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## MEET 3 EXELON ENGINEERS: COMMITTED TO POWERING EXELON'S PLANTS AND PEOPLE

These employees are changing our company, from supporting STEM education to their innovations at our generating plants and utilities.

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At Exelon, we make a point to recognize our employees who move us forward and do good work in their communities. To recognize **Hispanic Heritage Month**, we got to know three Exelon engineers: Gabriel Chavez, Heriberto Gonzalez and Laura García García, all leaders in both their field and their communities. Join us in celebrating their careers at Exelon by checking out their stories below.

### Integrating nuclear best practices and drawing on diverse talent



Thirteen years ago, Gabriel Chavez joined Exelon as an intern in Nuclear Fuels at Cantera. Today, he is senior manager of the company's Midwest dry cask storage organization, with expertise and knowledge critical to keeping our nuclear plants running safely and reliably. "When something goes wrong, I can fix it," he says.

During a recent trip to Exelon's newly acquired **James A. FitzPatrick Nuclear Power Plant** in New York, he helped implement the company's industry-leading management model for dry cask storage, which he helped develop for Midwest plants in 2012. This process guarantees that nuclear sites safely deal with spent fuel by creating space in spent fuel pools so that nuclear plants can continue with planned refueling outages. This transition was a heavy lift, but critical to safe plant operations.

"I'm proud the company has enough trust in my ability to help with technical issues and align the organization's plants," he says.

In addition to ensuring that Exelon's plants are operating at top safety standards, Chavez has also worked hard to build a diverse workforce. He held leadership positions and is now an advisory member with employee resource group Organization of Latinos at Exelon (OLE), as well as with the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE).

Through these groups, Chavez has focused on community outreach and mentors and recruits Latino students into STEM-related fields, as he firmly believes diverse talent is critical to improved business outcomes.

For the past eight years, he's also moderated the [Chicago Regional Science Bowl](#) and mentored kids from grade school through high school. He has led recruiting booths to draw potential engineers to Exelon through SHPE chapters at University of Illinois campuses in Chicago and Champaign.

Chavez estimates that after nearly a decade of interacting with and advising students, about a dozen have either earned internships or full-time jobs within Exelon.

"It's one thing to advance or be promoted yourself, but it's more rewarding to watch your mentees and friends do the same," Chavez says.

### Going above and beyond in the workplace and in the community



Soon after Heriberto Gonzalez first started at Exelon Generation as an engineer, he realized innovation was a foundation on which the company was built.

Gonzalez began his Exelon career at LaSalle County Generating Station as a Rapid Response engineer with limited nuclear plant experience under his belt, after graduating and moving from Puerto Rico.

Gonzalez quickly made his mark, spearheading a project that exponentially increased the plant's efficiency. During planned outages, it took crews several hours to remove the Main Steam System Relief Valves for testing and maintenance. But with Gonzalez's leadership and innovation, an engineering modification package that allowed the crews to replace the hardware with HydraNut bolts was completed. This cut removal and installation of the valves down to minutes.

More recently, Gonzalez has lead innovation at ComEd's Transmission Engineering group. Gonzalez found that the ComEd's data related to the transmission system operations was being documented on an outdated process that did not allowed for analytics and exploration of reliability improvements. To fix this, he created a set of innovative tools linked together to easily and reliably store, share and analyze the data to identify reliability improvement opportunities in the system. He later presented this at the 2017 ComEd Engineering Day and the [2017 Exelon Innovation Expo](#), which was met with great interest from ComEd's sister utilities.

"I am always looking for ways to improve and innovate in different aspects of the company, and it's allowed me to learn and accomplish more than just my day-to-day job," Gonzalez says.

Like Chavez, Gonzalez also finds impact and innovation outside his normal responsibilities through his involvement as the President of the Exelon SHPE chapter and Board Director of OLE. Through these employee resource groups, he notes that the most impactful event has been the [ComEd's Solar Spotlight](#), celebrated during Hispanic Heritage Month. Gonzalez and fellow Hispanic engineers developed the curriculum for the program and mentored local Hispanic students on building solar panels, engineering and problem solving.

"We try to get students motivated in STEM and pursuing higher education, and after these programs they are all excited and genuinely interested in them," Gonzalez says. "It's part of what SHPE and OLE do: support our community and develop our future STEM professionals."

While growing up, Gonzalez didn't have an engineering mentor or figure to follow, and although he excelled at math and science, he still feels lucky to have found his career at Exelon. To give back to his community, Gonzalez makes it a point to mentor the next generation of engineers.

"Now I that have the opportunity to mentor students, I take every opportunity to promote STEM careers, relate to them and to grow that passion for higher education," he says.

### **A passion for STEM and sharing it with others**



## Laura García García

### Grid Strategy & Analytics

#### ComEd



ComEd engineer Laura García García is at the forefront of Exelon's smart grid technology revolution. Over the next five years, Exelon has committed to investing \$25 billion into critical infrastructure and smart grid technology across the country.

"The industry is changing a lot, and there are a lot more changes coming in the next 10 years," García García, who is from Spain, says. "I love being part of it and knowing ComEd is trying to stay ahead of this stuff."

García García and her engineering department analyze and study different emerging technologies in order to evaluate the impact on the energy grid if implemented, such as smart inverters, which assist in controlling the output of solar generation and energy storage batteries.

She also dedicates her free time to smart grid research. García García has presented multiple papers at industry conferences and was published last year by the [International Council on Large Electric Systems \(CIGRE\)](#) for their Next Generation Network competition. She worked to determine the economic, reliability and resiliency improvements of microgrids, finding that customers, especially commercial and industrial ones, stand to gain economic benefits thanks to much fewer service interruptions.

Engineering is a true passion for García García, and she wants to share it with Hispanic students.

"It's something that I love about ComEd and Exelon: They give us a lot of opportunities to participate in promoting the importance of STEM fields for kids," she says.

She's volunteered with Solar Spotlight and mentored a team of girls in the [Ice Box Derby](#), an event where teams build and race their creations while learning valuable STEM lessons. While García García thinks that representation of Hispanics and women in the energy industry can certainly improve, she sees a commitment to change at Exelon and ComEd through their multiple community mentoring programs.

“We need to get out there and show more students — specifically Hispanics and women — our passion in STEM careers so we can have an even more diverse workforce,” García García says.

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