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LEAD Original Programming

Maria del Rosario “Rosie” Castro (2019)

START – 00:00:00

[Music]

>> Bienvenidos and welcome to the next installment of LEAD media programming, from Studio 54, Campus of California State University San Bernardino, the digital media platform for inspired educators, leaders and community activists and advocates, taking our message directly to the people, to the gente. Thank you for sharing our common interest in the analysis, discussion, critique, dissemination and commitment to the educational issues that impact Latinos. I'm your host, Dr. Enrique Murillo Junior, and this episode is a syndicated replay from season 10 of LEAD Summit 2019. The theme that year was *Su voto es su voz, everyone counts*. And among our featured speakers that year was Maria Del Rosario Castro. Rosie Castro is a Mexican-American Civil Rights activist and educator who has been involved in several prominent groups, such as the young Democrats of America, the Mexican-American Youth Organization, the Committee for Barrio Betterment and the Raza Unida party. She is the mother of Julian Castro and Joaquin Castro. Growing up in the San Antonio Barrio, Castro cited the beginning of her interest in social justice in witnessing the racial and economic boundaries that affected her family, especially her mother. Continue and enjoy the full value and complexity of this episode. We extend our appreciation to our LEAD sponsors and partners, planners, volunteers, speakers and panelists, production team, affiliates in Town Hall chapters and commend them all for lifting their voice and uplifting the plight of Latinos and education. Thank you. Gracias. Tlazocamati.

>> Háganse contar. Ok. I would like to now turn it over to Dr. Alejandro Jazan, who seven or eight days ago defended his dissertation. So es el Doctor, Doctor Alejandro Jazan is an associate professor of Speech Communication Studies in the College of the Desert. And like I said, just successfully defended his doctoral dissertation, cohort 10 in our campus educational leadership program here at CSUSB, ok? So, ahí está, Doctor. All yours.

>> Buenas tardes. Good afternoon. It is my sincere honor to introduce our next speaker. Maria Del Rosario, Rosie Castro, is a civil rights activist and educator from San Antonio Texas who has been involved in several prominent groups, such as the young Democrats of America, the Mexican-American Youth Organization, the Committee for Barrio Betterment and the Raza Unida party. She is the mother of former San Antonio mayor and U.S. Secretary of Housing, Julian Castro and Texas Congressman, Joaquin Castro. Growing up in a San Antonio Barrio, a low-income neighborhood on the westside, Castro sighted the beginning of her interest in social justice in witnessing the racial and economic boundaries that affected her family, especially her mother. Her mother, a Mexican immigrant who reached the fourth grade, cleaned the houses of the

affluent in Alamo Heights. As a young girl, Rosie was struck by the remarkable differences, the streets and drainage, the sidewalks and schools. The inequities she observed in her youth inspired her social activism in college and beyond. Rosie first worked as a volunteer for Lyndon B. Johnson's 1964 presidential campaign and later she joined the Mexican American Unity Council and helped to organize the organization's boycott of the San Antonio savings Association. With the scholarship from her valedictorian title and other financial means, she successfully enrolled at Our Lady of the Lake University. As a student at Our Lady of the Lake College, she joined with the Catholic Youth Association and organized the Young Democrats. In 1971, she became one of the first chicanas to run for City Council. She helped found the la Raza Unida party and became its Bexar County chair. Rosie was also active during the Free Angela Davis campaign of 1971. Castro received a Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Texas at San Antonio and worked at Palo Alto College, where she served as interim Dean of Student Affairs from 2008 until she retired in 2013. Rosie's belief in the importance of Education remains as strong today as it did more than fifty years ago and continues to advocate for social justice. She is an accomplished community activist, a published poet and a tireless advocate for voter registration, for better political representation and for better city services, particularly on the west side of San Antonio. She is also involved in national organizations such as Latinas Represent, the Texas Organizing Project and AARP. In 2015, she was elected to the San Antonio Women's Hall of Fame and, in 2017, she was awarded an honorary doctorate from Our Lady of the Lake University. But she is perhaps best known for supporting the political aspirations of her sons. Both Joaquín Castro and Julian Castro have sided Rosie's activism as the foundation for their political careers. Rosie took her sons to political rallies and instilled in them a desire to serve. Julian delivered a moving tribute to Rosie during the keynote address at the 2012 Democratic National Convention. Quote "My grandmother never owned a house. She cleaned other people's houses so she could afford to rent her own, but she saw her daughter, Rosie, become the first in her family to graduate from College and my mother fought hard for civil rights, so that instead of a mop, I can hold this microphone." Please join me in welcoming our speaker, Rosie Castro.

