

ISSUE
MAY 2025

LAREDO IS ON THE RISE!

Border Insight



*Featured
Article*

**LAREDO ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
CELEBRATES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WEEK**

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Design & Chief Editors:



Yvette Peña



Ana L. Benavides
Del Bosque

CONTRIBUTORS FOR THIS EDITION:

- Cesar G. Hernandez
- Maribel Villarreal

Laredo Economic Development Corporation

P.O. Box 2682 (616 Leal St.)
Laredo, Texas 78044-2682
Phone: (956)722-0563
1-800-820-0564
Email: info@laredoedc.org
www.laredoedc.org



For Advertising and Graphics:
Ana L. Benavides Del Bosque
☎ (956) 722-0563

✉ abenavides@laredoedc.org

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Celebrates 2025 Economic Development Week

Laredo, Texas – The Laredo Economic Development Corporation was proud to announce its participation in the 2025 Economic Development Week, which took place from May 12th–16th. This global initiative, led by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC), recognizes and honors the essential work of economic developers and their contributions to fostering vibrant, resilient communities worldwide.

"The future of economic development is centered around collaboration and partnerships," said IEDC president and CEO Nathan Ohle. "Economic Development Week is an opportunity to celebrate and lift up the stories of economic development happening throughout the world. At the heart of this year's Economic Development Week are stories of collaboration and partnership, and how the field of economic development works together to support, cultivate, and drive economic prosperity for place of all sizes, in every region in the world."

The IEDC created Economic Development Week in 2016 to recognize the work that EDOs and professionals do in their communities. IEDC celebrates Economic Development Week every year, highlighting the programs, best practices, and exceptional individuals that positively impact life in their communities. In just a few years the event has become one of the most widely recognized awareness weeks of its kind, validating the—often unheralded—work of the economic development profession.

LEDC President & CEO David A. Stedman emphasizes "for the Laredo Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) and MileOne – International Business Assistance Center (MI-IBAC), **#EconDevWeek** has transformed into a meaningful celebration that showcases our economic development efforts. These initiatives involve broadening the tax base through capital investments, along with generating and preserving jobs by fostering new or expanded businesses and encouraging vibrant entrepreneurship. Additionally, this event provides an opportunity to express appreciation for the continuous support from our members and partners, highlighting the valuable collaborations that have fostered positive change!"

These partnerships include the City of Laredo, Webb County, Workforce Solutions for South Texas and other vital organizations that are committed to fostering innovation, growth, and sustainable change in our community. As the Laredo region progresses, the Power of Partnerships illustrates the necessity of uniting efforts to create a brighter future for everyone.

As the community gathers to celebrate **#EconDevWeek**, the spirit of collaboration and shared vision for the future will undoubtedly resonate, reinforcing the importance of working together to build a thriving and resilient economy. This celebration is not only a reflection of past success but also a beacon of hope and inspiration for what lies ahead.

About the Laredo Economic Development Corporation

The mission of the Laredo Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) is to promote and foster the economic and industrial development of the Laredo and the Webb County region. Its vision statement, the LEDC is an organization defined by its visionary leadership, recognized for its integrity and contributions towards the economic development and vitality of Los Dos Laredos.

The LEDC was first certified as the 17th Accredited Economic Development Organization (AEDO) in the nation, first in Texas, by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) in 2000. The LEDC has maintained its international standing with its most recent re-certifications in 2014, 2018 and 2022, and is 1 of only 74 in the nation as an accredited economic development organization out of more than 9,800 in the country.

In addition, the LEDC and MileOne were nationally recognized in 2023 with 2 Silver Awards at IEDC's Excellence in Economic Development Award ceremony in Dallas, Texas for its annual "Innovation in Economic Development Week" and "Entrepreneurship" (MileOne) programs, respectively. It is to say that these awards are not easy to obtain, the LEDC and MileOne staff have worked diligently to stand out at the national level.

Since 2011, the LEDC has played a crucial role in enhancing the community's economic landscape. It has successfully facilitated close to \$1.5 billion in capital investments, leading to the creation of more than 6,600 new jobs, the retention of over 500 positions, and an increase of over \$239 million in new expansions.

