



Center for Mexican  
American and Latino/a Studies

College of Liberal Arts  
and Social Sciences

SMALL CENTER, BIG RESULTS



# ANNUAL REPORT

FALL 2023-SPRING 2024



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# HISTORY & MISSION

## HISTORY

The Center for Mexican American Studies (CMAS) at the University of Houston was established in 1972 as an interdisciplinary academic program encompassing the liberal arts, education and social sciences focusing on the Mexican American and broader Latino experience in the U.S. Due to rapid growth of Latino/a representation at the university, in 2022, the center was renamed the Center for Mexican American and Latino/a Studies (CMALS) to reflect this shift in demographics.

## MISSION

To advance knowledge, promote critical thinking and foster the value of service to the community. This involves designing a broad spectrum of public and scholarly programs.



# WELCOME MESSAGE

03

As we say goodbye to Dr. Mindiola and head into a new academic year, I enter my tenth year as Director of CMALS and reflect on where the Center began and the work in which we are now engaged. As most of you know, the University of Houston's Center for Mexican American and Latino/a Studies celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2022, and this past year we said goodbye to the man whose dedication and commitment helped to build the Center and make all subsequent opportunities for it possible, Dr. Tatcho Mindiola. Dr Mindiola had a vision to provide access to the University of Houston for Mexican American students and to any student whose financial need and life challenges were significant. He also wanted to help build a place where students could be taught by people who shared their experiences, and therefore, could help students to imagine their futures differently. He more than realized that dream and has left a legacy that will endure well beyond his time with us.

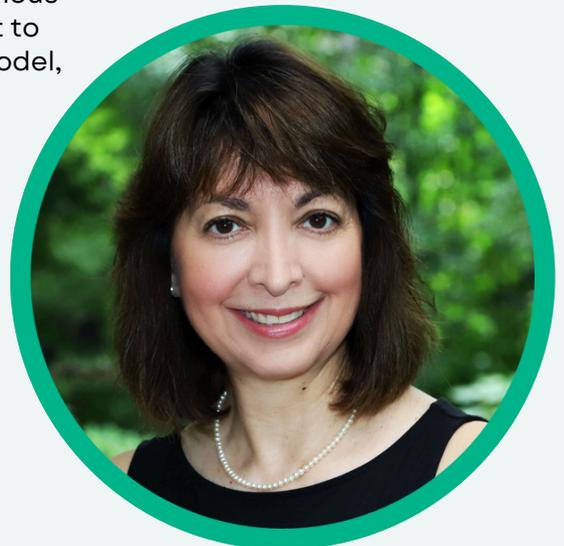
CMALS has grown from an idea to a Center and Academic Program that has served as headquarters for a national research consortium, host of a national Latino art event, and one of the most successful and award-winning undergraduate programs in the country to graduate Latino and first-generation students. This past year, with the sponsorship of CFEInternational, CMALS funded 30 graduate students across 6 Colleges at the University of Houston.

We have created Houston's (and the country's) first fully bilingual and interactive visual digital archive and public knowledge tool that maps Houston's Latino art. This cutting-edge innovation is located in satellite sites across Houston and not only preserves the Latino art of Houston but also serves to democratize access to art and knowledge. In short, we are a small ethnic studies center that engages in "big" activities.

Most important, CMALS is a home to so many of our students, a place where they feel safe, supported and in which they build their skills and experience care. CMALS is an authentic space with a group of ordinary people who do extraordinary things, serving our students and our community with dedication, energy and love. Our anonymous contributions, acts of kindness, and selfless commitment to the Houston and Latino community provides UH with a model, not only of how to successfully educate first generation students but also how to help them become culturally competent and civic minded members of their communities. I am exceptionally proud to work with my colleagues and as we move forward, CMALS will continue to engage in the work begun by Dr. Mindiola – ever present, completely dedicated and resolute in its commitment to our communities.

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**Dr. Pamela Anne Quiroz**  
*Director*



# THE CMALS TEAM



PAMELA ANNE QUIROZ, PH.D.

DIRECTOR



MARISELA MARTINEZ, ED.D.

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR



FELY AGUILAR

PROGRAM DIRECTOR  
ACADEMIC ACHIEVERS



DIANA PINO, ED.D.

