

Brazoria, Comal, Guadalupe, Hays, Travis, Williamson

# La Voz **Newspaper**

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FREE /GRATIS

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# People in the News



## Jenny Sanchez Joins Texas Civil Rights Project as DFW Organizer

**Jenny is TCRP's DFW Organizer.** She works to advance civil rights and support communities across **North Texas** through advocacy and organizing. Prior to becoming the **DFW Organizer**, **Jenny** served as the organization's **Legislative Coordinator**.

Before joining **TCRP**, she worked as a **Legislative Aide** in the **Texas House of Representatives**, gaining first-hand experience in the policymaking process and supporting efforts that impacted communities across the state.

A proud **Dallas** native, **Jenny** later spent six years in **Austin** pursuing her undergraduate and graduate education at **The University of Texas at Austin**. She earned both a **Master of Social Work** and a **Master of Public Affairs**, equipping her with a strong foundation in public policy, advocacy, and community-centered practice.

Outside of her professional work, **Jenny** enjoys spending time outdoors with her chihuahua, enjoying time with family and friends, and scrapbooking in her free time.



## Dr. Miriam Solis Now An Associate Professor at UT Austin in Planning

**Miriam Solis, Ph.D., MCP**, is an **Associate Professor of Community and Regional Planning** at **The University of Texas at Austin** with Tenure. Her research draws on environmental justice theory and research to examine the role of environmental education and workforce development in the planning, design, and operation of urban infrastructure.

She is a community-based participatory researcher who frequently collaborates with nonprofit organizations and government agencies. **Dr. Solis** is a **2020-2022 UT Austin Humanities Institute Fellow** for her work on youth perspectives on racial justice and decarbonization.

**Dr. Solis** teaches courses on racism and the built environment. She also teaches practicums and research design, core courses in the **UT School of Architecture's Community and Regional Planning** graduate student curricula. Her 2020 practicum consisted of a partnership with **Austin Water** to provide analysis and recommendations on how to advance racial equity through the agency's policies and programs. The project received the **American Planning Association-Texas Award for Advancing Diversity and Social Justice**.

**Dr. Solis** is on the leadership team of **Planet Texas 2050**, UT's campus-wide grand challenge research initiative. She is also a faculty fellow of the **Institute for Urban Policy Research & Analysis**, a faculty affiliate of the **Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies**, and a board member of the **Center for American Architecture and Design**. She is a former member of the **City of Austin's Climate Equity Plan Sustainable Buildings** committee.

Raised in **California's Central Valley**, **Dr. Solis** is a first-generation college graduate and the proud daughter of working-class **Mexican** immigrants. She received her doctorate in **City and Regional Planning**, as well as undergraduate degrees in **Ethnic Studies** and **Geography**, from the **University of California, Berkeley**. She also holds a **Master of City Planning** from the **Massachusetts Institute of Technology**. Prior to her faculty appointment, **Dr. Solis** was a **Robert and Patricia Switzer Foundation Environmental Fellow**, and worked for the cities of **San Francisco**, **New York**, and **Richmond, CA**.



## Professor Victor Morales Makes Parents Proud in La Guella, Texas

The following write up is from Benito Saenz, papa de Dr. Victor Saenz

### So Proud of My Son Victor

My son, **Dr. Victor Saenz (PhD)**, has been a professor at **The University of Texas at Austin** for about 20 years.

He serves as the **Associate Dean for Student Success, Community Engagement and Administration** in the **College of Education** and as the **L. D. Haskew Centennial Professor in Public School Administration** in the **Department of Educational Leadership and Policy** at **The University of Texas at Austin**.

He also holds courtesy appointments with the **LBJ School of Public Affairs**, the **Center for Mexican American Studies**, the **Department of Mexican American and Latina/o Studies**, the **Irma Rangel Public Policy Institute**, the **Institute for Urban Policy Research & Analysis**, and the **UCLA Higher Education Research Institute**.

During the last few years, **Victor** has been teaching a class during the summer in **Puebla, Mexico**. This summer, he will teach in **Spain**. He and his students will visit **Barcelona, Madrid, Toledo, Sevilla** and **Córdoba**. In addition, they will visit museums, churches and other historical sites. They will be in **Spain** for about four weeks.



## Gaby Hurtado Joins Salsaña Public Relation Shop in Austin, Texas

**Saldaña Public Relations** is PROUD to introduce a new TEAM Member, **Gaby Hurtado**, 2026 Summer Professional Intern.

**Gaby** is a sophomore student at **Texas Christian University** pursuing a Marketing degree at the **Neeley School of Business**. Born and raised in **Austin, Texas**, she is excited to use her creative storytelling to help brands form meaningful connections with their audience.

She is passionate about her volunteer work and supporting women, children, and those experiencing homelessness through her service. One of her most meaningful experiences was leading a 6-week fundraising campaign for the **Leukemia & Lymphoma Society**, where her team raised over \$40,000 by engaging the **Austin** community. In this campaign, she was recognized as Team Member of the Year after raising the highest amount of funds among all candidates, personally raising over \$15,000 to support childhood cancer.

In her free time, she enjoys baking and hosted bake sales across **Austin**, built relationships with local businesses and utilized corporate donation matching to expand the campaign's impact. At **Texas Christian University** she is involved in her sorority, **Alpha Chi Omega**, where her fundraising efforts include annual support of the **Real Chic Women Fashion Show** that donates all proceeds to the **Women's Center of Tarrant County**. In a combined effort from the ladies of the **Iota Lambda** chapter, they have raised over \$1,000,000 to promote domestic violence awareness.

# PRODUCTION

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Por cualquier pregunta sobre el contenido de este periodico, llamanos en 512-944-4123 o por email: lavoztexas@gmail.com

## Pensamientos

Buenas noches otra vez a La Voz Newspaper. Que te puedo decir, los run-offs se van a llevar a cabo el 26 de mayo. Parece que este año mucha gente estan poniendo atención a politica. Ya cuando los precios del gasoline pegan \$4.00 el gallon, entonces si van a pegar de gritos.

### Cambiando de tema

Decidimos incluir un articulo que se llama, *Why Black Americans should celebrate el Cinco de Mayo*. Some may agree and others might not. But what is important in this story to understand that world events can shape us in ways we could never have imagined. Check out the story on page 8 and 9.

The other story we wish to call to your attention is the one on page16 and 17. The young lady who is organizing this project believes there is potential in getting to a younger audience sooner than later. If after reading her interview, you feel so inclined, give her a call and ask how you can help.

### Cambiando de tema

And our last comment is reserved **James Harrington**, the retired **Civil Rights attorney** who founded the **Texas Texas Civil Rights Project**. As a former attorney for **Cesar Chavez**, **Rev. Harrington** offers his views and suggests there may be more to this tory than meets the eye.

## Editorial



**Alfredo Santos c/s**  
Editor & Publisher



## THE FARM WORKER MOVEMENT MARCHES ON

### Holy Family Catholic Church

An inclusive & compassionate  
CATHOLIC community

Rev. Dr. Jayme Mathias  
M.A., M.B.A., M.Div., M.S., Ph.D.  
Senior Pastor



9:00 a.m. Dialogue on Scripture & Spirituality  
10:00 a.m. English Mariachi Mass  
10:45 a.m. Breakfast & Mariachi  
12:00 p.m. Spanish Mariachi Mass

9322 FM 812 Austin, Texas 78719  
From Highway 183 going South, turn onto FM 812

For more information: (512) 826-0280  
Welcome Home!



