



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DEPENDENTS SCHOOLS PACIFIC/  
DOMESTIC DEPENDENT ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY SCHOOLS - GUAM  
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE  
UNIT 35007  
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**Director's Message**  
**National Hispanic Heritage Month**

Hispanic Heritage Month begins on September 15, the anniversary of independence for five Latin American countries—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico declared its independence on September 16 and Chile on September 18.

America's cultural diversity remains one of our greatest strengths. The Hispanic-American community has a long and important history of commitment to our Nation's core values, and the contributions of this community helped make our country great. During National Hispanic Heritage Month, we celebrate the many achievements of Hispanic-Americans and recognize their contributions to the United States and the world. This year our continued focus on Spanish language skills in 19 elementary schools demonstrates the importance of preparing our students to excel in a multi-cultural society.

Here are just a few characteristics of why Hispanic-Americans remain the cornerstone of our success as a Nation:

**Education**

**59%** - The percentage of Hispanics 25 and older who had at least a high school education in 2006.

**3.1 million** - The number of Hispanics 18 and older who had at least a bachelor's degree in 2006, up from 1.4 million a decade earlier.

**839,000** - Number of Hispanics 25 and older with advanced degrees in 2006 (e.g., master's, professional, doctorate).

**11%** - Percentage of all college students in October 2005 who were Hispanic.

**Business**

**1.6 million** - The number of Hispanic-owned businesses in 2002.

**Triple** - The rate of growth of Hispanic-owned businesses between 1997 and 2002 (31%) compared with the national average (10%) for all businesses.

**\$222 billion** - Revenue generated by Hispanic-owned businesses in 2002, up 19% from 1997.

**Spanish Language**

**32.2 million** - The number of U.S. household residents who speak Spanish at home.

**29%** - Percentage of Texas residents who speak Spanish at home, which leads all states. This compares with the national average of 12%.

**Serving our Country**

**1.1 million** - The number of Hispanic veterans of the U.S. armed forces.

This month, please take the time in your classrooms to celebrate the achievements of Hispanic Americans. Let us also remember those who were instrumental in exploring and mapping our great hemisphere and honor those proud Hispanic-American patriots who fought and died for our country in every war and conflict since our founding.