



08:00 - 02:00 pm  
05 March 2025

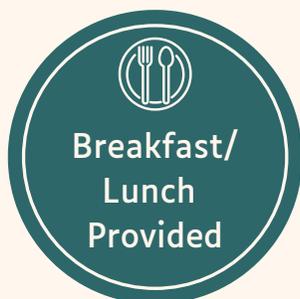


West Leyden HS  
1000 Wolf Road  
Northlake, IL

## SPRING 2025 CONFERENCE

# “CULTIVATING EQUITY AND CREATIVITY FOR HERITAGE LEARNERS”

### What to Expect :



Pre-registration and payment is required,  
no onsite registration will be accepted.



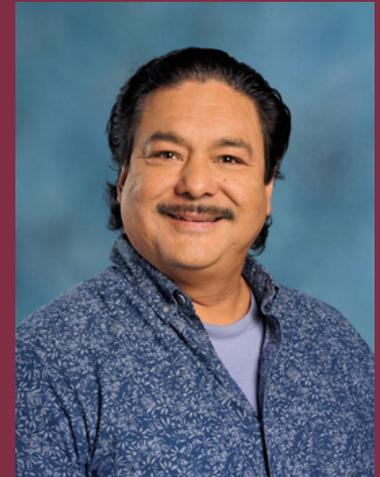
**REGISTER NOW**

# Reescribiendo la narrativa: Descolonizando las clases de español de herencia

Este taller está diseñado para proveer a los profesores de español de herencia estrategias y recursos que promueven una educación culturalmente relevante y anticolonial. Exploraremos cómo descolonizar los materiales y las prácticas pedagógicas, centrándonos en las voces, experiencias y conocimientos de las comunidades de nuestros estudiantes.

Además, se hablará de cómo empoderar a los estudiantes y adaptar la instrucción a distintos niveles. A través de la reflexión crítica y actividades colaborativas, los participantes aprenderán a transformar sus currículos para honrar las diversas identidades de sus alumnos y desafiar las narrativas coloniales y eurocéntricas. La presentación citará trabajos académicos de Dr. Kim Potowski, Dr. José Medina, Dr. Michael Ayala, entre otros.

**Dr. Michael Ayala** (he/him/él): Michael is an accomplished educator with 34 years of experience, including 31 years teaching all levels of Spanish, such as AP Literature, at John Hersey High School. He specializes in Spanish, Latin American History, and curriculum design, having created a successful four-year Heritage Language curriculum.



A leader in his field, Michael has served as President of ICTFL, Secretary of Central States, and a board member of NIESHL. His dedication to culturally relevant teaching and student success has earned him honors, such as the 2021 Teacher of the Year and the 2023 ISBE Cook County Regional Teacher of the Year.



**Cristina Bravo** (she/her/ella): Cristina is a third-year Spanish teacher at John Hersey High School dedicated to student growth, cultural awareness, and professional development. She has taught Spanish 2 and Heritage Spanish 3 Honors, incorporating authentic resources to expose students to diverse perspectives and strengthen their cultural identities. She holds a Master's in Spanish Language and Cultures from Universidad de Salamanca in Spain and has participated in conferences like ICTFL, ACTFL, and NIESHL.

# Challenging the Narrative: Raciolinguistics in the Heritage Spanish Classroom

Informed by her experience as Director of the Spanish Heritage Language program at the University of Illinois at Chicago, **Dr. Angela Betancourt-Ciprian's** presentation will explore how instructors can encourage students to question linguistic hierarchies and affirm their identities through language.

**Dr. Angela Betancourt** is a Clinical Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago where she currently directs the Spanish as a Heritage Language program and teaches courses at both the undergraduate and graduate level. Her experiences as a Chicago-born Latina of Cuban, Puerto Rican and Mexican heritage inspire her research that focuses on perceptual dialectology, language and identity, and the intersection of language and race.



## La inteligencia artificial en el salón de herencia

**Amber Biggs** is an experienced educator with nearly 25 years of dedicated service to Waukegan Public Schools, primarily at Waukegan High School and John Lewis Middle School. As a lifelong learner and Waukegan native, Amber possesses a deep passion for education and a commitment to fostering a love of learning in her students. Her expertise spans a diverse range of subjects, including Spanish language learning, Heritage Spanish in Spanish instruction for Spanish bilingual studies, ESL, Social studies, and Science. Amber is a strong advocate for culturally responsive teaching and creating inclusive learning environments that celebrate the unique experiences and perspectives of all students. Beyond the classroom, Amber is a proud mother of four and enjoys the company of her loving family. As a fluent Spanish speaker and avid language learning enthusiast, she has a keen interest in linguistics and the power of communication to connect individuals and cultures. Amber is committed to ongoing professional development to continuously enhance her teaching practices and provide the best possible learning experiences for her students. As a lifelong learner always interested in staying educationally current, Amber fostered a desire to investigate Artificial Intelligence and the ways it can help her and her students.

