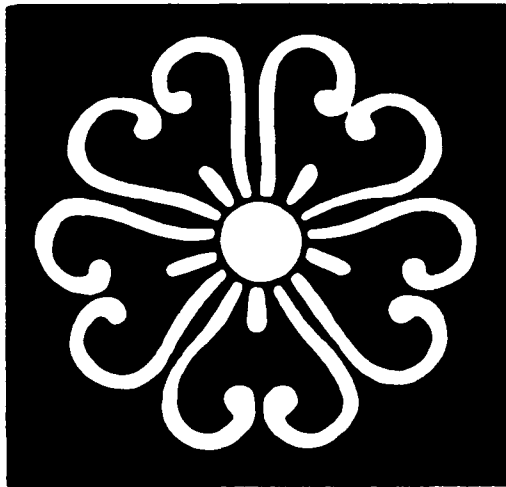

Eighth Annual
Ernesto Galarza
Commemorative Lecture
1993



Latinos in the Decade of the 90's:
A Political Coming of Age

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Latinos in the Decade of the 90's:
A Political Coming of Age

Presented by

ANTONIA HERNÁNDEZ
President and General Counsel,
Mexican American Legal Defense
and Education Fund (MALDEF)

Ernesto Galarza

The symbol for this lecture is Dr. Ernesto Galarza (1905 - 1984), a Stanford alumnus, intellectual, visionary, and activist scholar who galvanized national attention on the plight of farm workers in the 1940's and 1950's, and later focused on urban institutions that impeded the health, educational and socio-economic development of Chicana/os in the United States. The legacy of his contributions to civil rights include the founding of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) and the National Council of La Raza (NCLR). A few years before his death, Dr. Galarza donated all of his files to Stanford. Several renowned scholars conduct research based on his materials in the special collections archive at Stanford University's Green Library.

Preface

For almost two decades, respected legal activist Antonia Hernández has been at the forefront of the most significant efforts to expand the rights and opportunities of Latina/os through the effective use of litigation and lobbying. Since becoming the primary leader of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF), the most significant legal advocate on behalf of Mexican Americans and Latina/os for the last twenty-five years, she has ably guided the organization with her understanding that long term social change most often is incremental, takes time, always requires attention to detail, and demands ever increasing creativity in the development and pursuit of strategy.

It was her record of accomplishment, vision, and continuing work of national significance that made Hernández the unanimous choice to deliver the eighth annual Ernesto Galarza Commemorative Lecture sponsored by the Stanford Center for Chicano Research (SCCR). I should like to give my special thanks to the members of the selection committee: Chair: Guadalupe Valdés, Professor of Education as well as Spanish and Portuguese; Tomás Ybarra-Frausto,

Associate Director for Arts and Humanities, The Rockefeller Foundation; Raúl Yzaguirre, President, National Council of La Raza and member of the SCCR National Advisory Board; Herman Gallegos, Chairperson of the SCCR National Advisory Board; Albert Camarillo, Professor of History and Associate Dean of Humanities and Sciences; and Mary Louise Pratt, Professor of Spanish and Portuguese. I should also like to thank Miguel Méndez, Professor at the Stanford Law School, for introducing Hernández at the event.

In her lecture, Hernández outlines some of the major accomplishments achieved by MALDEF in the last quarter century. Most significantly, she provides an incisive critique of the current status of Latina/os as a group within American society that we should all seriously consider in our efforts to help our nation live up to the best aspects of its promise. The lecture was not only well received — the most frequent comment made after the lecture was "She tells it straight, doesn't she?" We are grateful to her for her courage and honesty.

Luis Ricardo Fraga
Director, SCCR
September, 1993

Introduction of Guest Lecturer

Miguel Méndez
Professor, Stanford Law School

The world at large, not just the United States, is gripped by change. Despite the promise of a "new world order" following the collapse of communism, the world seems to have been replaced by unprecedented disorder. At home the release of badly needed resources by the ending of the Cold War did not materialize. Instead, we Americans find ourselves making even tougher choices. In the competition for scarce resources, advancing one's group interests seems to require sacrificing the interests of others. Only someone who understands and can take advantage of change can lead in this new and uncertain environment.