DIRECTOR  
*LYDIA MENDOZA FELLOWSHIP*



JESSICA Y. THIAM

DEPT. BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATOR



EDDIE MUÑOZ III

PROGRAM MANAGER  
*AAP UH*



VANESA LUNA

PROGRAM COORDINATOR  
*AAP AUSTIN*



LARISSA HERNANDEZ

FINANCIAL COORDINATOR



ELIZABETH HERNANDEZ

COMMUNICATIONS  
COORDINATOR

# CMALS GRADUATE FELLOWS

05



**KAREN HENRIQUEZ**

MASTER'S  
*SOCIOLOGY*

Born in El Salvador and a first generation college student, Karen is a second year graduate student in the department of Sociology at the University of Houston. Her research is focused on Latinas providing hospice and end-of-life care in the U.S.



**DAVID GUEVARA**

MASTER'S  
*SOCIOLOGY*

Currently a Latino graduate student in Sociology, David's research interests involve investigating social phenomena within Latino populations in the United States that are creating related social stratification and its solutions.



**IRAN CASTILLO**

MASTER'S  
*SOCIOLOGY*

Iran is a Master's student at the University of Houston enrolled in the Sociology graduate program. She obtained her bachelor's from the University of North Texas and is a first generation Mexican-American student aiming to inspire and uplift those in her community.



**PABLO LOPEZ DUQUE**

PH.D.  
*QUANTUM PHYSICS*

Pablo is a Ph.D. student whose research work is in the context of conformal systems, quantum field theory, quantum information, and quantum computing. He has been working on a quantum computing education project sponsored by the CMALS Graduate Fellowship.

# CMALS VISITING SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The Visiting Scholar Program aims to support research on Mexican American and Latino/a studies regardless of the disciplinary focus. Visiting Scholars join the Center for Mexican American and Latino/a Studies as post doctoral fellows and actively participate in the Center's research activities and seminars. The Visiting Scholar Program provides time, space, and mentoring for the fellows to work on their projects as well as advancing the Center's research agenda.

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## INTRODUCING

ALLISON SAENZ, PH.D

Allison Sáenz is a public historian whose research focuses on the intersections of Central American studies, Latina/o/x history, immigration, and ethnic identity in the United States. She earned her PhD in History from the University of Houston, where her dissertation, "Sunbelt Sanctuary: Central American Immigration, Culture, and Ethnicity in 1980s Houston," explored the complex dynamics of Central American migration to the U.S. during the 1980s, emphasizing the contributions of Central American communities in the Sunbelt region. Her research interests are deeply rooted in understanding how immigration and ethnic identity shape communities and public memory.



2024 -2025  
VISITING SCHOLAR

In addition to her scholarly pursuits, she is committed to making history accessible to diverse audiences through public history initiatives. She has served as a research assistant for the University of Houston's Center for Mexican American and Latino/a Studies' *Latino cARTographies* project, served as a museum studies fellow with the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History and the National Museum of the American Latino, and awarded the prestigious Inter-University Program for Latino Research Mellon Fellowship. Dr. Sáenz is passionate about creating spaces where history is not only studied but lived, and she continues to be an advocate for the inclusion of underrepresented histories in both academic and public spheres.

# STRATEGIC FOCUS

07

## RESEARCH

Latino cARTographies is a visual digital archive and public knowledge tool that merges art with technology to create the country's first portable, bilingual and interactive map of Houston's Latino art.

## STUDENT SUCCESS

The Academic Achiever's Program (AAP) has provided invaluable support to students since 1994. Its mission is to recruit and graduate underrepresented students

## ACADEMICS

Through relevant courses, a Major & Minor, fellowships and other academic opportunities, CMALS has promoted critical thinking and fostered the value of service to the community since 1972.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The goal for CMALS through its strategy is to forge academics that excel as exceptional representatives for the Latino/a community.



# Latino cARTographies

Mapping the Past, Present and Future of Houston Latino Art



Latino cARTographies merges visual and performing art with technology to create the country's first portable, bilingual, and interactive digital board that maps Houston's Latino art, landmarks, and culture. With just a touch of the finger, the visitor can access more than 270 of Houston's Latino artists, explore 7 Latino neighborhoods and 81 landmarks. You can access these through video, images, text, avatars, and much more!

Latino cARTographies was funded by the University of Houston.

