



La Comunidad

California Latino Psychological Association

VOLUME I

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

NLPA President	3
Membership Chair	3
Featured Article	4
Board of Psychology	10
Remembering Star Vega	11
Student Column	12
Submission Guidelines	14
Upcoming Events	15
Resources/Conferences	16
Membership Brochure	17

Presidential Column



Building Coalitions

Miguel E. Gallardo, PsyD

When I reflect back to my initial thoughts about the establishment of the California Latino Psychological Association (CLPA), I immediately recall my concentrated effort on identifying the details of our survival. Establishing a new association is not something you just do, simply because it is a good idea. I wanted to ensure that our time and energy was well spent, and remains that way. In my involvement in organized psychology, I have experienced first hand the challenges that associations face in a time when our profession is asking more from us, but giving us less. One of the most salient concerns is the recruitment and retention of members. I had a conversation with one of my dearest friends and mentors; Dr. Thomas Parham about CLPA's survival. What came out of our discussion is the framework for this column – Why CLPA is important and what we need to do to survive. The five reasons I have outlined below are the foundation why people join, and remain members of associations.

1. **Purpose.** It appears that associations compete for the same members. Associations often ask the question, “What do our members want?” In a time when every association that I am a member of is losing members and looking for ways to gain more, why start a new one? One of my colleagues sent me an email recently in which he asked why we started CLPA. He stated, “*The resources among psychologists are so thin that spreading them out this way could make psychology less effective rather than more effective.*”

Continued page 7

Mentoring Makes a Difference

Olga L. Mejía, PhD

As I decided to go into higher education, I resolved to find ways to give back to my community – to help us achieve and progress. In my journey from a small town in Baja California, Mexico to having a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology in the United States, I had, and continue to have, much valued guidance and support from mentors and “angelitos” along the way. Through the difficult “I want to give up” moments, what helped me significantly was knowing that someone else believed in me and was cheering me on. My mentors have taken many shapes, sizes, and colors, including family members, friends, colleagues, supervisors, and professors. I strongly believe there are many more Latinas, Latinos, and people of color who are first generation college students and may not have the financial means to go into higher education, yet make up for these barriers in drive and dedication. With a good dose of guidance, mentoring, and resources, these students and their families can also have the opportunity to achieve their goals.



Continued page 9

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The editorial board reserves the right to edit all articles and submissions.

Editor's Column

Hello Everyone! It is with much excitement that I introduce the first issue of the California Latino Psychological Association's (CLPA), newsletter, La Comunidad. Our goal in creating a newsletter is to help unite, educate and inform psychologist and other mental health professionals interested in Latino Psychology. La Comunidad provides an opportunity to come together as a community and support each other in our work.

La Comunidad will be distributed quarterly throughout the year, starting with this edition in October and others issues to follow in January, April and July. We welcome all members to submit articles to be published in La Comunidad. Submissions can include book reviews, a student/early career column, experiences related to career development or articles focusing on research, education and/or clinical practice with the Latino community. Please refer to submission guidelines on page 13 for more information. Publishing in La Comunidad provides an opportunity to share the important work you do with others who have a similar commitment and passion. We are excited to work together to create a community and build resources and relationships throughout California.

If you are interested in participating on the Publications Committee, please feel free to contact me at Tlopez@argosyu.edu.

We look forward to hearing from you and we hope you enjoy the newsletter.

Tica Lopez, PhD
Chair - Publications Committee
Newsletter Editor

National Latino Psychological Association

Saludos to the members of the California Latina/o Psychological Association (CLPA). Your decision to become part of this new and important association speaks to your commitment to advance the study and practice of Latino Psychology. I am certain many of you know that CLPA can make a difference for us as academicians, researchers, and practitioners. Through this affiliation, you can have a dialogue with one another, become informed about the latest research findings, employment opportunities, and relevant conferences to meet your interests. A Latino cultural value is allocentrism, a sense of independence and community that dates back centuries to the early Indian tribes of Mexico and other Spanish-speaking countries. Through CLPA,

allocentrism, familismo, and personalismo can be practiced to the benefit of the membership and the Latino communities we want to serve.

Felicidades to Dr. Miguel Gallardo for his leadership in the development of CLPA. On Behalf of the Executive Committee of the National Latina/o Psychological Association, I encourage all of you to be active and bring pride to CLPA. *Adelante!*

Patricia Arredondo, EdD
NLPA President

Greetings from the Membership Chair

Welcome members, and potential members, of the California Latino Psychological Association! As Chair of the Membership Committee I relish this moment of advancement for Latino psychology and the founding of CLPA as a voice for Latino mental health. This letter is just a *personal* note about my hope and views about the CLPA.

As I see it, this is a time for joyous celebration of our professional development combined with heightened activism for the mental health needs of our people. The CLPA has come into existence to serve a community that has long been ignored and continues to bear the brunt of hostility, and paradoxically, indifference by federal, state and local entities. The time has come for Latino psychologists and other mental health professionals to take a stand in defense of our community and to provide a vehicle for the professional advancement of Latino clinicians, scholars, and students.

