



EL CAMPeStre

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Mendez Sisters – A Family Tradition

As a first generation college student, in 2008, Oralia Mendez made the tough decision to leave her hometown, Nyssa, and her family to continue her education at Oregon State University. Little did Oralia know, she was paving the way for her three younger sisters that would one day follow in her footsteps. Oralia is now a two time OSU alumni with both degrees through the College of Public Health and Human Sciences with a concentration in Health Management and Policy. She received her masters in Public Health in 2019 and shortly found a career opportunity working as the CHW Training Program Coordinator and Instructor with the OSU Center of Health Innovation. She was inspired to work in healthcare because growing up she noticed that there was a lack of Latinx representation in health care. At a young age she would help interpret for family and friends and what started as being a navigator in her small community turned to be her life passion.

A year after Oralia Mendez joined OSU, her younger sister Araceli began her own college journey at Oregon State. Araceli Mendez is currently a second year student working towards her Master's of Public Health. She's employed at the Benton County Health Department as a Health Navigator and works with an



elementary school in Corvallis helping families connect to health services. Similar to her older sister, she was interested in bringing more Latinx representation to Public Health and was determined to help support families similar to hers. Araceli's CAMP experience had a huge part in finding her life passion and her career choice. Although she always had the spark in her, with the connections she made throughout CAMP and getting to know past cohorts, Araceli was able to find out about the HDFS major through the CAMP upperclassmen. With the connections she made her freshman year of college and the support that CAMP provided she found what she wanted to do in life.

A couple years after Oralia and Araceli took their chance at Oregon State University, in 2013, Tania Mendez decided to also join OSU and the CAMP family. Tania is an OSU

alumni working at Linn Benton Community College as the Latino Outreach and Retention Specialist where she helps members of the Latinx community who are interested in continuing their education at Linn Benton. Family has always been a huge part in the lives of the Mendez sisters. For Tania she looked up to her parents and the sacrifices they made to come to this country in order to give her and her sisters a better life. Seeing other families like hers struggle to find resources in their native language inspired Tania with what she wanted to do in life. Growing up she would see bilingual employees help people who didn't speak English and since then she knew that she wanted to use her skills to help as many families as she could.

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This year the final Mendez sister joined Oregon State University and the CAMP family, Keila Mendez is a first year Public Health major. She plans to complete her bachelor's degree and go to nursing school to get her BSN. Seeing her older sisters go through college and start their careers played a big role for her. With the guidance from her sisters and the support of her family she realized that she wanted to pursue a similar path. Her big take away from high school that ultimately helped her choose what she wanted to one day do was when she visited a nursing home and had the opportunity to work alongside the residents there. She enjoyed making personal connections with everyone and she could see herself as a nurse helping others in the future. Although Keila's CAMP experience is slightly different since she is going through everything virtually. She knows what the program has done for her older sisters and has no doubt that the staff and program will continue to have her back as well.

The four Mendez sisters were motivated by the lack of Latinx representation in their community. They all uniquely navigated through the CAMP program yet all have decided they wanted to work with public health. As many of us can relate to growing up in a mixed-status family it can often be difficult to pursue a higher education. Leaving home is never easy, because it's all we know. However, for the Mendez sisters, their family helped by supporting them and CAMP provided an extended family. These sisters, like many of us, are more than capable of achieving our dreams but sometimes we need that extra support. Without programs like CAMP teaching students and their families about the complexity of college, from financial aid to simply making connections, these sisters were able to give back to communities like the one they grew up in.

“Don't be afraid to ask for assistance; asking for help is not a weakness, it's a sign of trust.”

CAMP Scholars go Abroad...

David Ford – CAMP Scholar 2016

A recent OSU alumni, David Ford, graduated in June 2020 with a B.A. in History and a minor in Native Spanish. Towards the end of his undergraduate career he began thinking about his post-graduate plans and ended up applying to over 20 internships/jobs. David was informed by one of his previous Spanish professors, Guy Wood, from OSU's College of Liberal Arts School of World Languages and Cultures Department about an internship based in Madrid, Spain. David ended up accepting the position as an English tutor in January of 2020, just months before the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 as a global pandemic. Although the pandemic has restricted David from leaving Madrid due to the Spanish Government closing the regional governments, he has still made his time there memorable by using his Metro de Madrid Abono de Joven Pass to commute through public transportation. Whenever he is not working as an English tutor, David enjoys exploring the city and community of Madrid. He hopes to leave all current and incoming CAMP students with one piece of advice: **“It is essential to develop a good relationship with your professors/ instructors. No matter what size of the lecture is. Having a good relationship with your professors can potentially lead you to undergraduate research, scholarships, internships abroad, a post-graduate job, the possibilities are limitless. To this day, many of my previous professors and I continue talking even after passing their courses years ago when I was an undergraduate.”**



CAMP Alumni: Where Are They Now?