Antonia Hernández is that person. Change and adjustment to new realities have characterized her life, both personal and professional. She was born in 1948 in *El Ejido el Cambio*, a farming collective in the northern Mexican state of Coahuila. When she was eight, her family left this rural community for an uncertain future in the United States. The Hernandezes settled first in El Paso and later in Los Angeles. It was there that Antonia first learned the lesson America

teaches to all people of color: that despite its commitment to equality, America is not equal; skin color, ethnicity, and national origin continue to be key determinants in defining social, educational, and economic opportunities.

Many have faltered in the face of this ugly truth. But not Antonia. Backed by her family's belief in the importance of education, she finished high school with honors. She then attended UCLA where she obtained a B.A. in 1970, a teaching credential in 1971, and a J.D. in 1974. Her goal was to serve Chicana/os and other Latina/os as a lawyer. From 1974 to 1977 she served as staff attorney with the Los Angeles Center for Law & Justice; from 1977 to 1979, she was the directing attorney of the Lincoln Heights Office of the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles; in 1980, she served as staff counsel to the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary. In 1981 she joined MALDEF as a staff lawyer and has served as President and General Counsel since 1985.

Her contributions in the field of civil rights have been recognized by many. She has been the recipient of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Hubert Humphrey Award for work in the cause of equality and of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Award for promoting the civil rights of all Americans. Her interest in the status of women is long-standing. While she was in law school, the American Association of University Women honored Antonia for her scholarship on women's issues. That Antonia was the first winner of the award for research unre-

lated to a dissertation is a testament to the scholarly quality of her work.

UCLA has also honored her achievements. In 1990 Antonia was selected as alumnus of the year. Earlier, the law school recognized her commitment to serving others by establishing the Antonia Hernández Public Service Award. The Government of México followed suit by bestowing on her its highest award — The Order of the Águila Azteca — for her contributions to social justice.

Dr. Ernesto Galarza was a firm believer in combining scholarship with activism on behalf of all those who have been disadvantaged by race and ethnicity. Though he appreciated the role of research, he knew that theory alone could not produce a better job or a better school for Latina/os. Injustice could be eliminated only by confronting oppression at the very levels where it manifests itself. Antonia has always fought prejudice wherever it rears its ugly head: in the workplace, the schools, the courts, and in legislative bodies. Because of her achievements as a scholar and accomplished activist, we honor her today as the keynote speaker for the Eighth Annual Ernesto Galarza Commemorative Lecture.



LATINOS IN THE
DECADE OF THE 90's:
A POLITICAL COMING
OF AGE

Antonia Hernández

Buenas tardes, everyone. Good afternoon. It is with great humility that I stand before you here today. You have heard some of my history; let me share a little more. One of the books that I read as a college student was *The Merchants of Labor*, by Ernesto Galarza. It is one of those books that impressed me most because it closely resembled my father and my mother's sufferings. I remember picking crops up and down the San Joaquín Valley which looks very different today than it did in 1956. I've picked fruits and vegetables and as I first stated, it is with pride and humility that I stand before you because Ernesto Galarza

was one of my heroes as was César Chávez.

I want to be able to provoke you a little; to challenge you to think. I am here to talk about change from an entirely different perspective. Influenced by Dr. Galarza, the activist and the change agent, I have always been very proud of the fact that I see things differently and try to effect change from that point of view. I have spent twenty years of my life working in public interest law. I went to law school for one reason and one reason only—to get paid to do what I love to do. And the twenty years of doing so have gone by very fast.

In 1972, when I finished my first year of law school I worked for MALDEF. It was only three years old with offices on Fourth and Spring Streets. I was awed by the Mario Obledos, Miguel Garcías, and Percy Durans, lawyers who were already formulating those policies that have persisted throughout time. I have worked with MALDEF full time since January of 1981, and the great deal of time spent there has shown me what a unique institution it is.

It is unique for a variety of reasons. We target certain issues and look toward the long haul. We try

to look beyond the present to the future to improve the quality of life for the Latino community. Also we believe strongly in the philosophy that we have within our community the creativity and the talent to be part of the solution, and that it is within our power to control our destiny.

