



Dear Friends and Colleagues,



Welcome! ¡Bienvenidos!

The LEAD Summit 15ñera marks fifteen years of collective vision, scholarship, and activism — a coming-of-age ceremony for the Summit itself. Like a quinceañera, this milestone is both celebration and transformation: a ritual moment where innocence gives way to consciousness, where the promise of youth evolves into the power of resistance.

This year, the 15ñera unfolds in the luminous spirit of Día de los Muertos, embracing both memory and renewal. In the presence of marigolds and candles, we honor those who came before — the educators, organizers, and

visionaries whose work paved our path — even as we nurture the seeds of a new generation rising to meet the challenges of our time.

“Divina Juventud: From Innocence to Resistance” honors the sacred vitality of young people and emerging generations who inherit a world in turmoil — a world where democracy itself is in question. It calls upon the divine spirit of youth (divina juventud) not as naïve idealism, but as revolutionary energy — the creative, loving, and defiant force that insists on life, dignity, and truth in an era of disinformation, polarization, and political decay.

The 15ñera for Justice reframes a traditional rite of passage through a lens of cultural remembrance and social transformation. Just as the quinceañera symbolizes a young person’s entrance into community responsibility, this 15th anniversary marks our collective passage into a deeper accountability: to defend democracy, to reimagine education as liberation, and to resist the normalization of injustice — even as we honor the spirits of those who fought these battles before us.

Through panel presentations, featured speakers, cultural performances, altars of remembrance, and community rituals, the LEAD 15ñera becomes a space where scholarship dances with art and activism speaks through ceremony. It becomes a living ofrenda — an altar adorned with fifteen years of courageous conversations, educación con conciencia (education with awareness), and the countless lives touched by this movement.

This year’s summit invites educators, advocates, students, artists, and community organizers to rise, reflect, rejoice, resist, and reimagine together — to walk the marigold path between remembrance and rebirth. It challenges us to ask:

- What does it mean to “grow up” in a time when truth itself is endangered?
- How do we transform grief for democracy’s decline into collective power?
- What new forms of justice can we imagine when we center the brilliance, creativity, and courage of youth?

In celebrating Divina Juventud, we celebrate the sacred fire of resistance that lives in each generation — a flame carried from the candles of our altars into the torches of our movements. We honor our ancestors’ dreams, our mentors’ sacrifices, and our students’ unyielding hope. We dance between memory and movement, between mourning and joy, between the souls we remember and the futures we are determined to create.

The LEAD Summit 15ñera for Justice is not only a commemoration — it is a declaration:
That we have come of age.
That innocence has given way to insight.
That resistance, radiant and divine, is our collective rite of passage.
That in the spirit of our ancestors — ni muertos ni vencidos — we rise.
Sincerely,

Dr. Enrique Murillo, Jr.



Jerry Tello

Jerry Tello is a father, grandfather, community justice advocate, healing practitioner, therapist, award-winning author, and internationally recognized authority on culturally based health and healing. For more than 50 years, he has dedicated his life to strengthening and healing individuals, families, communities, and systems through his interpretive Indigenous-based pedagogy, La Cultura Cura (Culture Heals).

Through this philosophy and its practices, Maestro Tello has reached over half a million people and trained thousands of facilitators nationwide in his curricula and teachings.

Born into a family of Mexican, Texan, and Tap Pilam Coahuiltecan roots and raised in the South Central and Compton communities of Los Angeles, Mr. Tello is regarded as an international expert in trauma and healing, sacred fatherhood, family strengthening, racial justice and racial healing, community peacebuilding, and mobilization. He is the co-founder and Elder Emeritus of the National Compadres Network, established in 1988.

Maestro Tello has authored numerous articles, videos, and culturally rooted curricula addressing generational trauma and healing-centered, trauma-informed practices. He is the award-winning author of *Recovering Your Sacredness*, co-editor of *Family Violence and Men of Color*, and creator of a bilingual children's book series. He has also produced a series of motivational health and healing recordings.

His culturally based healing and development curricula include: *El Joven Noble*, *Cara y Corazón*, *Raising Children with PRIDE*, *El Círculo* (Circle Keeper), *Amor de Padre*, and the *La Cultura Cura* Health and Healing Philosophy.

Maestro Tello has been featured in *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Latina*, *Lowrider*, and numerous other publications, webinars, podcasts, and digital media platforms. He currently co-guides the *Healing Generations Podcast*.

Over the years, he has received numerous prestigious honors, including the 2024 National Latino Behavioral Health Lifetime Legacy Award; the NCPL Fatherhood and Family Pioneer Award for over 40 years of advancing positive fatherhood; the 2023 Lifetime Children's Advocate Award; Maria Shriver's Annual Advocate for Change Award; the White House Champions of Change Award; the Presidential Crime Victims Service Award presented by President Bill Clinton and Attorney General Janet Reno; two California Governor's Awards; and the Rotary International Ambassador of Peace Award.

Together with Susanna Armijo, Maestro Tello co-guides the Sacred Circles Center in Whittier, California, where they hold space for teachings, practices, and ceremonies grounded in Indigenous healing ways of life. Along with their large extended family, they are the proud parents of five children and seven grandchildren.



Josefina E. Canchola

Josefina E. Canchola is an immigrant to the United States, born in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. She is a proud product of the Los Angeles Unified School District, having attended Hammel Street Elementary and Belvedere Junior High School. Her family later moved to Whittier, California, where she graduated from Pioneer High School.

Josefina earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from the University of California, Riverside, becoming the first in her family to obtain both an undergraduate and graduate degree. In 2006, she received her Master's degree in Management from the University of Phoenix, graduating with an impressive 3.98 GPA while working full time, serving as a deeply engaged community leader, and raising her daughter Julia as a single mother.

Josefina describes her life's calling as creating educational opportunities for first-generation and underserved students. She is a steadfast advocate for students who, like herself, face educational, economic, and social barriers that challenge their ability to complete a college degree. Her life motto, "Sí Se Puede" ("Yes, it can be done"), is a message she shares widely to inspire students to overcome obstacles and achieve their highest academic aspirations.

Josefina has dedicated 38 years of service to the University of California system. She has worked with the University of California's Puente Project in various leadership capacities, including Regional Coordinator, Regional Centers Director, Associate Director of Partnerships, and currently as Director of Secondary Programs and Partnerships. She has also served at UC Riverside as Program Coordinator for Chicano Student Programs and for the Office of Governmental and Community Relations.

Beyond the UC system, Josefina has served as Community Services Liaison to the Superintendent for the Riverside Unified School District and as Community Services Manager in the City of Riverside's City Manager's Office.

She currently serves as the Vice President of the Board of Trustees for the Whittier Union High School District, further advancing her lifelong commitment to public education and student advocacy.

Josefina is widely recognized as a leader in community and civic circles and has received numerous honors. She has also been elected and appointed multiple times to serve on the California Democratic Central Committee and has participated in the University of California Office of the President's Women's Professional Development Institute and Executive Program.

Her extensive community involvement includes 33 years of service as a volunteer and past president of the Chicano Latino Youth Leadership Project—California's premier Latino youth leadership development program. She has served on the UC Riverside Alumni Association Board of Directors (including as Secretary/Treasurer on its Executive Committee), the Citizens Oversight Committee at Rio Hondo Community College (2014–2020), the Riverside YWCA Board of Directors, the Riverside Area Urban League Board, and as an advisory board member for Hispanas Organized for Political Equality. She also previously served as a California State Senate appointee to the California Nursing and Psychiatric Board.

Josefina remains actively engaged in local and statewide humanitarian efforts, guided by her deep belief in giving back. She attributes her commitment to service to the many opportunities her education has afforded her and strives to ensure those same opportunities are accessible to others.

She is the proud mother of two children, Julia and Darryl Antonio, and is also raising her young daughter Eliana. In her free time, Josefina enjoys writing poetry—several of her works have been published in Latino literary journals—as well as hiking, baking, traveling, attending concerts, and participating in community cultural events.



2025 LEAD Summit Padrino de Honor

Ignacio Gomez

Born in Boyle Heights, California in 1941, Ignacio Gomez has had a long and important career as an artist and muralist. His vast collection of posters aiming towards the youth in the community, to strive for the highest in education, have become a positive enforcement to many.

Gomez had early success in 1978 with his painting of Edward James Olmos as the character “El Pachuco”. This has since become his most famous poster which was used to promote the Luis Valdez play “Zoot Suit”, the first Chicano play on Broadway which debuted in 1979. The “Zoot Suit” image is now in the collection of the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

The production’s poster—an image that not only captured the spirit of the play but which has also become an iconic symbol of Chicano/Latino pride. According to Gomez, that image would have turned out far less iconic had he not been willing to lay his own money and reputation down on the line. Somebody at the Mark Taper Forum had seen a cover I did for New West Magazine and called me and asked, ‘Are you Ignacio Gomez?’ I said, ‘Yes.’ ‘Are you a Chicano?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Have you heard of the play Zoot Suit?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘We want you to do the poster for the upcoming season,’” says Gomez. “I said, ‘Great’ and I got all excited.”

“But then they said, ‘We can only pay you \$300 and we can only afford two colors: yellow and black,’” adds Gomez, with a laugh. “I told them, ‘No, it’s gotta be full color, even if I have to pay for it.’ Imelda, my wife, who was nearby holding one of my kids, heard me say that and her mouth dropped.”

Fortunately for art history, his offer spurred the Mark Taper into action. Not only were they able to renegotiate with their printer to do full-color printing, but they also upped his pay to \$500, and let Gomez retain the image’s copyright.

In a short autobiographical piece from 2002, Gomez talked about his early career doing technical illustrations, time in the Army Reserves, and education at Los Angeles Technical College and Art Center College of Design in Pasadena. “My uncle and my older brother were painters,” Gomez continued. “I was fortunate to have them as my art mentors. They showed me different murals of Diego Rivera and paintings of El Greco from Spain, and Norman Rockwell art.”

Ignacio has worked on various motion picture posters and advertising campaigns. Some of which are now in corporate collections.

In 2004, Ignacio designed, sculpted, and painted the Cesar E. Chavez Memorial for the City of San Fernando, California, honoring the late Chicano labor leader and founder of the United Farm Workers. As he reflected, “I hope [the Chavez Memorial] has the same impact on the new generations that Cesar had on us and that they learn about the struggles he fought for.” That same year, he also designed the Cesar E. Chavez’ headstone in La Paz, Keene, California.

In 2012, President Barack Obama dedicated the gravesite and the Cesar E. Chavez Center into the Cesar E. Chavez National Monument. In 2013, another Cesar E. Chavez Monument was designed and sculpted by Ignacio which was unveiled in city of Riverside, California.

Gomez also designed the statues for Mendez Tribute Monument Park in Westminster, CA, which opened in 2022. The monument commemorates the landmark Mendez v. Westminster civil rights case of 1947 about school segregation.

In 2023, Gomez’s work was part of the Estampas de la Raza exhibition of Mexican and Latino art at the Delaware Art Museum.

Most recently, Ignacio sculpted a life-size figure of Cheech Marin (LEAD Summit 2020-22 Honorary Chair / Padrino de Honor) for the Cheech Museum in Riverside California. Ignacio also has his work in the Lucas Museum, LACMA, and the Autry Museum.



2025 LEAD Summit Padrino de Honor

José Feliciano

José Feliciano is recognized as the first Latin Artist to effectively cross over into the English music market, opening the doors for other artists who now play an important role in the American music industry. As importantly, Feliciano has been acclaimed by critics around the world as “The greatest living guitarist.” Referred to as “The Picasso of his Realm,” José Feliciano’s accomplishments are highly celebrated. He’s been awarded over forty-five Gold and Platinum records; he has won nineteen Grammy nominations, earning nine Grammy Awards, including the “LARAS Award for Lifetime Achievement.”