# 1957

Average Income \$ 5,000  
Cost of a New Home \$ 12,220

Price of Milk	Gallon of Milk	\$ .50
Dozen Eggs		\$ .57
Price of Gasoline		\$ .30
Hamburger (McDonalds)		\$ .15
Price of a New Car (Chevrolet Bel Air)		\$2,300.00
Dow Jones Avweage		\$475.99

President of the United States  
Vice-President of the United States

Dwight D. Eisenhower  
Richard M. Nixon

By Jim Harrington

Over the years, I have written many op-ed pieces about **César Chávez**. This is one I wish I didn't have to write. The recent revelations about him are as shocking as they are painful. I was his **Texas** lawyer for 18 years before he died and am stunned. When I heard the news, I would wake up at night, hoping it had been a bad dream. But it wasn't. I grieve and pray for the victims. My heart goes out to them.

Those of us who joined the farm worker movement and gave much of our lives to it must come out of this nightmare with the resolve to keep the movement going. We must move beyond our sense of betrayal to remember that what we worked for, and continue to work for, is the cause of justice, the cause of justice for farm workers and all those whom our American system oppresses. The disclosures about **César** will not deter us a bit but will add a heavy burden to our shoulders.

The movement is about people. The farm workers' victory in **Texas** of changing the laws that denied them workers' compensation, unemployment benefits, and the right to know about dangerous pesticides in the fields—and their success in banning the backbreaking short-handled hoe, bringing access to toilets and drinking water in the fields, and organizing politically—was the struggle of poor people who joined together and shouted, "This is enough! It is time to change! ¡Ya basta!"

History recognizes **César's** organizing skills and his dedication to workers' rights. But we must acknowledge him as a flawed person. We must keep firm in our minds that, even though he was the leader of a movement for justice that brought enormous change and inspired people worldwide to join the struggle, that the movement was by the people and for the people, and remains by the people and for the people.

The red-and-white **United Farm Workers** flag with its black Aztec eagle will always be a symbol of respect for those who lost their lives, the four martyrs of the movement, and the hundreds of thousands of workers and supporters, who shored up the struggle and were its bedrock.

The picture of the struggle for me is that of **Genoveva Puga**, whose son was crushed to death by a forklift malfunction in an orange grove, standing next to **Governor Mark White**, holding her **UFW** flag, at the **la Virgen de San Juan** shrine in 1984, as he signed the law extending workers compensation to injured farm laborers who had been denied that benefit, which all other workers had for 70 years.

**Genoveva Puga** gave her heart to changing the law so that nobody else had to suffer the pain that her son's family and his two little kids had to endure. **Genoveva** was one of so many like her with whom I was honored to work. That is the struggle we need to treasure, all the while admitting the defects of our leaders, who, like all humans, can be flawed.

When we marched with **César**, when we fasted with him, when we applauded his words, we were not doing it for him, but for all those who have suffered and still suffer. We will not stop that struggle, God help us. We will continue the struggle against the country's powers of darkness that strive to diminish workers' rights and undercut people's fierce struggle for justice. They try to distract us from their own complicity in the evil of injustice. The fight continues. We shall overcome!

I write this to honor and lift up all who have participated in the fight for justice, all those who have made life better for farm workers, and all those who have taken inspiration from their movement, in all walks of life, for the benefit of our larger society. ¡Adelante!

Harrington is the retired founder of the Texas Civil Rights Project.

## CELEBRATE 5 DE MAYO WITH MARIACHI & PIÑATA WORKSHOP AT THE ARTISAN MERCADO

**Austin, TX-** Celebrate 5 de mayo, listen to bilingual singer-songwriter Vanessa Cherry and make a piñata at the free **Artisan Mercado Grand Opening** on Saturday, May 2 at 506 Congress Avenue in downtown Austin.

The 2026 indoor and air conditioned art market will operate from 10 a.m to 5 p.m. the first and third Saturday from May through December. The dates include May 2, 16, June 6, 20; July 4, 18; August 1, 15; September 5, 19; October 3, 17; November 7, 21 and Dec. 5, 19.

The first market this year will commemorate **Cinco de Mayo**, the **1862 Battle of Puebla** when Mexican troops defeated the French. The battle has special significance for Texans since it was led by **General Ignacio Zaragoza Seguín**, born in **Goliad, Texas**.

Throughout its 9-year history, more than 60 local vendors have participated in the market which has called **Congress Avenue** its home at various locations including **Mexic-Arte Museum, Frost Bank Tower, Old Bakery and Emporium, La Peña Gallery** and now the **Downtown Austin Alliance Activation Space**. **Claudio López**, jewelry designer and owner of **Athena Silversmith**, and his wife, **Irma Orozco**, a bilingual communication consultant, began the art market in 2016. After closing for two years following the Coronavirus Pandemic, the couple reactivated the market in 2024.

Interested vendors and artists, craftspersons and musicians can apply for exhibit space or to conduct a workshop by sending three images to [info.artisanmercadoatx@gmail.com](mailto:info.artisanmercadoatx@gmail.com). *"We want the community to have access to an affordable space for cultural programming that can be attended by locals and tourists,"* stated **López**. For details on renting the arts and craft and cultural presentation spaces, call at 512 660-1845.



## CELEBRE EL 5 DE MAYO CON MARIACHI Y TALLER DE PIÑATAS EN EL ARTISAN MERCADO

**Austin, TX—** Celebre el 5 de mayo, escuche a la cantautora bilingüe Vanessa Cherry y construya una piñata en la gran inauguración de manera gratuita del Artisan Mercado el sábado 2 de mayo en el 506 de Congress Avenue, en el centro de Austin. Este mercado de arte de 2026, ubicado en un espacio interior con aire acondicionado, operará de 10 a.m. a 5 p.m. el primer y tercer sábado de cada mes, desde mayo hasta diciembre. Las fechas incluyen: 2 y 16 de mayo; 6 y 20 de junio; 4 y 18 de julio; 1 y 15 de agosto; 5 y 19 de septiembre; 3 y 17 de octubre; 7 y 21 de noviembre; y 5 y 19 de diciembre.

El primer mercado de este año se conmemorará el **Cinco de Mayo**, la **Batalla de Puebla** de 1862 en la que las tropas mexicanas derrotaron a los franceses. La batalla tiene un significado especial para los texanos ya que fue liderada por el **General Ignacio Zaragoza Seguín**, nacido en **Goliad, Texas**.

Durante la gran inauguración de esta novena temporada, Cherry, fundadora del mariachi femenino Las Corporales, ofrecerá una serenata a los asistentes de 11 a.m. a 12 p.m. mientras que los visitantes disfrutarán de café y pan dulce mexicano y posteriormente, de 12 a 2 p.m., los asistentes podrán aprender a fabricar una piñata tradicional en un taller dirigido por **Kelly Miller**, del negocio "Precious Planet", creadora de regalos de origami y artesanías. El taller es gratuito, aunque se cobrará una cuota nominal por los materiales. Reserve su lugar en: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2026-artisan-mercado-crafts-latinx-cultural-events-tickets-1986904089618?aff=oddtcreator>.

Los vendedores, artistas, artesanos y músicos interesados pueden solicitar un espacio de exhibición o proponer un taller enviando tres imágenes a [info.artisanmercadoatx@gmail.com](mailto:info.artisanmercadoatx@gmail.com). *"Queremos que la comunidad tenga acceso a un espacio asequible para programación cultural a la que puedan asistir tanto locales como turistas",* declaró **López**. Para más detalles sobre el alquiler de espacios para artesanías y presentaciones culturales, llame al 512 660-1845.



