The 46th annual Chicano/Latino Commencement Celebration (CLCC) returns in person on May 21, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the Savemart Center, after two years of virtual celebration.

The CLCC is a momentous occasion of love, joy and pride that radiates through the audience by the passion and intensity of music, dance, speeches and the cries of happiness from friends and familia.

Bringing Chicano and Latin American culture, identity and representation to a volume that can be heard and felt throughout all of Fresno.

The commencement relies heavily on the dedicated help of staff and student volunteers, of which the Latino/a Faculty and Staff Association has been a critical source of staff volunteers who contribute to the success of the celebration, all of which is coordinated by Dr. Victor Torres, a professor in the Chicano and Latin American Studies Department.

Dr. Torres witnessed his first CLCC in 1996, and from that point on participated in the celebration since 1997 as Director of Los Danzantes de Aztlán, which performs each year at the celebration; and he was appointed the position of coordinator of the CLCC in 2016.

The feelings, and emotions and representation of this celebration leaves a lifetime impression on each observer and participant.

Having witnessed year after year of accomplishments and congratulations, Dr. Torres has first hand knowledge of the importance and impact that the CLCC has on anyone that attends.

"CLCC is a culminating academic experience representing the perseverance, resiliency and determination of the graduates and their families. So it symbolizes not only the collective success of the family, but also of the entire community."

I myself personally witnessed the celebration when I was 8-years-old attending my mother’s graduation from Fresno State with a double major in History and Chicano and Latin American Studies.

I remember all the flags representing various countries from Latin America proudly surrounding the graduates in the middle of the Savemart Center.

The volume of the speakers increasing with each bachata, cumbia, merengue, salsa and mariachi song that played.

Followed by the endless energy that continuously flowed during the duration of the celebration with friends and familia singing along to the lyrics or the inability to stop dancing along with the music and performances.

Then hearing not only my mother’s name being announced, but my abuela’s and abuelo’s names being called as well.

I remember the look of pride on my abuelos’ faces and the feeling of joy from my tia, primo and hermanita as we shouted in support and joy of my mother’s accomplishment.

After leaving the celebration, I left with a heart full of pride and love not only for my mother and her accomplishment and success, but of being the nieta of strong and resilient Mexican immigrant grandparents; and the daughter of a persistent and strong-willed single Latina mother.

To see the Chicano/Latino community celebrated in such a momentous way was something I had never experienced nor seen before.

It left me feeling proud of my Mexican culture and heritage, to be Latina, and of becoming a future Fresno State Bulldog.
By Alondra Ruiz

The 2022 Chicano Youth Conference (CYC) held its 49th conference in the Satellite Student Union (SSU) on March 12 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Next year, it will mark the CYC 50th Conference, holding a long significance to Fresno State.

The first conference was held in 1973 where 300 middle school and high school students first attended. The following year in winter of 1974, 500 students attended, and two years later 1,500 students participated in the conference.

Since then, high school students from Los Banos High School, Orosi High School, Edison High School, and Parlier High School, alongside other schools, have participated in spending the day on campus to feel a sense of belonging.

This was “el movimiento” in the 70s and 80s for Chicanism, representation, higher education and social justice that continues today. The CYC is hosted under Fresno State’s department of Outreach and Special Programs with the collaborative effort and support from MCHA, College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), Lyles College of Engineering, Chicano Alumni Club, ASI and Latino/a Programs and Services.

The campus’s clubs, organizations, and programs in the community presented their profession to students to encourage and inform them of the options and occupations available.

CYC is held every year in January, but COVID-19 restrictions and mandates did not allow the conference to take place until March. The previous year, the conference was held virtually over two days to allow more students to join.

The conference provides workshops on four pillars – cultural awareness, access to higher education, social justice, and career and leadership. Through these workshops, students meet role models in those fields, and are exposed to ways of navigating institutions of higher education, as well as exposure to careers.

The goal is to provide an opportunity for future students to explore the pathways into post-secondary education.

Information is given about preparation for college, college admission requirements, and financial aid that is available.

