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# Conceptualizing Latina/o philanthropy in higher education: A study of Latina/o undergraduate alumni from a predominantly white Jesuit institution

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**Conceptualizing Latina/o philanthropy in higher education: A study of Latina/o  
undergraduate alumni from a predominantly white Jesuit institution**

by

**José Angel Cabrales**

A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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Program of Study Committee:

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Kevin Saunders

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2011

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DEDICATION

Para mi papá y mamá

José Angel y Amalia Cabrales

y mis abuelas/os

María Macaria y Roberto Rivas

María de la Paz y Juan Cabrales

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## ABSTRACT

There has been a growing body of research on Latina/o undergraduate students, primarily in the areas of access and retention, yet there is limited research on Latina/o baccalaureate alumni and their post-graduation institutional engagement. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore and understand how Latina/o alumni define their roles as alumni, interact with their alma mater, and give to the institution. Using Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth model as a guiding framework for this study, four themes emerged which highlights the different ways Latina/o alumni approach giving: Latina/o alumni as university ambassadors; careers, community, and giving; Latina/o alumni as targeted givers; and competence, conscience, and compassion: the importance of the university's vision and mission. Implications for alumni associations, development, public relations, and student affairs and recommendations for future research are discussed.

## DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

This section provides definitions of key terms that will be used throughout the dissertation.

1. **Alumni:** In this study, the term “alumni” refers to persons who have completed undergraduate degrees.
2. **Alumni Association:** An association representing an individual college or university with the charge of engaging alumni with the university following graduation. Common opportunities for alumni engagement include reunions, homecomings, student recruitment events, and in some cases, fundraising.
3. **Alumni participation:** In the context of this study, alumni participation refers to the multiple forms of engagement such as, but not limited to, service (i.e., volunteerism, political advocacy) or monetary donations within (e.g., Rakestraw, 1985; Weerts, Cabrera, & Sanford, 2010; Wilkins & Emanuel-Wallace, 1990) or outside (e.g., Cortés, 1991, 1995; Diaz, Jalandoni, Hammill, & Koob, 2001; Gallegos & O'Neill, 1991) of the construct of the university.
4. **Development:** Refers to the total program of institutional fundraising (Tromble, 1998b).
5. **Latina/o:** The term Latina/o (Latina/Latino) refers to men and women who reside in the United States who have ancestry from Latin American countries (i.e., México, Nicaragua, Chile, Cuba, etc.) (Castellanos & Jones, 2003). Other terms such as *Hispanic* or *Chicana/o* may be used interchangeably in cited literature sources.

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Colleges and universities across the nation depend on their alumni to assist with admissions, serve as mentors, and donate financially to the institution (S. A. Gonzalez, 2003; Mulugetta, Nash, & Murphy, 1999). Although giving to colleges and universities can take many forms, monetary donations are typically synonymous with “giving.” While it may be appreciated, other forms of giving, such as volunteering, can be minimized, overlooked or ignored. Alumni of color, particularly Latina/o alumni, are oftentimes disregarded because of the assumption that they do not give (i.e., monetary contributions) (Rivas-Vásquez, 1999). This study will address how Latina/o alumni enact giving at one predominantly white Jesuit postsecondary institution in ways that can support and enhance overall institutional advancement efforts.

In order to gain a better understanding of Latina/o alumni, it is important to first understand Latinas/os in terms of population and educational attainment in the United States. Latinas/os now account for 16.3% of the United States population and comprise its largest minority group (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011; U.S. Census, 2008). From 1990 to 2000, the Latina/o population grew from 22.4 million to 35.3 million, respectively, for a growth rate of 58% (Saenz, 2004). Latinas/os also represent a number of ethnicities (i.e., Puerto Rican, Mexican, Cuban, etc.), permitting a more nuanced analysis. People of Mexican descent – Chicana/os – comprise an estimated 66% of the total U.S. Latina/o population. Other Latina/os include Central or South Americans (14%), Puerto Ricans (11%), Cubans (5%), and Other Latinas/os (7%) (Yosso, 2006). With the rapid increase in Latina/o population, the educational participation of Latina/o students has also steadily increased across the United States. However, there appears to be a decline in rates of college graduation among

Latinas/os, since college graduation rates have not kept pace with population increases (R. V. Padilla, 2007).

### Problem

There has been a growing body of research on Latina/o undergraduate students, primarily in the areas of access and retention (e.g., Contreras, 2005; K. P. Gonzalez, Stoner, & Jovel, 2003; Nora & Cabrera, 1996) but there is limited research on Latina/o baccalaureate alumni and their post-graduation institutional engagement (e.g., S. A. Gonzalez, 2003). Many studies have explored issues pertaining to alumni giving behaviors (e.g., Frumkin, 2006; Mesch, Rooney, Steinberg, & Denton, 2006; Volkwein & Parmley, 1999). These studies focus narrowly on monetary giving patterns.

Other studies on Latina/o philanthropy focus on giving that occurs through informal settings such as support for extended families; involvement in religious organizations, like the Catholic church; and support of *mutualistas*, which are typically community organizations that provide basic social services and facilitate social justice activities (e.g., Carson, 1999; Ramos, 1999). Although these studies do not focus specifically on giving in the context of higher education, it leads to questions about potential misalignments between higher education's giving and the philanthropic behaviors of Latinas/os.

Only a handful of studies (e.g., S. A. Gonzalez, 2003; L. J. Smith, 1998) have examined race and giving in a higher education context. Consequently, there is limited research on Latinas/os and their post-baccalaureate institutional engagements. This study will explore how Latina/o graduates interact with the university and define their roles as alumni and as “donors.”



### Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore and understand how Latina/o alumni define their roles as alumni, interact with their alma mater, and give to the institution.

### Research Questions

1. What are Latina/o graduates' perceptions of how their alma mater frames alumni giving?
2. How do Latina/o alumni enact giving as alumni?
3. How does the alma mater benefit from Latina/o alumni contributions?

### Rationale

My point of entry to this study comes through my involvement with the Santa Clara University (SCU) alumni association for 10 years as an alumnus. In my opinion, the institution may be underestimating the direct and indirect contributions of its Latina/o alumni and the institutional benefits that accrue from these contributions. In other words, institutions like SCU may value financial giving over other types of giving such as mentoring (Segura-Herrera, 2006) and active involvement (Gregory, Steinbring, & Sousa, 2003) with undergraduates and the surrounding community. My goals for conducting this research are:

1. To identify, understand, and validate the various forms of giving by Latina/o alumni as well as their rationales for giving.
2. To explore relationships between participants' giving and their student experiences while enrolled at the university.

3. To advance the body of knowledge pertaining to the giving practices of Latina/o alumni and Latina/o alumni participation in institutional advancement.
4. To recommend strategies for institutional valuing and incorporation of forms of giving other than monetary.

### Significance of the Study

This study is significant for multiple reasons, four of which are discussed in this section. First, although proportions may be slowly increasing, more Latinas/os are graduating from four-year colleges and universities each year. Between 1996 and 2006, the number of Latinas/os earning bachelor's degrees from U.S. institutions rose 84% while the proportionate increase of Whites (19%), African-Americans (56%), and Asians (59%) rose at lower rates (Excelencia in Education, 2008). Consequently, it would be a tremendous oversight for institutions to overlook, misunderstand, or underestimate this particular demographic when designing for alumni giving initiatives. For example, Latina/o alumni who serve as volunteers and ambassadors to the university can be assets in recruiting prospective Latina/o students. In addition, Latinas/os are becoming wealthier and can leverage greater monetary donations to university programs (Anft, 2002).

Second, there is a growing body of research pertaining to the recruitment and retention of Latina/o undergraduate students, but there is limited research on Latinas/os and institutional engagement once they earn baccalaureate degrees. Hence, the findings will help understand how graduates interact with the institution and define and enact their roles as alumni and as institutional supporters.

Third, the findings from this study may counter some of the extant assumptions about alumni of color regarding low rates of giving, alumni participation, and philanthropic initiatives (Cortés, 2002; Diaz, 1999; Gallegos & O'Neill, 1991; Hay, 1990; Rivas-Vásquez, 1999). The findings and implications from this study may inform the ways U.S. institutions of higher education approach their work with Latina/o alumni. Latina/o alumni bring rich cultural wealth that can complement and enhance financial wealth, which is frequently what alumni and development offices are tasked to seek. Therefore, it is critical to understand and highlight the culturally relevant giving practices of Latina/o alumni so that institutions can structure fruitful engagement opportunities with their Latina/o alumni and other underrepresented alumni groups.

Fourth, due to the limited research on Latina/o alumni, the findings from this study may be a resource to the institutional advancement division and the Office of the President. These two particular audiences are integral because they take principal responsibility for the engagement of students post-graduation, which can include but is not limited to fundraising and alumni participation. My study will help institutional administrators understand the importance of Latina/o alumni giving. Second, this study may also be a resource to governing bodies such as the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (McGuire & Casey) and other philanthropic bodies.

### Conceptual Framework

Tara Yosso (2005) developed the Community Cultural Wealth model which is “an array of knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed by communities of color to survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression” (p. 77). Yosso (2006) contextualized her model through counterstories, which is a data representation form that

“aims to cast doubt on the validity and accepted premises or myths, especially ones held by the majority” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 144). In addition, she applied the community cultural wealth model to provide a broader understanding of Chicana/o educational pathways; challenging Bourdieu’s traditional assertion of social capital, which considers the knowledges of the upper and middle classes as valuable capital (Yosso, 2006). Yosso (2005) concluded that communities of color nurture six different forms of capital:

1. *Aspirational capital* refers to the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers.
2. *Linguistic capital* includes the intellectual and social skills attained through communication, experiences and more than one language and/or style.
3. *Familial capital* refers to the cultural knowledges nurtured among *familia* (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory, and cultural intuition.
4. *Social capital* can be understood as networks of people and community resources.
5. *Navigational capital* refers to skills maneuvering through social institutions.
6. *Resistant capital* refers to knowledge and skills fostered through oppositional behaviors that challenge inequality. (pp. 77-80)

Working together, these forms of capital constitute community cultural wealth that benefits community members, such as students in K-12 settings (Yosso, 2005). In this study, I employ the community cultural wealth model to conceptualize Latina/o alumni giving. Details of this framework and its relevance to Latina/o alumni demographics and alumni engagement will be discussed in Chapter 2.

## Summary

This goal of this study is to explore how Latina/o alumni at one private predominantly White institution (PWI) define and enact giving to their undergraduate institution to gain a deeper understanding of the different ways Latinas/os interact with their alma mater and define their roles as alumni and donors. Little research exists on Latina/o alumni and institutional advancement, and this study will investigate how Latinas/os enact giving and how they perceive the institution defines giving. In Chapter 2, I will analyze literature and identify conceptual categories that relate to culturally relevant philanthropy and higher education philanthropy. The literature review provides a brief historical backdrop for institutional advancement and highlights gaps in the research literature regarding culturally relevant giving as it pertains to Latinas/os.

## CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Introduction

This chapter will examine relevant literature and research findings related to institutional advancement and Latina/o involvement in philanthropic activities. In the context of this study, “institutional advancement” refers to activities related to development and alumni affairs. “Latina/o alumni” are defined as Latino male and female graduates who have received undergraduate degrees. The literature reviewed in this chapter has been delimited to Latina/o involvement in institutional advancement activities such as alumni associations, monetary giving, and volunteer work. However, since there is limited research literature on Latinas/os and institutional advancement, I have extended the literature to include philanthropy more generally. This chapter is organized by first setting the institutional context of development and alumni associations followed by details on how Latina/o communities and other communities of color have been involved with giving activities, whether through time, talent, or treasure.

### Organization of Chapter

This chapter is divided into four different sections. The first section provides an overview of alumni associations and the development of minority alumni associations. Over recent years many minority alumni associations have formed and been successful; however, many institutions have challenged the existence and development of minority alumni associations because some institutions feel that it is a way of self-segregation from the greater institution. The second section will provide an overview of development, which is considered the “fundraising” arm of advancement that overlaps significantly with alumni

associations and individual alumni as primary constituent groups. This section provides an overview of fundraising and will describe how Latinas/os participate in the fundraising process. The third section introduces Latina/o philanthropy and provides an overview of how giving is enacted by Latinas/os. This section highlights research literature on the culturally relevant practices of Latina/o giving. Lastly, I will end the chapter with a discussion on community cultural wealth as an appropriate conceptual and analytical framework for my study.

### Alumni Associations

Alumni Associations have been a critical part of U.S. colleges and universities for over 200 years. Often known as organizations charged with friend-raising rather than fundraising, alumni associations have a history of assisting the university with different operations such as: new student recruitment (Council for Advancement and Support for Education, 1983; Stuart, 2009), career advising or job-shadowing for currently enrolled students (Cabrales, 2008; Mulugetta, et al., 1999), volunteer service to the institution (Gill, 1998; Scully, 2008; Weerts, et al., 2010; Weerts & Ronca, 2007), and development (Loyola Marymount University, 2010; McE. Buchanan, 2000; Nicklin, 1997). Alumni associations commonly serve as brokers of opportunities for alumni to participate in these and other avenues to support the college or university.

Descriptively, many of the larger alumni associations are self-funded and dues driven, while others are dependent upon their institutions' budget to survive (Gill, 1998). Although there is a paucity of published research regarding alumni associations, a number of sources describe their functions relative to serving the mission of their respective institutions.

The first recorded alumni association stemmed from Yale University in 1792 (Forman, 1989b). In its early years, the “Yale Alumni” assigned class secretaries to gather information from graduating class members; this information would be published in a series of newsletters to alumni. As years passed, other private institutions did the same and “class activities quickly led to two outgrowths: (1) the solicitation of alumni for donations and gifts, and (2) the creation of local clubs and chapters in principal cities around the country” (Forman, 1989a, p. 7). After Yale, many other alumni associations were founded such as The University of Virginia (1838), Amherst College (1842), Santa Clara University (1881) and The University of Michigan (1897).

In 1913, the mutual experiences and shared concerns of 23 alumni secretaries throughout the country led to the formation of the Association of Alumni Secretaries. This Association became the American Alumni Council in 1927, which is one of the predecessors of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (McGuire & Casey) (Quehl, 1989). These meetings increased the visibility and enhanced the knowledge of best practices in alumni administration. Quehl (1989) wrote, “Strengthening alumni administration is critical because, today more than ever, we need our alumni and their support – and not just their financial support” (p. ix).

In addition to their involvement with institutional fundraising and fostering the creation of local clubs, alumni were often sought by university officials to serve on their governing bodies. This practice of appointing generous alumni to governing boards can be attributed to the university’s willingness to share governing power with those who have given substantial donations or gifts (Barrett, 1989; Forman, 1989a). Forman (1989a) suggested that, “institutions whose financial viability is predicated on substantial alumni



giving have always acknowledged the role of alumni in providing advice, counsel, and direction in the establishment of the policies governing the institution” (p. 8). In addition, alumni represent a strong cornerstone of commitment to a college/university’s progress. “They have a lifelong commitment to their alma mater, although possibly a self-serving one in that the value of their degrees depends on the current assessment of the institution’s quality” (Forman, 1989a, p. 7). Nearly every institution of higher education in the United States has established an alumni association that encourages alumni to take opportunities to display their lifelong commitment to their alma mater.

#### Alumni Programs

Today, alumni associations are responsible for numerous programs that engage their alumni constituents. Among these programs are reunions and homecoming. “Class reunions date back to the 1700s, and homecoming activities were initiated in the late 1800s in conjunction with inter-collegiate athletic contests” (Gill, 1998, p. 247). Reunions and homecoming events were regarded as important occasions because they allowed alumni to reinvigorate old friendships and relive special moments in their lives (Funderburk, 1989; Gill, 1998). Today, reunions and homecoming continue to take place across U.S. institutions. However, other types of small-scale programs that emulate reunions and homecoming also exist to engage alumni at regional levels. Such programs include, but are not limited to, post-work networking socials, service projects, and family friendly events. These types of programs are beneficial to the institution because the events renew alumni interest in the institution, which can prompt greater financial return for the university in terms of alumni gifts.

### Alumni Chapters/Clubs

Alumni chapters benefit the larger alumni associations by promoting the institution across the nation and the world. Ways that alumni chapters promote institutions are through recruiting students, initiating publicity for the institution, engaging in community service, and sometimes promoting the institution's legislative agenda (Gill, 1998). Alumni chapters and clubs extend beyond the boundaries of the university's physical location. Simply put, while reunions and homecoming events bring alumni to campus – alumni chapters and clubs bring the campus to alumni (Williams, 1989). Regional alumni chapters and clubs provide alumni with an outlet to reunite through providing programs, such as community service and socials, where alumni can reminisce about their times at their alma mater. In addition, many chapters and clubs utilize this time to offer support in the student recruitment process, raise money for local scholarships, provide a forum for institutional speakers, and disseminate institutional materials (Gill, 1998).

Although the majority of chapters and clubs are based on geographic location, others may be based on a particular affinity or social identity such as one's gender, one's affiliation with a particular campus organization, or one's race/ethnicity, such as University of Nebraska's Mexican American Student Association (MASA) Alumni Association (University of Nebraska, 2010) or Loyola Marymount University's Mexican American Alumni Association (Loyola Marymount University, 2010). "Many alumni identify strongly with specific aspects of their educational experience and seek relationships with other alumni who shared these same experiences" (Gill, 1998, p. 255). Colleges and universities across the nation are steadily beginning to create a space for ethnicity-based clubs and chapters (e.g., Latina/o alumni chapter, African-American alumni chapter, etc.) to be more inclusive of this

alumni demographic. Many of the early ethnicity-based clubs and chapters began in the late 70s, such as the University of Southern California Mexican American Alumni Association (1973) and the University of Georgia Black Alumni Association (1978). Other smaller and private institutions established ethnicity-based clubs and chapters around the same timeframe, like Loyola Marymount University's Mexican American Alumni Association (1981). For many Latina/o alumni, involvement with an ethnicity-based alumni chapter or club is their entry point to engaging with the university (Rakestraw, 1985).

#### Ethnicity-based Chapters/Groups and Alumni Associations

As students of color, particularly Latinas/os, continue to increase their graduation rates from colleges and universities across the nation (Excelencia in Education, 2008), alumni associations are slowly exploring ways to engage alumni of color (Stuart, 2009). Although alumni associations have the charge of engaging all of the institution's alumni, alumni associations have come to expect that alumni of color will not participate in alumni programs because of their negative undergraduate experiences. As one example, Hay (1990) stated, "If minority alumni don't have fond feelings about their student days, they might be decidedly unenthusiastic about participating in programs after graduation" (p. 31). Consequently, institutions may not be proactive in efforts to engage alumni of color with the university. On the other hand, some alumni directors argue that alumni associations have the responsibility to address these experiences and work with alumni to make current undergraduate students' experience a better one (Hay, 1990).

For example, in 1953 Louisiana State University (LSU) enrolled Alexander Tureaud, Jr., by court order, as the university's first Black undergraduate. However, within weeks, LSU successfully appealed the case with the courts and asked him to leave the university.

Thirty-five years later Tureaud returned to the university as an honored guest at its first ever Black alumni reunion, which honored the first students to receive degrees from LSU as well as those who had sued LSU to open its undergraduate and graduate schools to Blacks (Wilkins & Emanuel-Wallace, 1990). “The reunion gave Black alumni the opportunity to put their feelings in perspective and realize that their struggle made way for the many changes at LSU today” (Wilkins & Emanuel-Wallace, 1990, p. 38). Soon after, many reunion participants approached the LSU Alumni Association about organizing a Black alumni chapter, which flourished and became the A.P. Tureaud, Sr. Chapter – named after Alexander Tureaud Jr.’s father, a Louisiana civil rights lawyer.

After a group of alumni organized the Tureaud chapter, the organizers of the chapter had a candid discussion with the alumni association centered around the needs of the chapter and made the alumni staff realize that they needed to change their thinking and find ways to help former students renew their ties with the university (Wilkins & Emanuel-Wallace, 1990). This chapter and other culture-based alumni groups have been progressively gaining momentum since the mid-1970’s (Hay, 1990; Rakestraw, 1985). Carter (1989) argued the following:

In ever-increasing numbers, institutions of higher education are showing an interest in organizing their minority alumni. Although the factors driving this surge are not clear, it may be the alumni themselves who are expressing a desire to get involved, or it may be that the institutions are recognizing that minorities, as an increasingly larger segment of the alumni body, have a role to play in advancing institutional goals. (p. 157)

The example above describes an event that was initiated by Black alumni and took place over 20 years ago. However, many alumni groups such as the University of Southern California Mexican American Alumni Association (1973) and the University of Georgia Black Alumni Association (1978) preceded LSU's Tureaud chapter and have found success in engaging alumni and providing financial support to undergraduates from their respective racial/ethnic demographic (Rakestraw, 1985).

Over the years, ethnicity-based alumni groups have been viewed as positive assets for colleges and universities (Nicklin, 1997; Stuart, 2009). However, critics have also claimed that these groups are divisive in nature and prefer a colorblind approach to alumni engagement, thus condemning rather than endorsing the existence of ethnicity-based alumni groups. The following are examples of the ascribed benefits and concerns of ethnicity-based alumni groups.

#### Benefits of Ethnicity-based Alumni Chapters/Groups

##### **Increased involvement**

Oftentimes alumni of color do not participate in mainstream alumni events, such as homecoming and class reunions, because the events do not meet their needs (Rakestraw, 1985). However, many administrators believe that ethnicity-based alumni chapters/groups increase the participation of alumni of color through preserving culture and promoting scholarships for their respective racial/ethnic demographic (Hay, 1990; Rakestraw, 1985; Stuart, 2009). For example, *Los Diablos* (The [Sun] Devils), the Arizona State University's Latina/o alumni association, provided members the opportunity to become more involved by raising money for scholarships, recruiting more Hispanic students, and socializing and networking with other Hispanic alumni (Rakestraw, 1985). The majority of ethnicity-based

alumni chapters/groups are self-initiated by alumni of color and often, but not always supported by, the formal alumni associations representing the universities (Carter, 1989; Gill, 1998; Wilkins & Emanuel-Wallace, 1990; Williams, 1989). Supporting ethnicity-based alumni chapters/groups appears to be one primary strategy for alumni associations to engage and increase the participation of their alumni of color.

### **Student recruitment and retention**

Alumni serve as an invaluable resource to universities with respect to student recruitment (Council for Advancement and Support for Education, 1983; Gill, 1998). Alumni often give personal testimonies on how a degree from their alma mater prepared them for successful careers. Similarly, ethnicity-based alumni chapters/groups also adopt student centered issues as a primary project by addressing campus climate, recruitment, and retention (Hay, 1990). For example, the Hispanic Alumni Council at the University of Michigan was founded in 1988 with the goals of recruiting, retaining, and reciprocating. These activities, aligned with these goals, include recruiting Hispanic students, faculty, administrative, and academic support from staff members. In addition, they help develop and administer scholarship programs and activities to support Hispanic students and their programs at the university (University of Michigan, 2008). In summary, ethnicity-based alumni chapters/groups organize around causes about which they care (Stuart, 2009) and advocate the betterment of the campus climate for their future alumni members – in this case – undergraduate students.

### **Communication**

With the progressive changes in communications and social networking technologies, alumni associations are continuously searching for the best way to communicate with their

constituents. More than ten years ago, Stephany and Tuch (1998) asserted that the use of technology allowed institutions to enhance old services as well as provide new ones to its constituents, and the current evidence of these advances are clear. Alumni associations at University of Florida, Santa Clara University, University of Cincinnati, and LaGrange College are utilizing tools like Affinity Circles, a social network provider, to keep alumni connected and to better communicate with its alumni. In addition to connecting with alumni, Affinity Circles provides these association members with career networks, housing and job listings, and opportunities to advertise local events (Affinity Circles, 2009). Another method of communication with alumni is through the social networking website, Facebook. Facebook provides a space where users can create and join groups, such as alumni affinity chapters and student organization groups. “Facebook Groups makes it easier for members of groups to connect, share and even collaborate on a given topic or idea” (Facebook, 2010, para. 5).

In addition, the gradual shift toward technological resources and communication has had a positive effect on budget savings (Stephany & Tuch, 1998). The drawback to the growing use of digital communications technology is that it may not be accessible to all constituents. The ways in which some institutions negotiate this change are through the development of traditional marketing and communication collateral, such as magazines and direct mail (Stephany & Tuch, 1998). Alumni chapters and groups, including those that are ethnicity-based generally receive both electronic and postal mail as types of communication; however, the utilization of the “groups” function offered by electronic social networks like Facebook and Affinity Circles has made it simpler and faster to communicate and engage with each respective alumni demographic.

## Critiques of Ethnicity-based Alumni Chapters/Groups

### Staffing

Like any organizational initiative, resources in the form of staff support can be critical to a program's success. The demands of staff support increase when more ethnicity-based alumni chapters/groups become part of an alumni organization (Hay, 1990). Carter (1989) suggested that institutions who choose sponsorship of minority alumni constituency groups, are best served by a senior alumni officer who is aware and able to absorb the historical legacy of the institution as it pertains to minorities. In other words, the alumni officer should be knowledgeable of how alumni of color have been historically (mis)treated, overlooked, or ignored by the institution. In addition, Carter questioned whether a person of color necessarily should hold this position, but also argued that, “a minority professional will certainly have a better understanding of the problems minorities face and will facilitate the integration of this body of alumni” (Carter, 1989, p. 159). Scully (2008) agreed that a racial/ethnically diverse alumni association staff brings valuable information and can contribute to the organization’s overall success. However, she contended that a lack of diverse advancement officers is often a Catch-22. She stated, “It’s harder to recruit employees of color because they don’t see people like themselves around the office. And even if the organizations manage to draw them, they can feel isolated, which makes retention difficult” (Scully, 2008, para. 10). Ironically, the concerns with the retention of staff of color parallel the findings from retention studies focusing on students of color which states that minority students often experience discrimination and feel isolated at their predominantly white institutions, thus negatively affecting their persistence (Nora & Cabrera, 1996).



## **Separatist**

Critics of ethnicity-based alumni chapters/groups claim that these types of organizations are harmful because they “are divisive and will lead to self-centered subgroups” (Rakestraw, 1985, p. 34). In 1982, a group of Black and Hispanic alumni from Baruch College filed a lawsuit against the university for violating their civil rights (Center for Constitutional Rights, 2010). The alumni filing the suit argued that they wanted an association who would meet their specific needs, such as cultural support and job placement assistance. The vice-president for development of Baruch College, Stephen Wertheimer, offered a colorblind approach to the lawsuit stating that the single alumni association represented all alumni. He noted further: “It’s really sad that blacks want to segregate themselves within a white institution” (Rakestraw, 1985, p. 34). University of Nebraska and Pennsylvania State University alumni association’s executive directors at that time took the same stance – since everyone is the same, the approach toward minority alumni is and should be one of integration (Rakestraw, 1985).

However, alumni of color at Pennsylvania State and University of Nebraska have persisted to develop their own alumni network, with or without sponsorship of the university. Today, Pennsylvania State University actively charters alumni affiliate organizations such as the Latino Alumni Interest Group and the African American Alumni Organization (Stuart, 2009). Although not formally affiliated with the University of Nebraska, the Mexican American Student Association (MASA) Alumni Association along with involved faculty and staff have successfully raised and awarded a total of over \$15,000 in annual scholarships to undergraduate students in recognition for students’ dedication to school and involvement in

their communities (J. Izaguirre, personal communication, March 31, 2010; University of Nebraska, 2010).

Many institutions demonize ethnicity-based alumni groups and chapters because they claim they are divisive in nature. In a longitudinal study of Chicana/o college students from one institution, Villalpando (2003) found that when Chicana/o college students associated with other Chicana/o peer groups, their social conscious values were reinforced, it increased their likelihood in pursuing careers in service of their communities, and were also more inclined to become involved in community service activities after college. Ethnicity-based alumni groups may provide an organized opportunity for Chicana/o and Latina/o alumni to continue service to their community and alma mater whether it is through recruitment, undergraduate-alumni student engagement, or retention.

#### Development

Participation in ethnicity-based organizations can also lead to other types of advancement activities for alumni, such as fundraising for scholarships and other campus initiatives. Although the existence and worth of ethnicity-based alumni associations continues to generate controversy, the demographic composition of students earning postsecondary degrees is changing. Advancement officers point out an increase in the last decade in the numbers of Asians, Blacks, and Hispanics enrolling, graduating, and then giving back to their alma maters (Lomax, 2000, November/December). Additionally, alumni of color, combined command an estimated trillion-dollar buying power for consumer goods (Scully, 2008). Latinas/os alone controlled \$978 billion in spending power in 2009, and that number is expected to reach \$1.3 trillion in 2014 (Humphreys, 2009). With the increase in size and wealth of Hispanic population in the United States, perceptions that this is a

community in need rather than a community that can give must be altered (Nicklin, 1997). However, postsecondary institutions and their alumni and development operations may not be in a good position to tap into this growing market.

Generally, billions of dollars are contributed to postsecondary education annually. According to the Council for Aid to Education (2010), contributions to postsecondary education reached \$27.85 billion in 2009. However, due to the slumping economy, this amount sharply decreased 11.9% from 2008 contributions, which totaled \$31.60 billion (Council for Aid to Education, 2009). Alumni play an integral role in supporting their alma mater across the nation. Approximately \$7.13 billion (25.6%) of the 2009 contributions made to postsecondary education were from alumni (Council for Aid to Education, 2010). Effective fundraising efforts by the institution's development entities foster and maintain these high levels of giving.

Institutional development and, in some cases, alumni associations are charged with fundraising, which is the act of persuading others to make financial contributions to support a cause or an institution (Tromble, 1998a). There is no specific formula that will guarantee increasing contributions to an institution. However, development officials have typically followed a standard principle of fundraising to guide their efforts, which is "IDENTIFY the prospect, CULTIVATE interest, INVOLVE the prospect in affairs of the institution, then ASK for the gift" (Tromble, 1998a, p. 21). This conceptual approach to fundraising seems to be endorsed as the appropriate model for fundraising efforts. Yet, how does this approach work with Latina/o alumni? Rivas Vásquez (1999) argued:

It is too frequently said that 'Hispanics don't give' as a summary dismissal for why many nonprofit organizations in the United States have not been successful as they

would like in raising funds from this increasingly expanding and affluent group.

