



WOODY AND GAYLE HUNT FAMILY FOUNDATION

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WOODY AND GAYLE HUNT FAMILY FOUNDATION ESTABLISHES ASPEN INSTITUTE FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship is part of the \$1 million gift by the Foundation to support Aspen's Latinos and Society Program and elevate the voice and expertise of Borderplex leaders

EL PASO, TX - Today, the Aspen Institute Latinos and Society Program and the Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation announced the launch of the Woody and Gayle Hunt Aspen Institute Fellowship. This program will support the participation of civic, community and emerging voices from the Borderplex region in the Aspen Institute's highly-respected seminars, roundtables, and convenings. The inaugural fellowship was awarded to Yasmín Ramírez, a writer and professor at El Paso Community College.

The fellowship is part of a \$1 million gift from the Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation to support the programming and mission of the Aspen Institute Latinos and Society Program including tours for journalists and investors of the Borderplex region (an area that includes El Paso, TX; Ciudad Juárez, MX; and Las Cruces, NM) as well as seminars and reports informed by Borderplex leaders. The fellowship will build on these efforts and help bring a Borderplex perspective to discussions of national and global importance and provide emerging leaders the opportunity to learn from and interact with a wide range of subject matter experts.

"The Aspen Institute has created a truly unique environment that celebrates deep expertise and fosters unexpected connections that can shape our world," said Woody L. Hunt, chairman of the Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation. "We are excited to give our community members the opportunity to join these gatherings, and we are proud to bring the experiences and viewpoints of our unique three state, two-country region to these national conversations."

The Woody and Gayle Hunt Aspen Fellowship provides funding to residents of the Borderplex region who are admitted to an Aspen Institute program based on their personal and professional expertise. Aspen Institute events convene world-renowned thought leaders for frank exchanges on pressing topics of the day, from national security to culture and economic development.

Program alumni join a global community of changemakers who stay in touch and often build longer term partnerships..

“We are known for launching big ideas and practical solutions for some of the world’s most complex problems,” said Domenika Lynch, executive director of the Aspen Institute’s Latinos and Society Program, which manages the Woody and Gayle Hunt Aspen Institute Fellowship. “But those ideas and solutions only work if they reflect a broad and diverse set of insights. Thanks to the Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation, voices from one of the most historically and culturally rich regions of North America will be able to participate in conversations about its future, as well as the future of our nation.”

Professor Yasmín Ramírez was awarded the first Woody and Gayle Hunt Aspen Institute Fellowship earlier this year. Professor Ramírez teaches Creative Writing and Chicana Literature as an associate professor of English at El Paso Community College and has published several short stories and articles spotlighting Latinx perspectives and contributions. She holds an MFA in creative writing from University of Texas at El Paso and is working on a memoir, ¡Ándale, Prieta!, scheduled to be released by Cinco Puntos Press next year.

“I’m very appreciative of this opportunity, thanks to the Hunt Family, and how it allows me to learn and hone my craft as a writer and storyteller,” said Professor Ramírez. “Often, my job as an educator doesn’t allow me to take advantage of opportunities due to the financial expense. However, through scholarships such as this, I will be able to attend and contribute to the growth and visibility of Latinx writers in the literary community, and be able to tell stories that much closer reflect the true experiences of those who grew up in and love our unique border community.”

In June, Ramírez participated in the Aspen Summer Words program, one of the nation’s top literary gatherings. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the five-day event, normally held in Aspen, Colorado, took place online. Ellie Scott, the program’s coordinator, said “Aspen Words was honored to host Ms. Ramírez during Aspen Summer Words Virtual, a convening of writers from different backgrounds and stages in their writing career, and particularly grateful to the Hunt Fellowship for helping to ensure Latinx representation in our program. The intimate exchange of stories that occurs during a writing workshop is a crucial way to support and amplify LatinX voices and draw historically marginalized narratives into the mainstream. Our conference aims to facilitate connections between acclaimed faculty-authors and emerging writers of great promise, and we’re committed to including LatinX voices and supporting these writers in their creative process.”

More information about the Hunt Aspen Institute Fellowship and Aspen Institute programming can be found [here](#).

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