



ORGANIZED JANUARY 1922

PAN AMERICAN ROUND TABLE OF AUSTIN REPORT TO 2019 STATE CONVENTION

The sisters of Pan American Round Table of Austin forged ahead into our second century of promoting knowledge, understanding and friendship.

We are active participants in the work of PART Texas and the Alliance of Pan American Round Tables, with many of our members serving in leadership roles in those organizations. Our table nominated Sylvia Williams for the office of Alliance Director General and at the October 2018 Convention in Cochabamba, Bolivia, she was elected to that office and now presides as our Director General.



Alliance Director General Sylvia Williams and the medallion awarded to her at her installation.

The Austin table has had delegates at each of the PART Texas statewide gatherings in the last biennium and, in March 2018, the Austin Table hosted the PART Texas Board meeting at the Embassy Suites San Marcos. Approximately 40 PART members enjoyed the camaraderie, shopping, musical entertainment and the business sessions.

Austin Table membership has grown slightly to 110 members and we look forward to welcoming 9 new members at our Pan American Day celebration in April. With normal attrition and new members each year, we have maintained a membership of just over 100 for several years.



Rosalía Castañeda and Gloria Mata Pennington celebrating Pan American Day 2018

At our opening meeting of the 2017-2018 year, we adopted a new mission statement for the Austin table, designed to guide us in planning and decision-making. In keeping with our historic pledge and collect, “The mission of the Pan American Round Table of Austin is to promote understanding and peace at home and among the peoples of the Americas through education, outreach and friendship.”

As we began our new year, we offered thoughts and prayers for the people of Puerto Rico, Florida, the Caribbean islands and Texas who had suffered great loss from hurricanes and other natural disasters in those areas. We sent messages of support to Pan American Round Tables in those areas and shared links with

information about how members of the Austin table could send financial support to organizations working to alleviate the suffering.

We have enjoyed widely varied luncheon speakers in the past two years, including some of our scholarship recipients and a very special post-election presentation from the Consul General of Mexico, Carlos González Gutiérrez. We are privileged to have the Consul's wife, Alina Flores, as one of our active members.



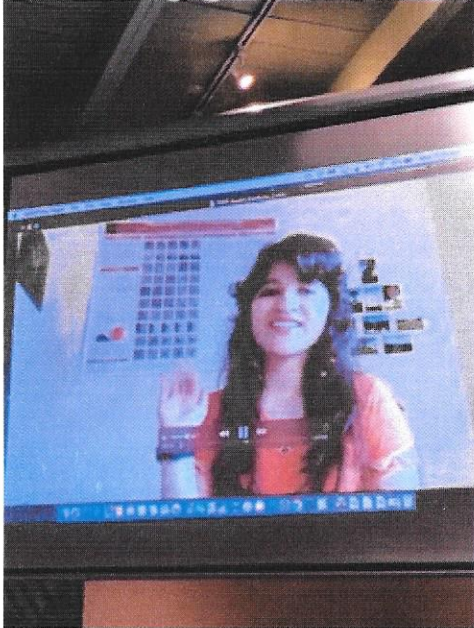
Consul General of the Republic of Mexico, Carlos González Gutiérrez. November 2018

We welcomed special PART guests to our luncheons, including then Alliance Director General Nhury Gutierrez Vilches from Chile, State Director Dee Moore from Del Rio, TX, as well as visitors from the Houston, Conroe and Beeville tables.



Austin Table Director Rose Ann Reeser, PART TX Corresponding Secretary Ann Beitel (Del Rio), PART TX Director Dee Moore (Del Rio), PART Alliance Director General Sylvia Williams (Austin)

We hosted the principal and staff members from Rodriguez Elementary School, and of course, our scholarship and community grant recipients. It is always inspiring for our members to meet sisters from other Tables and to hear from the recipients of our community outreach grants and volunteer efforts.



2018 Scholarship recipient, Sofia Ruiz, UT Astronomy student from Colombia

Each month, during our PART year, we hold a “Spanish Coffee” in the home of a member to enjoy each other’s company and a program presented in Spanish. Average attendance is about twenty members and guests. Our Spanish Coffees are a delightful way to get to know each other in a smaller, informal setting and offer the opportunity for Spanish conversation. (English and other languages definitely allowed.)

In 2017, we began a new coordinated fundraising effort through an *ad hoc* Fundraising Committee to support our three principal outreach efforts - scholarships, grants to community non-profits, and programs at Rodriguez Elementary School. As our charitable activities increased, we became concerned that constant appeals for funds for various individual projects were tiresome and confusing. Janet Roberts and Amalia Rodriguez Mendoza chaired the ad hoc committee. Through a varied program of events, direct pleas and raffles – carefully paced throughout the year - we have raised sufficient funds to maintain and even increase our local giving. We continue to work toward refining the process of raising and allocating funds and amending the by-laws to make the committee a permanent part of our governance structure. We are most grateful for the hard work of the Fundraising Committee and the generosity of our members.

Each year, we award three scholarships to local students. In February 2018, we heard a stirring presentation from one of our 2017 recipients, who thanked us for our support and described how difficult it can be for international students to leave

their families and support systems to study in Austin. She challenged us to use the talents and professional contacts available to our membership to help our scholarship recipients in ways beyond financial support. We accepted that challenge. PART Austin members volunteered their time and expertise and the scholarship committee began to assembling a list of resources to share with our scholarship recipients. We informally call the program, "Scholarships Plus", and we hope it will grow to be a significant help to our scholarship recipients who journey so far from family, friends and familiar surroundings to further their educations.

We maintain a strong presence at Hermelinda Rodriguez Elementary School, named for the first Latina principal in the Austin Independent School District. Ms. Rodriguez was a member of our table. To honor her memory and to support this public school of predominantly Hispanic students, we host an annual holiday brunch for the faculty and staff, volunteer in the library, sponsor the May Career Week for 5th graders and provide other support as requested. For the past two years, the school has celebrated the birthday of its namesake, using the occasion to teach the children about Ms. Rodriguez and her leadership in bi-lingual education in Austin. Our members provided the cake and happily attended the festivities. At this year's party, we also presented a monetary gift in honor of the late Gus García and his widow, our PART Austin sister, Marina García. Gus was the first Hispanic mayor of Austin, a champion of bi-lingual education and equal education rights for all students, and a friend and colleague of Hermelinda Rodriguez.



Rodriguez Elementary School faculty and staff enjoy a holiday brunch courtesy of PART Austin



Sylvia Williams, Marina García, Gloria Munguía, Tulis Escobar, Rose Ann Reeser and Inés García at Rodriguez Elementary School 20th Anniversary and Hermelinda Rodriguez birthday celebration

PART Austin is becoming more widely known in the Austin community for its multicultural focus and community involvement. In addition to our regular projects, we submitted a letter of support which helped Mexic-Arte Museum secure significant city funding to enlarge its exhibit space in downtown Austin, successfully encouraged the Handbook of Texas Women (an on-line publication of the TX State Historical Association) to add a biography of Florence Terry Griswold, and participated in the United Nations Association (Austin Chapter) International Women's Day celebration. At that celebration, author and PART Austin member Beatriz de la Garza, spoke briefly about her biography of Florence Terry Griswold – published in English and Spanish.

It has been my honor to serve as Austin Table Director for 2017-2019, and I look forward to helping our incoming Director, Yolanda Guerrero Goodman, and the new Board, as they guide the wonderful women of PART Austin onward into our second century.

Rose Ann Reeser
PART Austin Table Director 2017-2019