>> Thank you, Doctor. I really appreciate that. Can you hear me? Is this microphone ok?

>> No.

>> No? Ok. I'll stand up. Is this better?

>> Yes.

>> Alright. First of all, let me thank you for the invitation. It has been a real pleasure to be with you. This conference has been so well organized. I've enjoyed it so much and I really can see how much goes into putting something like this together because several of us, including Jane and Dr. Alan Clark, worked on a conference last year that we held in November which marked the 50 year anniversary of the Conference held by the U.S.

Commission on Civil Rights on Mexican-Americans. For the first time 50 years ago, in 1968, a conference was held in San Antonio because they needed to understand who these people, the Mexican Americans were. And so we commemorated that and that took about two years or more to plan, to find the funding for -- We were fortunate to have Our Lady of the Lake support us, but it was a really incredible endeavor and a difficult one. So, for you all, to have sustained a conference, year after year, that gives information, that gives hope, that gives fellowship, that is nothing but a labor of love. And I hope that we all understand that labor of love. I've really enjoyed it also because in our November conference, I didn't get to go to anything. I went to maybe a couple of things. I've had so much fun listening to your ideas, listening to what you hope to do, listening to what you've already done. I'm envious, frankly. And you have to live in Texas to understand why. When Alex talked about being able to vote anywhere, being able to have same-day voter registration, being able to have all the things that you have around voter registration and voter engagement and actually voting, I mean, I'm totally envious. We used to have to prove, when we go to vote, that we are who we are. And a few years back, there was such confusion that they asked even for two kinds of proof. And, in Texas, you can prove who you are if you have a gun license but you can't prove who you are if you have a student ID. And to me that is so ridiculous. I mean, it is beyond ridiculous. So I really congratulate you for the things that you have managed to do in those areas. And, you know? In Texas, if you know anything about Texas, you know that there's a party over there that likes to use California as the Bogeyman [phonetic]. And so, anytime they want to put down a politician or scare people about him or her, they say "They're trying to make us like California." That's the ultimate insult, right? But I got to tell you that there is so many things that you've talked about today that I really wish that we could have in Texas and that I'm sure, one day, we will have in Texas. It's just a matter of time now, because like you, our population has grown immensely. The problem that I think we see across the way has been that although we've grown immensely and even although we've registered immensely, we are not voting immensely, not in proportion to the strength that we have and that we should be at. In San Antonio, we just had a State Rep election that someone moved on. And I had predicted -- We had a young lady run, I said "You know, I think you can win with 2,000 votes." And there were about six people running. Sure enough, it was a little bit over 2,000 when they went into a runoff. I figured "Oh, we're going to run -- We're going to be able to win this thing with 5,000 votes." And sure enough, it was about 5,000 votes all total. That is about what I have on Facebook. That's the number of people that probably you have more on Twitter and Facebook. How does that make sense? That we elect these important officials, School Board, with two thousand votes, when there's a population of over a hundred thousand in that District? So the topic that you have chosen is very appropriate and I just want to tell you a little bit about why our family got involved with two things. First of all, education. And then, secondly, with voting, with government, with public service and with the belief, the firm belief that, in this country, if you are not at the table, you will not be counted. And so I'm hoping to talk a little bit about that. First of all, let me look at education. My mom came over from San Pedro, Coahuila, because her parents we're both -- Had passed away. So she was orphaned at about seven years old, along with her three or four year old sister. They came because in Mexico their grandparents could not support them. They had been sent to one family

