

“This is where we want to stay”

Tejanos and Latino Community Building in Washington County

THE LATINO POPULATION of Washington County, situated just west of Portland's Multnomah County, grew at ten times the rate of the overall population over recent decades, increasing from roughly 2,540 in 1970 to 83,810 in 2010. Latinos now represent almost 16 percent of the county's total population, and in several of its small cities comprise a much larger share of the population. In Cornelius in 2010, for example, 50.1 percent of residents identified as Hispanic or Latino. Most of that growth is due to new arrivals from Mexico.¹ The first Latino families to settle in the county year-round, however, were migrants from Texas. Prompted by the same factors that motivated successive groups of Latinos to emigrate — oppressive treatment and poor work and financial prospects — Tejano (Texas ethnic Mexican) families left Texas in the mid and late 1960s for seasonal agricultural work in other states.² After making their way to Oregon's Washington County, some decided to abandon seasonal migration and settle permanently.

Many of those early settling Tejano families worked to build a strong network of community support. They were instrumental in laying the foundation of a social service infrastructure that continues to benefit new immigrants and the Latino population as a whole. Tejano families and their allies established Centro Cultural of Washington County, a multi-purpose educational and cultural center, in Cornelius in 1972, and Centro founders, with the support of St. Vincent Hospital and Tuality Community Hospital, created the Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center in 1975 to serve farm workers and those without money to pay hospital bills. Both organizations have grown considerably and continue to play important roles in serving a



A group gathers for an event outside Centro Cultural's community center in about 1980. Centro provided a place to meet for a variety of functions and helped organize the Latino community, vital opportunities that were lacking when the first Tejano families settled year-round in Washington County.

large and diverse Latino population. Tejanos worked (and continue to work) through those and other organizations and capacities to aid new arrivals, and their example has inspired others to expand on that work. Starting in the 1960s, Tejano families fought to combat discrimination and to resist forced assimilation and the erasure of cultural and linguistic identity. They asserted a right to belong in Washington County, founded a community that welcomed immigrants and created opportunities for its members, and built ties with non-Latinos as well.

Scholars of Latino history in Oregon and the Pacific Northwest — such as Glenn Anthony May, through his book *Sonny Montes and Mexican American Activism in Oregon*, and Mario Jimenez Sifuentez II, through his dissertation “By Forests or By Fields: Organizing Immigrant Labor in the Pacific Northwest, 1940–1990” — have examined overt and specific forms of activism over multiple decades.³ This article examines the community-building and organizing efforts of early settling Tejano families by following the life and career trajectories of three Tejano narrators who have served the Latino population through activism and professional work. Their stories give voice

to various phases of community growth, activism, and intra-ethnic relations that developed among county Latinos.

Some scholars of Latino migration in Oregon have addressed the relationships and differences between Tejanos and Mexican immigrants, focusing primarily on social, migration, and labor issues. Sifuentes described tension between Tejanos and Mexican immigrants. In her article “*Festejando Community: Celebrating Fiesta Mexicana in Woodburn, Oregon*,” Elizabeth Flores noted the different music and activity preferences of the two groups as well as the desire of Woodburn Tejanos to have their specific cultural practices and roles as community founders remembered and honored.⁴ In Erlinda Gonzales-Berry and Marcela Mendoza’s *Mexicanos in Oregon: Their Stories, Their Lives*, an excerpt from an interview with Lorenzo Rubio recounted tension between the two groups in Washington County.⁵

This work examines historical relationships between the two groups with respect to community dynamics in order to understand how Washington County Tejano leaders responded to Mexican immigrants. Despite tension and even instances of violent conflict between the general Tejano population and Mexican immigrants, community leaders established a different type of relationship with immigrants in Washington County than the one established decades earlier by leaders in Texas, as described by David Gutierrez in *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity*.⁶ In Texas, according to Gutierrez, Latino leaders generally came from an elite business and professional class, were generations removed from migration, and had no experience with manual and seasonal labor. They often sought to divide themselves and other Tejanos from newcomers and offered little assistance to immigrants. Tejanos who settled in Washington County (and in the rest of the Pacific Northwest), however, were themselves migrants. They could relate to the struggles of immigrants. Many of the early Tejano leaders in the county acted on a strong dedication to creating a broad and welcoming Latino community. They helped immigrants and respected them as friends. The accomplishments and precedent established by these leaders conferred long-lasting benefits on the growing and diversifying Latino population of Washington County.

Oral histories and archival research allow us to follow the history of the Washington County Latino community from its formation in the 1960s through the Chicano Movement and to understand the long-term influence the Tejano founders and leaders had, and have, on resources and opportunities available to the county’s Latino population. Interviews I conducted with residents reflect the need for greater documentation of the significant contributions of the early Tejano families and of county Latino history generally.⁷ The importance of this methodology is underscored by its use by

other scholars of regional Latino history (Erasmus Gamboa, Mario Sifuentez, and Gilberto Garcia, for example).⁸ Sifuentez wrote that “the ‘official’ record often tells us more about what officials thought about Mexicans, rather than their actual lived experience” and cited the relative lack of written records from migrants and immigrants to explain his use of oral history.⁹ I would not have grasped some of the issues defining local Latino history in the same way had I not spoken extensively with residents. While my oral history research and conclusions are confined to Washington County, the approach and argument can serve as a template for evaluating the actions and long-term influence of Tejano community leaders in communities throughout the Willamette Valley and other agricultural areas of the Pacific Northwest.

Included in this article are excerpts from five of the nine interviews I conducted. Three of the five narrators are Tejanos who moved to Washington County in the 1960s. Hector Hinojosa was born in Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Mexico, and spent most of his first decade in Harlingen, Texas. He came to Oregon from California with his parents and siblings. The family settled permanently in Oregon in 1961 (before Hinojosa started his fourth-grade year of school). Hinojosa’s life highlights how terms such as *Tejano*, *Mexican immigrant*, and *Mexican American* can serve as only imperfect titular designations. National and regional identities can become complex and multi-faceted among those whose lives have been shaped by migration. In this work, Hinojosa is a Mexican immigrant, a Tejano (as he was raised in Texas and tied part of his identity to culture and community there) and (having obtained his citizenship in the 1970s) a Mexican American. Evangelina Sanchez was born in Needville, Texas, and spent the first nineteen years of her life in Texas. After moving across the country seasonally for several years, she relocated to Washington County in 1967 with her children, her mother, and her siblings. Enedelia Hernandez Schofield was born in McAllen, Texas, and moved to Washington County from California in 1962 (when she was four) with her parents, Emilio and Hortencia “Tencha” Hernandez, and her siblings. I refer to Enedelia, who took her husband’s last name, with both surnames in this work to clarify and highlight her connection to her parents.

These narrators and some of their family members worked as activists and in positions of leadership. As the ethnic Mexican and Latino population grew and diversified after the early 1970s, a relatively large share of those who rose to positions of influence were Tejanos. Their U.S. citizenship and their proficiency in both English and Spanish helped them occupy niche roles as cultural and linguistic brokers. Not every Tejano who settled in the county went on to have a long and rewarding career serving the Latino population, but a number of Washington County Tejanos took advantage of opportunities to help other Latinos and improve their own fortunes through leadership roles.



The Hernandez family is pictured here in Cornelius outside one of their first homes after arriving from Texas in 1962. Many migrant families were misled by recruiters in Texas about the standards of living and working conditions in Washington County and found them much poorer than had been promised.

