

# Legislature natural step for Richfield's Garcia

It seems only natural that Edwina Garcia should represent the city of Richfield in the Minnesota Legislature. In the 20 years since she first made that city her home, she has done just about everything else.

Rep. Garcia (DFL-Richfield) served as commissioner of the Richfield Housing and Redevelopment Authority and was a Richfield City Council member from 1986 to 1990. She was the council's representative to the Metropolitan Airport Sound Abatement Council (MASAC) and also served on Richfield's Community Services Commission, Charter Commission, and Human Rights Commission. And she also has been a member of a variety of school and youth organizations.

Garcia's activity began shortly after moving to Richfield from Clovis, New Mexico, with her husband and daughter in 1971. Since then, she has made a little bit of Minnesota history.

Garcia is the first minority woman to serve in the Minnesota Legislature. But she adds that she doesn't feel she is serving to undertake any special agenda for minorities.

"The first constituent that I will always have on my mind and definitely in my heart will be the Richfield constituency,"



## Edwina Garcia

District: 40A

Age: 46

Home: Richfield

Occupation: Higher education counselor

**District traits:** 40A includes most of the city of Richfield, a middle-class, "inner ring" suburb bordering on the airport. The district voted for the Bush-Quayle ticket over Dukakis-Bentsen by a 54.8-to-45.2 percent margin.

she says. Among those concerns is transportation, an issue, says Garcia, that played a big role in her upset win over three-term incumbent representative Chris Tjornhom.

Because Richfield is "landlocked" by highways and the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport, Garcia says she learned a lot about transportation from her tenure on the city council and with the sound abatement council.

So she says she was pleased to be named to the Transportation Committee. Garcia also serves on the Redistricting Committee and was named chair of the Education Committee's Joint Subcommittee on Libraries.

Because Richfield is an "aging commu-

nity," Garcia says senior citizen issues are a big concern; ones that she intends to focus on.

Garcia works at the University of Minnesota's Chicano-Latino Resource Center as an advisor for Hispanic students and holds no illusions about becoming a full-time legislator.

"If you're privileged to be elected, it's still not your seat," she says. "That seat always belongs to the people. And if you keep that in mind, if you serve at their pleasure, that's always going to keep you focused on who your boss really is."