



# LULACnews

SPRING 2023



**Domingo Garcia**

*National President*

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# LULACnews

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# A Message from the President *¡Hasta La Victoria!*



“

*...le estamos dando duro,  
we are working hard.*

”



It is my honor to bring you this edition of the LULAC News. In the following pages, you will read about and see some of the many actions LULAC is leading for *Jose y Maria* across the United States.

Our Latino communities were hit hard by COVID. As America's essential workers, we paid a heavy price in the sheer number of men and women who were infected and died.

Now, we are emerging more resilient and active than ever and continuing to be the vibrant, strong backbone of America's economy. Once again, *le estamos dando duro*, we are working hard.

I have been coast-to-coast, border-to-border, and I see our men and women from all walks of life busy at work for their families and communities.

This is why I always close every message with *¡Hasta La Victoria!* My wife Elba, our sons, Joaquin and Fernando, and I believe and live by the spirit that our *fuerza* and our *ganas* move and lift us every day, and with God's help, *le damos adelante*, we go forward.

Also, one of my greatest joys wherever I go, is witnessing the love we share *entre nuestras familias*, among our families *y con nuestras amigos*, with our friends. This is the beauty of who we are.

As my dear and respected friend, former LULAC National President, Ruben Bonilla, spoke so eloquently in our recent 94<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration video, LULAC is a mosaic, a reflection of the people we serve.

I invite you to view the video and feel the excitement we report on weekly. Now, enjoy some of the images we have captured in my travels across our great country and Puerto Rico.

Thank you,

Domingo Garcia



# Visit Us at Our New LULAC Home

*¡Saludos from Washington, DC!*

**W**elcome to our new LULAC National Headquarters. We are excited and proud to introduce you to your home in the nation's capital. LULAC is now located just blocks from the White House and Capitol Hill, where we can meet with our country's elected leaders. Also, we will receive LULAC members and visitors in Washington, DC, when they are here conducting business or in town for fun and want to meet with the LULAC team. We invite you to come in and visit anytime you are in the Washington, DC, area.

**Our new address is:**

1776 Eye Street NW, Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20006

(202) 833-6130



# Welcome Your New LULAC Team Members

LULAC introduces the newest team members at national headquarters who, together with the rest of our dynamic and talented staff are serving you daily. We salute them each and all.

Also, a special shout out to our El Paso duo that continues to faithfully oversee membership and programs making sure LULAC continues to grow and carry out its mission.



David Chayer,  
*Director of Development*



Andy Perez,  
*Receptionist*



Silvia Perez,  
*Senior Manager*



Priscilla Garcia,  
*Programs Manager*



Guadalupe Morales,  
*Director of Membership Services*



## LULAC Loves Our Interns Who Are Becoming Leaders

LULAC offers interns an opportunity to learn about service to the community as they gain valuable experience preparing them for their future careers.

Over the years, LULAC has provided countless interns with their first community-service position in Washington, DC which has helped to prepare them for jobs in government and private sector careers.

LULAC's goal is to provide an enriching, challenging experience that encourages growth and self-discovery for every young person during their internship.

For many persons, their time with LULAC is a life-lasting memory that reminds them they are part of the larger Latino family and we are their biggest champions wishing them each future success.

SAVE  
THE  
DATE



NATIONAL  
**WOMEN'S**  
*Conference*  
April 14-15, 2023  
Los Angeles, CA

Join LULAC's National Women's Conference for a day-long event that gathers distinguished leaders and issue experts to lead plenaries on women's health, entrepreneurship, leadership, and civic mobilization.



[LULAC.org/WOMENSconference23](https://LULAC.org/WOMENSconference23)



# LULAC Answers the Call



**L**ULAC is alert daily for emergencies and events affecting the most vulnerable Latinos, including arriving refugees in very dire conditions. Thousands of men, women, and children reach the United States who have traveled by foot for weeks, while others are victims of human traffickers. Adding to this tragic plight is the political crossfire that has turned these innocent individuals into faceless targets of attacks, mistreatment, and even deceit.

Recently, LULAC responded to significant emergencies involving refugees, who became the focus of national stories. The first involved two groups of refugees. One group was taken by bus to Washington, DC, and dropped up in front of the house of Vice-President Kamala Harris. The other group was flown by plane to Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.

