

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



### **The American Immigration Council Honors Olympic Gold Medalist Henry Cejudo's Mother**

**Phoenix, AZ – June 16th, 2010** - [The American Immigration Council](#) recently announced that they will honor Nelly Rico, mother of Olympic gold medalist Henry Cejudo, at their annual benefit on Friday, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010 at the Gaylord National Hotel and Convention Center in Maryland. Cejudo has the honor of presenting the council's coveted American Heritage Award to his mother.

According to Nelly Rico's son, [Olympic gold medalist Henry Cejudo](#), "Words cannot express how honored I am to present my mother with the American Heritage Award. It's such an amazing honor. Last year the award was presented to Carlos Santana. This year the award goes to my mother, and in my eyes, no one is more deserving. My mom is an amazing woman. She has influenced and encouraged me my entire life. She is my hero."

[The American Heritage Award](#) (also referred to as the Immigrant Achievement Award) is presented to individual immigrants for their outstanding accomplishments and unique contributions to the United States. The criteria range from meaningful endeavors such as providing a loving and stable home for children to courageous acts that have changed our nation's history.

Cejudo went on to say, "This is a very significant award. It represents the positive side of immigration by showcasing noteworthy contributions that immigrants have made to our society. The award honors immigrants, like my mother, who came to the United States to build a better life and to give her children access to opportunities that only America has to offer. I am so grateful for the sacrifices that my mother made for our family, without them I would not be the man that I am today. I am a proud American citizen but I am also the proud son of Mexican immigrants."

The American Immigration Council's annual benefit is the council's largest event. The national event is held in conjunction with the American Immigration Lawyer's Association (AILA) annual conference. The 2010 Annual Benefit, American Heritage Awards to Honor Outstanding Women, will honor Nelly Rico, along with Ms. Rebecca Cammisa, director and producer of the Oscar nominated documentary "Which Way Home" and Ms. Loula Loi Alafyoiannis, founder and president of the Euro-American Women's Council. Special guests for the evening are Cokie and Steve Roberts, who will serve as masters of ceremonies.

**About the American Immigration Council:**

The American Immigration Council (formerly the American Immigration Law Foundation) was established in 1987 as an IRS designated 501(c)(3), tax-exempt, not-for-profit educational, charitable organization. The mission of the American Immigration Council is to strengthen America by honoring our immigrant history and shaping how Americans think and act towards immigration now and in the future. The American Immigration Council exists to promote the prosperity and cultural richness of our diverse nation and continues to work tirelessly to achieve justice and fairness for immigrants under the law.

**About Nelly Rico:**

An undocumented immigrant from Mexico, Ms. Nelly Rico entered the United States to find a better life. Over the next several decades, she would work multiple jobs in order to provide for her family of seven children. Ultimately, she would do much more than provide – she would give her family the resources and encouragement to *thrive*. Raising four sons, three daughters, and more than one wrestling champ, including Henry Cejudo, the youngest American wrestler to ever bring home Olympic gold. Nelly Rico is now a proud lawful permanent resident of the United States.

**About Henry Cejudo:**

Henry Cejudo is a freestyle wrestler who won a gold medal in the 2008 Beijing Olympics. At twenty-one years old, he was the youngest American ever to have won an Olympic wrestling gold medal. Henry was born in Los Angeles and currently lives in Phoenix, Arizona. For additional information on Henry Cejudo, please visit [www.henrycejudo.com](http://www.henrycejudo.com). We also encourage fans to follow Henry on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [You Tube](#).

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