



Lydia Contreras Named New Vice Provost for Faculty Diversity



Lydia Contreras

AUSTIN, Texas — The University of Texas at Austin has named Lydia Contreras as its new vice provost for faculty diversity, equity and inclusivity, effective immediately. Contreras, who currently holds the Jim and Barbara Miller Endowed Faculty Fellowship in Chemical Engineering, has served for the past two years as the managing director of diversity in the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost.

She succeeds Edmund T. Gordon, who will serve as the inaugural executive director for the university's Contextualization and Commemoration Initiative.

Contreras' primary responsibility will be to lead the advancement of the Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity in alignment with UT's new plan for an equitable and inclusive campus, You Belong Here.

"Lydia Contreras is a thoughtful, energetic and engaged leader, and she brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to this important position," said Sharon L. Wood, executive vice president and provost.

"As a faculty member in the Cockrell School of Engineering, she has driven successful recruitment and retention efforts that champion a more diverse and inclusive community. And as the university's managing director of diversity, she has demonstrated an ability to activate plans and develop meaningful initiatives. We are thrilled to have her in this new role as she builds on the excellent work that Ted Gordon has done over the past five years."

Contreras is an accomplished professor and researcher who joined the UT faculty in 2011. A native of the Dominican Republic, she earned a BSE in chemical engineering from Princeton University and a Ph.D. in chemical and biomolecular engineering from Cornell University.

Her scholarship is at the interface of RNA biochemistry and protein engineering, and she leads a large interdisciplinary team that studies RNA regulatory systems. Her work has been recognized by the National Science Foundation with a CAREER award, by the Society for Biological Engineering

with the Biotechnology and Bioengineering Daniel I.C. Wang Award, and by the Division of Biochemical Technology of the American Chemical Society with a Young Investigator Award. She is the co-founder and chief technology officer for Griö, a startup that has revolutionized baby feeding routines by incorporating cutting-edge science.

Contreras will bring the same high level of energy and creativity to serve the university in this position that she brings to her research. As the managing director of diversity, she was integral to the launch of the Early Career Fellows Program and Seed Grants for Actions that promote Community Transformation, both designed to build a more inclusive environment on campus.

The vice provost for diversity position was created in 2017 when Gordon was appointed to the role. A longtime advocate and voice for faculty equity at UT, Gordon has been instrumental in the development of many faculty diversity initiatives, including the Faculty Diversity Strategic Plan, which launched in 2021.

T-Mobile 5G is set for a huge speed upgrade

By Steve McCaskill | TECHRADAR

T-Mobile has achieved speeds of more than 3Gbps on its standalone 5G network (5G SA) by combining multiple spectrum channels using carrier aggregation.

The US mobile operator combined two lots of spectrum in the 2.5GHz band with another in the 1900MHz band to effectively create 210MHz of mid-range capacity to reach the desired transmission rate.

T-Mobile says it's the first time that an operator has achieved such a feat on a live production network using a commercial device—in this case a Samsung Galaxy S22 powered by Qualcomm's technology—and that customers could see the benefits sooner

rather than later.

Carrier aggregation is already used by T-Mobile in some parts of its network, with customers able to access to the two channels of 2.5GHz.

The additional third 1900MHz channel will be added later this year, allowing anyone with a Galaxy S22 to experience the headline transmission rate.

"This test demonstrates the incredible power of mid-band spectrum and represents another huge step forward for standalone 5G," said Neville Ray, President of Technology at T-Mobile. "Only T-Mobile is delivering a nationwide standalone 5G network to customers today, and we're blazing a trail with new performance-boosting capabilities

that generate incredible speeds and deliver on our vision to create the highest capacity network in the country."

T-Mobile claims its 5G network now covers 315 million people in the US, with 225 million of those able to access it fastest 'Ultra Capacity 5G' service. The latter figure is expected to reach 260 million later this year and 300 million in 2023.

The magenta-obsessed operator has started rolling out Voice over New Radio (VoNR) (opens in new tab) in some locations, allowing users to make and receive phone calls using 5G, arguing this will ensure a higher quality and more consistent 5G experience.

Texas' favorite fast-food restaurant comes as a surprise

by Anthony Wood | KRLD Radio Dallas



(DALLAS TX) - There are few better ways to split a room than to debate the top five fast-food chains. Especially when the winner is a little...left field.

Top Data compiled lists for every state of their top five fast-food restaurants based on tracking data.

According to their data, Chick-fil-A is the nation's favored destination for fast food taking 10 states in total -

Arizona, Idaho, Kansas, Missouri, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Mississippi, New Hampshire, and Connecticut.

