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Latinos in Isla Vista



A REPORT
ON THE
QUALITY OF LIFE
AMONG
LATINO IMMIGRANTS

DENISE A. SEGURA

*L*atinos in Isla Vista
A REPORT ON
THE QUALITY OF LIFE
AMONG LATINO IMMIGRANTS

by
DENISE A. SEGURA

§

A Report of the Center for Chicano Studies
University of California, Santa Barbara

August 1999

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Art

The mural on the front cover is outside the Isla Vista Teen Center. The mural on the back cover is on a building facing Children's Park in Isla Vista. Photographs of both murals were provided by Raymond Huerta.

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ABOUT THE CENTER

THE CENTER FOR CHICANO STUDIES POLICY REPORT SERIES is a project of the program, "Interdisciplinary Research on Chicano/Latino Communities." This research program is affiliated with the Center for Chicano Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. This program supports faculty, graduate, and undergraduate research on Chicano/Latino populations and dissemination of key research findings to inform policy formation affecting these communities. Currently, the program's research centers on social and economic indicators of well-being, education, culture, literature and art.

THE CENTER FOR CHICANO STUDIES is an organized research unit at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Founded in 1969 as the result of extended work undertaken by students, staff, faculty and community members, the Center is committed to researching and disseminating knowledge about Chicano/Latino populations, especially as these populations are subject to social stratification and differentiation. Housing a number of distinct projects, the Center is also a crucial site for the training of young scholars.

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L a t i n o s

A REPORT ON THE QUALITY OF LIFE

Center for Chicano Studies
University of California, Santa Barbara

in Isla Vista



AMONG LATINO IMMIGRANTS

Denise A. Segura

SUMMARY

OF SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF LATINOS IN ISLA VISTA

The results of the Quality of Life survey indicate that many Isla Vista adult Latino residents are long-term, settler immigrants who are committed to achieving socio-economic betterment for themselves and their families in the United States. Most are from Mexico and have lived in the U.S. for over 5 years. Latino residents have numerous children in local schools. By and large, they speak Spanish in the home.

Latinos who are married or in "uniones libres" (unmarried partners) have anywhere from 2 to 12 dependents for whom they feel responsible—both in the U.S. and abroad. Most Latino residents live in one- or two-bedroom apartments in households that include either other adults or other related nuclear families. Their rents are often more than one adult or family can afford, so the presence of other adults and families with other income earners is critical for their economic survival. At the same time, the apartments in which Latinos live tend to be crowded with little free space. On the average, there are 5.97 persons per household and 4.23 persons per bedroom. These figures are higher than those reported elsewhere and may reflect our in-depth, individualized survey interview methodology.

A high proportion of Latino men and women work in jobs that tend to offer minimum-to-moderate wages. Latino residents'

desires for socio-economic betterment coupled with their high concentration in low-paying jobs and the high cost of living in Santa Barbara County require many of them to have second jobs and/or undertake a variety of activities to supplement their incomes. The range of these activities is limited given the high number of residents who do not have driver's licenses and rely heavily on carpooling and public transportation. Two-thirds of surveyed households utilize at least one form of public assistance/welfare.

The socio-economic profile points to the need for affordable housing or alternative housing models. Significant need also exists for adult English language classes and job training, especially for women, given their much lower incomes *vis-à-vis* men. Both English proficiency and specific job training are integral to secure better-paying jobs, which is one of the greatest needs of Latinos in Isla Vista.

II. LATINO PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

Latino parents are very interested in their children's education. In general, they articulate respect and appreciation for schools and school personnel. Parents indicate that they receive information about school events regularly but one-third of Isla Vista Elementary School parents and one-quarter of Goleta Valley Junior High parents indicate that the information sent by schools is "difficult to understand." Parents with elementary school children give high marks to teachers for their concern for their children's education (95%) and for teaching in a way that their children understand (90%). Some junior high school parents indicate that their children have difficulty in understanding teachers (29%) and do not know whether or not their children can receive tutoring help at the school (57%).

Seventy-two percent of Latino parents actively participate in their children's schools in a variety of ways (e.g., school meetings, Latino parent night, and fund raising). Nearly all of the elementary school parents (89%) but less than half of junior high school parents (43%) indicate that they help their children with their homework. The major barriers to parental participation in school activities include lack of time, lack of transportation, lack of childcare, language, not being informed on time, and lack of bilingual personnel.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Assert High Expectations of Latino Student Achievement
- Improve the Quantity and Quality of School-Latino Parent Communication
- Develop Bilingual Personnel to Serve as Latino Parent and Student Advocates
- Convene Ongoing "Substantive" Workshops with Latino Parents developed in partnership with parents, schools, community-based organizations and the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB)
- Expand "Latino Parent Night" to Other Schools
- Restructure School-Parent Community Meetings
- Expand UCSB-School District Tutoring Programs to Enhance Latino Student Achievement

III. ISLA VISTA LATINOS, UCSB AND COMMUNITY SERVICE NEEDS

Latino residents report rarely or never receiving information about the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB). Despite their low receipt of information from UCSB, slightly over half (54%) of the Latino respondents had participated in a university-sponsored event. Latino residents were most likely to attend events that resonated to them culturally or politically, and/or appealed to their interest in sports. The major reasons they did not attend UCSB-sponsored events include lack of knowledge or lack of time. This suggests that participation by Isla Vista Latino residents in UCSB events could be enhanced by more effective dissemination of information by the University.

Latino residents are interested in the development of a variety of educational and support services from UCSB and other agencies that could enhance their opportunities for socio-economic betterment (e.g., English classes, job training) or

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Improve Information Dissemination from UCSB on the University's Educational, Cultural and Recreational Programs
- Develop a Coordinated Educational Partnership between UCSB, Santa Barbara City College (SBCC), and Local Schools
- Expand UCSB Service Learning
- Augment the Breadth and Depth of English Language Courses
- Enhance Community Safety Measures
- Expand Youth Recreational Services
- Develop Local Latino Leadership

improve the educational achievement of their children. They also express high levels of concern about the quantity and quality of local services, in particular enhancing public safety. Latino residents view bilingual Spanish-English-speaking police as the single greatest need of their community and critical to the formation of a safe space for themselves and their children. Consistent with these concerns is their willingness to pay greater taxes to fund educational programs for children to try and prevent drug use and gang activity. In addition, a majority favors the development of greater recreational facilities and after-school tutoring for their children. Many believe that a number of nonproductive activities including drug use and gangs could be curtailed if their children could be otherwise occupied.

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This report presents findings from the 1995 "Quality of Life" survey conducted by a team of undergraduates and graduate student researchers that I directed through the Center for Chicano Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB).¹ The purpose of the survey and report is to provide information on the socio-economic characteristics of Latinos and their households in Isla Vista to enhance the understanding of the University, the local community, and appropriate policy makers concerning the needs of this critical and growing population. I have organized the report to discuss first the background and significance of the Isla Vista Latino survey and research project followed by a brief discussion of the methodology. Part I profiles Latino immigrants, their jobs, households and living conditions. Then, I discuss the attitudes of surveyed Latinos toward their children's education in Part II. Latino views on UCSB and community service needs are discussed in Part III. Each section concludes with a series of recommendations to enhance the quality of life for Latinos in Isla Vista.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LATINO "QUALITY OF LIFE" STUDY

In November 1992, the University of California at Santa Barbara issued *The Isla Vista Community Enhancement Report*.² This report was the result of 18 months of research, interviews and hearings over the quality of life in Isla Vista, roughly one square mile of apartment complexes and houses adjacent to the University. This report produced a number of recommendations to improve the local infrastructure and community relations between Isla Vista residents

¹ I would like to acknowledge the work of Gonzalo Arrizón, Light Carruyo, John Delgado, Luis Franco del Rico, Lorena Jimenez, Claudia Leiva, Marisela Marquez, Marcie Miranda, Ramón Miramontes, Margarita Morales, Felicia Pérez, Angel Valdivia and Darcie Vandegrift who collaborated in the study design, survey administration, and initial data analysis. Several students wrote research papers from the Isla Vista data, some of which I cite in this report. Sociology graduate student Darcie Vandegrift coordinated the Isla Vista housing survey and is preparing a paper on the findings. I would also like to thank Professors Richard Flacks and Raymond Wong, Dean of Students H. Yonie Harris, Marisela Marquez and Darcie Vandegrift for their helpful comments. All errors remaining are my sole responsibility.

² Isla Vista Enhancement Committee, *The Isla Vista Community Enhancement Report* (A report submitted to the Chancellor of the University of California at Santa Barbara and the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors). Santa Barbara: UC Santa Barbara, November 1992.

and the University. Latinos (mostly Mexican immigrants), who comprise nearly 3,000 of Isla Vista's 20,000 residents, were not discussed in this community report. Rather, the report focused on the student population. Students, who comprise the majority of the Isla Vista population, are in town for only 9 to 10 months each year and rarely develop an investment in the community similar to that of families or more permanent residents. Latinos, on the other hand, tend to be yearlong residents, with considerable investment in community enhancement issues.

Census figures show that the Latino population in Isla Vista is growing rapidly (93 percent growth from 1980 to 1990). Despite this growth, little is known about their households, individual characteristics, socio-economic needs, and civic participation. We have some information on selected topics primarily from research projects undertaken by several UCSB Graduate School of Education faculty in the local elementary school and graduate students in Political Science, Anthropology, and Sociology. In addition, UCSB has operated several community outreach programs to serve potential and current students. A number of UCSB Chicano/Latino undergraduates particularly from the student organization *El Congreso* have created and maintained volunteer programs to tutor kids and/or work with

the major Latino community organization, *Familias Unidas*. More recently, Chicanos for Higher Education (CHE) at UCSB developed a *Raza Unida* club and a Teen Center in Isla Vista with the support of the Center for Chicano Studies and the Division of Student Affairs. Despite the existence of various programs touching the lives of Latinos in Isla Vista, a research-based profile of the Latino community has never been done.

A dramatic event in Spring 1994 changed this oversight. Chicano/Latino students engaged in a 10-day hunger strike to protest institutional inequality at UCSB, specifically the historical underdevelopment of the Chicano Studies infrastructure and neglect of the needs of the local Latino community. As part of the Hunger Strike settlement, the University promised to work to address local community needs.³ But neither the University nor the students had a concrete plan of action. As the incoming Director of the Center for Chicano Studies, I proposed the creation of an undergraduate research internship program to be funded by UCSB to do a "Quality of Life" survey of Latino residents in Isla Vista. The Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor supported this request, thereby giving birth to the Isla Vista Research Project on Latino Immigrant Life.⁴ This research program is ongoing and involves significant numbers of students

³ See: *El Congreso*, "Demands," dated April 22, 1994; "UCSB Response to Your Demands," dated May 5, 1994, from Executive Vice Chancellor Donald W. Crawford to *El Congreso*, and "Chicano Studies and Chicano/Latino Student Issues," dated July 24, 1996, from Executive Vice Chancellor Donald W. Crawford. The latter document delineates services UCSB is providing to the local Latino community as part of the 1994 Hunger Strike settlement.

