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# «El leñador»»

Al servicio de la comunidad latinx del condado de Humboldt

## **Arcata Mother Detained by ICE**

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diciembre 2017  
Vol. 9 Edición 4





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Front Page  
Artist rendition of Portillo’s vigil | Watercolor painting  
by Cameron Rodríguez

MISSION STATEMENT

El Leñador is a bilingual newspaper produced by Humboldt State University students of underrepresented ethnic groups. Our core values drive us to become the voice of the Latinx community in Humboldt County. We are committed to keeping our community informed of the most important issues in actuality. Through our newspaper, we hope to inspire other minorities to share their stories and experiences, thus creating more social, political, and cultural diversity in local media.

El Leñador es un periódico bilingüe producido por estudiantes subrepresentados de Humboldt State University. Nuestros valores fundamentales, como la integridad y la honestidad, nos llevan a buscar la voz de la comunidad latinx en el condado de Humboldt. Estamos comprometidos con mantener a nuestra comunidad informada de los eventos más importantes en actualidad. A través de nuestro periódico, esperamos inspirar a otras minorías para que publiquen un periódico propio y original, creando así más diversidad social, política, y cultural en la prensa local.

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MCC Vandalism Raises Continuous Issues of On-Campus and Off-Campus Safety

by Sarahi Apaez

Recent events have put a deeper dent in the already jeopardized level of safety on campus. The MultiCultural Center (MCC) is facing a particular threat after two events of vandalism against the building this year, once in October and again earlier in November.

The MCC is a student led organization and these incidents have left many of them afraid to be within this space they call their home.

“That safety was violated,” Deema Hindawi, a coordinator for Social Justice Summit and second year criminology and CRGS major, said. “This home was violated. We’re open to



Vandalism at the MCC. | Illustration by Gichi Viramontes

everyone, MCC is just our name.”

**First Incident**

The weekend before Halloween, students arrived to their campus home to find posters torn to pieces and left on the walkway entrance of the MCC. The “Justice for Josiah” posters, the “My Culture is Not a Costume” campaign poster, and a welcome poster were torn to pieces and left on the walkway entrance of the building. These posters were replaced with a sign that said “It’s okay to be white” on their door.

“This was an attack on the home that should be a safe space for everyone,” Hindawi said. “At a place where we try to create a sense of community for students and make them feel wel-

come, letting them know they belong here, there was this act of hate and it is difficult to take in.”

**Second Incident**

On the morning of Wednesday, Nov. 1, MCC staff walked up to the building to find “Justice for Josiah” posters ripped once again in the same way they had been the Saturday prior.

Interim coordinator for the MCC Carlos Sanchez called a staff meeting that day for students to share their feelings about the incident.

“We should not allow this to impact or distract our academic efforts in making the MCC an inclusive space,” Sanchez said. “We can’t let it drain us.”

“This could mean that someone is watching the house and that scares me,” Celyna Ramos, queer community coordinator at the MCC and fourth year international studies major, said.

**Campus Safety**

According to HSU’s crime reports, there were three hate crimes reported in 2015 and two in 2016. All crimes were bias-related vandalism found in campus residence halls. In the two-year span, three were racially based and two were based on sexual orientation.

Angelica Munoz, outreach and social media marketing at the MCC and third year social work major, agrees that students are allowed to express their opinions openly but still has many questions regarding the incentive a person had to express themselves in this way.

“This is not a way to get attention,” Munoz said. “There are other ways to express how you’re feeling even if it is hate.”

Not only is this type of incident not new to HSU, it isn’t new to other univer-



Photo of the entrance to the MultiCultural Center with reposted “Justice for Josiah” posters. | photo by Sarahi Apaez

sities either.

“Those posters showed up on Santa Rosa Junior College and other universities within the state of California,” HSU Police Chief Donn Peterson said. “When we saw them here on campus we removed them and we did document them.”

Similarly formatted signs reading “It’s okay to be white” have appeared across college campuses nationwide. According to the Washington Post, the poster campaign originated on the online message board 4chan and is intended to eventually have more people adopt white nationalist views while discrediting news outlets.

The message board includes a directed “game plan” explaining that the posters should be displayed on Halloween night while wearing costumes so identities are disclosed.

What can be done after an incident such as this occurs is limited as the expression of opinions and ideas, even ones that are hateful, do not constitute a crime.

“To do anything that would exclude people or make students feel unwelcome or unsafe is disgusting and it pisses me off but people do have a right to free speech,” Peterson said. “Still, these things shouldn’t be happening to our students”

**Reporting future incidents**

HSU Police Chief Donn Peterson stresses the importance of students reporting bias related issues, no matter how big or small.

“The ‘It’s okay to be white’ posters... will be reported by us as a hate crime but it probably won’t get picked up by the Department of Education as a hate crime,” Peterson said.

Chief Peterson says the Department of Education will most likely categorize this incident as bias related. These incidents will not likely show up in the Annual Safety Report but HSU does learn from these incidents.

“We always want people to report things on or off campus,” Peterson said. “I would always encourage people to report, for example, someone yelling or writing an offensive phrase. We can’t prosecute that in terms of arrest but at least there’s a record of it.... It shouldn’t be allowed to exist, it shouldn’t be underground.”

Chief Peterson emphasized that messaging or displays targeting or marginalizing any individuals or groups will not be tolerated.



# Arcata Mother Detained by ICE

The legal fight to bring her home continues

by Héctor Alejandro Arzate

When Claudia Portillo, 30, mother of four, left her north Arcata home three weeks ago, she was confident that her appointment at the U.S Citizenship and Immigration Services office in San Francisco would go well. But Portillo didn't come back, and what was supposed to be a yearly check-in became a fight to bring her home.

Jenny Ventura, sister of Portillo and a leader within the True North Organizing Network, knows all too well that the current immigration system can be difficult to navigate for many undocumented people.



Community members light candles on the Arcata Plaza. photo by Sarahi Apaez

“My sister had an appointment at the regional center on Tuesday, Nov. 14,” Ventura said. “She was very confident that she would just turn in her paperwork for her annual check-in. I was even going to go with her.”