**Left: Councilwoman Vanessa Fuentes** is grateful with **American Heart Association and American Heart Texas** in Austin. *"I'm so HONORED and thrilled to be recognized as a 2026 Heart of Austin Honoree by American Heart Association - Texas! This is a full-circle moment for me. My time with the American Heart Association shaped my deep passion for health access. And it's what inspired me to run for office in 2020, to help close the health gaps across Austin and make sure your zip code doesn't determine your life expectancy. Thank you to the American Heart Association for this recognition, and for over a century of fighting for healthy hearts!"*

# Why Should African Americans Celebrate Cinco de Mayo?

## Three Questions

### What is Cinco de Mayo?

Why is it celebrated here in the United States of America?

Why should Black Americans celebrate this holiday?

In a nutshell, **Cinco de Mayo** is about a fight that took place in **Mexico** in 1862. On this date, the 5th of May, a rag tag army of Mexicans, led by a general who was born in **Texas**, defeated the most powerful army in the world in the small town of **Puebla**.

The French, who had come to **Mexico** to “collect” on an overdue debt were so shocked that a bunch of Mexicans, hiding behind rocks and trees, could inflict so much damage, that they were forced to retreat and regroup. The French came back and not only took **Puebla**, but all of **Mexico** and ruled the country for several years. That is the basic story.

Next question – Why is **Cinco de Mayo** celebrated in the **United States of America**? According to **Dr. David E. Hayes-Bautista** in a paper published by the **UCLA Center for the Study of Latino Health and Culture**, the origin of **el Cinco de Mayo** in the **United States**, and the modern American focus on that day, first started in **California** in the 1860s.

**Bautista** writes, “Far up in the gold country town of **Columbia** (now Columbia State Park) Mexican miners were so overjoyed at the news that they spontaneously fired off rifle shots and fireworks, sang patriotic songs and made impromptu speeches.”



The 2007 **UCLA** paper notes that “The holiday, which has been celebrated in **California** continuously since 1863, is virtually ignored in **Mexico**. **Cinco de Mayo** is important to **California** because it was invented here,” said **Hayes-Bautista**, who is the director of the center. “It provides a collective identity for all Latinos, whether they were born here in **California** or immigrated from **Mexico**, **Central America** or **South America**. It binds them together in an identity – it is as important to Latinos as the **Alamo** is to **Anglo Texans**.”

The paper by **Hayes-Bautista** and co-author **Cynthia L. Chamberlin**, the center’s historian, appeared in the **Southern California Quarterly** and is titled “**Cinco de Mayo’s First Seventy-Five Years in Alta California: From Spontaneous Behavior to Sedimented Memory, 1862 to 1937**.” **Los Angeles, California** has

had an annual **Cinco de Mayo** celebration for the past 138 years. In **Tucson, Arizona**, school board minutes state: “A new holiday was inaugurated in 1910, two days being given off May 5 and 6 for the Mexican celebration “**Cinco de Mayo**.”

In the May 1, 1913 issue of **La Prensa**, a Spanish language weekly in **San Antonio, Texas**, a picture of **General Ignacio Zaragoza** is on the cover, and a poem about him can be found on the literary page along with an interview with a veterans of the battle.

In the May 1, 1913 issue of **La Prensa**, a Spanish language weekly in **San Antonio, Texas**, a picture of **General Ignacio Zaragoza** is on the cover, and a poem about him can be found on the

literary page along with an interview with a veterans of the battle.

In **Uvalde, Texas**, the **Uvalde Leader-News** carried a short article on the celebration of **Cinco de Mayo** in 1922. In **Austin, Houston and Waco, Texas**, Mexicanos were celebrating **Cinco de Mayo** as early as 1935.

Now for the last question, why should **Black Americans** celebrate an incident that took place in **Mexico**? To answer this question properly we have to go into a little more detail.

Let us start with why the French had sailed across the **Atlantic** to collect on a debt. Recall that **Mexico** had lost almost half its territory to the **United States** in the **Mexican American War** 1846-1848.

Afterwards, internal politics, personalities and conflicts put further stress on the country. Three costly years of civil war over the implementation of the **Mexican Constitution** of 1857 had just ended. The Constitution’s defenders, the **Liberals**, defeated the **Conservative** opposition, with both sides taking expensive loans. Once in power, the **Liberal** government faced a severe fiscal crisis.

On July 17, 1861, **President Benito Juárez** ordered the suspension of foreign debt payments for a period of two years, citing the great financial difficulties of the country and promising to continue repayment after this moratorium.



ABOVE: Benito Juárez

In response, **Great Britain, Spain and France** signed a tripartite agreement and sent military forces to take the customhouse in the port of **Veracruz** as a means of securing repayment. By January, 1862, all three nations landed troops outside **Veracruz**.

The intention was to force **Mexico** into negotiations. Unfortunately, not all the parties were concerned solely with debt repayment. **Napoleon III** sought to establish a monarchy in **Mexico** to restore French influence in the Western hemisphere. This idea was not new. As early as 1844, the

**French Minister to Mexico** drew up plans for the invasion and the imposition of a French prince. **Napoleon’s** goals were further encouraged by **Conservative** exiles, who saw a monarchy as a means of preserving their

privileges, and the support of the surviving **Conservative** opposition.

When it became clear that the French had no intention of leaving **Mexico** after successful debt



# ¿Por qué La Raza Negra Debe Celebrar el Cinco de Mayo?

negotiations, the tripartite agreement was dissolved and the **British** and **Spanish** forces withdrew from **Mexico**.

The **United States** with **Abraham Lincoln** as President, was in the midst of the **Civil War**. But he and his administration were following the events in **Mexico** with great concern. Given the secession of the **South**, European intervention in **Mexico** might have led to a more active French role in the **American Civil War**.

**Napoleon III** had sympathies toward the **Confederacy** and the creation of a hostile French puppet state would affect **Northern** foreign policy and war-time strategy. Though the **United States** took steps to organize a peaceful mediation,

**Napoleon III** had sympathies toward the **Confederacy** and the creation of a hostile French puppet state would affect **Northern** foreign policy and wartime strategy. Though the **United States** took steps to organize a peaceful mediation, the administration remained worried about antagonizing the French. Thus, the **United States** took no active role in aiding **Mexico**, even refusing to sell arms for its defense.

The French army then marched on the capital. With only the moral support of the **Latin American** nations, **Mexico** confronted the possible destruction of its national sovereignty and its absorption into the French colonial empire. The French forces were experienced, trained and well equipped. There was little doubt about the outcome of a battle.



French commander, **General Lorencez**, contemptuously wrote on April 26, "We have over the Mexicans such superiority of race, organization, discipline, morality..." Still, **Mexico** was determined to offer total resistance. "We must now prove to **France** and to the entire world that we are worthy to be free," wrote **President Benito Juárez**.

## The Battle of Puebla

**Mexico's** defense was entrusted to **Ignacio Zaragoza**, a young 33-year old **Liberal** general. After maneuvering for position, **Zaragoza** decided to defend the city of **Puebla**, **Mexico's** second largest city. As the last defensible city en route to the capital, it offered only improvised fortifications. Soldiers took up hasty defensive positions and prepared for the worst. Poorly armed, these 4,850 Mexicans awaited the arrival of 6,500 French.

On the night of May 3, **Zaragoza**

told his staff that "We must promise to die in our positions, given that it is illogical to pretend to achieve some victory with armaments so inferior to the enemy's; but we will try ... causing him the greatest amount of damage."

In the early morning of May 5, French infantry battalions approached the defensive positions with little worry and expectations of a quick defeat. Demonstrating his confidence in an easy victory, **General Lorencez** formed two columns of troops and immediately ordered a frontal assault against the two major Mexican positions. Taking advantage of this reckless attack, **Zaragoza** skillfully redeployed his troops to blunt the direct French assaults.

