



Outreach for Spanish-speaking Communities in the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area



John Echeverria • Intern • Summer 2021

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Acknowledgements

“Collaboration, creativity, and respect build lifelong connections that matter and make a difference, propelling us to work together across all boundaries.”-

Diane Luna



Figure 1: The author with his parents, Barbarito and Maria Echeverria, and his girlfriend, Nadia

Thanks to Elizabeth Shatto and Emily Huebner at Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area for sponsoring and supporting my efforts and the goals of this project. I would also like to thank Professor Denise Meringolo at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County for assisting me during my academic career and stimulated my interest in Public History and inclusionary practices at historic sites. *Finalmente, quiero agradecerle a mis podres, quien veniste a este paiz para segurar el futuro para mi y mi hermano—Gracias para todo su sacrificio.*

Introduction

Goals and intentions

This project aims to begin a dialogue and offer guidance for our partners and stakeholders looking to engage their Spanish-speaking audiences, review their organization's practices, or continue to develop their cultural competency. All the concepts and views that are not attributed to an author are representative of my own experiences, and not representative of Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area.

To begin outreach and establish sincere relationships with the Latinx community, self-reflection should be central to projects undertaken by our partners and stakeholders. Organizations should understand their own audiences and invest in cultural competency: "the ability to understand, appreciate and interact with people from cultures or belief systems different from one's own."¹ If organizations are looking to reach more audiences and better serve them, it is even more important to establish self-reflection and cultural competency as practices to better respect, understand, and listen to underrepresented communities. For more help with self-assessment and cultural competency training, please use this [**Community Outreach and Engagement Toolkit.**](#)²

For organizations that have already undertaken this assessment and would like to develop programming that appropriately engages with Latinx and Hispanic audiences, the Corazon Latino and the National Park Service have outlined strategies for developing effective programming to engage diverse communities.³ These resources are indispensable for organizations

¹ Tori DeAngelis, "In Search of Cultural Competence," *Monitor on Psychology* 46, no. 3 (2018): 64, <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2015/03/cultural-competence>.

² Camilla Sandoval, "Community Outreach and Engagement Toolkit," Patapsco Heritage Greenway, 2018, <https://patapsco.org/2018/10/09/community-outreach-and-engagement-toolkit-an-introduction-by-camilla-sandoval/>.

³ Corazon Latino Blog, "Tu Chesapeake: Latino Engagement Online Trainings," June 3, 2021, <https://www.corazonlatino.us/blog/2021/6/3/tu-chesapeake-latino-engagement-in-the-chesapeake>.

working in education, heritage/history, the arts, and cultural preservation. To find these strategies, use this [link](#).⁴

Relevant Information

The Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area sits in a unique position; we support more than historical, cultural, and natural resources but also educational, recreational, and tourism organizations in Carroll, Washington and Frederick County.

The Latinx and Hispanic communities in the United States account for 18.5% of the population, according to current Census data. These communities also hold the buying power of an independent nation—what would be the 7th largest economy in the world.⁵

The Latinx and Hispanic communities of Frederick, Washington and Carroll Counties desperately need inclusion at our historical parks, museum spaces and other heritage sites. Some of these flaws are a lack of culturally relevant programming, English-only signage and interpretation, and staff that are unable to provide suitable accommodations for Spanish-speaking visitors. In some instances, our partners and stakeholders have begun to recognize these issues. The Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area would like to facilitate this change.

The Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area stands ready to assist in securing funding, offering logistical support, and providing guidance when appropriate to our partners to start and/or continue this important work.

⁴ “Tu Chesapeake.”

⁵ Blanco, Octavio, “Latinos Key to U.S. Economic Growth, Study Finds,” CNNMoney, August 20, 2017. <https://money.cnn.com/2017/07/01/news/economy/latinos-u-s-economy/index.html>.