Rather than processing her paperwork, Portillo was arrested at once and placed in civil detention at the Contra Costa West County Detention Center by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in Richmond, California. Located in the East Bay area of San Francisco, the facility has been the subject of numerous complaints from its detainees because of the living conditions, including 23 hours of confinement and plastic bags in place of working toilets. The complaints even prompted a recent visit from local district Congressman Mark DeSauliner, according to an article by

the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

### The long road to reunite a family

In most cases, detainees are removed promptly but thanks to actions taken by the family, True North and hired lawyer Joseph LaCome’s legal efforts, Portillo was able to stay in the country.

Following her detention on Tuesday, a legal motion to stay and a separate motion to reopen Portillo’s case was filed by LaCome on Friday, preventing her deportation on Saturday.

But the road to reuniting Portillo with her family seems long and tasked with legal loops. Although initially confident that a judge would rule in favor of Portillo’s case and reopen, LaCome later relayed that Claudia’s initial request to reopen the case had been denied.

“Our next option would be to file an appeal through the federal immigration court in Virginia,” LaCome said. “If that’s denied, we can file with the 9th circuit.”

Moreover, the effort to release Portillo on a bond has been hindered by a lengthy waiting time.

Although she could potentially be bailed at \$1500, LaCome estimates that they might not get a bond hearing for five months. To further complicate the situation, Portillo has been relocated by ICE to the Mesa Verde Detention Facility in Bakersfield as of Nov. 30.

### The history of Portillo’s case

Portillo’s detention has since become a legal effort to release her from the facility. But the details surrounding the case seem to have a long spanning history, according to LaCome.

“It all started back in 2006,” LaCome said. “She was living in Long Beach but had moved away. That address had been listed with DHS [Department of Homeland Security] because she was receiving TPS [Temporary Protected Status] since she’s from El Salvador.”

Although Portillo had been living in the United States since the age of 7, she was legally eligible for temporary immigration status at one point, under the conditions that her documentation and status continued to be renewed. However, Portillo was taken out of the system and her case was changed to removal status, subjecting her to deportation. They scheduled a hearing in the summer of June 2008 and meant to notify Portillo via her listed mailing address, but it was never received and they proceeded “in absentia.”

“She didn’t find out until a 2011 traffic stop,” LaCome said. “She was referred to ICE by the city police. She was able to stay in the country with certain stipulations. Essentially, don’t violate the laws and check in once a year. But she recently hired a lawyer who was supposed to do some of these things, who never did anything. So instead, they just detained her at the check-in.”

### The community gathers for Claudia

Despite the impediments, Portillo’s family and friends have continued their efforts to bring her home and raise awareness of the situation to the local community in Humboldt County. Brenda Urueta, community organizer at the True North Organizing Network, is one of many who are working towards supporting Portillo and her family through a recently held vigil and an online GoFundMe page.

“Jenny wanted to have a vigil to let Claudia know that she isn’t alone,” Urueta said. “The GoFundMe is meant to provide funding for the immigration lawyer and for her family to travel down to San Francisco. We set it up under



Jenny Ventura, Dora Portillo, and family gather for a vigil on Nov. 27. | photo by Sarahi Apaez

Jenny’s name. True North is helping to facilitate the fund.”

The Nov. 27 vigil saw a large turnout of community members gathered at the Arcata Plaza. The vigil opened with a prayer and call for unity by Ventura and Portillo’s mother, Dora.

“We are asking for mercy for Claudia and all other detainees who are being held as if they were criminals,” Portillo said. “These are the moments where all Latinos need to unite to speak up to help and support those who are undocumented.”

Some community members, including Dave Silverbrand of Eureka, also spoke out about Claudia’s community outreach both here in Humboldt County and in the city of Ukiah, as well as the inspiration that is drawn from Latinx people.

“There’s something about the Latino community,” Silverbrand said. “They go above and beyond. People who we should see as examples for ourselves. I see that in Claudia.”

While Portillo’s case might seem exceptionally disheartening, there are many who feel that it is simply a vignette of a larger image of the failing immigration system in the U.S.

“To our family, to many families, this shows how broken our immigration system is,” Ventura said.

**To visit the GoFundMe page, go to:**  
**<https://www.gofundme.com/claudias-deportation-defense>**

# Madre local detenida por ICE

continúa la lucha legal por llevarla a casa

por Héctor Alejandro Arzate

traducido por Katherine Miron, Monica Ramirez y Héctor Arzate

Cuando Claudia Portillo, de 30 años y madre de cuatro hijos, dejó su hogar en el norte de Arcata hace tres semanas, confiaba en que su cita en la oficina del Servicio de Ciudadanía e Inmigración de los Estados Unidos en San Francisco iría bien. Pero Portillo no regresó y lo que se suponía ser un registración anual se convirtió a una pelea para llevarla a casa.

Jenny Ventura, hermana de Portillo y un líder dentro de True North Organizing Network, sabe muy bien que el sistema de inmigración puede ser difícil de navegar para muchas personas indocumentadas.

“Mi hermana tuvo una cita en el centro regional el martes 14 de noviembre,” dijo Ventura. “Ella estaba muy segura de que solo entregaría su documentación para su registro anual. Incluso iba a ir con ella.”

En lugar de procesar su documentación, Portillo fue arrestada de inmediato y detenida civilmente en el Centro de Detención del Condado de Contra Costa West por el Servicio de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas (ICE) en Richmond, California. Situado en el área de East Bay en San Francisco, la instalación ha sido objeto de numerosas quejas de sus detenidos debido a las condiciones de vida, que incluyen 23 horas de confinamiento y bolsas de plástico en lugar de un baño. Las quejas incluso provocaron una visita reciente del congresista del distrito local Mark DeSauliner, según un artículo del San Francisco Chronicle.

**El largo camino para reunir a una familia**

En la mayoría de los casos, los detenidos son destituidos rápidamente, pero gracias a las medidas adoptadas por la familia, True North y los esfuerzos legales del abogado contratado Joseph LaCome, Portillo pudo quedarse en el país.

Luego de su detención el martes, LaCome presentó una moción legal para quedarse y una moción por separado para reabrir el caso de Portillo,

impidiendo su deportación el sábado.

Pero el camino para reunir Portillo con su familia parece largo y tiene la tarea de crear circuitos legales. Aunque inicialmente estaba seguro de que un juez fallaría a favor del caso de Portillo y volver a abrirlo, LaCome luego transmitió que la solicitud inicial de Claudia para reabrir el caso había sido denegada.

