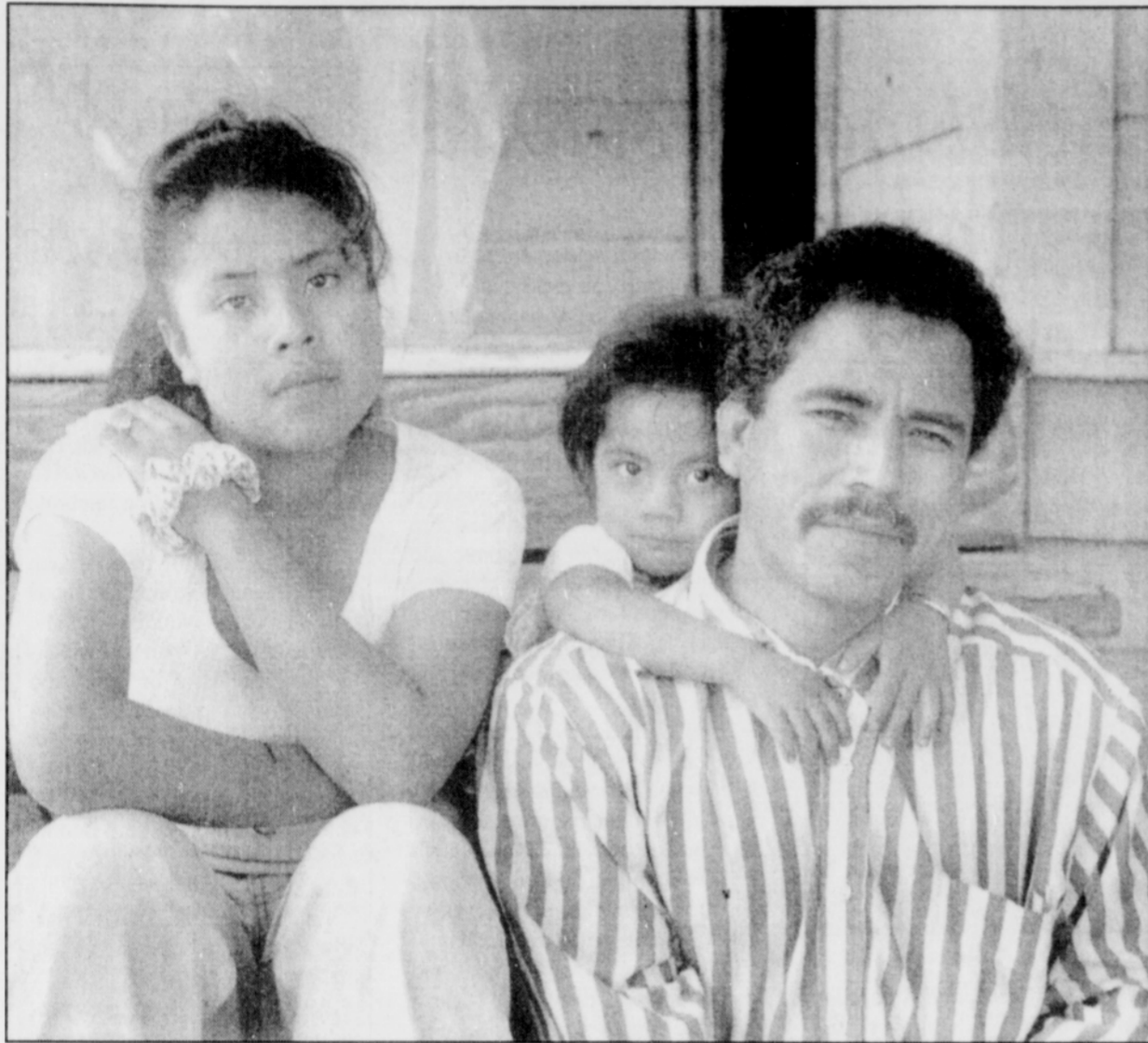


Through our own eyes Por nuestros propios ojos



Alexandra Lopez, youth photographer from Forest Grove High School. "I feel like a different person when I'm taking pictures—a little more experienced."

