

# PROGRESS

Leading Businesses...Leading Communities...

## Business Leaders LEARN about Brownsville's "State of Education"

On October 12th, the Brownsville Chamber of Commerce kicked off its first event of the fiscal year and hosted a "State of Education" luncheon with the purpose of engaging and inspiring the business leaders to take an active role in improving education in Brownsville. At the luncheon participants learned about innovations in education taking place in Brownsville to improve: high school completion, college preparation, and postsecondary credentials leading to jobs with labor market value. Speakers highlighted the unique work of their institutions to ensure an educated workforce and a robust economy.

The masters of ceremonies were Irv Downing, Vice President of Economic Development and Community Services at the University of Texas at Brownsville and Workforce



On October 12th, the Brownsville Chamber of Commerce kicked off its first event of the fiscal year and hosted a "State of Education" luncheon. Panel participants included from left to right, Tom Torkelson, IDEA Public Schools; Irv Downing, The University of Texas at Brownsville; Dr. Juliet V. Garcia, The University of Texas at Brownsville; Dr. Lily F. Tercero, Texas Southmost College; Pat Hobbs, Workforce Solutions-Cameron; Dr. Carl Montoya, Brownsville Independent School District.

Solutions - Cameron Executive Director, Pat Hobbs.

The University of Texas at Brownsville's President, Dr. Juliet V. Garcia.

Prestigious speakers were Brownsville Independent School District's Interim Superintendent, Dr. Carl Montoya; Founder and CEO of IDEA Public Schools, Tom Torkelson; President of the Texas Southmost College, Dr. Lily F. Tercero and

Speakers enforced the importance of quality education, how the business and education communities depend on one another, that if we want quality workforce we need to ensure that good education

*continued on page 6 (State of Education)*



**Glen Boles**  
Chairman of the Board  
Valley Baptist Health Systems

tation plan to the Gates Foundation.

This past July, the Gates Foundation accepted the plan and awarded Brownsville \$1.3 million as a part of the Postsecondary Success Initiative plus \$200,000 in kind assistance. The initiative is a community engagement effort to ensure more individuals move on and complete a postsecondary education which will result in better paying jobs and

*continued on page 6 (Chairman's Message)*

### Chairman's Message

Better Education means Better Business for Brownsville!! Ever since joining the Chamber Board, I have had the pleasure of working with Angela and the Brownsville Business & Education Coalition to promote Education for Brownsville. In October 2010, Brownsville was chosen as one of four cities in the nation to participate in a planning grant funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and administered by the United Way of Southern Cameron County. The idea was to develop an implementation plan to improve postsecondary completion rates among low-income young adults. The Partners for Postsecondary Success after many months of meeting and developing submitted the implemen-

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE!

**PAGE 2** President's Message  
A Year in Review

**PAGE 3** What Employers Can do to  
Keep their best Employees

**PAGE 4** New & Renewed  
Members

**PAGE 6** Continuation of  
Chairman's Message

# FY 10-11: A Year in Review

## President's Message

Recently, while out and about, I was asked by a business owner, not a member, "What does the Chamber do?" WOW... Those of you who work closely with the Chamber staff, committee chairs and directors on our many ongoing projects know all too well WHAT the Chamber does...

Frankly, we are doing a little bit of everything; we are the primary source for businesses and individuals that seek information on the business climate in a community, we act as a collective voice for the business community, provide bottom line programs for businesses large and small, and provide leadership in civil and social programs....just to name a few.

Because September 30th marked the end of the Chamber's fiscal year for 2010-2011, I've compiled a few highlights from our year; I encourage you to take a moment to read them...and as our motto goes...Leading Businesses...Leading Communities. A full report will be available

online soon.

### Promotion and Business-Building Initiatives

The Chamber promotes and assists small business through proactive innovative programs, education, motivation, networking and other resources available to facilitate growth. Moreover, networking opportunities allow members to grow their business by making contacts, develop existing business relationships, grow their professional network and generate business leads.

The Chamber organized more than 60 networking opportunities with a minimum of 4,000 participants.

