



**READ
GROW
INSPIRE**



MAYOR JOE V. SANCHEZ MEMORIAL BOOK FESTIVAL



**525 S. KANSAS AVE
WESLACO, TX 78596
956.968.4533
WESLACOPL.US**



Meet Award-Winning Authors!

SATURDAY MARCH 2ND, 2024

1:00PM - 5:00PM

IN PARTNERSHIP
WITH



Festiva

**Free Books
Courtesy of STLC**



The annual Mayor Joe V. Sanchez Memorial Book Festival was created to encourage the love of reading while bringing the community together in memory of Mayor Joe V. Sanchez, a longtime mayor of Weslaco, superintendent of schools, veteran, author, and a champion for literacy.

Mayor Joe V. Sanchez

A Legacy of Literacy, Education, and Community Service

A passion for helping others through literacy and education...

Mayor Joe V. Sanchez stated in his book *VIPs of the Barrio*, "Education opened the doors to better futures and a life of higher expectations." He believed anyone regardless of background could have the opportunity to reach their goals with the foundation of literacy and education.

He was a migrant farmworker, professional baseball player, Korean War veteran, business owner, teacher, superintendent, mayor, author, historian, storyteller, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

He graduated from Pam American College with the help of the GI Bill, continued his graduate studies at Texas A & I University in Kingsville, and then furthered his education at the University of Houston Doctoral Program. He worked as a teacher and administrator at Weslaco ISD and other neighboring districts.

His impact on education continued where he served as the director of the Hidalgo County Head Start Program. Sanchez directed and established the HEP Program at the University of Houston and Pan American University. He served as Assistant Superintendent at Hidalgo ISD and Superintendent of Schools at Progreso ISD.

A passion for reading and writing...

Sanchez was born on November 19, 1932, to Maria and Jose Vallejo in Weslaco, Texas. The oldest son of eight children, he was bright and developed a love for reading at a young age.

VISITING AUTHORS



Dr. Sylvia Sanchez Garza

Sylvia Sánchez Garza, Ph.D., the author of *Cascarones* and *Awaken*, is a Weslaco, Texas native. Her short story “Ojo” is published in *Living Beyond Borders*, her poems are published in *What They Leave Behind*, *Boundless*, and literary magazines, and her upcoming YA book, *Ghost Brothers*, is forthcoming.



Santos Vallejo

Santos was born in Chicago, Illinois, in 1988 and came from a humble family with strong religious beliefs and family values. At the age of three his family moved to San Benito, Texas, where he resides to this day. Throughout his elementary, middle, and high school years he met many challenges. He was labeled with a learning disability and placed in a special education program where he faced many trials and tribulations. He almost lost all hope of having a successful life. At the age of eighteen, he decided that in order to ensure his success in life he would enter the fire academy. He did so and completed the program in 2008 at the young age of nineteen. He married the love of his life in 2013, and became a father of three.



Adela Villalpando

Adela Villalpando is a native of Elsa, Tx. During her career in education, she has worked with children, families, teachers, and administrators in all areas of Early Childhood Education. Adela is the Author of 2 Bilingual Children’s Books. *Hector Gets Hearing Aids* will soon be on the market in Spanish.

VISITING AUTHORS



Rey Banda

Rey A. Banda, a Weslaco, Texas, native, is a dedicated special education teacher at a local middle school; as well as, a published author of two inspirational Christmas books involving hope, love, and perseverance. His published books feature his creation of “Northopolis”, a magical Christmas lawn display which was featured on the national television show, “The Great Christmas Light Fight” on ABC. In addition to his Christmas books, Mr. Banda’s love for his very own cat, Mr. Bean, inspired him to write his multi award-winning books titled, “Bean’s New Home” and “Bean Saves the Day”. Notably, Mr. Banda is also a co-founder of the nonprofit group, the “RGV Ghostbusters”.



Liz Caballero

Liz Caballero is the author of “Camila’s Big Feelings.” She was born and raised in the Rio Grande Valley, south Texas, a place she loves to call home. Her work as an elementary teacher and mom encouraged her to write about Social Emotional Learning and creating stories with children of different backgrounds. Especially those from her community. She resides in the RGV with her husband and three children. She hopes to bring the importance of SEL to readers.



Maria Carrales

Maria Carrales aka Grandma Cookie! Grandma Cookie is a local author with a heart for kids. Her books, “Spending the Day With My Grandma”, “Today is My Birthday”, and “Going Fishing With My Grandpas” are all about her fond memories with her grandchildren. Grandma Cookie’s books include important family values as well as sharing valuable memories with them.