**NEW  
FEATURES  
COMING  
SOON!**



# Latino cARTographies

Mapping the Past, Present and Future of Houston Latino Art

## NEW SATELLITE LOCATIONS



**BUSH IAH AIRPORT  
TERMINAL D15**



**HOUSTON HERITAGE  
HISTORY MUSEUM**




**ART MUSEUM TX**




**HOBBY AIRPORT**



**CONSULADO GENERAL  
DE MÉXICO EN  
HOUSTON**



# Latino cARTographies

Mapping the Past, Present and Future of Houston Latino Art

On May 15, 2024, Latino cARTographies held a special screening & reception of Latino cARTographies for our incoming Lydia Mendoza fellows and their scholarship sponsor CFE International.

## MAY 15, 2024 SPECIAL SCREENING IMMERSIVE

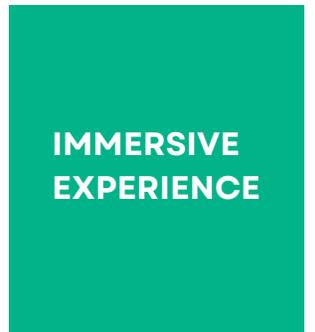
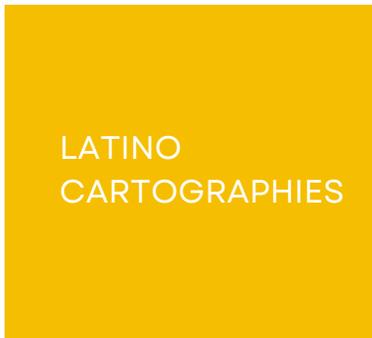


BRINGING  
TOGETHER  
COMMUNITIES



# Latino cARTographies

Mapping the Past, Present and Future of Houston Latino Art



# Latino cARTographies

Mapping the Past, Present and Future of Houston Latino Art

## IN THE COMMUNITY



Holocaust Museum



Art in the Heart Event

### Latino cARTographies Exhibitions

	Location	Dates
2024	Holocaust Museum	September 13 – December 13, 2024
	7th Latino Health Summit Conference	March 21st & March 22nd 2024
	Cleveland ISD	January 29 – February 29, 2024
2023	Ion Houston	October 11 – November 16, 2023
	The Heritage Society	September 11 – September 25, 2023
	8th Annual Statewide Summit	June 24, 2023
	Public Interest Communications Event	June 13, 2023
2022	Houston Scottish Rite Immersive	April 1, April 2, April 8, & April 9, 2023
	Debbie Harwell's Class	March 6, 2023
	Alley Theater	November 30, 2022 – January 11, 2023
	The Heritage Society	October 29, 2022
	Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Board	October 26, 2022
	Houston Scottish Rite – Unveiling	September 29, 2022
	Slalom	September 15, 2022
Art in the Heart Grand Opening	May 28, 2022	

# Latino cARTographies

Mapping the Past, Present and Future of Houston Latino Art



A VISUAL DIGITAL ARCHIVE AND PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE TOOL



UH project showcases Houston Latino artists



# ACADEMIC ACHIEVERS PROGRAM



The Academic Achievers Program (AAP) is sponsored by the Center for Mexican American Studies and the Office of the President. It was established in the fall of 1994 and is designed to retain and propel more students to graduation. The mission of the AAP at the University of Houston is to recruit underrepresented students.

## AT A GLANCE

- \$4,000 Annual Scholarship
- Mandatory Individual Academic Tutoring
- Time Management Skills Sessions
- Skills Workshops & Leadership Training
- Career and Internship Opportunities
- Priority Registration

**62**  
STUDENTS

## 2023-2024 IMPACT

**3.2**  
GPA

**8**  
GRADS

**100%**  
GRADUATION  
RATE

**80%**  
DEANS  
LIST

**Academic Achievers - University of Houston**



The Academic Achievers Program (AAP) has provided practical and invaluable support to students since 1994. Nationally recognized as a program of academic excellence by the White House and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, our efforts have always focused on one unshakable mission: to help students achieve their higher-education goals.