However, this myth ignores a cultural framework where giving has different meaning and expression than is does in Anglo culture, and belies the fact that few nonprofits have developed effective strategies to reach Latino donors. (pp. 115-116)

It is unclear to what extent fundraisers at postsecondary institutions have looked beyond traditional approaches to reach donors from racial and ethnically diverse backgrounds. Nicklin (1994, February 23) found that, “Fund-raising officials at predominantly white institutions say anecdotal and statistical evidence suggests that minority alumni do not contribute as much or as frequently as do white alumni” (para. 12). However, additional research has revealed more nuanced patterns in giving. For example, researchers have found that Hispanics, like African Americans, tend not to be unrestricted givers (Scully, 2008) and give to causes that are particularly meaningful to them (Frumkin, 2006). A respondent in Scully’s (2008) study stated, “If the college says, ‘We want to double the number of Hispanic graduates in the next decade,’ we’ll support it... We want to see a solutions approach, and for the institution to make a commitment and then be held accountable” (para. 28). Other examples of how Latinas/os have contributed to causes that speak to them in a postsecondary context include raising funds for scholarships and campus initiatives serving the Latina/o community. Many campus cultural centers have partnered with Latina/o alumni associations in order to award scholarships to undergraduate students. At the University of Arizona (U of A), the Chicano/Hispanic Student Affairs (C/HSA) in collaboration with the University of Arizona Hispanic Alumni Association (UAHA) has awarded scholarships to more than 100 local undergraduate students. As a form of recruitment and retention, the scholarship requires students to participate in the C/HSA programs and events. “Throughout their four or more

years at college, students form mentoring relationships through Entre Familia activities, which include meeting targeted alumni, interacting with the Center's designated abuelitos/as (grandfathers or grandmothers) and a faculty fellow, taking leadership classes, and joining a Hispanic graduation convocation to which the entire Tucson community is invited" (Francis & Ousley, 2006, p. 2). In a nine-year period, the UAHA raised \$300,000 through annual black-tie events, though this may be considered a comparatively low amount for an alumni fundraiser. Specifically, the U of A scholarship development director attributes the low contribution amount to a low percentage of Hispanic alumni (4% and approximately 157,000 alumni) and their negative feelings toward the university (Nicklin, 1994, February 23).

Another strategy institutions have found helpful for increasing the percentage of minority donors is diversifying membership of the institution's trustee and alumni association boards (Nicklin, 1994, February 23). Furthermore, the advancement profession is not the most racially or ethnically diverse among professions and increasing the percentage of advancement professionals of color may also increase alumni participation in development initiatives. People of color account for approximately 8% of total membership in the major advancement associations such as, the Association of Fundraising Professionals (Council for Advancement and Support for Education, 2002), the Association of Healthcare Professionals (AHP), the Association of Professional Researchers for Advancement (APRA), and the Council for Advancements and Support for Education (McGuire & Casey) (Council for Advancement and Support for Education, 2002; Wagner & Ryan, 2004). Moreover, Latinas/os represent approximately 3.4% of fundraising professionals across all U.S. postsecondary institutions (Tromble, 1998a). The Council of Foundations has found similar proportions of racial/ethnic minorities who serve on foundation boards or staffs. "A total of

90 percent of foundation governing boards and 84 percent of foundation professional staff consist of white Americans” (Carson, 1999, p. 270). Personal connections are important to Latina/o donors, particularly when deciding to make charitable donations. Latina/o donors are typically more concerned about who is soliciting them (i.e., Latina/o fundraisers) than about some of the other benefits, such as tax incentives, usually touted by development professionals (Rivas-Vásquez, 1999). This is why it is necessary and critical for postsecondary institutions that solicit Latina/o donors to include Latinas/os on their development team.

Traditionally, fundraising in postsecondary education takes different forms, including annual giving, major gifts, capital campaigns, and planned giving - to name a few (McE. Buchanan, 2000; Tromble, 1998b). Annual giving is an organized fund raising effort to obtain gifts (of any amount) for the institution from prospective donors on a yearly basis. Major gifts on the other hand are normally regarded as gifts that exceed \$10,000, which can be contributed over a structured period of time (e.g., 3-5 years). Major gifts can “take a variety of forms and a combination of resources, such as an outright gift of cash, appreciated securities, and real property, in combination with a deferred component that can take the form of a trust or bequest” (Raley & Weekley Read, 1998, p. 82). A capital campaign is a larger fundraising campaign effort designed to obtain gifts for designated capital purposes such as buildings and endowments. Lastly, planned giving, also known as deferred gifts, are future gifts given through designating the university as beneficiary or inheritor of life insurance policies, trusts, or wills (Tromble, 1998b). These forms of fundraising efforts are typical and longstanding postsecondary development practices.

Despite the popularity of these programs, as evident by their widespread use among development offices and non-profit organizations, Latinas/os are typically not enthusiastic about making these types of charitable donations (Hispanic Federation, 2010; Rivas-Vásquez, 1999). Instead, Latinas/os tend to look for a connection to the gift, and they are less interested in the tax incentive. A Hispanic respondent in Rivas-Vásquez's (1999) study who had successfully raised funds for several projects asserted that the response is different between Anglos and Hispanics when asking for monetary donations. He says, ““When I ask Anglos for donations, the first questions is, *Is that a 501(c)3?* When you ask Hispanics for a donation, the questions are about who is involved”” (p. 122). Latina/o donors are more concerned with who will benefit from their donations than with their own personal gains, such as tax incentives. Not surprisingly, when Latina/o alumni choose to give monetary contributions to postsecondary institutions, they are most often targeted contributions, like a scholarship fund for Latinas/os or for students of color (Frumkin, 2006; Scully, 2008). For example, the Mexican American Alumni Association (MAAA) at Loyola Marymount University sponsors an annual dinner to raise money for scholarships for Hispanic students. The dinner organizers tailor about the guest list to include corporations and Latina/o alumni who are doing well in their respective professions (Nicklin, 1997). In nearly thirty years, the MAAA's scholarship endowment has grown to over \$300,000 (Loyola Marymount University, 2010).

Fundraising is a fairly recent and more specific activity than philanthropy. Tromble (1998a) asserted that many will argue that philanthropy is the simple act of giving to charity while others would argue that true philanthropy, “is giving of one's self and one's means for the benefit of society” (Tromble, 1998a, p. 14). Some notable philanthropists, including

Cornelius Vanderbilt, Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller and James Smithson, have given substantial gifts to establish schools, museums, and foundations to benefit society (Sulek, 2010). In higher education, when there is an opportunity to give, it is the heart that says yes, but it is the head that says how much (Tromble, 1998a).

### Latina/o Philanthropy

Philanthropy has been in existence for centuries; however for years, academic scholars have attempted to define what exactly philanthropy is and why it really matters (Sulek, 2010). While there has been a considerable amount of research on philanthropy through various academic journals and electronic media outlets (e.g., *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* and *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*) a limited amount of research exists on Latina/o philanthropy (Carson, 1993). A number of scholars have explored Latina/o philanthropy and how Latinas/os enact philanthropy in the community (e.g., Cortés, 1991, 1995; Diaz, 1999; Gallegos & O'Neill, 1991; Ramos, 1999). These researchers generally agree that Latinas/os enact philanthropy through three different and frequently informal mediums: support for extended family networks, involvement in the church, and through *mutualista* organizations that provide basic social services and social justice activities.

#### **Support for extended family networks**

It is difficult to measure the real extent of charitable giving by Latinas/os because of the informal ways giving is enacted. Perhaps one of the only ways to measure the tangible support U.S. Latinas/os provide to their extended family networks is through cash remittances sent to family members throughout Latin America (Diaz, et al., 2001). “Money transfers, or remittances, are an established vehicle for immigrants in the United States to provide support for their families in home countries” (Petty, 2002a, p. 35). Many money



transfers or remittances are facilitated through companies like Western Union or through financial institutions. Remittances to México and select Central American countries have grown exponentially over the past 40 years. Remittances have grown from \$1 billion in 1980 to \$13.2 billion in 2003, and to over \$34 billion in 2007 (Diaz, et al., 2001; Lopez, Livingston, & Kochhar, 2009; Orozco, 2004; Pettey, 2002a).

Latina/o charitable giving tends to be personal and informal. In a study of Silicon Valley Latinas/os, researchers found that 82% of Latinas/os surveyed gave money to a friend or relative, followed by 76% donating clothes or food to help those in need, and lastly 65% stated that they gave money directly to homeless people (Aguirre & Min, 2005). In addition to the monetary contributions to these family networks, Latinas/os as a heterogeneous group (i.e., Mexican, Guatemalan, Salvadoran, etc.) give differently through kinship and community (B. Smith, Shue, Vest, & Villareal, 1999).

*Compadrazgo* or the system of co-parenthood, *comadres* and *compadres*, “serves to extend family relations and loyalty to a larger pool of individuals who are not kin but who become quasi-kin as a result of participating in the children’s baptism or other rituals” (Melville, 1991, p. 106). This type of relationship, similar to that of a godparent, establishes a family-like bond and trusts between parents and godparents so that if the parents unexpectedly pass away, the godparents could step in and raise the children. Culturally, *compadrazgo* also facilitates the different intangible forms of giving. For example, in the Latina/o community, many families practice the act of sponsorship or *padrinos* (B. Smith, et al., 1999). Typically, this occurs in religious events such as first communions, *quinceañeras* (15<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration), and/or weddings. During these ceremonies, the *padrinos* (sponsors) are asked to assist the family with sponsorship of cultural and religious relics. For

a wedding, many couples ask family, extended family, or friends to sponsor religious symbols such as *el lazo* (rope), *las arras* (coins), and *el libro y rosario* (bible and rosary) that are used during the ceremony. Sponsorship is synonymous to the system of *compadrazgo* where one serves to extend family relations and loyalty to a larger pool of individuals who are not kin and provide the child, teen, or couple with the religious and/or cultural symbols (e.g., *lazo*, *arras*, food, entertainment) (Melville, 1991). *Padrinos* also can be sponsors to non-religious activities such as wedding or *quinceañera* receptions, where they often serve as sponsors for entertainment, food, and/or photographers/videographers. It is evident that Latinas/os often give monetary support to their respective family and extended family networks. This is oftentimes a mutual cultural practice in the Latina/o community. Further, it also holds true that Latinas/os provide monetary contributions through remittances and serving as sponsors to religious and non-religious traditions (Petty, 2002b; B. Smith, et al., 1999).

Latinas/os in the United States comprise a heterogeneous group of people (U.S. Census, 2008). As such, giving patterns differ among communities. In a study of Mexican, Guatemalan, and Salvadoran communities, Smith, Shue, Vest, and Villareal (1999) explored the similarities and differences of giving patterns between these three communities.

The concept of *familia* is important to the Mexican community when it comes to philanthropic matters (B. Smith, et al., 1999). The term *familia* goes beyond the meaning of immediate family and is extended to all *Mexicanos*. Since the United States is in close proximity to México, money, goods, and clothing are often sent back to one's home town to be distributed to family networks (Petty, 2002a, 2002b). Other important giving activities include providing temporary housing for relatives and friends arriving from a different

country, giving to the church, and as previously mentioned, entering into co-parenthood arrangements, *compadrazgo* (Melville, 1991; B. Smith, et al., 1999).

The Guatemalan community gives in a similar fashion; however, Smith, et al. (1999) found that this community provides food and lodging to new immigrants. In addition, the Catholic Church is a focal point of giving for this community. Guatemalans also send a significant amount of money and goods to family networks in their home country. In 2007, combined with El Salvador and Honduras, remittances reached approximately \$10 billion (Lopez, et al., 2009). Lastly, another characteristic of Guatemalan giving is their low opinion of mainstream American philanthropic institutions, which leads to little giving or volunteering directly to non-Guatemalan charitable organizations (B. Smith, et al., 1999). One Guatemalan participant in this particular study explained why people do not give to American charities by stating, “As the large institutions grow to become more like corporations, resembling businesses, they will get less because people are afraid to feed into greed” (B. Smith, et al., 1999, p. 63). This further explains why there is a distrust and low opinion of American philanthropic organizations.

Like their Guatemalan and Mexican counterparts, most Salvadoran giving takes place within the extended family and ethnic community and a large amount of money and goods are given to family and friends in El Salvador (B. Smith, et al., 1999). Additionally, Salvadorans rarely relinquish care of elderly parents to government or nonprofit organizations and are more apt to give to and volunteer for mainstream nonprofit organizations than their Latina/o counterparts (B. Smith, et al., 1999).

Overall, Latinas/os in the United States comprise a heterogeneous community with similar forms of giving. There is little difference in how the Mexican, Guatemalan, and

Salvadoran communities enact giving, with the exception of their relative levels of involvement with mainstream organizations (Diaz, et al., 2001). The most common mainstream organization for Latinas/os is the Catholic Church and increasingly, evangelical Protestant orders (Ramos, 1999).

### **Latina/o participation with the church**

Religion plays an important role in Latina/o philanthropy. Many Latinas/os rely on the church to provide for most of their social needs. Furthermore, approximately 70 percent of U.S. Latinas/os – more than 20 million individuals – are Catholic, and the Catholic Church has been a traditional beneficiary of donations by this community (Ramos, 1999). However, there has also been an increase in Latina/o evangelical Protestants contributing to philanthropic efforts (McCready, 1991; Ramos, 1999). Consequently, approximately 41.3% of the total contributions made by Latinas/os are made to religious organizations (Diaz, et al., 2001). Stemming from the 1600s and 1700s in Latin America, the Roman Catholic Church has had a history of furnishing financial, legal, and social services, especially for needy families (Marx & Carter, 2008). For example, due to the size of the Catholic Church, the Church is able to wage a powerful lobby against social issues that affect the Latina/o community such as increasing the minimum wage (McCready, 1991), or more recently the racially-targeted immigration policies such as Arizona Senate Bill 1070 (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2010). In addition, Latinas/os have used religious organizations to access important services such as healthcare and education (McCready, 1991).

The church has played an important role in Hispanic identity through binding culture, ethnicity, and faith (McCready, 1991). This is most commonly demonstrated through the

mixture of traditional cultural and religious practices in weddings, communions, and baptisms. As explained earlier, the concept of *compadrazgo* and the sponsorship (*padrinos/madrinas*) of Latina/o cultural and religious practices further expand the definition of giving in the Latina/o community.

### **Involvement with the mutualista organizations**

Latinas/os have been developing *mutualista*, or mutual aid, organizations in the United States since the late 1800s (Center of Philanthropy and Civil Society, 2003; Marx & Carter, 2008). Mutual aid organizations were designed to give informal aid, such as assisting with the economic hardships experienced by newcomers and serving as advocates on behalf of members with political leaders and employers (Center of Philanthropy and Civil Society, 2003). More recently, mutualistas have expanded their missions to support labor and civil rights issues. The civil rights movement in the 1960s played a significant role in political activism and participation within the Latina/o community. During that same era, organizations such as the United Farm Workers (founded in 1962), the National Council of La Raza (1968), and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (1968) were established to provide advocacy on behalf of the Latina/o community in the areas of employment, education, immigrant rights, and political access (Carson, 1999; Center of Philanthropy and Civil Society, 2003; Cortés, 1995; B. Smith, et al., 1999). These organizations have continued their work into the present.

Cortés (1995) asserted that Latina/o philanthropy emphasizes personal relationships. As such, mainstream philanthropic organizations and fundraisers must understand “Latinos’ traditions of mutual assistance and trust in personal relationships in all their local variations... ‘Latinos helping Latinos’” (p. 30) or *personalismo*, which is defined as “the

sanctity attributed to personal relationships and the obligation that they demand” (Melville, 1991, p. 105) . This practice takes shape in a number of ways without the expectation of reciprocity. Many times mutual assistance is simply enacted through volunteering.

**Latinas/os as volunteers.** Latinas/os generally volunteer their time without actually utilizing the term “volunteering” or describing their contributions as such (Gregory, et al., 2003; Hobbs, 2001). The Latina/o community is most interested in serving the development and education of Latinas/os through numerous educational, cultural, and arts activities (Ramos, 1999). Diaz, et al. (2001) found that the most popular organizations where Latinas/os volunteered were religious organizations (19%), the education field (17%), youth organizations such as the Boys and Girls Club (13%), and informal activities (12%) such as helping friends, free childcare, or baking for school fundraisers or events. Additionally, the researchers found that more Hispanic women (53%) volunteered than their Hispanic male (41%) counterparts. The researchers also examined the motivation for volunteering. Eighty-eight percent of Latinas/os in the study stated that compassion was the main reason for volunteering followed by gaining a new perspective (74%) and feeling needed (73%). Finally, approximately 65% of Latinas/os volunteered because it would benefit a family member or a friend (Diaz, et al., 2001). Like other research has indicated (e.g., Center of Philanthropy and Civil Society, 2003; Cortés, 1995, 2002; B. Smith, et al., 1999), *personalismo* shaped how Latinas/os enacted giving practices.

Latinas/os engage in volunteer activities that are mostly informal in nature. These activities include those that involve the family, meaningful activities, and those that are in a comfortable environment (Gregory, et al., 2003). Hobbs (2001) found that, “Latino volunteerism occurs first in the context of family and secondarily in the neighborhood and

church as opposed to mainstream community-based organizations” (para. 9). For example, Latina/o parents would likely participate and volunteer if their children were involved with the activity, such as a sport or fundraising event.

“Volunteerism occurs in all human cultures, but is often performed differently from culture to culture” (Rodriguez, 1997, p. 19). Helping others is a significant rationale for Latinas/os involving themselves with volunteering activities (Diaz, et al., 2001; Hobbs, 2001). Although Latinas/os view helping others as second nature rather than volunteering, their volunteering activities remain culturally relevant and consistent with the three major components of Latina/o philanthropy discussed earlier: *support for extended family networks, involvement with the church, and involvement with the mutualista organizations.*

Historically, many philanthropic organizations and postsecondary institutions have misunderstood and overlooked the different ways that Latinas/os give, identifying monetary support as the dominant if not also preferred form of giving. Overall, the review of literature highlights three significant areas in this study as it pertains to Latinas/os in philanthropy and their historical participation in alumni association and development activities in higher education. The following Community Cultural Wealth model (Yosso, 2005, 2006) provides a conceptual framework for the study and situates how postsecondary institutions can further examine and value the diverse ways in which their respective Latina/o alumni give.

#### Conceptual Framework

As previously stated, this study explores how Latina/o alumni perceive their alma mater defines giving; how Latina/o alumni enact giving; and finally what Latina/o alumni believe the institution gains from their contributions. Since limited research has been conducted about giving by Latina/o alumni, this study seeks to explore the ways Latina/o

alumni broadly interact with their alma mater once they have graduated and how they perceive the institution defines giving. This study focuses on the different ways that Latina/o alumni give and challenges the perceived notions from institutions that Latinas/os do not give. Hence Tara Yosso's (2005, 2006) Community Cultural Wealth model has been adopted as the principal conceptual framework to guide this study. However, before discussing the model itself, it is important to discuss its origins.

Yosso (2005) developed the Community Cultural Wealth model through the theoretical lens of critical race theory (CRT) in order to challenge the traditional interpretations of Bourdieuean cultural capital theory. Critical race theory is defined as the "radical legal movement that seeks to transform the relationship among race, racism, and power" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 144). Yosso (2005) further defined CRT in education as, "a theoretical and analytical framework that challenges the ways race and racism impact educational structures, practices, and discourses" (p. 74). Five tenets are central to CRT in education:

- The centrality of race and racism and their intersectionality with other forms of subordination;
- The challenge to dominant ideology;
- The commitment to social justice;
- The centrality of experiential knowledge; and
- The transdisciplinary perspective (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001; Yosso, 2005).

Critical race theory was important to the development of the Community Cultural Wealth model because it challenged deficit theories that place blame on minority students and



families for “poor academic performance because: (a) students enter school without the normative cultural knowledge and skills; and (b) parents neither value nor support their child’s education” (Yosso, 2005, p. 75).

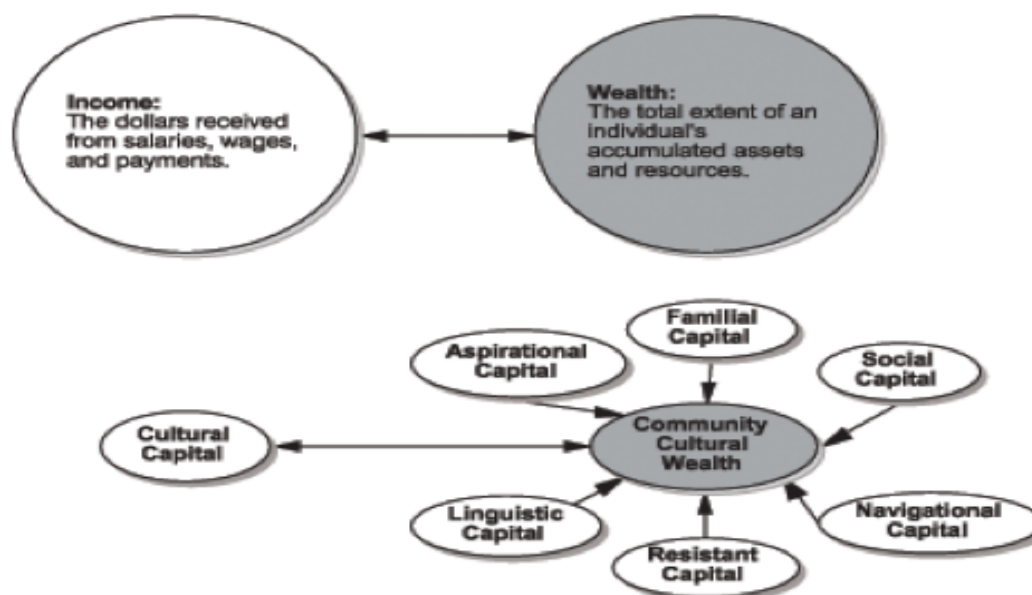
In addition, she critiqued the traditional interpretation of Bourdieuean cultural capital theory because his theory asserted that cultural, social, and economic capital can be acquired in two ways: by family and schooling. In addition, privileged groups in society inherit these forms of capital. Therefore, if one is not born into a family whose knowledge is thought of as valuable, one would need formal schooling to access the knowledge or cultural capital of the privileged class oftentimes alluding to the White, middle- and upper-class as the standard (Yosso, 2005, 2006). In other words, if one does not have access to the resources of the middle- and upper class, their cultural capital is poor.

In addition, Yosso (2005, 2006) used the work of Melvin Oliver and Thomas Shapiro (2006) to distinguish the difference between income (capital) and wealth. They argued that “Income refers to a flow of money over time, like a rate per hour, week, or year; wealth is a stock of assets owned at a particular time” (Oliver & Shapiro, 2006, p. 2). Wealth includes assets and resources like stocks, home ownership, and bank accounts, while capital includes only income in the form of salary or wages. The difference between income and wealth is particularly important to this model because wealth enables a broad range of resources and capital rather than solely financial capital.

Yosso (2005) defined Community Cultural Wealth as “an array of knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed by communities of color to survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression” (p. 77). In an effort to provide a broader understanding of Chicana/o educational pathways, Yosso (2005, 2006) applied the community cultural wealth

model, which includes six different forms of capital: aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and resistant capital (see Figure 1.).

Figure 1. A model of community cultural wealth



(Yosso, 2006, p. 50)

*Aspirational capital* refers to “the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers” (Yosso, 2006, p. 41). This form of capital can suggest the aspirations parents have for their children to pursue the highest levels of formal education, such as a bachelor’s degree or an advanced degree. In her counterstory, Yosso (2006) reflects on parents’ hopes and dreams of a better future for their children.

*Linguistic capital* embraces the “intellectual and social skills attained through communication, experiences and more than one language and/or style” (Yosso, 2006, p. 42). Approximately, 78% of Latina/o children of the age of 5 enter school speaking Spanish (Quijada & Alvarez, 2006) and oftentimes serve as translators for their parents and family. Other forms of linguistic capital include community traditions of storytelling through

*cuentos, dichos*, and family oral histories (Yosso, 2006). Through the tradition of storytelling, children are taught attentiveness to details, memorization, and how to rhyme. In addition, children are or become bilingual, which is ostensibly a desirable asset for students.

*Familial capital* refers to the “cultural knowledges nurtured among *familia* (kin) that carry a sense community history, memory and cultural intuition” (Yosso, 2006, p. 48). As described earlier, family extends beyond parents to include uncles, aunts, grandparents, friends, and godparents. Through this kinship, students and their families are able to build and sustain community. In an effort to stress the importance and the value of education, some parents in Yosso’s (2006) study indicated that families would take their children to pick fruit over the summer breaks to demonstrate that the parents’ work was back-breaking. This family interaction also provided parents the opportunity to support and encourage their children to continue with their education.

*Social capital* “can be understood as networks of people and community resources” (Yosso, 2006, p. 45). These community resources include involvement with *mutualista* organizations. As previously stated, mutual aid organizations were designed to give informal aid in different areas such as assisting with the economic hardships by newcomers and serving as advocates on behalf of members with political leaders and employers (Center of Philanthropy and Civil Society, 2003). Latinas/os utilize their social capital to navigate multiple systems (e.g., political, social, economic, and educational). However, once knowledge and social capital are attained, many Latinas/os will then share the information and resources acquired with others in their social networks (Yosso, 2006). For example, in the educational context, if a Latina/o parent learns of a college scholarship, the parent may go back to his/her social network and provide others with the information.

*Navigational capital* “refers to skills maneuvering through social institutions” (Yosso, 2006, p. 44). This form of capital particularly refers to maneuvering through institutions that were not created with Chicanas/os or Latinas/os in mind. Yosso (2006) explains that despite facing many forms of oppression and barriers, children remain resilient, particularly in stressful environments. However, though these children are thought of as resilient, they still need the community and family support to navigate through the education system.

*Resistant capital* refers to the “knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behaviors that challenge inequality” (Yosso, 2006, p. 49). Many Latina/o parents raise their children to assert themselves to be strong, intelligent and worthy of respect and to challenge the status quo, particularly in a racist, materialistic, and sexist society (Yosso, 2005, 2006). In an educational context, this can take shape through students’ involvement with campus or community organizations that oppose racial and social injustice.

Working together, these forms of capital constitute community cultural wealth that benefits community members, such as students in K-12 settings. Students of color bring these forms of capital from their homes and communities into the classroom (Yosso, 2005). Overall, Yosso’s (2005, 2006) model of Community Cultural Wealth involves a commitment to develop and teach schools that serve a larger purpose to strive toward social and racial justice.

#### Community Cultural Wealth as a Model for Latina/o Alumni

In recognition of the limited research that exists on Latina/o alumni, some researchers have applied models and theories to predict or explain general alumni involvement with postsecondary institutions. One theory that is frequently applied in alumni research is social exchange theory. The basic concept of social exchange theory today mostly derives from a

combination of disciplines of psychology, anthropology, sociology, and economics. The theory simply states that a resource will continue to flow only if there is a valued return contingent upon it (Emerson, 1976). In other words, if a student had a great college or university experience, she or he is likely to be engaged with the institution upon graduation. Weerts and Ronca (2007) asserted that “alumni support is associated with the alum’s perceptions about the value of his or her current and past experiences with the institution” (p. 23). This framework is linear and does not take into account differences among student experiences or students’ motivations to give back to their respective communities upon graduation.

Yosso’s (2005, 2006) model of community cultural wealth can extend beyond linear models such as these that have historically been used in alumni research. The community cultural wealth model can be applied as a framework to help understand how Latina/o alumni give in higher education contexts. Latina/o alumni may utilize the different knowledge and forms of capital (aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational and resistant) to challenge how institutions traditionally value and define giving. Using examples discussed earlier in this chapter, these forms of capital may be useful in exploring the nature and types of Latina/o alumni giving.

*Aspirational capital* refers to “the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers” (Yosso, 2006, p. 41). Latina/o alumni likely share the similar hopes and dreams of parents for their students to successfully complete college. Whether or not the student attends the alum’s alma mater, the general hope is to carry on the legacy of giving back to the community. One example of how Latina/o alumni

have illustrated aspirational capital is through attending scholarship dinners to support and raise funds for student scholarships (Francis & Ousley, 2006; Nicklin, 1997).

*Linguistic capital* embraces the “intellectual and social skills attained through communication, experiences and more than one language and/or style” (Yosso, 2006, p. 42). The storytelling tradition in the Latina/o community plays a significant factor in linguistic capital. Latina/o alumni may utilize this form of capital to share the stories they experienced as undergraduates. Additionally, many of the struggles and successes of Latina/o can be shared with undergraduates through oral history. For example, stories like that of Alexander Tureaud, Jr., the first black student at Louisiana State University, served to inspire alumni and was enshrined in the creation of the first Black Alumni Association that was founded at Louisiana State University (Wilkins & Emanuel-Wallace, 1990).

*Familial capital* refers to the “cultural knowledges nurtured among *familia* (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition” (Yosso, 2006, p. 48). Latina/o alumni may demonstrate this form of capital through contacts with student organizations that supported them like family throughout their undergraduate experience. This time can serve as a way to mentor students - academically and professionally (Cabrales, 2008). Alumni can also be instrumental in emotional support and community well being.

*Social capital* “can be understood as networks of people and community resources” (Yosso, 2006, p. 45). In this capacity, Latina/o alumni can provide students with instrumental information, including scholarships and graduate school options. Alumni can also utilize their social capital to assist students with securing internships related to their major or area of study. Much like Latina/o parents learn of resources and communicated them with their

community, Latina/o alumni can serve as resource vehicles for students (Center of Philanthropy and Civil Society, 2003; Yosso, 2005).

*Navigational capital* “refers to skills maneuvering through social institutions” (Yosso, 2006, p. 44). Latina/o alumni may revisit their alma maters and participate in panels regarding their student experience or their career path. Alumni can utilize this time to guide students through the institution and point to resources (e.g., scholarships, campus services, faculty, administrators, etc.) that were beneficial to them as undergraduates. This would also serve as an opportunity to share their experiences about their participation with student organizations and other Latinas/os on campus (Villalpando, 2003).

*Resistant capital* refers to the “knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behaviors that challenge inequality” (Yosso, 2006, p. 49). Like the characteristics of linguistic capital, Latina/o alumni can share their experiences combating racial and social injustice as undergraduate students. This is a critical resource for students since alumni can provide an oral history of student movements, protests, and demonstrations that occurred and the resources they fought for during that period of time.

