



# César E. Chávez Campaign

*Stepping Up for Social Justice*

March 1, - March 31, 2007  
High School Level



*"What better way to continue Cesar's legacy than to empower young people to address social justice issues in their own communities." Helen F. Chavez*

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February 1, 2007

Dear Friends and Supporters:

We would like to invite you to join hundreds of thousands of young people across the country in the Cesar E. Chavez Campaign by stepping up for social justice in your community. Chavez Day, a holiday in eight states (AZ, CA, CO, MI, NM, TX, UT, WI) and dozens of cities and counties throughout the nation, marks the kick off for the Chavez Campaign providing an opportunity for all students to honor the legacy of Cesar E. Chavez by getting involved in their communities.

As natural and man-made catastrophes like the Citrus Freeze in California, the high school dropout rate, and the war in Iraq continue to impact our communities, it is critical now more than ever for young people to become actively involved in service activities that promote social justice and peace. What better way to continue Cesar's legacy than to empower young people to address social justice issues in their own communities.

I would also like to ask the country to pay special attention to the farm workers affected by the recent citrus freeze in California. **Farm workers face a time of crisis and we need your help.** On January 12<sup>th</sup>, California was hit by a week-long freeze that devastated the Central Valley's citrus industry and will most likely leave 28,000 farm workers unemployed within days. Some workers will face foreclosure, eviction or be forced to choose between paying their utility bills or feeding their children. We need your help to ensure that farm workers receive the emergency assistance they need in this time of crisis.

Please use this guide to assist in organizing food, toiletry, and donation drives for the 28,000 plus farm workers and their families affected by the citrus freeze. For more information on the citrus freeze organizing efforts please contact Julie C. Rodriguez at (818) 265-0300 ext. 233 or via e-mail at [jrodriguez@cecfmail.org](mailto:jrodriguez@cecfmail.org).

Thank you in advance for continuing Cesar's legacy of justice, non-violence, and collective action. We look forward to working with you on the Chavez Campaign 2007!

Together, Sí SE PUEDE!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Helen F. Chavez".

Helen F. Chavez  
Founder & Wife of Cesar E. Chavez

# César E. Chávez Campaign

*Stepping Up for Social Justice*

Thank you for your interest in participating in the 2007 César E. Chávez Campaign and taking a step toward social justice in your community!

The César E. Chávez Campaign is designed to lead students through the process of taking action in their communities utilizing service-learning experiences to connect civic engagement to meaningful learning in the classroom. By following the powerful example César himself set through his work, students will have an opportunity to not only gain historical perspective on who César E. Chávez was, but to experience what it means to follow in his footsteps by taking action on local issues in their community. Service-learning allows young people to actively live out his legacy, rather than just learn about it

César Estrada Chávez was one of the heroic figures of our time. In learning about César's life and values, students will learn about history, self determination, help for the needy, and "step up" by taking actions that promote equity and justice. Using art as a powerful means of expression, students will develop a service-learning project which will utilize an art form to inspire others to join them in creating their vision. They will develop a sense of what it means to contribute to society and how they may make a difference. Students will also identify ways in which they can incorporate these characteristics into their own lives and become leaders in their community by "stepping up":

**Imagine** a vision for the world around you.

**Inspire** others to join your vision.

**Create** your vision.

In honor of the César E. Chávez holiday, the Campaign begins on March 1 and concludes on March 31, Cesar's birthday. Now you too can become part of this great event to celebrate César E. Chávez's life by "stepping up for social justice" through participation in the César E. Chávez Campaign. The curriculum will lead you and your students through planning and implementing a service-learning project that addresses a social justice issue in your community. Modeled after the work that César devoted his life to, students will take action on an issue that they identify, seeking to improve the quality of life for those around them. The active involvement of people from all walks of life in the César E. Chávez Campaign reflects the significance of César's legacy and his special place in American history. Nearly thirteen years after his passing, Cesar's philosophy of service to others continues to thrive. He once said, "We can choose to use our lives for others to bring about a better world for our children...in giving of yourself you will discover a whole new life full of meaning."

For more information about service-learning and the César E. Chávez Foundation please visit our website at [www.chavezfoundation.org](http://www.chavezfoundation.org). And, as you celebrate the life and work of César, remember that

"The end of all education should surely be service to others."

~ César E. Chávez

Thank you for celebrating Chávez Day 2007!  
¡Sí Se Puede! (It Can Be Done!)

# What Is Service-Learning?

**Service-learning** is an instructional strategy that connects academic curriculum to meeting real community needs through service. This methodology allows students the opportunity to learn and develop through meaningful experiences and active civic participation. Service-learning is characterized by the following elements:

- **Academic Learning** – The service performed is integrally woven into the academic curriculum, helping students acquire values, skills, and/or knowledge while providing service to the community.
- **Civic Responsibility** – The service helps meet a real need in the community and is centered on an issue that is important to the students. Participation helps students see a place for themselves in community and society.
- **Collaboration** – Teachers and students work with community members or outside agencies in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the project.
- **Youth Voice** – Students are given leadership in carrying out the service and play an active role in the learning process and project planning.
- **Reflection** – Thoughtful reflection is incorporated into activities throughout: before (to prepare), during (to learn from, adapt, and shape the project), and after (to process and deepen learning) the project.
- **Evaluation** - Information is collected and analyzed on the effectiveness of the project, as well as the student learning that occurred.<sup>1</sup>

## What Is Service-Learning's Research Base?

The research on high quality service-learning in K-12 schools across the country has demonstrated positive outcomes. According to a research summary published by Shelley Billig, Ph.D.<sup>2</sup>, the following impacts have been documented in studies conducted across the country:

- Service-learning helps students develop academic skills and acquire knowledge. Studies have shown that when the service-learning is linked closely with school curricula and content standards, students score higher on state assessments, show particular gains in higher order thinking skills, and score higher on measures on cognitive complexity.
- Participating in service-learning increases student motivation and decreases discipline problems.