However, to create a Latino psychological association raises a number of questions that can only be addressed by dialogue, reflection and research. For example, by its very name such an organization calls into question of what exactly *is* Latino Psychology and why is it needed. While social justice is clearly a fundamental concern, this raises the question of how to integrate community activism and clinical practice. More specifically, how do we empower our clients to live normal lives in an abnormal world? It is my hope that the CLPA will advance along three lines of development; praxis, policy analysis, and the development of a Critical Latino Psychology.

Praxis is needed to integrate the fields of Chicano / Latino Studies, Latina/o critical theory and clinical psychology. This would allow the transfer of knowledge to increase our scholarly understanding of the Latino experience while simultaneously enriching our work as practitioners. Policy and advocacy are clearly a fun-

damental mandate as mental health services continue to be under-funded (or de-funded) and mental health policy must be monitored in respect to the needs of our immigrant and established communities. The development of a critical Latino Psychology is necessary to provide a system of understanding that takes into account the experience of racism, sexism and oppression as a daily reality in the lives of most Latinos. By extension this includes the process of expanding and enriching strong ties with scholars throughout Latin America, particularly those who have developed models of community psychology based on the works of Paolo Friere and Martin-Baro.



Again, these are just my personal hopes and dreams. It is up to you, the CLPA member and your direct involvement that decides what our future will be. I look forward to working with all members to create a needed voice for our community.

Adelante!
Ricardo E. Gonsalves, Ed.D.

Issues Impacting the Mental Health and Wellness of Chicano/Latino Families in California

Jose M. Cervantes

Current writing indicates that a major crisis is developing with Chicano/Latino populations across the country, but especially noted in California, a state with one of the largest concentrations of Latino families (National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations, 1999; Council of Economic Advisers, 1998; Zambrana, 1995). This crisis is a combination of several forces impacting health, mental health, and education (Flores et al., 2002). This article will focus exclusively on some of the principle issues affecting Latinos in California given the increased concentration of these families throughout the state. In particular, this writing will address those salient issues impacting the psychological wellness of Chicano/Latino families.

In more recent times, the concern of Chicano/Latino populations relative to psychological difficulties and acculturation stress has been well cited (Falicov, 1998, 2002; Cervantes, Padilla, & Salgado de Synder, 1989; Salgado de Synder, 1987; Quintana, 1995). This writing is intended to briefly review the population demographics of the Chicano/Latino population in California, provide an overview to some of the salient issues impacting the psychological wellness of this population, discuss these identified areas, and provide a summary of recommendations for mental health policy makers.

Overview of Identified Problems

Families and their respective communities have been identified internationally as undergoing significant social, economic, and sociopolitical change in the new millennium (Kaslow, 2001). Complicating this demographic picture is that the Latino experience in the United States has been shaped by immigration. Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco (2001) and Edmonston & Passel (1994) report that the vast majority of Latinos are either immigrants or the children of immigrants. The Southwest is the particular recipient of this group blending varied migration experiences and acculturation status that have impacted bilingual ability, family dynamics, school performance, and general psychological adjustment (Falicov, 1998).

A recent study by Kanel (2002) highlights some relevant differences in mental health status among Latinos in South-

ern California. She surveyed three distinct groups: low skilled, working-poor Latinos, Latino college students, and psychotherapists who self-identified as primarily treating Spanish speaking families. While there were expected differences relative to socioeconomic status, acculturation, and employment, all groups acknowledged significant life challenges in addressing the unique mental health needs of this population.



Although not directed specifically to Chicano/Latino populations in California, the findings from the National Organization of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations (1999) identified increased adolescent pregnancy, depression, substance abuse, and delinquency as salient concerns for teenage Latino girls. This group further reported the co-occurrence of other risky behaviors and their related health consequences: increased risk for depression and suicide, use of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs, unprotected sexual activity with subsequent exposure to sexually transmitted diseases, and gun-related violence. These findings are predictably related to increased school dropout rates, pregnancy and detachment from school and work for Chicano/Latino youth (Hernandez & Charney, 1998, Zambrana, 1995).

While much of the professional literature on Latinos is directed at Mexican American populations, immigrants from Central American countries are receiving increased attention (Hovey, 2000; Hernandez, 1996). Hovey's study (2000) surveyed 78 Central American immigrants living in Southern California. A self-administered battery of questionnaires was used to measure religious activity, control and choice in the decision to migrate. These immigrants were found to have higher ratings of depression and suicidal ideation than the comparable population of Mexican American immigrants also examined in this study. Thus, Central Americans, principally immigrants from Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua, have their own unique set of psychological problems that interface with the majority Chicano/Latino population in California. The primary concern is that this mixture of distinct ethnic/cultural experiences, reasons for immigration, political agendas, and country of origin politics are likely conflictual with the battle lines drawn in the inner city neighborhoods (Cowan, Martinez, and Mendiola, 1997; Acuña, 1996).