This article also relies on two other narrators who spoke to the roles that Tejanos played among Washington County Latinos. Arturo Villaseñor was born in Mexico in 1965. After graduating from Mexico City's *Instituto Politécnico Nacional* (National Polytechnic Institute), he worked as a civil engineer. In 2000, Villaseñor moved to Washington County with his wife and children. Sister Ina Marie Nosack was born in 1926 in Gervais, Oregon, and entered the convent of Sisters at Saint Mary after completing high school. She took a position at the St. Alexander Parish in Cornelius from 1984 to 1996; while working there, she brought food and clothing to families living at migrant camps, helped families with childcare and other needs, and provided religious instruction to children at the parish.¹⁰

A small, permanent Latino community was formed by the early 1960s by a handful of families who relocated from Texas, but ethnic Mexicans had been working and residing seasonally in the county beginning at least two decades prior. The Mexican Farm Labor Program, commonly referred to as the *bracero* program, brought men from Mexico to fill the labor shortage

caused by World War II. The program, resulting from an agreement between the U.S. and Mexican governments, allowed for able-bodied Mexican men to work in agriculture and several other industries in many parts of the United States. *Braceros* were either single or living temporarily away from their families in Mexico. Gamboa argued that World War II created the conditions that led to a pattern of seasonal migration to Oregon and the Pacific Northwest for Mexican American families. The war pushed many rural, working-class Euro-Americans out of fieldwork and into the armed forces or defense industry jobs, and new employment opportunities of the postwar decades kept them from returning to the fields. The *bracero* program offered a replacement source of labor for farm owners of Washington County and other counties across the Pacific Northwest, but only for a few years.¹¹

Strike activity and protests from *braceros* in the region — over unpaid wages, hazardous work conditions, and other forms of poor treatment and discrimination — combined with increasing costs of program participation led to the end of the *bracero* program in the Pacific Northwest after 1947. By that time, farmers had identified other, preferable sources of ethnic Mexican labor. They began to actively recruit Mexican American workers in Texas (and, to a lesser extent, in other states bordering Mexico). Hoping to avoid labor disputes and challenges like those experienced with *braceros*, farm owners and operators sought to recruit whole families. Many farmers believed that whole families, concerned with the daily survival of their younger and more vulnerable members, would be less likely than unaccompanied men to openly challenge work conditions and treatment.¹² Beginning in the late 1940s, Tejano families worked and resided annually for several months during harvesting seasons at camps established by farmers on their properties. Oregon farm owners used their political and economic clout to curtail legal forms of labor organizing and protest, persuading the state legislature to pass a law that severely limited the legal right of workers to picket farms in 1961. Some even resorted to extralegal means to recruit and maintain workers.¹³

Despite the efforts of farm owners and operators to obtain labor at the cheapest possible rates and curtail the rights of those workers to agitate for better conditions, for some families Oregon was better — or less bad — than other places they had worked and resided. An example of this experience is related in Jerry Garcia's introduction to the volume *Memory, Community, and Activism: Mexican Migration and Labor in the Pacific Northwest*. Garcia had conducted interviews with many of his relatives:

A common theme emanating from these interviews was the wish to flee the Southwest for a better life in the Northwest. The reality of fleeing for my grandparents and their sons and daughters (my father) was a better wage and a sense of relief from the intense racism and discrimination of the Southwest, Texas in particular.¹⁴

All three Tejano narrators interviewed for this project experienced significant hardships and combated structures of cultural and ethnic discrimination in Oregon, but their struggles were not against a long-established system of social segregation and systematic intimidation like the one that prevailed in Texas.¹⁵ As a child, Gamboa migrated seasonally with his family for farm work, and later, he described some of the factors that made the state favorable to migrants: “Oregon was particularly attractive due to its lush vegetation and — because we were heavy consumers — to the absence of a sales tax. Moreover, when we were *needed*, and in comparison to residents of Texas and other states, Oregonians treated us surprisingly well.”¹⁶ Pay for Oregon farm laborers averaged \$1.12 per hour in 1959, second only to Washington state’s \$1.21 average and well above the national average of 73 cents per hour.¹⁷

While wages and social conditions may have compared favorably to Texas, life in Washington County was far from easy for the first Tejano families. Sanchez spoke about the disappointment and poor living conditions that her family discovered there in the 1960s:

In Oregon, the propaganda when the farmers go to Texas is you’ve got washing machines, you’ve got toilets, you’ve got beautiful cabins, the scenery and everything. And we got here and it was one room. One room and it has to be about the size of this kitchen [approximately twenty feet by twelve feet]. . . . You have a stove in the corner and you have two bunk beds over on the other corner and you have toilets also that you have to go out and walk. And the washing machines were of course the ringer washers. . . . The only heat you have is from the stove.¹⁸

Tejano narrators and their families found that living and working conditions were not as recruiters had promised in Texas.¹⁹

Seasonal farm work was no easier in Washington County than anywhere else. Hinojosa recalled working full days in the county at age twelve, doing “really hard labor to earn a day’s wages. . . . Crawling on your knees in the mud or dry conditions in the sun. Back then you didn’t have any of the conditions that are required today by OSEA [Oregon Safe Employment Act] or Department of Health. They didn’t have running water. They didn’t have utilities. I mean you went behind a bush.”²⁰ Hernandez Schofield also worked in the fields as a child when not taking care of her younger brother, and “there was no such thing as staying back because you’re sick. If you’re sick you’re still out there and picking as much as you could.”²¹ These migrant laborers had little choice but to work in the most trying circumstances and punishing conditions.

For many reasons, families abandoned the cycle of migratory labor and settled in Washington County on a permanent basis, a move that allowed most to eventually transition out of grueling agricultural work. Hinojosa and his siblings helped convince their parents to stay:



Courtesy of Hector Hinojosa

Hector Hinojosa (second from the left) and his cousin (left) and brothers (right and second from the right) pick cucumbers in the 1960s. Hinojosa and his family settled in Washington County in 1962.

Of course we loved the beauty and the green. So it was more the family, us kids who didn't want to go back. Mom and dad wanted to continue to migrate back and forth and we just fell in love with Oregon and basically boycotted mom and dad and said, "No, we don't want to go back. This is where we want to stay."²²

Oregon may have had its comparative advantages to Texas and other states, but circumstances beyond families' control also compelled or outright forced some to stay. Sanchez noted the importance of keeping her children continually enrolled in one school system in her decision to remain in Oregon, because academic disruptions due to constant relocation had forced her oldest son to repeat the first grade. Struggling to survive on agricultural work, for inadequate wages, some families found themselves stuck in Washington County after the end of a growing season. Sanchez also explained that her family stayed in Oregon because they were unable to pay travel costs associated with seasonal migration: "we didn't make enough money to go anywhere that year."²³

Until the first permanently settled Tejano families began reaching out to one another in the 1960s, Washington County lacked established Spanish-speaking communities. When the Hernandez family purchased a home in



Ene delia Hernandez Schofield, the small girl on the left in both photos, poses for photographs in 1965 with her siblings and parents, Emilio and Hortencia Hernandez, at Rainer’s camp in Forest Grove. Emilio and Hortencia, often assisted by their children, were instrumental in the establishment of Latino community organizations.

Forest Grove in 1967, a television news crew was sent to report. The reporter did not welcome or speak with the Hernandez family, but instead asked the neighbors how they felt about living next to a family of ethnic Mexicans.²⁴ Sanchez mentioned the scarcity of other Latino families residing in the area at that time: “We were just a few of us and I think the only place we got together was if we had dances or community events . . . we really did try and stay with each other in order to have that cultural base that you long for.”²⁵ Families found community building imperative as they struggled to retain their culture while living alongside a population largely unfamiliar with, and often hostile or unsympathetic toward, ethnic Mexicans and other Latinos.

