

LRT Winter 2021

Latino and Latina Roundtable Newsletter



BOARD PRESIDENT'S LETTER

BY JOSE Z. CALDERON

It has been a difficult year with the conditions of the pandemic and friends and family being affected all around. But with the spirit, tenacity, and commitment of our board, membership, director, and staff, the LRT (Latino and Latina Roundtable) has waded through the crisis. One aspect that has stood out is the mastering and use of new technologies in our work.

The example of this practice particularly stood out in the professional character of the Cesar Chavez Breakfast with its large attendance, support of a diversity of sponsors, tightness of the agenda, the use of webinar and zoom skills in allowing for the fullest of participation, and the tapping of the leaderships skills and abilities of our board and membership.

With a consolidated consciousness of moving alongside the community in building exemplary democratic spaces, this culture has similarly been successful in organizing a community-based commercial-free *Día de Muertos*, sustaining cultural projects in the parks, implementing college readiness forums, supporting ethnic studies, advancing thinking on new local wealth-building economic development models, actions that continue immigrant and refugees' rights, promoting clean and sustainable energy usage, and taking the lead in moving local cities from at-large to district elections. We are more than ready for 2022! Adelante!

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LRT Team

Lina Mira, Director
Temis Laguna, Special Projects Coordinator
Fridah Sanchez, emPOWER Lead Community Organizer
Liberated SOON, Clean Mobility Fellow (Access Clean CA/GRID)
Jasmine Rocha, Clean Mobility Fellow (Access Clean CA/GRID)

Latino & Latina Roundtable
of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley



The sense of *compromiso* is real. It is a value that threads through all of our work. We are powered by this sense of care and admiration for our community.

We often see ourselves in the victories and the struggles. This is a result of a group of people coming together- from members, our board and staff. The collective power of people when we come together is an unstoppable force.

I wish you all a Happy New Year and invite you to join the Latino and Latina Roundtable. Please renew your membership for 2022. I want to thank everyone for their work and dedication. My wish for all the organizers and community leaders is for you to find time and space to do something nice for yourselves. Let's take care of ourselves and each other.

DIRECTOR'S LETTER

BY LINA MIRA

It has been a pleasure and privilege to be the Director of the Latino and Latina Roundtable for the past two years. This role has given me many opportunities, including the opportunity to envision better possibilities for our communities. I have learned to sit with others, many times through zoom, and collectively voice our desires for our communities and nation. The question is always- how are we going to work together to achieve justice?

More than anything, what has stood out to me during this time is how much life surprises us. During a time that didn't make sense, our organization grew and expanded. We were able to create programming, deliver services, and also engage with our community during a critical time. I feel proud that the Latino and Latina Roundtable is respected and trusted in the community.

However, when I reflect on our journey, I am not at all surprised because the Roundtable has a superpower- which is simply a love for one's community. In that sentiment, there is commitment and dedication from people who never tire and who find the energy to continue organizing and assuring that we will do our part in the struggle.



CESAR CHAVEZ BREAKFAST 2021

BY ANGELA SANBRANO

I must admit that I was nervous as I prepared to co-emcee the 17th Annual Cesar Chavez Breakfast Program. This was the second time we celebrated the Latino and Latina Roundtable Cesar Chavez Breakfast via zoom. I asked myself- what if I get disconnected ? What if something goes wrong with my internet? All my fears went away when I heard the voice of *Profe* Jose Calderon, welcoming everyone, “*Bienvenidos*” and introducing Emilio Amaya and when Son Real started playing the beautiful music Son Jarocho, the “*alegría*” came to my heart and all my fears went away.

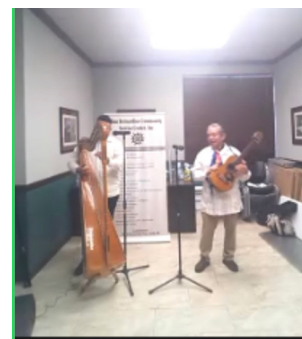
I was ready to go! We had a great turn out. I felt connected to everyone who was part of the virtual “*Cafecito*” and “*Pan Dulce.*” In the spirit of Cesar Chavez, we remembered all those who left us due to the pandemic and thanked the essential workers who continue to provide essential services during this difficult time. We honored great leaders from our community, Melissa Ayala, Luis Juarez, Francisco Suarez, Miranda Sheffield and Victor Preciado.

