Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi to Hold Celebration Honoring the Life of Civil Rights Leader Hector P. Garcia

Observance is one of many Hispanic Heritage Month events open to public

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – A celebration honoring the life of civil rights leader Dr. Hector P. Garcia will be one of the highlights of Hispanic Heritage Month from Thursday, Sept. 15, through Saturday, Oct. 15, at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

The Hector P. Garcia Day Celebration will be hosted by the University’s History Area on Wednesday, Sept. 21, from 11 a.m. to noon in the University Center, Lone Star Ballroom. The event will include short excerpts from the documentary, “The Longoria Affair,” followed by remarks from Dr. Pat Carroll, University professor and author of “Felix Longoria’s Wake.” Special guests will include Garcia’s daughter, Cecilia Garcia Akers.

In 2009, the Texas legislature passed a resolution making the third Wednesday in September “Dr. Hector P. Garcia Day.” The World War II veteran, founder of the American G.I. Forum and champion of issues confronting Mexican-Americans and other minorities, rose to national prominence after the war when he came to the assistance of the widow of Army Pvt. Felix Longoria who had been denied the right to bury her husband in a cemetery where whites were interred. The incident sparked a national movement for Mexican-American civil rights.

In 1984, President Ronald Reagan awarded Garcia the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honor bestowed on a civilian. Six years later, Pope John Paul II awarded him the Equestrian Order of Pope Gregory the Great. In April 2010, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution recognizing Garcia’s historic contributions to the Hispanic community and his efforts to combat racial and ethnic discrimination. Following his death, Garcia’s official papers were donated to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and are a centerpiece of the Special Collections and Archives Department of the Mary and Jeff Bell Library.

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All Hispanic Heritage Month events are free and open to the public.

The events are:

- **Tuesday, Sept. 20** – The University will hold a Hispanic Heritage Month kick-off on Tuesday, Sept. 20, from 5-9 p.m. in the Hector P. Garcia Plaza. There will be live music by Libra, performances from Ballet Folklorico Viva Mexico, and salsa lessons from the University’s Latin and Ballroom Dance Club. For more information, contact Dr. Cristina Kirklighter at 361.825.2263; or email cristina.kirklighter@tamucc.edu.

- **Wednesday, Sept. 21** – The History Area will hold a Hector P. Garcia Day Celebration in observance of the state holiday on Wednesday, Sept. 21, from 11 a.m. to noon in the University Center, Lone Star Ballroom. The celebration will include short excerpts from the documentary film, “The Longoria Affair,” followed by remarks from Dr. Pat Carroll, author of “Felix Longoria’s Wake.” For more information, contact Dr. Anthony Quiroz at 361.825.5985; or email r.quiroz@tamucc.edu.

- **Friday, Sept. 23, through Friday, Oct. 14** – The University will present a Hispanic film every Friday at 7 p.m. from Sept. 23 through Oct. 14 in Bay Hall, room 104. Films from México, Argentina, Spain and the United States will be shown to celebrate diversity in the Hispanic world. For more information and titles, contact Dr. Cristina Ortiz at 361.825.6009; or email cristina.ortiz@tamucc.edu.

- **Monday, Sept. 26** – The College of Nursing and Health Sciences will hold a Health Fair on Monday, Sept. 26, from 8 a.m. to noon in the University Center, Oso Room 221. Nursing students will provide blood pressure, BMI and blood sugar screenings and educational information on diabetes, high cholesterol and hypertension. There will also be a healthy cooking demonstration by the Texas A&M Health Science Center’s Coastal Bend Health Education Center. For more information, contact Petra Martinez at 361.825.2264; or email petra.martinez@tamucc.edu.

- **Tuesday, Oct. 4** – The University will hold an Immigration Panel on Tuesday, Oct. 4, from 5-7 p.m. in the University Center, Oso Room 221. Guest speakers Dr. Isabel Araiza, Dr. Pat Carroll, Dr. Jose Giraldo and attorney Heather Moretzsohn will

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discuss immigration issues to include a contextual overview of the history of Hispanic immigration to the United States with special emphasis on the post-1964 period. For more information, contact Ana Billeaux at 361.825.3922; or email ana.billeaux@tamucc.edu.

- **Wednesday, Oct. 5** – The University will hold a “Read-A-Thon” on Wednesday, Oct. 5, from noon to 2 p.m. at the Hector P. García Plaza. Faculty, staff and students will read short excerpts of literary works by Hispanic authors. For more information, contact Dr. Melissa Culver at 361.825.2580; or email melissa.culver@tamucc.edu.

- **Monday, Oct. 10, through Friday, Oct. 14** – The University will present an FYI writing exhibit from Monday, Oct. 10, through Friday, Oct. 14, from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. in the University Center, Legacy Hall. The exhibit will showcase the narratives of diverse students in First-Year Composition and First-Year Seminar to show the writing style of students at our Hispanic Serving Institution. For more information, contact Andrea Montalvo at 361.461.0958; or email andrea.montalvo@tamucc.edu.

- **Thursday, Oct. 13** – Dr. Pat Carroll, author of “Felix Longoria’s Wake” will screen the documentary, “The Longoria Affair,” on Thursday, Oct. 13, from 7-8:30 p.m. in the University Center, Lone Star Ballroom 142 C. After the screening, Dr. Carroll will answer questions from the audience. For more information, call 361.825.3073; or email pat.carroll@tamucc.edu.

For information on all the events, go to [http://hispanicheritagemonth.tamucc.edu](http://hispanicheritagemonth.tamucc.edu).

-A&M-Corpus Christi-