The combination of these forms of capital as they apply to Latina/o alumni can be illustrative of Yosso’s (2005, 2006) model of community cultural wealth. Latina/o alumni may bring rich cultural wealth that can complement and enhance financial capital that alumni and development offices are tasked to seek, but have heretofore been unexplored through systematic research. Traditional alumni research literature has not taken into account the different ways Latinas/os give to their respective communities. Therefore, this model is reasonable for framing this study of conceptualizing how Latina/o undergraduate alumni give.

## Summary

The review of literature highlights Latinas/os participation in different philanthropic and institutional advancement activities, such as alumni associations and development. It is important to acknowledge the limited research pertaining to Latina/o alumni interaction with postsecondary institutions once they have left the institution. As the literature review indicates, alumni of color (particularly Latina/o alumni) have faced obstacles while trying to actively engage with their alma mater through strategies that may not have corresponded to the traditional avenues of alumni participation. Latina/o philanthropy and community cultural wealth provides ample examples of the cultural wealth Latinas/os bring to giving practices and provides different ways for institutions to explore Latina/o giving. The goal of this study is to explore how Latina/o alumni enact giving; the community cultural wealth model will provide a basis for the design, structure, and framework that is further detailed in Chapter 3.



## CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

This study explores how Latina/o alumni perceive their alma mater defines giving; how Latina/o alumni enact giving; and finally what Latina/o alumni believe the institution gains from their contributions. Phenomenology is used as the methodological framework which is “generally seen as a study of people’s subjective and everyday experiences” (Crotty, 1998, p. 83). In this study, I explore the everyday experiences of Latina/o alumni and explore how they perceive their alma mater defines giving, how Latina/o alumni enact giving, and how they feel their alma mater benefits from their contributions. The chapter begins with the study’s epistemological position, followed by the researcher’s positionality, a description of the research site, data collection procedures, data analysis, and finally trustworthiness, ethical considerations and the limitations and strengths of the study.

### Epistemological Position and Positionality

This study used a qualitative research approach to explore the giving practices of Latina/o alumni. Qualitative research draws on the traditions of anthropology, sociology, and clinical psychology and draws on the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individual’s interaction with their world (Merriam & Associates, 2002). Furthermore, qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the constructions and interpretations at a particular point in time and in a particular context. Therefore, the epistemological approach of this study is constructionism. Constructionism emphasizes the processes of constructing meanings even if it is in relation to the same phenomenon (Crotty, 1998). Although Latina/o alumni in this study graduated from the same institution, the meaning of the way they were raised, their student experiences, and lives as alumni could be constructed in different ways. An interpretive theoretical perspective is ideal for this study because it permits a focus on

understanding and explaining human and social reality (Crotty, 1998), such as the lived experiences of alumni. In addition, Crotty (1998) asserted that the interpretive approach “looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social-life world” (p. 67). As a result of drawing upon a social constructionist epistemology and an interpretive theoretical perspective, this study uses phenomenology as a methodology.

Phenomenology focuses on the essence or structure of an experience (Merriam & Associates, 2002). It emerges as an exploration, via personal experiences, of prevailing cultural understandings and describes the essence of a phenomenon from the perspectives of those who have experienced it (Crotty, 1998; Merriam & Associates, 2002). Phenomenology is fitting for this study because it explores and seeks to understand the personal and lived experiences of Latina/o alumni as children, students, and college graduates. The participants’ lived experiences of this study are further explored by collecting and analyzing data in ways that do not prejudice their subjective character (Crotty, 1998). This allows for the researcher to understand and interpret the giving practices of Latina/o alumni.

Yosso’s (2005, 2006) model of community cultural wealth serves as the primary conceptual framework for this research study. Community cultural wealth is defined as “an array of knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed by communities of color to survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression” (Yosso, 2005, p. 77). Yosso (2005, 2006) originally developed and applied the community cultural wealth model, which includes six different forms of capital: aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and resistant capital to provide a broader understanding of Chicana/o educational pathways. The reason I chose this particular conceptual framework for this study was because it intertwined with the general concepts of Latina/o philanthropy: *support for extended family networks,*

*involvement with the church, and involvement with the mutualista organizations.* In addition, the community cultural wealth model was adopted in this study as a conceptual framework to help understand how Latina/o alumni may employ these different forms of capital in a higher education setting.

As a researcher conducting this qualitative study, it is important to assess the positionality I bring to the study (Merriam, 2002b). I have been actively involved with the Santa Clara University (SCU) Alumni Association in three major ways for ten years. My prior involvement with the research site benefits this study because of my established relationship with the executive director and my familiarity with the organizational structure of the university relations unit. Since graduating SCU in 2000, I have been actively involved with the Chicana/o Latina/o alumni chapter. As a member, I volunteered my time and chaired several events (e.g., post-work networking socials, career advisory day, and new Latina/o student receptions). Currently, I serve as the president of the Chicana/o Latina/o alumni chapter, and in this role I work closely with our chapter liaison and members to assure that we are engaging our members and fulfilling the objectives of the SCU alumni association, which are:

1. To organize, integrate, and support the alumni in an association, which is intimately related to the University, for the mutual benefit and support of the basic values and goals for which the University was founded.
2. To foster a spirit of loyalty and warm relationship among the graduates, former students, current administrators, faculty, and students in the University community.
3. To initiate and support activities in a cooperative spirit, which will enhance and benefit the relationship between the University and the members of the Association.

4. To advance means and methods to encourage alumni to grow spiritually and socially by serving God, their neighbors, and their country. (SCU, 2006a)

My role as chapter president also includes recruiting new members to serve on the chapter's steering committee.

In addition to serving as a member and an officer of the Chicana/o Latina/o alumni chapter, I have also served on the SCU National Alumni Board of Directors. In this role, I assisted with the development of the strategic plan by participating in focus groups and developing roles for critical areas, such as a) alumni engagement; b) history and traditions; c) student outreach; d) marketing and communication; e) partnerships; and f) strong support structure. The board also set the direction of the alumni association with respect to events and engagement with the alumni body.

Lastly, as a part of my doctoral studies requirement I assisted the executive director of the SCU Alumni Association on an assessment of the alumni association that addressed the following questions:

1. Is there a need for additional affinity groups within the alumni association in order to appeal to the needs of undergraduate students and recent alumni?
2. In which ways can the alumni association increase awareness and alumni engagement with SCU undergraduates?

The assessment project involved a number of focus groups with alumni and undergraduate students as well as an undergraduate online survey. The alumni focus groups included the participation of members of the Chicana/o Latina/o and African American alumni chapters.

My involvement with the alumni association in these different capacities has broadened my knowledge about institutional advancement and the importance of alumni

engagement. The assessment project in itself resulted in enhanced research skills utilizing qualitative and quantitative methods and ultimately led me to undertake this dissertation research. After completing focus groups with the Chicana/o Latina/o alumni chapter I was left with many unanswered questions about the different ways Latinas/os give. My involvement with the National Alumni Board of Directors also caused me to question what the institution valued as legitimate giving. Two years after the assessment project's completion I had a conversation with the executive director about continuing my work with the alumni association to explore how Latina/o alumni interacted with the university once they graduated and how they defined and enacted giving as alumni. The executive director has agreed to serve as the primary contact at the research site, and her office has provided me with the appropriate information for participant recruitment.

#### Research site and selection of participants

Santa Clara University, which is located in California and in the heart of the Silicon Valley was selected as the research site for this phenomenological study. This site was chosen in part because of the established working relationship with the executive director of the alumni association and my experience working with SCU Chicana/o and Latina/o alumni over a ten-year period of time. After a conversation with the executive director regarding the pros and cons of keeping the institution's name anonymous for the study, she decided that it was beneficial for SCU to learn about the positive and negative feedback of Latina/o alumni, within the parameters of this study; therefore, the name of the institution will be used for the study (K. Kale, personal communication, April 29, 2010). In addition, SCU is one of twenty-eight American Jesuit universities across the nation (Association of Jesuit Colleges & Universities, 2010) and the Society of Jesus founded Santa Clara University in 1851. SCU's

strategic vision is to develop men and women to become leaders of competence, conscience, and compassion. The strategic vision states the following:

Santa Clara University will excel in educating men and women to be leaders of competence, conscience, and compassion. By combining teaching and scholarship of high quality, an integrated education in the Jesuit tradition, and a commitment to students as persons, we will prepare them for professional excellence, responsible citizenship, and service to society, especially on behalf of those in greatest need.

(SCU, 2007, para. 1)

In the fall of 2010, Santa Clara University enrolled 4,719 undergraduate- and 3,580 graduate students (SCU Institutional Research, 2010). The university has 44 undergraduate majors and graduate programs in 7 disciplinary areas. In addition, approximately 35% of the student body are students of color and the first-year retention rate and university four-year graduation rate are 93% and 85%, respectively (SCU Facts, 2010). The total percentage of Latina/o student enrollment has steadily increased throughout the past 29 years (see Table 1). In 1981, the total percentage of Latina/o students on campus was 5.23%, whereas in the fall of 2010, Latinas/o accounted for almost 13% of the student population.

As one of the first institutions of higher education in California, the university also founded its alumni association on April 27, 1881 with the intention of fostering life-long relationships (SCU, 2006b). Currently the Santa Clara University Alumni Association is home to over 70,000 alumni (SCU Alumni Association, 2010b), which includes approximately 3,822 living Latina/o alumni (J. Moody, personal communication, June 1, 2010). Once students graduate from SCU, they tend to stay in the state of California.

Seventy-six percent ( $n = 53,193$ ) of SCU alumni stay in California; moreover,

approximately 45% (n = 23,815) of California SCU alumni stay within Santa Clara County, the same county where the university is located (SCU Alumni Association, 2010a).

Table 1. Hispanic enrollment at Santa Clara University from Fall 1981- Fall 2010

Fall/Year	Undergraduate	Graduate	Hispanic Total*	University Total	% Hispanic
1981	287	84	371	7100	5.23%
1982	277	90	367	7251	5.06%
1983	250	93	343	7401	4.63%
1984	272	85	357	7448	4.79%
1985	284	102	386	7624	5.06%
1986	268	109	377	7745	4.87%
1987	259	102	361	7550	4.78%
1988	292	106	398	7773	5.12%
1989	317	113	430	7892	5.45%
1990	365	132	497	7709	6.45%
1991	391	142	533	7761	6.87%
1992	465	155	620	7802	7.95%
1993	530	159	689	7725	8.92%
1994	578	178	756	7513	10.06%
1995	590	195	785	7654	10.26%
1996	610	169	779	7863	9.91%
1997	592	160	752	7763	9.69%
1998	615	158	773	7707	10.03%
1999	606	163	769	7668	10.03%
2000	602	178	780	7356	10.60%
2001	607	177	784	7368	10.64%
2002	597	215	812	7811	10.40%
2003	600	208	808	7794	10.37%
2004	606	237	843	7908	10.66%
2005	618	237	855	8097	10.56%
2006	612	224	836	7952	10.51%
2007	645	245	890	8248	10.79%
2008	720	255	975	8213	11.87%
2009	809	254	1063	8846	12.02%
2010	822	241	1063	8299	12.81%

\*Undergraduate and graduate Hispanics combined  
(SCU Institutional Research, 2011)

In addition, approximately 76% (n = 1,807) of California Latina/o alumni reside in the central coast and the bay area (Alameda, Contra Costa, Monterey, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and San Mateo counties), which may make it simpler to select participants from this geographic area for the study (see Table 2.).

Table 2. Counties with 50 SCU California Latina/o undergraduate alumni or greater

County	Count	Percent
Santa Clara	1159	48.68%
San Mateo	190	7.98%
Los Angeles	141	5.92%
Alameda	126	5.29%
San Francisco	115	4.83%
Monterey	74	3.11%
Santa Cruz	72	3.02%
Contra Costa	71	2.98%
Sacramento	66	2.77%
(36) Other Counties	367	15.41%
Total CA Latina/o Alumni	2381	100.00%

(J. Moody, personal communication, June 3, 2010)

Overall, SCU is an appropriate location to facilitate this study for a number of reasons. SCU's vision strives to prepare students to become responsible citizens and serve society (SCU, 2007). One of the goals of this study is to explore how Latina/o alumni enact giving, thus exploring how SCU's Latina/o alumni serve society, particularly those in need. In addition, approximately 76% of Latina/o alumni remain in close proximity (i.e., bay area and central coast) to the university upon completion of their undergraduate degree (see table 2.). This saturation of Latina/o alumni in the bay area and central coast allows me to select diverse Latina/o alumni research participants. Lastly, SCU is at the crossroads of evaluating the institution's alumni giving practices. The SCU president, Father Michael Engh, S.J.,



initiated an alumni task force to examine alumni giving participation and the cause for a decline in monetary giving in the past eight years (Boyd Saum, 2010).

Nine Latina/o graduates from Santa Clara University were selected to participate in this study. Selecting this number of participants for this study allows for different perspectives on the ways alumni interact with their alma mater while also providing access to a broad range of experiences and perspectives about how Latina/o alumni define and enact giving. Purposeful sampling strategies were used to select participants for this study. Purposeful sampling helps the researcher understand the problem and the research questions (Creswell, 2003). Maxwell (2005) outlined four goals of purposeful selection: 1. To achieve representativeness or typicality of the settings, individuals, or activities selected, 2. To adequately capture the heterogeneity in the population, 3. To deliberately examine cases that are critical for the theories that one begins to study with or that one has subsequently developed, and 4. To establish particular comparisons to illuminate the reasons for differences between settings or individuals. Due to the heterogeneity of the Latina/o community (i.e., Mexican, Guatemalan, Nicaraguan, Puerto Rican, etc.), the goal was to select participants from different ethnic backgrounds. Due to availability, all of the participants were of Mexican descent and identified with different terms to describe their identity, such as Chicana/o, Latina/o, Mexicana/o, and MeChicana. Furthermore, the majority of the participants differed in class year, majors, marital status, and the number of children. Lastly, five females and four male participants were selected to participate in the study, which closely aligns with SCU's demographic according to sex.

Recruitment of the participants was facilitated through the assistance of the SCU Alumni Association. The alumni staff members provided me with the appropriate electronic

contact information of Latina/o alumni who live in the central coast and the bay area (Alameda, Contra Costa, Monterey, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and San Mateo counties). Once the contact information was received, I sent an electronic mail message with the recruitment text approved by Iowa State University's Institutional Review Board. If respondents had questions, I provided further explanation regarding the nature of the study. I also informed participants that pseudonyms would be used in place of their actual names and names of other individuals they mentioned during the interviews in order to ensure their anonymity. Once the participants were recruited, I scheduled interviews at the participants' convenience.

#### Data Collection

As previously stated, phenomenological research focuses on the essence or structure of an experience (Merriam & Associates, 2002). In qualitative research, there are multiple ways that one can collect data, such as through observations, interviews, and audio and visual materials (Creswell, 2003). Although all of these can provide data, "the phenomenological interview is the primary method of data collection wherein one attempts to uncover the essence, the invariant structure, of the meaning of the experience" (Merriam & Associates, 2002, p. 93). For this study I interviewed SCU Latina/o alumni to gain a better understanding of the meaning of their lived experiences as alumni and how they define and enact giving. The interview protocol was informed by Yosso's (2005, 2006) community cultural wealth model and the review of literature. In addition, the review of literature also informed the protocol through providing background information on alumni associations, development, and Latina/o philanthropy (See Appendix A).

The interviews were structured utilizing Seidman's (2006) three-interview series. Seidman (2006) asserted that the three-series interview is of importance because people's behavior becomes meaningful and understandable when placed in the context of their lives and the lives around them. The interview series concentrated on three areas: focused life history, the details of experience, and the reflection of meaning.

### **Focused life history**

Seidman (2006) emphasized that during the first interview, the researcher's task is to put the participant's experience in context by asking the participant to tell as much as possible about him or herself. During the first semi-structured interview, each participant was asked about his or her childhood, college choice, student experience, and the charitable activities they witnessed and/or experienced as they were growing up. These questions allowed the participant to reflect and set the context of their lived experience.

### **Details of experience**

The second interview of the three-interview series involved concentrating on the participants' present lived experience (Seidman, 2006) as Santa Clara University graduates. The interview focused on their experiences as an alumnus or alumna of the university, their interactions with their alma mater, and the civic, social and religious activities in which they are involved. These questions focus on the details of their lived experience as alumni.

### **Reflection on the meaning**

The last interview reflected on the meaning of the participants' experiences (Seidman, 2006) as SCU alumni. Participants were asked to reflect on their definitions of giving and alumni giving. The participants were also asked to reflect on how they practiced giving and how they felt the university benefited from their contributions as SCU alumni.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted during a series of pre-determined visits to California. At the first (face-to-face) interview, the participants were provided with an informed consent form (See Appendix B). After the completion of each interview, a transcript of the interview was sent to the participants with a request to verify content accuracy and completeness of the transcribed data. In addition, the second and third interviews were scheduled consecutively, once the first interview was completed and at the participant's convenience. In the case that a participant was not available for a face-to-face interview, a phone interview was scheduled and conducted. Only one interview took place over the phone and the drawbacks were that I was not able to gauge the body language of the participant. However, the merit of the phone interview was that the participant was able to continue with the study and provide personal stories within the realm of the research questions.

### Data Analysis

Data for this study consisted of three semi-structured audio-recorded interviews with each research participant. Each interview lasted approximately 60-90 minutes and questions focused on alumni giving, student experience, institutional engagement, and philanthropic activities. Interviews took place in a quiet location either on SCU's campus or at a location that was convenient and comfortable for the participant. During the interview and transcription process, I took notes in order to reflect on the interviews and for other purposes, such as reflection on methods and theory as it related to the context of the interview (Maxwell, 2005). I also wrote memos to reflect on my general feelings and thoughts of the research process. In addition, memos helped shape my thoughts about the emerging analysis as well as provided a record of my progress (Esterberg, 2002).

Once the interviews were transcribed, I coded the participants' transcripts. The goal of open coding is to arrange data into categories that facilitate comparison between things in the same category, which aid in the development of theoretical concepts (Esterberg, 2002; Maxwell, 2005). Once reoccurring concepts were identified, I engaged in focused coding, which entails line by line data analysis that focuses on the key themes identified during open coding (Esterberg, 2002). Finally, I examined my notes, memos, and reoccurring concepts from the coding process to assure the themes are consistent with the scope of the study.

### Trustworthiness

Qualitative studies present findings of the inquiry as a mix of rich, thick description and interpretation (Merriam & Associates, 2002). As such, there are strategies that will take place in this study (i.e., member checking, triangulation) to establish the rigor of this phenomenological study. Along with these strategies, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability also establish the trustworthiness of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### Credibility

Prolonged engagement, persistent observation, and triangulation are three activities that can increase the probability of producing credible findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In addition, other activities that also make this study more credible include peer debriefing and member checking.

**Prolonged engagement.** Prolonged engagement, "is the investment of sufficient time to achieve certain purposes: learning the 'culture,' testing for misinformation introduced by distortions either of the self or of the respondents, and building trust" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 301). Building trust with the participants was important to this study. Through my

involvement with the SCU Chicana/o Latina/o alumni chapter and the updates sent via electronic mail, participants had some familiarity with my alumni association affiliation. In addition, I used Seidman's (2006) three-interview series, which allowed for more time with my participants.

**Persistent observation.** Persistent observation allows me to identify the characteristics that are most relevant to the problem or the issue being pursued (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985) asserted that while prolonged engagement provides scope, persistent observation provides depth. Merriam (2002a) stated that an audit trail describes with great detail how data were collected, how categories were developed, and how decisions were made throughout the study. I used my notes and memos to assist me in providing this detail.

**Member checking.** Another way of ensuring trustworthiness is through member checking. Member checking involves asking participants to comment on the researchers interpretation of the data (Merriam & Associates, 2002). Upon the completion of the interviews, participants received a draft of the findings for comments and/or input.

**Peer debriefing.** I worked with a classmate, who is also an advanced doctoral candidate to serve as a peer reviewer. The peer reviewer has taken all of the qualitative courses available and is also conducting a qualitative dissertation study. Peer review allows colleague(s) to read and comment on the findings of the study (Merriam & Associates, 2002). It also allows my peer to explore other aspects of the study that I may otherwise see as implicit (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As stated earlier, pseudonyms were used in place of the actual participants' names to ensure the anonymity of the participant.

**Traingulation.** Triangulation involves the collection of data through a combination of interviews, observations, and document analysis (Merriam & Associates, 2002). Maxwell (2005) asserted that triangulation “reduces the risk of chance associations and of systemic biases due to a specific method, and allows for a better assessment of the generality of the explanations that one develops” (p. 112). I used interviews and document analysis as a method of triangulation as well as member checking and peer reviewing in order to strengthen the credibility of the study.

### **Transferability**

Lincoln and Guba (1985) asserted that a researcher could not specify the external validity of an inquiry. External validity or generalizability is often critiqued in qualitative studies because it is often compared to the generalizability of positivist forms of research where a random sample or a population is often used to generalize in a statistical sense (Merriam & Associates, 2002). However, Lincoln and Guba (1985) purported that the researcher “can provide only the thick description necessary to enable someone interested in making a transfer to reach a conclusion about whether transfer can be contemplated as a possibility” (p. 316). Transferability is addressed through providing a rich, thick description of data and findings (Merriam & Associates, 2002).

### **Dependability**

Reliability often synonymous with dependability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) is problematic in the social sciences because human behavior is never static and lived experiences vary from person to person (Merriam, 2002a). I address dependability through utilizing my notes and memos to create a detailed audit trail to make my study more credible.

## **Confirmability**

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that the major technique to establishing confirmability is through an audit. As a researcher, utilizing an audit trail can help me maintain detailed raw records of the inquiry, which include raw data, data reduction and analysis products (e.g., field notes, write-ups, and theoretical notes), data reconstruction and synthesis products (e.g., findings and conclusions), process notes (e.g., methodological notes, trustworthiness notes, and audit trail notes), materials relating to intention and dispositions, and instrument development information (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I have kept these records in order to address confirmability.

Utilizing these four different activities will strengthen the trustworthiness of my study: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. In the next section I plan to address ethical issues and considerations for the study.

### **Ethical Issues and Considerations**

As a researcher it is important to maintain integrity with the study and with those involved as participants. My study began once I received approval by the Iowa State University's Office of Responsible Research. Since the study does not involve SCU undergraduate students or a SCU Co-principal investigator, a review from SCU's equivalent oversight body was not required. Participants were presented with an informed consent at the first face-to-face interview where I explained the participant's rights as dictated by the informed consent form (see Appendix B). As a researcher it is also important to protect the privacy of the participants of the study. Although the name of their alma mater, SCU, will not be anonymous, I protected the privacy of those involved with the study through utilizing pseudonyms instead of the participants' actual names and the names of individuals the



participants referred to throughout the study (Esterberg, 2002). In addition, I kept all of the raw data on a secured, password-protected computer. As previously stated, interview transcripts were sent to the participants in order to honor accuracy. At that point the participant could provide input or correct the transcripts if an inaccuracy was found.

#### Limitations

There are two limitations pertaining to this study. First, the findings to this study are limited to undergraduate Latina/o alumni from one predominantly white Jesuit university. The results cannot be generalized to all Latina/o alumni nor all Latinas/os. In addition, the participants of the study were undergraduate alumni from a Jesuit university and cannot be generalized to all types of institutions (e.g., Research I, Comprehensive, etc.).

#### Delimitations

The scope of this study was delimited to Latinas/os who received their bachelor's degree from SCU and was focused on the way Latina/o alumni perceived how the institution defined giving, how Latinas/os enacted and defined giving, and how they felt their contributions benefited SCU. I provided the rich and thick descriptions necessary to enable others interested in making the findings useful for understanding other sites or other groups.

The findings from this study are limited to undergraduate Latina/o alumni from one predominantly white Jesuit institution and may not apply to Latina/o alumni in other settings. In addition, time with participants may be limited since face-to-face interviews will only take place three times at most. Lastly, the long distance between the research site and the researcher may have presented a logistical challenge for scheduling interviews with multiple participants. This situation only occurred once and a phone interview was conducted in the place of a face-to-face interview.

## Summary

The purpose of this study is to explore and understand how Latina/o alumni define their roles as alumni and interact with their alma mater. Phenomenology allows exploration and understanding of the personal and lived experiences of Latina/o alumni as children, students, and college graduates. This chapter provides an overview of the methodology, research site, participant selection, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness, delimitations, and limitations of the study. Chapter 4 will introduce the participants and give a brief description of their lives, Chapter 5 will present results from the study, and Chapter 6 will provide a detailed discussion, conclusion, and implications for policy and practice.

## CHAPTER 4. PARTICIPANT PROFILES

This chapter presents the lives of the nine SCU graduates that participated in the study. The study participants selected for this study include a representation of the multiple areas of undergraduate study, occupations, and class years. Table 3 provides a demographic portrait of each participant in alphabetical order by their pseudonym. In order to give context to the participants' giving practices, I felt it was important to provide a description of their lives, such as their experience growing up in their respective community and their education - to include their student experience at SCU.

### **Chato**

Chato was born in *Tejas* and was raised in the eastside of the city of San José, CA. He was born to an immigrant father from México and a mother from *Tejas*. He is a proud product of the East Side Union High School district where he attended school before embarking toward his college journey at SCU in 1968. Both of his parents were farm and cannery workers and primarily worked in the prune orchards. His father also volunteered for combat duty in World War II. Chato also experienced working in the fields until he was a freshman in high school where he worked as a janitor's aid through a federally funded job program for youth. Since Chato worked in the fields at a young age, he considered his transition to this position as an upgrade.

My job was to clean bathrooms in the school. And I loved it. I was working with a couple of kids who I thought were pampered kids cause they didn't like working cleaning bathrooms. And I said holy shit, are you kidding? We are working in the shade! We get an hour for lunch and we get a break in the morning and a break in the afternoon. Holy moly what's there not to like about this. You know after picking out

Table 3. Participant demographics

Pseudonym	Undergraduate		Advanced Degree	Generation		Racial/Ethnic Identity
	Graduation Year	Undergraduate Major		College Student	Occupation	
Chato	1972	Management	Juris Doctorate	1st	Attorney	Chicano
Dolores	1983	Spanish Literature	Juris Doctorate	1st	Attorney	Latina
Esperanza	1998	Sociology	Doctor of Philosophy	1st	Professor	MeChicana
Isabel	1997	Anthropology	Masters	1st	Community Developer	Latina
Josue	1999	Marketing	N/A	1st	Community Developer	Chicano
Karina	1998	Political Science	Masters	2nd	K-12 Education Administration	Chicana
Mateo	2001	Sociology	Masters	1st	Counselor	Chicano
Pedro	2003	Economics	Masters	1st	Higher Education Administrator	Mexicano
Teresa	2002	Sociology	Juris Doctorate	1st	Attorney	Latina

in the fields from sun up to sundown with no breaks and usually no bathrooms out there and if so they were stinky port-a-potties out in the hot sun. Holy moly working

in the janitors aid cleaning sticky bathrooms that was a dream job for me.

Chato's parents were strong advocates for education and had the highest respect for educators. His parents strongly supported him and his siblings in following through with education and Chato remembers his father saying, "*Mijo* [Son], you have to get an education so you don't have to work like me – work like a donkey." The extent of his father's formal education was through the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and his mother attended formal schooling until the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

Chato was raised in a humble family in the eastside of San José. After some reflection, we spoke more about his upbringing and the extent to which he could identify someone throughout his childhood that he felt was a leader in giving and/or supporting others. Chato did not identify an individual; however, he identified the community as givers.

In our community it was always about giving. That's the way we were brought up.

That's the way we were raised, to give back, to help your community. But because we were all poor, we didn't have money to give. So we gave other things, we gave time; we gave our talent.

Chato expressed that giving occurred primarily through the church. He noted that if there was a family in need, people got together to assist the family: giving a dollar, fixing a window or a bathroom, patching a door, or simply cleaning a yard. He also explained that he was raised with the spirit of giving in mind and thought of as a common practice. Giving in his family also took form in different ways such as serving as *padrinos* [sponsors].

Every Mexican grows up that way, that's another way of giving... You know when

large families get together, *padrinos* help out in different ways – small cash donations or by contributing a little extra time and effort or by arranging something. That is part of our culture [and] we grew up giving in those ways.

Chato learned more about giving through witnessing his parents helping his family and extended family. He vividly remembers when he was in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade his family of seven (at that time) lived in a two bedroom home with a detached garage. A family from Tejas came over to look for work and did not have a place to stay, so his parents allowed them to stay in their garage. He reflected on the moment, “They were poor, we were poor, but they were poorer. We had a pot of beans – they had nothing.” So for two months the family lived with them and ate their pot of beans; his mother just added more water to the beans. This experience would happen regularly in his family. Although his family was poor, they always made the effort to help someone who was poorer.

Chato grew up with five siblings who are now accomplished in their respective fields and most of them have pursued and obtained advanced degrees. Although his parents stressed the importance of education, Chato learned about college through his guidance counselor. The counselor took a few Latinos from Chato’s high school that he saw potential and told them, “You are going to college. You will apply. You will go to college.” This experience was new and foreign to Chato and his peers since they were planning to go to the military like every other male role model in their life had done. He describes his experience with his guidance counselor:

[He] took us on a field trip, a couple of field trips to colleges. Made us sit down and fill out applications to college and I am proud to say that all five of us are graduates of Santa Clara University and all five of us are lawyers in private practice.

SCU is approximately 12 minutes from eastside San José; however, Chato never knew that the university existed because he had not heard of it while growing up in the barrio. He had not given college much thought until his guidance counselor encouraged him to apply. Chato applied to SCU and was accepted. He remembers thinking of SCU as a great school with a beautiful campus and a lot of history. In addition, he noted that there were good people at SCU and like the world, very small-minded people. Chato attended SCU in the midst of the conflicts and movements, such as the Vietnam War, Civil Rights, and the Chicano Movement. The great boycotts and his involvement with the Mexican American Student Confederation, the predecessor to MEChA carried over onto his SCU experience as an undergraduate student. Chato was one of the original founders of El Frente Estudiantil Chicano at SCU, which today is known as MEChA-El Frente.