Related to the Issue of Immigrants are recent changes in the Immigration policy that is threatening the emotional, familial, and community support systems for hundreds of U.S. born

Continued page 5

Continued from page 4

Chicano/Latino children and adolescents (Espenshade, Baraka, & Huber, 1997). Section 240 A (b)(1)(D) of the Immigration and Naturalization Act states that the identified alien may not be removed if he/she/they can demonstrate that said removal would result in exceptional and extremely unusual hardship for the alien's spouse, parent, or child who is a citizen of the United States or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence (Center for Migration Studies of New York, 1997).

Complicating this issue is the simultaneous passage of the Welfare Reform Reconciliation Act of 1996 which severely limits access to public economic and social services (American Public Welfare Association, 1996). Thus, in addition to the stress of parental deportation, those Chicano/Latino immigrants who have welfare eligibility have become aware of how costly it is to be a non-citizen, especially a poor non-citizen. Along with the ban on receiving food stamps, current immigrants have been excluded from receiving public benefits for their first five years in the United States (Isgro, 1997; Fragomen, 1997).

The following are the principal arenas that have been identified and are viewed as affecting the psychological wellness of Chicano/Latino populations in the State:

- Lack of educational support services for inner city youth
- Poor mental health intervention for children in school settings
- Increasing inter-ethnic distrust among Chicano/Latino Youth
- Immigration policy that is conflictual and non-supportive of U.S. born children with undocumented parents

Implications for Mental Health Policy Makers

Although not stated clearly due to the abbreviation of this article, a case is made regarding the impact of certain social, political, and community forces that are affecting the psychological wellness of Chicano/Latino youth particularly in California. Each of these areas will require thoughtful planning in the crafting of user-friendly approaches that can assist in the implementation of policy to support and design helpful interventions. This section is a summarization of the identified areas and a rationale for planning and assistance.

Lack of educational Supportive Services

The reality of limited school services for Chicano/Latino youth has several negative implications among which include teenage pregnancy, early drug use, development of non-cooperative learning attitudes, and increased school dropout rates (National Organization of Hispanic Health and Human Organizations 1999; Velez &

Saenz, 2001). This issue must be considered in concert with the at risk, contextual factors that are characteristic of some Latino immigrant families. Recommend the use of a brief survey instrument to screen for health and mental health issues in targeted inner city schools. Early identification of those children may allow for the development of intervention strategies that combine cultural sensitivity with the available community resources. Secondly, there is no better partner for children than their parents. Strong parental alliances must be a critical aspect of the success of any educational program. The formation of parent advisory boards, on-site parenting education programs, development of parent support systems, and school sponsored screening clinics for health and learning are examples of critical dimensions that can support a shortage in school resources yet increase the learning and school participation of children and families. **Family involvement** in the schools is the most effective aspect in the success of Chicano/Latino youth.

Poor Mental Health Intervention

The arena of mental health care is a salient factor in the wellness of Chicano/Latino families. It is not enough to increase the level of services that are being provided whether in the schools or in the larger community. Utilizing methodologies that allows for the gathering of relevant data with ethnically diverse populations is a first step (Rogers, 2000). Garrison, Roy, and Azar (1999) propose an innovative model of service delivery that offers a range of services of demonstrated effectiveness with Chicano/Latino families. This thinking is supported with observations by Ramirez, Lepage, Kratochwill & Duffy (1998) who advocate asking more appropriate questions about mental health services to this population.

Some of the appropriate questions to initiate meaningful dialogue about service delivery with Chicano/Latino families are: what cultural factors that contribute to the wellness or impairment of a specific community are operating most prominently; which intervention principles are most relevant to the dynamics of effective professional assistance; what level of institutional barriers or community attitudes should be addressed in order to facilitate effective public mental health care; how do the available theories of intervention accommodate for contextual factors of acculturation stress, poverty, prejudice and discrimination

Similarly applicable inquiry must be done with a more sophisticated approach to mental health seeking behavior with Chicano/Latino youth (Cauce et al., 2002). Thus, the questions to ask must understand the dynamic between culture, context, and help seeking pathways towards development of effective programs and meaningful interventions for Latino families.

Continued page 6

Continued from page 5

Increasing Inter-ethnic Distrust

The problem of understanding the dynamic interchange between and among Chicano/Latino youth and their respective families is complex. The existence of significant migration baggage in addition to other at risk factors such as poverty, ethnic minority status, and disempowerment all contribute to the development of inter-ethnic rivalry, internalized racism, and significant distrust. Policy makers must incorporate an awareness of relationship disempowerment that prompts the development of a vicious cycle and segregation of ethnic boundaries (Vigil, 1988). Funding community programs that support interactive, peace-making activities, development of Latino brotherhood/sisterhood circles, and initiating an ad-hoc advisory board consisting of Latino and community members who have vested interests in supporting and educating Chicano/Latino families are examples that can alleviate anxiety and distrust. Promotion of an attitude of community healing is the direction that could be affirming and accepted by Latino inter-ethnic groups.