Our job is to empower. Our job is to remove barriers, but the solutions come from within us. It is a very important philosophy for us. How do we empower our community to demand and take its rightful place in society?

...we have within our community the creativity and the talent to be part of the solution, and that it is within our power to control our destiny.

MALDEF is a very small institution. Nationally, there are only 68 of us. We are only 23 lawyers working out of five offices: Chicago, San Antonio, San Francisco, Washington DC and our headquarters in Los Angeles.

We are unique among civil rights

organizations because we have a varied approach to issues. We look at a problem and how we can resolve it as cheaply as possible, as quickly as possible. The court to us is a course of last resort. We are interested and very involved in advocacy, in making laws, in preventing bad laws from being created, and we make no bones about it. We advocate. *We're* advocates.

We believe also that education is critical within our community and we have expended a great deal of resources in educating our community whether it be through the Census program, through parent leadership, through scholarships or through our Leadership Program. But we are known primarily for our litigation. MALDEF, with its very limited resources, has come up against the best law firms in the country. We're darn good. We seldom lose. We target.

I have one of the best law firms in the country comprised of Latinas and Latinos and people of color. And we have very limited resources. Every year we litigate with a budget of five million dollars. We take no government funds because we want to be beholden to no one. Sometimes we don't even want to be beholden to the special interests within our community. We want to be able to say and do the things

that we feel will impact our community. I say this because I know it is a significant obligation, and my staff takes this very seriously.

I have one of the best law firms in the country comprised of Latinas and Latinos and people of color.

In preparing my remarks on the topic, *Latinos in the Decade of the 90's, A Political Coming of Age*, I really had to ponder because if you all recall, the 80's was supposed to have been our decade. Of course, that notion was created by Madison Avenue who wanted to sell us their products. I believe that only in this decade will we see the fruits of MALDEF's labor during the last twenty-five years.

Tomorrow is a very special day for MALDEF. May 1st, 1968, at a board meeting in San Antonio, Texas, The Ford Foundation announced its five-year grant to establish MALDEF. We opened our doors in July of 1968.

Today, in our docket are legal cases that were established back then. We have cases that we have been working on for over 15 years. Staff might come and go, but the cases remain. There are cases we

have tried one way and lost, tried another way and lost, and tried a third way and won. I see change and MALDEF sees change as slow and incremental. Real change takes a lot of work, a lot of commitment, and a lot of time.

Let me give you an example. Soon after we were founded we filed an education-related lawsuit that went right to the Supreme Court. It was called *Rodríguez*. We were alleging and wanting the court to declare that education was a fundamental interest and that we were therefore entitled to certain protections in order to get a quality education. The U.S. Supreme Court declared that education was not a fundamental interest and we lost the case. This was 1973.

We fought back. We asked ourselves, "Well, how do we do it?" We started again in the late 1970's. Unfortunately for us, and we don't know whether this was good luck or bad luck, the outcome was similar to that in the *Rodríguez* case. We started over again. We got a little sidetracked but then were on to something. In the 1980's we found a case, *Edgewood*, under the State of Texas Constitution, alleging that education was a fundamental interest. We used two clauses, Equal Protection and Efficiency, to prove that their present method of funding education was

inefficient. In the late 1980's, lo and behold, we finally won.

The Supreme Court of Texas was not willing to say that it violated Equal Protection but it did say that it violated the efficiency clause. We take our hard-earned wins however we can. That was only the beginning, because a victory before the Supreme Court is a hollow victory and merely a piece of paper if it cannot be implemented. The funding of education is a legislative prerogative and although we had won, we had to go to the legislature.

I see change....as slow and incremental. Real change takes a lot of work, a lot of commitment, and a lot of time.

The legislature did not want to fund education and there was a fight between the rich school districts and the poor school districts. The legislature passed a bill to reshuffle, but that policy did not do much to effect constructive change. We went back to court a second time and also went back to the legislature. It is 1993 and we're still battling the Texas legislature on the formula for financing. Major educational funding changes have

been implemented and we have won approximately 70% of what we wanted, but there is more to do yet.