⁴ I would like to acknowledge the funding provided by the Executive Vice Chancellor, all of which was used to support undergraduate student research assistantships. Funding from the University of California Chicano/Latino Research (SCR43) program at the Center for Chicano Studies was used to support graduate student research assistantships and the production of the survey instrument. I would also like to acknowledge the support of the Vice Chancellor for Research and the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs for undergraduate student research activities associated with this project.

exploring a number of issues (e.g., housing, elementary school education, and family empowerment) that are sponsored by the Center for Chicano Studies and the Department of Chicano Studies.⁵ The “Quality of

Life” survey is one project I directed that developed out of student vision and insight regarding the dilemmas of daily life experienced by many Latinos in Isla Vista.

METHODOLOGY

In 1995, a team of undergraduates, graduate students and I designed, field tested, and administered a “Quality of Life” survey in Isla Vista to 120 Latino residents in 10 apartment complexes.⁶ In light of the high number of apartments with multiple families, I decided to interview two adults per apartment when possible. *The total number of respondents (120) represents 68 apartments where a total of 406 adults and children lived.* This method maximizes the possibility for survey respondents to represent Latino residents living in Isla Vista apartments. The “Quality of Life” survey asked a series of open-and-closed-ended questions on: immigration, employment, parental involvement in children’s education, civic participation, relations with UCSB, evaluation of the community infrastructure, economic needs, and culture. I did not ask a specific question on individual legal status in order to maximize the comfort level of respondents to answer the one-to-two hour survey.⁷ Follow-up interviews with randomly selected informants were conducted in Summer 1996. From 1994 to 1997, the student researchers and I wrote detailed field notes from various community meetings we attended. I use information from the interviews and field notes in this report to contextualize major survey findings.

This report summarizes key findings relevant to the quality of life among Isla Vista Latinos. Organizationally, I present an overview of the demographics of Isla Vista, the socio-demographic characteristics of individual survey respondents, household data, and summary reports of each of the following research areas: educational issues, community services and UCSB.

⁵ Appendix A lists the major projects and students who have been involved in this program. The “Quality of Life” survey project is the first one listed in Appendix A.

⁶ Appendix B provides a more elaborate discussion of the study methodology. The research team had identified 18 non-student apartment complexes where Latino families lived. Eight of those apartment complexes were tapped for the Spring 1995 Housing Survey leaving 10 apartments for us to administer the Quality of Life survey. The questionnaire is available from Dr. Denise Segura, Center for Chicano Studies, UCSB. It is in Spanish only.

⁷ The research team felt strongly that we did not wish to be able to state, with certainty, the exact number of undocumented and documented immigrants. During this time there was significant tension surrounding immigrant status. Proposition 187, which sought to eliminate essential services for immigrants had just been passed, attacks on bilingual education were rampant, and military build-up along the U.S.-Mexico border were conveying hostile messages to Latino immigrants and reinforcing their mistrust of government agencies. Although I did not ask a specific question about legal status, many of the respondents indicated they received welfare benefits available only to individuals able to “prove” legal status (see p. 23 of this report for more information on this topic).

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ISLA VISTA

Isla Vista,⁸ which in Spanish means "Island View," is a one-square-mile area adjacent to the University of California, Santa Barbara and the Pacific Ocean. It is one of the most densely populated areas in the western United States. The majority of Isla Vista residents are UCSB students, but the non-student Latino population is steadily growing.⁹ According to the 1990 Census, 20,493 people live in Isla Vista. Of this number, 2,993 persons are Hispanic/Latino, which represents a 93% growth in this population group from 1980. The 1990 Census identifies 14,310 Caucasians/Anglo Americans, which represents a 41.8% growth in their population since 1980 in Isla Vista. Figures for African Americans are 595 (4% growth from 1980 to 1990) and for Native Americans are 142 (1.1% growth), respectively. The Census identifies 2,453 Asian and Pacific Islanders in Isla Vista but could not indicate percent growth in the intervening 10 years due to lack of comparable figures (Barber 1993).

The quality of life in Isla Vista presents numerous problems for families and youth. Adequate housing is a primary concern for all residents. Most (95%) of the residents in Isla Vista are renters. About eighty percent of the apartment buildings in Isla Vista were built 25 to 30 years ago. A recent housing study by the County of Santa Barbara indicates that almost half of the non-student rental units in Isla Vista are in deteriorating or dilapidated conditions (County of Santa Barbara 1996).

The annual income for the majority of non-UCSB student families in Isla Vista is low. A majority of the children (80%) in grades K-12 qualify for the free or reduced cost school lunch program based on Federal low-income guidelines. Isla Vista is isolated geographically, and bus fares are costly for low-income families. Local junior high and high school students who rely on bus

transportation to attend school have to pay \$40 per month. Geographic isolation and limited transportation constrain the opportunities of Isla Vista youth to participate in diverse recreation and other programs in Goleta and Santa Barbara. Youth crime is a growing concern in Isla Vista. According to the Isla Vista Foot Patrol, Isla Vista accounted for 1% of the 152 juvenile arrests in the County of Santa Barbara during 1996.

Isla Vista has a number of small restaurants and fast food establishments (n=32) as well as a number of other businesses (n=48). There are 5 churches and one religious center. UCSB has two theaters in Isla Vista used for classes and other events. The Isla Vista Parks and Recreation District owns 18 areas. There is one elementary school in the neighborhood. UCSB is the largest economic and educational presence in Isla Vista.

⁸ Much of the information for this brief discussion of Isla Vista comes from the "Isla Vista Community Profile" compiled by Jamie Haunani Silva (Spring 1996). A map of Isla Vista is provided on page 45.

⁹ According to the 1990 Census, approximately 80% of the people living in Isla Vista were enrolled in a public college. The County of Santa Barbara's 1995 housing survey estimated that the number of students residing in Isla Vista had decreased to 74% since 1990, most of whom were enrolled in UCSB with 10% enrolled at Santa Barbara City College (County of Santa Barbara 1996:31).

PART I

A SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF SURVEYED LATINOS

I. GENDER, AGE, NATIONALITY AND RELIGION

The research team surveyed 120 Latino adults over the age of 18. Fifty-four are men and 66 are women (54.3%). The average age of the respondents is 32. A majority of surveyed adults are from Mexico (90%) with 7.6% from Guatemala.

Survey respondents indicate high levels of participation in organized religion. The majority (82%) of Isla Vista Latinos are Roman Catholic; the rest identify either as "Christian," "Evangelical" or "Protestant." Five respondents did not state a religious preference. Over one-third of the Latino adults attend church services every week and another third participate at least once or twice a month. Nearly three-fourths (72%) of the respondents affirm religion is an important part of their lives.

EDUCATION

Educational profiles resemble those of Mexican immigrants nationwide (Portes and Rumbaut 1996).¹⁰ That is, Latino residents tend to report primary or elementary school education in their countries of origin (Table I). A sizeable number report education beyond elementary school but few have vocational or college degrees.

TABLE I
Education and Years of School Completed

| | Percent* |
|--|-------------|
| Elementary (<i>Primaria</i>), Levels 1–6 | 41% |
| Junior High/High (<i>Secundaria</i>), Levels 7–9 | 23 |
| <i>Preparatoria</i> , Levels 10–12 | 17 |
| Vocational (<i>Técnica</i>) | 5 |
| University, Levels 13+ | 6 |
| No Formal Education | 4 |
| No Answer | 4 |
| TOTAL | 100% |

* All figures are based on 120 respondents unless otherwise noted. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest tenth.

¹⁰ Research by two renowned experts on immigration, Alejandro Portes and Ruben G. Rumbaut report 3.5% of Mexican immigrants completed 4 or more years of college and 24.3% had completed high school (or the equivalent). Portes and Rumbaut indicate that immigrants from Mexico, Guatemala and much of Latin America have lower educational profiles than the "average" of all immigrants to the U.S. (1996:58–59).

IMMIGRATION AND TIME IN THE UNITED STATES

Isla Vista residents give a number of reasons for immigrating to the U.S., with some important variations by gender that refine prevailing notions about women's migration (Table 2).

TABLE 2
REASONS FOR MIGRATION

| (multiple reasons given) | Women (n=64) | Men (n=51) |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| | Percent* | Percent |
| Employment | 67% | 88% |
| Better opportunities for children | 58 | 55 |
| Better opportunities for women | 42 | 14 |
| To join spouse | 36 | 8 |
| To be with children/family | 11 | 2 |
| To get ahead/better quality of life | 11 | 27 |
| Family problems | 6 | -- |
| Just wanted to come | 5 | 6 |
| To get away from political problems | -- | 4 |
| To eat | 3 | -- |

*Two women and 3 men did not answer this question. Percentages do not equal 100 because women and men gave several reasons for coming to the U.S.

Clearly both men and women come to the U.S. in search of jobs and better opportunities for their children. Counter to conventional portraits of Latina migration as largely or even exclusively driven by the desire to rejoin their spouses, 36 percent of female informants give this as one of several reasons to come to the U.S. Many women are drawn to the U.S. because they believe it offers better opportunities for all women. Few men cite this reason as important in their own immigration.

When we consider each informant's "primary" reason for immigrating, their responses cluster into four categories, with employment as the chief motivator (Table 3). In general, women and men have similar foci for immigration: economic betterment. Men are more focused than women are on employment as the means to secure a better quality of life. Women are equally driven to migrate to the U.S. for jobs and to secure better opportunities for their children.

TABLE 3
PRIMARY REASON FOR MIGRATION

| | Women (n=56) | Men (n=49) |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| | Percent* | Percent |
| Employment | 32% | 51% |
| Better opportunities for children | 32 | 22 |
| To join spouse | 25 | 2 |
| To get ahead/better quality of life | -- | 11 |
| Other | 11 | 14 |
| TOTAL | 100% | 100% |

*This table is based on the answers of 105 respondents who answered this question. Several men and women did not give us a "primary" reason for immigrating.

TABLE 4
TIME IN THE UNITED STATES

| Year Respondent Came to U.S. | Male | Female | Overall |
|---------------------------------|------|--------|---------|
| 1990–1995 | 18 | 20 | 38 |
| 1985–1989 | 15 | 26 | 41 |
| 1980–1984 | 10 | 9 | 19 |
| Before 1980 | 11 | 8 | 19 |
| No Answer | -- | 3 | 3 |
| TOTAL | 54 | 66 | 120 |

Isla Vista Latino residents tend to be “settler immigrants” rather than “sojourner” or temporary immigrants. Most have lived in the U.S. for longer than five years and articulate interests and needs similar to prior immigrant cohorts (Table 4). As long-term residents, the Latinos we surveyed are committed to achieving socio-economic betterment of themselves and their families in the United States.

4. MARITAL STATUS

Most surveyed adults are married (see Table 5). Family size varied from 3 to 12.

TABLE 5
MARITAL STATUS

| (n = 120) | Percent |
|---|---------|
| Married | 67.5% |
| <i>Union Libre</i> (unmarried partners) | 15.0 |
| Single | 14.2 |
| Separated | 2.5 |
| No Answer | 0.8 |
| TOTAL | 100.0% |

5. HOUSEHOLD TYPES

Research on immigrant communities describes the importance of flexible households to maximize their survival (Fernández-Kelly and García 1997). Different household types exist among immigrant residents, each providing a distinctive social context for their quality of life in the U. S. It is essential to become familiar with the households in Isla Vista to understand better the environment within which Latinos work, send their children to school, and participate in the community. Drawing on the research of anthropologist Leo Chavez, I define “household” in terms of “coresidence,” that is, the individuals who reside together in one place (Chavez 1990: 34).