Chato reflected on his student experience at SCU and explained that he had experienced some of the best and worst days at SCU. His first day at SCU was nothing but the bad. As he sat in his first class, the professor was taking roll and was breezing through many of the names until he reached his Chicano friend's name, to which he severely mispronounced. His friend corrected the professor with the correct pronunciation and the professor, in front of the entire class responded by saying, "Oh I'm sorry, I never learned to pronounce these Frito Bandido names." Both students reacted to the response and went directly to the president's office to report the incident. Given that they did not have an appointment, they stood and waited in protest until the president spoke to the students. Although this event occurred the first day during the first class, the president apologized and assured that he would speak to the professor. The next class session, the professor apologized in front of the class. Other racial incidents occurred throughout his experience, but Chato

shared that the good days greatly outweighed the bad. Chato continued to be actively involved with El Frente Estudiantil Chicano and student government. Santa Clara at that time was an exciting place to be culturally, educationally, intellectually, and he recalled that athletics were nationally ranked back then.

### **Dolores**

Dolores was raised in California's Imperial, Pajaro, and Salinas valleys. She was a migrant student until the sixth grade due to her father's occupation in the agricultural industry. Her father immigrated to the United States as a teenager through the Bracero Program (1942-1964), which imported Mexican labor due to the labor demands during World War II (U.S. Department of Labor, 2011). Her mother was a stay-at-home mom and once she immigrated, her father was drafted to the army. After the sixth grade, her parents settled in Watsonville, CA and Dolores was able to complete high school along with her five siblings. Dolores' parents have little formal education; however, she describes her father as an avid learner who began cutting lettuce as a teenager. Due to his hard work ethic and desire to learn and help others in the community, he began to move up in the company and eventually became a vice-president for the company. Her mom was responsible for most of the details of child rearing because her father worked long hours 6 days a week throughout most of his entire working life. Her proactive work was critical to the success of her family.

Dolores remembers her parent's heavy involvement with the church and helping the church and surrounding community. Her father and other coworkers organized a massive food drive that delivered non-perishable foods to the poor in San Luis, Arizona. The food drive became a successful annual event by the *Migrantes Cristianos* [Christian Migrants], particularly because the group did not have any knowledge of other nonprofit organizations



like the United Way or the local Second Harvest Food Bank who facilitate similar activities. She also described other forms of giving that she and her family experienced through the church, such as volunteering as a catechist and also participating in quinceañeras. She recalls her parents particularly serving as sponsors for weddings, where they would pay for certain aspects of someone's wedding like the cake, reception hall, or the mariachi.

On a personal level, Dolores shared that her parents were ongoing givers, particularly with her family. "They always gave back to people, whether it was their sisters, parents, or brothers; whoever it was in México that need[ed] money and you know it was ongoing help." Dolores goes on to speak about the reciprocal giving she witnessed from her parents.

I mean they were helped first of all. They were helped by my older uncle...with food and a place to stay until they got their feet both grounded and then yes, [when] other younger or the older cousins came, we helped them with food and a place to stay. Due to her father's employment, he was able to find jobs for family members and other immigrants in the agricultural industry or find people in his network that had employment opportunities.

Remittances to México were a common practice for Dolores' family. She explained that her father and other family members would send money to her aunt so that her children could attend college in México. Dolores' aunt was an elementary school teacher in a small village in her father's hometown in México. Her father knew that his sister (Dolores' aunt) was very smart, perhaps smarter than him which is why Dolores' parents stressed education. They said, "Education is critical and that is the way that you are going to have options in life." Therefore, her parents did not stress education as an option, rather more like a directive. Dolores' college search process began in 1976 with a bad experience involving a Latino high

school counselor. Her father encouraged her to make inquiries about college so she told the counselor she wanted to go to college. He responded, “Well why do you want to go to college? You are a Mexican girl.” After reporting back to her father, he persisted for her to request information from a different counselor. So she did and found a counselor that was encouraging migrant students and achieving Latino students to attend college. Although the counselor was promoting mostly Southern California colleges and universities, she stumbled upon a SCU pamphlet and inquired about the university. She remembers the university’s beauty and the location was not far from home. The Catholic tradition and the social justice mission also enticed her interest. Dolores applied and to this date she remembers the essay she submitted with the admissions application. Her essay revolved around a summer work experience while she was helping her father make identification cards for the farmworkers.

I remember just seeing people work really hard...I went with my dad like on a Saturday to drive around and he said something like, ‘Wouldn’t it be great if you could grow up to help farmworkers...with their problems, because they work really hard and they don’t know where to go.’

This experience stuck to Dolores for years to come. When her father asked her what she was going to study she said, “You know what? I want to be a lawyer for farmworkers.” Without knowing what the pre-requisites were to become an attorney (i.e., law school and bar exams), she went with it, included this experience in her admissions essay, and was eventually accepted to SCU.

Dolores describes her experience at SCU as political, which was different from her high school experience. She was involved with El Frente Estudiantil Chicano at SCU and participated in sit-ins and brought awareness to the campus community. She vividly

remembers helping the new Latina/o students transition to SCU through tutoring and providing advice on how to navigate the university. Dolores also noted feeling intimidated because she was almost always the only Latina in her classes.

I distinctly remember being in an English class and being afraid to say a sentence because everyone else sounded so smart. They all went to private schools...I thought I could talk but I'm sitting here afraid to open my mouth knowing that it's going to come out wrong. I got very intimidated by all these other people that were usually not in my community in Watsonville High School.

She credits older students with helping her get through these experiences of feeling different. For her, talking to older peers was comforting because they understood her experience. The small group of Latinas/os in her entering class were very friendly and they quickly became close because of El Frente Estudiantil. Although she felt it was only about a dozen of them, they developed bonds that to this day, 30 years later, are strong. In Addition, Dolores utilized the Latino Affairs department on the second floor of the Benson Memorial Building as her home base. She worked for the department and often sought support from her supervisor, who was also Latina. She admired her presence and the work she accomplished to keep Latino students moving forward. Overall, she noted that she had a positive experience at SCU, particularly with her new friends, the Latino Affairs Director, the professors and her older peers.

### **Esperanza**

Esperanza was born in México and due to health and necessity she immigrated to the United States when she was nine years old. Her parents immigrated a short time thereafter and settled in San José, California where all of her mother's siblings reside. When Esperanza

and her sister immigrated to the United States, they stayed with her aunt and uncle and began their educational journey. She began the 4<sup>th</sup> grade and remembers the difficult transition because she did not know English. She was learning a new system, a new school, and meeting new people. Although she found all the other subjects difficult to learn, she excelled in mathematics and her teachers honed in on her math skills and provided her with advanced material for her peer group.

Esperanza's parents always emphasized education ever since they were in México. Her father always had ambitions for her to pursue a career in banking but that slowly changed to becoming a *maestra* [teacher]. She admires her parents because her father never had a formal education and her mother went to school up to the fourth grade, yet they always encouraged her and her siblings to pursue an education. Esperanza remembers being angered because school information was not accessible to them due to the language barrier. She says, "They helped us by encouraging us, by being there spiritually and morally, but in terms of my parents hav[ing] access; that type of information was lacking." Esperanza's perception of education was that every transition occurred automatically.

I always thought that going to college was just like when you go to elementary school, you automatically at the end...are told what junior high to go to and then after junior high you are told what high school to go to. That's how I thought college worked.

However, it was not until she became actively involved with her parish that she understood how to navigate the educational system. Learning about the educational system is largely credited to the priest of her parish who took Esperanza under his wing and was able to guide her through the process. In addition, Esperanza's first visit to her high school guidance

counselor was not until two weeks before graduation. She began her college process at a local community college, where she spent six years taking courses until she transferred to SCU. Father Evaristo helped Esperanza navigate through her last couple of years at the community college and he insisted that one day she was going to be at SCU. He encouraged her to see a transfer counselor to inquire about her intentions to transfer. In her eyes, SCU was unreachable. Her counselor doubted her intelligence and suggested that she transfer to another institution. However, Father Evaristo insisted that she transfer to SCU because he believed in her and he knew that she had what it takes to be a member of the SCU community. In spite of Esperanza's low grade point average and applying three times, she was successfully admitted to the university.

While applying to the university, Esperanza became more involved with the church to the extent that it became like her backyard. She described her involvement saying, "I was involved in every youth group the parish had. I was a lector. I was an alter server...you name it, I was there!" Her experiences at the church developed her leadership skills she needed to survive at SCU and she considers her first school as this parish. Her family also participated with the church in other ways such as sponsors/padrinos for weddings, quinceañeras, and bautizos. Her parents took these roles seriously, particularly becoming *padrinos de bautizo* [baptismal sponsors]. She says, "I remember my parents just being so serious about it...you know making that commitment. They saw themselves as the second set of parents to that child." There was a sense of respect between the child's parents and the godparents around baptismal rites.

The church has been central for Esperanza in terms of gaining leadership skills and learning about the education system. Once Father Evaristo guided her to SCU, Esperanza

spoke about her student experience at the university. She shared that it took her approximately one year to feel comfortable at SCU.

Everything was positive but I was carrying with me that sense of shame that comes from you know being told, not necessarily directly, you know you are not smart enough by your teachers. I mean I always carried all that. So I always felt that the...institution was doing me a favor for having me here.

Esperanza avoided certain spaces across the university because she felt uncomfortable and felt those space were for the white students. However, there were spaces that made Esperanza feel welcomed. She noted that the Eastside Project and the Multicultural Center were safe spaces where she felt at home. She also noted that professors also provided spaces where she could vent and be validated by professors. She remembers Dr. Muñoz's huge, old, yellow therapy couch where Esperanza could take a break and carry on with the day. Another support mechanism that helped Esperanza through her SCU experience was the ongoing support from her parents and Father Evaristo.

My parents and Padre [Evaristo] had faith in me, when I did not have faith in myself and sometimes I think for many people that's all it takes...So students need to know that you have faith in their potential to succeed.

Esperanza also found this validation from her professors. As a sociology major she felt her courses were a form of empowerment. She describes her first gender course with Dr. Ranero 15 years ago as a jaw-dropping experience because she was talking about Esperanza's experience; therefore, sociology was liberating. Esperanza was also involved with the Eastside Project, which is now referred to as the Arrupe Center. The center was an important part of her experience because of the volunteer work with the surrounding community. This

experience not only empowered her but also other students that took part in service-learning opportunities. Esperanza was integral in bridging her parish community in San José with the university through an annual reenactment of the apparition of the Virgen de Guadalupe, which will be celebrating 15 years in 2011. Overall, Esperanza's undergraduate student experience at SCU was positive, which can be attributed to the professors, centers, and surrounding community that had encouraging faith in her success.

### **Isabel**

Isabel was born in México and immigrated to the United States as a child in 1979. Her family settled in Watsonville, California before moving to Santa Cruz, California when she began junior high school. She described her father as a traditional financial provider who worked in nurseries throughout her life. Isabel's mother passed away when she was young and as the oldest daughter oftentimes bared the responsibility of co-parenting. While growing up, Isabel's involvement with the church was very limited because her mother generally carried the responsibility of helping her siblings complete their holy sacraments. She does not remember her parents actively involved as *padrinos*; however, as an adult, she has served as a *madrina* for a baptism. She recalls how the relationship between the child's parents and the *padrinos* change after the sacrament. She says, "For them it becomes a way of like reinforcing that connection that [we] have as friends but now at a different level." In addition, in preparation for the baptism, the *padrinos* also purchased the child's attire and *medalla* [necklace].

Isabel remembers the ways her parents helped others, particularly family. She jokes that it was not until after she graduated from SCU that there wasn't someone sleeping on their family couch. Her mother helped in other ways such as writing letters for family

members.

I think my mom went to 6<sup>th</sup> grade in school and so that meant she could read and write. You know so like we always had uncles or cousins coming over wanting her to write letters because this is before...this instant money stuff.

Isabel also remembers hosting a number of her family members recently from México to stay for long periods of time. In addition, her mother would save money from her work and purchase goods to send to México.

Isabel was a good student throughout her K-12 education and remembers working hard to make sure she understood the material. At times it would take her several hours to complete an assignment because she constantly referred to the dictionary to learn words. She gained knowledge about college through her older brother, who would talk about going to college.

He was already saying, 'I want to go to Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.' So at this point I didn't even know where it was, but it was like okay, he's thinking about college...so I'm going to college too, you know?

This acquired knowledge helped prepare Isabel for her 8<sup>th</sup> grade counseling session with the high school guidance counselor. She studied a booklet, which contained information on the A-G requirements for the University of California.

I met with him, he was actually very surprised at what I knew and so he asked me why [I] wanted to go to college. I was like well my brother is interested in going to college and so I am interested in doing that and I think he was very surprised [of] the detail of the requirements stuff that I had gotten into. But in my head when he asked me, I'm like well if I didn't go and look at it, you weren't going to tell me?



Isabel's brother provided some college guidance and her parents also expressed support for education as a younger child. They often equated education to having more opportunities and made it very explicit as an important endeavor in their household. Since Isabel's mother was primarily involved with her and her siblings' education, her father took more of a hands-off approach. Isabel was a hardworking student and in high school was enrolled in Advanced Placement (Oliver & Shapiro) courses, so she felt she was able to navigate the college going process easier.

Isabel learned about SCU through a support staff member in high school who worked with Latino students and was a recent UCLA graduate. Unfortunately, his time at her high school was short lived since he took a position in migrant education in a neighboring town. However, one day during her junior year he went to her house and introduced himself to her father. Since it was her junior year, he was mindful to encourage her to start applying to colleges.

I believe he's the one who brought me the little brochure. 'If you haven't thought about Santa Clara, here's some information.' I think to some extent he felt guilty having left us after only one year and he had made connections with some of the different students and I think especially for myself he was definitely like, '[Isabel], you have a lot of potential, you can do it, just keep going!'

Isabel had little knowledge of SCU's physical location, only noting that it was near San José. She had ambitions of going to a location where there were a lot of Latinos. She says, "You know I was like, Texas! I was so clueless...you know my experience in Santa Cruz is so different from Watsonville. I just knew I wanted to go where there were other Latinos."

Isabel referred to her experience being different in Watsonville because there was a larger

population of Latinos than that of Santa Cruz.

Isabel did not apply to any Texas colleges/universities and applied to two public University of California institutions and two private universities, one of which was SCU. She remembers that her choice heavily relied on the financial aid packages of each institution. SCU provided the best financial package and she decided to accept and enroll. Isabel's student experience at SCU was a challenge from the very beginning. While Santa Cruz is approximately a 35-minute drive to SCU, she did not have the transportation to move to SCU. Once Isabel arrived to campus, she recalls her experience as "Santa Cruz to the n<sup>th</sup> power." She felt culture shock and remembers the intensity. However, she felt that her move from Watsonville to Santa Cruz prepared her well for navigating the new space. She noted the wealth, primarily affluent White students. What retained Isabel was the social network she developed while at the university with other people who identified with similar experiences. She found the Multicultural Center and MEChA-Frente as places where she could be herself. Reflecting on her experience, she expressed that her peers challenged the university on the way they practiced diversity, specifically challenging them to practice the rhetoric they were espousing of "Excellence through Diversity." Isabel felt that the university could have done more to advocate for students of color particularly in the area of retention. Isabel remembers working 26 hours a week and being a full-time student, only to give the check right back to the university to pay for her tuition. In addition, she felt some of her courses were hostile. She spoke specifically about discussing issues of social justice in class.

I always felt it was a responsibility to speak up, to raise the issues and concerns that other people in the classroom weren't raising. And knowing when you did raise them, you would probably get 10-15 people that were going to challenge you on whatever

you are saying. So I think it was an experience of just always having to be really over prepared.

The majority of the time, Isabel was the only Latina in her courses and often had to fend for herself. She also shared that connecting with faculty of color made an impact on her experience. Many faculty members she interacted with took it upon themselves to engage with her and her peers beyond the classroom. In addition, faculty members of color were usually called upon for support if there were issues between the Multicultural Center or students and the university.

As previously mentioned, Isabel's involvement with MEChA and the Multicultural Center was pivotal to completing her degree at SCU. She shared that throughout her experience at SCU, MEChA alumni would come back to share their student experiences.

I know that we would have alumni that were connected to MEChA returning [to] the MCC as well, to talk to us about their struggles being at the university and just how invaluable it was for them too. One person you know I remember said, 'You know you are going to be surprised how well Santa Clara prepares you for the REAL world.' And you don't want to think about it like that because you don't want to think that the world continues being that way...but it does, it [SCU] really does prepare you.

Years after her graduation from SCU, Isabel reflected on her student experience. While she was a student, she could not wait to get out. However, she has returned to campus a couple of times and feels really proud to have made it through and is proud of her experience at SCU.

## Josue

Josue is the eldest of four boys and was raised in East San José, California. His father and mother were born in the Northern California and graduated from high school in San José. Educationally, Josue attended a Catholic private elementary and middle school until the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Much of Josue's upbringing revolved around the church since it was expected as a part of attending private school for families to volunteer at different church related activities, such as community service and attend mass regularly. He remembered attending mass every Sunday and fighting with his brother over who would put the money in the basket. Josue completed all of his holy sacraments at the same parish and later played an active role as a Eucharist minister and also helped with confirmation courses. His parents also took an active role in the church serving as *padrinos* for different religious events such as baptisms, quinceañeras, and weddings. In this role, his parents would give the goddaughter/godson religious gifts, such as crucifixes and plaques with different poems and/or scriptures. However, not all of the sponsorship was religious.

Say if they were the nino/nina, they would buy the cake or you know buy the alcohol or whatever. It is like everyone would kind of chip and buy a different piece to make sure the celebration could happen. You know if everyone kind of shared responsibilities, it's not as big of a load on the person who had the kid going through the ceremony.

Josue also remembered his parents giving in other ways such as hosting different family members that needed a home and helping family friends who were going through difficult phases in their lives. In the moment, Josue acknowledged the cross-generational nature of giving. He said, "My grandparents also would always take in a lot of people. You know and I

think that's where my mom got it from as well." He also remembers his uncle as being a leader in supporting and giving through his monetary support to the schools Josue and his siblings attended as children. In fact, Josue learned about SCU from his uncle because he is an alumnus of the university. As a child, Josue would hear his uncle mention Santa Clara, but he did not understand what it was until he was in 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade when one of his class projects was to build a mission. Since the mission and the university are on the same property, his mother encouraged him to contact his uncle to give him insight for the purpose of his project.

Josue attended a public high school in the eastside of San José and remembers his parents instilling the importance of higher education.

It was almost automatic after [that] after high school we would be going to college of some kind. [I] didn't necessarily know if it would be like a university, a junior college, but for us like high school was definitely not the end. For me, I think it had a lot to do with them not having that opportunity so they wanted us to definitely take advantage of that.

Although there were not many college preparation classes at his high school, he sought out and enrolled in the Advanced Placement courses offered. He also observed that many of his peers that attended private school with him in middle school went onto private high schools, such as Bellarmine College Preparatory, Mitty, St. Francis, Notre Dame, and Presentation high schools.

Once Josue was in high school, his uncle provided more insight about SCU. He would share stories about his student experience, like living in Swig Hall and his involvement with MEChA in its infancy years at the university.

He would talk about you know some of the same things that you and I faced when we were there. Just how the culture shock and how there was you know obviously blatant racism toward those Chicano students and you know the few African American students that were there...Other advice was just more like academic, like make sure you get to know the deans and mentorship advice.

Josue applied to two Jesuit universities in California and decided to attend SCU. The main factors that influenced his decision were that SCU provided a better financial aid package, the university was close to home, and he would be able to stay close to his younger brothers and help coach their sports and support them along their educational process.

Once Josue began his SCU experience, his uncle's previous advice and stories became validated by his own student experience. In his first year at the university, Josue experienced the culture shock of a new environment in a number of levels.

[O]ne was just a huge disparity between affluent resources versus not a lot of affluent resources coming from East San José...you know coming up into a class with [an] 18 year old driving a brand new BMW.

However, Josue spoke highly of his experience living in Unity House, which is affinity housing based on multicultural living. In addition, his experience with the Multicultural Center served as a refuge and allowed him to connect with other students and student organizations housed under the center. One of the events that impacted his experience at SCU was a movement called Unity 3. One of the demands of this movement called for the Multicultural Center's relocation to a central space on campus.

[Unity 3] was something big just because it was the first time that we were a part of some like real change that affected the campus wide community. Not just affected

myself or wasn't just for me and it was just a bunch of different people coming together for the common cause.

Josue felt that many of the conversations and debates of social justice that happened at that time are still happening today and in different communities.

Academically, Josue felt SCU provided a strong education; however, he also felt that he was typically one of a handful of students of color in class. Oftentimes, he was expected to speak for his entire race/ethnicity whenever an issue relating to people of color was raised in class. Josue took courses and was drawn to professors that were not a part of his business curriculum. He took a lot of courses in ethnic studies and felt he was more connected to the professors and could relate to the subject matter over the courses related to his marketing major.

Overall, Josue enjoyed his student experience because of the connections he was able to make with students and a number of student organizations affiliated with the Multicultural Center. In retrospect, he was happy with the size of the university because it was small enough to get around and felt there was enough to do on campus. He also liked the gradual physical growth of the campus with the recent additions of the library, communication building, and the Pat Malley Fitness and Recreation Center. Lastly, Josue enjoyed the fact that the university was private and followed a Jesuit tradition, which reminded him of his upbringing.

### **Karina**

Karina was born and raised in San José, California and is the second eldest of three children. Her mother was born in México and immigrated to the U.S. when she was 15 years old and her father was born in New Mexico; however, both parents have spent the majority

of their lives in San José. Karina describes her parents as active members in the community and participated in the local Chicano movement. In addition, they were involved in the development of San José's *biblioteca latinoamericana* [Latin American Library]. Karina reflected that she learned about the injustices in the local community and the world because of her parents' civic engagement. Her father completed college and later received a master's degree in social work. Her mother also attended college but was unable to complete her degree and instead went to care for the family. Karina's parents worked diligently throughout their lives to provide Karina and her siblings with a great education. Karina attended private schools throughout her entire education including her bachelors and masters degrees.

Karina and her parents are also active with their parish. Karina's mother works at the parish as a bookkeeper and also volunteers at the church in her time off. Her parents have assisted with marriage preparation courses, youth groups, and also donated monetary funds during Sunday mass. Karina and her parents were active participants in community service, since it was a familial practice coming from attending private Catholic schools. Another part of attending a private school was knowledge of fundraising. Karina shared her experiences of actively fundraising for her high school and because of her involvement with student council. In addition, she taught Sunday school called Faith Sharing for approximately three years. Karina also participated in quinceañeras as a teen and remembers her parents serving in the role of *padrinos* for baptisms, quinceañeras, and weddings. Karina expressed that her parents served as *padrinos* for more of the symbolic cultural offerings like the *lazo* and baptisms. When she got married, she had *padrinos* for the *lazo* as well; however, she was not too comfortable having the social aspects of her wedding celebration being sponsored.

They [Karina's parents] were the *padrinos* of the *lazo* at a wedding...they have a



couple of godchildren; you know they were padrinos for a baptism. I [had] padrinos for the *lazo* at my wedding too...but we never did padrinos of the limo, the padrinos of the *flores* [flowers] or the you know whatever.

Karina's family also helped their immediate and extended family in numerous ways. She remembers her parents sending her grandmother money for general support and also to help maintain her house. Her parents would rarely send remittances to México; however, Karina remembers a few times where her mother would send money to family members who helped raise her in México. In addition, her family would host extended family in their home for short periods of time.

Karina's first introduction to SCU was through her brother who is an alumnus of the university and she vividly remembers her visit to the university with the family during orientation. Although her brother did not necessarily advise her with the application process, he did talk to Karina about what it was like to be a student at SCU and to live on campus and the academic rigor. She said, "[He] would talk to me about you know, what living in the dorm was like or would talk with me about professors that were really hard or professors that were easier..." Karina applied to a number of universities in California; however, the reasons why she chose SCU was because her brother attended the university and also because of SCU's prestige.

Karina's student experience was much different from her brother's student experience at SCU. One of the main reasons was because she was a commuter student her entire time as a student. Though she first thought her transition would be easy because she was going from one private school to another, the reality set in as a challenge.

It was hard at Santa Clara that first year, especially. I doubted a lot about should I be

here or should I not be here...I felt like being at a private [high] school should have prepared me a little bit more for like being the only Latina in lots of classes...If I were to go back, I would have definitely stayed in the dorm...because you can build a community so much faster and I saw that with my sister and I saw that with my brother as well.

As a teacher and an administrator, Karina encourages all of her students to stay in the residence halls in order to easily build a community. She often commuted with another classmate from high school who attended SCU as a form of support. One of the pivotal moments in Karina's SCU experience occurred when she participated in a study abroad to México. During the trip she felt that she was able to get to know her political science advisor better and further develop academically. She said, "[It] was a big turning point for me, doing the study abroad at Santa Clara...from there on out I felt much more comfortable getting involved with things, especially with ethnic studies." Karina expressed that her professors in the ethnic studies program and her advisor made her feel validated, academically. It was often the case that she was the only Latina in her political science courses.

It was hard for me to participate especially my political science classes and that was my major...it was hard for me to raise my hand in class, even if it felt like I knew what was happening or I had something to offer...There were people who were super confident like in almost every class. I could pick out who was going to respond, sometimes they were men... and it made me feel really not confident.

Karina's advisor Dr. Cardenas and her ethnic studies professor, Dr. Muñoz are the professors that she felt comfortable with since she felt validated in the sense that they made her feel like her contributions mattered. Through her interaction and engagement with these professors,

she was able to work on independent research projects and was presented with an award for one of her papers that dealt with race and ethnicity.

Karina was involved with student organizations and service learning as an undergraduate student. One of her memories as a student was her engagement with the Eastside Project, now called the Arrupe Center. Typically, some courses require students to participate in a service-learning component with the Arrupe Center. Karina remembers volunteering with the center every year and being placed with different community organizations throughout San José and assisting with English as a Second Language (ESL) and citizenship courses. In addition, she has fond memories of the Multicultural Center and supporting their cause and the leadership. Overall, Karina had mixed experiences as a student at SCU. She enjoyed interacting with faculty on an academic front and felt it was important to be engaged with the community throughout her undergraduate experience.

### **Mateo**

Mateo was born and raised in San José, California in what he described as an immigrant, low-income, and monolingual Spanish speaking household. His parents both immigrated to the United States as teenagers and his father worked as a cook and a janitor throughout Mateo's life. Mateo also started working at an early age to help his family financially, whether it was collecting aluminum cans, washing windows, or painting houses. Both of his parents were formally educated in México, but they were not able to attend school beyond the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Since his parents were monolingual during his childhood, Mateo would often have to serve as a translator for them.

While in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, Mateo became familiarized with gang activity when his brother joined a gang. As a result Mateo became concerned for his own safety and began carrying a

knife. By the time he was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, he was attending gang meetings and started hanging out with his brother's gang. A turning point for Mateo was when he was stabbed in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and asked his father to transfer him to a high school in Santa Clara that was closer to his work. Mateo felt that if he continued onto the high school he was assigned to after the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, he would only get into more trouble. His father worked at SCU at the time as a janitor and a Jesuit Brother told his father about a private Jesuit high school where Mateo would receive a scholarship and enroll in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Mateo experienced a lot of shock when he began his studies at the private high school.

They offered me a scholarship...so I started my Jesuit career in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade and it was a big culture shock, ethnicity [and] class shock, academic shock, I mean it was night and day shock where every teacher gave homework!

Mateo realized that everyone surrounding him had a dream for him to further his education and pursue a degree at SCU. His parents always encouraged him to do better and expected him to go to school and bring home good grades. However, because of their limited English and unfamiliarity to the college-going process, Mateo was often had to navigate study skills, homework, college, and financial aid on his own.

Mateo said that he gets his work ethic from his father and his compassion from his mother. He views his mother as someone who is selfless and would always help others, particularly women. She would assist them with finding employment, taking care of their children free of charge, transportation and overall *consejos* [advice]. He said, "You know, a lady one time dropped an infant off at my mom's doorstep just because she knew that my mom was such a giving person." She would tell Mateo that even though they were low-income, to always give to the homeless – it was always about helping other people. His

family was not too active with the church other than going to church on Sundays and giving one or two dollars to the collection basket. On occasion, Mateo's mother assisted with preparing *recuerdos* [party favors] for different celebrations (e.g., baptisms, quinceañeras, or weddings). Mateo's parents practiced giving in a number of ways and he vividly remembers his parents sending money to México to support his elderly grandparents with daily necessities, such as a home, medications, and clothing. Mateo described it as saving money throughout the year so that when his family went to México, they could give it away.

Mateo's work ethic during his high school career provided him with the persistence needed to push through all of the shock he experienced in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. When it came to applying to colleges, Mateo applied to 5 colleges/universities, was initially wait-listed at SCU and later admitted. He first learned about SCU through his father, who worked as a janitor at the university since Mateo was in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. He remembered his father would help set up the graduation stage and would see the families attend their students' ceremony. Mateo imagined his father thinking that this would never be his experience to see his child participate in a graduation at SCU. As a child, Mateo always viewed SCU as a farfetched kind of world where he only witnessed Caucasian people walking through campus – it was untouchable. However, the Jesuits began to talk to Mateo's father on a personal level, asking him about his needs, his wishes, and his dreams for his kids.

[T]hey started bringing up this opportunity about Bellarmine and Bellarmine would lead to Santa Clara University, and he was all for it. [He] didn't really know the process but he was like, 'Sure help us out.' So the Jesuits kind of guided us in that process.

Mateo's reaction to his acceptance to SCU was like an unbelievable dream becoming reality.

He now carried his parents' hopes and dreams on his shoulders.

Mateo began his student experience at SCU only to be met with judgment because of the way he dressed. The first time he walked into the cafeteria he was approached by a staff member, inquiring why he was there as if he did not have the right to be present on campus grounds. He felt alienated by the experience and even as he proceeded to sit and eat, no one would sit with him, not even his Latina/o peers. Mateo felt invisible and this caused him to become more guarded. During most of his student experience he did not allow anyone the opportunity for friendship and resorted to his old gang identity, because at least there he was not invisible.

Mateo serendipitously found an outlet of survival through his academic major in sociology. He was searching for a major that would allow him to study whatever he chose to study.

And it was until I went to Sociology 101 class that I really fell in love with sociology because they say you can choose to study whatever you want. So all of the sudden, I was like I want to study gangs. That's all I know, that's all my friends. Why is everyone incarcerated and I am the only one who is out? So I really wanted to study me, I said I wanted to study my friends, I want to study my neighborhood, I want to study my community and that is why I fell in love with sociology.

