

The Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Selected as 2015 Hispanic Chamber of the Year by United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

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Houston, TX - The Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (GAHCC) has been awarded Hispanic Chamber of the Year by the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) at the 2015 USHCC National Convention, which is the largest gathering of Hispanic business leaders in the country.

Award recipients were selected based on delivery of excellence in programming, innovation, major achievements and collaborative efforts with the USHCC. The Greater Washington D.C. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce were the two other awardees announced this morning at the United States Hispanic Chamber National Convention in Houston.

The USHCC recognizes the Chamber of the Year from its membership of over 200 Hispanic chambers across the nation. The USHCC actively promotes the economic growth and development of Hispanic entrepreneurs and represents the interests of 3.2 million Hispanic-owned businesses across the United States that together contribute in excess of \$468 billion to the American economy each year.

Hispanic business ownership in the Greater Austin area is growing exponentially,” stated GAHCC President and CEO Mark Madrid. “According to the latest annual Kauffman Index report, the Austin area is #1 among U.S. cities in startups. This compelling factor and the rising economic influence of our Latina and Latino business owners reinforce the work of the GAHCC. Today is as an extraordinary and historic moment for our members, board, staff and our investors.”

Founded in 1973, the GAHCC mission is to build its members’ personal, business, educational and financial wealth and its vision is to be the Center of Excellence for businesses and entrepreneurs in the Central Texas Hispanic market. “The GAHCC is on top of the world! On behalf of our Immediate Past Chair Thomas Miranda, our Chair Elect Mario Flores and our entire board and staff,” remarked GAHCC Chair Val Velasquez, “we are honored with this prestigious national award, which further validates our efforts to build a stronger small business sector and a stronger economy.”

During the past year, the GAHCC released its groundbreaking Hispanic Business Research Study findings and launched Small Biz University for its small and medium-sized member businesses. For the region’s area high school students, the GAHCC inaugurated a dynamic entrepreneurship competition in partnership with the Austin Independent School District. As well, its signature Hispanic Austin Leadership (HAL), founded in 1999, surpassed the 300 mark in alumni. HAL’s mission is to provide business leaders and professionals the opportunities to develop business acumen, civic awareness, leadership skills and a network of colleagues for life.

The GAHCC celebrated the rise and distinction of women-owned businesses in the Greater Austin region throughout 2015, recognizing women business owners in innovation, cultural arts, community reinvestment, veteran engagement, procurement and Latina entrepreneurial excellence. Notably in 2015, the GAHCC has garnered the support and accolades of a new mayor, a new city council, and new county judge, and a new governor.

Austin Mayor Steve Adler stated, “No surprise our Hispanic Chamber is one of the best in the country! Under the leadership of the board and President/CEO Mark Madrid, the GAHCC is growing in power, influence, impact and relevancy—something Austin needs.

About the GAHCC:

The GAHCC is the premier voice for the Hispanic business community in Central Texas. The Chamber continues to stand by its mission to build its members’ wealth through business education, comprehensive economic development,

networking, advocacy and community engagement. For more information on the GAHCC, go to www.gahcc.org.

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