

Bracero Oral History Project: Legacy of a Community

ABOUT THE BRACERO PROJECT

California State University Channel Islands has partnered with the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History in an effort to collect oral histories from those who participated in the bracero program, a guest worker program administered by the United States government from 1942 to 1964. The Bracero History Project is a coordinated effort to collect, document, exhibit, and share the history of the Bracero program.

The goal is to bring awareness to this critical piece of history; shedding insight on the social and cultural aspects, how it affected the families, the towns in Mexico, their children, and their communities.

California State University Channel Islands' faculty and students, along with the Smithsonian National Museum of American History, are collecting local stories from former braceros, their wives, children and others who had interactions with the Bracero Program. We are also interested in objects, including hand tools used during that time, clothing, photographs and documents, such as contracts, identification cards and letters.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

This community project aims to capture the history and stories of the Bracero program in order to recognize and educate our students and the community about this important chapter in United States history. In doing so we hope to give voice to this time period and preserve the legacy of these hardworking individuals who gave so much, and continue to do so, in helping grow and shape the identity of the United States.

These stories will become part of a national website exhibit (www.braceroarchive.org) and local exhibit, to be debuted in the near future. To date over 500 Bracero oral histories have been collected nationally; locally CSUCI students have collected 32 oral histories. Families who share their stories will receive a DVD copy.

WHAT CSUCI IS ASKING

We are asking for former Braceros, their wives or children who are interested in participating in this project to contact Dr. Jose Alamillo at 437.2685 or Pilar Pacheco at 437.8851.