Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month: TODOS Drives Prosperity, Power, and Progress

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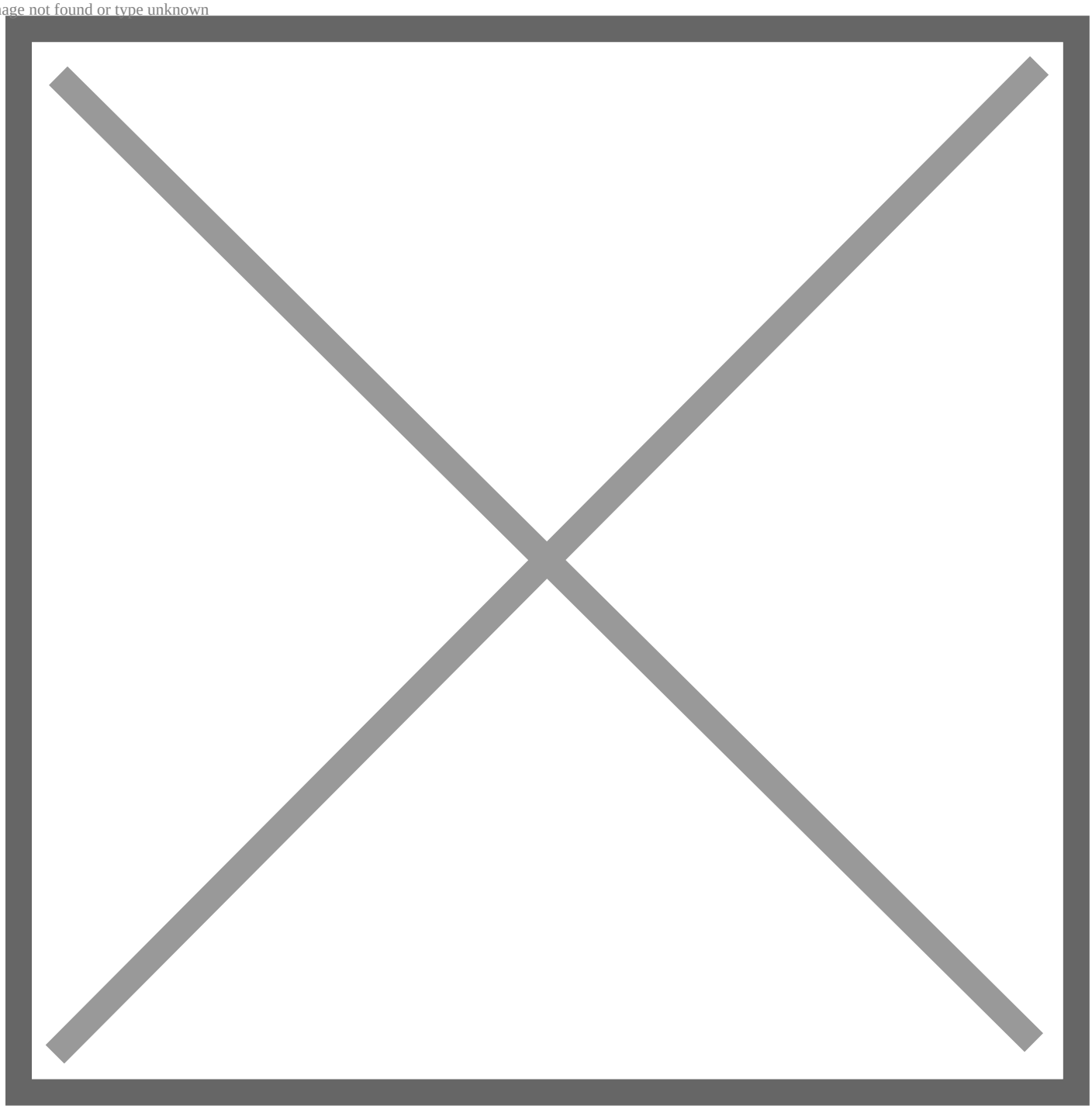
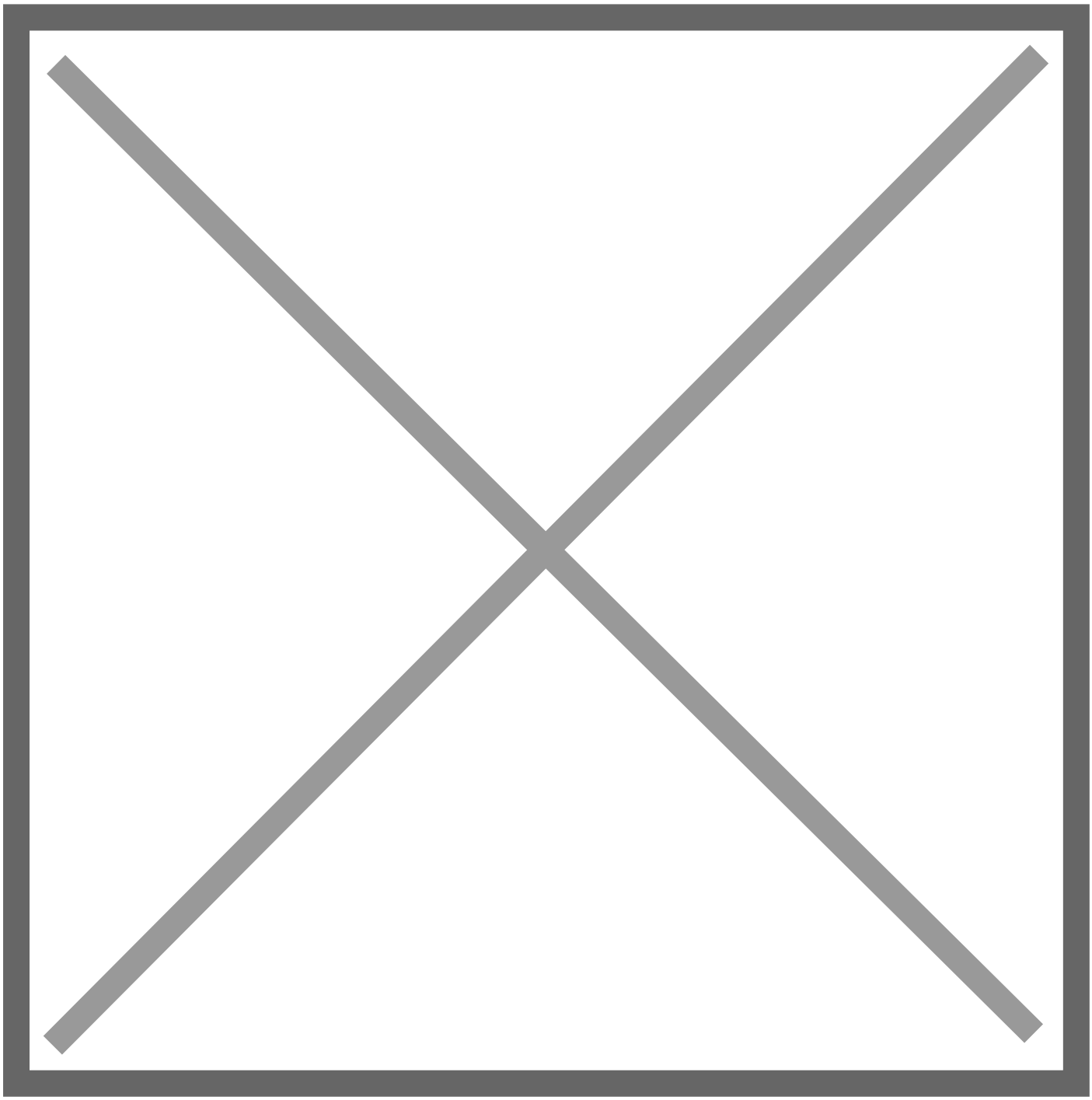


As a new Toyota employee, Gustavo Ramirez hoped to connect with other Latino and Hispanic colleagues. Thanks to the Toyota Organization for the Development of Latinos (TODOS), a business partnering group (BPG) at the company, he found the perfect opportunity.

