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# LA VOZ DE BRAZORIA COUNTY

El Periódico Más Interesante en el Condado

Volume # 19 Number # 1

A Bilingual Newspaper

January / February, 2008

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Campaign**

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## RENU KHATOR

### CONFIRMED AS NEW UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON & UH SYSTEM LEADER

# People in the News



## Murano Named New President of Texas A&M

Dr. Elsa A. Murano was named the 23rd President of Texas A&M University on Jan. 3, 2008. She is the first woman and first Hispanic-American to serve as President of the oldest public university of higher learning in Texas.

Dr. Murano has served since January 2005 as Vice Chancellor of Agriculture and Life Sciences for The Texas A&M University System and as Dean of Agriculture and Life Sciences for the University.

From October 2001 through 2004, she was Under Secretary for Food Safety with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, as appointed by President George W. Bush. Prior to her USDA service, Dr. Murano was a Professor in the Department of Animal Science at Texas A&M University. She joined the Texas A&M faculty in 1995.

Dr. Murano was an Assistant Professor in the Department of Microbiology, Immunology and Preventative Medicine at Iowa State University from 1990 until her appointment to the Texas A&M faculty. She received BA from Florida International University, and earned both an MA and Ph.D from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.



## Linda Yañez is Running for a Spot in the Texas Supreme Court

Linda Yañez, a Justice in the 13th Court of Appeals has filed as a Democrat for Place 8 on the Texas Supreme Court. Yañez said she could no longer turn a blind eye to the "extreme right judicial activism" of our state's highest court. One of the highest profile examples of the current brand of judicial activism is the case of *Duenez v F.F.P.*

"I authored the Court of Appeals' decision that affirmed the jury's verdict in favor of the brain damaged child victim of the drunk driver," Yañez noted. "The current members of our state's highest court reversed a jury verdict, ignored the *Dram Shop Law*, and overturned their own prior ruling in the same case after an election took place."

Yañez, was appointed to the Thirteenth Court of Appeals in 1993 by Governor Ann Richards - making her the first Hispanic woman to serve in an appellate court



## Dr. De la Teja Elected President of TACHE

Dr. Magda de la Teja, is the President-Elect of the Texas Association of Chicanos in Higher Education (TACHE). She takes the helm of this 34 year old professional organization in February during its annual conference in Austin.

Currently she is the Dean of Student Services, South Austin Campus at Austin Community College. In this position she spends a great deal of time helping students find the resources they need in order to complete their education at ACC.

De la Teja earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in speech communication from the University of Texas at Austin. She later returned to the university and obtained her Ph.D. in higher-ed administration. After a working at a number of jobs in the field of education she returned to The University of Texas at Austin and earned her law degree.



**Washington, DC**— Hoy, la campaña *Ya es Hora: ¡Ciudadanía!* (Citizenship, It's Time!) anunció que ha superado su meta de ayudar a movilizar a más de un millón de inmigrantes elegibles a solicitar la ciudadanía de los Estados Unidos en el 2007. Aun cuando miles de solicitudes todavía están siendo procesadas, el servicio de inmigración y ciudadanía de los Estados Unidos (USCIS por sus siglas en inglés) confirmó la recepción de 1,029,951 solicitudes de ciudadanía desde enero a octubre del 2007 —cerca del doble de solicitudes de ciudadanía recibidas en el 2006.

"Superar la meta de un millón de solicitudes es un tremendo logro", dijo la directora ejecutiva de Fondo Educativo Arturo Vargas NALEO. "Este es otro ejemplo del deseo de la comunidad latina de involucrarse completamente en el proceso político estadounidense. La alianza *Ya es Hora* continuará construyendo su campaña para seguir esta movilización y esperamos incrementar la participación de los votantes latinos en noviembre del 2008".

"El aumento elevado en solicitudes de ciudadanía, arraigado por el optimismo y la esperanza que sellan cada solicitud, es una victoria para todos los estadounidenses" dijo Eliseo Medina, vicepresidente ejecutivo del Sindicato Internacional de Empleados de Servicios (SEIU por sus siglas en inglés). "Justo cuando los ataques hacia los inmigrantes han aumentando, esta comunidad reconfirma su patriotismo y compromiso para ayudar a fortalecer la democracia de los Estados Unidos. Esta es la clase de participación cívica que nuestro país necesita para crecer con fuerza".