Let's take another issue, political participation. Before I comment, I'm going to tell a story that Joaquín Ávila shared publicly, so I'm not divulging any secrets. Ávila was our first Director of Political Access. Joaquín was this bright young attorney that Vilma Martínez hired to work for MALDEF. Vilma gave him a title and a mission to go out and change the face of Texas politics.

MALDEF prepared business cards for Joaquín. He, however, was not one to pay attention to the details of the card production. He packed his bag and started traveling through the valley of Texas handing out business cards. Every time he handed out his card people would look at him strangely, some would even chuckle. For some time he couldn't figure out the source of their humor. As the story goes, Joaquín finally read his card which said, "Director of Political Asses." The moral of this story is that MALDEF does make mistakes, even with the best of intentions.

I want to return to the issue of political participation and key events in that history. Willie

Velasquez, along with Joaquín Ávila, literally changed the face of Texas politics and participation by removing the literacy requirements, by replacing at-large with single member districts, and by dealing with reapportionment and redistricting. In New Mexico, Federico Peña, our current U.S. Secretary of Transportation, was, at the time, one of those "crazy radical MALDEF lawyers with a ponytail," who changed politics in the same way. If you speak with our nation's Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary, Henry Cisneros, he will tell you that his victory in the City Council of San Antonio, which led to his election as mayor of San Antonio, was a consequence of a lawsuit that we filed and won. Now, as you look at both Texas and New Mexico you see the changed political landscape following 25 years of a tremendous amount of litigation. And we're still working on change.

Let me now move to California. Unfortunately, MALDEF did not begin to put a lot of its resources into California until the early 1980's. The case in Watsonville, the *Garza* case in Alien County, and what is happening now in Salinas and Monterey with the assistance and litigation of Joaquín, are precursors of what you are going to

see in California during the decade of the 90's. The political empowerment of our community is based on empowering the little towns, getting people to run for city council, for the school board, for the county board of supervisors, for county judges, and eventually for State office. We are going to do that in the 1990's and you will see those changes.

As Latinos, we need to demand accountability, ethics and integrity from our representatives.

You are seeing a drastic change throughout the country, particularly as a consequence of the redistricting in the 90's. We almost doubled the number of Latinos in Congress. However, I want to make the point that to me numbers are not enough. Perhaps this statement surprises you. But, if our people aspiring to be elected officials are just going to be brown faces, practicing the same politics to reinforce the status quo, we will not have made progress.

As Latinos, we need to demand accountability, ethics and integrity from our representatives. If

we do not, we cannot have the rightful entitlement to say we belong in the political arena. And those Latinos who say that we must stand behind our leadership without question are retarding our political development. We must address the problems that lie within our community. We must remove obstacles and recapture political losses even though we have been historically victimized. We must take control of our destiny. If we are to remove the barriers we have experienced, it is our responsibility to register and to vote.

Another point, if we are not U.S. citizens, it is our responsibility to become citizens. Clearly, non-citizens should raise the question of school participation because children's education is so crucial. As I have told many people, we need to embrace the principles of democracy to fully participate. We want to be at the table and we should be at the table. But *we have to want to be there.*

And we must deal also with the issues within our culture that are not all that wonderful. Now I speak as a woman and a Latina. The machismo within our culture needs to be addressed. We need to deal forthrightly with those obstacles within our culture that prevent us

from reaching our full potential.

For twenty five years, MALDEF has been a very unique organization. It is unique in that it has been run by women the majority of its years. For nine years, Vilma Martínez was President and General Counsel. I will be there eight years in July.

The majority of the staff are women attorneys, two of my VP's are women and we are an integral part of the organization. People constantly ask me whether my gender has made a difference in how I run MALDEF. You bet your button booties it has. Anyone who says that being at the table does not make a difference is being myopic and not facing reality.

We need to deal forthrightly with those obstacles within our culture that prevent us from reaching our full potential.

We women have a unique perspective, a unique focus. When we deal with the issue of the undocumented, I always ask, "What about the undocumented woman? What about the health issues?" We talk

about the increase in single mothers. We also have to deal with the issue of values and what values we want to promote, and then hold ourselves accountable to those values.

