

# Building the Future Workforce Today

Unlocking America's  
tech sector for Hispanic  
American and Latinx talent



# Executive Summary

A digital transition is underway in our economy and talent marketplace. By 2025, 40% of core skills will change and 50% of workers will need reskilling.<sup>1</sup>

**To meet these demands, U.S. organizations must rethink and redesign their talent and leadership development strategies, especially with Hispanic American and Latinx talent.**





These workers are one of the greatest untapped resources of talent in the U.S. economy—especially for its technology-driven sectors. Hispanic American and Latinx professionals are the fastest-growing segment of the working-age population and have demonstrated their productivity, capacity, and capability.

Yet, organizations and C-suite leaders often overlook Hispanic American and Latinx talent (not limited to native Spanish speakers) in their talent and leadership pipeline strategies.

**If U.S. tech companies are going to meet their talent and skills needs, they need to take significant and systemic action to address the structural obstacles that keep Hispanic American and Latinx workers from entering and staying in high-growth tech careers.**

# 5 distinct actions CXOs can take to close the hiring gap:

1



**Investigate** and close digital skills gaps

2



**Promote** continuous learning and skills growth

3



**Foster** empowerment, career courage, and cultural confidence

4



**Elevate** diverse leaders

5



**Challenge** existing talent systems and embrace transparency

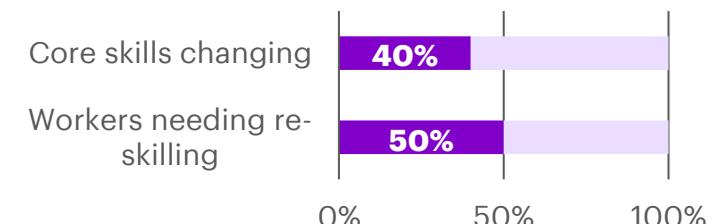


# The Opportunity

## Develop skills as the new currency

The changing nature of our economy requires new approaches to developing and sourcing talent. By 2025, the distribution of work tasks between humans and machines will shift, eliminating 85 million jobs across 15 industries while creating 97 million new roles, according to The Future of Jobs report from the World Economic Forum. In addition:

- 40% of core skills will change by 2025, and 50% of workers will need reskilling.<sup>2</sup>



(source: World Economic Forum)

- The U.S. alone could lose as much as \$975 billion by 2028 in cumulative growth if skilling efforts do not prepare American workers for the jobs needing to be filled.<sup>3</sup>

## **It's clear we need a mindset shift in the way careers are imagined and how people participate in them.**

"Skill-building is the new norm," says Yesenia Reyes, managing director, Accenture. "There is no job that stays static anymore."

A critical part of any strategy to address this skills gap will be in preparing, skilling, and inspiring Hispanic American workers, who, by the year 2028, will make up 20.9% of the labor force.<sup>4</sup> In fact, 78% of U.S. workforce net growth will be from Hispanic American and Latinx workers through 2030.<sup>5</sup>