These achievements highlight the LEDC's commitment to fostering economic growth and sustainability within the Laredo and Webb County region. The organization's strategic initiatives have not only attracted new businesses but have also supported existing enterprises, ensuring a resilient economic infrastructure.

Since opening in December 2017, MileOne has made a significant impact by assisting over 7,000 entrepreneurs and small businesses. We have proudly served more than 525 members, contributed to the creation of 700 jobs, and incubated over 170 new businesses.

Through our various programs and memberships, including the Launchpad Incubator, Business Incubator, International Incubator, and Co-working spaces, MileOne is committed to supporting the growth and success of the small business community.

There's no doubt the community's transformation over the past decade is a testament to the power of strategic planning and collaborative effort, showcasing how targeted investments can lead to substantial economic benefits. Through these efforts, the LEDC has helped position Laredo as a vibrant hub for commerce and industry, drawing attention from national and international investors. The focus on infrastructure improvements, workforce development, entrepreneurship and community engagement has created a thriving ecosystem.

As Laredo continues to grow, the LEDC remains committed to its mission of economic empowerment, striving to create a prosperous future for generations to come.



About IEDC

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) is a non-profit, non-partisan membership organization serving economic developers. With more than 4,500 members, IEDC is the largest organization of its kind. Economic developers typically work for cities, counties, states, public-private partnerships, and chambers of commerce and promote economic well-being and quality of life for their communities, by creating, retaining, and expanding jobs that facilitate growth, enhance wealth, and provide a stable tax base.

From public to private, rural to urban, and local to international, IEDC's members are engaged in the full range of economic development experiences. Given the breadth of economic development work, our members are employed in a wide variety of settings including local, state, provincial, and federal governments, public-private partnerships, chambers of commerce, universities, and a variety of other institutions. IEDC's members create high-quality jobs, develop vibrant communities, and improve the quality of life in their regions.

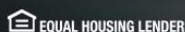


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The Historical Origins of Economic Development Week

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) established Economic Development Week in 2016 to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of Economic Development Organizations (EDOs) and professionals within their communities.

Each year, IEDC commemorates Economic Development Week by showcasing programs, best practices, and outstanding individuals who make a positive difference in their communities.

In just a few short years, *#EconDevWeek* has become a widely recognized celebration of economic development efforts, amplifying the critical work of the profession through media coverage and millions of social media impressions.

“

As local and regional economies evolve, the role of economic developers and development organizations is vital in energizing, preparing, and promoting local economic growth,”
states Nathan Ohle,
IEDC President & CEO.

”



Economic Development Week Shop Local and Job Fair Press Conference with Workforce Solutions for South Texas



On May 6th, Workforce Solutions for South Texas hosted a press conference to reveal their collaboration with the Laredo Economic Development Corporation and MileOne. This partnership aimed to organize a Job Fair and Shop Local Initiative as part of the celebrations for Economic Development Week.

The event saw the participation of Rogelio Treviño, Executive Director of WSST, Rosaura “Wawi” Tijerina, Webb County Commissioner and WSST Board Member, City of Laredo Members Melissa and Alyssa Cigarroa, Arnold Lozano, City of Laredo Economic Development Administrator, and David A. Stedman, LEDC President and CEO.

Additionally, media representatives and team members from Workforce Solutions, LEDC, and MileOne were in attendance.



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LEDC Kicks off Economic Development Week with a Proclamation Ceremony

The Laredo Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) officially launched the celebration of Economic Development Week with a Proclamation Ceremony held on May 12. The event marked the beginning of a week-long recognition of the importance of economic growth and community development in the region.

During the event, Mayor pro Tempore Vanessa Perez, along with Council Members Melissa Cigarroa (District 3), Ricardo Garza (District 4), and James E. Flores, Director of Economic Development at Webb County, presented a Proclamation designating May 12-16, 2025, as *"National Economic Development Week in Laredo, Texas."*

This initiative is a collaborative effort involving the Laredo Economic Development Corporation, MileOne International Business Assistance Center, the City of Laredo Economic Development Department, and the Webb County Economic Development Office.





LEDC Hosts "State of Transportation and Infrastructure" Workshop at Laredo College

On Tuesday, May 13th, the Laredo Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) hosted the highly anticipated **"State of Transportation and Infrastructure"** workshop at the Falcon Executive Conference Room at Laredo College main campus.

