

LATINO AMERICAN COMMISSION

ESTABLISHED IN 1972 | SUMMER 2016 NEWSLETTER | WWW.LATINOAC.NEBRASKA.GOV



Mission Statement: The mission of the Latino - American Commission is to serve as a voice in the Nebraska State Government for Latino Americans/ Latinos.

Vision Statement: The vision of the Latino - American Commission is to empower the Latino Community through a pro-active approach to issues that affect their access to educational, political, economical and social opportunities in Nebraska.

2016 Register to Vote: Where, When & How

The next election will be on November 8, 2016.

In addition to November 8th being a Presidential Election, it will also include local and county election positions on the ballot. Please check your local news agency or the Secretary of State's website for a full listing of the positions up for election in your district.

If you have not already registered to vote in Nebraska, you can still register, you must:

- Be a United States Citizen;
- Live in the state of Nebraska, you may register to vote the same day you become a resident of Nebraska;
- Be at least 18 years of age on or before the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November;
- Have not been convicted of a felony, or if convicted, at least two years have passed since the completion of your sentence including any parole term; and
- Have not been officially found to be mentally incompetent.

To register to vote online

For online registration, the deadline is 5 p.m. (Central Time) on the third Friday before the election. You need your Nebraska driver's license or state-issued identification card.

If you do not have these items, you need to register in person with a paper form: http://www.sos.ne.gov/elec/ele_forms.html

After you have registered to vote

All online applications will be reviewed and processed by the appropriate county election official through the same verification process that paper applications go through. The county election office will ensure there are no duplicate registrations under your name, that your record doesn't match any death records or potential incarceration notices and that you are registered within the proper county.

Once your application is processed, the county election office will send an acknowledgement of registration to you via mail. That notice will indicate if your application was accepted, rejected or if there were any problems that need further clarification.

If you have any problems completing your online registration, contact the Secretary of State – Elections Division at 402-471-2555 or toll free at 888-727-0007 or email: sos.elect@nebraska.gov for assistance.

To register to vote in languages other than Spanish and English visit: <http://www.eac.gov/>

To register to vote in person

If you do not have a driver's license or state-issued identification, you will need to register with a paper form that can be found online: http://www.sos.ne.gov/elec/ele_forms.html.

You can also find a paper application at any county election office, any Department of Motor Vehicle office, banks, libraries, post offices and offices that offer state public assistance.

Note: You will be asked to submit proof of your current address (a copy of your utility bill, bank statement, etc.) as well as sign the application. Through the online process, information is checked with the Department of Motor Vehicles and your signature is retrieved and added to your voter application.

To register to vote by mail

If registering for the first time in Nebraska by mail, please provide a copy of a current and valid photo ID, or a copy of a utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other government document which is dated within 60 days immediately prior to the date of presentation showing the same name and residence address provided on the voter registration application to avoid delays with your registration.

If you have already registered to vote, do not re-register, unless you have changed any of the following information:

- Your name;
- Your address; or
- Your political party affiliation.

Failure to vote in a previous election does not require re-registration.

For more information, visit the Secretary of State's website:

<http://www.nebraska.gov/faqs/sos/OVRA/FAQ-eng.html>



Lazaro Arturo Spindola
NLAC Executive Director

A Message from the Executive Director

We are only two months away from the General Election on November 8, which will determine the next President of the United States.

To say that this election is important is an understatement. In addition to President, there are many other elected positions including U.S. Senator, Representative of Congress, and state senators. Some of you will elect new mayors, City Council members, school board members and more. Use this time to educate yourself on the candidates and vote for the person you believe represents you and your interests the best.

Below are some important dates to remember:

- October 10 – First day to vote early in general election
- October 21 – Last day to register voters for the general election
- October 28 – Last day for in-person voter registration
- October 28 – Last day for applications for Early Voting ballot to be mailed to specific address
- Nov. 7 – Last day for Early Voting in person at County Clerk or Election Commissioner office
- Nov. 8 – General Election Day, polls open at 8 a.m. and close at 8 p.m.