Charging in mass toward Mexicans, the disciplined French troops expected the defenders to flee because of fear and panic. Instead, the trim red and blue uniforms of the French were of no protection against the concentrat-

ed fire of old muskets.

During the entire day, the French attacked three times in this manner, incredulous at the amount of resistance. Each time they were forced back by the Mexican defenders, leaving the field strewn with their wounded.

After the final assault **Colonel Porfirio Díaz** disobeyed orders and counterattacked, forcing the French withdrawal. By 5 p.m., **General Lorencez** recognized his defeat and retreated to **Veracruz**.

Nearly five hundred French soldiers were left behind, either dead or bleeding in the Mexican trenches. Immediately, **France** deployed 30,000 additional troops. Now committed to establishing a monarchy, the French army eventually defeated the Mexicans at **Puebla** in 1863. However, the **Battle of Puebla** delayed French occupation by a year. During this

respite, **Mexico** organized and prepared for this war, which would finally end with a French withdrawal in 1867.



ABOVE: Napoleon III

The 1862 French defeat eliminated their possible aid to the **Confederacy**. By the time of the coronation of **Napoleon's** representative, **Archduke Maximilian**, and the French consolidation in 1864, the fighting in the **Civil War** shifted to the **North's** advantage. Any French assistance would be politically unwise and of limited value to the losing **South**.



In sum, the Mexicans were able to tie up and keep the French busy so that they did not have the time or resources to aid the **Confederacy**. Some have speculated that had the French not been tripped up by the Mexicans, they would have helped the **South** and the outcome of the **Civil War** may have turned out differently. And if it did, the question of slavery may have been debated and delayed for many years to come. The **Battle of Puebla**, and the refusal of the Mexicans to give up is why **Black Americans** should also celebrate **El Cinco de Mayo**.

# Election Results from March 2026 Primary

## March 3rd 2026 Democratic Primary

Candidate Name	Party	Early Votes	Total Votes	Percent
PATRICIA ABREGO	DEM	78,513	128,632	5.84%
JOSE NAVARRO BALBUENA	DEM	39,230	65,826	2.99%
CHRIS BELL	DEM	146,637	216,787	9.84%
BOBBY COLE	DEM	73,011	112,675	5.11%
CARLTON W. HART	DEM	39,479	63,278	2.87%
<b>GINA HINOJOSA</b>	<b>DEM</b>	<b>888,878</b>	<b>1,289,576</b>	<b>58.52%</b>
ZACH VANCE	DEM	35,495	58,753	2.67%
ANGELA "TIAANGIE" VILLES CAZ	DEM	89,289	150,752	6.84%
ANDREW WHITE	DEM	77,782	117,392	5.33%
<b>Race Total</b>		<b>2,203,671</b>		



SOURCE: Texas Secretary of State website

## March 3rd 2026 Republican Primary

Candidate Name		Early Votes	Total Votes	Percent
<b>GREG ABBOTT (I)</b>	<b>REP</b>	<b>1,133,125</b>	<b>1,764,924</b>	<b>81.83%</b>
R.F. "BOB" ACHGILL	REP	5,617	9,119	0.42%
EVELYN BROOKS	REP	27,796	44,142	2.05%
PETE "DOC" CHAMBERS	REP	140,279	240,640	11.16%
CHARLES ANDREW CROUCH	REP	8,961	15,405	0.71%
ARTURO ESPINOSA	REP	14,166	23,444	1.09%
MARK V. GOLOBY	REP	6,502	10,991	0.51%
KENNETH HYDE	REP	8,707	14,941	0.69%
STEPHEN SAMUELSON	REP	6,656	10,864	0.5%
RONNIE TULLOS	REP	6,305	10,352	0.48%
NATHANIEL WELCH	REP	6,883	12,057	0.56%
<b>(I) - Incumbent Race Total</b>		<b>2,156,879</b>		

SOURCE: Texas Secretary of State website

The two tables on this page provide a quick look at the election results from the March 3rd, 2026 Primary Election in the Governor's race. There were a total of 9 candidates who ran under the **Democratic** banner. There were a total of 11 candidates who ran under the **Republican** banner.

**Gina Hinajosa** took around 58% of the vote in her party's primary while **Governor Abbott** managed to win around 80% of the vote in his party's primary. The last time a Democrat held the office of Governor of the State of Texas was in 1991.



# Election Results from March 2026 Primary for Selected Electoral Contests in Texas

## Travis County Comissioner Precinct 4 Democratic Primary

Candidate	Votes	Percent
George Morales III	14,516	36.9%
Susanna Ledesma-Woody	14,040	35.7%
Ofelia Maldonado Zapata	8,263	21.0%
Gavino Fernandez Jr.	2,507	6.4%

George Morales III and Susanna Ledesma-Woody have advanced to a runoff.

SOURCE: Travis County Clerk's Office

## U.S. Senator Statewide Democratic Primary

Candidate	Early Votes	Total Votes	Percent
JASMINE CROCKETT	715,745	1,071,900	46.22%
AHMAD R. HASSAN	19,370	30,875	1.33%
JAMES TALARICO	799,425	1,216,412	52.45%
Race Total		2,319,187	

SOURCE: Texas Secretary of State Office

## Travis County Constable, Precinct 4 Democratic Primary

Candidate	Votes	Percent
Gabriel Padilla	15,654	76.5%
Al Saenz	4,815	23.5%

Precinct 4 - Unexpired Term, Democratic Primary

SOURCE: Travis County Clerk's Office

## U.S. Senator Statewide Republican Primary

Candidate	Early Votes	Total Votes	Percent
JOHN O. ADEFOPE	4,955	9,284	0.43%
ANNA BENDER	14,194	24,167	1.12%
VIRGIL JOHN			
BIERSCHWALE	5,152	9,035	0.42%
SARA CANADY REP	16,005	26,355	1.22%
JOHN CORNYN (I)	597,367	910,382	42.01%
WESLEY HUNT	176,813	293,250	13.53%
GULREZ "GUS" KHAN	9,634	15,873	0.73%
KEN PAXTON	546,712	878,564	40.54%

(I) - Incumbent Race Total 2,166,910 Spacing

SOURCE: Texas Secretary of State Office

## State Representative District 49 Democratic Primary

Candidate	Early Votes	Total Votes	Percent
KIMMIE ELLISON	1,371	2,419	6%
MONTSERRAT GARIBAY	8,739	13,349	33%
GIGS HODGES	1,642	2,855	7%
ROBIN JENNIFER LERNER	2,037	3,079	8%
JOSH REYNA	2,150	3,586	9%
SAM SLADE	564	1,057	3%
KATHIE TOVO	7,792	11,448	28%
SHENGHAO "DANIEL" WANG	1,685	2,760	7%
Race Total		40,553	

SOURCE: Texas Secretary of State Office

### Primary Run-off

## State Board of Education, District 5

Candidate	Early Votes	Total Votes	Percent
STEPHANIE LIMON BAZAN	31,892	49,530	21%
ALLISON BUSH	57,905	83,852	36%
ABIGAIL GRAY	20,227	32,477	14%
KEVIN JACKSON	21,265	32,269	14%
NETO LONGORIA	15,609	25,220	11%
VICTOR SAMPSON	8,156	12,492	5%

Race Total 235,840 Spacing

SOURCE: Texas Secretary of State Office

Last Day to Register to Vote: Monday, April 27, 2026

Last Day to Apply for Ballot By Mail: Friday, May 15, 2026

Early Voting Starts: Monday, May 18, 2026

Early Voting Ends: Friday, May 22, 2026

Election Day: Tuesday, May 26, 2026



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**En caso de apagón, sepa qué hacer.**