“Nuestra próxima opción sería presentar una apelación a través del tribunal federal de inmigración en Virginia,” dijo LaCome. “Si eso es denegado, podemos presentar el noveno circuito.”

Además, el esfuerzo por liberar a Portillo de un bono se ha visto obstaculizado por un largo tiempo de espera. Aunque podría recibir un fianza de \$1500, LaCome estima que no recibirán una audiencia de fianza durante cinco meses. Para complicar aún más la situación, Portillo ha sido reubicada por ICE en el Centro de Detención de Mesa Verde en Bakersfield hasta el 30 de noviembre.

### La historia del caso de Portillo

La detención de Portillo se ha convertido en un esfuerzo legal para liberarla de las instalaciones. Pero los detalles que rodean el caso parecen tener una larga historia de expansión, según LaCome.

“Todo comenzó en 2006,” dijo LaCome. “Ella estaba viviendo en Long Beach, pero se había mudado. Esa dirección había sido incluida en la lista de DHS [Departamento de Seguridad Nacional] porque estaba recibiendo TPS [Estatus de Protección Temporal] porque es de El Salvador.”

A pesar de que Portillo había estado viviendo en los Estados Unidos desde la edad de 7 años, ella era legalmente elegible para el estatus de inmigración temporal en algún momento, bajo las condiciones de que su documentación y su estado continuarán siendo renovados. Sin embargo, Portillo fue sacada del sistema y su caso fue cambiado a estado de expulsión, sometándose a la deportación.

ación. Planificaron una audiencia en el verano de junio de 2008, y tenían la intención de notificar a Portillo a través de su dirección de correo listada, pero nunca fue recibida y procedieron “in absentia.”

“No se enteró hasta una parada de tráfico en 2011,” dijo LaCome. “Ella fue remitida a ICE por la policía de la ciudad. Ella pudo permanecer en el país con ciertas estipulaciones. Esencialmente, no viole las leyes y registre una vez al año. Pero recientemente contrató a un abogado que debía hacer algunas de estas cosas, que nunca hizo nada. Entonces, en cambio, simplemente la detuvieron en su registración.”

### La comunidad se reúne para Claudia

A pesar de los impedimentos, la familia y los amigos de Portillo han continuado sus esfuerzos para llevarla a casa y crear conciencia sobre la situación a la comunidad local en el condado de Humboldt. Brenda Urueta, organizadora comunitaria de True North Organizing Network, es una de las muchas que están trabajando para apoyar a Portillo y su familia a través de una vigilia recientemente celebrada y una página en línea de GoFundMe.

“Jenny quería tener una vigilia para que Claudia supiera que no está sola,” dijo Urueta. “GoFundMe está destinado a proporcionar fondos para que el abogado de inmigración y su familia viajen a San Francisco. Lo configuramos bajo el nombre de Jenny. True North está ayudando a facilitar el fondo.”

La vigilia del 27 de noviembre vio una gran concurrencia de miembros de



Community members candles light despite the rain. | photo by Sarahi Apaez

la comunidad reunidos en Arcata Plaza. La vigilia se inició con una oración y un llamado a la unidad por parte de Ventura y la madre de Portillo, Dora.

“Pedimos misericordia para Claudia y todos los demás detenidos que están detenidos como si fueran delincuentes,” dijo Portillo. “Estos son los momentos en que todos los latinos deben unirse para alzar la voz y ayudar y apoyar a los que no están documentados.”

Algunos miembros de la comunidad, incluido Dave Silverbrand de Eureka, también hablaron sobre el alcance de la comunidad de Claudia aquí en el condado de Humboldt y en la ciudad de Ukiah, así como la inspiración que proviene de la gente latina.

“Hay algo sobre la comunidad latina,” dijo Silverbrand. “Van más allá. Las personas que deberíamos ver como ejemplos para nosotros mismos. Lo veo en Claudia.”

Si bien el caso de Portillo puede parecer excepcionalmente desalentador, hay muchos que creen que se trata simplemente de una viñeta de una imagen más amplia del sistema de inmigración que fracasa en los EE. UU.

“Para nuestra familia, para muchas familias, esto muestra cuán roto está nuestro sistema de inmigración,” dijo Ventura.

**Para visitar la página GoFundMe, vaya a:**  
**<https://www.gofundme.com/claudias-deportation-defense>**



# Is There Really Free Speech at HSU?

by Silvia Alfonso

You’re out on the quad with a mic in hand, passionately talking about your club or the current events that are happening. A quick hour goes by and now you have to hand your mic back. After this, you result to speaking out to the quad and yelling with your own voice. Was that hour enough to say what you wanted to say?

Freedom of speech on a college campus tends to be a little faulty at times. For something as crucial as a human right stated in the Constitution, freedom of speech has a lot of regulations and policies that go towards it on college campuses. To start, the policy at HSU states that students can have amplified sound from the hour of 12-1 p.m., and after that hour the students are free to

speak out however they want without having it be amplified sound.

Does having a ‘free speech hour’ make our free speech limited? Or is it better to have these regulations?

Recently, the club at HSU known as MEChA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán) was sanctioned because they went overtime on their free speech hour. This made them lose their privileges of being able to reserve their table in the center of the UC quad, and the rest of their events for the semester are cancelled. Lucky for them it was merely only a “slap on the wrist” as MEChA club member Kevin Martinez explained. More drastic measures means the club could potentially get banned from campus.

“We’ve done it [go over time] multiple times,” said Martinez. “But, it seems a bit contradictory on the administration’s part. Sometimes you need more than an hour to say what you have to say.”

The reason why it may seem like a contradicting policy is because some students may feel that they should have the right to speak out whenever they want. It is a matter of having that speech be amplified and loud out on the quad. But when the microphone or megaphone is taken away from them, is the message still just as effective if they’re yelling out.

Now on the administration’s side, they are concerned that it is a potential disruption to classes happening around

the UC Quad.

“We constantly get complaints from faculty,” said Tay Triggs, associate dean of Student Engagement & Leadership. “[In Founder’s Hall or Siemens Hall] students hear the noise outside and are more concerned about going outside instead of focusing in class.”