One important finding of the "Quality of Life" survey is that Latino residents organize themselves into different household types to facilitate their economic well being. I identified five distinct household types (Table 6): (1) *Single Parent Family Household*; (2) *Nuclear Family Household* (married/partnered couple plus children); (3) *Extended Family Household* (nuclear family plus one or more relatives or friends); (4) *Multiple Family Household* (two or more related and non-related nuclear families); and (5) *Non-Family Household* (individuals who are not related through marriage or a parent-child bond).¹¹

Each household type responds to different needs and options of Latino residents. Slightly over one-third (37%) of all surveyed respondents live in nuclear family households. These households tend to be smaller in size than either extended or multiple family

households. They live in crowded conditions, however, since all but 4 of these families reside in one-bedroom apartments. This means that children either sleep in the same room as their parents or in the living rooms. In extended and multiple family households, living in apartments with multiple-income earners allows for income pooling that can benefit several related individuals and friends. This is also true for the non-family households. In extended and multiple family households, adults and older children often share childcare responsibilities. In addition, living in a unit with more established residents can ease the transition of newer immigrants into the local "scene" (jobs, schools, social service agencies, social rights). *However, extended and multiple family households tend to be quite large and result in high density and low levels of privacy. Non-family households also contain multiple-wage earners and live in situations of high density. In general, nuclear families and single parent families are smaller units, but also are constrained by low incomes to live in crowded conditions.*

TABLE 6
HOUSEHOLDS

(n = 68)

| | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Single Parent (Female-Head) | 6 |
| Nuclear Family | 25 |
| Extended Family | 13 |
| Multiple Family | 19 |
| Non-Family | 5 |

¹¹ I base this household classificatory scheme on that devised by Leo Chavez (1990:38-39) with the following differences: I use "Nuclear Family Household" and "Single Parent Family Household" instead of "simple family household." The Isla Vista data lent itself to separating out these two household types rather than collapsing them together under one category. I also use the term "non-family household" instead of the term favored by Chavez, "no family household."

KEY HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

- Most *nuclear family households* (84%) live in one-bedroom apartments. On the average, they consist of 4.6 people and pay \$604 per month in rent.
- *Extended family households* tend to live in one-bedroom apartments (70%). On the average, they include 6 people and pay \$645 per month in rent.
- A majority of *multiple family households* (60%) live in two-bedroom apartments. On the average, they contain 9 people and pay \$725 per month in rent.
- A majority of *single parent families* (67%) live in one-bedroom apartments. On the average, they consist of 3.3 people and pay \$460 per month in rent. This relatively low amount reflects subsidized rent provided to 2 out of the 6 households in this category.
- Most *non-family households* live in one-bedroom apartments (80%). On the average, they include 4.6 people and pay \$616 per month in rent.

6. CHILDREN IN LOCAL SCHOOLS

Seventy-seven respondents had one or more children attending Santa Barbara schools (see Table 7).

TABLE 7
SCHOOL AND NUMBER OF CHILDREN*

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| Brandon School | 20 |
| Isla Vista Elementary | 56 |
| La Patera Elementary | 2 |
| Peabody School | 4 |
| Goleta Valley Junior High | 8 |
| Dos Pueblos High School | 18 |
| La Puente | 2 |
| San Marcos High School | 2 |
| Santa Barbara City College | 3 |
| Other Elementary Schools | 8 |

* This table only reports the schools attended by the children of the survey respondents and does not include numerous other children living in the same household.

“TRANSNATIONAL” FAMILIES

About 17% of the respondents (n=21) have children under the age of 17 who were not living with them. This points to the existence of “transnational families” in this area, which is a burgeoning area of research in Chicana/o Studies (Zavella 1999; Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997). One implication of this phenomenon is the need for Latino adults to send money to their countries of origin and to wherever their children are living. *Of the 120 adults surveyed, 47% indicate they send money back to their countries of origin.*

HOME LANGUAGE USE

Spanish language use is very high (*see Table 8*). *Fewer than 6 percent of surveyed adults say that they speak equal amounts of both English and Spanish at home.*

TABLE 8
HOME LANGUAGE USE*
(n = 120)

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Spanish Only | 55.0% |
| Mostly Spanish/Some English | 37.5 |
| Spanish/English Equally | 5.8 |
| No Answer | 1.7 |

*Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Most of the respondents are employed (64%). If we also include individuals who consider themselves employed although they are paid only in cash, the figure rises to 66%, which represents 79 people. If we break this figure down by gender, 85% of male respondents and 50% of surveyed women are working for wages or cash remuneration. Survey informants report working as laborers, farm workers, production workers, and in service occupations. One-quarter of employed Latinos work "part time," or less than 30 hours per week. About 10% of employed residents work in more than one job, often in the "informal" economy—the shadow land of work without health benefits, where wages are personally negotiated and usually low, and working conditions are not monitored and often unsafe. In the informal economy, individuals work "on the side" in gardening, painting, housecleaning, and can recycling.

Other residents, primarily women who are not in the labor force, often engage in a variety of economic activities to supplement their family incomes (primarily selling clothing, glassware and food, babysitting and housecleaning). In general, one quarter of surveyed residents undertake economic activities to supplement their personal or family incomes. This type of work is critical for some Isla Vista Latinos to "make ends meet." Five residents own their own businesses (gardening, janitorial).

A majority (46%) of Latinos we surveyed work in neighboring Goleta. Others work in Santa Barbara (32%) or Isla Vista (19%). Slightly more than half get to work by driving. About one-fourth use public transportation whereas others rely on carpooling, walking or bicycling. High proportions of surveyed residents (41%) do not have driver's licenses or cars, and rely heavily on public transportation and carpooling.

Isla Vista Latinos demonstrate a fairly high attachment to their jobs as measured by length of time on the job (see Table 9). A significant number of Latinos (26%) have worked in the same job for four or more years. This portrait of job attachment belies conventional representations of immigrant Latinos as transitory residents who mainly do temporary or odd jobs.

TABLE 9
LENGTH OF TIME IN MAIN JOB
(n = 120)

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Less than one year | 30% |
| 1-1.8 years | 23 |
| 2-3 years | 20 |
| 4-5 years | 14 |
| Over 5 years | 12 |

*Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

10. INCOME

Income varies, especially by gender (Table 10). Women report income that is significantly lower than that of men. About half of the Latina women reported income less than \$100 per week. Only 8 Latino men earned less than \$100 per week. At the upper level, 21 men indicated they earned over \$300 a week compared to only 2 Latinas. In general, individual incomes cluster in the lower range with 60% of the respondents reporting income of \$200 or less per week. Of the unemployed respondents, four receive unemployment compensation.

Most income earners support families and/or households that range from 2 to 12 dependents. The combination of family size with low-to-moderate income situates a majority

of the informants within the "working poor."¹² This profile is similar to Mexicans and Latinos nationally and poses one of the most important challenges for improving the quality of life of this growing population.

| Income Range | Male (n = 54) Percent | Female (n = 61) Percent* |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Less than \$100/week | 15 | 49 |
| \$101-200 | 22 | 38 |
| \$201-300 | 24 | 10 |
| More than \$300 | 39 | 3 |
| TOTAL | 100% | 101% |

* Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

¹² By "working poor" I mean individuals who work at wages that place them and/or their families close to the poverty level. In 1995, households of four individuals were considered "below poverty" if pre-tax cash income was less than \$15,569.

II. PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

A majority of the *Isla Vista Latino* households surveyed utilize one or more forms of public assistance (66%). Utilization of these services varies by household type. Nearly all of the extended, multiple family, and single-family households report receiving (unspecified) public assistance. Half of the nuclear families and one non-family household report receiving this aid. More children than adults are recipients. Nearly one-third of the households report that children are the only recipients.¹³

Survey respondents did not always indicate which programs they utilize. Thus, I cannot provide precise data on specific forms of public assistance (e.g., Medi-Cal, AFDC, food stamps) *Isla Vista Latinos* use.¹⁴ However, the high incidence of children using public assistance and our field notes indicate there could be significant reliance on Medi-Cal for health care and the special supplemental food program for women, infants and children (WIC).

¹³ Of the 45 households who report receiving at least one form of public assistance/welfare, 69% (23) report both adults and children receiving aid whereas 31% (14) report only children as recipients. It is important to remember that undocumented persons are not eligible for AFDC (aid to families with dependent children) or food stamps although children born in the U.S. are. The high proportion of adults receiving public assistance in *Isla Vista* strengthens the possibility that many, if not most of our respondents are legal residents.

¹⁴ After we administered the survey, welfare programs and regulations changed with the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA). Under PRWORA, the eligibility standards for food stamps changed and AFDC has been replaced with block grants to states for "Temporary Assistance for Needy Families." With these changes, the participation of *Isla Vista Latinos* in public assistance programs may be different.

12. HOUSING AND RENT

The quality of life of Latinos in Isla Vista is challenged by the high rents paid for apartments that are all-too-often inadequate for their needs. Of the 68 apartments we surveyed, 25 had a nuclear family (married/partnered couple with children) living in an apartment. The other 43 apartments included a range of non-nuclear household arrangements living either in one-or-two bedroom apartments. Overall, survey respondents paid an average of \$633 per month. More precise figures by household are available in the earlier section on "Households," on page 19.

Rents in Isla Vista are high considering the space and condition of the units. During the survey year (1995), rents averaged between \$575 for a one-bedroom apartment in a grim complex to \$1200 for a two-bedroom apartment in a more "upscale" building. These rents are difficult to manage for individuals and families who rely on income from low-to-moderate paying service and day labor jobs. Hence, the high numbers of families who live in extended, multiple family, and non-family households. Yet, rents in the neighboring unincorporated area of Goleta and in the city of Santa Barbara tend to be much higher with two-bedroom apartments commanding upwards of \$800 per month, on the average. Moreover, rentals for families with children tend to be difficult to find, which often leads families to accept conditions not optimal for a good quality of life.

