Hispanic Archival Collections
Organizations/Clubs/Institutions

Please note that not all of our Finding Aids are available online. If you would like to know about an inventory for a specific collection please call or visit the Texas Room of the Julia Ideson Building. In addition, many of our collections have a related oral history from the donor or subject of the collection. Many of these are available online via our Houston Area Digital Archive website.

RG 1013 Our Lady of Guadalupe Church

The parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church was opened along with the school in 1912 in Houston’s Second Ward. Guadalupe Church was founded specifically to serve Houston’s Mexican and Mexican American population due discriminatory practices by other Houston Catholic churches. By 1930 it was considered the city’s first and only “Mexican” church.

This collection contains pamphlets, church bulletins, articles, newspaper clippings, invitations, and manuscripts from the 1900s concerning the church and its associated school.

RG 1394 MECA Collection

MECA, Multicultural Education and Counseling through the Arts, began in 1977, growing out of the St. Joseph Fun ‘n Food Fest, the first citywide celebration of the various cultural groups that lived in Houston. MECA received 501(c)(3) status and was incorporated in 1979; in 1993, MECA moved to its current home in the historic Dow School building in the Old Sixth Ward.

RG E 0053 Chicano Family Center (Formerly Chicano Training Center)

The Chicano Training Center (CTC) Inc., established in July 1971, is a non-profit agency with an emphasis in educational and social services and research. It is chartered by the state of Texas and classified by IRS as a 501(c)3 organization. It is governed by a fifteen-member board of directors representing such disciplines as psychiatry, business, law, juvenile justice, social work and
education, as well as groups such as consumers and lay community. It is governed by a board of
directors that is 90% Chicano and is staffed by a professional and para-professional staff comprised
of Hispanics and bilingual/bicultural non-Hispanics. The agency perceives itself as a private non-
profit service delivery organization of programs and projects designed to enhance the quality of life
through the provision of services that meet the needs of the community. Their goals include the
development and /or implementation of programs and projects that: 1) support the functioning of
individuals and families; 2) serve the interest of the target neighborhoods; 3) promote education;
4) foster interpersonal and intergroup relationships, and; 5) enhance the understanding of
culturally relevant intervention. The CTC Clinica program provides counseling services to families
with problems in mental health, family and individual dysfunction, catastrophic circumstances and
community education."

**RG G 0003 HUELGA SCHOOLS OF HOUSTON**

On August 31, 1970, a three-week-long strike was initiated by the Mexican American community in
protest to Houston Independent School District’s (H.I.S.D.) pairing plan. The plan paired black and
white elementary schools, with students to be bused between the paired schools in order to achieve
court-ordered integration in the district; however, H.I.S.D.’s so-called white students were mainly
Mexican Americans. The strike was called for by the Mexican American Education Council (MAEC)
and was intended to keep the Mexican American elementary students from attending H.I.S.D.
schools. The school district officials negotiated with MAEC and brought an end to the strike in
September. Nevertheless, just as everything was in order, H.I.S.D. presented another version of the
original pairing plan in January 1971 which was also disapproved by MAEC. In response to the
plan, MAEC renewed the strike. In February, the strike evolved into a boycott when MAEC created
the Huelga schools. These schools were held at three churches where volunteer teachers, along
with room mothers, helped teach the Mexican American students. The huelga school at Juan
Marcos Presbyterian Church was headed by Jose Torres, who was later appointed as the
superintendent of the huelga schools. The other two were at Denver Harbor Presbyterian Church
and El Mesias Methodist Church. The boycott would eventually go on until the end of the 1972
school year.

**RG I 0017 CASA JUAN DIEGO**

Inspired by the work of legendary pacifist and co-founder of the Catholic Workers Movement, Casa
Juan Diego opened in 1981 at 4309 Washington Avenue. The collection consists of copies of the
"Houston Catholic Worker" newspaper from May 1981 to February 1990. None of the years are
complete and there are duplicate copies of some issues. There are two issue of "Trabajador Catolico de Houston" for September and November 1984 in Spanish.

**MSS 0353 LULAC REGIONAL COLLECTION**

The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Regional Collection contains correspondence, programs, runoff records, newspapers, and membership lists from the 1960s to the 1990s.

**MSS 1389 NUESTRA PALABRA COLLECTION**

Nuestra Palabra is a Latino literary movement started in Houston, Texas in 1998. The organization held monthly showcases from February to July which highlighted Latino writers in entertaining and informative forums.

