THE MIGRANT STUDENT ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

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B.A., California State University, Sacramento, 2002
M.A., California State University, Sacramento, 2004

PROJECT

Submitted in partial satisfaction of
the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ART

in

HISTORY
/Public History/

at

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO

SPRING
2011
THE MIGRANT STUDENT ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

A Project

by

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Department of History
Abstract

of

THE MIGRANT STUDENT ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

by

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Statement of the Problem:
Students from farm-worker backgrounds are represented in very small numbers throughout higher education. The College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) at Sacramento State University aspires to change this by providing academic support services to migrant students and their families throughout Northern California. CAMP helps students bridge the gap between their future university lives and their farm-working past by recognizing key linkages and supports roles that are essential to the effective and efficient adaptation to college life for migrant students. Most importantly, CAMP provides a “home away from home” for all its students, a place where they can belong and seek personal and academic support in a family-like environment. The oral histories presented in this project add a personal essence to the limited body of literature on the migrant student experience in college.
Sources of Data:
The Migrant Student Oral History Project uses three videotaped oral interviews as a primary source of data collection to describe the college experience of Sacramento State/CAMP migrant students who are now graduates of this institution. The project documents the way these students perceived their upbringing, rose above the obstacles and transformed their perception throughout their college years.

Conclusions Reached:
Many studies too often focus on the barriers that prevent migrant students from succeeding in college. The three participants in this project are a prime example of how success can be achieved in college regardless of background. The intent of this project is to provide a greater depth of understanding of the college experience of students from migrant and seasonal farm working backgrounds. My goal is to use The Migrant Student Oral History Project DVD as an educational tool to further motivate migrant students in K-12 to pursue a college degree.

_________________________________, Committee Chair
Patrick Ettinger, Ph.D.

Date
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

CAMP History

In the early 1960s the nation's collective conscience was jolted by the CBS telecast of Edward R. Murrow's documentary *Harvest of Shame*. The broadcast raised awareness of the poverty and hardships endured by families who continually migrated throughout the U.S. to labor in chemically sprayed agricultural fields to harvest the fruits and vegetables consumed by Americans. The documentary led to national awareness and a call for action at the highest level (Salinas & Franquis, 2004). The resulting transnational dialogue gave way to a large-scale effort of the federal government to improve the lives of America's migrant and seasonal farm-workers (Education and the Children of Farmworkers, 1976).

The first major government-backed program addressed health concerns, housing and working conditions, and offered vocational training for migrant workers. Later, the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 committed the federal government to assist schools in providing extra help to children who were disadvantaged by poverty and its effects (U.S. Department of Education, 1981). In the fall of 1966, Congress amended the ESEA to create the Migrant Education Program to specifically address the needs of the children of migratory farm-workers (The National Commission on Migrant Education, 1992). The author of the bill, William D. Ford, was
a young Michigan congressman who became a powerful chair of the Education and Labor Committee before retiring in 1994. For almost 30 years, Ford was the steward for the Migrant Education Program on Capitol Hill (Salinas & Franquis, 2004).

The Educational Systems Corporation, a private educational research company, developed the original CAMP concept for the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), which was created as part of President Lyndon Johnson's “War on Poverty” (Salinas & Franquiz). In 1972 the first CAMP programs were funded in Adams State College in Alamos, Colorado; California State College in San Diego, California; University of Texas PanAmerican in Edinsburg, Texas; and Saint Edwards University in Austin, Texas (National HEP/CAMP Association Website, 2009). Today, there are 43 CAMP programs throughout the nation, located in areas as disparate as Florida, Idaho, and California.

**Background**

The College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) is a unique educational program and Sacramento State University houses one of the longest lasting programs in the nation. The program helps students from migrant and seasonal farm worker backgrounds successfully transition from high school to college. CAMP at Sacramento State was established in 1981 and funded for the first time by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Migrant Education in 1984. The program admits 80 freshmen each year and provides follow-up services to approximately 300 continuing students annually. The goal of CAMP is to increase the number of migrant and seasonal farm-worker students to earn degrees at the university by helping them integrate into the
social and academic communities of four-year institutions. CAMP helps students acquire the skills and knowledge needed to become successful students and ultimately college graduates.

Students from farm-worker backgrounds are represented in very small numbers throughout higher education. CAMP aspires to change this by providing outreach and recruitment to migrant students and their families throughout Northern California. In addition, CAMP provides academic and personal counseling, tutoring, peer mentoring, housing assistance, and financial support to eligible students. The CAMP program’s unique minority population brings to the campus added student body diversity that would probably not otherwise exist. Despite their disadvantaged backgrounds, CAMP students have one of the highest first-year retention rates on campus and graduate in numbers parallel to other university students (Office of Institutional Research, 2008).

CAMP helps students bridge the gap between their future university lives and their farm-working past. CAMP, therefore, addresses the three major stages migrant students experience when moving from one way of life to another: 1) separation, 2) transition and 3) integration. CAMP endeavors to assist students with the difficult task of straddling two worlds, that of a farm worker and college student, in a manner where they gain respect for both. Traditional educational models in higher education fail to look at the unique challenges of matriculating migrant students. CAMP, however, recognizes key linkages and support roles that are essential to the effective and efficient adaptation to college life for migrant students. Most importantly, CAMP at Sacramento State
provides a “home away from home” for all its students, a place where they can belong and seek personal and academic support in a family-like environment.

Project Involvement

My involvement with CAMP began in 1993. As a senior in high school, I was recruited by an Outreach Counselor from the program. As the first and only one in my family to attend college, dinner-table discussions were not focused on obtaining higher education or how to better prepare myself for college. I did not know what college was about and although my parents supported me the best they could, they were unable to provide any guidance in this area, since neither finished high school. As I applied to college with the assistance of CAMP, I had many fears and erroneous assumptions. Ultimately, I could not believe someone like me could graduate from college. Failure was my main fear, and each semester I worried that it would be my last. But CAMP took me under its wing and provided me with personal, academic, and financial support as well as a family-like environment, one where I could be surrounded by students with similar backgrounds, challenges, and fears. Thanks to CAMP and a college degree, my life was changed forever. In my view, education translates to more than just a better career; education itself is a change-agent. There is something about education that is liberating, powerful, and magical. It is something that nobody can take away, for it creates limitless possibilities.
Sacks, Deblasio, Ganxert, Mould, Paschen, et al., (2009) enforce the importance in matching the goals of your project with those of the organizations you hope to work with. In my case, as a CAMP and Sacramento State alumna, my life comes full circle by now serving as the Director of CAMP at Sacramento State—the very program that allowed me to become a college graduate and led me to a career in academia and administration. Each day I come to work, I am reminded of the difference education can make in a person’s life. At CAMP, I am privileged to meet students while they are still in high school, assist in their transition to college, provide support services and see their potential blossom as they become confident and determined college students. Since the final product of The Migrant Student Oral History Project includes a video of three condensed interviews, my goal is to use it as an educational tool to further motivate migrant students in K-12 to pursue a college degree.

**Scope of the Project**

The goals of the Migrant Student Oral History Project entails first, document the way migrant students perceive their upbringing, rose above the obstacles and transformed their perceptions throughout their college years; second, use the gathered knowledge to identify programmatic areas of strengths and areas of possible improvement; and third to establish a formal collection that preserves the memories and the individuals who have participated in the CAMP program, have graduated from Sacramento State and can now look back and reflect on their stories. As a final goal, the project will generate a video to
use as an educational tool to further motivate migrant students in K-12 to pursue a college degree. To assist with this arduous project, the program was fortunate to have a student intern throughout the completion of the project. Mr. Manuel Pacheco, a talented student from the Communications Department at Sacramento State majoring in Communication Studies and concentrating in Video Production assisted in the videotaping, editing and transcription phases of the project and received course credit for his efforts.

Many studies too often focus on the barriers that prevent success in college. Nevertheless, some migrant students do go on to college, graduate from a university, and become exemplary leaders in their communities. The three participants in this project are a prime example of how success can be achieved in college regardless of background. Additionally, students not only speak of their challenges but also address ways they worked through them. The participants reflected back on what they would do differently and revealed the lessons learned throughout their college journey. The interview questionnaire included open-ended questions, and addressed self-perceptions, high school experiences, study habits as well as reflections and recommendations for future generations of migrant students planning to attend college.
Chapter 2

MIGRANT STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION
TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

To familiarize myself with the current literature on migrant students, I located publications about particular experiences in education. This chapter presents a brief overview of migrant students and an examination of secondary literature. According to the California Migrant Education Comprehensive Needs Assessment (2007), California has the largest concentration of agricultural workers in the nation, totaling more than twice that of the second largest state, Texas (33.5 percent vs. 15.6 percent). Based on the same report, California also has the largest number of identified migrant students, numbering 237,096 in 2007, or approximately one-third of the total U.S. migrant student population. It is estimated that Latinos will represent nearly half of the state’s working age population by 2020 (Kelly, 2005). This is of great significance and in direct correlation to the migrant student population, where eighty-five percent of migrant children are of school age (five to eighteen years old), with Latino students making up 98 percent of the eligible migrant student population (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2003). The near-term need for an educated work force makes it imperative that the state reduce gaps in the educational attainment of migrant students to maintain the economic and social health of the state and to increase our competitiveness within the global economy.
Most of the literature on migrant students would suggest that the term high-achieving is an oxymoron (Treviño, 2004). The fact is that, compared to other student populations, little has been written about migrant students in higher education, particularly the potential causes for drop-out and success. Unfortunately, what has been written has been based on disadvantaged, deficit, or at-risk theories of academic failure (Trevino, 2004). Consequently, much has been said about the negative effects of Mexican-origin culture, the lack of adoption of American values, and the supposed lack of high aspirations (Coalson, 1971). The high school drop-out rates for migrant students is cited at 45 to 90 percent (United States General Accounting Office, 1998). Despite the dismal statistics and despite significant challenges, many migrant students persevere towards academic success and ultimately attain a college degree (McHatton, Zalaquett & Cranson-Gingrass, 2006).

Over the next ten years, 80 percent of the fastest-growing occupations in the U.S. will require at least an associate degree and 50 percent will require a bachelor’s degree or higher (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005). Thus far, due to rapidly changing demographics, the overall educational attainment of the United States is actually expected to decline in the coming years (Kelly, 2005). The fastest growing segments of the population, low-income and minority youth (migrant students included), have historically been the least likely to earn college degrees, and the gaps in degree attainment for these groups have only increased over time (Kelly, 2005; Mortenson, et al., 2006; WICHE, et al., 2003). Today, there are more than 12 million children living in poverty with two-
thirds comprised of minority backgrounds (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003). Currently, nearly half of all the school children (44 percent)—the future college-going population—come from low-income families (as measured by free/reduced price lunch eligibility). This number has been on the rise for the last ten years (Mortenson, 2006). Therefore, to increase college degree attainment rates in this country, there must be a major effort to improve both postsecondary access and success among this population, including migrant students.

