

2005 César E. Chávez Celebration Panel Discussion To Recall Compelling Period In The History Of UCSD

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The turbulent times of the Viet Nam war will be the background for a panel discussion on the struggle to create a democratic and inclusive college - now Thurgood Marshall College - at the University of California, San Diego.

The *Lumumba/Zapata College Retrospective* will be presented at 6 p.m. April 22 in the International House Great Hall, Eleanor Roosevelt College as part of the 2005 César E. Chávez Celebration. The event is free and open to the public.

Jorge Mariscal, director of the UCSD Chicana/o Arts and Humanities Program, will moderate. The panel will include UCSD alumni, who, as student activists in the late 1960s and early 1970s, focused on creating a UCSD college that would be accessible to underrepresented students.

Writer Gina Valdés will read poetry from the Viet Nam War period. A UCSD freshman will speak on why this movement in the campus's history should be of interest to today's students.

The name chosen for the college by students in 1969 had historical significance. Patrice Lumumba was an African anticolonialist and the first prime minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He was assassinated in 1961. Emiliano Zapata (1879-1919) was one of the principal leaders of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 that overthrew the Diaz Dictatorship. Using these two figures as political symbols, the movement to create a Lumumba/Zapata College at UCSD was fueled by national and international events of the day. During the first few months of 1969, the struggle to stop the United States war in Southeast Asia, the African American civil rights movement one year after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., and a rapidly growing Chicano/a militancy "shook the foundations of college campuses across the nation," according to Mariscal.

On March 14, 1969, two UCSD organizations, the Mexican American Youth Association (MAYA) and the Black Student Council (BSC) issued a document on the creation of the new Third College. The document begins: "Despite the Chicano rebellions in the Southwest and the Black revolts in the cities, the University of California, San Diego ... has not changed its institutional role ... We therefore not only emphatically demand that radical changes be made, we propose to execute these changes ourselves!"

"Although student activists were only partially successful," says Mariscal, "their efforts led to the creation of UCSD programs such as Communication, Third World Studies and Third College, now Thurgood Marshall College. The Lumumba/Zapata episode stands as the most concerted attempt in the history of the campus to make UCSD accessible to historically underrepresented students and to empower all students in terms of university governance and curriculum."

Third College was founded in 1970. It remained Third College until 1993, when it was renamed in honor of Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, widely recognized for his dedication to civil rights and breaking down barriers to education. The Thurgood Marshall College philosophy is that "a broad liberal arts education

must include an awareness and understanding of the diversity of cultures that comprise contemporary American society and the richness that socio-cultural diversity brings to the lives of American people."

Mariscal and Cecil Lytle, provost of Thurgood Marshall College, are co-chairs of the 2005 César E. Chávez Celebration Planning Committee. Olivia Puentes Reynolds is the community representative. For more information on the *Lumumba/Zapata College Retrospective* panel and discussion, visit the web site at <http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/chavez> or call Mariscal at (858) 534-3897.

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