

LATINO LIFE

New project commemorates Latino legacy in San Diego County



Maria Velasquez and Maria Nieto Senior on Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2021 in San Diego, CA.

(Jarrod Valliere / The San Diego Union-Tribune)

Project thought to be the first comprehensive, multimedia presentation of Latino history in the region

BY LYNDSAY WINKLEY

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In the 1950s, *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka* toppled racial segregation in schools after a group of Black families whose children were barred from their local public school decided to push back.

But twenty years before that, in San Diego County, another group of families was fighting racism in the classroom.

In 1931, a group of families, many who had immigrated from Baja California, filed their own court case after school officials refused to allow Mexican students into the Lemon Grove Grammar School. Instead, the children were sent to an old, two-room building that was often referred to as ‘La Caballeriza’ or ‘the barnyard,’ the San Diego History Center website says.

According to David Villarino Gonzalez, the CEO of Farmworkers Institute of Education & Leadership Development, his grandfather, Juan Gonzalez Escobeda, helped persuade local

families to join in a lawsuit against the Lemon Grove School District — a case they ultimately won.

This story and others were compiled by the Latino Legacy Foundation for a project called San Diego Latino Legacy: Timeline-Milestones-Stories, a multimedia presentation of Latino History in San Diego County. The project, which the Union-Tribune sponsors, was unveiled during a press conference Thursday at San Diego High School.

The online book will chronicle San Diego's Latino experience, from the end of the Mexican-American War to the present.

Maria Velasquez, president of the Latino Legacy Foundation, said that too often Latino history is forgotten or ignored. She hopes the project will not only commemorate those stories, but will help “foster understanding and to bring (the community) together.”

The project will be released in three parts. The first, available now, begins with Latino life in the 19th century through World War II. The second installment, expected in March, will delve in the Chicano civil rights movement and the many community groups that worked to create better lives for themselves and their families. Next fall, the project will conclude with a third section that discusses Latino social and political influence and a look toward the future.

Part one can be viewed at:



[A multimedia project by the Latino Legacy Foundation](#)