

UC SANTA BARBARA

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Bill Schlotter

Pioneer Feminist Chicana Group to be Celebrated With Symposium, Reception, and Exhibition

Formed more than three decades ago by Mexican American women seeking political empowerment, Comisión Femenil Mexicana Nacional has grown to be a powerful voice for Latina feminism. In 2001, the group donated its collection of letters, photographs, tape recordings and other memorabilia to the California Ethnic and Multicultural Archives, housed in the Davidson Library at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

After two years of processing, the Comisión Femenil Mexicana Nacional (CFMN) material is now on display in the Davidson Library's Special Collections exhibition room, where it will remain through Nov. 15. To celebrate the opening of the archives to the public and to honor the 30th anniversary of CFMN's Constitutional Convention, held in Goleta in 1973, the UCSB Libraries are planning a Latina feminism symposium, a recognition luncheon and a reception Friday and Saturday, Nov. 7 and 8. Founding members and past leaders of CFMN and Latina state legislators will be present.

"In hosting this symposium, we seek to underscore the unique value and historical importance of these archives and the continuing influence and centrality of these women, regionally and nationally," said UCSB University Librarian Sarah Pritchard.

The celebration will begin with the reception, featuring State Senator Nell Soto

(D-Ontario), at 5 p.m. Friday, Nov. 7 on the Eighth Floor of the Davidson Library. Also present will be UCSB Chancellor Henry Yang, Pritchard, and CEMA Director Salvador Güereña.

A symposium to discuss the history of the CFMN and current Latina concerns will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday in UCSB's MultiCultural Center. The first session, from 10 a.m. to noon, will feature discussion of CFMN history. Panelists will be Gracia Molina de Pick, a CFMN founder and former professor in the UC and CSU systems; Marcie Miranda, a consultant with the Los Angeles Community Development Commission; and Sandy Sewell, a past CFMN president and the executive director of Centro de Niños in Los Angeles.

The moderator will be Ellie Hernandez, an assistant professor in the Women's Studies Program. Student respondent will be Tania Saenz.

The second session will run from 1:45 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. and will address current Latina concerns. Panelists will be State Senator Nell Soto; Leticia Quezada, a past president of both CFMN and the Comisión Femenil Los Angeles; and Sophia Esparza, CEO of the Chicana Service Action Center.

Moderator will be Sonia Garcia, chair of the Political Science Department at St. Mary's University. Rachel Vasquez will be student respondent.

Between the panels, a variety of prominent Latina elected officials will be recognized at a 12:15 p.m. luncheon in Corwin Pavilion. Lunch tickets are \$10 and can be reserved by contacting CEMA director Salvador Güereña at (805) 893-8563.

Local high school students have been invited to attend the celebration. UCSB vans provided by the UCSB Academic Senate Center for Faculty Outreach will transport students to and from Dos Pueblos, San Marcos and Santa Barbara high schools.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society.

All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.