Despite administration going along with the policy, students have emphasized that the free speech hour should definitely be extended to two hours. MEChA members have expressed that the single hour of free speech is not nearly enough time to say what they have to say, and that goes for any club on campus.

# Campus Community Celebrates Posadas

by Melissa Vazquez

*Posadas* are religious reenactments of Mary and Joseph’s search for shelter in Bethlehem on each of the nine nights leading up to Christmas, Dec. 16-24.

During a *posada* a group of people go around various streets singing traditional Latin American Christmas carols and asking for help since *posadas* are a theatrical representation of how Joseph and Mary searched for a place for the birth of Jesus. During the event participants go knocking from door to door asking for *posada* (shelter), the hosts turn you down as well as all the following until you get to the last house where they’ll accept you and give you *posada* (shelter) and they’ll have a display of the birth of Jesus. A *piñata* is broken every

day and is filled with fruits and candies. Traditionally the *piñata*, is only broken by children, has jicama, sugar canes and candies.

They are a tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation with key elements such as *aguinaldos* (goodie bags), the “Canto Para Pedir Posada” (a traditional song whose title means song to ask for shelter), candles, lanterns and *piñatas*. *Aguinaldos* are gifted to wish prosperity and *piñatas* were originally made for *posadas* to cleanse the seven deadly sins. Every strike to the *piñata* represents a sin, every break a representation of breaking free from those sins. It allows one to have a fresh start at the beginning

of the year.

Brenda Pérez, a guest researcher at the Humboldt Institute for Interdisciplinary Marijuana Research shared that in her village in Puebla, México, different families are in charge of hosting a *posada* at their home every night during a two-week time span.

“There’s a steward in the village that organizes the big festivity that happens at the end of those two weeks,” Perez said.

In the end when Jesus is born, which is the last day of the *posadas*, there is a huge celebration where everyone comes together at church and sings to baby Jesus all night long, and make offerings to him. This is the season to break free

from those sins, cleanse yourself and restart.

On Thursday, Nov. 30 Toyon, the LCAE and the cultural Greeks: Gamma Alpha Omega, Lambda Theta Alpha and Lambda Theta Phi hosted a *posada* and poetry slam at the KBR. During this event, a background on the religious and cultural significance of *posadas* was given, and *cancioneros* (songbooks) and candles were handed out. The participants asked for *posada* at the LCAE, then the Redwood dorms, and ended up at the KBR where food and *aguinaldos* (goodie bags) were given. The event ended with the breaking of a couple of *piñatas* in the UC Quad.

# Memories in the Masa

## Atole de Masa con Guayaba

by Mónica Ramirez

Back in the day when my mom was a middle schooler, she patiently watched her mother prepare *sopes* and *atole de masa* as her hunger grew. After politely asking to be served, her mother responded like most Latinx mothers do ‘*Llévale el almuerzo a tus hermanos primero*’, she had to go to her brothers’ school and deliver their lunches first. You know the drill, you have to run an errand before you receive anything in return.

My grandmother was the one that taught my mom the recipe for *atole*. This warm drink can be made in so many flavors like chocolate, pineapple, or guava and during the holidays or on *noche buena*, *atole* is usually made to alongside tamales. Although my mom’s memory isn’t directly related to the holidays, it still reminded her of her mother cooking and like most recipes that are passed down to us, all we think of is family, just like with most holidays.

If you decide to make *atole* during this holiday season, I hope you enjoy it with a loved one too.

## Did You Know?

*Atole* can also be written as *atol*, and in Náhuatl, *atol* is *atolli*, which means watery. *Tal* means water and *tol* is diminutive (meaning extremely small) which refers to the ‘i’ in *atolli*, so *atole* is like the combination of the three words.

### Atole de masa with guava (recipe serves 4)

Ingredients:  
½ cup of cornflour  
4 ½ cup of water (you can also use milk)  
1 stick of cinnamon  
1 piloncillo (type of sugar - find this at your local Mexican market)  
8 guavas

Directions:  
Dissolve the cornflour with half a cup of warm water and in another pot add the rest of the water, cinnamon, and piloncillo.  
After the water with cinnamon and piloncillo has boiled, add the dissolved cornflour and strain the guavas to avoid seeds getting into the mixture.  
Continually stir the *atole* on medium heat until all of the ingredients have mixed together and thickened.  
Note: If the *atole* is too watery then add more flour but if it’s too thick, add water.

## Sabías?

En Náhuatl, *atole* se escribe *atolli* y significa aguado, tal significa agua y *tol* es diminutivo despectivo. *Atole* es como la combinación de las tres palabras.

### Atole de masa con guayaba (Sirve a 4)

Ingredientes:  
½ taza de masa de maíz  
4 ½ tazas de agua o leche  
1 raja de canela  
1 piloncillo  
8 guayaba

Preparación:  
Disuelve la masa con media taza de agua tibia y en otra olla agrega el resto del agua con la canela y el piloncillo  
Despues de que ya hirvio el agua con la canela y el piloncillo, agrega la masa disuelta y añade la guayaba molida y colada  
Revuelves constantemente a fuego medio hasta que los ingredientes se hayan mezclado y el *atole* haya espesado

Nota: Si esta muy aguado ponle mas masa y si esta espeso, un poco mas de agua

drive of instructional design, trainings, culturally relevant pedagogy, and racial dialogues on campus. Recognizing that this is a campus of color, Johnson is aware of the lack of resources available to students within the educational system.

“Students of color would stay here and thrive, if it was more welcoming,” Johnson said.

She strives to help the faculty understand how they can create a supportive learning environment for all students to succeed. She has begun by introducing dialogue on campus titled, “What’s Goin On?” where students of color can come and talk about their experiences in the classroom and when they leave campus.

“We want to empower our students of color, so they have the option to stay here and build a family if they want to,” Johnson said.

Over the course of her career, Johnson has worked with diverse populations such as the chronically mentally ill, incarcerated women re-entering into mainstream society and reunifying with their children, homeless women and their children, school-aged youth, and children and families involved with courts and social service systems.

Dr. Cheryl Johnson has been appointed as the new executive director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI). The ODEI’s purpose is to work with faculty and staff to create a more equitable and inclusive campus for everyone. Her focus at Humboldt State is to achieve racial equity, and dismantle institutionalized racism by creating culturally relevant pedagogy in the classroom, and throughout the community.

