



RICARDO A. SAMANIEGO
EL PASO COUNTY JUDGE

BIOGRAPHY

Ricardo A. Samaniego was sworn in as the El Paso County Judge on January 1, 2019 and is now entering his second four-year term. Born and raised in El Paso, Texas, Judge Samaniego has 3 graduate degrees from the University of Texas at El Paso, and New Mexico State University, and the University of Norte Dame. Before taking public office, Judge Samaniego worked in both the private and public sector. His extensive experience as a businessman and as a previous mental health professional has proven to be essential during his term in office.

Since taking office in 2019, El Paso has received national attention as the community has dealt with a horrific mass shooting targeted at what is a predominantly Latino region, an ongoing influx of refugees from all over the world, as well as a deadly pandemic. Judge Samaniego has been at the forefront of helping the community to navigate through these challenges and knows firsthand what it truly means to unite, heal, and overcome. Judge Samaniego's vision of establishing a Healing Garden as a means to help the community heal, was recently designed by the US Congress & the US Senate as a National Memorial. The Healing Garden stands as a reminder of our community's culture and resilience that cannot be weakened by hate.

Since the onset, Judge Samaniego has been very involved in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. This effort included vaccinating 32,000 maquiladora workers from Ciudad Juarez. The vaccination took place at a neutral zone on the border. El Paso County was the first community in Texas to reach herd immunity as 75% of the population were fully vaccinated.

Judge Samaniego is a recipient of the Albert Armendariz Award presented by the El Paso Bar Association for his leadership in addressing the COVID-19 crisis. He was also awarded the Crossing Borders Award presented by the El Paso Community College for his outstanding service to the U.S – Mexico border community.

He was awarded President Bidens Lifetime Achievement Award; the highest level of the Presidents Volunteer Service Award.

County Judge Samaniego received the Ohtli Award, the highest honor bestowed by the Mexican government, which is administered by the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs and recognizes individuals who have aided, empowered, or positively affected the lives of Mexican nationals in the United States and other countries, presented by the Mexican Consul Mauricio Ibarra.

Judge Samaniego truly cares about El Paso and is committed to initiatives related to mental health, veteran services, County infrastructure, job creation, Women's commission, economic development, and most importantly community outreach. After 4 years of collaborating with both the veteran and the military community (Fort Bliss), El Paso was proclaimed the Veterans Capital of the United States of America.