



LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
**HISPANIC  
NETWORK**

**LGHN**

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

January 27 - 29, 2025

Mesa Convention Center

**MESA, ARIZONA**

**CONNECT. COLLABORATE. SUCCEED**



# LGHN

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE

January 27 - 29, 2025

### EVENT PROGRAM

Mesa Convention Center  
MESA, ARIZONA

**MONDAY  
JAN 27**

**12 - 5pm**

#### **Conference Registration**

*Mesa Convention Center*

**7 - 11am**

#### **Preconference Events**

Golf | Scottsdale Chapter - Continental Golf Course, Preregistration (registration form), Contact golf course directly to reserve and pay, transportation on your own 480-941-1047  
User Mountain Regional Park Hike  
Preregistration required, no cost. 40 person capacity.

**9am - 12pm**

#### **Welcome Reception**

Delta Hotel Mezzanine

**5:30 - 8pm**

*Dinner on your own*

**TUESDAY  
JAN 28**

**8 - 9am**

#### **Conference Registration**

*Mesa Convention Center*

#### **Continental Breakfast and Network with Sponsors**

**9 - 10:15am**

#### **Opening Session & Keynote**

*Palo Verde I, II, III*

- **Welcome Remarks**
  - Samantha Tavares, President
  - LGHN Affiliates
  - MissionSquare
  - Remarks and offerings from City of Mesa, AZ
  - City of Mesa Story Telling Project with local youth and Tomas Stanton, Arts Engagement Manager
- **Keynote Speaker**
  - Reyna Montoya with Aliento

## CONCURRENT WALKING TOURS

10:30am – 1:15pm

Box lunch provided on tour

### Option 1: ¡Abre Puertas y Conecta! The Impact of Spanish Media in Government Management

*Channel 11 Studios, Mesa City Plaza*

### Option 2: Transforming Downtown Mesa: Uniquely Local

*Downtown Mesa*

### Option 3: The Art of Storytelling

*Mesa Art Center*

### Option 4: Taking Flight in Mesa!

*Falcon Field Airport, transportation provided*

### Option 5: Investing in Our People - Prioritizing Mental Health in the Workplace

*Mesa City Council Chambers*

**TUESDAY  
JAN 28**

## CONCURRENT SESSIONS

1:30 – 3:00pm

### Session 1 - GFOA

*Artificial Intelligence (AI) Best Practices Part I  
PALO VERDE I*

### Session 2 - LGHN and ICMA INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE COLLABORATION

*Where have we been, where are we headed and how  
do we get involved?  
PALO VERDE II*

### Session 3 - ICMA

*Innovative Talent Mining: New Approaches to  
Recruiting Local Government Leaders  
PALO VERDE III*

**CONCURRENT SESSIONS**  
**3:15 – 4:45pm**

**Session 4 - GFOA**

*Artificial Intelligence (AI) Best Practices Part II*  
PALO VERDE I

**Session 5 - MissionSquare**

*Student Debt Impacts on Public Sector Employees (and Employers)*  
PALO VERDE II

**Session 6 - ICMA**

*Leading with Passion: Insights and Support Strategies from top city and county executives.*  
PALO VERDE III

**Awards Reception**

*Location: THE POST*  
*hosted by the City of Mesa*  
*(From 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm: networking, music, dancing, bites and drinks; 6:45 pm to 8:00 pm: awards and sponsor recognition)*

**TUESDAY**  
**JAN 28**

**5:30 - 8pm**

- **Welcome from the City of Mesa**
- **Partners and Sponsorship Appreciation**
- **Emerging Leaders Award Presentation**
- **Joel Valdez Award Presentation**

*Dinner on your own*

**WEDNESDAY  
JAN 29**

**8 - 9am**      **Continental Breakfast and  
Network with Sponsors**

**Opening Session & Keynote**  
*Palo Verde I, II, III*

- 9 - 10:15am**
- **Welcome from City of Mesa, City Manager**
  - **Annual Membership Meeting**
  - **Installation of LGHN President and Board of Directors**
  - **Keynote Speaker**  
*Joelle Martinez, President and CEO of the Latino Leadership Institute*

**CONCURRENT WALKING TOURS**  
**10:30am - 1:15pm**  
Box lunch provided on tour

**Option 1: Discovering Mesa's Asian District**  
*Asian District, Transportation provided*

**Option 2: Enhancing Public Safety with Technology and Innovation**  
*Mesa Municipal Court*

**Option 3: Cultivating Leadership Potential: The My 2.0 Apprenticeship Program**  
*The Post*

**Option 4: Educating Our Community: Early Education through Post-Secondary Success**  
*Mesa Library - Saguaro Room*

**Option 5: Empowering Leadership: Navigating Challenges with Courage and Inclusion**  
*Mesa City Council Chambers*

## CONCURRENT SESSIONS

1:30 – 3pm

### **Session 1**

*Leading While Latino*

PALO VERDE I

### **Session 2 - LGHN Chapters and Members Collaborative**

*Community Engagement Lessons from the Frontlines with City of Reno, NV; City of Chandler, AZ and Fort Lauderdale, FL*

