

17th Annual LATINA Style Business Series Tour Kick-off in Dallas, Texas

By Tania G. Davila
Photos by Aldo Barbosa

LATINA Style, Inc., in partnership with the business series' title sponsor, Nationwide, kicked-off the 17th Annual LATINA Style Business Series Tour on March 27, 2015 in Dallas, TX. Marking its 118th stop, the one-day program for Latina entrepreneurs in the nation was hosted by AT&T at their Dallas corporate headquarters.

The LATINA Style Business Series program began with a networking breakfast surrounded by local and national elite exhibitors and community partners. It followed by an opening ceremony conducted by award-winning anchor Rebecca Aguilar who served as the event Mistress of Ceremonies. Aguilar is a reporter with 33 years of experience in television, radio, print and online reporting. She is also the founder of Wise Latinas Linked, the largest Latina networking group on Facebook and LinkedIn with a combined virtual membership of more than 7,000 women.

Consequently, Mike Evans, Lead Consultant Diversity and Inclusion for AT&T provided the morning welcoming remarks. Evans acts as the point of contact on

diversity surveys, awards and recognition. He also supports the development of AT&T's 12 employee resource groups ensuring alignment with corporate strategy and brand. He Directs, develops and conducts diversity data analysis and awareness programs to ensure policies and impacts are properly communicated and implemented. Evans has also served as a Board Member for the local chapter of HACEMOS, the Hispanic/Latino Employee Association of AT&T Employee Resource Group. HACEMOS was recently recognized by LATINA Style Magazine, as the Employee Resource Group of the Year. This year marks Evans' 20th year of service at AT&T.

With a focus on women empowerment, the business series program seminars are designed to benefit Latina professionals and entrepreneurs at all levels. Speakers included experts who interacted with the audience on diverse topics such as: *Accessing Capital: Building Strong Businesses*. This panel was moderated by Rosa Navejar, president, The Rios Group, Inc. Speakers included: Yolanda Olivarez,



Blair Crossan, RVP, Southwestern Regional Operations, Nationwide.



(L-R) Rosa Navejar, president, The Rios Group, Inc.; Yolanda Olivarez, Regional Administrator, Small Business Administration (SBA); Mary S. Rivera, vice president, Comerica Bank-TX Banking Centers, and Sandy Garza, Principal Agent/Owner, Sandy Garza & Associates, Inc., Nationwide.



(L-R) Luz Varela, Strategic Communications Leader; Rebecca Aguilar, Freelance TV & Online Reporter, National Association of Hispanic Journalists; Monica Greenhalgh, Director Sales & Marketing IT Development, General Motors, and Jessica Nunez, Founder and President, Nunez PR Group.



(L-R) Margie Aguilar, president and CEO, IS Productions, Inc.; Erica Armendariz, Agent Owner, Nationwide; Laura Benitez Geisler, owner, Geisler Law Firm, and Wanda Granier, CEO, BridgeWork Partners.

Regional Administrator, Small Business Administration; Sandy Garza, principal Agent/Owner, Sandy Garza & Associates, Inc., Nationwide, and Mary S. Rivera, vice president, Comerica Bank-TX Banking Centers.

The second panel *Enhancing Women Empowerment through Technology & Social Media* was moderated by Luz Varela, Strategic Communications leader. Panelists included: Rebecca Aguilar, freelance TV & Online reporter, National Association of Hispanic Journalists; Jessica Nunez, founder and president, Nunez PR Group, and Monica Greenhalgh, director, Sales & Marketing IT Development, General Motors.

The *LATINA Style Entrepreneurs Roundtable* was moderated by Ellen Castro, Chief Energizing Officer and included panelists: Margie Aguilar, president and CEO, IS Productions, Inc.; Erica Armendariz, agent owner, Nationwide; Wanda Granier, CEO, BridgeWork Partners, and Laura Benitez Geisler, owner, Geisler Law Firm.

The final workshop of the day, *How to Bring Your Supplier Diversity to the Next Level* was moderated by *LATINA Style's* president & CEO, Robert Bard. Panelists included Didi Anekwe, Consultant, Supplier Diversity, Nationwide, Heather Herndon Wright, Director, Supplier Diversity, Energy Future Holdings, Nancy N. Alvarez, Supervisor, 8(a) Business Development Program, SBA, Dallas/Ft worth Office, and Stephanie Lindsly, Supplier Diversity Professional, AT&T.

During the awards luncheon, *LATINA Style* honored Margie Aguilar, president and



(L-R) Margie Aguilar, president and CEO, IS Productions, Inc. and Gloria Tostado, GM Diversity Communications-Hispanic.

CEO of IS Productions, Inc., as the *LATINA Style Entrepreneur of the Year for Dallas, Texas 2015*. This award is presented to Latinas who demonstrate the core values of entrepreneurship. "Margie has managed through hard work, commitment to her business and our community to take her business to the next level," said Robert E. Bard. "She is a great role model and example for others to follow."

Aguilar's company has been in business for 16 years. Her experience in Spanish Television Broadcasting as production manager for Univision elevated her to start her own video production company. Today, ISP is a full facilities productions company providing services for video, HD, print, and webcasting production capable of working from concept to completion and anything in between.

"I am very passionate about evolving development business opportunities for women in business locally and across our nation. There are many creative extremely skilled women in business today that often do not receive their deserved valued recognition," expressed Aguilar. "As new business opportunities continue to grow for women, I am excited to be a part of that growth and find great joy and satisfaction in mentoring young businesswomen. I believe all women share a common goal, that they should be treated with dignity and respect in all facets of life. My aim is to further expand the support and praise to women that continue to excel in their areas of expertise in business and in life. My endless goal is to be a continual role model to young ladies, especially young women wanting to be in businesses of their own. Finally, to the fantastic team at *LATINA Style, Inc.*, I want to say that I value your publication as an extraordinary effort to help highlight the beauty and the continued development of women in society today. Your honed skills and talents in telling of the successes of women remain inspirations to all the readers of all ages, cultures and walks of life. Thank you for all your endeavors in these regards. Thank you for highlighting the importance of women in business throughout the country and around the globe."

Want to comment or have any questions on this article? Email us at info@latinastyle.com

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Thank you to Dallas' sponsors, community partners and contributors: Title Sponsor: Nationwide. City Sponsors: Comerica Bank, General Motors. Official Airline Carrier: Southwest Airlines. Host Sponsor: AT&T. National Sponsor: Parents Step Ahead (PSA). Community Partners included: Greater Dallas Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Irving Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Business Assistance Center (BAC), Carter Blood Care, Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Hispanic 100, Hispanic Women's Network of Texas, NAWBO DWF chapter, and Instituto de la Mujer. Co-Chairs: Rebecca Aguilar and Rosa Navejar. Leadership Committee Members: Jessica Narvaez of Pinnacle Technical Resources, Gloria Tostado of General Motors, Claudia Torrescano of El Instituto de la Mujer, Dora Ramirez of Wells Fargo in the Dallas/Fort Worth, Griselda Quezada-Chavez of Q&C EXIM, LLC, and Michele Bobadilla, M.Ed., D. Litt., Senior Associate VP for Outreach Services & Community Engagement, The University of Texas at Arlington.



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