



Writer, activist, professor and media personality **Tony Diaz** has led some of the most fascinating modern movements based in our community. This year, he's taking that cultural capital to the next level.

Diaz was the first Chicano to earn a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Houston Creative Writing Program. He earned his bachelor's degree in communications from De Paul University in Chicago. Diaz is currently a professor of Mexican American Literature and Rhetorical Analysis at Lone Star College in Houston, Texas.

He is also a political analyst on *What's Your Point*, which airs on Fox 26 Houston. He also hosts the weekly bilingual radio program *Nuestra Palabra: Latino Writers Having Their Say* which covers Latino Literature, Art, and Politics on KPFT 90.1 FM Houston. His essays have appeared in the *Houston Chronicle*, *The Texas Observer*, CNN.com, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *The Huffington Post Latino Voices* among other publications. He wrote the novel *The Aztec Love God* and is included in *Hecho En Tejas: The Anthology of Texas Mexican Writers*. He recently launched the column "The Cultural Accelerator" to address issues that other publications don't address in his unique style and point of view.

Diaz made national and international news when he led the Librotraficantes in defying Arizona's ban of Mexican American studies by leading veteran members of *Nuestra Palabra* to organize the 2012 Librotraficante Caravan to smuggle books banned in Tucson back into Arizona. He is the lead writer and editor for the textbook *The Mexican American Studies Toolkit*. He also is an educational consultant for school districts implementing innovative curriculum. Diaz currently resides in Houston, where he continues to fight for intellectual freedom and freedom of speech.

### Highlights

- \* Founded *Nuestra Palabra: Latino Writers Having Their Say*, April 1998.
- \* Founded the *NP Radio Show* on 90.1 FM KPFT, March of 2001.
- \* Organized the Latino Book and Family Festival, 2002–2007—the largest book fair in Houston and one of the largest in Texas.

### About

- \* First Chicano to earn a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from the University of Houston Creative Writing Program.
- \* Author of the award-winning novel "The Aztec Love God"
- \* Co-founder and leader of the Librotraficante Movement
- \* Advocate for Mexican American Studies
- \* Mainstream media and social media pioneer.



**Dr. Teta Banks** is an educator, human rights advocate, and diplomat. She has served in the capacities of faculty and/or administrator at several institutions, including as Interim Director of the African American Studies Program at Rutgers University-Camden, Interim Director of the Mellon Humanities Program, and as a faculty member at Spelman College, Washington University, and Howard University. As a human rights advocate, she served for a decade as Executive Director of the Philadelphia Martin Luther King Jr. Association for Nonviolence under the auspices of the late Mrs. Coretta Scott King and Hon. C. DeLores Tucker. In that position, she developed the Regional Institute on Nonviolence and was the founding editor of *Vital Issues: The Journal of African American Speeches*, published by the Bethune-DuBois Fund in Washington, DC. She is also a senior advisor for the Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives, founded by Nettie Washington Douglass, the great-great-granddaughter of Frederick Douglass and the great-granddaughter of Booker T. Washington. As a diplomat, Banks was appointed Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Liberia, representing that nation as it began rebuilding from a decade of war. She was a member of the Liberia Truth and Reconciliation Commission Advisory Council, the first of its kind internationally to include members of a nation's diaspora in the process. Banks also served as President of the Consular Corps of Philadelphia. Currently, as National Chair of the United Nations Association of the United States of America, she leads the more than 25,000-member organization as it promotes the mission and vision of the United Nations. She is also a member of the Executive Committee of the World Federation of United Nations Association, a 94-nation member organization. Banks has integrated these various fields and interests as she continues to work for human rights.