

Hello SAHRMA,

We finished 2021 with an appreciation luncheon at the Magnolia Halle for the dozens of volunteers that



make our association a wonderful place for HR practitioners across San Antonio. We recognized all our volunteers and paid a special tribute to our Chapter Management Professional, Celia Rosas, who will be retiring this coming February. As part of this special accolade, our outgoing president, Dawn Cunningham, prepared a very classy gift for Celia—a lovely serenade from Mariachi Los Amores. As they strummed their guitars entering the dining room, we all clapped in admiration for their songs and appreciation for Celia's many years of faithful service to SAHRMA.

One of the songs Mariachi Los Amores sang was *El Rey (The King)*, by Vicente Fernandez. Now for those of you who may not be familiar with Mexican folklore music, Vicente Fernandez was the godfather of Ranchera music (a genre of traditional Mexican music) who died two days before we met for the appreciation luncheon. Without going into a line-by-line translation of the song, *El Rey* is about a man who lives life by his own terms and although it is not a direct equivalent, Frank Sinatra's "*I Did It My Way*" reverberates a similar attitude. An attitude of independence and a powerful desire to live life by one's own terms regardless of what society thinks.



By now you are probably wondering, what does a Mexican song have anything to do with HR? Well, allow me to explain. Vicente Fernandez' song contains a verse that exemplifies how I feel about embarking as SAHRMA's president in 2022. One of the lines in the song reads:

*...no hay que llegar primero; pero hay que saber llegar a...*

Loosely translated, that line means "it's not as important to arrive first, but it's more important to know HOW to arrive." In other words, the journey is more important than the destination. Or perhaps a better way to understand Vicente's words would be to consider that in any endeavor, it is more important to finish well than to finish first, and that is precisely how I feel as I take the leadership baton from Dawn. As SAHRMA's 2022 president, it is important for me to not only begin strong but also finish well.

As we start this new year, we take stock of the opportunities and challenges we will face. Together we will continue to advance the HR profession in San Antonio and across South Texas. We will continue educating the HR community by providing relevant educational content and we will continue expanding our membership through networking events and mentorship opportunities. We will exercise creativity as we schedule events that allow us to engage with each other while remaining safe in this post pandemic environment.



During 2022, the entire Board of Directors and I will focus on initiatives and resources that add value to your SAHRMA membership. We will be ambitious about growing our membership to rival that of other HR chapters in larger Texas metropolitan cities such as Austin, Dallas, and Houston. This will require a Herculean effort from all of us, but I am confident that it is a very attainable goal, especially given the talents encapsulated in the 2022 Board of Directors, the self-less work of our volunteers and the support of all our members. Adding to our deep bench of talent, we will also count on the knowledge and expertise of our new Chapter Management Professional, Dena Culpepper, and the Culpepper Management Group. Dena's experience managing other HR chapters in Texas and Oklahoma, will serve us well as we forge ahead to increase our membership and our influence across Central and South Texas.

If you are a new SAHRMA member I welcome you! If you are a long-standing member, I ask for your continuing support! Together we CAN accomplish all that we set before us and when 2022 comes to a close, we will be able to look back and echo the outlook of Vicente Fernandez' song and proudly acknowledge that we FINISHED WELL!

-Gonzalo Soliz, SAHRMA President 2022