Among the many students who participated in the conference, Milagros Cruz, a senior at Kerman High School, joined CYC after receiving an email weeks prior to the event. She became interested after learning it targeted Latinos, where it could also provide her opportunities and broaden career ideas.

After attending a couple workshops, she most enjoyed the STEM panel where it provided educational information and a variety of engineering majors offered at Fresno State.

In addition to learning and understanding that there is not one specific career she must follow, she got to hear the “different things you could do with that (engineering majors). There are many other things you could do, and there isn’t only a single career you could fall under.”

As a senior in high school, she applied to several CSU and UC schools across California, to major in computer science.

Milagros said that whenever she “[saw] girls in technology, I was always interested,” which led to her future aspiration to become a computer forensic investigator.

Early Outreach Counselor for the Outreach and Special Programs Ricardo Andrade, the lead organizer for CYC 2022, said, “We hope to continue to provide great information, an opportunity for students to network, learn about the history, the impact and accomplishments that Latino students have made on campus and in the community and also to inspire them to further their education.”

“We will be celebrating the 50th Anniversary so we definitely want to expand and reach out to more students and gain more support from individuals that have attended the conference and hear about how CYC impacted them or helped them go to college.”

Join next year’s 50th Chicano Youth Conference celebrating fifty years of history of social justice, educational equity, promoting higher education and the continuation of “el movimiento.”
César E. Chávez Commemoration

By Alondra Ruiz

Celebrating and commemorating César Chávez and his accomplishments took place on March 24, 2022 at the Peace Garden. The ceremony was led by Professor Emeritus and Sudharshan Kapoor, and hosted by the Latino/a Programs and Services and College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP).

It opened and welcomed students and community members where they enjoyed tacos, paletas and pan dulce, while contributing and advocating for farmworkers.

It offered special performances and entertainment by Fresno State Mariachi, Los Danzantes de Aztlán and the Aztec Dance Club, and a resource fair of student clubs and organizations, more specific to the Latinx students on campus.

Keynote speaker Teresa Romero, president for United Farm Workers National Headquarters, spoke on behalf of her experiences, and of César’s environmental justice, boycott of grapes, the united front alongside Filipinos, and for Muslim Independence.

Teresa, the third UFW President following her predecessor, is committed to the community, advocating for farmworkers, minorities, and is keeping the legacy — “el movimiento” — alive.

This year’s commemoration included a Long Sleeve and Bandana Drive for local campesinos, where donations were accepted at the event and at the CAMP office during National Farmworker Awareness Week.

Farmworkers go long hours en los campos putting their health and safety at risk due to exposure to dangerous pesticides and heart stress.

Long sleeves and bandanas are used to protect themselves from chemicals and pesticide, dust, the sun, COVID-19 and for women to guard themselves against sexual harassment or assault.

California celebrates a state holiday in March to honor the legacy of César Chávez, a civil rights activist and American labor leader for the Latino community across the United States.

Latinos/as/xs at the Oscars

By Victoria Monsivaiz

The Latino/a/x presence was felt at the 2022 Oscars with multiple nominations, performances, and wins; and while celebratory of the accomplishments and creativity recognized, it brings to light the lack of Latino/a/x representation and voice in Hollywood both in front and behind the camera.

According to the 2020 U.S. Census Bureau research and data, the Latino makeup of the U.S. population grew from 16.3% to 18.7% from 2010 to 2020.

Additionally, 51.1% of the total U.S. population growth from 2010 to 2020 was due to the growth of the Latino population. This highlights the presence of Latinos/as/xs in the U.S. and provides insight as to how much Latino/x representation and voice in Hollywood both in front and behind the camera.

In a virtual panel discussion in 2021 hosted by the White House Office of Public Engagements and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Director of Research and Civic Engagement, Ana-Christina Ramón of UCLA’s division of social science, stated that Latinos account for only 5% to 6% of main cast members and only 3% of directors and writers — for those that worked in streaming and box office films in 2020 — reported Nicole Acevedo from NBC News.

The lack of Latinx representatives in positions of influence within the news media and film leaves for lingerers and contradictions, accounts of negative stereotypes and rhetoric of Latinos/as/xs at the forefront of representation and identity.