- 1) Networking at Noon - 80 participants.
- 2) Annual Holiday Mixer - 200 participants
- 3) Speed Networking - 49 participants
- 4) Annual Wells Fargo Charro Days Mixer - 300 participants
- 5) Diamond Ball Dinner & Dance - 200 participants
- 6) Annual Meeting - 300 participants
- 7) Speed Networking - 49 participants
- 8) Freedom Celebration Mixer - 150 participants
- 9) Legislative Update Luncheon - 300 participants
- 10) Power Hour - 50 participants
- 11) Do the Right Thing

Crime Stoppers Fundraiser - 200 participants  
12) Business to Botana Expo - 1,000 participants

Additionally, since the beginning of the fiscal year the Chamber organized 51 ribbon cuttings, ground breakings and/or grand openings with at least 20 contacts per event. Ribbon cuttings/grand openings or ground breakings ceremonies increased 2% compared to last fiscal year.

Moreover, Coffee Talks were held monthly with an average number of 15 participants. Coffee Talk is an informal informational and networking opportunity that also showcases the host business. Areas of discussion included Brownsville's economy, education and international relations.

The Chamber organized and hosted Business to Botana Expo 2011 where more than 100 chamber member businesses displayed their products and services. More than 1,000 participants were able to view chamber member exhibitors or taste the delicious cuisine from 17 member restaurants. The Expo was a great venue for companies to generate sales leads, increase company awareness, market a new product or service, and gain new clientele.



**Angela R. Burton, IOM, CPM**  
President/CEO

The Bienvenidos Committee organized and hosted Diamond Ball 2011. The formal dinner and dance was attended by more than 200 guests. The ball is organized yearly to raise funds for the purchase of the beautiful hand-made ceramic plaques given to Chamber members at ribbon cuttings. The Brownsville Chamber is the only chamber known in Texas to give such a business keepsake. Mrs. Anna Rodriguez of Wells Fargo Bank was the lucky winner of the one carat diamond.

More than 80 Members are participating with the M2M Discount Program. This program increases business among Chamber members while allowing them to take advantage of discounts thus saving money.

The Chamber staff gathered and reported data for the ACCRA-

Cost of Living Survey. The Brownsville Chamber of Commerce receives pricing report forms each quarter that require research and documentation for almost 60 categories such as grocery items, housing, utilities, mortgage quotations, transportation, health care, and miscellaneous goods and services. Over a three day period, the Chamber staff compiles the research data and submits it to ACCRA evaluation and later for publication. The Cost of Living Survey is a great economic development tool. It measures relative price levels for consumer goods and services in participating areas.

Four hundred fifty (450) Certificates of Origin were processed for members this year. A Certificate of Origin (CO) is a document attesting that goods in a particular export shipment are wholly obtained or produced or manufactured or processed in a particular country (country of origin). In most countries, chambers of commerce are the key agent in the delivery of certificates of origin.

The Chamber's online business directory was displayed 656,181 times by internet guests from North America, Europe, Asia, South America, Africa and Oceania. This is a 37% increase from last fiscal year. Each member averaged 563.25 referrals from the Chamber

website with a daily average of 1,798 referrals from the website business directory. Additionally, the top five categories searched and displayed on the online business directory were: restaurants, banks-financial, hotels-motels, Organizations-Non Profit, and Employment Agencies.

The Chamber in partnership with the Small Business Development Center hosted and organized 27 seminars with more than 287 small business owners or potential owners participating. Seminars are developed to educate small businesses on a variety of issues that will help ensure success. A majority of the seminars are held free of charge. Seminars and workshops help upgrade business skills and knowledge. Compared to last fiscal year there were 10 less seminars conducted however participation increased 29%. Meaning...less seminars but more participants.

Moreover, the Chamber hosts a Small Business Development Counselor who meets with business owners and potential owners and assists them with advice to financial, marketing, production, organization, engineering, technical problems, business plans and feasibility studies. All services provided by the counselor are free and confidential. The Small Business De-



# Welcome! Bienvenidos! New Members

New Members as of  
10-28-11

Beef O' Brady's  
Restaurants  
Mr. Gabriel Loya  
3457 Old Hwy 77 Ste. 100  
Brownsville, TX 78521  
Phone: (956) 986-2333

Brownsville Toastmasters  
Professional Training/  
Development  
Ms. Kathy Payton  
1600 University Blvd.  
Brownsville, TX 78520  
Phone: (956) 244-1172

Cameron County  
Insurance Center, Inc.  
dba Coleman, Hall &  
Heinze Insurance  
Insurance Agencies &  
Agents  
Ms. Maria Nuez Hall  
302 Queen Isabella  
Blvd.  
Port Isabel, TX 78578  
Phone: (956) 943-6481  
Fax: (956) 943-7086

