

By: Canales

H.R. No. 377

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Dr. Cristina Villalobos, a professor and associate
2 dean of the College of Sciences at The University of Texas Rio
3 Grande Valley, is the recipient of a 2020 Presidential Award for
4 Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring; and

5 WHEREAS, The award is one of the highest national honors
6 given to educators who have dedicated themselves to the academic
7 and professional development of our future STEM leaders,
8 particularly those who have been historically underrepresented in
9 STEM fields; to be selected for the award is a coveted and highly
10 prestigious achievement, and this year, Dr. Villalobos was one of
11 only 12 individuals nationwide to earn the accolade; and

12 WHEREAS, A native of Donna and a first-generation college
13 graduate, Dr. Cristina Villalobos received her bachelor's degree
14 in mathematics from The University of Texas at Austin and her Ph.D.
15 in computational and applied mathematics from Rice University; she
16 has more than 18 years of experience in higher education, and she
17 currently holds the Myles and Sylvia Aaronson Endowed Professorship
18 at UTRGV, where she is founding director of the Center of Excellence
19 in STEM Education; and

20 WHEREAS, Working alongside program coordinator Idalia Mejia,
21 Dr. Villalobos leads the Center of Excellence in STEM Education in
22 supporting and providing resources to students who are pursuing
23 careers in STEM fields; one of the center's goals is to increase the
24 number of STEM graduates, especially those from minority groups,

1 and it has hosted planetarium visits and other hands-on activities
2 that have helped promote interest and engagement in STEM among
3 thousands of local K-12 students; Dr. Villalobos has been
4 recognized for her commitment to increasing minority
5 representation in STEM, and she has served on several committees
6 and advisory boards dedicated to this mission, including the board
7 of directors of the Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics
8 and Native Americans in Science; and

9 WHEREAS, Through her outstanding work at UTRGV, Dr. Cristina
10 Villalobos is helping to prepare young Texans to be part of a
11 diverse workforce that will be at the forefront of technology,
12 research, and innovation, and she may indeed reflect with pride on
13 this well-deserved recognition; now, therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas
15 Legislature hereby congratulate Dr. Cristina Villalobos on her
16 receipt of a 2020 Presidential Award for Excellence in Science,
17 Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring and extend to her sincere
18 best wishes for continued success; and, be it further

19 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
20 prepared for Dr. Villalobos as an expression of high regard by the
21 Texas House of Representatives.