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**THE HISPANIC 100, ACCION TEXAS AND THE EVA LONGORIA FOUNDATION  
JOIN FORCES FOR “LATINAS EMPOWERING LATINAS” CAMPAIGN**  
*Funding initiative dedicated to Latina entrepreneurs in North Texas*

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**DALLAS, TX – July 24, 2014** – The Hispanic 100, a network of Dallas-area Hispanic women leaders working to increase business and leadership opportunities for Latinas, has joined forces with Accion Texas Inc., the nation’s largest microlender, and The Eva Longoria Foundation to fund small business loans for Latina entrepreneurs in the North Texas region.

The organizations aim to raise \$250,000 during the next year for the Latina Loan Fund – created by philanthropist and actress Eva Longoria in 2013. The self-sustaining fund has already created many jobs and helped dozens of Latina business owners start, grow and sustain small businesses, subsequently reallocating the principal back into the fund.

The organizations have launched a “Latinas Empowering Latinas” campaign to help North Texan Latina entrepreneurs who face economic hurdles, yet continue to persevere. The first fundraising event will be held in Dallas later this month – featuring Eva Longoria.

“We are proud that the Latina Loan Fund is making a positive difference in the lives of Latina small business owners in Texas, and I am excited to be partnering with The Hispanic 100 to expand our reach,” Longoria said. “Together, with Accion Texas, our three organizations can help greater numbers of ambitious, high-potential Latinas achieve their dreams, provide for their families and build stronger communities.”

The initial \$1 million Latina Loan Fund was launched in 2013 by The Eva Longoria Foundation in partnership with The Howard G. Buffett Foundation. Accion Texas was chosen to administer the fund in some of the most economically challenged areas of the state. During 2013, Accion Texas disbursed and managed 58 small business loans totaling more than \$500,000 through the fund, which has created or sustained approximately 160 jobs in Texas. The remaining \$500,000 is being disbursed to deserving Latina entrepreneurs in 2014.

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According to American Express OPEN’s 2013 State of Women-Owned Businesses Report: A Summary of Important Trends, 1997-2013, as of 2013:

- Hispanic women own an estimated 944,000 firms, employ 408,100 people and generate an estimated \$65.5 billion in revenue across the U.S.
- Texas is the second-largest home to Latina-owned companies – a total of 183,100.

“Statistics show that Latinas are starting businesses at eight times the rate of men in the U.S., so we’re stepping up to support them,” said Lydia Gonzalez Welch, president of The Hispanic 100. “Eva’s work and the ‘Latinas Empowering Latinas’ initiative strongly align with our mission to provide access to and create business opportunities for Latinas in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, and we’re confident it will have a lasting economic impact.”

Luther Branham, Accion Texas president of the North Texas market, said, “40 percent of the lender’s clients in the Dallas-Fort Worth area are women and 34 percent are Hispanic. The Latina Loan Fund gives Latina entrepreneurs the capital necessary to either launch or grow their businesses and provides the educational resources they need to make the most of their loans, increasing their chances of long-term success.”

For more information or to apply for a loan through the Latina Loan Fund, applicants should contact Branham at 888-215-2373, ext.1306. Or visit [www.acciontexas.org](http://www.acciontexas.org).

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### **About The Hispanic 100**

The Hispanic 100 is a network of Dallas-area Hispanic women leaders who are committed to increasing business development opportunities for Hispanic, women-owned businesses and to promoting Hispanic women’s leadership roles in the private and public sectors. The organization’s endowment fund supports Latina education initiatives. For more information, visit [www.dfwhispanic100.org](http://www.dfwhispanic100.org).

### **About The Eva Longoria Foundation**

The Eva Longoria Foundation helps Latinas build better futures for themselves and their families through education and entrepreneurship. The Foundation offers programs which help Latinas graduate from high school college-ready. Additionally, it provides Latina entrepreneurs with capital and training to start and grow their businesses. By investing in Latinas, The Eva Longoria Foundation hopes to build a stronger future for our country. For more information, visit <http://www.evalongoriafoundation.org>.

### **About Accion Texas Inc.**

Established in 1994 in San Antonio, Accion Texas Inc.’s financial and business-support services help entrepreneurs strengthen their businesses, stabilize and increase their incomes, create employment and contribute to the economic revitalization of their communities. Accion Texas manages the nation’s largest microloan portfolio and is committed to providing capital to entrepreneurs who do not have access to loans from commercial sources. Since its inception, Accion has made nearly 15,000 loans totaling more than \$165 million. Accion operates in eight states: Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee and Texas. For more information, visit [www.acciontexas.org](http://www.acciontexas.org).

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