

EL AGUILA

AÑO DE CHIKOEI TOCHTLI

ESTANFORD, CALIFAZTLAN

VOLUME SIETE, ISSUE 2

SPRING 1995



THE HUNGER STRIKE: ONE YEAR LATER

Editor's Note

¡Hola Raza!

It's crazy to think that I didn't open a single book until the third week of this quarter. Since the moment I stepped off the plane in San Francisco after Spring Break the only thought on my mind was El Aguila. I knew it was going to be extremely difficult to put a quality newspaper together, in addition to obtaining funding for it, in only one and a half weeks. As much as I tried, I couldn't get myself to think that others would be there to help me, and I prepared myself for two weeks of stress and exasperation.

When the time finally came to spend my days and nights in the Centro computer cluster, though, my attitude toward the project at hand changed as I saw familiar faces continually walk into the room and ask how they could help. Even other Chicanos and Chicanas who were kicking back in El Centro were of help simply by smiling and telling us how proud they were of us. It was then that I finally realized the spirit of El Centro and of the Chicano community at Stanford. It's about being there to support each other, even if it's with a simple cheerful attitude and signs of concern.

As we near one of the most critical times that the Chicano community has to face during the year, the spring elections where the fate of the MEChA Special Fee will be decided, we must keep the spirit of the Chicano familia in mind. The campaign for MEChA Special Fee did something beautiful — it brought together Chicanos/as and Latinos/as, and even members of other ethnic communities, that under ordinary circumstances have no opportunity to get to know each other. As we cast our votes this Wednesday and Thursday, may we feel the unity that has been created by the joining of Chicano and Latino organizations. And, when it's all over (regardless of the outcome), may the spirit of familia remain with us the rest of spring quarter.

Let's do it!
Cecilia

Editors

Cecilia Balli y Beatriz Esparza

Writers and Contributors

Felipe Barragan	Alma Medina
Miguel Blass	Juan Neria
Danny Bramzon	Elvira Prieto
Keri Castaneda	Perla Rodriguez
Olivia Diaz	Mireya Samaniego
Marisa Espinosa	Lubia Sanchez
Maria Fernandez	Carlos Santana
Sonia Herrera	Carmella Schaecher
Veronica Luna	

El Aguila would like to thank M.E.Ch.A., the ASSU Publications Board, El Guiding Concilio, and to all those dorms which made this issue possible.

The content of the articles in **EL AGUILA** does not necessarily express the views of MEChA, but is the collaborative work of MEChistas. Contributions and letters are welcome and can be submitted to El Centro in the **EL AGUILA** box.

¡Expresate, libérate, y siempre dí...y qué!

¡VIVA CÉSAR CHÁVEZ!

María Fernández

On Friday, March 10, El Centro Chicano, DERECHOS (Stanford's Chicano/Latino pre-law society), and M.E.Ch.A coordinated the second annual César Chávez Commemorative Celebration. The Stanford Chicano/Latino community celebrated the life and work of late United Farm Workers' leader César Chávez at Dinkelspiel Auditorium before a full auditorium of 700 people. The evening was highlighted by the nationally-renowned comedy and theater group Culture Clash.

Stanford's Ballet Folklórico performed, as well as the improvisational theater group Teatro Xicano. XedeX, a graduate student in drama, and dancer Shaine Muller performed a modern dance symbolizing the struggle between death and a farmworker. M.E.Ch.A co-chairs

Mireya Samaniego and Felipe Barragan gave an address entitled *The Legacy of César Chávez* in which they expressed the need for us as students to continue the work of César Chávez and other leaders of the United Farm Workers.

The commemoration concluded with Culture Clash's performance "Carpa Clash," and were afterwards joined by members of the Chávez family. César Chávez's nephew, Rudy Medina,

spoke on the need to continue la lucha for justicia. Several commemorations took place nationwide last month to pay tribute to the work and dedication of César Chávez for La Causa. May his memory and vision live on. ¡Que viva César Chávez!



PHOTO FROM MEChA ARCHIVES

César Chávez Commemoration Speech

These words were taken from a speech made at this year's César Chávez Commemoration by MEChA co-chairs Mireya Samaniego and Felipe Barragan.

“In the early 60s, poor working conditions, low wages and a general lack of respect for farmworkers led to the formation of a farmworkers union under the direction of César Chávez and Dolores Huerta. They began to organize farmworkers in order to achieve common goals and demand justice and equality.

César Chávez was a special leader in that he was a man of the people, always humble and full of love for the workers of our farmland. He continually worked to eliminate the injustices suffered at the hands of farmowners. He was a relentless organizer, always dedicating his time and energy for the betterment of our people. He cared so much for the Cause that he was willing to put his life on the line by fasting for twenty to twenty-five days at a time. The struggle of César Chávez and the UFW was one of attaining their demands through non-violence — peaceful demonstrations, pilgrimages and boycotts.

César Chávez and the UFW have promoted the idea that there is power in unity. In our own struggles as students, we have embraced these same philosophies. We must fight through education and self-determination. The struggle continues and César Chávez has inspired us to fight and demand what is right. Today our Raza faces tremendous obstacles; the educational system is pushing out Raza from the high schools because it is not addressing the real needs of our Gente. We need to know our history, our culture, and our language in order to take pride in who we are. We must continue to teach our children to be proud of who they are and where they come from in order to build strong self-esteem and keep the movement going.

As MEChistas we have gained strength from seeing the amount of determination and heart which Cesar Chavez demonstrated. This year marks the 25th anniversary of MEChA. Twenty-five years ago, students gathered in Santa Barbara to discuss key issues affecting the Chicano community. They were

concerned about the lack of representation of Chicanos/as in higher education, the growing number of school drop-outs and the increased representation of Raza in the penal system. MEChistas recognized that without a strategic use of education that places importance on what we value, we will not realize our destiny. For this reason, they vowed to organize themselves and form a united front to work towards social, political, and economic equality. Although there have been significant gains for our people over the past twenty-five years there is still a long way to go. We need to remind ourselves that there is still much to be done. We need to come together in order to fight repressive and racist immigration laws such as Proposition 187, the proposed dismantling of affirmative action, and the daily violations of civil rights that occur in our barrios.

Although many of us have different backgrounds, experiences and political views, we must find a common ground from which we can work together in order to accomplish our goals. Everyone has an obligation and responsibility to help our communities. It may be at different levels of commitment and in distinct domains, but whether you are a student, factory worker, professor, farmworker, doctor, gardener or lawyer, we all have something to contribute. For this reason, we make a call for action to everyone to get up and fight for what is right because the future is today.

We must remember that the vision of equality which César Chávez worked so diligently towards has still not been fulfilled. It is up to us to make that vision a reality. It is up to us to make sure that César Chávez's death was not in vain. It is up to us to continue that lucha!

In parting, we would just like to leave you with a few words that César Chávez once said: 'ESTA LUCHA GANAREMOS.' THIS STRUGGLE WE SHALL WIN! Let us not forget these words, but always remember them and continue to fight. Let us be proud of who we are and what we do, but most of all let us be united because 'LA UNION HACE LA FUERZA!!!'