The basic lifestyle of migrant families is the primary impediment to success faced by migrant students. The National Commission on Migrant Education (2007) found that over one-third are one or more grades behind their age-appropriate grade-level and over 40 percent are achieving below the 25th percentile in reading and math standardized assessments in K-12. The low achievement rates may be due to the fact that approximately 40 percent are in the process of learning English as a Second Language (Cranston-Gingras & Paul, 2007). It may also be due to the outcome from repeated absences due to family obligations, such as the need to work to help support the family or having to miss school to take care of younger siblings (Green, 2003). Overwhelmingly, migrant farm workers earn less than livable wages in the United States. According to the 2001-2002 National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS), the total family income averaged between $15,000 and $17,499.
Encouragement from parents to attend college is absent in many instances. Migrant students often feel a strong family obligation to be home, and as a result, separating from their families can be difficult (Cranston-Gingras, 2003). Separation is particularly difficult when 15 percent of farm workers are illiterate and less than 15 percent have completed 12 years of school or more (NAWS, 2005). For this reason, parents depend on their children to take care of the day-to-day household and family responsibilities. Additionally, due to the nature of their parent’s work, migrant students constantly change schools to follow the crop of the season. This reality can be very frightening and intimidating to high school students (Cranston-Gingras, 2003). Considering the peer-acceptance needs of adolescents, this social reality often has disastrous effects on the academic achievement of the students. As a result, migrant students often feel alienated from other students and experience a sense of not belonging in school (Cranston-Gingras, 2003). All of these areas have contributed to weak foundations in the education of migrant children, often resulting in grade retention and drop-out issues. Consequently, migrant students enrolled in K-12 grade levels have the largest school drop-out rates, ranging from 45-90 percent (Green, 2003).

Based on data from the “National Center for Education Statistics: Persistence and Attainment of Beginning Students with Pell Grants” (2002), low-income, first-generation students experience less success than their peers right from the start. Across all institution types, low-income, first-generation students were nearly four times more likely to leave higher education after the first year than students who had neither of these risk
factors. Additionally, six years later, nearly half (43 percent) of low-income, first-generation students left college without earning their degrees. Among those who left, nearly two thirds (60 percent) did so after the first year. This means that, in the end, only 34 percent of low-income, first-generation students earned bachelor’s degrees in six years compared to 66 percent of their peers. Based on the same data, findings revealed that low-income, first-generation students were more than seven times more likely to earn bachelor’s degrees if they started in four-year institutions, but only 25 percent of them did so.

The Challenges of Achieving Success

Valerie Yow suggests starting every oral history project by conducting preliminary research through texts on the topic (Yow, 2005). With this goal in mind, I identified a number of studies that attempted to indentify the key to migrant students’ success. These include qualitative and quantitative studies on college access, and studies of academic trajectories of migrant students in K-12 and in higher education. Additionally, opinion articles on the characteristics of migrant students, existing attempts to meet their special needs, anecdotes from migrant students achieving academic success, assessments of the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), and retention strategies for this unique population of students are presented. Lastly, due to the similar characteristics with low-income first-generation students and because 98% of migrant students in the state of California are of Latino decent (California Migrant Education
Comprehensive Needs Assessment, 2007) the review also incorporates literature addressing Latino students in higher education.

In the study, *Meeting the Unique Needs of the Children of Migrant Farm Workers*, Romanwski (2003) discusses findings from two qualitative studies conducted at a Summer Migrant Education Program (SMEP) in a rural school district in northwest Ohio. The SMEP provided opportunities for local migrant children to attend an eight-week summer school in which they could continue their studies and progress towards graduation. This particular SMEP offered summer services to over 150 students who are predominantly Mexican Americans, with an average daily attendance of approximately seventy to eighty students. The SMEP was housed in a K-12 public school building in a small rural town centrally located to the various migrant farm workers camps.

The initial central study examined the needs of migrant students and addressed the question: what knowledge do teachers need to acquire and what awareness must they develop to aid migrant students effectively in realizing their full potential? The follow-up study examined the role that cultural capital plays in the education of migrant students as described by administrators, teachers, and migrant students themselves. It addressed the question: how does cultural capital that is shared in migrant families affect the educational experiences of migrant students? The method used to collect data was based on information gathered during a two-week initial study and a three-week follow up study at the SMEP. Research techniques included formal and spontaneous interviews with administrators, faculty, and students; group interviews with students in grades 5-12;
nonparticipant’s observations; classroom observations; and conversations with the migrant recruiter who spent a significant amount of time interacting with migrant parents.

The findings presented several important problems that schools must understand to address the needs of migrant students. In addition, recommendations were made to suggest ways in which teachers can better meet the needs of migrant students enabling them to attain academic success and realize their full potential. For example, the SMEP teachers who participated in this study indicated a need to engage in deliberate critical reflection to reveal their own prejudice or negative feelings, which are grounded in stereotypes about migrant families. In school, teachers praised students for such traits as being respectful, industrious, and obedient, or dressing and acting in a pleasing way. However, many of the traits valued by schools are, to a great extent, culturally inscribed. Students whose cultural background and behavior harmonized with faculty expectations are considered academically and socially superior and are treated accordingly. Students whose cultural values are not as academically prized and are labeled as disrespectful or unmotivated troublemakers, among other negative attributes. Because cultural conflicts are common between migrant students and teachers, the SMEP teachers acknowledged that they must be willing to learn about migrant culture and integrate that knowledge into the curriculum.

Also, unlike traditional public school students, migrant children and their families have unique needs that must be met to remove some of the barriers to their academic success. First, it is imperative that schools and teachers integrate “the work we do in
class and the lives that [students] live outside of class (Giroux and Simon, 1992).”

Teachers should develop knowledge about the complexities of migrant culture and then begin to use that information in their teaching and interaction with migrant students.

Finally, teachers must realize that migrant parents are anxious about school because they have inadequate experiences as both a student and parent. Teachers can ease anxiety and involve migrant parents by recognizing and welcoming them. For example, they can initiate information sessions for migrant parents (at a time convenient for families) that address the concerns about school and the community (Romanowski, 2003). These findings describe the unique needs of migrant students, some of the intricate aspects of migrant culture, and what teachers need to know and do to help the children of migrant farm workers overcome the many factors that get in the way of their academic achievement.

It has long been recognized that the process of student departure is longitudinal and takes place over the course of the student career. In fact, the incidence of students leaving is the highest in the first year of college (Cope and Pascarella, 1975). The forces that shape departure during the first year of college, especially during the first six-weeks of the first semester, are qualitatively different from those that mold departure in the later years of college (Daubman, Williams, Johnson, and Crump, 1985). In the view of many researchers, the first six months of college are an especially important period in student persistence and completing the first year is more than half the battle in earning a bachelor’s degree (Louis and Potter, 1986). The article, “Stages of Student Departure:
Reflections on the Longitudinal Character of Student Leaving,” by Dr. Vincent Tinto adds a new dimension to the understanding of the departure process—one that highlights the varying difficulties individuals face over time in attempting to persist college. In a classic study, entitled *The Rites of Passage*, Van Gennep (Gennep, 1960) argued that the process of transmission of relationships between succeeding groups was marked by three distinct phases or stages, each with its own specialized ceremonies and ritual (Anderson and Kimball, 1974). Gennep believed that the notions of rites of passage could be applied to a variety of situations, especially those involving the movement of a person or group from one place to another. Using Van Gennep’s *Rites of Passage* as a theoretical framework, Tinto relates the stages of separation, transition, and incorporation to the process of student departure.

The first stage of the college career—separation—requires students to disassociate themselves, in varying degrees, from membership in the past communities, most typically those associated with the local high school and place of residence. Since all separation entails some form of parting from past habits and patterns of affiliation, adoption of the behaviors and norms appropriate to college is essential. In order to become fully integrated in the communities of the college, these students have to disassociate themselves physically as well as socially from the communities of the past. In a very real sense, their staying in college depends on becoming distant from their former communities. The process of separation can be stressful, painful, and disorienting, especially for students who are first-generation college goers such as
migrant students. In the case of migrant students, separation begins during the process of recruitment with the identification of the student and corresponding initial contact with family, parents, or guardians. Separation from the migrant lifestyle requires careful analysis of family history, system values and cultural practices to better understand and assist the student during this stage.

In the second stage of the college career—transition—new students have to acquire the norms and patterns of behavior appropriate to integration in the new communities of the college. Because they have not yet established the personal bonds of community membership they may experience stress, a sense of loss, and desolation. Without assistance and support, many will drop out of college not because they cannot keep up academically but because they are unable to cope with the stresses associated with the transition to keep up. Many students, especially those who are first generation college goers, may simply not possess the skills to cope with the new life of college as they may have not yet learned how to direct their energies to solve the problems they face. In a similar manner, migrant students must also establish personalized systematic support systems to move from a situation of change to a situation of options and careful decision-making. This stage is a major part of the CAMP program and is translated into program objectives and activities.

Lastly, the individual is faced with the task of becoming integrated. During this final stage, the person now faces the problem of finding and adopting norms appropriate to the new college setting and establishing competent membership in the social and
intellectual communities of college life. Because social interactions are the primary vehicle through which such integrative associations arise, individual have to establish contact with other members of the institution, student and faculty alike (Pascarella, 1980). Unfortunately, individuals in college are not often provided with formal rituals and ceremonies whereby such contacts are ensured (Tinto, 1988). Most institutions provide orientation programs and first-year programs, but in most cases they are very short lived and most of the time new students are expected to learn the ropes on their own. The integration and mainstreaming stage is also the ideal outcome for migrant students. At this stage, the students clearly understand the resources available on campus and in the community to maintain control over important career and life decisions. This includes recognition that a college education can be useful to his/her own family and community members in similar circumstances. It also includes developing a respect for the values of the home while increasing knowledge about the industrial and technological world and the larger U.S. society.

The problems associated with separation, transitions, and incorporation are conditions that apply to all students, but are particularly challenging for migrant students to overcome due to the instability of migrant life. Nevertheless, according to Tinto, these conditions should not lead to departure from college. It is the individual’s response to those conditions that finally determines staying or leaving (Klein and Rennie, 1985). Therefore, there is a great deal institutions can do to assist new students to cope with these conditions. First, intervention programs must be carefully timed to meet the
changing situation and needs of students throughout the path to college completion; second, although the first year is critical, institutions must not ignore students’ needs beyond the first year; third, orientation programs must provide the long-term academic and social assistance new students require during the first months of their college careers and not be limited to a few weeks prior to the start of the first year (Hall, 1982); and fourth, institutions should consider employing public rituals and ceremonies as part of their retention efforts such as first year “coming out” ceremonies.

In another article, “Taking Student Retention Seriously,” the same author, Dr. Vincent Tinto (2002), offers his expertise on student success of low-income and underserved students and provides recommendations on how institutional retention efforts can take the needs of these students into account to ultimately achieve more equitable attainments rates. This article provided answers to the difficult question of retention and how institutions can address the problem. Although not particular to the migrant population, this article addresses the needs of low-income and underserved student which is also a primary characteristic of migrant students.

According to Tinto, although typically a top item on the agenda in most institution of higher education, very few colleges invest the necessary resources in students and, as a result, do little to change the essential character of the institution. Retention will finally begin to be addressed once institutions recognize that the roots of failure lie not only in their students but also in the very character of the educational settings. The focus must be placed on the conditions in which students are placed rather than on the attributes of
students themselves. After all, attributes are beyond the institutional control while the settings are within institutional control.

Tinto introduced five classroom settings necessary to promote student retention. First, he concludes, institutions must expect more from their students and create settings of high expectations. Second, the setting must provide clear and consistent information about institutional requirements and effective advising about the choices students have to make regarding their programs of study to better understand the road map. Third, the setting must provide academic, social, and personal support but not in that particular order since each student is unique and while some students may require academic assistance, others may need social or personal support. Fourth, the institutions must establish settings that involve students as valued members of the institution. It is believed that frequent interaction between faculty, staff and other students is an important independent predictor of student persistence. Unfortunately, in most settings, teachers lecture, a few students participate and most students learn in isolation. And fifth, learning must be fostered as it is well known that students who learn stay in school and graduate.

