



Courtesy photo

UTRGV's CHAPS Program team at the Capitol building in Austin on the floor of the 85th Texas State Legislature as they were honored by the presentation of House Resolution No. 479. Pictured are, bottom row from left, Russell K. Skowronek, CHAPS executive director and associate dean of Interdisciplinary Programs and Community Engagement; Juan L. Gonzalez, co-director of the CHAPS Program and associate professor of Earth Sciences; Walter Diaz, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts; and top row from left, Texas State Representative Ryan Guillen, Starr County; Christopher Miller, CHAPS co-director and professor of History; and Roseann Bacha-Garza, CHAPS program manager.

## CHAPS team honored on floor of Texas legislature

SPECIAL TO THE MONITOR

On April 13, the CHAPS (Community Historical Archaeology Project with Schools) team was present on the floor of the 85th Texas State Legislature as Starr County Representative Ryan Guillen formally read House Resolution No. 479 to his fellow elected officials and to the attending members of the public in the gallery.

This resolution, forever maintained by the Legislative Reference Library and the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, honors the CHAPS Program team at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley for their work to raise awareness of the region's rich cultural and natural history. CHAPS was also

honored for "forging relationships with local and county institutions as a true community engagement entity."

Since its inception in 2009, the CHAPS Program has accomplished a tremendous amount in a short time. They have embarked on several successful projects that include curriculum and lesson plan development for regional K-12 students and educators. Their "Native American Peoples of South Texas" project and "The Rio Grande Valley Civil War Trail" project have both produced lesson plans with accompanying traveling trunks to better serve independent school districts with hands-on items and activities to coordinate with

TEKS aligned lesson plans.

The CHAPS Program has also earned several awards that include two awards from the Texas Historical Commission which include the Award of Merit for preserving the cultural and historical resources of Texas and the Chairman's Award for Community Education for the Rio Grande Valley Civil War Trail project. CHAPS was also awarded the prestigious Daniel G. Roberts Award for Excellence in Public Historical Archaeology for the Society for Historical Archaeology. As stated in the resolution, "CHAPS has proven to be a dynamic and innovative educational endeavor, one that is enlightening and inspiring countless young people throughout the Rio Grande Valley."