The event brought together leaders and stakeholders to discuss current and future infrastructure developments impacting the Laredo region.

The workshop featured insightful presentations from top transportation officials, including Epigmenio "Epi" Gonzalez, P.E., Texas Laredo District Engineer, and Roberto Rodriguez III, Supervising Engineer from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). Both speakers offered a comprehensive overview of TxDOT's ongoing and upcoming infrastructure projects in the region, highlighting efforts to improve mobility, safety, and economic growth.

Adding a local perspective to the conversation, Melissa Montemayor, Senior Vice President and Southwest Region Leader at LJA Engineering, provided valuable updates on various infrastructure initiatives within the Laredo community.



Her presentation emphasized collaborative efforts and strategic planning to support the city's rapid growth and long-term development.

The event underscored the importance of coordinated infrastructure investments in driving regional competitiveness and improving quality of life for residents. Attendees included elected officials, engineers, business leaders, and community members, all eager to contribute to the region's progress.

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MILEONE Small Business Forum

Women Entrepreneurs Rock Series

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As part of the 2025 LEDC Economic Development Week, MileOne proudly launched this year's Women Entrepreneurs Rock (WERS) Series with a powerful Small Business Forum & Award Ceremony at the TAMIU Academic Innovation Center.

The event featured keynote speakers from the U.S. Small Business Administration and PNC Bank, who led engaging discussions on key challenges small businesses face—particularly around access to capital and government contracting. Attendees gained valuable insights from Cindy Solano, SBA Lead Lender Relations Specialist; Rossy Chase, PNC Vice President Corporate Relationship Manager; and Orlando Castaneda, SBA Business Opportunity Specialist.

More than just a forum, the event served as a celebration of local entrepreneurial spirit. Awards were presented to leaders making waves in the community:

- Rising Innovator of the Year: Pablo Guzman, Hector J. Garcia Early College High School student
- Small Business of the Year: Richard Rivera, CEO of 360 General Contractors
- Lifetime Achievement & Service Honorees: Olivia Varela, Norma L. Rodriguez, and Nelly Vielma



This kickoff not only marked the beginning of a six-month series focused on empowering entrepreneurs but also reaffirmed MileOne's commitment to being a community-centered resource hub. As COO Cesar G. Hernandez shared, the goal is to provide education, resources, and mentorship that empower entrepreneurs at every stage. From strategy sessions to networking, MileOne continues to be a driving force for innovation and small business growth in Laredo.

With a diverse lineup of workshops, seminars, and one-on-one mentoring opportunities, the series promises to be an invaluable asset for both budding and established entrepreneurs. Participants can expect to gain insights from industry experts, share experiences with fellow entrepreneurs, and forge connections that could lead to new collaborations and ventures.

As the series progresses, MileOne will also highlight success stories and case studies from local entrepreneurs who have thrived with the support of the community. These narratives not only serve as inspiration but also as practical examples of the impact that strategic guidance and community backing can have on a business's trajectory.

Looking to the future, MileOne envisions expanding its reach and continuing to adapt its offerings to meet the evolving needs of entrepreneurs. By staying at the forefront of innovation and community engagement, MileOne is dedicated to ensuring that Laredo remains a dynamic and thriving hub for small business development.





Spring Membership Networking Event to Celebrate Community and Vision Growth

On Thursday, May 15th, the Laredo Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) and MileOne proudly hosted the highly anticipated LEDC Membership Spring Networking Event at the Laredo Country Club. The evening brought together a vibrant mix of community leaders, business partners, and dedicated supporters, all united under a shared mission: driving Laredo's continued growth and prosperity.

The event served as more than just a networking opportunity—it was a celebration of collaboration, vision, and community spirit. Attendees engaged in meaningful conversations, forged new connections, and reaffirmed their commitment to Laredo's economic and cultural development.

