

BRACERO PROJECT

The Bracero History Project, coordinated by the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History (SNMAH), the Center for History and New Media at George Mason University, and the Institute of Oral History at the University of Texas at El Paso began as an ongoing cross-country, cross-border effort to collect, document, exhibit, and share the history and voices of the bracero program.

The goal, of this grass-roots effort, is to create a national consortium of museums, universities, and cultural institutions to focus on this critical piece of history and to focus on the social and cultural aspect, how it affected the families, the towns in Mexico, their children and their communities. Funded by a \$ 48,000 grant from the Smithsonian Latino Center for the first year of research, SMAHH has teamed with other major universities including USC, and Brown University, and their students to capture the oral histories of the braceros.

The Office of Service Learning and Civic Engagement has scheduled an appointment with Steve Velasquez, associate curator for the SNMAH and Ted on Thursday, September 20, 2007 from 10:30-11:30 to provide an overview of the project, benefit to CSUCI and discuss the possibility of service learning students contributing to this historical project.

Possible Course Connections to Bracero Project

Narratives of the Working Class- Professor not listed (examines the lives of working people from various approaches and methodologies)

Historian's Craft – Frank Barajas (survey course on the writing of history, utilizing oral interviews and other material in the writing of history)

Narratives of Southern California – Frank Barajas and Joan Peters (studies the narratives, oral, written and filmed, of SoCal)

Social Problems In Service Learning Context – Professor Choi and Horigen

Project goals

- Δ Collect oral histories
- Δ Create website of virtual archives
- Δ Expand the notion of Mexican American History
- Δ Oral history questions were developed by UTexas. Contact name: Christine Navarro, Director of Oral History Project/Created a toolkit

Exhibit will consist of:

- Δ Oral histories displayed
- Δ Listening stations
- Δ Pictures

Create an informal consortium of museums, universities and cultural institutions

Role of collaborators

- Δ Host a collection day/town hall meeting
- Δ Incorporate collection into their institution/or regionally
- Δ Set up times for oral histories
- Δ Do the work on the ground in the community
- Δ Contact Bracero organization to get the word out

Students could:

- Δ Plan town hall meetings
- Δ Conduct follow-up interview
- Δ Research local history to add to the exhibit
- Δ Identify meeting place

Possibilities

Distance learning in collaboration with:

- Δ Brown
- Δ Yale
- Δ Stanford

On a specific aspect of the Bracero program such as, public history, implications on women and children, oral history training.

Students would need to be bilingual

Project is also looking to speak with the farmers, growers, shippers. Non-bilingual would be OK,