VISITING AUTHORS



Ana Cavazos

Ana. A. Cavazos, born in Los Angeles, California, but raised in the Rio Grande Valley. She is a retired school teacher/librarian and published author and poet. Ana uses her writing as an art of capturing the stories of her family and her ancestors and telling the stories forward.



Rogelio Cervantes

I am a disabled veteran that writes for therapy. My children's book "Never Wake Up A Sleeping Dragon" won a national award and encouraged me to continue writing and publishing my work.



Julieta Corpus

Julieta Corpus' poetry has been included in The Texas Poetry Calendar. Her first poetry collection: "Of Love and Departures", 2021, is available on Amazon. She was recently awarded a Creative Writing Residency in Tasajillo, Texas.



Edgar Crow

Edgar Moony Crow was born on May the 3rd, 1994 in the city of Mission, Tx of the Rio Grande Valley. Where he was raised by his father, Alfredo and mother, Elizabeth along with his siblings Alfredo, Alexis & Daylin. Due to his Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Edgar would get in loads of trouble, until he found the one thing that helped. Writing! Many years and mistakes later, an encounter with God changed his life completely. He published his first book "Mr.Crow: The tale of the Widow, the Beggar and the Orphan" in January of 2023 and is excited to release "Umbra", "The Tattletale Fool" and "Mr.Crow: The Oracle of Satus" this 2024.

VISITING AUTHORS



Dr. Isaias C. Rodriguez

Dr. Isaias C. Rodriguez is a native of Mission, Tx and during his 29 year career in education, he has worked with children, families, communities, University students, teachers and administrators. Dr. Rodriguez is a Bilingual Children's Book Author, University Professor and a Speech Language Pathologist Assistant who loves to read to children and write children's books. Dr. Rodríguez has worked as a Bilingual Teacher, Mentor, Administrator, Consultant, University Professor, Speech Language Pathologist Assistant and is the Author of Bilingual Children 's Books.



Angela Rosko

Angela is a seasoned writer who has always had a passion for storytelling. With the arrival of her first grandchild, she found a renewed inspiration to create captivating children's books. As a long-distance grandparent herself, Angela understands the importance of maintaining a strong bond across the miles. With every turn of the page, Angela's books bring joy, love, and imagination into the lives of families around the world. Angela is a Philadelphia native who now lives Weslaco Texas with her loving husband and adorable cat.



Nason Rumfield

Nason Rumfield was born and raised in Harlingen, TX. He currently works as a Firefighter and Paramedic for the Brownsville TX Fire Department. He is a musician, filmmaker, and the author of "Pie We Don't Deserve," and "1.3 Seconds." He and his wife Cynthia are both very involved at their home church, El Shaddai International Christian Church, in Weslaco TX.

VISITING AUTHORS



Thomas Ray Garcia

Thomas Ray Garcia is a writer, educator, and entrepreneur from Pharr, Texas. He is the author of the award-winning short story collection *The River Runs: Stories* and co-author of *El Curso de la Raza: The Education of Aurelio Manuel Montemayor*. Thomas is also the founder and board chair of the College Scholarship Leadership Access Program (CSLAP), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that teaches college access classes and connects students to near-peer mentors.



Eliza Garza

Eliza is the founder of *Adventure in a Cup*, a program that provides children with the opportunity to learn the principles of entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and goal setting by practicing with their own raspa stand for a day. Eliza was awarded with a Proclamation by the City of McAllen declaring a day (6/18) in honor of her book - *Raspas Con Mi Grandpa Day*, which is her Grandpa Chavez's birthday.



Trinidad Gonzalez

Trinidad Gonzales is a history and Mexican American Studies instructor at South Texas College. He is a co-founder of *Refusing to Forget*, a nationally recognized public history project devoted to remembering state-sanctioned violence against Mexicans and Mexican Americans during the 1910s in Texas.



Randal Gritzner

Randal Lee Gritzner is a retired Science and Physics Teacher turned author of 26 books across 4 genres. As a lifelong storyteller, several friends encouraged him to put some stories on paper, and he hasn't stopped yet. His heart and mind are still strongly engaged in reaching High School and Middle School students with positive messages about Reading, Science, education, and building a strong future.

VISITING AUTHORS



DR. Jacob C. Howell

Dr. Jacob C. Howell, Ph.D is local award winning recognized educator, writer, and advocate, for his work in community education and leadership. His self help books and leadership philosophy push boundaries with having a winning mindset, to achieve business and life success. His work and recognitions have been documented and recorded in the National Library of Congress (Washington D.C.).