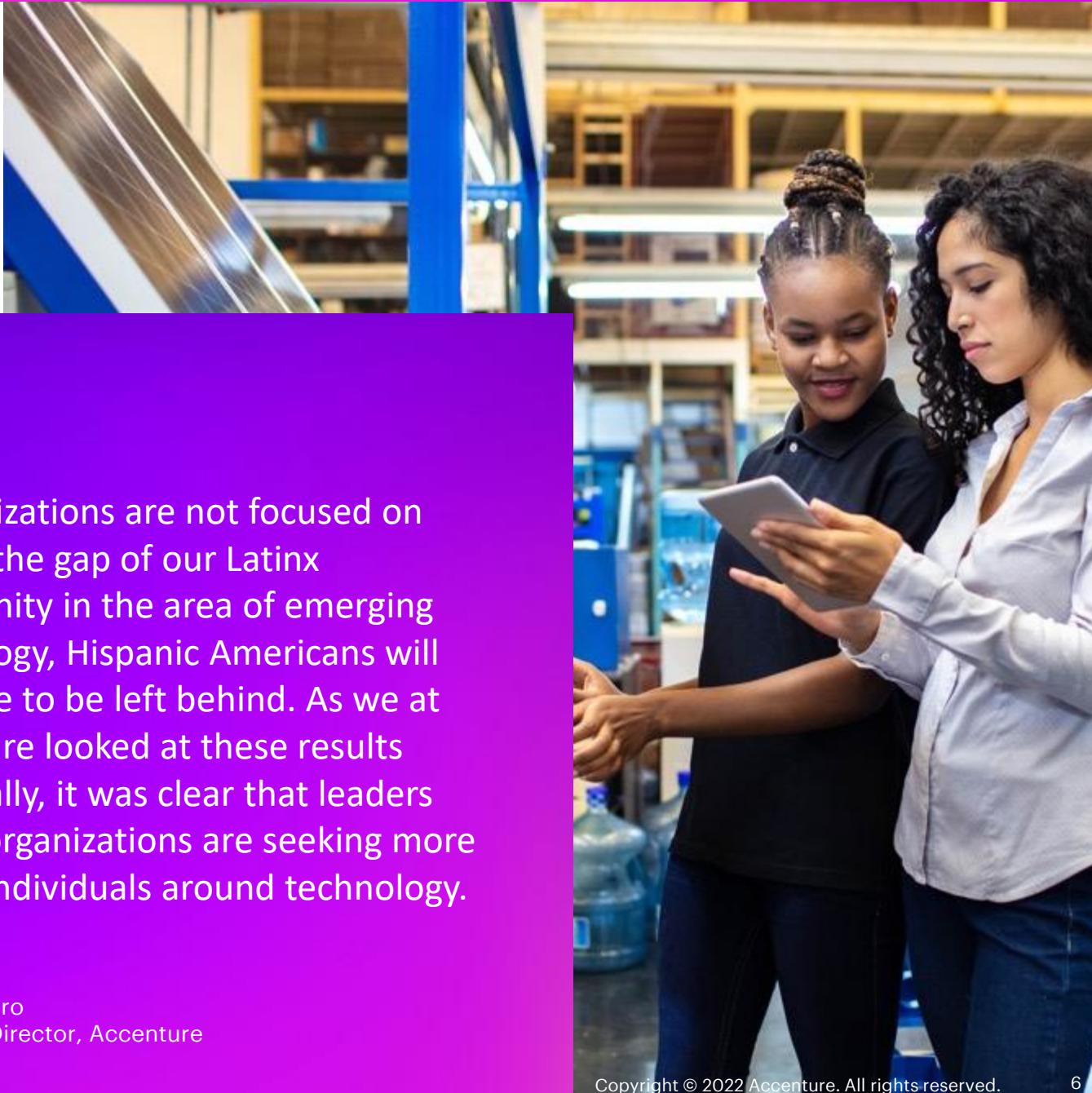
While Hispanic Americans make up 28% of the population of Silicon Valley,<sup>6</sup> they hold only 8% of all STEM-related jobs in the U.S.<sup>7</sup>



**Nellie Borrero**  
Managing Director, Accenture

“

If organizations are not focused on closing the gap of our Latinx community in the area of emerging technology, Hispanic Americans will continue to be left behind. As we at Accenture looked at these results holistically, it was clear that leaders across organizations are seeking more skilled individuals around technology.



