

Courageous Cuentos 2024 Community Award

Community Award

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Courageous Cuentos 2024 Community Award



Brenda Pérez
Centro del Pueblo Indigenous
Migrant Movement

Brenda Pérez is from Chalchicomula, Puebla. Brenda came here as a researcher as she was getting her PHD in Latin American Studies with a specialty in History and Political science from UNAM. She never thought she would come here and stay. Brenda Pérez is now the CEO of Centro del Pueblo Movimiento Indígena Migrante. Centro del Pueblo began as a grassroots community organizing group which was founded in 2016 by lead organizer Renee Saucedo, with the help of many community leaders and the Latinx/e community. Centro del Pueblo led the fight to become a sanctuary county in 2018. When Renee Saucedo left Humboldt County in 2019, Brenda Perez assumed leadership and shifted the focus of Centro del Pueblo, transforming it into a nonprofit organization. Moving beyond direct organizing, she championed the enforcement of the sanctuary law, provided resources to the indigenous immigrant community, and created a space where the Latinx/e, indigenous immigrant community can get recognition and fair payment for their knowledge. In this manner, Brenda skillfully guided the Latinx/e community through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and, more recently, navigated the aftermath of the earthquakes that disproportionately impacted this community. Her leadership stood out as she mobilized resources and support, ensuring that those most vulnerable received the help they needed during these critical times.

Students wanted to honor her because she has created spaces in the community where they feel welcomed, a space that feels like home in rural Humboldt County. Even though these spaces might feel small, they are filled with community and love.

The Sanctuary Garden (Jardín Santuario) has become an especially important project for students. Many Cal Poly Humboldt students, faculty, staff, and local community members have volunteered at the Sanctuary Garden, and have learned from each other and the community leaders sharing their knowledge of plants. The Sanctuary Garden is a site of collaboration, generosity, and care. As they learn about plants and how to nourish and grow them, they simultaneously learn how to nourish

and care for each other too. They find that this garden is a symbol of their culture and community, a space that needs to be cared for and protected from the numerous attacks received since 2022, which demonstrates that more work is needed to continue to eradicate a toxic culture of hate and protect the few spaces where the Latinx/e community feel reflected, empowered, safe and cared for.

Brenda Pérez es de Chalchicomula, Puebla, y nunca pensó que se iba a quedar aquí ya que vino como estudiante para completar su tesis de investigación de doctorado en Estudios Latinoamericanos por la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). Brenda Pérez ahora es la CEO del Centro del Pueblo Movimiento Indígena Migrante. Centro del Pueblo comenzó en 2016 como una organización de activistas que lucha por los derechos de los inmigrantes liderada por la activista Renee Saucedo. Con la ayuda de líderes y la comunidad Latine, Renee Saucedo luchó por la ley santuario del condado. En 2019, cuando Renee Saucedo se fue del condado, Brenda Pérez asumió el liderazgo y cambió el enfoque del Centro del Pueblo, transformándolo en una organización sin fines de lucro. Más allá de la organización directa, se enfocó en promover la aplicación de la ley santuario dando servicios a las comunidades inmigrantes, creando espacios para que los líderes de la comunidad puedan compartir su sabiduría y recibir un pago justo por sus conocimientos. De esta manera, Brenda guió hábilmente a la comunidad inmigrante a través de los desafíos de la pandemia de COVID-19 y, más recientemente, navegó las secuelas del terremoto de 2022 que afectó desproporcionadamente a la comunidad Latine. Su liderazgo apareció al movilizar recursos y apoyo, asegurando que aquellos más vulnerables recibieran la ayuda que necesitaban durante estos tiempos críticos.

Los estudiantes de Cal Poly Humboldt quieren honrar a Brenda Pérez por su trabajo en la comunidad y por crear espacios que hacen sentir a los estudiantes bienvenidos y como si estuvieran en casa, aunque sea un espacio pequeño, pero con mucho amor. El jardín santuario es muy importante para los estudiantes

porque ahí han voluntariado, aprendido, se han divertido y se han alimentado del jardín. Este espacio es muy valioso para los estudiantes porque es un símbolo de su cultura, comunidad, amor, cariño y un espacio que necesita protección por los numerosos ataques que ha recibido desde 2022, los cuales demuestran que todavía tenemos un largo camino para erradicar la cultura tóxica del odio racial. Hay que proteger los pocos espacios que hay donde la comunidad se siente reflejada segura, querida y empoderada.