Each spring, Straight Shooting provides a small group of young people from six counties with an opportunity to learn photographic skills and develop self esteem, allowing them to explore and find expression through the use of a camera. Contact: Jeff Nunn, Project Coordinator, Oregon Commission on Children and Families in Salem (503) 373-1283.

"In a time where life seems increasingly fragile, it is difficult for anyone to stand tall. We will all be knocked down. Growing up in such real and underprivileged worlds, it is inconceivable to imagine adults find each and every day. The young photographers in straight shooting face their world with a sensitivity that, at many times, seems too perceptive. They are consciously aware of the failures of our society.

"Flooding our darkrooms with clearly seen photographs of magical and beautifully truthful images, these students remind us of the power of photography as an art. It is an art of looking at our world. While anyone can take a picture, only these young adults could have made these photographs.

Only these young adults could have evoked these dreamlike scenes of oppression, or their undying love for family in a single image. We are all privileged to learn from their work.

"All of us involved, the students and the mentors, had to reach out towards each other's worlds. The understanding and strength gained is inexplicable. The relationships formed and photographs created in this program are testament to the extreme value of our society working together." —Adam Ogilvie, Mentor and Coordinator.

In our own words En nuestras propias palabras

BY STEFANIE FUENTES

I was born in Fresno, California, which is located in the San Joaquin Valley. My parents both came from the States. My mom, Maggig pardo, was born in El Paso, Texas, and my dad, Virgil Pardo, was born in San Jose, California.

My grandparents all came from Mexico. My mom's parents are Genardo and Gregoria Magdaleno. They had eight kids, including my mom. All were born in Mexico except for the two youngest, who happen to be my mom and Tia (aunt) Sicorrio.

My dad's parents, Moses and Angela Pardo, had four kids of their own together. Moses (who is the oldest), Phil, Virgil (my dad), and the youngest, Marisha. All have children of their own.

My parents grew up knowing nothing other than working in the fields. I am very grateful for not having to grow up working in the fields. My parents had something greater in mind planned for us in our future. They wanted us to grow up like any other American kids, to have the same chances and advantages of any other. Therefore, they brought us up with only what they knew best and what they were taught.

I often think to myself how lucky I am to be living in the States, with all the advanced technology and education given in schools today. Because in Mexico today it's not like it is here. Not all kids get to go to school. If you do, you are considered lucky.

Most kids just ended up working in the fields, starting at a very young age. My



Stefanie Fuentes

grandma Angela never attended school until her fifth grade year because she had to work in the fields, helping her family make a living.

Often time I forget where I come from and all the advantages I had that my parents never had and I end up taking advantage of them. Not because I'm ungrateful, but because I forget how lucky I am to be living in the United States. I see young teenagers walking around like they have so many problems and worries around them, but in reality they don't.

I bet if they were to take a trip to Juadis, Mexico, and saw how the Juadis teens live, they would be so grateful for what they have that their whole attitude would change. Especially the way they look at life. I think they would appreciate their parents more.

Today as I look around at other ethnic families, I realize something unusual, that we're all alike in some ways, yet we're all different in many other ways, such as our beliefs, holidays, birthdays, and many other

ways. For instance, when holidays come around our whole family gets together in one house and makes enchiladas, tacos, mole, tamales and all sorts of other foods. We sit around together, adults in one room and the kids in another, just having fun and talking away.

I grew up knowing nothing other than this lifestyle stated in this article. I was brought up in a small town in Northern California. We ended up moving because our neighborhood got so bad that there was a killing just behind my house. Soon after that it started getting worse as the days passed by. So my parents had no other choice but to move the family to another town.

We all piled in a car and moved to Jose, California. It was weird having to move to a whole new city and probably 10 times as big as Fresno. We all started school within the first week we moved and my dad had to find a job. My mom had to stay at home not working because of so little job opportunities.

We didn't last too long in San Jose, either. Our neighborhood was getting bad. It got so bad that my parents wouldn't let my little sisters play outside. Not to mention our rent was so high we barely had enough money to buy food with and with my dad the only one working it made things even harder, so we had to move (to Oregon).

When we moved this time it was different from all the rest, because my dad wasn't able to come along with the family. While we were all in

Portland living with my Tio (uncle) Moy, my dad was stuck in San Jose saving money for us so we could live in a house of our own. When we moved, I was just starting my seventh grade year at Ockley Green Middle School, and my dad didn't come to live with us until the middle of my seventh grade year. It was weird not having him around for so long, and with only having a chance to talk to him for a couple of minutes once a week. But once we were all a family again living in our own house it was like we had never been apart.