Mateo felt like the sociology department was supportive of him and his interests. He noted that if a five-page paper was due, he would turn in twelve. While others expected research papers, the majority of the faculty members welcomed the content and were appreciative of his work. Mateo was not involved in student organizations as an undergraduate because his main priorities were closely tied to helping communities, particularly his neighborhood

issues. What he disliked about SCU was the lack of racial/ethnic diversity. Oftentimes, Mateo was the only Latino in his class and it did not make him feel connected, or welcomed for that matter.

Even when you walk in the mission say a mass...I don't get the Latino feel in mass. It's all from a Caucasian perspective...so when you walk on campus, I don't feel my culture...So I felt like an outsider even though I am grateful that I got a chance to attend school there but I always felt like an outsider.

Mateo did however enjoy the service part of SCU and was appreciative that the university saw the whole person from its philosophy of its Jesuit mission. SCU introduced him to what his passion is today – serving the community. Mateo was connected to a person through a Jesuit Brother who introduced Mateo to the nonprofit field. Mateo has taken what he has learned from this individual and developed his career in the nonprofit sector. Overall, Mateo's experience was one of isolation; however, he found his voice through his academics and his newfound appreciation for the community work.

### **Pedro**

Pedro comes from a medium sized immigrant family who moved frequently throughout his childhood to follow the crop. His family has lived in Texas, New Mexico and settled in Colorado where his father found employment at a dairy and his mother worked as a school janitor. In Colorado, Pedro and his family lived in a small community where Pedro continued his educational journey. In school, he was often ridiculed because of the way he dressed and the way he spoke.

I guess I was lost as a migrant child, I mean in a sense *de que* [that] you would always be told certain things and you spoke a certain way and you dressed a certain way.

When I got to school, those certain ways didn't become the norm and it was when you got ridiculed for most of it.

This experience caused Pedro to shift his way of thinking of his own identity. He said, "I hated who I was for a while and I hated being around my family because they spoke another language and that wasn't accepted in this community." Pedro tried his best to fit in by changing how he acted, dressed, and took more challenging college prep classes, in which he excelled. A turning point in his education was when a teacher told him, "You know, it is ok to be ambitious but kids like [you] are mostly carpenters and mechanics." From that point on, Pedro took his education seriously and graduated top of his class.

There have been a number of people that have come across Pedro's life that have helped him and his family establish themselves in a stable environment. Pedro reflected on a priest who taught him the value of what it meant to give back through giving him the opportunity to volunteer with church and community activities (i.e., food and clothing drives, holiday dinners, labor, etc.). The priest was also instrumental in helping Pedro's family gain access to basic needs like food and assisted them with economic resources. Other church-related activities also included his family's participation as padrinos for quinceañeras and weddings. Oftentimes, the participation and sponsorship was reciprocal and a general part of building community within the culture.

Yeah, I mean we always [participated], it's the *cultura* [culture]. If you help somebody out, [they] will return the favor, hopefully. So putting the money in for quinceañeras, the bautizos – that was always there. There was not only that, it was also the prep time and coming together to do all the centerpieces...or the food. I still love just coming together and being there as a family and interacting with each other.



Pedro has also participated as a padrino for weddings and baptisms. He characterizes his participation as mimicking his parents' actions, but also is aware of the responsibility of being a padrino.

Pedro and his parents' giving practices extended beyond the church. One way of displaying this practice was through sending remittances to family in México. However, to Pedro it almost became an expectation from the community in México due to the perceived notion equating the north with prosperity and monetary wealth.

It's always the perceived notion that if you are in the North, you are automatically wealthy and I could see ourselves struggling to make it, while we were still trying to send some money down. I would be frustrated *porque* [because] it was kind of an expectation [to send money] and then if you didn't do it you were a hypocrite or *el creido* [aloof] type of thing.

Pedro's parents continue to send remittances; however, not as much as in the past. Now, they concentrate their time through giving locally and helping those who are newcomers. This included introducing newcomers to the community, which also often included assisting with finding employment, clothing, and a temporary living space until they transitioned to their own *hogares* [homes].

After completing high school, Pedro decided to pursue a degree in engineering at the University of Northern Colorado. However, that ended after his first year at the university because of its decision to cut the engineering program. At this time of ambiguity, Pedro met an SCU alumnus that spoke to him about SCU and helped Pedro through the application process. Had it not been for the SCU alumnus that encouraged him to apply to SCU, Pedro would not have applied to the university given the price of tuition.

At this point, Pedro did not realize that SCU was in California and not in Colorado. He was accepted to SCU and decided to attend with the blessing of his parents. He vividly remembers his father helping him drive to California.

I still remember the drive because we came over the valley in Sacramento and my dad started crying...he was like, ‘You know, many years ago I was in this valley picking *melones* [melons] in Yolo. I would have never thought I would be bringing a child to college in this area.

Once Pedro arrived to SCU, he was faced with another challenge – no housing. Pedro’s transition to SCU was challenging due to the fact that there was a shortage of on campus housing. Pedro slept in his truck for three days until one day he walked into the Multicultural Center where MEChA-Frente was having a *concilio* [council]. He explained his situation with the students and one student, which later took on a pseudo-brother role, offered Pedro housing at his family’s home in San José until his housing situation was figured out.

Pedro’s student experience at SCU was difficult, academically and socially. Academically, Pedro felt like he was not prepared and often found himself with tutors, in the library, or in search for supportive faculty/staff mentors. Pedro continued with his major in civil engineering until he began an internship in his field. Through his internship experience, Pedro questioned his career direction because it was the antithesis of working with people, something he has always done. He approached his advisor regarding his feelings and the advisor suggested he think about who and where he wanted to be and that everything would fall into place. This advice carried him through his academic career at SCU as he chose to major in business economics, while becoming more socially engaged as a student.

Pedro was actively involved with student organizations while he attended SCU. He

was a member of most of the Chicana/o Latina/o student organizations such as MEChA- El Frente, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE), Latino Business Student Associations (LBSA), and Chicanos and Latinos in Health Education (CHE). The Multicultural Center was also his second home. He said, “It is where you would go and hang out and replenish before you had to go back in the sea of whiteness.” It was also a place where one could interact with like-minded people and talk about some of the frustrations they are experiencing as students, such as being the only Latina/o student. Overall, Pedro enjoyed the sense of community that was felt at SCU. He reflected that he met a lot of great friends and many amazing individuals who he could trust and call on to be there for him.

### **Teresa**

Teresa was born and raised in San José, California and is the youngest of three siblings. Her parents were born in México and immigrated to the United States shortly after getting married and became permanent residents when Teresa was nine years old. Teresa’s childhood was presented with many obstacles that continued throughout her young adulthood. She grew up in a low-income household with an abusive father. After her parents separated, her mother relied on social services (i.e., food stamps and cash aid) to support the family, including a sister with Lupus, a chronic inflammatory disease. Teresa also grew up in a low-income Latino neighborhood and was bussed to a nearby predominantly white middle school.

Teresa and her family were actively involved with the Catholic church while she was growing up. During their hardship, they depended on their faith and the church to overcome adversity. At times her family would not have financial resources to complete their rent and the parish’s priest and other parishioners provided the necessary support to survive. Teresa’s

family also volunteered at the church and participated as catechists. They would help with an annual carnival called a “kermess,” which helps the church raise funds. Her family would also donate money to purchase food items for the fundraiser. Her parents and siblings would also serve as padrinos for different occasions, such as quinceañeras, weddings, and baptisms. Teresa specifically participated as a *madrina* [godmother/sponsor] of the wedding cake cutter set typically called *la pala y el cuchillo*.

Although Teresa’s family was low-income, they always found ways to send remittances to her grandmother and aunts who live in México, mainly for medical supplies and general support. Her parents also hosted family members at their home for many years throughout her childhood.

Teresa would characterize her education as one of persistence and motivation. Throughout her education, she was tracked to take advanced courses, which led to college prep courses in high school. She said, “It’s the healthy kind of competition that sometimes motivates me to do better.” Teresa had not thought about attending college until she met a student in her high school folklorico group that motivated her to look into applying. She had not heard of or visited SCU until an advisor (who is also an SCU alumnus) for their high school Latino club facilitated a retreat at the SCU Multicultural Center. She instantly knew that SCU was the university she wanted to attend for her undergraduate studies.

It was a beautiful campus [snapping fingers], it was close to home and my family is very important to me so I didn’t want to be far away...Money was an obvious challenge but because we were low-income, I got scholarships. I really do credit my friend for influencing me...it wasn’t like she told me, ‘I think you should go.’ But I think there was just something about what she was doing that appealed to me and that

made me realize that I wanted to do this.

Teresa credits her college going decision to the friend she met in the folklorico group and her introduction to SCU to the alumnus who was also her advisor. She said, “Exposing us to Santa Clara was great. I mean some of us had never been here or knew that this campus existed.” Her advisor also wrote her letter of recommendation for admission to the university and helped edit her essay. Teresa applied to a couple of schools that were in the local vicinity; however, her first choice was SCU where she was admitted. The day she was admitted was especially significant because it was the day of her patron saint.

Teresa began her student experience at SCU and purposely lived in Unity House, which was the multicultural-themed residence hall on campus. Although she lived in this type of space, Teresa was caught off guard once she stepped outside of her living environment. She said, “I was really surprised by the majority of Caucasian students and it was interesting because after being in a diverse high school for four years, I really felt like I was intimidated all over again.” Teresa recalls the intimidation she felt in class and was unsure how to structure her study time because she did not have to put too much effort to do well in high school. It was also challenging for her to balance her family obligations with her academics. Academically, Teresa began her studies as a psychology major and then changed her major her sophomore year to sociology. She remembers loving her introductory sociology class because she learned about herself in that course and the sociology courses that followed. Her major professor was also phenomenal and very supportive throughout Teresa’s time at the university. She recalls taking her advisor’s social stratification course and writing journal entries about her life. Through those journal entries, Teresa and other students participated in authoring different chapters for an edited book based on their

experiences as first-generation college students.

Teresa lived on campus two of the four years at SCU and became socially engaged in different student organizations and activities. She reflected that her participation in these activities made her feel like she was a part of the greater campus community.

I think at some point I just realized... I am here and I am a smart student. I have an opinion and I can voice that, so at some point I really kind of gave way to my own opinions and being able to voice them actively.

Teresa joined a Latina-based sorority and participated with three other Latino student organizations. Regardless of her major, through these organizations like Chicanos and Latinos in Health Education (CHE) and Chicanos and Latinos in Engineering and Sciences (ChALESS), she was able to attend professional conferences where she could further her intellectual development. In addition, she also served as the Director of the Youth Empowerment Program through the Multicultural Center.

As a student, Teresa enjoyed the quality of education SCU had to offer and the evolution of the university. SCU tries its best to have an open mind about issues that they may not be too savvy about and she believes it is rooted to Jesuit Catholic traditions. Although she believes SCU was not as diverse as other schools, she believes the Latino population at the university was very supportive and community oriented.

I think...in some way our experiences are different...some positive, some negative, but I think generally speaking my experience here was good. I think you make the most of your education and I really try my best to do that here...I have good memories and I've met a lot of good people.

Overall, Teresa enjoyed her experience at SCU on an academic and social level. Her academic involvement with her major and professors led her to take on minors in anthropology and ethnic studies. In addition, the faculty members in her department were helpful and provided her with excellent support. Socially, her experience and involvement with different student organizations gave her the opportunity to advocate and become engaged through different disciplinary areas. Although she has graduated, she continues to engage with her former professors and students on campus.

### Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide the context of the personal lives of the participants in this study through sharing reflections from their childhood, educational experiences, family giving practices, college awareness, and how they experienced SCU as students. All of the participants, with the exception of Karina, were first-generation college students. In addition, the majority of the participants had at least one parent who immigrated to the United States. This presented many challenges for the participants, as they were the first in their immediate family to attend a four-year institution and navigated the college system themselves or with minimal guidance. However, through various social networks (i.e., parents, SCU alumni, church, community, etc.) they were able to find the resources needed to succeed.

The participants of this study experienced Latina/o philanthropy at an early age through witnessing the actions of their family members. The majority of the participants' families participated with religious activities and participated through serving as padrinos/sponsors and/or volunteering with their respective parish. Every participant's family

also provided some form of support to immediate or extended family, such as temporary living spaces, remittances, and/or employment.

Lastly, the participants' student experience at SCU can be characterized as positive, yet challenging at the same time. Some participants experienced isolation as they were the only Latina/o in their courses or suffered from imposter's syndrome where sometimes they questioned their legitimacy as students of the campus community. However, all of the alumni who participated in this study were able to engage with phenomenal peers, faculty, and staff, which made their SCU experience memorable.

Chapter 5 presents the findings from this study. The four themes that emerged from this study include: (a) Latina/o alumni as university ambassadors; (b) careers, community, and giving; (c) Latina/o alumni as targeted givers; and (d) competence, conscience, and compassion: the importance of the university's vision and mission.



## CHAPTER 5. FINDINGS

This chapter presents the research findings from this study, which is guided by the following research questions: (a) What are Latina/o graduates' perceptions of how their alma mater frames giving; (b) how do Latina/o alumni enact giving; and (c) how does the alma mater benefit from Latina/o alumni contributions? After a thorough data analysis, four themes emerged: (a) Latina/o alumni as university ambassadors; (b) careers, community, and giving; (c) Latina/o alumni as targeted givers; and (d) competence, conscience, and compassion: the importance of the university's vision and mission. Each theme highlights the different ways Latina/o alumni approach giving. This study is also guided by Yosso's (2006) Community Cultural Wealth Model, which will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

### Theme 1: Latina/o alumni as university ambassadors

Earlier research asserted that minority alumni's participation was negatively impacted if they did not have a fond experience at their alma mater (Hay, 1990). The SCU Latina/o alumni in this study all had their challenges navigating the institution, socially and academically. Oftentimes, these experiences led to isolation and feelings of not belonging on SCU's campus. Yet, these Latina/o alumni were resilient and found a community of resources that allowed them to continue and eventually graduate from the institution. The following theme highlights the participants' student experience and the support mechanisms in place that assisted them throughout their experience, which gradually influenced their decisions to become ambassadors for the university.

#### **Student experiences**

The participants in this study have had mixed student experiences at SCU. The majority of the participants indicated that they were first-generation college students. For

these students, SCU was a foreign space on an academic and social level. Pedro indicated that SCU felt normal for students that came from wealthy families. He said, “If you are from a wealthy family then everything feels normal and you are not really challenged to step outside of it unless you want an alternative spring break experience or something.” In addition, he felt that the speed of the quarter system was challenging.

Many of the participants also felt the isolation of being the only Latina/o in the classroom and often felt intimidated to talk amongst their peers. Dolores felt isolated because everyone looked so different than the community she came from. She said, “You came in feeling a little isolated because everyone looked so different than you...even economically. Perception-wise they were different but actually on a one-to-one basis it was very positive.” Isabel always felt like she had to be more prepared than her white peers and often visited her professors’ office hours in order to gain additional support and feedback. On one of her visits to office hours, a professor commented that he knew when students were not prepared, insinuating she was not prepared for a class presentation.

So when I went to talk to him he was very much like you know well I know when people aren’t prepared and I felt that I was taking it very personal...so I just made it my mission that I was just going to make the best presentation that next day that he would ever see. I think I did and I remember I went in there and I had like charts and all this stuff...I was like now if you have any doubt about me being prepared...and I think he was very shocked and was kind of like, ‘ahhh you didn’t have to do all that, you know.’

Isabel felt that she always had to be on top of her academics because she did not want to be known as an underachieving student.

Some alumni participants in this study attended SCU during campus and community protests. The protests were a result of social movements, political initiatives, and campus politics. For example, Chato began his SCU career at the height of the Chicano Movement and in the midst of the Vietnam War. He was politically involved with different community initiatives and those efforts influenced him and other students to initiate El Frente Estudiantil Chicano, now known as Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán – El Frente (MEChA- El Frente) – the oldest student organization serving Chicana/o and Latina/o students at SCU.

Controversial propositions such as California proposition 187, which prohibited undocumented immigrants from utilizing services like public education, healthcare, and social services, and California proposition 209, which eliminated affirmative action, were highly debated topics in the community and the classroom. Isabel debated whether to choose political science or anthropology as a major, but found that either would be political in nature.

I think in the classroom my idea initially why I had chosen anthropology over political science was like null and void because it didn't matter. You know, even in anthropology it was consistently when there were issues that were brought up around you know social justice like current social justice issues so at that point like you know I think it was like 187 and 209 like all of those different things that were happening around us. There were usually you know debates in the classroom or even in the literature we would read and you know feeling honestly that I always had to be prepared when I was in the classroom and ready to speak up. Like I don't think I ever thought about it as a choice.

Like Isabel, many participants were typically prepared for class and discussions, but unlike Isabel these other participants generally stayed silent due to intimidation.

Over the years, SCU has also experienced a number of student movements. A couple of participants were involved with student activism, particularly as it dealt with the student resources and/or the Multicultural Center. Josue was a senior when a student movement on SCU's campus took shape. At the time, the Multicultural Center was located in the Graham 100 basement, where time after time the center would fall victim to leaks and become inhabited with unwanted pests and rodents.

At the time [Unity 3] would seem to us as a no brainer. Look, we are in this leaky, dirty basement and we think that there should be an opportunity to move out and have the resources that these students deserve. There was a lot of resistance [from] other students and faculty would take the time to fight against it making that a little degrading.

Once the protests began, the students involved with the protests felt the resistance and challenges from their peers, some faculty, and the university administration.

The movement, called Unity 3 (SCU Multicultural Center, 2011) demanded the following:

1. MCC was moved from the basement of Graham to comparable accommodations by Winter 2000 (Shapell).
2. The Provost commits to supporting the Ethnic Studies Faculty's efforts to finalize a strategic plan by June 1999. The Vice Provost for Multicultural Education will work closely with the Ethnic Studies Faculty to develop joint faculty appointments with

- other academic departments. The program may develop into a department provided that it meets the criteria and follows the procedures required to do so. The Vice Provost will work with students to assure their participation in faculty recruitment and curricular design and development.
3. The services and programs offered by the Drahmman Center, the Center for Multicultural Learning, and the Counseling Center will provide the functions previously offered by the Student Resource Center to meet with the needs to targeted populations. (para. 3)

The movement sparked days of peaceful protests and involved a number of students from Multicultural Center and members of the campus community. Although Karina did not hold a leadership position at the Multicultural Center, she remembers the Multicultural Center's move from Graham to Shappell Lounge and shared her thoughts and input with the director during the time of protest.

The participants in the study faced several challenges while navigating their way through their SCU experience. Events due to social movements, political initiatives, and campus politics challenged the participants' success in a number of ways. However, the resiliency of the Latina/o alumni in this study was sustained through different support mechanisms, included student organizations, centers, faculty, and support offices. These campus community spaces and individuals provided the support necessary to successfully graduate from the university.

### Support mechanisms

**Student organizations.** The majority of the participants, with the exception of Mateo were generally active with political, social, academic, and professional student organizations on campus. Their involvement with the student organization provided a community where they could share their experiences and develop socially and intellectually. Less than a dozen students (including Chato) created el Frente Estudiantil Chicano on SCU's campus in the late 1960s. Since then, this student organization has developed and has been a critical vehicle of support, even for the Latina/o alumni participants in this study. Dolores participated in El Frente, while she was a student in the early 1980s and she remembers the different events that took place where students of color were able to build a community. She said, "So we would have our own dances with the Black Student Union...and others came, but it was mostly us, which was very different music than the Bronco student dances." Mentorship from older students had a positive impact to assist students like Dolores to navigate SCU's educational system.

Then there were older students. The older Latino students that were juniors and seniors [who] were the presidents and vice-presidents of El Frente. We had our agendas and issues that we were going to discuss, whether we were going to talk to this teacher about this or talk to this department about that. Seeing them being comfortable in their role and knowing that one was going to go to med school and one was going to go to law school, you know I just think just having them there helped a lot.

As time passed, Latina/o students joined other student organizations that were focused toward a profession such as, Chicanos and Latinos in Health Education (CHE), Chicanos and

Latinos in Engineering and Sciences at SCU (ChALESS), and the Latino Business Student Association (LBSA). Pedro and Teresa participated in a number of these organizations and built a community amongst Latina/o students who were actively engaged in their academic majors and professional aspirations. Although Teresa majored in sociology, she was an active member of ChALESS and CHE, which focused on engineering and health occupations, respectively.

Okay freshman year I joined everything! I was in ChALESS...I was in CHE. I went to MEChA and then I mean I lived in Unity. It was fantastic, we got to go to the NTCC [National Technical Careers Conference] conference in L.A. and then CHE...I got to go with them to Atlanta, Georgia, for a conference there and it was wonderful. In addition to participating with most of the Latina/o-based organizations, Pedro also served as a representative for *Comunidad Latina* [Latino Community], which was a council for all of the Latina/o organizations on campus.

Many of the participants sought community through participating with Latina/o-based organizations. However, not all were strictly only engaged with Latina/o organizations. Some participants were active in academic organizations like the American Marketing Association – Student Chapter and the Sociology Student Association. When Chato and his classmates founded El Frente, they quickly realized that student organizations received funding from the Associated Student Body, which is the university's student government. The associated student body executive vice-president chaired the student senate and had an influence on decisions. Therefore, this is the place they felt they needed to be in order to have an active voice. So Chato was chosen amongst his friends to run for an elected position on the student body government.

So finally I drew the short straw and I was designated to run for student body executive vice president cause we figured if we were going to go for it, might as well go for it all because that was the chair of the senate and the presiding officer who appoints the committee and stuff like that. So by the end of my junior year I ran for student body executive vice president and became the first, perhaps (the only since then) the only Chicano to hold the position of executive vice president and thus chair the student senate. Learned a lot in the process. That's where I learned Roberts Rules of Order. If all those white students thought they were going to stick it to me by sticking me with rules and procedure. They did the first time, but not once thereafter. But I learned Robert's Rule twice as good as they did, so I'm proud to say [I was] the first Chicano student body executive vice-president and presiding officer of the student senate. So we made some progress in four years. From being called Frito Bandidos to student body executive vice president.

Chato was able to learn a set of leadership skills while serving on the student government board. His service also created a pathway for Latinas/os to learn how to navigate the university and how to officially request funds for their student organization. Chato's student experience progressively got better throughout his time at SCU and reflected that despite the "jerks" that they saw quite often and were hostile toward them, there were a lot of good people at SCU.

Student organizations provided these participants a space where they could learn and develop a community amongst their peers. Although the majority of the participants engaged with Latina/o student organizations, they also participated with academic and professional organizations. In addition, Latina/o-based and multicultural fraternities and sororities began



to make an appearance on Santa Clara's campus in the early 1990s. Participants also indicated that there were a number of campus resources like the Student Resource Center, Multicultural Center and the Arrupe Center (formerly the Eastside Project) that also impacted their experience at the university.

**Campus Centers.** The participants in this study used different campus resources as places where they sought support from students, staff, and the surrounding community. The Student Resource Center, Arrupe Center, and the Multicultural Center were three campus centers where students felt they could walk in and connect with other students and communities that could relate to their experiences. In addition, these centers were available to support students with retention, campus and community engagement.

**Student Resource Center.** Participants in this study identified individuals from the Student Resource Center (SRC) that advised and mentored them throughout their undergraduate student experience. The SRC is no longer a physical space at the university; however, as indicated in the Unity 3 demands, the Drahmman Center, the Office for Multicultural Learning (formerly the Center for Multicultural Learning), and the Counseling Center were assumed to take on the role of the SRC.

Dolores fondly remembers her time at the Latino Affairs office and working as a student assistant with the director. Her responsibilities as a student assistant were to assist the director with statistics, curriculum and advising student organizations and assessing how the university is assisting Latina/o students on campus. She acknowledged the Latino Affairs office as her home base. In addition, the presence of the director of Latino Affairs was empowering for Dolores. She said, "I think having her there as a force and a face, a Latino face too. Just her presence of working on issues for the work she was doing just I think

helped us just to move forward.” Dolores also reflected that her director always defended the existence of the Latino Affairs department, since it was always under the constant threat of being cut by the university administration.

Josue also remembers seeking support from the Latino Affairs director while he was a student. Josue was one of the last cohorts to experience the services of the now defunct SRC. He reflected on the director’s departure from the university by saying, “I remember her and then I remember that like when she left it was kind of like you know there was nothing else right there for us to really go to.” Josue worked with the director throughout his first two years at SCU and wished that she had been present throughout his four years at the university because he felt she supported him academically and made sure he was on track. He also noted the differences between the director and visiting a professor for office hours and concluded that the director served as a better support system for him.

Chato also acknowledged the support from the assistant dean of Chicano students and his assistant while he was a student at SCU in the late 1960s. Chato and El Frente looked to these individuals to guide them because no other members of the administration looked like them. He said, “So those individuals would be, apart from ourselves helping ourselves cause we really had no one else to look to. There was no one in administration that looked like us and no one in administration that talked like us.” Therefore, students looked to these administrators for their support and guidance.

**Arrupe Center.** The Arrupe Center played a role in connecting students to the surrounding community. Formerly known as the Eastside Project, “the Arrupe Partnerships for Community-based Learning connects students, faculty, and community organizations for active engagement, research, and collaboration around social justice” (SCU Arrupe, 2011, p.

para. 1). Arrupe coordinates placements between students and community organizations. Some courses require a service-learning component to the curriculum through community placement. Many of the participants in this study were able to experience such placements in San José. Karina used the opportunity to get involved with the Arrupe Center simply because it provided the opportunity to engage in community service.

I worked with Eastside Project a lot [and] I think I did that every year. So I did community service and it wasn't always with a class. So in the beginning, because it wasn't as popular and not as many classes were making you know students do the community service learning, there were spaces for people who just wanted to do community service and so I would do that.

Karina enjoyed her experience working with different organizations, particularly because they were in the community where she was born and raised. She assisted with ESL, citizenship classes and worked with a senior center in the Eastside community.

Esperanza's experience with the Arrupe Center was empowering in the sense that she was able to go back to her San José community and not only learn, but teach.

For the Latino students it's something going back to my community or communities that look like me was very empowering because then I'm like 'Oh my God, yes we're poor.' We don't have the resources, but we have things to teach. So that empowered me. So my experience was different because I was going back to my community, you know communities that were similar to mine...so in that sense participating in the service-learning component of classes was very empowering.

Esperanza also gained interest in agency through her many conversations with the Center's director, who she felt had influence on her student experience. She said, "People have

agency, we're not voiceless, we have a voice, it's just we are not heard." She gives credit to the Center's director for teaching her about agency and Paolo Freire's ways of teaching.

Esperanza now utilizes a similar pedagogy in her own teaching approaches.

Arrupe has also had an impact on a participant through providing a space for career exploration. Teresa used her placement at a law center as a way to learn more about the roles and responsibilities of an attorney. Her Eastside Project placement eventually led to a full-time position with a law practice in San José.

The reason why I kind of found my mission in life was through ah the Arrupe Center for community based learning, which was known as the Eastside project, and my involvement in that project was mandatory through social problems, which was Soc. 33 and I had wanted to get involved in that my freshman year, but I was too timid. And then when the class required it, I thought perfect. And so I signed up for the Eastside Community Law Center, which is now known as the Katherine and George Alexander Community Law Center. And so that really resonated with me. Like the idea that as part of a class curriculum you were asked to go to a placement to serve people who were lower income. And write about that and we would share about it. And [that] really impacted me.

Teresa found a passion through her placement at the Eastside Law Center and realized the need for bilingual attorneys to assist people who are low-income. After graduation, Teresa continued working for attorneys as she attended law school to become one herself.

**Multicultural Center.** The Multicultural Center recently celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary on SCU's campus. The center was founded in 1985 after six student organizations were evicted from their office spaces in Dunne basement. They were told to

apply for cubicle space in Benson; however, the spaces were too small to have functional student organizations. The six student organizations developed a proposal in favor of creating a Multicultural Center. Fortunately, the Multicultural Center opened its doors in the Graham Basement during the 1985-1986 academic year (SCU Multicultural Center, 2011). All of the participants, with exception to Dolores and Chato (who graduated before the Multicultural Center was created), have highlighted this location as one where they felt at home. Esperanza used this space as a sanctuary and a way to come together with other students.

I wasn't a part of the leadership, but was more you know one of the members. So we would come together and hang out. Sometimes you need that space to feel comfortable to kind of like breathe and say, 'okay, we can do this, cause I am not the only one, you know?' ... It's like to be a part of an organization, to be with other Chicano students, other Latino students and to know that yes, I do have a community of other students like me. I'm not alone. That for me really helped me and that's where I built my friendships and if I ever felt uncomfortable on campus, I [could] always run to the MCC and that could be a safe space for me. MCC definitely had an impact on me in terms of affirmation.

Pedro shared similar sentiments, expressing that the Multicultural Center served as a safe haven where one could replenish and seek the support from other students who were going through similar experiences.

MCC you could say was my second home too, cause that is where you would go and hang out and replenish before you know you had to go back to the sea of whiteness, I guess you could say. You just meet with people and you talk to people and they are going through the same frustrations, you know. Like, 'Why am I the only

Latino/Latina in class? Or when we talk about the Mexican Revolution and everyone looks at you.’

The Multicultural Center also provides students with the opportunity to develop their leadership skills. Isabel served on the Multicultural Center’s programming board as a representative for MEChA-El Frente. This experience allowed her to interact with students from other organizations and reflect on her academic and day-to-day life.

The Multicultural Center really helped me both think about my life outside the classroom and my life inside the classroom. So it would help connect those two and you know really the greatest resource for the Multicultural Center is the other students.

Although Teresa was not actively involved with MEChA, she was heavily involved with the Multicultural Center’s Youth Empowerment Program, which worked closely with undergraduate admissions to promote higher education to middle and high school students. The examples provided highlight the different ways the Multicultural Center has served as a support mechanism for students at SCU. While they may have felt isolated or intimidated in class, the Multicultural Center provided a space where they could be themselves.

**Faculty.** Latina/o alumni shared that their interaction with SCU faculty served as a great support and a validation mechanism for their academic success at the university. In fact, many times when they felt isolated as SCU students, their faculty helped them process their experiences through writing. Mateo felt that his professors were very supportive and provided him the opportunity to free-write about his experiences.

