

Hispanic Heritage

02

"I hope that I can help people break boundaries...and have the strength to keep going until they achieve even more than their goals."

Lele Pons, YouTuber, Actor, and Singer

07

"Without the rapid growth of Latino-owned businesses over the past five years, the total number of businesses nationwide would have declined."

Arturo Cázares, CEO, Latino Business Action Network

DIEGO LUNA

The actor and director reflects on how his Mexican heritage has enriched his storytelling

Read more on Page 06

Empowering Hispanic Homeownership as a Pathway to Wealth and Legacy

Each year, the National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals publishes the State of Hispanic Homeownership Report. The 2024 report highlights both remarkable progress and persistent obstacles.

1. Record growth in Hispanic homeownership

Despite a slight decline in the overall homeownership rate to 49%, the number of Hispanic owner-households reached a historic high of 9.8 million in 2024. Hispanics accounted for 35% of total homeownership growth nationwide.

2. Youthful demographics drive demand

With a median age of 31, Latinos are more than eight years younger than the general U.S. population. Nearly half of Hispanic heads of household are Gen Z or Millennials.

3. Affordability crisis remains the top barrier

Rising home prices, limited inventory, and high interest rates have created unprecedented affordability challenges. The median sales price is now six times higher than the median Hispanic household income.

4. Creative strategies and resilience

Hispanic buyers are adapting by relocating to more affordable regions, leveraging multigenerational living arrangements, co-borrowing with family, and utilizing down payment assistance programs.

5. Opportunities in emerging markets

Texas continues to attract the largest influx of Hispanic residents, but new opportunity markets are emerging in the Midwest and Northeast, where affordability and new construction are more accessible.



WRITTEN BY
Oralia Herrera
2025 President, National Association
of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals

Lele Pons on Authenticity, Culture, and Creative Evolution

From viral videos to global stages, Lele Pons shares how authenticity, culture, and passion have shaped her entrepreneurial journey.

Was there a specific moment when you realized your voice could shape culture and represent the Latino community on a global stage?

There was never a specific moment, because all moments led me to another that made a bigger impact than the other. From being the first influencer to make it to the global Top 50 charts on Spotify with a Latin song to being one of the first and only Spanish-speaking creators to be invited to the White House to help Michelle Obama with a campaign, every opportunity mattered.

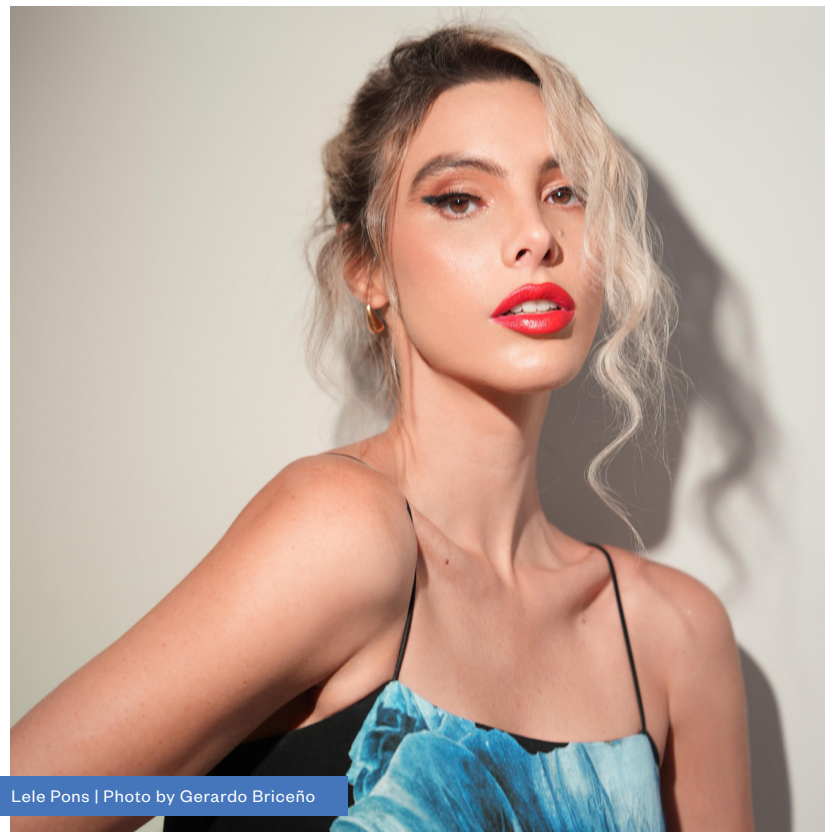
You've collaborated with major brands and launched your own products. What have you learned about building something that truly resonates with your audience?

