

# Del Rio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN  
THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY  
AND THE BUSINESS WORLD

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
JULY 2022

## The 4th of July, through our youthful eyes

The 4th of July is a significant date in our nation's history. This day marks our independence as a sovereign nation, and we celebrate across the country with friends, family and acquaintances. This annual holiday brings people closer together and we all get to take part in rich American traditions. Whether its barbecue with family or fireworks with our children these traditions help us mark this special occasion.

Let us celebrate this 4th of July through the eyes of our youth. For the future belongs to them and they will continue to keep our great nation strong.

Take a moment to remember the sights, the sounds and the smell of the 4th of July when we ourselves, were young.

As youth, we would look up at our American flag with pride and sometimes wonder. The nation back then to us might have seemed relatively large and unknown through our young eyes, however today as adults we all have a better understanding of just what the rest of our country looks like. Because of our many experiences as adults, we do not have the opportunity to share those positive experiences of our nation with our youth.

We should make it a point this year to pass along some of our great 4th of July traditions with our children. More importantly, we have a real opportunity to keep our nation strong by planting seeds of positive American possibilities in our children.

Let's remember what it was like to see the 4th of July through our own youthful eyes and with that same mindset, let's show our children how to enjoy all the



4th of July traditions. Let us pass along this positive significance of this day with our youth and continue to keep America strong.

Happy 4th of July  
God Bless America  
City Council Woman Ernestina (Tina) Martinez

**Education:** 1965 Graduate San Felipe High School • Student of Gemological Institute of America

**Employment History:** 8 Years at JC Penney Del Rio as manager and merchandiser of the fine jewelry department.

12 years for Wood Jewelers • 14 Years Small Business Owner & Operator Frances Florist Shop

2022 elected as Councilwoman for Del Rio City Council At Large Place C

**Professional Organizations:** 2022 May Elected Councilwoman Place C at Large, Del Rio • 2022 Director San Felipe Board of Directors

2022 International Good Neighbor Council (IGNC) - Secretary. Current Fiesta de Amistad Parade Chair

2022 Del Rio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Education Director • 2022 Del Rio Host Lions Club

2022 Retired Senior Volunteers Program (RSVP), Catholic Charities • Life Member - VFW - Chaplain

American GI Forum Women's Auxiliary Chairwoman • Brown Plaza Association, Past President, Secretary and Treasurer

Quad Counties Council, Past President • Former Councilwoman City of Del Rio Pct. 11, Served 8 years

Past Member Operation Troop Family Support • Past Member Main Street Program

**Awards:** 2002 Woman of the Year, Comité Cultural del Pueblo, Casa de La Cultura, Del Rio

Past IGNC Fiesta de Amistad Parade Marshall with husband Joe, Mr. & Mrs. Amistad

**Personal:** Widow of M/Sgt Jose (Joe) Martinez • Mother of 3 sons, a stepson and stepdaughter

## DRHCC BOARD MEMBERS

President  
**Isidro Valdez Fernandez**

Vice President  
**Roberto Fernandez**

Parliamentarian  
**Sergio Diaz**

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## US Designates Future Interstate 27 Part of the Interstate Highway System

(LUBBOCK, TX) – The designation of future Interstate 27 (I-27) became official on Tuesday, March 15 as President Biden signed into law the appropriation bill. The designation recognizes the Ports-to-Plains Corridor from Laredo, Texas to Raton, New Mexico as an addition to the Interstate Highway System.

"I am very excited that the I-27 highway expansion project is now written into law with the passage of the FY22 omnibus appropriations bill," said Henry Cuellar, U.S. Rep. for District 28. This designation will make Texas and New Mexico eligible for increased federal funding to complete the I-27 highway expansion project, creating economic growth, jobs, trade opportunities across those two states. The I-27 expansion will grow the Texas GDP by \$17.2 billion and create 178,000 construction jobs.

It will also add 17,000 long-term employment opportunities in the new I-27 corridor. With this project, Laredo will also become the only port of entry that has three corridors: I-35, I-69, I-27—a boon for our trade economy.

As a senior member of the Appropriations Committee, I will continue to fund projects in south Texas that bring good-paying jobs and ease quality of life for my constituents."

"Establishing a four lane, federal highway for I-27 is a game-changer for our economy and quality of life in West Texas for decades to come and will strengthen our food security and energy independence for the entire country," said Jodey Arrington, U.S. Rep. for District 19.

"I had three big goals for a better and stronger West Texas when I took office in 2016 - get cotton back in the farm bill, secure the B-21 bomber at Dyess, and establish a federal highway for West Texas. I had a lot of help from colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and I'm humbled by the opportunities this will provide for generations of West Texans."

