

# Somos Austin

News and culture from and for Austin Latino community.

## **140 Central Texas students receive MexAustin scholarships**

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James Barragan

The Consulate General of Mexico in Austin and Foundation Communities awarded the first annual MexAustin scholarships to 140 Central Texas students Wednesday night.

During a ceremony at the Austin school district's Performing Arts Center, the students were awarded the \$1,000 scholarships, which are open to students who are Mexican, of Mexican descent or of another Latino group. The funds for the scholarships will be awarded to the recipients upon proof of admission to an institution of higher education.

Mayte Lara, an Austin high school valedictorian who was harassed online after tweeting that she was undocumented, spoke during the award ceremony. About 30 percent of the scholarship's recipients were undocumented.

"My best advice is keep going. If you constantly listen to the things people say about you, you're going to be held back," Lara said to the crowd of scholars and their families. "What they say shouldn't matter. You should always

continue to fight for our rights and advocate for everything you believe in and encourage others to do the same.”

“I just hope all of you take this scholarship and continue your education and make the world a better place,” Lara said.

Carlos González Gutiérrez, consul general of Mexico in Austin, said the award was an affirmation of the hard work the students put in throughout their high school years and a show of support that their community believes in them.

“They will succeed, I know, because as a community we have their backs,” he said.