**Academic Achievers - Austin High School**



NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED AS A PROGRAM OF EXCELLENCE BY:



**Important Dates**

Summer 2024	<b>AAP Summer Sessions 2024</b>
June 18, 2024	<b>Study Abroad Oaxaca</b>
April 22, 2024	<b>Community Service at Eastwood Park</b>
Fall 2023	<b>UH Graduations</b>
December 2023	<b>Community Service - Christmas Cards</b>
November 29, 2023	<b>Gender Migration with CFE International</b>
November 2023	<b>Arthouse Casita Presentation</b>
October 20, 2023	<b>Dia de los muertos Workshop</b>
October 5, 2023	<b>First Gen Passport Party</b>
September 18, 2023	<b>Community Service with Lulac</b>
August 17, 2023	<b>CMALS Class pop-up</b>

**Notable Guest Speakers at AAP Monthly Meetings**

- Elizabeth Ortiz**, Artist
- Lorena Morales**, Artist
- Joaquin Martinez**, Councilmember
- Dex Davis**, Amegy Bank
- Mario Castillo**, Councilmember
- Eduardo Elizondo**, HISD
- Jose Tanguma**, PWC
- Naomi Fuentes**, WellMed





MONTHLY MEETINGS

FIRST-GEN PASSPORT PARTY



STUDENT ENRICHMENT



# STUDENTS



## MENTORSHIP & LEADERSHIP



## CIVIC & CULTURAL AWARENESS



# AAP SUMMER INTERNSHIPS



**YOALI PEREZNEGRÓN**

TARGA



**JOSE MEDINA**

CENTERPOINT ENERGY



**DIANA BALDERAS**

SHELL



**BRIANA VALENTIN**

ALDINE ISD



**JOSE BARCNAS**

HARRIS COUNTY



**SILAS AYALA**

LANDMARK PROPERTIES



**DANIEL GUZMAN**

HITT CONTRACTING



**JULIAN GALVAN**

MARRIOTT



**ASHLEY QUINTERO**

WEATHERFORD



**HUGO GONZALEZ**

JOHNSON SPACE CENTER



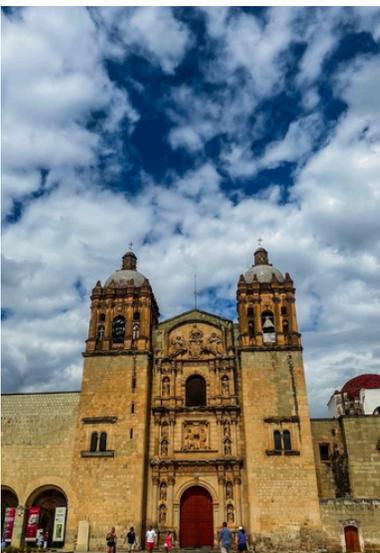
**MAYRA GARCIA**

UH - CMALS

# STUDY ABROAD SUMMER IN OAXACA

As part of MAS Course 3340 - Mexican American Urban Communities, students embark on first hand experience at home and abroad through this CMALS faculty-led program.

An interdisciplinary approach to the origin and development of Mexican American neighborhoods in urban regions from the 20th century to the present. The course focuses on demographic and structural organization and its influence in the quality of life in various settings.



# MAJOR & MINOR IN MEXICAN AMERICAN & LATINO STUDIES

## THE MAS MAJOR IS HERE!

Inter and multidisciplinary academic area of study that builds upon the experiences of people of Mexican and Latino descent. The BA seeks to prepare culturally competent and knowledgeable students to become leaders in the business, political, academic and cultural communities for the 21st century by exposing them to a wide curriculum and diverse academic experiences including conferences, symposiums, internships, cultural and artistic programming.

### Minor in Mexican American Studies

The Center for Mexican American and Latino/a Studies offers a minor in Mexican American Studies. The material covered in the minor conveys the broad and rich experiences of people of Mexican descent in the United States. A minor in Mexican American Studies augments a student's major area of study and prepares him/her to better understand the history, culture, social relations, folklore, literature, politics, and numerous contributions this group has made to society in the United States.

## CURRENT MAS COURSES

- **MAS 2340** Intro. to Mexican American Studies
- **MAS 3340** Mexican American Urban Communities
- **MAS 3341** Mexican American Experience through Film
- **MAS 3343** Latino Psychology
- **MAS 3345** Latino Leadership, Activism & Organizing

## CAREERS FOR MAS DEGREES

- Immigration, Human Rights and Civil Rights Law
- Non-profit Leadership/Management
- Community outreach, services and organizing
- Government
- Business and corporate sectors in areas with target demographics
- Education and health in areas with target demographics
- Art, graphic design and IT sectors seeking to employ graduates whose creativity is informed by cross-cultural and transnational skills.



