



June/July 2022

Mid-Year Report from District 11  
Honorable Maria Salas Mendoza

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**Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas**

**MEMBERSHIP NEWS:**

Members attended a virtual meeting of District 11 on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. *We have seven new members: Judge Andrea D. Plumlee, 330<sup>th</sup> Family District Court (Dallas), Justice Erin A. Nowell, Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals (Dallas), Judge Martin Hoffman, 38<sup>th</sup> Civil District Court (Dallas), Judge Sandra Jackson, 302<sup>nd</sup> District Court (Dallas), Judge-Elect Maria F. Aceves, 192<sup>nd</sup> District Court (Dallas), Justice Dennise Garcia, Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals (Dallas), and Justice Bill Pedersen, Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals (Dallas)* . District 11 currently has 99 members.

**PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES:**

On June 24, 2022, NAWJ District 11 in collaboration with the El Paso Women's Bar Association and Texas Latinx Judges held its first Faces of Justice Program in El Paso. Forty-five college students attended the program which featured members Judge Diane Navarrete and Judge Maria Salas Mendoza on the judges panel joined by U.S. Magistrate Judge Miguel Torres and Family District Judge Jesus M. Rodriguez. The attorney speakers were Jessica Mendez, Priscilla Mata, A'kiesha Soliman and Christina Ford, moderated by Professor Lisa Soto. Other members participated in breakout sessions and on the planning committee including Judge Anna Perez, Judge Linda Chew and Judge Selena Solis, joined by Cori Harbour-Valdez, Judge-Elect Melissa Baeza, Professor Lisa Soto, Judge Becky Bustamante, and Priscilla Mata.





On June 8th, 2022, Chamberlain Hrdlick hosted a dinner in honor of Texas Latinx Judges and NAWJ District 11 to kick off the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting.



On May 25, 2022, District 11 held a membership social in Dallas, Texas. Several new members joined NAWJ that night and several more after. It was a great event to talk about NAWJ, its programs, how to join and how to get involved with its programs.





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Judge Yolanda Huff, County Court No. 12 (San Antonio) was the keynote speaker for the Kappa Alpha Psi Silhouettes' banquet on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022.

Judge Emily Miskel, 470<sup>th</sup> District Court (Collin County) presented on *COVID & the Courts*, at Loyola Law School for the National Center for State Courts on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022.

Justice Gina M. Benavides, 13<sup>th</sup> Court of Appeals, moderated the judges panel at the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Soaking Up Some CLE: A South Texas Litigation Course, held on May 12-13, 2022, on South Padre Island. Judge Maria Salas Mendoza, 120<sup>th</sup> District Court, joined Judge David Sanchez, 444<sup>th</sup> District Court, and Judge Joanne Garcia, Hidalgo County Probate Court, on the panel.

Judge Beckie Palomo, 341<sup>st</sup> District Court (Webb County) received the Leadership Award from the Laredo Hispanic Chamber of Commerce on May 13, 2022.

On May 18, 2022, Judge Yolanda Huff, County Court No. 12 (San Antonio) was a panelist discussing *Mental Health in Underserved Communities: Eliminating the Stigma, Addressing Disparities and Building Stronger Relationships* at the St. Phillips College.

Judge Audrey Moorehead, County Criminal Court #3 (Dallas) and Judge Maria Salas Mendoza, 120<sup>th</sup> District Court (El Paso) presented on *Criminal Trials in a Post-Pandemic Reality* for the Women in the Law Section, State Bar of Texas on May 25, 2022.



Judge Audrey Moorehead, County Court at Law #3 (Dallas) presented on Client Management during the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting in Houston, Texas, on June 9, 2022.

Judge Maria Salas Mendoza, 120<sup>th</sup> District Court (El Paso) joined Judge Audrie Lawton-Evans, Harris County Civil Court at Law No. 1, and Judge Ravi K. Sandill, 127<sup>th</sup> District Court (Harris) for the Diversity Forum held at the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting in Houston, Texas, on June 9, 2022. The topic was *Unconscious Bias In Jury Selection*.



Judge Rosie Speedlin-Gonzalez, County Court at Law #13 (Bexar), was the keynote speaker for the Global Diversity Council's 2022 Mexico LGBTQ+ Cumbre de La Unidad (*Unity Summit*) in Mexico City on June 16, 2022.



On June 25, 2022, Chief Justice Dori Contreras, 13<sup>th</sup> Court of Appeals, was a speaker for Project Poderosa, in San Antonio.

Justice Leticia Hinojosa, 13<sup>th</sup> Court of Appeals, is being recognized by the Hispanic Women's Network of Texas as a 2022 Trailblazer at its State Conference to be held in San Antonio, Texas, from Sept. 30-Oct. 2, 2022

Judge Linda Chew, 327<sup>th</sup> District Court (El Paso) will be receiving the State Bar of Texas Judicial Section's Lifetime Achievement Award; the award given by her peers recognizes Judge Chew's reputation for and commitment to judicial excellence, her significant length of service and her long term, consistent and significant contribution to the betterment of the judiciary, access to justice and the system of justice in Texas. Judge Linda Chew has been a district judge since 2003, served as chair of the Texas Center for the Judiciary, was Dean of the College of New Judges, and Local Administrative Judge for the El Paso Council of Judges from 2019-2022. The award will be presented at the Texas Bar Foundation Luncheon at the Annual Judicial Conference in September 2022.