Desde enero del 2007, esta campaña sin precedentes ha unido a más de 400 instituciones en 24 ciudades para ofrecer talleres sobre la ciudadanía y a proveer otras herramientas de ayuda a los solicitantes. Los medios de comunicación en español — **Entravision, ImpreMedia y Univision**— han incorporado mensajes y programas educativos sobre la ciudadanía, al igual que anuncios impresos y televisivos de servicio público alcanzando al 99% de los hogares Hispánicos.

Como resultado del tremendo éxito de la campaña, los diversos miembros que componen este esfuerzo de *Ya es Hora: ¡Ciudadanía!* están trabajando con USCIS y representantes del Congreso para reducir el retraso en el procesamiento de las solicitudes. Actualmente, los retrasos procesales en USCIS podrían impedir que los solicitantes del 2007 puedan naturalizarse a tiempo para votar en las elecciones del 2008.

"Nuestra campaña está comprometida en proveer el apoyo necesario para que podamos acelerar los retrasos", dijo Celia Muñoz vicepresidenta de Consejo Nacional de La Raza (NCLR, por sus siglas en inglés). "Estos solicitantes han seguido todas las reglas —esperado pacientemente su turno, pagado sus impuestos y contribuido con sus comunidades. Todos estamos de acuerdo de que éstos no deben enfrentar retrasos injustificables que les impida conseguir su ciudadanía. Ellos merecen la oportunidad de convertirse en ciudadanos activos para que su voz se escuche el día de las elecciones".

Además de su continuo compromiso para ayudar a los inmigrantes elegibles a naturalizarse, la campaña *Ya es Hora* recientemente inició *Ya es Hora: Ve y Vota* una campaña activa que busca movilizar a llevar a millones de latinos a las urnas en noviembre 2008.

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**PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT**

*La Voz de Brazoria County* is a monthly publication. The editorial and business address is 804 Pery Street Angleton, Texas 77515. The telephone number is (979) 848-2883. The use, reproduction or distribution of any or part of this publication is strongly encouraged. But do call and let us know what you are using. Letters to the editor are most welcome.

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**Unos Pensamientos**

In this edition of *La Voz de Brazoria County* we wish to call to your attention the fact that the **University of Houston** has made history in appointing a woman to be its new leader. **Dr. Renu Khator** will serve as both the Chancellor of the University and its President. See more of this story on page 5.

Another woman we wish to call to your attention to is the **Tejano** music pioneer **Lydia Mendoza**. I did not know who **Lydia Mendoza** was until the 1980s. Then, little by little I began to read about her contributions to **Tejano** music. Once I was at a meeting at **La Merida Restaurant** on **Navigation Street** in **Houston, Texas** when **Lydia Mendoza** suddenly showed up and actually performed. I was stunned to say the least. Here was a person who began recording music in the 1930s and now fifty years later I was privileged to hear her beautiful music in person.

On page 4 you will find another story about a woman who after 50 years decided to finally become an American citizen. At her All American Party this past Saturday where she gladly served hot dogs and Texas chili, she observed that while she didn't necessarily feel any different, she did wonder out loud why she didn't take the step toward citizenship earlier. We want to congratulate **Isabel Hyman** for taking this courageous step.

Our last comment is about our Latino Cultural Quiz on page 13. If you take the quiz, do not be afraid to ask for assistance with some of the questions. If you would like to contribute questions to future Latino Cultural Quizzes, just send us an email or letter and we will be happy to work your questions in the next quiz.

En este ejemplar de *La Voz*

de **Brazoria County** queremos llamar a su atención el hecho de que ahora la **Universidad de Houston** tiene un nuevo líder. **Dr. Renu Khator** fue nombrada Presidenta de la universidad, un puesto que la va permiti redefinir muchos aspectos de la universidad.

Otra mujer quien queremos reconocer es a **Lydia Mendoza**, una pionera de la musica **Tejana**. Yo no sabia quien era **Lydia Mendoza** hasta en los 1980s. Luego poquito a poquito empeze leer de su contribuciones a la musica **Tejana**. Una vez estaba en una junta en el **Restaurante La Merida** alla por la calle **Navigation** en **Houston** cuando de repente entró **Lydia Menodza**. Me asuste! Aquí estaba una persona que empezo a grabar discos en los 1930s y ahora 50 años después, yo tenia el plaser de oir su musica en persona.

En la pagina 4 usted encontrar la historia de una mujer que se decidio hacerse ciudadano después de vivir en **Angleton** por más de 50 años. En una fiesta para celebrar su ciudadanía el pasado sabado, ella comento que no se sentia diferente ahora que puede declarar que es American citizen, pero se quedo pensativa cuando empeso a reflejarse en la cuestion de por que espero tanto años. Queremos felicitar a **Isabel Hyman** por tomar este paso de la ciudadanía.