“I joined TODOS within a month of starting to work at Toyota because I wanted to learn more about other Latino cultures, network with other employees and impact my community through the volunteer activities that TODOS organizes,” he says.

Since joining the organization in 2019, Ramirez, who currently works as a corporate development and governance consultant for the Americas Oceania region at Toyota Financial Services (TFS), has participated in countless activities and community-based initiatives, including mentoring middle and high school students from West Dallas.



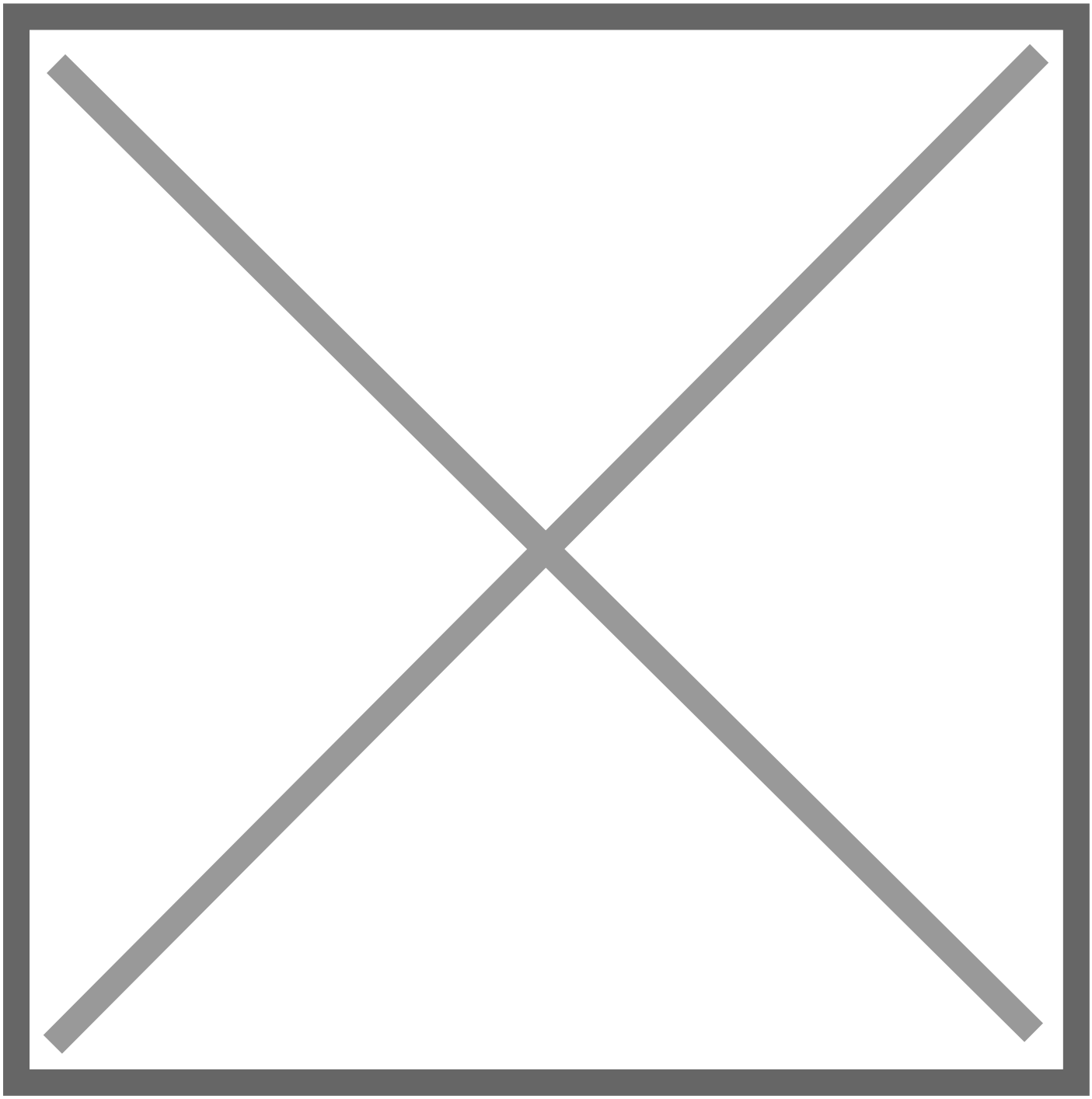
“It’s been amazing to see how the kids have matured and gained confidence over the past four years,” he says.

