



**For Immediate Release**

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Contact: Amy Hinojosa  
Telephone: 202-833-0060  
[ahinojosa@hermana.org](mailto:ahinojosa@hermana.org)

**MANA Congratulates Frances Garcia, MANA Primera® and Lifetime Member, on being named Hispanic Business Magazine's 2009 Woman of the Year**

Washington, D.C. -- MANA, A National Latina Organization, with headquarters in Washington, DC, twenty-six chapters and six affiliates across the nation, commends Hispanic Business Magazine on selecting a woman of superior distinction as their 2009 Woman of the Year, Frances Garcia. Ms. Garcia was recognized by MANA with a Las Primeras® award in 2002 for serving as the first Latina Inspector General of the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO). We applaud her continued achievement, and are confident that she earned this award through her diligent work and strong character.

Frances Garcia set her goals far beyond her humble beginnings in Wichita Falls, Texas. She worked through her youth, picking cotton and sugar beets and working as a waitress. She was the first in her family to earn a high school diploma, demonstrating her clear vision of success. Her bravery and ambitions never faltered, and she knew that with a dedicated work ethic and education, she could continue to reach great heights.

She was the first Latina to join the Dallas accounting firm, Arthur Anderson. Ms. Garcia became the first Latina CPA in Texas. Recognizing the need for a network and community for Latinos in her field, she co-founded the Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting (ALPFA). She would later serve as the first female president of ALPFA. She was appointed by President Carter to the Copyright Royalty Tribunal, which began her career in Washington. Finally, in 1996, she became Inspector General of the GAO, a role well suited to her esteemed moral disposition. She has served this position well, a model of the GAO values: accountability, integrity, and reliability.

“Frances Garcia is a woman of distinguished character and values, and prides herself in being a role model for young Latinas. She is a champion for diversity, making this a priority in her role at the GAO. She has been a model member of MANA, and made great strides for all Latinas” stated Alma Morales Riojas, MANA President and CEO. “Frances Garcia is widely admired and an asset to the Latina community, and we are honored that she has been deemed Hispanic Business Magazine's 2009 Woman of the Year.” she added.

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***About MANA:** MANA, A National Latina Organization, is a nonprofit advocacy organization headquartered in Washington, DC. With chapters across the country, it is the oldest national Latina membership organization in the United States. MANA, whose mission is to empower Latinas through leadership development, community service, and advocacy, envisions a national community of informed Latina activists working to improve the quality of life for all Hispanics. MANA also has the only national Latina mentoring program for girls 11 to 18, known as "HERMANITAS®".*