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# **NAGC Names Experienced Education Leader To Be Next Executive Director**

## **M. René Islas Held Senior Position at Department of Education**

WASHINGTON (April 2, 2015) – The National Association for Gifted Children, the nation’s leading advocate for high-achieving and high-potential students, has announced M. René Islas as the organization’s new executive director, completing a nationwide search that began last summer.

Islas, 37, will take over as Executive Director beginning May 18. A former Special Assistant to the Secretary of Education and Chief of Staff in the office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Islas joins NAGC from Learning Forward, where he served as Senior Vice President responsible for the organization’s consulting arm as well as its federal and state policy agenda.

For several years before joining Learning Forward, Islas served as an external advisor to NAGC during his time as a Senior Vice President at B&D Consulting (now FaegreBD Consulting). In this role, Islas designed the organization’s public policy agenda.

“NAGC is excited to have a leader of the caliber of René join our organization as our next Executive Director. René is deeply knowledgeable and passionate about what we need to do as a nation to better serve our high-ability and high-potential students so that we can more fully develop our academic talent. He also understands well the larger education ecosystem, particularly the federal policy landscape, and will lead our organization ably for years to come,” said NAGC President Tracy L. Cross, Executive Director of the Center for Gifted Education at William & Mary.

Islas, an Arizona native, earned a Bachelor’s Degree from Whittier College and an MBA from Western Governor’s University.

“The combination of René’s breadth of knowledge and expertise in the education sector along with his business skills makes him the ideal candidate to lead NAGC at this time in our 60-plus year history,” said Paula Olszewski-Kubilius, a NAGC Past President and co-chair of the search committee. “The search committee is thrilled with our selection and looks forward to welcoming René on board next month.”