Current Works

Within the last few years, we have seen an influx of partner and stakeholder activities that incorporate inclusion and seek to make worthwhile changes within programming to reflect the communities they represent—which includes Spanish-speaking residents. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources, in collaboration with Chesapeake Conservancy and the Patapsco Heritage Greenway, noted in a summit conference in 2019 that Maryland’s Spanish speaking population is ever increasing.⁶ Our partners and stakeholders have also modified their core values to reflect this change in demographics, while others have started or modified programming with Spanish-speakers in mind.



Figure 2: A portion of the 'We the People' exhibit at Heritage Frederick

Heritage Frederick secured a Maryland Heritage Area Project Grant to assist in funding their exhibit “We the People,” an exhibition which primarily focuses on the impact and experiences of both early and modern immigrants. This is a step forward in terms of engagement with Latinx and Hispanic populations.⁷

⁶ “Summit Session: Building Meaningful Relationships in Maryland’s Latinx Communities” (presentation, 2019 Old Line Summit Conference, Frederick, MD, August 20, 2019), <https://www.preservationmaryland.org/old-line-state-summit-session-latinx-outreach-and-engagement-building-meaningful-relationships-in-communities/>.

⁷ “We the People,” Online Exhibit, *Heritage Frederick*, April 2, 2021, <https://frederickhistory.org/we-the-people/>.

The Chesapeake Conservancy, with the National Park Service, has begun offering mobile bilingual programming at some of their Maryland sites.⁸ The Chesapeake Roving Ranger project provides the same amenities and services that a visitor center



Figure 3: The Bilingual Interpretive Outreach Assistants and their Roving Ranger program at Greenbrier State Park

would provide but can also be staffed with several Bilingual Interpretive Outreach Assistants, who host Latinx outreach events and bilingual programming.⁹ The Chesapeake Conservancy's initiative was also funded in part by a Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) Project Grant.

The C&O Canal Trust has been continuously implementing their *Canal for All* program, which seeks to engage underrepresented audiences – including Latinx and Hispanic folks.¹⁰ This initiative provides events, translation of Trust materials, staff diversity training, and internship funding.¹¹

⁸ "Chesapeake Roving Ranger," Chesapeake Conservancy, August 5, 2021.

<https://www.chesapeakeconservancy.org/what-we-do/explore/find-your-chesapeake/roving-ranger/>.

⁹ "Roving Ranger."

¹⁰ "Canal For All," C&O Canal Trust, May 4, 2020. <https://www.canaltrust.org/programs/canal-for-all/>.

¹¹ "Canal For All."

Heritage Area Demographics

According to the 2010 Census, Maryland's population is unique within the United States.¹² For one, a higher proportion of the Latinx/Hispanic population in Maryland are foreign-born, as opposed to the trend seen in other parts of the county.¹³ Also important to note are the different proportions of Hispanic identities that are seen in Maryland compared to other states. For example, "Salvadoreans are by far the largest Hispanic group in Maryland, comprising nearly 124,000, well above Mexicans (88,004), Puerto Ricans (45,572) and Guatemalans (34,491).¹⁴ This trend will undoubtedly continue as more Census data and analysis is released by the Maryland Department of Planning.

