

Historical Timeline

1865

U.S. Navy Seaman **Philip Bazaar** became the first Hispanic Congressional Medal of Honor recipient for his service carrying dispatch communications between soldiers onshore and the USS Santiago de Cuba during the assault on Fort Fisher off the coast of North Carolina.

1867

Following the defeat of the French monarchy, Mexico entered an era known as the **Restored Republic under President Benito Juárez**, the first Mexican president of Indigenous origin. Among his achievements were: the secularization of the country to limit the Catholic church's power in Mexico, the recognition of his government by the United States, and the advancement of equal rights for indigenous peoples.

1893

The **Garza Revolution**, an armed conflict between the Mexican state of Coahuila and Texas, came to an end. It was an important confrontation that shaped the U.S.-Mexico border today and the lives of the people who occupy those lands.

1902

Cuba gained independence from the U.S. as the **Republic of Cuba**. The country's new constitution allowed the U.S. to retain the right to intervene in Cuban affairs and supervise its finances and foreign relations. The Platt Amendment allowed the U.S. to lease the Guantánamo Bay naval base.

1914

The **Panama Canal** officially opened on Aug. 15, completed at the cost of more than \$350 million. It was an event that would reshape global trade and helped establish the U.S. as a global power but had a tremendous cost in the century to come, changing the landscape and demographics of Panama permanently.

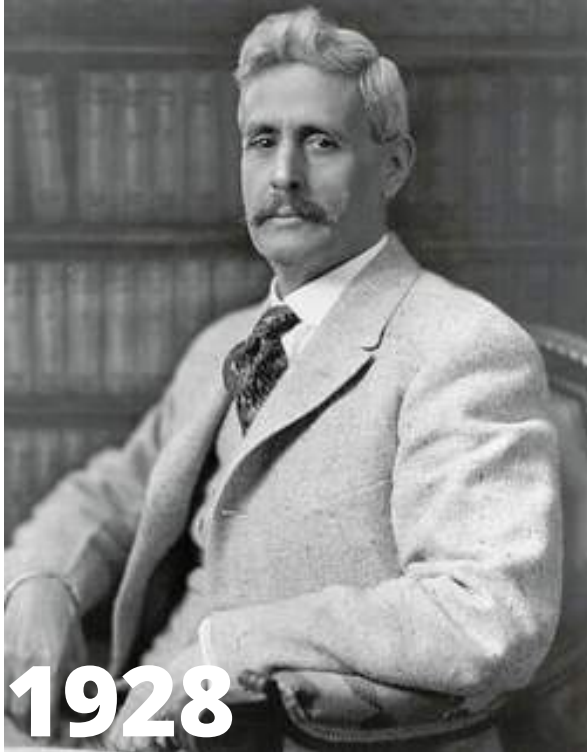
1918

The **Hispanic American Historical Review** printed its first issue. Latin American historians who felt the American Historical Association had marginalized their cultures sought to create an institutional structure that would provide a scholarly journal to examine Latin American history.



1893

Historical Timeline (cont'd)



1928

Octaviano Larrazolo became the first Mexican American to serve in the U.S. Senate. The former governor of New Mexico had been serving in the New Mexico State House of Representatives when U.S. Senator Andrieus Jones died. Larrazolo won the election that would see him serve for the remainder of Jones' term.



1942

World War II drastically changed the U.S. views and policies toward Mexican immigration. The governments of the U.S. and Mexico jointly created the **bracero (laborer) program**, which encouraged Mexicans to come to the U.S. as contract workers to support wartime industries.



1952

Puerto Rico proclaimed its constitution and was approved by the United States Congress, officially establishing a formal government structure to include a legislative branch, an elected governor and a judicial system based on civil liberties.

Historical Timeline (cont'd)

1954

President Dwight D. Eisenhower institutes a controversial program known as “**Operation Wetback**” in which the U.S. government detained and deported more than 1 million people. Rhetoric blaming immigrants for low wages led to the policy, which would only last a few months due to funding and a lack of support after agriculture was severely disrupted.

1959

Ritchie Valens, the first-ever Mexican American rock and roll star, was killed in a plane crash in Iowa along with Buddy Holly and other musicians on Feb. 3 (an event often referred to as “**The Day the Music Died**”). Valens was the creator of the famous song “La Bamba.”

1962

Civil rights activists César Chávez and Dolores Huerta establish the **National Farm Workers Association** to advocate for migrant workers’ rights. In the 1960s, it became the United Farm Workers of America.