Born on September 10, 1945, in Lares, Puerto Rico to humble beginnings, the legendary singer, songwriter, and guitarist’s music bridges cultures and languages. One of 11 boys, blind from birth due to congenital glaucoma, Feliciano moved with his family to New York City at the age of five. There, in the cultural melting pot of the Bronx, he began his remarkable musical journey. He first experimented with sound using a tin cracker can and later a concertina, teaching himself by listening to records. By age nine, he was already performing at the Teatro Puerto Rico.

Feliciano eventually taught himself to play guitar, practicing up to 14 hours a day, developing a unique style that blended Latin, jazz, pop, soul, and rock elements. He began performing in Greenwich Village coffeehouses before expanding his performances across the U.S. In 1963, he signed with RCA Victor and released his first single, “Everybody Do the Click,” in 1964.

His breakthrough came in the 1960s, when he rose to international fame with soulful, bilingual interpretations of popular songs. His renditions of “California Dreamin’” and “Light My Fire” earned him widespread acclaim, and his original holiday classic “Feliz Navidad” became a global Christmas staple. Over the years, Feliciano has released dozens of albums, won nine Grammy Awards, and earned over forty-five Gold and Platinum records.

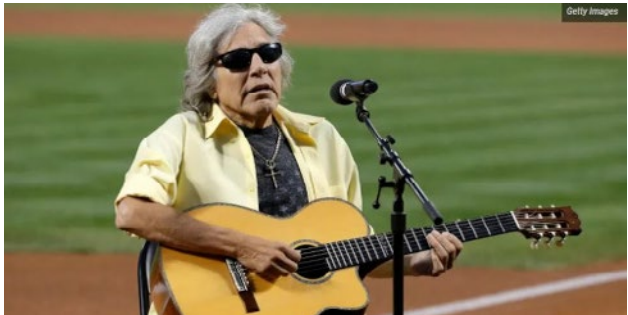
Beyond music, Feliciano is known for his advocacy and storytelling, as in his song “No Dogs Allowed,” which recounts being denied entry into the U.K. with his guide dog. He has performed at prestigious venues like the Newport Jazz Festival and contributed to film and television scores.

In his personal life, Feliciano has been married to Susan Omillian since 1982, with whom he has three children. He has been honored with an honorary degree from Sacred Heart University and was knighted by the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre, affirming both his cultural and humanitarian impact. José Feliciano’s musical career has been immortalized with a Star on Hollywood’s Walk of Fame while New York City honored him by re-naming Public School 155 in East Harlem, “The José Feliciano Performing Arts School.”

Guitar Player Magazine awarded him “Best Pop Guitarist,” placing him in their “Gallery of the Greats,” and he was voted both “Best Jazz” and “Best Rock Guitarist” in the Playboy Magazine reader’s poll, as well. In 1996, José was selected to receive Billboard Magazine’s “Lifetime Achievement Award.”

Continuing to be constantly in demand, José has performed for and with some of the most important people on Earth. He’s enjoyed playing with many of the top symphonic orchestras including the London Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. He’s appeared on major television shows worldwide; he has done a number of his own specials and his music has been featured on television, in films and on the stage.

José Feliciano’s enduring legacy lies in his ability to connect people across borders through his heartfelt, transcendent music. Today, the National Anthem is rarely sung in its strictly traditional form, ever since José’s extraordinary performance in Detroit. In The Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York, you can actually listen to this historic moment when José first sang the National Anthem and caught the world’s attention off-guard!



2010 Inaugural LEAD Summit Madrina de Honor

Sylvia Mendez

Sylvia Mendez is the oldest daughter of Gonzalo Mendez, a Mexican immigrant, and Felicitas Mendez, a Puerto Rican, who fought so she and her brothers could have equal education through the case of Mendez et al v. Westminster et al. Sylvia continues with the legacy left by her parents to campaign for education. Sylvia Mendez worked for 33 years as a nurse at the USC Medical Center in Los Angeles. Ms. Mendez spends her retirement traveling abroad and speaking at universities, conferences and schools across the nation. Her sole intent is to convey the importance of obtaining an education by encouraging students to stay in school.



2011 LEAD Summit Madrina de Honor

Judy Rodriguez Watson

Judy Rodriguez Watson, co-president of the Seal Beach-based Watson and Associates Development Corporation and ardent supporter of education, is the Honorary Chair of the LEAD 2011 summit. Affectionately termed, “La Madrina de Honor” of the second annual conference, Rodriguez Watson together with her husband James Watson, co-chaired California State University, San Bernardino’s “Tools for Education” fund-raising campaign in 2006. The effort raised more than \$3 million to equip the university’s College of Education Building with technology labs, clinics, literacy and assessment centers that will serve the students and the Inland Empire community. In 2010, CSUSB named its four-year-old public art program the Judy Rodriguez Watson Public Art Project in honor of her passion and financial support for placing art in open spaces at CSUSB, the surrounding community and around the city of San Bernardino.



2011 Inaugural Feria Educativa Padrinos de Honor

Graciano & Trini Gomez †

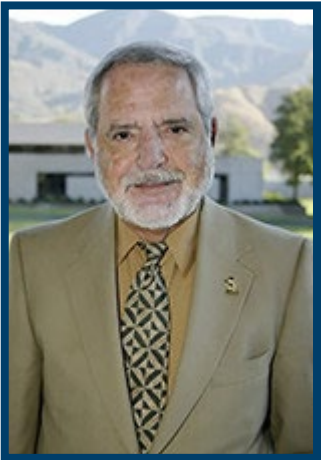
Mr. and Mrs. Graciano (2017) and Trini Gomez† graciously accepted to serve as our 2011 Honorary Chairs for the inaugural LEAD Feria Educativa. They will be affectionately known as our event’s “padrino y madrina de honor”. Married for more than 30 years, Graciano and Trini are very well known, have deep roots, and are highly active in and across our regional communities. They place a high value on education and socio-economic endeavors, and in the collaboration of community groups working towards mutual goals and objectives. They are most well known for their hard work and commitment in having established the Inland Empire Hispanic News. Since the publication’s inception, Mrs. Trini Gomez has played a vital role in the development and ongoing operation of the newspaper, alongside Graciano, who served as publisher and editor. Together they have made into reality this dream of creating such an elemental resource for our communities across the region.



2012 LEAD Summit Padrino de Honor

Dr. Ernest F. Garcia †

Ernie Garcia served as dean of Cal State San Bernardino’s College of Education for more than a decade during the 1980s. Garcia retired in 1990 and lives in San Bernardino, was named the LEAD 2012 honorary chair, or “el padrino de honor.” He spent 36 years in education, including 13 as a teacher and an administrator in K-12 schools and 23 years in higher education that included 11 years as the dean of the CSUSB College of Education, where he also served as a professor and chair in the department of elementary education. Garcia’s educational career also included serving as an associate professor of elementary education at the University of Redlands and teaching part time and during summers at the University of Redlands, Stanford University, UC Santa Barbara, UC Riverside and San Bernardino Valley College. Garcia served on the board of the Rialto Unified School District for nine years; later, an elementary school was named in his honor. He received the Career Achievement Award from the University of Redlands Alumni Association and was recognized as one of “Forty Who Made a Difference” by the UCR Alumni Association on the occasion of UCR’s 40th anniversary. He was named to the Alumni Hall of Fame by San Bernardino Valley College and received the “El Fuego Nuevo” award from the Association of Mexican-American Educators, where he served as state president.



2013 LEAD Summit Madrina de Honor

Honorable Josie Gonzales

Josie Gonzales proudly serves as Supervisor for San Bernardino County’s 5th District. Supervisor Gonzales continues to champion issues important to our communities, including public safety, economic development, improved transportation, ending chronic homelessness, and environmental stewardship. She addresses these key issues through cooperative efforts developed on federal, state and local levels.



In effort to improve the wellbeing of county families, Supervisor Gonzales initiated a county wide Healthy Communities campaign. To date, 16 cities and towns throughout the county have adopted innovative Healthy Cities programs that encourage residents to make healthy lifestyle choices. Prior to her service as a member of the Board, Supervisor Gonzales served on the Fontana City Council, and the City’s Planning Commission. The San Bernardino County native has also owned and operated a successful small business in the city of Fontana. In effort to improve the wellbeing of county families, Supervisor Gonzales initiated a county wide Healthy Communities campaign. To date, 16 cities and towns throughout the county have adopted innovative Healthy Cities programs that encourage residents to make healthy lifestyle choices. Prior to her service as a member of the Board, Supervisor Gonzales served on the Fontana City Council, and the City’s Planning Commission. The San Bernardino County native has also owned and operated a successful small business in the city of Fontana. After his service, he attended East Los Angeles Community College before transferring to Pomona as a junior. He graduated with a degree in history and then earned his doctorate in Latin American history from Harvard University. Nava was a civil rights activist during the height of the Chicano Movement. He was the first Mexican-American to be elected to the school board of the L.A. Unified School District in 1967. Today he is retired and lives San Diego County with his wife, Patricia. He holds the title of professor emeritus of history at CSUN. Nava lectures widely about multicultural education, and serves on the board of directors of Encuentros, which promotes education among young Hispanic males. In 2011, a school was named for him.



2014 LEAD Summit Padrino de Honor

Dr. Julian Nava †

Dr. Nava is a recognized Latino leader and role model in the United States. The son of Mexican immigrants, he was raised in East L.A. and says even through junior high, he was still learning English as Spanish was spoken at home. He struggled in high school and joined the Navy as soon as he legally could at age 17 during World War II. After his service, he attended East Los Angeles Community College before transferring to Pomona as a junior. He graduated with a degree in history and then earned his doctorate in Latin American history from Harvard University. Nava was a civil rights activist during the height of the Chicano Movement. He was the first Mexican-American to be elected to the school board of the L.A. Unified School District in 1967. Today he is retired and lives San Diego County with his wife, Patricia. He holds the title of professor emeritus of history at CSUN. Nava lectures widely about multicultural education, and serves on the board of directors of Encuentros, which promotes education among young Hispanic males. In 2011, a school was named for him.



2015 LEAD Summit Padrinos de Honor

Secretary Julián Castro

Julián Castro was sworn in as the 16th Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development on July 28, 2014. In this role, Castro oversaw 8,000 employees and a budget of \$46 billion, using a performance-driven approach to achieve the Department’s mission of expanding opportunity for all Americans

“Julián is a proven leader, a champion for safe, affordable housing and strong, sustainable neighborhoods,” said President Barack Obama after Castro’s confirmation. “I know that together with the dedicated professionals at HUD, Julián will help build on the progress we’ve made battling back from the Great Recession - rebuilding our housing market, reducing homelessness among veterans, and connecting neighborhoods with good schools and good jobs that help our citizens succeed.”

Before HUD, Castro served as Mayor of the City of San Antonio. During his tenure, he became known as a national leader in urban development. In 2010, the City launched the “Decade of Downtown”, an initiative to spark investment in San Antonio’s center city and older neighborhoods. This effort has attracted \$350 million in private sector investment, which will produce more than 2400 housing units by the end of 2014.

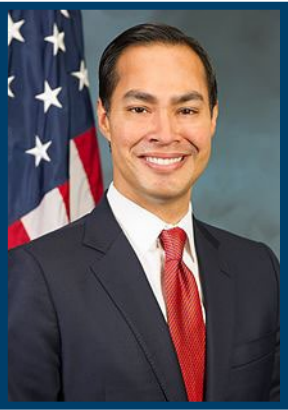
Secretary Castro received a B.A. from Stanford University in 1996, and a J.D. from Harvard Law School in 2000. He and his wife, Erica, have a daughter, Carina and a son, Cristian.

Dr. Ellen Riojas Clark

Ellen Riojas Clark, Professor Emerita of Bilingual Education, holds a Ph. D. in Curriculum and Instruction from The University of Texas at Austin. She received a M. A. in Bicultural Bilingual Studies from The University of Texas at San Antonio and a B. A. in Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education from Trinity University.

