

Ray Mellado Chair & CEO



Ray Mellado is the founder, Chairman of the Board & CEO of Great Minds in STEM™ (Formerly HENAAC). The mission of Great Minds in STEM™ is: To educate, motivate and enable more under served students to achieve careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM); To develop and leverage Hispanic STEM talent to play a leadership role; To engage families, educators and employers to support under served students in STEM careers; To inspire our nation through recognition of the achievements of Hispanics and other role models in STEM; To lead collaboration and cooperation within the STEM community.

Great Minds in STEM™ began to carry out this mission through its annual HENAAC conference, now entering its twenty first year. In recent years, this organization has also developed educational programs like the Hall of Fame, the College Bowl, Viva Technology™, and STEM-Up™.

In 2000, Great Minds in STEM™ introduced the College Bowl, an innovative, competitive two-day workshop for college students preparing to enter engineering careers. In 2001, it launched Viva Technology™, a year-round K-12 educational program designed to introduce pre-college students to the exciting careers in science, engineering and technology. In 2009 Great Minds in STEM™ launched STEM-Up™, the first initiative of its kind to bring Science, technology, Engineering, and Math college and career pathways into schools and underserved communities.

Mellado entered the private sector after a distinguished 21-year marketing/sales executive career with the Xerox Corporation. Throughout his career, Mellado has taken an active leadership role in the Hispanic Community. In 1977, while a notable member of the Xerox marketing team, Mellado was a founding member of the Hispanic Association for Professional Advancement (HAPA), one of the first Hispanic Employee Associations in Corporate America. HAPA was proud to have him serve as one of its founding presidents. Mellado has also coached football at the high school, community college and college level for 17 years. In 2009 Mellado received the NASA.

Exceptional Public Service Medal. This award is limited to less than 1 percent of the contractor workforce. He received this medal for outstanding contributions to NASA's mission in honoring and documenting the success of outstanding Hispanic American professionals, including NASA engineers, scientist and astronauts.

Currently, Mellado serves on the Executive Advisory Council for the College of Engineering, Computer Science and Technology at California State University Los Angeles (CSULA), the National Academy of Engineering's Action Forum on Diversity, a group chartered to work with the Academy to increase the number of women and underrepresented minorities in engineering as well as US Navy's Diversity Senior Advisory Group (DSAG reporting to the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO). He also serves on the Advisory Board of the Association of Naval Service Officers (ANSO), an organization dedicated to Hispanic officer recruitment and retention, and on the Board of the Foundation for the Advancement of Science Education (FASE), producers of award-winning educational products that have earned three Peabody Awards.

Mellado was born and raised in Los Angeles, California where he attended Cathedral High School, East Los Angeles College and Whittier College. He and his wife, Carmela, have been married for 36 years and have three grown children – daughters Anna and Regina, and son Peter – and 4 grandchildren – Adara, Jessica, Vivian and Atticus.