Tinto also promotes Learning Communities as the answer for institutions to target all five settings.¹ Rather than separate, stand-alone courses unrelated to the academic life of the institution, he recommends colleges and universities to make Learning Communities and the collaborative pedagogy the norm and not the exception. In

¹ Learning Communities are block scheduling that enables students to take courses together, rather than apart and are connected by an organizing theme.
Learning Communities, faculty alter their teaching and classrooms to promote shared, collaborative learning experiences among students across the linked classrooms. It requires students to work together in some form of collaborative groups and to become active. The benefits for students are many, as they spend more time learning together both inside and outside the classroom. As students learn more and see themselves as more academically and socially engaged, their persistence is enhanced. The power of these and other arrangements is that they enable the institution to integrate the provision of academic and social assistance to the social and academic needs of students in ways that is connected to their needs as learners thereby addressing the deeper roots of student retention. They provide an academic structure within which collaboration among faculty and student affairs professions is possible (Engle and Tinto, 2001).

In the study “Achieving Success: Perceptions of Students from Migrant Farmworker Families,” MacHatton, Zalaquett & Cranson-Gingras (2006) examined the characteristics of diverse students from migrant farmworker families whose high school achievement earned them entrance to a competitive four-year university and analyzed the perceptions of these students regarding factors that contributed to their academic success. Participants in the study were enrolled in the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) in Tampa, Florida. Approximately thirty students per year participate in the program and a total of 57 students participated in the study. A packet containing a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and confidentiality of responses, and a copy of the anonymous survey was given to all the students attending the December 2004
meeting of the CAMP program. Later, a second administration of the survey was conducted at the December 2005 meeting. A total of 57 surveys were returned for a response rate of 86%. Data was comprised of responses to a 98-item survey instrument consisting of both Likert-type and open-ended questions. Domains included demographic information, self-perceptions, interest in education, high school experiences, transitioning to college, and study habits, as well as a section to help other diverse students succeed in school. The results were used to highlight those attributes that contribute to student success by identifying those themes that reverberated through each area.

Results were derived from a comprehensive individual survey that addressed multiple domains that were relative to students’ high school experiences. High school experiences were broken down into several categories and sub-categories including school, teachers, and cultural competency, which contained three sub-categories: school, teachers, and peers. The findings revealed that participants view themselves as resilient, proactive, and self-reliant. These were themes that reverberated through each area: first, they were proud of their heritage and relished being part of a culture with a strong work ethic; second, they described themselves as goal oriented with a strong sense of social justice, and third, they credited themselves for much of their success. The strong resiliency and self-determination reported by the participants indicated an area requiring further study. A list of recommendations to school officials similar to the one
summarized in Romanowski’s and Tinto’s previous articles was also introduced as part of the recommendations.

In the next article, “Against All Odds: Lessons from Parents of Migrant High Achievers,” Trevino (2004) presents a case study involving five families who each had 18 children and all 18 graduated from college. In Texas, where this study was conducted, one in five migrant students is overage for grade; and of those students who persist through their senior year, nearly one in four will not graduate (TAAS, 1999). The five families reared 41 highly successful children, among them doctors, nurses, lawyers, aerospace engineers, teachers, scientists, and business entrepreneurs. Based on the assumption that parent involvement has a positive influence on student achievement, it makes sense to examine how the parents of high-achieving migrant students involved themselves in their children’s education. Thus, the principal research question of the study is: Why and how do parents of high-achieving migrant students get involved in their children’s education? The subjects of the study are five Texas-home based Mexican origin parents, from five different geographic regions of Texas with 18 successful college graduate children.

Three types of data were used: 1) semi structured individual interviews employing a protocol of open-ended questions and probes; 2) field observations, and 3) field notes. Data was gathered in the fall of 1999, from more than 100 hours of personal audiotape interviews, telephone interviews, and home visits. Participants could express themselves in either English or Spanish. At the families’ requests, all interviews were conducted in
Spanish. The findings were generated by an initial list of 18 open-ended questions aimed at permitting the parents to provide as much information as possible. During the interviews, the parents described their involvement behaviors relative to all their children. The data from the audiotapes was then transcribed, translated, and analyzed for common themes that emerged among the five families. To minimize researcher bias, each family was given the opportunity to review the findings and conclusions for accuracy and correctness, and changes were made accordingly.

The findings reflected the following: 1) parents envisioned superior achievements for their children and believed that parents were the first teachers; 2) graduating from high school and college was not negotiable; 3) education was more important than student work or extracurricular activities; 4) working hard was critical; 5) children must be respectful; and 6) corporal punishment was ineffective and unnecessary. In addition, 7) the parents were proud of their children and encouraged self-esteem, 8) the parents made sure that the oldest children were high achievers who could mentor their younger siblings; 9) parents attended all school activities with an academic focus and all ceremonies recognizing their children’s achievements; and 10) parents ensured that at least one parent was home after school at all times to monitor children’s free-time activities closely, encourage conversation and critical-thinking skills, provide academic help and learning materials, advocate for their children at school, minimize school interruptions, and made use of community and school resources. The study demonstrated clearly that the “culture of migracy” is not an absolute and can be changed, and supports
the notion that parents of high achieving migrant students involve themselves in their children’s education in ways that sometimes differ from school expectations.

In order to fully understand the perceptions of migrant students regarding factors that contribute to their academic success, it is important to examine the effective strategies used by programs that promote migrant students’ college access. The University of California—Los Angeles (UCLA) Migrant Student Leadership Institute (MSLI) stands out as a rare program that specifically addresses the college readiness of these students. The MSLI strives to help students develop their community leadership skills and attend college.

In the study “Creating Pathways to College for Migrant Students: Assessing a Migrant Outreach Program,” Nunez (2009) examines the college access (including college application, admittance, and enrollment outcomes) of migrant students who participated in the MSLI program. Program participants’ college access outcomes are tracked and compared with those of an equivalent comparison group of nonparticipants with similar college preparation characteristics. This longitudinal quantitative study used a database to match student-level data on program participants between 2000 and 2005 and members of a nonparticipant comparison group with student-level data records from the University of California Outreach Program (UCOP) on college-going behaviors and outcomes. The data on college-going behaviors and outcomes included measures of the application, admission, and enrollment patterns in the UC system campuses, as well as college enrollment patterns in California’s three-tier higher education system. Through
the matching process, data was generated on the UC system and California public college application and enrollment patterns for 237 participants and 56 members of a nonparticipant comparison group.

The findings indicated that 64 percent of participants, nearly double the percentage of nonparticipants (37 percent), applied to at least one UC campus. About twice the percentage of program participants (54 percent) who took the Standardize Admission Test (SAT) as nonparticipants who took this test (25 percent) were admitted to at least one UC campus. When restricting this analysis to the students who took the step of applying to any UC, almost all MSLI participants who applied to any UC campus (88 percent) were granted admission to at least one of the UC campuses. In comparison, about two-thirds of nonparticipants who applied to UC campuses (68 percent) were admitted to at least one of them. Among those MSLI participants who applied to the flagship institutions, 26 percent were admitted to UCLA and 42 percent to UC Berkeley. Twenty-seven percent enrolled in a CSU, and 16 percent in a California Community College. Overall, then, almost two-thirds (62 percent) of MSLI students enrolled in a California 4-year public institution.

On the other hand, about half the proportion of nonparticipants (14 percent, compared with 35 percent) enrolled in a campus in the UC system. This indicated that nonparticipants, despite equivalent academic achievement, leadership skills, and college admissions test scores, were statistically less likely to enroll in UC’s. This study suggests that, when taking into account academic achievements, leadership skills, and college
standardized test scores, MSLI program participation positively influences migrant students’ application to and enrollment rates in the most selective tier of 4-year public higher education in California. This study also reflects the influence of summer programs on student motivation, college planning, and confidence level as participants apply and are admitted to the most competitive colleges.

In another quantitative study, “Are Federal Dollars Bearing Fruit? An Analysis of the College Assistance Migrant Program,” Willison & Jang (2008) analyzed four years of national College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) data from programs located across the United States. This research considered CAMP’s overall effectiveness based on data submitted by CAMP awardees across the nation to the Office of Migrant Education.

According to the study, on average, 26 percent of CAMP students attending a four-year institution and 56 percent of those attending a two-year institution do not return for a second year. In 2002, the retention rates of first-year students in four-year institutions varied from 65.2 to 85.3 percent, whereas for the same time period, the retention rates in two-year colleges varied from 42.8 to 70.2 percent for CAMP students (Lowther & Langley, 2005; National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2002). It has been well documented that family education, financial security, the availability of preventive health care, and other factors not normally associated with migrant families all influence student’s academic success (Gandara, 1993). Thus, it is
logical to presume that migrant students without assistance are at a higher risk than other college freshmen of not being academically successful their freshman year.

The research considers quantitative data from 64 CAMP’s in existence from 2002-2003 through the 2005-2006 academic years. Because CAMP awards are five years in duration, program data examination is reflective of CAMP’s in various years of their funding cycle. The programs, located in 17 states and in Puerto Rico, are situated on 46 higher education campuses. Data was retrieved from the electronic reporting system used by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Migrant Education to collect, record and review data from individual programs. The findings reflect that of the 7,903 students enrolled in CAMP during the four academic years, 2002-2005, 86 percent completed their first year of college in good academic standing and 81% continued to attend school the following year.

Thus, it is reasonable to say that, nationally, CAMP students will successfully complete their first year and that the majority of those who do will continue their studies the following year. CAMP programs across the nation have demonstrated the federal program’s overall capacity to assist students in successfully completing their initial year of college. Having 81 percent of their first year students return for a second year is a worthy standard that many universities have yet to achieve with their general population, much less with a population of students identified as at risk of not even attending school (Lowther & Langley, 2005). CAMP’s overall 81 percent continuation rate speaks to the
idea that when given the attention, resources, and other support necessary, migrant youth can succeed in college.

##

Oral histories can be useful in situations where there is too little documentation (Ritchie, 1995). The limited literature found on migrant students’ success in higher education using oral histories as the form of data collection demonstrates the need for more in-depth projects such as The Migrant Student Oral History Project. Starr (1984) establishes that it is imperative to test the evidence in oral histories for internal consistency and to corroborate the information with other sources. Establishing general knowledge of the educational experience of migrant students through the review of existing literature helped establish the context for this project. After all, oral history is a contribution to the historical record, rather than the complete record, and is seen as “a means to an end, not as an end in itself” (Kyvig & Myron, 2000). When used in conjunction with all available sources, oral history can clarify and add depth to one’s research.

William Moss (1984) states “the record produced by an interview should never be confused with the original events.” In fact, according to Halbwachs (1980), “one remembers only what he himself has seen, done, felt, and thought at some time.” At the same time, oral sources tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believe they were doing, and what they now think they did (Portelli, 1991). For this reason, oral history is an excellent resource for gathering unavailable information worth
preserving. The goal of The Migrant Student Oral History Project is to provide a personal element to the scholarship on the migrant student experience in college. In the next chapter I will describe in detail the process used to complete this oral history project, including the following four major phases: 1) developing the project; 2) identifying interviewees; 3) conducting the interviews; and; 4) transcribing and editing the interviews.
Chapter 3

DESIGNING AND CONDUCTING THE MIGRANT STUDENT ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Methods

The Migrant Student Oral History Project was a four-phase project. The first phase focused on project development. During this phase, I identified practical knowledge that could be used for CAMP program development and improvement through research of past evaluations and a review of the existing literature. Designing core questions that could generate valuable information from the interviewees was part of this first phase. Based on the research and the gap found during the review of literature, I choose to give the project a focus designed to gain insights about the students’ overall experience at Sacramento State and as members of the CAMP program. The second phase involved indentifying and contacting potential interviewees. Working in the CAMP program as a Counselor, and most recently as the Director, provided me with access to potential candidates who could speak appropriately about their experience. The third step encompassed conducting face-to-face interviews. The interviews were conducted in the CAMP office and videotaped using a Cannon GL2. The fourth and final step was editing and transcribing the oral history interviews. Each interview was carefully transcribed within a few weeks of the interview. The transcriptions and the edited video will be made available at the library at Sacramento State and will be used as a recruitment tool to motivate and recruit students to pursue college.
The twin goals of the MSOHP were to gain useful information on the strengths and weaknesses of the CAMP program and to produce an edited compilation of the interviews to use as a recruiting tool for the program. I conducted research using previous program evaluations to gain background on the areas in need of improvement in the CAMP program. From the research and the review of literature, I gained a general understanding of the need to strengthen services for continuing students. All throughout this process, I wrote down potential questions that addressed the gaps of knowledge in the literature and could generate valuable information for future program implementation. This knowledge provided me with the background to formulate cogent questions that would expand on important topics to the CAMP program. The structure centered on topics related to the individual’s past history, present situation and experience as college students. The knowledge attained from this project will ultimately be used to guide the Director’s decision making and allocation priorities.