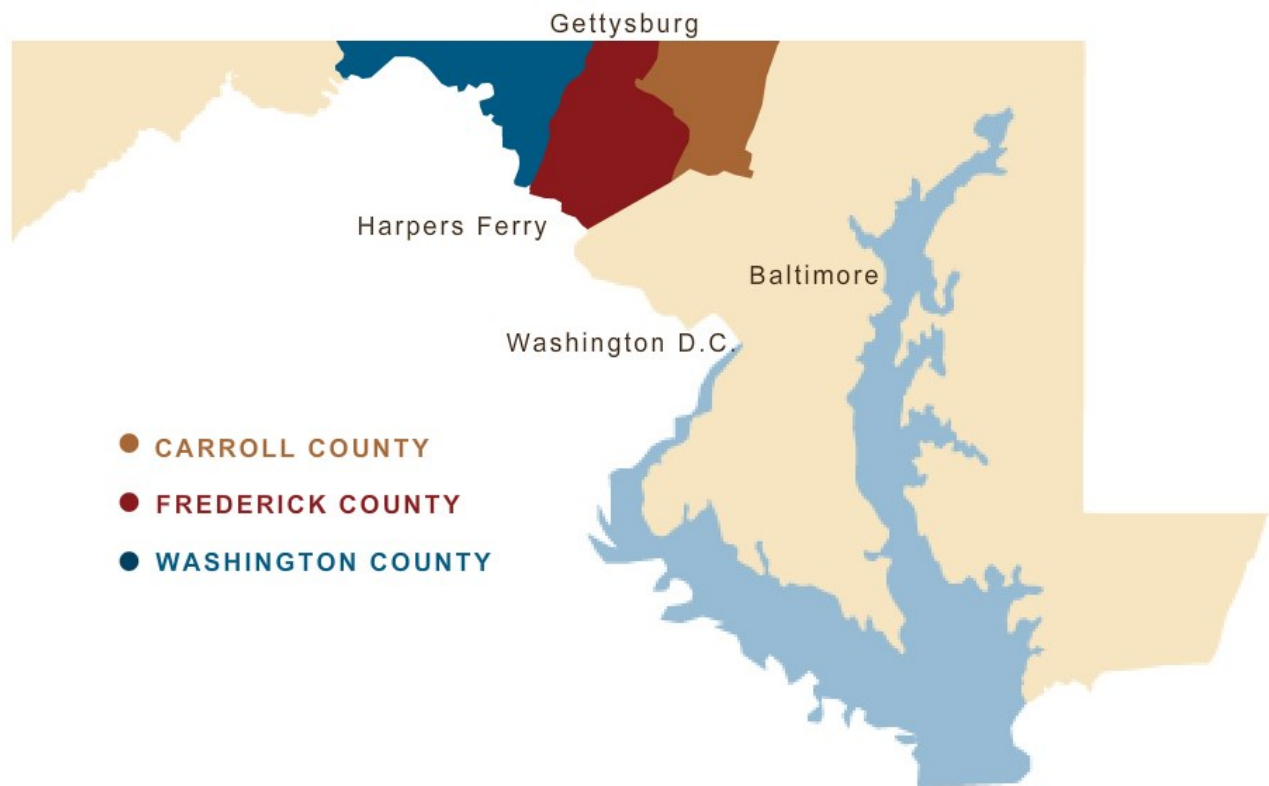


Figure 4: Map highlighting the counties that make up Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area

¹² "Building Meaningful Relationships," 8.

¹³ "Tu Chesapeake."

¹⁴ "Building Meaningful Relationships," 7.

Although specialized information for the heritage area is not currently available, it would be unwise to not take these trends into account when planning in our counties. In Carroll County, an estimated 6,500+ people of Latinx/Hispanic descent currently reside within the county, similarly Washington County observes an estimated 8,700+ residents of Latinx/Hispanic descent.¹⁵ Frederick County holds the highest number of Latinx/Hispanic residents, with an estimated 27,200 people.

When developing programming it is important to consider that each subgroup and subculture has its own nuances and dialects— lumping Latinx and Hispanic people into streamlined categories goes against best practices and rejects the type of change we would like to see in our heritage area.

¹⁵ “U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Carroll County, Maryland” United States Census Bureau, Accessed August 1, 2021. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/carrollcountymaryland/PST045219>; “U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Washington County, Maryland,” United States Census Bureau, Accessed August 2, 2021, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/washingtoncountymaryland/PST045219>.

Points of Contact

Included is a compiled list of organizations and other sites that either directly or indirectly serve a Latinx or Hispanic audience. These could serve as potential partners, sites of survey, or places to host general outreach and begin relationships within the community. These are not vetted sources; however, through research and by the help of our partners, we have highlighted these organizations as a potential resource for your projects.

