

Maciel nominee for BGCT first vice president

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René Maciel, president of [Baptist University of the Americas](#), will be nominated for first vice president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.



René Maciel, president of Baptist University of the Americas Julio Guarneri, pastor of [Calvary Baptist Church in McAllen](#), announced his intention to nominate Maciel, current BGCT second vice president, at Texas Baptists' annual meeting in Waco, Nov. 16-18.

"BUA serves as a bridge, connecting people cross-culturally, and René Maciel personifies that," Guarneri said. "He has the ability to relate to Texas Baptists cross-culturally.

"Texas is changing, and it is a critical time to have leaders who can reach across barriers and relate to different cultural groups and different types of ministries."

With the sale of the Baptist Building in Dallas and anticipated relocation of

BGCT Executive Board staff to new offices, Texas Baptists face significant changes in the next year, he noted.

Understands change

“René understands change,” Guarneri said, pointing to his experience both at BUA and as assistant dean at Baylor University’s [Truett Theological Seminary](#) when the seminary moved to the Baylor campus from its original location at First Baptist Church in Waco.

Guarneri characterized Maciel as “loyal, a person of integrity, possessing a high level of commitment and a servant spirit.”

Maciel expressed appreciation to Texas Baptists for allowing him to serve as second vice president and pledged to represent them faithfully if elected as first vice president.

“It has been such a blessing to be able to serve,” he said, affirming the leadership provided by President Jeff Johnson and First Vice President Kathy Hillman.

This summer, Maciel was called as interim pastor at [First Baptist Church in Castroville](#), where he previously served as music and worship leader and volunteer youth minister.

Importance of the local church

“It’s giving me a chance to see firsthand how important the local church is to the life of our convention—to see people growing up in Christ, in fellowship and in their understanding of God’s word,” he said.

The church is experiencing remarkable growth and making an impact in its community, in large part because of its willingness to reach out cross-culturally, Maciel added.

“Half of the congregation at Castroville is Hispanic. That’s at a historically Anglo church in a German Catholic town,” he said.

Texas Baptists need to train pastors, missionaries and church leaders to work across cultures, said Maciel, who has spent more than a quarter-century in higher education and administration with Baptist institutions.

Since 2007, he has served as president at BUA, a BGCT-related institution in San Antonio committed to training cross-cultural Christian leaders in a Hispanic context. About 275 students at the school are pursuing undergraduate degrees in biblical and theological studies, Spanish or business leadership. Another 750 students are enrolled in Baptist Bible Institutes, mostly along the Texas/Mexico border, but also in South Africa and India.

Before he arrived at BUA, Maciel served at Truett Theological Seminary—first as director of student services and later as assistant dean for administration and academic services. He also served in administration at New Mexico Baptist Children’s Home in Portales, N.M.

He earned his undergraduate degree from Hardin-Simmons University and his master’s degree in higher education administration from Baylor University, and he later served in administrative positions at both schools.

He and his wife, Sabrina, have two daughters—Brianna and Carmen.