

THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
THROUGH THE EYES OF THREE LATINO MALES

by

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## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to several individuals in my life. First my Mother and Father whom allowed me to learn through my own mistakes, you were always there no matter how long it took me, thank you.

Next I have to mention my wife who allowed me to be away in class while she watched over our family. I humbly and graciously thank my wife Rhonda for her love, encouragement and continuous belief in me, as I chased my dreams. The old cliché “behind every good man, is a good women” definitely works in my case.

Finally, this is for my children. When I started this program I had two kids age eight and four. Today at the end of this journey I have three children, Seraya Danielle, fourteen, Noah Daniel, ten, and Dax Julian, five. Sorry for time taken, but I hope you can learn from me the importance of setting goals and achieving them, and to stay dedicated to being a lifelong learner.

Thank you all, you have all been my motivation!

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study is to capture the culture and climate within Student Affairs at Texas State University during the last thirty years through the eyes of three Latino professionals, during their collective sixty plus years of service as students and professionals

This research uses Social Cartography to capture three life stories of Mexican American men working within the Division of Student Affairs at Texas State University. This research explores their life experiences, professional challenges and the changes they have witnessed at this campus as it became a Hispanic Serving Institution. It also explores the enrollment of Mexican American students, campus climate and the development of student support services in response to this demographic change.

## I. INTRODUCTION

It opened in 1903 as the Southwest Texas State Normal School, starting out as a public school for teachers. Over the years, the name has changed and it is now known as Texas State University. I started my relationship with Texas State University in 1987, when I created a plan to attend. At that time, I didn't know what a Student Affairs Division was, but almost instantly because of either luck or faith, I became involved in a career path which would change my life and help me better understand my own purpose in a career.

Over the last 24 years after graduating from Texas State University in 1992 with a Bachelor of Science degree, I have continued to work in higher education in different capacities, at multiple universities. During my tenure in the role as a student affairs administrator, I have experienced student affairs administration at a variety of levels. I have served as a Graduate Assistant for The Department of Recreational Sports at Sam Houston State University, where I graduated with a Masters of Arts. I have been the Director of Recreational Sports at Texas A&M University – Kingsville; served as the Assistant Director of Campus Recreation at The University of Texas at Arlington; and was the Assistant Director of Campus Recreation at Texas State University. Presently, I am the Associate Director for the Department of Campus Recreation here, at Texas State. In 2006, I worked in a dual role for the division serving as the Interim Associate Director of Residence Life, 17 months. Having the opportunity to serve in these roles within student affairs, has given me a global perspective on university administration and its affects on students. Being at Texas State, now for over 15 years as a professional staff member, I have noticed shifts in the student population. As an example of this shift, the

university is now recognized as a Hispanic Serving Institution. Historically, Texas State has operated under the influence of a White-stream institution. White-stream institutions represent a widespread and largely unquestioned attitude which believes the educational system already in place is neutral and fair, and that special programs and curricula for minority groups are unnecessary (Theo, 2012). The Faculty and administration at Texas State University have been predominantly white males. Despite an effort over the last few decades to bridge the gap, we still lack minority perspectives on this campus. Personally growing up in Texas, I have felt the awkward attitude of white-stream entities, schools or institutions, and reflect back on how it was introduced to me by family and friends. They mentored me to “just play the game”. This implied there was only one acceptable path to success in school (Urrieta, 2009). In other words, *just playing the game* simply meant, uncritical acceptance of and assimilation of White-stream expectations (Urrieta, 2009).

These personal life and work experiences motivated me to pursue a doctoral degree in 2007. And, since the beginning, I have been thinking of ways to create a study involving Mexican American Students, student affairs and higher education. These three areas interest me greatly, and were the catalyst to pursue my Ph.D. My experiences as a first generation college student, a Mexican American male, a doctoral student and a professional administrator in student affairs at this university make this work personal. I feel it is my responsibility to help create awareness by undertaking this research at Texas State University. Employing an interpretivist epistemology will position me in the middle of the research, making my research autobiographical. This allows me to incorporate reflections of my own personal life experiences with those of the other participants. As I then interpret these reflections to make sense of the knowledge and understanding

captured in these very personal experiences, I also rely on the epistemology of Social Constructivism (Wertsch, 1997). By grounding my authentic learning experience in a real world context, the ability of others to connect with this framework and transfer these experiences to their own lives, thereby taking ownership of the findings in this research will be enhanced. I worked to mitigate any biases and blind spots by being highly transparent and reflective in this work.

My research is titled: *The Historical Evolution of Texas State University through the Eyes of Three Latino Males*. The life stories of three Latino men presently working in the Division of Student Affairs are studied. These life stories collected, present details and information about their personal experiences. This information includes personal accounts of each subject, and what they have witnessed on this campus. Social cartography is used as a methodology to collect, analyze and illustrate its findings. A two dimensional chronological map was created using artifacts, pictures and symbols guided by these individuals' perspectives. This timeline also includes three additional data sets; the demographics and history of the state of Texas, the university, and state policy, to create a visual image of the social context of education in the state. This methodology ties together the life stories, images, timelines and other artifacts that are relevant to this research. This is a contemporary method of mapping. It uses visual imagery to promote a greater awareness and understanding of the state's history, particularly as it relates to the macro and micro context of the study. Mapping can be a key tool in analyzing and demonstrating perspectives (Paulson, 1996). This qualitative research looks intensely at each individual's life, and draw conclusions based on their individual and collective

perspectives. The research does not focus on discovering a universal truth, nor cause and effect; instead, emphasis is placed on exploration and description.

I listened to and explored the life stories of these three individuals who stand witness to thirty years of Hispanic growth at this university, and the evolution of services offered to students in an effort to create a sense of home away from home for its students. These perspectives are paralleled with a visual timeline using social cartography. I want to investigate student services presently offered in order to identify potential new services that could improve the offerings to and support of Hispanic students on this campus. These men now work on this campus with a combined experience of over 60 years at Texas State.

These three individuals grew up in the state of Texas, graduated from high school in Texas, obtained Bachelor's Degrees in Texas and have gone on to obtain post-secondary degrees. This research has a great opportunity to capture the history, the transition, and the present. It can have an effect on how the university responds to Hispanic students. The information can impact the future survival of Hispanic students, the practices of the Division of Student Affairs at Texas State University, as well as the institution itself. If we do not improve upon equity and accessibility for education of our Hispanic students, the cost will be that all members of society are under prepared to compete in a global economy. With the continued increase in the state's population, the success of Latinos achievement at Texas State University will become progressively more important to the economic and civic health of the U. S. (Brown, Lopez & Santiago, 2003).

## **The Problem Statement**

The problem pertains to the student support systems the university has in place for Mexican Americans that are admitted and enrolled on campus. Because Hispanic students are brought onto a campus that has historically operated under a White-stream institution framework and culture, the research will analyze student services offered over the last thirty years in order to identify potential new services that could improve the ways the university meets the needs of its increasing Hispanic student enrollment. The university is growing and becoming much more international, but if it cannot adjust to its local context, citizens and cultural surroundings we miss a great opportunity to meet the needs of its citizens and the global population. The cost associated with this problem, if the university does not evolve to meet changing demographics, will be increased hardship for students, high failure rates, high assimilation, high levels of stress for students stemming from leaving home, and a lack of establishing citizenship of the campus.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to capture the evolutionary changes in culture and climate within the Division of Student Affairs during the last 30 years, as seen through the eyes of three Latino men. Collectively, these men have over 60 years of experience as both students and professionals at the university. This study traces the parallels between their experiences, their culture, and the historical timeline of events that took place over the time of their stories. The rationale is to collect and analyze stories from these three Mexican American males and use their perspectives and experiences to explore new student services for Hispanic students. This information would be valuable to students and could assist their entry, transition, survival, and successful completions of their



studies while they live and develop on this campus. The three Mexican American males selected to share their life stories have each had a strong commitment to and understanding of the emerging Latino population on this campus. These individuals have also been dedicated in working to develop new programs and strategies to support the university's goals and initiatives, and have had an influential social standing within this campus community.

### **Research Question**

This research consists of three life stories with three Mexican American men working within the Division of Student Affairs at Texas State University. It explores their life experiences, professional challenges and the evolutions they have witnessed at this campus relating to growth of Mexican American enrollment, climate and the development of new student services in response to this demographic change alongside the visual timeline of historical events taking place within the state. The guiding research questions for this study were as follows:

1. What do the lives and institutional experience of three Mexican American men who work in the Division of Student Affairs at Texas State University look like?
2. How can the experiences of these three Mexican American males inform the Division of Student Affairs?
3. What student services will help Hispanic students succeed at Texas State University?

### **Theoretical Framework**

Community cultural wealth is the theory informing the research and guiding the process of making meaning. This theory is used to collect *platicas* and examine counter

storytelling of each of these three Mexican American males. This is not to concentrate on the deficit views of their life, culture, or disadvantages. This framework gives attention to their cultural knowledge, skills and abilities which are sometimes unrecognized and unacknowledged by socially marginalized groups (Yosso, 2005). Through the lens of community cultural wealth, it is evident that historically oppressed Latino/a communities accumulated cultural wealth by creating at least six forms of capital (Delgado Bernal, 1997, 2001; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). These six forms of capital are as follows:

1. *Aspirational capital*: the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers.
2. *Linguistic capital*: includes the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style;
3. *Familial capital*: those cultural forms of knowledge that are nurtured among kin and carry a sense of community, history, memory and cultural intuition.
4. *Social capital*: is understood as networks of people and community resources. Peers and other social contacts can provide both instrumental and emotional support to navigate through society's institutions.
5. *Navigational capital*: are the skills they possess for maneuvering through institutions not created with communities of color in mind.
6. *Resistance capital*: those forms of knowledge and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenged inequality (Yosso, 2005 p.78).

This framework guided us in observing the many successes and accomplishments each of these three men experienced along their own personal path in life and at Texas State University.

### **Definition of Terms**

This section assists in understanding how the following words/terms are used by the researcher in this study. Most of these terms are used throughout this report.

- *Assimilation* - the general process of inclusion through which newcomers are transformed from outsiders into full members of a group or society (Mclemore & Romo, 1998, p. 41).
- *Campus Climate* - a set of beliefs and attitudes that drive the environment of institutions of higher education (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1999).
- *Campus culture* - the current perceptions, attitudes, and expectations that define the institution and its members (Peterson & Spencer, 1990).
- *Community* - a unified body of people. People with common interests, living in a particular area (Merriam-Webster's, 1993).
- *Cultural Capital* - non-financial social assets that promote social mobility beyond economic means. As an asset, it embodies, stores or gives rise to cultural value in addition to whatever economic value it may possess (Throsby, 1999)
- *Chicano/Chicana* - a person self-reporting "Spanish/Hispanic origin or descent" and identifying the source of that affiliation as "Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano" (Gonzalez Baker, 1996, p. 6).

- *Familism* - an orientation in which the needs of the family are more important than the needs of the individual. Familism implies close reciprocal relationships among family members (McLemore & Romo, 1998, p. 252).
- *First-generation* - students who are the first in their family to attend college (Terenzini, Springer, Yaeger, Pascarella & Nora, 1996).
- *Hispanic* - a term invented by the U.S. Census Bureau to include American residents who identified themselves as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central, and South American, and “other” Spanish descendants (Rochin & de la Torre, 1996, p. 63).
- *Hispanic Serving Institutions* - as defined through the Higher Education Act of 1965, Hispanic Serving Institutions include accredited and degree-granting public or private nonprofit institution of higher education with 25 percent or more total undergraduate Hispanic full-time equivalent (FTE) student enrollment (Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, Title V, Sections 501-518).
- *Jim Crowism* - a term used to refer to laws that were passed and repealed in the 1860s, to segregate Whites from Blacks in public transportation, housing, work sites, restaurants, theaters, hospitals, playgrounds, public parks, swimming pools, organized sports, churches, cemeteries, and schools, for example. In the 1890s, these laws were revised and reinstated even more extensively, supported by the Plessy v. Ferguson decision that laid down the “separate but equal” rule for the justification of segregation (McLemore & Romo, 1998, p. 283).
- *Latino* - a term sometimes used as a substitute for “Hispanic” in order to lessen the implied European bias of the latter (Rochin & de la Torre, 1996, p. 63).

- *Mexican American* - a term that appears to be most widely accepted and used in reference to all Americans who trace their ancestry to Mexico (McLemore & Romo, 1998).
- *Persistence* - used to define a student's ability to remain in college. A student's persistence is affected in part by individual characteristics: family socioeconomic status, personal ability, and level of commitment, revealing personal ability along with a level of commitment as the most influential predictors of college success (Tinto, 1987).
- *Perceptions* - beliefs, motivations, or attitudes students have about their environment (Ancis, Sedlacek & Mohr, 2000).
- *Racism* - an unfavorable attitude and perhaps an unfavorable action toward people who are members of particular racial or ethnic groups. It may or may not specify the type of relationship that exists between unfavorable attitudes and actions, and the idea of group ranking may be more salient (McLemore & Romo, 1998, p. 153).
- *Social Capital* - how people organize themselves into groups and work together. It is excess cooperation, where most people build trust within a network or group to cooperate with them. Recently it has become increasingly commonly referred to as the glue which holds the group together (Coleman, 1988).
- *Tejanos* - native Mexicans living in Texas at the time when Texas broke away from Mexico to become an independent republic; also applied to all contemporary Mexican American Texans (McLemore & Romo, 1998, p. 222).

## Summary

Chapter one lays the foundation for the study. It identifies the need to explore both the university's demographic evolution, and how the university accommodates the cultural shifts that accompany demographic change, using case studies of three Mexican American males working in Student Affairs at Texas State University. It also explores how they see the university through their lens, and how they view and the evolution of student services and the Latino population at Texas State University. Social cartography is used as a research strategy to identify, collect, and analyze research data. It helps to place research issues in their appropriate social, historical and political contexts by providing a visual presentation of concurrent events. The timeline below helps make sense and organize my research.

This timeline was constructed as a two dimensional chronological map which included four data sets including; the demographics and history of the state of Texas, the university and public policy, and the life stories of these three Mexican Americans to create a visual image of dialog.

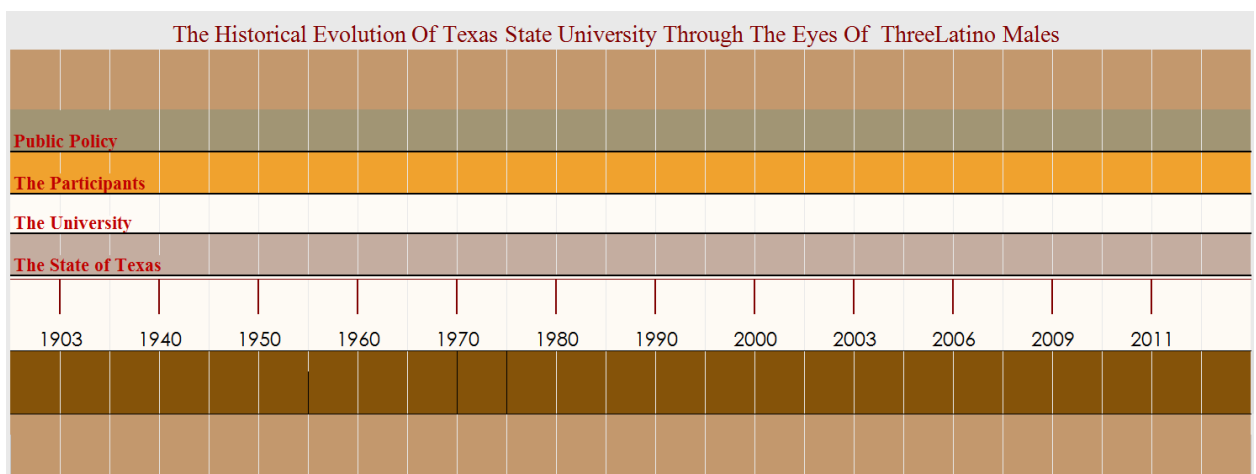


Figure 1. Historical Timeline

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the demographic shift of the state of Texas over the last 30 years from 1980 to 2010. Presented with this, a look at how the enrollment at Texas State University has also experienced a demographic shift over the last 30 years. This shift in enrollment at Texas State University is demonstrated by an increase of over 7,000 students. Specifically, this increase went from 1,517 Hispanic students in 1980 to 9,043 Hispanic students in 2011. During this time, from 1980 to 2011, the university's overall enrollment increase was 18,687 students going from 15,400 students in 1980 to 34,087 students in 2011. 40% of this increase is Hispanic enrollment, accounting for 7,526 of the 18,687 total university enrollment increase.

Parallel to these shifts, the Student Affairs Division at Texas State University has continued to grow and age. From a conversation with one of the longest tenured administrators in the Student Affairs Division, an image of the evolution of student affairs was framed. A historical overview of Mexican Americans in Texas is also part of the literature, explaining how Mexican Americans in Texas have been historically positioned in our educational system.

The last section of this chapter explains a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). Texas State University made a commitment in 2004 to become a Hispanic Serving Institution. Texas State met that goal by surpassing the 25% Hispanic undergraduate enrollment requirement, in September, 2010. In an announcement, the University President, Dr. Denise Truath, was quoted as saying:

“We are proud that our enrollment reflects the true changing face of Texas. We have achieved this important outcome because of the efforts of many individuals across the university, and I sincerely appreciate those efforts”.

“It has been our goal for several years to become an HSI. Now it is time we direct our efforts toward becoming the best HSI in the state” (University News Service, 2011).

### **Demographic Shift in Texas**

The chart below from the Texas State Data Center shows the continued growth the state of Texas has experienced from the year 1850 to the year 2010.

Table 1  
*Historical Population Changes*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Decade</b>	<b>Numerical</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1850	212,592				
1860	604,215		1850-1860	391,623	184.21
1870	818,579		1860-1870	214,364	35.48
1880	1,591,749		1870-1880	773,170	94.45
1890	2,235,527		1880-1890	643,778	40.44
1900	3,048,710		1890-1900	813,183	36.38
1910	3,896,542		1900-1910	847,832	27.81
1920	4,663,228		1910-1920	766,686	19.68
1930	5,824,715		1920-1930	1,161,487	24.91
1940	6,414,824		1930-1940	590,109	10.13
1950	7,711,194		1940-1950	1,296,370	20.21
1960	9,579,677		1950-1960	1,868,483	24.23
1970	11,196,730		1960-1970	1,617,053	16.88
1980	14,229,191	2,985,824	1970-1980	3,032,461	27.08
1990	16,986,510	4,339,905	1980-1990	2,757,319	19.38
2000	20,851,820	6,669,666	1990-2000	3,865,310	22.76
2010	25,145,561	9,847,852	2000-2010	4,293,740	

*Texas State Data Center*

According to the 2010 census, the state of Texas grew by 4.2 million to 25,145,561 total Texas residents, making it the second most populous state in the U.S.



The census also demonstrates 20.6% of this growth is attributed to the Hispanic population, accounting for 9,847,852 of the total population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). This increase in Hispanic population in Texas is not a fad or even a recent phenomenon; this growth in the state’s Hispanic population started occurring before 1980, and will continue to flourish into the future. If the largest ethnic population continues to be under educated, the nation as a whole will not be able to move forward. It is known that the Latinos are the largest minority population in the United States, yet they continually remain behind other racial and ethnic groups in higher education attainment (Brown, Lopez & Santiago, 2003).

Below is a chart (Figure 2) from the Texas State Data Center. It projected racial and ethnic population percentages for Texas from the year 2000 to 2040. This chart presents, starting in 2015, a potential shift in what will be the new dominate demographic in the state of Texas.

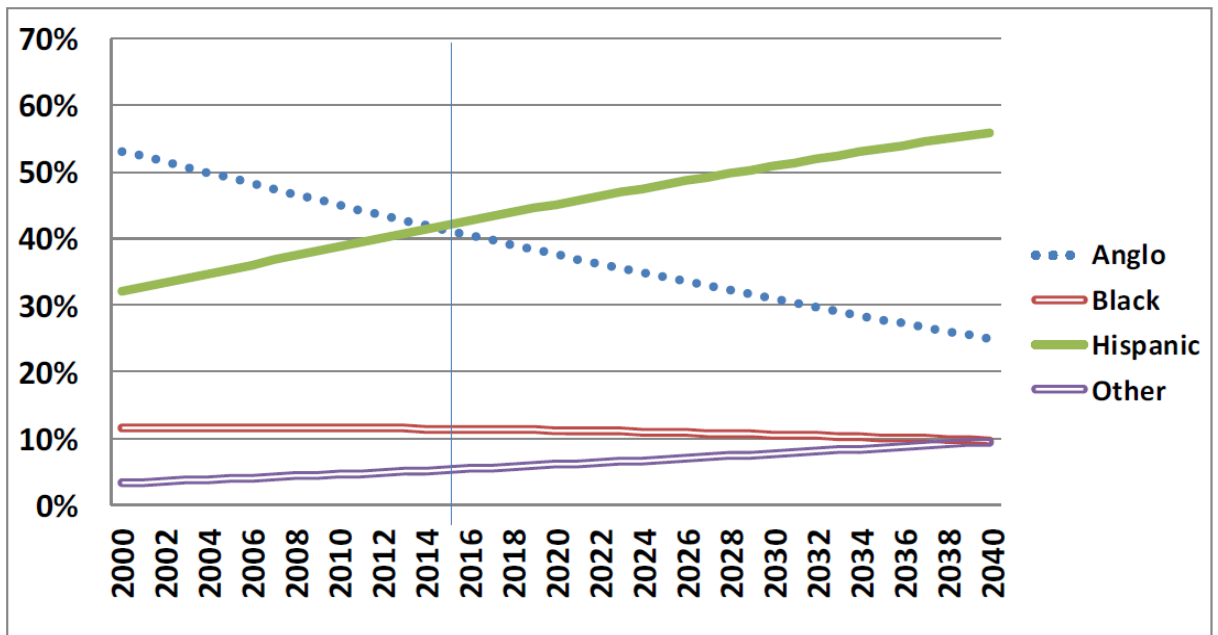
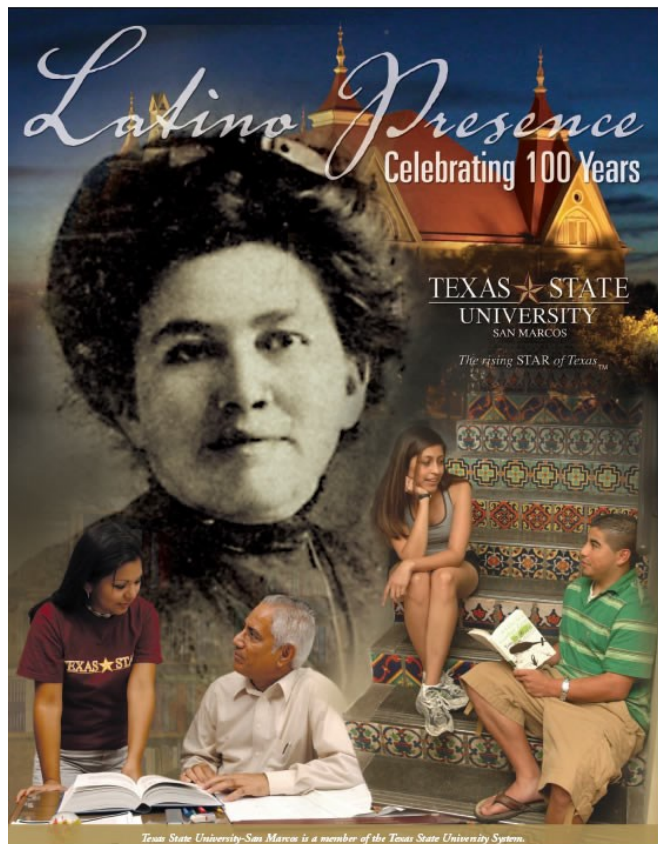


Figure 2. Projected Racial and Ethnic Population Percentages for Texas, 2000 – 2040

This chart also predicts that by 2040, the Hispanic population in the state of Texas could potentially make up almost 60% of the state's population. At the same time, it is anticipated the Anglo population could decline to about 27%. This information gives us an indication of what the future constituents of the state of Texas will look like.

### **Demographic Shift on Campus**

The university celebrated 100 years of Latino presence on campus in 2006. The Hispanic enrollment in 2006 was at 5,687. This 100-year Latino presence began in 1906 (Figure 4) when it served only one Hispanic student (Maria Elena Zamora O'Shea, the first Hispanic at Texas State University).



*Figure 3. Celebrating 100 Years*

Texas State University became a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) in 2010 and the Hispanic enrollment increased to 7,936.