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**Saludos a todos este Cinco de Mayo**


**RE-ELECT**

**Laurie**  
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**FOR DISTRICT JUDGE**


Full political advertisement by the candidate

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**Feliz Cinco de Mayo**



**Lulu Flores**  
State Representative ★ HD 51

Pol. Ad. Paid for by Lulu Flores Campaign P.O. Box 40969 Austin, TX 78704



WINNING POSTER DESIGN BY: RUDY VALDEZ

# The 44th Annual Tejano Conjunto Festival

**THURSDAY  
MAY 14**

**ROYAL PALACE  
BALLROOM**

3506 SW Military Dr.  
SA TX 78211

*Free Seniors  
Conjunto Dance*

10:00am - Bene Medina  
Y Su Conjunto Águila  
11:00am - Epi Martínez  
and Friends

**FRIDAY  
MAY 15**

**ROSEDALE PARK**

303 Dartmouth SA TX 78237  
Gates open at 3:30pm

4:45pm - Opening Ceremonies/  
Poster Contest Winners  
5:00pm - Jesse Pérez Y Sus Compadres Alegres  
6:00pm - Los Tellez  
7:00pm - Santiago Garza Y La Naturaleza  
8:00pm - South Texas Homies  
9:00pm - Rubén De La Cruz Y Su Conjunto  
10:00pm - Los García Brothers  
11:00pm - Los Fantasmas Del Valle

**SATURDAY  
MAY 16**

**ROSEDALE PARK**

303 Dartmouth SA TX 78237  
Gates open at 11:00am

12:00pm - Donna High School  
Conjunto Ensemble  
12:30pm - Rafael Cantú Jr. High School  
Conjunto Ensemble  
1:00pm - Texas Best Middle School  
Conjunto Champions  
1:30pm - Texas Best High School  
Conjunto Champions  
2:00pm - Elijah Ezequiel Y Los Conjunto Addictz  
3:00pm - Fruity Villarreal Y Los Mavericks  
4:00pm - J. Castillo Y Los All Stars  
5:00pm - Rubén Garza Y Su Conjunto  
6:00pm - Los Tremendos Y Reunion  
7:00pm - Los Cucuys De Rodney Rodríguez  
8:00pm - Los Monarcas De Pete Y Mario Díaz  
9:00pm - Da Krazy Pimpz  
10:00pm - Lázaro Perez  
11:00pm - Ricky Naranjo Y Los Gamblers

**SUNDAY  
MAY 17**

**ROSEDALE PARK**

303 Dartmouth SA TX 78237  
Gates open at 11:00am

12:00 - 12:45pm - Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center Student Showcase  
12:50 - 1:05pm - Conjunto Heritage Taller Student Showcase  
1:10 - 1:30pm - Edison High School Conjunto Ensemble  
1:35 - 1:55pm - Southside High School Conjunto Los Cardenales  
2:00pm - Stevie Vavages & Waila Mumsigo  
3:00pm - DeVozión  
4:00pm - Los Estrellas De Oro  
5:00pm - Conjunto Cats  
6:00pm - Chente Barrera Y Taconazo ft. Juan P. Moreno  
7:00pm - Joel Guzmán and Sarah Foxx Y Conjuntazzo  
8:00pm - Max Baca Y Los Texmaniacs  
**8:40 - 9:55pm - Special International**

**Flaco Jiménez Tribute**

hosted by Juan Tejeda featuring:

Santiago Jiménez Jr.  
Dwayne Verheyden  
(Netherlands)  
Miguel Pérez  
(Spain)  
Linda Escobar

Gill Jiménez  
Honorio Imamura  
(Japan)  
Antonio Tanguma  
(Mexico)  
Arturo Jiménez

**3-DAY WEEKEND PASS...\$50**

**FRIDAY SINGLE DAY...\$20**

**SATURDAY SINGLE DAY...\$25**

**SUNDAY SINGLE DAY...\$15**

**CHILDREN 12&UNDER...FREE**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**CALL 210-271-3151 or [Guadalupeculturalarts.org](http://Guadalupeculturalarts.org)**



# In the Community



This past weekend, TAMACC's Leadership Tejas cohort gathered in Waco for an engaging and impactful training experience. We wrapped up the weekend

LATINO POWER FUND VIRTUAL TOWN HALL | APRIL 14 AT 9 AM PST

## ROAD TO THE 2030 CENSUS: HOW LATINO COMMUNITIES CAN PREPARE FOR THE COUNT

LATINOCF.ORG/EVENTS

*Si Se Puede - Stronger Together - Siempre Adelante*

Elect  
**Diana Olvedo-Karau**

For  
**Uvalde County Commissioner Precinct 2**

# En la comunidad

**RIGHT;** Bertha Rendon Ortiz is with Maricela Benites and 13 others La LUCHA We been fighting this monster of TX DOT for years as you can see the transformation of East of IH-35 artbreaking & DEVASTATING to our Community! City the leadership & City Council Members, Travis County Commissioners Court are responsible for the environmental impact this will have on Sanchez Elementary and our neighborhood us the residents this devastation the exit to Holly is terrible the detours, construction, pollution, noise where are the constructio



ABOVE: J.R. Gonzales and friends at va community meeting.



# Comisión de Calidad Ambiental del Estado de Texas



## MODIFICADO AVISO DE RECIBO DE LA SOLICITUD Y EL INTENTO DE OBTENER PERMISO PARA LA CALIDAD DEL AGUA

### PERMISO PROPUESTO NO. WQ0016961001

**SOLICITUD.** MP2K II, LLC, 2202 Buckholt Street, Pearland, Texas 77581, ha solicitado a la Comisión de Calidad Ambiental del Estado de Texas (TCEQ) para el propuesto Permiso No. WQ0016961001 (EPA I.D. No. TX 0149144) del Sistema de Eliminación de Descargas de Contaminantes de Texas (TPDES) para autorizar la descarga de aguas residuales tratadas en un volumen que no sobrepasa un flujo promedio diario de 60,000 galones por día. La planta estará ubicada aproximadamente 2,200 pies noreste de la intersección de la calle Cole Industrial Boulevard y State Highway 35 en el Condado de Brazoria, Texas 77511. La ruta de descarga estará del sitio de la planta a un afluente sin nombre, de allí a New Bayou, de allí a Chocolate Bayou Tidal. La TCEQ recibió esta solicitud el 24 de marzo de 2026. La solicitud para el permiso estará disponible para leerla y copiarla en La Biblioteca Pública de Alvin, 105 South Gorden Street, Alvin, en el condado Brazoria, Texas antes de la fecha de publicación de este aviso en el periódico. La solicitud y los avisos asociados están disponibles electrónicamente en la siguiente página web: <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/wastewater/pending-permits/tpdes-applications>. Este enlace a un mapa electrónico de la ubicación general del sitio o de la instalación es proporcionado como una cortesía y no es parte de la solicitud o del aviso. Para la ubicación exacta, consulte la solicitud. <https://gisweb.tceq.texas.gov/LocationMapper/?marker=-95.26444,29.362483&level=18>

**AVISO DE IDIOMA ALTERNATIVO.** El aviso de idioma alternativo en español está disponible en <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/wastewater/pending-permits/tpdes-applications>.

