

# Latinxs and Hispanics in the Mathematical Sciences



## David Hernandez

Curriculum/Professional Development Specialist, Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA)

*"Hispanic Heritage Month is a reminder of the pride to be a Hispanic in the United States of America. It is a reminder of the responsibility I have as a professional to provide education and life skills to all my students for them to build their own American dream. Finally, it is a reminder of all the people who took the stand to achieve equal opportunities for all of us to reach our goals."*

Being in a classroom for over 15 years teaching mathematics and science has been a wonderful journey for David. The journey started in 1998 when he completed his Associates degree in science from the College of DuPage after finishing high school with a 4.0 GPA. In 2007, after 9 years of overcoming tremendous obstacles, he earned a Bachelor of Science (Physics) from Northern Illinois University. Finally, David achieved a Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction in 2015 from Aurora University. However, the journey did not stop there because David is planning on starting a PhD in the near future. After graduation, David began his career at The Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA) where he eventually became a curriculum writer.

David strives to foster a welcoming learning multicultural environment where students can build confidence in their life skills to achieve the best outcomes. David's plan for the future is to become part of the education board for the state of Illinois to promote high quality and meaningful education to every student regardless of race, color, or social background. For David, the best part of being an educator is the connection with the students. He enjoys empowering someone to believe in themselves beyond any obstacle.

David believes education is not just a job, "Being a teacher is an enormous responsibility because you become a counselor, a psychiatrist, a social worker, a translator, a mentor, and the most important: a role model for the students." He adds, "On the other hand, being a teacher is one of the most rewarding professions there is. When you run into a special former 12th grader, the one who was always in trouble and about to drop out of school, the one who nobody believed in in the past but you went the extra mile for this student and he/she graduated against all the odds. And now he/she tells you, 'Thank you for inspiring me to become someone in life.' This is the best reward as a teacher."

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Lathisms was founded in 2016 in order to showcase the contributions of Latinx and Hispanic mathematicians during Hispanic Heritage Month, which is celebrated in the United States from September 15 and October 15 every year. During this time, we feature/reveal a prominent Latinx/Hispanic mathematician daily. See all the featured mathematical scientists at [LATHISMS.ORG](https://lathisms.org).

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