Hinojosa and Hernandez Schofield experienced difficulties in school during the late 1960s and 1970s. Hinojosa remembered that there was only one other Latino student when he first attended J.W. Poynter Middle School.²⁶ The number of Latino families and students gradually increased during the latter half of the 1960s, but school policies were far from accommodating. Hinojosa was forced to speak only in English while at Hillsboro High School: “When you’re denied your language, your heritage . . . it is a blow to who you are as an individual.”²⁷ Although he had a working command of English by the time he entered high school, it was still his second language. Lacking the opportunity for specialized linguistic instruction, he continued to find certain aspects of comprehension challenging. Hinojosa would

often have to leave school to interpret for his parents, for “everything from banking to a doctor’s visit to the mechanic’s shop. . . . Things that my white friends, European Americans, didn’t have to deal with those issues, I did at home.”²⁸ During his sophomore year, he lost credit for all the year’s courses for exceeding the number of permissible absences, making an on-time graduation impossible. Hinojosa dropped out and began working full-time to help financially support the family.²⁹ Through hard work and financial sacrifices, Hernandez Schofield’s parents were able to send their children to St. Anthony’s, a small private Catholic school. After her elementary years, Hernandez Schofield attended the public Neil Armstrong Middle School in Forest Grove. An incident there forced her to realize that she was not being treated the same as other students: “I was in the highest math class. And the teacher at that time was like, ‘What are you doing in this class? You’re Mexican, you shouldn’t be here.’ And it was kind of that wake-up call of, *oh somebody sees me as somebody different.*” That teacher later forced Hernandez Schofield to retake a math test multiple times, not believing that she could have done so well without cheating.³⁰

While these narrators confronted challenges at school, they and their families also undertook community-building efforts and fought to secure their legal rights. The national Chicano Movement of the late 1960s and 1970s influenced and furthered their efforts. Latinos in Washington County and elsewhere in the Willamette Valley became aware of and inspired by activism in the states bordering Mexico and in Colorado, which hosted large and long-established ethnic Mexican populations, through the media and by interacting directly with activists. In *Sonny Montes and Mexican American Activism in Oregon*, May described how Montes and his colleagues became inspired and brought a more focused Chicano activist spirit back to the Willamette Valley after they attended a 1969 conference in Los Gatos, California, and learned about the tactics employed by key activist organizations involved with the movement.³¹ Local activism and state and federally funded programs opened new educational, vocational, and career avenues for Latinos in Washington County.

Federal funding through the War on Poverty programs of the Lyndon B. Johnson presidential administration helped fuel Chicano Movement goals to honor and promote Latino cultures and educational opportunities and to improve the working and living conditions of seasonal migrants. Tom Current, a Euro-American man who had long been sympathetic to migrant workers, persuaded other allies in the upper Willamette Valley to help create an organization to assist workers and their families. Their efforts resulted in the formation of the Valley Migrant League (VML), which received an initial War on Poverty grant of \$681,000 from the Office of Economic Opportunity

(OEO) in March 1965. The VML originally had five area offices or “opportunity centers” in the Upper Willamette Valley: Woodburn, Independence, Stayton, Dayton, and — for Washington County — Hillsboro.³² The OEO created national programs such as Job Corps, which offered vocational training to poor young adults, and Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), which sent volunteers to marginalized communities. The first VISTA volunteers arrived in Oregon in June 1965, and the OEO assigned forty-six of them to the VML.³³

VML Hillsboro area director Ruby Ely favored direct action and intervention on behalf of migrant workers. She also wanted to give current and former migrants more power in the organization’s decision-making process. She brought in two men studying at the Mt. Angel Seminary in Marion County to work with her at the Hillsboro center: José Jaime, originally from Mexico, and Jose Garcia, originally from California. Jaime and Garcia began to work with twelve ethnic Mexican families, including the Hernandez and Hinojosa families, in Washington County who had begun work to create better opportunities for county Latinos. Garcia, Jaime, and the families created *Los Amigos Club* in 1966 to help community members purchase homes or deal with costs associated with the death of a family member or other emergencies. Garcia hired Sonny Montes to work as a program aide at the VML’s Hillsboro center. The Texas-born Montes had relocated to Oregon earlier that year to work at a farm in Cornelius where his wife’s brother was a supervisor. Hardworking and charismatic, Montes quickly rose through the ranks of the VML.³⁴

While Ely was realizing gains in Washington County, her approach clashed with VML board members, who were mostly well-off Euro-Americans. Twelve of the forty board members were farm owners in 1965, and they had their own interests at heart even while advocating for better conditions for migrants.³⁵ Farm owners involved with the VML did not necessarily care deeply about improving the lives of migrant workers, because they supported a program that would attract more and “better” workers whose labor could increase their profits.³⁶ Ely’s migrant-worker advocacy resulted in her firing in 1966, and many of the staff of the Hillsboro opportunity center left the VML to start a new organization in Washington County with her. Emilio Hernandez (Enedelia’s father) turned down an offer to continue to work with the VML to join Ely and others in creating Volunteers in Vanguard Action (VIVA) and became the director of the new organization. As described by Hernandez, the VML of 1966 was not truly concerned about farm workers: “It was allright [*sic*] to be helped while we were here so long as we left after the season was over — that’s what it seemed like they were saying. I felt that was a form of discrimination and I told the VML not to count on me for anything.”³⁷

After the split from the VML and the creation of VIVA, Garcia temporarily assumed Ely’s role of Hillsboro area director before returning to

California. John Little was then hired to fill Garcia's position.³⁸ Little and Montes believed that the VML was not sufficiently honoring the needs and input of farmworkers, and they worked to transform its leadership structure. Once Little became the organization's executive director and Montes became the director of the Hillsboro and then the Woodburn center, in 1968, the two helped transform the VML into an organization largely governed by farmworkers. Changes did not take place without internal tension and conflict; many of those within the VML's power structure reacted negatively to losing control over the organization. May called the 1968 transfer of power "a seminal event in the emergence of a Chicano movement in Oregon."³⁹ The VML was restructured to support migrant-driven initiatives, its power structure transformed from within by Montes, Little, and their allies.

At VIVA in Washington County, Ely, Hernandez, and others combined their passion for helping migrant farmworkers with their experiences from participation with the VML.⁴⁰ VIVA did not receive the federal funding that fueled the VML, but its members and allies, through monetary contributions and long hours of work, helped improve the opportunities of migrant families and those attempting to transition from migrant life into permanent residence in Washington County. VIVA members used their own cars to help migrants looking to settle find permanent residences and jobs.⁴¹ Working with Guadalupe Bustos, another important county activist, VIVA was instrumental in the establishment of a co-op gas station in Hillsboro, where Hinojosa worked as a manager after dropping out of Hillsboro High School.⁴² VISTA volunteers worked with VIVA and provided community members with important training.⁴³ Hinojosa recalled their contributions:

They helped us with skills on community organizing. They brought bookkeeping and accounting to the table. They brought management skills to the table. They were able to teach us these skills that we needed. Very few of us were bilingual and so we needed, those people needed to be bilingual as well.⁴⁴

Some of the VISTA volunteers became long-term residents of the area and continued working with the community.⁴⁵

At age sixteen, Hinojosa returned to school through the Portland Job Corps, the local arm of the national organization established through the OEO, to receive vocational training and pass his General Educational Development tests (GED). Hinojosa later was appointed by Gov. Tom McCall as a delegate to the White House Conference on Youth, convened by President Richard M. Nixon in 1971. Impressed with his abilities and his work ethic, Job Corps offered Hinojosa a scholarship to attend Portland State University to focus on guidance and counseling. Hinojosa balanced his studies there with part-time work as a counselor for Job Corps.⁴⁶



Emilio Hernandez became director of Volunteers in Vanguard Action (VIVA) in Washington County in 1966. In this undated photograph, he and Hortencia Hernandez work on a quilt for migrant workers.

The 1970s, which saw the three Tejano narrators continue with their formal education and begin careers, also saw the founding of two institutions that would have lasting importance for the county's Latino population: Centro Cultural of Washington County and the Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center. In the mid 1960s, the Hernandez family, the Hinojosa family, and other members of *Los Amigos Club* had begun to plan and raise funds for an educational and cultural center for the ethnic Mexican families of the county. Their aims were realized with the opening of Centro Cultural of Washington County in 1972 in Cornelius.⁴⁷ According to historian Gilberto Garcia, the establishment of centers like Centro Cultural of Washington County and Woodburn's Centro Chicano Cultural were integral goals for activists in Oregon.⁴⁸ Centro Cultural of Washington County would play a number of vital roles for the county's Latinos, providing educational, cul-

tural, and vocational opportunities and serving to organize and promote community interests.