Nuestro ultimo comentario es sobre nuestro Latino Cultural Quiz que se encuentra en la pagina 13. Si usted trata de tomar este examen, no tenga miedo en preguntar por ayuda. No hay nada que dice que usted no puede recibir ayuda. Si usted desea incluir preguntas que usted tiene, mandanos lo que tiene con una notita.

**Editorial**



**Alfredo Santos c/s**  
Editor



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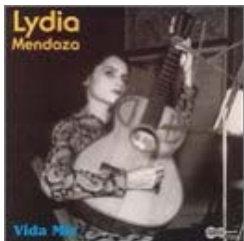
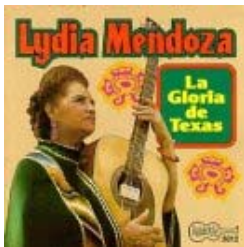
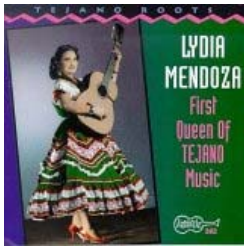
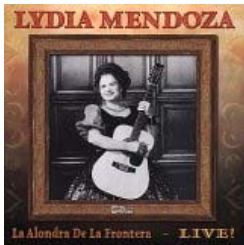
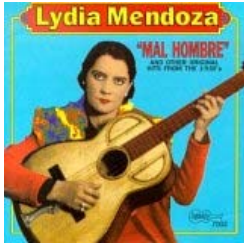
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# Lydia Mendoza Passes Away at 91 Years of Age

by Barbara Renaud Gonzales



If you don't know who she was, ask your grandmother, who likely remembers her and her twelve-string guitar at the Plaza del Zacate in San Antonio, Texas, with the chili queens in the early 1930s. She sang, literally, for pennies, as part of a struggling musical family following the migrant route to Michigan and back, until she was signed to the Blue Bird label. One of her songs, *Mal Hombre*, was an overnight success, when she was just 17 years old.



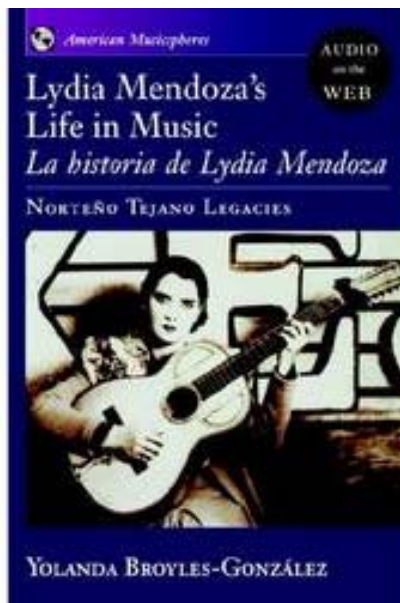
She emerged as one of the few tejanas to gain national prominence in a time when few women were encouraged to pursue a musical career. Throughout her life, until she suffered a stroke in 1988, she was beloved for singing the songs of the poor, working-class mexicanos she came from, as la cancionera de los pobres and la alondra de la frontera.

In 1982, Lydia Mendoza became the first Texan to receive a National Endowment for the Art's National Heritage Award. Her last public appearance was a tribute to her, *A Serenata to Lydia Mendoza*, for her 90th birthday, presented by the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center at the Plaza Guadalupe in September 2006.

It rained that night, and Lydia Mendoza's illness prevented her from singing for the thousands who came to just see her, and show their *respeto* to the woman who knew a thousand songs about their lives, their joys, and their sorrow. She learned the words when she was a little girl in Monterrey, Mexico, from bubble-gum wrappers, listening to the men who sang those songs, teaching herself to play the mandolin, the guitar, the violin, the piano, the bass fiddle.

Adios, Lydia. I will remember you as the rain that falls in Texas, the softest *lluvia*, and the kind that haunts you all the way home.

**RIGHT:** The cover of the book on the life of Lydia Mendoza by Dr. Yolanda Broyles-Gonzalez.



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# RENU KHATOR

## CONFIRMED AS NEW UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON & UH SYSTEM LEADER

### Board of Regents Names Her President and Chancellor

**Dr. Renu Khator** has been unanimously appointed president of the **University of Houston** and chancellor of the UH System. **Khator**, who has been serving as provost and senior vice president at the **University of South Florida**, is expected to take office this month. *"It will be my job to build the four universities of the UH System into a model metropolitan institution of higher education for the 21st century, one that provides access and excellence with equal ease,"* **Khator** told a ballroom filled with well wishers. "There is already so much to be proud of, and I look forward to helping **UH** becoming the state's next flagship research university."