Like Ramirez, many others join TODOS for similar reasons. That’s why, for the past 20 years, the BPG has continued to provide its Latino employees and allies with the resources to support each other, the company, and the communities in which it serves.

This year, TODOS’ theme for Hispanic Heritage Month is “Mobility for TODOS: Together Driving Prosperity, Power and Progress for Latinos at Toyota,” which directly reflects the BPG’s efforts and goals for the year

ahead.

“A lot of our focus right now is on Hispanic Heritage Month, and we also have our second annual TODOS symposium coming up in October that is being put on by our TODOS North American Advisory Council (NAAC),” says Chris Devlin, a business operations manager at Toyota Motor North America (TMNA) and TODOS’ chair. “We are very fortunate for our NAAC and the opportunity to bring all our TODOS chapters from across North America together to help build our TODOS family and discuss our most pressing topics.”



Driving Community Efforts
In addition to providing opportunities to discuss and address important issues that pertain to the Latino community, TODOS hosts community-based events to serve and assist local residents. For example, next to L.G. Pinkston High School in Dallas and the West Dallas STEM School, both of which Toyota supports, is Fish Trap Lake where TODOS members have organized lake cleanups.

“We mentor students from these schools through our E3 Mentorship Program,” says Devlin. “So, getting out there to clean up the area where some of the kids we mentor actually live is very meaningful.”

Buckle Up for Life, the national car seat safety program from Cincinnati Children’s and Toyota, is teaming up with Children’s Health to help keep the littlest passengers safe on the road. Through this partnership, many families in need across Dallas receive child passenger safety education and free car seats along with installation assistance.