To locate your polling station, visit <https://www.votercheck.necvr.ne.gov/VoterView/PollingPlaceSearch.do>

In my previous message, I had listed the Latinos/as who were running for office, below is the updated list of Latinos/as who advanced from the primary election and WILL be on the ballot for the General Election on Nov. 8, they are:

1. Hastings Public School Board Member: Aida Olivas
2. Hastings City Council, Ward 1: Jose E. Jimenez
3. Member of the Legislature, District 5: Gilbert Ayala
4. Member of the Legislature, District 7: Tony Vargas
5. Metropolitan Community College for Board of Governors, District 4: Roger Garcia
6. Papio Missouri River Natural Resources District, Subdistrict 3, Board: Larry Bradley
7. Western Community College Board, District 5, At-Large: Linda Guzman-Gonzales

Once again, please let us know if we have missed any candidates from our list. Regardless if they are elected or not, all of these candidates are worthy of our respect. We must keep encouraging them and others to run for office and represent their community, which is our community.

In Nebraska, state law, Neb. Rev. Stat. § 32-922, will allow you to take time off to vote without being punished. The law states: Employees are entitled to up to two paid hours leave to vote. Pay cannot be deducted if the employee gives notice in advance of Election Day. The employer can set the time for leave to vote.

Your vote is your voice. Go forth and vote!

Commissioner Election of Officers



The 2016-17 Nebraska Latino American Commission Board of Commissioners at the August 27th Quarterly Meeting in Lincoln. The Commissioners are, from left to right: Ramon Otero of Cairo, Aida Olivas of Hastings, Daniel Castillo (Vice-Chair) of Lincoln, Adrian Sanchez (Chair) of Lincoln, Jack Gutierrez of Columbus, Deyanira Salgado (Secretary, and Governor's Representative) of Lincoln, Leticia Rodriguez of Madison and Chabella Guzman of Scottsbluff. Not pictured: Maria Valentin of Omaha and Norma de la O of South Sioux City.

If you are interested in applying for a Commissioner position, or to browse State Boards and Commissions with open vacancies, visit: www.governor.nebraska.gov/board-comm-req.

- ### Latino American Commission Commissioners
- Adrian Sanchez (Chair)**
 - Daniel Castillo (Vice Chair)**
 - Deyanira Salgado (Secretary)**
 - Norma de la O**
 - Jack Gutierrez**
 - Chabella Guzman**
 - Aida Olivas**
 - Ramon Otero**
 - Leticia Rodriguez**
 - Maria Valentin**

- ### NLAC Staff
- Lazaro Arturo Spindola, M.D.**
Executive Director
 - Jasel Cantu**
Public Information Officer
 - Dora Lima**
Staff Assistant
- Visit Our Website:**
www.latinoac.nebraska.gov

Hispanic Heritage Month Essay Contest Now Open

The Nebraska Latino American Commission invites the youth of Nebraska to participate in the 10th Annual Hispanic Heritage Month State Commemoration Essay Contest

Hispanic Heritage Month: National Hispanic Heritage Month was enacted into law on August 17, 1988 observing September 15 to October 15 as a period to celebrate the histories, cultures, and contributions of those who can trace their ancestry to Mexico, Spain, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean.

For the essay, the Hispanic Heritage Month Committee is asking students to write about civic engagement:

- What is the importance of civic engagement among the Latino/a community? Why is it important for Latinos/as to engage in voting, encouraging others to vote, volunteering, taking part in student organizations, knowing and contacting your local elected official, and running for public office?

Guidelines: When writing your essay, consider any of the following: What does civic engagement mean to you? How do you participate in civic engagement? Why is it important to contact your local elected official and inform them of your support or opposition to certain issues? How is civic engagement relevant and important to Hispanic Heritage Month? What are the barriers that prevent Latinos/as from becoming engaged in civic purposes, and how can Latinos/as become fully engaged? Your essay will be judged by grammar, content, creativity, and understanding of the theme.

Eligibility: Students of all ethnicities currently enrolled in a Nebraska public, private, special purpose, home school or magnet school

Reminder: Latino Summit Registration & Scholarship

The Latino Summit is an all-day educational conference open to high school and middle students in Nebraska. This year's Summit will be on October 24 at the Younes Conference Center in Kearney. Registration is now open at <http://www.latinosummit.org/>

The Summit encourages higher education by offering information and advice on college readiness. The event features a Keynote Speaker, break-out sessions, lunch and college recruitment tables. This will be the first year a scholarship will be offered to high school seniors.

The Keynote Speaker is Carlos Ojeda, founder of CoolSpeak: Youth Engagement. The son of immigrants, he overcame obstacles to graduate college. A former university administrator and small business development director, he now encourages students to succeed.

