

## Membership Approves Work Program and Budget for FY 2009

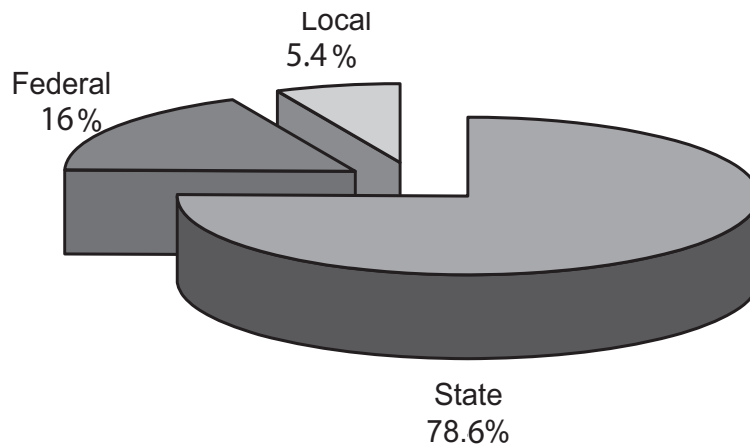
The Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (LRGVDC) membership has approved the 2009 Work Program and Budget that will allow the Council to continue its active role in the Region. The new FY 2009 budget puts emphasis on, and addresses needs within Cameron, Hidalgo and Willacy Counties in programs such as Transit, Criminal Justice Assistance, Homeland Security, Law Enforcement Training, 9-1-1 Coordination, Solid Waste, Water Quality/Quantity Planning, Economic Development, and the Area Agency on Aging.

The Development Council employs 115 individuals and will operate on an annual budget of \$13 million in 2009.

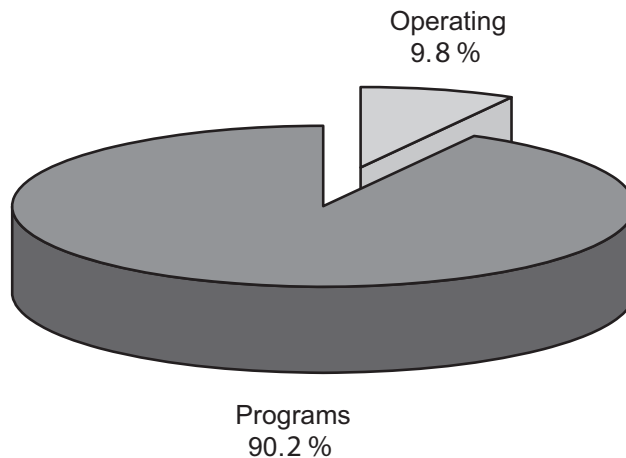
“The budget reflects a sound organization and the continued regional support of comprehensive services provided,” said Mr. Arturo Ramirez, LRGVDC President. “Local revenues are used successfully to leverage state and federal funds. Only 1.6 percent of the Council budget is generated from membership dues.”

State income sources include the Texas Office of Rural Community Affairs, Texas Water Development Board, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Criminal Justice Division of the Governor’s Office, Texas Department of Transportation, TDPS/State Homeland Security and the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services. Federal sources for funds include, the Economic Development Administration, the Corporation for National Service, and the Federal Transit Administration.

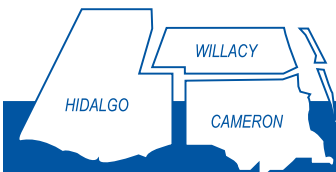
### LRGVDC 2009 BUDGET



STATE FUNDS 78.6%    FEDERAL FUNDS 16%    LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS 5.4%



OPERATING 9.8%    PROGRAMS 90.2%



## 2009 RGV REGIONAL BUS ROADEO

The LRGVDC congratulates AURELIO MEDRANO, JR. for placing second in the Para- Transit competition at the 2nd Annual 2009 Rio Grande Valley Regional Bus Rodeo held in McAllen. Mr. Medrano and other contestants showed their skills in four different tests. Those tests were: knowledge of (CDL) Commercial Drivers License requirements; wheelchair safety and securement systems; equipment inspection and functionality; and, the obstacle course.

Mr. Medrano competed against contestants from McAllen (McAllen Express), South Padre (The Wave) and Brownsville (Brownsville Urban System). Mr. Medrano will also compete at the State Regional Rodeo in Waco, Texas on April 18, 2009.

Mr. Medrano has been an employee of the LRGVDC- Rio Transit Center since September 29, 2008. He has earned an associates degree in Education and is currently pursuing his Bachelors degree in Education. Overall Mr. Medrano has 14 yrs experience as a CDL operator.

