



¡SALUD! Latina Leadership Panel

August 31, 2022

Melanie Mendez-Gonzales

Moderator & Host of ¡SALUD! Season 2



Call her a multi-passion chaser. Melanie Mendez-Gonzales is the managing partner of MMG Media, LLC and founder of the award winning blog Que Means What. She uses the digital media landscape to create and amplify stories about Latina leaders, representation of the Latino community and her experiences as a Mexican-American exploring her own identity.

Since the start of her blogging career in 2010, she has received various recognitions but she is most proud of receiving the 2018 TECLA Award “The Jewel Award” for Social Good Content Creator. Melanie has worked with Fortune 500 companies such as Walmart, Toyota, and Disneyland. She has also collaborated with local organizations such as Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas, San Antonio College, and LiftFund US.

Melanie is a four-time South by Southwest (SXSW) speaker on entrepreneurship, diversity in the outdoors, multicultural influencers, and parenting with STEM education. She has also been a speaker at H-E-B Diversity and Inclusion Summit, Women’s Global Connection Girls Summit, Voto Latino Power Summit, and Hispanicize Event.

Melanie is the 2022 Co-Chair of the Latina Leadership Institute, a program of the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. She serves as a Board Member and Communications Chair of SAY Si, a youth arts education nonprofit in San Antonio, TX. Melanie is Dare to Lead™ Trained and has received a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Certificate from University of South Florida.

As a proud seventh-generation Tejana, Melanie is raising her two boys in San Antonio with her husband. You can find her on social media as @QueMeansWhat.

PANELISTS

Hope Andrade **Co-founder, Go Rio & Former Texas Secretary of State**



Andrade's professional experience spans 30 years as a successful CEO, business leader, and government executive. An entrepreneur who created, grew, and profitably sold three high-growth companies, Hope brings a broad business perspective with particular expertise in the healthcare, transportation, workforce and economic development arenas.

Secretary Andrade's service as Texas Secretary of State and Texas Workforce Commissioner helped establish her reputation as one of the State's best advocates for bringing new businesses to Texas. Andrade served from 2003 – 2008 on the Texas Transportation Commission, rising to Chairwoman of the Commission.

By building strategic alliances and deep relationships with senior government leaders, foreign dignitaries, and business leaders across geography and cultural settings, Secretary Andrade can overcome obstacles and deliver successful outcomes for their clients regardless of the challenges that arise. Secretary Andrade attributes her success to bringing the private sector to the public sector. A committed business leader, Hope has received dozens of awards and accolades.

Hope is currently a Partner with Go Rio Cruises overseeing the boat operations for our San Antonio River Walk. She is also Co-Founder of Andrade Van de Putte & Associates where she serves as Strategic Advisor.

Blanquita Cullum

Radio & Broadcast Journalist



The Honorable Blanquita Walsh Cullum is the President and co-founder of Voices Against Trafficking. Ms. Cullum is an award-winning broadcast journalist and host of the podcast, The Hard Question. For eight years, Ms. Cullum served as a Governor on the United States Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG). She was Nominated by President George W. Bush and was unanimously confirmed by the United States Senate. Governor Cullum is the first Hispanic woman and the first radio talk show host to have served on the BBG. In that

capacity, she also served as Chairman of the Committees on Radio Free Europe, Radio Free Asia and the Middle East Broadcast Network. In 2020, she was inducted into the Texas Radio Hall of Fame and received the prestigious “Sammy Award” for outstanding accomplishments for women in broadcasting. Cullum was named “Champion of Radio” by the Multicultural Correspondents Association. Ms. Cullum was honored in the Congressional Record by the late Senator Tom Coburn as a “Champion for the mission of U. S. International Broadcasting”.

For 19 years, she has served as emcee of the National Memorial Day Parade in Washington DC honoring our Nation’s heroes past and present. Recently, she authored a chapter in the book, “Voices Against Trafficking-The Strength of Many Voices Speaking as One.” It is now in the Library of Congress.

Cullum’s broadcasting career began in Texas. While she was at University of Texas at Austin, she began as a studio artist at KLRN. After the death of her father, she moved with her mom to San Antonio and took a job as a copywriter for KBUC. Radio station KITE heard her voice on air and offered her a job as co-host to popular morning drive host, Tom East. Her career took her to on air positions with KENS TV, KTSA and KSJL.

In addition to her work with Voices Against Trafficking and The Hard Question, she is in demand as a coach/trainer for national and international broadcasters.

She is the mother of two children Blanquita and James and has four grandchildren.

Dalia Flores Contreras CEO, City Education Partners



Dalia Flores Contreras is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at City Education Partners (CEP) a San Antonio based non-profit focused on disrupting the inequitable and systemic legacy of redlining through the power of education, and ensuring that K-12 students attend a world-class school regardless of where in our beautiful city they grow up.

Contreras grew up on the Westside of San Antonio and is a graduate of both Palo Alto College (PAC) and The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). She holds a Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies and a Master of Educational Leadership and Policy

Studies from UTSA. She has more than 16 years of experience in education and has served in a variety of roles — from classroom teacher to superintendent of schools. She had the opportunity to study, learn, and work in the education ecosystem of Texas, Illinois and Oklahoma in both district and charter public school systems.

MAJOR GENERAL ANGIE SALINAS
U.S. Marine Corps (Retired)
CEO, Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas



Angie Salinas, Major General U.S. Marine Corps (Ret.) joined Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas as the Chief Executive Officer in July 2015. Prior to becoming the CEO, she served in the U.S. Marine Corps for 39 years. A woman of many firsts, she made history as the first Latina selected and promoted to the general officer ranks in the Marine Corps and at the time of her retirement in September 2013, she was the senior ranking woman and the senior Hispanic in the Corps.

A Girl Scout alumna, Salinas is a role model to girls and women seeking to break through the glass ceiling. She commanded at every level from Lieutenant to General and is a trailblazer, serving as the first woman in multiple assignments that include Commanding General, Marine

Corps Recruit Depot San Diego/Western Recruiting Region, Assistant Chief of Staff for plans and policy of a major combatant organization, and command of a recruiting district. Her military decorations are many including the Defense Superior Service Medal and culminated with the Navy Distinguished Service Medal upon retirement.

Salinas' accolades extend past her military experience. She has been recognized with multiple awards including the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute's Lifetime Achievement Award, the Women's International Center's Living Legacy Award, and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute's Latinas in Service Award. She was named a Top Latino Leader by the National Diversity Council and a TAMACC Woman of Distinction. She has been inducted into the U.S. Veterans Hall of Fame, Hispanic Women in Leadership Hall of Fame, and the San Antonio Women's Hall of Fame. She is a recipient of the NCAA Legacy Award, the American Latino Influencer Valor Award, and the American Spirit Award Medallion from the National WWII Museum. She has received the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce Tribute to Women Business Leaders Hope Award, as well as the San Antonio Business Journal Women's Leadership Award. Salinas has been named one of 15 Phenomenal Women by Latina Magazine and one of six Power Latinas by VivaLa.com.

A native of Alice, Texas, she holds a Master of Arts from the Naval War College and a bachelor's degree from Dominican College of San Rafael, California. She was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Laws from Dominican University in 2015 and named a Distinguished Alumni in 2016.