The paseo of portraits recalls the rich and diverse history found in this city and the many events that have taken place that define Houstonians today.

Rolando Briseño

INSPIRATION FOR THE NORTLNE TRANSIT CENTER/HCC STATION

Artist Rolando Briseño’s station design honors local Tejano heroes chosen by the community for their contribution to the culture of Houston and Texas. The design incorporates abstracted elements from the Mission Revival architectural style, such as filigree, in celebration of cherished Tejano aesthetics.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born and still working in San Antonio, Rolando Briseño received his MFA at Columbia University. His public art projects include installations at Houston Intercontinental Airport and other airports throughout Texas and across the country. Briseño’s work is shown in major museums and private collections in the US, Europe and Latin America.

Roy Benavidez

VIETNAMESE WAR MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT

Master Sergeant Raul (Roy) Perez Benavidez was a member of the Studies and Observation Group of the US Army. In 1965, President Ronald Reagan presented Benavidez with the military’s highest award, the Medal of Honor, for his actions in combat in South Vietnam on May 2, 1968. During the award presentation, President Reagan reportedly turned to the press and said, “If the story of his heroism were a movie script, you would not believe it.”

Carlos C. Cadena

JUDGE

Carlos C. Cadena was a Mexican-American lawyer, civil rights activist, teacher and judge based in San Antonio. His decision in the landmark 1954 Hernandez v. Texas case helped end the systematic exclusion of Hispanics from jury service in Jackson County. Cadena became the first Mexican-American associate justice for the 4th Court of Appeals in 1959 and became the court’s chief justice in 1972, a position he held until his retirement in 1990.

Olga Y. Soliz

EDUCATION TRAILBLAZER

Olga Soliz was a volunteer and businesswoman who dedicated her life to worthy causes and effecting positive social change for women and minorities. She was active in the American Leadership Forum, Hispanic Women in Leadership, LULAC Council 643, the Houston Realtors Association’s Center and the Houston Hispanic Forum. A University of Houston graduate, Soliz was one of the first Hispanic women to start a Northside business, Olga Soliz & Associates, an accounting and bookkeeping firm on North Main.

José M. Lopez

WORLD WAR II MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT

José Mendez Lopez was a boxer who fought under the name Kid Mendez in the 1920s, but was most remembered for being a US Army soldier who served during World War II. In 1945, President Franklin D. Roosevelt presented him with the Medal of Honor for valor in combat for his heroic actions during the Battle of the Bulge. Lopez had almost single-handedly turned away a German infantry attack, killing at least 100 enemy troops.

Lorenzo De Zavala

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS

Manuel Lorenzo Justino de Zavala y Sáenz was a 19th century Mexican politician and author. He served as finance minister under President Vicente Guerrero. A colonizer and statesman, Zavala served as interim Vice President of the Republic of Texas under interim President David G. Burnet. Zavala dedicated his book, Journey to the United States of North America, to “hard-working, active, reflective, circumspect, religious” Mexicans.

Dr. Hector P. García

PHYSICIAN AND AMERICAN GI FORUM ORGANIZER


Alfred J. Hernández

JUDGE

Alfred J. Hernández was a lawyer, civil rights leader and judge. He served as a technical sergeant in the US Army during World War II. Hernández was a two-term president of LULAC from 1965 to 1967. His work to improve the social and economic conditions of all American citizens of Spanish-speaking descent in the US included the Selma (Texas) Minimum Wage March, a two-month trek ignited by a labor strike of the United Farm Workers Association, which received national attention in 1966.

George I. Sánchez

EDUCATION ACTIVIST

George Iridio Sánchez was an education pioneer, a civil rights activist and an author. He held several positions at the University of Texas from 1940 until his death. Dr. Sánchez served as president of LULAC from 1941 to 1942. He championed equal educational opportunities for Mexican-American students throughout his career. In 1982, the National Education Association sponsored the George I. Sánchez Memorial Award, which recognized him as the “father of the movement for quality education for Mexican Americans.”

Theodore W. Berenson

FOUNDER AND DEVELOPER OF NORTLNE MALL

Theodore W. Berenson was a pioneering real estate developer and advocate for minority contractors. He helped develop Houston’s Gulfton and Northline malls. In 1965, Northline’s 800,000 square feet made it the largest enclosed, air-conditioned mall in the southwest and one of the largest in the country. Berenson also served on the President’s Commission of Government Contracts and helped the Eisenhower administration better serve the interests of minority contractors bidding for government contracts.
A. John Castillo
CIVIC LEADER
A. John Castillo was a railroad car inspector and a community leader dedicated to helping elect pro-Hispanic candidates to Harris County public office. Castillo was a founding member of the Hispanic Caucus, Harris County PPSO, serving as vice chairman in 1984. He served as director for LULAC Council 60, United Fund, Fiestas Patrias and The Community House, and was the Democratic Party precinct judge for precinct 48, the largest Mexican-American precinct at the time, from 1986 to 1996.

Gustavo C. García
CIVIL RIGHTS ATTORNEY
Gustavo “Gus” C. García was a Mexican-American civil rights attorney. García was best known for being instrumental in the landmark Hernández v. Texas case that ended systematic exclusion of Hispanics from jury service in Jackson County. As a result of the trial, he and fellow attorneys effectively put an end to the 25-year-old practice that had kept anyone of Mexican ancestry from serving on juries in more than 70 Texas counties.

John J. Herrera
ATTORNEY AND CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST
John J. Herrera was a leading civil rights advocate for Mexican Americans in Texas. He practiced law for five decades in Houston, participating in cases that ended separate schools for Mexican-American children and the systematic exclusion of Spanish-speaking citizens from juries. He also protested employment discrimination for Mexican Americans in Houston shipyards during World War II. Herrera held several posts in LULAC, including national president and national legal counsel, beginning in 1935.

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