I learned that if it resonates with you, then it will resonate with the audience! People are smart, and they know what is authentic. They follow everyone for different reasons. Use the reason why they follow you and build the brand. Be true to yourself, because people catch on to it.

As a Latina entrepreneur and content creator partnering with different brands, what challenges have you faced, and how do you turn them into opportunities?

The challenges I faced have been finding a balance between what my Latin audience likes versus my English one — the language, the jokes, and more. There has to be a balance. That's why I use physical comedy and music for my videos, so it's more international and everyone can understand.

You recently became a mom! How has pregnancy shifted your perspective on your work, your



Lele Pons | Photo by Gerardo Briceño

purpose, or even the kind of content you want to create?

Being a mom has definitely given me an even bigger purpose to work and give a better life to my baby. She is a huge motivation. However, on the content side, I want to continue the maternity and mom content as myself while not involving my baby in the videos. I just want to talk about my experience as a first-time mom.

How important is representation in the media to you, and how do you hope your journey inspires the next generation of Latinas?

I hope that I can help people break

boundaries, not be afraid to get rejected, and have the strength to keep going until they achieve even more than their goals.

What's one piece of advice you would give to young Hispanics who want to chase big dreams while staying true to who they are?

Some advice I have for them is that not everyone is going to like you. The more successful and special you are, the more people are going to envy you and judge you. You have something they don't have, which is you and yourself. That's how you know you made it. Be worried when they stop talking about you.



Papel picado folk art at the Grand Canal Shoppes inside The Venetian Resort | Photos courtesy of Grand Canal Shoppes



Folklorico dancers at the Grand Canal Shoppes inside The Venetian Resort

Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, Vegas Style

Las Vegas is a city of vibrant cultures, flavors, and voices, and during Hispanic Heritage Month, Sept. 15-Oct. 15, the destination shines even brighter. From dazzling culinary showcases and inspiring art installations to legendary live music and new marquee attractions, visitors can celebrate the spirit of Hispanic heritage while experiencing the excitement only Vegas can deliver.

Cultural moments

Kick off your celebration with a stroll through the Grand Canal Shoppes inside The Venetian Resort, where brilliant papel picado folk art hangs overhead through Sept. 30, perfect for a colorful photo backdrop. Then head to Fashion Show Las Vegas, where Chicago artist Matthew Hoffman's three-dimensional interactive artwork invites guests to share affirmations and personal stories on papel picado-inspired tags. These notes are displayed together as a vibrant tapestry that honors the diversity of Hispanic cultures, on view through Oct. 15. Fashion Show Las Vegas is also home to the immersive art exhibit *Colors of Mexico*, which features seven rooms to learn and explore Mexican culture, along with a restaurant and bar serving dishes from the different regions of Mexico.

Flavors of heritage

Las Vegas is home to some of the best Mexican dining in the country, making

it easy to celebrate through flavor. Standouts include **Amaya Modern Mexican** at The Cosmopolitan, **Casa Playa** at Wynn, and **Cañonita** at The Venetian, each serving innovative coastal cuisine alongside handcrafted cocktails. Off-Strip, **Milpa** by Chef DJ Flores blends wholesome, modern fare with authentic Mexican roots, while **El Segundo Sol** at Fashion Show transports guests with a Tulum-inspired setting and a menu boasting more than 100 tequilas. At **VIVA!** inside Resorts World, Chef Ray Garcia delivers vibrant Mexican-American plates designed for sharing.

Live music

The sounds of Latin music reverberate across the city throughout the month. Legendary guitarist **Carlos Santana** returns to House of Blues Sept. 21-28. Beloved singer **Pedro Fernández** takes the stage at Virgin Hotels Las Vegas on Oct. 3, followed by **Clave Especial** on Oct. 9. The month crescendos with **Los**

Horóscopos de Durango on Oct. 11 at Virgin Hotels and **Marca MP** on Oct. 11 at Fontainebleau, delivering unforgettable performances for fans of every genre.