Identifying Participants

In any oral history project, it is important to have a very clear idea of what it is you want to find out. Once that is determined, you will probably have little trouble finding good people with whom to talk to (Ives, 1995). The central criterion taken into consideration for this project was that the interviewees be CAMP/Sacramento State alumni. The participants chosen to be interviewed represented a range of periods in the
history of the CAMP program. Of the three participants, one attended Sacramento State in the 1980’s, one in the 1990’s, and the last one in the early 2000’s. Two of the participants were female and one was a male. Once the main criterion was established, interviewees were chosen based on their availability, willingness to participate, and assessment of whether their interview would make a noteworthy contribution to the project.

Since I currently serve as Director of the CAMP program, locating potential interviewees was not difficult. CAMP alumni serve as mentors and are involved in continuing efforts with the program. The three participants were recruited using different methods. As I came across alumni who stopped by the office to meet with me for program-related purposes, I casually asked them if they were interested in being part of The Migrant Student Oral History Project. Other potential participants I contacted using e-mail or telephone. Nonetheless, regardless of the method used to recruit participants, I formalized their participation with an introductory e-mail that described the project and the importance of their contribution. As is common in oral history projects, most of the interviewees for this project did not believe their story was valuable enough to document (Ives, 1995). Also, the idea of being video-taped resulted in some hesitation. To alleviate the hesitation, my communication focused on the ultimate goal of the project—a video used in rural high schools to motivate migrant students to attend college. Their ultimate willingness to be interviewed regardless of the hesitation was a sign of the important role
the CAMP program played in their college lives and a strong commitment on their part to help future migrant students attend college.

Establishing clear communication with potential narrators about the interview process is essential in oral history (Ritchie, 1995). A telephone call a week before the interview was made to discuss the logistics of the project. During the telephone call, I outlined the interview process and informed the interviewee that the interview would be a two-person interview. I also told the interviewees to plan for at least three hours of videotaping and to avoid wearing white or very bright colors. To prevent the participants from beginning to narrate their experiences before video recording began, I kept the first contact conversations to a minimum. I also did not reveal in advance questions in order to minimize scripted responses. Many oral history practitioners suggest avoiding giving questions in advance because it can undermine the spontaneity of answers (Ives, 1995). One interviewee requested a written list of questions so she could better prepare for the interview. Instead, I provided an outline of the general format (questions about background, experience going through K-12 and college transition) but not the specific questions used during the interview.

Another important logistical issue discussed during the telephone call was the time, location of the interview, and parking arrangements. All interviews took place in the CAMP office, after work hours. While it is possible that the interviews could have been conducted in the participant’s home or work, conducting the interviews in the
CAMP office allowed interviewees to return to campus and be surrounded by a similar academic environment experienced during their student life. This location also ensured that I could control the conditions for the interview, which required a quiet atmosphere and careful lighting (Yow, 2005). The final step in the pre-interview process was a reminder e-mail sent the day before the scheduled interview.

**The Interviews**

Careful pre-interview preparation is essential for successful interviewing. The day before the interview, Mr. Pacheco and I tested the video equipment, the lighting, and secured extra batteries and blank tapes. Since it is very time consuming to set up a stage and take it down each time an interview takes place, the stage was left in place for the duration of the three interviews. Doing everything possible to make the interviewee feel at ease helps build rapport and establish the “character of the relationship between interviewee and narrator” (Yow, 2005). This is another reason I chose to conduct the interviews on campus in the CAMP office, where the comfort of being in familiar surroundings could help the interviewee feel more at ease when recounting memories about their college experience. Prior to the interview, I provided each participant with a tour of the office and an opportunity to view a wall of photographs displayed in the lounge. Before each interview, I discussed seating preference and microphone location. I also discussed a brief overview of the structure of the interview, beginning with their biographical background, followed by a discussion of their transition to college and...
overcoming challenges and barriers, and concluding with their own personal advice to future migrant students entering college. Providing an overview of the format reconfirmed the purpose of the project and put the interviewee at ease.

It is all too easy to jump ahead to what is undoubtedly the most exciting part of any oral history project—sitting down with people to conduct the interviews . . . but failing to clearly discuss the purpose of a project in advance inevitably results in unsatisfactory outcomes (Sacks, 2009). With this in mind, I drafted interview questions with the goals of the project clearly in mind. I also arranged the questions under the categories of past, present, and future to ensure the entire story of the interviewee was captured in a chronological manner. While it is important to prepare a structure for an interview, it is equally important to remain flexible. In the course of the interviews, I allowed interviewees to tell experiences they felt were most important and left room for impromptu questions. For example, although all interviewees were asked the same questions, when they seemed applicable new questions were improvised on the spot. Consequently, in some cases, answers and follow-up questions changed the format of the interview while adding unique and significance to the content. According to Morrissey (1970), to reduce interviewing to a set of techniques is, as one person put it, like reducing courtship to a formula. There is a danger in too much reliance on tools and not relying sufficiently on old-fashioned intuition as to which tool to use in which situations.

When asking questions, it is recommended to avoid making the first question too abrupt or confrontational. Instead, interviewers should build up to the climatic questions
by establishing the historical setting and making the interviewee more comfortable with the process (Ritchie, 1995). Since the ultimate goal was to get interviewees to open up and share their personal stories, I stayed away from jumping right into the main questions. I set the stage with general questions and then followed with more specific questions. Following a biographical format, each interview began with several questions regarding the interviewee’s background and experiences prior to college. Interviewees responded to questions concerning their reasons for coming to the United States, learning English as a second language, moving to Sacramento from small rural towns, transitioning to college, and ultimately overcoming barriers to graduate from Sacramento State. In addition, CAMP program related questions were designed to explore specific program changes both in terms of student experience and program improvement.

In phrasing the questions, I found it important to leave them open-ended, and not impose in the phrasing of the question the answer I expected to receive. I tried to state the questions in such a way as to get the interviewee to pick his own alternative, because he might come up with one that I had not anticipated (Morrissey, 1970). Various open-ended questions were designed in a two-sentence format, where the first sentence stated the problem. For example, *what other types of responsibilities or duties did you perform outside of school, class and study time? Did these “additional” responsibilities or duties ever get in the way of your education?* The use of open-ended questions has also been cited as a means of “empowering” interviewees. That is, by encouraging interviewees to relate and to interpret their own stories, such questions shift the balance of power from
the interviewer to the interviewee (Ritchie, 1995). I also made a conscious attempt to not read the questions from my script. Rather, I tried to allow a more natural conversational flow to the interview. After posing a question, the interviewees had as much time as needed to respond.

When confronted with very brief responses, I asked for restatement, clarification, or qualification of the comment. Sometimes simply asked, why do you think you felt that way? According to Gorden (1975) one of the most effective probes is simple silence. It is important to learn to interpret whether a pause means that the interviewee has really finished and is waiting for guidance from you or is only considering what to say next. For example, interviewees sometimes disclosed emotional experiences as they recalled their childhood or personal struggles in college. During this time in particular, I made a greater effort to provide time for the interviewee to compose themselves and relate to me when they were ready to move on. Each interviewee was asked at the conclusion of their interview if there was anything else they wanted to address, which in most cases led to some discussion of issues not previously touched on or a return to a previous subject to which the interviewee wanted to add more information. According to Thompson (1978) historians come to an interview to learn by sitting at the feet of others who, because they come from a different background or social class know more about something. They therefore must tried to minimize their own presence in the interview. For this reason, I intentionally minimized my verbal presence by avoiding agreement or comments and instead using eye contact and nodding.
Each interview lasted anywhere between forty-five minutes and two hours. Some of the interviews seemed rushed, while others seemed too slow. Morrissey (1970) states that we should let the interviewee set his/her own pace. However, in my experience, the longer interviews led to fatigue on the part of both parties and a decline in the quality of the content. The lack of consistency in the length of the interviews was also a challenge, especially at the time of transcribing and editing. Even though every attempt was made to make the interviewee comfortable, some spoke much more freely when the video recorder was turned off (prior to the interview and after the interview). Evidently, much depended on who I was interviewing, some interviewees were self-starters who expressed themselves easily, while others required more support, did not volunteer much detail, and spoke in general terms.

Although all sources of potential background noise were eliminated by turning down phones, the printer, and the fax machine, one interview was interrupted several times by a personal telephone call. This was edited from the final copy. I also avoided at all cost interrupting the interviewee, even when the interviewee went off topic and/or had misunderstood the point of the question. Due to the brief time frame of this project, it was not possible to conduct multiple interviews with the same individuals, nor was there an opportunity to send interviewees their transcripts for review. Nevertheless, all interviewees signed consent forms to allow the use of the interview and transcripts for this project and other educational purposes (Consent Forms, Appendix B, C, & D). Each interviewee received a thank you note and a copy of the transcription and video.
The decision was made to use video recording technology in order to more fully capture the interview event. Richie (1995) states that although researchers prefer transcripts, which can be skimmed and photocopied, video recording offers advantages over simple audio. In viewing video, the researcher not only hears voice inflections, but also sees raised eyebrows, hand motions, and unspoken body language, “everything, in short, from clothing to reaction gestures and mannerisms; and gestures combined with words sometimes convey very different meanings.” Ritchie also states that expressions and gestures are too complex or subtle to reduce to words as people speak with body language, expression and tone – all impossible to fully capture in a transcript.

For this project, a Cannon GL2 was used to videotape all three of the interviews. A checklist of the equipment was created to serve as a reminder of the necessary equipment and to be prepared for unanticipated mechanical problems. The list included items such as extra batteries, tapes, light bulbs and an extension cord. Next, the equipment was set up the day before to make sure it properly function. In addition, the stage was set up to check for lighting and verifying the best shooting format. According to Ives (1995) there are two possible shooting formats in one-on-one interviews: over-the-camera and on-camera. While interviewing over-the-camera the interviewer asks questions from beyond or next to the camera, and the interviewee alone is on the screen, appearing to speak directly to the camera. In on-camera format, both the interviewers and interviewee appear on the screen. Since the chief focus of the oral project was the
interviewee, an over-the-camera shooting format was used for all three interviews in the project. Mr. Pacheco used a tripod and sat beside the camera most of the time. Occasionally, he picked up the camera to perform zooming, cuts and panning.