Housing conditions varied by the apartment complex. Because the student research team had recently completed a housing survey in Isla Vista, I did not undertake a detailed study of housing conditions in the "Quality of Life" survey.¹⁵ One major problem is overcrowding. Santa Barbara County defines "overcrowding" as "more than one person per room per household." *The Isla Vista Housing Strategy Report* released by the County of Santa Barbara (1996) found significant overcrowding, particularly in the area with the most non-student and Latino housing units. In this area, the County found 4.43 persons per household and 3.24 persons per bedroom (1996:22). The "Quality of Life" survey, on the other hand, found 5.97 persons per household and 4.23 persons per bedroom. These differences are likely due to different methodologies as well as the *confianza* between student researchers with

¹⁵ Appendix C offers a brief description of the 1995 Housing Survey. Readers interested in additional information on this topic are referred to: Darcie Vandegrift, UCSB Department of Sociology, and to the video (with Spanish subtitles), *Making the Struggle: Housing and Latinos in Isla Vista* (1996) produced by Doug Houston and Susana Peña (see Appendix A). Susana Peña can be contacted at the UCSB Department of Sociology.

local residents due to their involvement in the neighborhood and several local community organizations.¹⁶

In terms of the external conditions of the apartment complexes, the County report observed that “nearly 80% of the rental housing stock and much of the surrounding infrastructure in Isla Vista was built 25–30 years ago. This means that the vast majority of housing structures in Isla Vista are approaching or have exceeded the critical age of 30 years old

(the average life of a residential building) and are in need of major renovation or outright upgrading over time” (1996:5). Of the buildings surveyed for the County report, 100% of those found in “dilapidated” condition “not fit for habitation” and 96% found in “deteriorated” condition” housed non-student households. A majority of the non-student households in Isla Vista are Latino. In comparison, only 4% of student housing was evaluated as “deteriorated” (1996:14).¹⁷

¹⁶ Most of the student researchers and graduate student coordinator Darcie Vandegrift were well-known to a number of Latino residents though their work in local community settings as well as their prior involvement with community groups. These students were, in many ways, “insiders” to the Latino community and had established a mutually respectful relationship. The sense of trust or *confianza* they had established facilitated their ability to have frank discussions on important issues such as overcrowding, the extent of which many Latino residents might have been hesitant about revealing to anonymous surveyors for fear of recrimination from various agencies.

¹⁷ Student researchers evaluated the “overall” appearance of each apartment. They had been trained to conduct such systematic evaluations as part of their preparation for the spring 1995 housing survey. According to student assessments, 62% of the Latino participants in the “Quality of Life” survey live in apartments that are in “good/excellent” shape. The others live in apartments that are either “fair” (33%) or “poor” (5%). These evaluations reflect the conditions of roofs, foundations, walls, external and internal paint, ceilings, carpets, appliances, electrical sockets, windows, window screens, and the presence of rodents/insects. In general, “good/excellent” apartments have sound roofs and foundations, appliances and lights that work, carpets that are not extensively worn or moldy, walls with few cracks, operational toilets and sinks, and few visible insects or mousetraps. At the other end of the scale, apartments in poor condition have unsound roofs, numerous appliances that do not work (e.g., one or more burners on the stove or ovens) inadequate electrical sockets for which the residents compensated by creative and illegal wiring to provide power for lights, T.V.s and stereos. Apartments in fair and/or poor condition also had leaky roofs, walls in need of repair and/or paint, large numbers of visible “roach motels” and mousetraps, cracked toilets and inoperative sinks.

This criteria is significantly more detailed than the County typology of “sound,” “deficient,” “deteriorated,” or “dilapidated,” which focuses more on external conditions (Santa Barbara County 1996:6). In addition to considering external features (e.g., roof, foundation, exterior paint condition), we evaluated conditions *inside* the apartments as well.

SUMMARY OF SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The results of the Quality of Life survey present a profile of Isla Vista Latino residents as long-term, settler immigrants who are committed to achieving socio-economic betterment for themselves and their families in the United States. Most are from Mexico, but have been in the U. S. for over 5 years. Latino residents have numerous children in local schools. By and large, they speak Spanish in the home. Thus, neither they nor their children have a strong infrastructure to easily achieve fluency in English.

Latino residents tend to be married or in "*uniones libres*" (unmarried partners) with numerous dependents for whom they feel responsible—both in the U.S. and abroad. Most live in one- or two-bedroom apartments in households that include either other adults or other related nuclear families. Their rents are often more than one adult or family can afford, so the presence of other adults and families with other income earners is critical for their economic survival. At the same time, the apartments in which Latinos live tend to be crowded with little free space.

A high proportion of Latino men and

women work in jobs that, by and large, offer minimum-to-moderate wages. Latino residents' desires for socio-economic betterment coupled with their high concentration in low-paying jobs and the cost of living in Santa Barbara County require many of them to have second jobs and/or undertake a variety of activities to supplement their incomes. The range of these activities is limited given the high number of residents who do not have driver's licenses or rely heavily on carpooling and public transportation. Two-thirds of surveyed households utilize at least one form of public assistance/welfare.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Develop more affordable housing as well as alternative housing models**

Simultaneous problems of low levels of affordable housing and high need for housing that can accommodate low-income nuclear and extended families that average close to 6 members is one of the most pressing issues for Latinos in Isla Vista. County agencies in concert with non-profit community groups must take leadership to develop innovative strategies to ameliorate these problems.

- **Develop Employment Options and Training**

Isla Vista Latinos undertake a variety of economic activities including babysitting, house cleaning, gardening, and painting. Providing information about ways to start a small business or collective business endeavor might be useful to Latino residents interested in formalizing their skills. Classes on these topics could be developed and offered in Isla Vista by Santa Barbara City College, UCSB, or community-based organizations. In addition, UCSB should consider offering more frequent employment information and application workshops to local Latino community groups.

PART II

LATINO PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

This section discusses key dilemmas Latino parents experience in their children's education. I explore Latino parents' perceptions of the local schools and their involvement in their children's schools to provide information on their often-unrecognized activities in this critical area. I begin with a short vignette of one of my own experiences in Isla Vista that sheds light on the way in which parents are constrained both by language and by hierarchically organized social relations between local schools and the Latino community.

THE SCHOOL COMES TO THE LATINO COMMUNITY IN ISLA VISTA

On April 16, 1997, the Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee for the local school district met in the URC building in Isla Vista.¹⁸ I entered the building and sat down, nodding my head to several parents I knew. I had been invited to this meeting by a group of Latino parents who had met the previous night. I had attended that particular meeting at the request of a UCSB Chicano student group. A colleague from UCSB, Professor Olga Vasquez, the Center for Chicano's Visiting Research Scholar, joined me. Professor Vasquez came to this meeting with the students she was working with who were developing an educational ethnography of Isla Vista, "La Coordinadora" (see Appendix A).

The meeting began. A school vice-principal chaired the meeting. I scanned the previous meeting's minutes and discovered that the Isla Vista meeting was somewhat unique. Usually school-sponsored meetings are not held in community settings, but rather take place in schools or school buildings. This meeting had been requested by Isla Vista parents with the support of the local school principals to be held in Isla Vista to facilitate parent attendance. The school administrators at the head table lauded the high

¹⁸ This vignette is based on field notes I wrote immediately following the meeting. I crosschecked my notes with Professor Olga Vasquez.

number of parents at the meeting. Several parents and UCSB students present voiced their appreciation of the willingness of the school administrators to hold the meeting in their community. Then, the meeting began in earnest.

The English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Coordinator handed out awards to students in ESL. What exactly they were being awarded for was never explained. Was it for general achievement? Or, was it for learning English at a certain level? Or, were they being recognized for good citizenship? About half of the students or their parents were present to receive the awards. The audience clapped as each name was announced whether or not the person was actually there.

At one point in the meeting the Principal of one of the local schools addressed the parents in English with a Spanish-language translator. He reported that the math achievement of ESL Levels I & 2 was "very good," but was "not very good" for ESL Level 3. I raised my hand and asked him, "How do you explain this difference in math achievement? Is it due

to language? Or is it due to course content? What kinds of math are they doing? Are the students doing better because it's easier math or because they're better in English in a higher level math, or what?"

The principal answered, "Well it's very complicated. I can explain it to you in more detail if you call me at my office. But, it's both: language and level of math." He continued, "The students in ESL I & 2 are in sheltered classes whereas the students in ESL 3 are not." Then, he added, "We have an excellent volunteer tutor: a retired man who comes in to work with the students after class. And it's very discouraging because the room is mostly empty. The students aren't taking advantage of this service."

The ESL coordinator added, "Yes, the main problem seems to be one of motivation. The students in ESL 3 simply aren't motivated."

I noticed some movement at my side as Professor Vasquez moved to the edge of her seat and raised her hand to speak. She began by commending the Principal for his efforts to

¹⁹ University of California President David P. Gardner created the Latino Eligibility Task Force on August 25, 1992. The Task Force consists of faculty and administrative staff from each campus of the University of California "to develop a clear understanding of the issues associated with the low rate of Latino eligibility through the assessment of existing research and programs inside and outside the university; to expand our understanding of the issues through acquisition of new knowledge; and to recommend policies, programs, and other actions designed to improve future eligibility." (UC Latino Eligibility Task Force 1993:10).

engage the question of math education. She indicated that she was a member of the University of California Latino Eligibility Task Force as the representative of UC San Diego.¹⁹ She described her research in education and the Task Force's findings of the critical nature of math education and how statewide the lack of achievement in this area has contributed to inadequate preparation of Latinos for the SAT²⁰ that ultimately results in their abysmally low levels of eligibility for entrance to the University of California. She forcefully stated that lack of achievement is *not* only an issue of individual motivation but also results from insufficient institutional analysis and attention to the issue. I looked around the room at the parents who were listening attentively to Olga's words—all spoken in fluent Spanish alongside English.

The ESL Coordinator did not respond. The Principal expressed his appreciation of the issues Professor Vasquez had raised. He agreed that math education and English proficiency were critical subjects to address. Then, he discussed the important and growing role of UCSB tutors in his school who were working with a number of students in these areas. The Principal acknowledged that "a lot more work" needed to be done.

We did not speak again of this issue. This vignette suggests several important points with respect to Chicano/Latino education and different ways in which educational professionals engage parent participation as well as several arenas for additional discussion, research, and policy formulation.

²⁰The SAT refers to the "Scholastic Aptitude Test" that must be taken by prospective applicants to the University of California. The UC Latino Eligibility Task Force reports that significant reliance by the University of California on SAT scores poses a serious barrier for Latinos' acceptance into the University system. The utility of the SAT to predict college success is a subject of serious debate. Readers interested in the debate surrounding SAT and UC admissions are referred to John A. Douglass, "Setting the Conditions of Undergraduate Admissions: The Role of University of California Faculty in Policy and Process." Report to the Task Force on Governance, University of California Academic Senate. Berkeley: Center for Studies in Higher Education, UC Berkeley, 1997 (<http://www.ucop.edu.senate>). One example of research supporting the predictive ability of the SAT is Consuelo Arbona, "Noncognitive dimensions as predictors of college success among Black, Mexican-American, and White Students," *Journal of College Student Development* (September 1990):415-422. For a discussion of bias in the SAT see: Rodolfo Alvarez and Richard Flacks, "Toward Increasing Fairness in UC Admissions: Guaranteeing Admission to the Best Public School Students," Chicano Studies Research Center, UCLA (1997); and L. Scott Miller, *An American Imperative: Accelerating Minority Educational Advancement*, Yale University Press (1995).

The educational attainment and undereducation of Latino children is in a state of crisis. It is one of the most pressing national and local issues facing us today (President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans 1996). About one-quarter of all Latinos drop out of high school (California Department of Education 1994). About half of all Latino adults in the U.S. over the age of 25 do not have high school diplomas. UC Santa Barbara's Office of Budget & Planning estimates that of the 158,697 Latinos who were in 9th grade in 1994, about 59.5% or 94,473 will graduate from high school. Of that number, only 3,687 will have the grades and the SAT scores to be eligible to attend the University of California. The sum of these statistics is a *UC Latino eligibility rate of 3.9%*. *Of the Latinos "eligible" to apply to the University of California, 2,919 are expected to enroll at UC, and about 1,848 will graduate in 6 years.*²¹

How can we account for these abysmally low educational attainment rates? Explanations vary but can be divided into two broad categories; institutional analyses and cultural deficit/individual deficit theories.