# CROSSING LATINIDADES

## PRE-DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIP

The goal of Crossing Latinidades' Summer Institute is to equip participants who are already thinking of dissertation ideas with increased competence to enable intellectual innovation and expanded views of the field of Latino Humanities Studies before advancing to candidacy. Emphasis is placed on exploring and reimagining a comparative framework for Latino Studies that moves beyond the single-nationality paradigm.

Crossing Latinidades is funded by the Mellon Foundation.



JAVIER FRANCO

2023 -2024  
CROSSING LATINIDADES FELLOW

### ABOUT JAVIER FRANCO

Javier was born in Guanajuato, México and raised in Southern California, where he earned a BA and MA in Spanish from California State University, Long Beach. He is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Latin American Literature in the Department of Hispanic Studies at the University of Houston, where he is also a research team member for Latino cARTographies. Javier's current research focuses on the representation of drag queens in 20th and 21st century Mexican and Mexican American literature and culture, exploring Mexican machismo and its intersections with gender, sexuality, and identity. Additionally, his research interests encompass trauma studies, queer theory, film & media studies, and performance studies, with a particular focus on how these areas converge in Latinx cultural expressions. He is passionate about examining how marginalized voices challenge dominant narratives and offer new ways of understanding cultural and social power dynamics.

# LYDIA MENDOZA FELLOWSHIP

SPONSORED BY  CFEi

In early 2024, CMALS received confirmation that CFE International had committed to providing a sizable scholarship to advance the education of Latino students at the University of Houston. The grant, named in honor of historic Texan, Lydia Mendoza, would fully fund the graduate studies of 30 students. The search for the best of our academic community began in the spring of 2024 and the 30 recipients were announced in the summer.

## About Lydia Mendoza

Lydia Mendoza (1916–2007) was a pioneering American singer and guitarist, widely regarded as the "First Lady of Tejano Music." Born in Houston, Texas, she began performing at a young age, gaining recognition in the 1930s for her distinctive voice and instrumental skills. Mendoza was known for her heartfelt renditions of traditional Mexican and Texan music, and her contributions helped shape the development of Tejano and Conjunto music. Mendoza was inducted into the Tejano Music Hall of Fame and received many accolades for her influence on Latin music in the United States.

## Scholarship Selection Committee

**Pamela Anne Quiroz, Ph.D.**

*Director, CMALS*

**Marisela Martinez, Ed.D.**

*Associate Director, CMALS*

**Zelma Oyarvide-Tuthill, Ph.D.**

*Professor, Sociology*

**Deborah Harwell, Ph.D.**

*Professor, History*

**Samuel Brower, Ed.D.**

*Professor, Education*

**Gustavo Villalpando, JD**

*Community Partner*



# LYDIA MENDOZA

# FELLOWSHIP

## RECIPIENTS

**Valeria Gonzalez**

Ph.D., History

**Miranda Ruizinsky**

Ph.D., History

**Gustavo Valdivia**

Ph.D., Physics

**Pablo Lopez- Duque**

Ph.D., Quantum Physics

**Lorissa Saiz**

Ph.D., Cell &  
Molecular Biology

**Jesus A. Rodriguez T.**

Master's, Computer &  
Systems Engineering

**Reynaurora Resendez**

Master's, Curriculum  
& Instruction

**Natividad Mosqueda**

Master's, Curriculum  
& Instruction

**Meghann Adkins**

Master's, Education

**David Ramirez**

Master's, Public Admin.