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<sup>1</sup> Toole, Pamela. *Essential Elements of Service-Learning*. National Youth Leadership Council, 1998.

<sup>2</sup> *Research brief developed by Shelley H. Billig, Ph.D., RMC Research Corporation, Denver, CO, as part of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Learning In Deed Initiative, 2002.*

<http://www.learningindeed.org/research/slresearch/slrsrchsy.html>

- Service-learning experiences increase students' sense of civic and social responsibility.
- Research provides evidence that participation in service-learning is associated with increases in students' feelings of connectedness with the community; willingness to take action to solve community problems; and understanding of economic, political, and social conditions.
- Service-learning has a positive effect on students' personal development, increasing responsibility, self-esteem, and self-efficacy, as well as decreasing "risk" behaviors.

Teachers also derive benefits from their participation in service-learning. Research shows that service-learning is strongly aligned with best practices in education. Service-learning improves the overall climate in the school and generates active engagement in the teaching and learning process. It is associated with greater faculty coherence and collaboration.

Community members benefit beyond the actual service provided as youth come to be perceived as an asset to the community rather than a problem to solve.

Helpful resources on effective practice and policy issues around service-learning can be found at the National Center for Learning and Citizenship of the Education Commission of the States at <http://www.ecs.org/nclc>. Research on service-learning can also be found at the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse at <http://www.servicelearning.org>. Additional information on service-learning can be found at the National Service-Learning Partnership at <http://www.service-learningpartnership.org>.

### *Service-Learning and the Arts*

Developing service-learning projects that integrate the arts is a blossoming area in the field. Florida Learn and Serve, a leading service-learning organization has stated that:

The arts, which are rooted in social commitment and community engagement, play an integral part of the larger community. In addition to providing aesthetic beauty and truth, the arts can be utilized as an important tool, from alternative recreation for youth to economic and cultural development. To provide positive and sustainable community development requires citizen action. The connection to the arts can empower people to take the action needed to create change.

When arts education is infused with service-learning, a result is an effective pedagogy that draws upon similar core beliefs.

- Students learn when they are involved and see a personal and social value to what they are learning.
- Students are engaged when they take ownership of their actions.
- Students learn through active, in-depth investigation and exploration of artistic media or real community need.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Florida Learn and Serve, <http://www.fsu.edu/~flserve>.

# *Standards-Based Curriculum*

Each lesson provided in the César Chávez Campaign curriculum is aligned with the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Content Knowledge Standards. This set of standards is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what students are expected to know and be able to do across the academic subjects. The specific skill areas addressed in this curriculum include Civics, History, Language Arts, Behavioral Studies, and Life Skills. The full McREL Standards Database, *Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education* can be found at <http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks>.

Some of the identified standards addressed in the César E. Chávez Campaign curriculum include:

## **Historical Understanding**

*Standard 2.* [Understands the historical perspective](#)

## **Civics**

*Standard 1.* [Understands ideas about civic life, politics, and government](#)

*Standard 9.* [Understands the importance of Americans sharing and supporting certain values, beliefs, and principles of American constitutional democracy](#)

*Standard 11.* [Understands the role of diversity in American life and the importance of shared values, political beliefs, and civic beliefs in an increasingly diverse American society](#)

*Standard 25.* [Understands issues regarding personal, political, and economic rights](#)

*Standard 27.* [Understands how certain character traits enhance citizens' ability to fulfill personal and civic responsibilities](#)

*Standard 28.* [Understands how participation in civic and political life can help citizens attain individual and public goals](#)

## **Language Arts**

*Standard 1.* [Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process](#)

*Standard 4.* [Gathers and uses information for research purposes](#)

*Standard 10.* [Understands the characteristics and components of the media](#)

## **Art Connections**

*Standard 1.* [Understands connections among the various art forms and other disciplines](#)

While the end result of the student projects developed with this curriculum will determine which particular art standards are addressed, the following provide a representative sample of the types of standards which could be assessed through this curriculum.

## **Theater**

*Standard 3.* [Designs and produces informal and formal productions](#)

*Standard 5.* [Understands how informal and formal theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions create and communicate meaning](#)

**Visual Arts**

- Standard 1.* [Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes related to the visual arts](#)
- Standard 3.* [Knows a range of subject matter, symbols, and potential ideas in the visual arts](#)
- Standard 5.* [Understands the characteristics and merits of one's own artwork and the artwork of others](#)
- Standard 6.* [Knows and applies appropriate criteria to music and music performances](#)

# The Core Values of César E. Chávez

The core values that form the foundation of this curriculum are depicted in the ways that César carried out his life and work:

