A NEW PRESIDENT AND AN AMBITIOUS FUTURE
Introducing: The New President

New president, Eduardo Ramos-Gómez, recently returned to New York after three years as the Mexican Ambassador in Singapore. He views the Chamber as having a pivotal place in the global market. As he accepted the presidency, Mr. Ramos-Gómez told us, "We are in this time of building the chapter together. Our Chamber has a very important role in promoting trade and business – and most importantly, understanding and vision. Our nations cannot be separated anymore, nor can we build a strong future on our differences. We will succeed by understanding our common denominator and by working more closely. The Chamber has a responsibility to create opportunities that are strengthened with understanding and establishing appropriate liaisons with institutions and people. As Chamber members, we have a social responsibility to improve the quality of life in communities, as well."

2001
A YEAR OF CHALLENGES MET

The new president, Eduardo Ramos-Gómez, joins an active Managing Committee that includes Michael A. Jacobs, regional chairman, Oliver Armas, vice president for development; Denise Simon, vice president of programs; Aileen Schlef, secretary and Patrick Sabino, treasurer. We appreciate the leadership provided by Oliver as Interim President, after the departure of former president, Blanca Villarello.

The Managing Committee will soon share plans for 2002 that will focus on expanding our business horizons and involving members more extensively in the committee process. A formal newsletter committee will be instituted. Members will receive a briefing from the new team by the end of the month.

Adios Blanca. In March, Blanca Villarello was elected president of our chapter. She brought great energy and skill to our chapter and moved to Belgium in September to serve in the Administration of President Vicente Fox as the Representative of the Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, and Fisheries for five European nations.

Looking Back to 2001. This newsletter was originally scheduled for publication on September 11, to kick-off our fall schedule, traditionally the Northeast Chapter’s busiest time with a series of events that provide a large part of the chapter’s annual revenue. We were in the final stages of producing these exciting events: Fiestón Veracruzano The Colors & Flavors of Veracruz, a cultural journey showcasing the diverse cultural rhythms of one of Mexico’s most fascinating states. We were finalizing the September 22 Reception honoring President Vicente Fox. We are proud that the Chamber was selected to honor President Fox during his first official visit to New York as President of Mexico. As one of the Chamber’s founding members, President Fox is part of our history, and we hope to reschedule that event.

So much has happened since that September morning when everything seemed to change. We have not only sustained but have grown. It is difficult to adequately communicate our relief when we were able to confirm that everyone in our offices and Thacher Proffitt & Wood was safe: Primavera Salvá, director; Jessica Patterson, trade representative; the events team—Joaquín Martínez, Yaika García and Daniela Edward – and our vice president of development, Oliver Armas, a partner with the law firm.

Our new office is again within Thacher Proffitt & Wood. We thank them for their continued generosity. The Managing Committee and staff gratefully acknowledge the support we received from all over the United States and Mexico, particularly from our members and the Mexican Consulate.

Save the Date: January 17th

Mexican Debt Restructuring: Current Techniques for Restructuring Corporate Bank and Bond Debt in Mexico

NY offices of Mayer, Brown & Platt
Thursday, 1.17.2002, 3-5 pm
Oct. 4. Meeting with President Fox
Al Zapanta, Chamber national president, and Primavera Salvá met with President Fox and the New York team that established the first Mexican Trade Center in New York that month. It was held at the Consulate offices.

Oct. 4. Meeting with NYC's Mexican Community
Chamber members supported President Fox when he visited San Bernardo’s Catholic Church in downtown Manhattan, where he spoke to Mexican citizens living in New York. Several had lost family members at the World Trade Center.

Oct. 26. Funds for Mexican Families
With member restaurant, MAYA, we hosted a luncheon that raised more than $15,000 to benefit families of Mexican workers who were killed on Sept. 11th. A check was presented to the Mexican Cultural Institute to support the families.

This event was organized with the NE Chapter’s Transportation and TAFY (Textile, Apparel, Fiber & Yarn) Task Forces. Among the topics covered were Transportation policies and issues in the United States and Mexico, Logistics, Customs, Insurance, Sectorial Programs as well as Success Stories.

Dec. 5. Holiday Event and Silent Auction
The phenomenal end of the year gathering for members and friends at Café Frida was the most successful in our chapter history. The Silent Auction earned profits of more than $17,000. We appreciate the generous support of Cristina Castañeda and Joaquín Martínez of Café Frida, Elyse Ekin of Travel Impressions and Frank "Pancho" Shiel of México Elegante.