If we consider the vignette that opened this section, we can "explain" the low math achievement scores of the ESL 3 students either by analyzing institutional practices, arrangements, and ideologies and/or by individual and cultural deficiencies. If we consider the structure of schooling we find an array of practices designed to guide the development of individual excellence. Students are expected to be taught in English as soon as possible. Schools routinely test students on their linguistic heritage and English competency to place them in "appropriate" classes. At this

point, many Latinos begin to fall several steps behind due to differences in course content and language abilities of teachers and aides in "sheltered" *vis-à-vis* "regular" *vis-à-vis* "advanced" (e.g., GATE) classes.²² Schools routinely place students in ESL or "sheltered" classes where they learn in their own language until such a time as they "test" at a level of English proficiency sufficiently high to be mainstreamed or placed in "regular" classes. These students are those whom the school Principal described as "struggling." That is, with low or basic levels of English language skills, students can be placed in English-only math classes where many, if not most, fall behind. At this critical juncture, intervention is needed to assist students, families, and teachers but is rarely done in a way that "makes sense"

²¹ UCSB Office of Budget and Planning (DDH) 4/9/96, "Estimated Number of Fall 1994 California Public 9th Graders Who Will Graduate from High School, Apply and Matriculate to a UC Campus, and Graduate from a UC Campus." In *Pipeline Projections*, 1996.

²² Research has consistently found significant numbers of Chicano/Latino students enrolled below grade level and several years behind in critical subject areas, in particular math and science (President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans 1996).

to all of the interested parties.

A cultural or individual deficit theoretical perspective focuses on student initiative and motivation. Individuals and institutions guided by these theoretical orientations argue that individual students who have linguistic or cultural backgrounds that differ from the English-speaking norm need to work harder and perhaps seek out tutoring services. Their failure to achieve is viewed largely as an individual predicament rather than a social problem.

Reflecting on this debate, we asked Isla Vista Latino immigrant parents a battery of questions about their attitudes toward education, their involvement in their children's education and their own educational dreams. Of the 120 Isla Vista Survey respondents, 77 are parents with children in local elementary or secondary schools. Three-fourths of the parents have children who have participated in a bilingual education program.

In light of the large number of children attending Isla Vista Elementary School and to guide the development of an educational project on junior high school students, I developed several questions about parent and children's experiences with this school and Goleta Valley Junior High. In general, parents articulate respectful attitudes towards schools and school personnel. With respect to Isla Vista Elementary School, parents indicate that they receive information about school events regularly. One-third of Isla Vista Elementary

School parents indicate that the information sent by the school is "difficult to understand." *Most of the parents give high marks to teachers for their concern for their children's education (95%) and for teaching in a way that their children understand (90%).* About one-third of the parents state that the school does not send make-up work for their children when they are absent. *Nearly all of the elementary school parents (89%) indicate that they help their children with their homework.*

Parents with children in Goleta Valley Junior High also receive information about school events regularly. One-quarter find information from the school "difficult to understand." *Some parents indicate that their children have difficulty in understanding teachers (29%) and do not know whether or not their children can receive tutoring help at the school (57%).* Unlike the Isla Vista parents, most of the Goleta Valley Junior High parents do *not* help their children with homework (57%).

Our in-depth interviews with parents provide additional information on reasons that parental assistance with homework declines as their children advance in school. By and large, parents lack the language and educational backgrounds to help substantively with much of the homework. Parents are concerned, however, and told us repeatedly that they "made" their children do their homework.²³ One dilemma is that parents often do not know exactly how much homework their children have been assigned. Many parents take their children to the library, especially when a report

²³ Educational researchers Carola and Marcelo Suárez-Orozco found that Latino immigrant children rely less on their parents for direct help with their homework than they did when they were in Mexico. This decline is largely due to parents' limited English-language ability as opposed to interest and concern (1995: 164-165).

has to be done. Some parents told us that they “wished” they knew how to help their children use the library more effectively. Parents also allow their children to attend after school tutorial projects when (and if) their utility is clear

and if their children are supervised and safe. Parents express regret that they cannot provide very much “quiet” or private space for their children to study, due to the high density in the apartments.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS AND THEIR CHILDREN’S EDUCATION

The “Quality of Life” survey data indicates that, in general, parents actively participate in their children’s schools in traditional as well as non-traditional ways. *Most of the respondents (68%) said that they felt it was important to participate in their children’s education.* In fact, many of the parents said that to “*sacar adelante a los hijos*” or “help their children get ahead” is one of the primary reasons for migrating to the U.S. and a primary factor for willingness to endure hardships here in the U.S. (Carruyo 1997). Latino parents are aware that education is a principal route to move out of poverty and marginalization and tend to be highly invested in their children’s schooling.

Seventy percent (n=53) of surveyed Latino parents indicate they have participated in school activities. This high level of participation contrasts with conventional portraits of Latino parents as uninvolved and uninterested. Latino parents revealed the range of their involvement in the open-ended question format I used. Research studies that conclude Latino parents do not participate much in school activities typically ask about: PTA meetings, parent-teacher conferences, school board meetings, and open houses. In addition to asking these questions, I asked if there were any “other” school-related activities they had been involved in. I found that parental involvement in school activities is quite high and also embraces a number of “other” activities (*Table 11*).

Initially I was surprised at the high numbers of responses I received to both “attending a PTA meeting,” and “other.” The research team’s conversations with parents and among ourselves suggest that several parents may have interpreted the question to include the Latino Parent Night²⁴ at Isla Vista

| TABLE II | |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT* | |
| (n = 77) | Percent |
| Met with Teacher(s) | 70% |
| PTA/Latino Parent Night | 70 |
| Attended a School Board Meeting | 38 |
| Open House | 55 |
| Other | 50 |

* Percentages do not equal 100 due to multiple answers by parents. The table should be read: “70% of the parents indicated they had met with a teacher(s),” etc.

²⁴ The actual question in Spanish is: “Ha ido a una reunión de la Asociación de Padres y Maestros (PTA)?” Several of the survey respondents mentioned Latino Parent Night as a “meeting at the school” they had attended. Latino Parent Night was a project funded by UC Santa Barbara’s Division of Student Affairs in partnership with Isla Vista Elementary School. Latino Parent Night had been discontinued the year of the “Quality of Life” survey, but reconvened the following year.

Elementary School. Hence, the modification of the category to include this possibility.

We received 70 answers to the open-ended "other" question, many of which overlapped, from 38 different parents. Based on the range of answers, I developed five "new" categories: "Fundraising," "Social Event at the School," "School Ceremony," "Holiday Event," and "Other Educational Support Activities." These categories contain diverse activities that range from participating in books sales (n=9) or helping with "fiestas" (n=9) to cooking for teachers on the last day of school (n=1).²⁵

This data (*see Appendix D*) uncovers some of the "shadow" parental involvement of Isla Vista Latino parents in their children's schools. This finding is critical since it provides insight into ways schools can recognize and value alternative forms of parental participation. Theoretically, when children see a parent doing "things" at the school, it can impress them with the value of the enterprise especially since it comes at a heavy cost in families with heavy familial and economic workloads.

Parents also discussed barriers to participation in school activities. The 24 parents who did not participate in school activities gave the following reasons: lack of time (50%), lack of transportation (48%), lack of childcare (44%), language (42%), not being informed on time (42%), lack of bilingual personnel (39%), felt it wasn't necessary (32%), and feeling uncomfortable (25%). Light Carruyo's research on this issue in Isla Vista revealed that parent participation is sometimes hindered by their sense of "inadequacy" to guide their children to educational success in a strange, English-speaking land. Similar to other work-

ing class groups, Latino parents often feel they are doing the best for their children if they leave education "to the experts" (Lareau 1989, Segura 1993).

In sum, the "Quality of Life" survey illustrates some of the ways that Latino parents participate in their children's education and schools. Many parents would like to participate more effectively. This data suggests that policy makers need to develop ways to nurture parental interest in their children's education. At least two general principles could usefully guide this process: first, acknowledge what parents do, and; second, treat parents with respect as educational partners and work *with* them at problem-solving. At the same time, it is important to understand the interest and the limitations of parental participation: many parents want to help with the English book report but don't have the skills (neither do many non-Latino English-speaking parents, but that is beyond my purview here). Fostering Latino parent empowerment in schools is critical to children's school achievement. Projects designed with parents to provide information on their rights as well as enhance substantive knowledge in areas as diverse as computer literacy or book report formats, could be provided at parent-friendly times.

Schools need to improve effective communication with Latino families. It is worrisome that 25%-plus parents find school notices "hard to understand." This finding points to a greater need for a "personal touch": more phone calls or home visits by bilingual personnel. To maximize parental involvement in "official" school meetings, convening them in a locale easily accessible for a community heavily

reliant on public transportation and walking is desirable. The structure of meetings should also be re-thought and redesigned to modify hierarchical seating arrangements that position parents in a passive "audience" role that contradicts the development of a spirit of partnership. A hierarchical power structure was actively reinforced in the organization of the room at the meeting I described at the beginning of this section: the school "experts" sat at the head table with the parents as the "audience" sitting in rows looking toward the front. For any member of the "audience" to speak s/he had to stand and move in a circle for everyone to see and hear. Only a few parents could or would do this set of actions given the structure of the room. The "experts,"

on the other hand, were visually accessible to everyone without moving. Motionless, hierarchy was reaffirmed and parental voices curtailed.

Parental interest is there. Parental involvement, however, must be nurtured. Local educational policy makers need to foster a relationship of mutual respect between the schools and the families with an eye to the prize—the academic success of Latino students. In this enterprise, UCSB should be called on for support. As a land grant institution, UCSB is ultimately responsible for reaching out to all of the population equally. Both sets of educational institutions as well as families should be held accountable for Latino school achievement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Assert High Expectations of Latino Student Achievement**

Educational policymakers and practitioners need to continuously assert high expectations for Latino student achievement. Research indicates that one of the most important features of "effective" schools is conveying high expectations for Latino student achievement among professional staff and organizing policies and practices that embody this ethos.

- **Improve the Quantity and Quality of School–Latino Parent Communication**

To foster communication with Latino parents, schools need to secure additional bilingual personnel or bilingual volunteers to personally contact parents to discuss both positive and problematic areas of their children's education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Develop Bilingual Personnel to Serve as Latino Parent and Student Advocates**

Schools, in partnership with UCSB, should develop a corps of bilingual undergraduates trained to serve as "student or parent advocates" specializing in providing information and advocacy for student and parent access to school and community programs that facilitate their educational goals.

- **Convene Ongoing Substantive Workshops with Latino Parents**

Workshops that cover topics of mutual concern need to be designed with parent input and convened at parent-friendly locations and times. Potential workshop topics might include: demystifying testing procedures, placement in ESL and its implications at each grade level, different ways to secure children's placement in GATE/Advanced Placement classes, ability grouping procedures within classes and schools, etc. Workshops could be developed by local schools or community-based organizations in partnership with parents, UCSB and Santa Barbara City College.