- 1. Acceptance of all People** – An essential ingredient for success in organizing diverse forces to achieve social change, create community, and actualize democracy is the acceptance of all people; an absolutely indispensable necessity to the well-being of this country.  
“We need to help students and parents cherish and preserve the ethnic and cultural diversity that nourishes and strengthens ... this nation.”
- 2. Celebrating Community** - Sharing the joyous and respectful expression of cultural diversity through the reinforcement of the values of equity and responsibility to and for one another.  
“We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community ... Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own.”
- 3. Respect for Life and the Environment** – Respect that holds as sacred the land, the people, and all other forms of life.  
“However important the struggle is and however much misery and poverty and degradation exist, we know that it cannot be more important than one human life.”
- 4. Non-Violence** – Invoking non-violence as the most powerful tool for achieving social/economic justice and equality; action that requires boldness and courage versus meekness and passivity.  
“Non-violence is not inaction. It is not discussion. It is not for the timid or weak ... Nonviolence is hard work. It is the willingness to sacrifice. It is the patience to win.”
- 5. Innovation** – A creative capacity to find pragmatic strategies and tactics to resolve problems and situations that often seem insurmountable to others.  
“A lasting organization is one in which people will continue to build, develop and move when you are not there.”
- 6. A Preference to Help the Most Needy** – A concerted effort to support programs that reach the most needy, the most dispossessed, the most forgotten people in society no matter how difficult the challenge that choice may bring.  
“We are tired of words, of betrayals, of indifference ... the years are gone when the farm worker said nothing and did nothing to help himself... Now we have new faith. Through our strong will, our movement is changing these conditions... We shall be heard.”
- 7. Knowledge** - The pursuit of self-directed learning and the development of critical thinking and constructive problem solving skills; overcoming ignorance through education.  
“Students must have initiative; they should not be mere imitators. They must learn to think and act for themselves and be free.”

8. **Sacrifice** – Sacrifice that is spiritual; that is courageous and steadfast in its willingness to endure great hardship for others.

“I am convinced that the truest act of courage, the strongest act of [humanity], is to sacrifice ourselves for others in a totally non-violent struggle for justice. To be [human] is to suffer for others. God help us to be human.”

9. **Service to Others** – Service that is predicated on empowering others; engendering self-help, self-determination, and self-sufficiency versus charity.

“When we are really honest with ourselves we must admit that our lives are all that really belong to us. So, it is how we use our lives that determines what kind of [people] we are. It is my deepest belief that only by giving our lives do we find life.”

10. **Determination** – Determination that is characterized by an attitude that with faith, steadfast commitment, patience, and optimism, human beings can prevail against all odds.

“We draw our strength from the very despair in which we have been forced to live. We shall endure.”

# Implementing the César E. Chávez Campaign

Timeline: March 1 – March 31, 2007

The César E. Chávez Campaign curriculum comprises a series of 10 lessons which guide students through learning about César's life and work, and connecting his values to their own work by stepping up to take action on a social justice issue in their community. Each day's lesson focuses on one of the core values identified as central to César's life. Students learn about and reflect on the identified value, then work to incorporate those ideals into their own life as they take steps to create a more just society in the world around them.

The Campaign begins by having students create a vision for their world, then leads them through a process of creating an artistic product which will serve as a communication tool to share their vision as they seek to inspire others to join their work. Following the sequence of 10 lessons, students will work through the Chávez Campaign Action Plan to design and implement a service-learning project which moves them toward creating their vision in a concrete way.

Each day's lesson encompasses three pieces:

LEARN: Gain a historical perspective based on César and his work.

REFLECT: Make connections between César's work and students' lives.

SERVE: Take a step toward social justice in students' own community. Within the SERVE section each day are two options. The **Small Step** option describes a simple, concrete step that students can take in carrying out that day's value in their own lives. The **Big Step** option outlines the process of developing and implementing a service-learning project that utilizes the principles identified in this curriculum guide. The SERVE component is meant to allow educators to either help their students launch a new service-learning project or to infuse service-learning and discussion of Cesar E. Chavez's values into an existing project or lesson plan.

By the end of the Campaign, students will:

- Understand the life and legacy of César E. Chávez.
- Discover ways to incorporate the core values of César E. Chávez into their own life.
- Develop a vision for their community.
- Identify a social justice issue that they would like to address.
- Create an artistic product to communicate their vision to others.
- Formulate an action plan to move forward with their vision.



February 1, 2007

Dear Friends,

Thank you for stepping up for social justice in honor of my grandfather Cesar Estrada Chavez.

This year we ask that you honor my grandfather by supporting the 28,000 farm workers affected by the recent citrus freeze. In a matter of days farm workers across California will be unemployed and in need of assistance. Please use this guide to organize a local food, toiletry, or donation drive in your community. However big, however small the farm workers need your support!

Having been born and raised in the farm worker movement, I was exposed to social justice issues and the fight for farm workers' rights at an early age. At the age of five I began volunteering after school, on weekends, and during the summer with the United Farm Workers, participating in marches, picket lines, and community meetings, as well as other activities and organizing campaigns. I learned early on that no matter how old I was or how much "experience" in life I had there were always ways for me to contribute to and support farm workers.

Throughout my life I have taken an active role in advocating for social justice just like my grandfather! Many people call him a hero not because of the things he said but because of what he did and how he lived his life.

Now you too can be heroes by joining the Cesar E. Chavez Campaign 2007! For more information on the citrus freeze organizing efforts please call me at (818) 265-0300 ext. 233 or e-mail me at [jrodriguez@cecfmail.org](mailto:jrodriguez@cecfmail.org). Don't forget to send photos, video, or whatever you want to share about your project.

Together, Sí Se Puede!

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Julie Chavez Rodríguez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the last name being particularly stylized.