# What are Digital Skills?

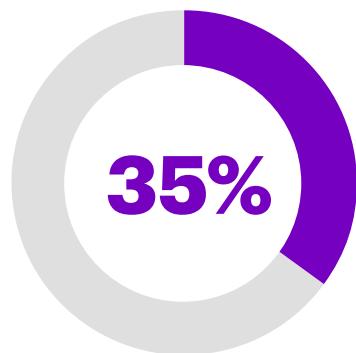
Digital Collaboration Tools  
Cloud and Cloud Native  
Computing  
Blockchain  
Data/Statistical Analysis  
Automation & Robotics  
Enterprise Platforms  
Software & Application Testing  
Extended Reality (Augmented, Virtual, or Mixed Reality)  
Data Science & Data Modeling  
Software Engineering

Dev Ops & Dev Sec Ops  
Information Technology  
Artificial Intelligence  
Internet of Things  
Cybersecurity  
Digital Marketing  
5G and Edge Computing  
User Experience  
Marketing Research & Strategy  
Web Development  
Agile Coaching



# A Critical Mismatch

Accenture—in collaboration with the Hispanic Technology Executive Council (HITEC)—sought to identify some of the obstacles to Hispanic American and Latinx engagement in the tech space. Leveraging an Accenture research study of more than 1,200 Hispanic American and Latinx professionals, some findings stand out.

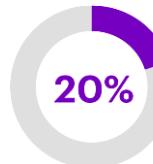


(source: Pew Research)

**Hispanic American and Latinx talent are struggling to see themselves in tech-based careers—only 35% see themselves as being able to have achievements in this area.**

On average, **Hispanic American and Latinx talent are aware of only 5 of 21 key digital skills**, trailing the global average of 9 of the same 21 skills.

Some examples of those skills include computing, blockchain, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity.



And only **20% of surveyed Hispanic American and Latinx talent possess key digital skills.**

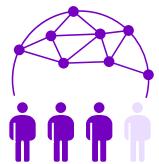
But Hispanic American and Latinx talent are ahead of the global average on so-called soft skills—including collaboration, communication, and emotional intelligence—that will be crucial in the coming digital reskilling revolution.

On average, **43% of Hispanic American and Latinx talent are very proficient in soft skills vs. the global average of 37%**. This suggests Hispanic American and Latinx talent could prove to be even more successful in the coming transformation.



Indeed, Hispanic American and Latinx talent represent significant potential for the American technology sector.

\$1.9 trillion



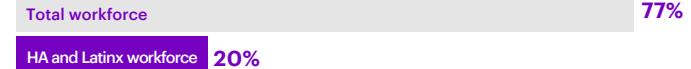
Hispanic American and Latinx individuals have **\$1.9 trillion** in purchasing power,<sup>8</sup> and nearly **three out of four** Hispanic American and Latinx individuals (71% vs. 51% of the global sample) say they are heavily dependent on digital technology to help them earn a living.<sup>9</sup>

And yet C-suite executives are largely unaware of the massive skills gap they are facing and have a vastly unrealistic expectation of what skills and talents they will be able to access in the coming years.



### Our research shows:

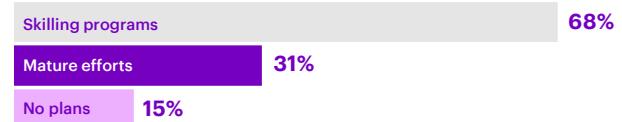
77% of CXOs report high skills possession in their workforce, yet only 20% of Hispanic American and Latinx workers possess digital skills.



72% of CXOs say that their employees have been able to take advantage of reskilling opportunities on multiple occasions; only 57% of Hispanic American and Latinx talent report the same.



Nearly 68% of CXOs report offering skilling programs for racial and ethnic minorities, but only 31% say they have mature efforts, and 15% have no plans for a specific program.





In short, **organizations—already facing a skills shortage—have massively underinvested in the technology skills of the fastest-growing sector of the U.S. workforce.** If organizations can figure out how to engage and support Hispanic American and Latinx workers, the benefits could be enormous—not just to the U.S. economy, but also to tech companies, and workers.