What's new in Vegas

Vegas itineraries are as diverse as the city itself, allowing visitors to celebrate Hispanic heritage while exploring the destination's newest highlights. Take in the cinematic **Wizard of Oz** at Sphere, indulge in a once-in-a-lifetime culinary experience at **Revelry at Wynn**, or embrace the immersive thrills of **Universal Horror Unleashed** at AREA15.

Written by **Melinda Carter**



To learn more and plan your visit, go to [visitlasvegas.com](https://www.visitlasvegas.com)



The custom-wrapped ID. Buzz, designed by Michelle Guerrero | Photos courtesy of Volkswagen



The Volkswagen ID. Buzz: A Moving Canvas of Art and Mobility for All

At the end of 2024, Volkswagen introduced its three-row, all-electric ID. Buzz, the spiritual successor to the iconic Type 2 Microbus associated with the colorful culture in the 1960s and 1970s. Similar to the reputation of the T2, the ID. Buzz emits vibes of optimism and joy, in many ways due to the vibrant available two-tone exterior paint options that complement its spacious interior.

The ID. Buzz is more than just a vehicle, but a modern form of automotive art. It's why Volkswagen recently partnered with the Los Angeles-based artist, Michelle Guerrero, to create a unique visual mural wrapped on the ID. Buzz that naturally helps deepen Volkswagen's relationship with the Hispanic community.

How Volkswagen chose its artist

Michelle Guerrero (who signs her work as Mr B Baby), is influenced by her Mexican and Puerto Rican heritage. She fuses Mexican folk art, nostalgia, and her personal experiences to create her

work. Guerrero draws a wealth of her inspiration from her childhood in Chula Vista, California, where she was raised by a single mom with her older sister.

Guerrero's ultimate goal is to make art that is for everyone while building real connections and promoting happiness through her designs. This is especially true for her mobile mural for Volkswagen, which intersects with community, activation, and festival themes at locations where the vehicle will be displayed this year.

A look at Guerrero's Instagram grid, which has an audience of more than 68,000 followers, showcases a sea of visual art in the shades of bright hues,

“

Guerrero's ultimate goal **is to make art that is for everyone while building real connections** and promoting happiness through her designs.

such as orange, blue, yellow, green, and purple. Animals, flowers, and themes from Mexico and children's books — inspiration points that the artist directly alludes to on her website — appear throughout.

“As a muralist, I create work that blends culture with emotional healing, turning my experiences with mental health into colorful stories of resilience,” said Guerrero. “Through my collaboration with Volkswagen, I aimed to celebrate Latino identity, community, and the way music and art have the power to connect us all.”

She's the perfect fit for the ID. Buzz, as her design is synonymous with the

“

Through my collaboration with Volkswagen, I aimed to celebrate **Latino identity, community, and the way music and art have the power to connect us all.**



character of the vehicle — optimistic, hopeful, and inviting creativity and imagination.

A commitment to inclusivity

The artwork on the ID. Buzz is true to form for Guerrero: It's got bursts of light, vibrant florals, and papel picado. The characters within contribute to an authentic representation of the Hispanic community, replete with community, resiliency, heritage, and joy.

What's more, and in the design, you'll

see characters that Guerrero has designed herself and incorporated into her art, including Chucho, the blooming piñata that symbolizes transformation; Chaco, the blue horse representing courage; and Maria, the traditional Mexican rag doll honoring the craftsmanship of the women who make them.

Look closely and you may even see a soccer ball and the U.S. Soccer crest in Guerrero's design.

"This is a nod to our longstanding U.S. Soccer Partnership and Volkswagen's

commitment to growing the game within the U.S.," said Rachael Zaluzec, Volkswagen's SVP of Customer Experience and Brand Marketing. "Soccer is a game for everyone, and Volkswagen is proud to help ensure that every player, no matter their background or format of play, has the opportunity to be seen and celebrated."

In fact, VW has been the presenting partner of the U.S. Soccer Federation and its 27 National Teams since 2019 with a commitment to fueling the global growth of the beautiful game for all.