**AVISO ADICIONAL.** El Director Ejecutivo de la TCEQ ha determinado que la solicitud es administrativamente completa y conducirá una revisión técnica de la solicitud. Después de completar la revisión técnica, el Director Ejecutivo puede preparar un borrador del permiso y emitirá una Decisión Preliminar sobre la solicitud. **El aviso de la solicitud y la decisión preliminar serán publicados y enviado a los que están en la lista de correo de las personas a lo largo del condado que desean recibir los avisos y los que están en la lista de correo que desean recibir avisos de esta solicitud. El aviso dará la fecha límite para someter comentarios públicos.**

COMENTARIO PUBLICO / REUNION

**PUBLICA.** Usted puede presentar comentarios públicos o pedir una reunión pública sobre esta solicitud. El propósito de una reunión pública es dar la oportunidad de presentar comentarios o hacer preguntas acerca de la solicitud. La TCEQ realiza una reunión pública si el Director Ejecutivo determina que hay un grado de interés público suficiente en la solicitud o si un legislador local lo pide. Una reunión pública no es una audiencia administrativa de lo contencioso.

**OPORTUNIDAD DE UNA AUDIENCIA ADMINISTRATIVA DE LO CONTENCIOSO.** Después del plazo para presentar comentarios públicos, el Director Ejecutivo considerará todos los comentarios apropiados y preparará una respuesta a todo los comentarios públicos esenciales, pertinentes, o significativos. **A menos que la solicitud haya sido referida directamente a una audiencia administrativa de lo contencioso, la respuesta a los comentarios y la decisión del Director Ejecutivo sobre la solicitud serán enviados por correo a todos los que presentaron un comentario público y a las personas que están en la lista para recibir avisos sobre esta solicitud. Si se reciben comentarios, el aviso también proveerá instrucciones para pedir una reconsideración de la decisión del Director Ejecutivo y para pedir una audiencia administrativa de lo contencioso.** Una audiencia administrativa de lo contencioso es un procedimiento legal similar a un procedimiento legal civil en un tribunal de distrito del estado.

**PARA SOLICITAR UNA AUDIENCIA DE CASO IMPUGNADO, USTED DEBE INCLUIR EN SU SOLICITUD LOS SIGUIENTES DATOS: su nombre, dirección, y número de teléfono; el nombre del solicitante y número**

**del permiso; la ubicación y distancia de su propiedad/actividad con respecto a la instalación; una descripción específica de la forma cómo usted sería afectado adversamente por el sitio de una manera no común al público en general; una lista de todas las cuestiones de hecho en disputa que usted presente durante el período de comentarios; y la declaración "[Yo/nosotros] solicito/solicitamos una audiencia de caso impugnado". Si presenta la petición para una audiencia de caso impugnado de parte de un grupo o asociación, debe identificar una persona que representa al grupo para recibir correspondencia en el futuro; identificar el nombre y la dirección de un miembro del grupo que sería afectado adversamente por la planta o la actividad propuesta; proveer la información indicada anteriormente con respecto a la ubicación del miembro afectado y su distancia de la planta o actividad propuesta; explicar cómo y porqué el miembro sería afectado; y explicar cómo los intereses que el grupo desea proteger son pertinentes al propósito del grupo.**

Después del cierre de todos los períodos de comentarios y de petición que aplican, el Director Ejecutivo enviará la solicitud y cualquier petición para reconsideración o para una audiencia de caso impugnado a los Comisionados de la TCEQ para su consideración durante una reunión programada de la Comisión.

La Comisión sólo puede conceder una solicitud de una audiencia de caso impugnado sobre los temas que el solicitante haya presentado en sus comentarios oportunos que no fueron retirados posteriormente. **Si se concede una audiencia, el tema de la audiencia estará limitado a cuestio-**

**nes de hecho en disputa o cuestiones mixtas de hecho y de derecho relacionadas a intereses pertinentes y materiales de calidad del agua que se hayan presentado durante el período de comentarios.**

**LISTA DE CORREO.** Si somete comentarios públicos, un pedido para una audiencia administrativa de lo contencioso o una reconsideración de la decisión del Director Ejecutivo, la Oficina del Secretario Principal enviará por correo los avisos públicos en relación con la solicitud. Además, puede pedir que la TCEQ ponga su nombre en una o más de las listas correos siguientes (1) la lista de correo permanente para recibir los avisos del solicitante indicado por nombre y número del permiso específico y/o (2) la lista de correo de todas las solicitudes en un condado específico. Si desea que se agregue su nombre en una de las listas designe cual lista(s) y envía por correo su pedido a la Oficina del Secretario Principal de la TCEQ.

**INFORMACIÓN DISPONIBLE EN LÍNEA.** Para detalles sobre el estado de la solicitud, favor de visitar la Base de Datos Integrada de los Comisionados en [www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/cid](http://www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/cid). Para buscar en la base de datos, utilizar el número de permiso para esta solicitud que aparece en la parte superior de este aviso.

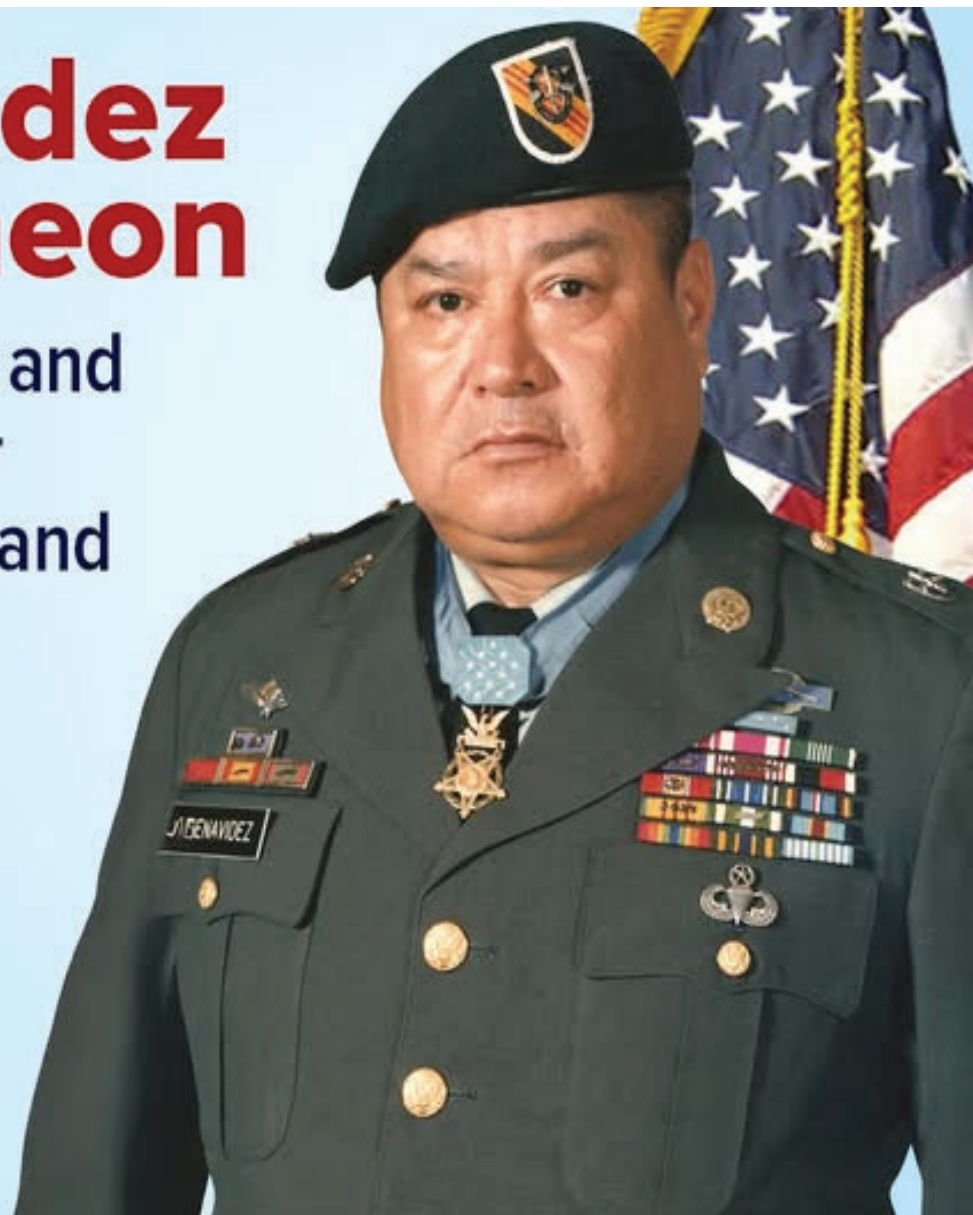
**CONTACTOS E INFORMACIÓN A LA AGENCIA.** Todos los comentarios públicos y solicitudes deben ser presentadas electrónicamente vía <http://www14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/eComment/> o por escrito dirigidos a la Comisión de Texas de Calidad Ambiental, Oficial de la Secretaría (Office of Chief Clerk), MC-105, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas 78711-3087. Tenga en cuenta que cualquier información personal que usted proporcione, incluyendo su nombre, número de teléfono, dirección de correo electrónico y dirección física pasarán a formar parte del registro público de la Agencia. Para obtener más información acerca de esta solicitud de permiso o el proceso de permisos, llame al programa de educación pública de la TCEQ, gratis, al 1-800-687-4040. Si desea información en Español, puede llamar al 1-800-687-4040.