We also recognized the scholarship recipients who were inspiring and had the traditional silent auction. We thanked our friends and sponsors for their support to the organization, all while we had an online silent auction with many unique items from local vendors and artisans. As always, our interpreters were amazing. We closed the breakfast singing “*De Colores*” reaffirming our commitment to carry out the struggle in service of our Latino/a/x Community!

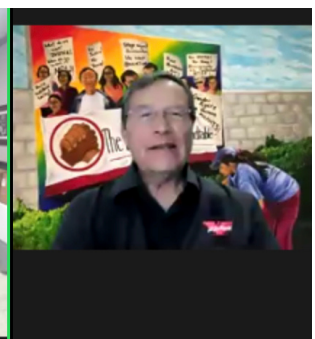
¡Qué Vivan Los Trabajadores! Long Live Our Unity!



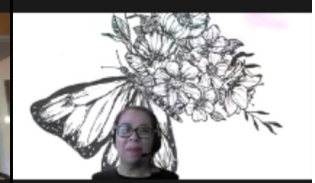
Jose Z. Calderon



Son Real



Jose Z. Calderon



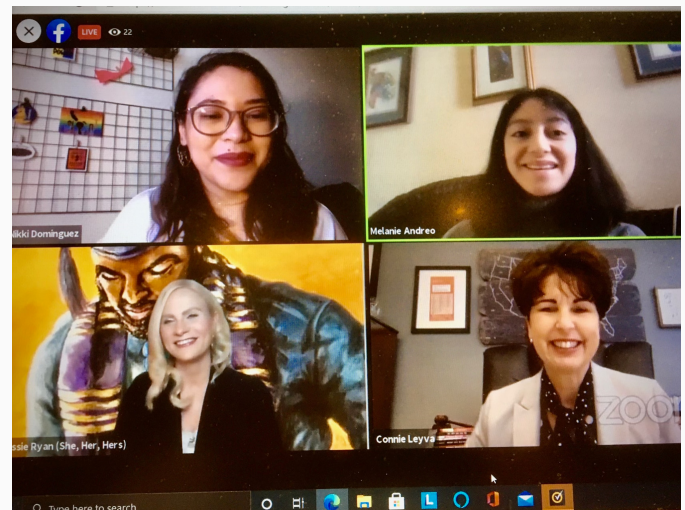
ETHNIC STUDIES

BY FABIAN PAVON

The Latino and Latina Roundtable has played an instrumental role in the advancement of Ethnic Studies, both locally and statewide. We have hosted numerous forums educating the community on various ethnic studies models and curriculums. Due to our ethnic studies coalition work, we have been able to successfully advocate for graduation requirements at the California State University, California Community Colleges, and K-12 levels through AB 1460 and AB 101.

In addition, the state of California has allocated about \$55 million towards ethnic studies implementation and teacher education. Through the Pomona Education Coalition (PEC), we were successful in our campaign for Pomona Unified School District (PUSD) to adopt a year-long ethnic studies course as a graduation requirement. We also hosted a live Spanish language interview with *En Confianza* con LRT in order to share information with Spanish speakers about ethnic studies. We are currently working on developing our official position on a California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum.

We are also in the process of continuing and expanding our Community Cultural Survival Programs (CCSP). We hosted free *Danza Azteca* classes at both Cesar Chavez and Tony Cerda Parks through the summer. We will be hosting *Danza Azteca* classes again in January 2022. We continue to use Chavez Park as a space where we share culture, history, and struggle. Furthermore, we collaborated with PEC to host the film screening of *Precious Knowledge* at Martin Luther King Jr. Park in order to educate our community about ethnic studies. For more information please visit the LRT website- www.latinolatinaroundtable.org



COLLEGE FOR ALL

BY JOSE Z. CALDERON

In this last year, the LRT College for All committee has held monthly meetings, participated in local legislative trainings, and been part of an Advocacy Week to educate legislators online on key initiatives. As a result, we were part of statewide coalition efforts in passing: SB-309 (ensuring funding of up to \$540,000 to ensure A-G requirements and for more students to be able to attend college), AB-928 (simplifying the process for college transfer by community college students, and AB-104 (giving students various options for lost learning time during the pandemic crisis).

