



# SOUTH SUBURBAN COLLEGE

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***Pictured:*** Students of the South Suburban College SOLES Group Attended the Illinois LATino Council on Higher Education Conference.

## **South Suburban College's Student Organization for Latino Empowerment and Success (SOLES) Attends Illinois LATino Council on Higher Education (ILACHE) Conference**

South Holland, IL—On Friday, April 14, South Suburban College's (SSC) Student Organization for Latino Empowerment & Success (SOLES) attended the Illinois LATino Council on Higher Education (ILACHE) Conference hosted at Malcolm X College. SSC students participated in various workshops, including Pilsen's Festival de Mujeres 1979: Using a new digital exhibit to explore *la riqueza* of 1970s; Cafecito sin Azucar: Undocumented Professional Collective Wisdom at Work; Crotchet and Sustainability: What I learned from my mother; and Self-Advocacy in Higher Education.

"My favorite workshop was self-advocacy advocating for yourself as a Latina/o/e. It was very informative on how to advocate for your well-being," said Ana Ezparza, SSC Student and Latino Center Office Assistant. SOLES President Gloria Ruiz added, "I learned how to set healthy boundaries." In addition, Lizbeth Atenco, SOLES Secretary, stated the My Skin, My Weapon workshop was her favorite as it provided tips on surviving graduate school as a Latina.

The ILACHE Conference hosted two speakers for the morning and afternoon plenary during breakfast and lunch. Dr. Nancy "Rusty" Barcelo, nationally recognized for her work in diversity and inclusion and former President of Northern New Mexico College, spoke about her journey in higher education in the late 60s as a Chicana during the morning plenary. SSC Barber College student Miguel Ramos mentioned he "really enjoyed the morning speaker, Rusty."

Author and Latinx Activist Prisca Dorcas Mojica Rodríguez presented a portion of her book, *For Brown Girls with Sharp Edges and Tender Hearts*, during the afternoon plenary. "It was great to hear their amazing stories and learn from Dr. Barcelo and Prisca Mojica Rodriguez," stated Lizbeth Atenco, SOLES Secretary.

SSC Students also attended the research symposium with topics such as Medically Assisted Therapy during Pregnancy and the Impact of Commercialized American food in Mexico. "It was exciting meeting new people and seeing all the research," said SSC student and SOLES member Gabriela "Gaby" Chaparro.

Overall, the ILACHE Conference provided SSC students professional and personal growth opportunities. Kimberly Rodriguez, an SSC student, stated, "There was trust between all of us as a community without inequalities," referencing the Latinx community. The conference concluded with a networking event in which various undergraduate, graduate, and higher education professionals participated. Miguel Ramos concluded, "It was inspiring to be around people from all walks of life who want to make a positive impact for all Latino communities."

The South Suburban College Main Campus is located at 15800 S. State Street, South Holland, IL. For more information on SSC's Latino Center, please call (708) 210-5740 or email [latino@ssc.edu](mailto:latino@ssc.edu).

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