CEOSE Mini-Symposium

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The Committee on Equal Opportunities in Science and Engineering
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MOTIVATING LATINAS IN STEM:
OBSTACLES AND OPPORTUNITIES

A personal perspective
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Latin@s in America

- Across all STEM fields, the proportion of women of color is small, and drops at each level of degree attainment (NSF 2007, CPST, 2007).
• 2005-06--Latinas earned 61% bachelor's degrees awarded to Hispanics but only 37% in STEM fields.

• Latinas lag behind Latino males in degrees earned in all STEM fields except biology/sciences.
In 2005, Latinas received 60% of all undergraduate degrees conferred to Latinos of those only 39% were STEM degrees. (Excelencia in Education, 2007).
In 2003-04--Latinas earned
  ◦ 70% of associate,
  ◦ 63% of bachelor’s,
  ◦ 52% of master’s, and
  ◦ 54% of PhDs awarded in biology/sciences to Hispanics (NCES, Digest of Education Statistics, 2007).
• In spite of the increase in bachelor’s degrees, only 53% of the total Hispanic population finishes High School.
OBSTACLES

- Teachers lacking content knowledge
- Content prerequisites
- Traditional content pedagogy
- Teachers' misunderstand Latinas
- Cultural and Family dynamics
- A dearth of role models
OBSTACLES

- A lack of financial resources
- Limited Language proficiency
- Lack of a proper space to study
- Poor study habits
- Poor training in critical thinking abilities and communication skills
¡GRACIAS!