**Itzia Medrano**

Master's Sociology

**Edward Muñoz III**

Master's Sociology

**Carolina Aguado**

Master's, Anthropology

**Noah Wood**

Master's, Anthropology

**José Gutierrez**

J.D., Law

**Alyssa Peralez**

Master's, Communication  
Sciences & Disorders

**Sandra Hernandez**

Master's, Communication  
Sciences & Disorders

**Maritza Yanez**

Master's, Communication  
Sciences & Disorders

**Vicente Mandujano**

Ph.D., Political Science

**Susana Lewandowski**

Graduate Certificate,  
Arts & Health

**Christina Segura**

Ph.D., Psychology

**Taylor Longoria**

Ph.D., History

**Katherine Avila**

Ph.D., Psychology

**Kathia Marquez**

Master's, Social Work

**Daniel Riojas**

Master's, Social Work

**Erika Avila**

Master's, Social Work

**Kimberly Cervantes**

Master's, Poetry

**Lea Colchado-Joaquin**

Ph.D., Rhetoric &  
Composition

**Adrian Pachuca**

Master's, Poetry

**Theresa Escobedo**

Master's, Inter-  
disciplinary Practices  
& Emerging Forms

# CMALS BY THE NUMBERS

## MEXICAN AMERICAN AND LATINO/A STUDIES MAJOR/MINOR

STUDENTS DECLARED IN 2023-2024



## CMALS OUTREACH

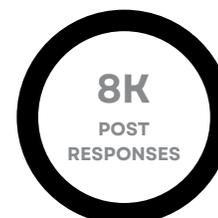
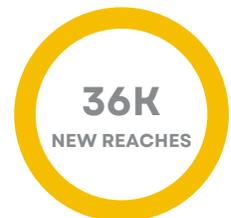
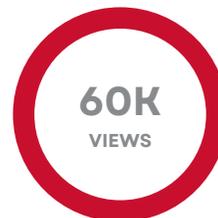


## CMALS SERVICES

- MALS Major and Minor Advising
- Mentorship, scholarships and learning abroad opportunities
- Academic Achievers Program
- Latino cARTographies Arts Interactive
- Graduate Fellowship Opportunities
- Curated Mexican American and Latino/a Resources

## SOCIAL MEDIA INSIGHTS

FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM COMBINED AVG.  
AUG. 2023 - DEC. 2024



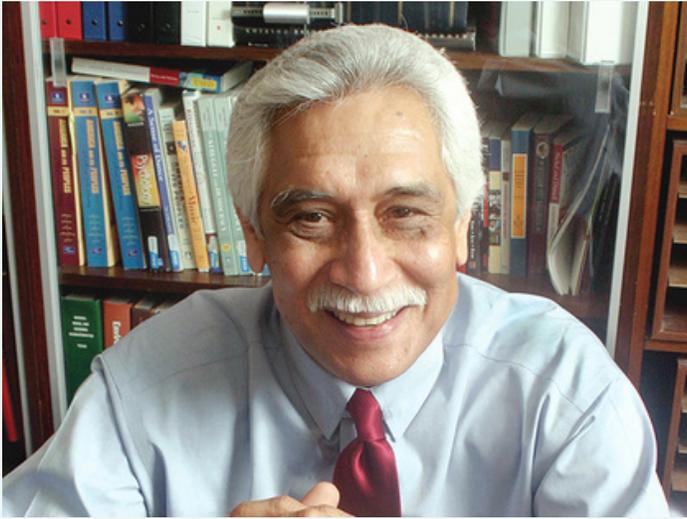
WE ARE NOW  
**@UHCMALS**

Across all social media channels.



# REMEMBERING

## DR. TATCHO MINDIOLA



DR. TATCHO MINDIOLA, JR.

1939-2024



This year, we reflect on the passing of Dr. Tatcho Mindiola Jr., a distinguished leader whose vision, dedication, and commitment profoundly shaped the University of Houston and the CMALS community. As the former director of CMALS, Dr. Mindiola's leadership was characterized by his steadfast belief in the power of unity, purpose, and perseverance. He inspired all who worked with him to strive for excellence and to embody the values of integrity and service.

Dr. Mindiola's legacy extends beyond his professional achievements—his influence continues to resonate in the lives he touched and the communities he helped build. As we honor his memory, we remain committed to carrying forward the mission he so passionately championed. We are grateful for the lasting impact he made on our community. His remarkable life and leadership will continue to inspire us.

**PIONEER OF THE  
CENTER FOR MEXICAN  
AMERICAN AND  
LATINO STUDIES AT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF  
HOUSTON**





Center for Mexican  
American and Latino/a Studies

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and Social Sciences**

**University of Houston**

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**Houston, TX 77204-3001**

**(713)-743-3136**

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