

CIVIC AND ORGANIZATION PROJECTS

In 1939, I work for the Recreation Department* of the City of Corpus Christi as an instructor of Athletic at Ben Garza Gymnasium. My job was to organize different age group for various kinds of sports.

I started with baseball and formed four different baseball leagues, the Men League, the Intermediate League, the Juniors League and the Women League. With the help of some prominent men we manage to get sponsors for each team in all the leagues, approximate 40 sponsors for 42 teams. This being a successful project, we extended to football and other projects. I even received a promotion to assistant to the Director of Recreation of the city of Corpus Christi, Mr. Hugh Henry. Being assistant to the Director, I inherited some more assignment such as coordinator of social event, square dancing, tennis tournament, badminton tournament and other games which the city of Corpus Christi sponsored.

Being the sole supporter of my family and with a desire to get ahead I had to leave this position for a higher paying position at the Naval Air Station as an administrative clerk to the Admiral. The pay here was not much but was more than the City of Corpus Christi paid. Later the Post Office Department called me to worked for them as I had qualified and had passed their examination with a grade of 95. World War II broke out and I left for the Army and return in 1948, and have been employed ever since.

I continued to help these Mexican American groups in sports, social affairs, schooling and environment. Schooling was the easiest to implement for these minority groups since most of them were World War Veterans or Widows or Childrens of Veterans. The rest of the social cycle followed as these group learned the difference of poverty and better ways of living and environment. My sister and I even taught the English language to a group of illiterate who wanted to become citizen of the United States. This project proved to be a success and many received their citizenship and administer the Oath by the late Judge Allred former Governor of Texas.

After the above project I decided to continued my education towards my B B A Degree and other undergrades courses. I did very little work with civic groups as I had little time.

In 1950, I decided to continued my work helping minority groups and with the help of the American GI Forum and Dr. Hector P. Garcia, the Founder of the American GI Forum of the United States, we succeeded in partly eliminating Discrimination and Poverty. I have been one of Dr. Garcia constant assistant ever since. Through the American GI Forum, many have become better educated,, in various fields of profession and skills. Many have received Scholarships funds to various colleges in the United States. Many have received education in the right to vote and to exercise that right when confronted with city problem such as discrimination and poverty.

Our next several project were to try to eliminate Discrimination in various local agencies. The investigation of the School System, as to why the employment of Mexican teachers was not a policy in the C.C. School System. This was changed and some teachers of Mexican decent were employed. Also employees in the Corpus Christi City Department, who were discriminated before were given an opportunity on qualified advancements.

In 1960, we started with the local Post Office who would not even let a Mexican American College Graduate answer the telephone in thier working area. An Organization was formed now called the Corpus Christi Postal Union Clerk Craft with exclusive recognition. This Organization broke a precedent in the U.S. Post Office in the employment of more Mexican American employees and the same ended discrimination in the Corpus Christi Post Office. It led to the first supervisor of Mexican American decent in the Corpus Christi Post Office - which was me. Later Mr. R. Perez followed by Mr. R. Cano, and Mr. J. Medina were also advanced to supervisors. Incidentally with outside help Mr. R. Pérez has reached from Level 4 to Level 11.

As Dr. Hector P. Garcia assistant I have done research work in finding out the Education Status of the overall Mexican Americans in Texas and found that 2.9% ever reach college and 4% ever graduate from high school, 34% reach the eight grade.

I have taken other projects such as helping Mexican Americans how to register and vote, how to evaluate the different candidate who are running for legislative or senatorial seat in the Congress of the U.S.A. as well as our State of Texas.

I have also investigated some firms such as Bell Telephone, Central Power and Light, and other Firms as to why their policy did not include the employment of Mexican Americans while at the same time manipulating government contracts. These companies have changed and have employed some school boys and girls for office and lineman work. Some will start on the job training programs.

I corresponded with the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity concerning equal emplyment oppertunities in the employment and promotion in the Post Office Môtör Vehicle Facilities and through endless correspondence, one Mexican American was employed as a Garageman and another was promoted to Mechanic in Charge PFS Level 6.

I have worked together with the League of Latin American Citizen concerning Job Placement Center and requested their help in placing me in a position with project SER, a newly organized corporation for helping minority groups, so that I can further help the minority groups. Project SER has since been Incorporated but only as a Referral Center with no future for those who applied, as some of their applications have never been answered.

I am presently interested in helping young people of minority groups and formulate ways and means of helping them to attend college with little or no cost to them. My prime objective is to help eliminate Poverty and help educate the less unfortunate with President Johnson help and his Executive order, It is to my belief that this will eventually materialized.

I have been an Officer of the American GI Forum for sixteen years- as an advisor and organizer. Two years as treasurer of the local chapter, and two years as District Vice chairman and treasurer. I have served as a Permanent Advisor of Local Chapters confronting problems on minority groups. I have dedicated myself in obtaining education information for the Junior Forums, Local, State and National Groups.