President Garcia and a team of LULAC members immediately answered the call for help, and thanks to their coverage, the world learned of a mysterious woman known only as "Perla." The refugees stated she had tricked them into going to distant cities with the promise of housing, a job, and safety. None of this was true. LULAC offered a reward for any information about her whereabouts, and the search for Perla went viral.





(Photo Credit: Andrew Harnik, AP Photo)

## *LULAC is Taking Action at the US – Mexico Border*

**L**ULAC is advocating daily for the thousands of arriving refugees fleeing violence and danger in their countries of origin. Also, we are assisting untold numbers of immigrants who are already here and in desperate need of shelter, food, clothing, and health care.

Recently, LULAC News traveled to the U.S. – Mexico border for a firsthand look as President Biden made a trip to El Paso, Texas.

Leading the LULAC team that day were Lydia Guzman, LULAC National Immigration Chair and Ray Mancera, an El Paso native and LULAC National Parliamentarian, along with a group of local LULAC members who have been working tirelessly helping arriving refugees.

These are some of the images of that historic day.





# LULAC Washington State Is Mentoring the Next Generation

**L**ULAC mentors Latino youths and young adults across the United States and Puerto Rico. For many LULAC members, this is their passion because they know how vital adult guidance and support can be to a young person growing up. The seeds we plant today by investing time and resources in a youth or young adult council will yield fruit for a lifetime.

In Washington State, Gabe Portugal, LULAC state director, makes mentoring one of his constant goals, and the work is paying dividends. “Time and again, I see how LULAC is changing lives and providing an example and being a role model of what it means to become a leader,” says Portugal. “It is about being

“

*...I see how LULAC is changing lives and providing an example and being a role model of what it means to become a leader.*

”

willing to be a servant and showing up with a smile, encouragement, and a positive attitude. This is what young people are looking for, and they struggle to find it. Often, their parents are working long hours or dealing with other personal pressures and may not know how to help the children with school issues. LULAC is filling the gaps by encouraging them to attend college and learn a certified trade or profession. The best part is, we can all do it right in our communities, and this is the best way to showcase what LULAC is all about,” he adds.

## *Congratulations, Washington State LULAC, for the job you are doing!*



## *LULAC History is a Story Worth Preserving and Sharing*

**H**istorian David Contreras has a love for history, especially LULAC. His family has a long involvement in the evolution of the league. From an early age, he was aware of the importance LULAC meant for the Latino community in Houston, Texas.

“History is in my blood,” says Contreras with a smile, reflecting his constant and positive curiosity for learning, both from the past and present. “Our lives are richer when we know where we come from, how we got here, and all the work and sacrifice others made before us. LULAC has done a great deal to shape our community and this nation, and when you go back and read the newsletters and historical documents, a much fuller and richer picture emerges. This is why we have a responsibility, even a sacred duty, to preserve LULAC history for future generations to examine and hopefully appreciate,” says David.



Millie Contreras, David’s wife, is a recently retired educator who actively shares the quest for LULAC’s past. Together, they traveled to Washington, DC, and for days, immersed themselves in a sea of archives in boxes dating back decades. They sorted and organized an enormous content volume, including past programs, one-of-a-kind records, and priceless LULAC newsletters.

“It was as if we could hear their voices,” says Millie. “We came across many items and materials from past presidents, members, and an array of elected officials, allies, and many others from all walks of life who had contact with LULAC. The sifting and separating was hard work, but I am humbled and honored, along with David, to have been on the team that worked with the LULAC staff to get the job done. Now LULAC national knows what its archives contain, and scholars will study for years to come,” she adds.

LULAC thanks David and Millie Contreras, the first husband-wife archival team in its history.