Conflictual and Non-supportive Immigration Policy

Immigration has defined a policy and a set of criteria for undocumented parent(s) of U.S. born children that is both unclear and difficult to meet as an effective operational standard. In this case, mental health policy has minimal impact on what has already been determined as law. However, psychological researchers do have an obligation to conceptualize what is psychological hardship for the legal community. As the standard is utilized, immigration policy is dictating and judging how psychological criteria is being defined and interpreted in a particular case. This turn of events prompts confusion and disillusionment among legal professionals and the respective family over how psychological hardship will be interpreted.

The development of anxiety disorders and other related mental health difficulties are a natural and undesired outcome of current immigration law. Clarification of psychological concepts, developing a foundation of literature support, and publishing results regarding an understanding of psychological hardship will have a meaningful impact in the alleviation of suffering for Chicano/Latino Families.

For full references contact CLPA editor

Joseph M. Cervantes, Ph.D., ABPP received his Ph.D. in community-clinical psychology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, in 1977. He is an Associate Professor, Department of Counseling, California State University, Fullerton and maintains a practice in child, adolescent, and family psychology. He is licensed in the states of California and Hawaii. Dr. Cervantes' research interests are in the relatedness of cultural diversity and indigenous spirituality. He serves on the editorial board for the journal *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, and is a journal reviewer for *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, and *Journal of Education and Latinos*. Dr. Cervantes also currently serves as the Ethics Chair for the Orange County Psychological Association, and is a Board Member for the Sexual Misconduct Oversight and Review Board, Diocese of Orange, Office of the Bishop.

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Continued from Page 1

My reply to him was that there are many issues within the Latino community that many associations will never meet. However, I also emphasized that CLPA's agenda would not move forward without the assistance of other associations. In essence, we need to work together- We need to **Build Coalitions**. "Other", mainstream associations do not have an invested interest in the Latino community. If these associations are not invested in our issues, we will not advance and utilize the strength in our growing numbers. Our coalition building needs to extend beyond simply connecting with "other" associations, but more importantly, building relationships within our own community. Our collectivistic culture teaches us that in taking care of others, we are also taking care of ourselves. However, we have not always done a good job of taking care of one another. A student recently sent Dr. Patricia Arredondo and me an email where he stated,

"For me, one of the biggest disappointments was reaching out to other Latino psychologists and getting a cold shoulder. You don't know how difficult this was! Patricia and Miguel, if there is one thing that I would really like you to say in your presentations, it is to let Ph.D. ethnic minority psychologists know that they need to be willing to mentor and support those of us who are still trying to get there. It doesn't even have to be that much; often times a simple "si se puede" will go a long way. It is just disheartening to know that sometimes our own people are not even willing to do that much. Fortunately, these negative experiences with other Latino psychologists have been few. Over the years I have had a "corrective emotional experience" around this issue, and I have met other Latino psychologists, like you Patricia, who have been very supportive. At my institution, I have been fortunate to have professors of color who have been extremely supportive. The point I was trying to make was that just one negative experience could be very damaging."

When I read this, I was disappointed, but not surprised. While our numbers continue to increase throughout the country, and in California, our "collectivism" is slow to follow. As we continue to grow, the increasing need to work together to reach mutual goals is a must. There are many Latino, African American, Asian, and/or predominantly mainstream associations that are doing good things. In many ways our goals are similar, yet the Latino community and Latino Psychologists have specific needs. The Latino communities throughout CA continue to evolve and grow. What we know today will most likely change for us tomorrow. If we do not have an association, like CLPA whose charge is to consistently advocate and provide support for the Latino community, it will not happen. Our communities will remain impacted, but not changed. Our communities will continue to grow, yet remain limited. CLPA is an organization with these goals and purpose in mind. CLPA is concerned with social advocacy, educating our communities, and, most importantly, we are charged with integrating the research, scholarship, and practice of Latino psychology in CA.

2. **Affiliation.** People join associations to come together with other individuals who have the same interests and goals. CLPA aspires to be the state association that brings together mental health providers who are invested in furthering Latino Psychology and fostering the well-being of Latino communities across the state. Affiliation also establishes a linkage to Latino Mental Health providers in CA through establishing a network of providers who are culturally competent and invested in Latino Mental Health.
3. **Communication.** CLPA provides a platform for the dissemination of information pertinent to Latino Psychology in CA. Members stay involved when they receive information relevant to their invested interest. Through our newsletter, listserv, and website, we provide our members and the public with resources geared toward ensuring the development of cultural competence among mental health providers and by educating the public.

Continued page 8

Continued from page 7

4. ***Intellectual Stimulation.*** An association that frames the issues and brings this information to the forefront is an association that retains members. CLPA, in collaboration with other associations, provides the framework for the most significant issues in Latino Psychology, including, social advocacy and community development issues, depathologizing misunderstood cultural values, and integrating the latest research and scholarship into Latino mental health practice.

5. ***Annual Gathering.*** The purpose of an annual gathering is to provide members with an opportunity to come together in fellowship around similar interests. An annual convention or conference allows opportunities for Latino mental health providers to present their work, stimulate necessary discussions amongst colleagues, and learn about the most crucial issues facing the Latino community. While CLPA is only establishing a foundation at this time, it is our intent to move towards establishing an annual conference in which Latino Mental Health providers can come together in fellowship and scholarship.