I think that me living as a Hispanic-American I make it out as to how I want to live and be known as. Because, most people, if you think highly of yourself, that's what you'll be and so on. I appreciate the things I have and the things I don't have.

I don't wish that I had them because I know that I don't have them for a reason, and that reason must be a pretty good one, too.

In Our Own Words (En Nuestras Propias Palabras) will be a regular feature of The Portland Observer, offering to Hispanic youth the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings—and to describe their experiences—as a Latino in a predominantly Anglo environment. The Observer encourages our young readers to submit their own writing and a photograph and we will try to find space in our pages for you.

Christmas Toy Drive needs sponsors

People can help a child enjoy and celebrate this Christmas by donating to Jefferson High School Club Hispano's Third Annual Christmas Toy Drive.

This community project will encompass Hispanic parents, children and high school students who live near and around Jefferson High & Ockley Green Middle School located in N.E. Portland.

By participating in the toy drive, you would be helping underprivileged children, but more importantly reinforcing the sense of giving and sharing that we try to convey to young people. Jefferson Club Hispano members had their fundraiser in September and raised \$86.00. The money will be used to

buy toys but it is not enough to buy sufficient toys for the club's annual toy drive.

We need sponsors for Jefferson High School Club Hispano's Toy Drive. We are requesting financial assistance of \$50.00 so the group can buy toys priced around \$5.00.

The toy drive is scheduled from Nov. 10 to Dec. 10, 1996. We will have a Fiesta Navidena on Dec. 10, 1996 at Ockley Green Middle School One of our members will dress up as Santa Claus and deliver toys to the children.

For information call 916-5180. We are more than happy to come to your office to discuss this great endeavor. The members anxiously await your response.

Coordinadora' 96 an awakening

By Mary Ann Prado
On October 12, a coalition of citizens and prospective citizens, of labor unions, community and civil rights organizations, immigrant rights and human rights group convened in Washington, D.C. for the Latino and Immigrant Rights March.

The coalition, Coordinadora' 96, demanded a program calling for human rights for all, equal opportunities, free public education, access to health care, citizen police review boards, labor law reform, a \$7.00 minimum wage, citizenship rights and amnesty for all.

As part of the Latin America/Asia Pacific Youth Friends (LAAP) of American Friends Service Committee, four youths journeyed from Portland to Washing-

ton, D.C. and participated in this landmark mobilization of Latinos, immigrants and others to show solidarity and to let "young voices be heard!"

As expressed by Leng Bouasykeo, a student from P.S.U. and Jonathan Friolo, "October 12th was a day of unity and justice."

Other youth participants included Cecilia Giron and Ramon Najera. In Cecilia's submitted to the Portland Observer, Cecilia, Leng and Jonathan shared their personal experiences at the march and their feelings as immigrants. For more information contact Latin America/Asia Pacific Youth Friends Program (LAAP), 2249 E. Burnside, Portland, Oregon 97232 (503) 230-9427.

Are You At Risk?

Diabetes is a very serious disease, especially for Hispanics. One out of 10 Hispanics has it. Even worse, diabetes affects one out of 10 Hispanics over age 45.

Diabetes is a quiet killer and can cause serious problems like blindness, heart disease and amputations. Half of the people who have diabetes do not know they have it. So far there is no cure. But there is good news: You can control diabetes through diet, exercise and medication. You can improve your health and the quality of your life.

Ask About DAR

The American Diabetes Association has a special program for Hispanics called DAR. DAR stands for Diabetes Assistance & Resources and comes from the Spanish word for "to give" or "to provide." And giving is at the heart of the program.

Through DAR, we can give help and information (in Spanish and English) to you and your family. We can answer your questions about diabetes or show you where to find

the answers.

The most exciting part of DAR is the Diabetes Home Health Party. Volunteers host small, informal parties in your area, for family, friends and neighbors. You eat great food that is healthy for people with diabetes. A trained Diabetes Lay Counselor tells the group about diabetes and where you can get help. It's a fun way for you to learn more about diabetes from people in your own community.