Economic  
Empowerment  
& Technology



Education



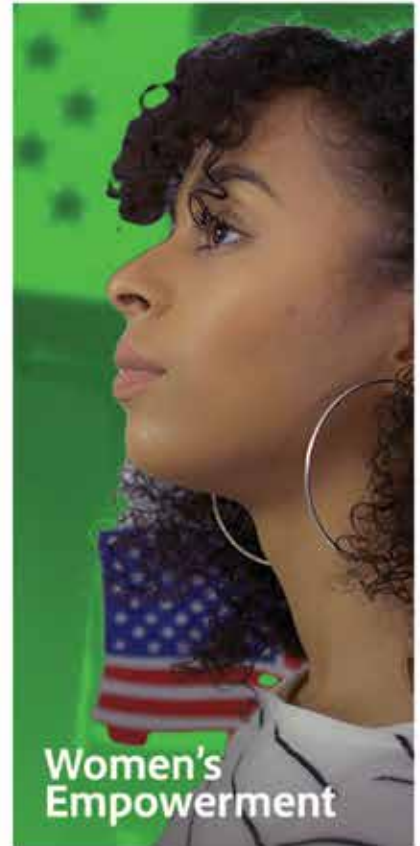
Health



Workforce  
Solutions



Women's  
Empowerment



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[LULAC.org/programs](https://LULAC.org/programs)

**Building  
Stronger  
Communities  
Through  
Opportunity**

To find available programming  
and grant opportunities visit



# LULAC Pray-For-Texas Campaign Helps Victims Heal

Life in Uvalde, Texas, will forever be different because of the tragedy that claimed the lives of 19 children and their two teachers at Robb Elementary School last May.

Yet, in the months since that terrible day, America opened its heart and answered LULAC's call for help as families tried to cope with their sudden loss.

It will take years of intensive care and support before loved ones can recover, and the pain will never entirely go away, but one day, they will be able to smile and feel joy again.

LULAC thanks all those whose expressions of love and sympathy moved them to donate to the Pray-For-Texas campaign that raised nearly \$1 million, the largest in our history.

Whatever the amount, from the smallest to Aileen Avikova who gave \$91,000, we are grateful and say thank you. Please know that LULAC has distributed 100% of the donations to the families and individuals affected.

Within the first 24 hours of the tragedy, LULAC was on the scene. Rodolfo Rosales Jr., Texas LULAC state director, kept President Domingo Garcia and the national board briefed.

Meanwhile, the team in Washington, DC, led by Lisa Smith, Chief Financial Officer, coordinated the setting up of the fund. Dario Pantosin created the design that went viral in the single most extensive Latino non-profit fundraising campaign for Uvalde, Texas.

In the weeks and months that followed, LULAC has returned to Uvalde on several occasions, twice to deliver donations. Also, to honor the brave survivors, several of whom have received the first LULAC Presidential Purple Hearts ever awarded in our 94-year history. We stand with each and all of them.

Today, a LULAC Council is led by Javier Cazares, whose daughter, Jacklyn, died that sad day in May. As LULAC president, we are all his family now, and Jacklyn is our daughter too.

***¡Que Vivan los Niños de Uvalde!***

***¡Que Vivan las Maestras de Robb Elementary!***

*¡Que Viva Uvalde LULAC!*

# LULAC Says The Brandon Act Is Still Needed



Every day in their small community tucked away just outside Phoenix, Arizona, Teri and Patrick Caserta begin their morning the same way they have since shortly after Brandon died by suicide on June 25, 2018.

They are the frontline first responders to one of America's hidden crises, the increasing number of servicemembers dying by suicide, both active duty and veterans.

"It is unconscionable that 14 months after President Biden signed the Brandon Act into federal law, we are still getting calls and emails daily from families losing loved ones to suicide while we wait," says Patrick Caserta. He served 22 years in the Navy, fifteen as a recruiter, and even led the advertising department in the Navy Recruiting Headquarters at one point. "The Department of Defense has yet to fully implement the measures we wrote into the Brandon Act to help other families avoid the experience we did. Getting that knock at the door that brings the worst news you can imagine and is the worst nightmare," he adds.

Teri, Brandon's mother, is usually the one who scans the day's news events and social media. Often, she is the first to see an urgent message from someone in distress, either because they have a servicemember going through a mental health crisis or it's too late, and like Brandon, they have ended their pain.

"People think suicide is an act of weakness," says Teri. "In Brandon's case, he left a letter that told us clearly he was sending a message to the Navy. Our son had been the victim of toxic leadership and constant bullying. Then, when he asked for help, they turned Brandon away, and the abuse continued right up until the very day he died by suicide. Besides losing Brandon, the worst part is knowing this crisis is ongoing today," she says.

