



Sí Se Puede: Building Financial Security for Latinos in the US

Presentation and Panel Discussion Featuring:

Welcome by

Jeremy Smith

Director, Retirement Savings Initiative, The Aspen Institute Financial Security Program

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Abigail Golden- Vázquez

Executive Director, The Aspen Institute Latinos and Society Program

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Presentation by

Abigail Zapote

Executive Director, Latinos for a Secure Retirement

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Panelists

Carlos García

President and Founder, Finhabits

@garciaCarlosar and @Finhabits

John Herrera

Founder, Latino Community Credit Union

Steve Juarez

Deputy Treasurer, California State Treasurer's

Office

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Samantha Vargas Poppe

Associate Director, Policy Analysis Center,

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Moderated by

Cristina Martin Firvida (Moderator)

Director, Financial Security & Consumer Affairs, AARP

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About the Event

As a critical and growing portion of the US population, the economic security of Latino households is an important issue affecting all Americans. Over the next 40 years, Latinos will continue to grow and will account for nearly 30 percent of the US population—driving business creation, consuming, and entering college at higher rates than any other ethnic group. As a result, they will continue to have an immense influence on the nation's trajectory well into the future.

While Latino families are progressing, many face financial challenges, from short-term needs to long-term goals like retirement security. They trail many of their fellow Americans in retirement preparedness, a fact that could become painfully clear as more and more Hispanics begin to reach retirement age. This, of course, is not solely a Latino issue, as many families struggle to build savings and wealth. The good news is that there are ways to help Latinos and the country get on a more sustainable savings track.

The Aspen Institute's Latinos and Society Program and the Financial Security Program is hosting a presentation and panel discussion on the morning of October 26 from 9:30am to 11am. The event is bringing together thought leaders from industry, government, and the non-profit sector to explore these challenges and highlight possible solutions that can help more families save, build wealth, and contribute to a more prosperous America for all.

The Latinos and Society Program (LSP) is a place for learning about American Latinos and involving them in addressing the country's most critical issues at the highest levels. Its mission is to promote understanding of how the success of the American Latino community, and the success of this nation, are deeply intertwined. For more information on the Latinos and Society Program, please visit www.aspeninstitute.org/programs/latinos-and-society-program/.

The Financial Security Program (FSP) is dedicated to solving the most critical financial challenges facing America's households, and to shaping policies and financial products that enable all Americans to save, invest, and own. For more information on Aspen FSP, please visit www.aspenfsp.org.

The Aspen Institute is an educational and policy studies organization based in Washington, DC. Its mission is to foster leadership based on enduring values and to provide a nonpartisan venue for dealing with critical issues. The Institute is based in Washington, DC; Aspen, Colorado; and on the Wye River on Maryland's Eastern Shore. It also has offices in New York City and an international network of partners. For more information, visit www.aspeninstitute.org.

Participants



Carlos García
President and Founder
Finhabits
@garciaCarlosar and @Finhabits

Carlos Armando García is a Latino serial entrepreneur with 15 years of financial technology experience working on Wall Street and building his own companies. His life mission is to support underserved communities to close the retirement gap in our country. More recently, he founded Finhabits, the first bilingual digital retirement platform that helps people get into the habit of investing for their future. Carlos has a B.Sc. in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science from MIT.



Abigail Golden-Vázquez
Executive Director
The Aspen Institute Latinos and Society Program
@Abbeyny and @AspenLatinos

As Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Latinos and Society Program, Abigail runs a policy program whose goal is to improve understanding of the growing Latino community and its critical importance to the future of the United States. For 8 years prior she developed and managed the Institute's geographical (Africa, Central America, India, Middle East, and China) and topical leadership initiatives (education and environment) that comprise the Aspen Global Leadership Network with the goal of stimulating a new generation of local leaders poised to play a greater role in the civic engagement of their countries. As a Vice President at the Aspen Institute she is part of the executive management team working on strategy and representing the Institute publicly. Abigail joined the Aspen Institute from the German Marshall Fund (GMF) where she was Director, External Relations and a Sr. Manager responsible for partnership development, congressional relations, and public outreach. Abigail holds a B.A. in Political Science and Spanish from Amherst College and an M.A. in International Relations and Latin American Studies from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. She is a member of the board of ConPRmetidos, and is a National Hispana Leadership Institute Executive Leadership and an International Career Advancement Program Fellow. She has attended leadership training at Center for Creative Leadership and Harvard Kennedy School.