and another and they just couldn't support them. So there was a family García here that was her distant relative. They said "We'll take the kids. However, they cannot live in the same household. They will be living in two different households." So my mother, who had lost her parents, then also kind of lost her sister. And so, she lived with this family whose head of the family, Mr. García, was a musician. Now, you don't make a whole lot of money but he was able to maintain enough, so that collectively the family was able to, at some point, buy a house and mother was living there and the Mr. Garcia's wife, Mrs. Garcia, who had been a second mother to her, then passed away, as well, within a few years. So again, she had lost someone. She started school and was pulled out of school at third grade, ok? So she spent her life learning how to read and write in English and Spanish, but she didn't have the education that would support her in a career of anything other than the things that she could do well, which was to clean house, to cook for people, to babysit and she did a lot of babysitting. But because of that, she always, and the Garcia family, always kind of pushed that idea that if you want a life in this country, you're going to have to get a good education. And so, fortunately they really sacrificed to ensure that I went to school. For 12 years, catholic school named Little Flower, my mother cleaned the offices for the priest. My guardian, Mario Garcia, worked for the priest as a secretary. So one of the things that I feel happened as a result of that catholic education was a couple of things. One, after going to church for six out of seven days of the week, I learned all about social justice and I learned all about the Christian principles of loving one another. I learned about the fact that we are all brothers and sisters and that's something that kind of always stayed with me. And so, that you would question "Well, if we're all brothers and sisters, why is it that some people, because of the color of their skin or because of the language they speak, don't seem to have the same rights and privileges, don't seem to have the same resources as everybody else?" Going from Little Flower, I then was able to get a LULAC scholarship. I know our LULAC president is here. And also a scholarship from Our Lady of the Lake. And I was very, very fortunate because one of the things that I learned at Our Lady of the Lake, and let me shout out to Our Lady of the Lake, because I think they're tuned in today, one of the things I learned very early on was that I got a mentor, Dr. Margaret Kramer, who taught in the bilingual education area and was very famous for doing that, because it was the beginning then of bilingual education. It was the beginning of finance for college. Many of these things were just starting because when I graduated from High School, in 1965, there was in Texas, at that time, an 80% dropout rate, 80%. Said another way, 20% of us were graduating. The college going rate in 1965 was 4%, 4%. Ok? So I'm coming from a time that Alex didn't exist. We didn't know any Doctors, PhDs. We didn't know them. I mean, I think that might've been one of UT Austin, maybe a couple of them, but I didn't know them. And so, it makes me think about that many years later, in the 80s, I found a quote by a German philosopher, [inaudible], that said this "Go as far as you can see and when you get there, you'll be able to see further." And I think I took that to heart, and I think it's something we should all do. That Alex told me the story to the -- You know, he didn't necessarily think about that PhD. originally, but there was a professor, there was a teacher, there was someone who encouraged. There was some people that said "You can." And it's those people, you people, that have created the kind of community that we have today, in many ways. I know that there's a number of bad statistics that we could quote, they're there, but

there's a number of good statistics too. Because we have had the dreamers and we have been the dreamers and we are the dreamers. Both those that are waiting on citizenship and those like Willy Velázquez [phonetic], and those like Jane Velázquez, and those like Ellen Clark [phonetic], and those like Dolores, and those like Miss Mendez and all the people who have been able to dream despite not always having the resources. And so, one of the things that I think has been very important for us is that, early on, I came to understand that without the educational process and without the help of others, we were never, as a family, going to be able to lift ourselves out of the poverty that we were in. My mom used to work for three Anglo-women in Alamo Heights and, as a kid, she would drag me with her. We had to take several buses to get down there. And I can remember one the first times this happened. We walked into one of the houses and we were in the kitchen, my mother was cleaning or whatever, and she opened the pantry. Well, I never knew what a pantry was. This pantry was a room full of food and I could not believe that. There was no concept in my head of a room full of food anywhere. And so, it was things like that made me wonder "Why is it that some people had a room full of food and other people had no food?" In San Antonio, during that period of time, one of the local -- Or one of the national stations had done a study of hunger in several areas in the country. San Antonio was one of those that was studied because we had some incredibly bad numbers when it came to deaths of infants who die because of malnutrition or no nutrition. San Antonio, in one part in our history, had been almost a capital of tuberculosis. We had a special hospital with little huts where people were put because of tuberculosis. San Antonio was where Eleanor Roosevelt came and saw the deplorable conditions that mexicanos lived in and went back and told Roosevelt, her husband, "You have to do something about housing in this country." And so, San Antonio had one of the first housing authorities. And just as an aside, I worked at the Housing Authority for a number of years. The Commissioners, at that time, which is the equivalent of a city council now, voted that you could build public housing only on land that was unusable for anything else. And so, years later you have the situation where methane gas starts to leak up from -- For the housinness. And that was a reason why they had been built on landfills and things like that, because it could not be built on good land -- Prime land. So San Antonio and the Mexican-American population, I think, has had its share of things to overcome. And growing up in that, as Willy did, as Mario [inaudible], as many of us did, we had to ask ourselves "Could it be that this was because we were less than other people?" We didn't think so. "Could it be because we didn't serve in the service, in the armed service, the way other people did? We weren't American enough?" No, we had one of the highest percentage of Medal of Honor winners in every war. "Could it be that somehow we were deficient?" And I think we found the answer to all of those were no. The answer to all of those were "It's obvious that things are not going to change in this city, or across Texas, unless we ourselves take hold of our own destinies and we change it." And I think that it was not new to our generation. Before us, there had been the Albert Peña [phonetic], [inaudible] and a whole group of Latino politicians that tried to make changes. But we were the -- We were the generation, like many of you may be, that was angry, that was no longer going to come out, hand in hand, until anyone else that we were going to follow their lead. We wanted something better and something different, not just for ourselves. Most of us at the time, in the 60s, did not have children yet. But we were thinking about those children

