

## General Session

*Going for Gold: Finding Your Purpose*

**Laurie Hernandez**



Finding her **Purpose** at a young age, 2016 Olympic Gold Medalist **Laurie Hernandez** will share her story about growing up with the dream of becoming an Olympian and what it took to win gold. Janine Strafaci, an award-winning journalist, will moderate a discussion with Laurie about her loving family, her grandmother's care at Reformed Church Home, her rigorous training, her intense sacrifices, and her amazing triumphs. You will fall in love with and be mesmerized by America's newest sweetheart all over again.

Laurie Hernandez burst onto the Senior Elite gymnastics scene in 2016, just in time for the Rio Olympic Games. She accomplished her goal to make an Olympic Team, and earned a team gold medal and individual silver medal in the process! Laurie is known for her dazzling floor exercise routine where she has been nicknamed the “human emoji” for her outgoing facial expressions and for her grace and artistry on the balance beam.

Laurie is the first U.S. born Latina to make the U.S. team since 1984. Laurie credits her hard work, leadership skills, and her “never give up attitude” to her Mom, who was in the Army Reserves while Laurie was growing up. Since bringing home the Gold and Silver medals at the

2016 Rio Olympic Games, Laurie won the coveted Mirror Ball Trophy on *Dancing with the Stars* Season 23 in December 2016 and, in January 2017, her first book titled, *I Got This: To Gold and Beyond*, was published, hitting the *New York Times* Best Sellers list.