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## UFW vice president speaks at Fresno State's César Chávez Day, April 4

UPDATED:

Due to rain, the location of Fresno State's 17<sup>th</sup> annual César E. Chávez Celebration and Garlanding

Ceremony 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. today, April 4, has been changed to the University Student Union Pavilion (lower level). The USU is located east of the Peace Garden, the original site of the event.

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Armando Elenes, national vice president for the United Farm Workers and a U.S. veteran, will deliver the keynote address at Fresno State's 17<sup>th</sup> annual César E. Chávez Celebration and Garlanding Ceremony 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Thursday, April 4, in the Peace Garden, just north of the Henry Madden Library.

The event is being held a week after Chávez' March 31 birthday because this year, it falls during Spring Break when classes are not in session. The formal state observance is Monday, April 1, and the campus will be closed in observance of the official holiday.

The campus celebration will begin with a mariachi performance, followed by Fresno State's Los Danzantes de Aztlán, student Mexican folkloric dancers in the Chicano and Latin and American Studies Department. The garlanding ceremony follows at 12:15 p.m. with presentation of flags from the U.S., Mexico and the United Farm Workers and performances of the national anthems of the two countries formally opening that portion of the days' events.

Elenes will speak at approximately 12:35 p.m. before the garland is placed on the Chávez statue in the Peace Garden to conclude the event. Carnations will be provided free for individuals to place at the base of the monument.

Elenes will speak about Cesar Chávez' life and legacy, and specifically, his commitment to community service. He also will recognize Fresno State student organizations for their community service efforts.

One of four national vice presidents for the [United Farm Workers](#) that Chávez founded, Elenes serves as the organizing director for the union's external organizing department in the San Joaquin Valley. He has coordinated field operations for political campaigns and union representation election campaigns and has organized various United Farm Workers efforts.

Born in Sinaloa, Mexico, Elenes immigrated to the U.S. in 1980 with his family when he was eight. At 15, he began working in nurseries and dairies, as well as picking peaches and apricots in the

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summers, to help provide for his family. He graduated from Hilmar High School in 1990 and served in the U.S. Air Force for four years.

Elenes earned an associate of arts degree from Modesto Junior College in 1997. While a student there, he became involved with the United Farm Worker's major strawberry organizing campaign on the Central Coast where he organized dozens of union supporters to leaflet stores in the Modesto area. After graduation, he completed an internship as a community organizer for the United Farm Workers' office in Los Angeles. Less than two years later, he was transferred to Delano where his focus is organizing workers in the Central Valley.

For more information, contact Raúl Z. Moreno, coordinator at University Migrant Services, at [raulm@csufresno.edu](mailto:raulm@csufresno.edu) or 559.278.1787.

#### **Related Links:**

- [Elenes BIO](#)
- [United Farm Workers](#)
- [Peace Garden](#)

*(Copy prepared by University Communications news student assistant Alejandra Garcia.)*

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By [Tom Uribes](#) | March 28th, 2013 | Categories: [PRESS RELEASES](#) | Tags: [Cesar Chavez](#), [event](#) | Comments Off

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