In closing, I want emphasize our history as a people. We are used to fighting for our place at the table. To a large degree, we still do. Inherent in our blood is survival. We come from a culture where we have had to fight for equality, progression, and for education. Our instincts have served us well for many years, yet sometimes plague us today. Occasionally we are fighting without knowing who we are fighting and what we are fighting for. Our perspectives need to shift. We are changing and we do not look the same as we did before. In fact, we never really have. We are one of the most diverse people with regards to cultural practices, foods, languages, etc. What once was the way to nuestra corazon is changing. If we do not come together as a people and reach out to those within and to others outside our community, the divide will continue. When we build coalitions with others, and with ourselves, we will provide the foundation I have outlined above by providing our members with a viable Latino psychological association in CA. CLPA cannot overlook what so many associations are missing today...that is, the need to seek out all those who have come before us, and continue to do the work we hope to achieve. Without this, we will not survive. We are not going to reinvent the wheel. We are going to use the one already moving...making it stronger and helping it to evolve.

We look forward to your membership and towards working together.

Sinceramente,

Miguel E. Gallardo, Psy.D.
CLPA President

Continued from page 1

According to U.S. Census statistics, there are an estimated 37.4 million Latinos in the United States, representing about 13.3 percent of the total population (Ramirez & de la Cruz, 2003). However, in terms of educational attainment, two statistics stand out. First, 57 percent of Latinos have a high school education compared to 88.7 percent of non-Latino Whites. In other words, an estimated 43 percent **do not** have a high school education. Second, of the 43 percent mentioned, **27 percent have less than a 9th grade education**. These statistics are alarmingly real. Solving these problems will take many solutions, and for my part I believe in creating opportunities for those coming after me not only in higher education but also within the field of psychology.

I received my Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from the University of Texas at Austin and there was an emphasis on clinical practice and research, as well as opportunities for teaching. In the program, I put my resolve of giving back to my community into action by developing clinical competencies in working with people of color, particularly Latino students. In terms of research, I focused my investigations on Latinas, Latino college students, and the acculturation process of immigrants.

Once I became more open to mentoring students, the opportunities abounded. For example, in my current position as a practitioner at Pacific Clinics/Centro Familiar, I am given the opportunity to work with at-risk Latino children, youth, and their families. This is a very unique program that uses best practices to provide mental health services to the Latino community. Coming from a fairly traditional training model, I was amazed that a program could integrate mental health and the needs of the Latino community so effectively. Pacific Clinics/Centro Familiar's dedication is apparent in their flexible and creative way of reaching out to the community and making mental health services accessible and non-threatening.

Pacific Clinics/Centro Familiar began as the "Latina Youth Program," which was designed to target high rates of Latina suicides. The program is now in its 3rd year and expanding. Pacific Clinics/Centro Familiar is a field-based program, meaning that clinicians and case managers meet with clients at the main office, at the school, at the client's home, or in a convenient location that affords privacy and confidentiality. One of the very unique aspects of this program is that all the staff is bilingual (Spanish and English) and bicultural. Therefore, all services are provided in the client's preferred language. Intervention modalities include individual, family, and groups for youth and parents. The offices at Pacific Clinics/Centro Familiar display Latino art and posters that offer affirming messages. The families who seek services at Pacific Clinics/Centro Familiar have either Medi-Cal coverage or no insurance. The clients face numerous barriers, which include parental conflict; decreased academic functioning; behavioral problems at home and school; drug and alcohol use; emotional, physical, and sexual abuse; serious mental illness; gang-involvement; and foster care.

Through all the challenges that my clients and their families face, I often see the "light come on" or the look of possibility "can I go to college?" and they begin to ask questions about graduating high school and higher education. Within the limits of a clinical setting, I try to empower clients to believe that there are ways that they can reach their goals. I answer their questions and link them to resources (e.g. tutoring, academic counselors, educational websites) to assist the client, and their family, to be more successful.

Overall, my hope is that more Latinas, Latinos, and people of color have access to a wider range of opportunities for whatever career path they decide to follow, including higher education and the field of psychology. In the future we can all routinely take turns at being an "angelito" for someone else.

Olga Mejía, PhD

Board of Psychology Highlights

Geneva S. Reynaga M.A.

The California Board of Psychology (BOP) regulates the practice of psychology within the state of California. Licensure with the BOP requires compliance with all APA guidelines as well as several rules and regulations unique to California. The current code of regulations may be found online at www.psychboard.ca.gov.

The purpose of this section is to present new information from the BOP. Updates will be presented in as understandable language as possible, although the BOP does not always make this a simple feat! If you have questions regarding any information provided herein, please contact the BOP for clarification, as they make the final decision with all matters.

