

# Semester Recap Newsletter

CRECE  
6 May 26



Welcome to CRECE, the Hispanic Leadership Center at Kean University. This groundbreaking initiative is dedicated to nurturing the next generation of Hispanic leaders through innovative education, mentorship, and community engagement. As a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), Kean University is uniquely positioned to address the leadership gap and educational disparities faced by the Hispanic community. CRECE, which means "grow" or "rise" in Spanish, embodies our core mission: fostering growth, rising excellence, and cultural empowerment among Hispanic students and professionals.

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Welcome to our second CRECE newsletter! We are thrilled to share with you what we have been working on this past semester.

Firstly, we would like to express our gratitude to all of our partners who have continued to support and work with us.

In this edition, you will find an excerpt on addressing health equity, a recap of the semester including our events, trips and ceremonies, a thank you to our partners, and more.

We are excited to see what is in store for CRECE in the future. Enjoy this semester's newsletter!



Kean has partnered with the La Pica Project in Puerto Rico to transform a former youth correctional facility into a center for education, innovation and opportunity.



Rooted in community needs, this collaboration strengthens ties between Puerto Rico and New Jersey while expanding access to education and opportunity for local communities.



Take a look at the recap video [here](#)

## Addressing Health Equity through Representation



### In this newsletter you can expect:

- Addressing Health Equity through Representation
- Crece Talk: The Grand Paloma Resort
- Events Recap
- Field Trip to Supreme Court
- Thank you to our Partners



Latino and Hispanic communities represent one of the largest and fastest-growing populations in the United States, yet this expansion is not represented in the physician workforce. Latino physicians continue to be underrepresented in healthcare, limiting access to care, communication, and health outcomes. Representation in medicine is more than just professional diversity; it is also about health equity and outreach to the community.

Although approximately 19% of the US population identifies as Hispanic, less than 7% of physicians do. Latinas have significantly lower representation, accounting for only around 2% of all physicians nationwide (American Heart Association, 2022; Balderas-Medina Anaya et al., 2023). These disparities illustrate how far the healthcare system remains from mirroring the populations it serves.

Written by Carlos Barrera-Gomez, LANF Intern

If you would like to read more, visit the link [here](#)

## CRECE Talk: The Grand Paloma Resort

On Wednesday, February 4<sup>th</sup> 2026, CRECE hosted an inspiring evening with award-winning author Cleyvis Natera, in conversation with Angela Abreu, founder of the Dominican Writers' Association.

We thank Cleyvis and Angela for guiding such a meaningful dialogue, examining this contemporary novel through a powerful historical lens. They reflected on why these themes mattered, showing how colorism, culture, history and Afrolatinidad shaped the characters' complex, often flawed decisions, all set against the vivid backdrop of the Dominican Republic.

We are so grateful to the organizations that collaborated with us on this event and helped make this space for learning and reflection possible, and to everyone who joined us and contributed to the energy in the room.



## Tri-Alpha Honor Society Induction

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, the Iota Gamma Chapter of Tri Alpha inducted over 100 students, staff, and alumni into the First-Generation National Honor Society. Among them was our Senior Vice President of Administration, Dr. Carlos Rodriguez.

As a first-generation graduate, he understands firsthand the importance of access, opportunity, and meaningful support for our students. He continues to be a true champion for student success.



## 1st Generation Graduation

On April 17<sup>th</sup>, first-generation students were honored at the annual First to Climb Higher Ceremony!

Congratulations to our graduating first-generation students who were honored at today's First to Climb Higher celebration. This ceremony highlights a defining part of Kean's identity, with more than 42% of our students being the first in their families to attend college.

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## Field Trip to the Supreme Court

On April 1st, The U.S. Supreme Court had an oral argument on the case of Birthright Citizenship. This case centers on the interpretation of the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which guarantees that all persons born in the United States are citizens, regardless of their parents' immigration status.

The Lesniak Institute, in partnership with the Latino Action Network Foundation and CRECE: The Center for Raising Excellence and Cultural Empowerment at Kean University, brought 12 students to rally before the U.S. Supreme Court during the oral argument.

This trip consisted of two main segments: our informational canvassing day and the day of our trip to Washington D.C.



Take a look at the recap video [here](#)

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