



# National Latino Research Center

California State University San Marcos

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A Quarterly Newsletter

## GREETINGS FROM THE NLRC DIRECTOR

I want to thank everyone for their participation in our NLRC open house during our Library Grand Opening week. I especially want to thank Dr. Marion Reid for her gracious cooperation to use the spectacular Library Reading Room for our event. Thanks for making our open house and grand opening week a success!

The NLRC remains a visible and active organization on campus and in the community. We continue to sponsor campus and community events that communicate vital research and information about Latino populations. Among our recent activities include presentations at the North County Times, Leadership North County, Cal State Los Angeles Career Opportunities in Research (COR) program, the San Diego World Affairs Council, and the Binational Environmental Conference.

The NLRC looks forward to new initiatives involving physical health, mental health, and educational issues of Latinos. The NLRC is currently identifying CSUSM faculty research associates to collaborate on these initiatives, such as projects on preschool education, community development, and oral histories. Please contact us about becoming an NLRC faculty associate.

I want to thank the support of CSUSM administration for renewing my directorship for another term. I look forward to serving the campus and community in a larger and more meaningful capacity.

Enjoy the summer and congratulations to the class of 2004!

Dr. Gerardo González  
NLRC Director



Aurora Levins Morales at CSUSM on April 28th, 2004  
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## NLRC Recent Accomplishments

- ◆ Gerardo González presented at the North County Times offices in Oceanside and Escondido on January 26th, 2004. The presentations were sponsored by the National Association of Hispanic Journalists.
- ◆ Arcela Núñez-Alvarez returned to the NLRC after completing her Ph.D. program from the University of Minnesota in February 2004.
- ◆ The NLRC held a reception on March 3rd, 2004 in CSUSM Kellogg Library Reading Room to celebrate our move to campus and the Library Grand Opening.
- ◆ Konane Martínez presented at the San Diego World Affairs Council series *A look at Immigration* on March 30th, 2004 at the Escondido Public Library.
- ◆ Sonia Taddy presented at the Imperial County and Mexicali Binational Environmental Conference on April 7th, 2004 in Mexicali, BC, Mexico.

# Al Norte de San Diego: Latinos in North San Diego County, 1940s to Present

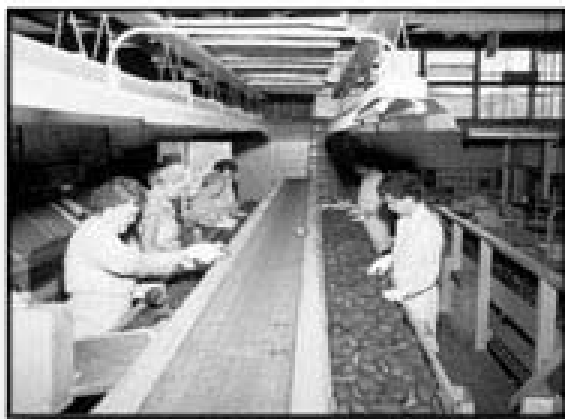
by Arcela Núñez-Alvarez

*Al Norte de San Diego* is a pilot project and the first of its kind in San Diego County that will recover and archive oral histories of Latinos who have lived and worked in North San Diego County. The project is funded by the Bravo Foundation and the California Council for the Humanities.

The impetus for developing this project is the dramatic growth of the Latino population in the last decades. Despite the historical presence of Latinos in San Diego, dating to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, no single comprehensive source documents their role in the making of the region's multicultural history. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, approximately 750,965 Latinos live in San Diego, an increase of 240,000 persons between 1990 and 2000. They comprise the largest ethnic subgroup, approximately 198,349, living in the northern region of the county. The growth of the population however, has been accompanied by long-held misconceptions and questioning of their role as equal participants in the democratic process. In fact, numerous contemporary acts

of intolerance and persecution show tension towards people of Latino ancestry. For instance, a brutal racially-motivated attack perpetrated on a group of five elderly migrant workers in North San Diego County by a group of teenagers illustrates the disenfranchisement this ethnic group faces in contemporary society. Hence, this pioneering project will contribute extensively to the general understanding of contemporary living cultures and traditions in multicultural perspectives of the region and its history.

Understanding the history of Latinos in North San Diego County sheds light on the social costs of immigration, the impact of national economic trends on specific communities, and the degree to which community institutions like schools, health clinics, neighborhood associations, and other groups are able to mediate those changes and their impact on neighborhood residents. By engaging Latino residents of North San Diego County in interviews, making these interviews available to the broader public, and developing an appropriate depiction of the community's history, the Latino history project is seeking not only to record stories, but also participate in the building of community in and around North San Diego County.



**Workers packing avocados**  
Escondido, CA  
Courtesy of the Escondido Pioneer Room

The goals of this project are:

- a) To use oral histories of present and former residents to provide comprehensive history of Latino influences and contributions within North County, thereby contributing to promoting a greater understanding of their lives as well as developing a greater sense of community.
- b) Through an examination of the themes discussed in the oral history interviews, residents will gain a greater understanding of the impact of social structures on their interactions with each other.
- c) Interpreting the themes identified in the interviews, residents will determine how best to permanently portray them in a display or art exhibition.
- d) Using the data collected through the oral histories, a curriculum will be developed for fourth-grade California History that will facilitate their understanding of the history of this community and its impact on present life.

## Continued...

This project encourages Latinos to participate in our efforts to document and celebrate the community's past. While the primary focus is on interviewing residents in North San Diego County cities with high Latino population, it is also vital to include other stakeholders in the conversations and events – non-Latino local residents, city officials, and businesses in and around North San Diego cities. Documenting the stories of North San Diego residents, past and present, provides a framework for ongoing debates about the cities' future and brings previously underrepresented voices into ongoing discussions of economic revitalizations in their neighborhoods.