Updates for May 2004 include:

- ◆ *Notice requesting information of unethical practice:* Due to recent complaints filed against medical doctors practicing within California, all licensed psychologists are encouraged to protect their patients by informing the BOP of physician misconduct. Contact the BOP at (800) 633-2322 or www.caldocinfo.ca.gov. While all claims are made anonymously, the BOP does not guarantee that the informing party will not be identified during any resultant investigation.
- ◆ *Licensure Renewal:* As of 1/1/04, there will be an additional \$10 fee for license renewal, making the total fee \$410 (due every two years). This is due to the creation of the Health Professions Education Foundation (HPEF), which was mandated by AB 938 and serves to implement scholarship and loan programs. (Full text of AB 938 is available on the BOP website.)
- ◆ *Diversity Based Psychology:* The BOP published a paper outlining the implications of two documents published in 2003: The new APA [Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct](#) and the [Guidelines on Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice, and Organizational Change for psychologists](#). This paper presents important revisions made regarding the practice of psychology with ethnically diverse populations, including:
 - Psychologists should not provide services to diverse clientele when they lack knowledge of various issues, including age, gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status
 - Psychologists must incorporate the influence of situational, personal, linguistic, and cultural differences when interpreting assessment data and writing reports
 - Focus on the client in his or her cultural context, using a broad range of interventions
 - Multiple relationships not causing harm are no longer considered unethical, as it is recognized that closer involvement may be appropriate in particular cultural contexts
 - Enhance student development and competence in working with diverse clientele by promoting awareness of multicultural competence, knowledge of diverse groups, and supervised training



We Will Miss Dr. Star “Estrella” Vega

Star, or “Estrella,” Vega was a daughter, sister, mother, student, colleague, mentor, leader, and friend. She succumbed to complications associated with leukemia on Saturday, April 24, 2004.

I first met Star in 1978 at the Long Beach VA Medical Center. She was a graduate student at USC at the time. Star was doing a rotation on the Pain Program. Dr. Carol Cummings was her supervisor. I was a recently discharged veteran and new college student who was working part-time in the same program. I remember walking into the program’s office and hearing Star on the telephone to her son. I believe Jeffrey was 8 years old at the time. Star was a single mother. She was in graduate school. She was Latina. My life was so easy compared to hers.

Many of us have been touched by Star over the years. She was a CPA President. Star was a Plaintiff in a successful major lawsuit against Aetna, along with CPA and APA. Star was one of the first Latina graduates from USC’s clinical psychology program. Dr. Steve Berger was one of her professors there. Her dissertation on the effect of culture on psychological assessment was groundbreaking. Star has been honored by both CPA and APA for her many achievements as a professional. More recently, she honored us by pushing CPA to change its governance model and leadership mentality. Star never missed an opportunity to emphasize how a diverse profession is a more representative and therefore honest profession. She strongly supported the creation of the California Latino Psychology Association and is CLPA’s first honorary member.

Star will be missed, but her advice and support will continue to touch us at all levels. She had the courage to enter a profession as an ethnic minority; her voice at the end of her life was anything but minor. Star’s persistence and passion for issues affecting our profession and clients were always strong. In retrospect, they had to be strong because Star only had a brief time during which to express her thoughts to us. Out of respect to her memory, I suggest we consider how Star challenged our biases. Perhaps she can still mentor and lead us, only this time through our own heartfelt memories of her life and remaining soulful presence.

Gracias, Mi Hermana, Estrella. Gracias.

David Lechuga, Ph.D.

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Student Column

Vanessa Martinez

As the youngest of five, I am a first generation college student from a small farming community in the Central Valley of California. My parents never had the opportunity to attain a higher education. I am an American of mixed cultural origins. My father is a Mexican immigrant and my mother is a bi-ethnic Native-American Indian and Spanish-American who identifies with the Chicano culture. I choose to embrace both cultures and identify myself as a Chicana/Latina American Indian. My educational goal is to pursue a doctoral degree in the field of counseling psychology. Today, as I prepare to go to the University of Wisconsin-Madison for a Masters in Counseling Psychology, I choose to tell my story and share means to enhance your journey if you aspire for a post baccalaureate degree. First, I will share the challenges I encountered, following, I will provide the five main elements I learned one needs to pursue graduate school. Last, my final thoughts and recommendations will be addressed.. Initially starting at the community college, I transferred to the University of California, Irvine (UCI) to pursue my baccalaureate degree in the field of Psychology. Navigating higher education, I met several challenges. Some of the challenges included the typical student stresses such as: having problems with roommates, time management, and bad study habits. Along with these challenges, however, I had unique challenges to confront and overcome as a Latina undergraduate. Coming from a predominantly Latino high school, I encountered acculturation distress. Specifically, entering college, I realized that Latinos were a small minority on campus and that the majority of students were from an ethnic group that I rarely encountered in my community. Further impacting this feeling, I experienced cultural incongruity with the university values and the majority of the non-Latino students. A feeling of isolation took over as I discovered the difficulties in finding others like me, whether they were Latinos or Native Americans. Not finding a family away from home further intensified being away from my family. In addition, coming from a lower socioeconomic background, I faced financial problems which made it challenging to pay my education and monthly bills. My parents had no way of helping out financially; therefore, I worked while attending school and shared a small bedroom with 2 other students. Confronting the many challenges, I felt normlessness and the desire to

return home but I sought mentorship and learned about the five educational pillars (Castellanos and Gloria, in press).

