

## Month-Long César E. Chávez Celebration In April

March 10, 2005

Jan Jennings

The life and accomplishments of César E. Chávez, labor leader and champion of human rights, will be observed with a month-long series of diverse activities during April at the University of California, San Diego. Activities will continue through May 2. All events are free and open to the public.

The principal figure in the Chicano Civil Rights Movement, César E. Chávez, and his role as a leader in the struggle for working families and an advocate for non-violent solutions, dignity, and respect for all, will be the guiding thread in presentations on the history, present, and future of Chicana/o communities. There will be presentations by alumni on the development of UCSD's Third College, now Thurgood Marshall College, and a performance by poet/musician Gloria Velásquez. Lecturers will include experts on Chicana/o culture and politics.

Claudia Smith, director of the Border Project, California Rural Legal Assistance Fund, will speak at noon April 5 at the International House Great Hall, Eleanor Roosevelt College. Smith is known for fighting injustice and discrimination on behalf of farm workers and the rural poor. The Chavez Committee will present her with an award for her humanitarian efforts.

Attorney Ken Ensimaje, president and founder of the United Domestic Workers Union, will speak at 11:30 a.m. April 15 at the UCSD Cross-Cultural Center. Ensimaje will address the connection between the United Farm Workers Union and the formation of the United Domestic Workers Union, including an historical overview of the evolution and impact of laws and case precedence on unionization efforts in the United States.

UCSD's *Lumumba/Zapata College Retrospective*, a panel and discussion with alumni, who, as student activists, struggled in the late 1960s and early 1970s for the creation of a democratic and inclusive college, will be presented April 22. Although they were only partially successful, their efforts produced Third, now Thurgood Marshall College, at UCSD. Festivities will begin at 6 p.m. at the International House Great Hall, Eleanor Roosevelt College. Faculty will attend, as well as acclaimed writer Gina Valdés and other Chicano/a poets from the Viet Nam War period.

Gloria Velásquez, award-winning writer and professor of modern languages and literature at California State University, San Luis Obispo, will perform at 7 p.m. April 28 at the International House Great Hall, Eleanor Roosevelt College. Velásquez's theme is that the Chicano movement for social justice lives on - and for her, in activism, poetry, and music. Other activities in the month-long salute to César E. Chávez include:

*The 7th Annual César E. Chávez Commemoration Breakfast*, 7:30 a.m., March 28, San Diego Convention Center. The event will honor essay contest winners from San Diego, Imperial, and Orange Counties.

*The 27th Annual Thurgood Marshall College Cultural Celebration* will be featured at the college all day, April 9, including music, dance, food, and art from around the world.

*A Community Forum* will be held at 5 p.m. April 18 at the UCSD Cross-Cultural Center. Activists from campus and the wider community will discuss issues that face Latinos in contemporary society.

*Senorita Extraviada*, a human rights film by Lourdes Portillo about the kidnapping, rape, and murder of more than 370 young women workers in El Paso/Juarez, will screen at 5 p.m. April 21 in the UCSD Cross-Cultural Center.

Jorge Mariscal, director of the UCSD Chicana/o-Latina/o Arts and Humanities Program, and Cecil Lytle, provost of Thurgood Marshall College, are co-chairing the César E. Chávez Celebration Planning Committee. Olivia Puentes Reynolds is the community representative. For more information visit the web site at <http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/chavez> or call (858) 534-9689.

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