Dr. Clark served as the Educational Content Director for a nationally acclaimed Scholastic Entertainment PBS children’s cartoon series. This sixty-five episode program Maya and Miguel is focused on promoting the value of a culturally diverse society and bilingualism.

Dr. Clark has developed and presented many graduate summer institutes that focused on Latino literature and culture, multicultural education collaborative approaches, curriculum development, cooperative learning and restructuring schools for language minority students at UTSA over the years. These



have included the 1999, 2001, 2003 National Endowment for the Humanities summer institutes Derrumbando Fronteras/ Breaking Boundaries: the Inclusion of Mexican American and Latino Literature and Culture in the Classroom for which she received major NEH funding. Other signature events that she has co-chaired were: the University Conference on Multiculturalism in the United States: Multiculturalism and Democracy: Strategic Alternatives that brought speakers such as Carlos Cortes, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Cornel West, and Jorge Klor de Alva and Luz: Education through Art - Orlando AB. This event included an art exhibit, workshops, and student programs structured in collaboration with the Columbian artist, Orlando Botero, traveled nationally and internationally.

Vicki Carr

A legendary star of the stage and screen Vikki Carr has captivated audiences nationally and abroad for over 50 years with her melodic voice and presence. She is one of the best loved and most accomplished entertainers in the United States, Latin America and Europe. In her illustrious career she has garnered four Grammy Awards including a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Recording Academy and has released over 60 best selling recordings. She has performed for the Queen of England, five United States Presidents, wartime soldiers in Vietnam and sold out audiences around the world. She has worked in radio, television, film and theater. Her music embraces four languages and she is among the first artists to bridge the cultures of the United States and Latin America, paving the way for many performers today.

Vikki Carr has received many prestigious awards throughout her career. In addition to the 2008 Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, these honors include the 2011 Medallion of Excellence given by the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, 2009 Vietnam Veterans President’s Award, 2005 National Hispanic Media Coalition Impact Lifetime Achievement Award, 2003 Latino Spirit Award, 2003 Tito Guizar Award, 2002 Trefoil Award, 2000 Inductee, Latino Legends Hall of Fame, 1998 Imagen Foundation “Humanitarian Award, 1996 Hispanic Heritage Award, 1991 Girl Scouts of America Trefoil Award, 1990 City of Hope’s Founder of Hope Award, 1988 Nosotros Golden Eagle Award, 1984 Hispanic Woman of the Year, 1981 Star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, 1974 Doctorate in Law from San Diego University and Doctorate in Fine Arts from St. Edwards University, 1972 American Guild of Variety Artist’s “Entertainer of the Year”, and the Los Angeles Times’ highly respected “Woman of the Year” for 1970. She has earned the career achievement award of the Association of Hispanic Critics, Chicago’s Ovation Award and the YWCA Silver Achievement Award.



2015 Feria Educativa Padrinos de Honor

Lilian Esther Hernandez

Ms. Lilian Esther Hernandez is the Executive Director for PIQE’s regional offices in Riverside/ San Bernardino and San Gabriel Valley. She is responsible for the programs day to day operations, program development, quality control and the fiscal budget for the offices. In addition, Ms. Hernández is responsible for establishing and maintaining working relationships with local university presidents, community leaders, school superintendents, principals, and other school representatives. Ms. Hernandez was instrumental in successfully leading and sustaining the two regional offices for the past nine years. She was essential in expanding PIQE’s programs in the counties of Riverside, San Bernardino and a portion of Los Angeles. She was responsible for making sure we served multiple communities by offering PIQE’s programs in multiple languages. She joined PIQE in 1999 as a Facilitator, and then, as an Associate Director before being promoted to Executive Director.

Ms. Hernández was born and raised in Puerto Cortes, Honduras. She immigrated to the United States in 1982. She and her husband are pastors in Amistad Cristiana Church of Assemblies of God in the city of Upland. She has tremendous passion for helping others and through her involvement she has participated in numerous conventions empowering women to overcome obstacles. She is a gifted speaker being invited to lead workshops in Mexico, Cuba, Honduras, and El Salvador. In addition, she enjoys volunteering in orphanages and helping children in need. She is a proud mother of two grown children: Caleb and Joshua Hernandez.

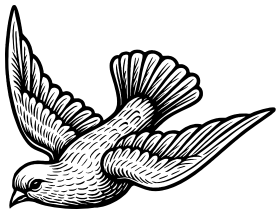


Jorge B. Haynes

Jorge B. Haynes was Senior Director of External Relations for the California State University Office of the Chancellor. He was responsible for outreach to all California State University constituent groups and serves as the primary liaison between the Chancellor’s Office and underrepresented communities in California and nationally.

Haynes coordinated the CSU’s out-of-the-box initiatives, which have been nationally recognized and replicated in other states. The CSU’s partnerships with African American churches, Latino organizations, Asian Pacific Islander representatives and Native American communities have created new pathways to underscore the need for academic preparation leading to a university education for traditionally underrepresented communities.

Prior to joining the Chancellor’s Office in 2001, Haynes worked in the capital cities of California, Florida, Texas and Washington, D.C. While in California, he worked in the Department of Finance, the Public Employment Relations Board, the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) and the California State Assembly where he was the first Latino hired as a consultant to the Assembly Education Committee. Haynes is an Air Force Vietnam veteran and is active with the American Legion, the G.I. Forum, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities (HACU) and the Hispanic Chambers of Commerce. He received his BA in government from CSU Sacramento in 1972.



2016 LEAD Summit Padrino de Honor

Fr. Patrick S. Guillen (†2019), Chicano Priest & Co-Founder of Libreria Del Pueblo

Patricio Guillen Santoyo was born in 1929 in Bellflower, California, and the eighth child of ten born to Patricio Guillen Zendejas from Michoacan and Juana Santoya Castorena from Aguascalientes, Mexico. Both of his parents immigrated to the United States at the turn of the 20th Century.



Just 8 months after he was born, the Great Depression of 1929 shook the economy and his family soon lost both their dry farm and family home in Bellflower. To make matters worse the Long Beach earthquake of 1932 hit the area badly and they spent several days living outdoors until the after-shocks lessened in intensity and finally stopped completely.

From 1932 on, his family became one of the thousands of migrant Mexican American farm working families barely earning enough for food and lodging. As the Depression intensified, 4 of his siblings and 15 of his cousins all began to die in their teen years due to the great Tuberculosis Epidemic that struck with deadly force.

Patricio graduated from Chino High School in 1948, attended both La Verne College and Immaculate Heart Major Seminary and graduated in 1957 with his Bachelor's degree. He was ordained a Roman Catholic Priest on March 19, 1957 (Diocese of San Diego, CA).

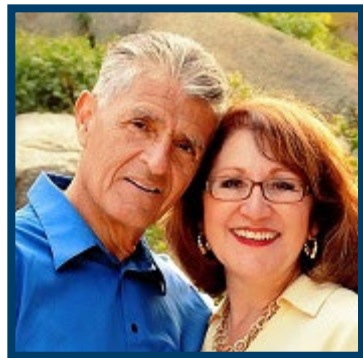
Fr. Guillen recounts in his written essay "THE JOURNEY OF A CHICANO PRIEST" (2011) that he began his priestly, pastoral ministry right after his ordination in St. Joseph's Cathedral, and as he lay flat on the floor of the Sanctuary during the chanting of the litany of the Saints he "offered his life to God in the service of His People." Little did he know then what lay ahead in his five-year priestly ministry as an associate pastor, two years as a catholic Chaplain of Narcotic Rehabilitation Center, and three years of Post Graduate Studies, Diocesan Ministries and Pastor of four different parishes.

2017 LEAD Summit Padrinos de Honor

Frank and Eloise Reyes

Assemblymember Eloise Gomez Reyes

was born and raised in Colton, attended Colton High School and San Bernardino Valley College, eventually transferring to USC. She worked up to three jobs while she worked her way through college. She received her law degree from Loyola Law School and not long after, became the first Latina to open her own law office in the Inland Empire.



Since becoming our newest Assemblymember, Eloise was appointed Chair of the Assembly Legislative Ethics Committee and was also appointed to the Special Committee on the Confirmation of Xavier Becerra as Attorney General. Additionally, she has been appointed to various important Committees: Appropriations, Judiciary, Labor, Privacy and Utilities and Energy.

Eloise's passion and commitment to the community will bring resources and opportunities to San Bernardino county. She will continue to be a leader –fighting alongside those who seek a better community and a better world.

College Trustee Frank G. Reyes was elected to the San Bernardino Community College District Board of Trustees, Area 1 in the most recent election. Frank has been an advocate for higher education and will continue to expand opportunities for our students.

Recognizing the importance of education, Frank shares, "A quality education is the best gift we can give our students and they all deserve the opportunity to learn in a safe and stimulating environment."

2018 LEAD Summit Madrinas de Honor

Gloria Harrison and Marta Brown †

Gloria Macías Harrison and Marta Macías Brown† (sisters), are San Bernardino natives (both graduates of SB High School), civic advocates, and lifelong activists who among many achievements and decades' work in community rights, education and politics; are credited for helping create and grow the "El Chicano" newspaper. It was founded in 1968 under the auspices of the University of California, Riverside, by a group of community leaders from San Bernardino and Riverside counties.



Marta was one of two first editors of the volunteer-driven paper which served as a voice and educational platform for the Chicano community. Articles focused on social justice, civil rights, school integration and other issues. It became part of the Chicano Press Association, an organization of like newspapers and newsletters around the country, and served as an organizing tool for voter registration, rallies, meetings and political campaigns.

Gloria and her husband, Bill Harrison, were active in the Progressive Action League advocating for equal access to education, housing, and employment opportunities. In 1969, "El Chicano" came under independent ownership with Marta as editor, Gloria as publisher, and Bill as its business manager.

Next year (2018), "El Chicano", which publishes weekly along with nine other community weeklies that make up the family publishing business, Inland Empire Community Newspapers, will turn 50, and is already the longest-running Chicano-owned and -operated publication in state history!!!

Gloria Macías Harrison served as President of Crafton Hills College for 12 years and as Vice President of Instruction for six. She taught for 20 years at San Bernardino Valley College and was Dean of Humanities for three. She retired in 2011 and was elected to the San Bernardino Community College Board of Trustees in 2012.

Marta Macías Brown was also a founding member of the first United Mexican American Student chapter, a precursor to the Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan, or MEChA, at California State University, San Bernardino. MEChA, which sought Chicano empowerment and unity through political action, sprang from the civil rights and Chicano Movement sweeping through Southern California and elsewhere around the country during the 1960s.

The Macías sisters are recipients of many local, state and national awards, including an NAACP award for their contributions to the community through "El Chicano" newspaper. Both have served as governor appointees on California commissions and remain advocates for social justice, equity and equality in education, the arts, women's rights, and energy and conservation issues.



2019 LEAD Summit Padrino de Honor**Dr. José Angel Gutiérrez**

Dr. Gutiérrez, along with Cesar Chavez, Reies López Tijerina, and Corky Gonzales, stands out as among the most important and influential leaders of the Chicano movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

He was a founding member of the Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO) in 1967, one of the first student activist groups of the Chicano movement; and founding member and past president of the political third-party La Raza Unida Party, which left its mark on the political scene, challenging Democratic and Republican parties alike to court the ignored Mexican American and Latino voter.

José Angel was one of many activists working to change public education on a local level in the 1960s and 70s. Born in Crystal City, Texas, and educated in local schools, Gutiérrez mobilized the community to demand equal treatment for Chicano students. He was lead organizer of the Winter Garden Project, the project that which led to the now famous walkout of 1969.

Dr. Gutiérrez has been organizer, founder and co-founder of several other organizations such as the Mexican American Unity Council (MAUC), Ciudadanos Unidos, Obreros Unidos Independientes, Becas Para Aztlán, Oregon Council for Hispanic Advancement, Northwest Voter Registration and Education Project, and Grupo de Apoyo para Immigrantes Latin Americanos (GAILA).