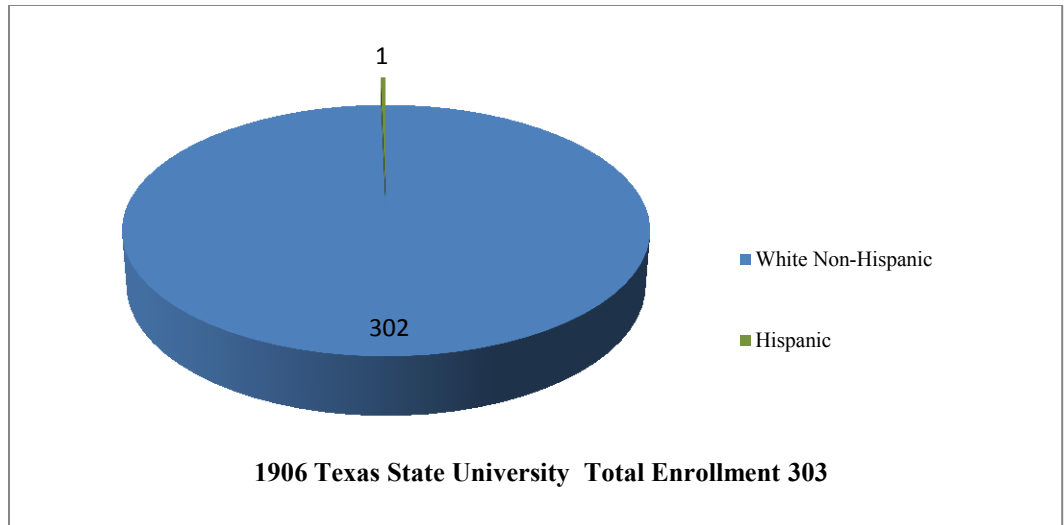


Figure 4. 1906 Enrollment

The following charts, (Figures 5-9), present the growth of the university's total enrollment and the increase in Hispanic enrollment over the last 30 years. These data sets show university enrollment in 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010. Texas State University demographic enrollment records were not saved electronically until 1980, so these data sets start from this point. The chart below, (Figure 5), demonstrates the enrollment and demographic data of Texas State University in 1980. The Hispanic enrollment in 1980 was recorded at 1,517, and the total university enrollment was 15,400.

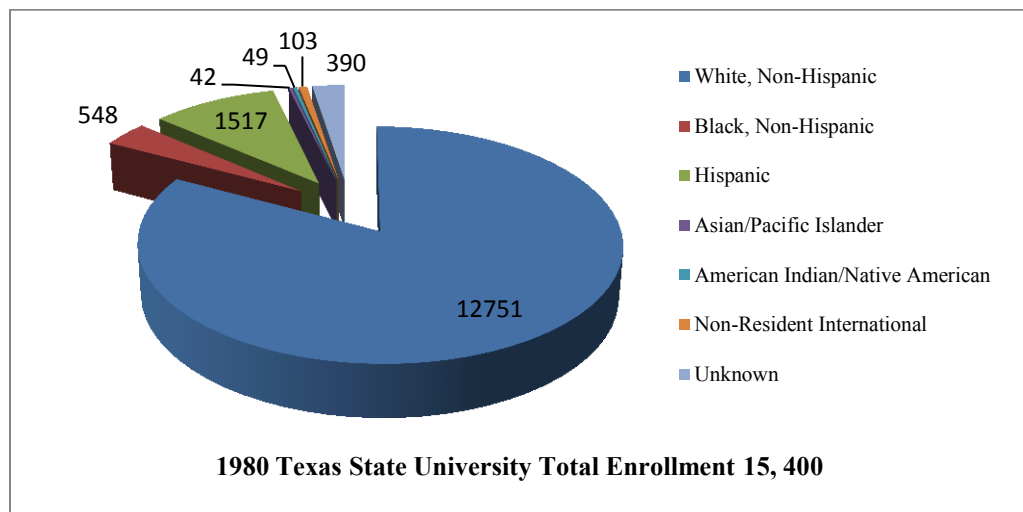


Figure 5. 1980 Enrollment

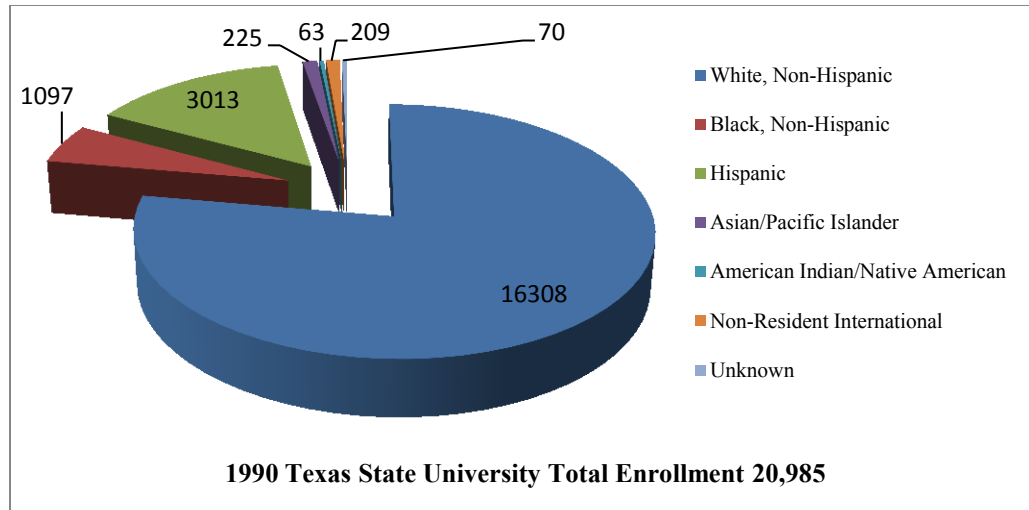


Figure 6. 1990 Enrollment

In 2000, (Figure 7) shows the total university enrollment at 22,471 and the Hispanic enrollment recorded at 4,129. From 1990 to 2000, the university had a total enrollment increase of only 1,486 during this ten year period. The Hispanic population made up 75 percent of this increase with 1,116.

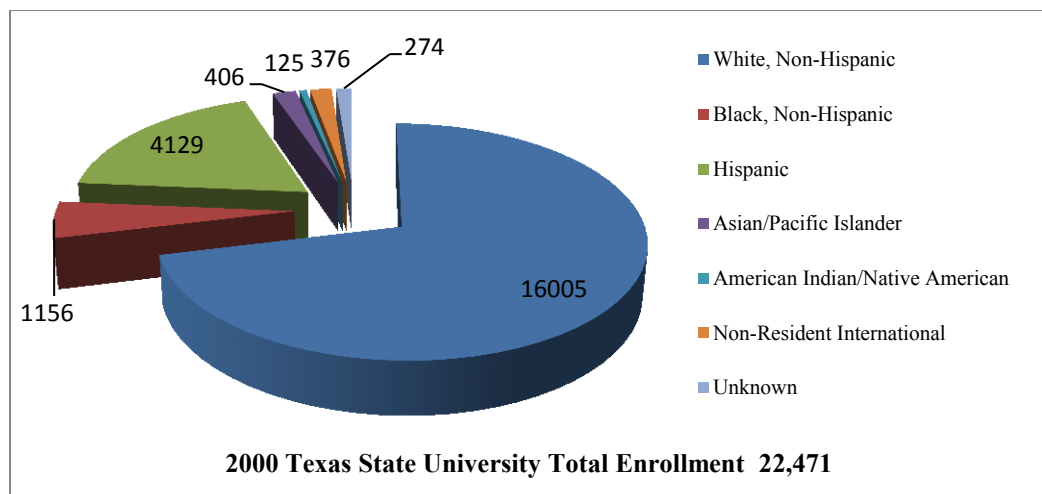


Figure 7. 2000 Enrollment

The next chart, (Figure 8), presents the enrollment data from 2010. These data sets shows the total university enrollment at 32,607 and the Hispanic student enrollment

at 7,936. This is a total university enrollment increase of 10,136 from 2000 to 2010 with the Hispanic enrollment accounting for 37% of this increase with 3,807 students. This increase of 10,136 students between the years of 2000 and 2010 is the largest increase in university history.

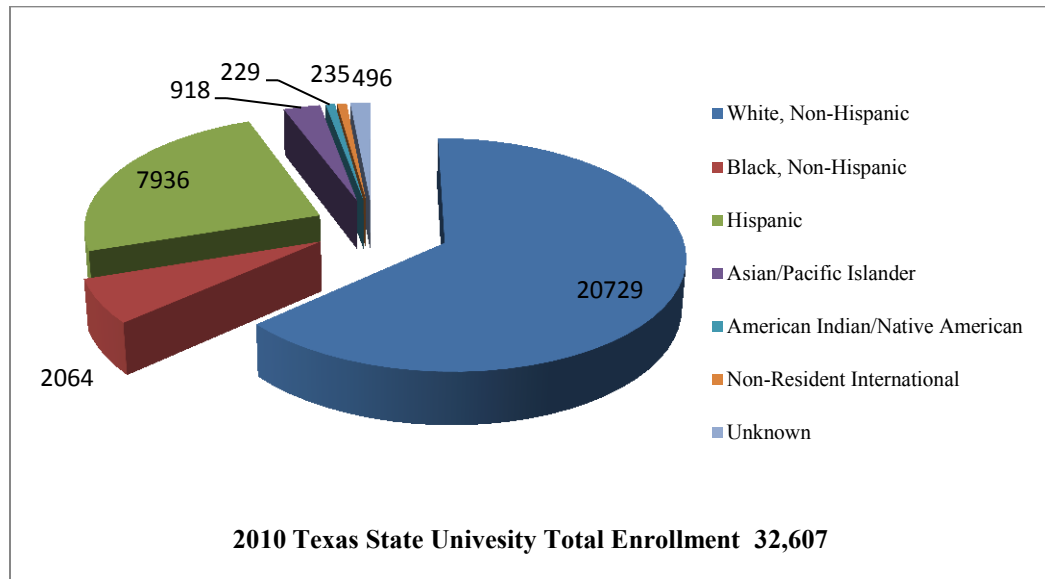


Figure 8. 2010 Enrollment

A year later, the enrollment data for 2011, shown below in (Figure 9), has the total university enrollment at 34,087, and the Hispanic enrollment at 9,043, an increase of 1,107 Hispanic students. In 2011, the university added for the first time, a new demographic category; Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic, Non-Black, accounting for 449 students.

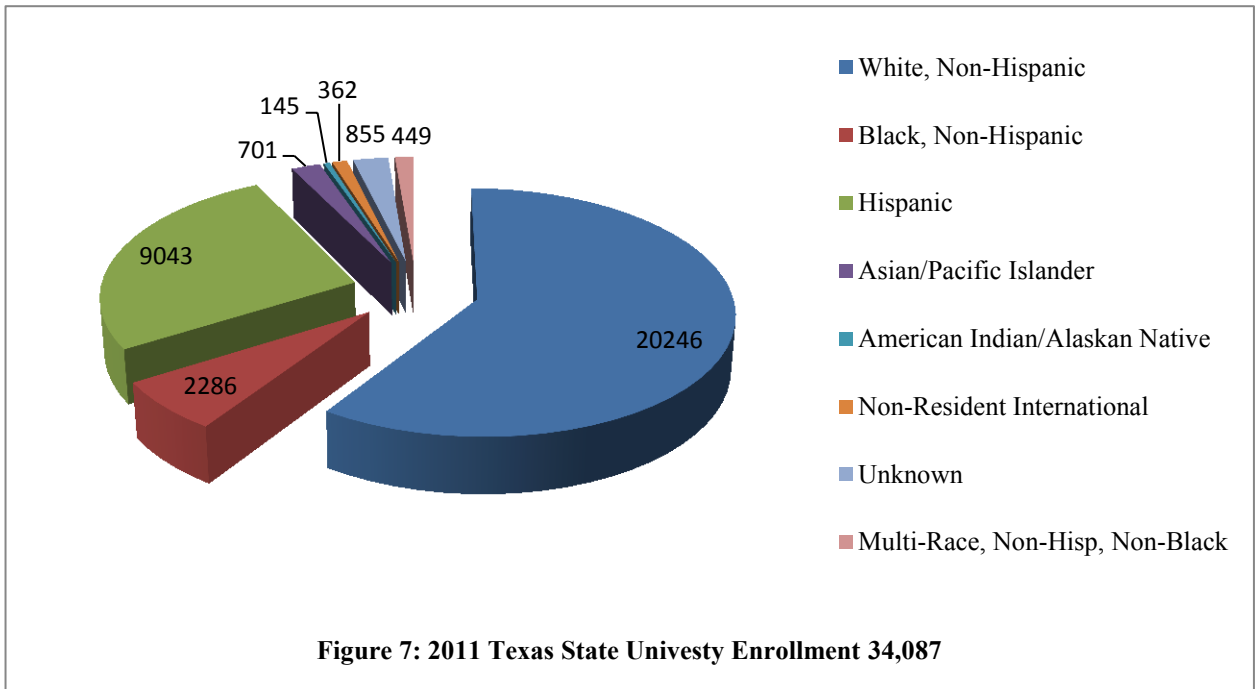


Figure 9. 2011 Enrollment

These data demonstrates how over the last 31 years, the Hispanic enrollment at Texas State has grown from 1, 517 in 1980 to 9,043 in 2011, an increase of 7,526 Hispanic students and also shows the state of Texas’ population growth, the majority of this growth being the Hispanic population.

It is because of both of these demographic shifts that I believe the administration at Texas State University sees the need to respond. If this demographic shift continues and the Hispanic enrollment at Texas State University continues to increase, will the campus climate and culture change, not just in color, but in consciousness? Historically, the climate on this campus has been a White-stream institution where admissions, funding, employment opportunities, student services, curriculum and university activities offered have been influenced by the ontology of this leadership. This exploratory research is being conducted to provide the university the opportunity to develop a plan that is responsive to student services in order to improve the sustainability of the

education of its Mexican American community. It also is directly related to the focus and ideas stated in the university's Diversity Plan as part of the 2012-2017 Strategic Plan.

The Diversity Plan incorporates three important underlying principles:

1. Diversity goals are best achieved by combining a strong commitment and universal integration of diversity principles in all our decision-making;
2. All members of the university community share the responsibility to work toward reaching our stated diversity goals;
3. Well-defined measures and increased accountability play key roles in realizing progress towards our diversity goals.

The purpose of this diversity plan is to help the university become a preferred choice for college students in Texas. It is also intended to help Texas State University become a first-rate steward of Texas prosperity by recognizing the need to serve the changing demographics of the state by being committed to funding new and existing programs that will attract and retain more diversity in our community. The university hopes to create a campus culture of acceptance and inclusion that support a welcoming environment for all student, faculty, and staff. One of the goals is that Texas State will also continue to remain a Hispanic Serving Institution, demonstrate an increase in the rate of graduation of Hispanic undergraduate students with a desired outcome to rank in the top ten percent of all public institutions in Texas ("2012 -2017 Diversity Strategic Plan")

### **Historical Overview of Mexican Americans in Texas**

The idea of Texas State University, historically a White-stream institution, potentially serving an enrollment made up of more than 25% Hispanics is a paradigm shift. Can the university meet this Texas Challenge and be the model for the rest of the

state and country to follow? The university has an opportunity to be on the right side of history. Many of the Hispanic citizens in Texas have been here for multiple generations. Many parts of Texas have been Hispanic longer than they have been Anglo. The Mexican American struggle took a different path from African Americans in Texas. The segregation of blacks in Texas happened in an overt way, but the segregation of Mexicans occurred in a more oppressive, covert manner. The beginning of Mexican Americans' existence in Texas has been grounded in conquest and colonization, which through the years evolved into subordination based on race (Menchaca, 2002), and they have struggled to claim all the rights and privileges afforded to them as citizens in this country.

According to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, some of those rights and privileges included equal educational opportunities. The signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was the end of the Mexican American War and the annexation, by conquest, of over 525,000 square miles of territory by the United States (Including present day Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Texas). This treaty in 1848 guaranteed equal educational opportunities to Mexicans, but instead the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo signaled the beginning of persistent discrimination, and oppression for Mexicans living in the southwest (Rendon, 1971). With this annexation, a line was drawn which divided families, friends and tried to separate individuals from their culture; this line is the Texas/Mexican border. At the end of the war between Mexico and Texas, Mexicans living in the northern territories (Texas) were given the right to citizenship and the use of their language. Although specific provisions were included in the Treaty guaranteeing citizenship and language rights, these provisions were largely ignored,



precipitating sentiments of betrayal among Mexicans living in the northern territories (Hernandez, 1997, p. 969). This betrayal is exemplified by Hernandez in the following sentiments regarding this inequity:

The failure to fully explain how America acquired its southwest and how it subsequently dishonored its obligations has a great deal to do with the way in which Americans have regarded Mexicans. Few treaties have had a more lasting influence on one nation's perception of another's peoples than the Treaty of Hidalgo, which formally ended the war and sealed the annexation of the territories to the United States. Mexicans like sheep were largely shorn of their property and dignity. They may have been Hidalgos under Mexican rule, but they were awarded by their conquerors a lower-class status. Lynching and murders kept them in their place and they became aliens in their own country. A racist regime put them in their place. The land of liberty had numerous embarrassments in store for those who were not Anglo-Saxon. These cultural codicils included what could kindly be called an imperfect suffrage system and rampant Jim Crowism extended to Mexicans. It was a society of violence, power, and profit. It was racist and discriminatory. (p. 969)

In an article entitled *The impact of Brown on the Brown of south Texas*, the encounters and memories of Jose Tamez, born in 1924 in Elsa, Texas, were shared. Mr. Tamez spoke of a memory which shaped him as a young Mexican man growing up in south Texas. This memory Mr. Tamez shared was an encounter involving his father and a public school bus driver. He recalled his dad asked the bus driver if he could drive further down the road to pick us up because it was a long walk to the bus stop. The driver

responded with “No! Mexicans aren’t supposed to get educated anyway. You are meant to work in the fields.” In this article, Mr. Tamez went on to say Mexican children were taught just enough English to understand their patrones (bosses) and rarely made it out of grammar school (Guajardo and Guajardo 2004).

The article went on to present interviews from numerous Anglo farmers in central and south Texas. These interviews uncovered the perspective of how the farmers/land owners viewed the role of the Mexican American worker in the economy and social structure of south Texas. The farmers unabashedly argued that Mexican American children had no business going to school. Educating Mexican Americans would upset the roles already defined by the regional political economy (Montejano & San Miguel, 1987). Mexicans made up a large percentage of the labor force, primarily working in agricultural fields or managing livestock on farms and ranches throughout Texas. It seemed this was the only intentional plan for Mexicans in the state.

Because of these inequitable policies, Mexicans had a difficult time with public schools. School officials either chose to exclude Mexican children from public schools, or did very little to encourage their enrollment (Weinberg, 1977). In addition, the schools the Mexican children had to attend were racially segregated and overcrowded. Generally, they had older rundown buildings, minimal recreational space and inadequate equipment. Often teachers lacked a bilingual or multicultural education. And often, new inexperienced teachers were assigned to the Mexican schools at the beginning of their careers. Additionally, budgets and expenditures per student at Hispanic schools were low compared to Anglo schools.

These historic practices still haunt Mexican students today. If a Mexican American child is admitted into college, more than likely they will be the first in their family to go to college and the least likely to pursue a post-secondary degree. (Ginorio & Huston 2001).

Personally growing up in Texas, I experienced conversations about how Mexicans don't value education or they don't like to move too far from home. I can understand how these inequities came about, more as the result of discriminatory school-based structures and practices than the lack of parental interest (Yosso and Solorzano, 2006). Different from the early 20th century views of the administrators in education, it was found that the challenge was understanding Latino families and their views on the system, not their value of education. They theorized "what we encounter at a familial level is an information gap, not a value gap" (Brown, Santiago & Lopez 2003). I have heard people fault Hispanics for their educational struggles. This type of thinking is known as culturally deficit thinking (Ornelas and Solorzano, 2004). Deficit thinking refers to the notion that students (particularly of low income, racial/ethnic minority background) fail in school (e.g., perform poorly on standardized tests) because such students and their families have internal defects, or deficits that thwart the learning process (Valencia, 1997). For example, this thinking maintains that Mexican American students who experience school failure do so because of limited educability, poor motivation, and inadequate family socialization for academic competence. Deficit thinking is founded on racial and class bias that "blames the victim," rather than examining how schools are structured to prevent students from learning (San Miguel, 1987).

## **Student Affairs at Texas State Grows Up**

One thing is certain, change is inevitable. Student affairs divisions on college campuses have to continue to move with the influencing variables that create change and accept them in order to sustain. What is not clear sometimes is what change will look like. How will it happen, what will influence it and how can Student Affairs administrators effectively move through the process? At Texas State University, student services are being provided through the effort of the Division of Student Affairs.

Today these services being provided have come to be expected by our students, parents and the general community. Not only have these services come to be expected, but the Student Affairs professionals today have become the day to day managers assigned the responsibility of student life on campus. Universities realize when students attend their campus they become members of the university community for 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Overseeing a university is more complicated than simply recruiting students and giving them a place to sleep. What do students do after class is over? What do students do when the university administration leaves at five o'clock? What happens if they get sick? More and more the university recognizes the need to provide services for students with mental health issues, disability issues and learning disorders. The purpose is to help keep students engaged and make them feel welcomed, and not to feel marginalized. This is so we can be supportive of their goal to graduate. The Division of Student Affairs at Texas State University has become a comprehensive component to help enhance the co-curricular experience for 34,000 students.

Historically, it wasn't always this way. In an interview with Dr. John Garrison, who worked in student affairs at Texas State University from 1975 to 2008, the Student

Affairs Division at Texas State University was created because of a non-violent student protest of the Vietnam War by students known as the San Marcos Ten. In 1969, during the tumultuous time of the 60's, a Supreme Court case dealing with freedom of speech developed. The case was *Bayless v. Martine*. Floyd Martine was the Dean of Students and Bayless was a student. This Supreme Court case established how free speech areas on college campuses all across the country are supposed to operate. At that time, Student Affairs at Southwest Texas State University was setup as a dual dean system.

The two dean system consisted of, a Dean of Women and a Dean of Men, with an Assistant Dean under them with the primary responsibility of overseeing the separate dormitories on campus. Following the court's decision in favor of the San Marcos Ten, in 1974 the university brought in a new President and Vice president which changed Student Services. The Vice President was Dr. Allen Watson. Dr. Watson was hired by the new president of the university, Dr. Lee Smith, the 6<sup>th</sup> President of the university. Dr. Watson's title at that time was Vice President of University Affairs. The vision this new leadership had was to improve student support services. Offices and reporting structures were changed. Starting in 1974, The Vice President of University Affairs supervised the Dean of Student Development (new position), Dean of Students - Student Justice Office (new office), Dean of Students and Academic Services (new position). Each of these four administrators supervised the following new service areas for the university. First, the Vice President of University Affairs directly oversaw Alumni Affairs, News and Information, Athletics, and the University Police. The Dean of Student Development (new position) managed the Student Union. The Dean of Students - Student Justice Office (new office) oversaw: Student Government, Recreational Sports (new office), and

The Department of Housing. Finally, the Dean of Students and Academic Services (new position), supervised: Financial Aid, Counseling Center, Registrar and Admissions.

The model above, with three Deans in the division, only lasted two years. The Dean of Student Development and the Dean of Student and Academic Services were removed, leaving only the Dean of Students. The Dean of Student Development eventually became the Director of the Student Center. This change, in 1974, is still the primary structure which our division operates under today.

Dr. Lee Smith was the President of Texas State University until 1982. In 1989, Dr. Jerome Supple became the 8<sup>th</sup> President of the university. The era of President Supple may have been the most significant for student affairs thus far. Upon Dr. Supple's arrival, he immediately felt the university didn't have the student affairs division he was accustomed to at previous universities. One of his first acts as president was to assemble a committee and conduct a national search to find a vice president with a background in student affairs. Through this search, Dr. James Studer was hired in 1992 as the new Vice President of Student Affairs. Prior to coming to Texas State, Dr. Studer was the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs and Services and Director of Student Life at Michigan State University for 11 years. He also held the position of Dean of Student Life at Ohio Wesleyan University in Delaware, and Assistant and Associate Dean of Students at The Defiance College. With this new chief student affairs officer came a new vision and expectation for the Division of Student Affairs at Texas State University. This new vision and expectation consisted of a commitment to hiring staff with the professional experiences to serve students in a better way, and a commitment to increasing financial resources. This vision and expectation also carried a commitment to focus on diversity,

retention and recruitment. With these efforts, the Division of Student Affairs at Texas State University soon became nationally recognized.

According to this information from Dr. Garrison, our current Student Affairs Division at Texas State University, with its present expectations, has only been operating for 22 years.

Since 1992, things like Virginia Tech, veterans, campus bomb threats, and the need for mental health programs have made us change and adapt the way we serve our students here, at Texas State University. With the shifting landscape of the state of Texas and Texas State University over the last 30 years, I believe the next big thing to influence Texas State University will be the growing Hispanic enrollment. The university can recognize this and try to be proactive to prepare for it, or it can let change happen and deal with it.

### **What Are Hispanic Serving Institutions**

In 2006 Texas State University celebrated 100 years of a Latino presence on campus. The Hispanic enrollment in 2006 was 5,687. In 2010, Texas State University became a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). In 2011, the Hispanic enrollment at Texas State University was over 9,000 students. When we became a Hispanic Serving Institute many wondered what it meant to be an HSI?

Hispanic Serving Institutions are part of a Federal designation, with the intension of helping colleges and universities assist first generation, low income Latino students. The Higher Education Act of 1965, which was signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on the campus of Texas State University was amended in 1992, and the term Hispanic Serving Institution was created. HSI's are defined as an "accredited and degree granting

public or private nonprofit institution with twenty five percent or more undergraduate Hispanic full time equivalent (FTE) student enrollment” (Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, Title V, section 501-518).

The department of education offers large grants to colleges and universities defined as HSIs. These funds can be used to enhance academic purposes for all ethnicities at the university. And, they can also be used for faculty development, administrative management, development and improvement of academic programs, endowments, curriculum development, scientific or laboratory equipment for teaching, renovation of instructional facilities, joint use of facilities, academic tutoring, counseling programs and student support services. Nonetheless, achieving the HSI designation is important because research suggests that Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI) graduate over 50% of Latinos enrolled in college (Santiago, 2006).