Nonprofit and Religious Organizations

The [Centro Hispano de Frederick](https://centrohispanodefederick.org/about-us/) serves the community by offering education and enrichment to the local community.¹⁶ They have helped in providing feedback and other types of support to organizations that were working on Latinx-Hispanic programming. Other organizations working within the heritage area include the [Spanish Speaking Community of Maryland, Inc.](https://www.spanishcommunityofmd.org/), and [Comunidad Latina de Washington County](https://www.facebook.com/Comunidad-Latina-de-Washington-County-165200520202353/).¹⁷ Other great resources to interact with Latinx folks in a community setting would be churches and religious organizations, some include: [*Iglesia Pentecostal El Monte Sinai*](#), [*St. Joseph Catholic Church*](#), [*Iglesia de Dios Comunitaria Internacional*](#).¹⁸

Stores and Businesses

Local businesses where Latinx and Hispanic folk shop are found in abundance in the heritage area and are useful places to establish relationships with people or conduct surveys. These are establishments created and operated by Latinx owners or intended for the use of Latinx and Hispanic residents. Some of these places of economic development include:

¹⁶ "About Us – Centro Hispano de Frederick," Accessed July 10, 2021, <https://centrohispanodefederick.org/about-us/>.

¹⁷ "Spanish Speaking Community of MD, Inc.," Accessed July 10, 2021. <https://www.spanishcommunityofmd.org/>.

¹⁸ "Comunidad Latina de Washington County," Accessed July 20, 2021. <https://www.facebook.com/Comunidad-Latina-de-Washington-County-165200520202353/>.

- The Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce ¹⁹
- Jasmin Grocery [17603 Virginia Ave, Hagerstown, MD 21740]
- *El Eden* International Market [908 Dual Hwy #5913]
- Hagerstown, MD 21740]
- The Hillcrest Latino Market [22 [Hillcrest Dr, Frederick, MD 21703] (Pictured right)
- *Mi Pueblo* International Market [1170 W Patrick St Suite K, Frederick, MD 21702]
- *La Chiquita* Market [1425 W Patrick St, Frederick, MD 21702]
- International Market [1450 W Patrick St #8, Frederick, MD 21702]
- *Panaderia La Estrella* [1507 W Patrick St, Frederick, MD 21702]
- Megamart [1 Western Dr, Frederick, MD 21702]
- Reyes Latino Market [250 Englar Rd Ste 17, Westminster, MD 21157]



Figure 5: Checkout line at the Hillcrest Latino Market

Other locations and resources

Radio is a frequently used form of media for Latinx and Hispanic residents²⁰ According to a 2018 survey published by Global Web Index, two thirds of U.S. Hispanics are still using certain types of traditional media.²¹ One of the biggest Latin radio providers in the area seems to be the FM station [El Zol 107.9](#), however [AM station WACA 1540 kHz](#) is another popular

¹⁹ "About Us," Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, accessed August 10, 2021. <https://maryland-hispanic-chamber-of-commerce.org/about-us/>.

²⁰ "The Media Consumption Habits of Hispanics in the U.S.A.," Global Web Index, 2018, [https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/304927/Downloads/Infographic-Media-Consumption-habits-Hispanics.pdf?utm_campaign=Hispanics media consumption infographic&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=61519792&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_IVBVZDeX567QCQC5kbmQzLLAkroR5c1ZeNYkA149iNF7IWPEMx84Xt_6kFvPLb4DQ6hRytUke1aOLWm0YGxMDrTB-ElfzOmkp5wVaH4F2dXnqBus&utm_content=61519792&utm_source=hs_automation](https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/304927/Downloads/Infographic-Media-Consumption-habits-Hispanics.pdf?utm_campaign=Hispanics%20media%20consumption&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=61519792&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_IVBVZDeX567QCQC5kbmQzLLAkroR5c1ZeNYkA149iNF7IWPEMx84Xt_6kFvPLb4DQ6hRytUke1aOLWm0YGxMDrTB-ElfzOmkp5wVaH4F2dXnqBus&utm_content=61519792&utm_source=hs_automation).