He has been the subject of many articles and film documentaries, including the PBS video series, CHICANO! The Mexican American Struggle for Civil Rights, and is mentioned in many Chicano history and political science books. He was also featured as an "Innovator" in the PBS documentary series - School: the Story of American Public Education. More recently Dr. Gutiérrez was featured in a segment of: "Prejudice and Pride: the Chicano Movement", which was part of the PBS series - "Latino Americans."

We just received the news that José Angel Gutiérrez is the recipient of the prestigious 2019 Hispanic Hero Award. For those not familiar with his contributions, here's the video produced and published by the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute. Watch José Angel Gutiérrez 2019 Hero Award on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rxs0if-Blk&feature=youtu.be>.

**2019 LEAD Summit Madrina de Honor****Mrs. Concepción "Concha" Rivera**

Concha Rivera was born and raised in Mexico. She and her family emigrated to the United States at the age of 20. She attended public schools in Mexico. She holds degrees in interior design, and AA in business, and an AA in fundraising from Loyola University.

At age 22, she married Tomás Rivera and had three children. After her husband's death, Concha was acting director of the California Museum of Photography, and was responsible for moving the museum from the university campus to downtown Riverside. She continued with the museum for 12 years as Director of Development. She has served in numerous boards, such as the Riverside Art Museum, The Riverside Community Foundation, is the founder of the Tomás Rivera conference, and the founder of Primavera in the Gardens at UCR.

Concha serves on the UCR Foundation Board of Trustees and was also selected as the 2019 Woman of the Year by Assembly member Jose Media, 61st Assembly District. She enjoys traveling, having visited 63 countries (and continues to travel!), and enjoys ballroom dancing, reading, and playing tennis.

Her late husband Tomás Rivera was a Chicano author, poet, and educator. From 1979 until his death in 1984, he was the chancellor of the University of California, Riverside, the first Latino and minority to hold such a position within the University of California system. Concha continues with the legacy left by her husband to campaign for education. Watch this Deeply Rooted YouTube video:

<https://youtu.be/po1rEo9IWfo>.

advocate. In the mid-1980s, he began developing what is now arguably the finest private collection of Chicano art. Much of 2022 LEAD Summit Padrino de Honor

**2022 LEAD Summit Padrino de Honor****Cheech Marin**

Best known as one half of the hilariously irreverent, satirical, counter-culture, no-holds-barred duo Cheech and Chong (now on tour), Cheech Marin is a paradox in the world of entertainment. Cheech is an actor, director, it formed the core of his inaugural exhibition Chicano Visions: American Painters on the Verge, which broke attendance records during its groundbreaking 15-city tour during 2001-2007 to major art museums across the United States. He states, "Chicano art is American art. My goal is to bring the term 'Chicano' to the forefront of the art world."

Following the success of Chicano Visions, over a dozen additional exhibitions drawn from the Cheech Marin Collection have toured more than 50 major art museums across the United States and in Europe under the direction of Melissa Richardson Banks. In addition, art books have been independently published to accompany many of these exhibitions, including Papel Chicano: Works on Paper from the Collection of Cheech Marin, Chicanitas: Small Paintings from the Cheech Marin Collection, and Papel Chicano Dos: Works on Paper from the Collection of Cheech Marin. Artwork from his collection inspires his work in other ways. For example, the bottle design of Tres Papalote Mezcal, for which Cheech serves as the brand ambassador, was inspired by the contemporary glass sculptures and other works of Einar and Jamex de la Torre, two brothers who are represented his collection.

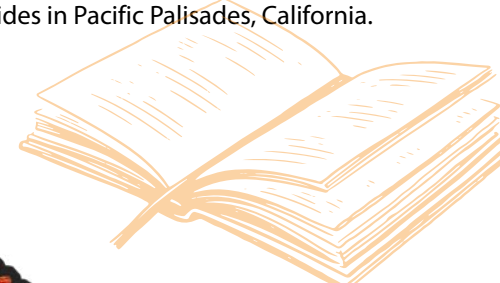
Furthering his goal to introduce Chicano art to a wider audience, Marin has entered into a partnership with the City of Riverside and Riverside Art Museum to create the national Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art, Culture, and Industry (aka "The Cheech"). Slated to open in 2021, The Cheech will become the permanent home for his more than 700 works of Chicano art, including paintings, sculptures, and photography; collectively, the most renowned Chicano art collection in the United States.

Cheech is a nationally ranked golfer, active in the charity circuit. Married to Russian-born classical pianist Natasha Marin, the couple resides in Pacific Palisades, California.

**2023 LEAD Summit Padrino de Honor****Emilio Rivera**

Emilio was born in San Antonio, Texas as the oldest child of seven siblings (four brothers and three sisters), and as a young boy his family moved to California. He is very familiar with our Theme as having grown up in a gang family from Frogtown (an impoverished neighborhood of Los Angeles, Elysian Valley). Upon matriculating from high school in 1979 as still a youth, Emilio enlisted in the US Army. But after which Emilio set out on a path of self-destruction and recklessness. He was associated with street gangs, took drugs, and drank. He lived this life for years, then as he said, acting saved his life. He went into rehab and began studying acting, and although he wasn't ready for Hollywood yet, Emilio launched his acting career as a stage actor. He first started honing his craft and improv skills on comedy club stages, but found discipline and true passion through the art of acting. Underneath his exterior, Emilio's passion for acting thrived and after much soul searching he decided to take his biggest risk and pursue professional acting. The training, discipline and extensive hours of studying changed Emilio's life forever. Those around him were amazed at the radical yet positive change in Emilio and realized he had found his true passion in life. In between his time studying Emilio worked as a mechanical engineer.

He discovered that turning your life around is the key to making dreams come true. His acting credentials have allowed him to top the list of successful Latino actors. With nearly 150 acting credits to his name, he is known for his authenticity and presence on screen, especially while depicting criminals and law enforcement officers. Emilio gained international fame for his portrayal of Marcus Álvarez (Leader of the Mayans Oakland charter) in the FX original crime-drama series Sons of Anarchy and its spin-off, Mayans M.C. Noticeably, the fictional character of Marcus Álvarez is called "El Padrino" by his fellow Mayans, a title of immense respect, and a title that will now be bestowed upon Mr. Rivera in real-life by our LEAD Projects, as an example of life imitating art.



2023 LEAD Summit Madrina de Honor

Dolores Huerta

Dolores Huerta is one of the most influential Chicana/Latinas of the 20th century for her work as a community organizer, labor activist, civil rights leader, and advocate for social, economic, and environmental justice. Dolores Clara Fernández Huerta (born April 10, 1930) is an American labor leader and civil rights activist who, with Cesar Chavez, is a co-founder of the United Farmworkers Association, which later merged with the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee to become the United Farm Workers (UFW). Huerta is the originator of the phrase "Sí, se puede". Huerta's community activism began when she was a student at Stockton High School.

Huerta was active in numerous school clubs and was a majorette and dedicated member of the Girl Scouts until the age of 18. A schoolteacher accused her of stealing another student's work and, as a result, giving her an unfair grade, an act she considers to be rooted in racial bias. Having experienced marginalization during childhood because she was Hispanic, Huerta grew up with the belief that society needed to be changed. She attended college at the University of the Pacific's Stockton College (later to become San Joaquin Delta Community College), where she earned a provisional teaching credential. After teaching elementary school, Huerta left her job and began her lifelong crusade to correct economic injustice. In 1955, Huerta along with Fred Ross co-founded and organized the Stockton Chapter of the Community Service Organization (CSO), which fought for economic improvements for Latino/Mexican/Chicano migrant Farm workers.

Due to her dedication and willingness to serve, Ross often delegated huge responsibilities to her. He knew she was capable of delivering the organization's message in Spanish and English and promoted the agenda from door to door field organizing. "As she assumed responsibilities and stance that were traditionally held by white males, Huerta encountered criticism based on both gender and ethnic stereotypes". In 1960, Huerta co-founded the Agricultural Workers Association, which set up voter registration drives and pressed local governments for barrio improvements. In 1962, she co-founded, with César Chávez, the National Farm Workers Association, which would later become the United Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee. Huerta was the only woman to ever sit on the board of the UFW, until 2018. As an advocate for farmworkers' rights, Huerta has been arrested twenty-two times for participating in non-violent civil disobedience activities and strikes. She remains active in progressive causes, and serves on the boards of People for the American Way, Consumer Federation of California, and Feminist Majority Foundation.

On June 5, 1968, Huerta stood beside Robert F. Kennedy on the speaker's platform at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles as he delivered a victory statement to his political supporters shortly after winning the California Democratic presidential primary election. Only moments after the candidate finished his speech, Kennedy and five other people were wounded by gunfire inside the hotel's kitchen pantry. Kennedy died from his gunshot wounds on June 6. Huerta is very familiar with our Theme. In September 1988, in front of the St. Francis Hotel in Union Square, Huerta was severely beaten by San Francisco Police officer Frank Achim during a peaceful and lawful protest of the policies/platform of then-candidate for president George H. W. Bush. The baton-beating caused significant internal injuries to her torso, resulting in several broken ribs and requiring the removal of her spleen in emergency surgery. The beating was caught on videotape and broadcast widely on local television news. Later, Huerta won a large judgment against the SFPD and the City of San Francisco for the attack, the proceeds of which she used for the benefit of farm workers. As a result of this assault and the suit, the SFPD was pressured to change its crowd control policies and its process of officer discipline. Following a lengthy recovery, Huerta took a leave of absence from the union to focus on women's rights.

Huerta is president of the Dolores Huerta Foundation, which she founded in 2002. It is a 501(c)(3) "community benefit organization that organizes at the grassroots level, engaging and developing natural leaders. DHF creates leadership opportunities for community organizing, leadership development, civic engagement, and policy advocacy in the following priority areas: health & environment, education & youth development, and economic development."



2024 LEAD Summit Padrino de Honor

Pepe Serna

Pepe Serna is your favorite actor, and you didn't even know it. Did you grow up in the 1970s, '80s, or '90s? Are you a millennial or a Gen X? Doesn't matter. When you went to the movies or turned on the TV, he was right there in front of you. No, not the star. The guy to his or her left. The one who makes the scene work and the star shine.

As one of the longest working character actors in Hollywood, Pepe Serna has inspired and paved the way for generations of Latino actors by defying stereotypes and fighting for representation in an industry that continues to largely ignore the Latino community.

Pepe Serna is a versatile American actor, artist, and motivational speaker, born on July 23, 1944, in Corpus Christi, Texas. With a career spanning over five decades, Serna has appeared in more than 100 films and 300 television shows. He is perhaps best known for his role as Angel Fernandez in the iconic film "Scarface" (1983), where his character met a gruesome end in a memorable scene.

Serna's early career included roles in films like "The Student Nurses" (1970) and "The New Centurions" (1972). He has also played significant roles in movies such as "Silverado" (1985), "The Rookie" (1990), and "American Me" (1992). His television credits are extensive, featuring appearances in shows like "The Rockford Files," "Knight Rider," and "American Playhouse."

More than an actor, Serna is also known for his work as an artist and a motivational speaker. He has conducted workshops and given keynote speeches, emphasizing the power of self-expression and cultural heritage. His documentary, "Pepe Serna: Life is Art," highlights his contributions to Hollywood and the representation of Latino actors in the industry. This documentary is available on streaming platforms like Amazon and Apple TV.

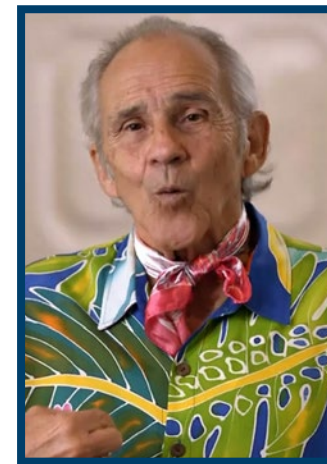
In addition to his film and television work, Serna has been active in theater and voice acting, showcasing his wide-ranging talents and enduring presence in the entertainment industry.

