Guide to the Juana Beatriz Gutiérrez Mothers of East Los Angeles (MELA) Collection

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Language of Material: Multiple languages
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Title: Juana Beatriz Gutiérrez Mothers of East Los Angeles (MELA) Collection
Creator: Gutiérrez, Juana Beatriz
Identifier/Call Number: URB.MELA
Extent: 6.92 linear feet
Date (inclusive): 1978-2004

Abstract: Juana Beatriz Gutiérrez co-founded the Mothers of East Los Angeles (MELA) with several other women and a priest, Monsignor John Moretta. After co-founding MELA, she formed MELA-SI (Santa Isabel), becoming the president of that organization. Both groups worked to keep their communities and families safe by assisting others, organizing protests, and raising awareness within the community. Gutiérrez had nine children, all of whom assisted with MELA projects. She has received awards for her work within the community and today MELA is a well-known grassroots organization. The records of the Mothers of East Los Angeles consist primarily of correspondence to and from Mothers of East Los Angeles members, as well as newspaper clippings regarding the Mothers during their activities. It also contains flyers, magazine articles and certificates for achievements of MELA.

Language of Material: English, Spanish; Castilian

Biographical Information:
Juana Beatriz Gutiérrez co-founded the Mothers of East Los Angeles (MELA) with several other women and a priest, Monsignor John Moretta, when a proposal regarding a state prison jeopardized her children's safety. She was born and raised in Mexico, and later moved to Texas where she married her husband Ricardo. After her marriage she moved to Boyle Heights, where she began to take active roles in helping the community. After co-founding MELA, she formed MELA-SI (Santa Isabel), becoming the president of that organization. Both groups worked to keep their community and families safe, by helping others, protesting against projects, and raising awareness on problems in the community. Gutiérrez had nine children all of whom helped with the projects. She has received awards for her projects in the community, and today MELA is a well known grassroots organization.

Scope and Contents
The Juana Beatriz Gutiérrez Mothers of East Los Angeles (MELA) Collection consists primarily of correspondence to and from Mothers of East Los Angeles members, as well as newspaper clippings regarding the Mothers during their activities. It also contains flyers, magazine articles and certificates for achievements of MELA. The collection is arranged in four series:


Series I, Administrative Records, contains administrative information about MELA, consisting of flyers, summaries, statements, as well as calendars and newsletters distributed by MELA. The series is arranged chronologically.


Series III, General Correspondence and Enclosures, contains correspondence to and from MELA and/ or Juana Gutiérrez. This series also contains newspaper clippings and other enclosures about MELA and their achievements. The series is arranged chronologically.

Series IV, Exhibition Materials, includes items from previous gallery exhibits which highlight the history and accomplishments of MELA.

Arrangement of Materials:
Series I: Administrative Records, 1984-2002
Series II: Community Activism, 1978-2004
Subseries A: Education - Scholarships, 1994-2002
Subseries B: Education - General, 1987-2002
Subseries D: Environmental Earth Fairs and Community Clean Up Programs, 1993-2003
Subseries E: Environmental - Incinerators and Toxics, 1988-2000
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Subseries N: Labor, 1990-2002
Subseries O: General Projects, 1987-2003

Series III: General Correspondence and Enclosures, 1985-2004

Electronic Format:
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General

Other Information:
This collection was processed under a U.S. Department of Education Title V Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) Grant.

Conditions Governing Access:
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Immediate Source of Acquisition

Preferred Citation:
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Processing Information:
Robert G. Marshall, Yolanda Alaniz, Joan Van Sickle, Maria Bonilla

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Documents
Photographs

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