A key component has been a partnership with PUSD in the organizing of various online forums (with one having over 300 participants), on how students and parents can influence and manage the higher education pipeline. Out of these forums, a core group has participated in statewide College Strategic Planning retreats to discuss how the local can be connected to statewide education policy-making efforts.

As a result of this work, the committee has participated in statewide coalition strategic planning retreats, helped in giving out scholarships, and carried out visits to area colleges. This educational work has become a model for the region and its influence was presented as a highlight in Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval's State of the city speech last year.

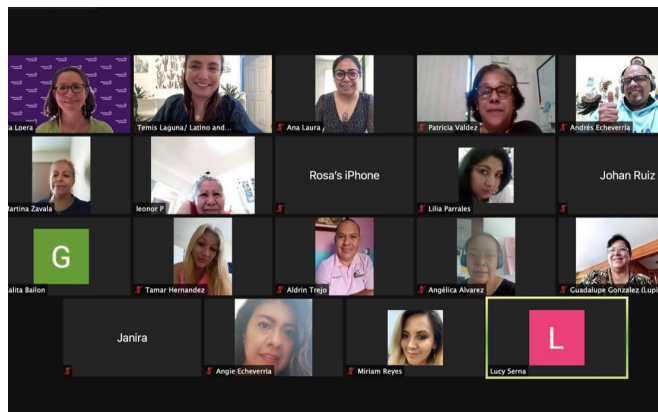
emPOWER & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

BY FRIDAH SANCHEZ

Over the course of the past year, LRT has continued its partnership with the Liberty Hill Foundation in extending its work to the San Gabriel/ Pomona Valley and the Inland Empire through the emPOWER program. This helps promote and advocate for energy efficiency, financial assistance, and clean energy alternatives to communities of color. Environmental racism continues to be prevalent in our communities, but several steps are being taken to advocate for better air quality, accessible utilities and clean energy. emPOWER advocates for individuals in danger of having their utilities shut off and has helped these individuals apply for relief.

Through outreach such as sustainability art-workshops, virtual meetings and in-person events, the emPOWER program has also started conversations about creative ways to live sustainably while collaborating with local urban farms and other environmental justice organizations. emPOWER has reached 28,067 individuals within 2021. Due to the great work of our team, emPOWER will continue its work within the Latino/a Roundtable for the next year.

In addition, LRT's collaboration with Access Clean California and GRID Alternatives, has provided two fellowships. These collaborations brought more dialogue on clean air, safety, fare-less and accessible transit. We also created spaces to access clean mobility and held two workshops where the community came together to chat and move through yoga. Through our work with these two programs, LRT has seen successes, inspiring us to keep working towards tackling and dismantling environmental injustice.



WELLNESS

BY TEMIS LAGUNA

2021 has been a challenging year requiring us to find better ways to support and understand the needs of our community and leaders through this global pandemic. Understanding the impact of the pandemic has given new feats to our organization in our quest for justice. The pandemic is much more than a health crisis. LRT applied for a Community Wellbeing grant from Tri-City to support youth mental health. This grant provides tools to become a trauma-informed organization to better serve our community during these times and in the future.

In August, LRT created *En Confianza*, a weekly Facebook Live conversations in Spanish to promote resources and connect with community leaders and organizations. We have talked about social justice, wellness and mental health, immigration, ethnic studies, and much more. We have reached over 2,200 families.

Additionally, LRT is part of the COVID-19 Action Committee with the City of Pomona and other community partners working together to better support everyone during and after this pandemic. Through these efforts, we supported vaccination campaigns and also addressed the fear and hesitancy around the vaccines by offering information to ease people's concerns.

In LRT we believe wellness is a human right and everyone should have access to affordable and high quality resources that ensure optimal physical and mental health while honoring and respecting diversity, language differences, and culture.

IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

BY ANGELA SANBRANO

In 2021, the Immigrant Rights Committee (IRC) has been advocating for the bill that was introduced early this year as part of Budget Reconciliation process that would provide DACA, Temporary Protective Status (TPS) holders, Farmworkers and Essential workers Permanent Resident Status.

Unfortunately, the Senate parliamentarian has twice rejected the Democrats attempts to include immigration changes in the \$3.5 trillion Budget reconciliation measure as part of the Build Back Better Bill.

The latest proposal presented to the parliamentarian is a procedure called immigration parole, a temporary status that could offer undocumented immigrants protection from deportation and grants them the ability to obtain a work permit.

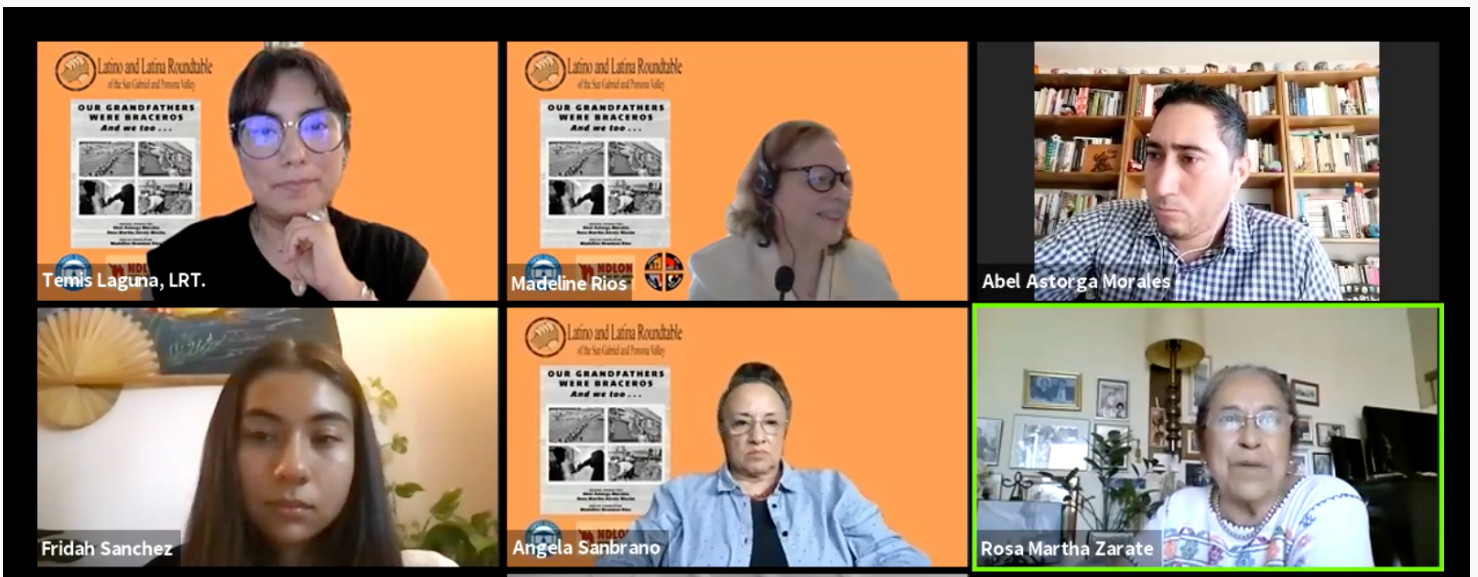
Regardless of the outcome from the Budget Reconciliation process, the LRT will continue to fight to achieve a full pathway to citizenship for all undocumented immigrants.

The IRC's work this year included participating in the coalition to protect the unaccompanied children at the Fairplex. We especially promoted language rights for indigenous language speakers and support for mental health. The Fairplex facility closed Nov. 19.

As part of the LRT Academy and Immigrant Rights Initiatives we organized a virtual presentation of the book *"Our Grandfathers Were Braceros and We Too..."* by Rosa Martha Zarate and translated by Madeline Rios, Chair of the IRC.

The IRC advocated for the City of Pomona to establish the COVID committee to reach out to the community most affected by the pandemic especially the immigrant community.

We also advocated for the expansion of the California Safety Net Fund for undocumented immigrants who were left out of the Federal CARES Act.