“When you are creating or increasing equity, you are decreasing racial predictability,” Johnson explains that, when you eliminate that predictability in a statistical sense, that is when you are creating racial equity.

During the next few months, Johnson will choose a team of 60 faculty from CAHSS, CPS, and CNRS to conduct a “pilot” for a three hour microaggression training for all college department staff. ODEI will be working with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to begin this process, by collectively assessing and evaluating the trainings.

ODEI has formed a partnership with the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), where these microaggression trainings will be available. Johnson plans for the CTL to be the initial

community partners to work together to create a safe and welcoming Arcata for people of color. The working session was titled, Equity Arcata which prioritized strategies and tactics to eliminate racial disparities for all people of color in housing, health, education and employment.

Currently, Johnson is working to improve the relationship with the city through trainings like Equity Arcata in hopes to create a positive college experience for all students.

In a response to faculty and staff in an open letter, Johnson wrote, “As an African American woman I have fought and struggled against racism most of my life, so I take these issues very seriously and have dedicated most of my professional life to dismantling inequities, and shining light on overt and covert racism.”

Johnson has visited almost every department of Humboldt State, and has been slowly introducing the vision of racial equity and what that could potentially look like in the classroom.

**For more information, you can visit the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Siemens Hall 209.**





Vocalists and guitarists of La Mancha (from left) Octavio Acosta, Cristian Span, and Eduardo Gutierrez. | photo by Emilyo Arias

# Local Band Profile: La Mancha

by Meg Bezak

Rhythmic feet tap the ground and audience members give audible approval as they listen to the colorful sounds of local band La Mancha. The band members’ high energy and cross-genre Latin flavor give them a unique place in Humboldt County’s music scene.

“It’s a little bit hard to describe in only one genre,” lead singer and bass player Cristian Span said. “Imagine a style of music that’s your favorite, but definitely with some Latin roots in it and a lot of Spanish.”



Nick Camacho on the drums. | photo by Emilyo Arias

### Conception of the band

After what has been “a little bit of an evolution” according to Span, La Mancha’s current members have been together for almost a year, mostly connected by mutual friends at College of the Redwoods.

Rhythm guitarist Octavio Acosta, drummer Nick Camacho, lead guitarist Eduardo Gutierrez, percussionist Wes Singleton, and singer/bassist Span are all current students at Humboldt State University with fields of study ranging from music to botany to second language education.

Since their conception, La Mancha has grown in popularity and demand. They have performed at local venues in Arcata such as The Jambalaya, Blondies and The Outer Space, as well as Labor Tem-

ple in Eureka for a benefit event for the recent disasters in Mexico and Puerto Rico. Cultural festivities such as Dia de los Muertos and Fiestas Patrias at Humboldt State University have hosted La Mancha as musical guests, and the band even appeared on the Local LIXX segment of the Arcata-based radio station KRFH in late November.

**Lack of Latin music in Humboldt**

While there is a considerably wide selection of genres in Humboldt County’s music scene, there is a lack of music made by and for Latinx people.

“I feel that they play a role in showing that it’s not just the student demographics that are becoming more diverse in the area,” theater arts major Marissa Sanchez said. “The art scene, especially the music scene, is evolving and it’s beautiful.”

For students and community members whose feet have always moved to Latin music, La Mancha provides tunes that have the power to provide a feeling of comfort in a place that doesn’t seem to lend it very naturally.



Eduardo Gutierrez in a trance-like mood playing the guitar. | photo by Emilyo Arias

“We came up with the concept of making Latin-American music because it’s a need over here,” Acosta said. “It’s a necessity. Well, for us it’s a necessity because being away from it is hard.”

La Mancha is changing the social dynamic of the community by bringing diversity of culture and genre to the musical art scene, especially for those who find themselves represented by the music and the people creating it.

“I definitely believe that the band has had an impact on students that identify with the music, especially because we are in an area where it is difficult to find spaces where we feel represented,” Sanchez said. “It’s refreshing to listen to them play their music. It builds a sense of community.”

An interpretation of the band name La Mancha can be found in the name of a desert region in Spain called Castilla-La Mancha, which probably derived during Muslim rule of modern-day

Spain from the Arabic word “al-mansha,” which is said to mean “the dry land.”

“Go and find a Latin indie band playing in this area. It’s like a desert,” Span said. “We are pretty much in the middle of everything except for what we do. We are feeding this desert of Latin music.”

**Latin America meets the North**

Span, 36, grew up in a small town called Aguachica, Colombia, where he heard Latin music played 24 hours everyday. Still, he says, many people who feel very proud of their roots appreciate a lot about American music and its influence.

“I was all the time in love, looking up at North America and thinking, ‘I love how these people play rock. I wish I could do that. I wish I could speak English, play their language, and play their music,’” Span said.

Naturally, when he started living in the United States about five years ago, Span found the opportunity to introduce two influences to each other by creating Latin-American music with like-minded musicians.

“Coming to the United States as an immigrant, I was told that Latino artists were big and famous internationally,” Span said. “I soon realized that [American people can] really dig into Latin music, but not everybody has the opportunity to be present to the music in a way they can relate. What if we bring to American people a different version of Latin music that they can relate to more?”



Octavio Acosta plays the guitar while holding a pick between his teeth. | photo by Emilyo Arias



Cristian Span getting the crowd riled up. | photo by Emilyo Arias

Rhythm guitarist Octavio Acosta, 21, whose mother and father are from Mexico City and Michoacan, respectively, brings his musical knowledge to the U.S. and to Humboldt County from Latin America as well.

“As a kid that’s kind of where I learned how to play guitar, in Michoacan,” said Acosta. “We went every year. My uncle is a musical instructor in a little town called Tacámbaro.”

Drummer Nick Camacho, 22, whose father was in the military, has grown up in a few different places including Alaska, Costa Rica, and Colombia. His ethnic background in Puerto Rico keeps the music La Mancha creates close to his heart.

“Making this music together is cool because it represents a certain part of the world that is underrepresented here in Humboldt County,” Camacho said. “It makes me feel closer to my own roots.”