This collection is comprised of photographs, magazine clippings, publications, press releases, showcase documents, and programs relating to Nuestro Palabra and Latino writers in general such as Houston Latino Book and Family Festival, which in 2012, was the largest Latino book festival in Texas. An item of note includes a 1999 proclamation of "Nuestra Palabra Day" by Mayor Lee Brown.

**RG 1322 OLGA SOLIZ/HOUSTON HISPANIC FORUM COLLECTION**

The Houston Hispanic Forum was conceived in 1984 under the name of Houston Hispanic Roundtable, in a meeting with Manuel Sanchez III, Rey Gonzalez, Lupe Fraga, Dr. Dorothy Caram, and Olga Soliz for the purpose of focusing on issues important to the Hispanic community. The Houston Hispanic Forum is a nonprofit organization whose primary objective is to promote awareness, understanding and communication about issues affecting the Hispanic community. Since its inception, the Forum has undertaken projects aimed at providing leadership, vitality, and unity, with the Career and Education Day being its annual highlight. Houston Hispanic Forum is an objective, non-partisan group of concerned individuals and institutions committed to providing leadership and promoting cordial relations and unity among Hispanics, foster the growth and development of individuals, encourage Hispanics to develop their strengths and abilities to serve each other and the community at large, encourage continued attainment of educational goals, and help resolve extraordinary problems and issues affecting the Hispanic community as they may arise."
RG E 0015 POLITICAL ASSOCIATION OF SPANISH-SPEAKING ORGANIZATIONS (PASO)

In 1961 The Civic Action Committee organized PASO (Political Association of Spanish-Speaking Organizations) with Genaro Flores and John Castillo as a chairman and vice-chairman.

RG E 0021 LEAGUE OF UNITED LATIN AMERICAN CITIZENS (LULAC) COUNCIL 60

Council #60 was founded in 1934 as the first LULAC Council in the Houston area and has a distinguished record. It developed as a response to the trying conditions faced by the Hispanic Community during the first part of the twentieth century. At that time the Houston Mexican American populace suffered from many of the problems encountered by Hispanics across the United States. In particular, prejudice and discrimination placed numerous obstacles in the path of Hispanic advancement. Mexican Americans found little access to public facilities as well as the private sector where they found barriers to housing and equal employment. Likewise, the language barrier and lack of education stood in the way of Mexican American advancement. So it was that in 1934 a group of men from Houston and Magnolia Park, a predominantly Mexican American suburb of the city, founded Council #60 just a few years after LULAC began in Corpus Christi. This early group of men was determined to do their best to facilitate the full participation of their people in the wider society. LULAC Council #60 became their vehicle for civic action. The goals of LULAC became the code they would live by. By the end of the 1930s, Council #60 was already widely known in the LULAC organization. In 1937 it hosted the first LULAC National Convention, held in Houston. It would later host national conventions in 1946, 1966 and 1979, the golden anniversary of LULAC. The council has helped to foster the proliferation of LULAC chapters in the Texas Gulf Coast. LULAC Council #60 has produced many community leaders on the local, state and national levels. Four national presidents come from its ranks: John J. Herrera, Felix Tijerina, Alfred J. Hernandez and Roberto Ornelas. These men each in their own way symbolize Council #60's commitment and struggle to foster education, employment and civil rights for the Hispanic community. Council #60, now over a half-century old, is proud of its history and hopeful for the future.
RG E 0024 CLUB MEXICO BELLO

Club Cultural Recreativo Mexico Bello (or Mexico Bello) began in Houston in 1924 as a social, recreational and civic outlet for individuals of the Houston Mexican American community. It was composed primarily of aspiring, upwardly mobile young adults from across the city. Although it was a men’s group, it soon developed a women’s auxiliary which was composed mainly of member’s wives. The membership was exclusive and the number limited. Membership in the organization was highly sought after by people in the Houston community. Mexico Bello functioned as a social and civic group as it sponsored dances and many forms of community interaction, including the annual "blanco y negro" ball. It also developed other affairs such as the yearly quinceañera. In addition, the club was very interested in cultural preservation as its motto stressed "Patria, Raza, Idioma." From its inception the club was prestigious and counted in its membership many of the leaders of the Houston Hispanic community. They stressed a wider civic consciousness among the Houston colonia and endeavored to create a positive image of the Mexican American people in the minds of the larger Houston community. Mexico Bello has over the years worked with other organizations in the Hispanic community, as many of its members have been active in other groups as well.

