President’s Message

Dear LLN Hermanas:

It is both an honor and a pleasure to have the opportunity to serve as the LLNCCC President. I feel blessed to be able to draw from my previous experiences as an LLN member, as well as, my service on the LLNCCC board as the Central Region Representative, Treasurer, and Vice President Central before taking this President role. I am very appreciative and thankful for all the wisdom shared by my LLN Hermanas. Their support, guidance, and teachings gave the knowledge, the skills, and the leadership needed to serve from the heart and continue growing together to successfully fulfill the vision and mission of LLNCCC.

We left the 2018 LLNCCC Conference with a powerful message from the honorable Sylvia Mendez: to continue fighting for justice and equity. Through the Mendez family’s work, we are reminded of the struggles faced which provides us with wisdom to continue advocating for what is right. However, la lucha sigue as we continue to face the social political challenges affecting our Dreamers and DACA students and our immigrant families in general. Let’s always remember que La unión hace la fuerza, as we continue facing challenges before us. It is my hope that we can unite further and continue supporting one another at the emotional, moral, professional, and personal levels. Let’s continue our collaborative work to make a difference not only in our respective campuses and communities but through our beloved LLN work.

My commitment and goals for the next two years are to continue building a strong network and fostering equitable educational and employment opportunities for Latinas. Furthermore, as part of our Plan of Action, I am committed to provide support and mentorship through professional development webinars. It is my hope for LLNCCC to host a yearly regional professional development event for both professionals and students.

Again, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to serve you as the LLNCCC President. I am highly committed to honor and support the LLNCCC vision and mission. I invite you to continue the genuine discourse as we make sense of this complex world to collectively make our campuses, our communities, and our world a better place for all.

En solidaridad,

Dr. Ana Gómez de Torres
LLNCCC President

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https://llnccc.org/
Latina Leadership Network

On June of 1987, Olga Arenivar, Cecilia Alvarado Kuster, Betty Cotton, Irma Alvarez and Sharon Yaap met at the Great Teachers Seminar in Santa Barbara and shared their concern about the underrepresentation of Latinas at that event and throughout the California Community College system.

Recognizing, that the representation of Latinas in higher education was not improving, and that a Latina-Sensitive staff development program was in desperate need, and that Latina students were not being prepared for successful employment in the changing California job market, these women decided to act.

These five women decided to convene a conference to develop Latina Leadership in the California Community Colleges and to expand the number of Latinas throughout the system. Nine months later, the organizing committee had doubled in size. With the assistance of a small fund from the Improvement of Instruction grant, the conference, a Hispanic Women: The Untapped Leadership Resource was organized. Participants in this highly praised event identified issues impeding Latina Leadership and proposed strategies for addressing those issues.

31st Annual Latina Leadership Network of California Community Colleges Conference


The 31st Annual Latina Leadership Network conference centered on discussing the theme of “El Poder de la Mujer Latina: Impacting Equity, Diversity and Social Justice in Higher Education.” In addition, special discussion was centered around the impact that student equity funding has on Latina students; how we are represented at the faculty, classified, management level at our colleges, and work towards developing strategies to address our underrepresentation.
Sylvia Mendez is an American civil rights activist of Mexican-Puerto Rican heritage. At the age of eight, she played an instrumental role in the Mendez v. Westminster case, the landmark desegregation case of 1946. The success of the Mendez v. Westminster case made California the first state in the nation to end segregation in school, paving the way for Brown vs. Board of Education seven years later, which would bring an end to school segregation in the entire country. Mendez grew up during a time when most southern and southwestern schools were segregated.

Sylvia Mendez is the daughter of Gonzalo Mendez, a Mexican immigrant and Felicitas Mendez, a Puerto Rican immigrant, who fought so that Sylvia could have an equal education through the landmark court case battle of Mendez v. Westminster.

In 1943, students of Mexican decent were required to enroll in separate schools from Caucasian children.

“We were too young to really know what was going on,” Sylvia Mendez says of her family’s landmark education case, “But it was very humiliating for my parents and very sad, because they were not being accepted and being thought of as equal.”

When Sylvia was in third grade, she and her siblings were denied admissions to the segregated, “white school” near their Orange County home. The Mendez family fought back. Their 1947 victory desegregated public schools in California and became an example for broader decisions, such as Brown v. Board of Education.

