



## Great Minds in STEM Remembers Rod Garcia, Founder and First President of SHPE

The Board of Directors and staff of Great Minds in STEM mourn with our friends at the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) today over the passing of Rodrigo T. “Rod” Garcia, the founder and first president of SHPE.

Rod was a visionary whose impact on the Hispanic community is almost immeasurable. The SHPE organization has grown in both size and influence since he founded it in 1974, impacting countless students and professionals to this day. GMiS is proud to partner with SHPE on multiple fronts as we and other sister non-profits continue to pursue the vision for Hispanics in STEM that Rod played a leading role in defining.

Great Minds in STEM’s own founders, Ray and Carmela Mellado, knew and collaborated with Rod for nearly 50 years. They’ve released the following statement:

*“Our country lost a giant this week. We first met Rod Garcia in the early 70s when he was formulating his ideas and forming his intentions to mobilize Hispanic engineers and scientists. He, before almost anyone else, saw how Hispanics were being left behind in what today we call the STEM fields, and that we would continue to be shutout of STEM unless those Hispanics that did break through took on the monumental task of initiating change at both the local and national levels.*”

*“Rod harnessed his vision into forming and growing the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE), the first national organization in STEM focused specifically on empowering an underserved segment of the American population. From its humble beginning in Los Angeles, SHPE quickly added chapters across the country. It was then that Rod reached out to us and entrusted Carmela with producing SHPE’s first national newsletter. The success of that publication laid the foundation for Hispanic Engineer Magazine, a partnership between SHPE, Mellado Communications, and Career Communications Group that brought the stories of outstanding Hispanic engineers and scientists to the national conversation. Today, multiple publications serve this space. Rod’s vision and energy in these formative stages cannot be overstated. We will miss him dearly.”*

Rod was a true pioneer for whom all Hispanics in technology owe a debt of gratitude. We look forward to continuing the work he helped initiate all those years ago so that more Hispanics are equipped to pursue degrees and careers in STEM.

Sincerely,

Juan Rivera, Ph.D.  
Chairman of the Board & Acting CEO  
Great Minds in STEM

Bertha Haro, MPA  
Executive Director  
Great Minds in STEM