Now, in his 80s, Serna is determined to help solve Hollywood's representation problem by empowering students in under-resourced communities to become the next generation of storytellers. "We're so much more than anybody gives us credit for," he said. "We're good at anything and everything. And that's why it's important that I reach as many students as I can in my workshops."

For more detailed information, you can visit his official website.

- **Prime Video:** Pepe Serna Life is Art: <https://www.primevideo.com/detail/Pepe-Serna-Life-is-Art/OLM96IOP2DNM5JIR1HZZH9ETIT>
- **Apple TV:** Pepe Serna Life is Art: <https://tv.apple.com/us/movie/pepe-serna-life-is-art/sbd.9001%3A1727366909> umc.cmc.6uekqvdenC7f8xhgw9mtftay7?playableId=tvS
- **Book:** Pepe Serna Life is Art <https://www.pepeserna.net/product/life-is-art>

PS: Pepe encourages everyone to also go to YouTube and watch, Raices De Sangre, he says is "The Greatest Chicano and Mexican Movie ever made, shot in 1977." <https://youtu.be/70zd2QaNUE0>





Bel Hernandez Castillo
Founder/
CEO Latin Heat Media

Founding Chair, Hispanic
Coalition of Small Businesses
(HCSB) Arts & Entertainment
Committee

Chair, Farmworker Justice
Advisory Council Chair,
Peabody Awards

Member, Advisory Board of
the Mexican American Cultural
Education Foundation

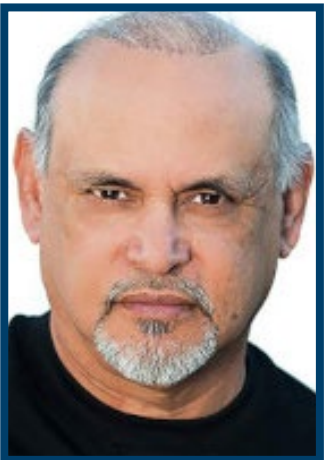
Extending the Latin Heat brand, she produced the Latin Heat Entertainment Conference for six years, with the participation of Hollywood’s top talent, studios, networks, and executives. Hernandez Castillo’s work led to her being named “The Godmother of Latino Hollywood” by Moviemaker Magazine. She also served for six years on the Peabody Awards Board, which honors excellence in TV, film, and the internet, the last year becoming the first Latina/o to serve as the Chair of the Board.

In 2012, Hernandez Castillo received an NCLR ALMA Award from the National Council of La Raza (now UNIDOS) for her contributions to the entertainment community. Recognition for her journalist endeavors came from the Hispanic Public Relations Association, Latina Style Magazine, La Opinion, National Hispanic Health Foundation, National Hispanic Media Coalition, the City of Los Angeles, the HPRA (Bel, is this the same as the Hispanic Public Relations Association mention earlier in this sentence?), The Art Center Los Angeles, and Women in Theater Festival.

She currently serves as the Chair of the Farmworker Justice Advisory Council and on the Advisory Board of the Mexican American Cultural Education Foundation.

In 2021, she began her work on the Credentialing Committee of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (producers of the Golden Globes).

Hernandez Castillo is most proud to be the mother of three children: Karina Noelle, Sol, and Alma Castillo; a “Nana” to Amada and Kean Castillo, and Jack Day; and to be married to actor/director Enrique Castillo!



Enrique Castillo
Producer/Co-Director/
Writer

Enrique Castillo is an
award-winning actor/
writer/director and author
whose work spans theater,
television and film. He is an
Imagen Award recipient for
his writing/directing. He is
well known for Showtime’s
television series Weeds
where he played the lethal
Cesar. Enrique is most
recognized for his film role

of Montana in Taylor Hackford’s Blood In Blood Out where he played the inspirational (albeit terrifying) leader of the Mexican prison gang. When the film was released, The New York Times singled out Mr. Castillo’s performance in their review. In Japan a film critic said of his performance as Montana “He plays the role with the wisdom of Torquemada and the strength of a Sandinista warrior.” He began his career with Luis Valdez’s El Teatro Campesino in 1969. As part of the Teatro, Enrique participated in workshops with renowned English director Peter Brook’s theater company that included now Academy Award winner Helen Mirren. In the early 70’s Enrique traveled with the Teatro to Paris where they represented the U.S. at the World Theater Festival.

Enrique made his television debut in 1969 performing Los Vendidos with El Teatro Campesino on NBC. In 1978 Enrique made the move to Hollywood and was cast in the hit play Zoot Suit, also created and directed by Luis Valdez, where he played the lead role opposite Edward James Olmos. Since then, he has appeared in over 50 television shows and feature films. His first feature film was acting opposite Charles Bronson in Borderline. Since then he has worked with such notable film directors as Tony Scott, (Déjà Vu) Taylor Hackford, (Blood In-Blood Out) Stephen Frears (The Hi-Lo Country) Wim Wenders (The End of Violence) Gregory Nava (My Family and El Norte) Oliver Stone (Nixon) and Tim Burton (Mars Attacks) Miguel Arteta (Beatriz at Dinner) Starring Salma Hayek. In the mid 90’s Enrique adapted, starred and directed the award-winning play The Last Angry Brown Hat, written by Alfredo Ramos that toured to rave reviews for over four years. He then wrote and directed Veteranos: A Legacy of Valor, a theater piece honoring the military contributions by Latinos in America’s defense that had two national tours to standing ovations and much critical acclaim. Veteranos was awarded a special recognition by the Hispanic Congressional Caucus and received the prestigious Imagen Award for Best Live Theatrical Production in Los Angeles, CA. Enrique has written various screenplays including Yo Solo (I Alone), The Cobra, Valley of The Dead, Deerdancer and the screen version of The Last Angry Brown Hat. Enrique’s debut novel, The Dead of Summer is a suspense thriller/crime drama that takes place in the US/Mexico.



8:45 AM: Opening Ceremony

9:00 AM: Procession / Performance

9:15 AM: Welcome Remarks /
Bienvenida

9:45 AM: Morning Featured Speaker

10:15 AM: Break / Networking & Vendor -
Exhibits Fair / Community Altar

10:30 AM: Puente Panel - “Educación como
Resistencia: Teaching and
Learning for Liberation in the Age
of Disinformation”

11:15 AM: Dr. Tomás Rivera Featured Panel -
“Ni Muertos Ni Vencidos: Memory,
Language, and Cultural Survival”

NOON: Lunch & Networking / Vendor &
Exhibits Fair / Community Altar

12:45 PM: Afternoon Featured Speaker -
“Divina Juventud: Rise, Reflect,
Rejoice, Resist, and Reimagine”

1:15 PM: Capstone Presentation -
“In Tloque Nahuaque:
The Interconnected Sacredness
and our Intergenerational
Movement for Justice and
Healing”

2:00 PM: Concluding Remarks &
Acknowledgements / Despedida
- “From the Altar to the Streets”

LEAD SUMMIT XV

Friday, October 16

Santos Manuel Student Union - South, CSUSB

LEAD Summit 15ñera for Justice: Divina Juventud: From Innocence to Resistance

8:00 AM: Check-In / DJ Music / Live Interviews / Ofrenda Installation



Jeannette Sandoval



Alejandro Ramos-Barajas



Saludo Artístico - Dee Jay MJ



Mariachi Generación Musical

- **Red Carpet Interviews:** Jeannette Sandoval & Alejandro Ramos-Barajas
- **Entertainment / Saludo Artístico:** Dee Jay MJ
- **Music:** Mariachi Generación Musical

Tlamanalli Community Altar (Ofrenda prehispánica Miccailhuitl) - curated by Makuill Ollin Ocelotl - Mitotl Calpulli (Circulo de Danza Azteca). Additional photographs and displays will be curated by the Consulado de México en San Bernardino, California (Mexican Consulate in San Bernardino). The Association of Latino Faculty, Staff and Students (ALFSS) at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) will display decorated calaveras (skulls) from their annual community art exhibition and live auction (Festival de Calaveras).

**Attendees are invited to place photos, flowers, or written tributes on the community ofrenda honoring ancestors, educators, and activists. Attendees are also invited to upload photos onto the digital Altar.*

8:45 AM: Opening Ceremony



Land Acknowledgement



Color Guard Presentation - Air Force Junior ROTC, West Covina HS (Distinguished Unit Award 2025-2026)



Pledge of Allegiance - Capt. Jesus Acuña-Perez (Ret)



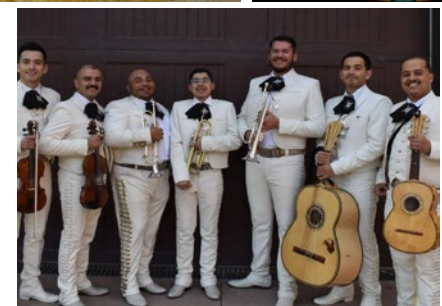
Mariachi Generación Musical



Very Rev. Msgr. Gerard M. Lopez, STL, Vicar General, Diocese of San Bernardino

- **Land Acknowledgement**
- **Color Guard Presentation:** Air Force Junior ROTC, West Covina HS (Distinguished Unit Award 2025-2026)
- **Pledge of Allegiance:** Capt. Jesus Acuña-Perez (Ret)
- **U.S. National Anthem:** Mariachi Generación Musical
- **Invocation:** Very Rev. Msgr. Gerard M. Lopez, STL, Vicar General, Diocese of San Bernardino

9:00 AM: Procession / Performance - " Raíces y Resistencia: Storytelling as Legacy and Liberation"



- **Intercessors:** Makuill Ollin Ocelotl - Mitotl Calpulli (Mexika Dance Calpulli)
- **Grand Marshals:** 2026 Padrinos de Honor
- **Video:** La Divina Juventud Against Fear: ICE, Media, and Student Walkouts - <https://youtu.be/ShKQrk08r70>
- **Music:** Mariachi Generación Musical

Featured Partner: Project XV: Empowering Our Youth, afterschool program within San Bernardino City Unified School District

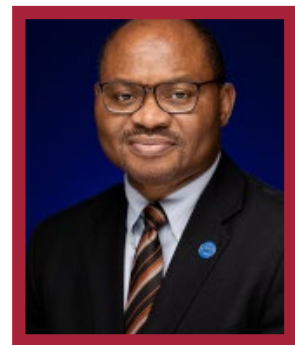
"Calling the Directions, Calling the Spirits": An intergenerational blessing invoking the cuatro rumbos (four directions) and the ancestors, accompanied by danza Azteca and drums.

"La Marcha de la 15ñera: From Innocence to Resistance": A ceremonial procession blending Día de los Muertos imagery with quinceañera ritual — featuring youth leaders carrying marigolds, protest banners, past LEAD Summit posters, and candles representing fifteen years of struggle and transformation.

9:15 AM: Welcome Remarks / Bienvenida



Dr. S. Terri Gómez
President,
California State University,
San Bernardino



Dr. Chinaka S. DomNwachukwu

- **Dr. S. Terri Gómez, President, California State University, San Bernardino**
- **Dr. Chinaka S. DomNwachukwu, Dean, James R. Watson and Judy Rodriguez Watson College of Education, California State University, San Bernardino**

9:45 AM: Morning Featured Speaker - "Passing the Palabra rooted in our Ancestral Integrity (AI) to the next generation of Youth Justice Leaders"



Leilani Ramirez



Maestro Jerry Tello

- **Introduction/Moderator:** Leilani Ramirez, Co-Director/Cultural Practitioner - Makuill Ollin Ocelotl Mitotl Calpulli (Circulo de Danza Azteca)
- **Featured Speaker:** Maestro Jerry Tello, Award Winning Author, Storyteller, Healing Practitioner, and LEAD Summit XV Padrino de Honor

This keynote centers the sacred act of passing the palabra — the intergenerational transmission of truth, memory, and responsibility — grounded in our Ancestral Integrity (AI). In a time shaped by disinformation and disconnection, this address calls us back to the wisdom of our ancestors as a living guide for justice, leadership, and collective healing.