Concierto de la Primavera

Olivia Díaz

¡La primavera ya está aquí, y con ella ha llegado el 11vo Concierto de la Primavera! Por esta razón, El Ballet Folklórico de Stanford would like to cordially invite you to come celebrate our second year as an independent student organization. Now is the time to pencil us into your busy schedule. Currently, we have three shows scheduled for Memorial Day weekend. On Friday, May 26, and Saturday, May 27, the show will begin at 8pm. We will also be holding a special children's matinee on Saturday afternoon. Tickets for this show will be \$2. Tickets for the regularly scheduled performances will go on sale soon for the very low price of \$5 for students and \$8 for the general public.

This year, El Concierto de la Primavera will be full of explosive energy and surprises. Although we will include some Mexican regions that we have performed in the past, most of the show will consist of new material from the regions of Nayarit, Durango, Veracruz and Jalisco, as well as material from our past repertoire in Guerrero and Yucatán. In addition, we will perform the very much awaited Concheros' dances. We have been working tremendously hard this year in order to offer you the best show possible. The time has come for us to share all our work and efforts, so bring your roommate, friends, family and anybody interested in learning about Mexican dance culture. Come out and support El Ballet Folklórico de Stanford by attending the best show of the year. ¡Que viva la cultura Mexicana!



Adelante Mujer

Keri Castañeda

MAS (Mujeres at Stanford) de MEChA will be holding its Second Annual Adelante Mujer Conference on Saturday, May 20. The purpose of the event is to bring together 100 Chicanas y Latinas of local high schools to discuss some of the issues they face in their daily lives and expose them to Chicana and Latina role models. MAS is working closely with its mentor group from Sequoia High School to get ideas about some of the issues the conference should address. Some possible workshops for this year are: Chicanas and Latinas in the Career World, Expression Through the Written Word, Chicana y Latina Pop Culture, How to Talk to Parents, and Love, Sex and Violence. If you are interested in working on one of these workshops or developing your own, we would love to hear your ideas. Also, we still need volunteers to work on outreach, fundraising and food committees. Meetings this quarter are held Thursdays at 5:30 in the Casa Zapata dining hall. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Perla Rodriguez at 7-5609 or Keri Castaneda at 7-6646. ¡Que viva la mujer!



A Raza Day Success

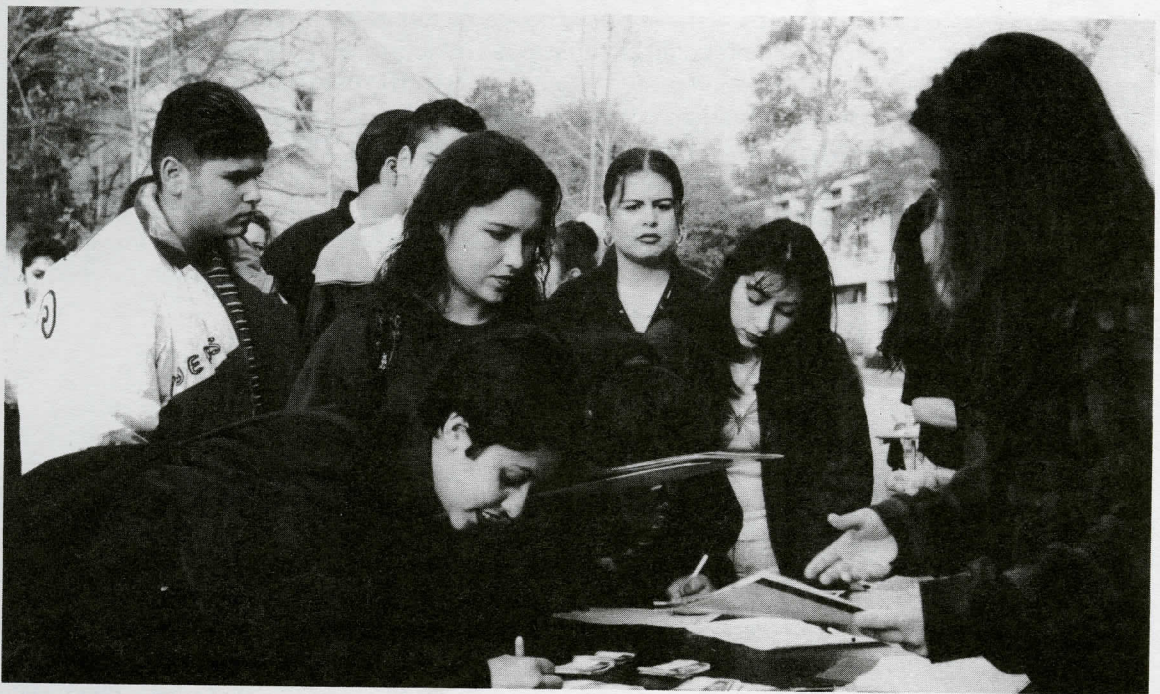


María Fernández

The Raza Day Conference, organized by M.E.Ch.A., was held on Saturday, February 18 at the Stanford Law School and attracted over 350 students, teachers, and advisors from the Bay Area. The annual Raza Day Conference at Stanford is held in an effort to address key issues of educational equity, retention and access to higher education. Thanks to all the organizations, departments, and groups that made this event possible, including the organizations that facilitated workshops: La Familia, Project Motivation, Society of Chicano/Latino Engineers and Scientists, Chicanos in Health Education, Mujeres at Stanford, Hermanos de Stanford, M.E.Ch.A and Teatro Xicano.

The General Assembly was filled with energy as the Aztec Dance Group Xitlalli opened the conference. Freshmen Cindy Urquidez and Agustín Rodríguez added excitement and enthusiasm to the assembly as masters of ceremony. Dr. José Cuellar (a.k.a Dr. Loco), chair of La Raza Studies at San Francisco State University, was a dynamic keynote speaker. He expressed to students the need to face the challenges resulting from fear, lack of clarity, power, and fatigue through an indigenous story filled with humor and valuable lessons. Several students from the Barrio Art workshop showed other students the positive message they learned at the conference through a beautiful painting they finished in one hour. This year's workshops included Raza in the Media, Xicano Studies, Ending

PHOTO BY CECILIA BALLI



Barrio Warfare and many more.

One of the day's highlights was the closing assembly, where masters of ceremony Juan Neria and Verónica Luna introduced students presenting poetry, statements, skits and art. Through these presentations the students shared what they had learned in their workshops. It was the first time for some students to even be able to shout "Chicana Power" with their peers and teachers. Many also expressed their desire to take this knowledge and motivation back to their communities.

With the passage of Proposition 187, elimina-

tion of federally-funded meal programs and the rise in anti-affirmative action sentiments, the need for our community to address issues of educational equity is critical. The talent and knowledge that 300 high school students expressed in a day's conference shows us that the current school system is not meeting students' needs. But, as the students demonstrated, they have not given up on la lucha, and we cannot afford to give up either.



LA HUELGA

¿Que Pasa Con Chicana/o Studies At Stanford?

Lubia Sánchez

"We recognize that without the strategic use of education, an education that places value on what we value, we will never realize our true destiny". —El Plan de Santa Barbara

The desire to institutionalize Chicana/o Studies at the university level comes from a long history of lucha y esfuerzo. Since the late 60's and with the creation of El Plan de Santa Barbara, Chicanas/os have struggled for university Chicana/o Studies programs — programs of study that would not only shed light on the history and culture of nuestra comunidad, but that would also help us prepare for the task of serving our communities. These types of programs have been in existence in American universities for more than 25 years. Stanford, however, until now has lagged far behind.