Hinojosa and his parents were heavily involved in the efforts to create Centro Cultural “from fundraising to literally going out and looking for the property . . . sitting on the board, first board of directors.”⁴⁹ Members would hold dances or dinners to raise money for Centro. Emilio and Tencha Hernandez, in addition to helping migrants through VIVA, working to make ends meet, and taking care of their children, fundraised for the center and volunteered their time there.⁵⁰ Hinojosa described Centro as “a place to go and learn and appreciate our culture . . . we had a resource center with books, films, tapes, videotapes, as well as audiotapes of presentations.”⁵¹ At the time that Centro was established, there were few other outlets for Mexican American culture or food in the area. Hernandez Schofield explained:

My kids . . . can go to the Mexican aisle. . . . They can get on the internet and listen to music and they can listen to different genres. We didn’t have that and so my parents really had to work at getting that. And I think that that’s why Centro Cultural was so important because it would be a place where you could come and share what music you wanted to hear, what food you wanted to eat and stories that you had in common about going back to Texas.⁵²

Centro Cultural helped Latino families feel connected with their home communities and cultures of Texas or other regions.

Centro Cultural also provided tangible resources and an organized unity among Latino community members that assisted in the process of forming other social service and aid organizations. In 1975, Virginia García, the six-year-old daughter of a migrant family, died from septicemia, a viral blood disease, caused by an infection from stepping on a rusty nail. At the hospital, her parents had not been given instructions in Spanish on how and when to give her medicine to fight the infection. Before eventually being treated at St. Vincent Hospital, García had been denied treatment at a community hospital for lack of health insurance. The incident called attention to the need for appropriate medical treatment for Spanish speakers and for those without insurance or money to pay hospital bills.⁵³ Members of Centro Cultural decided to set aside for a health clinic space that had been intended for training mechanics. Hinojosa recalled:

Within that old two-story house in the garage where we originally had plans to start vocational training [that plan] was to put to a halt, and in that garage we put in a clinic. A triage clinic, if you can imagine that with services from people [medical providers] from St. Vincent de Paul who volunteered to come out . . . and help us with medical issues.⁵⁴

With support from St. Vincent Hospital and Tuality Community Hospital, Centro Cultural established the Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center,



The Flor y Canto was one of Centro Cultural’s first events. Hortencia “Tencha” Hernandez made all the dresses worn by the young women, including Enedelia’s (second from the left).

which began operations just weeks after García’s death.⁵⁵ As with Centro Cultural, volunteer efforts by both Latinos and non-Latino allies kept the center going through tough times. The center grew from a clinic inside the converted mechanic’s garage in the mid 1970s to a hospital-sized facility with multiple satellite locations, and as of 2014, was serving more than 35,000 patients annually.⁵⁶

The 1970s also saw Mt. Angel College restructured and renamed as Colegio Cesar Chavez, the first accredited higher education institution tailored to the needs of Latinos. Located in Marion County’s Mt. Angel about forty-five miles south-southeast of Hillsboro, the college had direct and immediate as well as broad and long-lasting influence on Latino education across the region. Montes left the VML in 1971 to begin work at Mt. Angel College, recruiting Mexican American students. The college was already in deep financial trouble when he arrived.⁵⁷ By late 1973, faced with growing debts and insufficient enrollment numbers, the closure of Mt. Angel College seemed imminent. Montes and other recently hired Mexican Americans convinced the school’s board of directors to give them the opportunity to repurpose the institution and its facilities to create a college tailored to the

needs of Mexican American students.⁵⁸ Montes and his colleagues assumed the most important administrative positions and soon changed the institution's name to Colegio Cesar Chavez. The administration took on the challenges of reworking the curriculum, attracting a student body composed mainly of Mexican Americans, bringing in faculty members, regaining accreditation status (which was temporarily achieved), and addressing the pressing debt situation inherited from the Mt. Angel administration.⁵⁹

Colegio Cesar Chavez provided work and educational opportunities for Latinos from Washington County and elsewhere in the state. Sanchez earned a Bachelor of Arts with a major in psychology from the Colegio in 1978, when she was in her mid-thirties. While attending Colegio, which offered evening classes and accommodated busy schedules, she balanced her coursework with working and raising her children as a single mother. She shared her impressions of Colegio Cesar Chavez:



Centro Cultural Photography Collection

People gather outside the Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center in about 1981. From its humble beginnings in a hastily converted garage in 1975, the organization has expanded to multiple locations to serve thousands of migrants and other marginalized individuals, offering culturally and linguistically appropriate care in Washington and Yamhill counties.

It was a beautiful experience. . . . When you go to most colleges there's already preconceived ideas about who you are and they're usually not very positive about the Mexican people. . . . [At Colegio] you could get to talk the language and you get to be with instructors that were Hispanic too. So there's a connection and that connection was important.⁶⁰

With instructors and curriculum that honored the Spanish language and Latino cultures, and with flexible course scheduling and credit options, Colegio Cesar Chavez provided Sanchez with a welcoming atmosphere and the means to further her career. Hinojosa worked as a recruiter at the school for a year. "For the first time to be in a classroom where it's okay, not is it just okay for you to be who you are but encouraged to express it in literature and in art form" was especially valuable for Hinojosa, who painfully recalled being forbidden to speak Spanish and express his cultural identity in middle school and high school.⁶¹

According to Sifuentez, Colegio Cesar Chavez also "proved to be a launching pad for numerous activists and grassroots organizations."⁶² The school brought together like-minded individuals and provided them with opportunities to further their activism. Cipriano Ferrel, a student at the college, worked with Larry Kleinman, who was originally from a Chicago suburb and had arrived in the Pacific Northwest with the VISTA program, to create an organization that would provide resources for undocumented immigrants and cut down on deportation rates in the region. With the help of other allies, Ferrel and Kleinman founded the Willamette Valley Immigration Project (WVIP) in 1977. The founders and WVIP supporters created *Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste* (PCUN), or Northwest Treeplanters and Farmworkers United, in 1985 as a union for farmworkers and forest workers in the Willamette Valley. Through labor and community organizing, PCUN improved life opportunities for its thousands of members, overwhelmingly immigrants from Mexico and Central America.⁶³

Colegio Cesar Chavez had a profound impact on the educational opportunities for Tejanos and other Latinos from Oregon and beyond, but its successes as an accredited college were short-lived. The college faced an uphill financial battle from the beginning, and college administrators clashed with U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) officials, who were highly skeptical of the Colegio's plans to repay loans for campus facilities and showed little flexibility in negotiating a payment schedule. Administrators fought to achieve accreditation status, struggling against the strict rules and imposed delays of the procedures of the Northwest Association's Commission on Colleges and the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, from which they earned and then ultimately lost conditional accreditation status. A vicious cycle of debt and accreditation woes, com-

pounded by poor record keeping that dated from the previous Mt. Angel administration, and intensifying administrative conflict eventually doomed the college. The final classes were offered in the spring of 1982 and, several years later, HUD moved to foreclose on the campus.⁶⁴

Even as Hinojosa lamented the demise of the Colegio Cesar Chavez, he spoke about the long-lasting influence of the organization:

The folks that were there and left went off to other institutions . . . including U of O [University of Oregon], Portland State [University]. Two of the folks just retired from Portland State that were back in Colegio Cesar Chavez's day. They ended up [in] Portland Public Schools. Sonny Montes ended up there. He was president and one of the co-founders, Jose Romero just retired from migrant education. So it created leadership and it split other people off into other institutions and took hold in other locations.⁶⁵

Tejanos and other Oregon Latinos who had been administrators, faculty members, recruiters, and students at Colegio Cesar Chavez continued to draw on the knowledge and experiences they gained during their time there as they transitioned into new professional roles.