Editing the Interviews

Since one of the purposes of the project was to produce a short video to be used in CAMP student recruitment, we undertook substantial editing of the footage. During the editing phase, interviews were edited to a more manageable length to make them useful for educational purposes beyond this project. The editing reduced the interviews, which total an average of forty-five minutes to two hours of recorded time each, to a forty-five minute condensed video featuring highlights from the interviews. Under my supervision, Mr. Pacheco completed the editing and used the software Final Cut Pro to edit the material. He also selected a clip from each interview to be compiled into the introductory page of the DVD. Once the interviews were edited, the final material was burned onto a DVD. While significant amount of material was edited out, it was general material that was to the project’s focus. All experiences that addressed college transition, integration and graduation were included. The editing was limited to long pauses, dead space, side conversations between the interviewer/interviewee, and any content considered repetitive or unrelated to the goals of the project. Based on my knowledge and expertise on the topic, I assisted Mr. Pacheco in the editing process and indicated what should and should not be included in the final copy. Overall, the editing process met the needs of the
project and audience. The editing process was intense and took an average of 10 hours per interview to complete.

Transcription of Interviews

The last part of the oral history project was the transcription of the interviews. Kyvig and Marty (2000) maintain that, although costly and time consuming; a transcribed oral history is the most efficient way to make the information available and useful for researchers (Kyvig, 1995). Richie also states that researchers prefer written transcripts to listening to tapes, as they can be scanned and photocopied and, when indexed, information is easily retrieved. The transcribing phase was the most labor intensive and time-consuming step of the project. The transcription took anywhere from five to seven hours, depending on the length of the interview. A laptop computer and digital transcription audio player software called ExpressScribe were used to transcribe the interviews (Interview Transcripts, Appendix E, F, & G). The digital recorder’s software assisted in listening to each interview at a slow rate of speed, mitigating the need for frequent stopping and rewinding.

Mr. Pacheco and I collaborated in the transcription process. Ives (1995) suggests that the best person to do the transcribing is the interviewer. The patterns of speech and topics are easier for the interviewer to recall and decipher than someone who was not present at the time of the conversation. Although I conducted the interviews, Mr. Pacheco was present to videotape the interviews and he did the initial transcription of
each interview. To protect the original material, Mr. Pacheco made a duplicate copy of
the video prior to transcribing. After Mr. Pacheco completed the first draft of the
transcription of the interview, I took charge of the auditing. I listened to each interview
again to make sure the transcript accurately reflected the audio recording. I then edited
for punctuation, paragraphing, and the general flow of sentences. The interviewee’s
language and grammar choices were not “cleaned up,” but transcribed in verbatim.
Noise, laughter and distractions were noted in brackets. Italics were used when Spanish
was spoken. After one last final review, I double spaced and formatted each transcript.

At times, there were words, phrases, and even longer passages difficult to
understand. In those cases, I advised Mr. Pacheco to move on after three tries. As
explained by Ives (1995), even under ideal circumstances, a transcript is simply the best
representation one can make of what is recorded, but since it is a representation, it is
unavoidably an interpretation. Consequently, no two people will transcribe the same
interview exactly the same way, even if they are following the same set of guidelines, nor
will the same person transcribe it in the same way on two different occasions.

Probably the most challenging transcription was the interview of Mr. Jorge
Iniguez because it was conducted in Spanish and required translation to English.
Although it took on average five to seven hours to transcribe the other two interviews,
Mr. Iniguez’s took closer to 15 hours. This particular interview was transcribed,
translated, and ultimately subtitles were incorporated into the DVD to ensure all viewers
could understand the content. Due to time limitation of this project, the interviewees did not receive printed copies of each transcription for review. They each did receive a copy of the final transcript used in the project. All interviewees received a thank you letter for taking the time to participate.

**Ethical Considerations**

One crucial decision in any project is determining who will conduct the interviews. It is important to understand that regardless of who it is, the individual will have a certain level of influence on the overall interview. Vansina (1965) states that each historian adds their own particular flair to the interpretation of the sources he consults, making the process more of an art than a science. Historians choose facts and angles in a story that are of interest to themselves, and possibly to other targeted audiences. As the Director of CAMP, I was fully aware of the potential implications of being in a position of authority or influence as an interviewer. For this reason, the three individuals chosen to participate in the project were students who attended Sacramento State over ten years ago—prior to my leadership. One student attended Sacramento State in 1988, another in 1992 and the third in 2001. Excluding potential narrators with a personal connection to me as the Director of CAMP helped ensure the honesty and integrity of the research.

The participation of CAMP alumni sets this project apart from traditional oral history studies which often include complete strangers. I personally knew all the participants and worked with them at one point or another in program or community-
related efforts. But as Ritchie (1995) states, although in some cases, having established rapport with the interviewee could be beneficial, there are disadvantages to intimate as opposed to clinical interviewing. While it was beneficial to have a rapport with the interviewees during the scheduling, it became a shortcoming at times during the interview. For example, in several instances, the interviewee’s answers to various questions were brief, and did not go into detail about the issues discussed. In one occasion, one of the interviewees said, “you know what I mean . . . you’ve been there,” as I asked for further details. Although most of the time I followed up with a probing question, in some special cases, I was sensitive to the interviewee’s lack of detail and chose to take it as a sign that the interviewee was ready to move on to the next question. In the end, as Kammen (2003) maintains, “there is no set of rules that tells us when we have looked far and long enough, or searched fully, or asked enough questions to feel certain that what we say is correct or that our search is done.” With that in mind, the researcher needs to remain flexible, use new methods, and creatively try to find answers to what can seem a myriad of questions until he is able to satisfy himself and those interested in the topic being researched. Overall, I felt satisfied with the amount of information collected from each interview.

Although the interviewees were not students during my leadership, it is impossible to fully eliminate the potential influence that my role as Director may have played in the ultimate outcome of the interview. It is always a possibility that an interviewee may have said what they felt I wanted to hear or may have had a difficult
APPENDIX B

OLGA ARELLANO CONSENT FORM

The Migrant Student History Project

College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP)
California State University, Sacramento

A project by Viridiana Diaz

Oral History Interview Agreement

I hereby donate to Viridiana Diaz, for scholarly and educational purposes as she shall determine, all rights, title and copyrights interest in the digital video recordings and their contents of our interview conducted in July 2007.

Viridiana Diaz
(Name of Narrator)

Olga Arellano
(Name of Interviewee)

V. Diaz
(Signature of Narrator)

Olga Arellano
(Signature of Interviewee)

September 1, 2010
(Date of Agreement)
time admitting a lack of academic motivation and/or fault in an attempt to keep their reputation intact. For this reason, at all times during the interview, I maintain an awareness of my body language, facial expressions, vocal inflections and words chosen. My goal was to ensure that I did not reveal certain attitudes or expectations based on my personal background and/or professional knowledge. I also did not offer my opinions and avoided responding to the interview’s expressions. Most importantly, I stepped out of my role as Director and instead played the role of a common person who is interested in listening and understanding a story. Using these tools and techniques helped maintain the objectivity and integrity of the project.

According to Patton (2002) recounting highly personal experiences can make an interview uncomfortable for both interviewer and interviewee. The possibility of harmful or intimate information being discussed during the interview process is always present and it is difficult to anticipate and try to plan for the impact of this information during or after an interview. During the interviews, some of the interviewees disclosed intimate information about themselves and/or their families. The ethical code was to protect the privacy of the participants and to convey this protection to all individuals involved in the project (Creswell, 2009). To honor the ethical code, disclosure of intimate information was edited from the final product. At the same time, the openness of personal experiences and reflections not only provided information about college life, but also about the interviewee themselves. At the end of the interviews, I realized I had collected many valuable stories.
Chapter 4

CONCLUSION

The inspiration of The Migrant Student Oral History Project came from the desire to incorporate oral history into department programming. Because a formal oral history project had not previously been attempted in CAMP, the choice to bring a student intern to assist the Director in the project appeared to be a great way to acquire valuable knowledge and capture the experiences of migrant students at Sacramento State. At the end, the following goals were met:

- documented the way migrant students perceived their upbringing, rose above the obstacles, and transformed their perceptions throughout their college years;
- used the interviews to identify programmatic areas of strengths and those with potential for improvement;
- initiated the process of establishing a formal archive to preserve the memories and recollections of the individuals who have participated in the CAMP program.
- the project generated a video to be used as an educational tool to further motivate migrant students in K-12 to pursue a college degree.

Eventually, the video of three condensed interviews will be distributed to rural high schools throughout Northern California.

The primary conclusion derived from this experience is that oral history makes a valuable contribution to understanding the history of migrant students in college. The
biographical format added to the project because individuals shared their life story from beginning to end—making it a story of success. Despite the subject’s differences, every interview was a fine source of information. All three individuals have clearly benefited from the support services provided by CAMP and owe their accomplishments to the assistance they received throughout their college experience by this program. The CAMP program will be celebrating their 30th anniversary in 2011, and it is vital to capture the memories of its participants. This important oral history collection will enrich the history of the program for years to come.

According to a number of scholars, migrant students are supposed to drop out of school and continue the “culture of migrancy” (Trevino, 2004). However, against all odds, some students continue to clearly demonstrate that culture is not an absolute and can be changed. Therefore, the wealth of these unique college experiences should be captured, shared, and preserved. Oral histories can help document previously undocumented information about communities while uncovering complexities and adding new dimension to what was generally perceived as a simple, straightforward recitations of the past (Sommer & Quinlan, 2003). The intent of The Migrant Student Oral History Project was to accomplish exactly this goal – to provide a greater depth of understanding of the college experience of students from migrant and seasonal farm working backgrounds while utilizing the findings for programmatic implementation and change.
APPENDIX A

Interview Questionnaire
### THE PAST

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<td>1.</td>
<td>Where were you born and if you were born outside of the U.S. when did you move to the U.S.?</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>What was your first language and what was your experience like learning English?</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>How old were you when you learned English?</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Where are your parents from?</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Did they go to school at all? Explain.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>When you moved to the United States where did you reside and what was the environment like?</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>What kind of student were you in High School?</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>While in high school, did anyone ever discourage you from graduating or going to college?</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>What originally motivated you to pursue a higher education?</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Do you feel high school prepared you for college?</td>
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### THE PRESENT

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<td>1.</td>
<td>During your first year of college, what kind of challenges did you face and what were some of your fears?</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>During your first year of college were you required to complete any remediation coursework?</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>During your first year of college did you join any campus organizations?</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>What are some of the sacrifices you had to make to remain in school?</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Did you ever feel undecided or uncertain about what you wanted to study or about your educational goals? If so, how long and how did you feel during that time?</td>
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<td>As your college years progressed did the concept of length towards graduation</td>
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<td><strong>change?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>7.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Have you ever taken a semester off? If so, what motivated you to return?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>8.</strong></td>
<td><strong>On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you score your time management and study habits?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>9.</strong></td>
<td><strong>What do you consider your strengths and weaknesses?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>10.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Have you ever been on academic probation? If you have, what happened and how did you get back on track?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>11.</strong></td>
<td><strong>What other types of responsibilities or duties did you have outside of school, class and study time? Have these “other” responsibilities or duties ever got in the way of your education?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>12.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Who was your motivation (in general)?</strong></td>
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**CAMP**

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<td><strong>1.</strong></td>
<td><strong>In what ways did you benefit from CAMP during your first year or how did CAMP influence your future?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2.</strong></td>
<td><strong>How do you feel about the full-time staff?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>3.</strong></td>
<td><strong>How do you feel about the student assistants and tutors?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>4.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Do you feel CAMP helped you achieve your goals? Do you feel CAMP helped you remain in college and not drop out? If so, in what way?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>5.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Do you feel CAMP somehow overprotected you from the real college experience?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>6.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Do you think CAMP provided you with the tools to go out to the real world and succeed?</strong></td>
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**CLOSING**

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<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong></td>
<td><strong>What type of things would you say are important to understand before coming into college?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2.</strong></td>
<td><strong>If you could change anything about your college experience what would it be?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>3.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Now that you are acquainted with the university what do you really think about CSUS?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>4.</strong></td>
<td><strong>What kind of advice would you give incoming freshmen planning to attend college?</strong></td>
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APPENDIX B

Olga Arellano’s Consent Form
APPENDIX B

OLGA ARELLANO CONSENT FORM

The Migrant Student History Project

College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP)
California State University, Sacramento

A project by Viridiana Diaz

Oral History Interview Agreement

I hereby donate to Viridiana Diaz, for scholarly and educational purposes as she shall determine, all rights, title and copyrights interest in the digital video recordings and their contents of our interview conducted in July 2007.