In response to the hunger strike initiated by MEChistas last spring, the university called for the creation of an advisory committee that would explore and survey Chicana/o Studies programs nationwide in an effort to establish a rigorous and innovative one at Stanford. The committee, headed by Professor and Dean Ramón Saldivar, consisted of the following members: Assistant Director of the Stanford Center for Chicano Research Charlene Aguilar, Professor Lucius Barker, Professor Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano, Professor George Fredrickson, Professor Renato Rosaldo, Professor Guadalupe Valdés, Graduate Student Representatives Stephen Pitti and Alicia Schmidt Camacho, and Undergraduate Student Representatives Irene Lara and Lubia Sánchez. The committee submitted a proposal to Dean of Humanities John Shoven at the end of autumn quarter.

At the Faculty Senate meeting on February 23 this year, after reviewing the recommendations of both the Chicano Studies and Asian American Studies proposals, Dean Shoven announced that he intended to establish an interdisciplinary program in Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity. Concentrations of study could be done on individual ethnic group tracks, or students could opt to concentrate their study "across ethnic and racial groups," for instance, a Comparative Chicano and Asian American major. With the eventual participation of other programs, he said, students could also pursue "even wider U.S. and international racial and ethnic groups comparisons." In addition, students could have the opportunity to pursue a broader course of study where the student concentrates "not on one ethnic group or racial community alone but instead concentrates on a topic such as international migration."

Dean Shoven originally announced that he would establish two committees to begin the imple-

mentation of the proposed program. Originally, one committee was charged with establishing curriculum and the other with developing possible administrative structures. However, after students vocalized their concern that the African American community was not invited to serve on the committees, Shoven made a few changes. The new and current structure involves three committees — African American Studies, Chicano Studies and Asian American Studies — which will work to develop the curriculum for each of the majors. The committees will each consist of two student representatives and six faculty members. Furthermore, from these committees Shoven will select nine faculty members and four students to serve on a fourth committee, which will investigate and propose an administrative structure for the program. Currently, Shoven is involved in the selection of faculty, staff and students to serve on the committees. Two weeks ago, he asked El Centro Chicano to nominate four students to serve on the committee. Students nominated individually and also at the weekly CORE meeting. El Centro held elections on Thursday, April 6, where the community voted for four students they felt would best represent the concerns of the community. These four students were María Fernández, Cecilia Ballí, Lisa Gallegos and Lubia Sánchez. Of these four nominees, Shoven will select two students to serve on the committees.

Although we are at the point where Chicana/o Studies at Stanford is beginning to seem as a possibility, the struggle does not end. It is, in fact, just beginning. The proposal made by Dean Shoven is just that — a proposal. Many changes could take place from now until the inception of a degree-granting Chicano Studies program, and it continues to be of extreme importance that we keep ourselves aware of the status of the efforts to institutionalize Chicano Studies. We should, however, not just keep ourselves aware, but we should also be directly involved in the decision-making process.

Many important decisions about the program are still to be made, decisions like how the program will be run, who will direct it, what constitutes a major in Chicano Studies and many others. Although there has been speculation about the best way to establish such a program, things remain unclear. It is up to us to keep our voices heard in this process. This program, when it comes into existence, should reflect what we as students feel is important. Like the Chicano/a students who met in mid-April back in 1969 to author El Plan de Santa Barbara, it is important that we, "assume the sacrifices and responsibilities inherent in our commitment."



ACCOUNTABILITY: THE COMMUNITY CENTER COMMITMENT

Juan Neria

Stanford University depends heavily on the help of workers from surrounding communities. Without the help of residents of East Palo Alto, who clean Stanford's residences, libraries and classrooms, the university would not be able to function. The workers of EPA also serve as maintenance workers, food service employees and as "objects of analysis" for academic research. One would expect the university to fulfill its responsibility to give back to EPA, but Stanford gives a minimal amount of respect and compensation to this community. Out of this injustice arose the spring hunger striker's demand for a community center in East Palo Alto. Students decided it was time to make the university accountable and force it to pay its dues. The administration recognized this need last spring and agreed to aid in the process of establishing the center. Although it did not commit funds, the university agreed to develop a list of potential donors and allow a student committee to lead the way in establishing the center.

A year later, the committee faces the same dilemma it faced last

spring: lack of funding and University aid. A bit of success emerged last quarter, as an apartment manager donated two large apartments for the establishment of a small center in his complex. The student committee planned to use the apartment center as a model to serve for the larger community center. However, because of some unusual circumstances the apartment center plan fell through, and the students had to begin from scratch again.

The dilemma we now face should serve as a call to arms. We cannot forget the sacrifice of the hunger strikers, who were willing to put their lives on the line for the establishment of a center. It is our duty to force the university to honor its debt to EPA. It is going to take a commitment on our part to lead the way in establishing the center. Although it is a long and arduous road, we cannot forget our obligation to make this center a reality. As we look back on the accomplishments of the hunger strike we must acknowledge and fulfill our commitment to the establishment of a center for the community of East Palo Alto.

Campaña Comunidad



VOTE MECHA

ART BY MIGUEL BLASS

SPECIAL FEE

Vote April 19 y 20
1995

So we have asked you to vote for the MEChA Special Fee. After signing one too many petitions, deleting e-mail message after message and reading who-knows-how-many fluorescent fliers, you still have to put up with possibly the busiest campaign season you've experienced in your life. This week you'll read still more posters, messages on your doors, and be approached by hundreds of overly-enthusiastic people who have just one goal in mind: getting their special fee.

Besides reading single-sentence fliers that tell you, not advise you, what to vote for, it is important that you know what impact your say will have. Your vote will affect not only the organization you support, but the rest of the university as well. The following is what you should know about MEChA Special Fee:

When you vote "yes" on MEChA Special Fee, you will be supporting more than just MEChA. The \$26,754 dollars requested under MEChA Special Fee (\$34,746 including a buffer for student fee refunds) will go toward funding academic, social and cultural events sponsored by a number of Chicano and Latino organizations at Stanford. Our fee is used to co-sponsor events with other student groups. Under this year's MEChA Special Fee request, the groups that will benefit are: Ballet Folklórico de Stanford, Chicanos in Health Education (CHE), Chicano/Latino Graduation Committee, Chicano/Latino Undergraduate Students in Business and International Relations (CLUBIR), DERECHOS, Latino Student Association (LSA), Mujeres at Stanford (MAS), Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano/a de Aztlán (MEChA) and the Stanford Literacy Improvement Project (SLIP).

The events sponsored by these organizations vary greatly in purpose. Academic issues are addressed through engagements like DERECHOS' pan-

els on public policy and law professions, MEChA's Raza Day education conference and El Centro Chicano's Student-Alumni Symposium. Social and cultural events include celebrations such as Dia de los Muertos, La Gran Posada, Gran Festival de Cinco de Mayo, Casa Zapata's Zoot Suit Week, LSA's Latino Culture Night and Ballet's Concierto de la Primavera. Events providing services to the community are also funded by MEChA Special Fee, including a number of elementary and high school mentoring programs, CHE's East Palo Alto Health Fair, MEChA's César Chávez Commemoration and tutoring services by SLIP, a student organization which provides assistance with literacy and English skills to Stanford food service and housekeeping employees. All events are always open to the entire Stanford community.

