

PRESS RELEASE



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Chamber Volunteers to Be Recognized at Awards Ceremony

CHAIRMAN GABRIEL CASTILLO TO "PASS GAVEL" TO INCOMING CHAIRMAN AS PART OF THE CEREMONY



Gabriel C. Castillo
Chairman of the Board
Laredo Chamber of Commerce

Outgoing Chairman of the Board for the Laredo Chamber of Commerce Gabriel C. Castillo will officially hand over the reins of the organization to his successor, L. Adrian Zapata, at a ceremony to be held on Wednesday, September 27, 2023. The outgoing chairman will preside over a luncheon meet and recognize the many volunteers who assisted in carrying forth his program of work during the year. Castillo will also have the opportunity to present an annual report.

Annually, the Laredo Chamber of Commerce hosts a ceremony at the end of its fiscal year to recognize volunteers. This year's event will be held at the IBC Annex Ballroom at 2418 Jacaman Road starting at 11:30 am. States Castillo on a positive note, "This has certainly been a fulfilling year. I take great pride in having served as chairman of this organization this year – a job that comes with a tremendous amount of responsibility. I want to make sure to point out that we could not have reached the level of success we did were it not for the talent and dedication of the many volunteers that form

the Laredo Chamber. I'm happy to take time to recognize their efforts."

The Chamber Awards ceremony will be held in place of the regularly scheduled monthly Board of Directors meeting. As is traditional, the program will also serve to introduce the incoming Chairman of the Board and the new slate of officers. Heading the FY 2023-2024 team will be Chairman of the Board L. Adrian Zapata, Director for PAD Specialists of Laredo. Other members of the 2019-2020 Executive Committee are: Sandra Alaniz (RE/MAX Realty), Chairman Elect; Rossy Chase (PNC Bank) Treasurer; Gonzalo Prida (Intermodal Logistics, Inc.), Catalina Dickerson (The Dickerson Law Firm), Jorge Leal (Laredo Medical Center), A.B. Barrera (AlphaGraphics) and Magali Rodriguez (The Vaswani Group), Council Chairs; and Gabriel C. Castillo (IBC Bank), Past Chairman.

Traditionally, following the recognition of volunteers, the outgoing chairman calls on the new chairman and presents him/her with the gavel. The new chairman then closes the meeting as his/her first official action of the new year.

(cont.)

Following is the list of awards to be presented by outgoing Chairman Gabriel Castillo:

- **Jim Parish Media Award** – Presented to **Francisco ‘Paco’ Barrientos**, partner of AlphaGraphics of Laredo, for his support in promoting the Chamber mission and advocating for increased support for Chamber initiatives through creative and innovative campaigns.
- **Un Poquito Más Award** – Presented to **Catalina Dickerson**, of the Dickerson Law Firm, for dedication and commitment to the Chamber cause as exemplified by her immersion in the development of an expanded membership recruitment/retention campaign.
- **Committee Chairperson of the Year Award** – Presented to **Veronica Castillon**, Director of Communications for LISD, in recognition of the leadership demonstrated in the organization and planning of the program of work for the Education Committee.
- **Volunteer of the Year Award** – Presented to **Robert Summers**, Owner and Operator of Jiffy Lube, for his commitment to the Chamber mission as exemplified by his involvement over the last several years in the “Breakfast with the Mayor” initiative.
- **Board Member of the Year Award** – Presented to **David Dodier**, of PNC Bank, for his outstanding contribution and personal commitment to the successful organization and execution of the 2023 Business ICONS Awards Dinner as chair of the Small Business Committee and his continued involvement in the organization of the Cola Blanca Hunting Contest.
- **“Spirit of Laredo” Award** – Presented to **Mike Marasco**, Owner and Operating Manager for McDonald’s of Laredo, for his commitment and dedication to the Chamber mission as exemplified by his personal involvement in the successful transfer of the Laredo Chamber to its new location offering physical and moral support throughout the transition period.
- **Award in Memory of Luis Guerra**– Presented to **Oscar Caballero**, of Falcon International Bank, in recognition of his unselfish dedication to maintaining and growing the image of the Cola Blanca Hunting Contest as one of South Texas best recognized outdoor competitions.

Tickets to the 2023 Awards Ceremony and luncheon are \$50 per person. Reserved tables of 8 are available for \$500. Deadline for reservations is Monday, September 25. For information or tickets to the noon luncheon, contact the Laredo Chamber of Commerce at (956) 722-9895 or email chamber@laredochamber.com.

Founded in 1915, the Laredo Chamber of Commerce is Laredo’s and Webb County’s longest running business organization. It represents approximately 675 businesses of the local community. The Laredo Chamber of Commerce is accredited by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce with five stars – the highest level of accreditation. Only a very small percentage out of approximately 7,000 chambers in the United States are accredited.

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