



UC MEXUS

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA CONSORTIUM ON MEXICO & THE UNITED STATES

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*By*

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## UC MEXUS

**[SLIDE: Butterflies]**

I am very excited to be here today and to have the opportunity to talk to you about UC MEXUS. I understand that I have only seven minutes, so I want to put the spotlight for these few moments on an assortment of interesting and particularly successful projects. **[SLIDE: Newsletters]** They will illustrate for you, I hope, the incredibly diverse array of subjects and, particularly, the significant questions addressed by the UC MEXUS programs.

**[SLIDE: Mixtec girls]**

First, how can two countries work together to protect the rights of trans-national populations? This question formed the basis of the project of Carol Nagengast of UC Santa Cruz, Michael Kearney of Riverside, and Rodolfo Stavenhagen of The College of Mexico, sponsored by the UC MEXUS Critical Issues Program. **[SLIDE: Mixtec women]** The Mixtec, an indigenous Mexican people who farm on both sides of the border, were taken as a case study by the research team. Note in this image the beautiful colors and embroidery of the women's veils and masks, worn as an ineffective protection from the pesticides used in agricultural fields.

**[SLIDE: Mural being painted in studio]**

Next, what would the uniquely Mexican/Chicano mural art form mean in Gorky Park? UC Irvine's Judith Baca developed the concept of "World Wall: A Vision of the Future Without Fear." The semi-circular, multiple-paneled mural traveled the world, increased at each stop by the contribution of local artists.

**[SLIDE: Baca planning mural with students].** A UC MEXUS Creative Activities grant supported the creation of the initial panel, "Triumph of the Hands," by Baca and her students.

**[SLIDE: Close-up of segment of mural]** The exhibition's tour included Joensuu, Finland, the Smithsonian Institution, and, of course, Moscow, where it was viewed by an audience of more than 100,000.

**[SLIDE: woman in labor in hut]**

Another question: How can California's health professionals provide effective care to new residents with very different cultural and medical traditions? In answer, UC San Francisco's Paula Braveman worked with Dr. Fernando Mora, Coordinator of Medicine at the Autonomous University of Mexico in Xochimilco. They directed a faculty exchange program in primary health care training and research that involved more than two dozen faculty members from two UC and two Mexican campuses. **[SLIDE: woman in labor in hospital]** The program generated nearly one million dollars in extramural funds from the initial \$7,000 UC MEXUS "seed" grant.

**[SLIDE: earthquake damage]**

Next, why do some old buildings remain standing while new buildings collapse in an earthquake? Following the devastation of the 1985 Mexico City Quake, Berkeley's Randolph Langenbach began a major study in collaboration with Mexican architects.

**[SLIDE: cathedral]** Investigating centuries-old structures which survived the quake, the team searched for improved techniques for building preservation and conservation. Four years later, Langenbach applied knowledge gained in Mexico City to preservation of some of Oakland's quake-damaged historic buildings.

**[SLIDE: Durango desert scene]**

Moving to the desert, is it possible to protect an environment that is also needed by local people to sustain their livelihoods? This question is addressed by the research of UC Riverside Ph.D. Candidate Andrea Kaus in collaboration with researchers at the Institute of Ecology. **[SLIDE: Cattle drive]** Her field work, supported by a UC MEXUS Dissertation Grant, concentrates on the ranchers who live in the Mapimí Biosphere Reserve, an arid region of Durango that is home to endangered species of tortoise. Ms. Kaus recently co-authored a major article in *Bioscience* concerning historical human interactions in and with so-called natural areas.

**[SLIDE: aerial of farm]**

Next, what are the economic and social relationships between Californian and Mexican agriculture? UC MEXUS has supported many projects in this area: their topics range from biological and chemical control of agricultural pests and diseases **[SLIDE: grapes with hands]** to examination of political, economic and technological forces which affect labor needs in both countries. **[SLIDE: man with UC cap in field]** Here, UC MEXUS supported a meeting coordinated by UC Davis Professor of Plant Pathology Joseph Ogawa. U.S. and Mexican growers, packers, and scientists convened in Sinaloa, combining resources to combat diseases which damage vegetable crops.

**[SLIDE: boys with sombreros]**

In 1987, Senate Concurrent Resolution 43 asked the University to thoroughly examine the challenges presented by the changing demographics of California, with particular emphasis on the growing Hispanic population. **[SLIDE: UCR Chicana student]** UC MEXUS coordinated the SCR 43 Task Force which generated two major reports, one of which has been used as a text in several California universities. While the reports are concerned with a broad range of issues, including health, criminal justice, economic opportunity, and immigration, education is a central theme. **[SLIDE: girl with painted face]** This little girl is a student at Mission Bell Elementary School in Riverside. To me, she is a poignant reminder of both the relationships between Mexico and the United States and the pressing need to dedicate

our efforts toward a brighter future for the children of both countries.

**[SLIDE: smoldering forest]**

But how can we protect the environment and manage the natural resources that will sustain that future? These are critical, global problems that cannot be resolved by any country alone. **[SLIDE: Baja Sea]** Still, the United States and Mexico contain within their borders both tropical and arid regions, urban and rural settings, fresh and sea waters—and examples of virtually every environmental challenge facing the world today, including pollution, species extinction, and resource exploitation. **[SLIDE: Polluting Factory]** We are neighbors forever, and together the United States and Mexico can lead the world in meeting these challenges. Teaching our own students about the environmental blessings and mistakes of the two countries is an essential beginning. **[SLIDE: Aerial of Tropical Forest]** And so this year we are concentrating on development of the UC MEXUS Natural Resources and Environment Program, which will enable graduate student training and foster binational research program development in Mexican institutions and in the University of California.

**[SLIDE: Binational Science Foundation]**

A serious impediment to binational collaboration, however, is lack of U.S. and Mexican fund sources to support joint science programs. Last year, at the request of Congressman George

Brown, and with support from the MacArthur Foundation, UC MEXUS convened the leaders of the U.S. and Mexican scientific communities at the Smithsonian Institution. There the non-governmental, bi-national United States-Mexico Foundation for Science was created to support collaborative science, and both governments have since committed funds to its initial endowment.

**[SLIDE: Journal of Mexican Studies]**

In closing, I thank you for your attention to this presentation of a very small number of UC MEXUS programs. I would like to go on about publications, conferences, special collections, exchanges, and other research programs. Seven minutes just doesn't do justice to the fine work that UC faculty and students from every campus and every discipline are undertaking with UC MEXUS support.

**[SLIDE: UC MEXUS Logo]**

With UC MEXUS, the University extends its research, instruction, and public service programs to Mexico and receives much in return, enriching itself, its scholarship, its students, and the future of the state it serves. I am very proud to direct this program, and I hope that you are proud that it belongs to the University of California.