²¹ "The Media Consumption."

station to consider.²² For nonprofit organizations looking to broadcast events or programming, public service announcements may be used to get the word out with no cost required, however must be formatted appropriately – these terms vary between radio stations.

Other locations include Spout Spring, within the Frederick Municipal Forest, which acts as a gathering place for people of many backgrounds to collect fresh spring water. From personal experience I can attest to considerable numbers of Latinx and Hispanic visitation. Similarly, the National Shrine Grotto is a pilgrimage site for practicing Catholic Latinx/Hispanic and individuals collect water there. Our state parks and local parks attached to river systems and waterways, sporting events, and English language learning programs offered by various institutions and organizations are also useful places to begin relationships with Latinx and Hispanic families.

²² “El Zol 107.9,” accessed August 10, 2021, <https://www.audacy.com/elzolradio/contact-us>; “Quienes Somos,” accessed August 10, 2021. <https://www.radioamerica.net/nosotros/quienes-somos>.

Keeping Momentum

To prevent the collapse of the goals of this project, I have included a collection of ideas that may serve as the foundation for future outreach projects by HCWHA and their stakeholders. They include a set of survey questions, possible events/programs, and suggestions that may be useful to reaching out to Latinx/Hispanic communities in our counties.

Sample Survey Questions [To be organized in a more casual conversation or survey]:

1. *Good [Morning, Afternoon, Evening], would you like to take a short survey for [your organization]? All it requires are your opinions about [your organization/site] and how we can better serve Latinx/Hispanic audiences. All of this information will be kept private and used for educational purposes.*
2. *Would you like to take this survey in Spanish or English? If you ever feel unsure about a question, feel free to change your response.*
3. *What brings you out to this site/organization? Is this a family visit or something else – is this a place you like coming to?*
4. *How do you feel about staff – do they make this site/organization an inviting place? If you became staff, how would you approach this [follow-up with career opportunities, if appropriate]?*
5. *How long have you enjoyed [site/location]? What sort of events, programming, or general changes at [site/organization] would you like to see? Are there any groups [nationalities or ethnicities] you would like to see supported/focused on more at this site?*
6. *What are some aspects of this site/organization that you like? Dislike? What would keep you coming back?*
7. *Is there anyone in your community who would be interested in contributing to discussions to better enhance visitor*

experience/increase visitation for Latinx/Hispanic people in our community?

- 8. Are there any aspects of this site/organization that bring tension? If you have ever encountered conflict at this site—what was the reason behind it?*
- 9. Do you feel comfortable here? If not, what would make your future visit more accommodating?*
- 10. Are you interested in supporting this organization/site? If not, what would persuade you to support/volunteer? What sort of volunteer work would you like to do?*
- 11. What are some core values that represent you, your family, and your local community – how do these values reflect the sites/organizations/businesses you interact with.*

Tips for outreach and completing surveys

Although this series of questions is by no means definitive, try to take some time to understand the reason behind them and adjust to your organizations' specific needs. When creating your own set of survey questions make sure to address intent and avoid asking for specific information from the beginning—hesitancy to complete surveys is quite common amongst Latinx and Hispanic respondents, as “this disproportionate refusal rate may in part be driven by a general suspicion of government or a more specific fear of deportation among subgroups of the U.S. Hispanic population, including unauthorized



Figure 6: Perhaps your organization could host open talks or guided discussions with Latinx and Hispanic leaders and residents?

immigrants.”²³ To help reduce this anxiety and fear of legal consequences, begin the survey with language “that stresses random selection of the respondent and confidentiality of responses can help to mitigate this risk, though experience suggests it will not mitigate it entirely.”²⁴ Formatting your survey in a way that operates on a casual conversation as opposed to a series of multiple choice responses may also reduce this reluctance amongst respondents. Make sure your questions are available in *both* Spanish and English, and that those offering the survey are adequately prepared to facilitate this.