This year's MEChA Special Fee budget will fund 24 events throughout the 1995-96 school year in addition to providing for operational costs. The result is a large fee request. It is important to note, however, that the actual cost of putting on these events is approximately \$46,000. The organizations planning events co-sponsored by MEChA Special Fee are doing their best to streamline operational costs. By requesting only \$26,754 from Special Fee, the Chicano/Latino community is committing itself to fundraise an additional amount of about \$19,000.

Needless to say, the Chicano and Latino communities will suffer enormously if the MEChA Special Fee does not pass this spring. This year, the lack of the Special Fee made it difficult, if not impossible, to sponsor annual events that students enjoy. Ballet Folklórico is an example of a group that was particularly affected by the loss of co-sponsorship funds from the MEChA Special Fee. Ballet is limiting its dances for this year's Concierto de la Primavera because of the lack of money to provide for costumes of the different regions of Mexico. El Centro Chicano is also having problems planning the upcoming Cinco de Mayo celebration because of the

lack of co-sponsorship funding.

It is important that students exercise their power on this campus by voting in the spring election. We urge that all students vote for MEChA Special Fee. The money provided by this grant will benefit not only Chicano/a and Latino/a students, but all Stanford students and the community outside of the university as well. When you vote this week, make MEChA Special Fee one of your priorities. With the passage of this request, every student's vote will be multiplied in benefits for all.



Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA) at Stanford is part of a statewide network of Chicano/Latino student organizations in high schools, colleges and universities which work toward progressive changes in the Chicano/Latino community by advocating education rights. Aside from addressing political issues, MEChA also serves as a social support group for its members through participation in retreats and other community-building events. In addition, it works to increase awareness of the Chicano and Latino cultures by putting on annual events open to all of the Stanford community. With the financial support of MEChA Special Fee, MEChA is able to sponsor and co-sponsor events such as El Dia de los Muertos, La Gran Posada, Raza Day, Cesar Chavez Commemoration, Cinco de Mayo and many more.

Where MEChA Special Fee money will go:

SUMMARY BY EVENTS:

Operating Budget

Ongoing Events

Sequoia High Mentoring Program

Speakers

Issue Panel

Pre-professional Mentoring Program

Literacy Development Programs

Fall Programming

Fiesta de la Bienvenida/Welcome Reception

Dia de los Muertos/Day of the Dead Program

La Gran Posada/Christmas Celebration

"Is Law School for Me?" Panel

Winter Programming

Student-Alumni Symposium

Raza Day/Education Rights Conference

Zoot Suit Week

Cesar Chavez Commemoration

Latino Culture Night

Real Life and the Law Panel

Community Service and the Law

Literacy Week

Spring Programming

Gran Festival de Cinco de Mayo

Concierto de la Primavera/Ballet Folklórico Concert

Adelante Mujer: Women's Conference

Chicano/Latino Graduation

SLIP Adult Learner Event

Public Health Conference

East Palo Alto Health Fair

TOTAL EXPENSES

NET SPECIAL FEE

SPECIAL FEE ADJUSTED FOR REFUNDS

PROPOSED BUDGET 95-96:

\$995

\$50

\$371

\$1,559

\$100

\$906

\$524

\$703

\$955

\$71

\$1,011

\$3,483

\$1,146

\$3,487

\$1,121

\$171

\$46

\$549

\$1,646

\$4,990

\$1,327

\$1,436

\$548.50

\$259

\$500

\$27,954.50

\$26,754.50

\$34,746.10



MEChA Special Fee at work

S
L
I
P

The Stanford Literacy Improvement Project (SLIP) is a voluntary student organization dedicated to addressing the issues of literacy at Stanford. Founded in 1986, it is a university-run program which seeks to serve limited and non-English speaking Stanford service employees lacking in literacy skills. It provides one-on-one tutoring for any Stanford employee seeking to improve his or her literacy skills. It also provides training for student volunteers and has a collection of teaching aids available to anyone involved in tutoring on the Stanford campus. In addition, it serves as a referral service for citizenship classes and other similar programs. This year, SLIP was responsible for organizing a campus-wide recognition of Literacy Week. MEChA Special Fee plays a big part in providing services for all of SLIP's valuable services to the community.

M
A
S

MAS aims to encourage and develop the presence and influence of Chicanas at Stanford. One of our main goals is to provide a strong support system through educational, informational and social programming. Outside the Stanford community, MAS strives to preserve the legacy of Chicana/Latina pride and empowerment through its programs targeting local high school mujercitas such as the Latinas for Academic and Political Progress (LAPP) from Sequoia High School. This spring quarter is the ideal time for you to join MAS and make an impact in the young Chicana/Latina community through the LAPP mentoring program and the annual Adelante Mujer Conference, to be held on May 20, 1995. Mujeres at Stanford (MAS) de MEChA invites you to our weekly meetings on Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. at the Casa Zapata Library. ¡Unidas saldremos adelante!

C
H
E

Chicanos in Health Education (CHE) is an organization for students wishing to pursue careers in health-related fields. CHE serves primarily as an academic support network by establishing mentorships with faculty members and medical students and by providing resources that facilitate the application process to graduate schools, summer programs, internships and other opportunities for research and clinical experience. It also provides a social and cultural base through which members can establish relationships with other students who have similar interests.

With the financial support of the MEChA Special Fee, CHE is able to fulfill its goal to be of service to Chicanos/as and Latinos/as beyond Stanford by providing a number of health services to the East Palo Alto community. The fee also makes possible the attendance of its members to important medical conferences. In this way, CHE is able to promote, at the undergraduate level, the education of culturally aware physicians, scientists and health care providers.

D
E
R
E
C
H
O
S

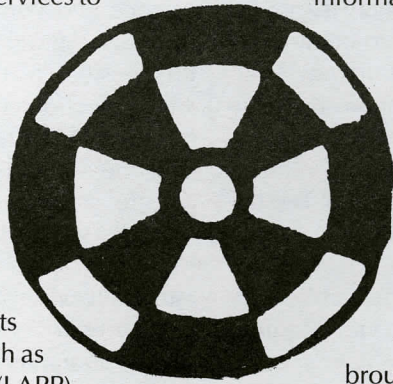
DERECHOS is a Stanford support organization for Chicano/Latino students interested in law and public policy. Founded in the fall of 1989, DERECHOS addresses the Chicano/Latino community's lack of representation in these fields. As an information network, DERECHOS provides information to its members about internships, graduate schools, and other professional opportunities. As a support group, it arranges discussions about law and public policy-related issues and gives members the opportunity to participate in a mentorship program with Stanford law students. DERECHOS is also involved in the surrounding area through community service projects and participation in a statewide program, the annual intercollegiate "Moot Court" competition. All of these services, in addition to DERECHOS' co-sponsorship of other events put on by the Stanford Chicano/Latino community, are made possible by the financial support of the MEChA Special Fee.

B
a
l
l
e
t

Celebrating its 24th year in existence, the Ballet Folklórico de Stanford is a student-run organization dedicated to bringing Mexican culture and dance to the campus and surrounding community. The Ballet Folklórico performs at a variety of functions every year, ending with an annual Concierto de la Primavera held Memorial Day weekend. El Concierto brings over eight regions of Mexico to the stage and represents the hard work, practice and effort of the year. Ballet is directed by Ana Iris Bosch, who studied with Bellas Artes in Mexico City and danced for four years with renowned dancer Amalia Hernandez.