RG E 0025 HARRIS COUNTY HISPANIC CAUCUS

In 1978, The Mexican American Hispanic Advisory Council was organized by the Harris County Hispanic Caucus (HCHC) to discuss with Houston’s mayor, Jim McConn, employment, economic and political problems that the Hispanic Community faced in Texas.

RG E 0084 Tejano Association for Historic Preservation

Tejano Association for Hispanic Preservation is a non-profit organization which strives for the preservation of sites that have Tejano / Mexicano historical significance and that are in danger of being lost due to natural or human causes.
RG Q 0001 MEXICAN AMERICANS FOR BETTER TRANSIT

Mexican Americans For Better Transit was created in 1978, to mobilize support of the Mexican American community for the passage of the Metropolitan Transit Authority, and to emphasize better transit services for the Mexican American Community.

MSS 0205 LITTLE SCHOOL OF THE 400 COLLECTION

The "Little Schools of the 400" was founded by Felix Tijerina in 1957. Tijerina became national president of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) in 1956 and under his direction LULAC initiated the "Little Schools of the 400" as a pioneer effort in Mexican American education. The program intended to teach Spanish-speaking preschool children four hundred basic English words so that they could deal adequately with the first grade. In this manner, its advocates reasoned, Mexican American children would not fall behind in their early school years, become discouraged, and ultimately drop out at the alarming rate which characterized the Texas Mexican community at that time. The pilot projects were established in the Texas towns of Ganado and Edna in 1957, and by the following year had spread to other places in the state. The overwhelming majority of the project's preschoolers went on to successfully finish the first grade, a dramatic contrast to the appalling failure rate of children who did not receive such instruction. The "Little Schools of the 400" were consistent with LULAC's traditional emphasis on education as a primary focus for Mexican American advancement. Tijerina's own non-confrontational approach in dealing with Anglo society represented a principal tactic of the late 1940's and 1950's, especially during the Eisenhower years. In 1959, Tijerina's friendly persuasion convinced the parsimonious Texas State Legislature to adopt and fund the concept as the Preschool Instructional Classes for Non-English Speaking Children. Tijerina and LULAC worked to spread the program across the Southwest. Ultimately, it became a model for Project Headstart under the administration of Lyndon B. Johnson. Felix Tijerina's approach made Houston a focal point of state and national attention on Mexican American issues. Such periodicals as the Saturday Evening Post and Time magazine featured articles on Tijerina and the plight of Latin American education. Guadalupe Quintanilla is an educator and a civic leader active in the Mexican American community. Her 1976 dissertation was written on the "Little School of the 400." "Little School of the 400" was a program specifically designed to acquaint the Latin American children of this state with the basic English vocabulary necessary for them to enter their first year in school with greater ease and confidence. Advocates reasoned Mexican American children would not fall behind in their early school years and become discouraged and drop out at the alarming rate which characterized the Texas Mexican community at that time. Pilot projects were established in the Texas towns of Ganado and Edna in 1957 and by the following year spread to other places in the state. The overwhelming majority of the project’s preschoolers went on to successfully finish the first grade, a dramatic contrast to the appalling failure rate of children who did not receive such instruction. The name was derived from
a list of 400 vocabulary words deemed necessary for basic English skills. Felix Tijerina was chairman of the LULAC Educational Fund, Inc. through which the "Little School of the 400" was run. Tijerina and LULAC worked to spread the program across the Southwest and ultimately it became a model for Project Headstart under Lyndon B. Johnson’s administration. The materials in this collection were collected by Dr. Guadalupe C. Quintanilla, Associate Provost of the University of Houston and a representative of many successful Mexican Americans in higher education, when she was writing her doctoral dissertation in 1976. A school dropout at age fourteen, she reentered the educational system as an adult, and against much adversity, eventually earned a doctorate. Quintanilla moved beyond the campus, involving herself in a legion of civic affairs. She pioneered teaching Spanish language and Hispanic culture courses to Houston police officers. Nationally, she served for a time on the United States delegation to the United Nations during the Reagan administration. The collection contains copies of pages from David Adame’s registration book and correspondence from Jake Rodriguez, Executive Director of "The Little School of the 400". There are also financial reports by the LULAC Educational Fund, Inc. from 1958 through 1962. Copies of lists of the schools that were qualified for the "Little School of the 400", Spanish program radio stations, and LULAC councils in the state of Texas are also in the collection.

The Finding Aid for this collection is available online! http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/houpub/00171/hpub-00171.html