The south was largely won by A&W where they claimed Texas, Oklahoma, and Alabama, as well as Chipotle which took New Mexico, Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee. The west coast was a bright shade of yellow thanks

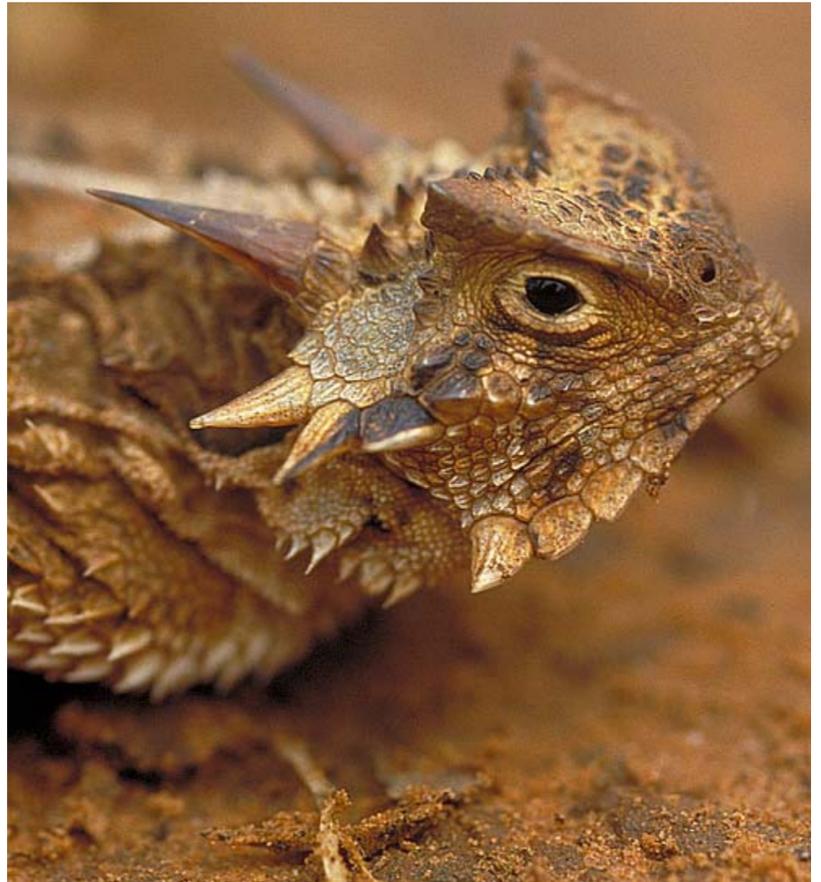
to In-N-Out taking California, Oregon, Utah, and Nevada.

Smash Burger took much of the east including Pennsylvania, Ohio, Idaho, Kentucky, and Illinois.

The report also claims that Sonic was the fastest-growing burger chain, Taco Bell the fastest Mexican food chain, Church's the fastest chicken chain, and Domino's the fastest pizza chain.

'Most Significant Wildlife Conservation Bill in Half Century' Passes U.S. House

Texas would receive over \$50 million per year to help at-risk wildlife



Texas horned lizard portrait - courtesy Texas Alliance for America's Fish & Wildlife

(TEXAS) - On Tuesday, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the *Recovering America's Wildlife Act*, to fund locally-led conservation projects to prevent wildlife from becoming endangered. If the bill is also passed by the U.S. Senate, Texas will receive around \$50 million per year to help more than 1,200 species of concern, including Texas Horned Lizards, Guadalupe Bass, and Bobwhite Quail.

"This is the most important piece of wildlife legislation in the past fifty years," said Janice Bezanson, Senior Policy Director with Texas Conservation Alliance. "Wildlife in Texas and across the country are in serious need of help, and this commonsense bill will tackle the problem at an effective scale, without new taxes or regulations. The yes votes from U.S. Repre-

sentatives from Texas is a legacy they can be proud of."

Funding from the *Recovering America's Wildlife Act* would be used to implement the Congressionally-mandated state wildlife action plans, which have identified more than 12,000 wildlife and plants across the country in need of conservation assistance.

Bezanson notes that the bill could be particularly beneficial for a private lands state like Texas. "This funding could provide more technical assistance for private landowners who want to conduct wildlife studies or improve native rangeland, benefiting livestock as well as wildlife on working lands."

Through new regional conservation projects, the legislation will create new jobs for wildlife management,

tree planting, river restoration, and wildlife reintroductions. It would also connect more Texans and children to outdoor recreation, nature education, and wildlife watching opportunities.

"Nature tourism is huge in Texas," continued Bezanson. "People from all over travel here to see iconic landscapes and wildlife such as migratory birds. Unfortunately, much of the fish and wildlife that our outdoor recreation economy depends on is declining. We're also losing animals that are essential to agriculture, like bees that pollinate our crops and bats that help control insect pests. And there are three billion fewer birds in our skies than there were 50 years ago."

The bill now heads to the U.S. Senate where it has 35 cosponsors and strong bipartisan support.