Tessie Ledesma

Tessie Ledesma has had a passion for writing since she was a little girl and always dreamed of using her creativity to write and publish a children's book. Tessie grew up in Mercedes, Texas, and is a proud alumna of Texas A&M University - Kingsville. She graduated in 2017 with a bachelor of arts in communications-radio/TV, and in 2019 with a master of business administration.



Margie Longoria

Margie is passionate about diverse books, her two sons, coffee, football and Mr. Darcy. Her work is a hopeful love letter from the Mexican American community to today's young people.



Victoria Lopez

2022 City of McAllen Poet Laureate and Author, Victoria Lopez -- You can join Victoria at Unfolded: Poetry Project workshops at the McAllen Creative Incubator.

VISITING AUTHORS



Rosa Esthela Mora

Rosa Esthela Mora is an inspiring multilingual author who shares her knowledge and the wisdom of her multicultural experiences throughout the chapters of her exciting and relatable novels.



David Norec

Award-winning author David Norec is a type-2 diabetic who was inspired to write an interactive children's book that encourages kids to eat healthy and exercise after losing a brother and sister to diabetes. The Adventures of Exo and Cy is the first book in the Fit-Lit (fitness literacy) series of books.



Rosario Ozuna

Rosario Ozuna is a lifelong book lover, a published author, a poet, and an advocate for literacy. She was born in Mexico, but was raised in the Rio Grande Valley in Rio Grande City, TX. She enjoys writing poems, reflections, and stories about everyday experiences and what inspires her. She is a graduate of Sam Houston State University at Huntsville, Texas with a Master's Degree in Library Science.



Ron Ramirez

Ron Ramirez has dedicated twenty-nine years to Bilingual Education and meeting the needs of diverse students across the Rio Grande Valley. He was a teacher and a librarian. He believes in literacy for all. Now he has focused on his new career as a children's book author and a cultural novella writer. He lives in McAllen, Texas

VISITING AUTHORS



Rosa Linda Cruz

An Author & Presenter on Mental Health Strategies, Well-Being Tips, Social Emotional Learning Tools & Self Care including her highly requested Specialty the "Benefits of Laughter and So Much More!" Her children's stories & workbooks are Inspired by her grandchildren, students & community members requesting fun, engaging & interactive wellness resources.



Ruben Degollado

Rubén Degollado's work has appeared or been featured in *Texas Highways*, *Literary Hub*, *CRAFT*, *The Common*, *The Rumpus*, *Image Journal*, and elsewhere. His first novel *Throw* won the Texas Institute of Letters Best Young Adult book for 2020. His debut literary novel *The Family Izquierdo* is a *New York Times Book Review* editor's choice and a long list title for the PEN/Faulkner and Mark Twain American Voice in Literature awards. Ruben lives and writes along the southern border, in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas.