CLUBIR

Currently in its first year of existence, Chicano/Latino Undergraduates in Business and International Relations (CLUBIR) is an organization established for Chicanos/as and Latinos/as interested in international affairs. CLUBIR has information about the numerous business and other international job opportunities in the fields of teaching, banking, law, journalism, diplomacy and more. It also provides members resources for the application to internships and scholarships, thereby establishing a strong system of networking. CLUBIR members meet twice a month to exchange experiences and advice. Additional information about CLUBIR can be obtained by calling 497-6308.



Barrio Assistance

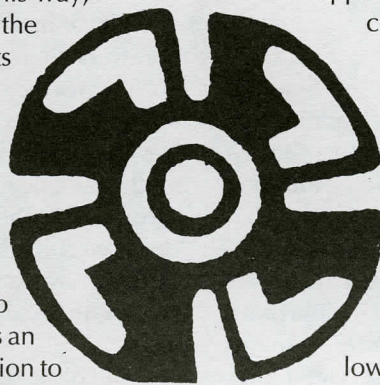
What is Barrio Assistance? B.A., as it is commonly known, has proudly entered its third decade of community service that brings students from Ravenswood School District and Stanford University together every Saturday. Each week more than 45 elementary and middle school students are brought to El Centro Chicano for a warm breakfast and a full session of one-on-one tutoring and recreation. The goal of the program is to provide "tutoring, friendship, and opportunity for students from barrio communities," according to program coordinator Lubia Sanchez.

The program is divided into two sessions. During the first hour and a half, the Stanford tutors instruct the pupils in their particular subject areas of need. The last half hour provides time for the children to bond with their tutors through arts and crafts or other "free time" activities, such as sports, board games, and puzzles. The final half hour is very important, Sanchez said. "The students learn better through the formation of a conducive environment," she said. "The children feel more comfortable admitting their limitations which the tutor then helps the pupil overcome."

Throughout the year, there are numerable special activities, including the annual B.A. Halloween Haunted House, Parent-Tutor Orientation, a Cinco de Mayo celebration, field trips, and Graduation. One of our most important events is our annual overnight Spring Camping Trip that provides an opportunity for hiking, nature walks, and more. Still, the most important part of the program remains the tutor-tutee relationship. Our children benefit not only academically from one-on-one tutoring, but also personally, as do our tutors. The dedication and commitment of all of our participants, tutors and tutees alike, illustrate our belief in the importance of education.

Barrio Assistance would not exist without the support of the Stanford community. The ASSU Special Fee is key not only in continuing the program, but also illustrating Stanford's commitment to education, as well. As B.A. approaches its twenty-fifth anniversary, we hope you will join in continuing the tradition of community service at Stanford.

Vote Yes! for Barrio Assistance Special Fee!



Chicano and Latino Graduation Committee

In honor of the parents and families of graduating Chicanos/as and Latinos/as, the Chicano and Latino Graduation Committee organizes a yearly bilingual ceremony followed by a special banquet for graduates and their families. These special graduation activities have a long tradition in our community, and are made possible with funding from MEChA Special Fee.

LSA

The Latin American Students' Association seeks to promote Latin American culture on campus. Concentrating on social events like dances, culture nights, and meals where Latin American food is served, we provide an opportunity for all Stanford students to learn more about our culture. Our organization is formed by more than one hundred students that come not only from all over Latin America, including Colombia, Peru, México, Brazil, Venezuela, Bolivia, and many others, but also from European and Asian countries, as well as from the United States. We usually host one or two big events each quarter, including Fiesta de la Bienvenida in the fall, Latino Culture Night in the winter and Fiesta de la Primavera in the spring. We strongly encourage everyone who is interested to come and experience a little Latin American flavor with us, be it through salsa and merengue classes, great typical food, or simply by talking!!! For more information, please contact Claudio at 7-2962 or claudio@leland.

Many efforts under one name

Candidates en la Comunidad

JOAQUIN CASTRO

Junior Joaquin Castro will be on this year's ballot for the ASSU Senate. A resident of San Antonio, Texas, he is double majoring in political science and communications. Joaquin decided to run for the Senate in an effort to bring students of different ethnicities together.

"I want to continue the work of the People's Platform, to really bring together the different ethnic communities and tie them into the larger (Stanford) community so they're not

separate," he said, adding that he wants to dispel the myth that there is animosity between the Chicano community at Stanford and other students.

As a senator, Joaquin hopes to secure more funding for activities sponsored by the different ethnic centers.

Joaquin is endorsed by the People's Platform political party. While at Stanford, he has been involved in DERECHOS as public relations coordinator and in the Stanford Democrats.

JULIAN CASTRO

Julian Castro, a junior political science and communications major from San Antonio, Texas, will be up for a position on the ASSU Senate this spring election. He is running for the Senate in an effort to insure that the Chicano and other ethnic communities are attended to.

"I feel that the university is losing sight of the value of multiculturalism," Julian said, adding that he believes something must be done to guarantee that the ethnic com-

munity centers are respected.

As a senator, Julian would also work to attain support for the new ethnic studies program, he said, hoping to pressure the faculty senate to give the program "the funding to get off the ground."

Julian is supported by the People's Platform political party. While at Stanford, he has been involved in DERECHOS and the Stanford Democrats. This year, he serves as a resident assistant for Naranja dorm.

CHRISTY RAMON

Christy Ramon, a freshman planning to major in psychology, is a candidate for the ASSU Senate. A resident of Arleta, Calif., she decided to run for the Senate because it allows her to be involved in an organization that affects not only the Chicano community, but the university as a whole.

"I wanted to do it because I wanted to get involved in something that makes a difference," Christy said. "I want to keep a face in the senate and show that [Chicanos] are represented."

She added that she does not

wish to make a career out of politics, but hopes to be senator for the good of students and the rest of the Stanford community.

Christy is endorsed by the People's Platform. She has previously been involved with this party through her attendance at meetings and work for the Balanced Funding Deal campaign. Her activities include membership in MEChA, Project Motivation, Teatro Xicano, and the Council of Presidents, for which she is an intern for the food service, post office, and Special Fee committees.

JUAN DIEGO (J.D.) HENAO

Running for the ASSU Senate this spring is Juan Diego Henao, a junior economics major from Venezuela. J. D. sees being a member of the Senate as a way to give back to Stanford what he has received from it.

"I think mainly it's an opportunity for me to have the chance to give something back to the community," he said.

Citing a number of residential and multicultural activities he has been a member of, he feels he has been

involved in a variety of programs that will provide the experience necessary to represent the student body.

Juan Diego is running independently. This year, his involvement in the Latino community includes being a member of the Latino Student Association, for which he was formerly program director, and a member of the dance group, Grupo de Baile Los Decanos. He is also active in the Shooting Star Traveling Children's Theatre.

DANNY BRAMZON

Danny Bramzon, a freshman from Miami, is running for a position on the ASSU Senate. A student planning to major in political science and history, he decided to run for the Senate in an effort to make it more understandable and attainable to students.

"I would like to make the Senate less politicized and intricate, to make it more available for the average student to participate," Danny said.

He also stated his concern of

making the Senate represent Stanford students more accurately, adding that many of the current senators "have a set agenda" and are representing their personal interests.