Student affairs professionals believe that the student experiences are a byproduct of the culture created by the institution. Now that Texas State University is a Hispanic Serving Institution, the development of new services and grant proposals to assist the university are at the forefront of a changing campus climate. For Latino students, a campus environment that is actively supportive contributes to college adjustment, persistence, and satisfaction (Swail, Redd, & Perna, 2003). The campus climate will not eliminate all the stressors and challenges faced by Latino students, but it is an important component to consider while the university evolves to develop services and programs as an HSI. A campus climate accounts for how universities respond to their recruitment strategies, services, and curricula especially as the constituencies they serve change (Dey & Hurtado, 1995). Being involved in higher education, I have often asked myself, what



can I do to help? How can I get involved? Having this opportunity to help create ideas or discussions at the beginning stages on Texas State becoming an HSI is a once in a lifetime privilege. To share the *platicas* of so much experience, and the life stories of three Mexican Americans, creates a very unique and rare learning opportunity for Texas State.

### **III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **Setting**

This research takes place on the campus of Texas State University. This campus is located in San Marcos, Texas, situated in south central Texas between San Antonio and Austin. This fall 2011, the university had an enrollment of 34,087 students. It is the largest institution in the Texas State University System, and the sixth largest in the state of Texas. In the fall of 2010, Texas State achieved the status of being a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). This recognition is given to colleges and universities with a Hispanic enrollment of 25% or higher. The Hispanic enrollment in the fall of 2011 at Texas State was at 9,043.

#### **Participants**

The participants chosen for this study, through a purposeful sampling, are Mexican Americans presently employed at Texas State University in the Division of Student Affairs. These three individuals currently hold the positions of: (a) Senior Staff Counselor, (b) Assistant Dean of Students and, (c) Associate Director of Campus Recreation. The criteria considered for this population included the following: being first generation college students and having a master's degree. The three individuals, at the time of the study, will range in age from 36 to 62 years old. All are self-identified as being (a) Mexican American, (b) Catholic and, (c) married, with children.

The first participant is 64 years old. He is from Brownsville, Texas, and graduated from Brownsville High School in 1967. He received a Bachelor degree from Texas A&I University in 1970, a Master's degree from Harvard University in 1978 and a

Doctoral degree from The Ohio State University in 1992. This participant reported starting his professional tenure here at Texas State in 1992.

The second participant is 48 years old. He is from Brenham, Texas, and graduated from Brenham High School in 1984. He received a Bachelor degree from Texas State University in 1992, a Master's degree from Sam Houston State University in 1994, and is presently finishing his dissertation in completion of his Ph.D., as a member of cohort 2007 at Texas State University. The second participant also reported enrolling at Texas State in 1988, and then returned as a professional staff member in 1998.

The third participant is 38 years old. He is from Brownsville, Texas. He graduated from South Texas High School for Health Professions in 1992. He received his Bachelor degree from Southwest Texas State University in 1997 and a Master's degree from Texas State University in 2010. This participant reported being associated with the campus from 1989 to 1991, as part of the Youth Opportunity Unlimited (Y.O.U.), which helped him make his decision to enroll in 1992.

### **Life Stories**

Three life stories are collected on three Latino males who presently work at Texas State University in the Division of Student Affairs. These case studies collected, present details about what these individuals have witnessed at this university and the changes they have seen regarding the increasing Hispanic enrollment on campus over the last 30 years. This information includes personal life stories and accounts from each subject. This descriptive, empirical research looks intensely at these individual stories. Further, it draws conclusions from both individual and collective perspectives. The researcher does

not focus on discovering a universal truth, nor cause and effect; instead, emphasis is placed on exploration and description.

### **Social Cartography**

This research, *The Historical Evolution of Texas State University Through the Eyes of Three Latino Males*, uses social cartography as a methodology to collect, organize, analyze and present its findings. Social Cartography is the method of mapping, which is a key tool in analyzing and demonstrating perspectives and data (Paulson, 1996).

Social Cartography is employed by creating a two dimensional chronological map. This map presents a visual image to demonstrate evidence and parallels four separate data sets which include the following observables: public policy, three research partners' life histories, historical perspective of Texas State University and the State of Texas's historical moments and demographics. These multiple observables allow the researchers to weave the micro-life stories with the macro-historical events occurring at pivotal times during the lives of our research partners. The use of artifacts, pictures and symbols guided by the individuals' perspectives, stories and the research questions create great details to this research. The research is able to weave the research partner's views of the university and the journey they took to get to their present position on campus at Texas State University.

Social Cartography allows for the chronicling, mapping and weaving of history and change as informed by the research process. Items mapped include issues of race, equity, public engagement, United States Presidential history on the campus at Texas

State University, political activism, childhood stories, and the shifting demographics in Texas and on the Texas State University campus.

The map supporting this research is organized in a chronological timeline from the early years of the data sets to the present time. The analysis of this chronological map is conducted by exploring the three life stories of my research partners, the context they were born into, their experiences growing up, and the events in the world around them.

This analysis includes exploring the research through the community cultural wealth framework while simultaneously exploring the congruence, incongruence and the nuanced spaces they experienced while on the Texas State University campus.

While Paulson's work was mostly two dimensional, the addition of technology to this method allowed us to digitally explore the present while also weaving the past with the click of a button. This has allowed the digital form of this research presentation to bring the video and audio files to life. Included in this map is a video file of President John F. Kennedy as he delivered a speech at the National LULAC Convention in Houston November 21, 1963 the day before being shot in Dallas.

The digital public presentation of this research is then facilitated by the presentation software, Prezi. The Prezi software allows me to weave through the chronological frames of each of the research partners as they lived through time while also presenting the other data sets of public policy, Texas State University events, and the State of Texas history and demographics.

Social Cartography is the only method which allows me to bring the time and era of each individual's journey to life, so the readers can experience their paths. No other methodology I explored could do justice to this research. This contemporary

methodology focuses on developing a greater visual awareness and deeper understanding of the state's history, particularly as it relates to the macro and micro context of the study. This methodology gives me the ability to present the great complexities in weaving the four data sets informing this research together. Social Cartography is a methodology that allows me to accomplish the collecting, organizing, analyzing, and presentation of this work.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

The information for each life story was collected by conducting three interviews that were video-taped. During the interviews, the researcher took field notes to capture the participants' mood, perceptions and thoughts. (Glesne, 1999). Qualitative data analysis is used consisting of interview questions and some are based on rigorous methods in the field, which include observations that come from the interviews. The researcher collected these life stories to organize the data into categories, themes, patterns and key phases. The researcher also researched public documents, articles, books and university reports (Creswell, 1994, p. 153). The completion of the analysis and interpretation was completed in the Spring of 2014.

Framework Guiding the Inquiry Process:

1. Self

To better understand who each of these individuals and who was a part of their life plan.

2. Organization

Explain how they developed along their path, from childhood to their present positions here at Texas State University.

### 3. Community

What is their view of the community, their involvement, how they have positioned themselves? What do they want to see in the future for the community?

## **Life Story Interview Questions**

### **Self**

Tell me your story...

- Where did you grow up?
- How do you identify yourself?
- What are your greatest memories of growing up in this place?
- What has been your most satisfying accomplishment?

### **Organization**

- What organizations have contributed to your development...family, church, friends?
- Tell me about your schooling experience.
- When have you felt the most challenged?
- What does it mean to be an educated Mexicano?

### **Community**

- Civic engagement
- What is the legacy you want to leave behind?
- How do you describe your citizenship within this campus?
- Vision of what Student Affairs can become for Hispanic students at Texas State?

## **Building Trustworthiness**

To a great extent, validity in qualitative methods hinges on the skill, competence, and vigor of the person conducting the fieldwork. Lincoln and Guba (1985) state the

researcher is the instrument that establishes validity. Lather positions validity as "an incitement to discourse" (Lather, 1993). Discourse in the social sciences often argues validity is the problem not the solution; however, qualitative practices such as member-checking, peer debriefing, and triangulation are practices that have been implemented in an effort to resolve the problem of validity without exhausting it. Triangulation is defined as the use of multiple data collection methods, multiple sources, multiple investigators and/or multiple theoretical perspectives. Peer review and debriefing provide the opportunities for external reflections and input on the researcher's work. On the other hand, member checking is the process of sharing interview transcripts as well as analytical thoughts and/or drafts of the final report with research participants to make sure their ideas are represented accurately (Glesne, 1999).

### **Ethical Considerations**

Knowing this research took place on campus at Texas State University with known staff members, it is important to conduct ethical practices along with making sure the participants are fully aware of the subject matter of the research. In order to preclude the notion of deception, prior to the interviews, I discussed an overview of the purpose of the research. I also asked the participants to sign a written consent form noting they have been informed of my research intentions. This ensures they understand the implications of their agreement to participation. It will also be disclosed to them that they may withdraw from the study without prejudice. It is important the participants are not deceived by the study and are made to understand their participation is voluntary.



## **IV. CAMPUS LIFE AT TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY**

### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings from the data collected from three Mexican American males working in the Division of Student Affairs at Texas State University. Here we explore our personal and professional experiences and reflections in and out the university. This process consisted of three individual interviews, one group interview, and multiple informal conversations. The goal is to capture the culture and climate within student affairs during the last thirty years as seen through the eyes of three Latino professionals over the course of their collective sixty plus years of service as students and professionals on this campus.

These interviews explored the lives, professional challenges and the evolutions they have experienced on this campus, specifically related to the growth of Mexican American enrollment, culture and climate. My intent is to capture the richness of the changing campus climate in hopes of developing new student services responsive and congruent to the culture that facilitates demographic change. I hope to use this information to inform and facilitate a climate and culture that facilitates future students' success as they enter, transition, and survive while they live and mature on this campus. Additionally, I hope this will inform programming and practices on campus, thirdly, I hope to expand the literature as it relates to Hispanic Serving Institution objectives in higher education. The guiding research questions for this study are as follows:

1. What do the lives and institutional experiences of three Mexican American men who work in the Division of Student Affairs at Texas State University look like?

2. How can the experiences of these three Mexican American males inform the Division of Student Affairs?
3. What student services will help Hispanic students succeed at Texas State University?

### **Chronological Map**

To meet the articulated goals of the research I created a two dimensional chronological map using artifacts, pictures and symbols informed by four sets of observation: the individuals' stories, university changes, state and federal policy and the state of Texas demographics. These observables are woven together to present a visual image of a dialog that provides the macro level setting my research partners have witnessed at Texas State University. This map is a key component to understanding the information presented. The map creates a visual presentation of four major observables involved with this research. The chronological map can be viewed on the following page. The observables consist of:

1. State and Federal Policy
2. History of the State of Texas
3. Life histories of Three Research Partners
4. Important events at Texas State University

# The Historical Evolution of Texas State University

## Public Policy



## Segregation in Texas

By 1930  
90% of all public schools were segregated

## Delgado vs. Ba

Lawsuit which legal  
Mexican-America  
LULAC attorneys

## The Participants

**Fidel**  
Age: 64 (1949)  
Hometown: Brownsville, Texas  
High School: Brownsville High School 1967  
Bachelors Degree: Texas A&I University 1970  
Masters Degree: Harvard University 1978  
Doctoral Degree: Ohio State University 1992  
Position Title: Senior Counseling Staff 1992

**Noah**  
Age: 48 (1965)  
Hometown: Brenham, Texas  
High School: Brenham High School 1984  
Bachelors Degree: Southwest Texas State University 1992  
Masters Degree: Sam Houston State University 1994  
Position Title: Associate Director of Campus Recreation 1998  
Doctoral Degree: Texas State University 2014

**Julian**  
Age: 38 (1975)  
Hometown: Brownsville, Texas  
High School: South Texas H.S. for Health Professions 1992  
Bachelors Degree: Southwest Texas State University 1997  
Position Title: Assistant Dean of Students 2002  
Masters Degree: Texas State University - San Marcos 2010

1903 1920 1930 1940

## The University



**Southwest Texas Normal School**  
Founded 1899  
First Enrollment - 303  
First Class - 1903

First Name Change  
Southwest Texas State Normal College 1918

Second Name Change  
Southwest Texas State Teachers College 1923



LBJ at  
Southwest Texas State Teachers College  
1930

First Latina to Enroll  
Maria Elena Zamora O'Shea Age: 26

**LULAC**  
League of United Latin American Citizens  
Founded in Corpus Christi, Texas 1929

## The State of Texas



**American G.I.**  
Founded in



Figure 10. Historical Map

# University Through the Eyes of Three Latino Males



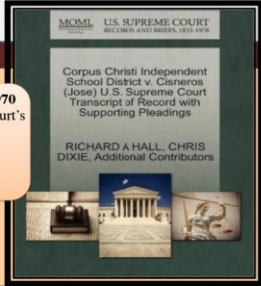
**Delgado vs. Bastrop I.S.D. 1948**

Lawsuit which legally ended segregation for Mexican-American children in Texas. ULAC attorneys filed suit- First in Texas



**1965**

**Cisneros vs. Corpus Christi I.S.D. 1970**  
First case to extend the U.S. Supreme Court's Brown vs. the Board of Education  
  
The "Other White" argument operation of dual school systems



**Fidel**  
Age: 64 Born: 1949  
Hometown: Brownsville, Texas

**Noah**  
Age: 48 Born: 1965  
Hometown: Brenham, Texas

**Fidel**  
Brownsville High School 1967  
Brownsville, Texas



**Fidel**  
Bachelors Degree Texas A&M University 1970  
Kingsville, Texas

**Julian**  
Age: 38 Born: 1975  
Brownsville, Texas



**Fidel**  
Masters Degree Harvard University 1978  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

**Noah**  
Brenham High School 1984  
Brenham, Texas

**Noah**  
Bachelors Southwest Texas State San Marcos

**Fidel**  
Ph.D. Ohio State University Columbus



Texas State University 1980  
Hispanic Enrollment 1,517

Texas State University  
Hispanic Enrollment

Texas State University 1980  
Enrollment 15,400

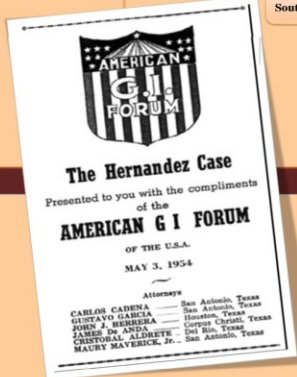
Texas State University  
Enrollment 20,000

Third Name Change  
Southwest Texas State College 1959

Fourth Name Change  
Southwest Texas State University 1969

**Minority Affairs Program (MAP)**  
Name change to **Multicultural Student Affairs (MSA)**  
Founded 1983

**Aldolfo "Al"**  
Named the President of Multicultural Student Affairs



**American G.I. Forum**  
Founded in 1948



1964 Dr. Roberto Galvan  
First Faculty Latino Ph.D.



State of Texas  
Hispanic Population 1980  
2,985,824

State of Texas  
Hispanic Population  
4,339,960

State of Texas  
Population 1980  
14,229,191

State of Texas  
Population  
16,986,500

Figure 10 (cont'd.)



Figure 10 (cont'd.)

## Road Map of the Analysis

To support the chronological map and give context to the different eras in Texas history a Road Map strategy section will intertwine during the conversation. The Road Map is used to create a narrative of popular culture of the time to parallel the research partners' personal experiences along with historical events of Texas and the university; this provides a cultural and political snapshot of the times during their lives. This helps give the reader a better context to their experiences.

This road map creates a background for the reader as the research partners share the thirty year evolution they have witnessed on this campus. Each road map section helps the reader understand what our research partners lived in route to their present positions', it also gives milieu to the process of change in our state and university. This road map will cover the decades between the 1950's to 2010. Figure 11 below, presents our first road map.

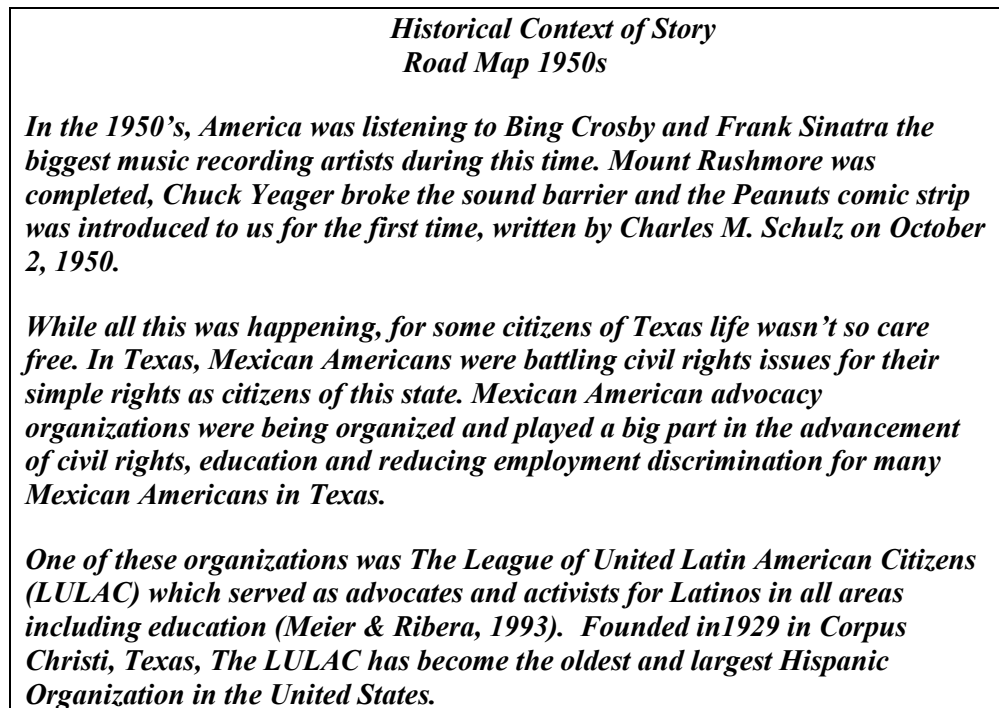


Figure 11. The 1950s

*Another organization which played a significant role for civil rights in the twentieth century for Mexican Americans was the American GI Forum (AGIF) also founded in Corpus Christi, Texas in 1948.*

*This organization was designed with the idea to help support Mexican American veterans who were being denied medical service by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. The AGIF gained its popularity when it supported the family of a United State Solider, Private Felix Longoria from Three Rivers, Texas.*

*In 1945 at the age of 25, Longoria was killed in the line of duty in the Philippines. Subsequently, his wife was denied funeral services in his hometown. After the AGIF pushed this story to national prominence, Senator Lyndon B. Johnson, Texas State Alumni helped arrange his burial at Arlington National Cemetery.*

*In 1948, the LULAC filed the first law suit in Texas against the Bastrop Independent School District representing Minerva Delgado and twenty other Mexican American parents. This suit stated charges of segregation of Mexican students. This case created a ten year battle lead by the American G.I. Forum and the LULAC, which ended with the decision of Hernandez vs. Driscoll CISD (about separate classes on the same campus).*

*The G.I. Bill also proved to be a major breakthrough for Mexican American military veterans as it facilitated their access to post-secondary education (Meier & Ribera, 1993).*

*In 1954 the discrimination case of Brown v. the Board of Education reached the U.S. Supreme Court.*

*University Historical Facts of the 1950's*

*The university went through its third name change. Established as Southwest Texas State Teacher College, the name was first changed to Southwest Texas State Normal College, then in 1959 it became Southwest Texas State College.*

*Research Partners*

*While all this was going on, in 1949, in Brownsville, Texas Fidel was born. He started his path in the Texas educational system in 1955, when he entered kindergarten. This helps us sense the context of his experiences in the Texas educational system.*

Figure 11. (cont'd.)

### Conversation as Counter Story

I act as facilitator during this virtual conversation. Using information from interviews, personal observation, internet sites, and my own personal and professional experience I create a conversation and counter stories by employing social cartography

methods. Community cultural wealth provides the theoretical framework informing the research and guiding the process for making meaning. This theory is used to collect stories and examine counter storytelling of each of these three Mexican American males. Instead of concentrating on the deficit views of their life, culture, or disadvantages, this framework gives special attention to their cultural knowledge, skills and abilities; assets which are sometimes unrecognized and unacknowledged in socially marginalized groups (Yosso, 2005). Through the lens of community cultural wealth, it is evident that historically oppressed Latino/communities accumulate cultural wealth by creating at least six forms of capital (Bernal, 1997, 2001; Solórzano & Bernal, 2001). These six forms of capital are:

1. *Aspirational capital*: the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers.
2. *Linguistic capital*: includes the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style;
3. *Familial capital*: those cultural forms of knowledge that are nurtured among kin and carry a sense of community, history, memory and cultural intuition.
4. *Social capital*: is understood as networks of people and community resources. Peers and other social contacts can provide both instrumental and emotional support to navigate through society's institutions.
5. *Navigational capital*: are the skills they possess for maneuvering through institutions not created with communities of color in mind.
6. *Resistance capital*: those forms of knowledge and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenged inequality (Yosso, 2005 p.78).



Delgado (1989) declared “Counter-stories is a method of telling the story of those experiences that are not often told” (p. 2421). According to Solorzano and Yosso (2001, p. 475), Delgado (1989, p. 2421) and Lawson (1995, p. 354), counter-stories serve at least four theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical functions: (a) they build community among those at the margins of society by putting a human and familiar face to educational theory and practice; (b) they challenge the perceived wisdom of those at society’s center by providing a context to understand and transform established belief systems; (c) they open new windows into the reality of those at the margins of society by showing the possibilities beyond the ones they live, demonstrating that they are not alone in their position; and (d) they teach others that by combining elements from both the story and the current reality, one can construct another world that is richer than either the story or the reality alone. The following frames were used to organize the stories;

### **Participant Profiles**

The participants selected for this research were chosen from professional staff members in the Division of Student Affairs at Texas State University. The three individuals selected to share their life stories have each had a strong commitment and understanding of the emerging Latino population on this campus. These individuals have also been dedicated in assisting with developing new programs and strategies to support the university’s goals and initiatives and have had an influential social standing with this campus community. It was apparent from the beginning of the study that the Division of Student Affairs at Texas State University had very few Mexican Americans males that met the criteria for this study. The criteria included:

1. Identifying as Mexican American

2. Age – each individual born in three different decades
3. Gender, male
4. A minimum of a Master's Degree
5. A minimum of fifteen years of professional employment or relationship with the university in a variety of capacities, such as student, professional employment, summer camps or internships
6. Presently employed in a position classified higher than coordinator or entry level

The following tables help describe each participant's background, family, education levels, personal education levels, and length of experience with the university. Table 1 provides a personal profile for participants. All participants were between the ages of 38-64, and were full time employees. Information relative to their position within the university, their hometown and their long-term associations with Texas State University is also included. Each research partner has had a relationship with the university for more than fifteen years. Combined, these three individuals have sixty years of experience. This united experience provides a unique perspective and an eye-witness testimony about the evolution of the Division of Student Affairs over the last thirty years.

Table 2  
*Participants' Personal Profiles*

Participant	Age	Title	Texas State Affiliation	Hometown
Fidel	64	Senior Counselor	21 years	Brownsville
Noah	48	Associate Director	25 years	Brenham
Julian	38	Assistant Dean of Students	22 years	Brownsville

Table 2, contains the participants' academic profile, and shows the highest level of education each participant has obtained. The academic profile shows all three have obtained a Masters; degree, one has a Doctorate degree, and one is a candidate for a Doctorate degree. Research tells us only 10.6% of Hispanics hold a bachelor's degree or higher as compared to 28.1% of Whites and 16.5% of Blacks (Ginorio & Huston, 2001). The profile also notes the high schools from which each one graduated.

Table 3  
*Participants' Academic Profile*

Participant	High School	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	Doctoral Degree
Fidel	Brownsville High School	Texas A&I University	Harvard University	Ohio State
Noah	Brenham High School	Southwest Texas State	Sam Houston State	Texas State (ABD)
Julian	Magnet School Mercedes	Southwest Texas State	Texas State University	N/A

***Historical Context of the Study  
Road Map 1960s***

***The 1960s were all about the baby boomers, the single biggest sector of the American population. The culture of the 1960s is remembered for the Beatles storming America, and parents thought Elvis was the devil himself. Popular television shows of the time were the cartoon, the Flintstones and the Adams Family.***

***The 1960s were also the time of the Vietnam War when many Chicanos gave their lives to this country in disproportionate numbers. It was also the decade of the assassination of JFK in Dallas, Texas.***

***For Mexican American students on many campuses, the 1960s called attention to social injustices suffered by Mexican Americans. The decade dared Mexican American students to challenge the status quo through political, economic, and social channels. Student organizations such as Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MeCHA), established in 1969, were instrumental in illuminating social injustices and discrimination, as well as creating opportunities for cultural awareness for individuals of Mexican origin on college campuses (Meier & Ribera, 1993).***

***University Historical Facts of the 1960's***

***In 1965, Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ) the 36th president of the United States signed into law on November 8, 1965, the Higher Education Act.***

***The intent of the Higher Education Act was to help build educational resources for colleges and universities and to provide financial assistance for students in postsecondary education. Having strong ties to Texas State University, LBJ felt it would be the perfect location for the signing of the document.***

***Because of this Higher Education Act, many students from low socioeconomic background were given the financial opportunity to go to college.***

***On the campus of Southwest Texas State College in 1964, Dr. Roberto Galvan was hired as the first Latino Ph.D., and in 1969 the university took on its fourth name change, becoming Southwest Texas State University.***

***Research Partners***

***In 1965, Noah was born. Fidel, born in 1949, was a freshman in high school in 1965. Both, Fidel, Noah and their families were right in the middle of these life affecting policies, and laws. We can begin to see the context of the politics they lived in.***

Figure 12. The 1960s

Table 3 shows the participants' family profile, including educational levels of their parents. It also shows the number of siblings each has and their educational levels. Additionally, all participants are married, with children. Two of the three participants have two children and third has three children.

