

Joe Garcia

President, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education



Joe Garcia was appointed President of WICHE in June 2016. He served as the Lt. Governor of Colorado and as the Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Higher Education, beginning in 2011. He had previously served on the WICHE Commission for nine years, including serving as its chair in 2011. During his time as Lt. Governor and as the SHEEO for Colorado, Garcia focused on increasing equity in outcomes for all students, particularly those from low income backgrounds and communities of color.

Prior to being elected Lt. Governor, Garcia served as President of Colorado State University-Pueblo, which was named the Outstanding Member Institution by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities during his tenure. He also served as President of Colorado's second largest community college, Pikes Peak Community College, where he was twice named President of the Year by the State Student Advisory Council. His previous public service positions included serving as a member of the Cabinet of Gov. Roy Romer and as a White House appointee under President Bill Clinton at the Department of Housing and Urban Development. He also was employed in the private practice of law for 10 years at the law firm of Holme Roberts & Owen, where he became the first Hispanic partner in the 100 year history of the firm. Garcia earned his B.S. in Business at the University of Colorado-Boulder and his J.D. from Harvard Law School.