

Shirley Acevedo Buontempo, MPA
Latino U College Access, Inc.
Founder, Executive Director



Shirley Acevedo Buontempo is Founder and Executive Director of Latino U College Access, where she has built a successful organization that brings together cultural relevance, bilingualism and program strategy to provide college access and opportunity to first generation Latino youth. Born in Puerto Rico and a first-gen Latina college graduate herself she is passionate about advocating for the needs of low-income Latino youth and ensuring they can make their college dreams a reality. In 6 years and under Shirley's leadership, Latino U College Access has grown from a pilot program in one local high school with 2 Latino U Scholars to a well recognized leader in the field of college access and opportunity. Her vision has expanded the organization's services to reach over 2,300 Latino parents and students and coached 100 Latino U Scholars to successfully apply and enroll in college. The organization currently serves 3 partner school districts in New York - White Plains, Sleepy Hollow and Ossining. Shirley also sits on the organization's board of directors.

Before founding Latino U College Access, Shirley had a successful career in Hispanic Marketing and Advertising having worked for the Hispanic marketing divisions of Grey Advertising and Saatchi and Saatchi. She also held brand management positions at Block Drug and CPC International. Her nonprofit management career included work at local organizations serving the Latino community as an Associate Director at the Community Center of Northern Westchester and a Program and Volunteer Manager at Neighbor's Link. She received both a BBA in Marketing and an MPA in Nonprofit Management from Pace University. Shirley was a 2014 Fellow in the National Hispana Leadership Institute and has received certification from the Harvard University Kennedy School of Executive Leadership program and the Center for Creative Leadership.

Shirley has quickly established herself as a thought leader and advocate for Latino youth to address educational inequity and ensure equal opportunity and access for all. She serves on advisory boards at the Hispanic Federation, National College Access Network and the Options Institute that seek insight and provide information on improving access to higher education among underserved communities.

Shirley sits on the board of the Open Door Family Medical Center and is a member of the Northern Westchester Hospital President's Council. She was also featured in Time Magazine's American Voices Video Series, Fortune Magazine and Hispanic Executive Magazine for her work and leadership launching Latino U College Access.

Since its launch Latino U College Access has earned recognition from the **White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics, First Lady Michelle Obama's Reach Higher Initiative, College Board** and was selected by the **Pace University Wilson Center for Social Entrepreneurship** as their 2016 and 2017 Social Enterprise in Residence.