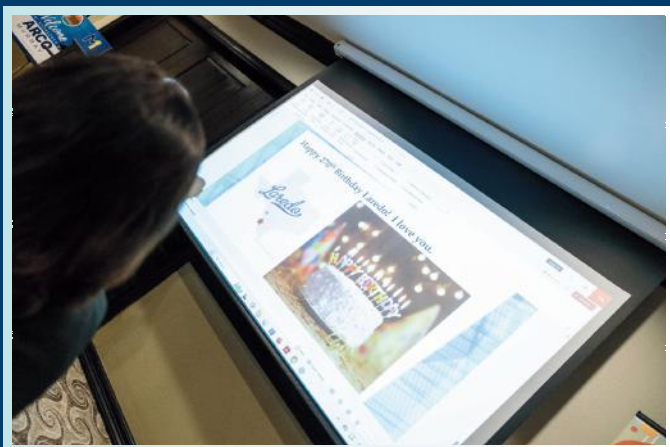
The highlight of the evening was a powerful keynote presentation by Cliffe Killam, President & CEO of Killam Development, Ltd., who shared an inspiring vision for the Downtown Restoration Project—a future for Downtown Laredo built on purpose, design, and collaboration.

We were honored to welcome Council Members Melissa Cigarroa and Dr. Tyler King, Dr. Minita Ramirez, President of Laredo College, and so many others who made the night unforgettable.

With an atmosphere full of optimism and momentum, the 2025 Spring Networking event proved to be an unforgettable evening—one that reaffirmed a collective commitment to a brighter future for Laredo.

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SHOP LOCAL INITIATIVE & JOB FAIR



LIST OF EXHIBITORS

To wrap up Economic Development Week, the LEDC collaborated with Workforce Solutions for South Texas to host the "Shop Local & Job Fair Initiative" on Friday, May 16th. Building on last year's successful partnership, we once again joined forces with WSST to enhance the downtown area by offering complimentary exhibit spaces for businesses to showcase their products, services, or job opportunities.

WSST set up an on-site resource station to assist applicants with their resumes, resulting in an impressive turnout of over 220 attendees!

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- Pam Transport
- Acme Employment
- Precious Garden Primary Care
- Texas Army National Guard
- Richer/TPW
- South Texas Neon Signs
- Elite Staffing
- Terracon
- Laredo College
- Workforce Solutions for South Texas
- City of Laredo ED & HR Departments
- Laredo College—Global Logistics Center
- LaredoEDC
- MileOne
- Fuel America Encinal
- Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice
- Logistics One
- La Frontera Health Insurance
- Fired Up Staffing
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection
- Ked Plasma
- Caridad Home Health
- Grifols
- Bexar County Sheriffs Office
- Legacy Home Health Services
- Buckland Global Trade Services

A heartfelt thank you goes out to Mr. Rogelio Trevino and the Workforce Solutions for South Texas team for their unwavering support in making this event a success once again. We are also grateful to the Outlet Shoppes at Laredo for their generous venue sponsorship, and a special shout-out to the Barber Education Academy for graciously providing complimentary haircuts!

Special thanks to the **City of Laredo**
for their commitment to the Laredo Economic Development Corporation

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SELECTUSA® INVESTMENT SUMMIT May 11-14, 2025

Laredo Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) President and CEO David Stedman attended the 2025 SelectUSA Investment Summit, held May 11–14 at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland.

As the premier event dedicated to promoting foreign direct investment (FDI) in the United States, the SelectUSA Investment Summit attracted over 5,000 participants, including more than 2,500 international investors from over 90 global markets.

The summit provided a powerful platform for U.S. economic development organizations (EDOs) to engage directly with foreign businesses seeking to establish or expand operations in the U.S.

Mr. Stedman's participation reinforced Laredo EDC's ongoing mission to position Laredo as a premier destination for global investment. With its strategic location, world-class infrastructure, and a strong workforce, Laredo offers an ideal environment for companies looking to grow and prosper in the North American market.

Key Highlights and Strategic Meetings

Laredo EDC Holds Meeting with U.S. Commerce Representative

Washington, D.C. May 11- The Laredo Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) hosted a meeting to advance economic development and international investment in the region.

Key participants included Heather Sykes and Christopher Netram from the U.S. Department of Commerce and Miriam M. Castillo, City of Laredo Economic Development Director. LEDC Board

Members Cliffe Killam and Andrew Lawson Carranco contributed insights on local priorities and opportunities.



The discussion focused on leveraging federal resources to draw foreign direct investment and boost Laredo's status as a global trade hub.