Julie Chavez Rodríguez  
Cesar E. Chavez Foundation

## Day 1

### Core Value: Acceptance of all People

*An essential ingredient for success in organizing diverse forces to achieve social change, create community, and actualize democracy is the acceptance of all people; an absolutely indispensable necessity to the well-being of this country.*

#### LEARN

Using the biographical resources contained in the Resources section of this guide, provide students with a short historical overview of the life of César E. Chávez. Review the historical timeline of his life and work. Lead students through a discovery of the significant events that occurred, making connections to the historical context in which these events took place. Lead students in a discussion about other significant social movements and compare them to the life and legacy of César Chávez. Examples might include the Civil Rights Movement, Women's Suffrage, and the development of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

#### REFLECT

Make comparisons between César's life and the context of their (the student's) own world. Discuss the significant events, personal beliefs, and the people who helped to shape who César was using *The Life of César E. Chávez* concept map found in the Resources section of this guide. Compare these concepts with the events, people, and ideas that shape their own life.

Reflect upon the following quote as it relates to this discussion:

*"We need to help students and parents cherish and preserve the ethnic and cultural diversity that nourishes and strengthens ... this nation."*

~ César E. Chávez

#### SERVE

Ask students to define the various communities they are a part of and the various people and elements that comprise those communities. In small groups, develop and present their definitions of "community" using one of the learning styles (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, etc.). From these definitions, identify the core elements that exist in all communities: government, private industry, environment, institutions using the Elements of a Community handout in the Resources section of this curriculum guide. Discuss the structures that are in place within these elements which maintain the status quo and/or can be impacted to bring about change.

Ask students to identify the community they would like to focus on in creating change through a service-learning project. Give students 10 minutes to write a spontaneous descriptive essay depicting as many details as possible about what the community is like, how it functions, and what they would like to see improved upon. Be sure to include physical descriptions as well as the social, economic, and political climate, institutions and resources that are available to the community, educational and employment opportunities, etc.

## Day 2

### Core Value: Celebrating Community

*Sharing the joyous and respectful expression of cultural diversity through the reinforcement of the values of equity and responsibility to and for one another.*

#### LEARN

Discuss the historical context of César's work. Using the T-chart found in the Resources section of this guide, ask students to outline the economic, social, technological, and political forces that either contributed to or hindered the advancement of his ideals. Answering the following questions may prove helpful in filling out the left side of the T-chart:

- What makes an issue political?
- What political issues were helpful in raising awareness of farm labor issues?
- How were these issues viewed by others?
- Did the social climate of the times help or hinder César's efforts? In what ways?
- What types of technological tools were available to leaders of this movement?
- Why was the civil rights movement important to the specific issues that farm workers were addressing?

#### REFLECT

Using the information entered on the left side of the T-chart, ask students to add their projections on how César's work may have been impacted if it had taken place today.

Answering the following questions may prove helpful in filling out the right side of the T-chart:

- What political issues are important now that might have been helpful in moving his work forward?
- How would his message be received in today's social climate? Would he have an easier or more difficult time garnering support? Why or why not?
- What are some of the technological tools that are available today which would have been useful to advancing César's ideals?
- What economic changes are evident?

Reflect upon the following quote as it relates to this discussion:

*"We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community ... Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own."*

~ César E. Chávez

Draw students into a discussion about equity. Use the following questions to guide the discussion: What does equity mean? Does it mean everyone having an equal share or equal opportunity? What's a current situation in our community that shows inequity?

## SERVE

Have students research and read about the recent Citrus Freeze in California. Provide them with newspaper articles, news clips and/or Internet resources to gather information about the Citrus Freeze. Break the class up into small groups. Assign each small group a different person/perspective you may want to include the perspectives of the following people: farm owner/grower, farm worker, consumer, President of United Farm Workers, Governor of California.

Ask each group to look at the impact of the Citrus Freeze from the point of view of the person they were assigned. As they discuss the issue and gather information, ask each group to take notes and then share this information with the rest of the class.

## Day 3

### Core Value: Respect for Life and the Environment

*Respect that holds as sacred the land, the people, and all other forms of life.*

#### LEARN

Read a story or watch a video about the life of a migrant worker. A list of relevant film and print resources are available at: <http://www.newpaltz.edu/collaborative/videos.html> and <http://www.reuther.wayne.edu/use/ufwbib.html>. Discuss the changes that were brought about by César's work. Help students in making a connection between respect for the environment and justice. What groups of people other than farmworkers are affected by environmental problems in unjust ways?

#### REFLECT

Discuss what César meant by the following quotes:

*"However important the struggle is and however much misery and poverty and degradation exist, we know that it cannot be more important than one human life."*

~ César E. Chávez

*"We can choose to use our lives for others to bring about a better and more just world for our children."*

~ César E. Chávez

Define social injustice. Discuss examples of social injustice that students observe/experience in the world today and changes that could be made to create a more just society.

#### SERVE

Ask each group to present the perspective of the person they were assigned in the small group discussion from Day 2. Discuss the recent Citrus Freeze in California as a major issue for the country. Share with students that the Governor of California has already declared a state of emergency and the President might do the same. Explain to students that as a result of the freeze about 28,000 farm workers will be unemployed. Brainstorm a list of things the farm workers might need to survive with your students.

## Day 4

### Core Value: Non-violence

*Invoking non-violence as the most powerful tool for achieving social/economic justice and equality; action that requires boldness and courage versus meekness and passivity.*

#### LEARN

Discuss the concept “strength of character.” What are the challenges César faced and what kind of leadership did he provide? How did Cesar demonstrate strength of character through his non-violent ways of expressing himself? What made his methods so effective? What effect did his example have on others?

*“Non-violence is not inaction. It is not discussion. It is not for the timid or weak ... Nonviolence is hard work. It is the willingness to sacrifice. It is the patience to win.”*

#### REFLECT

Reflect upon the following quote as it relates to this discussion:

*“When we are really honest with ourselves we must admit that our lives are all that really belong to us, so it is how we use our life that determines what kind of men we are.”*

~ César E. Chávez

Ask students to think about what violence means in their world today. How do you or others around you experience violence? Do you find it hard to accept that non-violence means strength rather than weakness? How do people learn to behave in non-violent ways?

