

FINAL SENT TO NMDOT

Official Scenic Historic Marker Program



CPRC Meeting: June 8, 2007

**Name of Marker: Mela Leger – Bilingual Education Pioneer
(1928-2006)**

County: Guadalupe

Review: Original Text/Replacement Marker Revised Text
 Move of Existing Marker New Marker

NMDOT District: 4

NMDOT Highway: See below

Suggested Site for Installation: I-40, NM 84 or NM 379 Interchange. This location is meant to coincide with Colonias, north of I-40.

Proposed Text:

At four, Manuelita de Atocha “Mela” Lucero Leger read Spanish language newspapers to her blind grandfather in Colonias. Although New Mexico’s constitution protects Spanish-speaking students, school children were often punished for speaking Spanish. As a pioneer in bilingual education, Mela changed that by founding one of the nation’s first bilingual multi-cultural schools, developing curriculum, training teachers and helping write the historic 1973 Bilingual Education Act.

Word Count: 65

Researcher/author: Thomas Chavez, revised by New Mexico Hispanic Women’s Council Members: Teresa Cardenas, Raquel Martínez, Vangie Samora, Leila Flores-Dueñas, and Verónica T. Sánchez, with Ana Pacheco, Mary Jean Haberman and Mela Leger’s daughters, Teresa Leger de Fernández and Annette Leger.

Source(s): *Mujeres Valerosas* (book and DVD interview); NMABE Newsletter, Vol. 31, No. 2.1, February 2007; *La Herencia del Norte*, Vol. 53, Spring 2007; Constitution of the State of New Mexico, Article XII. Education Sections 8 and 10; Senate Bill 421, 1973., November 2006. Dr. Chavez oral biography. Hispanic Women’s Council

Supporting Information Attached:

Text Approved by CPRC on Date:

CPRC Comments:

For Referral to: NMHWMI; Rhonda Lopez, NMDOT GO