**Renu Khator** (pronounced rah-NEW ka-TOOR) was named sole finalist for the position last month, with the board selecting her from a slate provided by a search advisory committee made up of faculty, staff and community members. *"It was clear that Dr. Khator is the right person at the right time for the University of Houston and the UH System,"* said **Board Chairman Welcome Wilson**. *"Her keen intellect, strategic sensibilities, political savvy and well-developed interpersonal skills convinced us that she was the individual we need to lead us at this crucial time in our institutional life."* A devoted teacher, seasoned educational administrator

and respected scholar, **Khator** has a doctorate and master's degree in political science from **Purdue University** and earned her bachelor's degree from **Kanpur University in India**. **Khator**, 52, has served as provost at **USF** since 2003, and was dean of the College of Arts & Sciences for three years prior to that.

From 1997 to 2000, she served as the director of **USF's Environmental Science and Policy Department**. She has served as professor of government & international affairs at the university since 1995. She is the author or editor of five scholarly books and numerous articles concerning global public administration, environmental policy and South Asian politics.

A native of India, she came to the **United States** in 1974 after her marriage to **Suresh Khator**. Both pursued graduate degrees at **Purdue University** and later accepted teaching positions at **USF**. He is a professor of Industrial & Management Systems Engineering and director of computing for the College of Engineering at **USF**. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Industrial Engineers and serves as faculty athletic representative to the NCAA. They have two daughters, both ophthalmologists.

She becomes the third person to hold the dual title of **UH System** chancellor and **UH** president. She follows **Arthur Smith**, who retired in 2003, and **Jay Gogue**, who became president of **Auburn University**, his alma mater, this summer.

**USF**, where **Khator** is the second-highest-ranking administrator, is a comprehensive, doctoral-extensive, research university with four campuses, including a medical school, in **Tampa, St. Petersburg, Sarasota-Manatee** and **Lakeland**. Last year, **USF** enrolled 44,000 students and had a budget of \$1.6 billion.

**Khator** has a long history of community engagement, serving on numerous boards, including the **Moffitt Cancer Hospital Board of Directors**, the **Hillsborough Education Foundation Board**, the **Lowry Park Zoo Board**, and she recently served as a member of the **National Advisory Council on Environmental Policy and Management**. She has recently been appointed to the **National Science Foundation Integrative Graduate Education and Research Program Panel** and the **American Council on Education Forum** on



**Internationalism** and **Multiculturalism**.

She enjoys writing poetry and short stories, several of which have been published. In addition to her duties as provost, she has been teaching a course in **Hindi** at **USF** this year. The **Khators** were honored by **India** this year, receiving the **Jewel of India**, a special award recognizing non-resident Indians for making outstanding contributions in their field. The **United States Citizenship and Immigration Services** included **Renu Khator** among its 2006 Outstanding American by Choice awardees. The award recognizes outstanding achievements of naturalized U.S. citizens. Also in 2006, **Khator** received the **Distinguished Alumnus Award from Purdue University's College of Liberal Arts** and the Outstanding Educator Award from the **American Foundation for Greek Language and Culture** for enhancing Hellenic studies.



# Isabel Hyman Becomes an American Citizen

She finally did it. After years of working at **Angleton/Danbury Hospital**, **Isabel Hyman** decided it was time to become an American citizen. "Oh, I have always thought about it over the years," she said recently at a party to celebrate having achieved her goal. "But I just never got around to it, until now."

Surrounded by friends and family including her daughters who came in from **Austin, Texas**, Mrs. Hyman shared with her guests how she studied and prepared for the citizenship test. "I studied over a 100 questions. I was nervous, yes, but I knew I had to do it."

The theme of the party was of course red, white and blue. As more and more people crowded into her home to eat All American hot dogs and chili, everyone offered their congratulations in their own words and an official "welcome to America" Angleton style. It was clear from all those present that she had indeed made many friends over the years.

Originally from **Venezuela**, Mrs. Hyman met her husband during **World War II** while he was over there. They married and soon came to the United States. They were married fifty years until he passed away about 10 years ago.

When guests asked if she was going to vote this year, she was quick with her response. "Yes, and I am already registered." When asked who she was going to vote for, she looked the questioner in the eye and stated flatly and with a smile, "That is a secret!"

Another guest asked her how she felt about her new citizenship status. She paused for a moment and reflected before answering. Then she said, "I have here been such a long time that I really don't feel all that different. But I would have wanted my husband to be here. That is my only regret for having waited so long."