Rita Moreno wins the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress for her role in *West Side Story*. She goes on to win an Emmy, Grammy and Tony Award during the 70s, becoming the first Latina actress to win all four major awards (commonly referred to as “EGOT”).

1963

The last baseball game ever played at New York’s historic Polo Grounds was the first and only **Hispanic All-Star Game**. Hall of Famers such as Roberto Clemente, Orlando Cepeda, Luis Aparicio and Juan Marichal were all featured in the game.

1965

President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the **Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965**, better known as the **Hart-Celler Act**. The reform bill ended the quota system that allotted immigration opportunities based on country of origin. The act gave priority to highly skilled immigrants and those with families already living in America.

1973

As the U.S. government officially recognized the word “**Hispanic**,” the Dade County Commission unanimously passed a resolution from Miami’s mayor making Spanish the city’s second official language and creating a department of bilingual and bicultural affairs. Later that year, Maurice A. Ferré was elected Miami’s first Hispanic mayor and the first Puerto Rican to lead a major U.S. mainland city.



Historical Timeline (cont'd)

1975

The Voting Rights Act of 1975 makes bilingual ballots a requirement in many areas.

1986

The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities was founded to champion higher education for Hispanic students. The Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility (HACR) was founded to advance the inclusion of Hispanic professionals in corporate America.

1987

The National Hispanic Leadership Institute addresses the lack of representation of Latinas in corporations, politics and nonprofits.

1989

[Ileana Ros-Lehtinen](#) becomes the first Hispanic woman elected to Congress.



1990

[Antonia C. Novello](#) becomes the first woman and Hispanic surgeon general of the U.S.

1993

[Ellen Ochoa](#) becomes the first Hispanic woman to go to space.

1995

Dreaming of You, the posthumous album by [Selena](#), becomes the first predominantly Spanish-language album to debut at No. 1 on the Billboard 200.

1999

California's controversial 1994 ballot measure called **Prop 187**, which sought to stop illegal immigrants from receiving benefits or public services in the state, was struck down by a federal court mediation. Judges labeled most of it as unconstitutional, declaring that the state cannot regulate immigration and that no child will be deprived of education or healthcare due to their place of birth.

Historical Timeline (cont'd)

2001

Representative Luis Gutiérrez proposes the first version of the **Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act**, granting citizenship to those who entered the U.S. undocumented as children.

2003

Hispanics have become the nation's largest minority group yet remain underrepresented in workforce leadership.

2007

America Ferrera becomes the first Latina to win Outstanding Lead Actress in a Comedy Series for her role in *Ugly Betty*.

2008

Lin-Manuel Miranda's *In the Heights* wins the Tony Award for Best Musical and goes on to produce the equally successful *Hamilton*.



2009

Puerto Rican **Sonia Sotomayor** becomes the first Latina Supreme Court Justice.

Richard Gonzalez becomes the CEO of AbbVie, achieving status as one of the highest-paid CEOs without completing a college degree.

2012

The **Deferred Action of Childhood Arrivals (DACA) begins** under President Obama. It allows those who entered the U.S. undocumented as children to have eligibility for a work permit and a two-year deferred action from deportation.

2017

"Day Without Immigrants" protests take place across the nation to show the government how valuable immigrants are to the economy. These protests get widespread media attention and raise awareness about immigration issues.



Historical Timeline (cont'd)

2018

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez beats out Joe Crowley, a longtime representative of New York's 14th congressional district.

Antonio Neri becomes the CEO of Hewlett-Packard.

Esteban Hotesse, the only Dominican to serve as a Tuskegee Airman during WWII, was posthumously awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for his bravery. Hotesse was one of the airmen who stood up against the Army's segregationist orders and went on to reach the rank of second lieutenant. He died in July 1945 on his 68th mission with the all Black squadron. He was 26.



2020

The Supreme Court blocks efforts to end DACA, ensuring that 700,000 young immigrants can work and study in the U.S. without fear of deportation.

18.7 million voters (around 1 in every 10 voters nationwide) were of Latin American descent in 2020, with a historic 53.7% of the Hispanic population eligible to vote. For the first time in the history of U.S. presidential elections, Latinos born in the U.S. voted at the same rate as naturalized citizens.

2021

U.S. Census Data revealed that the Hispanic population of Texas is now equal to the white population of the state before accounting for undocumented immigrants, signaling a shift in the state's demographic makeup in the coming years as Hispanic voters and consumers will become the majority.