Sylvia Mendez’s sole intent is to convey the importance of getting an education by encouraging students to stay in school and continue their education. Sylvia speaks at schools and other educational forums to educate others regarding her parents fight for desegregation of schools in California. On February 15, 2011, Sylvia Mendez was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.
Denise Alvarado

Denise Alvarado is serving her 15th year as an educator. She was a high school math educator for seven years, high school dean of Academics for three years, and high school assistant principal for the last five years. Denise Alvarado earned an Associate of Arts in 2001 from Fullerton College and in 2003 she went on to earn a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology with an emphasis in Chicana/o studies from University of California Davis. She earned a Master of Science degree with an emphasis in Secondary Education from California State University Fullerton in 2009. Ms. Alvarado currently works at Magnolia High School in the Anaheim Union High School District serving as an assistant principal. Ms. Alvarado has been awarded the Leadership and Outstanding Service for English Learners Award by the Orange County Department of Education. This recognition is awarded to individuals from districts across Orange County who have made significant contributions in promoting success for English learner students. Ms. Alvarado was recognized in 2003 while serving as a dean in Fullerton and in 2005 while serving as an assistant principal in Anaheim. Ms. Alvarado has a passion for volunteering and giving back to the community. She has been a Fullerton College Puente mentor for first generation college students since 2005 and has been visiting orphanages in Baja, Mexico since 2012. Ms. Alvarado has been a member of Alpha Delta Kappa Gamma Tau, an international sorority for women educators since 2013 and is currently the vice president of the sorority.

Maria Elena Ramirez

Utilizing the Indigenous art of storytelling, oral history, rap music, and spoken word, including teatro, Maria presents a feminine perspective on what has transpired over these past 500+ years since 1492, when Columbus invaded the Americas. Before Columbus, over 70% of the Indigenous nations were peaceful and clan centered. The invasion of 1492, followed by the infamous papal bull of 1493 and its deadly “Doctrine of Discovery”, ushered in genocide on a hemispheric level, disruption of native values, patriarchy, and a legacy of rape and violence against Mother Earth and women and children that haunt us to this day. Yet, a new cycle is upon us, just as our ancestors predicted, in which female power, leadership, and harmony will re-emerge.
LaƟna Leadership Institute: Part 1 and 2
Menudo for the Spirit

Moderators: Dr. Martha Garcia, Presenter: Dr. Marissa Vasquez-Urias

This workshop of the Leadership Institute offered valuable insight into the complex lives of today's Latina community college professionals. Modern Mujeres Profesionales represent a wide variety of experiences not akin to those of the past. Mujeres, married and single-parents, first-generation college graduates are increasing their representation in community college professions with purposes that are deeper than advancement and opportunity. However, the challenges for these Mujeres Profesionales are that they are underrepresented within executive leadership positions in higher education, and more so, the representation of Latina women executives at either community colleges or four-year universities is dismal. Of those Latina executives, most serve at community colleges instead of four-year universities. Moreover, work life balance must be a part of the dialogue. A discussion regarding the emotional, physical and mental charged life of the Latina community college professional, where family, language, culture, and community intercept to expose the pride and privilege that cannot be taken for granted. Despite the challenges, we have esperanza and will continue to grow our representation as Latina community college professionals.

LaƟna Leadership Institute: Part 3
LaƟna College Administrators: Triumphs and Challenges, Mi Legado

Moderator: Dr. Martha Garcia, Presenters: Dr. Angelica Garcia and Dr. Elaine Lipiz-Gonzalez

This workshop of the Leadership Institute encouraged and promoted the development and advancement of Mujeres Latinas in Community College administration. Attendees had the opportunity to hear about the stories of two Mujeres and their Legado: Dr. Angelica Garcia, Vice President of Student Services at Skyline Community College and Dr. Elaine Lipiz-Gonzalez, Dean of Student Support Services at Fullerton Community College.

LaƟna Leadership Institute: Part 4
LaƟna College Faculty Leaders: Triumphs and Challenges, Mi Legado

Moderator: Dr. Martha Garcia, Presenters: Glenda Moscoso and Bianca Bisi

This workshop of the Leadership Institute encouraged and promoted the development and advancement of Mujeres Latinas in Community College faculty leadership. Workshop participants had the opportunity to hear about the stories of two Mujeres and their legado: Bianca Bisi, Student Equity Coordinator at Imperial Valley College and Glenda Moscoso, Interim Student Services Division Chair at Cuesta College.
The Madrina Award of the Latina Leadership Network was established in 1992 to recognize the efforts of Latinas who have contributed their time and energy toward promoting the interest of Latinas in the California Community College system. Madrinas are individuals who demonstrate outstanding leadership skills and provide guidance and mentorship toward all Latinas. Their commitment to the goals of the organization is evident through their actions. They are involved in professional organizations, support curriculum development, foster leadership training, build bridges with the community, and mentor and empower Latinas.

