

## Monthlong Cesar Chavez Celebration to Kick Off with April 6 Awards Ceremony and Reception

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Two individuals and an organization who further Cesar Chavez's life and achievements will be honored at an April 6 University of California, San Diego ceremony marking the start of a monthlong celebration of the labor leader and human rights champion.

Recognized for their service in upholding the Chavez legacy will be Patrick Velasquez, Ph.D., winner of the staff award; Christopher Yanov '99, winner of the alumni award, and MANA de San Diego, recipient of the community award. Chancellor Marye Anne Fox will present the awards at the 11:30 a.m. ceremony in the International Center patio, and entertainment will be provided by the Mariachi Estudiantil from Montgomery Middle School, Otay Mesa.

Velasquez, director of OASIS, has been a UC San Diego staff member for 20 years, contributing to some of the most important changes in diversity and inclusion on the campus. He was a founding member of the campus Chicano/Latino Concilio and one of the strongest supporters for establishing the UCSD Cross Cultural Center and a Chief Diversity Officer position.

Yanov is the founder of Reality Changers: *Agentes de Cambio*, an organization dedicated to supporting highly-motivated, inner-city high school students in San Diego County with the academic and intellectual resources to become first-generation college graduates. In 1996, while enrolled at UC San Diego and studying political science and Spanish literature, he began working with high school youths at the Hispanic Presbyterian Church. In 1999 he joined the San Diego Unified School District with the hopes of improving the lives of inner-city students through education, and in 2001 founded Reality Changers. Established as a partnership with UCSD Academic Connections, the program has awarded more than \$1 million in scholarships to inner-city students.

MANA de San Diego is the local chapter of MANA, the national Latina organization founded in 1974 to provide a voice for Mexican-American women at the national, state and local levels. The San Diego chapter was founded in 1986 and has more than 600 members. Its activities include the Hermanitas youth mentor program which encourages higher education, the Sylvia Chavez memorial scholars program offering financial aid to Latinas, and the Dia de la Mujer Latina health festival which offers free screenings and health information and resources.

The kickoff event is sponsored by the UCSD Cesar E. Chavez Planning Committee and is free and open to the public. For further information contact [ivelasco@ucsd.edu](mailto:ivelasco@ucsd.edu) or 858 534-6862.

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