that we did not have. We knew that one day, we might. And we knew that we didn't want the conditions that we had lived under to be the conditions that our children would have to live under. And so, many of us and this is the thing that happens, I think, that has happened over all our history, many whose names are not remembered, were part of a movement that changed things just a little bit more. In the foundation, sometimes I've worked with the area foundation in San Antonio. They are the people that give all this money, right? Which we don't get. But [inaudible], they talked about a thing called collective impact, ok? And I -- When I was at Palo Alto and was heading up Dean -- Interim Dean of Student Success, what I saw was we were -- We're getting money from the state because our numbers were so low of kids graduating from high school going to college. And I'm at a junior college, where the majority of Latinos go. And we were watching all these different programs, PUENTE [phonetic] had come into Palo Alto. We had other programs. And as time was coming -- Going by, we're beginning to see the changes. We were beginning to see Texas then have more people graduating from high school, have more of our students going to college and I thought "You know what? That's what this is, collective impact. It is the impact of all of us individually and collectively and the number of us doing that for a long period of time." It is that that brings us to a better outcome. And I think that you can certainly see that California did that. I was envious because when you took on that proposition, you also unleashed the force that I would like to see unleashed in Texas. I could tell you about some of the things that, you know, there were so many things that we did during that time, but let me tell you a little bit about my sons. My sons were born in 1974 and that was right about pointsiding with Raza Unida was now winning. That we had had to apply -- We had had to be able to create Raza Unida on a ballot by getting 10% of the people who had voted two years prior in a gubernatorial election. To do that, we had to go door-to-door to people. We did that in the chicano barrios. And we'd go and say "You know, if you sign our petition -- And they could not be people that had voted democrat or republican. "If you sign our petition -- Did you vote? No. Well, would you mind signing this petition? This is the reason why we're trying to be a party. Look, this is our platform." And our platform really was about changing what had been those bad indicators for our community. Our platform was greatly about education, as well. And so, some people would sign and we got enough signatures to get on the ballot. And so we're on the ballot, the State gives us some money to run primaries and we're as young as many of you that are here now. We don't know shit about the rules of how to run elections. We don't know what you're supposed to do to run an election. We don't know how you handle that money or how you better not handle it, if you don't want to wind up in jail. And so we set up people that were training folks that wanted to help us run these elections. And we had just run these elections in the same places that Democrats and Republicans were running these elections. And so, we used to like to say it that time that, you know, we read that election code backwards, forwards and in our sleep. And we could tell you anything that was in it. And I think what that taught me is that if you want to be, beat something, if you want to do better, then you better be well prepared. You better know what you're talkin about. You better know your data. And one of the things that happened to a lot of us, as young people, when we did that, it showed a number of things. One, you can do it and two, it left you with a lifelong understanding that if we were ever to make any radical changes in our society, they were going to