LEDC President and CEO David Stedman Engages with Federal Leaders in Washington, D.C.

LEDC President and CEO David Stedman recently visited Washington, D.C., where he met with Congressman Henry Cuellar's team to discuss strategic initiatives that will shape the future of the City of Laredo.

In addition to his meeting with Congressman Cuellar's office, Stedman also met with U.S. Senator John Cornyn, senior staff members, and Andrew Lawson Carranco, a board member of the Laredo Economic Development Corporation.

These meetings emphasized the importance of strong federal partnerships in driving meaningful progress for Laredo.



from Washington, D.C. Trip



Laredo at the SelectUSA Investor Summit Featuring a Swiss Dinner for FDI

Washington, D.C. May 12– Laredo showcased its investment potential at the SelectUSA Investor Summit during the Swiss Dinner for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), highlighting its strategic value and robust trade infrastructure through a video presentation. Hosted by Willie Hornberger and Peter Little, the event gathered international investors and U.S. leaders, celebrating the Swiss and Liechtenstein Delegation. Gerry Schwebel and Cliffe Killam, were acknowledged for their contributions. Laredo's presence at the summit strengthens its status as a hub for international investment, with the LEDC dedicated to fostering relationships and attracting strategic investments for economic growth.

Texas Under The Stars

In Washington, D.C., Team Texas celebrated the strength and opportunities of the Lone Star State. Local leaders from Laredo collaborated with the Texas Economic Development Corporation to attract foreign investors and promote Texas's business climate. Special recognition went to Adriana Cruz and Aaron Demerson for their contributions. The event highlighted Laredo and Texas as prime destinations for international investment, emphasizing the state's pro-business environment and skilled workforce. It served as a reminder that Texas is committed to making business happen.



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Let's Welcome

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LUPITA R. CANALES



LEDC MEMBER OF THE MONTH

Laredo EDC proudly recognizes a distinguished Member in its monthly Border Insight for:

- The company's commitment to the betterment of the community
- Special Efforts above and beyond the normal scope of job and performance services



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We congratulate **Falcon Bank** as the Laredo EDC Member of the Month for their contribution to the development efforts in our region.

MEMBER OF THE MONTH

"Laredo Natives Bring Tech Solutions Home with SolveIT Managed Services"



Howdy, Laredo! We're SolveIT Managed Services, a homegrown team of IT professionals on a mission to make technology work for you—not against you.



Founded by Laredo natives and Texas A&M alumni David and Robert, SolveIT is more than just your average tech company. After spending years building their careers in the IT world, David and Robert have returned to their hometown with a shared vision: to help local businesses harness the power of technology to grow, thrive, and stay secure in today's fast-paced digital landscape.

From everyday IT support and cybersecurity to cloud solutions, data backups, and even custom website development, we provide tailored services that meet your business where it's at—and help take it to the next level. Whether you're a small startup or a growing enterprise, our goal is to make sure your technology is running smoothly so you can focus on what matters most: your business.

We wouldn't be where we are today without the incredible support of the MileOne community, which has provided guidance, resources, and mentorship as we plant roots and grow here in Laredo. We're proud to be part of this vibrant entrepreneurial network and even prouder to serve the community we call home.

At SolveIT, our mission is simple: to empower businesses with reliable, effective, and affordable IT solutions. We bring a personalized, no-fluff approach to every project and are committed to delivering results that exceed expectations—every time. Let's Solve IT, together."



Networking for Dollar\$ Fundraiser

MileOne Networking for Dollars Raises the Bar for Community Giving

In an inspiring show of generosity and community spirit, MileOne's Networking for Dollars fundraiser brought together entrepreneurs, business owners, and local supporters for a high-energy evening of networking with a purpose. Held at the MileOne IBAC, the event successfully raised over \$3,000 — exceeding the original \$2,000 goal! All to help launch the dreams of two emerging entrepreneurs through the MileOne Entrepreneur Scholarship.


The scholarship provides selected individuals with everything they need to kick start their business: business registration, a full year of incubator membership, and hands-on mentorship. The night featured a mix of business pitches, logo showcases, engaging conversations, food, drinks, and plenty of good vibes; all centered around empowering the next generation of business leaders.