LULAC supported the passage of the Brandon Act and actively campaigned for it in the House and Senate. However, after President Biden signed the bill into law, most observers thought the measure would be rolled out quickly, and that has not been done. For this reason, LULAC has met with the U.S. Army and is scheduled to meet with the Navy.

"We understand how important the Brandon Act is to the Casertas and countless other families," says Roman Palomares, Chair of the LULAC Military and Veterans Affairs Committee. "We intend to continue pushing for full implementation because LULAC is committed to saving servicemembers' lives," he added.

“

*We intend to continue pushing for full implementation because LULAC is committed to saving servicemembers' lives.*

”

As for Teri and Patrick, the Brandon Caserta Foundation is now their life's work. "We will never stop doing what our son saw as his purpose. It is ours now, and we are determined to carry out the mission," says Patrick.

See: <https://brandoncasertafoundation.org>

# LULAC Membership

## Is All About You

**L**upe Morales has been a mainstay of LULAC and has guided our annual membership process with diligence and care for years. We are thankful for her faithful service in ensuring membership compliance.

“Membership is about and for all those who make LULAC what we are,” says Lupe. “Our mission has been to ensure the rights of our Latino community, and we need our member-volunteers to carry out the job. This is why membership services are a year-round activity that involves responding to their questions or concerns so that LULAC councils function according to the rules of our Constitution.

We are moving towards making the membership process easier, faster, and more convenient. Indeed, with new technology comes new opportunities to complete enrollment in LULAC at your fingertips once these items are considered and approved by the national board. Until then, we must always stay on top of the process to remain on track annually and get applications turned in, validated, and recorded on time,” says Lupe.

### Membership reminds us of the benefits of joining LULAC:

#### Advocacy

As your government liaison in Washington, we monitor Legislation and provide policymakers with the Latino perspective on immigration, affirmative action, business, education, and other issues impacting our community.

#### Education

LULAC has increased educational opportunities for thousands of deserving young Hispanic students throughout the country. We operate one of the nation’s most extensive Latino scholarship programs and provide academic enrichment programs to elementary, middle, and high school students.

#### Political Participation

Our members sponsor voter registration drives and citizenship education programs. We have successfully implemented letter writing and efforts on behalf of critical Hispanic issues to legislators at all levels of government.

#### Service

LULAC members are engaged in a variety of community service projects that achieve progress through a positive approach. From job training to health fairs and mentoring to business initiatives, LULA members make a difference by taking charge and getting things done!

# LULAC LGBTQ+ UNITY SUMMIT



LEAGUE *of* UNITED  
LATIN AMERICAN  
CITIZENS

**November 10-12, 2023 | Las Vegas, NV**

The LGBTQ+ Unity Summit includes talks with leaders from across the country and key sessions on the Equality Act. Plus, talks with movement leaders on LGBTQ+ youth, elders, the transgender community, and HIV/AIDS.

[lulac.org/pridesummit](https://lulac.org/pridesummit)

# LULAC News *Top Stories*

**LULAC is now the most visible Latino civil rights organization in editorial coverage with an aggregated audience into the millions each month based on views through traditional and social media platforms. (Source: Meltwater Media)**

**The following are just a few of the stories we shared recently that received some of the most significant distribution:**



*Left to Right: Rep. Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY 8th District) US House Minority Leader, Domingo Garcia, LULAC National President, Rep. Pete Aguilar (D-CA 33rd District) Chair of the US House Democratic Caucus*

## **LULAC President Domingo Garcia Meets With Democratic Minority Congressional Leaders.**

“Looking forward to working with them and Republicans to help our Latino families with opportunities and fairness in Congress.”



(Photo Credit: Jack Gruber, USA TODAY)

## **LULAC Analysis: The State of the Union Address Reminds America that People are Our Strength.**

“Jose y Maria are the very backbone of labor, and it makes economic sense to fix a broken immigration system. We also need bipartisan support to provide drug treatment and go after cartel narcos who are bringing deadly fentanyl into our schools and neighborhoods.”