have to be done through the political process. That was my belief and it continues to be my belief. In 1974, number of things were happening. One of our first gubernatorial candidates, you may know, was Ramsey Muñiz. And, of course, he was then arrested. One of our next candidates was Mario Compean, who is my compadre. We ran together, in 71, for Committee for Barrio Betterment for city council and he now has a group, Academia América, that works with the immigrant groups that are trying to become citizen. Works with them with the cards and everything else. And so, during this period of time, I was about to have children in 1974. And though I had been working and giving some of my money over to Raza Unida party, because I had chaired the party, I suddenly had to switch from an activist with no children and a person who found it hard to find a job because, though I'd be in the top three all the time, they were afraid I might complain to the EO [phonetic] or somebody. I would not get the job. I had switched now to being a mother that needed to take care of my children, that needed to earn an income and it became a very difficult switch. But it was made very joyous by these two guys, these twins that were born on the 16 de septiembre. So, yeah. If you're ever in San Antonio, around that time we do a yearly party and this coming -- This coming 16 will be their 45th birthday. So we'll have a big celebration. But as very little, you know -- First of all, their dad came to live with us for about eight years and then he left. I was -- I had gone back to school because, like I said, I couldn't get a job despite the fact that I had to be -- So I decided that -- A friend of mine has found this ad in the paper that said that Masters will pay for your Masters. Oh, ok. Let's go check it out. Well, I [inaudible] saying she decided to go after something else. And I got a Masters in Economic and Environmental Management at UTSA. Nobody, at that time, knew anything about Environmental Management and they now call it Public Administration. But, anyway, it was that degree, going back to education, that degree that made all the difference in the world for me because now I had to intern and I did that with the city of San Antonio. And along with me, came these two little boys that couldn't think of anything better to do for the summer and who had to wait for me until I finished work, basically, during the summer and whenever they weren't in school. And so, they got to see everything around there, they got to know everybody. And whenever I had chances, then I was involved with health care issues, with women's issues, with domestic violence, with a lot of other things and with campaigns. And so, I dragged these guys to give my mother a break because she took care of them. I dragged these guys everywhere and they hated it. They would play football, they would do whatever but they hated having to be doing all these things. And I thought "Well, you know, maybe it's not fair. Maybe it's a punishment." But years later, for any of you that drag your kids to things, years later what I saw was this polish, this ability to talk to anybody from these two kids that wouldn't talk to anybody, they were so shy, this ability to talk about issues. This understanding of the issues we were talking about, because they had come along. And, I know Julian especially always says, you know, when they got to college, the last thing on Earth they ever wanted to do was to follow Public Service, being elected. None of that. They wanted to -- First of all, they did High School in three years. They were in a hurry and they were in a hurry because they wanted to make some money. They, you know, didn't want to be poor. I don't blame them. They decided that, you know, fine, that's fine. But she can do it, but it's not something we want. We want some kind of future. And then, their teachers did amazing things. One English teacher looked at

Julian's writing and published it in her book that was rewritten many, many times and used for classes all over the place and it was poised right next to Martin Luther King's speech. Another teacher, Luis Prada [phonetic], a professor there, at that time, at Stanford, took an interest in them and he gave them jobs in the summer. He wrote a book on single member districts and he had Julian and Joaquín take a little tape recorder and interview all these elected officials in Houston, Dallas and San Antonio, that had been elected under single member districts. Because we didn't use to have single member districts. When I ran for Council, it was at large. And so, what an incredible kind of training. They set them on this course of really getting to know politics. And so, before I knew it, before they finished Stanford, they ran for Senate, the two of them. And they discovered a new way to campaign which hadn't been done at Stanford. They got their friends, the women, and they got the guys and they made these posters about them running and they put them in bathroom stalls. So you had to -- You couldn't avoid it, you had to see that they were running. At any rate, they won, both of them. They were the highest vote getter and they got the same amount of votes. I'm sure somebody wondered how that happened but they became senators and I think, from then, they were hooked. And they weren't hooked in the sense of "Oh, this is something that's going to give me money because it doesn't." Or "This is something that's going to give me fame, because fame is fleeting." But they were hooked because they understood that public service, that government is a way to serve the people. That's what it was meant for. It's a way to bring opportunity. Economic opportunity, every kind of opportunity, health opportunity, all the opportunities that you'd want, equal opportunity to a community. I can remember when they came to Stanford, they said being in California was so incredible. They could get off the plane, literally, and see all the economic development that you had, that we didn't in San Antonio. One of the things about San Antonio in the time that they're going to school is that in San Antonio, if kids got educated, they left. There was nothing that they could do in San Antonio. We were infamous for that. San Antonio was powered by hospitality, the Riverwalk, the hotels, which doesn't pay much, right? And it was powered by government and if you couldn't get a job in government, what were you going to do? So when they come to California and see your economic development, they were blown away. And they asked themselves and I asked others "Why can't we do that in San Antonio? Why can't -- Why do we have to have brain drain in San Antonio? Why can't we create opportunities in San Antonio?" So they went back and looked at what Henry Cisneros had written about target 90 and they went back and did other research and really worked for four years thinking about how to go back and make the city better, how to go back and eliminate some of that poverty. And so, they came back. My mother passed away in 96, that was the year they graduated. They got to see her for a little bit and then they decided they would take a year off before going back to school. They went back to Harvard. They'd been accepted in the law school there. And I think at that time they thought Law was probably the way to go. I don't necessarily know that they think that way anymore, they've had their own Law firm, but it was a really good background, a great education for being a Public Policy maker, you understood what it takes to make the laws that benefit people, as opposed to the laws that only benefit some people. And so, since a very early age, my sons have felt that everyone should count. Because of the fact that we're human beings, everyone should count. There should not be distinctions because