For additional Madrina award information please visit our website at http://llnccc.org/madrina/
The Latina Leadership Network College/District of the Year Award (formerly, Region of the Year Award) was developed to honor a college and/or district that are dedicating time, energy, expertise, and leadership for the advancement of the Latinx community. The College/District commitment should be evident by the innovative programs, campus resources, and collaborations with community agencies that work towards closing the Latinx achievement gap.

To learn more about the great work Cuesta College is doing, please visit: https://www.cuesta.edu/

Latina Leadership Network (LLN) -
Creating a Welcoming Culture at Cuesta

The LLN had another excellent semester in providing leadership and guidance to Latinx and Dreamer students throughout the District. In September, the LLN provided leadership in hosting the Dreamer Forum on the San Luis Obispo campus. In addition, their leadership at many community events has been important in developing pathways for enrollment for populations of students who historically may not have considered Cuesta College. Thank you Latina Leadership Network for your amazing work with our community and students.
The Latina Leadership Network of the California Community Colleges (LLN) awards two scholarships per Region Area (North, Central and South for a total of six student scholarships) of $500 to Latina students currently attending a California Community College. Scholarship recipients are honored at the annual LLN Conference.

Sonia Bustos-Barocio
Los Medanos College
Major: Biology
Expected Graduation/Transfer: May 2018

“Iinnate curiosity propels my desire to understand why the human body behaves the way it does. My participation in influential research enabled me to develop the academic skills needed to succeed at the university level. I look forward to participating in cutting-edge research at the UC while pursuing an undergraduate education in Biology and then a Biomedical Science PhD.”

Tzitziki Hernandez
Napa Valley College
Major: Biology
Expected Graduation/Transfer: May 2018

“I am planning to receive my Bachelor’s Degree from UC Davis and get involved in research projects to help me get experience in different fields and where I hope it will reinforce my career. Then, I plan to apply for Medical schools and become a pediatrician. By translating for my parents and the medical staff including doctors regarding my sister’s medical condition, I noticed the conversations showed no empathy towards my parents when communicating. In other words there is a void of human cultural sentiment. I can use my Latino ‘cultura con cariño’ to connect by helping Latino health disparities because the Latino culture and the culture of medicine are unique.”

Kayla Gomez
Fresno City College
Major: International Relations/Political Science
Expected Graduation/Transfer: May 2018

“I want to learn more in depth about global issues such as human rights, access to education, youth empowerment, and environmental sustainability. My goal is to graduate with a Bachelor’s Degree and join the Peace Corps.”
Itzel Gonzalez  
Ventura College  
Major: Computer Science  
Expected Graduation/Transfer: May 2018

“My goal is to expand my fundamental understanding in the field of mathematics, physics, and computer science in order to prepare myself for the more rigorous upper division coursework that lies ahead. Working closely with my instructors before and after class has led me toward bettering my programming skills of control systems for automated technologies. This will enable me to accomplish my long term career goal of becoming an engineer in renewable energy or space exploration.”

Breanna Peterson  
Chaffey College  
Major: Education  
Expected Graduation/Transfer: May 2020

“It is important that we all have a voice and are given the opportunity to use it. College is more than just a means to a career. I have loved learning at every step and now that I have been given a second chance, I am so grateful to have the opportunity to work and attend school at the same time, as challenging as it is at times. My goal as a teacher is to provide a platform for Latina students to express themselves free of judgment and criticism.”

Jasmine Ureno-Diaz  
Evergreen Valley College  
Major: Political Science/Global Studies  
Expected Graduation/Transfer: May 2018

“I envision a future where more Latinas; regardless of social status, legal status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression are fully integrated in the political process whether that be by voting, holding political office, or advocating for the Latinx community by voicing issues that affect them in all social, political, and economic sectors. I am committed to making this a reality, starting with me.”
LATINA LEADERSHIP NETWORK OF THE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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For contact information please visit:
http://llnccc.org/board/
Join us for our 2019 Latina Leadership Network Conference taking place March 21-23, 2019 in Buellton, CA. Hotel reservations are underway and can be made by calling: 1-888-236-2427. Please ask for the 2019 LLNCCC Conference Group Room Rate. Take advantage of the group rate before it expires on February 21, 2019.
Dr. Martha Garcia

Viva! A big congratulations to Dr. Martha Garcia, on her new position as president of Imperial Valley College. Dr. Martha Garcia has become the first female president in the college’s history.

Dr. Garcia has been employed by Imperial Valley college since 1999 and has held several positions in the Student and Academic Services departments. Her last position held at the college was of acting IVC Vice President of Student Affairs and Interim Vice President of Instruction.