**LULAC Says Tyre Nichols Video Demands Good Cops Stop Bad Officers When They See Abuse of Power Against Civilians.**

“LULAC stands with the family of Tyre Nichols in calling for peaceful and non-violent demonstrations for justice,” says Domingo García, LULAC National President. “As important, we say to every good police officer out there, who we believe are the majority, when you see a bad cop committing abuse of power in the field, intervene and stop them. Report them!”



**LULAC Stands with the White House on Bringing Home Deported Vets**

“America owes a debt to its veterans who have placed their lives on the line for the rest of us. Many veterans who are suffering from PTSD spiraled into activities for which they have fully answered. However, we are also a compassionate country that believes in fair treatment for all. Who better than our deported veterans to be shown mercy and bring them back to their families? Now is the time for our lawmakers to right this wrong.”



**LULAC Files Federal Lawsuit Against City of Houston Over At-Large City Council Races**

“Latinos make up 44.5% of the city’s population, yet we have only one Latino out of 16 positions on the city council that controls a \$5.7 billion annual budget. Our battle is against an outdated system that denies Latino taxpayers and their families their lawful participation deciding vital services, resources, jobs, and investment this city makes. This action by LULAC ensures that Latinos can and will have a major voice in deciding Houston’s future.”



**LULAC Leaders Say Immigration Reform Presents a New Economic Benefit for the United States.**

“We are long overdue for bi-partisan, comprehensive immigration reform. We need to secure the border and create a realistic legal immigration plan to deal with America’s need for workers and America’s promise as etched in the Statue of Liberty. El Paso is the new Ellis Island and is at the vortex of the new debate on immigration. It’s time for a national summit of both parties, Mexico and leaders of countries sending the most refugees, to finally solve this issue realistically and humanely,”



# LULAC <TECH> SUMMIT

**June 15, 2023** Chicago, Illinois

The LatinoTech Summit an engaging destination for Latino tech leaders, designers, innovators, corporate and government leaders, and scholars. It creates a unique space for Latino technologists to exchange ideas, share their professional journeys, and network with like-minded Latino professionals. In addition, LULAC “pop-up” tech talks series continues to the elevate the policy issues and raise awareness across the country on the critical role of increasing labor diversity in the industry.

[lulac.org/TECHsummit](https://lulac.org/TECHsummit)



# *A Final Note from the Editor: LULAC News is Yours*

This edition of LULAC News marks the first time we, the LULAC family, do all the elements. Yes, the cost is one reason, but more importantly, LULAC News is yours, so why not create, write, and produce it ourselves?

In our busy lives today, many of us eat out on the run or have food delivered. Yet, for some reason, the meal never tastes quite as good as when we make it at home, and add some of the love and care that only family can give. We hope you feel that way about LULAC News. It is yours to shape, fill and share.

The past few months have been exciting to see. We have added three new states in the Far West, appointed a national vice-president for the region, and brought new voices to the LULAC national board. Plus, we now have the first female General Counsel, Gloria Leal.

Now, we look ahead to events in 2023, including the ***Women's Conference in Los Angeles, California (April 14-15)*** and the ***National Convention and Exposition in Albuquerque, New Mexico (July 31-Aug 5)***. Those of you getting this edition fresh off the press are attending the Legislative Conference and Awards Gala, another significant LULAC achievement this year in Washington, DC.

Send me a note or call if you want your LULAC council, state or region featured. I am always interested in hearing from you. LULAC members, corporate partners, and the community we serve are the reason we are here.

As former LULAC national president Ruben Bonilla said in our 94th-anniversary video, "LULAC is a mosaic, and this is what makes us... a formidable force."

Yes, LULAC News is yours, and LULAC is yours to protect.

In Unity,

David Cruz  
*Editor*

davidcruz@lulac.org  
(818) 689-9991



# LULAC National convention & exposition

**SAVE  
THE  
DATE**

▶ July 31  
August 5  
2023



**ALBUQUERQUE  
NEW MEXICO**

The LULAC Convention is an exciting, history-making convention, because it convenes the national delegates of LULAC to discuss issues, set policies, and elect the organization's national leaders. For this reason, the LULAC Convention is covered by national and local media. It is the only convention in which participants representing Hispanic communities from across the country determine the positions and strategies of a national Latino organization.

[LULAC.org/convention23](https://LULAC.org/convention23)