of who you love, what the color of your skin is, what the language you speak, what your religion is, what anything else. It makes no difference. We were all promised, in this country, that we would be recipients of certain rights, as well as certain responsibilities. And it has been very difficult to watch that promise, not only the American dream, but of the American Soul, those -- That freedom, that equality, that everything that we have meant to the world, it has been difficult to watch it being destroyed. We live near a community where little kids are taken away from their parents, sometimes as early as a couple of months, three months, where they're put in [inaudible]. Where families are destroyed, where children are given up for adoption though they have parents, where people are dumped like nobody cares on the street, in a bus. We live in a country that's never been -- Well, has been that way a few times before. Before I left, I got a message, an email, from Rebecca [phonetic] Flores who had been very instrumental in the farm worker movement in Texas. And was also -- Also knew Dolores and says that -- And she said that this Saturday, there's a contingent of Asian-Americans coming to San Antonio because they are going to ride the bus to Dilley and the internment camps are the -- Just about internment camps there are now, because they want to tell the world, they want the world to remember what happened to Japanese-Americans many years ago and what should not be happening to any American or any Non-American today. And so, I think, you know, my sons, both Julian and Joaquín, have been to those areas many times. Julian was there for Father's Day, last year, and they've taken gifts and they've tried to get in, and even as a congressman, Joaquín has made efforts to really know what is going on there. But every time you try, there's some barrier to understanding and knowing the truth, some barrier to talk into those children. And I think that, because of that, being the people who they are, at least first Julian, has decided that it is time that in this country, this country realizes what it means to be Latino. That there are folks that in our community, that we are a broad community made up of a lot of different people and that the stereotypes that are put out about our community, the stereotypes that are put out about our children, particularly, are not for real. That we may know not have had a president yet, we may not have had -- In San Antonio, we don't have presidents of the Latino presidents or Latina presidents of the colleges, except for the Junior Colleges and Texas A&M. But most of the private colleges, there is at least five of them, including UTSA, does not have a Latino president, we are 60% of the population. And you can look at institutions there and see again that we still have long ways to go. That is true of this country. This country has to know you and know me and know our children. And they have to know that not only are we an asset to this country, but that it cannot be the kind of country it has hoped to be, it has said it wants to be without us. I remember many years ago, one of the folks that worked for Clinton, who is a professor, wrote in the Atlantic, I believe, and I'm forgetting his name -- Alonso. [Inaudible] he is a commentator now quite a bit but he wrote an article on -- Many years now, on Latinos and he said "You know what? If we were understanding their values, if we were living by their values, we would be a much greater country today than we are." And I believe that's true because many of our values still, the value of family, the value of community, the values that we have always expressed are desperately needed today. They're needed in the top of government, they're needed in the top of educational institutions and they're needed throughout everywhere in this country. Let me just tell you a quick story about Tomás Rivera [phonetic]. Tomás was in San