By understanding the communities' past, both residents and other participants can come to appreciate the rich and complex history of the region, the factors that have shaped their neighborhoods' demographic, social, and economic changes, and the issues that must be addressed as these reinvent themselves and move towards the future. Through this project, those sharing the living space of North San Diego County, whether life long residents, new comers moving into upcoming housing developments, or outsiders who drive through the neighborhoods on their way to work or school, develop a better knowledge of this area's history in an effort to envision and create paths for its future.



North County Times



## Researcher Spotlight ~ Arcela Núñez-Alvarez



My mother followed the migratory path from Michoacán, Mexico to North San Diego County in search of a better life. She raised six daughters on her own by working in industrial jobs while we went to school. Like many immigrant children, we faced uncertainty, lack of understanding, language and cultural barriers, and lack of resources. However, the pride, self-respect, and work ethic my mother instilled in us helped us persevere.

I attended schools in San Marcos and graduated from Cal State San Marcos with a B.A. in social sciences. My Ph.D. dissertation, "**Pueblos Yaquis: Constructing Indio and Mexicano Identities in Binational Contexts, 1821-1940,**" is concerned with distinct approaches to scholarly debates and understandings of identity and race by addressing clash across class and space, and how these are projected in Mexico and the United States. Specifically, my thesis explores the significance of the Yaqui Diaspora by assessing the impact of Yaqui involvement in Mexico's economic and modernization campaigns, and the responses of Mexican and international governments.

After completing my graduate work in Latin American History and Chicano Studies at the University of Minnesota, I returned home to San Marcos where I have lived and worked since 1981.

My current position as Education Projects Coordinator at the NLRC bridges my personal and professional research interests. Having experienced many difficulties facing first-generation, immigrant college-bound students, I am committed to increasing access to educational opportunities for Latinos and other disenfranchised communities. Also, NLRC's focus of promoting action research to address social issues coincides with my philosophy of empowerment.

I coordinate several projects at the NLRC including **Al Norte de San Diego: Oral histories of Latinos in North San Diego County** and **Community Action to Fight Asthma (CAFA) project in Imperial Valley**. In addition, I am currently designing a research project, **Expelbound** to document stories of youth expelled from North San Diego County schools. It will explore the causes and consequences of school expulsions from the perspectives of students, parents, and school personnel.

For additional information, please contact Arcela Núñez-Alvarez at (760) 750-3503 or [anunez@csusm.edu](mailto:anunez@csusm.edu)

## Guelaguetza 2004

Experience the music, dance, culture and cuisine of Oaxaca, Mexico!

The Coalition of Indigenous Communities from Oaxaca (COCIO) in collaboration with Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA) once again bring the Guelaguetza to North County in celebration of the heritage and culture of the Oaxacan immigrant community.

**The event will take place on July 11<sup>th</sup> from 11:00am-5:30pm at CSUSM Lower Field**

For more information please contact Celia Martínez at [marti131@csusm.edu](mailto:marti131@csusm.edu)



## Events in the Community

- ◆ The National Council of La Raza is providing financial support for young people who wish to attend the 2004 *Líderes* Summit, at the NCLR Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona, June 25-29, 2004. Applications must be received by May 19, 2004. For full details about applying please contact [leadership@nclr.org](mailto:leadership@nclr.org)
- ◆ The Scholarship Foundation has 2004 Scholarship Applications available at SDCHCC's Office (1250 Sixth Avenue, Suite 550 San Diego). Application deadline May 14, 2004. To download application: [www.sdchcc.comscholarships\\_scholarships.htm](http://www.sdchcc.comscholarships_scholarships.htm)
- ◆ Bravo Foundation Speaker Luncheon presents *House of Mexico* at the California Center for the Arts (340 N. Escondido Blvd, Escondido), Tuesday, May 18th from 12:00– 1:30PM. Please RSVP at (760) 740-6630.

## Aurora Levins Morales Visits CSUSM

by *Konane M. Martínez*

The NLRC had the distinct honor to host Aurora Levins Morales on Wednesday April 28<sup>th</sup> 2004 at CSU San Marcos.

Aurora Levins Morales, an internationally renowned poet, historian, and activist, challenged the audience to recapture the history of oppressed and politically invisible peoples.

The interactive two hour event included a presentation of Morales' current community history work and a discussion about how to make history projects catalysts for social change and community awareness.

Morales used examples from her own work to exemplify how poetry can be utilized to illuminate the history of communities and individuals that have been marginalized from the pages of history books. Her work thus seeks to salvage the voices and hidden stories of history as a method by which to give agency to those who have been historically overlooked.

Her own unique background as a Latina, Jewish, and Puerto Rican woman acts as the kaleidoscope by which we experience and process the complex and rich history presented in her poetry. The powerfulness of her poetry was evident as Morales closed the session with a presentation of two of her most recent poems.

The NLRC is thankful to Morales for her memorable presentation as well as to all students, faculty, staff and community members that attended the event. We have received positive feedback from participants and hope to invite Levins Morales in the near future to present a workshop that will inspire and guide the CSUSM community to recover the hidden community histories that can contribute to a better understanding of North San Diego County.

Her work includes:

1. Remedios: Stories of Earth and Iron from the History of Puertorriqueñas (2001)
2. Telling to Live: Latina Feminist Testimonios (2001)
3. Medicine Stories: History, Culture and the Politics of Integrity (1998)
4. Getting Home Alive (1986)
5. This Bridge Called My Back (1983)



Aurora Levins Morales