- **Expand Latino Parent Night to Other Schools**

Isla Vista parents participate and enjoy Latino Parent night. This structure could be replicated by local school districts in partnership with UCSB at other schools or convenient community sites (e.g., the Goleta Community Center). Latino Parent Night could be, among other things, a site of development of substantive workshops for parent empowerment.

- **Restructure School-Parent Community Meetings**

Schools could hold parent meetings in the community in locales and times convenient for working parents with limited means of transportation. These meetings could be structured to diminish hierarchies that impede two-way communication (e.g., roundtable format, several tables with school personnel dispersed to each table to be more readily accessible to parents).

- **Expand UCSB/School District Tutoring Programs to Enhance Latino Student Achievement**

Schools, in partnership with UCSB (particularly the Graduate School of Education and the Division of Student Affairs Early Academic Outreach Program), should develop and monitor tutoring programs for different groups of students that maximize their achievement at every grade level to enable their placement and success in academically challenging and rigorous classes including college preparatory classes.

PART III

ISLA VISTA LATINOS, UCSB AND COMMUNITY SERVICE NEEDS

This section discusses Isla Vista Latinos' views on service needs in their community. Prior student ethnographic research in Isla Vista had uncovered a number of ideas about service needs among Latino residents that we could explore more broadly in survey questions. In addition, I had been encouraged by UCSB administrators to develop survey questions to improve UCSB's awareness of service needs in this community.²⁵ These administrators, particularly in the UCSB–Isla Vista Community Services office indicated that they would be responsive to this data in developing policy and programs relevant to Isla Vista. Some student researchers discussed this section of the questionnaire with city and county officials who also expressed interest in “finding out more” about the needs of this community. In light of the interest of the diverse agencies—Latino community members, UCSB students, UCSB administrators, and city/county officials—the research team developed a series of questions about community services. This report discusses findings on Latinos residents' evaluations of relations with UCSB and community service needs.

The University of California, Santa Barbara is one of the largest employers in the county and plays an important role in the social and economic life of neighboring Isla Vista, Goleta, and Santa Barbara. UCSB maintains a community relations office in Isla Vista which supports an array of support services in the local area. UCSB students occupy numerous apartment complexes. Moreover, privately owned fraternity and sorority houses for UCSB students occupy significant space in Isla Vista. Tension between students and other residents in Isla Vista exists, but to a large degree both segments of the community live in separate worlds intersecting mainly in the fast food establishments or grocery stores where many Latinos work. In many of these

²⁵ In the question-development phase of the research, Catherine Boyer, Community Liaison in the Isla Vista/UCSB Community Services office, and H. Yonie Harris, then-Acting Dean of Students, suggested several questions on UCSB–Isla Vista relations for possible inclusion in the final survey instrument. The research team discussed these questions and ultimately included several of them that are discussed in this section of the report.

establishments, Latinos work alongside students or are supervised by them. In other cases, Latino workers prepare food or wait on the large student clientele. The labor of Latinos in Isla Vista is essential for the well-being of the community and the county-at-large.

The 1994 Chicano/Latino Hunger Strike at UCSB called attention to the bifurcated social and economic world of Isla Vista. Hunger strikers had demanded that the University expand the quantity and quality of educational and recreational services to low-income and Latino populations in Isla Vista. Many UCSB administrators expressed interest in this enterprise and offered support for the development of questions to tap this area of concern (see footnote 25). In this section of the summary report I offer information on Latino residents' attitudes towards the university with an emphasis on the support services that they would like to see developed.

In general, Latino respondents rarely or never receive information from UCSB. Slightly over half (55%) indicate they "never" receive information of any kind from UCSB. Nearly one-quarter (23.3%) receive information infrequently (1-3 times per year). Eighteen percent receive information at least once a month or more. Four respondents said that my letter to them inviting them to participate in the survey was their "first contact" with UCSB. Despite their low receipt of information from UCSB, slightly over half (54%) of the Latino respondents had participated in an event sponsored by the university.

When asked to identify the "event or events" they had attended, respondents cited a number of events that fell into five categories: "cultural programs" (e.g., Banda Machos, Baile

Folklorico), "sports events," "Christmas Fiesta & Gift-Giving (1994)," "the 1994 Hunger Strike," and "other" (e.g., meetings). Latino respondents clearly attended events that resonated to them culturally or politically, and/or appealed to their interest in sports. When asked to elaborate on the reasons that they did not attend UCSB-sponsored events, a majority of the respondents indicated that lack of information or lack of time tended to prevent them from participating. This suggests that participation by Isla Vista Latino residents in UCSB events could be enhanced by more effective dissemination of information by the university. The high level of participation and interest in culturally relevant programs and sports events suggests another route for strengthening good relations between the university and the local Latino community.

Latino residents are interested in the development of a variety of educational and support services from UCSB. We asked, "Here's a list of services the University could offer to community members. If you had to pay \$5.00 a week for each service, which would you be interested in paying for?" With this question I wished to explore both level of support for a potential service need as well as a sense of the respondent's investment in the service. Theoretically, an individual is more likely to identify and prioritize a service if it is free over one that incurs costs to him/her. This may be particularly relevant for low-income individuals who have little discretionary income. Merging the concept of paying a nominal fee for a service with an individual's "interest" in having the service offered, is one way to ascertain the importance of each potential service. Latino respondents' answers to this question suggest important priorities among

possible services. Table 12 illustrates survey participants' levels of support for each service.

Clearly respondents are most interested in services that might enhance their chances for socio-economic betterment (e.g., English classes, job training). Although Santa Barbara City College has offered a number of English-as-a-Second-Language classes in Isla Vista for several years, surveyed Latinos identified this need as paramount. This suggests that Latinos may not be aware of these classes, the times may be inconvenient, or the course content may not be what they need. The critical nature of English-language acquisition beyond the beginning levels is one area that UCSB in conjunction with Santa Barbara City College and/or the local school district might usefully analyze with an eye towards developing vocationally sensitive and/or advanced English courses locally. Latino residents are also willing to invest in educational services for their children—an important finding when considered in conjunction with other measures in the survey that highlight a more nuanced parental involvement in children's education than is typically presented in the literature.

The willingness of Latino residents to spend \$5.00 a week on language training, job training, and educational services for their children is particularly impressive when we consider the low incomes of survey respondents in Isla Vista and the high cost of living, especially rent. On the average, 32% of the respondents earned less than \$100 per week; 30% made \$101–200 a week; 16% earned \$201–300 per week; 20% made over \$300 per week. If we consider the relatively large size of families (5+ on the average), spending \$5.00 a week

TABLE 12
PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS INTERESTED IN POTENTIAL UCSB SERVICES WITH A \$5.00 CO-PAYMENT
 (n = 120) Percent

| | |
|--|-----|
| English Classes | 96% |
| Adult Job Training | 91 |
| UCSB Tutoring to Prepare Youth for UC | 85 |
| UCSB Tutors for High School Students | 83 |
| UCSB Tutors for Elementary School Students | 75 |
| Use UCSB Library | 72 |
| Use UCSB Pool | 68 |

implies considerable sacrifice and commitment to social betterment of self and family among surveyed Latinos.

Our follow-up interviews indicate high interest in English classes that are vocationally oriented; that is, help them acquire vocabulary and speaking skills useful to their jobs. One of the major barriers to taking English classes is availability: the demand exceeds the supply. Other barriers include time constraints, transportation problems, and family responsibilities. Interview informants contend that if vocationally sensitive English classes were offered in Isla Vista at user-friendly times, they would participate eagerly. Survey respondents are also interested in the development of university–local school programs to enhance their children's educational achievement.

Survey respondents also express high levels of concern about the quantity and quality of local services. We asked them to indicate which services they would like to see expanded, curtailed, or maintained at the present level with the understanding that expansion would

involve a tax increase.²⁶ Over three-fourths of *Isla Vista Latinos* support expansion of the following services: bilingual police (87%), anti-gang education (87%), drug prevention education (85%), adult job training (81%), and after-school tutoring (75%). They express strong support for more youth recreation (72%), street maintenance and repair (64%), trash removal service (64%), government-subsidized housing (63%), and police patrols (62%). Latino residents express weaker support for expanded development of child-care (53%), traffic lights and stop signs (53%), and public transportation (43%).

These figures highlight the importance many Latino residents place on safety issues. They view bilingual Spanish-English-speaking police as the single greatest need of their community and critical to the formation of a safe space for themselves and their children. Consistent with this concern is their willingness to pay greater taxes to fund educational programs for children to try and prevent drug use and gang activity. In addition, a majority of respondents favor the development of greater recreational facilities and after-school tutoring for their children. Many believe that a number of nonproductive activities including drug use and gangs could be curtailed if their children could be otherwise occupied. I should note that women consistently express significantly

higher levels of interest in educational and recreational programs than men.²⁷ This suggests that development of programs in these areas might usefully call on the assistance of Latina women in the community.

Latino residents also support expansion of maintenance services to the community. High density among apartments creates a high demand for trash removal to keep the community clean. Our research team noted the cleanliness of most of the apartments we visited as well as overflowing trash bins at the back of several complexes that were both unsightly and unsanitary. Repeatedly, residents expressed frustration at the inadequacy of this service. Many discussed their desire to keep the community clean. Members of our research team often observed (and participated in) the periodic "clean up the community days" organized by *Familias Unidas* to sweep curbsides and pick up trash. A clean and pleasant environment is important to the residents, which they emphasize both by their high participation in street clean-up days as well as their willingness to commit additional taxes to augment services in this area.

In sum, Latino residents articulate significant willingness to invest in their local community either through tax increases or co-payments for services they believe are essential to

²⁶ The actual question was: "*Aunque significaría pagar más impuestos, supongamos un aumento de un centavo agregado al i.v.a (impuesto de valor agregado), prefiere que este programa sea ampliado, reducido, o dejado igual?*" Respondents were then shown a "wish list" of 13 potential and existing local services to evaluate.

²⁷ 92% of female respondents *vis-à-vis* 76% of male respondents favor expanding drug prevention education. Similar levels of difference exist in their attitudes towards anti-gang education (94% *vis-à-vis* 78%, respectively), and youth recreation programs (81% and 63%, respectively).

improve the quality of their lives in Isla Vista. Women, in particular, demonstrate high willingness to commit personal resources to develop educational and recreational services for Isla Vista youth. Both men and women express interest in receiving more information from

UCSB about programs and sports events. They are particularly interested in the development of programs to enhance their children's educational success in local schools and preparation for eligibility to successfully enroll at a four-year college and/or the University of California.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Improve Information Dissemination from UCSB**

UCSB should develop a more effective and consistent system of communication with Latinos in Isla Vista on its diverse educational, cultural and recreational programs. It is important that a population living adjacent to a major university become familiar with educational programs and employment opportunities at UCSB.

- **Develop a Coordinated Educational Partnership between UCSB, SBCC and Local Schools**

UCSB engages in a significant amount of K-16 educational outreach. UCSB could assume responsibility for developing a partnership with Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) and the local schools to develop and evaluate programs designed to enhance Latino children's educational achievement, drug prevention education, and after-school tutoring.

