Latino youth are one of the fastest-growing populations in the United States and account for one in four K-12 students and one in five college students. In recent years, Latinos have enrolled in college at higher rates than ever before. However, this increase is not reflected in college completion rates since only one in five Latinx students graduate from two-year institutions and one in two graduate from four-year institutions. UnidosUS is preparing for the future by investing directly in youth through education programs and by tackling institutional barriers—such as college affordability, access to financial aid, and student loan repayment—that hinder Latino youth’s ability to contribute to our nation’s success.

**EARLY ESCALERA**

The Early Escalera: Pasos Adelante college- and career-readiness program for ninth and tenth grade students validates Latinx students as college- and career-ready, civically engaged, financially capable, and critically conscious change agents and equity advocates. Early Escalera primarily serves first-generation, Latinx, low-income, and English learner (EL) students that have historically lacked access to quality K-12 education and who face barriers to completing a higher education. Since launching in 2015, Early Escalera has reached more than 1,100 students.

**About**

UnidosUS, previously known as NCLR (National Council of La Raza), is the nation’s largest Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization. Through its unique combination of expert research, advocacy, programs, and an Affiliate Network of nearly 300 community-based organizations across the United States and Puerto Rico, UnidosUS simultaneously challenges the social, economic, and political barriers that affect Latinos at the national and local levels.

For more than 50 years, UnidosUS has united communities and different groups seeking common round through collaboration, and that share a desire to make our country stronger. For more information on UnidosUS, visit [www.unidosus.org](http://www.unidosus.org), or follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

For more information about Early Escalera, please contact UnidosUS Education Program Manager Ulysses Urquizo at uurquizo@unidosus.org.