THE NEWSLETTER

Editorial Committee
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Denise Simon
Primavera Salvá

Managing Board
Secretary, Managing Board
VP. Programs, Managing Board
Executive Director

Education Task Force
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Research and Writing Design
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MEMBER NEWS: We invite your suggestions for the newsletter. Guest columnists are welcome! Please join us to make this a model for advancing business and knowledge about Mexico. Send us 2-3 lines about your business. Send to: northeast@usmcoc.org.
WHO’S WHO IN MEXICO’S NEW ADMINISTRATION.

Chamber members were fortunate to learn from new Administration members about Mexico’s development plans and growing partnership opportunities.

Meet the Fox Administration Series

In 2001, the chapter sponsored the popular series, Meet the Administration, gave members the unique opportunity to meet with key members of President Fox’s Administration and to gain firsthand knowledge and insight into Mexico’s new directions. The series has included Eduardo Solís, head of International Trade & Investment in Mexico, Ministry of the Economy; Leticia Navarro, Minister of Tourism; Julio Cesar Margain, the coordinator of Sistema E-México, connecting all of Mexico through the Internet; and three governors representing the states of Hidalgo, Sinaloa and Coahuila.

International Trade and Foreign Direct Investment in Mexico.

May 22, 2001. Dr. Eduardo Solís Sánchez, head of Promotion of International Trade and Investment in Mexico, Ministry of Economy.

On his 100th day in office, President Vicente Fox announced the creation of this office, a fulfillment of his campaign commitment. He appointed Dr. Eduardo Solís Sánchez to head this newly expanded initiative. Mr. Solís spoke to the Chamber for the first time about growing opportunities in Mexico under the Fox Administration: Fox Administration Key Investment Projects and Incentives; Expanding Free Trade Beyond NAFTA; NAFTA vis-à-vis European Union Free Trade Agreement.

Three State Governors Meet Chamber Members


This meeting with the Governors of Hidalgo, Coahuila and Sinaloa was historic because it was the first time that three state governments came together to meet with American businesses to explore possible collaborative ventures.

Sistema E-México Connecting Mexico to the Internet

June 7, 2001. Plaza Hotel, New York City

Sponsored by Consist International Inc. & ML Strategies

Julio Cesar Margain, chief project manager in the Ministry of Communications & Transportation, is in charge of Mexico’s new on-line communications system, Sistema E-México. He presented the Administration’s ambitious plan to link 98% of Mexico to the Internet. This $4 billion initiative to foster Internet use by having large telecommunications carriers has a goal to connect approximately 10,000 communities by 2006. Following a meeting between President Fox and Microsoft’s Bill Gates in Sun Valley, the plan received a major endorsement when Microsoft Corporation promised $58 million over the next five years to train at least 3,000 teachers and 20,000 software programmers. The Fox government will cover the cost of purchasing computers through private and public funds, with the cost eased through NAFTA. The Internet linkage will advance government efficiency, promote government. Lic. Margain said that the Microsoft announcement has been a great boost.

Tourism

July 17, 2001. American Express Tower, New York City

Sponsored by American Express

H.E. Leticia Navarro, Minister of Tourism, was honored at a special reception at the World Financial Center. She spoke of the growing business opportunities for the tourist trade and the interest in finding creative new ways to encourage tourism. Lic. Navarro spoke individually with U.S.-Mexico Chamber members to encourage those with creative ideas for expanding tourism opportunities to contact her. In his nine-month State of the Union, President Fox announced a significant increase in tourist travel in Mexico this year.

Ms. Navarro recognized Chapter member Al Kaplan for an almost half century commitment to advancing tourism in Mexico.
The first step is doing the research, beginning with both Mexican state area to provide consular services and advice to all Mexicans turned out to be unique with many unexpected challenges. Of the law firm Baker & McKenzie in its Juárez office. He returned to Monterrey to open an office for the firm and became politically involved once again. “This is my first time in foreign service,” he acknowledges, “and I accepted the position because it was hard to turn down such a challenge!” Although he did extensive research and interviewed his predecessors, life in New York has turned out to be unique with many unexpected challenges.