In addition, Latino/a student leaders will be recognized with the Gallery of Stars. School staff are encouraged to nominate 3 to 5 juniors or seniors who have shown leadership skills and educational success. Nomination forms: <http://www.latinosummit.org/>

Students selected for the Gallery of Stars will have their biography and photograph featured on a displayed poster, a slideshow that will play during lunch, and will be included in a commemorative booklet. High school seniors who are nominated can also apply for the Latino Summit

(grades 6-12). Entries welcome in English or Spanish, and must include a signed entry form.

Rules: Essays must be original, typed or legibly handwritten, and double-spaced. The word length is 250 – 400 words for middle school students, and 500 – 700 words for high school students. We reserve the right to disqualify essays that contain offensive language, political messages, or derogatory statements.

Awards: Scholarships, certificates, Kindles, and McDonald's gift cards will be given to six winners. Winning students will be recognized at the Hispanic Heritage Month State Commemoration scheduled for October 7, 2016 at the Nebraska Capitol Building in Lincoln.

First place winners will be asked to read their essay at the Commemoration and McDonald's will publish first place winning essays on their tray liners. The Commission reserves the right to edit essays for fitting purposes.

The scholarships are: \$200 for first place winners, \$125 for second place winners and \$100 for third place winners for both high school and middle school.

Submission: All essays due by Tuesday, September 20, 2016 at 5 P.M. Essays and entry forms may be submitted by email to:

Jasel.Cantu@nebraska.gov, via fax at 402-471-4381, or mailed to:

Nebraska Latino American Commission
ATT: Hispanic Heritage Month Essay Contest
P.O. Box 94965
Lincoln, NE 68509-4965

Leadership Scholarship worth \$500. This is open to all nominated high school seniors including citizens and non-citizens. A school counselor, teacher or principal must submit one letter of recommendation.

The student is also requested to submit a statement of purpose and a leadership essay. Both must be 500 words each, typed on separate documents and include the students' name and school name at the top right corner:

1. **Statement of Purpose:** Describe your educational goals such as: Which college/university you plan to attend, and when, and what you plan to study. Describe your future goals including career goals and how you plan to attain them.
2. **Leadership Essay:** Describe why you consider yourself to be a leader? (May or may not be school-related) Response may include: What leadership experience you have and what have you learned about your strengths and weaknesses through your experience?

The scholarship recipient will be announced at the Summit, the student must be in attendance. The deadline for the Gallery of Stars and apply for the Scholarship is Oct. 7. Please send nominations to sherri.landis@nebraska.gov. Registration deadline is Oct. 17. To register, complete the registration form and submit by fax: 402-476-7740 or email: michelle@ncsa.org

Hispanic Heritage Month 2016 Awards Now Accepting Nominations

The 10th Annual Hispanic Heritage Month State Commemoration will take place on Friday, October 7, 2016 at the State Capitol Rotunda.

We are currently seeking nominations for the 2016 Hispanic Heritage Month Awards. Please explain in 350 words or less why you believe an individual or organization should receive one of the following awards.

Nominations may be submitted by Nebraska residents of all ages, ethnicities and backgrounds statewide.

Humanitarian Award

This award honors an individual who has enhanced multicultural understanding, communication, and social justice in Nebraska. Please explain how this individual has contributed their time, actions or funding that has made a difference. We are looking for an individual who meets the criteria below:

- Dedication has led to improvements in the quality of life within the Hispanic community
- Promotion of equality, social justice, human dignity and diversity in the community
- Exemplify, through actions, the role of a humanitarian and leader for the Hispanic community
- Achievement of cross-cultural understanding in the community
- Advocate for underrepresented individuals

Event Award

This award honors an individual or organization on who has broadened cross-cultural understanding through an event, exhibit or body of work on issues affecting the Hispanic population or promoting the beauty of Hispanic culture. Describe an event that meets the below criteria:

- The promotion of Hispanic heritage, culture and community locally or statewide
- Publicly recognized a group or individual in the Hispanic community bringing positive attention
- Event, exhibit or body of work bridging cultural understanding between communities
- Eliminating myths and stereotypes through factual information provided in a large setting
- Advocating or bringing attention to topic(s) affecting the Hispanic community

Inspiration Award

This award is for an individual who has gone above and beyond promoting diversity and/or helping individuals within the Hispanic community. We are looking for an individual or group who meets one or more of the below criteria:

- Actions have benefited Hispanic individuals in the local community
- Improved opportunities for academic and social advancement among underrepresented individuals
- Worked to keep Latin American culture and heritage alive in Nebraska
- Has organized support groups or fundraisers to benefit a group, individual or issue affecting the Hispanic community
- Has overcome barriers and adversity that has inspired others through their own example