NEW ECONOMY

BY JOHN NOLTE

The Latino and Latina Roundtable continues to think, plan, and innovate to lay out a concrete path toward a New Economy. The New Economy committee has been meeting every two weeks since early summer. We recently met in a retreat format to develop principles to inspire and guide our work. In brief: in the New Economy, we are striving towards the well-being, empowerment, and quality of life of workers; it prioritizes the building of wealth in marginalized, vulnerable communities; it is inclusive, multi-racial, intergenerational, and supportive of individuals' intersectional interests; and it aims to eliminate poverty. We know that to build truly sustainable and resilient human wellbeing we must also ensure the wellbeing of the natural environment.

The path towards a New Economy will require deep transformations in our systems and in our everyday lives. We will need courage, innovation, transparency, and multi-sector collaboration. The work of our committee has blossomed into a partnership between the Roundtable and the Institute for Ecological Civilization (“EcoCiv”) that we are calling The Pomona Wellbeing Initiative.

EcoCiv is a nonprofit organization with values aligned to ours that has brought energy, clear thinking, hard work, and a link to the broad, worldwide movement for a wellbeing-focused economy. The Wellbeing Initiative is nearing completion of a proposal which, if funded, will allow the partnership to begin the difficult and necessary work of bringing together the economic stakeholders in the Pomona region to understand, commit to, and design a model project that can build wealth in Pomona's lowest-income communities while also building democratic, enduring, and empowering socio-economic structures.

This next year will be exciting! The ideas will see their birth into the actual world—that process will be complex and unpredictable, but hopefully will inspire us, bind us closer together, and show us what is possible.

The New Economy Committee will soon present our work to the Latino and Latina Roundtable and wider community with opportunities to get involved. Stay tuned to LRT emails for details.



***DÍA DE MUERTOS* CELEBRATION**

BY ALICIA RODRIGUEZ AND ROSE CALDERON

The Seventh Annual Latino and Latina Roundtable *Día de Muertos* event, held on November 6th, 2021, was a success. The event was preceded by two free workshops in the month of October; *Ofrendas* and Water Colors, and *Ofrenda* Frame Making via zoom. The goal of the event was to maintain, in part, the true historical meaning of *Día de Muertos*. As was originally meant to be, this was achieved in a non-commercial festivity, by honoring and remembering those that have passed.

As in the past, this year's program included presentations on the history of *Día de Muertos*, an arts and crafts workshop, Aztec Dancing, community story sharing of our loved ones in the spirit world, live music and sharing of food.

However, this year's observance was remarkable in that it was held at a new location, The Lopez Urban Farm. This 2.5 acre urban farm provided ample space to create a community ofrenda, a truly alluring artistic creation, where community members placed photos and paused to find solace after a year of extraordinary loss. The estimated 200 guests strolled through the grounds while children completed art projects, marveled at the community garden and ran through open spaces. The event ended with guests feasting on tamales, champurrado, and pan de muerto, served in the majestic shade of two grand oak trees while *Los Soneritos* band performed *Veracruzana* music.



SAN DIMAS REDISTRICTING

BY JOSE Z. CALDERON

A coalition of residents, made up of members from the LRT, NAACP, and LCLAA, were successful in moving San Dimas from at-large to district elections.

The final map voted on by the city council will now include a Latino/a/x influence district with 44.4% Latino, 12% Asian Pacific, and 4.3% Black. While it was not quite the configuration that the coalition had presented through their map, it does include two other districts that have a majority people of color.

With the help of MALDEF and SWVRP - a major victory was won by forcing the city to move from at-large to district elections and it does open the doors to be able to elect a more diverse city council in 2022 and 2024. Further, other cities, such as Ontario and La Verne, are also being forced to move in this direction - creating opportunities for increased participation and for the support of candidates of color who can get elected with the interests of our communities in the forefront.