- **Expand UCSB Service Learning**

At present an unknown number of UCSB students work with local Latino communities in a variety of ways including research, after-school tutoring, English literacy enhancement activities, and housing advocacy. The quality and quantity of these services could be enhanced if UCSB expanded service learning among interested undergraduates in a coordinated way that enabled students to receive training, course credit, and/or research mentorship depending on the specific project. Service learning of this type could benefit both the community and the students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Augment the Breadth and Depth of English Language Courses**

Santa Barbara City College has offered English-as-a Second-Language classes in Isla Vista for a number of years. The complexity, vocational utility, and intellectual challenge of these classes may need re-evaluation and re-design by SBCC. This re-design could include integrating the services of peer tutors or tutors from UCSB and SBCC.

- **Enhance Community Safety Measures**

County supervisors, in concert with UCSB, should enhance safety measures in Isla Vista, including providing additional bilingual police officers.

- **Monitor Maintenance Services**

County officials need to monitor maintenance services (especially trash removal) in Isla Vista.

- **Expand Youth Recreational Services**

One of the most pressing needs for Latinos in Isla Vista is the lack of recreational space and organized activities available to the youth. High apartment density exacerbates this situation. County supervisors, the Isla Vista Parks & Recreation District, and UCSB, in concert with Latino parents, need to formulate viable alternatives

- **Develop Local Latino Leadership**

Consistently, Latinos in Isla Vista express interest in learning how to become more effective advocates for their children, their families and their community. Policy makers need to integrate the voices of Latinos, in particular interested women, in the development of programs targeting this population, especially educational and recreational programs.

CONCLUSION

This report examined the social context of the quality of life among Latinos in Isla Vista. I identified some of the major issues that need urgent action and could be usefully addressed by relevant agencies including UCSB, Santa Barbara City College, local school districts, and the County of Santa Barbara. Reports such as this one are only as good as the positive actions they provoke. I hope that this report will be read, discussed and acted upon affirmatively.

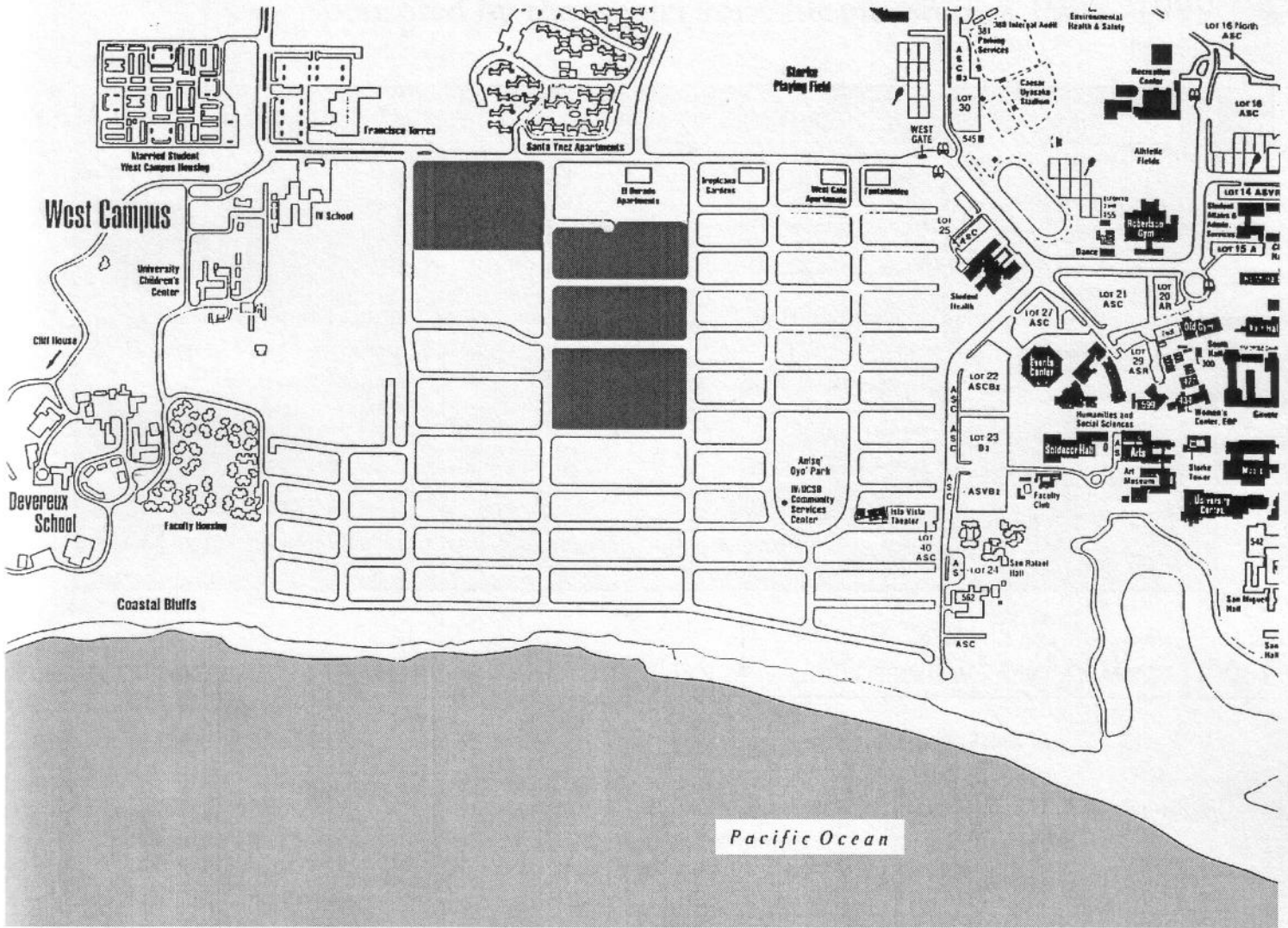
With this report, the Center for Chicano Studies reaffirms its historical commitment to community-relevant research that provides insight on Latino issues and needs with an eye to strategies for social change. The participation and training of Chicano/Latino undergraduates in the development of this research is particularly noteworthy. The blending of community and student voices in the articulation of Latino Isla Vista reflects a rare symphonic confluence in the university that should be replicated in future years on various themes.

The work I have presented here is far from finished. Many important topics are not covered in this report including civic participation and citizenship aspirations of Latinos in Isla Vista as well as data I gathered on race relations and employment. Future reports and research articles will discuss these areas. More importantly, the institutionalization of research on Isla Vista and local Latino communities at the Center for Chicano Studies and through field research courses in the Department of Chicano Studies is occurring and promises a rich yield in the future. Latino lives and issues will remain at the core of this enterprise.

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MAP OF ISLA VISTA



Housing Units examined in the surveys are shown in darkened blocks.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: ISLA VISTA RESEARCH & INTERNSHIP PROJECTS Sponsored by the Center for Chicano Studies 1994–1999

PROJECT I: "HOUSING SURVEY" AND "QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY" RESEARCH PROJECTS (1994–95)

Undergraduates

| | | | |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Luis Franco del Rico | Lorena Jimenez | Claudia Leiva | Ramón Miramontes |
| Margarita Morales | Felicia Pérez | Angel Valdivia | |

Graduate Students

| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Gonzalo Arrizón, English | Marisela Marquez, Political Science |
| Marcie Miranda-Arrizón, Sociology | |
| Darcie Vandegrift (coordinator of the Housing Survey Project), Sociology | |

Community Liason from UCSB's Division of Student Affairs

John Delgado

Faculty Director

Denise A. Segura, Director, Center for Chicano Studies

PROJECT II: "QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY" FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS AND ANALYSIS (1996)

Outcome: Surveys of the living conditions and quality of life among Latino residents in Isla Vista.

Undergraduates

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| Lorena Jimenez | Claudia Leiva | Ramón Miramontes | Susana Pitones (Summer only) |
| Adrianna Saenz (Summer only) | | Angel Valdivia | |

Graduate Students

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Light Carruyo, Sociology | Darcie Vandegrift, Sociology |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|

Community Liaison from UCSB's Division of Student Affairs

John Delgado

Faculty Director

Denise A. Segura, Director, Center for Chicano Studies

Outcome: In-depth interviews of a sub-sample of Latino residents of Isla Vista who participated in the 1995 "Quality of Life" survey. The purpose of the interviews was to clarify and supplement the survey data.

PROJECT III: FAMILIAS UNIDAS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (1996–97)

Undergraduates

Ivonne Cardenas

Manuel Criollo

Juventino Gutierrez

Claudia Leiva

Nancy Mariscal

Leticia Ochoa

Beatriz Zavala

Community Liaison from UCSB's Division of Student Affairs

John Delgado

Faculty Sponsor

Denise A. Segura, Director, Center for Chicano Studies

Outcome: A collaborative project between El Congreso (UCSB), Familias Unidas (Isla Vista), the Isla Vista Health Projects, and the Center for Chicano Studies, that was funded by the Fund for Santa Barbara and the Center for Chicano Studies to put on a series of workshops to enhance family empowerment and community development among Latinos in Isla Vista. Specific workshop topics included: drugs, alcohol and tobacco awareness, immigration, housing and education. All workshops were videotaped and are available at the Center for Chicano Studies and Familias Unidas.

PROJECT IV: VIDEOTAPE ON "HACIENDO LA LUCHA: LA VIVIENDA Y LOS LATINOS EN ISLA VISTA"
("MAKING THE STRUGGLE: HOUSING AND LATINOS IN ISLA VISTA") (1996)

Graduate Student Co-Producer

Susana Peña, Sociology

Community Co-Producer

Doug Houston

Outcome: A videotape on housing conditions of Latinos in Isla Vista that has been played regularly on the local community access station. A copy of the videotape is available at the Center for Chicano Studies. This activity was co-sponsored by the Center for Chicano Studies.

For additional information, contact Susana Peña, Sociology Department, UC Santa Barbara.

PROJECT V: HOUSING CONFERENCE "LAS CONDICIONES DE LA VIVIENDA Y
LA MOBILIZACION COMUNITARIA" (1996)

Conference Coordinator

Darcie Vandegrift

Undergraduate Organizers & Presenters

| | | |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Claudia Leiva | Ramón Miramontes | Felicia Pérez |
| Susana Pitones | Adrianna Saenz | Angel Valdivia |

Undergraduate Assistants

| | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Ivonne Cárdenas | Manuel Criollo | Alicia Fletcher | Jeannette Hernandez |
| Gladys Limón | Nancy Mariscal | Mabi Montes | Ricardo Mora |
| Ivonne Munguía | Edgar Sánchez | Lisa Valencia Sherratt | Alejandro Vásquez |
| Beatriz Zavala | | | |

Graduate Student Organizers & Presenters

| | | |
|---------------|----------------|-------------|
| Light Carruyo | Antonio García | Susana Peña |
|---------------|----------------|-------------|

Familias Unidas Organizers & Presenters

| | | | |
|---------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Julia Frausto | Juan Frausto | Carlos Pizano | José Luis Sánchez |
|---------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|

Faculty Sponsors

Francisco A. Lomelí, Chair, Department of Chicano Studies
Denise A. Segura, Director, Center for Chicano Studies

Outcome: The conference was dedicated to discussing housing conditions and tenants' rights. It also offered "help sessions" on housing needs with low-income Latino residents of alternative housing projects, and with Ron Perry, Director of Legal Aid. The target audience was permanent Isla Vista residents. The findings of the "Isla Vista Housing Survey" supervised by Sociology graduate student Darcie Vandegrift for the Center for Chicano Studies were discussed and the video produced by Doug Houston and Susana Peña, *Haciendo la Lucha: La vivienda y los Latinos en Isla Vista* was shown.