Receiving the future interstate designation is the first step to begin fundraising for the extension of I-27. As TxDOT's feasibility study determined, the extension of I-27 impacts the state of Texas in improving the safety of the roads by reducing the annual crash rate by 21% and providing more access and opportunities for rural America.

"I am ecstatic we received the future interstate designation for I-27 which will allow for the necessary infrastructure improvement to bring growth to our region and the state of Texas,"

said Dan Pope, mayor for the City of Lubbock. "As with most momentous achievements, our thanks are due to many in their support of this project.

From the Governor to our U.S. Senators and

Representatives, as well as our State Representatives, this will be a changing moment in Texas for decades."

"This exciting news represents years of planning and collaboration by so many people," said Ginger Nelson, mayor for the city of Amarillo. "The extension of I-27 is vital to our future growth."

"One of the most significant events of today was the inclusion of the designation of I-27 in the appropriation bill," said Brenda Gunter, mayor for the city of San Angelo. "We are seeing a project that will have a significant impact on the Texas economy as well as our national GDP. The hard work and effort to accomplish this designation is finally paying off with a tremendous impact on the future of our region and

the state of Texas. Thank you to all who have been a part of the process."

The Corridor represents three of the eight border crossings along the Texas-Mexico border: Laredo, Eagle Pass and Del Rio. As the next steps to fund and construct the extension of I-27 begin, the economic benefit for the U.S. is the addition of 1.7

million jobs and a \$287 billion increase in GDP along the Corridor.

"The impact of this designation is tremendous as it allows for the enhancement of infrastructure for domestic and international markets, creates safer roads for leisure and business travels, and connects underrepresented communities throughout the Corridor with outside markets," John Osborne, chairman of the board for Ports-to-Plains Alliance. "We would not be celebrating this historic moment without the support of Congressman Arrington and Cuellar and Congresswoman Granger, Senators Heinrich and Lujan, as well as our team of advocates at Hance Scarborough. We are grateful for their leadership and support of this project."

Ports-to-Plains Alliance Ports-to-Plains is a grassroots alliance of over 200 communities and businesses, including alliance partners Heartland Expressway and Theodore Roosevelt Expressway, whose mission is to advocate for a robust international transportation infrastructure to promote economic security and prosperity throughout North America's energy and agricultural heartland including Mexico to Canada. Additional information on the Ports-to-Plains Alliance is available at <http://www.portstoplains.com/>.

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# Gilbert Mercado

## Money Link Financial Services, Inc

In 2003, a small startup firm opened its doors for the first time in Del Rio. What started as a dream to build a business has turned into the reality of helping others improve their quality of life through financial education, awareness and implementation of sound financial practices. What started as Amistad Taxes Plus, which focused on providing tax preparation, bookkeeping and business services has developed into a firm specializing in holistic financial services.

Today that firm is known as Money Link Financial Services Inc. and Gilbert Mercado Financial Services Inc. Under their corporate structures, they offer services under the brand names of Money Concepts Wealth Management and Financial Planning, Liberty Tax and Money Link Financial Services. Each brand offers distinct services; however, to the clients and community they serve, the distinction is solely on paper. With a team of 15 plus employees, each with varying responsibilities and areas of expertise, clients are afforded services which include bookkeeping, payroll and business consultation, tax preparation and planning, representation before the Internal Revenue Service and financial planning, investments, and retirement planning!

The firm's President and CEO, Gilbert Mercado, oversees the overall operations and provides guidance for the future growth and direction of the company. He holds a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree along with multiple securities licenses and designations including a series 7, 65 and 22, as well as the Master Registered Financial Consultant (MRFC) and Certified Fund Specialist (CFS). Irmarie Mercado, the firm's COO and Executive Vice President, oversees day to day operations and also holds multiple industry designations, including the NTPI Fellow and Certified Bookkeeper (CB). Gilbert and Irmarie are also Enrolled Agents (EA). This is the highest credential offered by the Internal Revenue Service and are experts in the field of taxation. This license also allows them the same rights of representation as a CPA or Tax Attorney before the IRS.

The organization believes in educating their clients and community in financial matters so that they are empowered to reach the level of financial success they are seeking. This is evident in the firm's motto, "We help transform people to achieve life's freedoms!" The passion to help others is deep rooted in lessons Mr. Mercado learned from his mother and father.





# Ribbon Cuttings And Plaque Presentations



## E-VENTS

A ribbon cutting and DRHCC new member plaque presentation was held during the inauguration of the new E-events facilities for parties and events. The event was held at an open house on May 8.



## SOUTH TEXAS TAEKWONDO ACADEMY

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