Viridiana Diaz ___________________________ Olga Arellano ___________________________
(Name of Narrator) (Name of Interviewee)

V. Diaz ___________________________
(Signature of Narrator)

September 1, 2010
(Date of Agreement)

Olga Arellano ___________________________
(Signature of Interviewee)
APPENDIX C

Jorge Iniguez’s Consent Form
APPENDIX C

JORGE INIGUEZ CONSENT FORM

The Migrant Student History Project
College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP)
California State University, Sacramento

A project by Viridiana Diaz

Oral History Interview Agreement

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Viridiana Diaz
(Name of Narrator)

(JSignature of Narrator)

September 1, 2010
(Date of Agreement)

Jorge Iniguez
(Name of Interviewee)

(Signature of Interviewee)
APPENDIX D

Catalina Alvarez’s Consent Form
APPENDIX D

CATALINA ALVAREZ CONSENT FORM

The Migrant Student History Project

College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP)
California State University, Sacramento

A project by Viridiana Diaz

Oral History Interview Agreement

I hereby donate to Viridiana Diaz, for scholarly and educational purposes as she shall determine, all rights, title and copyrights interest in the digital video recordings and their contents of our interview conducted in July 2007.

Viridiana Diaz
(Name of Narrator)

Catalina Alvarez
(Name of Interviewee)

V. Diaz
(Signature of Narrator)

Catalina Alvarez
(Signature of Interviewee)

September 1, 2010
(Date of Agreement)
APPENDIX E

Oral History with Olga Arellano
DIAZ: Tell us about your childhood?

ARELLANO: My childhood has been very . . . it’s been a wonderful experience because I always get to tap into it as an adult. I am the oldest of six children . . . and one . . . the oldest of five women in my family. So, many of the responsibilities that my parents left were for me to take care of my youngest siblings and my parents worked in . . . as migrant farm workers, so they work "en el tomate, en la uva," you know, they worked long hours and I remember at times being left with the babysitter for about 8 hours even 10 hours when I was younger. But, when I was able to take care of the . . . of our kids . . . I call them my kids because I feel like I am the second mom at home . . . I was able to take care of them myself. So, my summers were . . . instead of going to summer school, I often times take care of my siblings. During regular school year, I was going to elementary school, you know, attending . . . I remember switching schools often . . . going from Clarksburg, CA to West Sacramento going back, then finally coming to Sacramento . . . a lot of movement in my family. My father was one of . . . probably many migrant farm workers that followed the crops. So, they . . . wherever there was work, that’s where we were. And, we didn't have a home of our own. We were actually staying at a home that was owned by the person who owned the
farms. So, it was a two bedroom, I remember, a two bedroom, one bathroom . . . dilapidated little . . . like a cabin . . . it was a . . . it looked like a cabin, it was green outside and it had very minimal amenities, hardwood floors. Old old hardwood floors, holes in the sealing. During winter it was pretty cold and during the summer you can imagine, no air conditioning it was pretty hard. But, we have our best memories there.

"Le llamabamos El Rancho," you know because we were and loved to be out in the free, we called it the wilderness . . . you know, we were able to go and become like the heroes of the wild you know we fantasized many times of . . . we role-played. We made "tea peas" out of the . . . you know . . . out of the different types of wood that we found and my mom's banquets'. She wasn't happy about that.

DIAZ: So, did you come to the United States or were you born here? Did you . . . were you brought here?

ARELLANO: See, my father left my mother in Mexico. He wanted to come and see . . . if he can stabilize at least a place to live, a job . . . to secure a job so that he was able to bring my mom here. He also wanted to secure the visas to ensure that they were able to give them the visa and the permits, you know, to be able to stay in the United States for the time that the visa allowed us. What happened is that instead of getting the visa, my dad just went ahead and applied to get . . . what was called or known as the green cards and so that’s when my mother came over to the United States and in
DIAZ: What kind of student were you in high school?
ARELLANO: In high school . . . I've always been a student that likes to drive at her own. You know, I love to learn and have a love of learning and I think that is the reason why I'm in education. I remember also . . . hanging out with only the Spanish speaking kids the ones that were like me. The migrant, farm workers, Mexicanos and I had a very difficult time assimilating with the other students that were not Spanish speaking that were English speaking or were lighter than me . . . I just felt like I did not belong, even tough, I had leadership skills . . . I ran for treasurer of the class and I got the position as a treasurer, but even then it was hard for me to interact with my colleagues, the president, the vice president, the secretary because they were not like me. And so, going to the football games was really hard too because it was like a whole different world for me. In our culture we are happy, you know that’s all I know . . . is "la musica, la comida, la interaction," the brotherhood, the sisterhood, you know we are there. We are there for each other. We forgot about how, we . . . all the racist remarks that could have been made by other kids or the bullying that was happening, the peer pressures, the interactions or negative interactions of our teachers. Or the constant change of administration, you know, the principals that kept, you know . . . I
remember I had a principal than all of the sudden two years later we had another one and all of the sudden two years later, another one . . . the inconsistence, you know . . . it was just wonderful to be able to be there with them.

DIAZ: While in high school, did anyone ever discourage you from graduating or going to college?

ARELLANO: This particular teacher . . . you know, said that it was so unfair that if his daughter did not have an opportunity to go to college, she was better prepared, she had obviously higher qualifications, obviously she was an honor student and that because of these new laws coming out they had to give those spots to other students who were of diverse backgrounds. He didn't say it that way but I am not . . . out of respect for our community I am not going to use the same words. And, I remember that stock with me because all the way through my application that kept echoing. And I always thought, did he think that I am not highly qualified? Did he think that I cannot make this? Am I not an honor student? Am I not good enough? It’s always that doubt in you. And . . . being the oldest one it was hard because I did not have an older sibling to come to him to say, hey am I doing the right thing? I have . . . I had no one! My parents and . . . and . . . my parents only knew that they wanted us to go to college, that’s all they knew. They wanted us to go to college, but they did not know what the process, or if we were highly qualified or not, the difference between an
(A-) and a (B+), you know, all these things they didn't know. There was a lot of people who did not think that a lot of us who did go to a university right from . . . from high school that we were not going to make it. In fact, we were supposed to be geared for a city college. We applied and we said “listen to this” we have nothing to loose and so much to gain and we were accepted. And, it was the best thing that ever happened to me.

DIAZ: What originally motivated you to pursue higher education?

ARELLANO: I love learning. I love to be able to gain knowledge and be able to give back to the community. My ideal situation it’s being able to go to school, using that knowledge going back and using it to support our community, not just any community. I am talking about the disenfranchised communities, the communities that don't have voices, you know the communities that need people to . . . to energize them, you know, because we don't want to enable communities, we want to support them to become independent communities so that they can access all the resources that we have. So that if there are . . . there are . . . they don't have insurance for example. If they don’t have medical insurance, they know, “Oh, there is Oak Park Community Center right here and I can access this by going here . . . we . . . I want to help, if I am in a position where I can't help, then I am not doing my job and I don't want that job. You know, the way that I am going to help people is by giving back to the community and that is my way of saying thank you to everyone who
has helped me. Starting from my elementary school years and people who actually saw and asked me, who knew, "you know what, she is a migrant child, she is very capable, she is very intelligent, she has the drive, she has leadership capabilities and she can actually run a school. You know, people that were able to see beyond the stereotypes, to see beyond that I am a woman, to see beyond that I am “Mexicana” that’s you know, that’s my way of saying this is what I am doing and . . . and it’s a drive, you have to have that drive. If you don't have the drive, I don't care how many people help you, you are not going to be there.

DIAZ: During your first year of college, what kind of challenges did you face or what were some of your fears?

ARELLANO: Oh my greatest fear . . . let me start there, my greatest fear was failure, was not being able to make it. The . . . the fear of not being able to make it after I was accepted. The fear of not knowing . . . ok, so I have these classes now, what do I do? Once I finish these classes, what do I do? And my challenges were having teacher that had no knowledge or sensitivity of the struggles that I underwent. They didn't really care. They cared. They cared because they had a syllabus and you have to go by the syllabus. I don't care who you are. But . . . but the inability of understanding certain vocabulary . . . because I spoke English but it wasn't proficient enough for me to be able to A my way through college. In order for me to get an A, I struggled. I spent countless hours studying
to get a C in a science class, that to me was like an A because that's how tough it was. Now, for some people, like me who have the, you know, who lacked that proficiency at that point, who lacked that proficiency in English. I . . . I'm also . . . I was like caught up in a rock in a hard place because my Spanish . . . it was good Spanish but it was the Spanish that my parents taught me. It wasn't academic Spanish. So, here is Olga, not enough academic Spanish to be able to say "oh I can transfer the Biology terms, or the chemistry terms . . . not only did I have to deal with not knowing proficient Spanish but then I had to learn proficient English. So, it was a double whammy to me. So, when we had essays to write, we would get together . . . draft outlines with the support of our CAMP tutors because CAMP offers tutors in different areas of study. They also . . . when I came in had counseling. So, they had an actual on-site counselor . . . I can tell you right now I used that counselor a lot, because I was going through a lot of pressures . . . pressures from my parents, pressures from my peers, pressures of having a boyfriend in college and dealing with those pressures . . . I also . . . we also had a class, a CAMP class. That was the best for me. The best class was my CAMP class. That was because . . . you know how I told you earlier about the ability to communicate and collaborate with our peers that have the same backgrounds, who shared the same thoughts, ideas . . . passions. We all came together in one class. It was "familia," that's what it was . . . it was
family. It was family coming together to learning newer, higher, education . . . we were together. We were a family.

DIAZ: In what ways did you benefit from CAMP during your first year or how did CAMP influence your future?

ARELLANO: They hit every possible area of learning. They helped you with academics. They helped you with your emotional support. They helped you with the social emotional support. They were there in everything and not to mention they were also there to get you out of trouble when your parents stepped in. CAMP was so key because another thing I did not mention earlier is that, even after my first year of CAMP, I came back to CAMP every year there after. I graduated in 4 years and I came back to get my teaching credential, and my administrative credential, and my masters degree . . . and every time, I came back to CAMP.

DIAZ: If you could change something about your college experience, what would it be?

ARELLANO: I would not change a thing. I love what I do. I love the fact that I had that support. And, I would not trade it for a thing.

DIAZ: What are some of the sacrifices you had to make to remain in school?

ARELLANO: Money. I had to sacrifice, you know, not wanting immediate gratification. I knew that I had to invest in what I had because all tough financial aid supported me, there was other many expenses.
DIAZ: What advice can you give students who really do feel the need to have that instant gratification and the fact that college is a long term investment?

ARELLANO: Patience is a virtue, immediate gratification is only temporary. So, the investment that you make with your education . . . whatever you do with your education is going to pay off. Whatever you do, do it with your heart. That's my recommendation. It's ok. It's going to be ok. You are going to survive 4 or 5 years in college. It will be ok. But, you have to keep your goals . . . focus . . . you have to keep yourself focus. Many people would love to see you unfocused. Many people don't have that discipline. So, there are three things you have to have . . . you have to have the discipline to continue doing what you are doing, the desire to do what you are doing, and the determination to ensure that nobody takes you of that road and family . . . family, keep them close. Even if they are far away, write to them, call them, you know, have them there. Even if you feel they are not supporting you, they are a strong root on you being successful. I just have to say that; because family was very important in my success.

