

VIDA CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF EMPOWERING THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY AT ANNIVERSARY GALA

October 9 Gala Will Honor Three Decades of Transforming Lives Through Education, Training, and Career Opportunities.

MCALLEN, TX, UNITED STATES, September 4, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement \(VIDA\)](#) will

commemorate three decades of service and impact with its [30th Anniversary Gala](#) at 7 p.m., Thursday, October 9, 2025 at the McAllen Convention Center Ballroom. This milestone celebration will commence with a cocktail hour at 6 p.m. and honor VIDA's enduring commitment to advancing education, fostering economic mobility, and creating a more prosperous future for the Rio Grande Valley.



VIDA provides education without limits

Since its founding in 1995, VIDA has transformed the lives of thousands by providing the resources, guidance, and encouragement necessary to pursue higher education, earn professional credentials, and secure high-demand, high-wage careers. The gala will unite alumni whose achievements embody VIDA's mission, community leaders who champion its cause, and partners whose steadfast support has made this work possible.

"This is more than an anniversary, it is a testament to what is possible when opportunity meets determination," said Felida Villarreal, VIDA President and CEO. "For thirty years, VIDA has stood alongside individuals striving for a better future. This gala is both a celebration of the lives changed and a commitment to the work still ahead."

As keynote speaker, VIDA is honored to welcome Founder and CEO of Leon Capital Fernando De Leon to its 30th Anniversary Gala. A native of Brownsville, Texas, Fernando's remarkable journey from the Rio Grande Valley to national business leadership exemplifies the transformative power

of education that VIDA has championed for three decades. After launching his career at Goldman Sachs and graduating from Harvard College, he went on to build Leon Capital into a diversified holding company with investments in financial services, healthcare, and real estate, employing thousands and touching millions of lives.

A recipient of the prestigious Horatio Alger Award and co-founder of Crexi, one of the world's largest commercial real estate marketplaces, Fernando also leads the De Leon Family Foundation, advancing poverty alleviation, healthcare access, and scholarships across Texas and northern Mexico. His story of vision, perseverance, and community commitment reflects the very aspirations VIDA fosters in its participants.

Building on this spirit of impact, guests will enjoy an evening of elegance and inspiration with proceeds directly supporting VIDA's programs. Sponsorship opportunities are available at several levels, each offering distinctive recognition including Pearl sponsorships that help underwrite the full educational journey of three participants and individual supporter tickets at \$100. Sponsors who reserve by September 9, 2025 and complete payment by September 22, 2025 will be recognized in the event program. Funds raised will ensure VIDA can continue preparing the Rio Grande Valley's workforce with the skills and training needed to thrive in a dynamic economy.

For sponsorship opportunities or to secure tickets, contact Amanda Rodriguez at (956) 903-1900, ext. 106, or email arodriguez@vidacareers.org. To donate, please visit:

<https://vidacareers.org/gala/>

About VIDA:

Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement (VIDA) is a nonprofit organization committed to empowering Rio Grande Valley residents through education and training, enabling them to secure high-skilled, high-wage jobs. Over the past three decades, VIDA has supported more than 6,000 economically disadvantaged residents in completing career training programs in high-demand fields, leading to self-sufficiency. With a 96% persistence rate, VIDA offers comprehensive support, including tuition assistance, tools, and job placement, to eliminate barriers and pave the way for success. The organization's impactful work has garnered recognition from the Institute for Women's Policy & Research (IWPR), Hispanics in Philanthropy, Fast Company, Nonprofit PRO among others. To learn more about VIDA, visit www.vidacareers.org or call (956) 903-1900.

LANETRA L KING

IndieKater PR

lanetra.king@indiekater.com

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