Organization Award

Help us recognize an organization (community, student, non-profit, church, etc.) that has helped the Hispanic community with education, advocacy, healthcare, voter education/registration or awareness. Tell us about an organization that deserves to be recognized for providing one or more of the below criteria:

- Provides classes or programs that benefit the Hispanic community
- Advocates for social justice, equality and cultural understanding locally or statewide
- Achieved improvements in academic or social opportunities among underrepresented youth
- Provided direction, access, support and/or services to Hispanic individuals
- Assisted in helping recent immigrants settle in new surroundings
- Assisted with voter education/registration in the Hispanic community

The Hispanic Heritage Month Committee will review the nominations and make the final selection. The Nomination deadline for all awards: **5 p.m. on Tuesday, September 27, 2016.**

Please send Nominations, or if you have any questions, please email: Jasel.Cantu@Nebraska.gov or mail nominations to:

Nebraska Latino-American Commission
ATT: Hispanic Heritage Month Awards
State Capitol, 6th Floor, P.O. Box 94965
Lincoln, NE 68509-4965

Dr. Hector P. Garcia Day Proclamation



On July 13th, Lt. Governor Mike Foley presented a Proclamation signed by Governor Pete Ricketts observing July 26, 2016 as Dr. Hector P. Garcia Day in Nebraska. From left to right: NLAC Director Arturo Spindola, Lt. Governor Mike Foley, NLAC Public Information Officer Jasel Cantu and NLAC Board Chair Adrian Sanchez. Director Spindola shared the history of Dr. Garcia and his ties to Nebraska as a Creighton Medical School alumni.

Latina Wins State Sonnet Shakespeare Contest

Julia Briones, a junior from Lexington Senior High School, won first place in the high school division of the 19th Annual Anne Dittrick Sonnet Contest presented by Nebraska Shakespeare.

The statewide contest is part of the non-profit's "Shakespeare On The Green" event held at UNO in late June and early July. Julia received a scholarship to Camp Shakespeare, her sonnet was published in the event program and was read by a Company member to the audience.

Below is Julia's first-place winning sonnet:

Do You Remember This November?

Do you remember this November?
Some years ago, in confidence, I told
A friend of hours I spent admiring you.
She fled my side, betrayed my trust so bold.
The very ears not meant to hear soon knew...

Thus ridiculed, sentenced to shame, I fell.
Despite all that, you lent a caring hand,
A friendship promptly bloomed—again, I fell.
Secrets and laughs alike we shared all grand

A reverie of years did waltz on past,
Each wore its own unique color and dress,
But when you came of riper age, you cast
It all aside in spite of my distress.

Although my wounds did heal with Time, I muse,
What mind-erasing medicine you use.

Hispanic Heritage Month College Scholarship

The Latino American Commission invites college students to participate in the 2nd Annual Hispanic Heritage Month College Scholarship.

We are asking for college students to tell us in their own words about the following:

- The upcoming election will take place on Nov. 8, 2016 for both national and local elected positions. As a future leader of your community, what does it mean to be a voter?

Guidelines: Remember to cite any research that you include. Please consider one or more of the following along with your answer to the above question: How will the 2016 election impact international relations? How does being a Latino/a shape your views on voting? How will the 2016 election impact international college students?

Judging: Commission staff and Commissioners will judge your essay on grammar, content, originality, and understanding of the theme.

Eligibility: Students of all ethnicities currently enrolled in a Nebraska state or private college or university, or enrolled in a community college or professional trade college, seeking their Associate's, Bachelor's, or Master's degree. International students are also welcome to apply.

Legislative Page Positions

Nebraska Legislative pages are selected in the fall each year to work for the upcoming Legislative Session. Pages respond to senators' request lights on the legislative floor, run errands, deliver messages, photocopy materials, get food and drink for the senators, assist the presiding officer, set up and staff committee hearings and perform other duties as assigned.

Page applicants must be high school graduates currently enrolled in a Nebraska college or trade school with a minimum grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale. Pages must be able to work 20 hours a week during session, preferably the same four-hour shift each day.

The legislative session will be from January 4, 2017 through May 2017. This is a paid position and pages may also be able to receive college credit hours. First-year pages will earn approximately \$10.37 per hour and second year pages approximately \$10.78 per hour.

Applications are available through the Clerk of the Legislature's Office, Room 2018, State Capitol, 1445 K Street, or through your state senator's office. A page applicant is also encouraged to contact his or her home district state senator for a letter of recommendation. If you do not know who your senator is please contact the Clerk of the Legislature's Office at (402) 471-2271 or visit: www.nebraskalegislature.gov/senators/senator_find.php.