Sociology department, they were really supportive. Even though there was an English teacher before that had freed me to write. He said ‘write without worrying about

grammar...spelling' because I was a horrible writer...So once he freed me to write, I started writing a whole bunch. So when sociology papers came it was five pages, I would turn it into twelve. Some teachers would be, 'this is a great paper...a lot of content, thank you for sharing.' The majority [of the faculty members] were very supportive because I brought a different spin or outlook on life.

Mateo was not very social with his peers at SCU; however, he enjoyed his academic work in philosophy, psychology, and sociology because those courses helped him think and express his views on paper and it also helped discover himself in that way. Teresa had similar experiences with her professors. She actually looked to her advisor for guidance on how to navigate her major and graduation. Teresa participated in a research project with her faculty advisor that focused on the lives of first-generation college students and from that experience her advisor became a good friend.

Through social stratification class [my faculty advisor] had us do journal entries. And based on the journal entries of myself and another student, she got the idea to [write] a book about first-generation students. Because [the other student] and I were both first-generation students, Mexican descent, she received funding to actually publish a book with different chapters. So I think through that she really became a friend and so she was someone that I was able to go to talk about you know any questions that I had about school and that project didn't come on till my junior year, which was about the same time she became my advisor. I think because of that project she became my advisor.

Teresa also felt that her faculty advisor, who is Caucasian, was understanding of her experiences as a first-generation college student and enjoyed fruitful conversations with her.

Karina's experience with faculty was much different from the others. Since Karina experienced college as a commuter student, she often felt disengaged from campus activities. A turning point for her is when she developed an academic relationship with Dr. Cardenas during a study abroad trip to Mexico City. At that point, Dr. Cardenas became her faculty advisor and Karina had not known him very well from the academic year. She had such a great experience working with her advisor that she reached out to other faculty members upon her return to SCU. She felt like the faculty she interacted with validated her experience as a student. She said, "[Faculty] sort of validated it and validated my attendance and my ability to be a student at Santa Clara. It was nice to feel that they believed in me because I respected them a lot." Consequently, Karina was able to further engage with faculty through independent research, in which she received an ethnic studies award for an outstanding research paper.

The participants in this study valued their interactions with faculty members whether they were a part of their academic department or if they were faculty of color. Isabel acknowledged the lengths faculty of color would go to help move students forward.

Many of those faculty members actually took it upon themselves outside of the classroom to help support students of color in moving forward. Just knowing I think that extra burden that you [as a student] carry being on campus at which I think carried on to them too. I think that as faculty of color usually when there were issues going on between relationships to like the multicultural center or students of color and university they were usually called upon even though they already had a full course load you know and they are like in two departments (if they are teaching in ethnic studies) and so I think they had a similar experience all on their end as well.



Isabel did not believe it was fair for faculty of color to speak and/or respond to issues of equity and equality, especially when the university was founded with a social justice mission. She also noted that the way faculty of color engaged with students exceeded her expectations. She learned how to think more critically, particularly as it related to communities of color.

It is apparent that faculty played a key role in the retention of the participants, especially having felt a sense of isolation as students. Faculty played a significant role in their intellectual development and afforded them with opportunities to engage in academic activities, such as independent research and conference presentations. In addition, faculty of color played an integral role in advocating for students and serving as mediators between the students and the university.

### **Ambassadors**

Although the participants had challenges while they attended the university, they found support mechanisms such as the student organizations, campus centers, and faculty to sustain them through their student experience. The participants indicated that these forms of support are what made their SCU experience positive and encouraging. As a result, they serve as ambassadors to the university in different capacities. Many participate in community programs, which encourage and expose first-generation college students to university settings and others serve within the community and on school committees such as the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

Chato is the founder and director of a Latino Role Model conference that takes place in East San José that has been in existence for 20 years. The Latino Role Model conference

attracts many Latina/o professionals across different disciplines to engage and expose middle and high school students to their professions.

This year is our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and this is an annual inspirational conference where we bring in Latino middle school and high school students and we bring in Latino doctors, lawyers, engineers, police, firefighters, teachers, businessmen and women, and so on...different Latino professionals to expose them to our kids, so our kids can see that there are Latinos in those professions and that they can do the same thing too. [It is] designed to inspire our kids to remain in school, to go to college, and to dream about being a lawyer, a doctor, an engineer, and so on.

Chato is an ambassador for SCU such that he talks with passion for his alma mater and encourages students to seek out the opportunities for them to attend SCU. He reflected that this conference strengthened the visibility and support for SCU.

For example we're inspiring kids to consider college and to actually do something about going to college. When people ask me [where I went to college], I say SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY and I wear my Santa Clara shirt so everybody knows. I'm a graduate of Santa Clara University. I went to that ghetto high school and I went to Santa Clara University. So kids are inspired to go to Santa Clara too. And maybe some of them are like me, that even though I only lived 15 minutes away from Santa Clara I never knew it existed until someone told me about it. So Santa Clara benefits by having its Latino graduates like me involved in the community...Involved in our community and making a difference by contribution of time, by contribution of our own personal efforts. Especially when it's directly conveyed as I always do that I'm a proud graduate of Santa Clara University.

Chato draws from his childhood experiences to increase awareness about college and SCU. Pedro also expressed that speaking about his experiences as a child and his educational pathway motivated students to pursue higher education. In one of his speaking engagements he said the following about his voyage to SCU:

I went on to graduate top of my class and obtained a great scholarship to attend college. But it was people like your mentors, your parents, your teachers, and loving sponsors of programs like the ones we sit with today that made all of this possible. If it were not for people who believed in me I would have never made it.

Things were tough no doubt about it! I initially believed that Santa Clara University was in Colorado. NOPE! I was forced to relocate away from home. Could I do it? Could I survive without my *familia*? Everything is possible!

Now these ‘migrants’ were dropping off their son in college. This was and still is one of my best memories, this is still one of my best memories to date. A few years later my parents also walked me across the stage and whispered in my ear...this was ‘*la oportunidad*.’ Gracias miyo!

Have you found your *oportunidad*?

Speaking engagements from SCU Latino alumni like Pedro promote and credit the university for some of his development as a mentor.

It's recognition for the university. When I get the next level of the speeches it's about the support, the mentoring and the gift of getting to come to an institution like this and having people see that, 'hey maybe I can go there.' So it feeds into that pipeline. Pedro's speaking engagement resonates with many alumni that have received the support of their communities to pursue a higher education. Just as Pedro received support from his community, he is paying it forward through extending his support to students in the surrounding community. Karina feels that through her work in the community and through her church, the university gains recognition because she would often speak of the university or take students to visit the SCU campus.

I think they gain an ambassador, which I think is the most important thing to the organization. To have somebody who is like, 'I believe in what it is that you do' strong enough where I'm going to give my time, my resources, and I'm going to talk to other people.

For Karina, her role as an ambassador allowed her to feel a stronger connection to the university and to her community.

Unlike Karina, Dolores graduated from the university over 20 years ago and has not maintained a strong connection to the university. However, she now has children of her own and would like to strengthen her relationship with the university through serving as a parent ambassador for her children's high school PTA.

For example, for me if I'm more connected to the Santa Clara at this point, I might be the little parent ambassador at my high school for Santa Clara. You know saying good things about Santa Clara if I know more and I feel more connected and I feel like I am actually part of Santa Clara, so Santa Clara will benefit by me spreading the

word about Santa Clara. Then they would benefit if I was able to comment back to them what I see are the needs for local high school students.

Dolores' approach to becoming an ambassador for the university is one of sharing information of the different needs of today's students. Oftentimes, admissions counselors visit campuses for presentations and not much is known about the student demographics at that particular high school. She would engage with parents to familiarize them with the admissions process so that they are aware of the necessary tools to support their children. Lastly, her efforts as an ambassador may cultivate a more diverse applicant pool for the university.

The participants in this study experienced SCU in different ways, yet the challenges of a foreign space did not deter them from persisting and ultimately graduating from the university. The support mechanisms in place made their experience at SCU a positive one where they were able to engage with student organizations, faculty, and campus centers such as the Multicultural Center. Their experiences with these support mechanisms also allowed them to become ambassadors for the university as alumni. Through their resiliency, Latina/o alumni in this study now provide motivation to other students to attend college, and more specifically Santa Clara University.

## Theme 2: Careers, community, and giving

The participants in this study work with their communities in different capacities through their occupations. Whether participants were attorneys, professors, or administrators each of their respective occupations involved helping people in their respective communities. In fact, their occupations intertwined with their community involvement in different civic and educational activities, which resulted in different practices of giving (see Figure 2). The

following theme argues that the participants' careers are interconnected with their notions of giving, which are also connected to the connection to their respective communities.

Figure 2. Participants' notion of giving



Most of the participants in this study were intentional in choosing their career path. It was often noted that the participants in this study wanted to “help people,” not fully knowing what exactly that practice looked like. As a young child, Dolores knew she wanted to help people. On her summer breaks she would help her father make identification cards for farm workers and she remembered seeing people working real hard. She stuck to her goals and after graduating from SCU she enrolled in law school. Upon completion of law school, Dolores worked for California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA), where she assisted “low-income, mostly farm workers, in the areas of housing, employment, education...and some environmental justice issues.” Most of her cases involved landlord-tenant issues where

people would be on the verge of being evicted from their homes or involved in disputes over not receiving their security deposits. In addition, Dolores worked on environmental justice cases, which was a relatively new term in the early 1990's. One of her cases involved a lawsuit against the city government plans to place a chemical plant next to a migrant camp. The city changed the zoning without following the proper protocol, which could have affected the health of the residents of the migrant camp. Dolores' team prevailed, which made the city's decision to change the zoning, illegal. While she was in the process of becoming a lawyer, her desire was not necessarily to go to law school to become a lawyer, rather it was to help people, particularly farm workers. She said, "It was not like I went to law school to become a lawyer, it's like I want to help farm workers in those issues." Her work at CRLA provided her with a foundation to pursue her own involvement with her community. As time progressed, Dolores began working as a legal analyst for the Equal Employment Opportunity office and continued her civic engagement through serving on community boards, such as the planning commission and the library board. Her experience in advocacy and witnessing the power of city government encouraged her to pursue a career in politics, where she ran for city council and ultimately became a city mayor. She ran for these positions because she felt that in order to be a catalyst for change, one must be where the decisions are made.

In Salinas when I would go to the councils and I'd actually see them vote on stuff and vote on things that I didn't like and I thought wow, 'They're the ones that have the power.' That's where more of us should be. I mean we're really good advocates but we should be in those position of power where we could, if we can get there, we can

make those policy changes that affect a whole town and that actually could affect a whole state...

One of her greatest accomplishments as a city council member was working with the school district to build the growing city's second high school. Dolores worked with different groups, such as unions, advocacy groups, farmers, and community members to reach a consensus so everyone's concerns were acknowledged and validated. In her role as a legal analyst, she continues to serve her community and encourage people to apply for employment with the county and/or pursue a higher education.

Dolores' life experiences as a young child and goals of helping people have come to fruition through her work as an attorney and community leader. She continues to give her time to her family and surrounding community. Her notion of Latina/o giving parallels those defined by Latina/o philanthropy: extended family, church, and mutual assistance organizations.

So I've heard many times where people will say, 'Well you're not participating or giving in your community', but in fact they [Latinas/os] are. They are participating in church activities and they're giving their time with youths or senior activities or they're helping at soup kitchens or they're just in different areas giving their time to improve the part of their world that they are in. And especially if you are kind of newer to this community...you are not going to jump over to unknown groups that you are not familiar with. But you are going to be giving in your own [community] whether it's your family or your extended family or your schools or your church or you know similar smaller community groups.



Dolores shares this experience with many other participants in this study. Karina began her career as a high school teacher for a charter school. Her main motivation for pursuing a career in education was due to the awareness of the educational disparities while growing up. Karina attended private schools her entire life and became aware of the racial/ethnic and socioeconomic differences in her experience.

In my neighborhood there were very few people that went to private schools, and so I was really aware of the differences and then you know my parish church Sacred Heart...is also [in a] very sort of low-income community. And my mom was an immigrant and so I was sort of aware of the differences and the opportunities that I got that other people didn't. So I knew that education was a big part of that and equal access education was something that was important to me.

Although Karina pursued an advanced degree in education with a concentration in policy and administration, her initial intention was to work in the policy sector rather than teaching. However, an opportunity to work at a new charter school in the community presented itself where she could utilize her interests in policy and education. Another motivation to work in the education field was because of her interests in working with the community. She said, "I did know that I wanted to be really active in the community." The mission of the charter high school Karina worked at was to "prepare underachieving students to be the first in their families to go to a four-year college or university." As a part of her employment, Karina also served as the parent outreach coordinator where she developed curriculum on how parents could support their college-going children.

So we, me and one other person who was more of a volunteer, organized a variety of parent community meetings...where there was a curriculum that we developed related

to how parents can support their student in getting to college. And everything that that means. So not just making sure that there is a space for them at home to do homework, but also that parents understand what are the A-Gs and why college. And ‘What am I worried about with college?’ And ‘What is this public education system in the United States and high school?’ and then going on to four-year college. ‘What’s the difference between a junior college and another college? What’s the cost going to be like? If I’m not a citizen what does that mean for financial aid? Or what is financial aid in general?’ So all of those kinds of pieces, along with the normal the more traditional kinds of things [like] making sure your student gets their homework done [and] all that that kind of stuff. So there were specific classes, not necessarily classes but community meetings.

Karina held community meetings to better inform parents about the college-going process. She shared that every parent wanted their children to do better than they did. Her community meetings provided knowledge and a level of comfort in the ways they could support their children in pursuing a higher education. Karina’s role to inform parents about college was critical due to the fact it was required for a student to be accepted to a four-year college/university in order to graduate. Karina also shared that there were partnerships between SCU and the charter high school. A SCU professor taught a “College Ready English” course to seniors at the high school as a way to prepare them for college writing. In addition, the professor also brought SCU undergraduate students as teaching assistants to help students in the course. Also, Karina was able to take her students to campus to engage in conversations with different professors whom Karina had formed relationships with as an undergraduate student.

Karina has gone back to SCU to speak to students about her career and has served on panels for different courses offered by professors. She participated with the career center's vocation career symposium for approximately four years, has served as a distinguished alumni speaker for ethnic studies, and was asked to be a speaker at the SCU president's inauguration. Karina feels that these engagements are forms of giving because they are contributions of resources and time. She was involved with the selection committee for the San Juan Diego scholarship, which originated 15 years ago as a partnership between SCU and the Sacred Heart parish that awards a full scholarship to a student accepted to SCU from the parish. In addition, every year SCU and the Sacred Heart parish celebrate the apparition of the *Virgen de Guadalupe* [Our Lady of Guadalupe] at the Santa Clara Mission, which attracts members of the university and surrounding community. Karina remembered that in the beginning it was difficult to find anyone to apply for the scholarship because of qualifications; however, with her connection to the charter high school and the sacred heart community, the scholarship attracts approximately 30 applications annually. Karina's engagement with her employment and community allowed her to give time and resources in different capacities throughout the community.

Similar to Karina, Josue's interests in giving back to the community were salient since graduating from SCU. After graduation, Josue and another alumnus began the process of developing a nonprofit organization that executed resource fairs, including a balance of education, urban arts, and a community cause (i.e., nonviolence, pregnancy prevention, etc.).

We were putting on events, which were called Edutainment Events, it was like educational resource fairs with different members of the community along with some kind of entertainment mostly revolving around the urban arts. So it would be like hip

hop shows, poetry slams, urban arts or graffiti contests, usually those contests were centered [on] a theme. So one I remember we did was pregnancy prevention and all the artists came out and did that. Others [were] against nonviolence, you know those kinds of things. Then just regular hip hop shows like artists, rappers, you know performers coming out and doing these shows mostly at high schools, colleges, youth centers, and just like community type events, fairs, festivals, that stuff.

This type of work allowed Josue to network with different community organizations and led him to his current position as a mentoring program manager. I asked Josue what exactly drew him to the nonprofit sector. He responded with the following:

I think a lot of it does have to do with just um opportunities I've been provided. You know...although I had done a little bit of volunteer work in high school, mostly revolving around church...I think moving on into college [and] really getting involved with the multicultural center and obviously MEChA. Learning about that more kind of fed into my desire to have to naturally do that. I think also what inspired me is that there was like so many other people doing it. It wasn't just like me, it was like you, folks, other folks we all kind of grew up with right there and know and still know to this day.

Josue is also involved and serves on a board for a Hispanic development organization that plans an annual youth leadership conference that invites approximately 200 students to expose them to approximately 30-40 community leaders with different employment backgrounds (e.g., firefighters, news anchors, politicians, nonprofit leaders, etc.). The conference attracts students from local school districts, private, vocational, and continuation schools and approximately 95% of the attendees are Latina/o. The conference recognizes

community leaders and allows students the opportunity to ask community leaders questions in an intimate setting. Josue became involved with this organization because at one point in his high school career he was a participant in the youth conference and when he attended SCU he served as a volunteer for the organization. For Josue it was important to be engaged with his community not only through his occupation, but also through his volunteer work with the Hispanic development organization. Lastly, Josue also feels it is vital to remain connected to SCU because he continues to engage with the university through recruiting mentors for his employer at volunteer fairs and he occasionally visits the multicultural center and MEChA-El Frente to engage them with the different volunteer opportunities available.

Participants of this study intertwined their work and community engagement with their giving practices. As I continued to ask questions about their occupations and civic engagement, I felt compelled to ask where they learned the practice of “helping others,” which was often synonymous to their notion of giving. The majority of the participants concluded that they learned giving practices through their parents, mentors, and their respective communities. As mentioned earlier in the study, Mateo said he learned his work ethic from his father and his compassion from his mother.

When I was younger I would always see [my mother] give to her friends. She would sell Avon or whatever, not for herself but to help a friend out. She would babysit for free and she would drive people around for free. So she would do all this stuff you know for people and I would notice it. She was my role model in giving...It’s not an obligation, but it’s [what] you’re suppose to you know that’s just kind of what you do. I have a pretty strong Catholic upbringing so that really impacted, inspired the giving also the compassion – the helping others...

Teresa shared the same sentiments as Mateo when describing where they learned about giving. In addition, Teresa also included her parish as a place where she learned about giving because of her experience with a parishioner who gave time and helped guide her and her sisters when her father was not around and when situations were not the best at home. Lastly, Chato felt that he learned about giving through elders in his community and from his parents. He said, “It was our parents that had the personal philosophy of supporting extended family, neighborhood, and community, usually a church community...but not only espoused than, not only verbalized it – they lived it.” He also learned about giving practices through observing the actions of local community activists in East San José. He reflected that these were the people that kept him and his classmates engaged with the community and mentored them through his college and law school days.

Those are the individuals that guided us, that mentored us into becoming Latino activists and as I’ve mentioned we still are Latino activists. We have just taken the fight from the streets into the boardroom, from the protest line into the board of education, from the picket lines that we had at Santa Clara University to our level of community activism where we are now creating systemic change and lasting change. So we’re still in that respect we’re still homeboys and homegirls. We just now wear a suit and tie.

Learning giving practices from parents, mentors and the community have fueled a fire within these participants to reciprocate what they have learned and turn it into action. All of the participants interviewed for the study have become involved with the uplift of their communities through civic and community engagement (i.e., leadership conferences,

mentorship, committees, board members, etc.). Participants also shared their sentiments about monetary giving, which will be discussed next.

### Theme 3: Latina/o alumni as targeted givers

As evidenced in the previous theme, participants in this study predominantly intertwined their occupation and their community engagement to develop their notion of what they deemed as giving. As they formulated their own definition of giving, it was important to ask how they felt SCU framed alumni giving. The participants' general perception was that the university predominantly frames giving through monetary gifts. The following provides further depth on how participants negotiate their notion of giving with how they perceive the university frames giving.

Participants of this study equated university giving to monetary giving. Less than half of the participants have given a small monetary gift to the university in the past. However, the majority views their monetary gifts as not having a significant impact on the university. Chato has given a monetary gift to the university in the past and feels the university defines giving in large amounts of money.

Well from my perspective, you know not hanging out with those high and mighty people over there, I think it's money pure and simple and money in large amounts. So they're out of my league. I cannot fund a 20 million dollar building...or [fund] a plane trip for the athletic team, but I can pay \$250 to the Hispanic Charity Ball for one ticket or \$2500 for 10 tickets like I did last year. So my general sense you know just thinking out loud is – university giving is out of my league. I think that's wrong. His perception of what the university would classify as a notable donor was through giving a larger gift than what he could afford. Instead, he noted that he was willing to purchase tickets

to support an event that raised funds for local community organizations and provided assistance to Latinas/os. Pedro provided a similar notion of how the university frames giving; however, he noted that the university rankings would increase if they included other forms of giving as alumni participation.

I think the definition of university [giving] in general is business. So their business model of giving is monetary and unfortunately that's the way that we rank college systems *tambien, pero* [also, but] if they would also seek community involvement and community service hours as part of giving, I think that we would pretty much sky rocket in our rankings because I know plenty of alums who are very very involved. *Y este* [and uh], but the model unfortunately that we use and has been used is, 'how much money do you give.' What's the bottom dollar?

Pedro felt that the university privileged monetary giving because it affected the way SCU was judged by ranking organizations, such as the *U.S. News and World Report*.

Teresa felt that she was in the position to give a monetary gift; however, she also noted that the university needed to develop a better marketing approach targeting Latina/o donors. She acknowledged that the university primarily focused on monetary giving as evidenced by the number of mailings (that include envelopes) she received from SCU. However, she felt that the university did a good job in trying to keep alumni informed through the *Santa Clara Magazine* and delivering the message that monetary gifts were vital to the university.

[The university] wants to keep alumni informed of what the university is doing because they want people to know there's a value attached to the money you're giving. You are not just giving this money because we need it, we're asking you to



donate because all of this is going back to the university – It's going to the students. It's going to be your future children's future because you may want them to go there and all of that is going to the betterment of the institution. And I do see the value to that and I know that I would like better marketing methods I think because if they want to sell a product – the university – or they want people to give then they need to find a better way to approach that because people give in different ways...

Dolores feels that the university certainly privileges monetary giving over other forms of giving such as time. The majority of the marketing collateral she received typically asked for monetary gifts. She said, "I don't receive anything about giving your time to go and learn about a certain program or you know, 'Come on over as an alumni and as a parent to tell us what you think about how we can outreach, or what do you think about X, Y, or Z?'"

Nonetheless, Dolores has given to a targeted monetary gift to the *Santa Clara Magazine* due to an article where she was featured. She noted that this article raised her connection with the university and she also received positive responses from her classmates throughout California. She encouraged the university to think about highlighting more Latinas/os in the magazine as a way of outreach to potential donors.

That is another way connecting to giving – acknowledging a diversity of people in your magazine, for example, and not maybe the regular sports or traditional articles...If you are thinking of how to outreach to Latinos...have some articles on some Latinos from Santa Clara."

Dolores felt that this type of coverage would encourage Latina/o alumni to become more engaged with the university and thus become a monetary donor. As a result of her featured article, she became a targeted donor in support of the magazine.

Targeted gifts were very salient to the participants of the study. The majority of the participants indicated that if they were to give a monetary gift, it would go toward a fund to which they felt connected, such as scholarships toward Latina/o, first-generation college students or students of color. In addition, they would also consider giving to centers and/or student organizations that supported them as undergraduates, such as the Multicultural Center or MEChA-El Frente.

Due to Pedro's interest in undocumented college students, he directed his monetary gift toward the Hurtado Scholars program. The Hurtado Scholars program funds 5-7 annual scholarships, which are awarded to undocumented students. However, he gave his monetary gift directly to Jesuit order, since that is where the fund is housed. In addition, he was hesitant to give over the phone due to not knowing if the fund would be directed appropriately, since student callers typically call for a specific campaign.

[Student callers] really wouldn't give us options like from the phone call and the conversation was kind of generic...Somebody who doesn't know you, somebody who mispronounces your name and then asks you for money. So you don't really have you know feel that commitment to support it. I know I would have I wanted to donate money to the Hurtado Scholarship but because it is such [specific] scholarship, none of those people knew where the money would have to go to...So the only way that I have donated is I actually sent a check to Father [Xavier], who manages that.

I probed Pedro with a follow up question asking why it was important for him to give his money toward a targeted fund.

I think for me it's my own family history. I mean, I'm first generation and also could have been in the same exact footsteps. I was just fortunate enough that I was born on you know the right side of the geography line, I guess.

Pedro suggested that because of his own family history, he could have been in the shoes of many of these students who are ineligible to apply for financial aid due to their immigration status. Pedro also suggested that he would also give monetary gifts toward scholarship initiatives that benefit Latina/o students and first-generation students. Lastly, he indicated that he would give money toward a campaign to build a brand new Multicultural Center as opposed to a new library.

Josue felt like once he was in the position to give a monetary gift that he would start a fund for Latina/o students. He reflected that he was a recipient of such scholarships and he would love for Latina/o students to have the opportunity to experience what he did as a SCU student.

I honestly I've always told myself, I mean if I'm in a position wealth wise and had a clean financial spot, I would love to start up some kind of scholarship for Latino students and that's always been a long standing goal of mine. I haven't reached it yet, but it's still something that's kind of one my long term to do list because I think that's a good opportunity. I've benefited from scholarships that I earned both from the university and outside sources. Anyhow I'd love to give that back through a Santa Clara scholarship so other students could experience what I did.

Given Josue's active involvement with the Multicultural Center as a student, he indicated that he would give a targeted gift to benefit the center.

Throughout the interviews with the participants, I took note on how passionate each individual was for their family unit. No matter what, the family was there in times of need and the community was there to support whatever endeavor a family member embarked upon. Pedro reflected upon his sentiment toward targeted university giving and the importance of the approach the university uses with Latina/o donors.

Money is important, but I think that if you look at history and you look at the Latino community, money is no problem if it has to deal with family. So take a quinceañera or take a *boda* [wedding] or take all those things into consideration. I mean we pour out thousands of dollars for those things, *pero* [but] the key center part of it is family and if you can make a campaign around. [For example], let's create a family with the MCC. Can you donate to it? Yes. Let's make a family of incoming freshman from Watsonville. Are you willing to donate for their scholarships? Yes, *pero* [but] don't say I want you to donate to me period, because it's just going to Santa Clara University – I mean that's just too vague. It's like saying can you donate to all the quinceañeras in Watsonville without them being your family.

The sentiments of the metaphor Pedro used to describe targeted giving are shared with other participants in the study. To summarize, participants in the study felt like they had the capacity to give monetarily; however, their choice to give monetary gifts to the university heavily relied on having funds available that they felt would benefit future students who came from similar backgrounds as the participants. The following theme presents the participants' commitment to the institution's vision of developing the whole person through social justice and conscience, competence, and compassion.

#### Theme 4: Competence, conscience, and compassion: The importance of the university's vision and mission

Santa Clara University is a mission driven institution with the goal of developing the whole person. Its strategic vision is to develop men and women to become leaders of competence, conscience, and compassion. This theme presents findings that are relevant to the strategic vision and the everyday lives of the participants of this study. The majority of the participants indicated that the social justice mission of the university was an important reason why they chose to attend the university. In addition, those participants who graduated from the university after 1999, reflected that the strategic vision of the “3 C’s” (conscience, competence, and compassion) were relevant to the practices of their everyday lives.

The social justice mission played a prominent role for the participants of this study, particularly on how they perceived the university acted upon the rhetoric espoused through marketing collateral. Esperanza felt like the social justice mission was important to her and in the interactions with like-minded people, regardless of race. In addition, she felt that the Arrupe Center was an office that exemplified the Jesuit social justice mission.

Well I mean for me is how the Arrupe Center and back then the Eastside Project for me is that that’s where I really saw it come to light and come into practice. That these...communities surrounding Santa Clara are looked at as learning centers...that those people at these communities have something to teach the students here and that the classroom extends beyond the physical space of the room. That’s where I saw back then where I [saw] Santa Clara exercising that social justice that it talks about. Esperanza also felt that the Arrupe Center personified giving, in the sense of allowing the space and opportunity to learn other ways of knowing and experiencing the world. She added

that there is an added expectation of how an SCU alumnus should participate with the community once they receive their degree from the university.

I think that SCU expects and strives for their alumni to go...beyond Santa Clara and really do something with what they learned here. To really do something with the Jesuit philosophy that they learned on campus, because I think that's what Santa Clara expects of us, the alumni – To carry on that tradition of giving, but not giving in the sense of helping the needy, by giving in sense of exercising your responsible citizenship.

Responsible citizenship was generally practiced through the act of giving and helping others. Dolores was attracted to the university because of her Catholic upbringing, but more so because of the teaching of social justice and the service.

... It enticed me that it was a Catholic [institution] because I grew up very Catholic. And grew up in like you know people serving each other and helping each other and of course the whole social justice of it and the teaching of my learning of social justice in the Catholic teachings, even though I didn't go to Catholic school. But obviously, I got a lot of that from my upbringing...that kind of enticed me to go to Santa Clara because I was drawn to that, you know the service part also.

Dolores continues to participate in social justice through her civic engagement with local politics and through her employment by assuring candidates in underutilized employment positions are given a fair opportunity to become competitive candidates.

Although many of the participants agreed that the university's commitment to social justice played an important role in experience with Santa Clara, some participants indicated that there was also a dissonance between what was advertised as a social justice institution

and the actual response to injustices by the administration and campus community. For example, one-third of the participants of this study reflected upon the university administration's lack of response to racist incidents that took shape through a party which depicted Latinas/os in a stereotypical and obscene manner. Mateo shared his thoughts on the matter.

I still get upset when I remember all the theme parties and all that stuff. You know and people were pissed and I don't think [there] was ever a solution...I don't think people's hearts are changed, the ones that [were the] perpetrators of it. There's no rehabilitation for them, so it's going to happen in more secluded areas or in people's brains or in policy – institutional racism. So, Santa Clara had an opportunity to fix and educate people on their own campus and community and failed to do that. So therefore, I'm still upset. You know I'm still not at peace with Santa Clara.

Mateo's sentiments were felt with two other alumni in this study. However, they also provided legal advice and direction to the Multicultural Center leaderships. While reflecting on her engagement with the university post-graduation, Teresa stated, "I went back during a retreat they had to talk about the Facebook postings of a racist party." In essence, her presence and guidance for the Multicultural Center leadership complimented her occupational expertise as an attorney. Chato also served as an advisor to MEChA-El Frente students through that incident.