I sometimes think that we give lip service to the family saying: "*Estamos entre familia*," "*La familia es tan importante*," if it is, then every member of that family should be held accountable, including the males who are producing those children, and the collective community that is not addressing those issues. These are issues that we—and you as students—need to talk about. I was very pleased earlier in today's program to hear these topics addressed in your student research papers. It is notable that a majority of recipients of the Galarza Prize for Excellence in Undergraduate and Graduate Student Research are women.

Another phenomenon within our community—and it is not good or bad—is that a lot of the vibrant, energetic leadership is coming from Latinas. But as we congratulate ourselves, we must also acknowledge that we want to walk hand in hand with our brothers, because we do not want to neglect the education of those men.

As you think and work within your respective fields, there is much to be done whether it be in economics, or employment, or whether it is facing a current issue today - the rising tide of anti-immigrant bashing. Let me suggest that anti-immigrant bashing is affecting all of us.

"I came the right way." What does that mean? I, myself, came from Torreón through Juárez through El Paso and up to Arizona and to California. But let us not forget that until society sees us differently than it sees us today, none of us can escape. We are all painted with the same broad stroke of a brush as farm workers, illiterates, as not caring about education, and so on.

... anti-immigrant bashing is affecting all of us.

In fact, for those who think that we have left that behind, I will share some information with you. Last year a group published the traditional polls of the social standing of all ethnic groups in this country. In order to be "objective," an ethnic group that does not exist was created. That fabricated ethnic group has a greater standing

than Mexicans and Puerto Ricans have in this society today. In closing, remember that as we continue to work and as you continue to change, real change takes time, and it's incremental.

Un paso para adelante y otro para atrás. Muchísimas gracias.

April 30, 1993

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MEXICAN AMERICAN LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND

Miguel Méndez,
Professor, Stanford Law School

May 1, 1993, will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of MALDEF, the most important Chicano civil rights organization in the United States. MALDEF was the brainchild of Pete Tijerina, its first president, Mario Obledo, its second president, Judge Carlos Cadena, Roy Padilla, Albert Peña, and others who saw the need for an organization that could litigate systematically on behalf of Mexican Americans and other Latinos. In 1967 these lawyers met with Jack Greenberg of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund for advice in starting MALDEF. Jack referred them to The Ford Foundation, which given the social fervent of the 1960's, showed an interest.

Prior to the founding of MALDEF, the protection of civil

rights of Mexican Americans and other Latinos was a hit and miss proposition. Whether litigation was initiated depended primarily on the willingness of a few Chicano lawyers, such as Judge Cadena and Gus García, to represent indigent clients. While civil rights violations existed the resources to combat them did not. The Latino bar consisted of no more than 200 lawyers nationwide. Their average income was less than \$8,000 per year, and in Texas none could afford a library that contained both federal statutes and federal cases.

The civil rights fervor of the early 60's did not leave Mexican Americans untouched. Two events were of particular significance to us. One was Reyes López Tijerina's raid on the courthouse in Tierra Amarilla, New Mexico, to reclaim lands Anglos had taken from their Mexican owners. The prospect of Chicanos resorting to extra-legal self-help to enforce their claims was electrifying in both the Mexican American and Anglo communities. The specter of a Mexican American Zapata was welcomed by some, feared by others. The raid moved The Ford Foundation to look at the claims of Mexican Americans. The Foundation's lawyers reported that legal redress would require many lawyers. One result was the establishment of the Council for Legal Educational Opportunities, a non-profit foundation that provided training in law school skills to promising minority stu-

dents who wanted to study law. Another was the eventual establishment within MALDEF of scholarship funds for promising Latino law students.