Framed by the spirit of the 15ñera and Día de los Muertos, this session honors the voices that came before us — elders, educators, organizers, and cultural bearers — whose teachings continue to shape our path. The altar becomes not only a site of remembrance, but a bridge: where stories, values, and visions are carried forward into the hearts and hands of the next generation.

Our featured speaker invites us to understand Ancestral Integrity as both grounding and direction — a compass rooted in culture, accountability, and community. Here, youth are not passive recipients, but active carriers of the palabra: storytellers, truth-tellers, and architects of justice who inherit not only struggle, but purpose.

This session calls us to reflect:

- What does it mean to carry the palabra with integrity in this moment?
- How do we ensure that ancestral knowledge is not lost, but lived?
- In what ways can youth transform inherited wisdom into collective action?

Blending reflection, storytelling, and ceremonial intention, this keynote sets the tone for the day — reminding us that the future of justice depends on how we honor the past, how we live in the present, and how we prepare the next generation to lead with courage, clarity, and corazón.

A father, grandfather, therapist, award-winning author and internationally recognized authority on culturally based healing, Maestro Jerry Tello has devoted more than 50 years to strengthening individuals, families and communities.

Through his Indigenous-rooted philosophy, La Cultura Cura—Culture Heals—he has reached more than half a million people and trained thousands of facilitators nationwide. As co-founder and Elder Emeritus of the National Compadres Network, he is widely respected for his work in trauma healing, sacred fatherhood, family strengthening, racial healing and community peacebuilding.

10:15 AM:Break / Networking & Vendor - Exhibits Fair / Community Altar

- **Community organizations, vendors, publishers, artists, and youth collectives present cultural and educational resources.**
- **Empowering Latino Futures:** select authors and vendors of the Latino Book & Family Festival
- **Red Carpet Interviews:** Jeannette Sandoval & Alejandro Ramos-Barajas
- **Entertainment:** Dee Jay MJ
- **Community Altar and Day of the Dead Art:** Makuill Ollin Ocelotl, Mexican Consulate of San Bernardino, and the CSUSB Association of Latino Faculty, Staff, and Students.

10:30 AM: Puente Panel – “Educación como Resistencia: Teaching and Learning for Liberation in the Age of Disinformation”



Josefina E. Canchola



Dr. Gustavo Flores



Krystal Cervantes



David Aparicio



Richard Otero-Serrano

- **Chair/Moderator:** Josefina E. Canchola, Director of Secondary Programs and Partnerships - Puente Project, Vice President of the Board of Trustees - Whittier Union High School District, and LEAD Summit XV Madrina de Honor
- **Panelist:** Dr. Gustavo Flores, Assistant Director of Secondary Teaching - The Puente Project
- **Panelist:** Krystal Cervantes, Puente Alumna, Junior-Linguistics Major at University of California, Riverside
- **Panelist:** David Aparicio, Puente Senior at San Jacinto High School
- **Panelist:** Richard Otero-Serrano, Junior - Kinesiology Major, and Past LEAD Summit Puente Ambassador, CSUSB

This panel of educators, students, advocates, and activists discusses decolonizing pedagogy, truth-telling, and protecting students’ civic voices.

In a time when truth is contested and classrooms have become battlegrounds of ideology, this panel explores education as one of the last sacred spaces of resistance. “Educación como Resistencia” invites educators, students, advocates, and activists to confront the growing assault on truth, history, and civic consciousness — and to reclaim the classroom as a site of liberation rather than indoctrination.

Drawing from traditions of critical pedagogy, ethnic studies, testimonio, and community-based learning, panelists will discuss what it means to teach and learn with courage, compassion, and cultural memory in the age of disinformation. From book bans to algorithmic bias, they will examine how misinformation shapes public understanding and how educators can equip students to navigate — and challenge — false narratives.

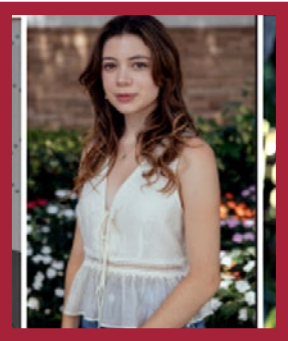
This conversation moves beyond academic theory into lived praxis: how teachers can transform lessons into acts of social justice, how advocates and activists can center truth over spectacle, and how youth can reclaim their civic voices.

In the spirit of the 15ñera and Día de los Muertos, this panel honors the educators who have come before — those who kept the flame of consciousness alive — while empowering a new generation to carry that torch forward. Education becomes both altar and battlefield, where every lesson is an offering to truth and every act of teaching is a declaration of resistance.

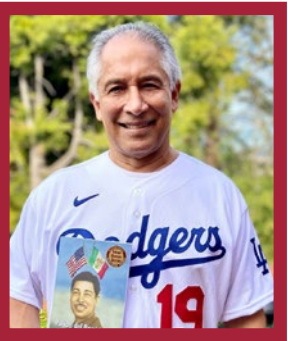
11:15 AM: Dr. Tomás Rivera Featured Panel – “Ni Muertos Ni Vencidos: Memory, Language, and Cultural Survival”



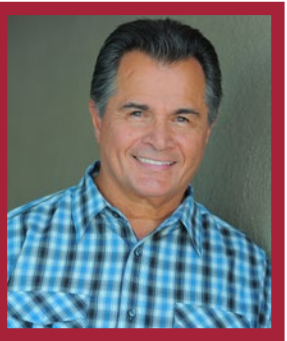
Kirk Whisler



Oyuki Hadoyan Aguilar



Reynaldo Santa Cruz



Carlo Allen

- **Chair/Moderator:** Kirk Whisler, President: Empowering Latino Futures, and Graduate of Pacific High School, San Bernardino Unified School District
- **Panelist:** Oyuki Hadoyan Aguilar, Senior, Marter Dei High School, Sweetwater High School District. Four-time International Latino Book Awards-winning author.
- **Panelist:** Reynaldo Santa Cruz, Retired Educator and Principal. Four-time International Latino Book Awards-winning author
- **Panelist:** Carlo Allen, Actor and Educator. Two-time International Latino Book Awards-winning author

This panel of youth writers, poets, and cultural workers explore storytelling as resurrection — how words, music, and art keep our communities alive.

In the tradition of Dr. Tomás Rivera — whose words carved pathways for generations of storytellers — this featured panel gathers youth writers, poets, and cultural workers to explore storytelling as resurrection. In a world quick to erase, silence, or distort the voices of marginalized communities, these artists remind us that through language, rhythm, and imagination, we remain ni muertos ni vencidos — neither dead nor defeated.

Anchored in the spirit of Día de los Muertos, this session transforms the stage into a living altar of voices. Each poem, lyric, and narrative becomes an offering — a candle lit for memory, a song for survival, a story that refuses to be buried. Through bilingual and bicultural expression, panelists will illuminate how art becomes both archive and uprising: how words stitched in two tongues can heal, how memory becomes a political act, and how creative resistance ensures that our ancestors’ struggles are never forgotten.

The conversation invites the audience to consider how cultural expression — from spoken word to corrido, mural to podcast — keeps our communities alive across generations and geographies. It celebrates art as a form of collective memory, one that carries the heartbeat of our pueblos forward even as we confront the erasures of coloniality and modern amnesia.

In the LEAD Summit 15ñera for Justice, this panel embodies the theme of Divina Juventud — youth as sacred keepers of story, guardians of language, and architects of cultural rebirth. Through Rivera’s legacy and their own lived truths, these emerging voices proclaim that while empires may fall silent, the people’s song continues — eternal, luminous, and unbroken.

* Dr. Tomás Rivera (December 22, 1935 – May 16, 1984) was a Mexican American author, poet, and educator. As an author, Rivera is best remembered for his 1971 Faulknerian stream-of-consciousness novella ... y no se lo tragó la tierra, translated into English variously as This Migrant Earth and as ... and the Earth Did Not Devour Him. This book won the first Premio Quinto Sol award. From 1979 until his death in 1984, he was the chancellor of the University of California, Riverside, the first Mexican American to hold such a position at the University of California.

12:00 PM: Lunch & Networking / Vendor & Exhibits Fair / Community Altar

- **Community organizations, vendors, publishers, artists, and youth collectives present cultural and educational resources.**
- **Empowering Latino Futures:** select authors and vendors of the Latino Book & Family Festival
- **Red Carpet Interviews:** Jeannette Sandoval & Alejandro Ramos-Barajas
- **Entertainment:** Dee Jay MJ
- **Community Altar and Day of the Dead Art:** Makuill Ollin Ocelotl, Mexican Consulate of San Bernardino, and the CSUSB Association of Latino Faculty, Staff, and Students

12:45 PM: Afternoon Featured Speaker - “Divina Juventud: Rise, Reflect, Rejoice, Resist, and Reimagine”



Dr. Stacey C. Ortiz



Luz Gallegos

- **Introduction/Moderator:** Dr. Stacey C. Ortiz, Ed.D. Program Specialist - Doctoral Studies, and President - Association of Latino Faculty, Staff, and Students (ALFSS), CSUSB
- **Featured Speaker:** Luz Gallegos, Executive Director - TODEC Legal Center, and Immigrant Rights Movement Leader and Advocate

In a moment when democracy trembles under the weight of lies, fear, and forgetfulness, this address calls us to witness the sacred energy of youth — divina juventud — not as an age, but as a spirit: fierce, radiant, and alive.

We are invited to look to young people — students, artists, organizers, dreamers — as the architects of a new democratic imagination. Here, youth are not merely “the future” but the moral compass of the present, guiding us from the shadows of grief into the light of collective power.

“Divina Juventud: Rise, Reflect, Rejoice, Resist, and Reimagine” embodies the transformation from victim to visionary, from mourning to movement. It honors those who came before — teachers, elders, ancestors — while lifting up the next generation as sacred defenders of justice, truth, and dignity. Through stories of struggle and triumph, the featured speaker will illuminate how today’s youth confront disinformation with creativity, apathy with art, and despair with action.

This is a call to reclaim the divine within resistance — to see joy as rebellion, knowledge as weapon, and love as the fiercest form of power. Echoing the spirit of the 15ñera, this moment celebrates fifteen years of struggle and awakening with a declaration: “Divina Juventud — sacred, angry, alive.” “From innocence to resistance — we are the 15ñera for justice.”

The Afternoon Featured Speaker guides us through the final stage of the 15ñera’s rite of passage — from reflection to rebirth, from democracy’s funeral to the dawn of a new civic imagination. It is not only a keynote; it is a blessing, a challenge, and a celebration of the unstoppable light of youth.

Luz Gallegos is executive director of TODEC Legal Center. Born and raised in the Inland Empire, Luz began her journey “en la causa, el movimiento” as a child, guided by her parents and inspired by leaders such as Bert Corona, Soledad “Chole” Alatorre and César E. Chávez.

Throughout her career, she has led hundreds of initiatives advancing immigrant rights, civic engagement, educational access and community well-being. Under her leadership, TODEC provides vital legal, educational and humanitarian support to immigrant and migrant-worker families across the Inland Empire and Coachella Valley.

Guided by faith, compassion and solidarity, Luz reminds us that love and hope are powerful instruments of healing, resilience and justice.

