

ABEL CHAVEZ, Ph,D

Abel Antonio Chávez, Ph.D., is a university president, educator, and engineer whose career has focused on expanding educational opportunity, strengthening institutions, and connecting higher education to the communities and economies they serve.

Dr. Chávez currently serves as President of Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio, Texas. During his presidency, he has led significant institutional transformation focused on student success, financial strength, operational excellence, academic innovation, and strategic growth. His leadership has included strengthening student retention and completion, realigning the academic portfolio, advancing innovative academic offerings, eliminating the barriers to credential completion, expanding research and grant activity, securing transformational philanthropic support, and building partnerships with business, civic, and community leaders.

Previously, Dr. Chávez held executive and academic leadership positions at Western Colorado University. Earlier in his career, he worked as an engineer and project manager in the energy and industrial sectors.

The first in his family to graduate from college, Dr. Chávez experienced higher education as a nontraditional, commuter, adult, and working student, and as a parent pursuing his education while raising a family. His own educational journey began at a community college, where he earned an associate degree, followed by a B.S. in mechanical engineering, an MBA from the University of Houston, and a Ph.D. in civil engineering from the University of Colorado Denver. Those experiences shaped his conviction that higher education is the most reliable engine of economic mobility available to families, and his commitment to building institutions that make that mobility real for students, families, and communities.