Reyes López Tijerina's raid intensified and expanded Latino ethnic consciousness. Chicanos saw the need for unity and concerted action if inequalities were to be eliminated. With the help of MALDEF, José Ángel Gutiérrez, Juan Patlán, Narciso Alemán, and Willie Velasquez founded the Mexican Youth Organization in San Antonio. It later became La Raza Unida Party, which as a third party forced Democrats and Republicans in some states to begin to respond to the needs and aspirations of Chicanos. Willie Velasquez saw that the paramount need was political empowerment, so he founded the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project. Willie turned to a young MALDEF lawyer named Joaquín Ávila. Willie and Joaquín put together the most successful reapportionment strategy employed in the Southwest. Today, hundreds of Latino elected officials can trace their public positions to Willie and Joaquin's efforts to give Chicanos a political voice.

But it fell to another to spark the emergence of the Latino as a political personality capable of acting to reclaim the equality and dignity which years of Anglo occupation had denied us. That man was César Chávez. When he proved

that campesinos — the most marginalized and vulnerable members of the Latino community — could be organized to reclaim their rights, other Latinos knew that justice was not just a dream but a goal that could be achieved. The federal government responded by funding legal services as part of the War on Poverty. To secure their rights, the poor, just like the rich, were to be entitled to the services of a legal advocate. The Ford Foundation also answered the call by providing the money to found MALDEF.

Since its founding, MALDEF has focused on areas of prime concern to Latinos. It targets its actions on practices which disadvantage Chicanos and Latinos as a group. Foremost is the miseducation of Latinos. The lot of Chicanos and other Latinos will not improve on a sustainable basis until our children have access to equal educational opportunities. Adequate funding is the key to good schools. MALDEF has been instrumental in the fight to assure that state educational funding formulas provide rich and poor school districts — the ones most of our children attend — with equal funds.

MALDEF has succeeded in challenging intra-district funding practices that favor Anglo schools at the expense of minority schools. Funding equality between rich and poor school districts would be an empty victory if Latinos are regulated to comparatively under-

funded schools within a district.

MALDEF understands that remedying the miseducation of Latinos must include reforming higher education. MALDEF has thus begun to focus on the funding of higher education institutions. The State of Texas, in particular, has located most colleges and universities in areas where few Chicanos live. As a result of a MALDEF challenge, the State of Texas must now improve and expand higher education institutions in South Texas, where the Chicano community is concentrated.

Chicanos and other Latinos, as a group, do not yet have access to substantial economic resources. If we are to exert our influence, we must do so through our numbers at the ballot box. MALDEF has led the way in empowering Latinos politically through its incredibly successful reapportionment lawsuits. Under the leadership of Joaquín Ávila, who served as a staff lawyer and as General Counsel, MALDEF has made it possible for hundreds upon hundreds of Chicanos to be elected to office for the first time.

Once the poll tax and English-speaking requirements were eliminated as barriers to Mexican American political participation, opponents responded by gerrymandering Chicano communities so that we could never elect one of our own. MALDEF, more so than any

other Latino organization, has put a stop to these practices.

MALDEF has literally changed the face of Southwestern politics. But the change has not been limited to the complexion of members of city councils, school boards, county governments, and legislatures. MALDEF has extended the principle of protecting against the dilution of minority voting strength to the election of judges. As Pete Tijerina, the first president of MALDEF and later an appellate judge in Texas said to me, "Now that we can get elected, the Anglo politicians have suddenly discovered that only appointed judges are 'truly qualified' to sit on the bench." MALDEF, we can be assured, will be there if politicians attempt to circumvent the election of Latino judges by requiring their appointment.

One of the most effective ways of empowering individuals is by helping them obtain well paying jobs. MALDEF has joined legal service organizations and other civil rights groups in challenging employment practices that discriminate against Latinos in the public as well as private domain. MALDEF has taken the lead in challenging work rules that require employees to speak only in English and that fail to reward bilingual employees who are required to use their bilingual skills on the job.

The Mexican American com-

munity has always included a large number of immigrants, both legal and illegal. The dramatic increase in undocumented immigration from México and Central America in the 1980's, and the corresponding increase in anti-immigrant sentiment resulted in a new MALDEF program to protect immigrant rights. MALDEF's efforts have centered on eliminating illegal enforcement activities by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). As a result of MALDEF suits, the INS is under court order to refrain from raiding workplaces and other places where Latinos congregate, unless the INS first complies with the Fourth Amendment's probable cause and warrant requirements.

