

Hispanic Evangelicals Unite Around Education Equity

The National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC/CONEC), the nation's leading organization for 16 million Hispanic American Evangelicals, celebrates its annual Education Sunday on September 6, 2015.

The NHCLC invites churches across the nation to pray for and support the students in their congregations and communities, including those in home, private and public schools. Education Sunday equips parents to take an active role in their children's education and empowers congregations to actively support high academic achievement for all children in their community.

Rev. Samuel Rodriguez, founder and president of NHCLC/CONEC and a former public school educator, views education equity as a matter of biblical justice.

"It's time to remind Americans that we are not only one nation under God, but we are also a nation of liberty and justice for all. We will bring biblical justice to our nation's public classrooms when academic achievement is no longer dependent upon a student's zip code, ethnicity or income. And we will truly love our neighbors as ourselves when we love their students as our own."

Education Sunday is a dedicated time for congregations to pray for their students and teachers, affirm the value of education, and invite the congregation to support local schools and students.

Dr. Andrea Ramirez, Executive Director of the Faith & Education Coalition-NHCLC, describes the heart behind Education Sunday 2015: "This year we are focusing on Jesus' command to 'love the Lord with all our minds and to love our

neighbors as ourselves' from Luke 10:27. Education Sunday focuses our hearts on equipping students—the children in our homes as well as the children in our communities. By taking steps to support local schools, our hope is to honor the 'Imago Dei' in every child. Because every child is created in God's image, each one has the potential for loving God with all of his or her mind."

The NHCLC hosts a resource website for parents and pastors. Tools for churches are provided at the site, including Education Sunday bilingual resources, as well as a variety of tools and information for parents. Resources include:

- **Parent Toolkit:** parents can plan for a successful school year with tips for student success, parent-teacher conference guides, suggestions for homework help, help discovering local after-school care, and links to academic standards by grade level
- **Education Sunday support:** information and ideas for this year's event include a sample sermon, original song, Bible studies and more
- **Scholarship Information:** students can enter a scholarship contest by submitting a 60-second video of what Education Sunday looked like at their church. By participating in Education Sunday, churches and their students become eligible for other scholarship opportunities through the year.

"Hispanic parents care deeply about education," comments Dr. Carlos Campo, President of Ashland University and founder of the Faith & Education Coalition. "They are eager to see their children graduate high school and attend college, even if no one else in their family has accomplished that goal. But far too many graduates require remedial classes at college, because they weren't held to rigorous high school standards. Our students deserve better, and Christians can lead the way."

The NHCLC, which values Education as one of its core

directives, advocates for Hispanic student success including education equity and high academic standards for all students as a part of its mission as a Christian organization.