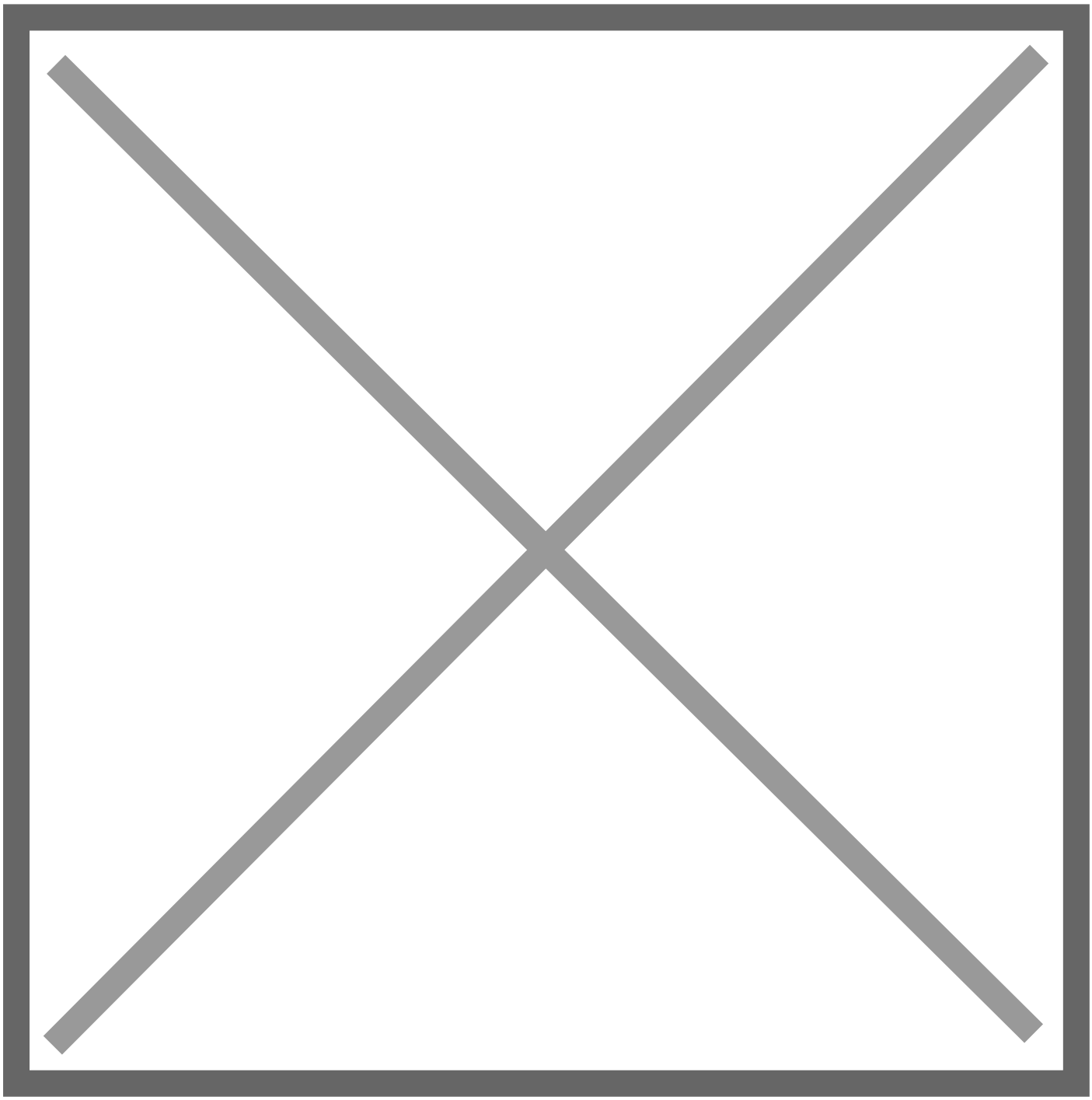
TODOS is excited to support their efforts to make sure that every child has the right car seat for their age, height, and weight. “As a parent” says Devlin, “it breaks your heart to know there are so many people out there who cannot afford the expense of new car seats. Having the opportunity to be a part of this is something I would encourage everyone to do.”

Steering Career Advancement
TODOS not only encourages its members to give back through community service and volunteerism, but the organization also serves as a vehicle to support and promote the careers of Toyota’s Latino employees.

“We have met with Toyota’s senior leadership to advocate for more Latinos in leadership, and to their credit they have heard us and taken action,” Devlin says. “We have actively advocated for more leadership training for our current members. We have also supported efforts to hire new, talented Latinos at Toyota. TODOS realizes we also need to provide our members with career development tools, so a lot of our focus in recent years has been on improving our content and events related to professional development.”

Devlin adds, “It has been awesome to see so many of our TODOS members be promoted or take on new, highly visible roles within the past year. I am always delighted when I hear people tell me they have had discussions with their leadership about their own career goals, or when I hear people tell me about how they reached out to a new mentor or connected with someone as a result of one of our events. Seeing our members take active control of their own development and not leave it to ‘if I work hard, someone will notice’ [approach], gives me confidence we are having the right discussions.”

Complementing Toyota Principles
For Devlin, who has seen the impact of TODOS up close, there are many fulfilling moments, such as the continued community involvement. “TODOS supports Toyota’s overall goals when it comes to supporting the community,” he says.



Devlin and Ramirez are proud TODOS members and look forward to supporting Toyota and the community.

“Everything we do is centered around making Toyota the best place to work, and we are proud to represent the company when we do community events,” says Devlin. “We are a reflection of Toyota’s principles, and we approach everything with a sense of humility but also the expectation that we will be the best at whatever it is we set out to do.”