Who are leaders in our world today that display similar values as César? What are the obstacles they work to overcome through courageous leadership? What does it mean to be a courageous leader?

#### SERVE

Using the IMAGINE section of the Chavez Campaign Action Plan found in the Resources section of this guide, students will design and implement a service-learning project to address the needs of farm workers affected by the Citrus Freeze. Begin by having students use the planning template to describe their vision in meeting the identified community need and what message they would like to share with their target audience about this issue. Encourage your students to be as descriptive as they can about the details of their project and what they hope to accomplish. Students should not be constrained by what they think can be accomplished in the immediate future, but use this visioning to open new possibilities and provide a “road map” to all that is possible.

The sample that follows in each of the subsequent SERVE sections of the daily plans provide two examples of projects outlined using the Chavez Campaign Action Plan. Use the sample as

inspiration for your students and a guide for you in helping them plan a project that is designed and led by the students, or to connect to existing work within your classroom or school.

## IMAGINE

**What real community need will we address in this project? What is the identified issue? What do we want to change? What is our vision?**

*We are concerned about the farm workers affected by the Citrus Freeze. Our vision is to provide assistance to the farm workers so they can survive through this difficult citrus season.*

**Who is our target audience? Who would we like our message to reach? Who do we want to help us create our vision?**

*Our target audiences are students, teachers, parents, administrators and news media. We would like them to help us by educating residents in our area about the current conditions of farm workers affected by the Citrus Freeze and collecting food, toiletries and money to donate to the workers.*

**What message would we like to share about this issue? Who are we? What are we about? Why should they care?**

*We would like to help people understand the important role farm workers play in feeding this nation and oftentimes the world. We want to increase understanding that people everywhere can support farm workers, especially those affected by the Citrus Freeze.*

## Day 5

### Core Value: Innovation

*A creative capacity to find pragmatic strategies and tactics to resolve problems and situations that often seem insurmountable to others.*

#### LEARN

Outline the process César used in gathering others' viewpoints on issues, such as the Farm Workers Census he conducted between 1962-1965, as well as the boycotts, marches, fasts, and other social action strategies. Discuss why it is important to listen to others' perspectives and how this can lead to new ideas and creative ways of looking at problems/solutions.

#### REFLECT

Reflect upon the following quote as it relates to this discussion:

*"A lasting organization is one in which people will continue to build, develop and move when you are not there."*

~ César E. Chávez

#### SERVE

Using the Chavez Campaign Action Plan contained in the Resources section of this guide, work with students to determine the overall design of their project, completing the remainder of the IMAGINE portion of the planning process.

### IMAGINE

**What is our intended outcome of the project? What do we want to happen?**

*Our goal is to collect \$500 and a vanload of food and toiletries for the farm workers affected by the Citrus Freeze. We would like community members to take action on current farm worker issues.*

**Description of the project:**

*Our project is to begin making this happen by researching the current impact of the Citrus Freeze on farm workers ([www.ufw.org/freeze](http://www.ufw.org/freeze)). Using this information we will create informational pamphlets or posters that can educate people about this issue and let them know how they can help. We will organize a week-long food, toiletry and donation drive for the farm workers.*

## Day 6

### Core Value: Preference to Help the Most Needy

*A concerted effort to support programs that reach the most needy, the most dispossessed, the most forgotten people in society no matter how difficult the challenge that choice may bring.*

#### LEARN

Using the information about current labor conditions for migrant farm workers below, discuss the following: “If Cesar E. Chavez were with us now, would he be pleased with the treatment of children in the work force?”

- 800,000 children work on farms and only 55% of these children finish high school.
- They earn \$2.50 per hour or less.
- 20% of farm deaths are children.
- 48% work in fields sprayed with pesticides.

#### REFLECT

Reflect upon the following quote as it relates to this discussion:

*“We are tired of words, of betrayals, of indifference ...the years are gone when the farm worker said nothing and did nothing to help himself...Now we have new faith. Through our strong will, our movement is changing these conditions...We shall be heard.”*

*~ César E. Chávez*

Discuss with your students the concept of a socially just world, what that world might look like, and why it is important. What does it mean to be poor? Is being poor only an economic condition? What are some other ways that people are “poor”? Who are the needy? “The poor” might be a common answer, but also encourage your students to think more specifically. What types of groups tend to be overlooked? Who are the “forgotten people of our society”? Why is it our obligation to look after all people and to especially ensure that we help the most needy?

#### SERVE

Using the INSPIRE section of the Chavez Campaign Action Plan contained in the Resources section of this guide work with students to begin determining the form and function of the project they have identified. Begin to answer such questions as “Where do we want to go?” and “How will we get there?” ensuring that student ownership of the project is maintained throughout the discussion.

## INSPIRE

### How will our project inspire others to join our vision?

#### What form will the artwork take?

*using our research on the impact of the Citrus Freeze on farm workers we will create posters to advertise our food, toiletry, and donation drive and hang them throughout the community.*

#### What will be the function of the art?

*The initial function of our poster will be to advertise our food and donation drive. We will ask local supermarkets if they will display our posters and help us collect food and donations in their stores to support the farm workers.*

## Day 7

### Core Value: Knowledge

*The pursuit of self-directed learning and the development of critical thinking and constructive problem solving skills; overcoming ignorance through education.*

#### LEARN

Active participation is essential for a democratic system of government to work. César E. Chávez understood this. His leadership was rooted in a system of American civic values. Seeing his people denied Constitutional rights moved him to action. These actions included registering people to vote and writing about his concerns, and speaking out against these injustices. His 1975 document “Bill of Rights for California Farm Workers” demonstrates his belief in political action.