DIAZ: What are three pieces of advice you would give an incoming freshman?

ARELLANO: When you set your goal, it needs to correlate with that dream. You know, how we all say "oh cuando yo sea grande, yo quiero ser..." well you have to keep it real. And by that what I mean is keeping it in front of you . . .
writing it out if you need to, on a piece of paper, on your journal . . . if you keep a journal awesome, you know, writing down how you feel because some days are going to be low days. I call those the “low days” because you may get discourage because you don't pass a class. It's okay to not pass a class, what is not okay it’s for you to feel that you can fail. You have no excuses to fail if you got to this point. No excuse to fail. That's no excuse. You did all this hard work to get here, you cannot fail now because people are depending on you, not just your parents, not just your family but the community because we are waiting for leaders like you to replace us. There is room for learning. Because remember that when you do fail, is not failure . . . is a learned . . . is something that you are going to learn. We have to learn that way. That's how we learn, otherwise, it would be new knowledge for us. So, remember that every opportunity that you feel that is becoming to be a failure, it is not. It is a learning opportunity take it back and think of ways that you can make it better and network. There are people out there that are going to give you 100% of their support, you need to reach out. Don't let it come to you, don’t be passive, be aggressive, be assertive, but if you don't have that in you yet, learn how to do it because you are going to need that because in this society that’s what we need to do. Learn how to be assertive, learn how to be aggressive, in a way that we provide others the same opportunities that you are being provided today.
APPENDIX F

Oral History with Jorge Iñiguez
DIAZ: ¿Háblame un poquito sobre tu niñez?

IÑIGUEZ: Mi niñez . . . bueno yo crecí . . . yo nací en Guadalajara, Jalisco. Y crecí en el estado de Zacatecas, en un pueblo que se llama Tlatelolco, Zacatecas.

DIAZ: Cual es el nivel educativo de tus padres?

IÑIGUEZ: Mi mama terminó la primaria, ósea fue hasta el sexto año de primaria, la termino. En el caso de mi papa solamente llegó al cuarto año por que tuvo que trabajar desde muy pequeño.

DIAZ: ¿Y cómo llegaste a los Estados Unidos?

IÑIGUEZ: Es una muy buena pregunta . . . yo creo que todos los que emigramos aquí, tenemos una . . . una historia bien particular. Yo tenía 16 años, acababa de cumplir los 17 precisamente. Y mi interés en migrar a los Estados Unidos, mas que nada, era una aventura de un joven que estaba explorando. Y me vine cruzando la frontera con coyote en Tijuana, estuvimos unos días ahí en Tijuana sobreviviendo a pan y agua, literalmente. Y cruzamos la frontera y nos escondieron en un carro y bueno lo típico de la mayoría de las personas que hemos cruzado ilegalmente.

DIAZ: Durante tus años de preparatoria aquí en los Estados Unidos, hay alguna persona que te motivo a considerar ir a la Universidad?

IÑIGUEZ: Mira, hubo de los dos lados. Hubo . . . hubo gente que me desmotivo . . . a . . . primero la gente que me motivo, gente de Migrant Education. Cuando
estuve en la high school estudiando y el programa de Migrant Education me tomó bajo sus brazos y me ayudó y me guió. Que a mí se me hizo muy . . . muy increíble el apoyo que yo no sabía que existía. Pues eso me facilitó un poquito la . . . los problemas de vivir solo. Mas a tan corta edad en la high school. Pero también por el otro lado, hubo un par de gentes, desafortunadamente fue un "counselor" el que no . . . no creyó en mí. No creía que yo era material para la universidad. Y más fuera de la escuela, donde yo trabajaba, por que todo el tiempo que estuve yendo a la high school estuve trabajando. Cuando yo fui aceptado a la Universidad, mi . . . mi, mi jefa o mi mayordoma, me insinúo que yo era material también de la Universidad. Incluso, no creyó que yo había sido aceptado a "Sac State."

DIAZ: ¿Cómo fue que escuchaste sobre el programa de CAMP?

IÑIGUEZ: Bueno . . . fue a través de dos situaciones muy parecidas. La primera fue en el programa de Migrant Education en la high school. Me introdujo a CAMP, diciéndome que había este programa, claro no sabía yo mucho a detalle que era CAMP. Hubo una oportunidad de hacer un viaje a la Universidad, pero con Migrant Education. Y me dijeron que me subiera al autobús. Yo pues cualquier cosa por salir de la escuela, no? y creo que, y fue la única vez que pude viajar de turista, con los gastos pagados. Entonces . . . vinimos a la Universidad y el “host” era CAMP precisamente. Entonces, ahí fue donde aprendí más de CAMP.
DÍAZ: ¿Que fue lo que originalmente te motivo a ir a la universidad? Cual fue tu motivación?

IÑIGUEZ: Yo creo que son . . . otra vez un par de cosas. No hay ninguna sola razón, sino una combinación. Cuando me vengo de México a Estado Unidos cuando emigro, yo sentía que ya mis oportunidades de seguir una carrera, de seguir en una universidad estaban muy fuera de mi alcance. Fue cuando estuve en la "high school" que a través de Migrant Education me encontré con CAMP. Y aparte, mi motivación de un par de amigos que me dijeron, ¿"porque no estudias?" ¿"Porque no sigues con la universidad?" Mi idea es . . . mi idea en 1987 era de, termino la “high school,” me voy y agarro un trabajo y me pagan a $10 dolares la hora y con eso puedo vivir bastante bien. Pero ya después se despierta en mi la espinita otra vez de, "sabes que hay todavía una oportunidad de ir a la universidad." Entonces ese sueño se me regresa y personalmente empiezo a creer más en mí. Y . . . en esa visita con CAMP que tuvimos, entre en el ochenta y . . . ochenta y siete yo creo . . . yo entre en el ochenta y siete. Cuando yo hice una pregunta y cuando le dije, "Oye Alejandro, tu crees que yo puedo venir a la universidad si yo trabajo para mantenerme yo solo y no tengo a mis papas aquí en los Estados Unidos, crees que pueda,? ¿“Ósea, quien me va a mantener?” ¿“Como le voy a hacer?" y la frase que se me quedo muy . . .
muy grabada fue "Si se puede." Entonces, eso . . . eso me sirvió para motivarme a mí y si se pudo.

DIAZ: ¿Que clase de estudiante fuiste en la preparatoria? Cuando estuviste aquí en los Estados Unidos? Como te consideras en términos este . . . académicos, que clase de estudiante eras?

IÑIGUEZ: Yo era un estudiante relajado, pero con poco tiempo. Como dije anteriormente, yo todo el tiempo estuve trabajando cuando estuve en la high school aunque sea "part-time." En mi año de "senior" en la “high school,” yo estaba trabajando tiempo completo. Entonces en cuestiones de tiempo, no tenia mucha libertad. Pero en cuestiones académicas, yo estaba muy relajado. No estaba, como te dije, literalmente no tenia el motivo de ir a una universidad. Entonces, los cursos que estaba tomando, no me estaban preparando. La mayoría de mis cursos siempre eran para aprender el ingles como segunda lengua. Y los cursos de matemáticas, tome un solo curso de matemáticas. Ciencias no tome ni un solo curso. Entonces, estaba muy relajado porque pensaba que no iba a ir a la universidad.

DIAZ: ¿Cuales fueron tus mayores retos y temores cuando llegaste a la universidad?

IÑIGUEZ: Ay . . . fueron varios. Yo creo que . . . no los voy a decir en orden de prioridad pero de los que te puedo platicar, en primero, el mas importante fue ¿"que estoy haciendo aquí?" ¿“Merezco estar aquí?” Tuve una platica conmigo mismo y me dije, ¿”Me merezco estar aquí?” Y si, si me puse a
pensar y esa... esa vez... incluso recuerdo que se me salieron las lagrimas por que en realidad sentia que era una oportunidad mas. Era, como mi ultima oportunidad. Entonces, yo mismo saque unas fuerzas increibles de decir "yo debo estar aqui, voy a hacerlo y lo voy a hacer."

Eso fue de los retos dificiles sicológicamente que no... no te puedes preparar. Nadie te puede preparar. Segundo, cuando empiezo a tomar los cursos y veo que soy tan debil estoy en mi Ingles y en las matematicas y ciencias, me puse a pensar y dije "wow, como le voy a hacer para terminar esta carrera de... de "computer science" o de ingeniero de computacion.

Eso... ese fue otro reto muy dificil... y el ultimo reto... tambien importante, a lo mejor como los otros mas, pero fue economicamente, que no tenia a mis papas. No tenia un apoyo financiero de alguien que me pudiera apoyar por que mi situacion legal estaba arreglándose en ese semestre. Entonces, no podia recibir ninguna otra ayuda ni aplicar para becas. Y por ultimo, la nostalgia de estar fuera de mi casa, el problema que yo tenia es que mi casa no estaba en "Winters" o en "Woodland" que podia ir los fines de semana. Mi casa estaba en Mexico, entonces ese... ese fue un reto emocional muy dificil... que me hizo crecer como adulto en cuestion de semanas y de meses... crecer rapido.

DIAZ: ¿De que manera influyo el programa de CAMP en tu futuro? ¿Y como te beneficiaste?
IÑIGUEZ: Wow, creo que para mi el primer año fue muy crítico, el apoyo que recibí de CAMP. Académicamente, me ayudan a resolver ese . . . o por lo menos a aliviar el problema . . . el problema académico que tenía. Tenían tutores, me estaban . . . si tenía problemas con la tarea, aquí venía a CAMP y me ayudaban, así fuera en Ingles, fueran en ciencia . . . en matemáticas. Tenía . . . estaban los tutores de CAMP que me ayudaban a tratar de balancear ese déficit que tenía yo en matemáticas. Entonces académicamente, increíble la ayuda que recibí de CAMP. Segundo, emocionalmente . . . emocionalmente, digo que no se puede medir . . . de alguna u otra manera que tanto apoyo emocionalmente me dio CAMP. Pero lo que sí te puedo decir es que cuando yo venía a CAMP, yo sentía que era mi casa. Y mi casa fuera de mi casa, ósea, era un sentido de . . . de estar aquí y sentirme como en casa.

DIAZ: ¿En algún momento pensaste o consideraste dejar la escuela o la universidad? Hubo esos momentos de . . . tan difíciles que consideraste dejar la universidad y quizás trabajar o cambiar de planes?

IÑIGUEZ: Si hubo esa curiosidad de decir "por que me estoy matando tanto? Esto me va a llevar 4 años." Incluso, en mi caso me tomo 6 años graduarme por todas mis deficiencias económicas. Y yo sentía que se me hacia inalcanzable el alcanzar llegar a mis clases, ya de mi carrera. Entonces, si hubo una duda pero yo creo que los cimientos se formaron desde "Summer Bridge," y desde mi primer semestre en CAMP.
DIAZ: En relación a tu carrera, ¿en algún momento te sentiste indeciso de lo que querías estudiar? Y como esto eso conectado con tu carrera profesional actual?

IÑIGUEZ: Primero, yo creo que desde pequeño tenía ese interés de ser ingeniero. Me decía mi mamá desde muy pequeño. La única grabadora... la primera grabadora que tuvimos en la casa para tocar los cassettes yo fui el encargado de desarmarla y armarla como unas 100 veces, yo creo. Desde pequeño me gustaba desarmar y armar cosas. Y eso es una... yo creo que estaba un poquito en la sangre y en... en mis genes de tratar de ser ingeniero. Cuando yo llego a los Estados Unidos y empiezo a estudiar en la “high school,” claro como estaba tomando clases muy relajadas, dijeron "que clases quieres tomar para tu "senior year" y dije a mira "oh computación, introducción a computadoras," “Me cobran por esto?” No, no las clases son gratis." Rápidamente fui... y tome esa clase y había un dilema. No hablaba inglés y el maestro no hablaba español. “So,” el maestro me dejó en la computadora a que yo aprendiera lo que pudiera aprender. Al final de cuentas, eso hizo que me cambiara y dije "wow" fui y me encantaron las computadoras.

