

AAMLE™ HOLDS ITS SECOND ANNUAL MEETING
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On March 22 and 23, 2024, members of the American Academy of Mexican Law Experts™ gathered in Mexico City for the organization’s Second Annual Meeting. On Friday, the meeting began with an evening social and dinner at the Campomar Insurgentes Restaurant.

On the morning of March 23, the group met at the Facultad de Derecho of the Universidad Panamericana, of which Vice President Ignacio Pinto-Leon is a graduate. President David Lopez opened the meeting with a discussion of organizational business, including good news concerning the Academy’s trademark application with the United States Patent & Trademark Office, finances and expenses, and ongoing business development efforts. In view of the organization’s commitment to improve the understanding of Mexican law and the Mexican legal system among U.S. judges and lawyers, Lopez called on the membership to commit to produce articles on current issues of Mexican law by June 2024 for publication in legal periodicals in the United States during the second half of 2024. The organizational portion of the Annual Meeting concluded with a discussion of the July 1, 2024 transition of officers, including Pinto-Leon’s forthcoming rise to the Presidency of the organization and his formulation of goals for his two-year administration.

The members then participated in the Academy’s first “*Best Practices Lecture Series*” – a series of presentations by members at annual meetings on different aspects of serving as a Mexican law expert in U.S. Courts. The Academy’s founding document defines the formulation of “best practices and professional standards for providing Mexican law expert services” as one of the organization’s core missions.

Lopez, who has served as an expert on Mexican law in over 180 cases during the past 27 years, discussed “A Model Form of Affidavit on Mexican Law.” He explained that, when he began work in this field in 1997, few people testified on a regular basis in this field (the primary two

being Dean Stephen Zamora of the University of Houston Law Center and Professor Jorge Vargas of the University of San Diego Law School) and there did not exist any standard form of affidavit or federal declaration or “best practices” with respect to the written presentation of expert opinions. In a question-and-answer session with the other members, he discussed the general form for affidavits he has developed and how that form is designed, among other things, to promote compliance with different ethical and professional standards – including, the maintenance of independence and neutrality, the avoidance of any role as a fact witness and compliance with state and federal requirements for written sworn testimony. Members observed that Lopez’s form of affidavit has been copied, sometimes verbatim, by others testifying on Mexican law.

Next, Mexican attorney Reynaldo Uriaga, AAMLE’s Secretary, gave a presentation on the 2021 changes to Mexico’s Federal Constitution and the Law of Amparo that have materially altered the way the Mexican Supreme Court and other federal courts make *jurisprudencia* – legally-binding precedent with what U.S. lawyers think of as *stare decisis* effect. He explained the new legal concept of *jurisprudencia por precedentes (obligatorios)* as it relates to the Mexican Supreme Court only. He also discussed the new official format of case abstracts (*tesis aisladas* and *tesis de jurisprudencia*) that summarize noteworthy opinions of the federal bench and the Mexican Supreme Court, and which abstracts are compiled in the *Semanario Judicial de la Federación* and its *Gaceta electronica*, and reported weekly on the Mexican Supreme Court’s website.

Following the meeting, the members held a lunch at the beautiful and historic San Angel Inn Restaurant to celebrate the legacy of Stephen Zamora. Before his death in 2016 in Mexico City, Zamora – who was a mentor to Pinto-Leon and Lopez – developed U.S.-Mexico law programs including the Center for U.S. and Mexican Law, served as a professor at UNAM’s

Facultad de Derecho and researcher at its Instituto de Investigaciones Juridicas, was the lead author of the Mexican Law treatise, and acted as a pioneer in the field of U.S.-Mexico comparative legal studies beginning in the 1980s. AAMLE members were joined at the lunch by Zamora's lovely widow, Lois Parkinson Zamora – a 46-year member of the University of Houston faculty and accomplished author and scholar in her own right. The Annual Meeting ended with a trip to the Parroquia San Jacinto, where members paid their respects to Zamora.