

Luján commemorates Hispanic Heritage Month

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LOS ALAMOS – While visiting Los Alamos National Laboratories October 9, Congressman Ben Ray Luján, D-N.M., and the U.S. House Assistant Speaker, addressed staff members at LANL to commemorate Hispanic Heritage Month and recognize the contributions of Hispanic Americans and Latinos in science, technology, and engineering.

An excerpt from Luján's remarks follows:

“As we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, I’m especially humbled to have an opportunity to celebrate the immense contributions to our state, economy, and country that Hispanic Americans make each day.

There have been few moments in our country’s history, where recognizing and celebrating the contributions of Hispanic Americans was as critical as it is today.

As a country, we must come together to root out bigotry and white supremacy and instead forge a society where our differences are respected – where they are seen as a sign of a beautiful and strong community that knows the value of bringing new voices into the fold.

But this moment is why we must celebrate the achievements of Hispanic Americans in our

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country.

Science, technology, and engineering are fields with a rich history of exploration by Hispanic Americans.

Born in New York City in 1929, Helen Rodríguez Trías – a Puerto Rican--American pediatrician and healthcare advocate, looked at medical abuses impacting her neighborhood and communities and became a fierce champion for women and children.

France Córdova, the director of the National Science Foundation, is an accomplished researcher who published more than 150 scientific papers on x-rays, gamma-rays, and black holes – expanding our knowledge of space and time.

Nearly three decades ago, Ellen Ochoa broke barriers when she became the first Hispanic woman to go into space. Serving on a nine-day mission on Discovery, she studied the Earth's ozone layer and helped us all understand the delicate balance maintaining life on this planet.

There are hundreds of examples. I know in this very room, scientists and engineers are testing the limits of human knowledge and daring to push them further so we can find new technologies and innovations to keep our country secure. “