Delivering Volkswagen-inspired art to the driveway

Volkswagen worked with LEEN Customs, a Hispanic-owned business, to make limited edition lapel pins featuring the wrapped ID. Buzz design. You can find these on Volkswagen's DriverGear site.

For those who may be inspired by Guerrero's unique artwork and mobile mural, there's an option for Volkswagen owners to tap into their creative side to design and wrap custom graphics on the exterior of the ID. Buzz.

Volkswagen teamed up with Wrapmate to introduce custom graphics, discoverable on the Wrapmate site, with a real-time configurator bringing design ideas to life digitally mocked up on a virtual ID. Buzz vehicle. ID. Buzz owners can order through a local Volkswagen dealership or through the Wrapmate site directly.

Best of all, the wraps are removable — so, like any passionate, creative artist, ID. Buzz owners can restyle their vehicle multiple times.

The journey of the ID. Buzz

The custom wrapped ID. Buzz debuted at Chicago's 2025 Fiesta del Sol this summer and continues its journey at other local festivals throughout Hispanic Heritage Month. Want to see more of the mobile mural and follow the journey of the wrapped ID. Buzz? Check out Volkswagen's social channels:

- Facebook: VW
- TikTok: @vw
- Instagram: @VW

Written by **Melinda Carter**



To learn more about the ID. Buzz, visit **vw.com**.



Diego Luna on Storytelling, Identity, and the Power of Art

Actor, director, and activist Diego Luna reflects on his artistic journey, Mexican roots, and the role of storytelling in driving change.

You have had such a dynamic career. What have been some defining moments for you as an artist?

I grew up in the theater. My father was a set designer, and my mother was a costume designer. For me, life was all about what was happening in the theater. That was very important for what I do and what kind of director and actor I want to be. A lot has to do with the theater I got to see, what that generation was doing in Mexico.

What drew you to storytelling in the first place? Has your purpose evolved over the years?

Yes, definitely. The beauty of this career is that it evolves constantly. You transform as an artist as you grow. The stories I can tell today come from the perspective of someone being a father and understanding what it means to bring someone into this world, to see your life through someone else's experience. At 20, I couldn't even imagine that. I'm pretty sure what I'll be doing in the next 10 or 20 years will also be very different.

You've worked on both sides of the camera as an actor, producer, and director. How does that fulfill you?

I started directing later in life. First, I was an actor, then a producer, and finally a director. It took me time to get



Diego Luna | Photo courtesy of Lucasfilm Ltd

to directing, time to have my own story to tell. I never had to make a living from directing, so everything I've directed comes from the heart, from a real need.

Being an actor was the exact opposite. I didn't even have to think about it. I started acting at 7, doing theater at 9, film at 11, and TV soon after. Since then, I haven't stopped. Acting has always felt natural, while directing came from years of

witnessing, producing, and finally reaching the point where I had both the tools and the need to tell my own stories.

What do you wish more people understood about Latino identity and experience, especially in Hollywood?

I would say that the most important thing — and this is just talking from my own perspective — is that I didn't

know exactly what it was to be a Latino. It wasn't until I started working in the States or in Spain that I started experiencing being a Latino. Before, I was just a Mexican going somewhere else. Then, when you get there, when you become the other, the unknown, then there's a need to place you somewhere, right?

But it's interesting because being a Latino is being part

of or having a connection with Latin America, which is a very vast, diverse, and interesting piece of this world. There is so much in common, but also so many differences. It's sometimes kind of unfair to try to put everything in just one pot.

At the same time, there is a strength in being a Latino, a strength that we have to understand and use to our benefit. There's something that connects us.

“

A lot has to do with the theater I got to see, **what that generation was doing in Mexico.**

In addition to your creative work, you've been active in amplifying social causes. How do you think culture, business, and activism can intersect meaningfully?

Telling a story comes with the responsibility of making sure you believe someone else should take the time for what you want to tell. Therefore, one of the big responsibilities you have as an artist is to be informed and to be affected by what happens out there. I think there is a lot we should and can be doing in our communities. I also think we have to take responsibility for those who are in charge, for those whom we put in power.



How Robin Arzón's Latina Roots Fuel Her Global Impact

From Peloton leader to bestselling author, Robin Arzón draws strength from her heritage to empower communities and redefine wellness.

