



December 6, 2014  
PRESS RELEASE  
For Immediate Release

Media Contact: Alphonso Rincón  
(210) 317-5424  
[face.arincon@gmail.com](mailto:face.arincon@gmail.com)



## **Seguin's LULAC Council Tapped as a National Healthy Communities Model**

SEGUIN, TX - Seguin's LULAC Council No. 682 is one of five local councils in the nation who are implementing a Mars Healthy Communities Program under the auspices of the national LULAC Institute's *Latinos Living Healthy Initiative*.

In October the national LULAC Institute Inc. notified Ricardo Guerra, LULAC Council 682 president, that the Seguin organization had been selected for one of the five \$5,000 grants offered in the competition. The other grantees included LULAC Latinas Ladies Council 330 - Milwaukee, WI, LULAC 3190 - Riverside, CA, LULAC Council 4760, Southwest Key Programs - Austin, TX, and LULAC Council 44040 - Provo UT.

The grantees are required to sign a Letter of Agreement outlining a program of work, "creating positive change from within Hispanic communities" according to a timeline that ends March 31, 2015.

The goals of the Mars Healthy Communities Program are, "to address health issues with national effects directly at the local community level and to bring health resources to communities across the United States through five LULAC Councils"

Guerra was surprised and glad to be among the grantees. He said that in past years the thought of submitting an application from a small town in a national competition was too daunting. However, Alberto "Beto" Rincón, the LULAC 682 / Ogallala Commons apprentice, brought the application to Guerra's attention and recommended the investment of apprenticeship hours to coordinate, write, and submit the application.

"Let's do it!" was Guerra's response.

"We are going to help Latinos in educating and eating more healthy, like eating more vegetables," Guerra added. "We are already doing that through the LULAC Community Garden, but we are doing it without a curriculum. I didn't really realize that until Beto got me thinking."

Looking down the row, Guerra hopes the Healthy Communities funds will help LULAC 682 get more people involved, network existing community gardens, and identify landowners who will donate idle land or planted crops to increase the capacity of food banks to provide fresh produce..

“That’s the whole idea,” said Guerra reflectively, “to supply healthy food to those who are in need.”

Beto Rincón said that getting his first grant under his belt “was a lot of joy” both personally and due to the increased capacity for LULAC to provide new services stemming from its Community Garden.

Rincón noted that an important step in the grant process was reaching out to the grant administrators to better familiarize them with LULAC’s work. He added that LULAC’s capacity to pursue the grant was due to LULAC 682’s partnership with Ogallala Commons (OC), which cosponsored Rincón’s 2013 internship with LULAC and is also the cosponsor of his current apprenticeship.

“This grant solidified OC’s contributions to LULAC 682 and Seguin,” Rincón said, “ but, conversely, it is also helping OC broaden its efforts to work with and serve Native Americans and other minority communities.”

Rincón credited several players who had a role in LULAC 682’s successful grant application besides Guerra: Gloria Suarez-Sasser, LULAC 682; Siempre Sustainable Network, and Bobby Deike, Executive Director, Community Council of South Central Texas.

For information about the LULAC 682 Healthy Communities Program, please contact Ricardo Guerra, (830) 822-5820.

###