National Weather  
Service  
Weather Service  
Mr. Steve Drillette  
20 South Vermillion  
Rd.  
Brownsville, TX 78521  
Phone: (956) 504-1432  
Fax: (956) 982-1766

Pena Eye Institute  
Physicians-Optom-  
etrists, Medical Eye  
Specialist  
Mr. Raul A. Pena  
1400 E. Ridge Rd. Ste. 10  
McAllen, TX 78503  
Phone: (956) 661-8733  
Fax: (956) 661-8724

Safeguard Universal  
B.F.P.  
Marketing &  
Promotional Products  
Mr. Luis Gutierrez  
1728 Santa Fe  
Corpus Christi, TX  
78404  
Phone: (361) 884-8640  
Fax: (361) 884-8015

Organo Gold-  
Selamawit Tekle  
Distributors  
Ms. Selamawit H.  
Tekle  
5712 Padre Blvd. Apt 4  
Coast Guard Station  
South Padre Island,  
TX 78597-7666  
Phone: (832) 640-0192

# Thank You! Gracias! Renewed Members

Renewed Members  
as of 10-28-11

Accion Texas  
November 10, 2000

Ayusa Construction &  
Development  
January 29, 2009

BNA Drive-Thru, Inc.  
October 29, 2008

Border Properties, Inc.  
January 1, 1984

Brownsville Elks Lodge  
#1032  
September 21, 2007

Brownsville Naviga-  
tion District (Port of  
Brownsville)  
January 29, 1989

Brownsville Nursing &  
Rehabilitation Center  
November 29, 2004

Comfort Suites  
October 21, 2008

Edward Jones  
July 26, 2006

Gourmet Central  
August 30, 2010

Industrial & Electric  
Supply Co.  
November 29, 1995

Kantack Alcantara  
Law Office, P.C.  
October 26, 2008

Kaplan College  
October 7, 2002

La Milpa Tortilleria  
September 19, 2002

Merrill Lynch Wealth  
Management  
October 19, 2009

Mervis Texas L.P.  
October 15, 1997

Mr. B Motor Co. Sales  
& Rentals  
January 1, 1987

Mr. Music  
June 21, 1993

Rancho Caracol  
June 17, 1999

Residence Inn by  
Marriott – Brownsville  
October 23, 1998

Royal Metal Building  
Components  
November 18, 1996

Sign Solution  
November 19, 2009

The University of  
Texas at Brownsville  
August 21, 1987

Tipton Motors, Inc.  
January 2, 1990

## Brownsville Chamber of Commerce Bienvenidos Committee Update

On October 1, 2011 Judith Lucio of Hamilton & Lucio, P.C. assumed the leadership role as Chairman of the Bienvenidos Committee. With more than 80 members, the Bienvenidos Committee is the largest and one of the most active committee's of the Brownsville Chamber of Commerce.



On October 1, 2011 Judith Lucio (Right) of Hamilton & Lucio, P.C. assumed the leadership role as Chairman of the Bienvenidos Committee.

The mission of the Bienvenidos Committee is to serve as the official greeter and host for the Chamber. Committee members greet visiting dignitaries and/or celebrities, volunteer for various fundraising activities for the Chamber, and

organize Chamber member grand openings and/or ribbon cuttings. This year ending September 30, 2011 the committee organized 51 ceremonies, a 2% increase from

last year. Within the past five years, the committee has organized and conducted more than 300 ribbon cutting and/or ground breaking ceremonies for Brownsville Chamber members.

Additionally, the Bienvenidos committee organizes the annual Diamond Ball, an important fundraiser that helps finance the beautiful handmade ceramic plaques given to chamber members during ribbon cutting ceremonies. Next year's Diamond Ball is scheduled for Saturday, March 24, 2012 so mark your calendars!

On Thursday, October 27, 2011 Beef O' Brady's located at 3457 Old Hwy 77, Suite 100 hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony in celebration of their grand opening.

Established in 1985, by Jim Melody. Mr. Melody dreamed up the idea of a neighborhood pub where friends could gather to enjoy good food and sports in a fun comfortable atmosphere. Together with his wife, Jeannette, they embellished the Brady family name and created a now famous Beef O' Brady's.

