



Tec de Monterrey serving and transforming the world - Ricardo Saldívar

“Transforming lives isn’t the ultimate purpose, it’s the means to transform something greater, which is the people themselves and the community in which they live and thus transform the world.”

In his first interview with CONECTA, this is what [Tec de Monterrey’s](#) new Chairman of the Board, **Ricardo Saldívar Escajadillo**, says about the institution’s educational and transformative mission.

More than 50 years after receiving a scholarship from the institution, he never imagined that decades later he would be able to continue this legacy, now as the institution’s Chairman of the Board.

Chairing the Tec Board, he says, is one of the **greatest challenges of his life** and he sees it as another opportunity to serve **Mexico** through **education**, following the example of **Eugenio Garza Sada**, whom he admires.

“The Tec has taught me to accept challenges; and that is what those who preceded me did, which is what motivates me to fulfill this new responsibility,” he reflects.



A bond with the Tec that has evolved

Sitting in a room in the Rector's Building, next to the portraits of **Eugenio Garza Sada**, **Eugenio Garza Lagüera**, and **Lorenzo Zambrano**, three of his predecessors, Saldívar recalls when he first heard about the **Tec's founder**.

He was in high school in his native Monterrey when his mother began to talk about **Don Eugenio**, whom she described as a person ahead of his time who was committed to society.

*"Because of that bond with Don Eugenio (Garza Sada), who inspired me, I **decided to study at the Tec**," he recalls.*

*"I was just starting to learn about Tecnológico de Monterrey, and at that time, it was already distinguished in Mexico for **academic excellence**; I was excited about pursuing a professional career there."*

“What I hope will happen in the coming years is that we at Tecnológico de Monterrey will be able to increase our capacity to transform many more lives.”

Saldívar was accepted to study for a degree in **Mechanical Engineering and Administration** at the Monterrey campus, where he eventually became a **professor while still a student**.

The vocation to serve and care for others was something his parents fostered in him, and it was at the Tec where he also saw how **professors dedicated their lives to educating others**; this filled him with great respect for them and awakened the desire to join in the causes of others.

*“I started teaching at the Tec when I was a fifth-semester student, in something that was known as the **School of Mid-Level Technicians**. After graduating, when I returned from my master’s degree abroad, I became a lecturer, continuing through from the late 1970s to the early 1980s.*

*“I really enjoyed interacting with the students; I distinctly remember looking into their eyes, catching their facial expressions, and **in that way feeling if we were connecting** or if I was able to convey my knowledge,” he recalls with a smile.*

His professional career led him to lead companies such as **The Home Depot** and **Grupo Alfa**, and then he was invited to become a board member of the Tec; two years later, he was invited to join the Board of [TecMilenio](#) and eventually became its chair.

On February 20, he took over as Chairman of the Tec’s Board and Governance Committee, succeeding **José Antonio Fernández**, who served 11 years in that position.

Tec scholarship in his youth raised awareness of helping

From a very young age, Ricardo understood the **value of philanthropy** and the impact it could have on people’s lives to **help them fulfill their dreams**.

In high school, he had the dream of studying at the Tec, but his father had a terminal illness, so his mother faced the challenge of continuing alone with the care of the family.

“So, I remember going to the Scholarship Department in the Classroom III building to apply for a scholarship.” Sometime later, he received the news he was waiting for: **scholarship**

granted.

This experience made him understand the joy that young people and their families feel when they receive scholarships, such as the **Leaders of Tomorrow program**, which provides 100% support for talented young people to study at the Tec.

*“We’ve seen some videos of them with their families, reading the letter informing them that they’ve been chosen and seeing their parents crying, it resonates perfectly well, because **in a way it’s something that I lived through**,”* he says thoughtfully.

Ricardo says that when the **Leaders of Tomorrow program** became known, he enthusiastically decided to join in. Today he is the **founder of the distinction called Committed to a Better Mexico**, through which he has granted **scholarships in perpetuity** to two Tec students.

“It has been extraordinary to see them obtain their degree from the Tec, which is very important to them, and fulfills a great ambition, as it did once for me too,” he said.

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A purpose in life and the concept of leadership

Ricardo said that his **purpose in life is to make everyone better off.**

“That applies to my professional and personal life; my aim is that my wife, children and grandchildren, and all the people around me are better off.”

About leadership, he identifies his **concept of a leader** as being someone with **behaviors that inspire others.**

*“As former President Ronald Reagan used to say, a good leader is able to get other people to trust them, and the **extraordinary leader gets others to believe in themselves.***

*“All my life I’ve been surrounded by humble people who have helped me grow; so, **my ambition is to be an extraordinary leader.**”*

Thus, throughout his various leadership positions in the private sector and in education, he points out that his personal hallmark is to be with people, **listen to them, motivate them,**

and be interested in their wellbeing.

*“I think that to a certain extent, that way of being or thinking that I have in relation to others, is a consequence of what I felt at the Tec from the professors who surrounded me and who **truly inspired me**,” he said.*

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Accepting the challenge to help transform lives and Mexico

A few weeks ago, Ricardo reveals that he was consulted by the Board as to whether he would be willing to assume the responsibility of the **position of Chairman**.

“It’s an enormous responsibility; I decided to accept it because of the deep affection I have for the Tec and in wishing the best for the Tec. I really wish the best for all of us who have a bond with it, students, professors, parents, and its entire community,” he said.

Reflecting on where he should direct his efforts as Chairman of the Board of the Tec, he said he envisions continuing to **transform lives** as a means of **transforming society**.

“Transforming lives isn’t the ultimate purpose, it’s the means to transform something greater, which is the people themselves and the community in which they live and thus transform the world,” said Saldívar.

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*“I hope that in the time that I can be in this position, we will be able **to add to the transformation of lives**, for the transformation of society,”* he said.

Regarding the strategy he envisions for the next five years in office, he pointed out that everything starts with the students, **servicing them better** and thus maximizing the possibility of impacting society.

“May our students have better skills and become better leaders in entrepreneurship and innovate, to transform society. That’s the great dream of the Board and it’s my great dream to continue transforming lives.

*“I hope that in the coming years, we at Tec de Monterrey, will be able to increase our capacity to **transform many more lives**, and with that, to **transform society and the world even more**,”* he concludes, smiling broadly.

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