



PRESS RELEASE

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**The Heritage Society Celebrates National Hispanic Heritage Month Con El Presidente Kennedy**

New Exhibit: *A Civil Rights Milestone: President JFK's Visit with LULAC in Houston*

**Houston, August 15:** On September 15, National Hispanic Heritage Month begins and a new exhibit with celebrations and activities will be held at The Heritage Society's museum gallery at 1100 Bagby Street. The Heritage Society is partnering with the Houston chapter of LULAC and the University of Houston Downtown to highlight the 60th anniversary of The Kennedy's visit and speeches at The Rice Hotel.

"The exhibit filled with films, photography, and artifacts from November 21, 1963, showcases a celebration of recognition for Latinos during the Civil Rights Movement of 1954 – 1968." The Heritage Society's executive director, Alison Bell said.

"We all learned that President John F. Kennedy's last day was in Dallas, but many do not know that the night before, he had a tremendous impact on the Latin community in Houston at the LULAC Council 60's Gala," The Heritage Society's board president, Minnette Boesel said. "To historians, Kennedy's appearance at the Rice Ballroom was likely the first time that a president officially acknowledged Latinos as an important voting bloc."

According to a LULAC press release, Kennedy was only supposed to stop by and say hello on his five-city, two-day trip to Texas. Instead, a group of eager Latinos persuaded him to come inside and speak to a packed room of Mexican American civil rights activists. And then, he persuaded First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy, to address the crowd in Spanish.

"Our Mexican American mural in our plaza marks the historic occasion at the Rice Hotel where President Kennedy sat and heard a band play Mexican ballads and where the crowd yelled 'Viva Kennedy!'," Bell added. "So, it made sense to partner with our colleagues at LULAC to commemorate this event about inclusion and how The Kennedys embraced the audience."

Other exhibit activities will include an opening reception, Houston History Bus Tours by Mister McKinney of Mister McKinney's Historic Houston, docent-led mural tours, and an evening with subject matter experts about the struggle for Hispanic rights -- sponsored by Constellation Energy.

Museum gallery admission is only \$5 and is located at 1100 Bagby Street. Gallery hours are Tuesdays – Saturdays, 10 AM – 4 PM, and parking is free at 212 Dallas Street. More information about the exhibit is available at <https://www.heritagesociety.org/kennedy-lulac> . For more information about National Hispanic Heritage Month, please see - <https://www.heritagesociety.org/national-hispanic-heritage-month>.

***More about LULAC:*** On February 17, 1929, representatives from three organizations met in Corpus Christi to merge and form the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC). The new group sought to unify statewide efforts to challenge racism and inequities toward Texas' Hispanic residents, while also promoting patriotism, education, and equality. Although needing only ten members to charter a new council, more than 20 Houston men met in 1934 at a filling station and bookstore at 74th and Navigation to form LULAC Council 60, of Magnolia Park. The group immediately set out to eradicate local prejudice and discrimination and adopted the national organization's primary goals: improving education, employment, and civil rights. Many of their early efforts were combined with the Latin American Club of Harris County, with which they merged in 1939 to become LULAC Council 60 of Houston. (ADD WEBSITE)

***More about The Heritage Society:*** The Heritage Society's Park grounds and museum tell the stories of the diverse history of Houston and Texas through collections, exhibits, educational programs, film, video, and now online content. Founded in 1954 by a number of public-spirited Houstonians to rescue the 1847 Kellum-Noble House from demolition, The Heritage Society has since saved an additional nine historic buildings, moved them from various locations to join the Kellum-Noble House in Sam Houston Park, and restored them to reflect their respective eras. These 10 buildings, along with the museum gallery, serve as historic reference points and exhibition spaces for more than 23,000 artifacts that document life in Houston from the early 1800s to the mid-1900s.

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