The owner and managers embraced the idea of good food and good sports in a family environment and brought Beef O' Brady's to Brownsville. With 15 TVs and 2, 110", big screens everyone can enjoy sporting events while dining with family or friends.



For the most Current Calendar of Events

Visit Our Website at:

[www.brownsvillechamber.com](http://www.brownsvillechamber.com)

continued from page 1 (President's Message)

velopment Counselor received 199 referrals from the Chamber and met with 56 of those at the Chamber office. As a result 9, retention/ business start ups were obtained, which created 26 new jobs and retained 2. Loans were obtained for \$29,900 with \$603,860 owner investment and projected sales of \$1,441,046.

In April 2011, five Brownsville Chamber members and the Chamber President were recognized at the Small Business Awards luncheon hosted by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at The University of Texas-Pan American Annex building. The luncheon celebrated National Small Business Week, honored the importance of small business ownership, and recognized model business people who contribute to the economic prosperity of the Rio Grande Valley. The Small Business Person of the Year award was given to Daniel B. Flores, owner of American Investigations & Security International. Mr. Flores has been an exemplary business leader serving the local community for over 20 years. Other Brownsville Chamber honorees were Edna Posada from Merle Norman Cosmetic Studio, Women in Business Champion; Jose (Joe) Arnoldo Atkinson, Wells Fargo, Financial

Services Champion; Daniel L. Davidson, The Vermillion Restaurant, Jeffrey Butland Family-Owned Business; Lawrence (Larry) Jokl, Veteran Small Business Champion and Angela Burton, Brownsville Chamber of Commerce, Phoenix Award for Outstanding Contributions to Disaster Recovery. The Chamber was instrumental in submitting the nominations and advocating for chamber members. Additionally, each winner was recognized by the Brownsville Herald with a feature story in the Business section arranged by the Chamber.

The Chamber organized and graduated Class II of the Women Entrepreneurs' Small Business Boot Camp. The Boot Camp is an eight month program focused on core business competencies essential to the success and survival of a small business. Wells Fargo Bank was instrumental in the process of securing funding with a grant from the Wells Fargo Foundation. Chamber member Maria Nuez Hall of Ignite Consultants Plus was the lead facilitator of the program. Within the last two years 20 lady entrepreneurs have participated and graduated.

The Chamber recognized eleven (11) businesses with the Shining Star Customer Service Award. This Award is given monthly

to a business that exceeds the standards in customer service.

Members from the International Trade & Logistics committee traveled to Guadalajara to make a formal presentation to COMCE Occidente. The purpose of the presentation was to market the Brownsville/Matamoros Ports of Entry and the various infrastructural and logistical assets at the Port of Brownsville to include the Heavy Weight Corridor. There were approximately 40 business owners representing the Cargo, Logistics and Import/Export Industries. Committee Members also attend Expo Carga in Mexico City to promote Brownsville/Matamoros as a Port of Entry hundreds of targeted contacts were made at the conference.

### Civic Involvement

Civic engagement can take many forms—from individual volunteerism to organizational involvement to electoral participation. It can include efforts to directly address an issue, work with others in a community to solve a problem or interact with the institutions of representative democracy. It means promoting the quality of life in a community through both political and non political processes.

The Chamber administered Brownsville Crime Stoppers by organizing committee programs and hosting

monthly meetings and activities. For Fiscal Year 2010-2011, more than 68 rewards totaling \$20,175.00 were reviewed and approved by Brownsville Crime Stoppers. Additionally, the Chamber in partnership with Brownsville Crime Stoppers organized the First Annual "Do the Right Thing" fundraiser luncheon with keynote speaker Special Agent Victor Cortez. Agent Cortez discussed his personal experience and the events leading up to his 1986 kidnapping and torture by corrupt authorities working with drug traffickers and how those events paralleled Special Agent Kiki Camarena's murder. The event netted more than \$20,000 for Brownsville Crime Stoppers with more than 200 in attendance.

As a community partner, the Chamber participated in weekly grant implementation meetings. In August 2010, United Way of Southern Cameron County along with community partners to include the Chamber, BSD and UTB/TSC were awarded a Post-secondary Success Planning Grant (Gates Foundation) designed to develop a specific plan to improve post-secondary education and employment outcomes for low income young adults. On April 25, 2011, a \$1.5 million dollar implementation grant was submitted to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. A decision was granted

Thursday, June 2, 2011 and the official announcement was made at a press conference Tuesday, July 12, 2011.