Wes Singleton uses his hands to keep a beat. | photo by Emilyo Arias



# Hands That Mold

## Art talk with Jacky Montalvo

by Emilyo Arias

A thin beam of light fills a tiny studio on a cold Arcata night as a ceramic piece is taking shape. Clay, paint, and tools litter the studio all the while Chet Baker plays in the background, the ideal ingredients for creativity.

Jacky Montalvo, a senior who is originally from Carson, California, came to Humboldt State to study psychology but has since changed her major to art education after realizing that the structure of psychology didn't resonate well with her.

"I was very expressive and always like to make shit, do crafts and what not," Montalvo said. "I got into fashion for a bit so I sewed a lot and drawing too. I would always draw. There was even a period where I was into theater."

It wasn't until high school when she met an art teacher who highly influenced her to move into art. It was this teacher that got Montalvo into ceramics as well as choosing HSU to continue her studies.

"She was the one that really pushed me to coming here and before I left she told me that I have the touch of clay, that I need to keep doing this," Montalvo said.

Montalvo has a variety of art mediums that she works with, but ceramics and photography are her current focuses. Working with ceramics teaches her to find patience, clarity, balance and centeredness.

"If you are not there in the moment it shows in your work," Montalvo said. "You have to enter that trance, you have to get into that feeling and that's what I live for."

I love that feeling." Montalvo's interest in photography also came with academic influence. "I always felt that photography wasn't an art like you only just see a picture," Montalvo said. "But it wasn't until I took my first photo class that I saw how conceptual, how beautiful, and how strong, these images can be."

Montalvo recently came back from a summer trip to Mexico which helped reinforce her photography skills and ended up manifesting an interest in street photography.

"When I was in Mexico that's where I felt more interested in street photography," Montalvo said.

"I was shy asking people to take photos of them but



Jacky Montalvo's Dry clay hands from working on a ceramic piece. | photo by Emilyo Arias

I was with my friend Cindy and she would encourage me to ask them and 90 percent of the time it was like 'Claro que si.' Then like they would share their story with me and I feel that it made the trip so much better."

She is currently working on projects that include a series of ceramic cups that she wants to have finished by next year to sell and have ready for art shows over the summer. Also in the works is a

photo series based on dreams. "I feel like as of now I would like to move somewhere new," Montalvo said. "Connect with a new community, work with artists, do any teaching that I can, workshops, sell and continue doing art and working with people."

You can follow her on Instagram @novakaht



Jacky Montalvo's artistic tools used in her everyday practice. | photo by Emilyo Arias

# Food Truck Series: Simmer Down Caribbean Café

by Dani Muñoz & Melissa Vazquez

The vibrant yellow truck parked behind Pacific Outfitters in Arcata not only gives you those Carribean vibes but makes you wish you were there too.

Simmer Down Caribbean Café is not your typical café, it's a food truck. Owner Patrick Gaskins, who is originally from Pennsylvania but now resides in Humboldt County, used to cook in parking lots across the country.

"I remember we were on Reggae on the River and there was no Ital rasta food at a rasta event and I had already been cooking for a good 10 years," Gaskins said. "It is kind of what brought me to Humboldt."

Gaskins officially started a food booth back in 2010, serving dishes at Reggae on the River, Summer Arts and other music festivals. He and his wife, who has some food allergies, were already cooking the Ital way because its low processing, low levels of salt, and mainly vegan qualities were beneficial for her. The events they worked at were filled with fried food, so they served the Ital food they now make at Simmer Down.

"I started cooking this type of food to give people not only a better option, but healthier one too," Gaskins said.

The food truck first launched in May 2015 in McKinleyville and resided there for two months before it was moved down to Arcata.

Our take on Simmer Down's Jamaican inspired, "Feel Good Food" sure left us feeling really good and full. The price is worth the big portions of food. We tried the mixed Veggies, curried veggie patties, yams fries with their special cilantro aioli sauce, as well as coconut rice and beans with a side of plantains. The Soursop Juice is so refreshing!

We also tried their authentic homemade special hot sauce line called Burn Babylon. They have four different sauce options: Coconut Lime, Carrot Coriander, Beet Cilantro (the hottest of the group), and their very own Simmer Down original sauce.

If you're wondering what the most popular dish Simmer Down has to offer, well everything is quite popular and their menu is really paired down.

"There is nothing on the menu that I do not like. There is nothing token on the menu and everything sells pretty well," Gaskins said.



The four Babylon hot sauces, from left to right we have Best Cilantro, Simmer Down, Coconut Lime and Carrot Coriander. | photo by Dani Muñoz



Simmer Down Caribbean Cafe vibrant yellow food truck parked outside Pacific Outfitter on the corner of G St. | photo by Dani Muñoz



An order of Curried Veggie Patty with a side of Yam fries and cilantro aioli sauce. |pPhoto by Dani Muñoz

The top sellers would probably be their chickpea cashew burger, escovitch fish and jerk tofu. Everything is all organic and made from scratch at this Jamaican inspired food truck. Bridget Ousley, 21-year-old HSU senior from St. Croix, US Virgin Islands, says Simmer Down has good service and food. We couldn't agree more.

"I really like the corn fritters and the patties," Ousley said. "Super comfort food and if you want a taste of Ital, it is a good place to start."

No cash? No problem. They accept cards and if you don't want to wait in line for your order you can always give them a call for pick up: (707) 702-1050

You can find Simmer Down Caribbean Café at 737 G Street, Arcata. Their winter hours are from 11 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. They can be reached by telephone at (707) 702-1050.



# HSU Hosts Chicano Batman on Fall Tour

by **Diego Linares**

Fans enjoyed tunes from three up-and-coming bands making a stop along the Chicano Batman 2017 Fall Tour.

Los Angeles group Chicano Batman had a nationwide tour promoting their third studio album “Freedom is Free,” which made a stop in the John Van Duzer Theatre on Thursday, Nov. 16.



Lead vocalist and multi-instrumentalist for Chicano Batman, Bardo Martinez performs on stage in the Jon Van Duzer Theatre on Nov. 16. | photo by Diego Linares

## Dolores Huerta Delivers Lecture

Dolores Huerta is a co-founder of what became the United Farm Workers of America union who gave a lecture in the John Van Duzer Theatre on Monday, Nov. 13.



