

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 a second generation American, as her grandparents are from Puerto Rico, making her 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 has gone on to win the coveted Mirror Ball Trophy on *Dancing with the Stars* Season 23 and her first book titled, *I Got This: To Gold and Beyond*, chronicling her journey thus far was published in January 2017, hitting the *New York Times* Best Sellers list.