After working at Colegio Cesar Chavez, Hinojosa continued his career in the private sector, a move that reflected the effects that federal funding cuts were having on social service organizations. He found work in Salem, Oregon, at the Dole mushroom division of Castle & Cooke in labor relations, negotiating with powerful individuals such as State Senator L.B. Day on behalf of the company. He was later promoted to Castle & Cooke's corporate headquarters in San Francisco. The former migrant worker who had been forced to drop out of high school was now representing a multinational agricultural company in its dealings with agricultural workers and their unions, negotiating directly with leaders such as César Chávez and Dolores Huerta.⁶⁶

Hinojosa's transition to the private sector was successful, and he believed his skills and activist background enabled him to work in a manner that was advantageous to both his employer and the worker unions with whom he negotiated. The shifting social and political climate that prompted his transition, however, did not bode well for the Chicano Movement. "As the rules for funding social programs changed," Gamboa wrote of developments in Oregon, "Mexican Americans were caught unprepared. Anglos were also critical of the various programs that had been developed during the 1960s and 70s."⁶⁷ Despite the successful formation of PCUN, which would eventually organize thousands of workers, cuts and challenges to social programs that began in the mid 1970s were significant. Gamboa concluded that "by the 1980s . . . El Movimiento in Oregon had come and gone."⁶⁸ In 1974, for example, Valley Migrant League reorganized as Oregon Rural Opportunities



Students attend the first graduation ceremony at Colegio Cesar Chavez on June 30, 1977. Although the college was designed to meet the needs of Latinos, the student body and faculty welcomed the handful of students from other ethnic backgrounds who also decided to attend.

(ORO). In 1976, the U.S. Department of Labor cut its funding for ORO.⁶⁹ The state assumed responsibility for the project, but it was not able to match the previous level of financial support and immediately moved to close some of the program's service centers; the center in Hillsboro was the first to shut its doors. ORO ceased operations by the end of the decade.⁷⁰

As mainstream educational institutions recognized the need to address the demands that the movement presented, some Oregon Latino activists and leaders found work there. That transition required some adjustments. After leaving Colegio Cesar Chavez, for example, Montes "had to adopt an essentially assimilationist stance" in his subsequent work with the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Interface Consultants, and Portland Public Schools.⁷¹ While many community leaders modified their attitudes and goals, their work to improve opportunities for Latinos continued. By the late 1970s, social service organizations and other resources were available in Washington County that had not existed a decade before. Some of these organizations expanded their services even as state and federal funding prospects declined.

The need for such organizations persisted. Tensions remained and in some cases intensified between Latinos and Euro-Americans in Washington County. In 1977 (the year before she finished her degree at Colegio Cesar Chavez), Sanchez took action to stop the abuses that her younger brothers suffered in the Forest Grove School District. She and several Latino parents filed a complaint with the state superintendent's office alleging poor treatment of migrant and Latino children by teachers and other students. The families had to proceed cautiously with their complaint, which eventually led to an investigation and the implementation of multicultural training for teachers. "It was a long, drawn-out process and at times hostile on the part of the Forest Grove community. We were afraid to complain because it was at a time when there were few Hispanics in [the] area. It took a lot of organizing and [was] time consuming."⁷² The processes was slow and cautious, in part because of Washington County's relatively small Latino population compared to its Euro-American population.

In the same year that Sanchez and parents of other students filed their complaint against the Forest Grove School District, Hernandez Schofield graduated from Forest Grove High School.⁷³ She had continued to experience discrimination as a teenager: "Oregon, it was still very lily white and so it was that kind of like 'we don't really talk about that. We're color-blind. We love all. Everybody's okay. Until you're dating my son . . . or until you're coming to my house."⁷⁴ Despite her stellar academic record and strong interest in attending college, Hernandez Schofield received no counseling or advice from the school on how to pursue higher education. She reflected on how her gender might also have influenced the school's failure to prepare her for college: "I look back through the lenses [of] that time and I wonder what kind of supports there were for women in sports, women going to college — just the gender issue in conjunction with the race and ethnicity."⁷⁵ Through personal determination and the encouragement of her parents, Hernandez Schofield enrolled in Forest Grove's Pacific University after graduating from high school.

With its ethnically diverse faculty and student body, she found an atmosphere at Pacific that was inclusive and supportive:

I had professors that were multicultural professors. . . . I always felt like they were making sure that I would succeed. And it was also a time when I was able to really embrace my ethnicity. . . . That time was really a learning opportunity and a journey for myself to get to know who I was and who I wanted to be.⁷⁶

Nevertheless, her path through college was not easy. She credited her parents for encouraging her to pursue her goals: "They would say, 'You can do anything you want. You can go to college.'"⁷⁷ Although their encouragement meant a lot to her, neither Emilio nor Tencha had completed many formal

years of education; they could not guide her through the higher education process. Hernandez Schofield had to figure out how to succeed in college, and she had to do so while maintaining the perfect 4.0 grade point average that was necessary to keep her scholarship and while working as a bus driver and as an assistant at Echo Shaw Elementary. "Sometimes I talk to friends who went to OSU [Oregon State University], U of O, or other places and the fun things they got to do, I never experienced it. I mean I was in books, at work, that's all I could do."⁷⁸ Hernandez Schofield earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from Pacific University in 1981. She went on to earn a Doctorate of Jurisprudence from the Lewis and Clark School of Law in 1985 and a Master of Arts Degree through Portland State University's Portland Public School Administrative Program in 1991.⁷⁹

After 1970, immigrants from Mexico and Central America comprised an increasingly larger proportion of new Latino arrivals, some working and residing seasonally and some, especially those who had previously spent time in Washington County, working and residing year-round there. The early Tejano settling families, who had comparatively more in common with one another, found that differences of linguistic proficiency, nationality, and cultural practices distinguished them from those newer immigrant Latinos.

In the article "Festejando Community: Celebrating Fiesta Mexicana in Woodburn, Oregon," Elizabeth Flores noted in Woodburn that Tejanos generally liked Tex Mex music and baseball, while Mexican immigrants favored mariachi and *banda* music and soccer.⁸⁰ While they had comparable migration experiences and struggled against similar societal prejudices, Tejanos and Mexican immigrants each distinguished themselves from the other group with unique cultural practices and preferences. Differences of opportunity also existed between the two groups; compared to newly arriving immigrants, Tejanos were relatively better off, as they had been settled longer in Washington County, generally had a better command of English, and had higher rates of U.S. citizenship.

These tensions are documented elsewhere as well. Writing about dance halls as spaces for Latino socialization in Ontario, in eastern Oregon, Sifuentez noted the tension that existed between different groups. Many Mexican immigrants did not like the Tejano music that was played at the dance halls and stayed away. Sifuentez suggested that the relatively low number of Mexican immigrants that attended the events minimized instances of overt conflict between the two groups.⁸¹ In Gonzales-Berry and Mendoza's *Mexicanos in Oregon*, Lorenzo Rubio, who began working with a radio station in Hillsboro that served the Spanish-speaking population in the early 1970s, recalled "the new immigrants were coming to Oregon, mostly Mexicans and Central Americans, and they saw the Texans. Those guys didn't like



Blanca Hernandez (left) is pictured here with her daughter and Sister Ina Nosack in the mid 1980s. Hernandez’s husband had been working seasonally in Oregon and brought his family to stay year-round just a few months before this baby was born. Nosack assisted their transition and has maintained a friendship with the family.

the Tejanos because they didn’t speak Spanish well. The Tejanos didn’t like those people because they were always trying to correct them.”⁸² As Nosack observed during her work in the 1980s and 1990s, some Mexican American supervisors of migrant farm camps did not respect the immigrant workers and abused their power. Their actions echoed the poor treatment that they or their family members had experienced from farm owners, operators, and recruiters when they were seasonal migrants: “Whoever was in charge of the whole camp was the one who would take advantage of them terribly. To mail a letter they would charge them five dollars sometimes. . . . If they got groceries for them, everything, everything was overcharged and put on their bill at the end of the month.”⁸³ Sanchez spoke about conflict between Mexican immigrants and those born in the United States. She recalled a visit to Mexico when she helped a woman learn a few words of English



Pictured here from left to right are Mrs. Rios, Mrs. Godinez, Hortencia Hernandez, and Mrs. Hinojosa at the Centro Cultural serving window. Centro frequently hosted fundraising dinners and other meals for community events. Preparing food was a vital and respected service at Centro Cultural.