Laura de la Torre –

CAMP Scholar 2014

Laura De La Torre graduated with a major in Public Health and a minor in Spanish. She's a first generation graduate with two younger siblings attending OSU. During the beginning of the global pandemic, Laura was involved with TRACE testing at Oregon State at the beginning of the school year and continues to work as a translator on occasion. Following her undergraduate career she began working in her hometown, Hood River, Oregon as a community health worker focusing on diabetes education. Alongside her job she also makes time planning and creating COVID-19 free testing events. Laura took a lot from her time at OSU and her time in the CAMP program, one of the most important things she learned was how important making connections with people really is.



“Use as many of the resources offered to you by OSU as much as you can, they are there for a reason so don't feel like you're alone. One thing to keep in mind is that even if your year in CAMP has ended, CAMP leaders will always treat you like family and will always be willing to help you as much as they can, please do not hesitate to reach out to them.”

Yesi Castro-Guzman – CAMP Scholar 2009



Yesi Castro was a member of the 2009-2010 CAMP Cohort. She graduated with a BS in Public Health. She is now working at a public health nonprofit called the Oregon Community Health Workers Association as the Workforce Development Director. In Yesi's free time she enjoys traveling and going on outdoor adventures with her fiancé, friends, and/or family. Her day to day life is constantly changing, she has a flexible work schedule which allows her to live her days to the fullest. Yesi has always been a planner and she likes to stick to the plans she's made, however one of her biggest takeaways from being in CAMP was to be flexible. She learned throughout CAMP that not everyone is on the same schedule as her and although it would frustrate her at times she values the equity that came from it. During the global pandemic, Yesi has found that the flexibility skills that she worked on during CAMP has helped her immensely because she knows now that some things won't follow her plan and that's okay!

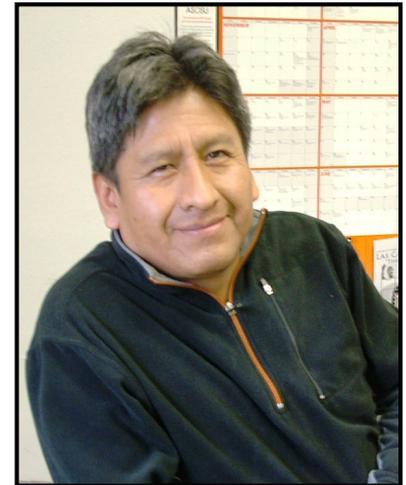
“My advice to the current and future camp cohorts is to find what brings you happiness and work towards that and intentionally put yourself in those spaces of happiness. To be selfish and do all the things you dreamed of because that will be the most epic thing you can experience in your life and to enjoy that stage in your life for as long as you can. Know your limits, learn to say no to things that don't serve you, have boundaries to protect yourself and your precious time. And lastly travel the world!

Amas' Updates

Welcome to another issue of "El CAMPestre" newsletter! As I write this section of the newspaper, I just realized that this might be the last time I write for El CAMPestre. The first issue of El CAMPestre was released in spring 2009 where Lupe Diaz, CAMP alumni was featured in the newsletter by Gera Casimiro. In many ways, we owe Gera for the idea of the newsletter and also for being the first news editor along with Yazmin Brambila. All of the three students have graduated and are professionals in their respective areas of study.

2020 has been an interesting year for the world, country, OSU and CAMP because of the COVID pandemic we've been experiencing these months. For the first time in our 17 years of existence as a program, our 2020-21 academic year and fall programming has started virtually despite of half of the 40 participants being on campus. It has been a new experience for us as well as for the incoming students. We've had some challenges in carrying out some of our activities but we're able to adjust and continue to provide services to our students. During the summer we also hosted a virtual Oregon Migrant Leadership Institute (OMLI) in August and close to 80 migrant students from throughout the state participated in the two weeklong remote sessions.

As I mentioned earlier, this year has been a different year in the program. CAMP is going through a few changes. Due to the Student Affairs Division reorganization, I was asked to oversee all grant funded programs in the Division and Maria Andrade, CAMP Program Assistant, has transitioned as the new CAMP Director effective November 1st. Maria has been with CAMP for over 15 years working alongside me during all those years and she had a very positive influence on our students. I have no doubt that Maria will continue to led and support staff and students. We also have officially a new recruiter for the program. Angel Esiquio Ruiz, CAMP alumni has been helping with the outreach and recruitment and has now accepted the full-time position effective January 1, 2021. Angel is a great role model for students of migrant seasonal farm worker backgrounds who would like to come to OSU. Also, I want to take this opportunity to welcome to CAMP, Karla Hernandez as the new editor for this newsletter. This is her first term at OSU, and she has gladly taken the responsibility to write the newsletter. Finally, I would like to say my thanks to Alin Lazaro-Ortiz for her work running this summer's OMLI program and helping as academic counselor in fall while Aleksandra was on maternity leave. I am fortunate to have the staff and students as part of my team. So, we begin to another successful academic year despite of the pandemic.



EL CAMPestre is the newsletter for OSU's College Assistance Migrant Program.

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December

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