John Herrera
Co-founder
Latino Community Credit Union

Born in San Jose, Costa Rica, John Herrera became a proud naturalized US citizen on July 4, 1999, in Greensboro, North Carolina. Herrera is the youngest of twelve brothers and sisters and the son of farmworkers. Since 1999, Herrera has served as Senior Vice President for Latino/Hispanic Affairs at Self-Help, one of the nation's largest community development financial institutions. Since 1980, Self-Help has provided over \$6.6 billion in financing to over 102,000 member owners. Herrera also helped found and is the current board vice chair of the Latino Community Credit Union in North Carolina. LCCU provides accessible ethical financial products and education to empower communities. LCCU is the first fully bi-lingual financial institution in North Carolina and is a national model for banking immigrants. Herrera also is a founding and current board member of the National

Association for Latino Community Asset Builders (NALCAB). NALCAB was founded in 2002 to help Latino-serving community development organizations better access capital and technical resources in order to help Latinos build assets and wealth. Herrera made history in November of 2000 when his election as Carrboro Town Alderman marked the first time in North Carolina that a first-generation Latino immigrant had been elected to municipal office. Herrera graduated from the University of Delaware in 1991 with a B.S in General Agriculture. He then earned a Master's of Science from North Carolina State University in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management in 1999.



Steve Juarez
Deputy Treasurer
California State Treasurer's Office
@CASecureChoice

Steve Juarez is CA Deputy Treasurer for Economic Development & Higher Education Policy. Formerly, he was Associate Vice President and Director of State Government Relations for the University of California, where he was responsible for all State policy matters affecting the University. Prior to his appointment in 2008, Steve was a Vice President with JPMorgan in the firm's Public Finance Division. He was formerly the Director of Financial Management for the J. Paul Getty Trust in Los Angeles and prior to that, Steve was the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Government & Community Relations at UCLA.

He served as Executive Director of the California Debt Advisory Commission as an appointee of the California State Treasurer. He also has extensive experience in state and local finance and policy matters. Steve holds a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from UCLA and a Master's degree in Public Administration from USC.



Cristina Martin Firvida
Director, Financial Security & Consumer Affairs
AARP
@AARPolicy

Cristina Martin Firvida is the AARP Government Affairs Director of Financial Security and Consumer Affairs. She manages AARP's federal lobbying on Social Security, pensions, retirement savings, financial services and other aspects of retirement financial security, as well as taxes, telecommunications, transportation and employment. Prior to joining AARP, Cristina was Director of Government Affairs at the National Women's Law Center, a leading research and advocacy organization for women's economic independence. Cristina also worked for the Children's Defense Fund.

Cristina earned a B.A. in philosophy from Yale University and a Juris Doctorate from Cornell Law School.



Jeremy Smith
Associate Director
The Aspen Institute Financial Security Program
@jeremymacsmith and @Aspen_FSP

Jeremy Smith is the Associate Director at the Aspen Institute Financial Security Program, where he focuses on fostering innovative policy solutions to expand savings and wealth for all Americans. Before joining FSP, he served as Director of Strategic Initiatives at the Pew Charitable Trusts, where he was responsible for developing and launching new research and advocacy campaigns. He was also Deputy Director for Government Relations at the Service Employees International Union, where he led advocacy efforts on a broad range of economic policy issues on behalf of SEIU's members. In

addition, Mr. Smith has more than a decade of experience in international affairs at U.S. Agency for International Development, with a primary focus on supporting microenterprise lending in Latin America. He holds an MBA and a MA in Latin American Studies from the University of Texas at Austin, and a Bachelor's

degree from Georgetown University in History. He is the co-author of *Financial Access for Immigrants: Lessons from Diverse Perspectives* and *Making Money Transfers Work*.



Samantha Vargas Poppe
Associate Director, Policy Analysis Center
UnidosUS
@WeAreUnidosUS

Samantha Vargas Poppe is the associate director of the Policy Analysis Center at UnidosUS (formerly the National Council of La Raza). Headquartered in Washington, D.C., UnidosUS is the largest national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States. Through its network of nearly 300 affiliated community-based organizations, UnidosUS reaches millions of Hispanics each year in 40 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. Samantha oversees the component's work to strategically produce fact-based policy analyses and develop innovative solutions to help shape Congressional and state policy proposals in ways that can improve opportunities for Latinos in the U.S. She works across several core policy issues, including the economy, health, and education. Her entire career has been devoted to improving programs and policies at the federal, state and local levels. Prior to UnidosUS she served as a senior analyst at the U.S. Government Accountability Office and led analyses of federal programs on behalf of the U.S. Congress. Before that, she worked at the George Washington University Medical Center where she conducted policy and program analyses for state and local public health agencies. She earned a master's degree from the George Washington University and a bachelor's degree from Stanford University.



Abigail Zapote
Executive Director
Latinos for a Secure Retirement
@abi_zapote

Abigail Zapote is the Executive Director for Latinos for a Secure Retirement in Washington D.C. where she leads a coalition of Latino organizations to protect Social Security, strengthen Medicare and increase pension access and financial literacy to Latinos of all ages. LSR and its coalition members are part of the Strengthen Social Security Coalition, and is actively working to educate and mobilize the Latino community around Social Security and other retirement issues. LSR's staff and member organizations have appeared on dozens of radio and television shows, in English and in Spanish, talking about the importance of Social Security and Medicare. Abigail received her bachelor's in Political Science at the University of Texas at Dallas. She currently serves as the National Vice President for Young Adults on the LULAC National Board.