Submit your application to the Clerk of the Legislature's Office, Room 2018, State Capitol, 1445 K St., Lincoln, NE, 68508.

The application deadline is October 3, 2016.

For further information, please contact the Office of the Clerk of the Legislature at 402-471-2271, or Kitty Kearns at 402-471-0617 or email: kkearns@leg.ne.gov.

Entries are welcome in English or Spanish, and must include a signed entry form and two letters of recommendation from a professional who is unrelated to you. Entry forms are available on the Commission website: www.latinoac.nebraska.gov.

Rules: Essays must be original, typed in 12-size font, and double-spaced. The word length is 800 – 1,000 words for the essay. We reserve the right to disqualify essays that contain offensive language, political messages, contain derogatory statements or have been plagiarized.

Scholarship: A single scholarship of \$1,500 will be granted to a college student with the selected essay. The scholarship will be sent directly to the students' college or university for tuition, student fees and books.

Submission: All essays due by Monday, Sept. 26, 2016 at 5 P.M. Essays and entry forms may be submitted by email to Jasel.Cantu@nebraska.gov, via fax at 402-471-4381, or mailed to:

Nebraska Latino American Commission
ATT: Hispanic Heritage Month Scholarship
P.O. Box 94965
Lincoln, NE 68509-4965

Pieces of Nebraskan Hispanic History

Coronado's Search for Gold in Nebraska

The following information was compiled from the articles, "Spain on the Plains" by James A. Hanson, published in 1993, and "The Famous Spanish Stirrups" by George W. Prather, published in 1924, in "Nebraska History" magazine. Information also compiled from "The Discovery of Nebraska" by James W. Savage in 1880, and "Nebraska Historical Buildings Survey Reconnaissance Survey Final Report of Box Butte County, Nebraska" by the Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center in 1996. Information and photographs reprinted with permission by the Nebraska State Historical Society. For the complete articles, visit: www.nebraskahistory.org/publish/index

In the 1500's, Vasquez de Coronado explored what is now New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas. Many historians believe that Coronado made it to Nebraska due to evidence, which would make his expedition the first European contact in the state.

Coronado was in search of Quivira and the Seven Cities of Cibola, all filled with gold. His expedition included 300 Spaniards and 800 Native Americans. There have been several locations where it is believed that Quivira was found, but Omaha Judge James W. Savage, an amateur historian and others believe that Quivira was Nebraska.

Coronado's expedition left Mexico in 1540 and reached present-day Kansas in 1541. By July, they had reached the southern boundary of Nebraska near the Platte River. When they did not find gold, their guide confessed he deceived them, and was hanged as a result.

Coronado's description of the landscape, flora, fauna, fruit, wildlife and weather were all consistent with Nebraska. Savage believed they stayed in an area between Gage and Furnas counties for 25 days. The evidence was Coronado wrote in his report that he had reached the 40th parallel of latitude, which would be in Nebraska.

In 1874, homesteader George W. Prather discovered rusted stirrups on his property seven miles from Riverton, close to Furnas County. He wrote: "As I walked along through the grass my foot struck something hard. I looked down and saw what seemed to be an iron link... projecting from the ground. I went back to my house, got my spade and dug around the iron. I dug out two metal stirrups. They were side by side. Each of them was about 6 inches wide and 9 inches long. They were buried in the earth, except a small projection of the upper part of one stirrup. I dug all around and down several feet to find some other remains, but found none, except a little discolorization of the soil which I thought might have come from decayed wood."

Prather cleaned them, noticing they were inlaid with silver and of fine workmanship, "(I) wondered at the peculiar sharp appearance of them at the bottom where the foot would rest in them. I did not attach any special value to them, but simply wondered how they came there."

They were sent to UNL asking for information, but not to keep them. Years would pass before the stirrups were returned to Prather, who by then had become county judge and moved to Bloomington. The stirrup was returned by Joseph Lamaster who explained what



One of the Spanish stirrups found by George W. Prather near Riverton. It is currently at the Nebraska State Historical Society in Lincoln. This photo has been reprinted courtesy of the Historical Society.

happened. One stirrup went to Savage who suggested it was tied to Coronado. The other stirrup was sent to the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. where it was confirmed to be a medieval Spanish stirrup; but the museum kept it. Nebraska U.S. Senator A. S. Paddock went to the Smithsonian and retrieved it, saying the stirrup belonged in Nebraska and the museum had no right to keep it. Paddock gave the stirrup to Lamaster, who returned it to Prather.