ABOVE: Mrs. Hyman in front of her home on the day of her party.

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# The Hidden Cost of Remedial Education

By Brooke Dollens Terry

Last spring, angry parents protested that their kids could not walk across the stage at high school graduation ceremonies because they failed the **TAKS** test. What should really upset parents is the false notion that every student receiving a diploma is ready for college. Too many students graduate from high school with insufficient skills to succeed in college, and have to repeat high school material at two- and four-year colleges.

Last year, 35 percent of all freshmen at **Texas** public higher education institutions had to enroll in at least one remedial education course because they were unprepared for college-level work in math, reading, or writing. This equates to more than 162,000 incoming freshmen expending time and energy on remedial coursework that does not count toward their degree.

**ACT**, a national college entrance testing company, concluded that a mere 19 percent of this spring's **Texas** high school graduates were ready for college-level courses in math, science, reading, and English. Sending poorly prepared students to college is costly for institutions of higher learning, for students, for taxpayers, and for the economy. Colleges and universities should not have to spend precious time and resources to re-teach basic skills before students are ready for college-level work.

But during the last academic year, the **University of Houston** taught remedial math to 924 students, remedial reading to 95, and remedial writing to 172. **San Antonio's University of the Incarnate Word** taught remedial math to 306 students and remedial reading and writing to 230. Even students at one of **Texas'** flagship universities, the **University of Texas at Austin**, needed remedial help.

Last year, 113 students needed help with basic math and algebra, 29 with basic reading, and 23 with basic writing.



Brooke Dollens Terry

These numbers demonstrate a wide disconnect between high school preparation and college expectations. Remedial education makes the attainment of a college degree less likely; in fact, it is the leading predictor that a student will drop out of college.

The **National Center for Education Statistics** reports that only 17 percent of students who enroll in a remedial reading course receive a bachelor's degree within eight years. In general, less education means lower earnings over a worker's lifetime. Remedial education is also a drain on taxpayers.

When students take remedial education courses in college, taxpayers wind up paying for the same material to be taught twice. Because taxpayers finance remedial education through local property taxes, state general revenue funds, federal income taxes, and other local taxes, it is difficult to determine the total cost to taxpayers. But last year's state budget appropriated \$206 million to public higher education institutions for the instructional cost of developmental (remedial) education.

Lastly, the large need for remedial education hurts the economy. The **Alliance for Excellent Education** estimates the nation loses \$2.3 billion a year from lost earnings. Other research

suggests remedial education costs Texas more than \$13.6 billion a year in reduced earning potential, poor worker productivity, increased spending on social programs, and direct costs of remediation.

To restore the value of a high school diploma and ensure that students are college ready, high schools must return their focus to teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic skills. The state should also raise high school standards so that students cannot graduate with deficits in these critical areas.

The goal of every high school should be to prepare all students to be able to enter college or the workforce without the need for remediation, because all of us pay the price when Texas students don't learn the first time around.

*Brooke Dollens Terry is an education policy analyst at the Texas Public Policy Foundation, a non-profit, free-market research institute based in Austin.*



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## LULAC recibe donación de \$25,000 del Banco Countrywide para programas de educación para compradores de casa

Washington, DC - The League of United Latin American Citizens National Housing Commission (LNHC) today announced that it has received \$25,000 from Countrywide Bank, FSB, the third largest federal savings bank in the U.S. and a member of the Countrywide (NYSE:CFC) family of companies. Countrywide Bank's financial support will allow the National Housing Commission to continue to promote educational programs on home buying, foreclosure prevention, financial literacy, credit and other areas for Latinos, especially for young people and the elderly.

"LULAC believes that homeownership is the key to the long-term economic progress and wealth accumulation of the Latino community, and that safe and stable neighborhoods are essential to individual achievement and community vitality," said LULAC National President Rosa Rosales. "We are grateful for Countrywide Bank's generous contribution, and we applaud their long-standing commitment to help consumers achieve and maintain homeownership."

"A solid foundation of financial education is the first step towards building your financial future," said Mary Salinas Durón, executive vice president for Countrywide Bank. "LULAC and the National Housing Commission are long-time partners of Countrywide, and we are proud to support their important efforts as we try to make the home-buying process a smooth one for the Latino community."

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<p><b>Transmission FLUID CHANGE *</b></p> <p><b>\$59<sup>95</sup></b></p> <p><small>*Most Vehicles, includes fluids, gasket &amp; filter</small></p> <p>REG \$79.95</p>	