Table 4  
*Participants' Family Profile*

Participant	Mother's Education	Father's Education	Number of Siblings	Siblings' Education	Married	Number of Children
Fidel	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	4 <sup>th</sup> grade	3	12 <sup>th</sup> grade	Yes	2
Noah	12 <sup>th</sup> grade	12 <sup>th</sup> grade	1	12 <sup>th</sup> grade	Yes	3
Julian	5 <sup>th</sup> grade	5 <sup>th</sup> grade	3	12 <sup>th</sup> grade	Yes	2

The final participant profile, Table 4, presents how each participant has been involved with Texas State University. Fidel has been with the university since being hired in 1992, counting for a twenty one year relationship with the university. Noah started his involvement in 1988, as an undergraduate student and completed his undergraduate degree in 1992. He returned in 1998 in a professional position and has fifteen years employment to the present. Over all, Noah has acquired a twenty five year relationship with the university. Julian began with Texas State in 1991, as part of a summer program called Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.). After graduating from high school he enrolled as a freshman in 1992, graduated in 1997, and has been employed by the university since 2002. He received his Master's in 2010. This constitutes a twenty-two year relationship.

Table 5  
*Participants' University Involvement*

Participant	University Summer Camp Internship	Texas State University Undergraduate	Texas State University Graduate School	Texas State University Employment	Texas State University Years Experience
Fidel	No	No	No	1992-Present	21
Noah	No	1988-1990	2007-Present	1998-Present	25
Julian	1991 (Y.O.U.)	1992-1997	2008-2010	2002-Present	22

These data presented in the aforementioned tables provide a snapshot of the participants and their academic background.

### **Life Maps**

To enhance the participant profile section each research partner used social cartography to give us a rich image of who they are. All three research partner constructed their own life maps. These maps were created within the few months of their first interviews. A unique vision from their own perspective lead us to a better understanding of who they are and what major events orchestrated Who They have become. Below are the three life maps:

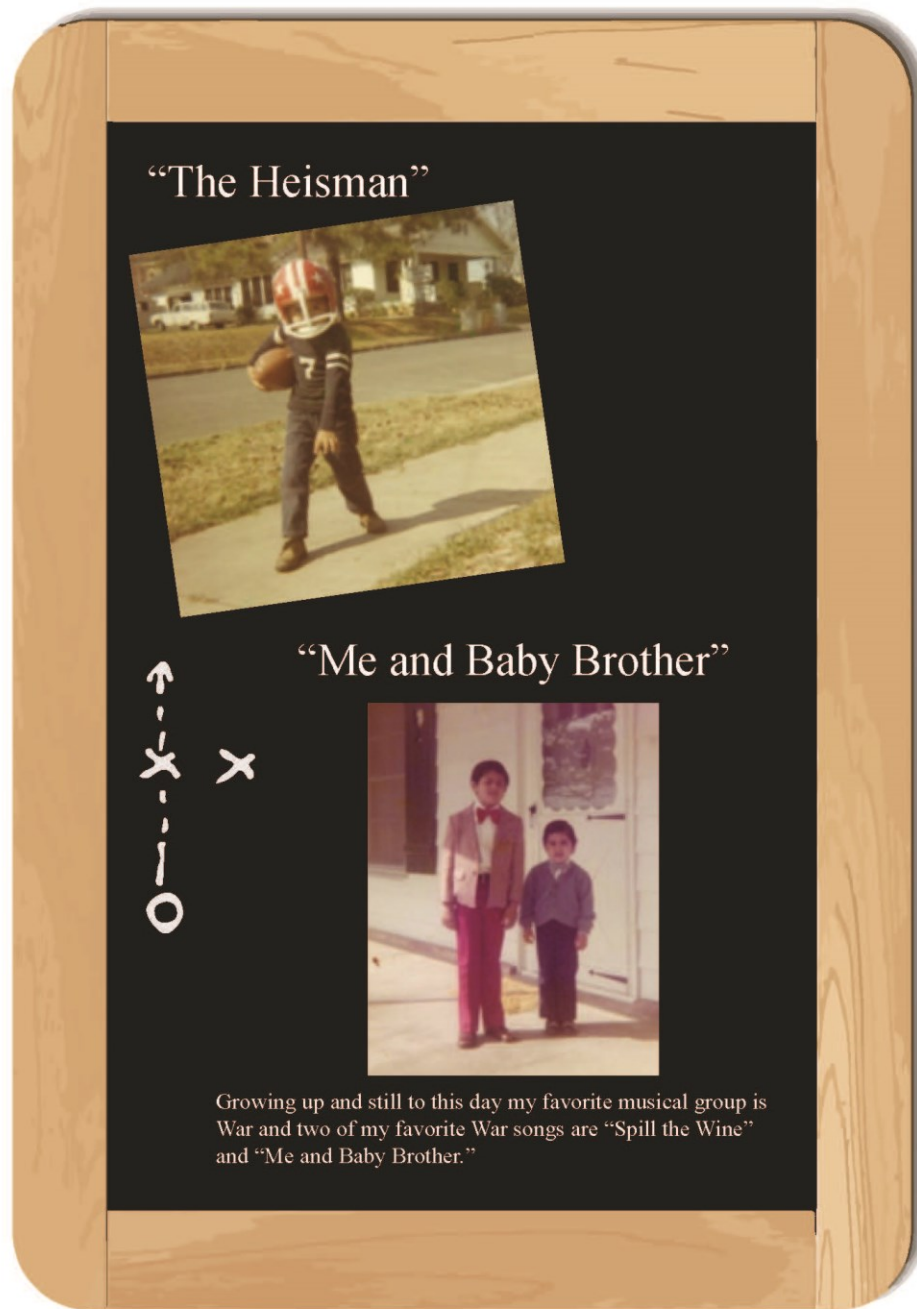


Figure 13. The Life Map of Noah - 1



Figure 14. The Life Map of Noah - 2



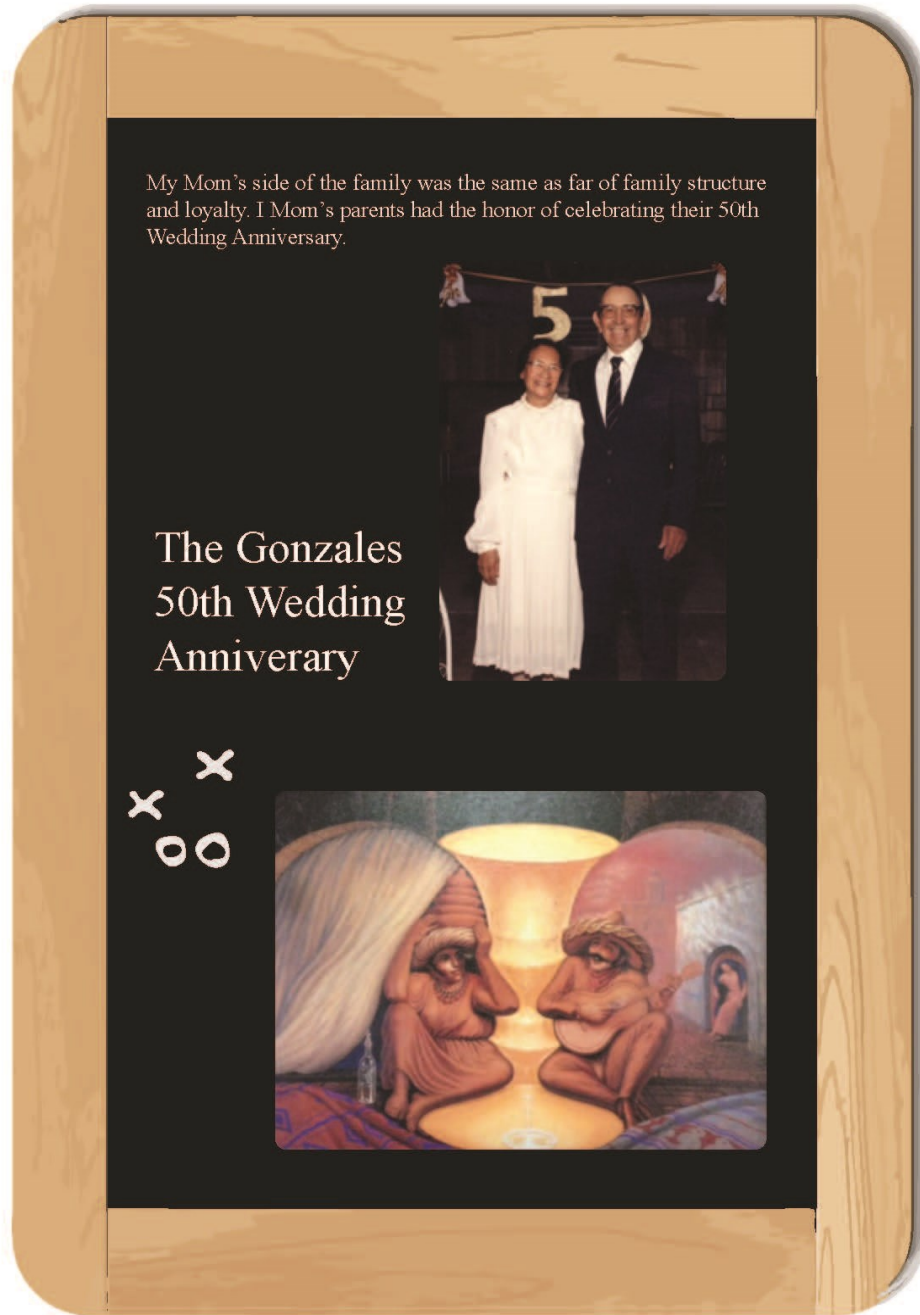


Figure 15. The Life Map of Noah - 3

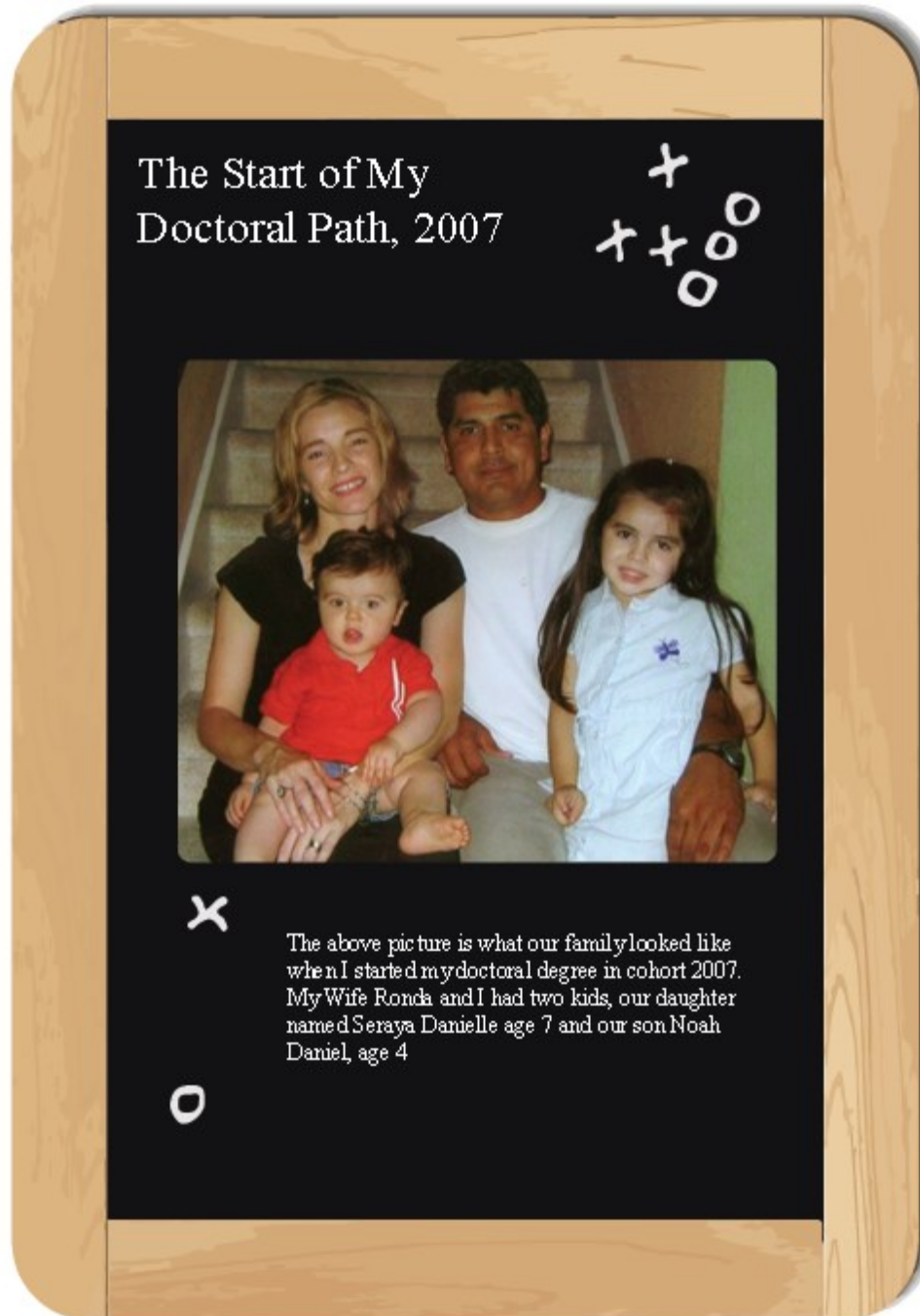


Figure 16. The Life Map of Noah - 4

## Texas State University

When I got to Texas State University, One of the major reason I finished was because of sports. I never knew about Student Affairs or Intranural Sports, but I quickly found a space I was comfortable in with people like me with the same interests. I also found a mentor in the Director of Campus Recreation, John Campbell. John filled my head with ideas of a career path, and getting a Masters degree. Campus Recreation at Texas State in 1989 was at Jowers. We had open recreation from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.. At 6:00 p.m. the intranural program would start up. We shared that facilities with Athletics and the Health, Physical Education and Dance Department. We had no access to a weight room and recreation on the weekends.

I found my people.

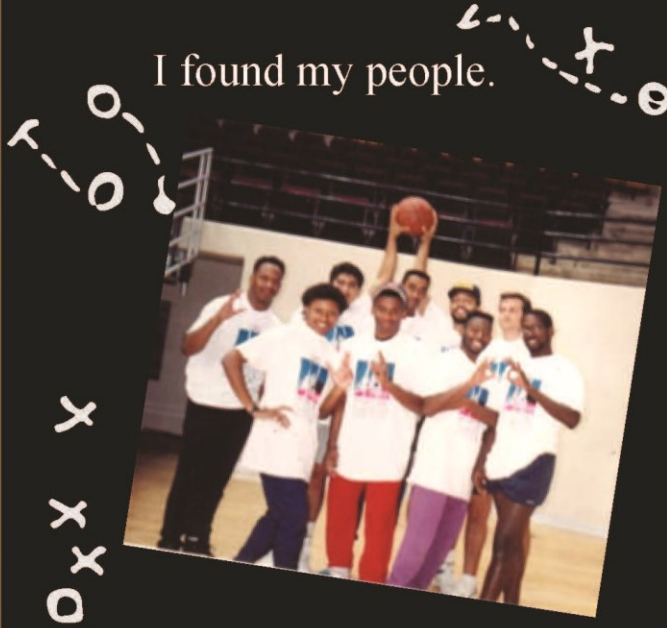


Figure 17. The Life Map of Noah - 5



Figure 18. The Life Map of Noah - 6



## Dark Place

The family traits of persistence and loyalty were tested to my ultimate challenge. In 2009, my wife became very ill during my Doctoral process. It slowed me down, but thankfully I didn't quit. I really struggled in a dark place.

*Figure 19. The Life Map of Noah - 7*

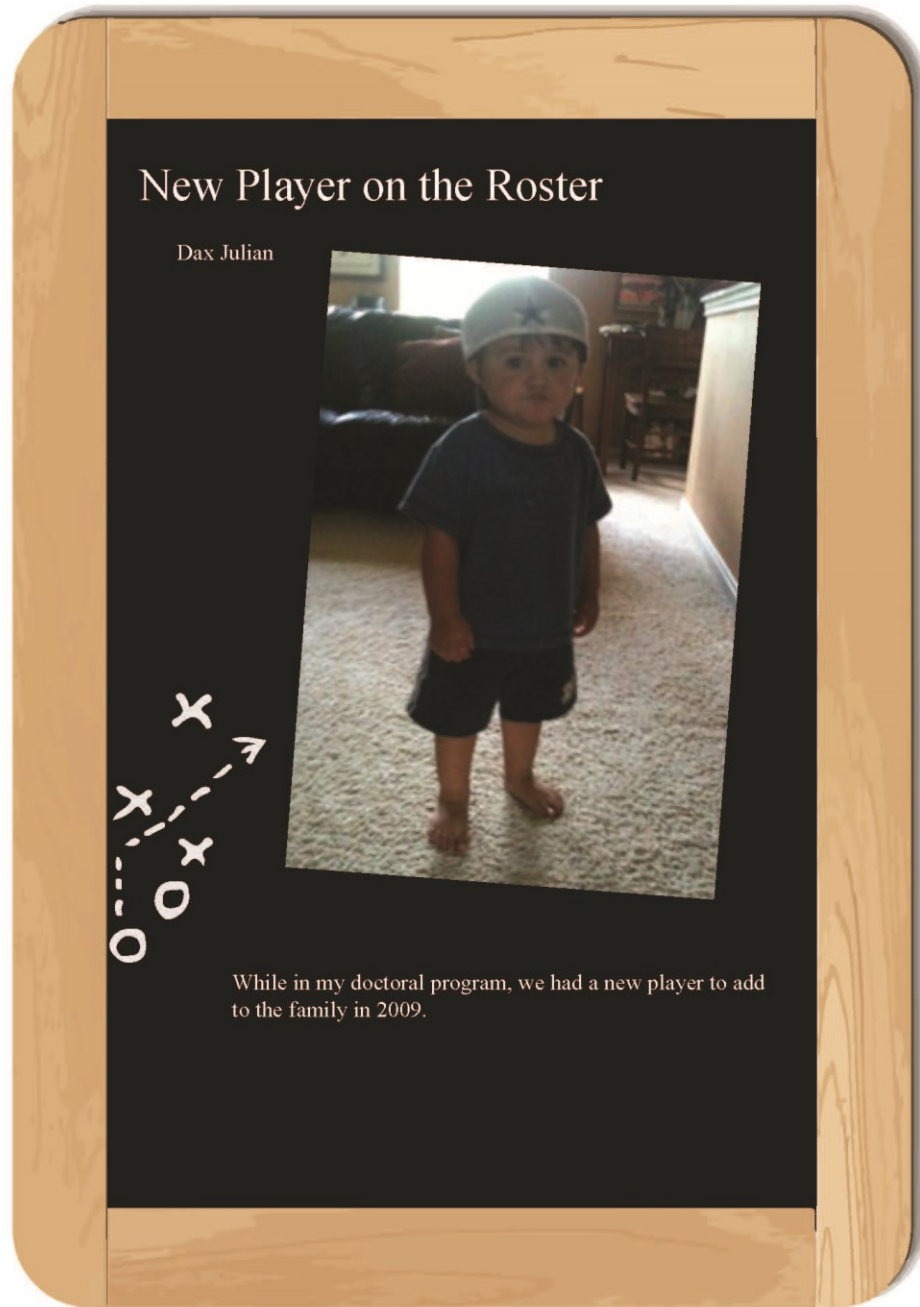


Figure 20. The Life Map of Noah - 8

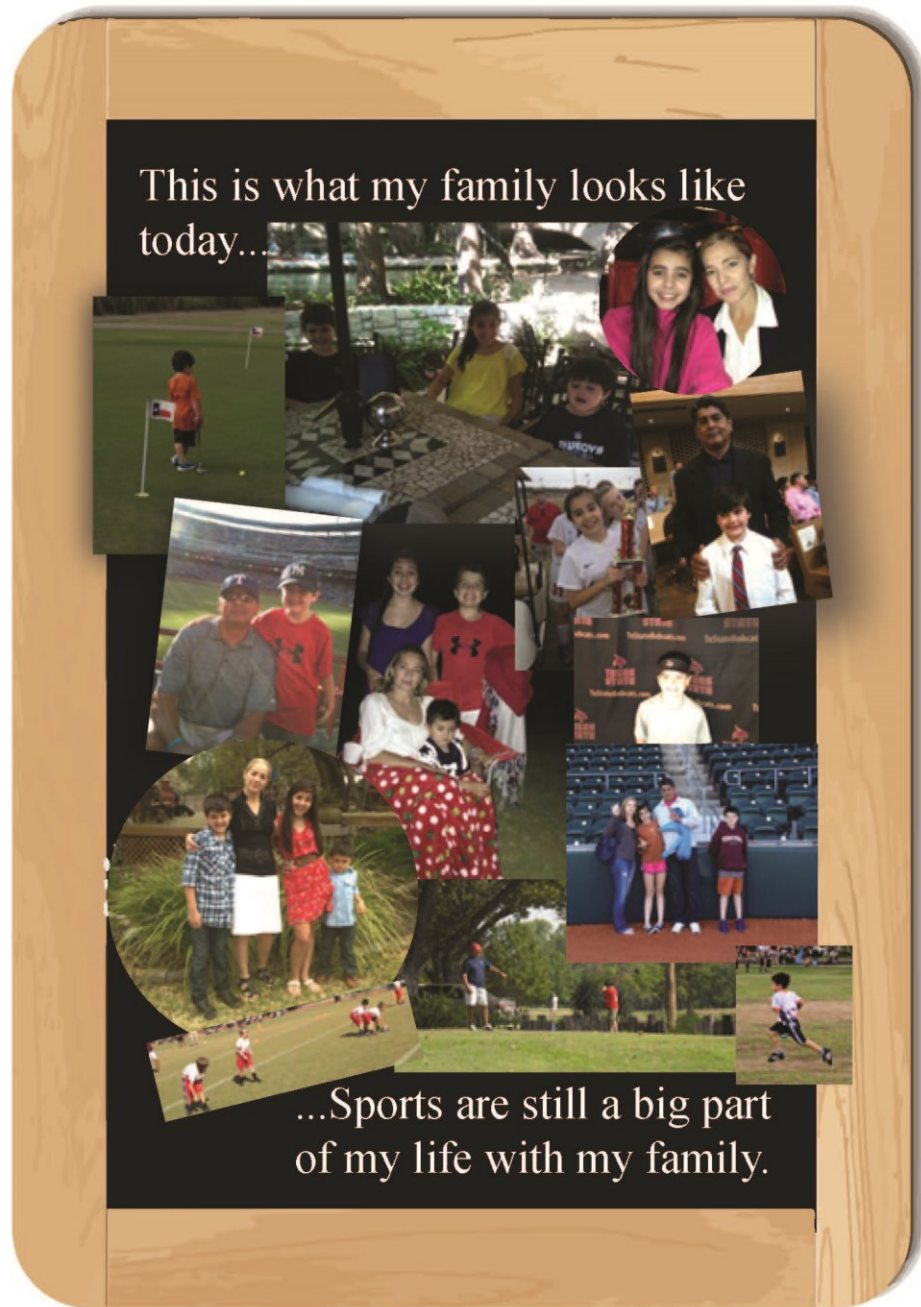


Figure 21. The Life Map of Noah - 9

## Dr. Israel Najera

For many young Mexican Americans who grew up in “the valley” of south Texas in the early 60’s, education was only important because we would hear our parents say it was so but we had few role models that would verify it. My parents did not get to graduate from high school. Most of the adults I knew and that looked like me were friends and associates of my parents and they did not have much formal education either. Because my parents believed so strongly that I should get as much education as possible, I did my best to become the best student I could be. I had no dreams of college or higher education. That is why when I graduated from high school I believed that was all the education I needed.

Fortunately, what I learned during my early years of school was something beyond what was taught in the classroom. I learned that dedication, persistence, responsibility, and discipline are just as important. I soon found out that these values also led to self-pride and were inspiring to others. This lifestyle led others to notice me and they encouraged me to take on more difficult challenges. I started college only because a personnel director noticed “things in me” and he worked to get me an academic scholarship to go to a junior college.

Many of the personal and academic challenges in my life would not have become successes without the dedication and persistence that I developed early in my life. I now strive to pass these values to young scholars and provide whatever assistance I can to help them stay on task and to believe in themselves. And I know that I can only be an inspiration to others when I live this “way of life” myself. I have worked with students from the elementary level to university campuses. I even served as a school board member. At this time, my joy is working with first-generation college students because I “see in them” what they still do not always see in themselves.

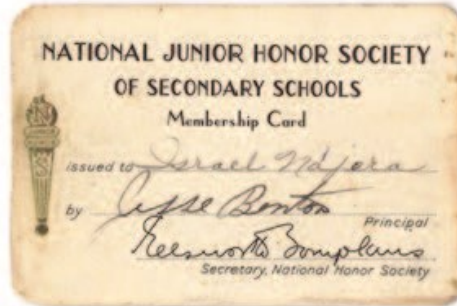
Most of our goals are not beyond our reach because there are others nearby who want to look out for us. However, we must do our own good work to be noticed. Luck and success do not just happen, they come to those who persist despite the struggles that seem intolerable at times. My journey has been full of doubts and fears but also full of pride and joy because of the “other education” I received starting at home and from those who still believe in me.