Join Us

The American Diabetes Association is your best source of diabetes information. We are the leading organization dedicated to the prevention and cure of diabetes.

Call us and we will give you free information about diabetes. We can help you and your family manage the disease.

Don't wait. Diabetes is a dangerous disease. But DAR provides fun and useful ways to help you beat it. Call your local American Diabetes Association office today.

Letter To The Editor
Send your letters to the Editor to:
Editor, PO Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208

To the editor:

We applaud your recent articles focusing on farmwork issues and your editorial endorsement of the consumer boycott our organization has pressed against NORPAC Foods and Wholesome & Hearty Foods. We agree that all consumers have a responsibility to care about and take action on farmworker issues. Your editorial which makes that very point is timely and welcome.

We also appreciate the Portland Observer's decision to expand coverage to focus on the growing Latino population in North and Northeast Portland. This addition demonstrates the Observer's commitment to serving the community and its evolving needs and populations.

—Larry Kleinman, Secretary Treasurer
Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste
Northwest Treeplanters and Farmworkers United

To the editor:

It was truly an honor for Latina Style to take part of this year's OCHA conference. Maria Elena Hawkins and other OCHA members did a tremendous job organizing a quality conference.

The speakers, panelists and attendees were impressive. Latina Style looks forward to growing our relationship with the OCHA members and other Hispanics in the Portland area.

—Anna Maria Arias, publisher of Latina Style Magazine

OCHA Conference promotes solutions

Continued from B1

was set to launch a Spanish-language version of the weekly as a result of the unparalleled success of their "Selena" issue, which outsold every edition in the history of People magazine.

She predicted that the new periodical would not lack for cosmetic advertisements.

Olmos

The highlight of the day's events was the appearance of Edward James Olmos as the nighttime keynote speaker. Mr. Olmos arrived to a packed house as the luncheon was getting under way, having just finished shooting the movie "Selena" in Texas at 3:00 a.m. earlier in the day, and he left immediately after his 40-minute talk to fly to Arizona, where several thousand people were waiting to hear him speak.

The theme of Mr. Olmos' speech was a call to recognize our similarities

as diverse people, and to find solutions through education and in forging commitments to work together.

Long active in anti-gang efforts, Mr. Olmos stated that "Violence is a health problem, not a judicial problem," echoing the words of Portland Police Bureau Chief Charles Moose, as was reported in the September 25 edition of The Portland Observer. He urged the audience to find solutions to violence in strengthening communities.

We are all different, but we are all alike

"It's the fact that we're all different that makes us all the same," Mr. Olmos said. To illustrate his point, he described himself and his brown skin as the product of an evolutionary mix of all the races, red or indigenous, white or Anglo, yellow or Asian, black or African. "I am a brown-skinned man, born of two Mexican parents...Part of me is white, which goes back 500 years to the arrival of

the Spanish; part of me is red, is indigenous, which goes back 40,000 years...Before that I was yellow, when we migrated from Asia, and before that I was Black, when we migrated out of Africa."

Senor Olmos asked for a show of hands of all who had attended elementary school and high school in the United States and had received more than one half hour of education about Meso-America over the course of their schooling. Among the thousand people in the room, only three or four hands went up. Mr. Olmos asked two of them to describe how much education on the subject they had received.

A man said "one hour"; and, in one of the many humorous moments of Mr. Olmos' talk, a woman in the distant back of the room who had held her hand up said that she actually hadn't received any such schooling, but couldn't resist the opportunity to express her affection and appreciation

for Mr. Olmos, which she proceeded to do.

Be "smart selfish"

In closing, Mr. Olmos said that "Everyone in this room is selfish. We are all selfish. I'm selfish, too. But there are two kinds of selfish people," he said. "There is a foolish selfish person and a smart selfish person. The foolish selfish person makes sure that everyone in his house is safe at night and then goes to bed. The smart selfish person first looks out the window and makes sure that the neighbor on his left is safe, and then checks on the neighbors on the right and across the street. Then he goes to bed, knowing that his neighborhood is safe, and his home and family are secured."

Mr. Olmos urged each of us to be more like that "smart selfish person," and with that made his way slowly to the exits besieged by admirers.

OCHA may be contacted at (503) 228-4131.

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