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We couldn't have done it without the generous support of our sponsors:

 **Next Level Roofing** – Our Title Sponsor, whose dedication to quality and community truly set the tone for the evening. Their leadership in supporting small business growth continues to inspire.

 **Modern Woodmen Fraternal Financial** – Their dollar for dollar match, up to \$1,000, helped us cross the finish line and double our impact.

 **L&F Distributors** – A longtime supporter of MileOne, L&F continues to uplift local initiatives and create impact where it matters most.

 **360 General Contractors** – A strong partner in our mission, their generous contribution reflects their commitment to building a better future for local business.

Events like **Networking for Dollars** are a powerful reminder that when a community comes together to invest in each other, incredible things happen. Thank you to everyone who donated, pitched, shared, and celebrated with us. **Let's keep building together!**

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YES CAMP

YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR SKILLS CAMP

On Saturday, May 31, 2025, MileOne proudly launched its inaugural Youth Entrepreneur Skills (YES) Camp, welcoming 20 bright students ages 13–15 for a powerful half-day experience focused on leadership, creativity, and real-world business insight.

The event was made possible thanks to the generous support of Union Pacific, whose ongoing commitment to youth development and community impact allowed us to bring this entire experience to life.



Hosted in partnership with Las Promesas de Laredo, the camp is designed to ignite an entrepreneurial mindset through hands-on learning and mentorship. With Union Pacific as a key contributor, students had access to top-tier programming, valuable resources, and a supportive environment to explore their ideas.



Special thanks to our sponsors!

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Participants took part in interactive sessions led by passionate professionals in our community, including:

- Leadership with Kayla Alvarado
- Public Speaking with Juan Livas
- Entrepreneurship with Azul Garibay
- Marketing with Cesar Hernandez

EACH PARTICIPANT LEFT WITH NEW SKILLS, A CAMP T-SHIRT, AND THE CONFIDENCE TO KEEP BUILDING THEIR IDEAS.

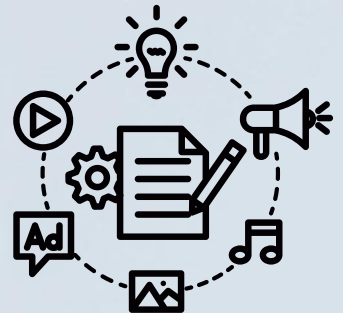
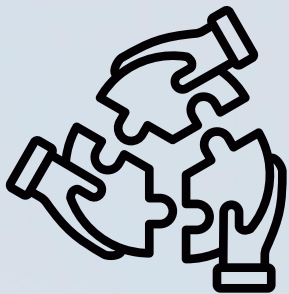
SESSION TWO CONTINUES JUNE 7TH!



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AGES: 13-15

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Las Promesa de Laredo

LEDC President and CEO presents at the South Texas Commercial Association of Realtors: "Unlocking Commercial Opportunities in Laredo"

On May 28, 2025, David A. Stedman, President and CEO of the Laredo Economic Development Corporation (LEDC), delivered a compelling presentation to the South Texas Commercial Association of Realtors. The event was hosted at the Laredo Association of Realtors, titled "Unlocking Commercial Opportunities in Laredo." The presentation highlighted Laredo's strategic position as the largest port of entry in North America, emphasizing its role in global trade, logistics, and manufacturing. Mr. Stedman showcased recent economic wins, including developments like World Logistics Park, The Coves at Winfield, Bridge 4/5, and discussed opportunities for real estate professionals to capitalize on Laredo's growing retail, industrial, and hospitality sectors. He emphasized the LEDC's collaborative efforts with local stakeholders to drive economic growth and foster business retention and attraction.





M1

UPCOMING EVENTS

**MAY
14**

**WOMAN
ENTREPRENEURS
ROCK SERIES KICK
OFF**

**MAY
31**

**Y.E.S. CAMP
SESSION 1**

**JUNE
07**

**Y.E.S. CAMP
SESSION 2**

**JUNE
20**

**WOMAN
ENTREPRENEURS
ROCK SERIES
SESSION 2**

**JUNE
26**

**MEXICANA
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July 2025	The Trio Border Region Outlook 3-Part Series	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Port Laredo• History• Outlook/Projects	July 21st

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