



CITY OF TUCSON

RICHARD G. FIMBRES
COUNCIL MEMBER
WARD 5

To the Editor of the Arizona Daily Star:

I am troubled and saddened that this publication wrote a story about the good efforts of a volunteer-driven organization, who works to better the lives of the children of Southern Arizona by trying to taint these efforts and harm both the organization and the children they try to help.

The writer failed to mention the intent and purpose of the dinner in question, that other groups and organizations received similar deals, as well as inferring I personally benefited from a special deal, this from a claim from a former employee fired for misusing funds, double booking events and questionable record keeping, as this reporter had reported previous but failed to mention in this article.

The timing of this story is also questionable since the investigation took place last year. The LULAC Youth Leadership Conference has started and that I had announced my intentions to seek a second term as the Ward 5 Councilmember.

There were no special deals and as I said previously, I had asked to have my name removed from the contract when I had been elected to the Tucson City Council in 2009, something that both Aramark and Obermaier failed to do. This was one of several instances, previously reported by this writer, of Obermaier's failure to keep records concerning events held at the TCC.

LULAC is one of the largest and oldest civil rights and educational organizations in the United States, operating at more than 900 LULAC councils nationwide. LULAC is a non-profit, volunteer driven organization so to say that one person benefitted was not true.

LULAC Council 1057 has worked in Southern Arizona to improve the graduation rates in schools by hosting the annual Youth Leadership Conference, to motivate students, between the 8th and 12th grades, to show that education is the key to success and that they needed to graduate. LULAC has worked well with many of the educational institutions, as well as the Metropolitan Education Commission.

Every year the Educator's Banquet is held, where students are recognized for their achievements, as well as community leaders and educators for their work. The Banquet is organized by members of LULAC Council 1057, as well as members of the community with a passion and commitment to education and our youth.

Proceeds raised by the annual Educator's Banquet, allows LULAC to sponsor students to attend the Annual LNESc Washington Youth Leadership Seminar and provide scholarships in coordination with LULAC's National Scholarship Foundation. Additionally, monies are raised to support the Manuel de Jesus Alvarado Scholarship Fund for local students.

In addition, Food Boxes are also provided to the most needy by LULAC, the organization has supported the annual Rosa Park's event, the FBI Community Service Awards and several Knight's of Columbus events.

Other monies raised from the Banquet also help to support the annual LULAC Youth Leadership Conference held in March of each year. Both the Conference and Banquet were created in 1988.

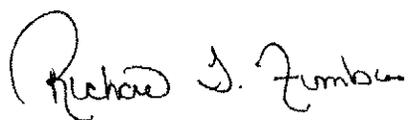
To date, the conference has hosted more than 100,000 participants, sending students to Washington D.C., and close to 400 young people have received scholarships to help out with their education.

The City of Tucson and ARAMARK were both sponsors of the Banquet. These sponsorships allowed underprivileged youths and their families to attend the Banquet. At past Banquets, both were recognized for this. In addition, they were also recognized at the Youth Leadership Conference as well at the LULAC FBI Community Service Awards Luncheon.

It is unfortunate for Obermaier that his career with the City of Tucson ended as it was reported by this writer but it is more unfortunate that the writer, who claimed his spouse is a member of LULAC, wrote such an article, tainting the efforts of a group of committed community volunteers working to better the lives of our children in Southern Arizona by referring to such claims as fact, when the person who made them, admitted he couldn't back them up in the testimony the writer referred to.

This effort is not about one individual, but a group of committed volunteers who work to help better the lives of children through educational attainment. It would be unfortunate that the article would damage this effort of this organization and in turn, hurt the lives of children it is trying to help.

Other non-profit organizations, such as the League of Mexican American Women, the Metropolitan Education Commission, the Tucson Mariachi Conference and Chicanos Por La Causa, to name just a few, work to better the lives of children and hold fund raising events to promote these efforts. All these organizations use to hold their fund raising events at the Tucson Convention Center under similar arrangements. Now the LULAC Educator's Banquet will join these groups and hold their event now at a different venue, to continue to help support the efforts of the youth of our community, in an atmosphere which is more welcoming to helping to better the lives of the youth of Southern Arizona.



Richard G. Fimbres
Councilmember
Ward 5, City of Tucson