



Alma Lamar Lopez Cavazos

August 17, 1943 - August 11, 2025

Alma Lamar Lopez Cavazos, beloved wife, sister, aunt, mother, and grandmother, passed away peacefully at her home on Monday, August 11, 2025, with her loving husband by her side. She was born in Laredo, Texas on August 17, 1943 to Alejandro and Olivia Lopez. At a young age, Alma and her family moved to San Antonio, Texas, where she and her two sisters were lovingly raised.

At the age of five, Alma would accompany her father to nearby counties on election day to watch the political process, shenanigans, and political arguments that occurred during election days. Her exposure to the political environment at a young age would influence her career in politics. Her maternal grandmother urged her to be “la nunca vista” – something that’s never been seen before.

Alma excelled at Graebner Elementary and Burbank High School on the south side of San Antonio before continuing her education at San Antonio College and St. Mary’s University, where she earned a B.B.A. degree. Although her father hoped she would attend UT Austin for law school, Alma followed her own path and enrolled at St. Mary’s University School of Law, where she was one of just four women in the program.

After earning her doctorate in jurisprudence in 1968, Alma began her legal career working alongside Attorney Frank J. Green, where she gained

experience in immigration law and further strengthened her Spanish language skills. She went on to establish her own private practice, specializing in immigration and family law for more than two decades.

Encouraged by her law school friend Frank Herrera, Alma pursued a judgeship. He secured a meeting with Governor Ann Richards resulting in Alma's historic appointment in 1993 making her the first Hispanic woman to serve on the Fourth Court of Appeals and only the second in the United States to serve on an appellate court. She was later elected chief justice, becoming the first Hispanic woman to be elected chief justice of an appellate court in the United States and highest-ranking justice on the first all-female appeals court in the United States. She served with distinction until her retirement in 2008.

Alma's legacy extended far beyond her judicial decisions. She broke barriers for Hispanic and other women in the legal profession. St. Mary's University School of Law honors her contributions each year with the Alma L. Lopez Women in Leadership Award. Even in retirement, she remained active in the legal community, volunteering her time and advocating for women in law and for survivors of domestic violence.

Alma married the love of her life, Emilio Cavazos, on March 3, 1983. Their marriage was a true partnership, built on unwavering support, and deep affection for one another. Their bond was an inspiration to all who knew them.

Alma is preceded in death by her parents, Alejandro and Olivia Roach Lopez, her mother-in-law Guadalupe Cavazos, her aunt Suzanna "Susie" Garza, her uncle Daniel Garza, nephew Daniel Valero, her brothers-in-law Arthur Cavazos and Johnny Cavazos.

In addition to her husband, Emilio, she is survived by her sisters Sylvia "Syl" Valero and Sandra "Sandy" Nemic (husband - Theodore), daughter Elizabeth Cavazos (husband - Bryan Kersten), son Emiliano Cavazos (wife - Kathy),

granddaughters Katie Roberts (husband - Brock) and Kelli Elrod (husband - Jimmy), nephews Vince Valero (wife - Jessica) and Mark Valero (wife - Letty), sister-in-law Sandra Cavazos Ayala (husband -Sam), brothers-in-law Bernie Cavazos (wife - Veronica) and George Cavazos (wife - Keke), sister-in-law Mary Cavazos, and numerous nieces and nephews.

Alma Lopez will be remembered not only for her trailblazing career and service to her community, but for her kindness, strength, love for everyone, and unwavering belief in justice. She leaves behind a legacy that will inspire generations to come.

Cemetery Details

Mission Burial Park South

1700 SE Military Dr.
San Antonio, TX 78214
<http://www.missionparks.com>

Previous Events

Funeral Mass

SEP 5. 10:30 AM (CT)

Mission San Jose Catholic Church
701 E. Pyron
San Antonio, TX

Tribute Wall

SW

“ I had the pleasure of working for Ms. Alma Lopez in the late 70s early 80s when she was in private practice in her offices off S.St. Mary's Street. She taught me so much. Not only about immigration and family law, but about being a better person. She will be missed. My condolences to her family.

Shawn Watkins - September 05, 2025 at 10:31 AM

MJ

“ Mary Lou Alvarez, Lynn & Jay purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Alma Lamar Lopez Cavazos.



Mary Lou Alvarez, Lynn & Jay - September 04, 2025 at 11:28 AM

SM

“ Sonia M. Rodriguez on behalf of many purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Alma Lamar Lopez Cavazos.