at the airport. “She says, ‘You know we have this myth about people from the U.S. that are Mexican, that they’re not very friendly and so I’m just surprised that you’re so nice.’” She noted also that such tension between the two groups developed in Washington County and occasionally escalated to violent conflict.⁸⁴

Although there was conflict among Latinos in Washington County, the narrators and other families who helped build Centro Cultural and served in positions of community leadership welcomed new arrivals and worked to create an inclusive atmosphere.⁸⁵ When asked if he thought there was an essential cultural division between Mexican nationals and Mexican Americans in Washington County, Villaseñor, a Mexican immigrant who was working as an instructor of math, computer, and food service business courses at Adelante Mujeres, replied:

The families that founded Centro Cultural are from Texas. Some of them, and I met them before, and they were working here. They were the first Latinos here in the area. . . . They

founded Centro Cultural because they needed a place for newcomers. And so I don't think so. It wasn't really a big problem with them.⁸⁶

Some Tejanos abused their privileges, and some immigrants lashed back out of fear or frustration. Tejanos in positions of community leadership, however, worked to create a more diverse and inclusive Latino community. Sanchez, the Hernandez family, and the Hinojosa family worked hard to assist immigrants and other community residents.

Hernandez Schofield's parents believed strongly in the importance of creating community. They recognized that the way new Latino immigrants were being treated had a bearing on their own opportunities. Improving the rights of, and respect for, immigrants served to improve how Euro-Americans perceived and treated all Latinos. They did not resent new arrivals, but welcomed them:

They wanted the best for us [their children] so them building that community allowed us to enter that in the future. . . . Every once in a while they would say, "remember that you may be judged by the color of your skin." So if I have somebody from Texas and you have somebody that's from Mexico and you have somebody that's from Nicaragua, at the end of the day if we're all brown looking, we're going to be perceived as however that person wants us to be perceived. So to them it was important that we did stick together in the sense of building a community because we really were a mix of that community in the brown skin that we are.⁸⁷

Shared experiences of mistreatment and the inclusive spirit of the Chicano Movement helped motivate Washington County community builders to welcome immigrants instead of seeking to differentiate themselves from them — as Mexican American leaders, largely well-off business owners and professionals who had never migrated for agricultural labor had done in many communities of the U.S. Southwest during the first half of the twentieth century.⁸⁸ Increasingly, new immigrants — such as Villaseñor — also began aiding the Latino population.

Because many members of the early Tejano families were U.S. citizens, had some level of familiarity with English-speaking U.S. culture, had settled and adjusted to life in Washington County, and had worked to organize and strengthen their community, they were well equipped to continue to assume positions of leadership and influence as immigrants from Mexico — and, to a lesser extent, Central America — made up an increasing share of this population after 1970.

After graduating from Colegio Cesar Chavez in 1978, Evangelina Sanchez began working at the Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center, first as a receptionist and then with the parenting project: "I liked that because you get to train parents in parenting and stuff like that; doing social work

— visiting with the families.”⁸⁹ Reflecting on her work with the clinic and its impact on the community, Sanchez added, “it’s kind of [got a] special place in my heart. . . . I have a lot of feelings about how many families that place helped when I was there.”⁹⁰ Before working at the health center and while taking classes at Centro, Sanchez worked with the Migrant Education Program as a home-school counselor. She later worked with Latino families as a social service specialist for the state of Oregon. She and another worker created education and treatment programs in Spanish to help prevent child and spousal abuse. At the time of our interview, Sanchez was teaching a class in Spanish for Latino foster parents through Portland State University.⁹¹

After working as a counselor for Job Corps while studying at Portland State University, Hinojosa worked as a counselor at Forest Grove High School and helped prevent Latino and economically disadvantaged students of other ethnic backgrounds from dropping out of school. He then worked for the University of Oregon in a program that enabled high school dropouts to quickly pass their GEDs and subsequently encouraged them to pursue university studies. After negotiating with workers as a representative of agricultural corporations, he worked independently as a consultant to help companies implement culturally and linguistically sensitive policies. He worked in California for a number of years, but eventually returned to Washington County in 1995. He continued his consulting work as he helped care for his father, who later passed away from cancer.⁹²

Hernandez Schofield, who completed her Master of Arts in 1991 through Portland State University’s Portland Public Schools Administrative Program, applied the lessons of her struggles in Washington County schools to the challenges facing English as a Second Language (ESL) and minority students. She became the first Latina principal of an Oregon public school in 1993, when she started at Echo Shaw Elementary in Cornelius. At that school, 80 percent of students spoke Spanish as their first language and many came from impoverished families. Hernandez Schofield created tutoring and second-language programs. Due in part to her efforts, by 1999, “93 percent of Echo Shaw students met the state’s reading standards and 80 percent met math standards.”⁹³ Students were performing so well that some individuals believed Echo Shaw administrators had fabricated test results — an allegation reminiscent of the accusations of cheating that Hernandez Schofield faced in middle school. In 2002, she was appointed to President George W. Bush’s Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, a seventeen-member group tasked with identifying ways to erase the gap between Euro-American and Latino students on standardized achievement tests. At the time of our interview, she was the principal of Butternut Creek Elementary School in Aloha.⁹⁴

By the 1990s and 2000s, new arrivals found a host of opportunities that had not existed for Latinos in decades past. Those resources did not erase the longstanding problems of social discrimination, economic marginalization, and mistreatment in the workplace, but they provided seasonal migrants as well as new and long-settled residents with methods for confronting these problems.

In 1999, Clackamas County Circuit Judge Deanne Darling commented on Washington County's wealth of resources for its Spanish-speaking population in comparison to her own county. "It was amazing. . . . They just had unlimited resources." Some Clackamas County caseworkers turned to Washington County to find bilingual foster parents or other resources for their Latino residents.⁹⁵ Villaseñor volunteered and then worked at Centro Cultural teaching computer, math, and Spanish classes before moving on to other career roles and eventually working for Adelante Mujeres. In describing community opportunities for Latinos, he cited the two organizations that had been established largely through the efforts of the early Tejano families: "Cornelius is a thriving community. You can see the change in just ten years. We have Centro Cultural growing, a new expansion of the Virginia Garcia Clinic, and more people to serve Latinos there."⁹⁶

The early efforts of Tejano families to build and organize community produced long-lasting benefits for Washington County Latinos. The existence of Centro Cultural and Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center enabled and encouraged Latinos and their allies to establish other organizations, such as Adelante Mujeres, founded in 2002 to provide opportunities specifically for low-income Latinas (women) and their families by addressing specific gaps in serving the Latino population. That most of the Mexican-born narrators I interviewed benefitted directly from this support system, or saw the importance of it, testifies to the ongoing impact of community-based efforts to help other Latinos that began in the late 1960s. Most Mexican-born narrators mentioned Centro Cultural as an organization that played a role in their lives. Through hosting celebrations, providing vocational training, and offering basic material assistance, Centro Cultural supported Mexican and other Latino immigrants.⁹⁷

Immigrants contributed heavily to the rapid growth of the county's Latino population. At the time of the interviews and my research in 2013, community did not exist in the tight-knit way that characterized the relationships among the first settler families of the 1960s, but long-settled and newly arriving Latinos benefitted in different ways from the presence of each other.⁹⁸ New immigrants influenced cultural replenishment among the Spanish-speaking population. By actively practicing the cultures of their home communities, new arrivals encouraged settled Latinos to further honor their own identities.



Centro Cultural is shown here in the 2000s. Centro continues to honor the community-building values of its Tejano founders. It provides a number of social, vocational, and educational services for Latinos as well as opportunities for cross-cultural exchange with non Latinos.