The day of the interview last fall was part of a frenetic week, an appropriate description of the life of the Consulate General since his arrival in New York. He had met with elected officials and community leaders in Farmingdale to seek a just resolution for two young Mexican laborers who were beaten in what was determined to be a bias attack. During the interview, we discussed the Fox Administration’s commitment to the Mexican community living abroad, the goal of maintaining a close relationship with Mexican families living in other countries and growing U.S.-Mexico partnerships. Nothing could have prepared him for the central role the Consulate would play for Mexican citizens living in New York on September 11, as their base of support and guidance which included documents, counsel and seeking financial assistance for affected families.

Consulate Beltrán-del-Río shared details about his professional journey. Originally from Chihuahua, he studied law and continued his studies at the University of New Mexico where he taught at the law school. Studies at Harvard led him to become member of the law firm Baker & McKenzie in its Juárez office. He returned to Monterrey to open an office for the firm and became politically involved once again. “This is my first time in foreign service,” he acknowledges, “and I accepted the position because it was hard to turn down such a challenge!” Although he did extensive research and interviewed his predecessors, life in New York has turned out to be unique with many unexpected challenges.

The Consulate General is the key administrative representative for the Mexican government. The office serves a broad range of informational, legal, and document-related needs for Mexican citizens as well as services for foreigners who want to travel, study or work in Mexico. As importantly, the Consulate has responsibilities for protecting its citizens, from offering general services (passports, marriage and birth registry, etc) to providing legal advice on broad issues from migration, labor, and civil and legal disputes. He is working with U.S. elected officials to inform the community about laws that affect them and about health and educational resources that are available to improve their quality of life and future in the United States. Beltrán-del-Río is collaborating with elected officials and foundations for English as a Second Language and literacy programs, early childhood education and post-secondary education programs. A mobile Consulate, he travels once a month throughout the tri-state area to provide consular services and advice to all Mexicans living in this region.

How does someone here begin a business in Mexico? The first step is doing the research, beginning with both Mexican and U.S. government websites that provide information and guidance. We are fortunate in New York to have many resources, including: The U.S.-Mexico Chamber of Commerce, Bancomext, Nafinsa Mexico Trade Center, and the Tourism Office. These offices can provide valuable information, resources and a network. Research and planning provide a stronger foundation so that the Consulate office can offer appropriate guidance and direction.

How long is it going to take for Mexico to complete the transformation process? There are those who believe that the proposed changes are so far-reaching that it will take an entire generation for change to occur. Consulate Beltrán-del-Río laughs at this comment: "I hope that it won't take a whole generation. We are in hurry to obtain better living conditions for the Mexicans living in Mexico and in this country." The interview ends with his description of a hardworking Mexican community – fully prepared with global sensibilities and a proud spirit, whether living in the United States or in Mexico, and an inextricable partnership between the United States and Mexico.
Veracruz State
The frequently overlooked State of Veracruz tops the list for vacationers wanting a full helping of Mexico’s history and striking beauty, albeit in a setting less attuned to the comings and goings of the international visitor.

Veracruz’s astonishing natural beauty, fascinating history and hospitable people make it a unique site for the experienced traveler. Few places in Mexico can match Veracruz in terms of diversity. From sea level to over 18,000 feet, with an array of archaeological sites, colonial cities and Mexico’s most jovial seaport, the State is brimming with things to see and do. The state if one of Mexico’s best for adventure travel: mountain climbing, river rafting and ecotourism excursions. Laguna de Caremaco, its shores brimming with parrots and toucans, is a natural lake formed in the crater of an extinct volcano. The area surrounding Los Tuxtlas, a low range of dense mountains, was once the homeland of the great Olmec civilization, evidenced by the massive heads found at Tres Zapotes. This site dates back to about 400 BC.

Veracruz City
Most visitors head first to the State’s main attraction, the bustling and charming tropical port City of Veracruz. As Mexico’s door to the world for more than 500 years, the City packs more history and ambiance than any other city in Mexico. From the arrival of Cortés to the expulsion of the Spanish in 1825, through three foreign invasions (one French and two American), numerous pirate attacks and the drafting of the Mexican Constitution, the city has witnessed many important events of post-conquest Mexican history.

