

Visionary Developer Helps Transform Houston Neighborhoods Inside the Loop

► **Jose Berlanga '89**
CEO and co-founder
Tricon Homes

For Jose Berlanga '89, success in business meant he had to pay a personal price. While his buddies were playing pool, bowling and going to parties, he was studying at UST and working day and night in his first business: a parts distribution company for the oil and gas industry.

The hard work and sacrifices paid off for Berlanga, CEO and co-founder of Tricon Homes.

"The business started small, just the two of us (including his brother Tristan)," he said. "In the '90s, the inner city of Houston was undergoing a revitalization process, and we noticed there was a niche, an opening. Not many builders were attracted to these transforming neighborhoods." The brothers began building in The Heights, Montrose, Midtown, Museum District and other areas.

Now, Tricon – which is both an architectural firm and a developer/builder – is one of the biggest builders in Houston. "We built a name for the product," he said. The homes, generally priced from \$500,000 to \$1 million, include styles ranging from loft to Victorian to Craftsman.

Berlanga gets great satisfaction from providing a service people appreciate. He enjoys the whole cycle of his job as CEO, from discussing potential sites, planning and negotiating to "driving by one day, looking through the window, and seeing a family having dinner. That's what keeps me going in business," he said.



Berlanga admits that one of his greatest challenges has been finding the right balance between work and personal life. Now, at 46, after spending the past 18 years building a successful business, he thinks he's found it. He's about to have his first children. His wife Adriana is expecting twins – a boy and a girl.

Berlanga is grateful that he was drawn to UST for the Catholic education as well as the smaller size of the classes and campus. He said he formed many lifelong friendships and made important business contacts while on campus.

"It's amazing that I'm standing on my balcony staring at Link-Lee Mansion," Berlanga said. "My office overlooks the campus. Close to 30 years later and I've never left the neighborhood...it's kind of cool." ■