In order to support high school completion initiatives, Chamber member volunteers and staff participated in "Walk for the Future". "Walk for the Future" is an effort to reduce Brownsville Independent School District's dropout rate by parents, teachers, school administrators and community volunteers walking Brownsville neighborhoods visiting students who did not return to school after summer break.

The Brownsville Chamber of Commerce was a drop off location for the Brownsville Police Department's (BPD) annual "Christmas for Kids". Chamber members donated a total of 100 unwrapped toys towards the project.

The Brownsville Chamber of Commerce hosted the U.S. Air Force Band of the West. The Band of the West is a musical organization with an outstanding record of achievement. The Airmen assigned to the band are highly-trained professional musicians who have dedicated themselves to serving their country through music. The Chamber served as a ticket outlet resulting in the exposure of member information to the hundreds of visitors who picked up tickets. More than 1,000 people attended the concert.

The Chamber in partnership with the Mexican Consulate in Brownsville and UTB/TSC ITEC Center organized and hosted the second Mexican Arts & Crafts Fair. More than 100 Mexican artisans from various Mexican States participated in the event.

The Chamber in partnership with Chimera Productions and PDLR Investments, Ltd sponsored the Kelly Miller Circus, where more than 10,000 people enjoyed quality family entertainment. The annual circus is a small part of the Chamber's commitment to the community and an opportunity for members to gain exposure via co-sponsorships.

### Advocacy & Leadership

The Chamber promotes awareness and takes action on issues of importance to chamber members at local, state and federal levels and to increase member involvement around critical issues related to voting, legislation and business advocacy.

The Brownsville Chamber of Commerce hosted a round table discussion featuring the honorable Senator John Cornyn. Topics of discussion included financial regulatory reform, healthcare reform, border security and commerce and transportation issues as they related to

continued on page 8 (President's Message)

*continued from page 1 (State of Education)*

is provided in Brownsville and shared what their institutions are doing and will be doing to achieve that goal.

“Education literally transforms a person’s life for the better; it gives them an opportunity to grow not only personally but from a career prospective. Both (business and education communities) are critical elements for growth and success of a community, I guess you can say they are linked together and the success of both is tie to the relationship they establish,” Tercero shared. “Those of us in education are committed working with the business community and the community

at large to improve the lives of the residents in Brownsville and the surrounding area,” she added.

Brownsville’s economic growth and business development depends on the students that are being educated in our classrooms today and that will determine if the city will be able to stay competitive in the regional, state, national and global market.

“Education lays a foundation for so many things, at a personal level for conference, development, growth, to open our perspective to the world, life and the community, it leads to civil engagement, to involvement in the

community and also for the viability of the community, for economic growth and to put food on the table,” District 38 State Representative, Eddie Lucio, III shared. “As far as we go in our education, as much as we can do to diversify our experiences can only provide us with the tools necessary to live a good quality of life, because that is what we all want and that is a fundamental component for living a good quality of life,” he added.

According to Hobbs, Brownsville has a young, growing, bilingual workforce which is attractive to a lot of companies but if the workforce is uneducated and untrained then

those companies can’t afford to relocate.

“Education is the key to almost everything; it affects long term the quality of the workforce because if the workforce is not educated, they can’t find a job. If the quality of our workforce is not appropriate then companies don’t look at us to move and use our workforce,” expressed Hobbs.

Although, local education and workforce institutions are working together, their efforts are useless if education is not enforced at home. A child’s first school is their home and parental involvement is intensely necessary.

According to Hobbs

there’s a lack of goal setting in our youth and parents expect the school system to take over their child’s education. “We need more parental involvement, career orientation and program need to be created in the early years to get kids start thinking about what career they should decide on,” he said.

Besides informing the community, the other main goal was to inspire attendees to take action. One of the most inspired participants was Lucio, III. “I hope that attendees feel inspiration, I think that as human beings we want to be inspired, we want to be call to duty,” he expressed. “The com-

munity leaders that we have may be leaders in their respective fields but have them being inspired and have them buy in, in to what the plan is and that plan is to have the best possible community we can and one of the most fundamental components is education,” he added.

