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Tejas Office Products Celebrates 50 Years

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Rebecca Villaneda—HispanicBusiness.com

Tejas Office Products landed at No. 178 on the inaugural **HispanicBusiness 500** index in 1982. The company has secured a position on the list for 30 years straight.

In 1962, Lupe and Irene Fraga bought a small office supply company and made it their mission to provide customers with quality office supplies. It has now grown to become the largest independent office products company in the Houston area.

The company made \$35 million in sales in 2012, compared to just over \$11 million in 2009.

Tejas this year celebrates its 50th year in business and currently has 52 employees, some of whom have been with the company for 25 years.

Lupe and Irene Fraga have given most of the reins to their children, with Stephen Fraga serving as president. Siblings Michele R. Fraga and Alisa Fraga-Kautzmann, along with Alisa's husband, Frank Kautzmann, also work for Tejas.

"One of the benefits of a family-run business is that we're all moving toward the same goals," Stephen Fraga said. "We're united from the start and we're truly here for each other. This concept is woven throughout our entire company culture."

Sustaining Growth

The economy hasn't been kind to many small-business owners, so how does one survive the uncertainties of an economic downturn?



Tejas leadership team, from left to right: Michele Fraga, Stephen Fraga and Alisa Fraga-Kautzmann.

For starters, Tejas plans to acquire other independent office supply companies and will focus its efforts on growing Tejas' Keurig line, which is a single-cup coffee brewer system.

"Making this happen will require Tejas to maintain our good financial standing and add some employees to our roster," Stephen Fraga said. "The economic state keeps us focused on our values and proven business practices."

He added that Tejas' revenue "is very much tied to employment, so we need the overall economy to be healthy so businesses are hiring people, and in turn those people are using office products."

To Fraga, small business owners are more invested in their communities, and that tie is important to maintain. The company gives back to the community through school supply drives, helping area students, and hiring local tradespeople and professionals.

"Small business or the buy-local initiatives going on in many cities have shown those dollars invested back in the community are more efficient than buying from the big guys," he said.

Tejas is certified as a Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) and a Minority Business Enterprise (MBE). Also, Tejas' co-founder Lupe Fraga this year received the State of Texas Small Business Award. He and Tejas Office Products were nominated by the Houston Minority Supplier Development Council.

Related story: ["Tejas Office Products Founder Receives State of Texas Small Business Award"](#)

What sets Tejas Products apart from other office supply is its outlook on the industry, Stephen Fraga said.

"You can buy office supplies from anyone and anywhere, but if you take care of your clients and employees and treat them as your friends, good things will happen," he said. "People want to buy from their friends."

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