

The Faces of Mexico

New citizen's roots remain in Mexico

by MARK GARBNER

Lucina Siguenza was in the United States for 30 years before she decided to become a citizen.

The 37-year-old Siguenza was born in Mexico City but moved with her family to East Los Angeles when she was 6 years old.

She was educated in the United States, and has worked here during her entire professional life, but she waited until last year to apply for citizenship.

"I just kept procrastinating. I wasn't sure if I was going to live here or if I was going to live in Mexico," she says.

berries and other crops.

Because most of them live in poverty, those farm workers make up a large part of the health clinic's clientele.

Many of the farm workers who come to the clinic are women who need pre-natal care and family planning information, she says.

Since most of the migrant workers are illegal aliens, the clinic is faced with difficult questions about how they should be treated. The clinic provides only primary care, but can refer patients to more specialized care under other tax-supported programs.



Lucina Siguenza stands in her office at the East Multnomah County Health Clinic.

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"I like to think of it as dual citizenship. I don't know if they will accept that or not."

Although she is a U.S. citizen, Siguenza has not forgotten her Mexican compatriots. As the manager of Multnomah County's East County Health Clinic, she helps provide health care to Spanish-speaking people.

In her job, Siguenza supervises the everyday operations of the clinic, which has about 26 employees. The clinic charges people according to their income, and therefore works mostly with poorer people.

"When I came here (from California), they told me there was a large Hispanic population. I got here and said, 'Where are they?'" she says.

She soon learned that the Spanish-speaking people were hidden in the suburban neighborhoods that have swallowed the farms in East County, or were working on the farms that were left, picking

"But there's the big issue of whether a person is illegal or not," she says, adding that she thinks migrants should be treated the same as other clients of the clinic.

The migrants come to the United States by choice, she concedes. "It's just economics. If they're coming here, it's worth it to come here for them."

But, economics aside, their status as illegal aliens should not mean their needs should be ignored, she says. "It's like they're people that don't have any rights. How can you ignore that the people are here and have needs? If they get sick, how can you say they're not here?"

Economics also played a large role in Siguenza's arrival in the United States.

When she was 6 years old, her father was working at a factory in Mexico, but lost his job when a strike was called. Her mother had

relatives in California, and those relatives encouraged the family to move to the United States.

Before coming to Oregon, Siguenza lived in Southern California most of her life. She earned her bachelor's degree in health education at California State University at Northridge and her master's degree in public health at UCLA.

Prior to moving to Gresham three years ago, she was working with state-funded family planning in California. She welcomed the chance to work in a primary-care facility such as the East County Health Clinic.

Oregon and Gresham also offered her things that Southern California could not.

"It has better air and is cleaner and greener," she says, adding that her apartment off Northeast 13th Street is only two miles from the clinic.

"I had to drive a lot in L.A. My dream was to be able to go to some place and just work and live."

Despite attaining that dream, Siguenza remains ambivalent about her "dual citizenship." She hopes someday to return to Mexico.

"I've thought about it all the time. I think I will sometime."

Minister works to help his people

by MARK GARBNER

Life is not complicated for Jose Gonzalez Diaz. Outside his family, he has two goals: to help his people and to practice his religion.

The 28-year-old Gonzalez Diaz, a Gresham-area resident and the Spanish minister at Pleasant Home Baptist Church west of Sandy, is able to accomplish both those goals through his work with the church.

Every Sunday, Gonzalez Diaz explains the beliefs of his church to about 35 Spanish members of the regular congregation. And every week night except Wednesday, he visits the migrant farm worker camps in Sandy, Damascus and Gresham, preaching to the Mexican workers and sometimes taking them clothes and food donated by other members of the church.

"The church helps a lot," Gonzalez Diaz says of the gifts for the migrant workers. "The American people at the church help a lot. They try to help the Mexican people."

Gonzalez Diaz tries to help too. Besides providing food and clothing when needed, he sometimes gives sick workers rides to the health clinic.

But, while he takes some material things to the workers, his main concern is with spiritual matters. He does not want the workers to think the gifts are bribes to get them to listen to his sermons.

"I go more to help the people recognize what is true in the Bible," he says.

Gonzalez Diaz's mind may be concerned with the spirit, but his feet are planted firmly in reality. He recognizes that the root of the pro-

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Sheriffs put up reward for leads on marijuana

The Oregon State Sheriff's Association is seeking help from citizens in locating commercial marijuana gardens, said Clackamas County Sheriff Bill Brooks.

Citizens' identity will remain anonymous.

The reward is offered for information leading to the seizure of marijuana plantations.

The toll-free number of 1-800-624-4405 is available 24 hours a day to anyone who desires to report the illegal activity. A reward of \$50 for gardens under 50 plants, \$100 for gardens of 100 plants or less, and \$250 for gardens exceeding 100 plants.

In order to claim the reward the informant's information must first be proven and a seizure made.

The motivation behind Clackamas County crimes are drug related, said Russ Williams, public affairs officer. The reward program is part of an all-out effort against the rising crime rate.



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