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Hispanic chamber announces foundation to provide scholarships

April 5, 2009

By JIM EDWARDS For The Beacon News

They came to the Paramount Theater to meet friends, feast, dance, honor local area businesses and – not the least of all – establish a foundation to create scholarships for area Hispanic college students.

The March 29 event was not your typical valley ball. Patrons served themselves, strolling from one Hispanic restaurant to another set-up in the Paramount lobby. The Aurora-area restaurants represented at the ball were Gazadores Bar and Grill, La Chicanita Bakery, La Quinta de los Reyes, Gaslight Manor, and La Bori.

The ability to pick and choose your favorite foods made most set menu banquets seem a bit boring. There were no tables set up with name tags as you sat where you wanted in the lobby area and all around the upstairs balcony. The gala had no "theme" and absent were raffle tickets and silent auction tables with items to empty the wallet. Patrons could have their photos taken in the lobby, which is a special touch for any gala celebration.

Among the winners of special Estrella awards were Robert Renteria, professional of the year, and La Quinta De Ls Reyes, small business of the year. Old Second National Bank and Allstate Insurance tied and received the corporation of the year award.

The law offices of Gil and Cruz, long time supporters of the AHCC, gave a generous check for the organizations' newly created foundation to provide scholarships to area Latino students to attend college. They also promised additional funds each year to the foundation. Gil and Cruz was honored at the gala with a special recognition award. "As a business they enrich the lives of each one of their customers in many ways, one of them being the Kids Day with Santa, held in their offices. Last year they gave the AHCC a home in their offices. They truly exemplify what it is to be actively involved in their community" noted Maria De Leon, secretary of the Aurora Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

Since 1997, the Aurora Hispanic Chamber of Commerce has awarded nearly \$160,000 to area Hispanic students. The money given out came from sponsorships, donations, and moneys raised from the AHCC Annual Aurora Hispanic Chamber Golf Outing.

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