“

We’re at a critical crossroads today, especially when it comes to tech roles and careers in technology. There is already a massive deficit of talent across the board. The United States has millions of unfilled tech jobs today, and those unfilled jobs are only going to continue to grow. If we don’t get this right—if we don’t get Hispanics into the talent pipeline for tech roles—our country and our economy is going to lose its competitive edge globally. And that, to me, is why we all need to focus on this.

Omar Duque  
President, HITEC

# Critical Barriers

Hispanic American and Latinx workers are at a significant structural disadvantage when it comes to entering and succeeding in tech-focused jobs. If U.S. tech companies are going to meet their future talent and skills needs, CXOs and organizational leaders need to take action to address the various obstacles blocking Hispanic American and Latinx workers from considering and flourishing in high-growth tech careers.

Our research has identified several barriers to success.

## Access and Visibility<sup>10</sup>

For Hispanic American and Latinx talent, there remains a lack of specific STEM education and early mentorship/internship opportunities.

**According to the Pew Research Center, Hispanic American and Latinx adults remain less likely than white, Asian, and Black adults to earn a college degree and are underrepresented among STEM degree recipients.<sup>11</sup>** In addition, hiring pipelines may not be broad enough, and may have inequitable requirements as well as additional roadblocks—such as language and economic barriers—to opportunities.

But even when education and skills are in place, there needs to be more visibility in Hispanic American and Latinx households and communities of the opportunities of STEM-careers and pathways to technology-based professions. Tech-focused career pathways aren't even visible to many Hispanic American and Latinx households—and that is compounded by the lack of equitable representation among Hispanic community leaders in tech-focused organizations.



The more we can increase exposure for existing Hispanic American talent and show young Latinx who they may connect with on a path to success, the greater their confidence will be in a truly inclusive talent pipeline.

Guillermo Diaz, Jr.  
Chairman, HITEC

## Cultural & Communal

Hispanic American and Latinx workers are not a single cohort with a single communal narrative, but part of a dynamic community with many subgroups of varying backgrounds, national origins, and collective identities. Organizations must build a cultural framework that is inclusive of different Hispanic American and Latinx cultures and work personas and apply that to everything from recruiting efforts to employee engagement.

**Culturally, Hispanic workers are less likely to ask for raises, promotions, or growth opportunities.<sup>12</sup>**

This leads to a plateauing effect, where promising Hispanic workers don't push themselves forward in their careers and are often overlooked when it comes time for promotions or stretch assignments.

Leaders should encourage participation in Hispanic or Latinx employee resource groups (ERGs) within the organization to provide safe spaces for shared experiences. Mentorships, sponsorships, and executive participation in such identity-based affinity groups can create a support system to encourage advancement and provide a powerful vote of confidence that these networks matter.



Sometimes our culture says to keep your head down and work hard. So, if leaders are saying, 'I'm giving opportunities to those who ask for it,' you might not get asked from your Latino reports.

Rah Thomas  
Digital Transformation and Client Account Lead, Accenture

“

Companies need to develop and promote. If I’m not seeing people like me getting promoted and advancing, I’m going to start questioning if I really have a future at that company. Seeing others like me in leadership roles is key—I’m looking to connect with those leaders, aspire to be like them, see myself moving up the corporate pipeline like they did. If I can see that path for myself, then I’m more likely to stay.

Omar Duque  
President, HITEC

## Individual

Hispanic American and Latinx talent continue to have less wealth compared to most other racial and ethnic groups, according to the U.S. Federal Reserve.<sup>13</sup> These financial challenges may prevent candidates from seeking higher education or being able to afford the cost of unpaid internships or skills training.

