



WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Welcome, Writers, to the first-ever National Latinx Writers Gathering!

My name is Valerie Martínez. I am the Director of History and Literary Arts at the National Hispanic Cultural Center (NHCC) and one of the members of the Planning and Organizing Committee.

This gathering is happening because so many of you expressed your desire for a national coming together—to connect, to feel a sense of kin and community, to create and celebrate together, to speak and listen, and to advocate for our place in the literary world. We are a remarkably diverse group, in every way, and we recognize that our identities, realities, and writing lives may be vastly different. Even so we come together, this weekend, to know ourselves and our Latinx writing community more deeply and more brightly, and to chart a path forward.

We ask that you enter these spaces with respect, compassion, and tolerance for your fellow writers and in the spirit of co-creating this experience together. We're honored that you're here.

This gathering was originally planned as an in-person event. We are sad that COVID-19 has prevented us from being together in person. However, we have made every effort to create a virtual version of this non-traditional “conference” that unfolds in the spirit of the live event. We welcome you into this shared, virtual space.

This event comes to you from the city of Albuquerque, New Mexico, home of the National Hispanic Cultural Center. We acknowledge that New Mexico is comprised of the ancestral and unceded land of nineteen sovereign Pueblo nations as well as three Apache tribes, and the Navajo Nation. We are indebted to the original owners and caretakers of this land and to the land itself. We are dedicated to engagement with complex issues of history and with history as expressed in Latinx literary arts. This kind of engagement is at the heart of cultural understanding and promotes a legacy that is dedicated to justice and reconciliation.

The organizers of this gathering also stand in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement. We commit ourselves to acknowledging, examining, and working to dismantle white

supremacist ideologies, institutions, and practices as well as internalized racism. We declare, “Black Lives Matter.”

As organizers of this event we expressly prohibit conduct that is disrespectful, disparaging or unprofessional as well as harassment based on race, color, national origin or ancestry, religious creed, age, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, marital or family status, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, medical condition, genetic information or any other basis protected by federal or state law.

We have so many to thank for this gathering—too many to list here. But special thanks go to the National Hispanic Cultural Center, the National Endowment for the Arts, the staff of the History and Literary Arts program at the NHCC, and members of the Planning and Organizing Committees. We are indebted to them and to all who have made this convening possible.

Finally, we ask for your patience, in advance, if there are technical problems that need to be addressed during each session. We have rehearsed and planned thoroughly but, as we know, technology is tricky. We will do our best to address what comes along.

Also, we have tried to identify accommodation needs for each session and our attending writers and this might affect how presenters and facilitators conduct discussion, chat, and more. Thanks for adapting to the needs of your fellow writers.

Bienvenidos—we’re so glad you’re here.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julie", written in a cursive style.