

Campus Conexiones

Students - meet your LatinX community!

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September 26, 2017

11:30 am - 12:30 pm

Room: I4-203

AVANZA Engagement Center

Speaker of the month:

Manuel J. Velez



Manuel J. Vélez was born among the fertile fields of the Salinas Valley in Central California in 1967. Born to a campesina and a musico he learned early on of the magic of the earth and the rhythms inherent within it. As a teen Manuel moved with his family to the desert city of El Paso, Texas where he encountered the same magic he felt in the green earth of California. It was in El Paso where he eventually began his studies. As an undergraduate student at the University of Texas at El Paso, Manuel immediately displayed a devotion to his community and a commitment to use his work as a voice for that community. It was this commitment that led him to found Strictly Mestizo, a university based Chicano theatre group that performed plays on high school and college campuses around the region. After receiving his Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Arts Manuel enrolled in UTEP's Bilingual MFA program eventually earning his Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing in 1996. Much of Manuel's poetry focuses on painting portraits of his community as a way of dispelling stereotypes and is fueled by his experiences as a resident of the barrio and as an activist for his community.

Manuel's work has appeared in such literary magazines as *Puerto del Sol*, *Many Mountains Moving*, *Bird Float*, *Tree Song*, and in the anthology *Literary El Paso*. He is also the recipient of the 1995 Pellicer/Frost Bi-National Poetry Award for his collection *Bus Stops and Other Poems*, which was published in 1998 by Calaca Press of San Diego, California. He also served as editor for *The Rio Grande Review* and *La Revista Calaca*. He is currently a Professor in Chicana and Chicano Studies at San Diego Mesa College.

Connect with Mesa Latinx faculty, staff and managers in a unique way!

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Request for accommodations and questions: 619-388-2995 or MesaProyectoExito@sdccd.edu