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New Research by *Excelencia* in Education Provides Context for Institutional Resilience in Puerto Rico

WASHINGTON, D.C. (May 19, 2021) – *Excelencia* in Education today released its newest research brief, “Higher Education in Puerto Rico: Conditions and Context Influencing Institutional Resilience.” *Excelencia* conducted an environmental scan as the first of a two-part study on transformation by colleges and universities in Puerto Rico to better serve their Latino, and all, students.

Puerto Rico experienced several natural, economic, demographic, and governance challenges in recent years that have impacted day-to-day life for students, communities, and institutions of higher education. And yet, some institutions and community leaders have met these challenges in innovative and proactive ways. Resilience has been an important characteristic for both students and institutions on the island. *Excelencia’s* leaders have said on numerous occasions that the issues in Puerto Rico can be a bellwether of what mainland institutions may also experience and need to address if they are to more intentionally serve Latino and rural learners.

The brief includes a demographic and socio-economic profile, summary of the educational pathway, and the context of institutions of higher education over the past several years. We believe understanding efforts during times of crises for institutional resilience to support students on the island can inform efforts by institutions on the U.S. mainland to better serve their Latino, and all, students during times of economic, demographic, and natural challenges.

For this project, *Excelencia* is working in partnership with the Puerto Rico Endowment for the Humanities (*La Fundación Puertorriqueña de las Humanidades* (<https://www.fphpr.org/en/>), led by Executive Director Margarita Benitez. Their efforts to engage and support colleges and universities on the island are core to our partnership and the next phase of work developing case studies on institutional resilience efforts in Puerto Rico.

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About *Excelencia* in Education

Excelencia in Education accelerates Latino student success in higher education by promoting Latino student achievement, conducting analysis to inform educational policies, and advancing institutional practices while collaborating with those committed and ready to meet the mission. Launched in 2004 in the nation’s capital, *Excelencia* has established a network of results-oriented educators and policymakers to address the U.S. economy’s needs for a highly educated workforce and engaged civic leaders. For more information, visit: <https://www.edexcelencia.org/>