También se puede obtener información adicional del MP2K II, LLC a la dirección indicada arriba o llamando a Mr. Christopher Todd, P.E., Ward, Getz, and Associates, LLC al 713-789-1900.

Fecha de emisión: el 17 de abril de 2026

# Roy P. Benavidez Legacy Luncheon

Thank you to the companies and organizations below for your generous table sponsorship and support of this luncheon.



## Saturday, May 2, 2026 | Austin Southpark Hotel

In partnership with the **Roy P. Benavidez** family and foundation, **TAMACC** and **Leadership Tejas** are proud to announce the launch of a powerful new tradition, the inaugural **Roy P. Benavidez Legacy Luncheon**. This is more than an event. It is a call to action. <https://tamacc.org/join-the-mission-honoring-a-legacy.../>

Tickets are now available for this first-ever luncheon, and affordable sponsorship opportunities are open for those who want to be part of building something that will grow into a signature, long-standing tradition. Your participation today helps lay the foundation for tomorrow.

The mission is clear: to invest in the next generation of leaders and ensure that no promising student is left behind due to a lack of opportunity. The name behind this effort carries a legacy that demands attention.

**Roy P. Benavidez** was not expected to become a legend. Born into poverty in **Texas**, he overcame discrimination, hardship, and every barrier placed before him. But his life proves that expectation is never the measure of a person—action is.

When his moment came during the **Vietnam War**, under intense enemy fire, he didn't hesitate. He stepped for-

ward—alone, outnumbered, and outgunned—and chose courage over fear. What followed was more than bravery. It was unwavering commitment in the face of impossible odds.

Now, that legacy continues through this scholarship luncheon—and you have an opportunity to be part of it.

To purchase tickets or learn about sponsorship opportunities, contact [panton@tamacc.org](mailto:panton@tamacc.org) or call 512-444-5727. <https://tamacc.org/join-the-mission-honoring-a-legacy.../>



# 20 Questions for Isis Martinez

## Founder of the GRACE Academy in Austin, Texas

### 1. Share with our readers what the GRACE Academy is all about.

**GRACE Academy**—which stands for Grit, Resilience, Accountability, Community, and Empowerment—is a nine-month, school year-long program dedicated to redefining the transition to young adulthood for girls in 9th through 11th grades in **Austin** with strong aspirations to attend college.

We provide the essential guidance and strategic tools they need to drive social impact, thrive beyond college, and ultimately achieve pay parity in the workforce. The core of the program is guiding each girl to create a **Social Impact Project Roadmap** that merges her strengths and interests into a meaningful project and celebrating this time of growth with family and community members on a ball.<sup>12</sup>

### 2. Is there anything like it around the state or country?

There isn't anything like this in the state or country. This is a unique program that combines three different activities that are not normally associated with each other - coming of age celebrations, passion project concept ideation/planning and college and scholarship application readiness.

Combining these three honors the tradition of celebrating a transition into early adulthood while redefining it at the same time. Furthermore, the approach is intentionally inclusive and grounds itself in the idea that teens must first be given tools to develop grit and resiliency.

### 3. I noticed that you stated the academy will launch in September. What are some the planning activities you are currently putting together?

We are heavily focused on finalizing our inaugural cohort of 25 students. Our application window is from April 1 to May 29. The final cohort will be selected in late June. We are also actively securing scholarships and sponsorships through our various tiers, and we are strengthening collaborations with local non-profits, the annual quinceañera expo, online **Facebook** communities and public and private schools for program

awareness and volunteer pipelines.<sup>2</sup>

### 4. What schools do you plan to target?

We are intentionally targeting public and private middle and high schools and hope this effort attracts a diverse set of participants.

We are especially excited to welcome girls from Latino, Black, Native American and Pacific Islander heritage. We have established program awareness collaborations with **Lively Middle School, LASA High School** and the **Girls School of Austin**. We have also submitted a partnership proposal to **AISD** to streamline awareness among all **AISD** schools.

### 5. Tell us something about cost and fundraising?

The full cost of the nine-month program is \$3,000. However, because almost 50% of the **AISD** school district is composed of families from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, we aim to offer up to 12 scholarships—from 50% to 100%. We currently have funding secured for one 80% scholarship, and we are working to secure vendors and sponsors through tiers ranging from the \$500 Community Catalyst to the \$9,000 Legacy level to close the gap.<sup>21</sup> Most importantly, Corazón Events is a social enterprise, and we pledge 100% of our profits directly to Academy scholarships.

### 6. When you think back to your time in high school, was college something people talked about?

I was primarily raised in **Brownville,**



**TX**, from the age of 5. When my parents immigrated from **Mexico**, they did it with the plan to strongly encourage a college degree.

A plan to provide an opportunity for my 7 siblings and I to

complete a college education in the US. As a first-generation student of very limited economic means, our focus was primarily on getting good grades and summer programs.

College admissions have changed significantly. I have spent 20+ years as a people strategy professional and was able to pursue a **Master's of Science in Industrial/Organizational Psychology**. That educational journey, combined with my experience as a parent of high-achieving teens and over 9 years as a **Girl Scouts of Central Texas** volunteer, inspired me to create a focused program for college-bound girls.

### 7. Who do you credit the most for helping you get through the college experience?

Despite my good grades in high school, I didn't enter college with the best foundation and the same goes for graduate school. Developing a mindset of grit and resiliency, modeled at home by my parents, was critical in completing not only my college experience but graduate school as well.

I also benefited from the fact that my 7 siblings were experiencing similar challenges and working through them. Research shows that good grades do not necessarily correlate with college success. Instead, grit and resiliency are what allow you to work through the difficult times and find ways

around challenges. **GRACE Academy** leans into this research and provides the participants with pre/post measures of grit, resilience and self-esteem. **GRACE Academy** also formalizes a mentorship opportunity with both peer mentoring and from local women professionals.

### 8. Why did you choose to anchor the program in cultural celebrations like the quinceañera and sweet sixteen?

I saw a clear opportunity to honor our coming-of-age traditions in a modern way. By combining these culturally relevant celebrations with rigorous college preparation, we affirm a girl's identity and heritage while preparing her for a successful future. It's about celebrating growth and commitment within the framework of family and community. Additionally, these celebrations are indications that the girl is loved and I saw it as only natural to offer an alternative that not only invests in the girl's future while offering the family an opportunity to still celebrate their daughter.