Daniel Garcia Ordaz

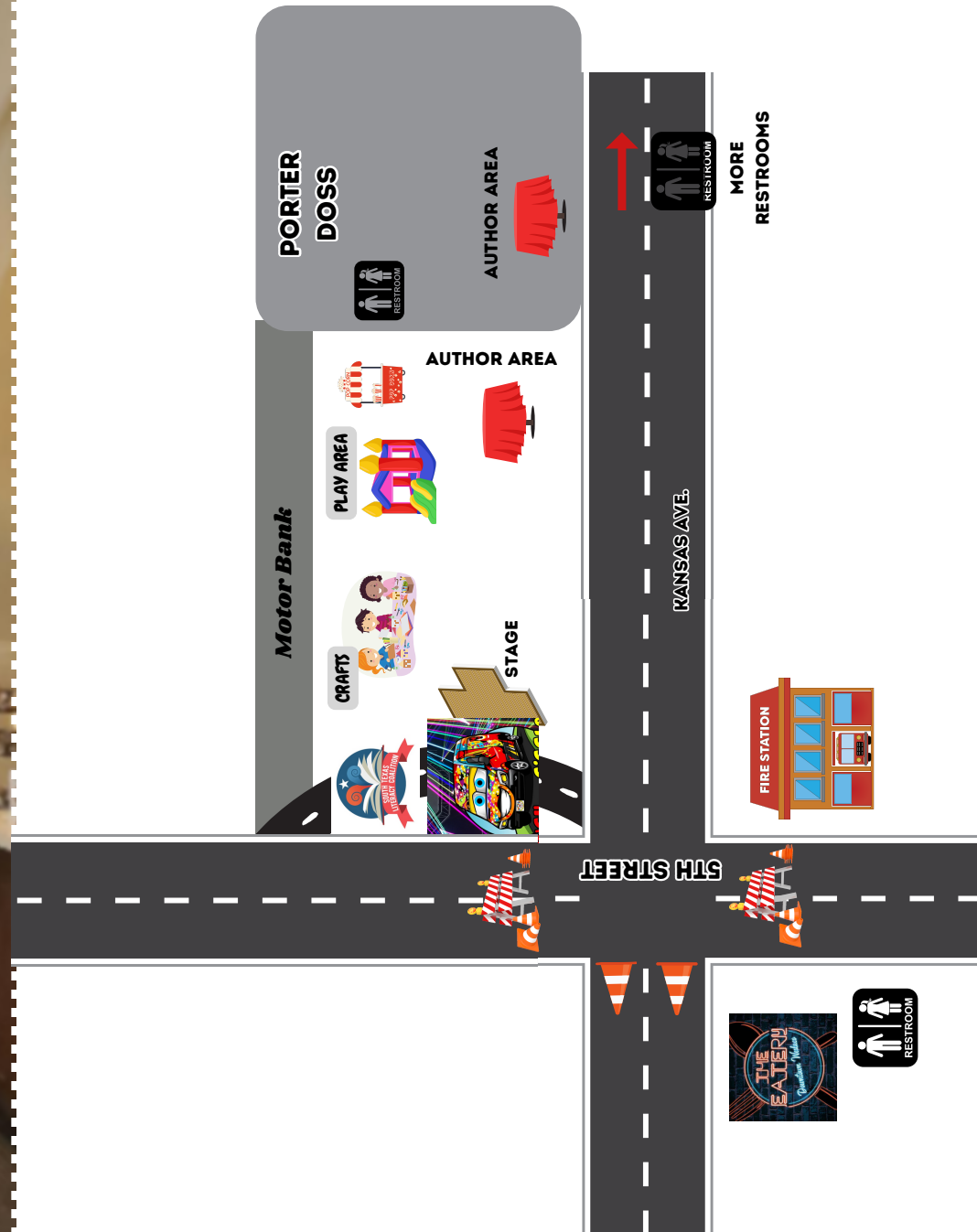
TEDx Speaker and Pushcart Prize nominee Daniel García Ordaz, a.k.a. The Poet Mariachi, is the author of *Read Until You Bleed*, *Cenzontle/Mockingbird* (YA Edition): *Songs of Empowerment* and *You Know What I'm Sayin'?* He teaches at La Joya Early College H.S. and serves as McAllen Poet Laureate.

EVENT SCHEDULE

- 12:45** Isaac Bazan (Live Music)
- 1:15** Welcome Keynote Speaker:
Mayor Adrian Gonzalez,
Honorable Hidalgo County
Judge Richard Cortez
Dr. Jeffery Ward,
Dr. Sylvia Sanchez Garza
- 1:45** World Scholars Mariachi
STISD
- 2:00** Folklorico dancers
- 2:15** Daniel Garcia Ordaz
Poetry Reading
- 2:45** 1st Author Panel- Children's
- 3:15** 2nd Author Panel- Fiction
- 3:30** Idea Pike Cheerleaders
Weslaco Panter Squat

* Vendors * Book give away

* Crafts and games available throughout the event!



NOTES

He and his wife, Elida Reyna Sanchez raised their five children, Joe, Ana Maria, Sylvia, Enedina, and Boye Obed in their beloved city of Weslaco. He instilled in his children, family, students, and community his passion for literacy, writing, and the importance of education.

Sanchez published three books, *VIPs of the Barrio*, *Legacy of the Barrio*, and *Odyssey to El Wes*, where he chronicled the stories of his migrant experiences and local history. *The Towncrier* published his stories in a weekly column, "From the Mayor's Desk" about the history of Weslaco, life as a migrant farmworker, baseball, or current events. Along with his wife, Elida, and brother Samuel, they started an educational supply store in downtown Weslaco, The Learning Center.

A passion for serving...

Sanchez served as mayor of his beloved city of Weslaco from 1975 until 1981 and again from 2001 to 2007. During his progressive tenure as mayor, Weslaco was honored as an All-America City. He helped bring South Texas College to Weslaco. He was honored as Weslaco Chamber of Commerce's Man of the Year in 2009. He was inducted into the Rio Grande Valley Walk of Fame in 2005 during its inaugural year. Sanchez was an avid sports fan and athlete, playing professional baseball with the Harlingen Capitols. He was later inducted into the Leo Najo Baseball Hall of Fame.

A legacy of literacy for people of all ages and future generations...

He inspired people of all ages by spreading his passion of literacy with everyone he met. Joe V. Sanchez' legacy will continue to touch and inspire future generations.

The Mayor Joe V. Sanchez Public Library is a haven where all can come and feel welcomed to read, write, study, or gather.

Relax, enjoy, and join us in spreading the love of literacy with others.