*Figure 22. The Life Map of Fidel - 1*



## Growing up in Brownsville, Texas

### Jr. High



My path to academic success started in Junior High.

### High School



Senior Graduation Picture 1967. I was the first in my family to graduate from high school.




When I first graduated from high school I worked as a truck driver in Brownsville and as a migrant worker in the fields of Nebraska.

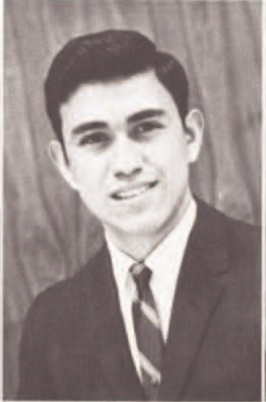
Figure 23. The Life Map of Fidel - 2

**My First College Experience -  
Community College**

**College** I was a First Generation College Student.



**Texas  
Southmost  
College**



*Israel Najera  
Brownsville, Texas  
Education*


Texas A&I University in Kingsville, Texas Undergraduate

The Faculty and Senior Class  
of the  
Texas A & I University  
at Kingsville  
announce the joint  
Baccalaureate and Commencement Exercises  
Friday, May nineteenth  
nineteen hundred seventy-two  
Physical Education Center


My Graduation Program from Texas A&I University, 1970.  
B.S. - Elementary Education

Figure 24. The Life Map of Fidel - 3

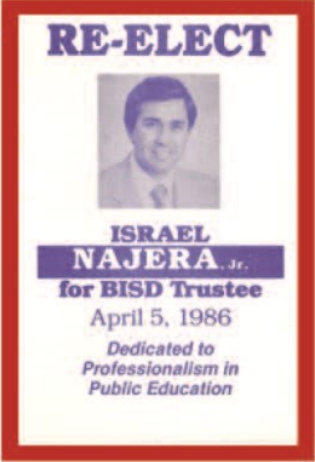
**Community Involvement in South Texas**



1976 - Residential Treatment Center



1980 - Director of Counseling



Campaign card for Re-Election to School Board for the Brownsville Independent School District.

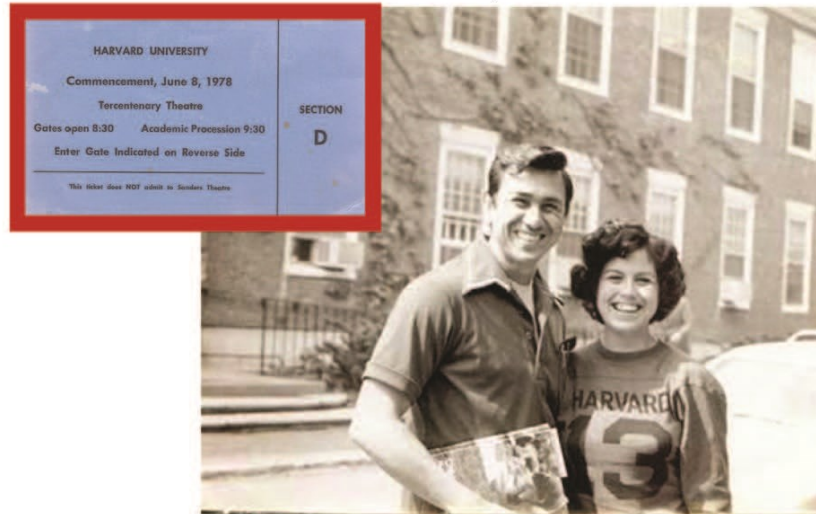
Figure 25. The Life Map of Fidel - 4

## Harvard University Masters Degree



This is the actual ID from Harvard where I received my Masters Degree in Counseling and Consulting Psychology in 1978.

### Graduation Announcement Card - Harvard University



At Harvard University - My wife has supported me through struggles and triumphs.

*Figure 26. The Life Map of Fidel - 5*

## The Ohio State University PhD

The Ohio State University 314th Commencement  
Autumn 1990  
December 7, 1990—9:30 a.m.  
St. John Arena

**Presiding Officer**  
E. Gordon Gee  
President

**Prelude—9:00 to 9:30 a.m.**  
The Commencement Ensemble  
Craig J. Kirchoff, Conductor

**Conferring of Distinguished Service  
Awards**

Recipients presented by  
Shirley Dunlap Bowser

Richard Armitage  
Jack L. Beal



Another proud moment in my life - Graduation with my PhD from Ohio State, 1990.  
In the picture are three generations of the Najera family. Pictured are two of my sons,  
my father and me.

*Figure 27. The Life Map of Fidel - 6*

# Texas State University

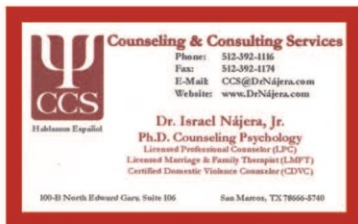


This is the first staff ID that I was given when I started working at Texas State University in 1992. Below are three things that I brought to the Texas State community:

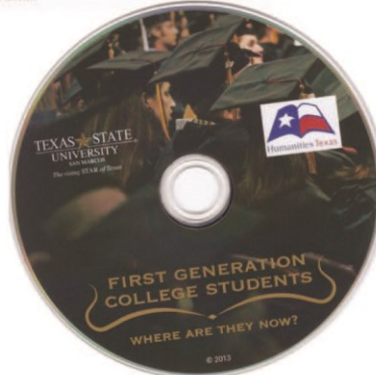
1. Founder - The Hispanic Policy Network (HPN) in 1993.
2. First Generation College Student Program in 1999.
3. Established Counseling and Consulting Services (Private Practice) in the City of San Marcos in 1995.



The first officers of HPN



I started this counseling practice in the City of San Marcos in 1995.



I produced two videos of First Generation college student experiences in 1993 and 2013.

Figure 28. The Life Map of Fidel - 7

## Years of Service at Texas State University



I was given this Twenty Year Service pin along with the below certificate.



Figure 29. The Life Map of Fidel - 8

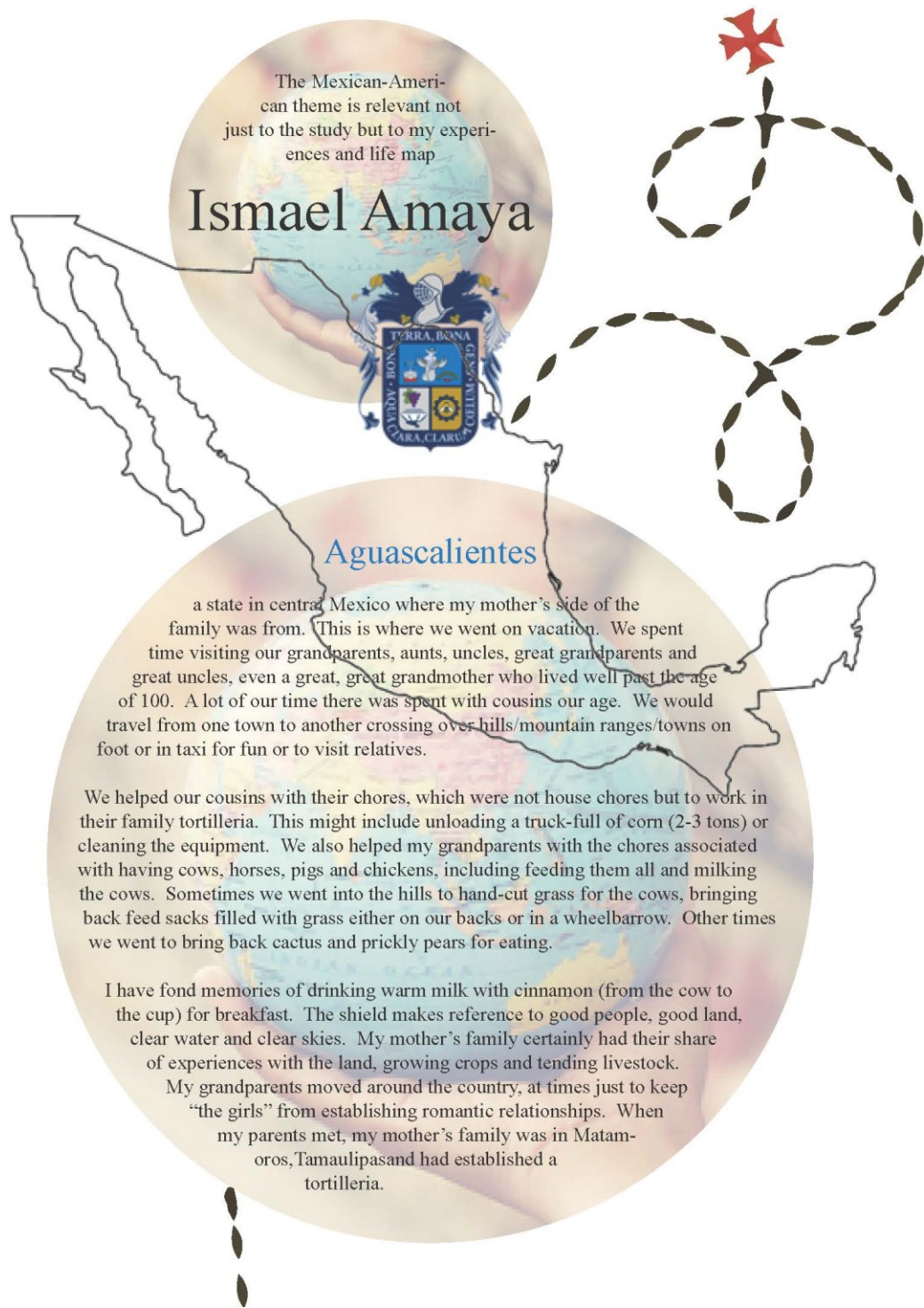


Figure 30. The Life Map of Julian - 1



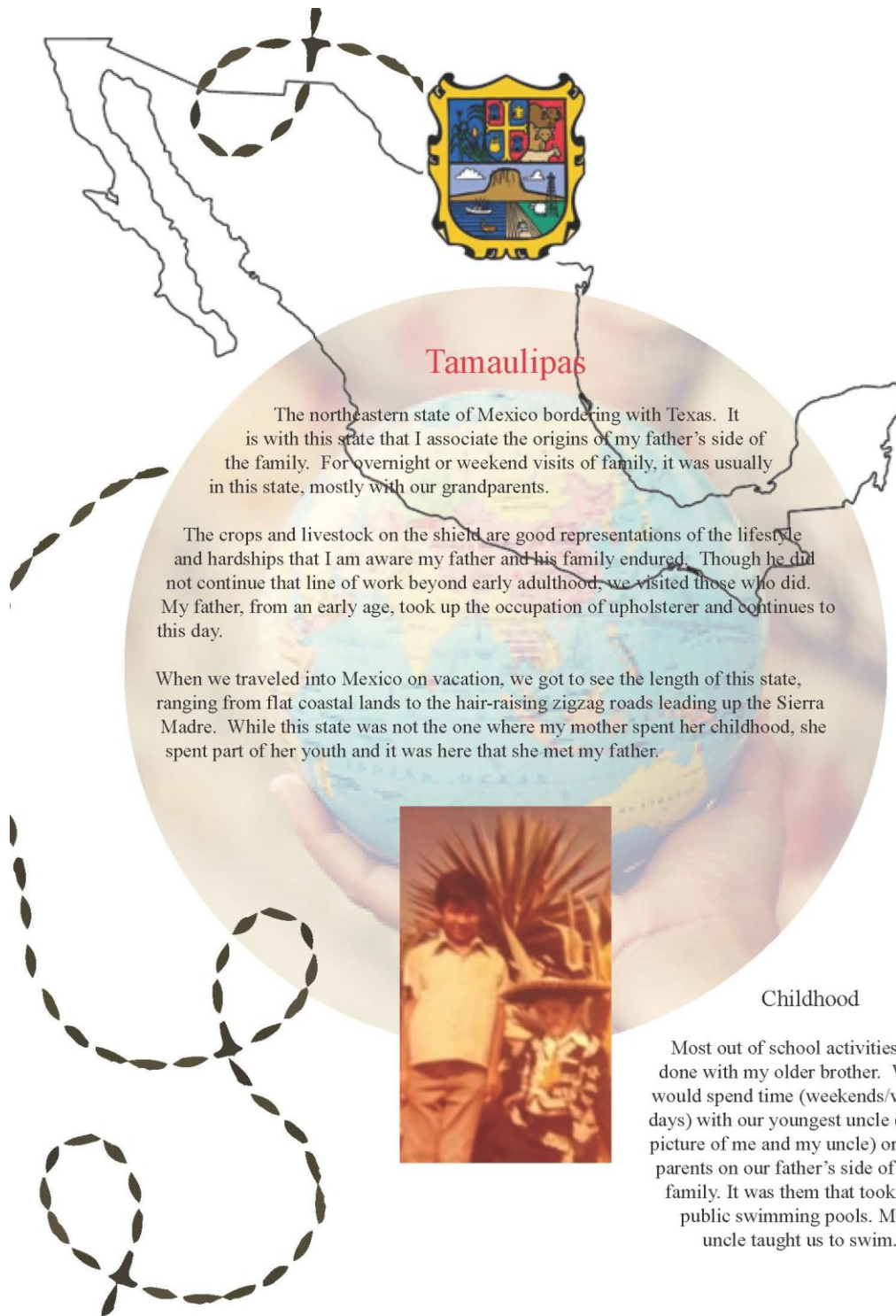


Figure 31. The Life Map of Julian - 2

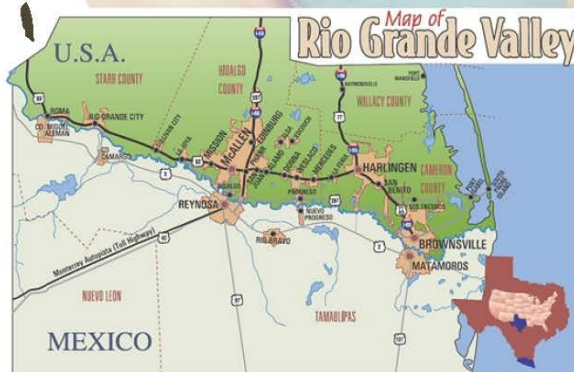
## The American Dream

We lived in Mexico until we can of age to go to school. My parents wanted us to have better educational opportunities which can with the privilege of living in the U.S.

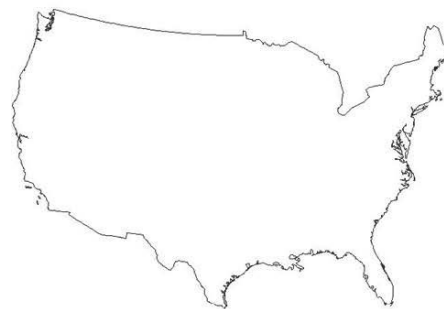
**Question - Where are you from?**

**Answer - The Valley.**

In Texas, people will understand what this means. The Valley is the southernmost tip of Texas, encompassing several counties and dotted with citrus groves and palm trees, the latter a reminder of its tropical climate and proximity to the coast. Living in a Valley town or city is like being from a small suburb or an Extra-territorial Jurisdiction of a large city in that residents may claim to be from "name the large city".



This map also shows the fact that "The Rio Grande Valley" borders northern Mexico. The whole area represented the geography where most of the family with which I interacted growing up lived. Through high school and when visiting after that, family and family events straddled the border separating (or connecting) the two countries.



**Brownsville**

Figure 32. The Life Map of Julian - 3



## Brownsville Texas U.S.A.

[Born & Raised – with the exception of five early years spent in Mexico. I attended elementary & junior high school in Brownsville and then South Texas High School for Health Professions, a magnet school in the South Texas ISD. The STISD and the school drew students from three counties. The school was commonly known as Med High.]



The Rampage – Jr. High School Yearbook

Acevedo	Acosta	Aguirre	Alaniz (5x)
Alatorre (4x)	Alderete	Alcantar (2x)	Aleman
Alonzo	Alvarez	Altamirano	Amaro (2x)
Amaya	Ambriz	Arias	Arizpe
Arguelles	Armendariz	Arias	Arredondo
Arreola			

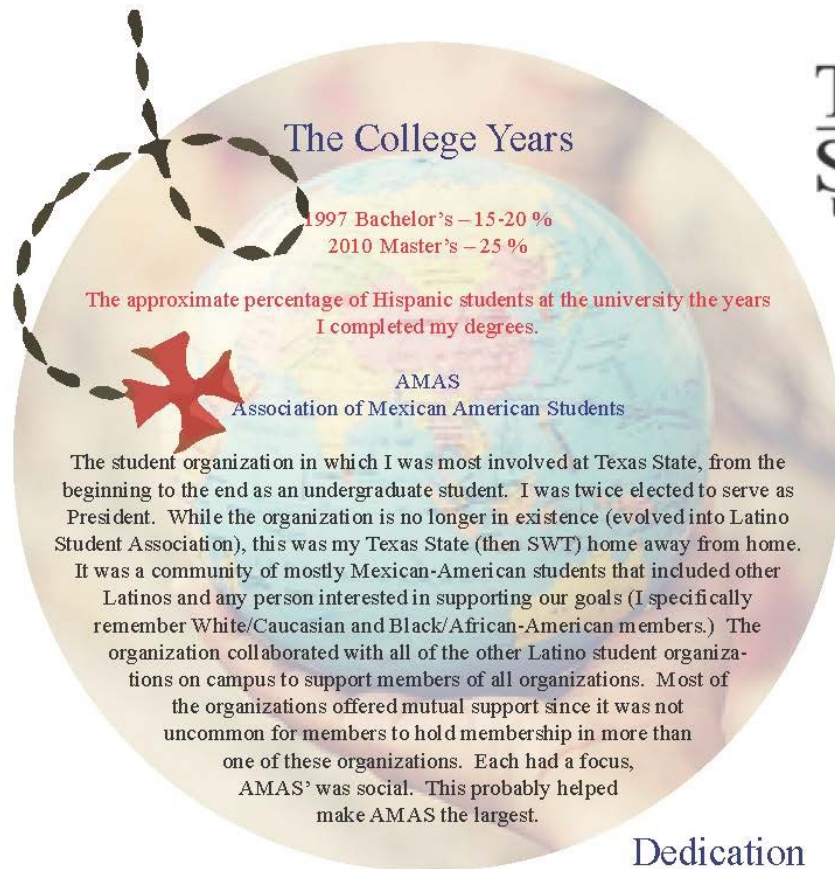
Above are the names of the people who were on the same page as I in my 8th grade yearbook. 100% of them are Spanish.

The Journal – High School Yearbook

Alaniz	Aleman	Amaya	Balderas
Balli	Barajas	Bibby	Burciaga
Bums	Cano	Carillo	Cavazos
Cervantes	Contreras	Coronado	

Above are the names of all of the people who were on the same page as I in my senior year yearbook - predominantly Spanish.

Figure 33. The Life Map of Julian - 4



## Dedication



To my family, thank you for your support. With most special appreciation, to my girls, for your patience and understanding during the many hours I spent away while you were growing.

Jessica, let's read! Cassandra, let's play!  
¡Que siga la tradición!

My Bachelor's was attained with the support of my parents. My Master's with the support of my wife and daughters. The script text above is the dedication in my MPA Applied Research Project and a tip of the hat to the fact that while I was a first-generation college student, it will be the expectation that our children and theirs will go to college.

August 31, 2013 will mark 11 years of me working at Texas State in a full-time, professional capacity. In the first four years I was responsible for the university's mentoring program (for new students). During the later seven I have been responsible for Student Justice – the school's student conduct review system.

Figure 34. The Life Map of Julian - 5

## **The Conversation as Interview**

The following dialog explores the individual and collective journeys of these three individuals. This conversation took place in a meeting room on campus, here at Texas State University, between three men, each with their own open perspective of who they are and with the professional goal of helping the university better serve the growing Latino enrollment on this campus. As I sat in the room waiting for these men to arrive, I thought about who they are and how long they have each spent watching this campus. Collectively they have witnessed this university change over sixty plus years. It is exciting to sit down with this group during this historical time. To witness and assist Texas State University in this new chapter of serving its student body, is a privilege and responsibility. It is within this spirit that we embark on this inquiry.

When I entered the room and sat down I reflected on the privilege of collecting these stories and information and the creative potential they embody. Designing and conducting this research felt like the right thing to do. I believed this was a great opportunity to give back to the university, and to future students who will enroll. I think of what a unique chance for this administration, to have individuals with the higher education experience, passion and a collective sixty year relationship with this university. I was filled with so much excitement just sitting there thinking about it.

One right after the other, the individuals entered the room. After all were seated, I opened by saying, thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule and thank you for being a part of this project. Everyone at the table has known each other for a long time, and has worked side by side many times with divisional projects or committees, but never on a project like this. A project of being asked what we have witnessed over the last thirty year on this campus as it pertains to the Latino community. The room really had a sense

of synergy and with great enthusiasm I jumped right into the conversation and started with my first question.

### **Conversation of Self**

So, tell me a little about yourselves, tell me your story?

Julian started the conversation.

I think my story begins in Brownsville, Texas. Born in Brownsville, but for the first five years of my life I actually grew up in Mexico. I don't have a whole lot of memories of that, but my mother certainly has plenty of pictures that she kept. I have two sisters and one brother. We moved over to Brownsville when it was time for me to start kindergarten. I went to school in Brownsville through junior high and for high school I went to a magnet school for students interested in health professions, which was in Mercedes, Texas.

With similar geographical background Fidel stepped in

I also grew up in Brownsville, Texas, born in 1949. Today I'm almost sixty-four years old. My side of town was the barrio section. My elementary school was about a half a mile from my house so we walk to school every day. I didn't go to kinder I started out in first grade. The makeup of our school was a bunch of poor Latino kids. My dad was always pretty rigid about school, so I had to make good grades. Because of a hearing problem I was born with, I had to always sit in the front of class. I believe my hearing problem became an advantage for me, I got more attention from the teachers and I was more attentive to the class. One big memory I have about school was after school there was always a fight on the way home.

It was something we actually came to expect as our everyday school routine.

Noah sat there for a second then interjected,

Wow! I grew up over 300 miles north of you two guys in Brenham, Texas.

Brenham is located in central Texas between Austin and Houston. My family started out in this area because the Brazos Valley had thousands of acres of cotton fields, “the bottom” as it’s called. My grandfather moved out there to work the cotton fields. They settled in the small town of Somerville, Texas. The population of Somerville was about 1200 people with a large Hispanic population with a very low socioeconomic class. My father moved us to Brenham, Texas where it seemed like everybody was rich. My brother and I were the only two Hispanics in the whole school system in Brenham back then. Growing up in Brenham, and being a minority there sounds totally opposite from how you two grew up down in South Texas.

Julian felt compelled to respond to Noah,

we knew we were minorities on paper, but not in practice. As a matter of fact, in the Valley, if you were Asian, Black, White, whomever, everyone learned to speak Spanish. If they were business owners in the community they had to speak Spanish. Speaking Spanish was a given. Even when school sent home information to the parents, it was given both in English and in Spanish. If you were to look at my school yearbook and with my last name beginning with “A” I’m on the first page and there’s about fifty students and they’re all Spanish last names, every single one on that first page, and about 98% of the whole book were. At the time we never gave much thought to it.

Noah interrupted,

I can remember in a Texas history class and studying the battle of the Alamo, some of the other kids would say things like; "what's up with your people, y'all thought you could take over our land." At the time it would really bother me. I remember responding, "Hey, I'm from Texas". I'm not trying to take nobodies land.

Everyone in the room laughed out loud and Julian said,

that is funny, what is real crazy is for me and my friends during history class we were in Texas so we were the home team. In seventh and eighth grade we weren't questioning much of the accuracy of those books and the real story of the Alamo. Playing outside we were all wearing those coon-skinned caps and Davy Crockett and the whole thing. What did we know about history?

Watching Noah, you could tell this part of his life was challenging. Noah went on to share, "I struggled with who I was at first. As I got older, my brother and I got involved in sports. I truly believe this helped with acceptance in the community."

After hearing the two perspectives Fidel shared a new angle,

well if it makes you feel better growing up in the valley as the majority population had its challenges too. I remember when we started out in school there were policies about speaking Spanish. We weren't allowed to speak Spanish, only English. Through fear, they forced us to use English. When we spoke Spanish we would be punish spanked "get licks" you. This was scary for me, it made me nervous.

After these three individuals shared their background of where they are from, I



asked them, “What are some of your greatest memories growing up in this place?” Again Julian responded first,

Mexican-American, those two words really mean something to me. I think of Mexico and the United States. Because of how I grew up, some of the best memories were going into central Mexico, Aguascalientes during our family vacations. We didn't go to Disney world, we didn't have summer homes. We lived fifteen miles from the beach, and we didn't even go there much. Our trips to Mexico were to visit the grandparents, cousins and family who lived in Central Mexico. Back then it was a fourteen hour drive or so, maybe longer if you took the bus, and we did that many times. Those trips into central Mexico are some of the memories I had of my early childhood and growing up in south Texas.

Fidel followed up with,

one of my early memories was when we actually built our house. My father did everything, he was our own contractor. He organized us to clear the land by tearing down trees, we framed the house, plumbing, the roof, everything. I even remember that at that time the streets weren't paved so when it rained it really got bad and we had no street lights. Another memory from my childhood was when I officially graduated high school. I graduated at mid-term, in December. I had the option to say Okay, I'm done, I'm out of here, but I decided to stay in school for the remainder of the year. I didn't have anything else to do. Even though I was a good student no one ever encouraged me to go to college.