I've been in certain respect an unofficial mentor a few years back when (you may recall) there was an incident where Santa Clara students off campus were mocking the Chicanos and the gangsters and the wetbacks and all that dressing up and partying like them. All the El Frente leaders called me up and asked for advice in counsel and

we had them there at the house. I brought in a couple of our graduates...and we sat down with them – ‘Look how can we help you? What advice can we give you?’ Although the alumni involved took offense to the events that transpired, they provided mentoring and advice so students were able to make informed decisions on how to approach and respond to the situation.

Although it is challenging to always control the actions of students in the community, alumni felt that the university had control over how to address the situation. In fact, Isabel remembered when the university used the motto, “Excellence through Diversity.” She suggested it was just that – a motto.

Yet, there are all these times when for example other students are coming out with certain perspectives [in the newspaper] or things that really go against some of that ‘excellence through diversity’ perspective and trying to get the university to acknowledge those things that are happening at the university that go against their very kind of mission statements and purpose.

Isabel spoke about the perspectives carried by students that contradicted the very mission that the university was trying to espouse. However, Isabel also talked about the challenges of retention of students of color and the lack of effort in part of the university to work with students toward completion of their degree. She felt that this was also a contradiction of the university’s mission and strategic vision.

While the university’s rhetoric may have caused some dissonance with the participants, there is a part of the strategic vision that stuck to participants who graduated after 1998. It is unclear why the words “conscience, competence, and compassion” stuck to these participants; however, my intuition leads me to believe that there was a stronger



marketing of the “3 C’s” to the campus community by the president of the university and his cabinet. Nevertheless, the “3 C’s” took on a different meaning than the rhetorical “excellence through diversity” verbiage that was critiqued by Isabel. The participants who graduated post-1998 believed that competence, conscience, and compassion were a way of life.

Josue’s experience with the Jesuit brothers led him to believe that their way of life was universal, including practicing competence, conscience, and compassion. He indicated that he carries some of these values through the work he does and throughout his life.

The 3Cs that we practice or that they preach at Santa Clara are kind of found throughout [life] but it’s like Jesuits are very I guess laid back, probably would be the best way to say it. Laid back in a sense, but still you know strong enough to get the point across as far as you know living their life how they live it...and definitely the compassion is one thing that definitely resonated with me and I carry on today. You know through my work and just through my life and stuff. And I think that’s important, I think that’s a big talking point that a lot of the issues that we see domestically, globally, and stuff is just [there’s] a real lack of compassion from both sides.

Josue felt that although he practices and utilizes the 3 C’s in his everyday life, there was still work to be done because of the lack of compassion on both domestic and international issues. He reflected that the work he does is community-based and oftentimes he works with kids and families that need resources, whether it is from him or from his organization. In contrast, Mateo does not give SCU complete credit for the implementation of these values. He mentioned throughout the interviews that he learned compassion from his mother and his work ethic from his father. However, he does give credit to his academic department in

sociology for emphasizing the 3 C's. He said, "They would say, 'you need to become problem solving sociologists.' So they really emphasized [that] you got to become problem solvers with compassion, conscience, and competence." Mateo continues to help the community through a nonprofit organization of his own where he continues to promote higher education and SCU. He said, "I mean I still promote Santa Clara to my mentees because I think locally it was this untouchable place growing up." Mateo shared that this was often the reaction that was carried by the Latina/o community, particularly those who never attended a private school or lived in the Eastside San José.

Teresa also viewed the notion of competence, conscience, and compassion in a positive light. Although she did not feel she thought about them every day, she felt the university provided an outlet (like the Arrupe Center) where students can practice the "3 C's."

Oh I love the 3 C's yeah. I do. I mean the competence, conscience, and compassion like I don't think about them every day but I do think of them in terms of the way I like to live my life and for me it is really important to do in terms of work, what I am passionate about and to really help people who are less fortunate. And I think the school is really good about giving back in that way.

Teresa's student experience at SCU was heavily impacted by this experience where the university served as an agent in providing an opportunity where students could practice competence, conscience, and compassion. In addition, Teresa indicated that this is where she developed a passion for helping those who were low-income and ultimately influenced her decision to become an attorney.

The university's social justice driven mission and strategic vision of developing men and women to become leaders of competence, conscience, and compassion provided a blueprint for SCU students. The participants in this study implied that social justice and the 3 C's played an integral part of their everyday lives. Moreover, it provided a framework in which they could improve the lives of others and personify responsible citizenship, particularly to those that most need the assistance.

### Summary

This chapter provides an in depth description of how SCU Latina/o enact giving and interact with their alma mater once they graduate from the institution. The four major themes that emerged from this study were: (a) Latina/o alumni as university ambassadors; (b) careers, community, and giving; (c) Latina/o alumni as targeted givers; and (d) competence, conscience, and compassion: the importance of the university's vision and mission. Collectively, the themes provide a deeper understanding of how Latina/o alumni perceive SCU frames alumni giving; how they as alumni enact giving; and how they feel the university benefits from their contributions. In addition, the themes provided me the opportunity to have thorough conversations with the Latina/o alumni participants regarding the development of their own giving practices.

Chapter 6 includes the findings of the study and provides a detailed discussion on how the findings relate to the Community Cultural Wealth and other relevant pieces of literature. In addition, the chapter highlights implications for practice for different areas of institutional advancement, such as the alumni association, development, and public relations. Lastly, I conclude the study with a personal reflection of what this process has meant to me as a researcher and as a SCU alumnus.

## CHAPTER 6. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

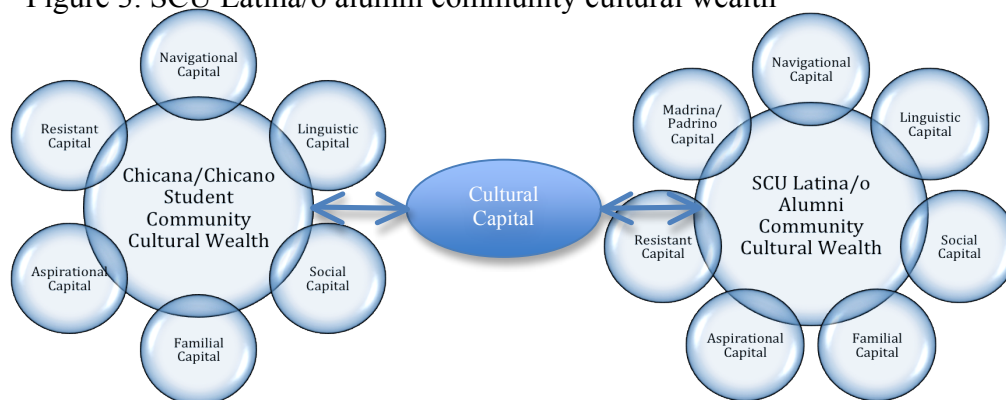
This chapter presents a discussion from the findings that emerged from the research questions guiding this study: (a) What are Latina/o graduates' perceptions of how their alma mater frames alumni giving? (b) How do Latina/o alumni enact giving as alumni? and (c) How does the alma mater benefit from Latina/o alumni contributions? The discussion focuses on the four emergent themes from this study in relation to the revised conceptual framework used to guide this study and existing literature. The chapter also highlights implications for practice for different areas of institutional advancement, such as the alumni association, development, and public relations. In addition, future research related to this topic is also suggested. Lastly, I conclude the study with a personal reflection of what this process has meant to me as a researcher and as a SCU alumnus.

### Overview of the Findings in Relation to the Revised Conceptual Framework

The findings in chapter 5 presented four themes that intertwined with Yosso's (2005, 2006) model of community cultural wealth. The four major themes that emerged from this study were (a) Latina/o alumni as university ambassadors; (b) careers, community, and giving; (c) Latina/o alumni as targeted givers; and (d) competence, conscience, and compassion: the importance of the university's vision and mission. Yosso (2005) defined Community Cultural Wealth as "an array of knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed by communities of color to survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression" (p. 77). Yosso (2005, 2006) applied the community cultural wealth model, which includes six different forms of capital: aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and resistant capital to provide a broader understanding of Chicana/o educational pathways.

The community cultural wealth model was applied as a framework in this study to help understand how Latina/o alumni give in higher education contexts (See figure 3). My initial intuition was that Latina/o alumni might utilize the different knowledge and forms of capital (aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational and resistant) to challenge how the institution traditionally values and defines giving. However, the results of this study revealed that SCU Latina/o alumni possessed these forms of capital to define how they enacted giving. In addition, the findings from this study called for adding a new form of capital, *madrina/padrino* capital, to best describe how Latina/o alumni enacted giving. The following are examples of how they used a revised form of community cultural wealth as ways of giving back to their respective communities.

Figure 3. SCU Latina/o alumni community cultural wealth



### Aspirational Capital

Aspirational capital refers to “the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers” (Yosso, 2006, p. 41). The participants in this study shared similar dreams and hopes of parents to take advantage of their academics and pursue a college degree. Esperanza is currently a professor and she had the following to say regarding being in front of the classroom:

I see my students, especially the Latino students, and I can read their faces. You know, uncertainty and the sense like okay this is a new space and I tell myself it's like I know what they are feeling because I've been there. You know I've sat there where they're currently sitting. So for me it's a very powerful experience...It just reaffirmed the importance and the privilege that I have to be a faculty and to be a professor to these students that I know someday they are going to leave [the university] and going to do wonderful things in life.

Esperanza attended the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the SCU Multicultural Center and it was an emotional experience because she was reunited with people who she had not seen in many years. She reflected that she and the other alumni were the kids with dreams of changing the community, of social change, and doing something for the community and now as alumni they were politicians, physicians, and lawyers. This Multicultural Center reunion experience allowed her to envision her own students in 5-10 years. In hindsight, her parents also had dreams that Esperanza would pursue a college degree. However, they also made sure that Esperanza committed to helping others aspire to the same goals of obtaining a college degree.

My parents would always say, '*que no se te olvide tu gente*' never forget your people and remember that there are others that are going to come after you. They're also going to have the same questions, the same desires, the same dreams, and we have to make an effort to be there and to help people just how you've been helped by [your] mentors.

Esperanza shared the same aspirations her parents had for her when she is in front of the classroom, teaching students to become responsible citizens and change agents in their

communities. Teresa reflected on a volunteer experience at a local high school career day with first-year high school students. The goal of the career day was to inform and inspire students to explore different career paths. Teresa led a group discussion about what she does as an attorney. She reflected, “[There were] two girls that were in my group for the second session. I asked them, ‘Have you ever met an attorney?’ and they said, ‘no’ and I told them, ‘I am really honored to be the first attorney you meet.’” Her experience with the group inspired Teresa to continue her mentorship work, particularly with the Latina/o community. Through her work with a local Silicon Valley Latina organization, she is able to inspire young women to pursue a higher education and a career path in law.

Chato also had high aspirations for Latina/o students in the local community to pursue higher education. He has been involved in organizing an annual Latino Role Model conference in San José to inspire and motivate kids to stay in school, attend college, graduate from college, and become professionals in a field of their choice. In response to questions on where he went to college he responds:

I say Santa Clara University and I wear my Santa Clara shirt so everybody knows I’m a graduate of Santa Clara University. I went to that ghetto high school and I went to Santa Clara University. So kids are inspired to go to Santa Clara too and maybe some of them are like me, that even though I only lived 15 minutes away from Santa Clara, I never knew it existed until someone told me about it.

The conference he organizes was in its 20<sup>th</sup> year of existence at the time of our interview.

Chato continues to support the university as an informal ambassador and he also continues to inspire students to pursue their dreams and attend college.

Whether participants volunteered for a particular program/conference or worked with students as a career, they were constantly engaged and encouraged students to pursue a college degree after high school. Furthermore, alumni were ambassadors of college in general, and not necessarily always ambassadors of their alma mater. The next form of capital describes how alumni served as vehicles for navigating through multiple systems like education and different career paths.

### **Navigational Capital**

Navigational capital “refers to the skills maneuvering through social institutions” (Yosso, 2006, p. 44). Whether the audience was high school or SCU students, the participants in this study were engaged in providing their community with guidance through different social institutions, such as education or the path to the participants’ respective occupation. Josue works with youth across the city of San José and coordinates programs where students from different age groups are able to learn different skills from goal setting to college preparation.

Aside from issues they are facing now, because we also address teen pregnancy, gang involvement, drugs, and alcohol...but we also do after high school, ‘What’s life after high school? Are you guys planning to go to college? Go straight to work?’ and [we] really educate them about some of those different options and what they really entail. Josue works with the students to navigate through different life possibilities, including a pathway to college. Chato has been invited back to SCU by MEChA-El Frente a number of times to speak to youth during their annual Raza Day. In addition, he has been invited to come back to courses taught by SCU professors to speak about Chicano issues, in particular the history of Chicanos at the university



I've been invited to be a speaker on several occasions by the student organization at their annual Raza Day and in fact I think it was just recently [there] last year or the year before that. Keynote speaker for their Raza Day and I've been asked to participate in various functions there [SCU], including individual classes [where] I speak to them on issues about Latinos in America, contemporary Chicano talk, history of Chicanos at Santa Clara U and so on. So in that regard I think I've been doing that. I think people that know my involvement in the community in my history, know that I was part of that, and that I have something to say in that regard.

Chato would speak to students about his experience at SCU and his involvement with the community. In his course presentations, he would speak to the class about the Chicano movement and the "metamorphosis of a person from being an immigrant to a student to an activist in the community." Teresa and Karina have also come back to SCU to participate in a career vocations symposium sponsored through the SCU career center. Their involvement with the symposium allowed them to talk about their career paths in the areas of law and education. Teresa shared a story about her experience with a girl that was interested in attending law school. Generally, when she meets with girls over a meal for example, she makes it a point that she pays for the meal because that is what was done for her while she was a student.

The girl that I met with today is interested in going to law school and she wanted me to read her essay. She's done a lot of great things, in terms of getting into contact with the people at the law school she wants to go to, but she wanted me to read her essay and give her feedback...Even though I didn't get a chance to read through all of it, I glanced through things and I talked to her and she had a really powerful, she has a

really powerful story. And I helped her, hopefully to see that, ‘this is your most impressive point’ and everything else that you would have brought can somehow be integrated into that. So it was really nice we were able to do that.

Teresa assisted this woman with a critical piece of information that is evaluated by law school admissions committees. She was able to provide the prospective law student with ways to improve her essay so her application to the law school would be strengthened. Teresa indicated that she felt that mentorship through these processes were vital to the Latinas she mentored through her involvement with a Silicon Valley Latina organization.

The participants in this study reflected upon their experiences as students and now as professionals and community leaders to help others navigate through different social institutions. Whether it was through presentations in the community or at SCU, utilized their time and space to direct students to different community and university resources that helped them navigate through the institution. Their stories and experiences could have influenced others to become aware and approach the different challenges and barriers that the study participants experienced. The following form of capital emphasizes the stories of those barriers and challenges and their importance.

### **Linguistic Capital**

Linguistic capital refers to the “intellectual and social skills attained through communication, experiences, and more than one language and/or style” (Yosso, 2006, p. 42). This form of capital took shape through stories of the types of challenges participants encountered throughout their lives and were used as a way to motivate and encourage others to continue their education, particularly at SCU. Linguistic capital was a reciprocal process for most of the participants as they shared stories about how their parents and/or community

used storytelling as a way to give *consejos* [advice]. For example, Isabel recalled how MEChA alumni would come back to their undergraduate meetings to talk about different struggles they had on campus and how they were able to persevere. Given the opportunity, Isabel would do the same for the Multicultural Center and students of color. She said, “For myself it would be you know, being able to come back and to speak to those students from the Multicultural Center or other students of color, generally about how we made it.” Isabel reflected on her intense experience, but also noted how those experiences prepared her for different spaces and her ability to thrive in those spaces.

Mateo has been asked by a number of professors and students to tell his story through both literary projects and for class discussions. In his discussions, he generally talks about his life experiences and his work with at-risk and gang youth.

I would get students e-mailing me, ‘Can you help me with this paper? Can I interview you?’ I was like yeah sure. When it was personal, I would respond. Or for class presentations, I used to do for sociology or for counseling psychology I would do talks...usually the topics would be [about] working with gang kids, careers out there after graduation...most recently it was just about how to work with the at-risk population through education.

Mateo’s life experiences and work with his own nonprofit organization encouraged him to continue mentoring youth. He tried different styles of mentoring and developed his own style of mentoring through trial and error and working with hundreds of teens throughout his career.

Lastly, Esperanza had a unique opportunity to bridge a local church community and SCU through organizing the annual Virgen de Guadalupe mass on SCU’s campus. When she

initially pitched the idea to a Jesuit from campus ministry, he gladly accepted the idea, but only to be performed at the theatre instead of the mission church. Esperanza went back to Father Evaristo and explained to him that it could only be played at the theatre instead of the church.

Padre [Evaristo] well they say that because it's a play that we can't perform it at the mission cause the mission is a sacred place and Padre [Evaristo]'s like 'you tell them that that's the way we pray Flor y Canto. Explain to him about Flor y Canto.' So here I go back. [laughs] I felt like a Juan Diega and then I go back well Father no it's different...yes it's theater but it's a different type of theater...for us it's a form of praying and giving thanks to Virgen de Guadalupe um for the gifts that we have in our life.

From this point, both priests communicated with each other and agreed to celebrate *la obra* [the play] at SCU. Father Evaristo organized the transportation from the local parish to SCU that included *niños, niñas, señoras, señores, abuelitos* [boys, girls, women, men, grandparents] to celebrate this partnership and most importantly la Virgen de Guadalupe. This year (2011) will mark the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the mass and the creation of the San Juan Diego scholarship. This mass is as important today as the day it was created because of the use of *flor y canto* [flower and song], to represent the apparition of the Virgen de Guadalupe. *Flor y canto* as explained by Esperanza is a form of praying through poetry for the people. Esperanza played a vital role in bridging these two communities together; however, the *obra* [play] is symbolic as it continues to share the experience linguistically, through *flor y canto*.

Although these stories only share some of the ways participants practiced linguistic capital, participants also shared their stories through participating in panels with different

student organizations or through a number of speaking engagements. Oftentimes, they shared their oral histories of struggle and resiliency and provided *consejos* on how to persevere. The next form of capital shares the stories of how the participants approached resistance capital.

### **Resistant Capital**

Resistant capital refers to the “knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behaviors and challenge inequality” (Yosso, 2006, p. 49). Some of the participants involved themselves in demonstrations and protests while they were students at SCU. Most notably in this study was the situation where Chato’s friend was called “frito bandido” in front of the entire class. His initial response was to gather his friends and approach the president with what had occurred. Chato continues to speak of this experience when invited class presentations and other speaking engagements. What is particularly unique about Chato compared to the other participants is that his daughter attends SCU as an undergraduate student. She has been fortunate to hear her father’s reflections about his student experience through these different speaking engagements.

She actually heard it because when I went to be a guest speaker to these various functions I would take her with me and/or my son...but usually at least my daughter because she’d want to go to Santa Clara. My son didn’t want to go to Santa Clara and did not go to Santa Clara. So he’d resist my invitations to join me [laughs] at these functions...but my daughter was thinking of that so she would generally go with me. And during those I would recount my history at Santa Clara. I think that’s one of the reasons why the professors invited me. And so my daughter heard it from a little girl on forward and she was amazed that it even happened at an institution of higher learning, but also being a student of history cognizant that those were the times. That

was the social dynamic going on in the 60s and 70s. But I think that also served to inspire to become an activist in her own right, a mover and shaker in her own school and now a member of MEChA-El Frente at Santa Clara U [laughs] to which her father was one of the founding members. I'm glad that my daughter's at Santa Clara. I'm glad my daughter a member of MEChA El Frente. I'm glad if she's sitting in the audience when I would make these presentations to different audiences at Santa Clara U, and I'm glad she decided to go to Santa Clara in spite of that history because I think she learned that despite the difficulties there are a lot of good going on at Santa Clara, a lot of good people there. There are a lot of good professors. It was an exciting place to be and ignorant people are everywhere – we all have our share.

Chato, like many other Latina/o alumni in the study, have shared their struggles as students with others as a way to combat future issues of racial and social injustice. Isabel indicated that as a student, Multicultural Center alumni would come back to provide an oral history of their experience as student leaders. In addition, Chato and Teresa served as informal advisors to students when racist parties organized by SCU students took place.

Oftentimes, history is lost in student leadership transition and it was vital for students to be privileged with reflections of student movements, protests, and demonstrations that took place and the resources they fought for during that period of time. In the study, alumni were privileged with different networks that allowed them to continue with their goals. In the next section alumni reflect on the social capital that they have provided students throughout their careers.

## Social Capital

Latina/o alumni in this study participated in different civic organizations and community activities throughout the bay area. Most of the time the members of these organizations provided access to networks that were resourceful to the community, such as educational, community, and mutual assistance. Social capital “can be understood as networks of people and community resources” (Yosso, 2006, p. 45). The Latina/o alumni in the study used their affiliations with different organizations to facilitate the progress of the youth and the community members they encountered. For example, Teresa used her Silicon Valley Latina organization to mentor and network with young women who were interested in the field of law. In addition, many of the monthly luncheon events require a registration fee and there have been a number of times that she has sponsored women who could not afford to attend these networking luncheons. Teresa finds importance in giving back to the community and sharing her time and knowledge with others. She expressed, “It is important to recognize that you’re in a role now that someone 10 years younger than you wants to be in.” Providing access to the organization allowed the women to network with a multitude of professionals and encouraged them to explore different career interests. Working with her local parish, Esperanza committed to Father Evaristo that once she was accepted to SCU she would recruit at least 5 other students from her parish community to attend the university.

One of the things that Padre [Evaristo] told me, once I came to Santa Clara, he told me, ‘Your homework is going be...before you graduate Santa Clara, five other Latinos from the community or from wherever need to be accepted.’ So I had to make sure that when I graduated, five other Latinos would be coming in and I met the

quota. Some of them were transfer students, some of them were right off high school but I think I see that and I think I will always see that as my way of giving back. Esperanza used her networks with the church and her community college network to inform others of how to apply to SCU. Furthermore, it is important to note that Esperanza was the only community college transfer student in this study and she extended her knowledge of the transfer process to other community college students in her network.

Latina/o alumni in the study used various forms of social capital to help their community navigate the prospective career paths and through the educational system. This practice is similar to how parents would learn of resources and in turn communicate it with others so they could also benefit from the resource (Center of Philanthropy and Civil Society, 2003). In the next form of capital, SCU Latina/o alumni use their mentorship as a way to emotionally support students and the community.

### **Familial Capital**

Latina/o alumni in this study used familial capital as a way to mentor and nurture students and their own children to achieve their respective goals. Familial capital refers to the “cultural knowledges nurtured among *familia* (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition” (Yosso, 2006, p. 48). Latina/o alumni in this study used this form of capital to remain in contact and engaged with the student organizations that supported them like family when they were students at SCU. For example, Isabel indicated that the Multicultural Center leadership would often call on alumni to mentor current student on how to approach and navigate campus politics. Teresa indicated how her time as a form of giving had ritual importance to her community. She expressed, “It is really about the different ways that we give our community, our friends, our family, for social functions that



have ritual importance.” For example, she felt that her time mentoring young women and including them in networking practices played a particular ritual importance for Latinas to overcome current or future obstacles.

Esperanza experienced familial capital through her parents advising her not to forget about her community and to be sure to help those that may have the same questions she had as a student. Esperanza is now a faculty member and continues to be engaged with her church and the surrounding community in San José. In addition, she reflected that as a faculty member she would provide a space for students just like one of her professors who had a large yellow couch where students could sit and catch a breath.

I remember [Dr. Muñoz] had this huge, old, yellow couch in his office and I remember everybody, I called it the therapy couch because...every time I felt uncomfortable, if he had office hours, I would go to his office and sit there. For me it was kind of like a breathing space and to see that there was this Latino or Chicano professor there it just gave me reassurance and then I'd know after that I'd be like okay I can go through the day. So for me having those spaces, having those faculty assessable to me played a lot, cause sometimes I think as a student um even a smile from a professor that looks like you means a lot and for me definitely made a difference.

Familial capital extends beyond the immediate family and can include other community members who have a commitment to community well-being (Yosso, 2006). In this case, Esperanza took the advice from her parents and offered a space for her students to take refuge and offer emotional support when needed. In this study familial capital mostly took shape through the emotional support that occurs in the process of mentoring. There were

countless times in this study where alumni supported students through their decisions to pursue a higher education. The following form of capital is relevant the emotional support that occurs in familial capital but extends support through sponsorship.

### **Madrina/Padrino Capital**

Madrina/Padrino capital refers to sponsorship that enables students and/or the community to explore and navigate different social institutions. In chapter 2, I discussed the concept of sponsorship, which was synonymous to the term *compadrazgo* in the context where one serves to extend family relations and loyalty to a larger pool of individuals who are not kin and provide the child, teen, or couple with the religious and/or cultural symbols (e.g., *lazo*, *arras*, food, entertainment) (Melville, 1991). Latina/o alumni in this study played similar roles as *madrinas* and *padrinos* [godparents/sponsors] would generally if they were sponsors for a religious celebration (i.e., baptism, quinceañera, or wedding). Latina/o alumni in this study used madrina/padrino capital to contribute monetary gifts toward targeted scholarships and sponsor or organize events that would allow students and the community access to different social institutions like higher education and different career paths.

For example, Teresa was able to sponsor students in different ways through paying for their meals or giving monetary gifts toward transportation costs. In addition, if she were to give to a SCU scholarship she would target it toward students who are in her similar situation.

Now that I'm financially able to do that I want to know that my money is going to something that is important to me. So what I want to do is give back to students who were in my situation...I want my money to go toward those students...to go towards those scholarships that helped me, because that is important to me because I know

that that money is put to good use. I mean I'm living proof of that and I didn't just graduate and get married. I went on, I've done other things, and those things have been to help other people.

Pedro has also given monetary gifts toward targeted funds like the Hurtado scholarship that provides scholarships to undocumented SCU students.

In addition, participants like Chato and Josue have been active participants in organizing different conferences that encourage students to pursue their career and educational ambitions. Chato's Latino Role Model conference provides a number of scholarships to Latina/o students attending college. As the organizer, he contributes monetary gifts toward the scholarship and also seeks gifts from other professional in San José. This year alone, Chato was able to raise \$8,000 to defray college expenses.

I practice giving by being involved in the community, community efforts. Here's \$1500 in checks in front of me that I've solicited for the Latino Role Model Conference and scholarships, so we're going to take this \$1500 this Saturday and we're going to give it to [Eastside High School] students ah for help defray their college expenses and books and so on, that's what I do. You know I went out asked people, like Santa Clara asks people from time to time. I went out and out and did the same. So by the way, we now have by just asking for this Saturday we're going to give away um about \$8000 in scholarships to [Eastside High School] students. So I practice giving by remembering the teachings of my parents, remembering that I'm a graduate of a Jesuit university that had a philosophy of service to humanity.

Mateo also played a major role in fundraising for his nonprofit organization, whose mission is to improve the quality of life of at-risk youth, young adults, and low-income families and

offers mentorship, educational scholarships and leadership development. Mateo is passionate for the mission of his organizations and has successfully raised over \$125,000 over the past 5 years. Overall, Mateo took initiative to create an organization that would sponsor and benefit youth in his community to further their education.

Throughout the study, Latina/o alumni played an important role in sponsoring students and the community through different initiatives. Furthermore, participants like Esperanza, Isabel, Pedro, and Karina also served in traditional *madrina/padrino* roles through their involvement with baptisms, quinceañeras and weddings. The addition and development of *madrina/padrino* capital was important to this study because it is metaphorical to the traditional roles of sponsorship and Latina/o philanthropic efforts. In this study, participants practiced traditional *madrina/padrino* roles; however, in the context of alumni giving, they expanded that sponsorship to students and their respective communities, which allowed them to explore and navigate different social institutions.

To summarize, Yosso (2005) defined Community Cultural Wealth as “an array of knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed by communities of color to survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression” (p. 77). The definition still holds true with the revised framework; however, the findings suggested that *madrina/padrino* capital was vital, in order for the community to maneuver different social institutions. It is important to note that sponsorship and mentorship were intertwined and served as a critical piece for *madrina/padrino* capital. Moreover, the alumni participants in this study were beneficiaries of Yosso’s (2005, 2006) model of community cultural as they were growing up and are now paying it forward with the revised community cultural wealth model as it pertains to this

study. The following section provides an over view of the findings in relation to the existing literature in chapter 2.

#### Overview of the Findings in Relation to the Existing Literature

The four major themes that emerged from this study were (a) Latina/o alumni as university ambassadors; (b) careers, community, and giving; (c) Latina/o alumni as targeted givers; and (d) competence, conscience, and compassion: the importance of the university's vision and mission. The following is an overview of how the findings related to the existing literature on alumni associations, development, and Latina/o philanthropy highlighted in Chapter 2.

#### **Alumni Associations**

As indicated in Chapter 2, alumni associations have been in existence for over 200 years and they have been critical to universities because of their history of engaging alumni to assist with different operational activities, such as new student recruitment (Council for Advancement and Support for Education, 1983; Stuart, 2009), career advising (Cabrales, 2008; Mulugetta, et al., 1999), volunteer services (Gill, 1998; Scully, 2008; Weerts, et al., 2010; Weerts & Ronca, 2007) and many times fundraising (Loyola Marymount University, 2010; McE. Buchanan, 2000; Nicklin, 1997). Alumni associations are also tasked with the responsibility of hosting different events, like reunions, throughout the calendar year. The participants in this study were not knowledgeable of the functions of the alumni association as undergraduate students; however, many participants indicated their involvement with the alumni association (e.g., Vintage Santa Clara, reunions) and the Chicana/o Latina/o alumni chapter's events (e.g., new student reception, post-work socials), post-graduation.

In the existing literature, Hay (1990) suggested if minority alumni had bad experiences, they would not likely participate after graduation with university and/or alumni programs. The findings from this study argued the exact opposite to what the existing literature claimed. The first theme, Latina/o alumni as university ambassadors, indicated that although alumni had challenging experiences at SCU, different support mechanisms (i.e., student organizations, campus centers, and faculty) at the university provided a community and encouragement for the participants to persist and graduate. Moreover, these participants became ambassadors for the university because of this support.