Her educational background includes earning a Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership with an emphasis in Community College Leadership from San Diego State University, a Master's degree in Educational Counseling from National University, a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice Administration from San Diego State University, and an Associate's degree from Imperial Valley College.

“I look forward to continuing to serve our students and community as best as possible,” said Garcia. “That is my purpose in life and I live it here at IVC every day, and it’s amazing.” Dr. Martha Garcia

MJC LLN has hosted monthly paint parties that have helped double their scholarship award from $250 to $500 per student.

MJC Paint Parties

Follow us on Facebook @MJCLLN or click https://www.facebook.com/MJCLLN/

Follow us on Instagram: MJCLLN
In an effort to lead our organization with clear purpose and focus, MJC’s LLN kicked off the start of the year with a retreat to envision our goals for the year. We decided to build a stronger network of support for Latinxs, serve as stronger advocates for our students, and increase our fundraising campaign for our student scholarships. We have created more spaces on campus where our culture and topics important to our community are discussed and where we develop culturally reflective programs. MJC’s Latina Leadership Network hosted our first International Women’s Day Scholarship recognition. We had a full-house, with over 100 people in attendance, Virginia Madueno delivered a heartfelt keynote and several of our college Dean’s from various divisions pledged THOUSANDS of dollars in support of our student scholarships! MJC LLN Board members worked tirelessly to make our inaugural event an elegant tribute to our ancestors while also helping ease the financial burden of our student scholars who will continue to cross borders of all kinds. MJC LLN awarded four $500 scholarships.

New this year is the LLN Plática Series. Each event is designed to strengthen and develop relationships with our colleagues, students and community outside of the work environment. Each Plática is a potluck and conversation that addresses important topics related to health, education and/or political advocacy.
The Modesto Junior College Latina Leadership Network (LLN) is hosted an inaugural Raza Graduate Celebration on Tuesday, April 10, 2018. The event reached capacity with over 400 students and their family members in attendance. MJC Raza Grad was streamed live from FB@MJCLLN with viewers from Mexico and Chile!

LLN’s bilingual (English/Spanish) celebration recognized the accomplishments of each graduating student and their family. Aztec dance group Kalpulli Ketzalcoatl Ketzal of Stockton opened the event with blessing and drumming.

Dr. Theresa Rojas, English professor and Dr. Marcos Contreras, Spanish professor, conferred the sarape stoles to students completing a certificate, associate degree and/or transfer program. The colorful stoles are made of traditional fabric, recognizing the connection to culture and community.

The program also featured keynote speaker MJC alumnus José González, founder of the Latino Outdoors organization. He is an experienced K-12 school teacher, environmental education advisor, outdoor education instructor and coordinator, and university adjunct faculty member. His commentary on diversity and environmental outreach has been featured by *High Country News, Outside, Earth Island Journal,* and *Latino USA,* and he has engaged in collaborations with the White House Council on Environmental Quality, U.S. Department of Interior, and the National Park Service. He also represented Latino Outdoors in several coalitions including the Latino Conservation Alliance and the Next 100 Coalition.

González has been recognized with honors by the National Wildlife Federation, *Grist Magazine,* and The Murie Center. He received his Associate Degree in Social and Behavioral Sciences from Modesto Junior College, Bachelor of Arts from the University of California, Davis, and his Master of Science from the University of Michigan School of Natural Resources and Environment.

During the celebration program, the Social Justice Advocate Award was presented to Richard Soto for his lifelong work as a change agent advocating for the civil and educational rights of the Latinx community. In 1964, Soto enlisted in the U.S. Navy and chose nursing as his career, and he served in Vietnam with a special medical surgical team in 1966. Upon his return from overseas in 1968, Soto enrolled at San Joaquin Delta College, maintained a 4.0 GPA, became the first president of M.E.Ch.A. in 1969, joined the Brown Berets and worked full time for Safeway while supporting a family of three. As a member of the Brown Berets, he was arrested for medically attending to victims of police brutality during the 1971 Chicano Moratoriums in East Los Angeles. Soto earned A.A., B.A., and M.A. degrees and a General Secondary Teaching Credential. In 1976 he was hired at his alma mater, Tracy High School, as a counselor and worked there for over 30 years.

After retiring he continues to counsel students at Tracy Adult School. In 2016, Soto opened the Chicano Library and Research Center at 2182 E. Main St. in Stockton, where he states, “You will find me reading beautiful Raza history and literature till I die.” He is also inspired by the thousands of young people who have allowed him to work with them to reach their dreams. Soto said, "Although my life is not over yet, I thank you for this greatly appreciated Life Time Achievement Award". 