



## NALEO NEWS

National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials

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### **Active Service Members and Veterans of U.S. Military to Receive Special Tribute at NALEO 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference in San Diego**

*Three-day event to include special recognition of armed forces at USS Midway, sessions  
addressing various veteran assistance issues and a community service project*

**San Diego, Calif.** - The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) will pay special tribute to our nation's active military members and veterans at the NALEO 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference. Considered the nation's annual Latino political convention, the event will take place June 26-28, 2014 at the Loews Coronado Bay Resort in San Diego, California.

This year's conference will feature more than 1,000 Latino public officials and supporters from communities across the country. Conference participants will be invited to an opening reception aboard the **USS Midway on Thursday, June 26 from 6-9 p.m. PDT** for an evening that will honor Latino contributions to our nation's military. Selected members of the armed forces will be recognized for their leadership, dedication and unwavering commitment to the defense of our country during the event.

Reception guests will be on hand to watch as U.S. Marine Cpl. Joshua Lopez and his family are presented with a new Southern California home. While serving in Afghanistan in 2012, Cpl. Lopez was severely injured after stepping on an improvised explosive device (IED). Currently, Cpl. Lopez is interning at Marine Corps Cyber Command. A special tribute will also be given to fallen Navy Cross recipient U.S. Marine Sgt. Rafael Peralta and Navy Cross recipient U.S. Marine Sgt. Marco Martinez during the event.

A number of leaders from the City of San Diego will be in attendance to honor these brave individuals and address the reception audience, including County Supervisor Greg Cox, City Council President Todd Gloria, and Councilmembers David Alvarez and Lorie Zapf.

This year's conference program will also include two sessions that will address various issues and challenges unique to military life. The first session "Supporting our Nation's Veterans: Housing and Job Assistance" will take place on **Friday, June 27 from 2:30-4 p.m. PDT**. During the panel, experts will provide an overview of innovative strategies to better support veterans as they attempt to successfully reintegrate and become productive members of their communities. The session will be moderated by California State Assemblymember Rocky Chávez and feature Senior Vice President of American Red Cross Service to Armed Forces

Sherri L. Brown, American GI Forum's U.S. National Commander Luis A. Vazquez-Contes and Vice President of Community Impact at Valley of the Sun United Way Amy Schwabenlender.

The second session "Supporting Our Nation's Veterans: Medical and Mental Health Assistance" will take place on **Saturday, June 28 from 10-11:30 a.m. PDT**. Panel speakers will provide policymakers with vital tools and information to help support veterans navigate the support and mental health systems needed when they return from service. This session will be moderated by California State Assemblymember Sharon Quirk-Silva and will include special remarks from U.S. Rep. Raul Ruiz and feature Director of Health Services at the San Diego County Health & Human Services Agency Alfredo Aguirre and Veterans Village of San Diego President and CEO Phil Landis.

In addition, conference participants will participate in a NALEO Service Project that will assemble special care packages for 1,000 families of veterans and active service members.

The NALEO 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference is made possible through the generous support of Presenting Sponsors, Southwest Airlines, Official Airline Sponsor of NALEO Educational Fund, and Toyota. For information about the conference and registration, please visit the NALEO website at <http://www.naleo.org/sandiego2014/>.

**What:** NALEO 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference

**Who:** NALEO, the leadership organization of the nation's more than 6,000 Latino elected and appointed officials.

**When:** June 26 – 28, 2014

**Where:** Loews Coronado Bay Resort  
4000 Coronado Bay Rd  
San Diego, CA

**Media:** **Advance registration is required.** For more information or to register, please contact Amanda Bosquez ([abosquez@naleo.org](mailto:abosquez@naleo.org); 202-546-2536) and Paula Valle Castanon ([pvalle@naleo.org](mailto:pvalle@naleo.org); 213-765-9414).

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### **About NALEO**

The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials is the leadership organization of the nation's more than 6,000 Latino elected and appointed officials.