Coupled with the assumption that alumni of color would not participate in university activities after graduation, ethnicity-based alumni chapters were often vilified as separatist organizations (Rakestraw, 1985). The Chicana/o Latina/o alumni chapter has been in existence at SCU for over 35 years. In fact, Chato indicated assisting in the development of the chapter after he graduated from SCU in 1972. Due to this important historical fact, I probed with many follow-up questions of why he helped organize and create the chapter.

Somewhere in those years, during the mid- to late-seventies we ended up completing the process of forming the Chicano/Latino alumni association. Some of us Latino alumni got together and thought that would be good to do so. One, because we still we had very good experience [and] very good affinity for Santa Clara. We were proud to say we're Santa Clara graduates, we were proud to say that we had some connection to Santa Clara, because we live in the area, because we may have still known someone who was going to Santa Clara, or we still had um long-standing admiration for one or two of the professors that we had at Santa Clara.

Chato reaffirmed the connectedness that Latina/o alumni had with the support mechanisms that were revealed in the first theme. Even through the racist and challenging situations Chato experienced as a student, he continued to have affinity for the university because of the relationships he had developed. The Chicana/o Latina/o alumni chapter has never been a separatist organization, but rather one that engages other SCU Latina/o alumni with different functions of the universities operations. I also inquired about the reason behind the title of the alumni chapter, “Chicano/Latino” alumni association. Without even having to ask, he stated:

And yes we went through the whole discussion of should we call ourselves Chicano Alumni Association? Should we call ourselves Hispanic Alumni Association? Should we call ourselves Latino, we had the whole discussion that we’d had 10 years before [laughs] as undergrads, but I’m proud to say that we still have a Chicano/Latino Alumni Association. And we ended up calling ourselves Chicano/Latino on purpose. Chicano - we were proud we were from the barrios. Latino was all encompassing and it was a bigger roof. It provided a bigger tent for those who were graduates of Santa Clara, who weren’t necessarily Chicano...who weren’t necessarily from the barrio, who weren’t necessarily from the same social economic background as we, the original ones were, but were still Latino and wanted to be part of it. So with the admit of the Chicano/Latino Alumni Association came what we have now, a big tent and graduates from all walks of life who are Latino who like us and are proud to say, I’m a Santa Clara graduate. Go Broncos!

Identity is fluid amongst Latinas/os as indicated in earlier in chapter 3. Although the participants in this study identified mostly with Chicana/o and/or Latina/o identities, two identified as Mexicana and one participant identified as Mechicana, a hybrid of Mexicana

and Chicana; however, the majority participants coupled the identities (e.g., Chicano/Latino, Mexicana/Latina) when they were asked about which identity represented them best. In addition, the participants also indicated that their racial/ethnic identity heavily depended on the context and their audience. Padilla (1995) describes Latinismo as being situational and states, “In short, the Latino-conscious person sees himself as a Latino sometimes and as Puerto Rican, Mexican American, Cuban, and the like at other times” (p. 443). SCU’s alumni association continues to use “Chicana/o Latina/o” to represent its alumni chapter as it also best represents these particular alumni demographics.

### **Development**

The findings from this study indicated that Latina/o alumni are targeted monetary givers. This particular finding coincides with what was found in existing literature. Scully (2008) and Frumkin (2006) asserted that Hispanics, like African Americans, tended not to be unrestricted givers and gave to causes that were particularly meaningful to them. As evidenced by participants in this study, their motivation to give was in line with the advancement and intellectual development of Latinas/os and their respective communities. Both Chato and Mateo organized efforts to successfully fundraise money to go toward their organizations. The funds raised were used to help Latinas/os and at-risk youth defray costs that they would potentially incur as college students. Teresa also indicated that she sponsored students to different luncheons for the purposes of networking and gave monetary gifts to her Silicon Valley Latina organization so participants could pay for their transportation costs to attend the events.

Rivas-Vásquez (1999) suggested that Latinas/os donors tended to look for a connection to their particular gift. Although there is not a formal annual event that allows



Latina/o alumni to give in a social setting, participants in the study found ways to engage with different scholarships that benefit Latina/o students at SCU. For example, Karina and Esperanza were active supporters of the San Juan Diego scholarship through helping with the organization of the inaugural Virgen de Guadalupe mass and serving on the scholarship committee. Pedro, on the other hand, gave money toward the Hurtado Scholarship, which benefits undocumented SCU students. According to Pedro, because this scholarship targeted and facilitated through the Jesuit community, he gave his gift directly to the Jesuit contact rather than informing the development office of his desire to give toward this particular scholarship.

Personal connections are important to Latina/o donors, particularly when they are making charitable donations. Rivas-Vásquez (1999) also indicated that Latina/o donors are more particularly concerned with who is soliciting them, alluding to the fact that there is a lack of Latina/o fundraisers. As previously noted, major advancement professional associations (e.g., AFP, AHP, APRA, and CASE) asserted that people of color accounted for approximately 8% of their respective association (Council for Advancement and Support for Education, 2002; Wagner & Ryan, 2004). Furthermore, Latinas/os only represent approximately 3.4% of fundraising professionals across all U.S. postsecondary institutions (Tromble, 1998a). Isabel noted the lack of targeted outreach by university advancement and used admissions' targeted outreach as an example of how alumni outreach should be facilitated. For example, she recalled that the office of admissions always had specific counselors recruiting for targeted communities (i.e., African American, Latina/o, etc.).

Somehow, once we are alumni we are all in this one lump group because of the common bond that you graduated. [In admissions], there's usually designated people

dealing with recruiting and outreach to particular populations and I think it would behoove to have something different for alumni.

The difference Isabel argued for is having a similar set up as admissions where recruitment is segmented with particular populations. Cortés (1995) also asserted that personal relationships, *personalismo*, was vital to Latina/o philanthropy and demanded a certain level of trust. Perhaps segmenting fundraising practices could increase Latina/o alumni participation and trust in monetary giving. The next section will provide an overview of Latina/o philanthropy and its relevance to the study.

### **Latina/o Philanthropy**

Latina/o philanthropy played a significant role in this study and the findings indicated that Latina/o alumni practiced giving through three different and frequently informal mediums: support for extended family networks, involvement in the church, and through *mutualista* organizations that provide basic social services and social justice activities (Cortés, 1991, 1995; Diaz, 1999; Gallegos & O'Neill, 1991; Ramos, 1999). The participants expressed that they learned their philanthropic practices through their parents and their communities. Moreover, the alumni participants also indicated that SCU's social justice mission and vision (i.e., competence, conscience, and compassion) provided a framework on how they approached their work with others.

**Support for extended family networks.** The alumni participants in this study participated in this form of giving mainly through sponsorship. *Madrinas and padrinos* play significant roles in the Latina/o community and are facilitated through *compadrazgo* (*comadres and compadres*), the act of extending family relations to those who are not kin (Melville, 1991) through sponsorship. Traditionally, this takes shape through religious

activities, such as baptisms, *quinceañeras*, and weddings (B. Smith, et al., 1999). Many of the participants in this study participated in this traditional form of giving and participated as *madrinas* or *padrinos* for different religious events. Furthermore, alumni participants were also sponsors for non-religious events, which provided the community with access to different social institutions like education or career networks. Latina/o alumni sponsorship came to fruition through targeted monetary giving (e.g., scholarships) and program sponsorship (e.g., career networking, luncheons, etc.). Hence, in this particular setting, the Latina/o alumni participants became *madrinas/padrinos* for the students and/or community they supported and *compadres/comadres* of the particular social institution (e.g., university, nonprofit organizations, etc.).

**Latina/o participation with the church.** Religion also plays an important role in Latina/o philanthropy. As indicated in Chapter 2, many Latinas/os rely on the church to provide most of their social needs, particularly for needy families (Marx & Carter, 2008; Ramos, 1999). The majority of the Latina/o alumni in this study participated in different types of church activities throughout their lives. As youth, many would assist the church as Eucharist ministers or catechism instructors. For example, Karina and Esperanza led confirmation courses and youth groups as younger adults. However, as alumni they have maintained relationships with their parish through serving on committees, like the San Juan Diego Scholarship committee. However, Teresa's parish provided her family with emotional and financial support while they were going through challenging times. Although, not all participants were presently active with the church on a consistent basis, they acknowledged the role it played in contribution to their livelihood. Furthermore, their involvement with the

church also intertwined with supporting extended family networks through religious sponsorship via *compadrazgo*.

**Involvement with the mutualista organizations.** Mutual aid organizations have been in existence for over 200 years and were designed to give informal aid and assist people with economic hardships (Center of Philanthropy and Civil Society, 2003; Marx & Carter, 2008). The Latina/o alumni in this study were members of different organizations that were designed for this exact purpose. For example, Teresa, Chato, and Dolores were all a part of a lawyers association, which raised money for students attending law school. In addition, Chato and Mateo were active in raising funds for their organizations in order to economically assist students with the costs of attending college. However, alumni also participated in numerous organizations that assisted their communities with different resources. Oftentimes, their work was personal, in the sense that they were committed to the cause. Diaz, et al. (2001) found that the top two organizations where Latinas/os volunteered were religious organizations and the education field. Latina/o alumni in this study validated the results through their participation with different educational initiatives and their parishes.

#### Summary of the Study

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore and understand how Latina/o alumni defined their roles as alumni, interacted with their alma mater, and gave to the institution. The study took place in the Santa Clara and Santa Cruz counties throughout a three-month period of time. Data were collected through three individual interviews with each participant and each interview was audio-recorded and transcribed; I analyzed the transcripts.

Yosso's (2005, 2006) model of community cultural wealth served as the primary conceptual framework for this study, which allowed me to explore and understand how Latina/o alumni employed different forms of capital in a higher education setting. Five women and four men participated in this study and identified as Latina/o and oftentimes coupled it with Chicana/o, Mexicana/o, or MeChicana, a hybrid of Mexicana and Chicana.

The research questions guiding this study will now be addressed:

**1. What are Latina/o graduates' perceptions of how their alma mater frames alumni giving?**

The participants in this study felt that SCU framed giving primarily through monetary gifts. They indicated that oftentimes SCU giving was out of their league because of their inability to give a substantial amount of money. Isabel expressed, "In order to be seen as a valuable giver, you have to have your name on a building." The participants in the study shared the same sentiments as Isabel and did not feel like their monetary gifts would influence or make a difference in general campaigns. However, the participants also indicated that if they were to give a monetary gift to SCU, it would likely be directed toward a targeted scholarship fund, such as one benefiting Latina/o students, students of color, or first-generation college students.

**2. How do Latina/o alumni enact giving as alumni?**

The participants in this study intertwined their occupations with their community involvement in different civic and educational activities, which resulted in different practices of giving, including sponsorship. Whether participants were attorneys, professors, or administrators each of their occupations involved helping people in their respective communities. Dolores expressed that many people assume that

Latinas/os do not give and she argued, “But you are going to be giving in your own [community] whether it’s your family or your extended family or your schools or your church or you know similar smaller community groups.” Her statement epitomized the way Latina/o alumni practiced giving in this study and validated the tenets of Latina/o philanthropy, which include: support for extended family networks, involvement in the church, and through *mutualista* organizations.

### **3. How does the alma mater benefit from Latina/o alumni contributions?**

Latina/o alumni in this study expressed that the university benefits through their ambassadorship. While not all of the participants had positive student experiences at SCU, their support mechanisms (i.e., student organizations, campus centers, and faculty) provided encouragement and the support necessary to build affinity to the university. Latina/o alumni participants felt that through their community involvement and speaking engagements, they were able to promote SCU and encourage others in the community to consider the university for themselves or their respective family members.

#### Limitations and Strengths

As indicated in Chapter 3, there are two limitations pertaining to this study. First, the findings to this study are limited to undergraduate Latina/o alumni from one predominantly white Jesuit university. The results cannot be generalized to all Latina/o alumni nor all Latinas/os. In addition, the participants of the study were undergraduate alumni from a Jesuit university and cannot be generalized to all types of institutions (e.g., Research I, Comprehensive, etc.).

The strengths of the study include the detailed and rich stories from each participant. I was fortunate to have “insider status” for two particular reasons: I am a SCU alumnus and I am also Latino. I have interacted with most of these participants prior to the study through my involvement with the Chicana/o Latina/o alumni chapter. In addition, I was an active undergraduate student at SCU, which allowed me to identify spaces and historical information relevant to this study.

#### Implications for Practice

The findings from this study provide a number of implications for practice for student affairs, alumni associations, development, and public relations. Findings from this study provide insight for these different functional areas that can further embrace and validate the way Latina/o alumni conceptualize giving.

#### Implications for Alumni Associations

The alumni participants in the study indicated that they were not aware of the function of the alumni association as undergraduate students. It would be beneficial to the alumni association if there were programs that could engage undergraduate students with alumni and the alumni association the minute they step onto campus. Engaging students early on would provide a foundation for a natural transition and engagement as an alumnus of the university. Many campuses across the nation have organized student alumni associations to facilitate this type of engagement. In addition, it would also be beneficial for the alumni association to develop a stronger relationship with the campus centers that provided support to the alumni in this study, such as the Multicultural Center and the Arrupe Center.

As evidenced in the existing literature, the advancement field has relatively low representation of Latinas/os. A way to increase the percentage of Latina/o professionals in

advancement careers, specifically alumni relations is to familiarize students with the functional area. For example, through hiring more Latina/o undergraduate student workers, the alumni association would have the opportunity to socialize and engage students with the type of programs that fall under the alumni association's responsibility. If students are retained as undergraduate employees, they may become viable candidates for professional employment upon graduation.

Latina/o alumni in this study were also engaged with the community and oftentimes served as ambassadors to the university. Many of the participants were affiliated with different community organizations that served college-going students. In this case, it would be advantageous for the alumni association to provide an internet or web-based communication portal where Latina/o alumni could make other alumni aware of their organization and use it as a way to recruit and engage alumni with community activities. Moreover, this outlet may be a good way to connect the Alumni for Others program to different community organizations led by SCU alumni.

Based on the findings, another way to increase SCU Latina/o alumni participation is through organizing broader programs that include families. The Chicana/o Latina/o alumni chapter facilitates some programming; however, most events are geared toward networking. Furthermore, since alumni are engaged in different capacities throughout the community, it would be beneficial to create programs that are intentional and are action-oriented to better the community.

#### Implications for Development

Findings from this study suggested that Latina/o alumni are targeted monetary givers. As such, it would be valuable for development to highlight different funds that are targeted



toward supporting Latina/o, first-generation, and/or undocumented students. As indicated in the existing literature, Latinas/os prefer a connection with the person soliciting them and with the fund itself. In addition, Latina/o alumni participants indicated that they prefer targeted ask letters rather than general stock letters for unrestricted funds. When asked which material they would privilege and open if they were to receive two pieces of direct mail – one was targeted (e.g., Latina/o scholarship, Multicultural Center, ethnic studies, etc.) and the other was general (e.g., unrestricted fund, annual giving), participants immediately indicated that they would pay more attention to the targeted piece. This finding was likely due to the fact that they would have a connection to the particular fund.

The Chicana/o Latina/o alumni chapter is housed under the alumni association and there is generally an alumni liaison that is charged with supporting the chapter. However, participants were not so certain who that liaison was for the development office that works with funds targeted toward Latinas/os. Isabel suggested for there to be a point person who is responsible for this demographic, as admissions has specific counselors for targeted recruitment. It is critical for the development office to understand culturally relevant giving practices as it pertains to Latinas/os. As previously noted, Pedro recommended how SCU should approach Latina/o alumni and monetary giving.

Money is important, but I think that if you look at history and you look at the Latino community, money is no problem if it has to deal with family. So take a quinceañera or take a *boda* [wedding] or take all those things into consideration. I mean we pour out thousands of dollars for those things, *pero* [but] the key center part of it is family and if you can make a campaign around.

He expressed that SCU should take a culturally relevant approach to giving and treat targeted funds (i.e., Multicultural Center, Latina/o scholarships, etc.) like families. The findings suggest that Latina/o alumni are targeted givers, yet intertwine their occupations and community engagement with their giving practices. Moreover, it is also important to acknowledge and become familiar with the cultural capital employed by the Latina/o alumni demographic (see Figure 3). Familiarity with culturally relevant giving practices will provide the development office with different possible methods on how to approach Latina/o giving.

#### Implications for Public Relations

Public relations is a critical functional area for most organizations. Participants in the study alluded to different ways the university can better engage Latina/o alumni with the university. Due to the age ranges of the participants, they all preferred a mixed approach on how they liked receiving information from SCU (i.e., telephone, electronically, direct mail, etc.). Almost every participant in the study received a copy of the *Santa Clara Magazine*. In fact, three participants were highlighted in the magazine for their community engagement in the past. Participants in the study reflected that they would like Latinas/os to be more visible in university publications, particularly regarding student issues. One participant suggested that the university should develop a one-stop-shop website where alumni and friends could find anything and everything pertaining to Latinas/os at SCU (e.g., campus events, student organizations, Chicana/o Latina/o alumni chapter information, statistics, Latina/o scholarship funds, etc.). The point the participant was making was that there was not a location where Latina/o alumni could find information pertaining to Latinas/os at SCU. Many alumni in the study still had interest in supporting the student organizations that they were involved with as undergraduates; however, it was difficult to support those organizations because alumni did

not know where to begin. It would be beneficial for public relations to develop a site or location where Latina/o alumni could read articles and stay up to date with information pertaining to Latinas/os at SCU.

Lastly, the findings suggest that Latina/o alumni who graduated post-1998 were particularly familiar with the university's vision on developing leaders of competence, conscience, and compassion. This familiarity may create an opportunity for public relations to continue to promote the university's vision through its publications. For example, a section of every *Santa Clara Magazine* could be dedicated to SCU alumni who practice either of those "3 C's" in the community. Through highlighting alumni in university publications, the university may be able to engage a diverse group of alumni who are practicing SCU's vision and Jesuit mission.

#### Implications for Student Affairs

The findings from this study provided rich descriptions of the participants' student experience. Many participants had challenging experiences as students indicating isolation and intimidation, socially and academically. However, there were many support mechanisms that encouraged them to persist through their education. One of the support mechanisms included their involvement with student organizations, mostly within *La Comunidad Latina*, which included social, political, professional, and Latina/o Greek organizations. These organizations provided peer support and were important players in the participants' leadership development.

Different campus spaces also played a vital role in the success of the participants in the study. The participants indicated that campus centers like the Student Resource Center, Arrupe Center, and the Multicultural Center served as safe havens for students to take refuge.

The different centers also allowed for students to become more engaged with the surrounding community and practice the university's vision of developing leaders of conscience, competence, and compassion.

Lastly, a number of faculty members provided support, encouragement, and sometimes served as advocates for the Latina/o alumni participants. Faculty members were pivotal in the intellectual development of these participants by encouraging them to delve into the practice of research, publishing, and involvement with professional organizations. Today, participants credit their professors with allowing them to grow as individuals and for teaching them how to better serve the needs of others.

Overall, student affairs professionals may use this study to gauge how to better support Latinas/os to minimize any feelings of isolation or intimidation by the campus community. Despite the challenging student experiences, the alumni in this study enjoyed their experience with the support of student organizations, campus centers, and faculty. Hence, when they conceptualize giving, they often reflect and give to those campus organizations and programs that provided them with support as undergraduate students.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

This research study contributes to the gap in the literature on Latinas/os and institutional engagement once they earn their baccalaureate degrees. The findings for this research helped me understand how graduates interacted with the institution and defined and enacted their roles as alumni and institutional supporters. Though a handful of studies examine race and giving in a higher education context (e.g., S. A. Gonzalez, 2003; L. J. Smith, 1998), the findings for those studies mostly related to monetary giving practices.

Throughout my dissertation study I wondered how this study would be different at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). Would Latina/o alumni enact giving differently? How would a HSI approach Latina/o giving? This type of study would merit further research.

In addition, the findings from this study found that Latina/o alumni intertwined their occupations and community engagement with their giving practices. How would giving be practiced by those not engaged with the community? What influence would it have on the recruitment of potential students to the university?

Research should also be conducted on the influence alumni have on recruitment and retention of Chicana/o Latina/o undergraduate students. How do Latina/o alumni contribute to recruitment and retention of Latina/o students? Do Latina/o alumni recruit specifically for their alma mater? Or do Latina/o graduates recruit students to generally pursue a higher education?

Also, this study involved Latina/o alumni participants who were alumni from a Jesuit institution that is mission-driven. I would be curious to find how Latina/o alumni engage and interact with their alma mater at a large public research or at a comprehensive institution. Does the size or classification of the institution matter? What would be the engagement of Latina/o alumni at these types of institutions?

Lastly, institutions have found that diversifying the membership on their institution's trustee and alumni association boards would increase the percentage of minority donors (Nicklin, 1994, February 23). Further research should be conducted whether the increase of alumni of color influences the development and implementation of policy. How would the policies be different if trustee and alumni association boards were more diverse? What type of influence do alumni donors have on university policies?

### Personal Reflection

This dissertation study has been an enjoyable and rewarding experience. The topic of conceptualizing how Latina/o alumni give to SCU came serendipitously through my experiences with the SCU Alumni Association. First, I would like to acknowledge the Executive Director of the SCU Alumni Association, Kathryn Kale '86 for allowing me the opportunity to work with her for the past 8 years. She has absolutely been of great assistance throughout my doctoral work and has provided me with opportunities to give back to SCU, while completing my degree.

My initial involvement with the alumni association, specifically with the Chicana/o Latina/o alumni chapter began immediately after I graduated from SCU in 2000. While I ventured off to graduate school, I remained in contact and engaged with the alumni chapter from a distance. While I was in my third year of my doctoral education, I was a member of the SCU Alumni Association National Board of Directors. During that time, the alumni association was charged with developing a strategic plan in which the national board participated in a number of focus groups and developed ways we could enhance different critical areas, such as alumni engagement, history and traditions, student outreach, marketing and communications, partnerships, and a strong support structure. Luckily, I was able assist the alumni association with a greater project on ways to increase the student/alumni engagement. This project had great outcomes, but also led me to ask more questions, particularly about Latina/o alumni engagement and giving.

I remember reading an article criticizing ethnicity-based alumni groups and then a few days later reading another article asserting that Latinas/os do not give. After reading the articles, I was infuriated because I knew exactly what the articles were implying and they

were simply misinformed. I reflected back to all of the times my family would host relatives in our home for long periods of time. I remember going to church every Sunday and giving a dollar or two to the collection basket and I also remember my parents sending money to family members in México so they were able to purchase their personal necessities. However, our family has also been on the receiving end of giving. I vividly remember October 17, 1989 at 5:04 PM when a 7.1 earthquake rocked our home of its foundation and with it went my childhood. The painful memory was unbearable; however, there were a multitude of people there to help us through those challenging times. Family provided us with shelter and food; the church assisted us with some necessities, and the Red Cross and other mutualist organizations provided us with economic assistance to purchase clothing and other belongings taken away by this natural disaster. So when I read articles about Latinas/os and their lack of participation in the giving process, I think about the author's lack of knowledge of Latina/o philanthropy.

After searching for different literature about Latinas/os and giving, I read different articles about Latina/o Philanthropy (Cortés, 1991, 1995; Diaz, 1999; Gallegos & O'Neill, 1991; Ramos, 1999). This was it! I found literature that identified how I felt Latinas/os enacted giving. There were a couple of dissertations that were focused on Latina/o giving in higher education; however, they focused primarily on the Latina/o monetary giving behaviors. So my mission was to extend my capstone project with the SCU alumni association and conceptualize how Latina/o alumni give at SCU.

This research process particularly hit close to home because I was interviewing participants who were like me: Latina/o and SCU alumni. Throughout the data collection process I was humbled to hear about the different ways the participants experienced Santa

Clara. There were times where the participants got emotional because of the pain those experiences brought them. The time I got emotional was when Pedro reflected about his father while they were driving through Yolo County. His father said, “You know, many years ago I was in this valley picking *melones* [melons] in Yolo. I would have never thought I would be bringing a child to college in this area.” This caught me off guard, as it was reminiscent of the uncertainty that many parents feel when they are dropping off their first-generation college student in a foreign space.

Throughout the study I also reflected on my motivation for conducting this study. Furthermore, why am I so engaged with SCU? Why do I continue to engage with the alumni association? Why do I care so much about Latinas/os and students of color at SCU? The answers to those questions caused me to reflect a lot on my life and think about all of the people who have sacrificed for me and encouraged me along the way. I think about my grandfather who sacrificed through hard labor during the days of the Bracero Program. I think of my grandmother who always encourage me to do well in school. Most of all, I reflect and give my sincerest gratitude to my parents, who made it possible for me to pursue a higher education. Now all I can do is pay it forward.



## APPENDIX A

## Interview Protocol

**Interview #1 –Life History (Student Experience)**

1. Briefly describe your childhood
2. Charitable activities
  - a. Growing up, is there one person you knew that was a leader in giving or supporting/helping others? Please describe.
  - b. Religious activities
    - i. Do you remember any service or giving activities at church? (e.g., Eucharist minister, monetary giving, childcare, etc.)
    - ii. Baptisms, Communions, Quinceañeras, Weddings
  - c. Family and extended family
    - i. Do you have any memories of your parents helping family or extended family domestically or in another country? Please describe.
3. College Decision
  - a. How did you hear about Santa Clara University?
  - b. What factors impacted your decision to attend SCU?
4. Student Experience
  - a. Describe your student experience at SCU.
  - b. Academics
    - i. What was your major?
    - ii. What was your coursework like?
    - iii. Tell me about your experience with faculty?
    - iv. Were you involved with any academic/professional student organizations? Please describe.
  - c. Social
    - i. What types of organizations were you involved with while at SCU?
    - ii. [Socially] What did you like about SCU?
    - iii. [Socially] What did you dislike about SCU?
  - d. Experience with campus offices/units
    - i. Which office do you remember visiting the most as an undergraduate?
    - ii. Was there a particular person or office that was critical in helping you navigate your experience at SCU?

**Interview #1 –Life History (Student Experience) Continued**

- e. Student experience/Alumni
  - i. What (if any) interaction did you have with the alumni association as a student?
    - 1. Did you know the mission or the purpose of the alumni association?
    - 2. What was your perception of the alumni association?
  - ii. Based on the satisfaction of your student experience, how likely were you at that point to give back to SCU?
  - iii. What were you willing to give to the university/students?

## Interview #2 – Details of Experience (Life as alumni)

1. Experience as an alumnus
  - a. Occupation after SCU
    - i. Pursuit of another degree?
  - b. Current occupation
2. Interaction with the University
  - a. Types of communication with the university since graduation
  - b. Involvement with campus activities
  - c. Have you attended any university alumni functions? Please describe.
3. Activities
  - a. Organizational involvement
    - i. Civic
    - ii. Professional
  - b. Are you involved with any community activities? Please describe.
  - c. Are you involves with any religious activities? Please describe.
  - d. In college, was there one person you knew that was a leader in giving or supporting/helping others? Please describe.

### **Interview #3 – Reflection on the Meaning**

1. How do you define giving?
2. How do you define being an alumnus?
3. How do you feel the institution defines giving?
4. How do you feel the university defines how an SCU alumnus should participate after graduation?
5. How do you practice giving as an SCU alumnus?
6. How do you feel the university benefits from your contributions?

## APPENDIX B

## INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

**Title of Study:** Conceptualizing the way Latinas/os give: A study of Latina/o undergraduate alumni from a predominantly white Jesuit institution

**Investigators:** José A. Cabrales  
Educational Leadership and Policy Studies  
N243 Lagomarcino Hall  
cabrales@iastate.edu  
(515) 294-7391

This is a research study. Please take your time in deciding if you would like to participate. Please feel free to ask questions at any time.

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to explore and understand how Latina/o alumni enact giving, interact with their alma mater, and define their roles as alumni. You are being invited to participate in this study because you are an alumnus of Santa Clara University.

## DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURES

If you agree to participate in this study, your participation will consist of three (3) 60-90 minute interviews. During the study you may expect the following study procedures to be followed: A series of open-ended interview questions regarding how you enact giving as a Santa Clara University alum.

The interviews will be audio-recorded; however, audio recordings will be destroyed one-year after the completion of the study. You may skip any question that you do not wish to answer or that makes you feel uncomfortable.

## RISKS

While participating in this study you may experience the following risks: There will not be any foreseeable risk or discomfort for the subjects participating in the study because participants will simply provide information on how they enact giving as Santa Clara University alumni.

## BENEFITS

If you decide to participate in this study there may be no direct benefit to you. The data obtained will help the university better understand how to interact with Santa Clara University Latina/o alumni.

### COSTS AND COMPENSATION

You will not have any costs from participating in this study. You will not be compensated for participating in this study.

### PARTICIPANT RIGHTS

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or leave the study at any time. If you decide to not participate in the study or leave the study early, it will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

Records identifying participants will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by applicable laws and regulations and will not be made publicly available. However, federal government regulatory agencies and the Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves human subject research studies) may inspect and/or copy your records for quality assurance and data analysis. These records may contain private information.

To ensure confidentiality to the extent permitted by law, the following measures will be taken: Only the principal investigator and the major professor will have access to the interview audio recordings as it is being collected. After the interview has ended, the data will be kept on a secure computer that is password protected. Data will be destroyed one-year after the completion of the study.

### QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

You are encouraged to ask questions at any time during this study.

- For further information about the study contact:
 

<p>José A. Cabrales, Jr. Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Studies N243 Lagomarcino Hall Ames, IA 50011 cabrales@iastate.edu (515) 294-7391</p>	<p>Florence Hamrick, Ph.D. Educational Leadership and Policy Studies N239-A Lagomarcino Hall Ames, IA 50011 fhamrick@iastate.edu (515) 294-9628</p>
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- If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515) 294-4566, [IRB@iastate.edu](mailto:IRB@iastate.edu), or

Director, (515) 294-3115, Office of Research Assurances, Iowa State University,  
Ames, Iowa 50011.

\*\*\*\*\*

### PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE

Your signature indicates that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study, that the study has been explained to you, that you have been given the time to read the document and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered. You will receive a copy of the written informed consent prior to your participation in the study.

Participant's Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Participant's Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

### INVESTIGATOR STATEMENT

I certify that the participant has been given adequate time to read and learn about the study and all of their questions have been answered. It is my opinion that the participant understands the purpose, risks, benefits and the procedures that will be followed in this study and has voluntarily agreed to participate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Person Obtaining  
Informed Consent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

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