With great excitement Noah joins in,

I come from a big family. In my immediate family I only have one brother. The reason my family is huge is my mom grew up with twelve brothers and sisters, and my dad grew up with seven brothers and sisters. I remember family reunions, holidays or any family gatherings were massive. We didn't have a lot, but there was always a lot of family. With so many cousins, as kids we just played and had our own community not a lot of outside interaction. There was no need for outside friends. Both sides of my family grew up in a house about 1200-1400 square feet, three bedrooms and one bath. All the girls slept in one room; boys slept in another, with multiple bunk beds. Some even slept on the couch. The most amazing part is the house having only one bathroom.

The next subject, let's talk about college, how did you get to college. How did you make the decision to go college, and the decision on where to go to college, how did it happen? After asking that question everyone just sat back, thinking about where to begin. Fidel starts the conversation,

after graduating from high school, I went to work as a truck driver at what's called the shrimp basin, in the port of Brownsville delivering industrial supplies. During this time in my life college wasn't on my radar. How it happened for me, the personnel directors where I worked asked me "Hey, how come you're not in college?" I said, "Well, I never thought about it." The personnel director said, "Our organization here offers scholarships for two kids to go to junior college. We'll give you a scholarship if you want, and you can go to the junior college." I said, "Fine, I will try it." That fall semester I enrolled in Southwest Community College. On the first day I remember being very intimidated, I had this image

college was for the real intellectual students. My start was unplanned and by chance.

Noah explained his college start,

for me it was a last minute decision. My mother worked in a mattress factory, and all employees with graduating seniors received a \$200 scholarship to Blinn College there in my hometown. I remember saying to my parents, "Hey, this is cool." My mom replied, "Well, if you are going to try college, why not take advantage of the money?" to us \$200 looked like a lot of money. I enrolled in the fall semester and used the \$200. This was the start to my college career.

Julian with a similar experience with a college scholarship explained his college start,

it's funny you mention the \$200 scholarship. By participating in that summer Y.O.U. program I got a scholarship for \$1,000, and similar to your experience we all thought what a lot of money, are they really giving me \$1,000? The scholarship was the deciding factor in coming to Texas State University. I applied to one other school, St. Mary's, which is a private school. I didn't really know what that meant as far as the price tag. Looking back at it now it was a good thing my family wouldn't have been able to afford sending me there. What is really funny, we didn't even look at how the two universities were different in being private or public or what they offered, we looked at it as, this school is giving me a \$1,000 that's the one.

Everyone in the room became to bust out in laughter. We laughed about this for several minutes. You guys have presented some very unorthodox college starts and

thought processes. Can you explain to me what degrees, professional training, and what was your first experience with Texas State University? Fidel answered the question first,

I went to Southwest Community College from there to Texas A&I University for my bachelor's degree. After working in the community for a few years I got my Master's from Harvard University. For my doctoral work I went to The Ohio State University and obtained my Ph.D. At Texas A&I University, I got a degree in elementary education. After graduation I worked for a residential treatment facility for delinquent kids. This is where I started getting involved in counseling and psychology. This is where the Harvard University became an opportunity. At that time I didn't even know where Harvard was located. I received a Masters in Counseling & Consulting Psychology in 1978. It took me one year to complete. Even today when I reflect back on my Harvard days, it's hard to imagine a kid from the valley at Cambridge? After Harvard an opportunity as the director in the counseling center at the junior college where I had first started became available. I worked there for about five years.

While I was in this position I took a group of students on a trip up there to visit some campuses in the Midwest who were actively recruiting Hispanic students. While I was listening to what these universities were offering I recruited myself. I told the program director at Ohio State that I was interested in enrolling. They gave me a fellowship to go get a doctorate. I believe for my entire college career I only paid about three hundred dollar total. After Ohio State, I applied for a position in the counseling center at Texas State, and got the job. This was in 1992, and I have been here ever since.

Julian jumped in the conversation,

in 1989 I participated in a Youth Opportunities Unlimited program (Y.O.U.) here on campus at Texas State University. The Y.O.U. program was a workforce investment program. We lived on campus in a residence hall for two months. We were given a part-time job on campus and went to classes for high school credit. This was my first experience with Texas State University or at any university. In 1992, after graduating from high school I enrolled at Texas State University as freshman. When I got to San Marcos that year, San Marcos became my home, I never moved back home to Brownsville. It took me five years to finish undergraduate degree. I worked for five years in the community at a nursing home before coming to work fulltime here on campus at Texas State. I have been with the university going on eleven years. I started out in the Dean of Students Office in the mentoring program, and then was moved into the role of Student Justice Coordinator. While on campus I received my Master's degree in 2010.

Noah went next,

I received an Associates degree from Blinn College. I got to Texas State University in 1988 and graduated with my bachelor's degree in 1992. I was offered a graduate assistantship to San Houston State University, and received my master's degree in 1994. In that summer of 1994, I got my first professional job at Texas A&M in Kingsville, as the Director of Campus Recreation. I worked there for two years. I then accepted a job at The University of Texas at Arlington. After working at those three different institutions, the opportunity in 1998 to return to Texas State was presented to me. That is how I got back to this campus in 1998. I

have now been here on campus for fifteen years. During my time here I served in multiple roles with the Division of Student Affairs. I started as an Assistant Director, was promoted to Associate Director of Campus Recreation, and for seventeen months served in a dual role, as interim Director of Residents' Life. I am also in the process of completing my doctoral degree as a member of cohort 07.

### **Theoretical Reflection of Self**

*Community Cultural Wealth expands throughout this conversation, but in this section I will highlight Navigational Capital.*

What these men have presented was their skill set of Navigational capital. They demonstrated their ability to maneuver through social institutions which were traditionally not created with Latinos in mind (Yosso, 2006). This section speaks in so many ways how they were unprepared academically and in the higher education culture but given small opportunities negotiated their way through the college process. Two of the research partners were given less than a thousand dollars to start school and the third research partner only paid three hundred dollar for college, through obtaining a doctoral degree at The Ohio State University. The traditional narrative is apparent that all three research partners were unprepared both economically and academically for their college journey. As products of an inequitable public state school system this will continue to be the case for students coming to Texas State University. By highlighting and focusing on the navigational capital, these three men have become tremendous assets to the university community.

*Historical Context of the Study  
Road Map 1970s*

*The 1970s was the time of party, exploration without explanation, and fashion. The popular television shows were; The Mary Tyler Moore Show, Hawaii Five-O and Love American Style. The era was full of Peace and Love.*

*While most were having fun with exploration in the 1970s in Corpus Christi, Texas a battle began in the courtroom over the civil educational rights of Mexican American students. Corpus Christi Independent School District was involved in the court case of, Cisneros vs. Corpus Christi Independent School District. Finding in favor of Cisneros, this case recognized Mexican Americans as a minority group that was being discriminated against. The City of Corpus Christi was found guilty of running a dual school system.*

*University Historical Facts of the 1970s*

*On the campus of Southwest Texas State University in 1971, a group of students at Texas State formed a chapter of a national organization called MAYO (the Mexican American Youth Organization). One of their main goals was for the university to have a Chicano Studies Program, with Latino faculty. They argued they were taught by Anglo professors from an Anglo perspective.*

*Research Partner*

*When the Cisneros verdict was announced in Corpus Christi, Texas, Fidel just thirty miles away in Kingsville, Texas enrolled at Texas A&I University-Kingsville. Noah was five years old, on the verge of starting his tenure in the Texas K-12 educational system as a kindergartener.*

Figure 35. The 1970s

## **Recap—Self**

The theme of “Self” helps us understand who the research partners are and their navigational capital that help them navigate through the system into college. This discussion underscores the fact that right here at Texas State, we have individuals who can identify with the future Mexican American students that will walk onto this campus.

These men are from families just like many of the future Hispanic students who will continue to walk onto campus of Texas State. Research tells us Hispanic men in higher education are considerably underrepresented, yet Hispanics are the largest minority population in the United States. As a group, they continually remain behind other racial and ethnic groups in higher education attainment (Brown, Lopez & Santiago, 2003). As explained in our literature review, in this past census the state of Texas grew to over 25,145,561 making it the second most populous state in the U.S., with the Hispanic population making up over 9,847,852. The total state increase of more than 4.2 million residents or 20.6% is attributed primarily to the Hispanics (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The success of Latinos in relation to higher educational achievement will become progressively more important to the economic and civic health of the United States of America (Brown, Lopez & Santiago, 2003). Without improvement in Hispanic’s higher education success, the state of Texas’ economic and civic health will worsen. Texas State, an HSI, must recognize the opportunity it has to become a leader in improving the higher educational attainments of Hispanics in the state of Texas. It is incumbent upon the university to take advantage of having this unique resource of being able to share an accumulation of over sixty years’ of experience from three Latino males as students and professionals, on this campus, who have positioned themselves as student advocates and



active members of the university and the Division of Student Affairs at Texas State. Not responding to the educational context of Latinos in this state and university will contribute to the development of pre-1960's conditions.

*Actual Years Witnessed on Campus  
Road Map 1980s*

*The 1980s start our thirty year look at Texas State University through the eyes of these three Latino males.*

*University and State Data*  
*In 1980 the university enrollment was 15,400, with the Hispanic enrollment of 1,517. The population of the State of Texas was 14,229,191 and the Hispanic population of the state was 2,985,824.*

*University Historical Fact of the 1980s*  
*In 1983 the university changed the name of Minority Affairs Program (MAP) to Multicultural Affairs (MSA).*

*Research Partners*—*Two of our research partners, Noah and Julian have started their relationship with the university. Noah, transferring in from Blinn College in the fall of 1988, and in 1989, Julian is a sophomore in high school when he participated in the Y.O.U. program at Texas State University, living on campus from June to July in the summer of 1989.*

*A Student Reflection From the 1980s: Getting to Texas State University in 1988* *counts me as one of the 1,517 Mexican Americans counted in this decade's enrollment. I remember vividly the day I arrived in San Marcos, in 1988. I had been working in construction full time for the last three years, living at home with my parents, while taking 6 hours a semester at Blinn College. My goal was to accumulate 60 credit (or as many as I could) hours and save \$3,000 so I could transfer to Texas State University (then, Southwest Texas State University). I thought this would be enough money to help move, pay my rent for three months, pay for one semester of college and give me enough time to find a job here so I could stay. One of my first memories about Texas State was the day I had to register for class in the yellow gym on the rubber court at the Jowers Building. I remember the roped off lines with hundreds of students standing in them. The students had to wait in line to confirm each class on their registration cards. I stood in those lines for hours, I can also remember, as I was standing in those lines waiting, looking around and noticing I was the only Hispanic in the gym at that time signing up for classes. I was twenty one years old at the time and I wondered what I was getting myself into.*

Figure 36. The 1980s

## Family

The next question I would like to ask is what does it mean to you to be an educated *Mexicano* and how do you think your family understands it? With eagerness Julian says,

I think of being from the valley, and from my experience not many people go on to college after high school, like my family. Because my family does not have that experience of going to college, they really don't understand what I do for a living. This gap in understanding my family doesn't really understand what my job is, or what I do. Working in the Dean of Students Office with student conduct is a big part of everyday life for me. To this day, my family asks "Do you work during the summer or do you get summer off?" To answer your question about what does it mean to be an educated *Mexicano*, to me it means it's a privilege to have a college experience and to be an educated *Mexicano*. It would mean more to me if my family better understood what it is I do as a career.

Fidel states,

it means you're probably going to have more struggles because there's fewer educated *Mexicanos*. People look up to you to be in a leadership role. This can be stressful because you have to find ways to not only get your job done, but also there's more work in helping and mentoring others. Like Julian my parents never really understood what I do for a living. The best they understood, or told their friends, is that I was a teacher at Texas State.

Noah what does it mean to you?

to be an educated Mexican American to me means . . . being distanced from one culture and lacking and behind in another. Trying to negotiate between the two environments of personal life and the work place/business culture really exposes this distance or gap. I have always felt my family doesn't understand what it is I do, like Julian and Fidel, my family thinks I'm a teacher with summers off. Because of my parents not understanding I feel a gap between me and my family. In the work place I feel a gap, because from the beginning of my professional career, I have always been the only person of color in the office.

What were your parents like, tell me about your parents, and were they supportive of you and education? Julian explains,

my mom is from central Mexico, Aguascalientes. My dad is from more of northern area the Tamaulipas. My mom's family was a little bit more migratory I guess at different phases of their life. They met in Matamoros, and that's where they settled after getting married. I have two sisters and one brother, and my parents were certainly very supportive throughout. They always pushed for us to finish high school, even though neither one of my parents ever finished elementary school. Earlier I mentioned we lived in Mexico until I was five years old, then we moved over to Brownsville when it was time for me to start kindergarten. When it came to education they knew the best place for educational opportunity was to have us come to school in the United States.

Noah,

my parents were supportive of whatever I did. I believe the greatest support or gift they gave me was the ability to explore and have leisure time, to just be a kid.

Most of the family I grew up with felt they had to immediately go to work and make money. I also received support from my grandfathers who were strict and hard working men. I learned a lot from these two men. In their world to be identified as a respectable man, you had to have a job. My mom's dad had strong policies with the family; he expected everybody to make good grades. He was very strict on how late in the evenings we were out. His expectations were to graduate from high school. My dad's side of the family had the same goals and rules, but a different style. My dad's father's was a little bit more laid back. He wasn't a hard individual. He was more charismatic, a very open person that used humor. His push was more of go find what you want to do, and try not to work as he did. He would say "there are better jobs out there." I always remember the two different styles. Going back to my mom's side of the family, Lupe (my grandfather) was hard, more rigid, worked on ranches and farms, waking up early in the morning and coming home late at night as the sun set. He was gone throughout the day, grandmother was our caretaker. One of the greatest memories was of him asking every time he saw me, if I had a job. I remember like it was yesterday visiting him in the hospital, it was the last time I saw him. I was married, thirty-eight years old, had two kids, and when I went into his hospital room, he asked the same questions he asked me ever since high school. "How are you doing? Good to see you. Do you have a job?" To him that was the priority of how he judged us. I was especially proud to report that I had a good career, and good life.

Fidel expressed he had the same type of experience and support from his family,

my father was the same way, he was hard and rigid about keeping us in line and kept us close to home. My parents were supportive of me in school. Looking back, the major contribution from his actions were to make sure I didn't get in trouble with the other kids in the neighborhood. His support was to go to school, stay at home, don't get in trouble. Dropping out of school or being truant wasn't going to happen under my dad's watch.

Can you tell me what it was like when you arrived on your college campus for your first semester, how was that experience with your family, and for you? With a big chuckle Julian said,

the experience with my family coming to Texas State as I look at students today with their parents during New Student Orientations was nothing near the same family experience. My dad and I drove to San Marcos, he drove up, dropped me off, and drove back home that day. I had no car, no friends, nothing. That was a five hour drive each way from Brownsville. Come to think, it was actually a six hour drive at that time the speed limit was slower and our car didn't go as fast even if you wanted it too.

Before Julian even finished his story, he had the entire room laughing. He went on to say,

I remember that experience too well, I will never forget it. One other thing, the day I got dropped off, was on the first day the dorms opened, so nobody else was checked in. Those first few days were pretty isolated and it felt lonely.

As Fidel was still laughing he said,

your experience is a lot like mine. My dad did the same thing. I know we're from

the same hometown, but this is funny. I remember the first time at Texas A&I University in Kingsville, which seemed to be a faraway place to me. I had never been out of the Valley. Like your experience my dad drove up to the main circle there, stopped the car, opened the trunk, took out all my stuff and said, "Bye, do a good job, work hard" and I'm left in this place all alone.

Noah explained,

I had two separate experiences. The first experience was with me starting off at Blinn Junior College, in my home town and living at home. I was very nervous because I didn't know what to expect. I didn't think I was going to make it past the first year, but I gained some confidence. It was easy for me and my parents. We didn't have to worry about eating or rent. After my first year at Blinn, I developed a plan to accumulate as many hours as I could while there, and to save three thousand dollars. I figured this would allow me to move, pay for a semester of tuition and pay rent for a couple of months. I figured this would give me time to transition to where it was I was going and find a job so I could stay. For me this was my plan to move out of the house and stay. I had no intention of going home. Even more fascinating to me, I thought moving between Austin and San Antonio, would be a great move to immerse into more of a Hispanic community. When I transferred to Texas State, I drove here by myself; my family didn't come with me. I didn't know anything or anybody. I got here in time for late registration. I didn't talk with a counselor, I just registered.

I sat here, listened to everyone stories and not one of you expressed how your parents helped you organize or prepare for college. Was that something we forgot to talk

about or was there a reason that we didn't mention anything? Fidel responded, my dad has a fifth grade education and my mother an eighth grade education. They didn't talk to us too much about going to college. They didn't have any idea what college was. As a matter of fact, I didn't have any idea what it was to go to college. My parents helped me by instilling a good work ethic to everything. I remember as a young man going to work with my dad, he was always very good about making sure that work got done right. He informed me everything had to be done correctly and that there was no cutting of corners. He also made it clear, if something is difficult, that you just kept persisting forward to get it done. These were the things I learned from my parents which helped me to prepare for college. I found out this is what it took to be successful in college. It's about going to class on time, and putting effort into your work load; get it done.

Noah stated,

I know I didn't talk about how my parents helped me prepare. With my own children today when we're doing their homework we talk about the purpose of doing homework. I have a thirteen year old daughter, and I bring up conversations and show her research on different colleges. I'm talking about this all the time. I don't remember those types of conversations or statements being made to me growing up. There was never a talk about what needs to be done after high school or any strategy. I just found out what I need to do next by listening to other students.

Not surprising but Julian said his experience with his parents was almost the same,

my parents didn't have anything beyond an elementary education and that's not even to say that they finished elementary. There was always support when we had expressed our desire. For all of us there was an understanding we had an obligation to finish high school. Anything beyond that, whatever we wanted to do our parents were good with. I think for them, the knowledge of “papeló”, which means “paperwork” in Spanish. You have to do paperwork and the application involved paperwork, whether it was for college or financial aid, scholarships, anything. It was just paperwork that they really didn't know what it entailed. They didn't have an experience of being in a college and what that was like. I had a high school counselor who helped us fill out college forms. Remember we lived in a border town, but remember my parents grew up in Mexico. Growing up for them education was somewhat optional where they lived. It was an agrarian lifestyle, so they were helping the family growing crops and working with animals. That was their training and lifestyle, the farm life. My mom's family had a “tortillería” Spanish for tortilla factory. They were working as children in the tortilla factory. My dad worked the fields and on the side he was doing upholstery work. I don't know how much of an option education really was when they needed to be working to help the family. For them obligation depended on what their parents, my grandparents needed to survive. They didn't think much of education because it wasn't necessary to help on the farm. My parents have always lived on the border, on the Mexico side. They made the decision to make sure we were born on the U.S. side. We lived on the Mexican Side, and then when we were school age, we moved back to the U.S. side. My parents wanted us to



have those opportunities of life and school; this was their major strategy to help us. I think part of it probably had to do a little bit with the obligation. On this side, not going to school was truancy. On the other side, it was you either paid to go to school or you didn't go. So, I think it was back to that ethic of you do what you are supposed to do, and you do it right and you work hard. My parents understood they had an obligation to get us through high school.

Fidel added,

you mentioned something interesting when you mentioned high school. My parents only had an elementary education. To them getting out of high school was a big deal. After graduating from high school you've already done a lot more than what they did. College was completely beyond them, they didn't have any sense of what that was.

### **Theoretical Reflection on Family**

In the above section our research partner's discuss their experience with parent support. They each shared experiences that presented two tenants' of community cultural wealth: Aspirational and Familial capital. The experiences used as examples include the participant's stories of coming from families of low income and who were first generation college going, but despite their inequality their parents' teachings for a better life were being strict when it came to school. They expressed their families were very supportive which included moving to United States to start schooling. It was also mentioned the parents instilled the ethic of hard work. One participant believed the greatest asset given was leisure time to be a kid and explore. Our research partners presented to us their families' roles in their college experience. We noticed a distinct gap

in their families' involvement in their higher education goals. Also revealed in the conversation of family are the community cultural wealth tenants of aspirational and familial capital. Examples of these tenants are demonstrated with the experience of each research partner received the skills of hard work ethic, and two got a ride to campus and three hundred dollars to begin the year.

*Actual Years Witnesses on Campus  
Road Map 1990s*

**University and State Data**  
*In 1990 the university enrollment was 20,985, with the Hispanic enrollment being 3,013. The population of the State of Texas was 16,986,510 and the Hispanic population of the state was 4,339,905.*

**State Policy Data**  
*1996 gave us the ruling of Hopwood vs. Texas, a legal challenge against universities' affirmative action policy in student admissions.*

*In 1992, Cheryl Hopwood was denied admission to the University of Texas Law School. Hopwood, a white female, filed a federal law suit against the university claiming she was denied admission to the law school despite being better qualified than many admitted minority candidates. On March 18, 1996, the fifth Circuit stated that "The University of Texas School of Law may not use race as a factor in deciding which applicants to admit in order to achieve a diverse student body, to combat the perceived effects of a hostile environment at the law school, to alleviate the law school's poor reputation in the minority community, or to eliminate any present effects of past discrimination by actors other than the law school" (Greve, 1996).*

*In 1997, Texas House Bill 588, better known as the "top 10 percent" law, was created in response to the ruling of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the fifth circuit, in Hopwood v. Texas, banning race sensitive admissions. The law gave all Texas students who graduated in the top 10 percent of their class the right to be admitted to any public university in the state. This law gave opportunities to all students from Texas no matter if they were from the pristine influential community of Austin, such as West Lake, or from the Rio Grande Valley, in south Texas.*

Figure 37. The 1990s

**University Historical Facts of the 1990s**

***In 1991, Dr. Aldofo “Sonny” Barrera was named the first Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs/Director of Multicultural Student Affairs.***

***In 1993 a new professional organization was founded for faculty and staff called the Hispanic Policy Network. The Hispanic Policy Network is an organization committed to the improvement of opportunities for Hispanics. It was established as a forum for faculty and staff to discuss the issues and concerns of the Hispanic community at Texas State University. Dr. Israel Najera, Dr. Esiquio Uballe, and Maria Gonzales are the co-founders of the Hispanic Policy Network.***

***Under the direction of Texas State University’s 8<sup>th</sup> president, Dr. Jerome Supple a national search was conducted to hire a new Vice President of Student Affairs. Dr. James Studer was hired as the Vice President of Student Affairs in 1992. He assembled the divisional structure of student affairs that is still in place today.***

***The first Hispanic fraternities and sorority were established on campus in the 1990s. In 1996, Sigma Delta Lambdas Fraternity, 1997, Omega Delta Phi Fraternity, and 1998, the Kappa Delta Chi Sorority***

**Research Partners**

***In 1992, Fidel began his professional career at Texas State University in the university counseling center.***

***Also in 1992, Noah graduated with a Bachelor’s degree from Southwest Texas state University, and then returned in 1998, after being hired as an Assistant Director of Campus Recreation, and has worked on this campus over the last fifteen years.***

***Julian graduated 1997, with his Bachelor’s degree.***

***A Student Reflection From the 1990s: My first experience with Texas State University was back in the summer of 1989. I was a sophomore at South Texas High School for Health Professions, in Brownville, Texas. I came to campus as part of Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.)<sup>1</sup>. I got to San Marcos on a Greyhound bus. I arrived in San Marcos, at the bus station located out on Interstate 35 and Guadalupe. When I got off the bus, the Texas summer heat hit hard, it had to be over 100 degrees on that day. I collected my bags from the bus storage compartment, and began to walk up the hill all the way to campus. I carried all my bags right through the downtown San Marcos square. I was***

***Figure 37 (cont’d.)***

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<sup>1</sup>Y.O.U. assists the youth of the area in improving educational achievement, preparing for success in employment, developing into good citizens and leaders, and finding paid work experience. Youth advisors work with schools and local employers to provide these services.

*assigned to Arnold Hall for the summer. I met a guy at Y.O.U. who had a car and gave me a ride to the bus station at the end of the summer. I enrolled at Texas State as a freshman in 1992. The two schools I applied to were St. Mary's in San Antonio and Texas State University. I decided on Texas State because they gave me a \$1,000 scholarship. At that time a \$1,000 was a whole lot of money and made a huge difference to me and my family. In the fall of 1992, my dad drove me to San Marcos in a Ford Pinto, helped me unload my few belongings, gave me about \$300 and told me to work hard. I didn't see my parents until the Christmas break.*

Figure 37. (cont'd.)

### Recap—Family

In this conversation the parents seemed to be reluctant to come on to campus and showed little interest in staying long when they got there college campus, but they gave plenty of support to their child's college journey.

These three men come from households where they are first generation college students, where their families are considered at the poverty level (Fry, 2002) and, for two of these men, they were the first to complete high school in their household.

The historical overview of Mexican Americans in Texas still has lasting effects. The historical beginning was grounded in conquest and colonization, which through the years evolved into subordination, based on race (Menchaca, 2002). Since, they have struggled to claim all the rights and privileges afforded to them as citizens of this country. Some of these rights and privileges included equal educational opportunities.

These privileges and the right to educational opportunities were part of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. It was meant to signify hope and new opportunities, but instead, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo signaled a continuation of persistent discrimination, and oppression for Mexicans living in the southwest (Rendon, 1971).