A Latina female mentor, my advisor served as an information circuit with a plethora of information and opportunities to identify. Specifically, along with assisting me with my adjustment and providing attention and guidance, Dr. Jeanett Castellanos highlighted the five main components to be most prepared to graduate school. In particular, they included (1) a relevant curriculum, (2) research experience, (3) practical application and internship, (4) community involvement, (5) leadership development.

My undergraduate psychology curriculum provided a strong background in psychological theory, statistical analysis, and research design. In addition, recognizing the value of cultural competence in my field of interest, I enrolled in courses that stressed the importance of cultural sensitivity and cultural competence. The myriad of classes helped expand my cultural knowledge and awareness about others, their beliefs, values, and customs, providing a strong foundation for my educational pursuits.

Research was the second skill to develop on the list. Determined to seek such opportunity, I joined a research team with Dr. Castellanos and Dr. Alberta M. Gloria. Under their guidance, I developed my research agenda on Latino college students and psychological factors that pertain to retention. With their guidance, I conducted qualitative research on Latino college students' coping and well-being. The experience helped me to become familiar with existing literature, and learn about qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Moreover, I had the experience of coding and analyzing qualitative data, developing theoretical models and assisting with the formulation of another research project underway on Latinas and spirituality.

Determined to stay on task and now understanding the college undergraduate experience a little better, I sought practical application in my field of interest. Specifically, knowing my passion for psychology, I applied to a job that assists undergraduates with career planning and advising. I worked as an academic resource advisor for the Social Sciences Academic Resource Center (SSARC) at UCI. One of my primary responsibilities involved offering

Continued page 13

VOLUME I

Continued from page 12

career counseling to undergraduates and preparing them for education beyond the post-baccalaureate degree. This position provided me with ability to direct students in the right path toward making educational career decisions, while enhancing my own skills as a student leader and counselor.

Realizing that leadership on campus was valuable but that community contact was also imperative, I put forth efforts to apply my skills for my community. Specifically, I participated as a home visitor in the Home-based Activities Building Language Acquisition (HABLA) Program which was created to promote the health and welfare of disadvantaged children ages 2-3 from low SES/low education backgrounds. The purpose of HABLA is language acquisition, cognitive and emotional development, and improvement of parent-child interactions. I helped build a stronger relationship between these children and their parents, by showing the parents that they can play an important role in their child's intellectual life simply by speaking and listening to their children, playing language games, and teaching their children to talk and think about the world around them. This experience not only provided the opportunity to serve as an advocate for my *gente* but the experience also heightened my awareness of the local Latino community and its needs. As a culturally rooted Latina, this experience was not only valuable in developing skills but also rewarding.

The last component to the equation was student leadership. I had refined these skills through all the identified experiences but there was still something missing, student involvement in clubs and organizations. As I was told by my mentor, "graduate schools do not only want book worms with no social skills." Hence, I became actively involved in MEChA and the Pan American Latino Society (PALS). In both of these organizations, I engaged with conferences and programming to make the university aware of the Latino culture and our practices. Last, I sought out to be a part of a professional organization with Latinos in the field of Psychology. Dr. Gallardo, CLPA President, encouraged me to be the student voice in the executive board and to be actively involved with the group. As part of CLPA, I have gained further insight about the field, the importance of community advocacy, and the value of organizations. Both types of organizations have served as a support system to help me put things into perspective and adjust with being away from home. Moreover, I have had the opportunity to come together with a group of dedicated individuals promoting change through significant efforts and practices.

Today, I reflect back and I ask myself – *how did I do it?* I know I worked hard and I stayed focused but what specifically did I do to stay on task and to retain myself in the university. First off, I wasn't on my own. My family, peers and mentors provided the motivation "¡Si se Puede!" Moreover, family connection, peer support, and mentorship were fundamental components to my success. If I had one recommendation, I would say believe in yourself and realize that you are the future to our community. Stay on task and create a plan of action to incorporate the five educational pillars. Last, make friends, join organizations, and most importantly – find a good mentor to lead you along the way.

Vanessa Martinez

Membership Opportunities

Interested in becoming an active member in CLPA?

There are many different ways one can become more involved. Please check our website Latinopsych.org for a list of committees and contact information

Submission Guidelines

La Comunidad is published quarterly by the California Latino Psychological Association (CLPA). It is read by California psychologists, allied medical and other mental health professionals, state and national legislators, members of the media, and interested others.

Information to prospective authors

Length - Articles generally range from 750 to 1500 words (approx. 3-6 pages typed double spaced). Book reviews are typically 300 to 400 words in length.

Content - The Editors encourage articles that cover a wide range of topics (i.e., scientific advances, professional practice issues, legislative matters, healthcare climate, etc.). Diverse views, critical analyses, theoretical or innovative ideas are also encouraged.

Cultural mindfulness - Psychologists are attentive to socio-cultural nuances in any communications, especially in articles written for a professional audience. Any writing about gender, race/ ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, disability must be culturally "correct" and free of bias. If in doubt, please refer to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association Fourth Edition (1994)*.

