Good morning.

I am honored to be the guest speaker for this Hispanic Heritage Month event! It is so important to celebrate our heritage and accomplishments, and to teach others about our different backgrounds. The Army has Soldiers hailing from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. Just like the country we serve, the Army has become a melting pot of diverse people who have united under one goal, and that is to protect the freedom of our fellow American citizens.

When I first heard that the theme of this year’s Hispanic Heritage Month is “Shaping the Bright Future of America”, I thought of how the Army shapes us as individuals, and how we in-turn can shape the future. With the discipline and skills we learn from the Army, we can improve ourselves and our communities- both in and out of the military. Whether you want to stay in for 20 more years, or transition to the civilian sector, I want you to take what you’ve learned here and shape a brighter future for all Americans.

I am grateful to serve in a diverse Army, and I believe that with diversity we have become a stronger fighting force. Hispanic-Americans come from many different backgrounds, and because of that we have so much to offer to our brothers and sisters in arms. Dating back to the Civil War, we have had a tremendous impact on the achievements of our military. Today, there are 1.2 million Hispanic-American Veterans, and I am proud to follow the lead of these patriots.

- provide examples of Hispanic American soldiers’ contributions to the Army from the Revolutionary war, Civil war, WWII, Korean War and Vietnam.

I want all of you take time today to remember those who have dedicated their lives to protecting fellow citizens of our country. It is also important to take time to appreciate your own accomplishments. Each day we continue to make the Army stronger through training, education, and personal development, and I thank each and every one of you for dedicating your time to protect the freedom of others.