To which has been irritat- ed by the past Trump administration and consequently continues to circulate presently. This demonstrates why Latino/a/x voices and representation is crucial now more than ever.

Some members of the Latinx community have already begun to take the initiative to not only bring their own chair to the table, but rather have also provided a space and platform for people to celebrate and support Latinx creativity in entertainment and film such as “The Latinx House”.

Alexandra Martínez Kondracke, Monica Ramírez and Olga Segura are co-founders of “The Latinx House.” They describe “The Latinx House” as not only a place to gather to appreciate and support the Latinx community, but where individuals are able to discuss content creation with regard to societal issues and creating opportunities, engagement and activation.

On “The Latinx House” website they describe that their mission is to unite the Latinx community to address issues that impact the community.

It also aims “to ensure that the priorities, perspectives, talent, and innovative ideas of the Latinx community are counted. It is critical that we promote our own content creators, and ensure that our voices are heard so that we have a seat at the cultural table.”

As the Latinx community continues to support and advocate for representation and additional positions of influence and cultural narrative directing, we celebrate the creativity and accomplishments of the Latinx/as/xs from the 2022 Academy Awards.

The Latino/a/x nominees:

• Lin-Manuel Miranda nominated for Best Original Song for “Dos Ojoggúilús” from “Encanto.”
• Ariana DeBose the first queer Afro-Latina nominated for Best Supporting Actor for “Encanto” (winner).
• Germaine Franco the first Latina composer to be nominated for an Academy Award in Best Original Score with the score for “Encanto”.
• Guillermo del Toro nominated for Best Picture for “Nightmare Alley.”
• Carlos López Estrada (co-director) and his team nominated for Best Animated Feature for “Encanto.”
• K.D. Dávila nominated for Best Live Action Short Film with “Please Hold.”
• Phil Lord co-produced the animated film “The Mitchells vs. the Machines” which was nominated for Best Animated Feature Film.

Hugo Covarrubias and Tevo Dias were nominated for Best Animated Short Film with “Bestia.”

Eugenio Derbez was a supporting actor in the film “CODA” which was nominated for Best Film (winner).
Whispers of the past, present and future.

Poem by Victoria Monsivaiz

Los susurros del presente pronto se convierten en susurros del pasado, pero allanan el camino hacia el futuro.

Fragments of various moments that transition into memory; from helping abuelito with el jardín, or preparando la maza for los tamales with abuelita, to helping mamá cuidar a mi hermanita. The same mantra was taught to me by each person, La educación conduce a mejores oportunidades.

Con cada historia, con cada consejo, it all circles back, a record on repeat.

My only reminder, Nunca olvides de donde vienes.

Their final assurance, Sigue pa’lante mija, ya tienes nuestra apoyo, ahora échale ganas y nunca olvides que siempre estaremos aquí. En esta vida o en la siguiente. Siempre estaremos contigo, apoyándote en tu esquina.

Ahi voy, one foot in front of the other. Con confianza y fuerza sigo pa’lante.

Spring 2022 Staff

Staff Adviser: Dr. Victor Torres

Victoria Monsivaiz
Editor-in-Chief

I graduated from Fresno State in May 2021 with my Bachelor’s in English. I currently work as a full-time tutor at Learn 4 Life: Kings Valley Academy II in Hanford and as a part-time barista. My experiences growing up and attending Fresno State have inspired me to become a poetry and fiction writer, in addition to working for a Latinx literary magazine or publishing company. I’m excited to share that I will be returning to Fresno State in the fall of 2022 to begin working on my Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing with an emphasis in editing and publishing.

Alondra Ruiz
Staff Reporter

I am a second year majoring in Chicano Studies, and I was born and raised in San Rafael, 15 minutes north of San Francisco. Living in a predominately white county, Latinos are among one of the minorities. My experiences, like many others, see the community and local issues affecting individuals and families, leading to much of my youth being a part of nonprofits such as early intervention, literacy, leadership, and college readiness. What brought me to Fresno State was the support and services offered, a sense of belonging, along with the vast Latinx population. My aspirations continue to remain involved with the community. In my free time, I write poetry, read manga and listen to oldies music. I enjoy movie nights with my family of nine.