PALO VERDE II

### **Session 3 - CORE STRENGTHS**

*Leadership Training and Strengths Assessment*

PALO VERDE III

WEDNESDAY  
**JAN 29**

## CONCURRENT SESSIONS

3:15 – 4:45pm

### **Session 4 - GFOA**

*Rethinking Your Financial Practices and Budgeting*

PALO VERDE I

### **Session 5**

*Leading While Latino*

PALO VERDE II

### **Session 6 - Core Strengths (Encore)**

*Leadership Training and Strengths Assessment*

PALO VERDE III

WEDNESDAY

**JAN 29**

**5 - 5:45pm Closing Session**

*Palo Verde I, II, III*

**City of Mesa Story Telling Project**

*- with local youth and Tomas Stanton, Arts Engagement Manager*

**Attendee Appreciation Performance**

**5:45 - 7pm Closing Reception**

*Mesa Convention Center Hall*

*Dinner on your own*



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# WALKING TOUR DETAILS

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28 10:30 - 1:15PM

*Business casual attire, comfortable shoes, and light rain gear recommended*

## **Option 1: ¡Abre Puertas y Conecta!: The Impact of Spanish Media in Government Management**

*Channel 11 Studios, Mesa City Plaza, hosted by Mesa Hispanic Network, Grecia Cervantes & Lucy Hambright, Speakers Ana Periera, Mariano Reyes, Capacity:50*

In this session, we'll explore how storytelling, coupled with data, can revolutionize government management through Spanish media channels. Discover the art of weaving narratives that resonate with diverse audiences while leveraging data-driven insights to inform policy decisions and enhance community engagement. Learn from real-world examples and practical strategies on harnessing the combined power of storytelling and data analysis to drive impactful governance practices. Join us as we uncover the potential of this dynamic approach in shaping a more inclusive and responsive government.

## **Option 2: Transforming Downtown Mesa: Uniquely Local**

*Downtown Mesa, hosted by Mesa Hispanic Network Angelica Guevara & Erica Navarro, Speaker Jeff McVey, Downtown Transformation Manager This session will be primarily walking and outdoors, please wear comfortable shoes. Capacity: 50*

Downtown Mesa, the heart of the third largest city in Arizona, is driving new development while working to maintain its historical character and support a diverse mix of local businesses that set Downtown Mesa apart! Explore downtown Mesa's Main Street area, including the home of the future restaurant incubator – focused on equitable success for local entrepreneurs. Learn about downtown's growing locally-owned retail and nationally recognized cuisine and brew. Stroll past award-winning eateries, microbreweries, and cider house and get some samples along the way. Find out what tools the City of Mesa is using to drive this growth.

## **Option 3: The Art of Storytelling**

*Mesa Art Center, Hosted by Lucy Lopez & David Peña, Capacity 50*

Everyone has a story and if YOU don't tell that story someone else may get it WRONG. Furthermore, the closest distance between two people is a story. The power of storytelling is infinite but the act of telling your story isn't that easy. It takes courage to make a part of yourself available for the world to witness.

In this interactive workshop, we will learn and practice the art of storytelling. We will experience the power and individuality of all voices by listening and effectively connecting with each other. These skills will make you a better communicator whether it is for your next staff meeting, department presentation or job interview!



# WALKING TOUR DETAILS

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28 10:30 - 1:15PM

*Business casual attire, comfortable shoes, and light rain gear recommended*

## **Option 4: Taking Flight in Mesa!**

*Falcon Field Airport (Transportation will be provided for this location)*

*Hosted by Zenia Cornejo & Diana Aguero, Capacity 50*

Take a flight onto an original WW II hangar! Join us at Falcon Field Airport and learn about its rich history of training the British Royal Air Force and American pilots during World War II. Falcon Field is a general aviation (GA) reliever airport that serves as an alternative for civilian and military aviation use (such as business, recreation, fixed-wing and helicopter training) so that Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport and Phoenix Mesa-Gateway can focus on international and commercial airline services. Falcon Field is the home of more than 130 businesses providing more than 1300 jobs with a payroll of more than \$104 million dollars.

## **Option 5: Investing In Our People - Prioritizing Mental Health In The Workplace**

*Mesa City Council Chambers, Moderators: Marrisra Ramirez-Ramos & Andrea Alicoate, Capacity 100*

In today's dynamic work environments, mental health has emerged as a crucial component of employee and family well-being, as well as organizational success. This session emphasizes the importance of prioritizing mental health in the workplace and explores practical systems for fostering a supportive culture. Our panel will showcase Mesa's innovative program that destigmatizes mental health needs and implements robust internal strategies that work to create a mentally healthy and thriving workplace.