1:15 PM: Capstone Presentation – “In Tloque Nahuague: The Interconnected Sacredness and our Intergenerational Movement for Justice and Healing”



Mayra Aceves



Maestro Jerry Tello



Josefina E. Canchola



Arely Velazquez



Dra. Ariana A. Cano

- **Chair/Moderator:** Mayra Aceves, Educator - San Bernardino City Unified School District, Author, Certified Life Coach, Cultural Practitioner - Makuill Ollin Ocelotl Mitotl Calpulli (Circulo de Danza Azteca), and Board Member - Rumsen Ohlone Indigenous Embrace (ROIE)
- **Panelist:** Maestro Jerry Tello, Award Winning Author, Storyteller, Healing Practitioner, and LEAD Summit XV Padrino de Honor
- **Panelist:** Josefina E. Canchola, Director of Secondary Programs and Partnerships - Puente Project, Vice President of the Board of Trustees - Whittier Union High School District, and LEAD Summit XV Madrina de Honor
- **Panelist:** Arely Velazquez, Junior - Cajon High School - San Bernardino City Unified School District, Student Representative - Student Leadership Advisory Council and SBCUSD Advisory Council, and Member - Fifth District Youth Advisory Council
- **Panelist:** Dra. Ariana A. Cano, Social Activist, Assistant Professor - Southwestern College, Former Quinceañera Choreographer - Inland Empire, Quinceañera Researcher - University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, CSUSB Alumna '16 and '18, Proud Danzante - Calpulli Mayahuel

As the day reaches its culmination, this Capstone Presentation centers In Tloque Nahuague — the understanding that all is interconnected, that we exist in sacred relationship with one another across generations, histories, and futures. This session becomes a living embodiment of that principle, bringing together Elders (52+), Yelders (27–51), and Youth (under 26) in a collective dialogue on justice, healing, and continuity.

Featuring one panelist from each generational circle, this intergenerational conversation reflects the full arc of movement-building: wisdom carried, knowledge practiced, and vision emerging. Elders ground us in ancestral memory and lived experience; Yelders bridge tradition and transformation through leadership and action; and Youth ignite the future with creativity, urgency, and unapologetic truth. Together, they model what it means to move not in isolation, but in relationship — accountable to past, present, and future.

This capstone, like a collective rite of passage, is more than a panel; it is a ceremonial convergence where story, testimony, and reflection become offerings to our collective altar. It honors fifteen years of the LEAD Summit’s legacy while expanding its vision — reminding us that justice work is not linear, but cyclical, relational, and deeply spiritual. Here, healing is not separate from resistance; it is the foundation that sustains it.

Guided by the spirit of the 15ñera and Día de los Muertos, this session calls us to reflect:

How do we remain rooted in ancestral knowledge while responding to present realities?

What responsibilities do we carry to those who came before and those yet to come?

How do we build movements that are not only effective, but sustaining, loving, and whole?

As the marigolds glow and the drums call us into unity, this presentation becomes a collective vow — to walk in balance, to lead with integrity, and to remain in right relationship with one another. It closes the 15ñera not as an ending, but as a renewal: a declaration that we are interconnected, that we are accountable to each other, and that our intergenerational movement for justice and healing continues — rooted, rising, and unbroken.

2:00 PM: Concluding Remarks & Acknowledgements / Despedida - “From the Altar to the Streets”

Closing ritual of renewal: attendees take candles and marigold petals from the altar and commit to carrying the work forward — *¡Presente y adelante!*



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Iwona-Maria Luczkiewicz Contreras (lead)
- **Arts / Culture / Music / Entertainment**
Elias Escamilla (lead, and Lobby MC)
Romeo Perez
Jorge Martinez
- **Development / Capital Campaigns**
Dr. Enrique Murillo, Jr. (lead)
- **Educational Design / Curricula / Program**
Dr. Enrique Murillo, Jr. (lead)
Jerry Tello (honorary chair)
Josefina Canchola (honorary chair)
Kirk Whisler
Jacob Vilchis-Ruiz
Capt. Jesus Acuña-Perez
Tammy García Chiang
- **Exhibits Expo / Vendors**
Jennifer Winburn (lead)
Kaitlyn Thomas
- **Facilities / Set Up**
Mario Orellana (lead)
SMSU Operations
- **Hospitality (Off-Campus) / Guest Relations / Lodging**
Patricia Aguilera (lead)
- **Hospitality (On-Campus) / Guest Relations / Food & Beverage**
Monica Baeza (lead)
- **Information Systems / Technology Operations / Media Partnerships**
James Trotter (lead)
Rob Garcia (stage manager)
Dmitriy Astakhov
- **Multimedia & Immersive Technologies Outreach / Promotion / Social Media**
Dr. Thomas Robles (co-lead)
Josefina Canchola
Steve Gonzales
- **Puente Ambassadors:**
Dr. Gustavo Flores (co-lead)
Andra Santamaria - Norte Vista High School
Maria Beltran - Norte Vista High School
Kevin Cervantes - Norte Vista High School
Christian Garcia - Norte Vista High School
Lia Campos-Gutierrez - San Jacinto High School
Milay Lopez - San Jacinto High School
Adrien Sanchez -San Jacinto High School
Alexa Cacho - San Jacinto High School

- **Parking / Transportation**
Dalia Hernandez (co-lead)
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Ricardo Elias
- **Procession / Procesiones**
Dra. Aurora Vilchis (lead)
Mayra Aceves
Arely Velasquez
Leilani Ramirez
- **Public Safety**
Captain Roland Gallardo (lead)
Sergeant Devon Herrington
Sergeant Manuel Aguirre
- **Red Carpet**
Alejandro Ramos-Barajas (co-lead)
Jeannette Sandoval (co-lead)
- **Registration**
Dra. Stacey Ortiz (lead)
Dra. Marina Serna Pulido
- **Translation & Language Services**
Delila A. Vasquez (lead)
Dr. Pablo A. Gutierrez Cervantes
- **Volunteer Coordination / Decoration / Clean-Up**
Jairo Leon (lead)
Estefania Esparza Loera (co-lead)

You Will Make a Real Difference

Latino Education and Advocacy Days (LEAD Projects) needs your support!

Our purpose is to promote a broad-based awareness of the crisis in Latino Education and to enhance the intellectual, cultural and personal development of our community's educators, administrators, leaders, parents and students.

To address these critical issues, and to ensure a strong future, the LEAD Organization at California State University, San Bernardino houses several national and international projects that provide a means to maximize the promotion, outreach and relations, within the areas of primary purpose.

Who are we: The broad spectrum of researchers, teaching professionals and educators, academics, scholars, administrators, independent writers and artists, policy and program specialists, students, parents, families, civic leaders, activists, and advocates. In short, those sharing a common interest and commitment to educational issues that impact Latinos.

The LEAD Organization serves as a primary site for a set of innovative and productive programs, publications and events in Latinos and Education. For more than two decades, our LEAD Projects have worked for Social Justice and Change by bringing you publications, information & resources, networking opportunities / partnership building, college & career fairs, financial aid workshops, public forums & virtual classrooms, audio & video production & webcasts, policy impact and netroots advocacy, scholarships - awards & internships, an annual showcase Summit . . . and many-many-many programs - too numerous to name!!!



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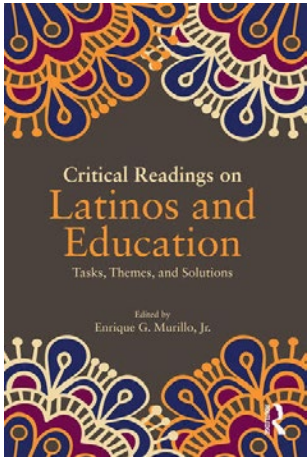
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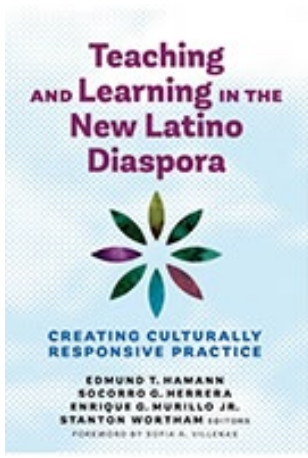
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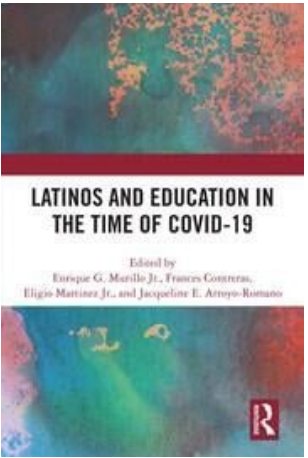
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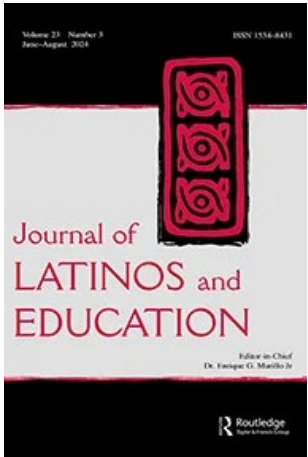
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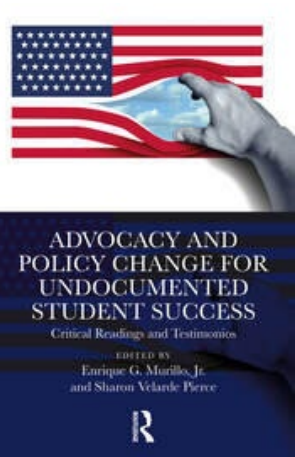
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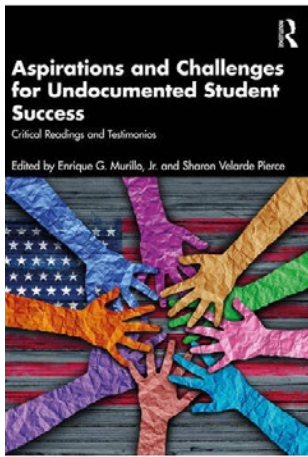
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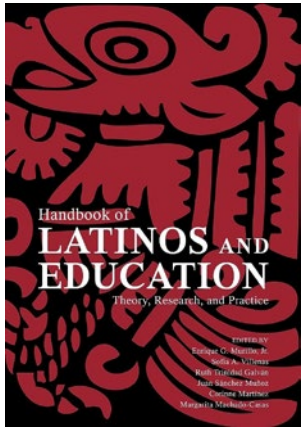
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TLAMANALLI COMMUNITY ALTAR (OFRENDA PREHISPÁNICA MICCAILHUITL)



The Miccailhuitl (Day of the Dead / Día de los Muertos) season is one of the most anticipated of the entire year. And it is impossible to resist the color, the flavor, and even the smells that accompany this celebration. During Day of the Dead / Día de los Muertos, the spirits of much-loved relatives and friends are invited to return home in order to share a special feast with the living. Day of the Dead, Día de los Muertos, Día de Muertos, Fiesta de Muertos, or simply Muertos, are all correct terms. Sometimes it is called Noche de Altares. In Catholicism called Día de los Fieles Difuntos. Our Mesoamerican Day of the Dead Rituals date back more than 3,000 years. Miccailhuitl is the name for our traditional ceremony honoring the passing of life from physical to essence, not the end but a new beginning.

A FESTIVAL UNIQUE TO OUR COMMUNITY

After decades of dedicated work to promote Día de los Muertos as a festival unique to our community, expanding on our Indigenous tradition that had been melded with Catholic observances of All Saints Day and All Souls Day, it has become in many cases a hyper-commercialized enterprise. As cultural practitioners and observers of this ancient holiday we are left questioning whether the sought-after visibility has come at a price too steep.

Still, community groups and members are working to recenter the festival's original intent of honoring the dead. Death was the place of silence, of regeneration; it was a natural part of life.

This year the Featured Exhibit will be a Community Altar curated by Makuill Ollin Ocelotl - Mitotl Calpulli (Circulo de Danza Azteca). Additional photographs and displays will be curated by the Consulado de México en San Bernardino, California (Mexican Consulate in San Bernardino).

The Tlamanalli is the community altar that connects the sky, earth, and underworld. The Featured Exhibit will reconnect, practice, and share indigenous cultural identity, ancestral knowledge, and communal work.

LEAD Summit attendees are invited to bring items, foods, flowers for the traditional Tlamanalli Community Altar (Ofrenda prehispánica Miccailhuitl), which is non-secular and interactive; recentering the celebration's original intent of honoring the dead - moving away from the hyper-commercialized enterprise it has become in too many places.