Here the Old and New Worlds first met on April 21, 1519, with the arrival of the Spanish conquistador, Hernán Cortés. Following the conquest, the first Spanish settlement was at La Antigua (6km north of the port). Veracruz was settled at its present site in 1598 and immediately became the only port in the Spanish American empire allowed to trade with Spain. Tons of Mexican silver, slaves, settlers, foreign invaders, pirates and rulers came and went through this city. Exotic imports from the Far East (arriving from the Philippines via Acapulco and across land to Veracruz) were loaded onto Spanish galleons at Veracruz and shipped to Europe. With such a glorious, yet often tragic past, the city has a compelling story to tell. It boasts several museums, splendid Colonial era monuments and numerous historical attractions, such as the ex-Iglesia de San Francisco where the Laws of Reform were read in 1859.

Further distinguishing the City is its distinctly "Caribbean-in-Mexico" atmosphere. The city’s residents are more ethnically diverse than in most Mexican cities. The Caribbean has influenced Veracruz, particularly in music and dance, with some of Mexico’s most colorful festivals and holidays. Marimba music, outdoor cafes, street dancing and souvenir vendors all compete for attention. Nightlife and dining are good and quite affordable, especially around the lovely Plaza de Armas.

Beyond its festive tropical atmosphere, Veracruz is one of the world’s great seaports, receiving the major share of Mexico’s overseas imports and dispatching wares to foreign destinations. Boca del Río is the center of Veracruz’s modernization drive and home to new five-star hotels, a World Trade Center, the Expover Centro de Convenciones (holding up to 12,000 people in one hall) and fine restaurants.

Excursions
Popular with Mexican tourists, the port city of Veracruz attracts surprisingly few foreign vacationers. Even fewer venture into the surrounding state, making this region ideal for visitors longing for a distinctly off-the-beaten-path adventure.

La Antigua: Site of the former home of Hernán Cortés.

Zempoala Ruins: Post-Classical ceremonial center of Totonac cultures in 1200 AD.

Veracruz City: Explore on foot or on the inexpensive wooden trolley cars, the historic downtown area and along the city’s malecón or the seaside promenade.

Plaza de la República: Surrounded by many of the city’s important 19th Century civic buildings.

El Tajín Archaeological Site: This quaint site is one of Mexico’s most fascinating and mysterious archaeological treasures with its main feature, the Pyramid of the Niches.

Tres Zapotes Archaeological Site: This rarely visited site will interest keen archaeological buffs. Nearby museum contains the first giant Olmec head sculpture ever discovered.

About Veracruz: Statistical Data

Capital: Xalapa
Main Cities: Veracruz, Córdoba, Orizaba and Coatzacoalcos
Population: 6.9 million (2000 census), 93.7% under 54 years old
Products: Veracruz State is Mexico’s largest producer of petrochemicals and the third largest producer of crude oil. State supplies 17% of Mexico’s energy and is the second largest generator of electricity after Chiapas.

Major Exports: Iron and steel, plastics, machinery & equipment, chemicals, natural fertilizers, coffee, sugar, limes and tobacco.

Discover Mexico on the Internet: Make your next trip to Mexico memorable. Visit www.visitmexico.com or call your travel agent for details. Either way, you’re sure to discover the many moods of Mexico. Courtesy of the Consejo de Promoción Turística, Mexico’s Tourist Board.
This new team brings extensive international, business, and academic expertise and has undertaken an ambitious agenda that will significantly advance opportunities for business ventures between Mexico and the United States.

Mike Jacobs, USMCOC national treasurer and NE Chapter regional chairman. Mr. Jacob's 32 years in the apparel industry followed an earlier career on Wall Street. In the 1960s, he began manufacturing textiles and entered the apparel industry in 1973. His Brooklyn-based domestic factories manufactured for major designers. He was selected to manufacture the clothing for the U.S. Olympic team at the 1992 Summer games in Barcelona. NAFTA brought new opportunities and Jacobs created Discovery International Associates (DIA), providing vertical manufacturing services for the apparel industry, producing women's clothing in wholly owned facilities in the State of Mexico. Jacobs, who sits on many charitable boards, was honored by the U.S. Congress for his work in Mexico.

Eduardo Ramos-Gómez, president. Mr. Ramos-Gómez is a partner in the Mexico practice of Thacher Proffitt & Wood, with residence in New York City. From 1998, Mr. Ramos-Gómez was Mexico's Ambassador to Singapore, Negara Brunei Darussalam, and the Union of Myanmar. He was the managing partner in the New York offices of Bryan, Gonzalez Vargas y Gonzalez Baz, one of Mexico's largest law firms, from 1986 to 1998. Mr. Ramos-Gómez was assigned to Bryan's Mexico City office for one year and to its Ciudad Juárez office for three years. He designed and developed foreign investment structures, advising multinational companies in North America, Europe, and Asia doing business with Mexico, as well as those involved in trade or finance in Mexico and Latin America. He received his law degree from the Escuela Libre de Derecho and a Masters in Law from the University of Virginia.

