



### PRICE PRITCHETT

Chairman and CEO, Pritchett LP, Dallas

Boyhood chores on a tractor, baked by the West Texas summer sun, convinced Price Pritchett that farming wasn't the life for him. "When I wasn't in school," he says, "I had to work my butt off on the farm." In the classroom, Pritchett developed a love of learning, and it took him all the way to a Ph.D. in psychology from Texas Tech University. After a stint in the Army, Pritchett's doctorate helped him land a job with a management consultant. He had a lot to learn. "My first years on the job were like getting an M.B.A.," he says. In time, Pritchett found his niche, helping executives manage their companies through the wrenching changes wrought by mergers and acquisitions. His boutique firm employs 20 people. His secret to success: "We need to keep stretching ourselves and learning."

### ANA 'CHA' GUZMAN

President, Palo Alto College, San Antonio

A 13-year-old girl fled Cuba with her family in 1960—not knowing where she'd end up, not speaking English. She was scared. "My father told me not to worry," Ana Guzman says. "Fidel Castro can take our jobs, our houses and our industry," he said, "but he can't take my education. We will survive in America." After that experience, learning became a big part of Guzman's life. The family settled in Milwaukee, and Guzman graduated from Stout State University in 1968. Married by then, she relocated to Texas. While teaching in a University of Houston program for low-income Hispanics, Guzman met her role models—married women with children who had earned doctorates. She followed in their footsteps, earning her own doctorate in 1979. She became president of 8,000-student Palo Alto, a two-year college, in 2001. "Without that doctorate," she says, "there's no possibility for a leadership position at colleges and universities."



### MICHAEL MARIN

Partner, Vinson & Elkins LLP, Austin

It's a long way from Canutillo, Texas, to Harvard Law School. Michael Marin made the journey. He grew up in the working-class community just outside El Paso, the son of a Mexican immigrant mother with a second-grade education and Mexican-American father who finished eighth grade. "My parents wanted better for me," Marin says, "and it was clear that education was the ticket to a better life." The product of public schools, Marin attended the Air Force Academy for three years, then finished his undergraduate studies at the University of Texas at El Paso. After a stint in the Air Force, he headed to Harvard. The Ivy League school opened the door to the prestigious Vinson & Elkins law firm, where he's made partner, and the presidency of the Austin Bar Association. Not bad for a kid from Canutillo.



## TIM TINGLE

Storyteller, Canyon Lake, Texas

You learn storytelling on your own. And Tim Tingle did. A Choctaw, he grew up on Texas' Gulf Coast and graduated from the University of Texas in 1974. After driving a milk truck, working for a dance company and managing fast-food restaurants, Tingle founded New Canaan Farms, selling exotic jams, jellies and dips. The company's marketing campaign involved spinning yarns about the farmers who made the products. Tingle loved it. He honed his storytelling skills with Toastmasters events, relating the Trail of Tears tragedy and other aspects of his Choctaw heritage. Tingle had found his calling. He sold the food company and became a storyteller, making his living performing at festivals while selling books and tapes. He earned a master's in Native American studies in 2003. "The key is finding something you love to do," he says. "You can't distinguish between work and play."



## JOY WALLACE

President and CEO, J.O.Y. Foods Inc., Dallas

A long and winding road through a succession of corporate jobs led Joy Wallace to a company of her own. After graduating from the University of Chicago, Wallace did financial analysis for Xerox, Rockwell International and Mary Kay Cosmetics. She shifted to strategic planning for Uncle Ben's rice, went into sales and marketing for an El Paso meat company and took on the school lunch market for Pilgrim's Pride. Pizza Hut recruited her to run its nontraditional business, and she developed a ready-to-prepare pizza kit for schools. A 1998 licensing deal for the Pizza Pack gave Wallace her start as an entrepreneur. J.O.Y. Foods has now moved beyond the school market with its own pizza line, called Sprazzo. It's sold to the U.S. military and other food service segments. "Every job I had taught me something I can use in my business," Wallace says.

## RON WHITE

Founder, Ron White Training, Dallas

Booted out of college with a dismal grade-point average, Ron White makes his living showing off his mental prowess. He operates Ron White Training, which teaches techniques to improve memory through corporate seminars and the "Memory in a Month" compact-disc course. White's presentation includes amazing mental feats—such as reciting back a long string of random numbers shouted out by his audience. White stumbled into the memory business by getting into telemarketing after flunking out of college. A natural salesman, he did well. One of his clients sold memory aids. He took the course and used what he learned to create his own business. "If you understand capitalism, you don't need a degree to succeed," White says. "If you don't, you won't learn it in college. A lot of it is passion, drive, a work ethic and a good idea."