Antonio. He worked at UTSA for many years before he came to you, guys. The boy's dad, Jesse Guzmán [phonetic] had, was part of starting up an organization which the Chicano movement had tried to do, it was an alternative college called Colegio Jacinto Treviño. And Tomas Rivera would come to the graduation ceremonies, he would teach classes, he would do everything he could in this alternative educational institution that would have a little bitty house next to a bar. The bars knocked down the house, I think they're still there. But here this guy would come and he was the greatest man you could ever, and gentlest, and most creative that you could ever want to meet but he knew, at UTSA, he knew that he would never be president of UTSA. And today, especially listening to Conchita, it made me mad all over again. He came here and that man was your chancellor. They could have done that in Texas. He didn't do it in Texas. So it is everything that we are, all of us, collectively and individually. All my life I've heard and you probably have too, think back at some of the articles, all those Latinos, those Hispanics, whatever they want to call us, they don't have a leader. There's no leader. There's no national leader. Well I've always maintained, you know what? We have a lot of leaders. That's what we're like. That's our society, not to be one leader that everybody follows. We're not dumb. We have many leaders, like the ones that have been in the past, like the one sitting here today and I know that all of you make the difference. You decide whether Alex and people just like him will be a PhD., will be an astronaut, will be an engineer, will be the President of the United States. And so, I [inaudible] a little bit of the story, but I want to say just one thing. Right now, you heard before, there's a rule on how people will get to that debate stage. And, as a mother, I ask you, there was one rule which you had to be -- You had to -- The poll -- You had to come in on three polls at 1% or more. Julian has met that, but there's a second rule coming into play because there's so many more people joining them. And that is that you have to have 65,000 unique donors and of those 65,000 -- And it can be a dollar, ok? Seriously, I'm not kidding. A dollar, five dollars, whatever you can afford. But of that, 20 there have to be 200 -- Two hundred each in 20 different states, different states. So if you know anybody that can help us get there, I'd appreciate it if you would. You also may know that Joaquín may be running for congress. We'll know that in a couple of weeks. So we ask for your blessing because that is important and we ask that you continue that strength that you have built in California, so that one day we will have it too.

>> Thank you so much, Rosie. At this time, I would like to open up the floor to questions for Rosie.

>> Hello, buenas tardes, everybody. So, you know, what the whole experience and everything like that, you know the whole lineage of, you know, political -- The political fight for justice that's going on, you know, in your family, the things that have been passed down, we wanted to know, how do you think we can ignite the fire? You know, like the fire that you helped ignite with your sons, that you know -- What they have learned from you, what they've learned from everything that's happened in the family, so that in our generation and those that are watching us, they can have that fire as well, so it can spread like wildfire and it can just lead on to future generations and leave a lineage forever and ever. What would be some advice for us? Because, you know,

personally, most of us, we want to give back and we want other folks that, you know, have the same aspirations that we do or believe -- Believe that change can happen and that they can reach, you know, those goals that we have as a community.

>> Well, you know, one of the first things is that you have to believe in yourself. And I think you have to be a strategic thinker and you have to also find your way and how you're going to do that. And I think you all over here, you have a head start. You're much more with it than, I think, coming from a very sheltered catholic church environment. Then I would have been or even the guys, my sons -- You're a product now of a community that is much more enlightened, I think, than from where we came from. I see the younger generation really leading the way already. And I think, you know, one of the things that I saw because many of those, from the movement, talk about "Oh, we did this and boy they got us this and all the suffering and all the -- And I remember, a friend of mine once told me, she's, you know, I asked you to come over here and make people feel good and ra, ra, ra. I didn't ask you to come over here and talk about like "Oh, you ran 30 years ago and 30 years later, your son became mayor." [Inaudible] nobody wants to wait 30 years. No, but everything you do leads up to those changes. I was at a conference a couple -- Well, maybe a couple of months ago and that I think voto latino had, and you know we were talking about these things about "Oh, we got to this and we got to do that." But you know what? Rosario Dawson came on after I had left the stage, Julian and I were on it, I think, and she said "You know what? That's a downer. Listen, you got to do this and you got to do that." Says "What you got to do is be yourself." You can help your community if you're an engineer, if you're ahead of us on agency, if you're CP -- A, it doesn't matter, except that you do it. You get that education and then whatever your god-given gifts and talents are, you use that for the community and it doesn't mean that you have to go stand in front of the bus to stop something or do what the people in the movement then get, but it does mean look at your technology. It means that you use your brains, your creativity, your innovation, your heart, to do those things that are going to move us towards the direction we want to move in and I congratulate you all for being here and for being so much further than many of us had the opportunity to be.

>> Thank you so much.

>> Thank you, Rosie. We'd like to honor you with this small token. If I can ask everybody, let's stand up for this woman. For your accomplishments and lifetime service to our community, we award you our LEAD Education Advocacy Medallion of Honor.

>> Que viva la mujer.

>> Viva la mujer.

>> Viva.

>> I think I'll just say viva la raza, ok?

>> Alright. Viva la raza. Ok. Thank you. Thank you.

END – 00:54:33