

LOWRIDER
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Raza report



Gloria
Arellanes

THE BROWN BERETS

Text By Paul Browning,
Photos By CSULA Public Affairs

CHIGANAS!

Chicanas, find Yourself!
Do you have a part in the Movement?
Are you satisfied?
Are your ideas suppressed?

Come & CREATE your ideas!
HELP CREATE Las Adelitas
de Aztlan

Time: 2:00 p.m.
Place: Euclid Heights Center
3045 Whittier Blvd

Date: ^{L.A.} Sunday - Feb. 22, 1970

= Join Las Adelitas de Aztlan
porque somos una familia de
hermanas

Filled with ideological pride, tenacity and purpose, Gloria Arellanes jumped on a bus when she was just 19 years old to embark on a journey from the only areas she had ever known—East Los Angeles and El Monte—to Washington D.C. as part of the Poor People's Campaign. Inspired by Martin Luther King, Jr.'s vision of a new multiracial campaign of awareness for the plight of the poor, Arellanes—and those affected by poverty who lived and worked with her on the trip—helped swell the discourse of their cause through protests, demonstrations and civil disobedience in several cities along the way.

After the campaign, inspired by those she met on the road and in Washington, Arellanes began to extend her roots deeper into the burgeoning Chicano civil rights movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s. She became a dedicated member of the Los Angeles-based Chicano nationalist activist group the Brown Berets, and served as minister of finance and correspondence of the organization's founding East Los Angeles chapter. "The Brown Berets began as an organization seeking to create change for a community. It eventually became a national effort to aggressively combat the social ills that prevented educational



opportunities, adequate health services and housing, and bettering job skills and training," explained Arellanes, 64, who currently resides in El Monte. "[Stopping] police brutality, violations of civil rights, prejudice and racism were our battle cries. Cultural pride and dignity were taught and promoted."

Though not always accepted openly by the public in the beginning, the Brown Berets' efforts eventually influenced the creation of positive programs and participation by the community, and helped develop the communication and organizing skills that are currently engrained in Arellanes' character today. During those years, Arellanes also served as administrator of El Barrio Free Clinic in East L.A. and coordinated La Clinica del Barrio. She became a member of the National Chicano Moratorium Committee (1969-70). After leaving the Brown Berets in the early '70s, she organized a women's group, Las Adelitas de Aztlan, and today, she is a celebrated figure of early Chicana feminist nationalism in the U.S. and an elder and recognized "Grandmother" of the indigenous Gabrielino-Tongva Nation.

The "Arellanes Collection" at the East Los Angeles Archive. Recently, Arellanes donated many of her mementos from her days as part of the "Movimiento" to California State University, Los Angeles' (CSULA) recently-established East Los Angeles Archive. The artifacts are housed on campus as one of the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library's Special Collections. This archive documents the history of East L.A., a community central to the social, political and cultural history of the Chicano/Latino community in the United States. Open to the public, the "Arellanes Collection" consists of political flyers, broadsides, newspapers, books, buttons, posters and photographs convey the emotion and events of the Chicano movement during that era.

The acquisition of the Arellanes Collection to augment the East Los Angeles Archive was made possible due to the efforts of CSULA's Chicano Studies Professor Dionne Espinoza and University Librarian Alice Kawakami. "The goal of the East Los Angeles Archive is to advance scholarship in Chicano/Latino studies and Los Angeles history through its varied collection of primary

research materials," Kawakami said.

The Arellanes Collection joins the repository of literary, historical and cultural treasures of the University Library's "Special Collections." The collections are rare library materials that enrich the educational and historical resources of the Los Angeles community. They serve as an educational resource to faculty, staff, students, alums, community friends and researchers.

"In my mind, my collection is in this community. It has to be here. This stuff sat in my house for over 40 years. I think it found a good home [Cal State L.A.]," said Arellanes. "I consider this a collection of reflections. It reflects my dedication to the Movimiento and reflects the hundreds of thousands of people who wrote articles, made buttons, and took pictures."

The CSULA University Library is seeking additional donated collections for the archive. For more information, please contact Romelia Salinas, librarian (323/343-2019, rsalina@calstatela.edu).

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