In my personal experience, as a second-generation Latino, I know that the unplanned conversation with Spanish-speaking folk is great in getting more direct feedback, even if it comes from a smaller pool of participants. A setting, with limited exposure to symbols of authority (casual clothing, public setting, limited tools/recording devices, and informal conversation/charismatic demeanor) is beneficial, as you begin to weave in some of your more pressing survey questions.²⁵ Consider visiting your local Latinx/Hispanic businesses, gathering sites, or events and engage with the owners, customers, and visitors about how they feel about our heritage area, or even announce your existence-- there's a possibility they might not be aware of your organization and what you do.

An introductory conversation may even begin with asking folks to open up about their background/nationality, and help your organization further understand the needs of Latinx/Hispanic subgroups. Residents who identify as Salvadorean might have a vastly different perspective and needs in our heritage area as compared to someone from Peru. This survey and related work have a direct need for cross language staff, so it would be worthwhile to hire bilingual survey administrators—Heritage Area grant funding is permitted to support this kind of contracted services within

²³ Anna Brown, “The Unique Challenges of Surveying U.S. Latinos,” Pew Research Center, November 12, 2015, <https://www.pewresearch.org/methods/2015/11/12/the-unique-challenges-of-surveying-u-s-latinos/>.

²⁴ Brown, “The Unique Challenges.”

²⁵ “Tu Chesapeake.”

budgets that support heritage tourism projects. If you are noticing issues with language and have no other option besides relying on the respondents, engage with the younger, school-aged family members. Oftentimes, Latinx and Hispanic children are given the responsibility of interpreting and facilitating conversations between their parents and those that do not have strong Spanish-speaking skills. If necessary, use this to get responses; however, make sure to offer thanks and provide a tangible gesture of appreciation or compensation if possible [after completion of survey] – they are offering a free service that exclusively benefits your organization. Plus, these young people are the future caretakers and supporters of our historic and natural resources – we need them to associate happy memories with their family-time in the heritage area.

During your survey conversations, observe your respondent. When I observe Spanish-speaking family members and friends having conversations with English speakers, I notice they will go along with the conversation and don't interject. Even in times of confusion, their body language can sometimes be mistaken for understanding or acknowledgement, like nodding and smiling out of respect for the speaker. Try to make sure your audience fully understands your purpose, offering them some short and accessible literature while explaining your purpose, or just streamlining the information you intend to address may help.

Possible events

- One event that can be considered is an old fashioned social -- which was used in Carroll County with the help of bilingual translators in order to encourage their Spanish-speaking community to complete US Census forms.²⁶

²⁶ Mary Grace Keller, "Carroll County Holds Ice Cream Social to Encourage Latino Community to Take U.S. Census," Carroll County Times, September 13, 2020, <https://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/carroll/news/cc-census-ice-cream-latino-20200913-z47hkm52e5afdlpvsnbxotf7iu-story.html>.

- Try reaching out to Latinx centers or churches, and perhaps invite them to tours with your organization, or bring events and programming from your organization to these locations.
- Host an online survey and gather the responses by collaborating with your established audience or try producing announcements in coordination with radio stations [listed above].
- Consider hosting Latinx/Hispanic events at your organization or sponsoring a dialogue that features Latinx and Hispanic discussants.
- Look into reserving space at *Jaripeos*, a popular rodeo-style event with performances from famous Latinx/Hispanic bands, or similar events that would attract Latinx folk.
- Consider teaming up with a local community organization and host a Latinx history event and interact with those in attendance.
- Ask local businesses and organizations that serve Latinx/Hispanic residents to post your announcements for an online survey or in-person survey.
- Interact with Latinx organizations through social media – perhaps there are a few known groups willing to shine a light on our initiative.