Danny is supported by the Students' Alliance. This year he serves as: a MEChA member, Gavilan dorm president, El Aguila writer, Stanford Review writer, dining service representative, member of the Student Advisory Committee for Dining Services, and a tutor for Barrio Assistance.

NICOLE VAZQUEZ

Once again, the Chicano community is being represented in the elections for the Council of Presidents, this year by Nicole Vazquez. Nicole, a resident of Los Angeles and a junior political science and English major, is endorsed by the People's Platform. Along with students Michael Choo, Jon Oram and Rich Stolz, she is part of the slate that calls itself "We Deserve Better."

Nicole's decision to run for a position on the COP resulted from three primary concerns. To begin with, as a COP member she hopes to represent the Chicano community in the ASSU. She will also push to make student issues and needs — such as fair funding for student groups, financial aid, tuition, campus safety, academic advising and transportation off campus — a priority for the university.

Finally, Nicole will aim to bring students to the table, particularly students of color, on administrative issues and make them part of the decision-making process. Ideas to accomplish this goal include pushing to place students on the University Cabinet and on the Bookstore Board of Directors.

While at Stanford, Nicole has gained experience working with the ASSU as a senator and member of the Appropriations Committee and the Program Board. She has also been active as co-treasurer for MEChA, community service director for DERECHOS, El Centro Chicano staff member, Barrio Assistance tutor, group projects director for the Stanford Volunteer Network and member of the Ballet Folklórico de Stanford.

NANCY SALAS

Nancy Salas, a resident of Inglewood, Calif., is a junior majoring in international relations with an honors certificate in Latin American studies. This spring election Nancy is running for senior class president on a slate with Liane Nomura, Reed Kennedy and Tom Sharpe, otherwise known as "Four Play." She decided to run for this group in order to insure Latino representation in student affairs, she said.

Although affiliated with the ASSU, senior class presidents are more involved in social activities, such as selecting a speaker for the 1996 com-

mencement ceremony.

"I wanted to have some input on who speaks at our graduation," Nancy said.

Although the group already has ideas for senior activities, they are taking things "one step at a time" and are not making these public yet, she added.

Nancy is currently an ASSU senator. She is also the community service representative for DERECHOS, co-president for Castaño dorm and a member of the Latino Leadership Opportunities Program.

BSU

AASA

VOTE SI

MECHA

SAIO

Dear Raza,

I hope you all are doing well and enjoying the beginning of another quarter. The last couple of days have been so beauti-



PHOTO FROM MEChA ARCHIVES

Verónica Luna, Alma Medina and Jorge Solís

Over the 25 years that MEChA has been on this campus we have struggled for the empowerment of the Chicano community. From Webb Ranch to California's Central Valley and Sacramento, we have fought for better working and living conditions for campesinos. At the forefront of the farm worker struggle is the national boycott on grapes. In trying to educate the Stanford campus on this issue, we have often been faced with blatant attacks of intolerance. The racial epithets and derogatory remarks that surfaced at Flick's last spring during an educational video on the issue of the grape boycott are a reflection of the challenges we face on this campus and in society.

After years of struggle and frustration engaging in the university process with former Dean of Students Michael Jackson, Vice Provost Mary Edmonds, Provost Condoleezza Rice and President Gerhard Casper, we had no recourse but to embark on a hunger strike. Hundreds of students protested and others fasted during the three-day hunger strike. One of the four demands made by the hunger strikers last May 3 was for a campus-wide grape

ful, I have almost forgotten how ugly they got last quarter. Almost. I was asked to write to you about last spring's hunger strike. This is not easy to do, but I agree that it is important for me to share my feelings about it and this last year with you. If you would like to talk to me about it at any time, just ask, and we'll see how it goes.

Last year's hunger strike was a result of our community's commitment to fighting for issues that not only affect us on this campus, but also on a wider societal level and in our personal lives. Issues of basic human rights to an education, decent working conditions, and the right to voice who we are and how we feel about the systems you work and live in, are extremely important to the individuals who decided to put their lives on hold and at risk for the duration of the strike. These rights are not only important to us as students on this campus, but also to the members of our families and broader Chicano community in this country.

The decision to take part in the strike, for many of us, caused an incredible amount of strain on our academic, physical and emotional lives. The worry and pain it caused my family alone, and the conversation I had with my mother before the strike, is a constant reminder of the strength I gain from their love and support every day. It was my mother's reminder that she wanted me to make my own decisions and stand by what I believe in that finalized my decision to strike. Their daily sacrifices under the sun in the grape fields of the San Joaquin Valley have allowed me to continue my education on this campus, something that I know is only possible because of the struggles of many other Chicanos before me. As a Chicana and the daughter of immigrant farm workers I often feel, particularly in this state, a lack of respect within the different systems I live in and for the work my family and many others do. I know that many people fail to recognize or are never taught of my family's plight and importance to the development of this country. This ignorance is what perpetuates the poor working conditions immigrant farm workers continue to endure possible. Striking for the evident need for education about this history as well as our responsibility to help those whose arduous labor puts food in all of our dining halls seemed like the least I could do for my family, my people.

It is this sense of commitment and responsibility to all of those individuals, to our families and to our community that gave all who were involved with the strike, the strength to get through its most difficult moments. In light of the initial and sometimes continuing sense of the administration's disregard for our concerns and efforts, the overwhelming support we received from students, faculty, and staff from every part of this campus allowed me to see the power and beauty of a broader and united Stanford community.

One of the most important results I saw from last spring's hunger strike and our continued efforts throughout this year was our success in waking many people up to the issues involved. In support of us or not, people were moved (or forced) to address our concerns. I firmly believe that the progress we *have* seen is a direct result of the strike. The fact that some forty congressmen felt the need to organize and rally against us by putting pressure on the university against the grape issue shows us that we have made an amazing contribution to the history of the still very alive and kicking Chicano movement.

Our strength and our survival depends on our combined efforts as a familia watching out and caring for each other. It is essential for us to continue to work as a united community, to accomplish our present goals as well as leaving the precedent and place for those to come after us at this University and beyond. Yes, we do still have a lot to work towards, but it is immensely important for us to realize that we have come a hell of a long way. Our mere presence on this campus is a victory to all those MEChistas and other Chicanas and Chicanos that have fought and struggled before us. I am sure there are a few congressmen who have, or would like to, write a letter about that too. I am glad we can make them do more than just "sit" in Congress. Do I believe in the worth and success of the hunger strike? With my life. ¡Adelante Raza!

Con cariño,

Elvira Prieto

Elvira Prieto, now a junior, was one of the four hunger strikers last year.

ATENTA MENTE, GENTE BOYCOTT GRAPES!!

boycott. We called on the university to enact a policy that would respond to the humane concerns of the farm worker community.

The Chicana/o community has remained vigilant and active in continuing César Chávez's work to bring the exploitation of farm workers to national attention. Moreover, many Stanford Chicano students feel intimately tied to the boycott of grapes because they come from farm worker families. Consequently, the critical decision to end the hunger strike hinged on the student's and community's hesitation to fall short of an immediate boycott of grapes and accept the establishment of a grape boycott committee. The hunger strike ended when students trusted in the Chicano faculty and decided to invest a similar trust in the university committee process.