Sonia M. Rodriguez on behalf of many - September 02, 2025 at 12:21 PM

AN

“ A wonderful woman and leader. Always friendly and personable. We lost a good one. Anton

Anton - September 01, 2025 at 12:23 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Alma Lamar Lopez Cavazos.*



August 31, 2025 at 11:08 PM



“ *My prayers are with the Cavazos and Lopez families. May you find comfort in the memories you created with Alma over the years.*
Barbara Rodriguez-Pashkowski

Barbara Pashkowski - August 28, 2025 at 03:42 PM



“ *Mari and Carol Ruvalcaba and Family purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Alma Lamar Lopez Cavazos.*



Mari and Carol Ruvalcaba and Family - August 27, 2025 at 10:39 AM

MA

“ We are deeply saddened by the passing of Judge Alma López, as my sister and I return from San Luis Potosí–Matehuala, México. Because of her, my family—and so many others—were given the opportunity to pursue our dreams, contribute to this country, and break the cycle of intergenerational poverty. She opened the doors for migrant workers like my parents, who longed for un pedacito del sueño americano. In gratitude, our parents named my sister Alma, honoring all that Judge López did for our family. □

Through her impact, my mother and father were able to raise two daughters who went on to earn associate’s, bachelor’s, and master’s degrees. Today, the next generation carries that legacy forward—my children are serving in the military, pursuing a PhD, and studying at Princeton University.

We will always remain grateful for Judge López’s vision, compassion, and dedication to families like ours. Her legacy will live on in every life she touched. May God bless her family during this difficult time. Nuestro más sentido pésame.

— Yesenia & Alma Álvarez (Parents Georgina & Fernando Álvarez)

Maria Yesenia Alvarez-Gonzalez - August 26, 2025 at 09:49 PM

DH

“ Dean & Connie Hanes purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Alma Lamar Lopez Cavazos.



Dean & Connie Hanes - August 26, 2025 at 10:43 AM

TF

“ *The Musick Family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Alma Lamar Lopez Cavazos.*



The Musick Family - August 25, 2025 at 09:08 PM



“ *Care and Compassion Spray was purchased for the family of Alma Lamar Lopez Cavazos.*



August 25, 2025 at 05:09 PM

JK

“ *Emilio. I am saddened to read of Alma's passing. My thoughts and prayers are with you. Judy Kallison*

Julie Kallison - August 24, 2025 at 05:11 PM

JR

“ *Our deepest condolences and prayers to Emilio and his family due the passing of his wife Judge Alma Lopez Cavazos. Emilio and Alma always attended any celebration for my parents including the funeral and celebration of life for my father. They were always respectful together toward my parents. May she always be remembered for her leadership and role model to all women. May she rest in peace.*

The Family of Jesse & Louise Lozano

Joanne Lozano Ramirez - August 20, 2025 at 09:07 PM

RG

“ *Richard G. purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Alma Lamar Lopez Cavazos.*



Richard G. - August 20, 2025 at 06:04 PM

RJ

“ *Richard Morales. I was a former classmate of Justice Lopez Cavazos at St. Mary's Law School in San Antonio. She was a wonderful, trailblazing woman and a great friend.*

Richard G Morales Jr - August 20, 2025 at 06:01 PM

JC

“ *My deepest condolences to the family of Judge Alma Lopez Cavazos. She was a role model and leader that I always admired. Thank you Judge for your service to our community and country. Respectfully, Dr. Judith A. Canales*

Judith A. Canales - August 20, 2025 at 12:23 PM

LI

“ *Sincerest condolences to the friends and family of Judge Lopez. I was one of the Alma Lopez scholarship recipients at St. Mary's Law school. She was an amazing woman and legal scholar who helped me decide on an immigration practice. She will be missed for decades to come. Linda*

linda - August 20, 2025 at 12:12 PM

AJ

“ Our condolences and prayers to Mr. (Emilio) Cavazos and family due the passing of his wife Judge (Alma) Cavazos. She married my wife and I a little over ten years ago. We have kept the kind words she stated at the ceremony in our hearts since. v/r Anthony Jr. & Olga N. Lira, San Antonio TX.

ANTHONY LIRA JR - August 19, 2025 at 11:46 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Alma Lamar Lopez Cavazos.



August 19, 2025 at 11:28 AM

CB

“ Charles and Maria Bandish purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Alma Lamar Lopez Cavazos.



Charles and Maria Bandish - August 18, 2025 at 08:02 PM