Dolores Huerta delivers a lecture in front of a sitting crowd in the John Van Duzer Theatre on Nov. 13. | photo by Diego Linares



Eduardo Arenas gets into his performance as the guitarist and vocalist for Chicano Baman on Nov. 16 in the John Van Duzer Theatre. | photo by Diego Linares



Carlos Arévalo performs in the John Van Duzer Theatre for Chicano Batman’s stop in Arcata on Nov. 16. | photo by Diego Linares



Dolores Huerta greets attendees of her lecture in the John Van Duzer Theatre on Nov. 13. | photo by Diego Linares



# “Un Poco Loco” for **Coco**

## A review of Disney’s Hit Latinx Film

by **Katherine Miron**

Vibrant colors fill the screen and a young boy *èchandose un grito* will pull at your heartstrings as you watch a touching film about the importance of family and remembering your ancestors.

“Coco,” produced by Pixar Animation Studios, takes place in Mexico and centers around a young boy named Miguel who longs for his family’s blessing to chase after his dream of becoming a musician. The film immerses viewers into the world of the long-standing Latinx holiday of Día de los Muertos featuring its traditions such as *altares* with *ofrendas*, flying *alberijes*, and *cempasichiles*.

The film also features an all-Latinx cast including beloved Mexican actors Gael García Bernal, Edward James Olmos, Ana Ofelia Murgía and newcomer Anthony Gonzalez.

Gonzalez, a 13-year-old boy born and raised in Los Angeles, won the part of Miguel after starting the audition process at the age of nine. He is of Latin descent and started singing and acting at the age of four, according to interviews he has done with Disney.

So *applausos* to Disney for yet again taking although slow, but progressive steps into creating more POC narrative storyline films and doing a great job at it.

Pixar, known for its attention to detail, pulls out all the stops for “Coco” having the ability of transporting you into the land of the dead with all of its beautifully done animations.

Throughout the musical, you might find

yourself rocking out or even crying to some of the original songs. The creators were also able to tell this story with the utmost respect for the Mexican culture, thanks to the help of Lalo Alcaraz. Alcaraz, a Mexican American political cartoonist and longstanding Disney critic, was hired as a cultural advisor for the film.

Although the film does take place in Mexico and the characters at times speak in Spanish, “Coco” is a film for everyone, no matter where they are from or what language they speak. Viewers will be able to laugh, cry and most importantly relate to the film in one way or another.

One of the film’s biggest themes is how family may have an influence on each other. Miguel, the protagonist of the film, loves his family but also music. Therefore, struggles with the idea of wanting to pursue his dream all the while fearing that he will disappoint them, a fear many could relate to longing recognition from their family.

“Coco” was not a film trying to break down barriers or stereotypes for the Latinx community but one that portrays them in a more humanistic way. It was also one of the rare instances where the Latinx community could see a reflection of themselves on screen and for many no need for subtitles.

You are never too old for Disney and this film is one you won’t want to miss.



## Did you know?

“Coco” is not the first time Disney ventured into the Latinx market. In 1942 the company released “Saludos amigos” and two years later in 1944 “Los tres caballeros.” These films came about after Walt Disney and a group of animators traveled down to several Latin American countries on behalf of the U.S. in a so-called goodwill tour during World War II. The films starred Latinx animated characters and were created to relieve tensions between the U.S. and their south of the border neighbors, according to *Latino USA*.

# Man Almost Ruins Navajo Code Talkers Ceremony

by **Gabe Rivera**

Every time Donald Trump opens his mouth, ignorant rhetoric spews from his lips with no hesitation. His words and ideas, usually regurgitated from the prestigious FOX news, show his true colors. Trump is a racist misogynist and an airhead.

His latest lapse in judgment came the Monday after Thanksgiving while honoring the Navajo Code Talkers from World War II in the White House. Trump could not even make it through the ceremony without using a racial slur that demeans none other than Native Americans.

“You’re very, very special people,”

Trump said. “You were here long before any of us were here, although we have a representative in Congress who they say was here a long time ago. They call her Pocahontas.”

Condemning the president’s use of the ‘Pocahontas’ slur, the National Congress of American Indians released a statement:

“The name Pocahontas should not be used as a slur, and it is inappropriate for anyone to use her name in a disparaging manner.”

Despite Trump’s derogatory slur aimed at Senator Elizabeth Warren, who has claimed that she is partly of

Cherokee descent, the Navajo in attendance did not let the bigoted Head of State ruin the outcome and message of the ceremony. The Navajo were being honored for their vital role in the Allied Forces’ victory in World War II.

The president of the 13 surviving Navajo Code Talkers, Peter MacDonald, used his time on the podium to exhibit what true leadership is by letting people know why America is and always will be great.

“America, we know, is composed of diverse community,” MacDonald said. “We have different languages, different skills, different talents, and different

religions. But when our way of life is threatened, like the freedom and liberty that we all cherish, we come together as one. And when we come together as one we are invincible. We cannot be defeated.”

Whether the president is calling a senator ‘Pocahontas,’ or that “Mexicans bring drugs and crime and are rapists,” or when he targeted a Mexican American judge that opposed his wall, or when he claimed there were “very fine people on both sides” at the Charlottesville, Virginia incident when a woman was killed by an alt-right supporter during a protest, it is plain to see his bigotry.



# Letter from the Editor

by Héctor Alejandro Arzate

From the beginning, the mission of El Leñador has always been to stand with the Latinx community and the voices of other underrepresented people in Humboldt County. As the Editor-in-Chief, I knew there would be large shoes to fill, with both those who came before and the communities that we are at the service of. And although it has been challenging at times, it has been the greatest joy and privilege all the way through. There is no better honor than to be trusted to tell the stories and experiences of our community in actuality, no matter how painful or healing.

Where we have written about the disconnect students felt after the murder of David Josiah Lawson, we have also written about the emergence of the first bilingual radio in a community that has felt overwhelmingly unwelcoming and hostile for many. Where we have told the stories of student artists and performers creating their unique art, we have also told the story of Corey Clark and his unsolved murder in 2001. The stories in this issue, like the stories we have published throughout this semester, have followed that beat.

