

## Alumni in the News—Martha C. de la Torre



Martha C. de la Torre '78

### Latinas of Excellence

**For years, HISPANIC Magazine has honored women who have shattered the glass ceiling and with its shards carved their initials in the foundations of the arts, business, education, government and journalism.**

By: Idy Fernandez and Marissa Rodriguez of  
*Hispanic Magazine*

Martha C. De la Torre has made a contribution to Hispanic media in a way few others have. As the president, publisher and founder of Los Angeles' *Al Borde* and *El Clasificado*, the Spanish weekly classifieds, De la Torre brought a means of buying and selling to an entire market who had been excluded by English-language classifieds.

De la Torre founded the publication in 1988 in Los Angeles, the No. 1 Hispanic market in the United States, with a population of almost 8 million Latinos. The daughter of Ecuadorian immigrants, and an Angeleno herself, De la Torre was well versed in the heavily Hispanic culture of her city and the opportunities it afforded.

Her foray into media came while working as a manager at Arthur Young & Company, now known as the accounting powerhouse Ernst & Young. One of her clients was *La Opinión*, Los Angeles' largest Spanish-language paper.



"I got close to them and saw potential," said De la Torre in a 2001 interview with *Hispanic Magazine*. "I thought it would be really fun to see them grow."

So in 1986, she left Ernst & Young for a position as chief financial officer at *La Opinión*. A mere two years later she launched her own publication to much critical and financial success. Now in its 17th year, *El Clasificado* has become the nation's largest free Spanish weekly publication serving more than 1 million readers. In its tenure as the leading publication of its kind, it has been hailed as a breakthrough for Spanish-language media.

In 2004, the paper was named "one of America's 100 fastest growing inner city companies" by ICIC and Inc. magazine. *Hispanic Business* magazine included the paper among its list of "500 Largest U.S. Hispanic Owned Companies."

Upon finding such success with *El Clasificado*, De la Torre's company launched *Al Borde*, a magazine in a similar fashion to its predecessor, only this time positioned to attract the elusive young Latino market.

In addition to serving as the publisher of two weekly publications, De la Torre has served on the boards of several non-profits including the Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic, Loyola Marymount University's Mexican American Alumni Association, L.A. Family Housing and Los Angeles County Education Foundation, and is also a Latino Advisory Member of the National Federation of Independent Business.

For this and more De la Torre has been the recipient of awards and honors from the Latino and business communities. Notably among them are Small Business Person of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Communication/Media Award from the National Latina Business Women Association, Hilton Distinguished Entrepreneur Award from Loyola Marymount University, her alma mater, and an induction into the National Association of Women Business Owner's Hall of Fame. Additionally, in 2005, the Association of Free Community Papers presented her with the Entrepreneur Award.