A message from our Interim Director:

Welcome to the Center for Mexican American Studies’ first newsletter!

Wow!! Spring 2018 is already here, and the Center for Mexican American Studies is planning many more activities for our yearlong series called “Nuestra Gloria” to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the publication of “Borderlands / La Frontera: The New Mestiza,” written by Valley native Gloria Anzaldúa. During the Fall 2017, the center was very active hosting and sponsoring many activities. For this reason, we created this newsletter to provide you with a glance of everything that happened last semester.

Abróchense los cinturones, because CMAS will continue its work focusing and supporting research, creative work, and community activities related to the historical and contemporary experiences of Mexican Americans, Chicana/o and Latinx. We hope to see you at our future learning activities, events, etc...

I would finish by thanking ALL the faculty, staff, and students who have contributed one way or another to the success of the Fall 2017 semester. To all of them, un millón de gracias!

Wishing you a wonderful Spring Semester!

Zulmaris Diaz, Ph. D.

Interim Director of CMAS
XITO: EL VALLE
SEPTEMBER 1 & 2, 2017
On September 1 and 2, 2017 Mexican American Studies lecturer Arnulfo Daniel Segovia, graduate assistant Amanda Tovar, and the Center for Mexican American Studies organized and hosted XITO: El Valle, a workshop for educators, with Arizona based educators that focuses on culturally relevant pedagogy. Norma Gonzalez, Jose Gonzalez, and Luis Perales (Zencons) shared their liberatory and community based pedagogy with 60 people. XITO has been committed to the success of Latinx students in K-12 for nearly 10 years.

GLORIA ANZALDÚA’S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION SEPTEMBER 26, 2017
The Center for Mexican American Studies held a celebration in honor of Gloria Anzaldúa’s 75th birthday. Faculty, staff, and students were accompanied by Gloria Anzaldúa’s niece and nephew. Professors and students alike shared the ways Anzaldúa’s work influenced and positively impacted their lives.

NUESTRA GLORIA KICKOFF EVENT WITH AIDA HURTADO OCTOBER 11, 2017
The Center for Mexican American Studies Kicked off a yearlong celebration of Gloria Anzaldua’s 30th anniversary of Borderlands/La Frontera’s publication with Dr. Aida Hurtado. Aida Hurtado facilitated a plática: The Obscurities of Cenote Writing: The Life and Work of Gloria Anzaldua.

RESILIENCE EN EL VALLE: REMEMBERING THE MATANZA OF 1915 OCTOBER 14, 2017
Refusing to Forget Project along with UTRGV CMAS hosted a series of events to commemorate the unveiling historical maker that recognizes the violence done to Mexican American people here in the Rio Grande Valley during an event which is referred to as “The Matanza [The Massacre] of 1915” a period of widespread, state sanctioned anti-Mexican violence along the Texas-Mexico border (1910-1920). This is a critical time in the shaping of the Rio Grande Valley and often a forgotten part of our history where the Texas Rangers, more commonly known as “the Rinches” spearheaded much of the lynching’s and violence against Mexicans and Mexican Americans.

VIGINIA GRISE'S UTRGV PERFORMANCE: YOUR HEALING IS KILLING ME OCTOBER 18, 2017
Virginia Grise performed selected pieces from her newest work. Your Healing is Killing Me is a performance manifesto based on the artists lived experiences with health care. Your Healing is Killing me was “part performance, part lecture, part therapy this performance is unprocessed, gluten, and guilt free.”

GRISELDAS CASTILLO: BLOOD & PILONCILLO READING SEPTEMBER 27, 2017
Griselda Castillo read from her bilingual chapbook, Blood & Piloncillo. She spoke on how to survive off of your own work as a writer in the current climate.

NLIRH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE OCTOBER 27 - 29, 2017
The Leadership Development Institute provided NLIRH activists and leaders with additional training around leadership development, civic engagement strategies, and a media academy. The LDI provided the team with additional tools and skills to further develop as leaders and build a strategy for local engagement, as well as to begin climbing the NLIRH leadership ladder and engage in additional community leadership roles.

Resilience en el Valle: Remembering the Matanza of 1915
Gloria Anzaldua Kick Off event with Aida Hurtado
TRAE TU LONCHERA  
(STEPHANIE ALVAREZ)  
OCTOBER 27, 2017

The first Trae tu Lonchera of the Fall 2017 semester was facilitated by Dr. Stephanie Alvarez. Faculty, staff, and students alike read her article *Evaluating the Role of the Spanish Department in the Education of U.S. Latin@ Students: Un Testimonio*. Dr. Alvarez uses her testimonio to “provide reflection” on her experience “for Spanish language educators and advocates along with both qualitative and quantitative data to understand how these individuals may better meet the needs of their Latin@ students while at the same time retaining students in their program and possibly assisting in their retention and graduation from college. Dr. Alvarez lays the groundwork for “arguing the need to regard Spanish as a domestic language and the absolute necessity of including U.S. Latin@ Spanish, Literature, and culture at all levels of the Spanish curriculum.” Dr. Alvarez’s article also provides strategic interventions for making progress towards those goals.

DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS  
ALTAR COMPETITION.

NOVEMBER 1 & 2, 2017

The Center for Mexican American Studies in collaboration with PSJA Independent School District hosted their second annual Día de los Muertos Altar Competition. Elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools participated in the celebration of our region’s rich Meso-American culture. In the elementary category, Drs. Reed & Mock won first place with García Elementary receiving Honorable Mention. In the middle school category, Alamo Middle School won first place with Liberty Middle School receiving Honorable Mention. In the high school category, PSJA North Early College High School won first place with Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School receiving Honorable Mention. All first-place winners received tickets to Disney Pixar’s Coco.

PHILOSOPHY ACROSS THE AMERICAS

NOVEMBER 2, 3, & 4, 2017

Philosophy Across the Américas: *Thinking La Frontera* was a conference co-hosted by STC and UTRGV, which featured local, national, and international philosophers, activists, and artists, including RGV artist Verónica Gabriela Cárdenas and poet Stevie Luna, on topics including Immigration, Social Justice, Chicana/o/Latina/o Feminism, The Border Wall, Borderlands, The History of the RGV, etc. Several events were held in community venues like The Old Church Winery in McAllen, as well as the Old Hidalgo Pumphouse Museum and World Birding Center.

In addition, there were presentations by three local community organizations: The Humanitarian Respite Center, LUPE, and The Young Center for Immigrant Children’s Rights. The event was free and open to the public.

TRAE TU LONCHERA  
DIGITAL STORY WORKSHOP

NOVEMBER 10, 2017

Dr. Stephanie Alvarez, B3 Director Francisco Guajardo, and Mexican American Studies lecturer Arnulfo Segovia offered a Digital Story-Telling Workshop at the Center for Bilingual Studies. MAS has been using digital testimonios as a signature pedagogy in its Introduction to Mexican American Studies courses since they were first introduced in 2009 and found them tremendously engaging and impactful for students.

BALLET NEPANTLA

NOVEMBER 29, 2017

Ballet Nepantla “explores the in-between-ness of cultures within the realm of dance, harmonizing contemporary ballet with traditional Mexican dance.” Ballet Nepantla closed out their Tejas Tour at Edinburg North High School. This is not your ordinary Folklórico, but rather a transcultural performance of music, folklórico, contemporary dance and classical ballet. Director and founder Andrea Guajardo held a Q&A session afterwards.
DECEMBER 1, 2017
The last Trae tu Lonchera was facilitated by Dr. Maritza de la Trinidad. Faculty, staff, and students alike read her article “We Are Asking for Equal Education”: Mexican Americans and the Quest for Educational Equity in Arizona which “addresses why Mexican Americans in Arizona filed a desegregation lawsuit in 1974 alleging de jure segregation of Mexican American students in Tucson public schools twenty years after the Supreme Court abolished legal segregation in Brown v. Board of Education. Using various sources, Dr. de la Trinidad analyzes the circumstances that compelled Mexican Americans to file Mendoza v. Tucson School District No. 1 to “demand educational opportunities for their children to push for school reforms to meet the community’s needs.” Dr. de la Trinidad’s article also “seeks to expand the history of Mexican American educational activism in the Southwest and provide a historical backdrop for current educational issues and debates in Arizona.”

NUESTRA GLORIA GRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM
DECEMBER 13, 2017
Nuestra Gloria Graduate Student Research Symposium: Healing & Social Justice in the Borderlands Research Symposium allowed students from the Mexican American Studies graduate Research Methods course to present their preliminary research findings to the community.

LA NOCHE DE M.A.S.
NOVEMBER 28, 2017
The Mexican American Studies Program at the Brownsville Campus hosted an event where the Mexican American Studies Program on the Brownsville campus was unveiled. New courses were presented, and different events were hosted. Another important highlight of the night was the release of the 2nd volume of the Chachalaca Review with a reading and a performance by Marimba Reyna del Valle.

DIA DE LOS MUERTOS: ALTAR COMPETITION WINNERS

Aida Hurtado’s presentation

Alamo Middle School

PSJA North High School

Reed Mock Elementary School

Newsletter created by Karen Ramirez and Amanda Tovar