PROJECT VI: LA COORDINADORA (1997)

Undergraduates

| | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Oswaldo Alex Aguilar | Marie Bailon | Paula Bautista | Erica Estrada |
| Anthony Gutierrez | Hector Hugo Orozco | Ramón Miramontes | Sandra Ramirez |

Faculty Director

Olga Vasquez, Visiting Scholar, Center for Chicano Studies
& Assistant Professor of Communications, University of California, San Diego

Outcome: A proposal to create a linkage between the university and the surrounding community to strengthen a steady flow of qualified and informed Latino students to advance up the educational pipeline. Ideally, this linkage system would involve students, faculty, local community agencies and local community members coordinated at UCSB.

PROJECT VII: ISLA VISTA TEEN CENTER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (1996–99)

Undergraduates (1996–97)

| | | | |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Marisol Alvarado | Melinda Bravo | Rosalba Gonzalez | Lorena Jimenez |
| Ramón Miramontes | Guadalupe Montes | Angel Valdivia | |

Undergraduates (1997–98)

| | | | |
|--------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Paul Bracho | Melinda Bravo | Cesar Corona | Jacqueline Espinoza |
| Martha Perez | Hector Rocha | Juliette Rodriguez | Pablo Sainz |

Undergraduates (1998–99)

| | | | |
|------------------|------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Norma Benitez | Jonathan Cruz | Zaida Cuellar | Jessica Lopez |
| Lorena Magdalena | Aneesa Motola | Raquel Quiroz | Teresa Ramirez |
| Ivan Renteria | Jonathan Sanchez | | |

Outcome: This program has had several products. The first emphasis was doing research to provide a rationale for an after-school teen center in Isla Vista for tutoring and recreational activities. This was successfully accomplished under the leadership of undergraduates Ramón Miramontes and Melinda Bravo sponsored by UCSB's Director of University & Isla Vista Relations and Dean of Students, H. Yonie Harris and Center for Chicano Studies Director Denise A. Segura. Simultaneously, the Center for Chicano Studies provided funding for undergraduate interns for tutoring and research in Isla Vista. This program was created by the student organization Chicanos for Higher Education (CHE) and supported by the Center for Chicano Studies and UCSB's Division of Student Affairs.

In 1998–99 this program was an undergraduate student internship program at the Isla Vista Teen Center supervised by Ramón Miramontes and sponsored by Center for Chicano Studies Director Denise A. Segura. The internship program involved 10 UCSB undergraduates, numerous Isla Vista teens (50–80), parents, Teen Center staff member Ramón Miramontes, and the Center for Chicano Studies.

PROJECT VIII: COURSE DEVELOPMENT, CHICANO STUDIES 192A/B, "FIELD RESEARCH IN ISLA VISTA"
(SPRING 1998 AND WINTER/SPRING 1999) AND SOCIOLOGY 128 (SUMMER AND SPRING 1999)

Chicano Studies 192 A/B (1999) Instructor

Marisela Marquez, Ph.D candidate, Political Science

Chicano Studies 192A (1998) Instructor

Lorenzo Lopez Covarrubias, Ph.D candidate, Anthropology

Sociology 128 (Summer, Fall 1999) Instructor

Darcie Vandegrift, Ph.D candidate, Sociology

Faculty Sponsors

Francisco A. Lomelí, Professor & Chair, Department of Chicano Studies

Denise A. Segura, Director, Center for Chicano Studies and Associate Professor of Sociology

Outcomes:

One two-quarter course developed under the sponsorship of the Center for Chicano Studies and the Department of Chicano Studies to be taught two quarters each year in the Department of Chicano Studies. This course focuses on Isla Vista and encourages students to engage in applied and ethnographic research in this area.

One course offered in the Department of Sociology that can include significant content on race-ethnic stratification and social relations in the local areas of Isla Vista and Santa Barbara.

APPENDIX B: METHODOLOGY

PROCEDURES, STUDENT PREPARATION AND QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT

In 1995, a team of undergraduates, graduate students and I designed, field tested, and administered a "Quality of Life" survey to 120 Latino residents of Isla Vista. Through the use of key informants from the local community, I had identified 18 apartment complexes where Latino families lived. I eliminated 8 apartment complexes that had been tapped (through a random selection process) for a housing survey the Center for Chicano Studies had recently completed. This left 10 apartment complexes known to have Latino families. I sent letters to all of the residents of these buildings that notified them of our project and invited them to participate in the survey. In Spring-Summer 1995, the research team went door-to-door in all 10 of these buildings to administer the "Quality of Life" survey. To non-Latino residents we administered a short questionnaire about socio-demographic characteristics. We administered the full "Quality of Life" survey to Latino residents only. Each interview lasted between 1 and 2 hours. In light of the high number of apartments with multiple families and to maximize participation of both men and women, I decided to interview two adults per apartment when possible. Thus, two researchers (one male and one female, when possible) went to each apartment. The total number of respondents ($n=120$) represents 68 apartments where a total of 406 adults and children lived. This method maximizes the possibility for survey respondents to represent Latino residents living in Isla Vista apartments.

Students underwent extensive preparation to develop and administer the "Quality of Life" survey. Students spent Fall 1994 reading and learning basic qualitative and survey methods. In Winter 1995, students who were not volunteers in community organizations were placed in different field settings: 2 undergraduates and 1 graduate student with the local

community-based Latino organization, Familias Unidas; 2 undergraduates at the Isla Vista Medical Clinic; 1 undergraduate worked as the Latino community liaison for the local Catholic Church; and 2 undergraduates volunteered in an after-school computer tutorial project. All of these community organizations had endorsed the project and, moreover, supported the concept of deepening student awareness of the local community.

The research team met once a week during 1994-95 to refine field note taking and analysis. During Winter 1995, the work pace accelerated as the undergraduates and the graduate students developed a housing survey, which was administered during Spring 1995. The purpose of the housing survey was to examine the living conditions of Latino households in 8 randomly selected apartment buildings and 1 non-family, student-oriented apartment complex for comparative analysis. After the housing survey was completed, the research team developed a "Quality of Life" survey that we field-tested in Santa Barbara. After the field test, I modified several questions to make them clearer and eliminated others. We administered the modified questionnaire containing 200

items to Latino residents of Isla Vista. Few respondents (less than five) declined the invitation to be interviewed.

The Quality of Life survey asked a series of open-and-closed-ended questions on: immigration, employment, parental involvement in children's education, civic participation, relations with UCSB, evaluation of the community infrastructure, economic needs, and culture. We developed each question through a collective process. My commitment to feminist methodology included eliminating as much as possible, hierarchical social relations in the formation and selection of research areas and survey questions. As the faculty director, I brought to the table questions that had been "validated" from other surveys (e.g., the National Latino Survey of 1990, the Gallup Poll, and my own prior work-issues survey). Through numerous collective discussions, nearly all of these items were either modified to be "more relevant" to the local

community context based on observations made by the student field researchers, or replaced by other items they developed. This process of give-and-take is unusual in a research project but maximizes the potential relevance of the questions. In addition, the quality of the discussion within the research team encouraged a great deal of reflexivity among us.

The questionnaire is in Spanish only. It is available at the Center for Chicano Studies or by contacting Professor Denise Segura, Sociology Department, University of California, Santa Barbara. I should note that a series of follow-up in-depth interviews with 18 randomly selected respondents to the Quality of Life survey were conducted during Summer 1996. In a few instances I have included information from these interviews to provide examples of the topic under discussion. In addition, I have included information from my field notes when they are directly relevant to the topic.

APPENDIX C: 1995 HOUSING SURVEY SUMMARY

In Spring 1995, the Center for Chicano Studies administered a "Survey of Housing Conditions" of 199 apartments in 9 complexes (1 student-oriented building and 8 non-student complexes). This survey was a collaborative project involving the community-based organization Familias Unidas, the Center for Chicano Studies, and the student organization El Congreso. Sociology graduate student Darcie Vandegrift served as the general coordinator and supervisor of the survey and is preparing a report on housing for the Center for Chicano Studies. Professor Denise Segura was the overall faculty director of the project. The housing questionnaire is available at the Center for Chicano Studies.

In the housing survey, teams consisting of two to three students systematically inspected conditions in each room of the apartment and asked a battery of questions to one adult household head. The team coordinators, the community liaison, and the graduate students had received training on evaluating housing conditions as part of their preparation for this project. Key findings from this survey include high density, high need for repair, significant problems with insects (79.9%) and rats (30.3%) in the non-student complexes. Over half of the respondents of the housing survey indicated having problems with rain and flooding. Half of the Latino residents (50.5%) reported difficulty getting owners and managers to repair their apartments. Over half of

the surveyed Latino residents (54.5%) responded to this by repairing their own apartments.

Recent housing reports by Santa Barbara County as well as *The Isla Vista Community Enhancement Report* emphasize problems with the quality of housing in this area as well as the tension between the high demand for housing and an inadequate supply of affordable apartments and houses. This tension exists throughout the unincorporated Isla Vista-Goleta area as well as in the City of Santa Barbara. Despite numerous hearings on this issue by County Supervisors, a resolution to this dilemma is not yet in sight. Recently, County Supervisors have authorized regular housing inspections, which should help with maintenance issues.

APPENDIX D: QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY

QUESTION 93

“Other” Forms of Parental Participation in School Activities

Fundraising Activity (Total: 23)

Book Sales 10
Kermes 5
Yard Sales 2
Jog-a-Thon 2
Sold Clothes 1
Sold Food 1
Got food for party at discount price 1
Bazaar 1

Social Event at the School (Total: 16)

Festivals/Fiestas 15
Cooked for teachers on last day of school 1

Holiday Event (Total: 10)

Cinco de mayo 2
Birthday 2
Halloween 2
Mother's Day Event 2
Valentine's Day 1
Dia del niño 1

School Ceremony (Total: 7)

Student of the Month 3
Graduation 2
Awards Ceremony 1
Cooked and helped set up diploma ceremony for Head Start 1

Other Educational Support Activities (Total: 14)

| | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| DARE program 2 | School plays 2 |
| Tutoring 1 | Helper on organizing events 1 |
| Field Trips 1 | Calls school to see kid's work 1 |
| <i>Adelante Mujer</i> conference 1 | Volunteers at school 1 |
| Assists at all school events 1 | County meetings 1 |
| Get information on what's happening in school 1 | School retreats 1 |



LATINOS IN ISLA VISTA

- Issues and Recommendations
- Socio-Demographic Profile
- Parents and Education
- UCSB and Community Service Needs

CENTER FOR CHICANO STUDIES, UCSB