#### REFLECT

*“We must understand that the highest form of freedom carries with it the greatest measure of discipline.”*

*~ César E. Chávez*

Help your students understand that the “Bill of Rights for California Farm Workers” and documents such as the Constitution and Bill of Rights are not just old documents written by men who are no longer alive, but that the documents themselves are as alive and meaningful today as individuals want to make them. We are rooted in a great system that continues to need individual participation to overcome each generation’s new challenges.

1. Identify the major hurdles César had to overcome in his work. List steps he took in his own life that helped him carry on. What support and resources did he have? What opportunities did he create? What kinds of things did he do to strengthen his resolve and that of others around him?
2. What do you think are America’s civic values? Who decides what they are? Do we always live up to our civic values?
3. Examine potential hurdles in today’s society that might present a challenge for you in your work. Determine support and resources in today’s world that might be able to provide assistance. What technological advances have been made that can aid in creating social change? What organizations and agencies, societal attitudes, or other resources can be helpful?

#### SERVE

Using the INSPIRE section of the Chavez Campaign Action Plan contained in the Resources section of this guide, work with students to determine the skills they will gain through the project they have identified. Engage students in the process of identifying not only which skills they will address, but what evidence of mastery will look like and how they will demonstrate those skills.

## INSPIRE

<b>What skills and knowledge will we develop through this project?</b>	<b>How will we assess the skills and knowledge we're developing?</b>
<i>Writing for different purposes; identifying target audience</i>	<i>Peer review, editing conferences with the teacher, self-assessment</i>
<i>Understanding of farm worker conditions</i>	<i>Unit test, descriptive essay</i>
<i>Creation of informational posters and messaging strategies</i>	<i>Response of community to our informational pamphlet</i>
<i>How to plan and coordinate a food, toiletry, and donation drive</i>	<i>Amount of money toiletries, and food collected; teacher evaluation</i>
<i>Understand how to take leadership on community issues</i>	<i>Journals, self-assessment</i>

## Day 8

### Core Value: Sacrifice

*Sacrifice that is spiritual; that is courageous and steadfast in its willingness to endure great hardship for others.*

#### LEARN

Lead students in a discussion of the sacrifices made by César throughout his lifetime. What sacrifices did César make in his personal life in order to carry out his vision? How might his life have been different if he hadn't embarked upon his campaign? How would others' lives have been different, both then and now? How would history have been changed? What does it mean to put others before yourself? Be sure to point out to students the difference between voluntary fasting and starvation. Draw out a discussion about how the choices they make in their own lives can help them reach their vision.

#### REFLECT

Reflect upon the following quote as it relates to this discussion:

*"I am convinced that the truest act of courage, the strongest act of [humanity], is to sacrifice ourselves for others in a totally non-violent struggle for justice. To be [human] is to suffer for others."*

~ César E. Chávez

Use the following questions to guide the discussion: What does it mean to sacrifice? What's an example of a sacrifice that you've made or seen others make? Is sacrifice sometimes necessary? What's the difference between sacrifice and deprivation? (Discussing examples of starvation around the world might help explore the concept.)

#### SERVE

Using the CREATE section of the Chavez Campaign Action Plan contained in the Resources section of this guide on work with students to plan the major steps they will take in carrying out this project. This planning document should be viewed as a process which will change and adapt as students embark on completing and reflecting upon their work. It is most meaningful if students are allowed to take ownership of this process as much as possible and make these changes as a natural result of their learning, even if their tasks and timelines are unrealistic at first. Encourage them to set goals knowing they can be adjusted as needed at a later time. Discuss what sacrifices they might have to make in order to complete their project. What will you choose to do or not do in order to make this happen?

## CREATE

Identify the steps you will take in carrying out this project:

<b>Major Project Steps</b>	<b>Who will be responsible for completing this step?</b>	<b>What resources do we need?</b>	<b>What is the deadline?</b>
Research facts and information on the Citrus Freeze	Small groups – each work on one source e.g. newspaper, TV news, farm worker organizations	Internet, TV, newspapers	March 9
Create an informational flyer with text/messages from the research	Ms. Hernandez' English class	Research Notes	March 15
Create posters using text/messages from research	Mr. Warren's graphic art class	Computer and/or art supplies	March 15
Distribute the flyers and hang posters around campus and in the community	Outreach Committee	Community calendar; Tape; push pins; staple gun	March 19
Contact media	Media Committee	Internet or phone book	March 23
Conduct week-long food, toiletry, and donation drive	All students	Collection bins and sites	March 31

## Day 9

### Core Value: Service to Others through empowerment, not charity

*Service that is predicated on empowering others; engendering self-help, self-determination, and self-sufficiency versus charity.*

#### LEARN

Using the biography contained in the Resources section of this guide, identify the steps César took which empowered others. How might things have been different if he had chosen to provide them with food and money instead of working to change overall labor conditions? What long-lasting changes came about through the labor movement that demonstrate this sense of empowerment? How do labor unions empower workers?

#### REFLECT

Engage students in a discussion of the difference between empowerment and charity. Give examples of each, such as giving someone a ride to work because they don't know how to drive vs. giving someone a ride to driving school so they can get their driver's license. Reflect upon the following quote as it relates to this discussion:

*"When we are really honest with ourselves we must admit that our lives are all that really belong to us. So, it is how we use our lives that determines what kind of [people] we are. It is my deepest belief that only by giving our lives do we find life."*

~ César E. Chávez

List the work that is being done in your community that empowers others to create change. List charitable and community development services which serve others. Discuss the purpose and value of each type of service and the necessity of each.