The Grape Committee, formed this year as a result of the MEChA-organized hunger strike, looked at data from a wide range of sources. These sources include UFW representatives, Dr. Marion Moses, California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR), hunger strikers and the Grape Workers and Farm workers Coalition. In addition, all students were invited to voice opinions during open forums.

While this year's open forums and research on the issue included a debate of relevant facts and statistics, methodologies and intellectual debate overshadowed the human element. *Although statistical data on the harmful effects of pesticides to*

farm worker was deemed' to be inconclusive, we assert cancer-ridden communities, accounts of acute poisonings and high infant mortality rates in farm worker communities are overwhelming evidence of the real-life effects of pesticide use. The death of one child or adult due to exposure to pesticides IS significant. If it were your father, sister, or child it would be significant, but a statistically-based analysis would want us to believe otherwise. The question should not be if we have measured sufficiently or correctly to ban grapes, but if we can afford to accept any risk to human health or human life.

To date, most of the Grape Policy Committee's proceedings remain officially confidential and closed to the community. President Casper has arranged a meeting with El Centro's Guiding Concilio to discuss the confidential report and recommendation. M.E.Ch.A. and the Chicano community have invested, to the extent possible, in the committee process. At this juncture we must expect President Casper to do the same by respecting the hunger strikers' concerns or, at the very least, by abiding by the committee's recommendations. The grape boycott asks of those that support it to recognize the farm worker and the struggles they are engaged in to obtain dignity and equality in their lives. As one of California's leading universities, it is critical for Stanford University to be at the forefront of these ideals.

Nuevas organizaciones

Mariachi Cardenal

Carlos Santana

El Mariachi Cardenal de Stanford is finally here! In its first year, El Mariachi Cardenal is getting off the ground with ten members: B.J. Lucero and Eric Parra on trumpet, George López on vihuela, Perla Rodriguez, Carlos Santana and Arturo Soria on guitar, Danny Hsu and Alissa Chackerian on violin, and Juan Aguayo and Cecilia Ballí on guitarrón.

All of the mariachi members have musical experience -- B.J., Carlos and Eric have played in mariachis before. Danny and Alissa both play in the Stanford Symphony Orchestra. The fact that most mariachi members are underclassmen ensures a strong future for the group.

Although the idea of forming a mariachi surged last year, it was not until this fall quarter that it became a reality. B.J.'s announcement of the formation of a mariachi was well-received at a Zapata house meeting and received enthusiastic responses from musically-talented Zapatistas. Since then, the group has expanded to include several members from other dorms, and is open to any student, regardless of

race, who would enjoy making traditional Mexican music.

Although it played at a Zapata talent show, it was not recently that Mariachi Cardenal performed formally for the first time at a reception with Stanford Trustee Luis Nogales. Thanks to Mr. Nogales, El Centro Chicano, Casa Zapata and other outside sources, the group was able to purchase a guitarrón and provide a mariachi lecture/workshop for the entire Stanford community. The group's next goals are to purchase uniforms and establish a strong repertoire of selections to perform towards the end of the year. The highlight of the year will be an appearance in El Ballet Folklórico de Stanford's annual Concierto de la Primavera on May 26 and 27.

Eventually the group would like to perform along with El Ballet Folklórico de Stanford in order to provide live music for the lively dances from the various states of Mexico. The group is still seeking musical talent and funding. For information on the group, please contact Carlos Santana at 497-6141 or B.J. Lucero at 497-3662.



Los Hermanos

"This is not the base for a club, a group, or a fair-weather organization, but the essence of a familia. Through the support of a family and the strength derived from unity we can stand with fortitude."

Hermanos Creed

Juan Neria

Familia is the essence of Chicano/Latino culture. In the establishment of Los Hermanos, the founding members sought to recreate that essence as a way of providing a vital support system. The purpose is to create a brotherhood that not only allows each member to "stand with fortitude," but to have a lasting impact on the Stanford community. The idea for such a family arose last year when the members identified a need for a support system for Chicano/Latino males.

Although several clubs and organizations already existed, the members could not find the brotherhood that they desired. In response, they decided to create an organization which would serve those needs not found elsewhere. Those needs are community involvement, aca-

demic excellence, preservation of the Chicano/Latino culture, and a long lasting bond.

Los Hermanos strives to maintain these goals through several projects, including a mentoring program at Menlo/Atherton, mandatory library hours for members and several other community projects. Membership is open to all those who are willing to accept the ideals of Los Hermanos and who are willing to dedicate their heart and souls to the accomplishment of these goals. In short, Los Hermanos hopes to establish a family unit to provide the support necessary for the greatest success in the Stanford college experience.

Una Noche de Gala



PHOTO BY PERLA RODRIGUEZ

María Fernández

On Friday night, April 7th, El Centro Chicano became the site of the greatest lip-synching extravaganza of the year! Over fifteen of the world's most popular singers performed before Stanford students in a fundraiser sponsored by M.E.Ch.A to benefit Chicana(o)/Latina(o) Graduation.

Among the performers were artists such as Linda Ronstadt (sophomore Lubia Sánchez), the sizzlingsalsa sensation Jerry Rivera (frosh Ernesto Martínez), la Reina de la Salsa Celia Cruz (junior Verónica Luna) and many more. Other talented students like sophomores Sonia Herrera and Felipe Barragan performed dual roles with Sonia giving two dynamic performances of La Reina del Rock Alejandra Guzman and Ana Gabriel and Felipe singing to the tunes of Pedro Fernández and Ezequiel Peña. And who can forget the wonderful emotion displayed by senior Juan Gabriel Ibarra as none other than Juan Gabriel himself!

And what night can go on without those great voices de la musica

ranchera. Among those greats were Lola Beltrán (Elvira Prieto), and a touching father and son duet by Vicente (Jorge Solís) and Alejandro Fernández (Fernando Aceves). Let us not forget those fun banda beats of Banda El Recodo performed by sophomore Juan Neria.

One of the crowd's favorites, la Mexicana mas turbada Gloria Trevi (Olivia Díaz) brought the crowd to its feet as she dominated the stage with her magnetic presence. As you can image, the night was lovely and topped with the humor of master of ceremony Juan Gil Garcia. The night ended with special tribute to the late Tejana singer Selena for her accomplishments as a business woman, musician, and role model for our youth.

As a result of the success of this event, we hope efforts like these can add some fun to a job that is so difficult to do such as fundraising. This event was a great opportunity for us to let our hair loose, throw Azucar on the stage and build community. We look forward to many exciting Noches de Gala to come!

¡Muchísimas Gracias!