Prather wrote: "I got the history of Coronado's expedition and studied it carefully. I concluded that these stirrups belonged to the Coronado party and that he camped on Thompson Creek in the region where I found the stirrups. Coronado says he reached Quivira in the 40th degree of latitude and then went further. The 40th degree of latitude is about 12 miles south of where I found these stirrups. I firmly believe that Coronado camped there and that these stirrups were lost by some of his party and during the long years and centuries they were covered with earth and grown over with grass."

In August 1541, the expedition considered going further, but Coronado wanted to return home. Lt. Jaramillo recalled: "It seemed to all of us that as it was already almost the opening of winter...and because we but very little prepared...it seemed to us all that his grace ought to go back...and return to that country at the opening of spring, to conquer and cultivate it...the general raised a cross at this place, at the foot of which he made the letters with a chisel, which said that Francisco Vazquez de Coronado, general of that army, had arrived here."

It is unknown where Coronado left the cross, and it was never found.

Coronado returned to Mexico but would never return to the Great Plains. He was acquitted on charges relating to the expedition's failure, and died in 1554. Soldier Castaneda wrote, "God has reserved these explorations for others. To us He gives only the right to boast that we were the first to make the discovery."

In 1924, the Society sent an expedition to meet Prather and visit the site. He took them to where the stirrups were found, but the land had been cultivated. The party took photos and film, gathered information, but nothing else was found in the area.

Prather bequeathed the stirrups to the Historical Society, where they can be seen today in Lincoln.

Upcoming Events

- **Holiday: September 5**
Labor Day
- **Deadline: September 20**
Hispanic Heritage Month Essay Contest
- **Event: October 7**
Hispanic Heritage Month Commemoration
- **Deadline: October 7**
Latino Summit Gallery & Scholarship
- **Meeting: October 8**
NLAC Quarterly Meeting - Lincoln
- **Vote: October 10**
First Day to Vote Early in General Election
- **Holiday: October 10**
Columbus Day
- **Election: November 8**
Presidential General Election

Contact Information

Latino-American Commission
Sixth Floor, State Capitol
P.O. Box 94965
Lincoln, NE 68509-4965
Phone: 402-471-2971
Fax: 402-471-4381
Email: latino.info@nebraska.gov
Website: www.latinoac.nebraska.gov
Twitter: @NLACommission
www.facebook.com/NebraskaLatino-AmericanCommission
www.pinterest.com/nlacommission



2016 Binational Teacher Ceremony at Capitol Building



From left to right: Jorge Luis Garcia of Jalisco, Hector Almaraz Pacheco of Zacatecas, Jose Sarmiento of Oaxaca, Nalleli Garcia Vargas of Hidalgo, Jaime Gomez Garcia of Jalisco, Rocio Sanchez of Morelos, Nathalie Mota of Hidalgo, Pascacio Arturo Gutierrez of Colima, Alejandra Quiñonez Esquer of Sonora, Edgar Delgado of San Luis Potosi and Joel Guzman del Villar of Zacatecas.

Eleven educators from Mexico were honored on June 20 at the Capitol Building in appreciation of their service to Nebraska public education.

The 11 educators were teaching in the state as part of the Binational Migrant Education Teacher Exchange Program with the Nebraska Department of Education.

Each educator was recruited from a different state in Mexico to teach at Nebraska public elementary schools in Bayard, Columbus, Gering, Lincoln, Madison, Nebraska City, Omaha, O'Neill, Schuyler and Scottsbluff.

Each educator worked in Nebraska several weeks starting in May or June and ending in late July or August. They taught Nebraska children about Mexican culture, art, Spanish, music, folklore, national identity, history, traditions and games like Loteria.

They also visited with local migrant families and had a table at Omaha's World Refugee Day event to promote international relations.

The educators were honored at the ceremony where they were recognized by Mexican Consulate Guadalupe Sanchez Salazar, Deputy Commissioner of Education Dr. Deborah A. Frison, the Department of Education's Federal Programs & Title I Administrator Diane Stuehmer, Latino American Commission Executive Director Dr. Arturo Spindola and additional Department of Education Migrant Education staff.

Each educator gave a presentation on their home city in Mexico, and an overview of their teaching activities in Nebraska.

The ceremony concluded with Secretary of State John Gale thanking them and awarding each educator honorary Nebraska citizenship.

The educators returned to Mexico in late June and July 2016.