#### SERVE

As students complete the remainder of the Chávez Campaign Action Plan, ask them to take time to think through some of the potential challenges they might encounter as they carry out their project. Work through potential solutions to the obstacles, ways they might meaningfully engage in reflecting about their work, and the next steps they might take in reaching their identified end outcome. Be sure to engage in a process of reflection as part of the ongoing process of completing tasks, reflecting, adjusting plans, and moving forward.

### What challenges might we encounter along the way and how might we address them?

- Getting community organizations to support our food, toiletry, and donation drive – it may help to create informational flyers that list the needs of the farm workers (see list of Citrus Freeze Relief Suggested Items for Donation in the Resources Section of this guide).
- Encountering people who don't agree with our point of view – include facts and data on the posters and informational flyers
- Paying for duplication of flyers – get the principal and other administrators excited about the project
- If more than one class, keeping our work coordinated between different classes and committees – it may be a good idea to schedule a meeting once a week to review and update plans
- Transporting the food to California's Central valley – call the Cesar E. Chavez Foundation at 818-265-0300 to ask for support

### What types of ongoing reflection will we use to help us analyze our process and product and tell us what worked, what didn't, and how we can improve it?

- Journals
- Small group discussions
- Feedback from adult partners
- Self and peer reviews of products we create
- Class discussions and weekly meetings

### How will we celebrate our success?

- Articles published in the paper
- School and district newsletters
- Have a community celebration with fresh fruits and vegetables harvested by farm workers for all of the groups that join in to help

### What might our next steps be after this project is completed?

- Create a Farm Worker Support Club at school or in the community
- Plan activities and events that can be held on a regular basis to help people learn how to support farm workers

**Day 10**  
**Core Value: Determination**  
**¡Si Se Puede!**

*Determination that is characterized by an attitude that with faith, steadfast commitment, patience, and optimism, human beings can prevail against all odds.*

## LEARN

Discuss what is meant by “Si Se Puede” (Yes, it can be done). What influence did that phrase have on César’s work? What evidence can you find that demonstrates his belief in his vision?

## REFLECT

Reflect upon the following quote as it relates to this discussion:

*“We draw our strength from the very despair in which we have been forced to live. We shall endure.”*

*~ César E. Chávez*

Ask the students to list 10 things that seem impossible to change. Identify steps that can be taken that would work toward changing these things and help affirm that “si se puede.” Remind the students that the right to vote for women and for African-Americans was once thought to be impossible. Remind them that changing farm labor conditions was once thought to be impossible. Remind them that the iPod and satellite radio were also once considered impossible.

## SERVE

Encourage students to work on the tasks they identified in their Chávez Campaign Action Plan. Be sure to engage in a process of reflection as part of the ongoing process of completing tasks, reflecting, adjusting plans, and moving forward.

# RESOURCES



# César E. Chávez Biography

## Chapter 1: *Cuentos* (Stories)

***“Preservation of one’s own culture does not require contempt or disrespect for other cultures.”***

**~ César Estrada Chávez**

Stories can play a vital role in the telling of history. It is the stories, advice and proverbs of his youth that set César E. Chávez on the course to be the spokesman for thousands and role model for millions. César Estrada Chávez was born March 31, 1927, near Yuma, Arizona. His early influences shaped and firmly grounded César in a rich Mexican American tradition. His later life would open him up to new influences that he would use to unite people of many nationalities and beliefs.

César always had a strong connection to his family. He was named after his grandfather, who came to the United States in the 1880s. César’s grandfather was a a peasant tied to the land through debt peonage on a Mexican ranch who escaped to the United States in order to secure a better life. César’s grandparents lived on a homestead of more than a hundred acres in Arizona with their fourteen children. One of their children, Librado (which means “freed one” in Spanish) grew up to be Cesar’s father. Librado married Juana Estrada and together they had six children of whom César was the second oldest. Librado worked on the family farm until his 30s. He owned a few small businesses but was rarely able to make much money because they lived in an isolated area and Librado used a lot of his own money to help others. Later, Librado lost his land and the Chávez family moved in with César’s *abuelita* (grandmother). Mama Tella, as she was called, was to have a profound influence on César.

César’s mother and grandmother taught him a lot about sincerity and charity through their actions. His mother, Juana, set an example of the importance of helping others regardless of their background. Chávez remembered that she “had made a pledge never to turn away anyone who came for food, and there were a lot of ordinary people who would come and a lot of hobos, at any time of the day or night. Most of them were white [nonMexican].” Her kind example modeled for César the charity that many only talk about. His grandmother, Mama Tella, modeled her kindness by sharing her wisdom. She made a point to teach the Chávez children the importance of being a moral person. She did this through stories, advice, and proverbs that always had a moral point. Later on in his life, César remembered his *abuelita* as someone wise. He said, “I didn’t realize the wisdom in her words, but it has been proven to me so many times since.” Throughout his life, César folded his grandmother’s teachings into his actions and mirrored his mother’s kindness to others. He also reflected their values of ‘practicing what you preach.’ César learned that he could not just tell others how they were supposed to live their lives; he had to do it through his example.

Mama Tella made sure that César had a strong religious upbringing. Cesar became a man who relied on his faith to give him strength and direction. He understood that religion unified and strengthened people. One example of a unifying symbol is the Virgin of Guadalupe. For

Mexican Catholics, the Virgin represents a unique relationship between the people of Mexico and the Roman Catholic Church.