### CONGRATULATIONS MR. MEDRANO!



## LRGVDC Regional Police Academy & Training Center Current Events



127th BPOC Front Row (L-R): O. Quezada, J. Carrillo, C. Saenz, A. Mejia Jr., J. Villescás, W. Sigler, M. Jacobo, N. Gonzalez, A. Flores, D. Zamarríppa  
Middle Row (L-R): A. Morales, M. Monforte, F. Ramirez, A. Casanova Jr., A. Alejandro, E. Hernandez, U. Ramirez, A. Villasenor, J. Munsell  
Back Row (L-R): R. Quintanilla, R. Garza, J. Rodriguez, A. Barrera, I. Lopez, J. Estrada, I. Villarreal  
Instructors: Lt. T. Garcia (R) Inv. R. Perez (L)

The Regional Police Academy continues to move forward in the development of courses designed for the law enforcement professional. We are currently working on courses in Human Trafficking, Child Abuse and Domestic Violence. Our goal is to work

with local, state, and federal agencies in combating human trafficking in Texas and the United States. Additionally, we are working with state and local officials to combat the epidemic of child abuse and domestic violence in our society.

The academy works with other agencies in professional development delivery. For example, we are preparing information for the members of the Cameron County Courthouse Security, corrections oriented courses for LCC Corrections Systems, Inc., and a host of other programs for agencies throughout Deep South Texas.

This month, we will graduate cadets from our Harlingen, Mission and Hidalgo academies. These young men and women will soon take their places among the elite in our profession to help keep our streets safe and safe guard our way of life.

### In-Service Course Calendar

Cultural Diversity	May 26
Special Investigative Topics	April 27 & June 29
Crisis Intervention Training	April 6-7, July 6-7 & Aug 3-4
Intermediate Use of Force	April 9-10
HIV-AIDS and Viral Hepatitis in the CJ Profession	April 15
Mental Health Peace Officer	April 20-22
Intermediate Interpersonal Communications in the Correctional Setting	April 28-30
Civil Process	April 11-15
Firearms Instructor Course	April 18-22
Use of Force in a Jail Setting	April 27
SRO Certification	June 8-12

## Regional Police Academy and Training Center Provides More In-Service and Specialized Training

The Regional Police Academy and Training Center is venturing out to include more in-service and specialized training and professional development for the law enforcement community.

Course offerings include legislatively mandated courses (Cultural Diversity, Special Investigative Topics, and Critical Intervention Training) as well as professional development opportunities (PPCT Defensive Instructors Course, SFTS Instructors Certification, School Resource Officer Certification). In the planning stages are courses geared toward university and college police officers (Campus Protection Officer Course), human trafficking, and gang intelligence.

Telecommunications operators are included in our planning as we offer the Full and Less than Full Access NCIC/TCIC courses,

the Basic Telecommunications Course, and Crisis Communications.

On the Corrections front, we have partnered with LCS Corrections Services, Inc. to provide the Basic Jail Operations Course to Corrections Officers in the private prison system. We will also assist LCS in delivering professional development courses such as Cultural Diversity, Suicide Prevention and Detection, and Inmate Rights and Privileges.

The staff of the Police Academy works diligently to make these seminars a reality and continues to improve the professional development of today's law enforcement and corrections officers.

## Lower Rio Certified Volunteer Ombudsman Wins State Award

Catalina Hernandez, Certified Volunteer Ombudsman, Brownsville, was selected as one of the individual recipients for the 2008 DADS Vision Awards in the Dignity award category. She was nominated by Debra Lachico, Program Administrator, LRGVDC-AAoA Managing Ombudsman. Mrs. Hernandez is a volunteer with the LRGVDC Area Agency on Aging's Nursing Home Ombudsman Program.

Names of Vision award winners will not be officially announced until the DADS Volunteer Recognition ceremony in June.

On June 24, 2009, the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) will hold the third state level recognition ceremony honoring DADS volunteers. DADS will announce the winners of the "DADS Vision Awards" in this ceremony honoring exemplary volunteer service to DADS programs.

Volunteers or volunteer groups who have won a DADS Vision Award will be sent a letter from the Commissioner.

The DADS Volunteer Recognition Awards ceremony will take place from 2 to 4pm following the DADS Council meeting on June 24, 2009. The ceremony location will be at 701 West 51st Street, Austin, TX in the Winters Building (located in the Public Hearing Room on the lower level).

## CERT PROGRAM UPDATE

On March 10 through 12, 2009 the LRGVDC sponsored a Community Emergency Response (CERT) Train the Trainer Course in Weslaco. The course was a big success with 17 participants from Cameron, Hidalgo and Willacy Counties. The CERT Program is a grassroots organization that draws on the skills of local, trained volunteers to help fellow citizens by preparing and responding to local emergencies.

Participants learned how to instruct other volunteers in disaster preparedness, disaster medical operations, team organization and disaster psychology, fire suppression, light search and rescue and all other facets of the CERT program.

It has been recently documented that bystanders or victims are the first to provide emergency assistance or rescues before first responders are able to reach the emergency. The CERT program helps train regular citizens to provide this assistance in a safe, effective manner that helps save lives, prevents additional injuries or tragedies during an emergency. The aid CERT members provide enables first responders in dealing

with much larger pressing and dangerous emergencies.

Having local citizens that are trained to provide all types of basic aid during an emergency has proven to be indispensable in real life emergencies like hurricanes Ike and Katrina where first responders were spread too thin by the sheer magnitude of the disaster. Therefore, a trained, CERT team is a tremendous asset to any community.