DIGITAL MEMORIAL SCREEN

We are doing something special: we are setting up a digital memorial screen right in the center of the altar so we can feature all of our ancestors, extended family, friends, and pets who have passed away.

This rotating digital display is a modern extension of our traditional ofrenda (altar). It allows us to expand our sacred space, ensuring that every ancestor, family member, friend, and beloved pet is beautifully remembered without the constraints of physical space. As the photographs cycle through, we invite you to pause, reflect, and share a story. Each image represents a life that shaped our own, a smile we miss, and a soul we welcome back to our hearts today. They are not gone as long as we remember them.

Attendees can easily submit photos of their loved ones to the virtual ofrenda by scanning the QR code displayed here. Select a clear, high-resolution portrait photo from your device's photo gallery. There is also an option to add text post.

OUR DIGITAL DÍA DE MUERTOS ALTAR CELEBRATES YOUR LOVED ONES



DECORATED CALAVERAS (SKULLS) VIEWING AND LIVE AUCTION

The Association of Latino Faculty, Staff and Students (ALFSS) at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) will display decorated calaveras (skulls) from their annual community art exhibition and live auction. A select group of the decorated calaveras will be on display for viewing and then auctioned off during part of the ALFSS (Festival de Calaveras) taking place Saturday, October 17th. All monetary proceeds and winning bids support the ALFSS scholarship fund for CSUSB students.



PHOTOGRAPHS AND DISPLAYS

An array of additional photographs and displays will be curated by the Consulado de México en San Bernardino, California (Mexican Consulate in San Bernardino): "Day of the Dead" by artist Nancy Nieto – painting exhibition; "The Tree of Life" by artist Nancy Nieto – painting exhibition; "Catrinas" by Alejandro López Jiménez – photography exhibition; and "Death Has Permission" – notes and newspaper clippings regarding José Guadalupe Posada.



MAKUILL OLLIN OCELOTL ANNUAL DAY OF THE DEAD /
DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS CELEBRATION & CEREMONY

Saturday, November 14th, 2026 @Fraternal Order of Eagles - 895 E. 9th St. San Bernardino.
*Starts at 5PM. Outdoors - bring your own chairs and blankets to stay warm. The public is invited to bring items, foods, flowers, and/or photos of your passed loved ones to add to our Community Altar. Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend, and free to the community. This is a family- and community-centered activity, free of alcohol, drugs, and violence and working to recenter the festival's original intent of honoring the dead.



LOWRIDER CULTURA: A CELEBRATION OF ART, HERITAGE, AND COMMUNITY

Celebrate the artistry, cultural pride, and community spirit of lowriding at the LEAD Summit! Various local lowrider clubs are curating a special exhibition showcasing the creativity and craftsmanship that make these vehicles works of art. The show honors lowrider culture as an expression of identity, tradition, and connection across generations.

The exhibition will be located just outside the east door of Student Union South, where Summit participants are invited to view the vehicles and appreciate the details that make each one unique. Stop by and enjoy this celebration of local talent and cultural heritage!



Project XV: Empowering Our Youth

Executive Summary

Project XV is an afterschool program within SBCUSD designed to provide high school students with a transformative "coming-of-age" experience. While the program is open to all students regardless of ethnicity, it places a significant emphasis on Latino culture, history, and the central role of family. By bridging these cultural traditions with modern mentorship, the program fosters academic achievement, leadership development, and community connection. This singular vision is realized through two distinct pillars: The Quince Project (for young women) and The Caballero Educado Initiative (for young men).

While rooted in a rich cultural heritage, Project XV is fully inclusive, inviting students of all backgrounds to explore identity and responsibility. This program also serves as an excellent support for Dual Immersion programs across the district. The semester-long journey culminates in a grand district-wide gala, showcasing the diverse talents of our students—from fashion and music to choreography and filmmaking—as they transition into their roles as empowered young adults.

Core Pillars & Shared Foundations

1. Shared Foundations

Both programs share a common infrastructure designed to ensure student success and family engagement:

- **Parent & Family Component:** Monthly workshops focused on navigating adulthood transitions, college readiness (FAFSA/Dream Act), and strengthening parent-child communication. (SWSS/FACE TEAM)
- **The Ticket Incentive System:** Students "earn" extra gala tickets for extended family by maintaining high GPA standards, demonstrating academic improvement, or achieving excellent attendance.



- **Cross-Program Collaboration:** Utilization of existing SBCUSD talent across multiple disciplines to power the final event.(EXL TEAM)
- **2. Program-Specific Curricula**
While the foundations are shared, each initiative provides a tailored focus:
 - **The Quince Project (Empowerment & Etiquette):** Focuses on building self-esteem, female leadership, and cultural history, exploring coming-of-age traditions globally.
 - **The Caballero Educado Initiative (Leadership & Accountability):** Utilizes trauma-informed SEL frameworks focusing on resilience, professionalism as stewardship, and personal accountability.

Program Comparison Table

Initiative	Primary Focus	Key Framework/Approach
The Quince Project	Empowerment & Etiquette	Self-esteem, female leadership, cultural history, and global coming-of-age traditions
The Caballero Educado Initiative	Leadership & Accountability	Trauma-informed SEL frameworks, resilience, professionalism as stewardship, and personal accountability

Master Collaboration Table

SBCUSD Resource	Primary Site/Source	Role in Project XV
Fashion & Tailoring	Shandin Hills MS	Learning from tailors and seamstresses on how to customize dress fabrication and suit fitting/styling for all participants.
Mariachi Ensemble	Music Department	Live traditional music for formal ceremonies.
DJ Program	Various High Schools	Modern soundtrack, lighting, and audio support for the reception.
Dance & Movement	After-School Network	Choreography for formal entrances, surprise dances, and waltzes.
Filmmaking	After-School Media	Documentary production and full event documentation.

Strategic Outcomes & Alignment with Vision 2030

Project XV is designed to drive systemic impact by aligning directly with the SBCUSD SHINES Vision 2030 framework and the California Dashboard performance indicators:

- **Academic Excellence & Attendance (SHINES: S, H):** Through our Ticket Incentive System, we improve academic engagement and attendance, directly impacting Chronic Absenteeism and Graduation Rates (Dashboard Indicators).
- **Belonging, Resilience, & Nurturing Environment (SHINES: B, N):** Our trauma-informed SEL curriculum fosters a deep sense of belonging and community connection, which research links to reduced Suspension Rates and improved Student Belonging/Engagement (Dashboard Indicators).
- **Involvement & Partnership (SHINES: I):** The mandatory family workshops and collaborative gala strengthen the Home-School Partnership, increasing family efficacy and their active participation in the district’s decision-making process.



La Marcha de la 15ñera: FROM INNOCENCE TO RESISTANCE

The LEAD Summit XV Ceremonial Procession

- **Intercessors:** Makuill Ollin Ocelotl - Mitotl Calpulli (Mexika Dance Calpulli)
- **Grand Marshals:** 2026 Padrinos de Honor
- **Video:** La Divina Juventud Against Fear: ICE, Media, and Student Walkouts - <https://youtu.be/ShKQrk08r70>
- **Music:** Mariachi Generación Musical
- **Featured Partner:** Project XV: Empowering Our Youth, afterschool program within San Bernardino City Unified School District

The opening procession of LEAD Summit XV: 15ñera for Justice – Divina Juventud is conceived as a ceremonial journey—one that honors the sacred transition of our young people from innocence into consciousness, from individual dreams into collective responsibility, and from cultural inheritance into courageous action.

This is not simply an opening performance. It is a living ceremony that intertwines Indigenous memory, Latino tradition, artistic expression, and youth activism into a single narrative of transformation.

The procession begins in silence.

A brief video of archival news coverage illuminates the screen - student walkouts and educational protests. The music and imagery remind us that every generation inherits unfinished work and that every movement is built upon the courage of those who came before.

Silence returns as the video concludes.

From the distance, the heartbeat of the huehuetl announces the arrival of the mitotl calpulli—the Mexika danza circle and ceremonial drummers—who enter not as entertainers, but as intercessors between generations. With every step, they sanctify the gathering, transforming the convention hall into sacred ground.

As they reach the front, they ceremonially acknowledge the Four Directions (Cuatro Rumbos) and invoke the ancestors. Through prayer, song, shell trumpet, copal, drum, and dance, they welcome the spirits of those who walked before us, asking their guidance for those who now continue the struggle. Invoking the four cardinal directions establishes the outer boundaries of a sacred space, while completing the Quincunx focuses that energy directly onto the Center, creating an axis mundi (world axis).

Their blessing extends beyond those present in the room. It embraces the generations who sacrificed for educational justice, the families whose hopes carried their children into classrooms where they were never expected to succeed, and the youth whose voices will shape the future still unfolding.

At the heart of the ceremony emerges a single young woman.

She represents Xilonen - the sacred young corn, embodiment of youthful feminine life, possibility, beauty, and becoming. Before there was the quinceañera introduced through colonial tradition, there existed Indigenous rites honoring the transition from childhood into community responsibility. The Xilonen ceremony recalls this ancestral lineage, recognizing the sacred power carried by young women as future caretakers, knowledge keepers, organizers, and leaders.

The community surrounds her in blessing. The Atecocoli conch trumpets sound. A necklace of husks and corn is placed on her, along with a ceremonial blanket. Her face then painted in red and yellow - red symbolizing fertility, vitality, and the life-giving warmth necessary for crops to thrive; and yellow the color of the fresh corn kernels and the ripening harvest.

She is not celebrated for reaching adulthood alone, but for accepting the responsibilities that accompany it: to remember, to protect, to lead, and to serve.

As the ceremony concludes, the rhythms shift, the procession transforms once more.

The quinceañeras (damas) enter in solemn procession.

This is no ordinary quinceañera court.

It is a court of young leaders.

Blending the sacred imagery of Día de los Muertos with the elegance of the quinceañera tradition, they carry marigolds, candles, archival LEAD Summit posters, protest banners, books, and symbols of educational liberation. Each candle represents one year of the LEAD Summit’s fifteen-year journey. Each flower honors those whose labor, sacrifice, and vision made this movement possible. Each banner proclaims that education remains a site of struggle, dignity, and hope.

Their procession becomes a living altar - a remembrance of the past and a commitment to the future.

The procession pauses as several youth leaders step forward to offer brief reflections.

They speak not only for themselves, but for an entire generation.

They speak of Justicia - the pursuit of educational equity and human dignity.

They speak of Lucha - the courage to organize, resist injustice, and transform institutions.

They speak of Esperanza - the unwavering belief that another future remains possible.

Their words are followed by movement.

Several young couples perform traditional quinceañera dances - a waltz, symbolizing grace, discipline, and the passage into new responsibility. The dance gently evolves into Ballet Folklórico, where regional traditions remind us that identity is not static, but carried through generations in music, movement, and memory.

Finally, the young woman who was blessed as Xilonen returns.

She steps quietly to the front of the ceremonial circle.

No longer standing as a child entering the community, she now stands as one prepared to guide it.

With humility and purpose, she leads the final Cruz, the ceremonial dance that asks permission and unites the Four Directions, the earth beneath us, and the heavens above. The cross formed is an ancient Indigenous cosmogram representing balance, reciprocity, and the center where all paths converge.

As the final drumbeats echo through the hall, the dancers recess

The ceremony leaves behind more than applause. It leaves a charge.

The young people who entered as participants depart as inheritors of a movement.

The audience is reminded that a quinceañera is not merely a celebration of age, but a declaration of purpose.

And so La Marcha de la 15ñera becomes the ceremonial heart of LEAD Summit XV—a sacred procession from innocence to resistance, from memory to movement, from tradition to transformation, and from hope to collective action.

For the next generation does not simply inherit history.

They become its authors.

15ñera Justice

LEAD SUMMIT XV

DIVINA JUVENTUD: From Innocence to RESISTANCE

Ni muertos **FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16** *Ni vencidos*

RISE. REFLECT. REJOICE.
RESIST. REIMAGINE.



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