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DR. SANTAPaula GARCIA NAMED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF TEACH FOR AMERICA–RIO GRANDE VALLEY

*Robert Carreon, Former Executive Director of Teach For America–Rio Grande Valley, Now
Serving as Vice President of Public Affairs for Texas*

McAlLEN, T.X., July 7, 2014— Teach For America announced today that Dr. SantaPaula Garcia has been named executive director of Teach For America in the Rio Grande Valley. In this role, Garcia will be responsible for the organization’s daily management, building community partnerships and cultivating private, public and foundation support. Garcia succeeds Robert Carreon, who now serves as Teach For America’s Vice President of Public Affairs for Texas.

“Growing up in the Valley, I was fortunate to have exceptional teachers who inspired me to join the Teach For America corps in 1998 to ensure that more children have access to the same education opportunities I had as a child,” said Garcia. “Teach For America–Rio Grande Valley is working in partnership with community leaders across the Valley to ensure that every child has access to the excellent education they deserve. I’m honored to be a part of TFA’s effort to ensure that more children have access to a great education.”

Garcia brings over 15 years of education experience to her new position. Garcia, a 1998 alumna of Teach For America in the Rio Grande Valley, most recently served as the Director of Curriculum and Instruction in Raymondville ISD. Garcia has worked in and supported schools all across the Rio Grande Valley, including as a project manager for Educate Texas, focusing on early college high school expansion in the RGV; founding school principal of IDEA Donna, the charter public school network’s flagship campus; education specialist for RGV Lead; school director at three Teach For America summer teacher training institutes; and, a fourth and fifth grade bilingual teacher in Mercedes ISD. Garcia received a bachelor of arts in Latin American Studies from the University of Texas – Pan American. She earned her doctorate in educational leadership from Texas A&M Kingsville, where her dissertation evaluated instructional coaching models and their effect on student achievement.

“We are so excited to have Paula leading Teach For America in the Rio Grande Valley,” said Julian Alvarez, President and CEO of RGV Partnership and a member of the Teach For America–Rio Grande Valley advisory board. “Paula has been working to bring greater education opportunities to the children of the Rio Grande Valley for over 15 years, and will be an ardent leader for the great work of Teach For America in the Valley. Additionally, we are excited that Robert will be staying in the Rio Grande Valley and leading Teach For America’s public affairs strategy for Texas. Robert’s impactful leadership in the Valley since 2008, coupled with his passion and understanding of the importance of Teach For America’s work, will prove invaluable in leading the public affairs strategy in Texas.”

In the new role as vice president of public affairs for Texas, Carreon will develop and lead a statewide public affairs strategy. Carreon will work with state legislators, agencies and governing bodies, as well as coordinate partnerships and strategies across the four Teach For America regions in Texas.

“Teach For America has a long history in Texas with Houston and the Rio Grande Valley being among the organization’s early regions,” said Carreon. “Today, we have 1,000 teachers in over 35 school districts in our four Texas regions. As Teach For America continues to partner with communities in Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio and the Rio Grande Valley, it is important that we coordinate our partnerships and strategies to maximize our impact in the state as we work together towards our goal of increasing education opportunity for students in Texas.”

Teach For America has been a community partner in the Rio Grande Valley since 1991. Last year some 170 Teach For America corps members reached more than 23,000 students in local public schools, and over 140 alumni of the program call the region home. This includes 15 school and district leaders, and many others working across sectors to help expand educational opportunity and access for students and families in low-income communities.

About Teach For America

Teach For America works in partnership with communities to expand educational opportunity for children facing the challenges of poverty. Founded in 1990, Teach For America recruits and develops a diverse corps of outstanding college graduates and professionals to make an initial two year commitment to teach in high-need schools and become lifelong leaders in the movement to end educational inequity. Our corps in the 2013-14 school year included 11,000 teachers in 48 urban and rural regions across the country. Today, our 37,000 alumni are working across sectors to ensure that all children have access to an excellent education. For more information, visit www.teachforamerica.org and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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