MALDEF, like California Rural Legal Assistance and other major legal services organizations, recognizes that legislative solutions are often more effective than legal remedies. MALDEF maintains legislative offices in Sacramento and Washington DC, and provides technical assistance to community groups seeking legislative relief. MALDEF has played a key role in extending the Voting Rights Act, without which much of the reapportionment work would not have been possible.

Long before terms such as "empowerment" and "self-help" became buzzwords, MALDEF recognized the importance of helping individuals and groups help themselves. MALDEF pioneered the

Leadership Development Program to train Latinos in leadership skills. Of the 1400 Latinos who have been trained, more than half have obtained positions on decision-making boards and commissions.

MALDEF has targeted a special leadership program for parents of school children. Litigation can reform school districts only so far. In the end, parent involvement can make the critical difference between an education that ignores Chicanos and one that responds to our needs. MALDEF has trained over 500 parents in techniques for influencing school policies and practices.

As we approach the Twenty-First Century, MALDEF faces new challenges. MALDEF alone, of course, cannot respond to all of these challenges. But as in the past, with leaders such as Antonia Hernández, we can count on MALDEF being at the forefront of the new struggles for equality, justice, and dignity. Each head of MALDEF made an important and unique contribution to the work of the organization: to Pete Tijerina, the first president, fell the task of starting MALDEF, of securing the initial funding base; to Mario Obledo, the second president, of getting both the Latino and non-Latino communities to accept MALDEF as the advocate for Latinos; to Vilma Martínez, the third president, of increasing the funding base to support new offices and

endeavors; to Joaquín Ávila, the fourth president, of taking advantage of unprecedented demographic shifts to give Latinos real political clout. And with Antonia Hernández resides the challenge of ensuring that Latinos stay at the center of the national, social and economic agendas as we approach the next century.

STANFORD CENTER FOR CHICANO RESEARCH

The Stanford Center for Chicano Research (SCCR) was established in 1980 to promote cross-disciplinary research on Mexican American and Latino communities in the United States. Under its current director, Associate Professor of Political Science Luis R. Fraga, the Center continues to promote interdisciplinary study, and focuses on major issues of public policy through projects that examine implications of the expanding presence of Latinos in California and in the United States generally, as well as the implications of increased diversity among Latinos themselves.

One important goal of the SCCR is to enhance dialogue between the research community and the public. As concerned citizens as well as researchers in academia, faculty want to contribute to the local, state and national discourse of public policy and promote effective long term problem solving through their work at the Center.

Current projects at the SCCR include: *Environmental Poverty: Assessing the Risk of Pesticides to Farm Labor Children*; *Latinos, Voting Rights and the Public Interest*; *The Public Outreach Project*; *Pediatric AIDS and Infectious Diseases*; *Cultural Citizenship*; *Civic Capacity & Urban Education*; *Bay Area Latino Community Studies Project*; *The Use of Languages Other than English in the Courts*; *Visionary Companies & Latino Employees*; and *International Childhood Immunization Strategies*.

The Center holds public forums, coordinates research seminars, and presents the Annual Ernesto Galarza Lecture each spring. Research activities are published through the Center's newsletter, *La Nueva Visión*, and the SCCR Working Paper Series. In tandem with the Chicana/o Fellows program and the Chicano Graduate Student Association, SCCR sponsors colloquia that highlight the research of faculty, visiting scholars, and graduate students.

SCCR sponsors programs, which focus on students, who are central to the center's academic mission. Beginning in the Fall of 1993, the Center implemented the SCCR Student Research Fellows Program to link targeted minority undergraduate and graduate students with faculty conducting interdisciplinary research projects at the Center. Currently this program receives funds from the James Irvine Foundation.

Each spring, SCCR calls for summer research project proposals from the Stanford graduate and undergraduate student community. Funded by the Escobedo Commemorative Fund, students may create on an original research project or may join an on-going project at SCCR. The Center also hosts the Latino Leadership Opportunity Program (LLOP), a one year national program of study and practicum designed for undergraduate Latina/o students interested in public policy and governance.