BOARD ELECTIONS AND RETREAT 2021

BY LINA MIRA

The members of the Latino and Latina Roundtable gathered in November to elect board members to serve for the next term. Something that is unique about the Latino/a Roundtable is that membership elects the board and the executive board members. Another unique aspect is that we have a working board. Our board members serve on committees, volunteer at events, and also promote the organization and fundraise. The seven board at-large members for this term are (in alphabetical order)- Julissa Espinoza, Maria Galvan, Lidia Manzanares, John Nolte, Fabian Pavon, Madeline Rios, and Mike Suarez. They are joined by the executive officers Jose Calderon (Board President) , Angela Sanbrano (Vice President), Rose Calderon (Treasurer), and Alicia Rodriguez (Secretary). Together the LRT Board has 11 members, who meet monthly and work continuously on various projects in their committees and help steer the organization. We are grateful for the two members who oversaw this election process- David Estrada and Laura Santos. Also special thanks to Temis Laguna, LRT Special Projects Coordinator, for her work and effort in this important process.

The board gathered in early December for the annual board retreat where they worked on the strategic plan and reflected on the accomplishments. In addition, this process also allows the board to evaluate priorities, forecast possible challenges and opportunities, and set goals for the future. We were grateful to have a skilled facilitator, Nikki Dominquez, who has guided us in the strategic plan process since its inception in 2019. We look forward to sharing more with you all at the upcoming Membership Retreat in February (location TBD). Our work is possible thanks to the collaboration of board members, members, staff, and community members. We look forward to 2022 and working together. Members are a key part of the organization and we strongly encourage you to become a member or renew your membership for 2022. For more information on memberships, please call (909) 480-6267 or email us at info@latinolatinaroundtable.org or visit our website, www.latinolatinaroundtable.org.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Latino & Latina Roundtable
of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley

LRT MEMBERSHIP RETREAT

02 MONTH **5** DAY **22** YEAR

LOCATION TBD

DEADLINE
MARCH 1 2022



Latino & Latina Roundtable
of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley

SOCIAL JUSTICE SCHOLARSHIP
EARN UP TO \$500.
OPEN TO HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS
AND CURRENT COLLEGE STUDENTS

Latino & Latina Roundtable
of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

SAVE THE DATE!

March 19th, 2022
Location TBD

Latino & Latina Roundtable
of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley

SAVE THE DATE
03.25.22

18th Annual Cesar Chavez Breakfast Fundraiser



For more information, contact
(909) 480-6267 or
info@latinolatinaroundtable.org



Latino and Latina Roundtable of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley

Membership Application/*Solicitud de Membresía*

Annual Member Cost / Costo anual:

\$25.00 for individuals / *para individuos*

\$10.00 for students, retirees & low-income individuals/
para estudiantes, jubilad@s y personas de bajos ingresos

Please print clearly / *Por favor escriba claramente.*

Please check one/*Marque uno* : New member/*nuevo miembro* Renew/*Renovar membresía*

Name/*Nombre:* _____ DOB/*Fecha de nacimiento:* _____

Mailing Address/*Dirección postal* _____

City/*Ciudad* _____ Zip Code/*Código postal* _____

Home Phone/*Teléfono de casa* _____ Cell Phone/*Celular* _____

Email Address/*Correo electrónico* _____

The best way of contacting me is/ *La mejor manera de ponerse en contacto conmigo*

Name of Organization/*Nombre de su organización (optional/opcional)* _____

Title/*Título o cargo (Optional/Opcional)* _____

Signature/*Firma*

Date/*Fecha*

*Please send payment to- Latino/Latina Roundtable

1460 E. Holt Ave Mailbox #144, Pomona, CA 91767

Additional Member Information/ Información adicional del miembro:

My interest in being involved with Latino/a Roundtable is/ *Me gustaría participar en Latino/a Roundtable por:*

____ To be informed about community issues / *Quiero informarme sobre asuntos importantes para la comunidad*

____ To take action on community issues / *Quiero participar activamente en mi comunidad*

____ To financially support the work / *Quiero apoyar económicamente el trabajo de la organización*

____ To meet other local activists and organizations/ *Para conocer a otros activistas y grupos comunitarios*

I am interested in being a part of/ *Me interesa formar parte de:*

____ Immigrant Rights Committee / *Comité de Derechos del Inmigrante*

____ Education Committee / *Comité de la educación*

____ New Economy Committee / *Comité de La Nueva Economía*