For Hinojosa, the continuing influx of seasonally migrating and permanently settling people from Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America offered him, other residents, and subsequent generations of ethnic Mexicans and other Latinos the opportunity to remain in touch with their ancestral cultures and language, and also offered a defense against forced assimilation. “It’s going to be more difficult to assimilate over years because it’s constantly being renewed by having Mexico as a border. . . . They’re coming in and replenishing our values.”⁹⁹ Although the cultural practices that Latino immigrants brought with them varied by region and nation and continued to change over time, Hinojosa could relate to the language and to broad cultural elements that he shared with Spanish-speaking arrivals. Their presence and their freshly transplanted cultural practices encouraged him to further honor his own identity and the culture specific to his family and region of origin.

The impact of the Tejano settlers extended beyond the organizations that they established in the 1970s. The experiences of Mexican immigrant narrators in Washington County schools in the 2000s compared favorably

to the school experiences of the Tejano narrators in the 1960s and 1970s.¹⁰⁰ A social climate encouraging greater acceptance of and respect for students of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds was brought about in part by actions like those of Evangelina Sanchez and other parents who weathered the backlash of some Euro-American residents in order to combat discrimination at Forest Grove schools.¹⁰¹ Hinojosa helped Latino and other disadvantaged youth obtain GEDs, graduate from high school, and pursue college education. He also worked to help universities and businesses adopt more culturally and linguistically sensitive policies. As an elementary school principal, Hernandez Schofield encouraged the success of Latino and other minority students. Sanchez continued to work with Latino families of diverse backgrounds. Immigrants benefitted directly from the material assistance provided by Centro Cultural, where all three Tejano narrators worked and volunteered. They helped bring about better treatment of, and respect for, ethnic Mexicans and other Latino migrants and immigrants.



Courtesy of Arturo Villaseñor

Arturo Villaseñor is interviewed by a reporter from Univision Portland (KUNP-TV) about the “Sabor Color” program, which was created in 2012 and provides Latino restaurant or food vendor entrepreneurs with commercial kitchen space to practice recipes. Villaseñor was an instructor for the program at Adelante Mujeres, and he and other Mexican immigrants have continued the work of early Tejano families to welcome and assist other Latinos.

Since its formation, Washington County's Latino community has been continually remade by successive waves of migrants and immigrants. By the early 1970s, the Latino population was no longer solely a tight-knit group of Tejano families, and subsequent decades saw that group become an increasingly smaller minority of the Latino population. The organizations those families established and the leadership and career paths and achievements of some of their members (the narrators involved in this project serving as only three such examples), however, continue to honor early community-building efforts. Tejano families built the nucleus of a permanent Latino community in Washington County, and Tejano community leaders fashioned a culture of mutual aid and a space for expressing identity and belonging that they opened to subsequent Latino arrivals. Their efforts and initiatives have aided newly arriving Latinos to Washington County and encouraged respect for and among the county's Latino residents.

NOTES

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1. The county's general population increased from 159,370 in 1970 to 531,610 in 2010 (334 percent). *2013 State Profile Oregon: State and County Projections to 2040*, Woods & Poole Economics (Washington D.C.: Woods & Poole Economics, 2013), 358; "Cornelius city, Oregon," U.S. Census Bureau, *2010 Census*, http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=DEC_10_DP_DPDP1 (accessed April 22, 2015). For a 2013 estimate of the nationalities of Latinos, which lists Mexicans as just over 81 percent of

the total Latino population, see "Hispanic or Latino Origin by Specific Origin: Washington County, Oregon. 2009–2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates," http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_13_5YR_B03001&prodType=table (accessed June 24, 2015).

2. It is important to note that most, but not all, people who identify as Tejano are U.S. citizens. Mario Jimenez Sifuentez II noted that his father was Mexican-born but identified as Tejano. See Mario Jimenez Sifuentez II, "By Forests or By Fields: Organizing Immigrant Labor in the Pacific Northwest, 1940–1990" (Ph.D. diss., Brown University, 2010).

3. Glenn Anthony May, *Sonny Montes and Mexican American Activism in Oregon* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2011); Sifuentez, "By Forests or By Fields."

4. Elizabeth Flores, "Festejando Community: Celebrating Fiesta Mexicana in Woodburn, Oregon," in *Chicanas and Chicanos in Contemporary Society*, Roberto M. De Anda, ed. (Lanham, Md.: Rowan and Littlefield Publishers, 2004), 145–53.

5. Lorenzo Rubio, "Testimonio," in Erlinda Gonzales-Berry and Marcela Mendoza, *Mexicanos in Oregon: Their Stories, Their Lives* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2010).
6. David Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican American, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).
7. Please see my thesis for more information about my methodology for, and process of, conducting oral history interviews, as well as an overview on existing scholarship on Pacific Northwest Latino history. Luke Sprunger, "'Del Campo Ya Pasamos a Otras Cosas' — From the Field We Move on to Other Things": Ethnic Mexican Narrators and Latino Community Histories in Washington County, Oregon" (M.A. thesis, Portland State University, 2014).
8. See Gilberto Garcia, "Past, Present, and Future Directions: Chicana/o Studies Research in the Pacific Northwest," in *Memory, Community, and Activism: Mexican Migration and Labor in the Pacific Northwest*, ed. Jerry Garcia and Gilberto Garcia (East Lansing, Mich.: Julian Samora Research Institute, 2005), 309–325; Carlos S. Maldonado and Gilberto Garcia, eds., *The Chicano Experience in the Northwest* (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall Hunt Publishing, 1995); and *Nosotros: The Hispanic People of Oregon. Essays and Recollections*, ed. Erasmo Gamboa and Carolyn M. Buan (Portland: Oregon State University Press, 1995).
9. Sifuentez, "By Forests or By Fields," 14.
10. When they were interviewed in summer 2013, all five narrators were living in Washington County: Hinojosa, Sanchez, and Hernandez Schofield in Hillsboro, Villaseñor in Forest Grove, and Nosack in Beaverton.
11. Erasmo Gamboa, *Mexican Labor and World War II: Braceros in the Pacific Northwest, 1942–1947* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), 38–43.
12. *Ibid.*, 38–39, 88, 126–127.
13. Gonzales-Berry and Mendoza, *Mexicanos in Oregon*, 62–65. On picket law, see also Harold Hughes, "Senate Votes to Restrict Farm Picketing," *Oregonian*, April 26, 1961, 9.
14. Garcia, "Introduction," in *Memory, Community, and Activism*, 7. For more on conditions for ethnic Mexicans in Texas, see Marc Rodriguez, *The Tejano Diaspora: Mexican Americanism and Ethnic Politics in Texas and Wisconsin* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011).
15. For recollections of discrimination in Washington County, see oral history interview with Evangelina Sanchez, August 2, 2013, Hillsboro, Ore.; oral history interview with Hector Hinojosa, July 29, 2013, Hillsboro, Ore.; oral history interview with Enedelia Hernandez Schofield, August 28, 2013, Portland, Ore.; interviews in author's possession and in the possession of the Washington County Museum.
16. Erasmo Gamboa, "Introduction," in *Nosotros*, 13. For more on discrimination and threatened and realized violence against and marginalization of ethnic Mexicans in Texas, see Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors*, 26; and Rodriguez, *The Tejano Diaspora*, 22, 53. For information on declining work opportunities in Texas for Mexican Americans in the early and mid twentieth century, see Gonzales-Berry and Mendoza, *Mexicanos in Oregon*, 54.
17. "'Forgotten' Million," *Oregonian*, November 4, 1959, p. 18.
18. Sanchez interview, August 2, 2013.
19. See Sanchez, Hinojosa, and Hernandez Schofield interviews.
20. Hinojosa interview, July 29, 2013.
21. Hernandez Schofield interview, August 28, 2013.
22. Hinojosa interview, July 29, 2013.
23. Sanchez interview, August 2, 2013. Utilizing the oral history interview she conducted with Lorenzo Rubio, Amie Thurber described how the Rubio family similarly ran out of funds to leave the county. Amie Thurber, "The History of the Latino People of Washington County: Weaving Community" (unpublished paper for Masters of Education Program, University of Montana, 2012), 11.
24. Amy Martinez Starke, "Life Story — Emilio Hernandez," *Oregonian*, February 11, 2007.
25. *Ibid.*
26. Angie Chuang, "Diversity Comes to Oregon," *Oregonian*, March 18, 2001, A01.