DIAZ: ¿Si pudieras regresar a los ochentas o a tu época de estudiante a tu momento de estudiante, que cambiarías?

IÑIGUEZ: Lo que me hizo su... me saco mucho mas canas, fueron las materias que no había tomado en la “high school.” Si pudiera regresar el tiempo, yo
hubiera tomado muchos más cursos preparativos para la universidad. Y no digo preparativos, simplemente los necesarios por que nunca tome los necesarios.

DIAZ: ¿Cuál sería tu consejo primordial que le pudieras dar a otros estudiantes de nuevas generaciones que van a considerar ir a la universidad y quizás se relacionan con tu historia, que vienen de . . . de familia migrante, que tienen dificultad con el idioma, que tienen las mismas inseguridades, cuales serían tus consejos . . . tus consejos?

IÑIGUEZ: Yo creo que el consejo más grande en un par de palabras es "si se puede," si se puede hay que echarle ganas pero si se puede. Pero de ahí, los consejos más realistas es, prepárense en la “high school.” Tomen los cursos. Yo no digo que tomen cursos avanzados, ósea, si pueden háganlo eso les va a cortar hasta un año de su carrera de lo que se tarden en ejercer su carrera. Pero, por lo menos cumplan con todos los cursos necesarios para poderse graduando. Para cuando lleguen a la universidad, no estén en un déficit o deban materias o tienen que tomar muchas materias para que puedan empezar a tomar los cursos necesarios.

DIAZ: ¿Que diferencia a hecho ese título universitario en tu vida?

IÑIGUEZ: Wow . . . ¿qué diferencia a hecho en mi vida? Es . . . es . . . como blanco y negro, agua y aceite, es un contraste increíble. De tantas cosas que eh podido lograr por que tengo mi carrera. Voy a empezar por el sueño de todos aquellos emigrantes empezando con nuestros papas. Ami mi carrera
me permitió poder regresar a México a trabajar. El poder haber ido a trabajar a México en otro nivel a . . . con otras circunstancias, que si hubiera estado en México no lo hubiera logrado. O, que si no hubiera tenido una carrera, nunca hubiera podido hacer eso. Yo creo que eso fue un experiencia increíble . . . 4 años y medio que estuve en México representando a mi compañía y fue maravilloso. Sin mi carrera, no lo hubiera podido haber hecho. Segundo, obviamente la situación económica. Con mi trabajo que tengo, no tengo que preocuparme de la situación económica. Estamos en una posición que, hablábamos al principio de la entrevista, que la economía y todo. Yo estoy tranquilo, hay problemas . . . no digo que soy rico, pero no tengo que vivir del día al día para poder ajustar para el pago de la casa. Tercero, el haber trabajado con esta compañía, ya llevo como 15 años trabajando para esta compañía. El haber tenido mi carrera, primero, me permitió haber trabajado para esta compañía. Y mi carrera me permitió conocer muchísimos lugares del mundo. Incluso, literalmente tuve la oportunidad de darle la vuelta al mundo en uno de mis viajes. De manera que salió el avión a los países que visite y por donde se regreso, le di la vuelta al mundo y para mi una gran gratificación que se queda muy pero muy adentro en mi corazón y en mi mente.
APPENDIX G

Oral History with Catalina Alvarez
DIAZ: Tell us about your childhood?

ALVAREZ: My childhood . . . I have good childhood. I grew up in a family where there was a lot of love and there was a lot of support. But, the support and the love wasn't really geared towards [doing] higher education. I grew up in Mexico, in Jalisco. I came to this country when I was ten years old.

DIAZ: What is your parents' education level?

ALVAREZ: My dad's education level is third grade and my mom, actually, never went to school.

DIAZ: What type of student where you in high school?

ALVAREZ: (Laugh). In high school I was a . . . I was a really good student. I was really dedicated . . . I sometimes . . . I needed guidance in terms of information for college, but I would go to my migrant counselors and I was very active with the community. I did a lot of community service. I stayed after school and assisted in the library. I became really good friends with my teachers.

DIAZ: While in high school, did anyone ever discourage you from graduating or going to college?

ALVAREZ: Yes, someone did. It was a counselor from the high school, not from the migrant program but the regular counselors that we had.
When I went . . . I was ready to apply for college . . . and I could not afford the fee for the application. And I went and I requested a fee waiver and she told me “well, you know I can get you to go to a community college,” and . . . and I had my application for the fee waiver there with me and she was there in front of me and when she said that . . . and then I continued and said well, no . . . I think I have what it takes to go to Sacramento State . . . and I already looked at the requirements and I know I can go and I want to go and I would like to apply! she said "No, but I think you should go to Delta College because, you know, students like you do really well in community colleges," she said that "students like you" so, what I did is that I ignored her and I went and I talked to another counselor. And, this counselor gave me all the fee waivers that other students had not been using. At the beginning that day I was really upset, but after thinking about it and after going to the migrant program and, actually, talking to other people about it. I am like well, what did she really mean? Did she really mean that I can't make it? Did she really think that I am not capable of going to college? That . . . I had great grades. I mean, I was . . . I felt that I had the potential to go to college. So, I just basically ignored her.

DIAZ: And you felt challenged?
ALVAREZ: I did. I felt really challenged. I felt that students like me, you know, Latino . . . immigrant students . . . I think that . . . I felt that as soon as I went up there and actually told my counselor "I am thinking of going to college," I thought she was going to be more supportive. But, it wasn't like that.

DIAZ: What originally motivated you to pursue a higher education?

ALVAREZ: The fact that I was going to be the first one from both of my family sides. Both my mom's and my dad's to go to college.

DIAZ: During your first year of college, what kind of challenges did you face or what were some of your fears?

ALVAREZ: My . . . my biggest fear was that I was not going to have enough money to support myself because I was . . . sharing an apartment with a roommate and I . . . I wasn't too far from home. It was about 50 miles from my hometown. But, I still felt a lot of responsibility, in terms of paying rent, paying utilities, buying my books, and buying food on-campus because I couldn't always cook (laugh). But, that was my biggest fear. The challenge to coming to this very . . . it's a really big campus. There is a lot of students. There is a lot of faculty. There is a lot of programs. But, is challen . . . It is very challenge . . . it's a big challenge to find a place where you can, actually, feel comfortable. When if you have a question, there is going to . . . you know, there is going to be someone there
willing to help you. So, that was my challenge, to actually feel part of Sacramento State.

DIAZ: In what ways did you benefit from CAMP during your first year or how did CAMP influence your future?

ALVAREZ: My first year was very difficult, was very challenging because I had a death in the family. I remember when I called CAMP and I told the counselor, I received a lot of support. A lot of emotional support . . . all throughout that stage of my life. And, I would come in and just . . . literately, just cry because I was very sad and my family wasn't here. So, I . . . when I got that support from CAMP, actually, CAMP did become part of my family. And after that, a lot of the . . . well, all the help had to do with preparing me for classes and knowing which classes to take because I didn't want to waste time. I knew what I was here for and I wanted to be surrounded by people who knew what I was here for and who, actually, wanted to take the time to assist me throughout the way.

DIAZ: Anything you wish you knew then that you know well now? That you wish you knew when you first came in and maybe that would have changed or that would have impacted your decisions or the way you did things?

ALVAREZ: I wish I had known that a college education can actually be for anyone that tries, for anyone that really wants to . . . the very one
that really want to get that college education. I . . . for some reason, I felt there was not people like me that there weren't any professionals like me out there. And, I felt that the people that actually had a college education had paid millions and millions to actually get in or . . . that I just wasn't part of that. There is a lot of things you are not allowed to question, even in your own family. You are afraid. You have a lot of fears and who do you talk to about those fears. Sometimes, counselors in school don't really want to hear that.

DIAZ: What do you think are the conflicting factors in our culture . . . when it comes to a woman going to college and especially a woman pursuing, you know, beyond a bachelor's degree?

ALVAREZ: I can sure answer that question (Laughing). Lets see, as I was growing up, I was always told that one day I was going to get married, that I was going to have kids, and that I was going to learn how to be a good wife and a good mother. And, so I grew up with that idea. But . . . so, that was the biggest expectation from my parents. And, [all knew] from my entire family, that I was going to get married. So then when I actually started my college career, they kept questioning, "well, when are you going to get married? when are you going to have kids? You know, you are getting old!" and I mean, I don't know but right now I’m twenty-four and I still
don't feel old! (Laughing). And, back then I was eighteen, nineteen . . . and it's a struggle. It's a struggle to actually face your family and tell them: "you know if I do want to get marry, I will get married! Just right now I want to focus on my school . . . right now I feel that this is what I want to do right now . . . I feel ready." It is very challenging because a lot of times you don't get support. And I mentioned earlier that I grew up in a very supportive family, but when it came to letting me make my own decisions, that support was no longer there. I mean . . . It is sad to say, but for my parents . . . my mom was a little more understanding, but my father, he said "no, you can't go . . . what are you going to do? You are going to come back pregnant . . . you are not going to finish . . . why do you even try, you are not going to make it . . . you are never going to graduate . . . no one has ever gone to school in the family, what do you have that you are going to make it." So, when he kept saying those things to me, I was like (laughing) "Okay, I'll show you that I can do it because I want to do it and I am going to do it because of me." Not because I wanted to prove him wrong, but because I felt that I had the right to go to college. And, I told him . . . I basically told him if you get upset that's your problem. It's not mine because I'm still going. So, I came and finally my dad is very supportive now. But, it was a difficult time for him to understand.
DIAZ: What are three pieces of advice you would give to incoming freshmen, especially CAMP students in regards to pursuing a higher education?

ALVAREZ: Three pieces of incoming freshmen . . . to incoming freshmen. Okay, number one would be to believe in yourself. Number two would be to . . . make a lot of questions. Number three would . . . number three is kind of follows with number two . . . and that is not to give up because, sometimes you will be surprised, you'll ask a question and it might be like my question, the one when I went to my high school counselor and I asked her for that fee waiver and she told me, "no, you're not good enough material to go to college." So, even if somebody tells you, "no, you can't do this," even when you have asked that question, keep believing in your potential. And, keep telling to yourself, "no, why not? Why is it that I can't do that? Because nobody else has ever done it? Is that why you are telling me that? Because you think that I'm like everybody else? No, I would like to do it." So, if that person doesn't give you that assistance, go with somebody else. Find a good support system, find . . . make really good friends. Get along with friends that are there also motivated or focused.

DIAZ: What difference do you believe a college degree made in your life?
ALVAREZ: I feel that it has opened a lot of doors. In the . . . in the way that I have more opportunities to be out there in the community in a way that I apply for different job positions and actually feel that I have really good knowledge and I actually feel competent enough with other employees for that particular position. And, I feel that I have a lot power. I feel that I have really have achieved something and I don't want to stop and I want to continue because that's a very good feeling. You feel really good.

DIAZ: It is . . .

ALVAREZ: And then your family . . . of course your family looks at you differently. My father now, he looks at me completely differently. He respects my decisions, he supports me. All I hear from him is "oh mija esta bien." "You know what you are doing mija" That's all I hear from him. He'll question a little bit, but then, he doesn't understand so he'll stop questioning. But, (laughing) there is a lot of . . . it is a big difference.
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