Yet when organizations take actions to soften barriers and improve access to skilling, they can help boost household income for Hispanic American and Latinx workers. **Our research found Hispanic American and Latinx talent who reported better access and fewer barriers to skilling experienced, on average, up to \$4,705 in more household income.**

## Organizational

Too often, organizations do not have in place dedicated programs focused on skilling and building a deep, leadership-capable pipeline of Hispanic American and Latinx digital workers. In addition, **a lack of prominent Hispanic and Latinx leaders may lead to backsliding on diversity commitments, or at the very least, fail to substantiate an organization’s commitment to those efforts.** True talent pipelines exist on a continuum. Organizations should not stop at hiring and onboarding. They should aim to enable through retention and progression, which should be important, valued, and measured.<sup>14</sup>



## To Close the Gap, Take Targeted Action

In order to create a successful pipeline for Hispanic American and Latinx talent—from recruitment to leadership—we recommend several actions.

1



### Investigate and close digital skills gaps.

Recognize the systemic nature of the barriers Hispanic American and Latinx talent face and aim to devise solutions that are holistic, inclusive, and accessible in their approach. For example, since so many potential Hispanic American and Latinx talent are bilingual, efforts to educate audiences about critical technology career paths and skilling must be done in Spanish as well as English.

Career narratives and descriptions should be presented clearly in both English and Spanish, and the aspects of career rewards in certain professions—especially wealth-building tools like stock grants and options—should be explained in ways that anyone can understand.

## 2



### Promote continuous learning and skills growth.

Build cross-cultural and intersectional experiences that integrate Hispanic American and Latinx talent into the full sweep of the organization. Seek to elevate lived experiences and stories across the organization to increase attention and visibility that helps to maintain career momentum and increase a sense of belonging.



But avoid the temptation to create special skills or education tracks that target Hispanic American and Latinx workers—these can become self-fulfilling segregated workspaces.



# 3



## Foster empowerment, career courage, and cultural confidence.

Create and support approaches that give Hispanic American and Latinx talent the ability to serve the community. This is a valued element in the work persona of many Hispanic American and Latinx early leaders, and creating an outlet for meaningful community service will be a powerful catalyst for retention and career progression.

Mentorship programs, in particular, are a key enabler toward supporting Hispanic American and Latinx talent as they seek to contribute to the communities while grooming them to become successful leaders.

It's also important to practice preventative maintenance in ongoing career development of Hispanic American and Latinx hires and early managers. Managers and mentors should make sure that "internalized oppression" and "self-editing/lean out" behaviors are not sidelining careers, and make regular check-ins, reviews, and equitable pay and salary increases areas of focus for managing Hispanic American and Latinx talent as they grow in the organization.

“

As organizations seek to retain Latinx talent, they will need to be intentional about aligning and supporting the values of a Latinx community, one in particular leveraging the organizational brand and resources to solve for closing gaps and actioning toward equity and equality.

Nellie Borrero  
Managing Director, Accenture



# 4



## Elevate diverse leaders and community engagement.

In addition to mentorship and sponsorship, intensive efforts need to be in place to develop hard and soft skills to prepare Hispanic American and Latinx employees for leadership positions. Role models must be visible as they share their career journeys, as their achievements are inspirational and within reach.

**Because organizations should never underestimate the importance of visibility and value, e.g., if I can see it, I can be it.**

At the same time, organizations need to establish—at a high level—their commitment to Hispanic American community organizations and stakeholder groups, such as academic institutions with significant Hispanic student populations, startup communities, and Hispanic-focused professional organizations. These efforts create a credible approach for Hispanic American and Latinx talent to serve their communities without leaving behind their tech-focused careers.

HITEC works to support Hispanic youth looking to build careers in technology through the work of the HITEC Foundation. The HITEC Foundation provides meaningful scholarship opportunities for Hispanic undergraduate and graduate students studying technology. HITEC also provides mentoring and access to internship opportunities for HITEC Scholars to help students develop professional skills, experience, and confidence.

Accenture works with Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), a network of colleges and universities with a focus on recruiting and enrolling Hispanic Americans and Latinx students. Other recruitment advantages are realized through apprenticeships and skilling programs, which provide viable pathways and greater access to digital economy careers for people with potential who are facing degree barriers.