References - As in writing for any professional or scientific audience, cite references in the body of the article when reporting data, referencing other sources, quoting statements or views from other persons, or otherwise substantiating ideas in the article. The number of references should range from 1 to 6 when possible; full references should be listed at the end of the article. Long reference lists may not be published due to space limitations.

Author identification - At the end of the article, write a brief bio-sketch of the author(s). Bio-sketches should include name, work setting or affiliation, professional specialty, and information on how to contact author(s).

Author photo (optional) - Send one 3x5 inch black/white photograph of the author(s) to the address listed below.

Submission Deadlines - Nov. 20, 2005 for January edition, February 20, 2005 for April edition, May 20, 2005 for July edition, and August 20, 2005 for October edition.

How to submit articles

Hard copy and disk submissions - We can accommodate commonly used word processing programs. Send copies of your article to the address below

Email submissions - Email as attachment to Tlopez@argosyu.edu

Correspondence to The California Latino Psychological Association, and La Comunidad should be sent to:

ADDRESS
Argosy University
Attn. Tica Lopez, PhD
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Santa Ana, Ca 92704

Upcoming Events

Cultural Competency Summit Conference
October 6-7, 2004
Anaheim, Ca
www.ohealthinfo.com/summit/

**Critical Research Issues in Latino Mental Health
Mental Health and Addictions Among Latinos:
Integrating Assessment and Treatment**
October 14-16, 2004
San Antonio, Texas

**National Latina/o Psychological Association Conference
Advancement in Latino Psychology 2004:
Strengthening Psychology Through Latino Family Values**
November 18-21, 2004
Scottsdale, Arizona
Www.Thewisdomgroup.net/nlpa/call.html

**First Interamerican Counseling Congress entitled:
Counseling in the Americas: Creating Alternatives**
November 17-18, 2004
Iberoamericana in Mexico City
English: www.uia.mx/departamentos/dptpsicologia/counseling/intro.htm
Spanish: www.uia.mx/departamentos/dptpsicologia/counseling/introesp.htm

National Multicultural Conference and Summit
January 26-28, 2005
Hollywood, Ca
www.multiculturalsummit.org

First International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry
May 5-7, 2005
University of Illinois
Urbana-Champaign
<http://www.QI2005.org>

Publications/Resources

Castellanos, J. & Jones, L. (2003). *The majority in the minority: Retaining Latina/o Faculty, administrators, and students*. Sterling VA: Stylus.

Falicov, C.J. (1998). *Latino families in therapy: A guide to multicultural practice*. NY: Guildford press.

Espin. O. M. (1997). *Latina realities: Essays on healin, migration, and sexuality*. CO: Westview Press

Journals

Journal of Latinos in Education

www.erlbaum.com/shop/tek9.asp?pg=products&specific=1534-8431

Latin American perspectives

www.sagepub.com/journal.aspx?pid=128

Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences

www.sagepub.com/journal.aspx?pid=66

Websites

Pew Hispanic center

www.perhispanic.org

Psychologist Acting with Conscience Together

www.vanderbilt.edu/community/psyact

Membership Brochure

WHY JOIN CLPA

- To advocate for the integration of research, practice, and scholarship on Latino mental health issues.
- Be an active agent of change to improve the current conditions of Latinos and the community's mental health status through public and institutional policy efforts.
- Meet other professionals invested in Psychology, specifically interested in the Latino community.
- Promote educational programs for Latinos interested in the field of Psychology.

The following membership categories include:

Professional, Mental Health Associate, Student, and Institution/Organization.

Professional: Must have a doctoral degree in Psychology or related field from a regionally accredited institution.

Mental Health Associate: Minimum degree earned must be a bachelor's or master's degree in Psychology or related field.

Student: Must be enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate program in the field of psychology or related field.

Institution/Organization: The institution/organization must endorse CLPA's principles set forth in the bylaws and the CLPA mission statement.

CLPA Membership Form

Name: _____ Degree: _____
 Title/Position: _____
 Mailing Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Professional Affiliation: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Fax Number: _____
 E-mail Address: _____
 Gender: _____
 Ethnic Identification: _____
 Clinical, Research & Teaching Interests:

Annual Membership Fee Optional Student Sponsorship

___ Institution/Organization \$100 Number of students
 you wish
 ___ Professional \$25 to sponsor ___ x \$10 = _____
 ___ Mental Health Associate \$15
 ___ Student \$10 (photocopy of current ID)

Optional

Name of student(s) you wish to sponsor:

Voluntary Contribution \$ _____

(Donations make it possible to support the growth and visibility of CLPA. Please note that this organization's non-profit status is pending and the contribution is not currently tax deductible).

I would be interested in volunteering for a committee.

Total

Annual Membership Fee \$ _____

Optional Student Sponsorship \$ _____

Voluntary Contribution \$ _____

Grand Total: \$ _____

Mail form with payment (check payable to CLPA) to:

Ricardo E. Gonsalves, Ed.D.

Membership Chair

P.O. Box 3536 Fullerton, CA 92834-3536

For more information: www.Latinopsych.org