Oliver Armas, vice president for development. Mr. Armas is a partner in the law firm of Thacher Proffitt & Wood and specializes in complex domestic and international matters involving commerce, licensing, and trade issues. Educated at New York University, Mr. Armas is a frequent lecturer on Latin American legal issues. He is leading the Chamber's expansion initiative.

Denise S. Simon, vice president for programs. Ms. Simon is a managing director with The Atlantic Advisory, which specializes in investing in emerging markets. Ms. Simon has been doing business in Latin America and Eastern Europe for the last 10 years. She was previously a Senior Portfolio Manager with Wasserstein Perella Emerging Markets Asset Management. Ms. Simon worked in London for Lehman Brothers and Bayerlischen Vereins Bank in Emerging Markets. She has a BA in inter-national economics from George Washington University and was an intern with the AIESEC Internship-Commonwealth Trading Bank in Sydney, Australia. Ms. Simon is leading the Chamber's expanded program initiative.

Aileen Schlef, secretary. As founder and president of Creative Alliance Communications, Ms. Schlef specializes in marketing, public relations, and fundraising. In Washington, D.C., she designed programs and policies to enhance services to Latino, particularly Mexican American, communities. Ms. Schlef was the U.S. Dept. of Education's first adult bilingual education specialist and vice president of marketing for the State of New York Mortgage Agency (SONYMA). She was a senior fellow with the US-Mexico Solidarity Foundation. Ms. Schlef completed graduate studies in communications, higher education, and community development at Antioch University and the University of Southern California. She is concentrating on public relations and public education strategies for the Chamber.

Patrick Sabino, treasurer. Mr. Sabino is Chief Financial Officer and Assistant General Manager for North America for Banco Nacional de México. Mr. Sabino was Senior Vice President of Financial Services and Controller of First Fidelity Bank in the 1980s and was previously with Chemical Bank for 12 years and Price Waterhouse & Co. (now PriceWaterhouse Coopers). He received his education at Fordham University in New York.
By joining the Chamber, you become part of a prominent network of more than 3,000 companies/business leaders who are members of the U.S. Mexico Chamber of Commerce. The many benefits make membership a savvy business decision:

- Local, regional and national U.S.-Mexico business communities and members.
- Our extensive network of contacts in the public and private sectors of the U.S. and Mexico.
- Support and information to launch/expand your business operations in Mexico.

**PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS THROUGH:**

- **USMCOC Membership Directory** which lists of more than 3,000 companies engaged in business between the U.S. and Mexico. You receive a complimentary copy.
- **The Chapter website.** Receive a complimentary link to your business home page.
- **Support and resources of our offices in Mexico:** Mexico City, Monterrey, Guanajuato, Aguascalientes, and Guadalajara.
- **Support and resources of our offices in the United States:** Washington, D.C. headquarters, New York, Los Angeles, San Diego, Denver, Dallas, Chicago, Albuquerque, Miami, Seattle and Detroit.
- **Business/educational programs:** Seminars, meetings, and luncheons. Interact with decision-makers from the public and private sectors of Mexico and the United States.
- **Ongoing information on important business issues in Mexico and the United States.** Includes national and chapter newsletters.

**MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES**

**Associate:** $100
Not-for-profit/non-governmental organizations, government agencies, and education institutions.

**Individual:** $300
Individuals interested in U.S.-Mexico relations but not involved in U.S.-Mexico commerce at corporate level.

**Corporate/Regional:** $500-$2,000
Companies involved or interested in U.S.-Mexico commerce.

Dues based on annual corporate revenue

- Under $10 million $500
- $10-$50 million $1,000
- $50-$100 million $1,500
- $100+ million $2,000

**Sustaining:** $2,500
Companies can designate more than one representative to the chamber. Hold a position on chapter’s Advisory Board of Directors. Invitations to private meetings with guest speakers. Opportunity to arrange private meetings for clients with guest speakers.

**Ambassador:** $6,500
Companies serve on the Binational Board of Directors and enjoy special privileges designated by the national office. Ambassador members are assigned to a home chapter and a regional affiliation.

Membership dues are considered a legitimate business expense under the Internal Revenue Service.