Robin Arzon | Photo by James Farrell

As a Latina with roots in Puerto Rico and Cuba, how has your heritage influenced your career trajectory and personal philosophy?

My parents' work ethic, tenacity, and resilience inspired me. I really feel like I started at their mountaintop.

My father was the janitor at CUNY School in the Bronx. He was born in Puerto Rico, but my abuela moved him to the Bronx because she thought there would be more opportunities. He began auditing classes at the community college, even after being rejected three times. A professor noticed him and got the dean to matriculate him. Similarly, my mother, a Cuban refugee, came over at 15 and taught herself English. She promised her Monsignor she'd earn a "B" average so she could be placed on the college track. Both my parents bet on themselves, and that idea has been central to our DNA. The question I've asked myself throughout my career is, "Why not me?"

You've been recognized as one of TIME Magazine's Latino Leaders. How do you leverage this platform to advocate for underrepresented communities, particularly within the fitness industry?

I try to use my voice where I can and support organizations that are already doing incredible work, like Poderistas; partnering with champions like America Ferrera, Eva Longoria, and Elsa; and in joining the board of the National Museum of the American Latino. Their ability to merge nonprofit work with entertainment is powerful. I support them wherever I can — helping spread information about healthcare, voting, or immigrant rights — and in joining the board of the National Museum of the

American Latino, I really hope that we're capturing stories for future generations.

As a mother, how do you instill values of empowerment and cultural pride in your children?

Both my kids know their abuelos' stories. We visit Puerto Rico every year, raise them bilingual, and share food traditions. I developed a cookbook, "Eat to Hustle" (out March 10, 2026), because I wanted to remix Puerto Rican and Cuban dishes into plant-based recipes. Cooking with my kids allows me to honor traditions while creating new ones. Language, music, story, and food are daily parts of our home.

Representation matters in every field. How do you see your role in inspiring the next generation of Latino professionals and leaders?

I hope the next generation of Latino leaders knows you don't have to shrink or assimilate to succeed. Our culture is not a liability; it's a superpower. Whether it's speaking Spanglish in a Peloton class or building generational wealth, we belong. Every time we show up in wellness, business, activism, or media, we expand the map for others. Through mentorship, Swagger Society, Peloton, and organizations like Poderistas, I want to help architect the world we deserve.

What legacy do you hope to leave for your community, and how does your cultural heritage play a role in that vision?

My heritage fuels my fire. The survival stories, the pride of my ancestors, that's my why. It's woven into my pedal strokes, footsteps, pushups, keynotes, and cookbooks. If it has my imprint, it has theirs, too.

Latino Entrepreneurs Are Powering the U.S. Economy and Our Future

Latino entrepreneurs are not just contributing to the U.S. economy; they are redefining its future. Their success is America's success.

The numbers tell a compelling story: With more than 5 million firms generating over \$800 billion annually, Latino entrepreneurs are fueling job creation, economic expansion, and innovation across every industry.

Without the rapid growth of Latino-owned businesses over the past five years, the total number of businesses nationwide would have declined. Latinos are not just participating in the U.S. economy; they are driving it forward. On average, Latino entrepreneurs launch businesses at a faster rate, achieve quicker revenue growth, and create more jobs with superior benefits. When Latino-owned businesses scale, they uplift not just their communities but the entire country.

Facing systemic barriers

Significantly, this economic powerhouse is largely immigrant-driven: About half of all Latino-owned businesses are established by immigrants, highlighting the indispensable role immigrants play in the U.S. economy.

Yet, despite these extraordinary contributions, Latino entrepreneurs continue to face persistent barriers that limit their ability to scale. Latino entrepreneurs are only half as likely to receive full funding compared to their white counterparts, secure less than 2% of all venture capital, and have diminished access to critical business contracts.

If Latino entrepreneurs had equitable access to capital, contracts, and support, their already impressive growth trajectory could yield transformative economic outcomes for America. Addressing these systemic issues has the potential to unlock trillions of dollars in added economic value, a unique opportunity for the nation's future.



WRITTEN BY
Arturo Cázares
CEO, Latino Business Action Network



To learn more about Hispanic Heritage,
visit www.modernwellnessguide.com