### 9. What moment made you say, "I have to build this — it doesn't exist yet"?

As a parent of three high-achieving teens, including a senior who is about to attend college, and a longtime **Girl Scouts** volunteer, I realized there wasn't a program that effectively married culturally relevant coming-of-age celebrations with strategic college admissions preparation for **Austin's** girls.

For the families who are already thinking of celebrating their daughter in a grand way, this initiative helps them do so in a modern way. For the families who were not planning a huge event, this program investment is still about 25% - 50% less than a program that offers guidance around passion projects alone.

I saw a need for a pathway that was both inclusive and guaranteed a clear social impact component. As a people strategy professional of 20 years, I am also faced with the disappointing reality that pay parity is still a huge opportunity in the US, with women earning 81 cents for every dollar a man earns and women of color earning far

# 20 Preguntas para Isis Martinez

## Founder of the GRACE Academy in Austin, Texas

less. This program will arm the participants with the language and tools that are critical to establish value and result in higher earning potential.

### 10. Why 25 girls?

We limit the cohort to 25 students. This small size is intentional to ensure the maximum impact of the peer-to-peer network. The group size is also big enough to offer a meaningful celebration in **Central Austin**, making it geographically desirable for girls of all parts of the Austin area.

### 11. What's the thinking behind keeping the cohort that small?

Keeping the cohort small ensures that each participant can engage deeply and establish a strong 24-person peer mentor network over the nine months. This focused environment allows for essential personalized coaching and feedback, promoting respect and psychological safety. Over time, the plan is to offer regional cohorts to multiply the experience and make it even more meaningful in **East, North, Central and South Austin**. My vision is to then expand the program to all major cities in Texas.

### 12. What does a "Passion Project Roadmap" actually look like in practice — can you walk us through an example?

The Passion Project Roadmap is a tangible outcome that the girls execute during their high school years. In practice, it looks like a formal project plan developed using a framework that starts with neuroscience-based concept ideation and research approach. The roadmap will include a research-based social impact initiative, a budget, a timeline, a list of resources/support needed from the community, and most importantly, the desired tangible outcome. By partnering with local non-profits, we also plan to offer the girls the option to drive impact in organizations that have a defined need.

### 13. How does GRACE Academy balance social impact with the very real pressure of college admissions?

The balance is the core design of **GRACE**

Academy: the social impact project is the strategic tool for college admissions. The program is specifically designed to build essential skills that are critical to showcase in future college and scholarship applications. By requiring a substantial, executed social impact project, the girls not only benefit their community but also gain a powerful, distinguishing component for their applications. Our goal is to see each girl gain admission to the post HS institution of their choice with significant scholarships.

### 14. What gap are you filling that Austin's Latino community has been feeling but maybe couldn't name?

We provide a structure that honors cherished coming-of-age traditions while simultaneously delivering the professional planning and high-level college prep—like the **Passion Project Roadmap**—that is often hard to access in underrepresented communities. We are intentionally targeting underrepresented communities with our marketing and scholarships. This program is also intentionally not just limited to the Latino community, as it's important to build a diverse peer network that reflects our city, state, country and world.

### 15. How does the Corazón Ball connect the girls back to their families and culture?

**The Corazón Ball** is the grand culmination of the nine-month journey. It's where the 25 participants are formally recognized for their growth and commitment, celebrated before an audience of 300 supportive family and community members.

By providing each participant with a Table of 8, we ensure their immediate family and support network are central to this

celebration, affirming the cultural importance of family in this transition. We are also asking each participant to be escorted by two adults - be it their parents, tias/tios, abuelitos, or a madrina/padrino.

### 16. What role do parents play in the GRACE Academy journey?

Parents are crucial partners in the **GRACE Academy** journey, providing commitment, accountability, and support. Their role culminates at the *Annual Corazón Ball*, where they join 300 other community members to celebrate their daughter's achievement. Financial participation is also key, and we offer incentives for early payment, such as receiving extra seats at the **Corazón Ball**.

### 17. Why girls specifically — what are young Latinas up against that makes a program like this necessary right now?

Our long-term mission is to drive pay parity in the workforce. As a 20+ year people strategy professional, I see that female leaders need to be equipped with grit, resilience, and a strategic framework for impact

from a young age to ensure they achieve pay equity. Targeting girls, and especially teen Latinas, is necessary right now to equip the next generation of female leaders in Austin.

Research shows that women are outpacing their male counterparts in college degree completion. However, once they enter the workforce, women still cannot even earn the same. Unfortunately, Latinas are also the lowest earning demographic in the US.

### 18. How do you define social impact for a 9th grader who's never been asked to think that big before?

We define social impact for a 9th grader by making it personal, actionable and mea-

asurable. It's about creating a project roadmap that merges their strengths and interests, giving them a platform to voice their ideas. The curriculum breaks down the "big thinking" into manageable steps, covering Neuroscience-based Concept Ideation, Research Approach, and a formal Project Plan Framework. Most importantly, it introduces the idea that you don't need to wait to make an impact.

### 19. As a Latina founder, what has building GRACE Academy taught you about your own grit and resilience?

Building this program has been a deep dive into the very values we teach. Every day requires the same Grit and Resilience that **GRACE Academy** is founded on. It has reinforced my belief that when you lead with heart—*corazón*—you can take a passion for community and turn it into a movement that builds the next generation of female leaders. This project was created during a time of transition for me as well. In late October 2025, my job was eliminated and the job market is especially challenging. Creating this initiative filled me with energy and clarity around combining my personal and professional experiences to drive impact in the community.

### 20. What do you want Austin's Latino community to know about GRACE Academy that a press release can't tell them?

I want the community to know that this initiative comes from a very personal place. I have been a long standing volunteer of not only **Girl Scouts of Central Texas** but have also stayed very close to multiple non-profits that elevate women through networking, reducing domestic violence, providing financial support/guidance for their growing business and encouraging college as a pathway after high school for first-generation students. This idea is the meshing of my commitment to community with my journey as a parent and the realities I see as a people strategy professional of 20 years.

The **GRACE Academy** model builds leaders, strengthens community ties, and leaves a measurable social impact while celebrating each girl's unique journey.



**RE-ELECT**

**Felix Chavez**

**For HUTTO ISD**

**ISD BOARD OF TRUSTEES**



**Saturday, May 2**

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## Word Power

### En Palabras Hay Poder

No one can ever argue in the name of education, that it is better to know less than it is to know more. Being bilingual or trilingual or multilingual is about being educated in the 21st century. We look forward to bringing our readers various word lists in each issue of La Voz.

Nadie puede averiguar en el nombre de la educación que es mejor saber menos que saber más. Siendo bilingüe o trilingüe es parte de ser educado en el siglo 21. Es peramos traer cada mes a nuestros lectores de La Voz una lista de palabras en español con sus equivalentes en inglés.

Help me

Ayúdame a

to understand

entender

what is going on

qué está pasando

with our government.

con nuestro gobierno.

What are people

¿En qué se supone

suppose to believe in

que debe creer la gente

nowadays?

hoy en día?

There will come a time

Llega un momento en

when the people

que la gente deja de

will no longer

creer.

believe. When that day

Cuando llegue ese día,

comes, fasten

abróchense

your seatbelts.

los cinturones.

**La Voz Newspapers 512-944-4123**

**Teachers don't lose  
passion for teaching.  
They lose patience for  
systems that make  
teaching impossible.**

# MUSEO GUADALUPE AZTLAN




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*for* State Board of Education



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