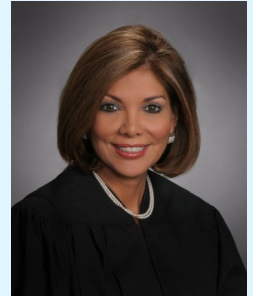




Meet our January 2016 Speaker

Supreme Court Justice
Eva Guzman

Eva Martinez Guzman (born January 12, 1961, in Chicago, Illinois) is a member of the Texas Supreme Court, the body of final appeal in civil and juvenile law in Texas. She was appointed to Place 9 on the court by Governor Rick Perry in the fall of 2009 to fill the seat vacated by Justice Scott Brister, who resigned with more than a year left in his term. All nine Supreme Court justices are Republican. Guzman won the GOP nomination for the seat in the primary election held on March 2, 2010. She defeated Judge Rose Vela of the 13th Court of Appeals, 721,456 (65.3 percent) to 384,135 (34.7 percent). In the November 2 general election, Guzman defeated Democrat Blake H. Bailey.



Guzman is one of seven children of Mexican immigrant parents. She was reared in Houston, where she graduated in 1979 from the predominantly Hispanic Austin High School. A resident of Cypress in Harris County, she is the first Hispanic woman to serve on the high court. Another Hispanic, David Medina, was elected to the court in 2006. Guzman was recognized by the Hispanic National Bar Association as "Latina Judge of the Year" and as "2009 Judge of the Year" by the Mexican American Bar Association of Texas Foundation. At the time of the appointment, Perry called Guzman a "principled conservative with an "unmatched work ethic."

Prior to her high court appointment, Guzman was an associate justice on the 14th Court of Appeals in Houston, where she ruled on thousands of civil and criminal appeals wrote hundreds of published opinions. She is also an adjunct professor at the University of Houston Law Center. As of 2009, she had served for more than a decade as the first Hispanic female appointed and then elected to both the Harris County Family Court and the 14th Court of Appeals.

Guzman has also been named "Appellate Judge of the Year" by the Houston Police Officers Union. She received a bachelor's degree from the University of Houston and a law degree from South Texas College of Law in Houston. She is married to Houston Police Sergeant Antonio Ray "Tony" Guzman (born 1958), and the couple has a daughter, Melanie Alexis.

***A new year is ahead of us.
Let's make it a Republican Year.***

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Reva Bhalla, from Stratford Global Intelligence, was our November speaker.

At Stratford they use a Geopolitical approach for intelligence reports and to forecast events. They start with a map and look into constrains and variables to predict what a country will do in three months, one year or even in 100 years.

She started by talking about the Paris bombing on November 13th. She said that it was well coordinated with multiple locations; explosives were not sophisticated but they were the type that need to be used right away because of their sensibility. Tactically speaking it was well coordinated with good communication among them. She also mention that one of the terrorists came from Greece, possibly as a refugee.

Miss Bhalla talked about Turkey and mentioned that Turkey sees itself as the house of a new Islamic government. They have a good military and good economy but they also have problems of their own. There are ideological differences between Saudi Arabia and Turkey. She added that all the players in the battlefield –Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Qatar, Turkey- want their people in place.

The United States is committed to war for a long time and many people think that it is unsustainable. The best way would be to let the locals bear the burden, but it is not an easy task.

She said that Russia is trying to reestablish its credibility by escalating its presence in Syria and by softening the sanctions on Ukraine. Russia also has monetary problems and at the moment they are engaged on budget discussions.

She mentioned the migration crisis among countries with economic and safety issues. They are worried about radical groups. Germany, for example, will introduce reforms to make it easier for refugees to work but at the same time it will toughen its asylum policies to slow the flow of refugees into Germany.

There was a Q and A. To the question on how long will the United States continue to expend on the war on terrorism she said as long as it has buyers for its debts. She mentioned that there is a strategy plan to bottle up ISIS and that we need to keep our options open. To the question on how do we make sure that middle east countries will not develop nuclear weapons she responded that it is not that easy to develop that kind of weapons in secret. Iran has been gathering some of the components necessary but they are far from having all. Someone asked where will Russia expend money this coming year and she said that Russia needs to modernize its military. She added that Russia probably has enough money for this coming year but its reserves are running low and they will not do in Ukraine more than what they have already done. To an alliance with France, she said that it makes sense to share intelligence with other countries fighting terrorism. She added that air strikes can only do so much and we need to work with the people on the ground. The United States and Turkey are coordinating air strikes. Turkey wants to create a safe zone for Syrian refugees but that will be difficult to achieve.



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