



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

**A Message in Honor of University of Nebraska Omaha's
Office of Latino/Latin American Studies
November 9, 2013**

Congratulations to University of Nebraska Omaha's (UNO) Office of Latino/Latin American Studies (OLLAS) as you celebrate 10 years of achievement in the field of Latino and Latin American studies.

While I was in the U.S. Senate, I remember when Shelton Hendricks, Lourdes Gouveia, and other UNO faculty members came to see me to explain their plan to create a center at UNO devoted to studying and engaging with Nebraska's growing Latino population.

I was very enthusiastic about such an institution, because it would help fill a critical gap in Nebraska by fostering research and ideas on how to better incorporate new Latino immigrants into the political, economic, and social life of the region. I am proud that I was able to play a small role in helping create OLLAS.

The dynamic agenda of the Cumbre 2013 conference is a testament to the force that OLLAS has become at the regional, national, and international level. By bringing together renowned academics, community organizers, and policy-makers around the theme of "Looking to the Future," this conference will help continue to define an agenda for social change and economic advancement in the 21st century.

The future of Nebraska, and the region, increasingly depends on the success of its Latino population and their contributions in education, business, politics, and culture. That means all of us have a stake in the issues and priorities that OLLAS has identified. As we look ahead to the next decade, OLLAS will only become more important in helping shape a prosperous future and a better world.

Thank you to the entire OLLAS team and congratulations again on your remarkable achievements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Chuck Hagel", is positioned below the word "Sincerely,". The signature is stylized and includes a long horizontal line extending from the bottom of the name.