



LEADERS OF COLOR NETWORK WINTER EVENT
ADVOCACY WEBINAR SERIES

Fernando M. Torres-Gil

Fernando M. Torres-Gil's multifaceted career spans the academic, professional, and policy arenas. He is a Professor of Social Welfare and Public Policy at UCLA, Director of the UCLA Center for Policy Research on Aging, and an Adjunct Professor of Gerontology at USC. He has served as Acting Dean and Associate Dean at the UCLA School of Public Affairs, and Chair of the Social Welfare Department.

Professor Torres-Gil has written or co-edited seven books and over 100 publications, including *The New Aging: Politics and Change in America* (1992) and *Aging, Health and Longevity in the Mexican-Origin Population* (2012). His most recent book (with J. Angel, 2019) examines *The Politics of a Majority-Minority Nation: Aging, Diversity and Immigration*. His academic contributions have earned him membership in the prestigious Academies of Public Administration, Gerontology, and Social Insurance. His research spans the important topics of health and long-term care, disability, entitlement reform, and the politics of aging.

Professor Torres-Gil is an accomplished academic and national leader in public policy. He has an impressive portfolio of public service and national and international recognition as a leading spokesperson on demographics, aging, and social policy. He earned his first presidential appointment in 1978 when President Jimmy Carter appointed him to the Federal Council on Aging. He was selected as a White House Fellow and served under Joseph Califano, then Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), and continued as a Special Assistant to the subsequent Secretary of HEW, Patricia Harris. He was appointed (with Senate Confirmation) by President Bill Clinton as the first-ever U.S. Assistant Secretary on Aging in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS, 1993-1996).

As the Clinton Administration's chief advocate on aging, Dr. Torres-Gil played a key role in promoting the importance of aging, long-term care and disability, community services for the elderly, and baby boomer preparation for retirement. He served under HHS Secretary Donna Shalala, managing the Administration on Aging and organizing the 1995 White House Conference on Aging. In addition, he served as a member of the President's Welfare Reform Working Group.

In 2010 Professor Torres-Gil received his third presidential appointment (with Senate Confirmation) when President Barack Obama appointed him as Vice Chair of the National Council on Disability, an independent federal agency that reports to the Congress and White House on federal matters related to disability policy. During his public service in Washington, D.C., he also served as Staff Director of the U.S. House Select Committee on Aging under his mentor, Congressman Edward R. Roybal. In 2013, he received the coveted John W. Gardner Legacy of Leadership Award from the White House Fellows Foundation and Association.

At the local level, Dr. Torres-Gil has served as Vice President of the Los Angeles City Planning Commission and as a member of the Harbor and Taxi Commissions for the city of Los Angeles. During the administration of Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, he served on the Board of Airport Commissioners. At the state level, he was appointed by former Governor Gray Davis to the Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Veterans' Homes; by former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger as a delegate to the 2005 White House Conference on Aging; and recently, appointed by Governor Gavin Newsom to an Advisory Committee developing a Master Plan for Aging.

Professor Torres-Gil has provided important leadership in philanthropy and nonprofit organizations including as a former board member for the Council on Foundations, Villers Foundation, AARP, The California Endowment, The National Steinbeck Center in Salinas, California, and the Los Angeles Chinatown Service Center. He currently serves on Boards serving the homeless (Step-Up), advocating for vulnerable elders (Justice in Aging), and addressing educational disparities (Alliance for a Better Community). He is Co-Chair of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine Forum on Aging, Disability, and Independence and previously served as a member of the Institute of Medicine (IOM) End-of-Life Committee (2012-2014).

Professor Torres-Gil, the son of migrant farm workers, was born and raised in Salinas, California. He earned his A.A. in Political Science at Hartnell Community College (1968), a B.A. with honors in Political Science from San Jose State University (1970), and an M.S.W. (1972) and Ph.D. (1976) in Social Policy, Planning, and Research from the Heller Graduate School in Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University.