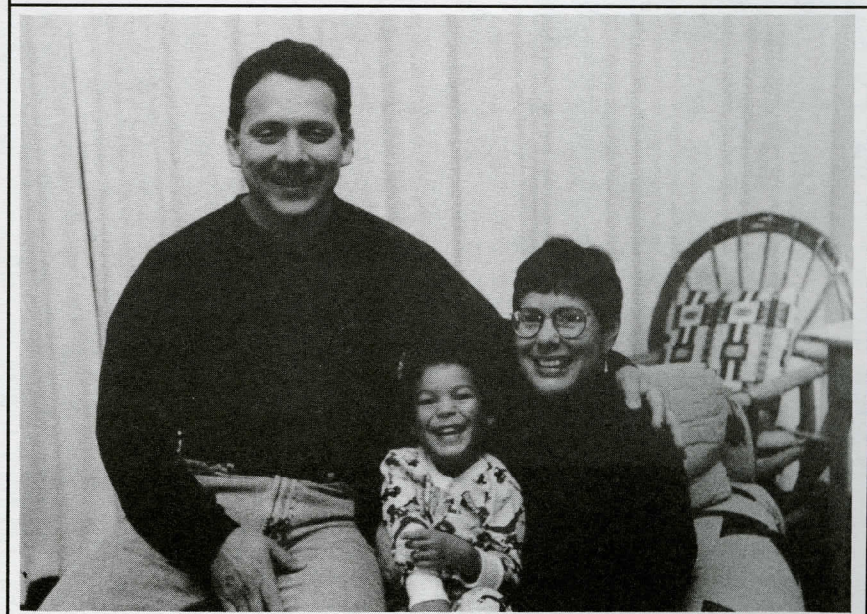


PHOTO BY CECILIA BALLI

A sincerest thanks to Arcadio and Ellen Morales for their endless efforts in making Casa Zapata a successful dorm and a nurturing home. The Morales were willing to lead Zapata through a very critical period in its 25 years of existence. As they relocate to Twain next year and English Assistant Professor Lora Romero takes over as resident fellow at Zapata, may we all remember Arcadio's words: "Once a Zapatista always a Zapatista goes for RFs too!"



PHOTO FROM MEChA ARCHIVES

Carmella Schaecher

Welfare Reform: Restoring or destroying the American family?

Since winning control of both houses in Congress after this past election, the new Republican majority has put forth a legitimate claim concerning the present state of the welfare system: the system needs reform.

As part of a lengthy legislative agenda proclaimed as a "Contract with America," Republicans have proposed the Personal Responsibility Act to address the welfare crisis. The act attempts to control spending on welfare to ensure that money allocated is efficiently and effectively spent, to reduce welfare dependency as a means of ending the public's increasing dependency on government, and to reduce illegitimacy in order to restore the American family.

While the act has numerous weaknesses, the most unsettling aspect of this legislation is the republicans' decision to tangle the welfare issue with family responsibility. Republicans are using welfare as a prize to those whose behavior they

deem socially acceptable, or more precisely the behavior of women that they approve, rather than as a program that aids needy individuals and families in obtaining basic necessities. Under the act, welfare is denied to minors with children born out of wedlock unless the minor is living with her parents or agrees to marry the biological father of her child. What the Republicans have failed to understand is that the value of a family lies beyond related individuals living under a single roof. Chances are that teenagers who turn to sex come from abusive homes or are in abusive relationships. Forcing minors to remain in such relationships does little in the name of the family.

The legislation not only contains unfounded assumptions but also measures that make the Republicans' true intentions highly questionable. The Personal Responsibility Act requires recipients to work or undertake job training for 35 hours per week after two years on the program. If Republicans are truly concerned about the children of this country growing up in a nurturing environment, they would not put forth legislation that requires mothers to leave their children six hours a day without providing child care that welfare recipients

cannot reasonably afford.

Further evidence that this act carries policies that harm women is the measure that allows states to reduce welfare payments by \$75 per month for those women without a high school diploma. This measure is directed at women alone with no such policy applied towards men. While education is undoubtedly a pressing issue, denying aid will do little to inspire young women to graduate. Such a blatant measure that harms needy women in the name of education is better understood as a measure to reduce welfare spending.

This brings up the most obvious flaw with the Personal Responsibility Act, that is, it is doubtful that by denying women in need of government support the necessary funding illegitimacy will decrease. There is an outrageous assumption that government funding promotes young women to have babies. It is highly unlikely that minors have sex because they know the government will provide aid just as it will be unlikely that minors will stop having sex because the government will deny support.

In effect, the Personal Responsibility Act greatly simplifies the issues by tangling welfare reform with the crises facing women and

fails to address the real questions at hand: why so many teenagers turn to sex, why so much pregnancy, why so few men are willing to take on their responsibilities as fathers, and why these so-called "dead-beat dads" are not as penalized as they should be. No government measure can be serious about restoring the American family without first addressing these questions. Because the Personal Responsibility Act fails to do so, it perpetuates a detrimental and unnecessary harm to unmarried mothers who responsibly choose to care for their children rather than abandon them as so many fathers do. The act does little to restore the American family, but rather, encourages women to abandon their children and deems only the well-off as able parents. The act, in turn, is little more than an attempt to establish outrageous welfare restructuring in the guise of the American family.

At the time of this writing the Personal Responsibility Act has passed through the House. It remains to be seen whether the Senate will stop this harmful piece of legislation and force our government to consider seriously the need for welfare reform and confront the issue of sexism that prevails with our elected congressmembers.

A letter to the Chicano/Latino admits of 1995 Why Stanford?

Mireya Samaniego

This is a question that's asked of me, time and time again, by fellow students when we get to discussing our reasons for choosing Stanford, but also by other people when they find out that I attend Stanford. My typical reply used to be that it was a great school, it was close to home, and the weather was nice. Recently, though, I have been asking myself this question again. I've really thought about it long and hard and I have come to realize that I came to Stanford because "I belong here." There isn't anywhere else I could imagine myself being.

The one aspect of Stanford that has made me feel most at home and the one thing that made me feel as if I really belonged was, and is, El Centro Chicano. El Centro Chicano is the "home away from home" that keeps me sane when everything else is so chaotic. I not only go there for social and cultural events, but I also go there for moral support. The staff and students are so supportive and always have an ear to lend. I can't even count all the times I have gone to Frances and Chris (from El Centro)

for their help. It always starts in the outside office talking to Chris, and before I know it, I am further inside talking to Frances. No matter how busy they are, Frances and Chris always make time to talk or listen to me and other students. (Pretty soon, we're going to have to make appointments to see them.)

Although El Centro may seem scary and intimidating at first, don't give up. It takes a lot of courage to walk down those steps and into the lounge, where it seems as if everyone is staring at you. But don't be afraid. I don't mean to stare, it's just that I'm interested and want to know who else is coming to be part of our community. The constant activity at El Centro takes some getting used to, but eventually, you will find yourself becoming a part of it. Before you realize it, you too will start considering El Centro your home.

El Centro is not only a place to come to relax, learn, and enjoy what it has to offer, but it also offers you a chance to become involved and make a difference. Whether you do this through MEChA and its many activities and programs, or through Project Motivation, Stanford Literacy Improvement Project, El Guiding Concilio (the governing board of El Centro), your energies and

ideas are constantly being sought. Through some way or another, you can make a difference in our community.

With all this socializing going on at El Centro, "What happens to academics" you ask? Well, there are plenty of opportunities for you to mix academics with social activities. One of the Chicano faculty usually drops by every other Wednesday to come have lunch with students and talk about his or her research interests. This not only gives students a chance to learn about our Chicano/a faculty, but it also gives students a chance to get to know them on a more personal level.

I know I have gone on and on about how great El Centro Chicano is, but it is only because it means so much to me. You may think that this sounds unbelievable, but it really is so. If you still don't believe me, then come find out for yourself. When it comes time to decide what school you will be attending, think Stanford. Where else do you get a chance to make life long friends, learn about your culture, grow as a person, and have that best time of your life?

Once again, bienvenidos and felicidades for being admitted as Stanford's Class of 1999!!

EL AGUILA



ART BY ROBERTO OCHOA