



PHOTOS BY RAÚL A. FLORES/CONEXIÓN

**ABOVE:** Fabiola Rivera of Laredo Nixon High School was selected as the best mariachi vocalist in the United States, beating out a crowded field of singers in the competition judged by members of Mariachi Vargas.

**LEFT:** José Martínez Jr., Steven Sandoval and Arturo Vargas, three featured vocalists in Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán, had a near-capacity crowd roaring with mariachi favorites during a Dec. 2 performance at Municipal Auditorium.



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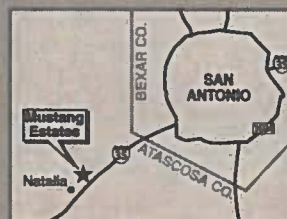
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# STUDENTS SHOW MARIACHI SPIRIT

MELISSA RENTERÍA, Conexión

San Antonio student mariachi performers had five winning finishes in Ford Motor Company's 12th Annual Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza performance competitions at Municipal Auditorium.

Madison High School senior Selina Elizondo, who was featured in the Nov. 30 issue of Conexión, tied for first place in the high school category of the vocal competition. Elizondo tied with Fabiola Rivera, of Laredo, who went on to win the overall title of "Best Mariachi Vocalist in the U.S."

"I was happy with my performance. There was a lot of competition this year," Elizondo, 18, said. "I'll probably compete again next year."

Peggy Wells, 16 and a student at Taft High School, placed third in the high school vocal category.

Stacey Mazuca, a student at Palo Alto College and a first-time competitor at the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza competition, placed first in college/university category.

Two student mariachi groups from San Antonio also placed in their categories.

Jefferson High School's Mariachi Los Potrillo placed third in the high school mariachi group competition. This was the most competitive category with 14 groups competing.

Mariachi OLLU from Our Lady of the Lake University placed second in the college/university mariachi group competition.

Members of Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán, considered by many musicians to be the best mariachi group in the world, judged the student competitions on Dec. 2.

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