

## **The Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, United States Hispanic Chamber of the Year, Announces 2016 Honorees**

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Austin, TX - On behalf of 2016 Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (GAHCC) Chairman Mario Flores, President & CEO Mark Madrid, the GAHCC Board of Directors and the GAHCC Staff, the GAHCC will host its sold-out Annual CELEBRANDO Austin Gala and Awards Ceremony on Saturday, August 27, 2016, at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Austin.

"Everything is up and forward at the Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber," proclaims Mark Madrid, President and CEO. "We have broken records in budget size for 2016 and for this signature event. Additionally, we have increased small business and corporate revenues, and being awarded United States Hispanic Chamber of the Year is an embodiment of the heart, innovation and drive of the GAHCC."

Honorary Co-Chairs for 2016 CELEBRANDO Austin are Dr. Richard Rhodes, Austin Community College District President/CEO and Dr. Judith Loreda, Texas State University Coordinator of MSI-TEN; LBJ Institute/EPDC NASA Project. Leslie Montoya and Claudia Talamantez from Univision Austin Local Media will serve as Co-Hosts and Fey will headline the entertainment.

At CELEBRANDO Austin, the GAHCC will showcase Hispanic-owned businesses, corporate citizens, volunteers and leaders who have gone the extra mile in business and civic engagement.

The 2016 GAHCC Honorees:

- Lifetime Achievement Award: Rosie Mendoza, Managing Shareholder-R. Mendoza & Company, P.C . •
- Hispanic Business of the Year: John Cuellar, Owner-Dismukes Awning Company • Hispanic Male
- Entrepreneur of the Year: Tony Aguilar, Co-Founder/CEO-Student Loan Genius • Hispanic Female
- Entrepreneur of the Year: Laura Valdez, Co-Owner & Director-Paul Mitchell The School Austin • Board
- Member of the Year (Chair's Award)-Joe Pelayo, Applied Materials Global Supply Chain • Distinguished Hispanic
- Austin Leadership (HAL) Alumnus of the Year, Barbra Boeta-Economic Growth Business Incubator • Corporation
- of the Year: Univision Austin Local Media • Ambassador of the Year: Isabel Raya, Raya PR & Events •
- Volunteer of the Year: Karlie Ramirez, Verizon Wireless

"The feats that this Chamber has accomplished is attributed to its wonderful members, Board and Staff. This year's gala will reflect the exceptional work that this Chamber is known to create. I am looking forward to celebrating our 43<sup>rd</sup> year of service to the Central Texas community at our signature event," said Mario Flores, 2016 GAHCC Chairman.

The GAHCC will feature 2016 Guest of Distinction the Honorable Gil Coronado, who retired from the United States Air Force on August 1, 1989, as a Colonel after serving our country for 30 years. Colonel Coronado initiated Public Law 100-402, which established National Hispanic Heritage Month on September 13, 1988. At a White House ceremony, President Reagan described Colonel Coronado as a "stout defender of his Hispanic heritage and the United States of America."

The Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce will kick-off Hispanic Heritage Month in Central Texas at the largest gathering of Hispanic business leaders in the region.

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