Over time the parents, through their own past negative experiences with their own education and language barriers, developed a negative view of the school system. To the

past generation of parents, school was a place of bureaucracy, controlled by non-Hispanics. With their children's educational experiences, come memories of their own educational experiences and the discrimination and humiliation they felt growing for things like speaking Spanish in school. Many times, the lack of bilingual staff can make parents feel powerless when they are attempting to resolve problems or advocate for their children (Chavkin, Feyl, Gonzalez & Lara, 1993).

In the article titled "The Impact of Brown on the Brown of South Texas." The memories of Jose Tamez, born in 1924, reflected back on an encounter his father had with a school bus driver, where the bus driver shouted at his father "No! Mexicans aren't supposed to get educated anyways. You are meant to work in the fields" (Guajardo & Guajardo, 2004 p. 510). Even one of our own research partners indicated he was told he was not allowed to speak Spanish at school. For a long time there has been a lack of understanding between teachers and Mexican students and parents.

*Actual Years Witnessed on Campus  
Road Map 2000's*

**University and State Data**

*In 2000, the university enrollment was 22,471, with the Hispanic enrollment being 4,129. The population of the State of Texas was 20,851,820 and the Hispanic population of the state was 6,669,666.*

**University Historical Facts of the 2000s**

*In 2003, the university went through another name change. It is now called Texas State University - San Marcos.*

*This era witnessed a lot of changes for the Texas State Hispanic community. In 2002, an additional Hispanic sorority was established, the Sigma Lambda Gamma Sorority. Also two additional fraternities were created in 2002 Sigma Lambda Beta and 2007 the Phi Iota Alpha Fraternity.*

*In 2006, Texas State University celebrated 100 years of Latino presence on campus, which started with Maria Elena Zamora O'Shea in 1906, as the first Hispanic enrolled at our university.*

*In 2009, Texas State University hired its first Latina as the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs/ Dean of Students, Dr. Margarita M. Arellano.*

**Research Partners**

*In 2002, Julian is hired as the Coordinator for Student Justice. Also in 2002, Fidel who was hired in 1992, has now been on this campus for ten years.*

*Noah, hired in 1998, has now been working on this campus for four years. Noah started his doctoral pursuit at Texas State University as a member of the 2007 cohort, in the Adult Professional and Community Education, in the College of Education.*

Figure 38. The 2000s

### **Institution as Community**

The information I want to talk about next is about your experiences while you were at college and the things you have witnessed here at Texas State. My starting question is, what experiences helped you survive in college? Julian started, "I went knocking on doors where I made my first connections during the summer Y.O.U. program, and got a job."

Fidel interrupted to say,

when I was at college there were not a lot of Latinos on campus; most of the people that lived in the dorms were Caucasian, White. I immediately tried to find other Latinos. Early in the semester I started to miss the food. The cafeteria didn't serve the kind of food I ate at home. One strategy I used to help me was I made friends with the Mexican campus workers. They would bring me tortillas from home. As our relationship developed, I would start to make trades with them, when I went home I would go to Mexico and buy bottles of liquor and bring it back to campus to get to them.

We thought that was hilarious and laughed. Fidel went to say, “but those times were different. Another thing I did was I joined Intramurals at the university.”

When Fidel mentioned sports, Noah's eye got big,

me too, sports have always been a big part of who I am. When got to campus, I found out where everyone played basketball. This allowed me to found other students with my interests and make a connection with them and with this new network quickly find out how things worked around campus. The recreational opportunities then were nothing like the student recreation center. During those times the university only offered the students recreational gym time at Jowers, which was very limited. I believe we were given about two or three hours at Jowers. The times we were given gym space was after Physical Education, the activities classes were done and around the Athletics schedule. We didn't even have access to a weight room. You either had to be enrolled in a Physical Education Activity class, or be an athlete to get into the weight room.

Julian added to his experience, something that really helped me was, I met a girl, now my wife, whom I met and who did well academically, I wanted to impress her. Another thing, I got involved with a student organization called AMAS, Association of Mexican American Students. I really identified with this group of students. There were no Hispanic Fraternities at the time to even consider. Over all for me, it was the people. The people I connected with during the Y.O.U. days created the start for me. They gave me a job, became mentors to me, and always reminded me of things I should be aware of on campus. We would speak Spanish and I could be myself. For me it was the people.

In your own individual perspectives, how did Texas State become a Hispanic Serving Institution? Fidel being the elder statesman spoke first, the Hispanic Policy Network started by realizing many years back, when Dr. Supple was here, that the demographics were going to change. During that time in 1992, the hot topic was about closing the gaps. The Hispanic Policy Network had always been involved; we put together a group of HPN members to work with the administration to help in organizing the university to become a Hispanic Serving Institution. The administration believed this was important for university as well. We understood we could become a Hispanic Serving Institution anyway because the state demographics were growing rapidly, but we wanted to make sure that people did their part. Through on campus conferences and symposiums, we would speak to the process, the importance and value reaching an HSI status. We became a Hispanic Serving Institution two years before our goal because of the



vision of the Hispanic Policy Network and the collaborative effort with the university. Today, I believe we need to be more than just the title HSI. Now that we are a Hispanic Serving Institution, the campus community doesn't really know what a Hispanic Serving Institution is? The university recognized it was important to achieve this status. We knew it provided federal monies which would be good for the whole university. To be honest, as a member of the HPN, I am trying to understand what that means. What federal funding, what do we have to do to get these grants, and how should we spent it to impact the campus? The campus needs to know becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution will help the entire university, it's not just directed to Hispanic improvements. I feel it has connotations; everything is just for Latinos maybe even some resentment. A campaign should be a developed and championed by everyone, not just by Latinos. Today's students are acculturated and maybe have lost their language, but they need to know about their history. I'm not sure a lot of students that are Latinos realize their own development and what's happening in terms of our population and state growth.

Julian supported Fidel's idea of better educating the campus, that is a good point about being a Hispanic Serving Institution. Helping people understand no standards were changed in the admission of Hispanic students, and Hispanic students didn't get an unfair advantage over somebody else. Do ya'll remember a few years back we created a Campus Master Plan to identify our campus needs, and we developed a map to be transparent in letting everyone know how we were going to address future improvements and growth of the

campus? That same method should be used to organize this informational campaign. This would be a positive, because, I've heard conversations, "We're a Hispanic Serving Institution. Oh, here we go. I guess the campus is just going to be totally inundated with Hispanic students." Everyone should know it's beneficial for everyone. The money is for university facility improvements, program improvements, academic improvements, research for the entire campus enrollment not just one population of campus. Now my perspective on how we became an HSI just had to do with the demographics of the state, it had to happen. I do know if some office took some proactive measures, particularly with recruitment we should have been an a Hispanic Serving Institution a long time ago. I've always said that not becoming an HSI by now would really be indicative of what a poor job we would have been doing otherwise in recruiting students. Noah gave his thoughts,

I believe we became a Hispanic Serving Institution, because we just did. I think members of the university brought it to the table as a great idea, but it was too hard to find who was really accountable for the task. The sheer number of the state took over, and that's not a bad thing. I think the real challenge is to make it work and make it effective for the community and the university.

Can you describe from the 1980s to 2013, how you have seen the Latino community at Texas State University? Do you think it's different for the Latino students and campus community? Julian,

one thing I have noticed in the past when I was a student the big campus wide events like homecoming, king and queen voting or student government elections,

most of the times when you had an African-American or Hispanic candidate, their platform was driven by the fact they were a Hispanic candidate. They were being supported by the Latino student organizations, by the coalition of African-American student organizations. As soon as they came together to have that visibility to have that combined vote and to be successful and it happened. This last student government election, we had a Hispanic, unopposed, Hispanic president and vice presidential candidate. I'm not aware of their campaign being driven in any way by seeking representation and awareness of the Hispanic community, they just ran for office. Not only was it not driven with a Latino issue, I'm not aware of any attempted push-back with competition. No One stepped up to say we can easily defeat this candidate or, no attempt at overtly trying to push back the fact that we have a Hispanic president and vice president running. Which I believe would have been the case years ago.

Noah then described the change he has witnessed with reference to his own experience on this campus involving sporting opportunities.

What I have seen change is the university has made a great commitment in providing the student body with wellness opportunities. Back in the day when we only has a couple of hours per week to play basketball, to now having a 189,000 square foot Student dedicated Recreational facility. This facility is student a dedicated facility open seven days, a week from 6:00 am to midnight. Having the ability to personally witness how this facility allows student from many different cultures and backgrounds share space has been powerful for the students of today. Another thing that is different is the development of Hispanic fraternities and

sororities. When I was in school we had absolutely no Hispanic fraternities. In 1998, I was the first staff advisor to the starting Omega Delta Phi chapter here at Texas State University. Helping this group of students was a great experience for me. I didn't have the opportunity, but by help other made me feel good about it.

Fidel expressed bitterness or disappointed about this discussion on how things are different for the Latino community.

For me what I haven't seen is improvement with hiring more faculty and staff to support our students. We need more people of color in leadership positions. We need Latinos in the higher echelon of our administration like Vice Presidents. I'm in the field of health professions, and there is more need of attention for our students. Today, we are dealing with a large number of students with mental health issues. I've been here since 1992 and I'm the only male, Latino psychologist in my office. It's been like that since I got here. It's even hard to get even a Latino intern to come and work here.

We are at the last part of our interview. The final question I would like to ask is what ideas or recommendations do you have to assist the university in better serving its growing Hispanic community. Julian shared the first idea with the group,

a dream idea I have is a Texas State University campus in the Valley. A starting idea could be to setup an office or visitor's center. We could staff it with a Texas State ambassador or an admissions recruiter/counselor. What about a community center. Having a facility with the name Texas State University to develop a connection with the south Texas area would be great in developing relationship with future students and parents. We could have faculty and staff from that area

attend recruitment events. I think it's important for the future students and parents to know there are people from south Texas who work at Texas State University. This would help develop a line of communication and trust so the families know where they are sending their children to college. Having admissions counselors in this area available to this community that can speak the language, English and Spanish could be a valuable tool in recruiting. I don't think you would need to speak Spanish to recruit the students. I think it helps when there's a Spanish speaking recruiter that can speak Spanish to the parents, I think that is important. I think it would have made my parents feel more comfortable.

Fidel jumps in, addressing language is a great idea right here on this campus. I've always been in offices where I'm usually the only one that speaks the language. People rely on me whenever a situation like that arises. Along the lines of language, we have many ceremonies, receptions and graduations. To be able to mention things in Spanish, for example to welcome people in Spanish, especially when there are families attending these receptions. A lot of people still don't feel comfortable with this type of setting. Another idea about language is during graduations. I witnessed recently at a university graduation ceremony. They gave the student the option of how they wanted their name pronounced in Spanish or in English as they walked across the stage. To me this was a great idea; the student should be given the option of how they want to be recognized, but more importantly, what a great way to give respect to the entire family. This is a great way to connect with the parents, to let them know it's not only great day for your family, but for Texas State too.

I see you looking at me, Julian. Do you have any thoughts about this idea?

I do, if you remember we had to start this meeting late because I was on the phone with a Spanish speaking parent from the valley. It was transferred to me because I'm one of the very few people in the office that speak Spanish. This parent was dealing with mental health issues with her son and withdrawing from school. She couldn't communicate with others on staff, so I made myself available. If I didn't how would they be helped?

Fidel added,

another idea for this campus is to create a cultural center. The Hispanic Policy Network has been working with the administration for a long time helping improve the campus for all students at this university, not just Latinos. It would be nice to have a place where we can work from. Right now we're just an organization that exists from each member's personal office. My idea is a campus Cultural Center would create visibility, awareness and unity to the campus. This cultural center could include space for student organizations to work from. The Hispanic Policy Network doesn't have to be only groups that use it.

Noah shares an idea involving our New Student Orientation Program, campus recreation assists with new student orientations and I've often thought how advantageous it would be to program some dates geared around Spanish speaking parents. Giving the families an opportunity to better understand our culture, and university policies and procedures in their first language could reduce tension or stress for the parents when they send their children here. This could help the students feel more comfortable because the parents are more understanding.

## **Theoretical Reflection on Institutional Community**

The research partners credit networking of people, contacts and community resources or social capital (Stanton-Salazar, 2001) with how they survived their college campus. Our research partners explain to us how they went knocking on door of past relationships, meeting other students they identified with in the gym, and befriending cafeteria workers for support. From the theoretical framework of community cultural wealth both navigational and social capital are presented from the experiences of our research partners. The university can prevent future Hispanic student from these types of challenges by creating programs of inclusions, so they don't have to experience what our research partners went through. Language has played a big role in our research partners lives. Julian spoke of living in the valley where everyone learned to speak Spanish. The linguistic capital is identified, as an important part of everyday life for our research participants. As our Hispanic enrollment continues to increase so will the need to address customer service in Spanish. Historically how our research partners explained, they have been the only Latino working in their office with the expectation of when a Spanish speaking issue arise the responsibility was on them to address it. This responsibility can be an unfair challenge to our staff and our future students. The university as a whole needs to be able to communicate to our students, not just the Mexican staff.

Along with the linguistic capital presented above, the skill of resistance capital is presented. This is presented throughout the different conversations. The research partners talk of the importance of not losing their language, not wanting to assimilate. These efforts are show through being members of the Hispanic Policy Network, an organization that assisted the university in becoming an HSI.

Resistance capital is also proven with their involvement with Latino initiatives and outreach programs on this campus. The most powerful example is in one the earlier conversation, Fidel told us the story of when he was in grade school Mexican students were punished for speaking Spanish. Even after his experience he demonstrates the importance of being proud of whom he is. If the university does not keep up with improving campus life, our future students won't have a chance to be comfortable with whom they are and forced to assimilate.

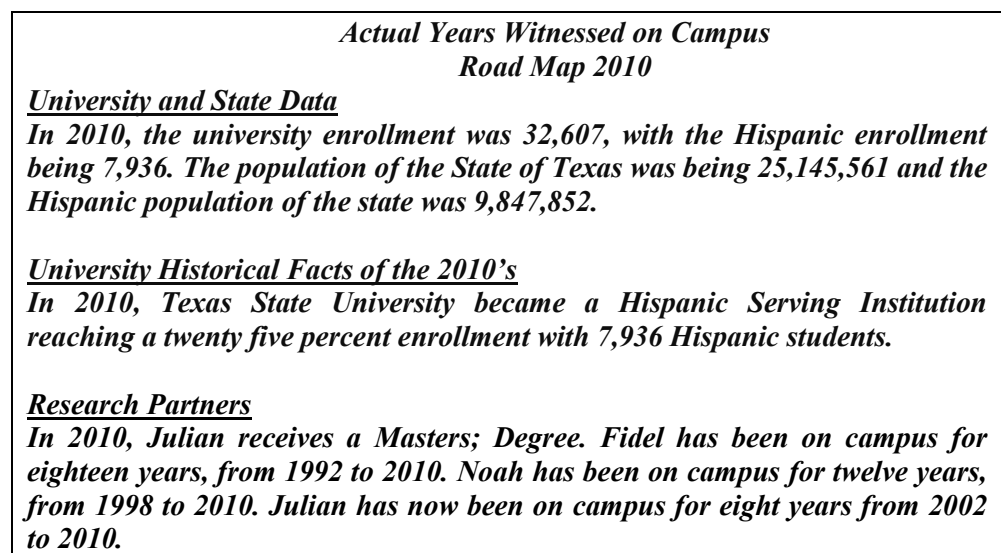


Figure 39. 2010

### Recap—Community

From what our research partners have shared with us, student affairs programs, facilities and organizations have evolved to support students in a number of ways. By today's standards the services being provided have come to be expected by our students, parents and the general community. Today an incoming freshman wouldn't just wander on to campus without several different programs hitting them in the face to try and help their transition to campus. Programs such as; New Student Orientation, structured time with advisors, parent's informational sessions and even the menu of food served in the



cafeteria are more diverse. Universities realize when students attend their campus they become members of the university community twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. From what the research indicates with a growing Hispanic enrollment tomorrow Spanish speaking parent and families may not get the same support which should come from today's services because of language. It would be important to make sure tomorrow's students do not have to experience finding support by identifying and developing a relationship with cafeteria workers as a way to survive like our research partners.

The shifting landscape of the state of Texas has had an impact over the last thirty year on the Hispanic enrollment at Texas State University. The observables demonstrate this impact by telling us the Hispanic enrollment had increased by over seven thousand students in the last thirty years from 1980 to 2011.

In the Institutional Community section the research partners share some ideas of new services to help this demographic as they come on to this campus? One idea, from the shared experiences of one of our research partners who was not allowed to speak Spanish in school while growing up is to cultivate greater sensitivity for the Spanish *lengua*.

Another idea to help the families feel a part of the great celebration and accomplishment of their student's graduation is to initiate a service of asking our graduating students how they want their name to be pronounced when they walk across the stage to receive their degree. At that moment, do they want to be recognized in Spanish or English? This is a simple accommodation to tighten relationships with family.

Our research partners show us from few encounters with individuals who can effectively relate to their experiences and function as mentors and role models to address Latino concerns and doubts (Swail & Cabrera, 2004). They had to rely on the resistance, social and linguistics capital to survive on this campus. As professionals our research partners felt isolated and alone with no one to turn to (Bernal, 2001) as experienced by being the only one in the office to address Spanish speaking issue. This research tells us we need to prepare to meet the needs of our growing Hispanic enrollment by improving and building on the linguistic capital of our future students.

The following chapters will provide specific lessons learned, recommendations and points to consider as we answer the research questions and look at new services at Texas State University.

## **V. TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY, THE RISING STAR OF TEXAS**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to capture the evolutionary changes in culture and climate within the Division of Student Affairs during the last twenty five years, as seen through the eyes of three Latino men. Collectively, these men have over sixty years of experience as both students and professionals at the university. This study has traced the parallels between their experiences, their culture, and the historical timeline of events at Texas State University.

This research uses stories from these three Mexican American males, as told from their perspectives, to explore new student services for Hispanic students. This information will be valuable to both current and future students during their entry into the university, their transition and survival in a new environment, and finally, successful completion of their studies while they live and develop on this campus. The three Mexican American men selected to share their life stories have each had a strong commitment to the emerging Latino population on this campus.

These Mexican American men have also been dedicated in working to develop new programs and strategies that support the university's goals and initiatives. Each professional has an influential social standing within this campus community.

In the late 1980s the Hispanic Association of College and Universities (HACU) lobbied Congress to create an official designation for two-year and four-year postsecondary institutions with high concentrations of Latino students (Alfredo & Gerardo 2003).

Texas State University became a Hispanic Serving Institution in 2010. The intent of this research is to expand the opportunity to help this university become better at meeting the needs of future Hispanic students who will be enrolled here.

I have found my positions at this institution as a Mexican American undergraduate student, a Ph.D. student, and a professional, to be a singular situation. My experiences, along with those of my research partners, uniquely qualified me to provide this research perspective.

I feel like I am in the right place at the right time. Not many have the opportunity to study an institution at the beginning of its advancement to that of a Hispanic Serving Institution.

As a doctoral candidate and a member of the Division of Student Affairs at Texas State University, I feel it is my responsibility to research new ideas and ways for creating new campus services to improve the climate for future Hispanic students.

The demographic shift of the state of Texas has happened and Texas State University has felt the impact of this demographic shift as shown by the increase in its Hispanic enrollment during the last thirty years.

This shift in enrollment at Texas State University is demonstrated by an increase of over 7,000 students. Specifically, the university's Hispanic population increased from 1,517 students in 1980 to 9,043 in 2011.

During this time, from 1980 to 2011, the university's overall enrollment increase was only 18,687 students going from 15,400 students in 1980 to 34,087 students in 2011. The research tells us the university's Hispanic enrollment is responsible for 40% of the increase, accounting for 7,526 of the 18,687 total increase in the university's enrollment.

This shift continues to impact the university as the increase in Hispanic enrollment continues to increase, along with higher concerns for the university to help these students to succeed.

The university has done an astonishing job in numbers and should be commended for getting us to where we are today with one exception, the change in our campus life has not kept up. This increase in enrollment comes with a great responsibility for creating an environment that is conducive to Hispanic students' success. Providing the opportunity for Hispanic students to enroll is not enough. Now, the responsibility expands to ensure their success all the way through graduation.

### **Emerging Themes**

The conversations from the previous chapter were analyzed and sifted through the theoretical framework of Community Cultural Wealth (Yosso, 2005). The matrix below presents the findings which identified the answers to the research questions. The three research questions are:

1. What do the lives and institutional experiences of three Mexican American men who work in the Division of Student Affairs at Texas State University look like?
2. How can the experiences of these three Mexican American males inform the Division of Student Affairs?
3. What student services will help Hispanic students succeed at Texas State University?

<b>Community Cultural Wealth Framework</b>	<b>Aspirational Capital</b>	<b>Linguistic Capital</b>	<b>Familial Capital</b>	<b>Social Capital</b>	<b>Navigational Capital</b>	<b>Resistance Capital</b>
<b>Question One</b>	Parents were strict with school concerns and goals Parent moved to America when they were of school age Parents taught them hard work	They were told “you cannot speak Spanish in school” Explaining or talking policy with parents in both languages English as a Second Language	From low income house holds Parents made sure they graduated from high school Parents allow time on leisure Working Class	Met other students of color in the gym Befriended cafeteria workers Received university information from other students	Created a plan to stay in college, by saving money Recruited self into a doctoral program	Was not intimidated by the college process Not wanting to assimilate
<b>Question Two</b>	Parents had a high education, or less Started college with a two hundred dollar scholarship	When it comes to Spanish speaking issues at work, they have to deal with it	They were given two hundred dollars as pocket money for the entire semester	Members of the Hispanic Policy Network Used past relationships from Y.OU. experience	Stood in line to register without academic advising Obtained a PhD for three hundred dollars	Refused to lose their language Refused to quit for lack of money resources First Generation College Students

Figure 40. Community Cultural Wealth Framework

<b>Community Cultural Wealth Framework</b>	<b>Aspirational Capital</b>	<b>Linguistic Capital</b>	<b>Familial Capital</b>	<b>Social Capital</b>	<b>Navigational Capital</b>	<b>Resistance Capital</b>
<b>Question Three</b>	<p>Willing to help the university through outreach programs</p> <p>Satellite Campus in the Valley</p>	<p>Spanish Orientations</p> <p>Graduation Announcement</p> <p>More Spanish Speaking Staff</p>	<p>Closing Family Gaps</p> <p>Create Programs to Welcome Parents</p> <p>Help Parents be Part of their Students Success</p>	<p>More Mexican Faculty</p> <p>More Mexican Professional Staff</p> <p>HSI Campus Awareness Plan</p>	<p>Cultural Center</p> <p>Residential Learning Communities</p>	<p>Enhance the Mexican Culture for Students</p> <p>More Mexican History Classes</p>

## Using Community Cultural Wealth

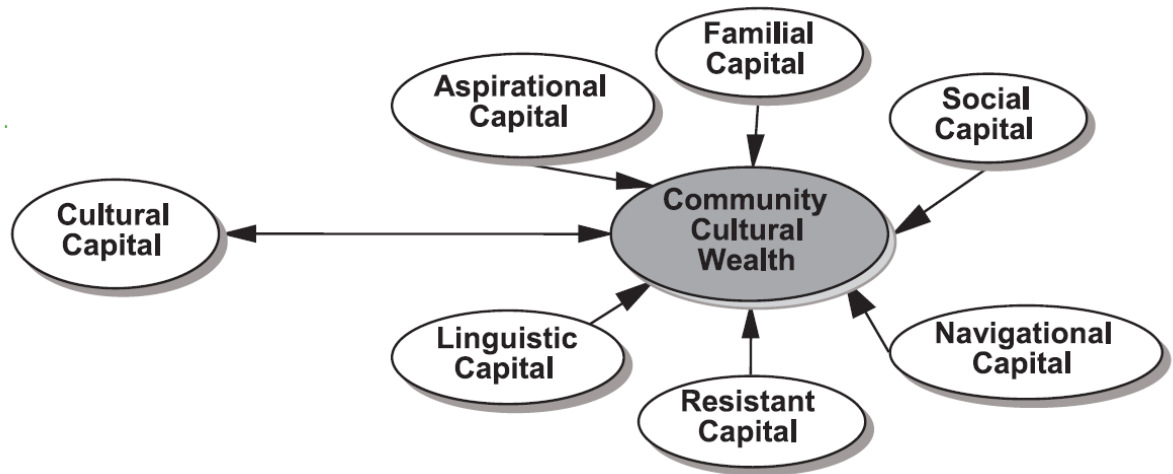


Figure 41. Yosso's Model of Community Cultural Wealth. From "Whose Culture Has Capital?" A Critical Race Theory Discussion of Community Cultural Wealth (Yosso, 2005).

Yosso's model of community cultural wealth contests the notion that the failure of Chicano students is based on their lack of mainstream cultural capital. As the model shows, individuals may draw on six forms of capital to negotiate through a system. As I mentioned in the methodology section, I used Yosso's model of community cultural wealth and the six forms, or domains of capital – linguistic, familial, aspirational, social, navigational, and resistant, in the matrix to help organize the findings to better answer the research questions.

### Question One

*What do the lives and institutional experiences of three Mexican American men who work in the Division of Student Affairs at Texas State University look like?*

All three research partners talked about how supportive their parents were as it pertained to their school aspirations, at all levels. They all explained when it came to



school issues or goals their parents were very strict, and the option of making the wrong decision was not accepted.

Our research tells us that the lives of our three research partners were different from those of most children growing up in Texas. The stories they shared inform us their lives started out typical of many Mexican families growing up in Texas, a number of individuals could have told these stories.

