

# The University of Texas Pan American



ENDOWMENT PROFILE

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## Raul L. and Earlene Longoria Endowed Scholarship at UTPA

**RAUL LONGORIA ROAD** in Hidalgo County, like many Texas roads, runs as straight as a ruler from beginning to end. For several generations, students in South Texas have taken that road until it connects with State Highway 107, which then takes them right past the main entrance of The University of Texas–Pan American. For many of those students, *the Raul L. and Earlene Longoria Endowed Scholarship* made attending the university a reality.

Raul L. Longoria's commitment to education goes back to one of the last conversations he had with his mother, who died when Raul was only 12 years old. She told Raul he was a smart boy and that education would be his road to success. Raul, a native of the small Starr County town of La Grulla, earned a bachelor's degree in business from The University of Texas at Austin in 1950. While attending UT Austin, he met his future wife, Earlene Moorman, also a UT graduate.

After Raul completed UT Law School, the couple returned to the Rio Grande Valley to set up a law practice in South Texas. Though she never attended law school, Earlene was able to take and pass the State Bar exam after an intense apprenticeship in Raul's law firm and having worked alongside her husband as he worked as an attorney. They had five children: Samuel, Janiece, Roy and twins Elaine and Cecilia.

"My parents expected all of their children to go to college," Elaine Longoria Mustard recalled. "They were firm believers in not only graduating from college, but also acquiring a professional degree that could

be utilized regardless of where you live."

In 1960, Raul was elected to the Texas House of Representatives, eventually gaining a seat in the Texas Senate in 1972. While serving in the Texas Legislature, he supported many pieces of legislation to help the university. Although it was not successful at the time, Longoria sponsored legislation to merge Pan American University with the UT System.

In 1980, Raul was elected to a district judgeship in Hidalgo County. He retired in 1994, but his interest in promoting UT Pan American did not end with his retirement. Earlene and Raul created an endowed scholarship at UTPA. That dedication to higher education was passed onto Raul's and Earlene's children. Janiece Maxine Longoria served on The University of Texas System Board of Regents from February 2008 to February 2011. Janiece remembers that her parents continually stressed the importance of higher education. "Expanded educational opportunity is the key to our continued success as individuals and as a nation," Janiece said. "Their public service was a catalyst for increasing the opportunity for higher education in the Rio Grande Valley."

"They wanted children from the Valley to have the same opportunities as those in other areas of the state," Elaine said of why her parents picked UTPA for the endowment. "My father's family was among the original Spanish land grantees here, so he had very deep roots in the area."

Like the road named after Raul, the legacy



Earlene and Raul L. Longoria

left by Raul and Earlene Longoria runs straight and true and will carry many more generations of students to new levels of success.

If you'd like more information about how to start an endowment, please contact:

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