

Proclamation



Jane Castor, Mayor

WHEREAS, established in 1983, the **City of Tampa Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Council** (MHAC) is a group of dedicated Hispanic individuals who are appointed by the Mayor to serve as a liaison between City government and the Hispanic community, and are a forum for those who need to voice their concerns to community leaders and City officials, and they accomplish their goals and objectives through programs, projects, and activities; and

WHEREAS, an annual City of Tampa Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Council event, the ***Latinos Unidos Luncheon*** showcases the growing presence and economic impact of Latinos in our city, state, and nation, and celebrates enhancements Hispanics have made to our way of life in science, technology, government, business, education, the arts and in so many other important areas, and proceeds from the event have assisted Hispanic students in financial need over the years through scholarship endowments totaling more than \$1,000,000; and

WHEREAS, the **25th Annual Mayor's Latinos Unidos Luncheon** on Wednesday, May 8, 2024, held at the Hilton Tampa Downtown Hotel highlights special guests **President Ron Vaughn** of the University of Tampa, former City of Tampa **Mayor Dick Greco**, and **Jessica Iredale**, the inaugural Latinos Unidos Scholarship recipient; and

WHEREAS, the late Matilda Martinez Garcia (1919-2016) was a charter member of the City of Tampa Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Council who had served since its founding, and the organization established the ***Matilda Martinez Garcia Leadership Award*** in honor of her over three decades of dedication and service, and it is awarded at the luncheon to an individual who has made extraordinary contributions to the Hispanic community and the people of Tampa; and

WHEREAS, this year, the *2024 Matilda Martinez Garcia Leadership Award* is presented to **Dr. Ernesto Ruas**, clinical professor in the Department of Surgery with the USF Health Morsani College of Medicine and private practice cosmetic surgeon, and Dr. Ruas has used his surgical expertise to improve the lives of hundreds of children and adults by volunteering his services, treating them for craniofacial conditions, such as cleft lip and cleft palate, which affects a person's physical appearance and can also impact their hearing, speech, vision, breathing and more importantly, their mental well-being, and since 1990, Dr. Ruas has worked with a medical mission team who travels annually to remote areas of Central America to provide free healthcare, and once was nominated by his peers in the Tampa Bay Latin American Medical Society as "Doctor of the Year" for his more than three decades of extensive volunteer services, and he serves as an inspiration to others who strive to excel and make an impactful difference within their communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jane Castor, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the city of Tampa, Florida, do hereby proclaim Wednesday, May 8, 2024, as

"LATINOS UNIDOS DAY"

in the city of Tampa, Florida, in honor of the Hispanic community's commitment to excellence, and ask that all citizens of Tampa support this occasion and offer congratulations to Dr. Ernesto Ruas on his well-deserved recognition.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 3rd day of May 2024.



Jane Castor

Mayor