27. Hinojosa interview, July 29, 2013.
28. *Ibid.*, 6.
29. *Ibid.*, 5.
30. Hernandez Schofield interview, August 28, 2013, 3–6.
31. May, *Sonny Montes*, 106–10.
32. *Ibid.*, 47–49.
33. J. Blaine Schulz, “Oregon to Get Corps to Aid Farm Migrants,” *Oregonian*, March 20, 1965, 34. May, *Sonny Montes*, 49. During the first Clinton Administration, VISTA became part of the newly created AmeriCorps program.
34. May, *Sonny Montes*, 18; Gonzales-Berry and Mendoza, *Mexicans in Oregon*, 79.
35. “Social Agencies Crowd Field in Try to Aid Migrants,” *Oregonian*, September 19, 1965, 26.
36. Schulz, “Oregon to Get Corps to Aid Farm Migrants,” 1.
37. Emilio Hernandez as quoted in Robert Olmos, “Former Migrant Mexican Farmworker Seeks Means to Assist Other Seasonal Laborers,” *Oregonian*, May 22, 1967, 29.
38. May, *Sonny Montes*, 52–53, 58.
39. *Ibid.*, 58–61, 75, 93–98, 126–129, quote on 98.
40. *Ibid.*, 50–52.
41. Olmos, “Former Migrant Mexican Farmworker Seeks Means to Assist Other Seasonal Laborers,” *Oregonian*, May 22, 1967, 29.
42. Hector Hinojosa, oral history interview by Michael O’Rourke (Hillsboro, Ore., March 15, 2001), transcription in possession of the Washington County Museum.
43. Gonzales-Berry and Mendoza, *Mexicanos in Oregon*, 80.
44. Hinojosa interview, July 29, 2013.
45. Jim Zaleski, a former VISTA volunteer, became the executive director of Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center in 1984.
46. Hinojosa interview, July 29, 2013.
47. *Los Amigos Club* was a direct predecessor to Centro Cultural of Washington County; the former organization dissolved as its members directed their efforts toward opening and running Centro.
48. Gilberto Garcia, “Organizational Activity and Political Empowerment: Chicano Politics in the Pacific Northwest,” in *The Chicano Experience in the Northwest*, ed. S. Maldonado and Gilberto Garcia (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall Hunt Publishing, 1995), 74.
49. Hinojosa interview by O’Rourke, March 15, 2001, 9.
50. Hernandez Schofield interview, August 28, 2013.
51. Hinojosa interview by O’Rourke, March 15, 2001, 12.
52. Hernandez Schofield interview, August 28, 2013.
53. Robert Olmos, “Rural Health Clinic Treats Migrants: Hospital, Group Join Forces,” *Oregonian*, July 13, 1975, 21. Gonzales-Berry and Mendoza, *Mexicanos in Oregon*, 81. The spelling of “Garcia” for the health center is not accented, as it was in most sources referring to “Virginia Garcia” the individual.
54. Hinojosa interview, July 29, 2013, 8.
55. Olmos, “Rural Health Clinic Treats Migrants: Hospital, Group Join Forces,” *Oregonian*, July 13, 1975, 21.
56. Hinojosa interview, July 29, 2013. Gonzales-Berry and Mendoza, *Mexicanos in Oregon*, 81. “About Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center,” Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center, online at <http://www.virginia-garcia.org/about/index.html> (accessed August 11, 2015).
57. May, *Sonny Montes*, 146, 149, 155–157.
58. *Ibid.*, 159.
59. *Ibid.*, 160–163.
60. Sanchez interview, August 2, 2013.
61. Hinojosa interview, July 29, 2013.
62. Sifuentez, “By Forests or By Fields,” 104.
63. *Ibid.*, For creation of WVIP, see p. 104–109; For creation of PCUN, see 172–178.
64. May, *Sonny Montes*, 190–191, 218, 240–246, 249.
65. Hinojosa interview, July 29, 2013.
66. Hinojosa interview, July 29, 2013.
67. Erasmo Gamboa, *Nosotros: The Hispanic People of Oregon*, 59.
68. *Ibid.*, 60.
69. Robert Olmos, “State Will Handle Funding of Farm Worker Program,” *Oregonian*, April 2, 1976, p. 62.

70. Alan K. Ota, "Migrant Agency Losing Funds; Director Quits," *Oregonian*, May 18, 1979, p. 27. Larry Kleinman, "Our Movement's First Home," PCUN, September 1, 2008, online at http://www.pcun.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/Our_Movements_First_Home.pdf (accessed July 14, 2015).
71. May, *Sonny Montes*, 250.
72. Evangelina Sanchez, email to author, November 26, 2013.
73. Evangelina Sanchez recalled her children being singled out for verbal abuse by other students in county schools during the 1970s and 1980s. Sanchez interview, August 2, 2013, 4.
74. Hernandez Schofield interview, August 29, 2013, 4.
75. *Ibid.*, 5.
76. *Ibid.*, 6–7.
77. *Ibid.*, 7.
78. *Ibid.*
79. *Ibid.* Enedelia Hernandez Schofield, oral history interview by Michael O'Rourke (Hillsboro, Ore., March 22, 2000), 15, transcription in possession of the Washington County Museum.
80. Flores, "Festejando Community," 145–153.
81. Sifuentez, "By Forests or By Fields," 93–95.
82. Lorenzo Rubio, "Testimonio," in *Mexicanos in Oregon*, 96–101.
83. Nosack interview, May 9, 2013.
84. Sanchez interview, August 2, 2013, 13. Sanchez did not elaborate on specific incidents during the interview.
85. *Ibid.*; Hernandez Schofield interview, August 28, 2013; Sister Ina Marie Nosack, oral history interview with author, May 9, 2013, Beaverton, Oregon; interviews in author's possession and at the Washington County Museum.
86. Arturo Villaseñor, oral history interview with author, November 11, 2013, Hillsboro, Oregon, in author's possession and at the Washington County Museum.
87. Hernandez Schofield interview, August 28, 2013, 9.
88. For an examination of tension between Mexican American elites and Mexican immigrants, see David Gutierrez, *Walls and Mirrors*.
89. Sanchez interview, August 2, 2013, 16.
90. *Ibid.*, 35.
91. *Ibid.*, 9, 17, 33.
92. Hinojosa interview, July 29, 2013, 10–15.
93. Paige Parker, "The Monday Profile: Latina Principal Hugs Her Way Into Students' Hearts," *Oregonian*, April 8, 2002, A01.
94. *Ibid.*; Hernandez Schofield interview, August 28, 2013.
95. Jill Smith, "Latinos Feel Shortage of Services in County," *Oregonian*, November 4, 1999, 01.
96. Villaseñor interview, November 11, 2013, 3–6
97. See Laura Gamboa, oral history interview with author, October 17, 2013, Hillsboro, Oregon; Giores, oral history interview with author, October 3, 2013, Hillsboro, Oregon; Ariadna Covarrubias Ornelas, oral history interview with author, June 12, 2013, Cornelius, Oregon; Villaseñor interview, November 11, 2013; interviews in author's possession and at the Washington County Museum.
98. For narrator perceptions of the loss and contemporary absence of a tight-knit Latino community, see Covarrubias Ornelas interview, June 12, 2013; Sanchez interview, August 2, 2013; oral history interview with Eduardo Corona, September 11, 2013, Hillsboro, Ore., in author's possession and in the possession of the Washington County Museum.
99. Hinojosa interview, July 29, 2013.
100. For school experiences of Mexican immigrant narrators and their family members, see Corona interview, September 11, 2013.
101. For one account of community between non-Latino and Latino families, and Centro Cultural's role in promoting linguistic and cultural understanding, see Andrea Castillo, "Stable Roots Help Students Flourish: Knowing that Repeated Moves Create Hardships for Kids, Migrant Families in Oregon Find Places to Settle," *Oregonian*, October 30, 2013, A01.