# WALKING TOUR DETAILS

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29 10:30 - 1:15PM

*Business casual attire, comfortable shoes, and light rain gear recommended*

## **Option 1: Discovering Mesa's Asian District**

*Asian District (Transportation will be provided for this location), Hosted by Cynthia Ezcurra & Diana Aguero, Capacity 25*

In 2019, the City of Mesa's Economic Development team launched a dynamic branding initiative for the Asian District, in collaboration with local business stakeholders. Once a hidden gem, the district has since flourished, drawing attention to its vibrant array of ethnic shops and restaurants, and revitalizing the community by highlighting its unique cultural attributes.

Join us for an exclusive tour that delves into the Asian District as it stands today, proudly featuring its distinctive logo inspired by the tangram, a seven-piece Chinese geometric puzzle dating back 2,000 years. This tour will immerse you in a rich tapestry of culinary delights and cultural experiences, showcasing over 70 Asian-themed restaurants, grocery stores, and diverse retail businesses along a lively two-mile stretch. You will also have the opportunity to admire stunning cultural murals that add to the district's charm. Discover the essence of the Asian District and witness firsthand the thriving community and its vibrant contributions to Mesa's cultural landscape.

## **Option 2: Enhancing Public Safety With Technology and Innovation**

*Mesa Municipal Court, Hosted by Lucy Lopez & Isela Devora, Capacity 50*

Supporting public safety efforts is a vital goal for the City of Mesa. This session covers the efforts of the Mesa Police Department's Real Time Crime Center (RTCC) and the City of Mesa Prosecutor's Office to prevent and reduce crime. The Real Time Crime Center is a state-of-the-art operations center that serves as the Department's information hub, working to provide real-time information sharing, quick identification/apprehension of criminals, and situational awareness for first responders. Additionally, the Mesa Prosecutor's Office handles misdemeanor cases in the city, utilizing specialty courts such as Domestic Violence Court, Veteran's Court, Community Court, and Mental Health Court. These specialty courts are designed to manage and serve those defendants coming into the criminal justice system with homeless, mental health or drug/alcohol issues, while also focusing on accountability. Together, they are nationally recognized agencies for their efforts to enhance public safety services.

# WALKING TOUR DETAILS

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29 10:30 - 1:15PM

*Business casual attire, comfortable shoes, and light rain gear recommended*

## **Option 3: Cultivating Leadership Potential: The My 2.0 Apprenticeship Program**

*The Post, Hosted by Vanessa Gonzalez & Scarlett Wright, Capacity 50*

Join us to learn how the City of Mesa is setting a new standard for employee development and leadership training through the My 2.0 Apprenticeship Program. The My 2.0 Apprenticeship Program is a pioneering initiative designed to enhance the professional development of field, entry-level, and public-facing staff. This program focuses on developing soft skills and leadership abilities, providing a pathway for employees to grow and excel in their careers. This session will inspire and equip you with the knowledge to implement similar initiatives in your own organizations.

## **Option 4: Educating Our Community: Early Education Through Post-Secondary Success**

*Mesa Library-Saguaro Room, Hosted by Andrea Alicoate & Mariano Reyes*

In this session, discover how Mesa fosters educational excellence and economic development for its community. Explore comprehensive educational initiatives designed to support lifelong learning, improve educational outcomes, and bolster economic growth. Highlighting programs like Mesa K-Ready, Mesa Family Resource Center, Read On Mesa, Mesa College Promise, Mesa Job Connect and the Education and Workforce Roundtable, we'll showcase efforts that help to fill gaps for existing educational institutions and enhance workforce readiness. These initiatives, institutionalized through a dedicated City team, aim to remove financial barriers, enhance early literacy, prepare children for kindergarten, and align education with workforce needs.

## **Option 5: Empowering Leadership: Navigating Challenges With Courage and Inclusion**

*Mesa City Council Chambers, Hosted by Lucy Hambright & Grecia Cervantes, Capacity 100*

In today's dynamic organizational landscape, leaders are called upon to navigate a myriad of challenges, from ethical dilemmas to fostering and sustaining a healthy team culture. This engaging panel session brings together a diverse group of leaders who will share their personal stories of resilience, courage, and the transformative power of inclusive leadership. Panelists will explore pivotal leadership moments, tools to overcome imposter syndrome and strategies for becoming a reliable "clutch player" in their organizations. They will also discuss creating safe spaces, overcoming adversity, and building strong, resilient teams. Attendees will leave inspired to stay true to their values, advocate for underrepresented voices, and lead with authenticity.