The stories they share bring to life the pathway these men took to become who they are; who their families are, where they come from, and how their communities taught them to be successful.

From nontraditional pathways, their families and communities taught them how to take emancipation into their own hands. Our research partners were raised by parents with less than a seventh grade education. These men all come from working class families who instilled the importance of hard work.

The research tells us their institutional experiences and challenges were met through the strength of the community cultural wealth skills they learned from their communities and families. They used the art of navigation to help them negotiate the process of recruiting themselves into a doctoral program. They resisted the fear of being intimidated by the unknown college process, as first generation students, and refused to give up their identity as Mexican Americans when they were dropped off on campus.

They took with them, in their hearts, the aspirations their parents gave them to find a better life through education. Their parents spent their whole lives keeping them on the right track, to the extent of moving to the United State so they could receive a quality education.

The lives of both Fidel and Noah were wrapped in the events of the 1960's. For instance, in 1965 LBJ, the 36<sup>th</sup> president of the United States signed the Higher Education Act on the campus of Texas State University on November 8<sup>th</sup>. That same year, Fidel was a high school freshman in Brownsville, Texas and Daniel was born on December 8<sup>th</sup> in Brenham, Texas. Language was a big part of everyday life for them.

Having bilingual abilities gave them linguistic flexibility in their communities and families, it expanded their network, and helped them connect with navigational capital to negotiate systems.

The bond of *Family* was expressed as the strongest component in their lives. Julian tells us stories of traveling to see family in Mexico while growing up, and basking in the closeness of *la familia* during big family gatherings.

All three indicated family was where they developed a strong sense of identification. From family, they received their foundation which gave them a sense of protection, of family honor, respect, tradition, networking and cooperation with large groups.

From these values, together with their families, they created dreams and aspirations to improve family honor by finding a better life. Julian tells us his family moved to the United State intentionally so he could attend school. This was where he developed his aspiration to go to college. Many Mexican families could tell these stories, as this is very typical to the lives and experiences of many Mexican families in Texas.

The institutional experience of these three men at Texas State University is very deep and unique. These individuals have had the opportunity to witness this campus for a combined experience of over 60 years. Things they have witness include things like

moving registration from its physical location in the Jowers building to an online registration system. Noah actually remembers standing in line for hours to register during the 1980s at Jowers.

In the past, there was no New Student Orientation with class advising, nor were there Hispanic Fraternities or Sororities. Noah told us during his entire undergraduate experience, he never had a Hispanic faculty member teach him in any of his classes.

They remember the Hispanic enrollment at 1,500 with a total enrollment of 15,400. Noah vividly remembers during the 1980s, the campus had no pride or awareness of the Hispanic community. Noah also remembers working in the Department of Recreational Sports, which was housed in Jowers. The recreation service they provided had to share the building with both the Athletic and the Physical Education Department, so the time during which services were offered was very limited. Students couldn't participant in recreational services until after 5:00 p.m.

Noah remembers times of isolation, like the story he shared of the time when he was the only Hispanic student working in that office as an Intramural supervisor.

All the students he identified with, he met at the gym or participating in recreational sports programs.

In the 1990s, all three research partners were on this campus. Fidel started as a professional in 1992, after graduating from The Ohio State University. Julian was on campus as an undergraduate starting in 1992. Noah returned to this campus in 1998, after being hired as a professional staff member in student affairs, (he had left this campus after graduating with a bachelor's degree in 1992). From 1992 to 1998, Noah was on a six year journey, working and developing in student affairs at several universities

including Sam Houston State University, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, and The University of Texas at Arlington. During their lives as professionals in higher education they have endured and persisted as the only Latino on staff, for many years. They both witnessed and experienced the years of failed attempts to implement affirmative action and endured the ways in which other staff rationalized people of color. All three men have spent their lives developing their professional skills, and have dedicated over twenty years each working with students, whether members of the majority or the minority, in higher education.

### **Question Two**

*How can the experiences of these three Mexican American males inform the Division of Student Affairs?*

These three men can inform the Division of Student Affairs that they are successful first generation college students. These individuals inform us of how they started out in college with two hundred dollars in their pocket and a bus ticket. These three individuals came to college armed with community cultural wealth skills of aspirational, resistance, familial, social and navigational capital as they refused to quit, refused to give up their identity and navigated their way through the unknown systems of college. Like many Mexican families in Texas, the search for the American dream starts with the aspiration for a better quality of life through education. Education is a simple privilege given to Americans. These simple rights and privileges of equal educational opportunities did not come easy to the Mexican communities.

Fidel explains to us that growing up, not only was he not allowed to speak Spanish in school, but in Brownsville, Texas in the 1960s students were actually

punished for speaking Spanish. Through their experiences we learn how their family's opportunity to be American, by assimilating into the American mainstream, was different compared to rest of the melting pot like the Irish, Germans and Polish. The Irish, Germans and Polish, were all European just like the pilgrims (Americans) who settled America, very unlike the Mexican American communities. Even today, immigration issues primarily pertain to the Mexican community. Even though Mexico is located just a few hours from the central Texas region, it may as well be a million miles away based on a common social identity.

Our research partners created their pathway from the community cultural capital they learned from their families and communities. This blueprint came from their communities and families because of their experiences of not being invited to have a seat at the table, so they developed their own table to sit at.

Their communities developed their own survival skills through family passion and aspirations, and taught themselves to navigate successfully through strange unknown systems. Navigational and aspirational capital are also observed in the parents through the ways they dealt with their own part in their child's college experience. They came to campus and dropped off their child at the front curb. They bought their child a bus ticket and gave them two hundred dollars to go to campus. These families gave everything they had to help launch their child's new adventure into college.

This is important for the university to know because this is how they lived and how they created their pathway. Our research partners and their families lived through segregation, oppression, and racism—all dynamics and issues facing minority youth today. The Division of Student Affairs needs to understand this, and they must respond to

this reality in a proactive way. This includes hiring professionals who appreciate this context, and will work to create a healthy climate and culture to enhance the likelihood of student success.

We see this insight presented by our research partners, we see it in the literature, and now we should expect it in practice. Texas State University has the opportunity to lead and create changes that will nurture the construction of a healthy climate.

I want to give the reader the power to understand this information so it can be felt, so when the opportunity comes to sit down and create new services we can all know why it is important.

The accomplishments of these three individuals honor the generations of the past. These past generations struggled to survive the oppression, poverty, racism, prejudice, limited schooling, segregation, poorly resourced schools, unequal educational opportunities, and unsupportive campus communities they encountered (Mellander & Mellander, 2001).

Living through and surviving these historical challenges, they still maintained a positive vision of education for their children. The parents of Latino communities should be honored for the sacrifices and hard work they put into resisting the traps in the system, and creating new ways to negotiate success.

Today's society, which seems to be more tolerant of social justice issues, does not represent how it was for our research partners and their families on their journeys starting in the 1950s. It was rough, it was not inviting, but it was the life they lived. Society expected the Mexican community to work in the fields, and believed Mexicans had no reason to be in school.

The research informs us that the university should be commended for the changes it has introduced, but other changes need to be realized. This research also recognizes the Division of Student Affairs at Texas State University has only been in place with its present organizational structure for 21 years, since 1992. All three of our research partners were here in 1992 and have seen the evolution of the Division of Student Affairs since its beginning.

In its 21 years, the division has made great strides in its evolution in providing student services. Student affairs administrators are forced to continuously evolve in order to satisfy new trends. Some examples of the challenges they face include risk management, lone gunmen, hurricanes, veterans' affairs, mental health issues and suicides. I believe the new trend we have to respond to is the changing demographics of Texas, and the impact it has had, and will continue to have, with regard to our increasing Hispanic enrollment. The division of student affairs will need to again accept the challenge to meet the needs of this growing Hispanic enrollment.

Finally these individuals would inform the university that it has a wonderful resource in the Hispanic Policy Network to assist them with new Hispanic initiatives.

The HPN is ready and willing to be involved, and are looking for new ways to improve upon their organization's mission. All three of the research partners are active members of the Hispanic Policy Network.

### **Question Three**

*What student services will help Hispanic students succeed at Texas State University?*

After many years of witnessing this evolution and working on this campus, the university should feel fortunate to have access to this great resource. It has taken a long

time for these men to equip themselves with the experiences, and the credentials to be in a position to assist the university with its higher education goals. All these efforts have come at a unique time while Texas State University transitions into a Hispanic Serving Institution and while we have access to these three wonderful resources, in these three men. Having the opportunity to see this university through the lens of a collective 60 plus years of experience is a powerful perspective from which Texas State University can learn.

The findings tell us these men have observed the Hispanic climate on this campus since the 1980's. The evolutions witnessed were experienced by actually working with outreach programs on campus, organizational involvement, and by creating programs for this campus.

Examples of such programs and involvement include the fact that all three of our research partners have served on countless university committees, and have been active members of the professional organization the Hispanic Policy Network. In fact, Fidel was one of the founding members in 1993.

Fidel has even produced two videos entitled, *The First Generation College Student Experience* in both 1999 and 2013. Noah has served in dual administrative positions within the division of student affairs, and on teams charged with managing building renovations and facility expansions. Noah has even created programs for the Texas State University including Rec Jam, a welcome back weekend concert and The University's Veterans Day celebration.



These individuals gave their time because they recognized the importance of improving the efforts for enhancing the cultural climate as it pertains to the increasing Latino enrollment.

The ideas which our research partners shared with regard to new student services are based on their own journey on this campus and their passion to help the university. Specifically their ideas address what they have witnessed with regard to creating a climate which welcomes not only our Hispanic students, but which extends to offer the same welcome to the families of our Hispanic students who invited to this campus. These ideas are as follow:

1. To implement additional dates in our orientation program that are presented in Spanish
2. Initiate a satellite campus in the Valley (south Texas)
3. Allow students the opportunity to choose how they want their names announced at graduation (in Spanish or English)
4. Increase the number of Spanish speaking faculty and staff to better serve and identify with our students.
5. Create a Hispanic Serving Institution Awareness Plan.
6. Develop a Residential Learning Community focused on Latino Studies or Social Justice.
7. Offer more Mexican history classes.
8. Build a university cultural center

Now that Texas State University is the fifth largest university in the state, with an enrollment of over 35,000, along with its transition into being a Hispanic Serving

Institution (University News Service, 2012), it is important that the university recognizes and creates a climate which will make both our Hispanic students and their families feel welcomed. It is imperative that family, community and institutional partnerships be incorporated into establishing services to create a culture of caring and a climate which supports the success of our increasing Hispanic enrollment.

The stories our research partners shared underscore the importance of family, and the crucial role that family played in becoming who they are. The need for programs which not only welcome parents, but also allow and even encourage parents to play an active role in their student's college experience is crucial. The desire to develop a Latino flavor on this campus, and to instill a sense of Latino pride were felt throughout their stories.

Finally, research suggests Latinos who engage in campus life through activities and programs often increase their chances of access, persistence, and completion of higher education (Ortiz, 2004, Brown & Santiago, 2003, Fry, 2002).

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE INSTITUTION

Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter  
-Martin Luther King, Jr.

The purpose of this study was to capture the evolutionary changes in culture and climate within the Division of Student Affairs during the last twenty five years, as seen through the eyes of three Latino men, who collectively have over 60 years of experience as both students and professionals at this university. The rationale was to collect and analyze stories from these three Mexican American males and use their perspectives and experiences to explore new student services for Hispanic students.

Based on the findings in Chapter five here are the top three recommendations for the university and student affairs. These recommendations can be the start of a blueprint to help develop key new services, programs and initiatives to help enhance the climate for our growing Hispanic enrollment. The three recommendations are as follows:

1. Hispanic Serving Institution Campus Awareness Plan
2. Spanish Orientation
3. Residential Learning Community

### **Hispanic Serving Institution Awareness Plan**

The first recommendation comes from a statement made by one of our research partners, “Now that we are a Hispanic Serving Institution, what is next?” To address *what is next*, the recommendation is to make the campus aware of what it means to us all to be recognized as a Hispanic Serving Institution, present a plan of what we will do next, and why we will be better because of it. As seen by these three individuals, the campus would benefit from a university wide Hispanic Serving Institution Awareness Plan.

This plan would be a public campaign to review, educate and update the university on what is happening with our new Hispanic Serving Institution destination, established in 2010. Criteria for this plan would include explaining to the university what it means to be a Hispanic Serving Institution and the purpose of being a Hispanic Serving Institution. This awareness plan also includes creating a team, or committee, to work with the university leadership to organize the needs of the campus, identify what can be done with HSI grant funding, and how to access the funding. Once we have organized our needs, the next step would be to create a visual public plan to share with the university.

In the last 15 years, two major university plans have been initiated with great success. The first one was the University Master Plan, and just within a few years now the second big university public plan was with the creation of the Personalized Academic Career Exploration Center (PACE).

When the Master Planning hit campus, it was organized, it was direct, and the public campaign was precise. The whole campus was aware of what was going to happen in the next few years from 2012 to 2017. At the beginning I remember organizational/informational meetings took place, images of what things were going to look like were presented, and funding was secure.

The PACE center was launched in the same way. We initiated development programs prior to the center opening. In 2012 the PACE opened its doors, and we knew its purpose, its goals and most everyone was in collaboration with the future events and programs of PACE Center. There was total campus buy in, with no hesitation. The goal was clear, the resources were made available and the necessary public campaign was presented.

This same type of public campaign and buy in should be implemented with the creation of the Hispanic Serving Institution Awareness Plan. The Hispanic Serving Institutions Awareness Plan should explain how it is a positive achievement for the entire campus. The university should know this federally funded grant program has a historical tie to Texas State University.

The Hispanic Serving Institution federal grant program was created out of The Higher Education Act of 1965, which was signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson (alumnus) on our campus of Texas State University. This Act was amended in 1992, and the term Hispanic Serving Institution was created. Texas State University opened its doors in 1903 founded on being an educational institution, a teacher college, to enrich our state. Below is the definition of a Hispanic Serving Institution;

A Hispanic Serving Institution is an accredited and degree granting public or private nonprofit institution with twenty five percent or more undergraduate Hispanic full time equivalent (FTE) student enrollment” (Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, Title V, section 501-518).

Our university community needs to be better informed that because of our HSI status the department of education allows us to access educational grants which can be used to enhance the educational experience and quality for all students at Texas State University. These educational grants can be used for: faculty development, administrative management, the development and improvement of academic programs, endowment funds, curriculum development, scientific or laboratory equipment for teaching, for renovation of instructional facilities, and joint use of facilities, academic tutoring, counseling programs and student support services.

The awareness campaign will present a message of pride about how the HSI grants are for improvements for the entire campus, not just for the Hispanic students. Our three participants have had conversations with students on the campus, and recognize some student have a misperception about what it means to now be a Hispanic Serving Institution. One misperception students have is that as an HSI, admission standards have been lowered or changed to accommodate Hispanic enrollment.

Another misconception is that only the Hispanic students will receive access to financial aid money, and programs will be just for their success. Along with letting the student body know how positive this is for the entire campus, we also need to share with them a plan for action which explains what we will do with the grant funding to enhance the entire campus. We should involve students to help with the university's HSI programming committee to create a strategic plan of what we need to improve in order to enhance this campus. This awareness plan will be a great tool of enhancing relationships with future incoming families. Our research partners share from the 1980s and 1990s there was very little Latino pride on this campus, which made it hard to call this campus home. As we have gained momentum with our growing Hispanic enrollment, establishing this type of buy in and pride helps create a new climate not just for the Mexican community, but for the entire Texas State University community.

A highly important factor for Latino students is the belief that they are part of the academic and social life going on around them (Hurtado, Carter & Spuler 1996). The sense of belonging on campus exerts significant influence on a student's desire to remain in college.

## **Spanish Orientation**

The second recommendation is to offer one or two dates in our university's orientation schedule that are conducted in Spanish. From the research and the community cultural wealth stories presented here, we see the importance of family in the Latino culture. Because of this characteristic of the Mexican culture, it is critical to consider the impact that a family support system exerts on student persistence (Castellanos & Jones, 2004). To create university programs that incorporate collaboration with Latino families would reduce the likelihood of first generation families feeling disconnected from the university. A major component of Latino success at an institution is in forming strong university-family-community partnerships (Ortiz 2004).

In this study our own research partners shared with us their own personal experiences of their parents feeling disconnected from participating in their college experience. As a result, their parents were reluctant to come onto the college campus with them. The stories of our research partners help us see the community cultural wealth tenets of social, navigational, and resistance capital used to maneuver through the policies of the system.

Giving parents the opportunity to participate in a Spanish orientation would improve the effectiveness of providing information about programs and services to families in the language they prefer, and could create a powerful collaboration between the parents and the university to assist students and enhance higher educational attainment and success. Unlike our research partner's parents, making tomorrow's parents feel welcomed and part of the process could be a great idea to bridge the gap with the parents.

The University of Central Florida offers two orientation sessions specifically for Spanish speaking attendees in their orientation called “La Orientación.” They also have an entire first year experience website, and a parent resources website, in both Spanish and English (“UCF, Orientación,” 2013). These types of programs at Texas State could prove successful in connecting with the future Hispanic families coming to our campus.

### **Residential Learning Community**

The third suggestion is to develop an additional residential learning community. At the University of California at Berkeley they have a residential program called *Casa Magdalena Mora Theme Program*. This program allows students to be matched together in a resident hall to develop a network based on their interests in studies on Mexican American and Latino cultural studies and social justice issues. The requirements are that each student has to enroll in, and attend a Chicano/Latino Studies class, participate at Casa weekly meetings, and participate in community projects (UC Berkeley, Casa Magdalena, 2013).

Presently, at Texas State we offer students a chance to be a part of ten different learning communities. These learning communities consist of the following options:

- |   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| 1. Future Teachers                        | Tower Hall       |
| 2. Career Exploration                     | Tower Hall       |
| 3. Journalism and Mass Communication      | Tower Hall       |
| 4. Honors College                         | Laurel Hall      |
| 5. Leadership Exploration and Development | San Jacinto Hall |
| 6. Pre-Medical/Pre-Dental                 | Tower Hall       |
| 7. Psychology                             | Tower Hall       |



8. Science, Technology, Engineering and Math      Gaillardia Hall
9. Business      Tower Hall

Creating an additional learning community, or residential college, around the theme or study interests of Mexican American and Latino culture studies or Social Justice, would be a great addition of services and programs to improve the cultural climate for our growing Hispanic enrollment. This program would be supportive in assisting students with similar backgrounds and interests to find each other and live together at the beginning of their Texas State experience so that they can quickly establish a support system to help them during their transition into our Texas State community.

### **Conclusion**

Having the opportunity to be a part of, and watch Texas State University since the 1980s, I have asked myself many times, what I can do to help us, as an institution, be better. I have even felt if I don't make an effort to help then who will?

I believe I can help by conducting this research and by communicating these popular stories, shared by our research partners. These stories could have been told by any Latino, to inform the university and student affairs. Community Cultural Wealth was woven throughout the stories shared by our research partners. This framework guided our research partners to their many successes and accomplishments as they negotiated through an institutional system which didn't have them in mind. In chapter four and five we share with you the stories which are the examples of how our research partners used Community Cultural wealth for their own success.

Not all our future Hispanic students will be equipped with the skills that the parents of our three research partners instilled in them to ensure their success.

Our three research partners were equipped with the capital skills of community cultural wealth, which enabled them not to be intimidated by the unknown, and to engage in varying aspects of academic and social life on their campuses. Such engagement included joining the student group AMAS, creating new relationship with cafeteria workers, and not being afraid to be alone with only two hundred dollars in their pocket as they walked from the San Marcos bus station to campus in 100° temperatures to start their college journey.

Through the lenses of these three men, right here on this campus at Texas State University, we researched the past to inform the future. The lives of these individuals were different in many ways, but also similar in how their families were positioned in the educational system.

To continue the denial of successful education for our future Hispanic students would be a tragedy. We must all recognize how Mexican Americans were historically established in the state of Texas, and like those of our research partners, were held back through the use of fear, to restrain their educational aspirations in order to fulfill the real role this state had in mind for them, as a human resource.

This was the experience of our research partners and their parents. Noah shared how he came to college on his own, and Fidel and Julian were dropped off at the front door, alone on the first day. Fidel also shared his personal experience of punishing students in school for speaking Spanish. Through all these experiences, neither they nor

their families stopped dreaming, and hoping for a better life. Fidel negotiated his way through college, and received a Ph.D. for only three hundred dollars.

It is the responsibility of student affairs professionals to develop creative ideas that will allow campus life to keep up with our growing Latino enrollment. As student affairs representatives, we are responsible for providing the university with the co-curricular experience of learning beyond the classroom. Now, as a Hispanic Serving Institution, we need to make sure the co-curricular experience involves creating a climate conducive to the future Hispanic students enrolled at Texas State University.

The reality that a campus climate is not conducive to students' learning, interactions, and engagement is an area of research that is vital to the information in our literature review. If our future Latino students feel they are being exposed to a cultural climate on this campus that they perceive to be hostile, they will be less prone to adjust socially, emotionally, and academically (Hurtado, 1996). Research tells us Latino students who are uninvolved with campus activities do not feel like they belong at the institution, become homesick, and often withdraw from school (Banks, 2004).

Along with the new services recommended, the institution should focus on recruiting and retaining more faculty and staff members who reflect the student body. A key factor that must be acknowledged by higher education administration is the importance of having faculty and staff of color that are on campus to connect with its student body (Gregory, 2003). The inclusion of Latino faculty and staff at all levels of an institution embodies and strengthens the commitment to ensuring Latino student success. Faculty and staff should also understand that it is important for them to serve as mentors and mediators for Latino students.

More specifically, university administration must provide a means to reward faculty and staff in developing successful student serves and programs (Hurtado & Kamimura, 2003).

Our research partners shared with us experiences on this campus over the last 20 years when they were the only person of color on their professional staff. As they have seen the increase in Hispanic enrollment, they have felt an increasing burden of responsibility. With the number of Spanish speaking parents also increasing, the offices feel it is their responsibility to address the unique needs of Spanish speaking parents. We are all here as professional administrators and we should all be prepared to address all student and parent issues, or hire more Latino professionals who can answer the call to duty. Now the university is faced with a new era of transformation associated with our growing Hispanic student body, so there is a greater need to enhance and create new ways to help the Division of Student Affairs create this congenial climate of inclusion for Hispanic students and parents, and confront the responsibility of addressing customer service for them.

For many Mexican students, the pathway to higher learning is through a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). Nearly half of all Latino students enroll at an HSI. In 1997, nearly 90% of Hispanics were enrolled in HSIs located in California, Texas, New Mexico, New York, Illinois, and Arizona (De Los Santo & De Los Santos, 2003). As explained in both chapter five and our literature review, a Hispanic Serving Institution is an accredited and degree granting public or private nonprofit institution with 25% or more undergraduate Hispanic full time equivalent (FTE) student enrollment” (Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, Title V, section 501-518).

Now that Texas State University has recently reached this goal of becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution, we need to embrace the demographic shift happening in Texas. If we don't, the cost will be that a high percentage of our society will not be prepared to compete in a global economy.

More specifically, the cost to this campus for our future Hispanic students will be hardship, high failure rates, low assimilation, high levels of stress stemming from leaving home and a sense of powerlessness from the inability to establish citizenship on the campus so they can become engaged students (Brown, Lopez & Santiago, 2003).

What imbues our research partners' experiences with the power to inform all of us is the fact that not only have they seen this campus evolve over the last 25 years, and that their own experiences in Texas mirror those of parents and students coming down the line to Texas State University as future families that will associated with this university.

It is the hope of this researcher to inform the university and student affairs on the benefits of creating a sense of belonging—a home away from home for all students, and to increase awareness about how we can better accommodate our Hispanic students for the next 100 years through student services.

### **Recommendation for Future**

Whereas this research focuses on three Latino men who witnessed the evolution of Texas State University as it has become an Hispanic Serving Institution, there are a number of additional issues to explore in future research. Though these issues fall beyond the scope of this research, they are as important as the issues presented in this dissertation. We know because of the shifting demographics in Texas, future studies to improve the cultural climate at Hispanic Serving Institutions are necessary. Below I

highlight three specific topics including, a focus on gender, following the money and keeping up with the shifting demographics of the state, that should guide these future studies.

First, I would invite my Latina sisters to work on collecting and exploring the stories of Latinas on the Texas State University campus during this time of transition. This perspective is critical to developing a deeper understanding of the Latina/o college-going experience. This is a pressing issue in this state, but it can also inform the literature on HSIs. Additionally, this can also inform the conversation as it relates to practice at other Hispanic Serving Institutions nationally. This research will help universities recruit and graduate Hispanics in Texas.

A second recommendation for future research is to follow the resources that have been secured under the HSI federal initiative. Resources are necessary to adopt the recommendation in this research as well as other initiatives necessary to respond to the change in the university's climate, culture, curriculum and staffing. It is important to invite the community of learners and leaders most impacted by the changes to help set and guide the administrative and institutional priorities of the university; this is critical to acting in a proactive manner. This research will help Texas State University lead the HSI community and inform the future development of the HSI policies and practices.

A final recommendation for future studies is to monitor the state's shifting demographics. The Latino population has grown at a rate that the university has not been keeping pace. This growth is important to monitor if the university is to continue to be relevant and leaders in the state and the country in reference to building an Hispanic Serving Institution and leading in educating the state's citizenry. This research tells us

that the Latino population in public schools will continue to grow; therefore, it is critical that Texas State University continues to be the rising star in the State of Texas.

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