

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LOS ANGELES  
SCHOOL OF LAW

CHICANX-LATINX  
LAW REVIEW



VOL. 41 • 2025

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Chicanx-Latinx Law Review  
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385 Charles E Young Drive East  
Los Angeles, California, 90095-1476

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Cover design by William Morosi

e-ISSN: 2169-7736  
ISSN: 1061-8899  
ISBN: 978-1-946696-42-7

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Funding provided by the UCLA Graduate Students Association

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## FOREWORD

Editor-in-Chief, Jennifer Báez

Volume 41 is published at a moment of heightened legal and institutional scrutiny. Across the United States and beyond, rapid shifts in law and policy continue to shape the lives of Latinx and immigrant communities in profound ways. Courts, legislatures, and administrative agencies increasingly serve as the sites where fundamental questions of belonging, participation, and protection are contested. In this environment, legal scholarship bears a particular responsibility: to illuminate how law operates in practice, whose interests it serves, and whose experiences remain marginalized.

The articles in this volume respond to that responsibility. As readers engage with these pieces, we invite them to consider their perspective in today's world. Santa-Ramirez's personal narrative for instance, offers insight into the realities undocumented students continue to face. Each contribution addresses issues that are not only timely but enduring in their significance.

Luis Avila's *The Latino Electorate* addresses the structural conditions that influence political participation among Latino communities in Texas, focusing on voting access, civic engagement, and institutional responsiveness. Avila's analysis draws attention to how legal rules and administrative practices affect participation in democratic processes. His work reinforces the principle that meaningful engagement depends not only on formal rights, but also on access, and inclusion within legal and governmental systems.

Yvette Borja and Jorge E. Cuéllar's "*El Oro No Se Toma, El Agua, Sí*": *Environmental Defense and the Task of Transnational Solidarity Among the Salvadoran Diaspora* examines the use of law as a mechanism of executive overreach in El Salvador. Centering on the prosecution of the Santa Marta Five, the authors show how legal process itself can be used to intimidate community leaders opposing mining. The article highlights the sustained presence of community supporters and the growing dissent within segments of the U.S.-based Salvadoran diaspora.

In *Latinx Heritage Preservation: Challenges, Successes, and Solutions*, Alán Díaz-Santana examines the preservation of Texas Latinx

history through legal and policy barriers. By analyzing federal and state preservation frameworks that prioritize Spanish colonial narratives while marginalizing broader Latinx histories and evaluates initiatives such as the National Park Service’s Latino Heritage Theme Study and Texas Historical Commission programs. Díaz-Santana concludes by proposing solutions and reforms that can better preserve Latinx heritage.

Stephen Santa-Ramirez’s personal narrative, “*No, I Can’t Leave Political Conversations at the Door*”: *From a Mixed-Status Household to Undocumented College Student Advocacy*, situates immigration and human rights within the everyday realities of undocumented and mixed-status families. This contribution underscores how frameworks governing immigration and higher education extend beyond the legal realm, shaping identity, access, and opportunity. At a time when institutions of higher education face increasing scrutiny over whom they serve and how they do so, Santa-Ramirez’s work calls for those in higher education to educate themselves to best support undocumented scholars.

*Volume 41* concludes with *It’s Not Us, It’s Them: Advancing Your Career Despite Decision-Makers’ Struggle to Recognize Latina Potential* by Nubia Willman. In this piece, Willman examines the persistent gap between Latina talent and institutional advancement drawing from both personal experience and structural analysis. Willman offers a practical framework for navigating and overcoming professional stagnation by posing critical questions and providing guidance for career advancement despite systemic barriers.

Collectively, these contributions examine various legal, policy and institutional mechanisms affecting Latinx Communities. With that, UCLA School of Law’s *Chicanx-Latinx Law Review (CLLR)* proudly presents *Volume 41*.

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