Figure 7: 'Jaripeo a otro Nivel,' held at the Frederick fairgrounds in 2021

Resources

Below is a collection of resources that individuals and organizations ready to begin this work can use to develop inclusive and appropriate programming:

- [Strategies for Engaging and Representing Latinos in Museums](#): This publication, produced by the American Alliance of Museums, “offers background information and strategies for engaging and representing Latinos in authentic and meaningful ways.”²⁷
- [Tu Chesapeake: Latino Engagement Online Trainings](#): A set of recorded and published webinars that caters towards park engagement, and creating accessible programming for Spanish-speaking visitors.²⁸
- [Building Meaningful Relationships in Maryland’s Latinx Communities](#): This summit presentation, available through Preservation Maryland’s website, offers viewers a general overview of the Latinx and Hispanic population in Maryland, how to responsibly engage with said community, and provides recommendations on how to successfully engage a Spanish-speaking audience during an event.²⁹
- [Overview of the Hispanic Travel Market](#): A short document that refers to economic success of US Latinx and Hispanic residents and identifying key themes in how they vacation and travel.³⁰

²⁷ “Strategies for Engaging and Representing Latinos in Museums.” Latino Network of the American Alliance of Museums, 2021. <https://www.aam-us.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/AAMLN-Strategies-for-Engaging-and-Representing-Latinos-in-Museums.pdf>.

²⁸ “Tu Chesapeake.”

²⁹ “Building Meaningful Relationships,” 1-18.

³⁰ Kay Saffari, “Overview of the Hispanic Travel Market,” 2019, <https://www.babbel.com/en/magazine/how-many-people-speak-spanish-and-where-is-it-spoken/>.

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- [The Media Consumption Habits of Hispanics](#): An infographic that depicts the media habits of Latinx and Hispanic people in the United States (completed in 2018).³¹
 - [Latinx and Hispanic Identity](#): Pew Research study and article that describes the way in which Latinx and Hispanic folk see themselves, a useful tool for organizations to learn more about their Spanish-speaking audiences.³²
 - [US Latinx/Hispanic Predicted Growth](#): Pew Research study and article that highlights the change in demographics—notes the changes in different parts of the country.³³
 - [Community Outreach and Engagement Toolkit](#): Created by Camilla Sandoval, this toolkit can help shape your next engagement and outreach program – also included is a self-assessment for organizations, and an annotated bibliography which includes more sources and potential partners.³⁴

³¹ “The Media Consumption of Hispanics.”

³² Ana Gonzalez-Barrera, “How Hispanics See Themselves Varies by Number of Generations in US,” Pew Research Center, September 24, 2020, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/09/24/the-ways-hispanics-describe-their-identity-vary-across-immigrant-generations/>.

³³ Noe-Bustamante, Luis, Mark Hugo Lopez, and Jens Manuel Krogstad. “US Hispanic Population Reached New High in 2019, but Growth Slowed.” Pew Research Center, 2020. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/07/07/u-s-hispanic-population-surpassed-60-million-in-2019-but-growth-has-slowed/>.

³⁴ Sandoval, “Community Outreach.”

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Images used

Figure 1: Courtesy of Stefanie Basalik at Heritage Frederick

Figure 2: Courtesy of Matias Orrego at Chesapeake Conservancy

Figure 3: Image sourced from

https://www.fredericknewspost.com/news/economy_and_business/growing-hispanic-impact-seen-in-frederick-county/article_4f4029a5-7066-51bd-a6cd-f4d1f229b020.html

Figure 4: Image sourced from https://unsplash.com/photos/cw-cj_nFa14

Figure 5: Image sourced from <https://i.ytimg.com/vi/YL-mZdqFDVw/maxresdefault.jpg>