

Talking Points

Commissioner Sergio “Chico” Rodriguez

Free Trade Alliance Scholarship Presentation

May 28, 2009

- Good Afternoon and thank you for having me here today.
- I am delighted to join you as you close up the Global Trade Policy Forum.
- This event hosted by the Free Trade Alliance is important because it brings together local, regional, national, and even international leaders and members of the business community to open dialogue about issues that directly impact our community.
- Training a competitive workforce, fostering trade partnerships, negotiating trade agreements, and exploring investment opportunities are some ways those of us here can contribute to the prosperity of our community.
- Achieving success for our community is why we have gathered to participate in this Policy Forum and why the mere fact that we are all here is indicative of the commitment the Free Trade Alliance has made to building a better and brighter future.
- The Free Trade Alliance through their Educational Foundation has reached out to our younger generation to inspire and encourage them to begin building relationships to head in the direction of a brighter future.
- All of you here who contributed a ticket price to attend this Forum have participated and supported the Educational Foundation because 100% of the funds collected are filtered directly into the scholarship awards given by the Foundation.
- Through the successfully developed Business Careers Pathway program, local participating schools help shape the program, recruit interested students who in return for their dedication and participation earn college credit while attending high school.
- This is the first year of the Program and it has garnered great success.
- The achievements of this Program are possible by participants assisting these students to cross over barriers they otherwise would have faced.
- In a similar way, Bexar County also must reach across geographical barriers and improve international trade relations and opportunities.

- International trade is extremely important for our community because while we want to be the top producer of all goods, services, and providers, the reality is that trade is about making available what would otherwise not be available.
- If you look outside, you will notice the products of various manufacturers of vehicles. This is possible only because of international trade.
- Look at your blackberries and cell phones, those products are also the result of successful trade negotiations.
- Bexar County will continue to promote opportunities for international trade because it was our collaborative efforts which persuaded Toyota Motor Manufacturing North America to make Bexar County home to their newest auto manufacturing plant.
- The opportunities for growth in Bexar County are endless and not possible without people like you here who are willing to look beyond the horizons into the future of our community.
- I am eager to see what we can accomplish. Thank you.