To have a successful business and education communities, everyone must do their best. Parents, children and the community in general, have to engage to the cause to make Brownsville a successful and better place to live, study and do business.

*continued from page 1 (Chairman’s Message)*

a better community. Partners in the project include, United Way of Cameron County, UTB/TSC, BISD, Workforce Solutions Cameron, Brownsville Economic Development Council, the Brownsville Chamber of Commerce and many others.

I bring these items up as a reminder of the “State of Education” luncheon hosted by the Brownsville Chamber of Commerce on October 12th. We witnessed a major historical event in Brownsville, where local leaders discussed taking the “bull by the horns” to improve education thus helping power the economy.

Angela was recently quoted as saying, “There is a clear correlation between education and economic development.” I want our members to know that your Board of Directors at the Chamber also echo this sentiment.

Furthermore, Angela was recently elected President of the University of Texas at Brownsville School of Business Advisory Board. She gracefully accepted the position because she understands the advisory board will provide an important linkage between the business and academic communities.

She is very motivated and stated one of her goals is to work with

the advisory board, Dean Kroll and the faculty to ensure the school receives Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) Accreditation. From my understanding an AACSB Peer Review Team of three Deans from Accredited Business Schools will be in Brownsville to audit the School of Business and eventually submit their recommendation to the AACSB Initial Accreditation Committee.

I bet you’re wondering why it’s important to be AACSB accredited. AACSB is the international seal of approval for business and accounting programs that insures the educational needs of students are

met through high quality, continuous improvement and excellence in education.

Moreover, according to a survey based on responses from deans at AACSB Accredited schools, 89% reported that AACSB Accreditation helped them produce higher caliber, better educated graduates who are more de-

sirable to prospective employers and 83% reported an increase in the number of recruiters and employers that were interested in their graduates after achieving AACSB Accreditation.

As your Chamber Chairman and a community stakeholder I respectfully ask for your support if called

upon. Be it input, focus groups, mentoring or internships please support educational initiatives at all academic levels. Again, as Angela stated, “there is a clear correlation between education and economic development.”

Thanks,  
Glen



## SUNWAVE

AIR CONDITIONING, LLC

**WE SERVICE ALL BRANDS**  
TOM GUTIERREZ • TACLA012932E  
7250 N. EXPWY • OLMITO, TX  
**(956) 350-4813**

INSTALLATIONS • SALES & SERVICE

- Heat Pumps
- Air Conditioning & Heating
- Residential & Commercial
- Financing Available with Approved Credit




# *What are you looking for?*

**A SOFA?**

**A PLUMBER?**

**A NEW CAR?**

*The Valley Bargain Book now brings you local print ads from local businesses all over the Valley - and all online in a searchable format. Search for deals from your favorite Valley Bargain Book advertisers, or browse for deals on the items you are looking for. No matter what you are looking for, find it at...*

[www.shopping.valleybargainbook.com](http://www.shopping.valleybargainbook.com)

**SHOP THE VALLEY.**  
**LOCAL BUSINESSES, LOCAL ADS.**

  
**Valley  
BARGAIN BOOK**  
*Proven results you can count on!*

*"Advertise in the Shopper  
Everyone Reads"*

**VALLEY BARGAIN BOOK**  
1300 Wild Rose Lane  
Brownsville, TX 78521  
**956-546-5113**

**VALLEY BARGAIN BOOK**  
1126 S. Commerce  
Harlingen, TX 78501  
**956-423-1818**



Brownsville. Because several of these issues directly impact the community, the open floor discussion was a great opportunity for chamber directors and community leaders to express concerns.

The Brownsville Chamber of Commerce, as part of the Interagency Group traveled to Austin in order to meet legislators and agency officials. More than 50 individuals from 12 different organizations attended a long list of meetings. Resolutions were read and passed on the House and Senate floors. Approximately 200 goodie bags were distributed on the morning of Jan-

uary 25th to all offices at the Texas Capitol and a reception was hosted that evening where more than 250 people attended to include at least 50 Texas Legislators and Speaker of the House, Joe Straus. The visit was designed for local leaders to showcase and discuss Brownsville's legislative.

The Brownsville Chamber of Commerce and the Harlingen Area Chamber of Commerce jointly organized a Legislative Update Luncheon with keynote speakers Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr., Rep. Rene O. Oliveira, Rep. Eddie Lucio, III, and Rep. J.M. Lozano. The delegation provided

an update of the 82nd Legislative Session and discussed issues that impact the region. The event was well attended with more than 300 Brownsville and Harlingen business leaders in attendance.