Please take the time to read through this issue and learn how local band La Mancha is introducing Latinx flair to the music scene in Humboldt. Find out about the legal fight to bring Claudia Portillo home from an ICE Detention Center. Get a taste of Jamaican-inspired food truck, Simmer Down. See how campus vandalism is threatening student safety. Celebrate posadas in Humboldt or enjoy a holiday recipe or two. Winter is always cold in Humboldt, but we hope to bring some warmth to your home.

Thank you to the best staff, writers, translators, layout editors, graphic designers, photographers and illustrators who work hard to create this paper every month, and our goofy advisor who's always pushing us to do better. And thank you to the wonderful community who makes it all worth it.



Photo of Fall 2017 El Leñador staff

Con Safos,

Héctor Alejandro Arzate

Visit our website **ellenadornews.com** for full stories, exclusive videos, live stream radio bilingüe and more!

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*Procesión:* Gather at Multicultural Center at 11:30am

*Misa:* Mass at Noon Goodwin Forum (Nelson Hall East 102)

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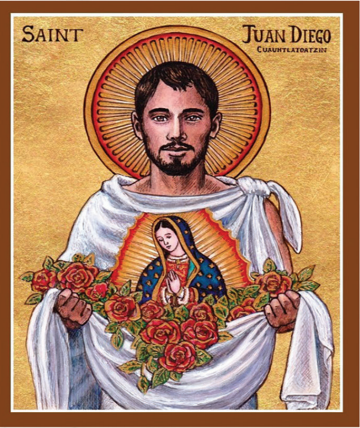



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diciembre

12.06 | miércoles

- Stress & Mindfulness
- 11am-12pm | RWC 108
- Massage Therapist
- 1-3pm | Library
- DIY Slime
- 4-5pm | RWC 108
- All Aboard the Snooze Cruise
- 6-7pm | RWC 124

12.07 | jueves

- Massage Therapist
- 1-3pm | Library
- Yoga Nidra
- 2pm | RWC 126
- Women in Latin American Political Movements
- 2-6pm | KBR
- Queer Flag Workshop Dialogue
- 5-8pm | Goodwin Forum

12.08 | viernes

- Cafe con Chisme
- 2-4pm | LCAE
- Black grad Planning Meeting
- 3:30-4:30pm | AACAE
- Kwaanza Family Dinner: Fed and Focused for Finals
- 5pm | AACAE
- Mariachi Interest Group
- 6pm | LCAE

12.09 | sábado

- Queer/ POC Climbing Day
- 12-3pm | West Gym
- Take a break and refresh!

**FINALS WEEK**

12.11-15

You know you got this. Ponte las pilas y hechale ganas!  
~ El Leñador Staff

12.11 | lunes

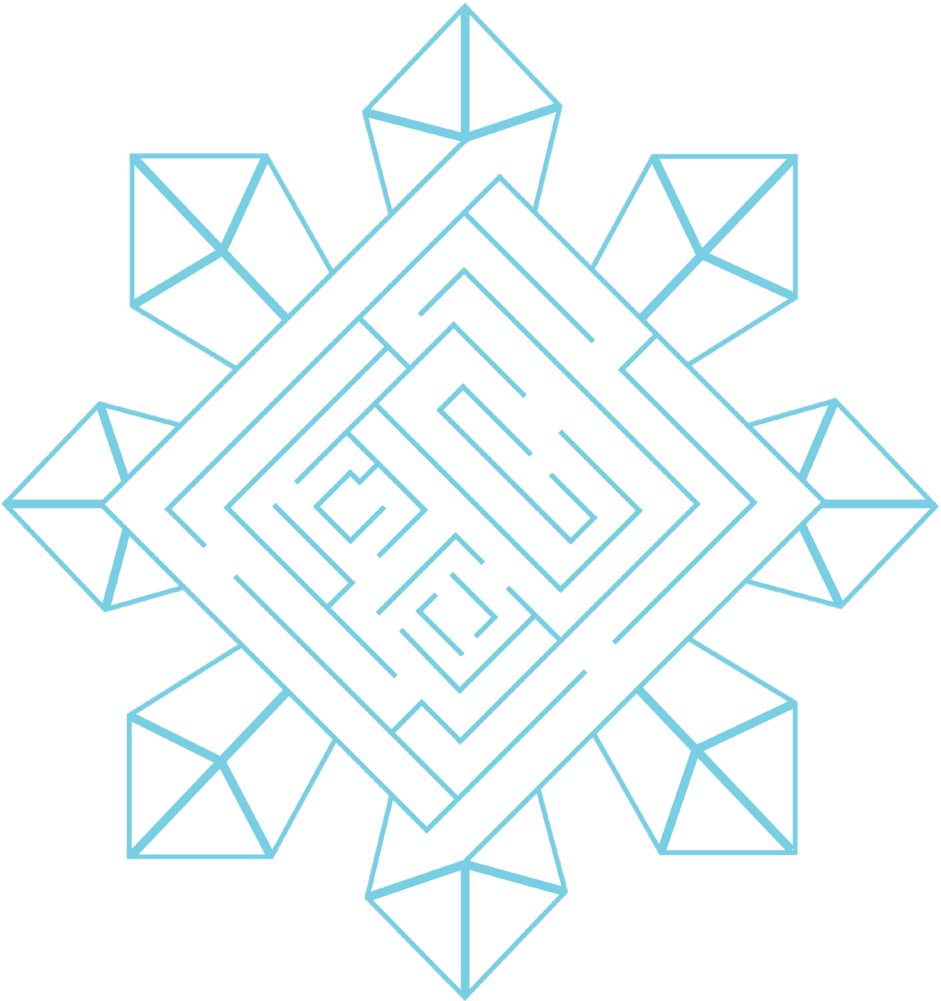
- Meet Therapy Dogs in the Library
- 1-2:30pm | Library Lobby
- 25th Annual Pancake Dinner
- 8-10pm | The J Cafeteria
- DIY Slime
- 4-5pm | RWC 108
- All Aboard the Snooze Cruise
- 6-7pm | RWC 124

12.12 | martes

- Virgen de Guadalupe Mass
- 11am-1:30pm | Goodwin Forum
- Meet Therapy Dogs in the Library
- 6:30-8pm | Library Lobby
- Women in Latin American Political Movements
- 2-6pm | KBR
- Queer Flag Workshop Dialogue
- 5-8pm | Goodwin Forum

12.15 | viernes

Josiah Vigil



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