Accenture's Apprentice Program, a learn-and-earn model, has created an incredible pipeline of diverse talent. With its focus on people who do not have four-year college degrees, the program helps build a more inclusive culture and attracts talent from a great diversity of backgrounds, skills, relevant experience, and professional potential. "We're bringing in 20% of our entry-level talent with non-traditional or no college degrees," said Borrero. "We're not just going after degrees; we're going after skills."

## 5



### Embrace transparency.

What gets measured gets done: Corporations should embrace transparency by setting ambitious, measurable goals in hiring, retention, and progression, then regularly report their progress toward meeting those goals.

For example, at the beginning of 2021, Accenture set goals that by 2025 we would increase the representation of our Hispanic American and Latinx employees from 9.5% to 13% and increase by a third the share of Hispanic American and Latinx managing directors from 3.5% to 4.7%.

To learn more about our Inclusion and Diversity goals at Accenture, please visit our [Accenture U.S. website](#).



“

It's not enough to talk about career narratives, or anecdotes—like, *I did it and so can you*. Organizations must measure their progress and hold themselves accountable for the results. We have to go beyond storytelling.

Yesenia Reyes  
Managing Director, Accenture



## Key Points

- U.S. companies and organizations—already facing a skills shortage—have underinvested in the fastest-growing sector of their workforce
- Hispanic American and Latinx workers face a significant digital skills gap and underrate their abilities and capacity for digital skills growth
- CXOs overestimate the digital skills of their Hispanic American and Latinx workers and lack the necessary skilling programs to address the gap
- Companies need to focus on closing digital gaps by addressing barriers to skilling, promoting cultural confidence and career courage, elevating diverse leaders, and embracing transparency in their progress

# Voices

---



**Nellie Borrero**  
Managing Director, Accenture

I understood from a young age how important my culture was to me. I fearlessly defended it in a society too quick to judge and marginalize members of my community. Today, I want to continue to ensure we understand that our culture infuses our power; our history and ancestry have taught us resilience and strength of character. We are a FORCE! Let's confidently lift others and continue to claim our earned space. We have gaps that remain to be closed. Let's boldly and collaboratively effect change!



**Yesenia Reyes**  
Managing Director, Accenture

Early in my career at Accenture working with public sector clients, I was selected to serve in a client program leadership role on a state-wide financial transformation project. It was a major leap for me, and like anyone else, I had doubts whether I could deliver in the role. But I recognized that just by being selected, hand-picked, that was a vote of confidence. Then, I worked with someone who understood that role and had done it. We would talk regularly, at least an hour once a week, to focus on the challenges and upcoming issues of her role. It was like a support system, where I could test my thinking, work through some scenarios, and get some really good coaching. Sometimes we didn't need to talk for long, sometimes we needed more time. It built up my confidence and my competence at the same time.



**Guillermo Diaz, Jr.**  
Chairman, HITEC

I went to the Navy right out of high school, and my job was telecommunications, tech, and security. When I got out, I was standing in Silicon Valley where I had been stationed, looking around, and there was nobody like me—a veteran and Latino in tech. It felt lonely, but I decided to seek out people. I had the skills, but if I had not had the courage, confidence, and communication to do that, I would not be here. So, there's this mix of building skills, but also how we continue to build confidence in our culture.



**Omar Duque**  
President, HITEC

I'm born and raised in Chicago and the proud son of immigrants from Guatemala. I do not have a technology background but have always believed in the power of technology to create a better world. I studied journalism in college and have always had a passion for working with the Hispanic community. Prior to HITEC I ran the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce where we started a first-of-its-kind incubator for Hispanic tech startups. Today I'm proud of HITEC's work to accelerate the power and impact of Hispanic technology leaders from the classroom to the boardroom.