On behalf of the Chamber, Angela Burton attended a variety of meetings regarding City Ordinance 2009-911-E, an Ordinance Prohibiting the Use of Plastic Bags in the City of Brownsville which passed at the city commission meeting on December 15, 2009 and amended September 23, 2010. The ordinance began Wednesday, January 5, 2011. The Chamber has acted as a liaison and

address community via its committee position on the Environmental Advisory Committee.

The Chamber attended the BiNational Chamber of Commerce Coalition meeting in Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Mexico. A variety of topics including infrastructure, transportation, security and commerce were discussed. The Bi-National Chamber of Commerce Coalition began in September 2005 as an initiative of the Brownsville and Matamoros Chambers.

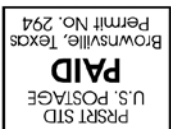
Chamber President Angela Burton and members of the International Trade & Logistics Committee met with Congressman Farenthold regarding the newly implemented initiative called Comprehensive Safety

Analysis 2010 (CSA 2010). The program was developed to improve large truck and bus safety and ultimately reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities that are related to commercial motor vehicles.

The Chamber President joined the U.S. Secretary of Labor, Hilda Solis as she addressed Junior ROTC students from six high schools on Friday, May 20, Armed Forces Day, as part of first lady Michelle Obama's "Joining Forces" initiative. Solis highlighted the importance of building leadership skills, the value of JROTC and education. Chamber President also made remarks telling JROTC students how important a post secondary education was, quoting by 2018, 63% of all American job openings will require some sort of

post secondary education. In November, more than 80 local business people attended Networking at Noon with featured panelists Michael Barkin, American Consul in Matamoros, Rodolfo Quilantan Arenas, Mexican Consul in Brownsville, and Michael Freeman, Port of Entry Director. The topic of discussion included Visas and Cross Border Travel. Each panelist discussed areas of importance and fielded questions from the audience.

The Chamber wrote dozens of letters and/or approved resolutions supporting or opposing programs and/or legislation important to Brownsville and the region.



Address Service Requested

# PROGRESS

Leading Businesses. Leading Communities.

is published by  
**The Brownsville Chamber of Commerce**

1600 University Blvd.  
Brownsville, Texas 78520  
(956) 542-4341 \* Fax (956) 504-3348  
email: info@brownsvillechamber.com  
website: www.brownsvillechamber.com

The Progress is printed and distributed by Valley Media, Inc.  
For Advertising information call 546-5113.

Publisher: ..... Angela R. Burton  
Editor: ..... Angela R. Burton  
Graphic Designer ..... Angela R. Burton  
Writers: ..... Angela R. Burton and Chamber Members

## BROWNSVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2011-2012 OFFICERS & DIRECTORS DIRECTORY

### OFFICERS

Glen Boles  
Chairman of the Board  
Valley Baptist Health Systems

Robert Berry  
Immediate Past Chairman  
International Shipbreaking  
LTD, L.L.C.

Alex Martinez  
1st Vice Chairman  
International Bank of Commerce

Placido Garcia  
2nd Vice Chair/Secretary  
PlaGar Engineering, L.L.C.

D. Marty Bogart  
Treasurer  
Marty Bogart, CPA

### DIRECTORS

Dutch Fisher  
Dutch Fisher Real Estate

Olga Gonzalez  
Falcon International Bank

David Handley  
Valley Regional Medical Center

Sergio C. Hernandez  
Tipotex Chevrolet, Inc.

Ankjaer Jensen  
A. L. Loran International, LLC

Bea Lopez  
HEB Store #4

Erick Lucio  
Royston, Rayzor, Vickery &  
Williams, L.L.P.

Jorge Montiel  
Walmart Superstores

David P. Musso  
Sombero Festival, Ltd.

John Phillips  
Christ Church of the Valley

Nancy Reed  
Express Employment  
Professionals

Elayne Sloane  
Newtek Business Services

Humphrey Thomas  
Edward Jones

Norma Torres  
Brownsville & Rio Grande  
International Railroad

Brunilda Villarreal  
Farmers Insurance Group-  
David Villarreal Insurance

Angela R. Burton  
President/CEO  
Brownsville Chamber of  
Commerce