

# UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD

## COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, NURSING AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS

### **Resilient Latinas Making Generational Change: The Resiliency of Latinas in Higher Education**

**Thursday, May 5, 2022**

**10:00 am- 11:30 am**

**Zoom:** <https://zoom.us/my/karlaloya> (Password: EDD)

#### **Dissertation Defense by Maribel Olivero**

Through a strengths-based narrative, this qualitative study examined the academic resiliency of Latinas in higher education as they pursued their college degrees. This qualitative study employed a narrative inquiry design and consisted of in-depth interviews with 15 Latinas who are college graduates and overcame challenges to learn about their college experiences and determine the protective factors they utilized to mitigate against failure and promote resiliency. Participants attended various higher education institutions across the United States, both public and private. The Academic Resiliency Model (Morales, 2008a) was utilized as a theoretical framework for this study.

The narrative stories presented in this study enrich our knowledge of the intricacies of the Latina college experience as they share their stories of resilience and how they persisted in the face of adversity to complete their degrees. Data analysis led to the identification of three types of protective factors instrumental to their success: Personal-Internal Factors, Personal-External Factors, and College Empowerment Factors. The Latinas in this study learned to persevere, valued education, had a strong work ethic, endured challenging and traumatic events but remained resilient and continued to pursue their degrees. Latinas continue to be a growing population in college enrollments (NCES, 2019), and with adequate systematic changes and support, they can and do graduate from college. This study contributes to the research in this field and allows us to view the complexities faced by Latinas in pursuit of a college education. More studies need to be conducted to address the challenges faced by Latina college students and promote resiliency.

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*Maribel Olivero is the Director of Bilingual Education, ESOL, and World Languages at an urban K-12 school district in New England. She holds a Sixth-Year Diploma in Educational Leadership, a Master's Degree in Education, with a focus in Curriculum and Instruction, and a Bachelor's Degree in Human Development and Family Relations from the University of Connecticut.*