# Sources

1. [\*The Future of Jobs Report 2020\*](#), World Economic Forum, 10/2020.
2. [\*The Future of Jobs Report 2020\*](#), World Economic Forum, 10/2020.
3. [\*It's Learning. Just Not As We Know It\*](#), Accenture.
4. [\*TED: The Economics Daily\*](#), Bureau of Labor Statistics, 10/2/2019.
5. Kevin Dubina, "[\*Hispanics in the Labor Force: 5 Facts\*](#)," U.S. Department of Labor, 09/15/2021.
6. [\*Hispanic Foundation of Silicon Valley\*](#)
7. Richard Fry, Brian Kennedy, and Cary Funk, "[\*STEM Jobs See Uneven Progress in Increasing Gender, Racial and Ethnic Diversity\*](#)," Pew Research Center, 04/01/2021.
8. Jeffrey M. Humphreys, [\*The Multicultural Economy 2021\*](#), University of Georgia Selig Center for Economic Report, 2021.
9. [\*Accenture's 2022 Tech Vision\*](#)
10. [\*Analysis\*](#) of the Computing Research Association's [\*survey of Ph.D.-granting programs\*](#) finds just 2.4% of new U.S. resident Ph.D. graduates in artificial intelligence (a subset of those in computer science, computer engineering and information programs) were Black and just 3.2% were Hispanic in 2019.
11. Richard Fry, Brian Kennedy, and Cary Funk, "[\*STEM Jobs See Uneven Progress in Increasing Gender, Racial and Ethnic Diversity\*](#)," Pew Research Center, 04/01/2021.
12. Jordyn Holman, "[\*White People Are More Likely to Get the Raises They Ask For\*](#)," Bloomberg, 06/05/2018.
13. Bhutta, Neil, Andrew C. Chang, Lisa J. Dettling, and Joanne W. Hsu (2020). "[\*Disparities in Wealth by Race and Ethnicity in the 2019 Survey of Consumer Finances\*](#)," FEDS Notes. Washington: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, September 28, 2020.
14. [\*The Accenture Better to Belong research\*](#), 2021.

# About Accenture

Accenture is a global professional services company with leading capabilities in digital, cloud and security. Combining unmatched experience and specialized skills across more than 40 industries, we offer Strategy and Consulting, Technology and Operations services and Accenture Song—all powered by the world's largest network of Advanced Technology and Intelligent Operations centers. Our 710,000 people deliver on the promise of technology and human ingenuity every day, serving clients in more than 120 countries. We embrace the power of change to create value and shared success for our clients, people, shareholders, partners and communities.

**Visit us at [www.accenture.com](http://www.accenture.com)**

## **About the Research**

Accenture Research surveyed 26,000 workers and 1,023 CXOs between November 2021 and February 2022. Data was collected in 11 countries within four regions: North America, Europe, Asia Pacific, Latin America. The Accenture Global Skilling Survey 2022 includes responses from both employed and recently unemployed workers from 15 industries which include: Banking/Capital Markets, Healthcare, Leisure and Hospitality, Media and Entertainment, Professional and Business Services, Retail, Transportation, Public Service, Aerospace & Defense, Chemical, Industrial, Energy, Insurance, Natural Resources, and Life Sciences.

For the purposes of this report, we focused on a sample of 1,281 U.S.-based Hispanic American and Latinx professionals and 210 U.S.-based CXOs.

## **About Accenture Research**

Accenture Research creates thought leadership about the most pressing business issues organizations face. Combining innovative research techniques, such as data science led analysis, with a deep understanding of industry and technology, our team of 300 researchers in 20 countries publish hundreds of reports, articles and points of view every year. Our thought-provoking research developed with world leading organizations helps our clients embrace change, create value, and deliver on the power of technology and human ingenuity.

**Research Lead:** Reggie Romain

**Research Team:** Leila Yosef, Laurel Mikalouski, Sumreen Ahmad, Donovan Griggs, Laurie Henneborn

**Acknowledgements:** Kimberly Curney, Carolina Cardoso, Matthew Gomez, 30 Point, McGuire Research