If you are interested in volunteering your time or need additional information on the CERT program, please contact Manuel Cruz, Director of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness at (956) 682-3481 ext. 105.

## LRGVDC Area Agency on Aging Receives Grant to Conduct TV Converter Box Outreach



The LRGVDC Area Agency on Aging received a \$25,000 grant from the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) to conduct an outreach campaign to educate seniors about the digital transition and to apply for a converter box. In addition, the project also assists seniors to apply for the converters and helps with the actual installation of the converters. The n4a and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration identified several areas of the country as targeted areas for this program. The Lower Rio Grande Valley was one of those priority areas because of the high number of Hispanic seniors and proximity to the Texas Mexico border. Its outreach efforts have netted approximately 38,000 contacts and have provided over 2,400 units of service. Units consist of assessments, applications, acquiring converters, and converter installations. Presentations were made to over 60 adult day care centers. Staff met with all senior center managers, and provided information to over 1,000 homebound seniors receiving a home delivered meal. Donated converters are also being provided to seniors whose coupons expired or are unable to apply for the converter coupon.

## LRGVDC Staff Receives Recognition for Years of Service

LRGVDC Board of Directors recognized staff for their years of service and contributions to the Region.



**Front row left to right:** Francisco Cantu, 5 yrs; Victor Morales, 5 yrs; George Romo, 5 yrs; and Gilbert Morales, 5 yrs.

**Middle row left to right:** Maribel Contreras, 5 yrs; Arturo Ramirez, LRGVDC Board President; Mary Escalona, 5 yrs; Brenda Salinas, 10 yrs; Rosa Cuevas, 10 yrs.

**Back row left to right:** Alfred Rogers, 5 yrs; Santiago Zepeda, 5 yrs; Veronica Alegria, 5 yrs; Jose Pena, 5 yrs; Kenneth N. Jones, Jr., Executive Director, 25 yrs.

**Not shown:** Maria Champine, 5 yrs.

## Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council

### Board of Directors 2008-2009

#### Executive Committee

<b>Mr. Arturo Ramirez</b> Grassroots Organizations	President
<b>Commissioner John Ingram</b> City of McAllen	1st Vice President
<b>Mayor Chris Boswell</b> City of Harlingen	2nd Vice President
<b>Mayor Pro-Tem Alvin Samano</b> Member-at-Large	Secretary
<b>Commissioner Sylvia Handy</b> Hidalgo County	Treasurer
<b>Honorable Norma G. Garcia</b> Member-at-Large	Immediate Past President

#### Remaining Board Members

Commissioner Edna Tamayo	Cameron County
Judge Pro-tem Aurelio Guerra	Willacy County
Commissioner Roel Landa	City of Alamo
Commissioner Carlos A. Cisneros	City of Brownsville
Mayor David S. Simmons	City of Donna
Mayor Pro-Tem Eddy Gonzalez	City of Edcouch
Council Member Gus Garcia	City of Edinburg
Mayor Steve Brewer	City of La Feria
Mayor Joel Quintanilla	City of Mercedes
Mayor Norberto "Beto" Salinas	City of Mission
Mayor Leo "Polo" Palacios, Jr.	City of Pharr
Mayor Orlando Correa	City of Raymondville
Mayor Joe Hernandez	City of San Benito
Mayor Pro-Tem Lupe Rodriguez	City of San Juan
Mayor Buddy de la Rosa	City of Weslaco
Dr. Cesar Maldonado, President	T.S.T.C.
Mr. Roberto Loreda	Donna I.S.D.
Mr. Gale Armstrong, Manager	El Jardin Water Supply Corporation
Mr. Michael G. Wilson, Manager	Port Mansfield PUB * Willacy Co. Navigation Dist.
Mr. Don Medina	Member-at-Large

#### *Contacts For LRGVDC Administered Programs*

<b>Kenneth N. Jones, Jr.</b> <i>Executive Director</i>	<b>Ann Lyles</b> <i>Director, Finance</i>
<b>Anna Hernandez</b> <i>Director, Human Resources</i>	<b>Terrie Salinas</b> <i>Director, Economic Development</i>
<b>Joe González</b> <i>Director, Area Agency on Aging</i>	<b>Manuel Flores</b> <i>Director, Transit Services</i>
<b>Andrew Canon</b> <i>Director, Hidalgo County MPO</i>	<b>Manuel Cruz</b> <i>Director, Homeland Security</i>
<b>Juan Gomez</b> <i>Director, 9-1-1 Services</i>	<b>Victor Morales</b> <i>Procurement Officer</i>
<b>Paul Williams</b> <i>Director, Regional Police Academy &amp; Training Center</i>	

## Mission Statement

“ENCOURAGE AND PERMIT LOCAL UNITS OF GOVERNMENT TO JOIN AND COOPERATE WITH ONE ANOTHER AND WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF MAJOR ECONOMIC INTERESTS, CITIZEN GROUPS AND GROUPS EXPERIENCING ECONOMIC DISTRESS TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND GENERAL WELFARE OF THEIR CITIZENS AND TO PLAN FOR THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGION”

### *REGIONAL PURSUITS*

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