Many Mexican Catholics (and other *Latino* Catholics) believe that the Virgin appeared to the people of the Americas as a Native American maiden in order to ease and bless their conversion to Christianity. Therefore, for many Mexican Americans, *la Virgen de Guadalupe* has always been a unifying force. César was always true to his spiritual beliefs; they guided his everyday life as well as his political action.

César heard stories about life in Mexico and about life in the United States after the Mexican Revolution. These stories made an impact on how he would see the world in which he would grow up. César's family told stories about the unfairness of life in Mexico. They described how *hacienda* landowners would exploit their workers. He knew that the landowners expected nonstop labor in exchange for the privilege of earning a meager salary. He heard of the easy life that the rich had at the expense of the poor workers. These stories of exploitation of the poor by the rich set the stage for his strong belief in the importance of fairness and justice. Very early,

César started believing that the poor were morally superior. He came to that conclusion because he felt that it was the poor that did the majority of the hard physical work. It was the poor that took care of one another when they barely had enough for themselves. To César the poor were the ones who lived a moral life.

The stories of injustice did not end at the border. His grandfather told stories about the corruption of politics in El Paso, Texas. Librado would tell stories about his family's efforts to gain political power in Arizona by voting as a united block of people. César's father became a leader in the Mexican American community of Arizona. César saw firsthand the power that could come from uniting people.

## Chapter 2: *Cultura* (Culture)

***"We need to help students and parents cherish and preserve the ethnic and cultural diversity that nourishes and strengthens this community—and this nation."***

***~ César E. Chávez***

A problem familiar to Mexican Americans was prejudice at school. While in Yuma, Arizona, César discovered what life was like for a student who had grown up speaking and reading Spanish at home. His lessons in prejudice started his first day of school, at age seven, when the other kids started making fun of his accent and called him a "dirty Mexican." His teachers punished him for speaking in Spanish. At that time, corporal (physical) punishment was allowed in the schools and César discovered that he would get hit for speaking Spanish. He said, "When we spoke Spanish, the teacher swooped down on us. I remember the ruler whistling through the air as its edge came down sharply across my knuckles." When there were fights on school grounds between Mexican kids and Anglo kids, the teachers and principals always took the side of the Anglo kids. This type of treatment again re-affirmed for César the importance of justice. It also taught him the importance of letting people be themselves. He saw how disheartening it was to be punished for just being oneself.

In 1937, César and his family were evicted from their land in Arizona and moved to California as migrant workers. They joined many others going to California during this time of the Great Depression. César experienced firsthand what it was like to wake up at 3:00 in the morning, ride a truck for an hour to get to the fields, work in the sun all day, and then return in the evening after another long ride, only to start over again the following morning. He understood that this type of hard, physical labor resulted in minimal wages and discrimination. He also knew there was no security for the workers and their families. If something happened to the worker, then his family was just out of luck. César grew up knowing the toll that such work took on a person's body and spirit.

César also learned the stories of other cultures and people. When his family began working in California, they worked alongside a multitude of races. César saw that African Americans, Anglo Americans, and Asian Americans all had similar stories of struggle, conflict, and displacement. Throughout his life César made sure that his work helped people of all races to succeed. He saw them as common brothers who could unite. Basically, César grew up understanding that a democracy's strength comes from a variety of people working together. He never forgot that important lesson. This is one reason why César E. Chávez is not just a Mexican American hero, but a hero to all people. He believed in the strength of the people and he showed it through his actions.

As a young boy César learned from his family's stories, his personal experiences, and the teachings of others. This background, when combined with his experiences during his teenage years, lit a fire in him that would never be extinguished.

## **Chapter 3: *Trabajadores* (The Workers)**

***"It is ironic that those who till the soil, cultivate and harvest the fruits, vegetables, and other foods that fill your tables with abundance have nothing left for themselves."***

***~ César E. Chávez***

During his teenage years, César personally encountered the conditions of the migrant worker. He saw the despair in the migrant camps, he witnessed the exploitation of farm workers, he had to survive on the meager wages, and he experienced ugly racism. He dedicated the rest of his life to combating such conditions and way of life of life.

César's family was always on the move. It is estimated that during the time of the Great Depression and World War II some 250,000 people worked as migrant workers, in California alone. They followed the harvest trail barely earning enough money to live on. They had to spend a lot of that precious money to buy gas to get to the next place of work. It was a hard, insecure life full of hard, physical work.

The migrant camps in which they were forced to stay were deplorable. Many camps did not have indoor plumbing and had little electricity. The houses were wood cabins that were drafty and damp. Sometimes the family had to do without cabins and, instead, lived in tents. The companies exploited the workers by charging high rent for their dwellings. The rent was taken directly from their pay. The migrant families had no choice but to stay at these places and buy food and material from company owned stores.

The migrant workers also had to deal with dishonest labor contractors. A labor contractor is someone hired by a company (in this case the growers) to find workers and oversee them.

Unfortunately, many labor contractors were dishonest men, though the companies did not care as long as production continued. Many labor contractors would receive a portion of the profit that they paid the workers. Labor contractors sometimes underpaid the workers and kept the money for themselves. At other times, the contractors would under-weigh the produce in order to cheat the farm workers, or they would not pay the correct taxes and pocket the money instead. Sometimes the workers even had to pay the contractor money for the opportunity to work, since so many people were desperate for employment during this time.

César learned these things first hand working as a child in the fields. He had to quit school after the eighth grade because his father had been hurt in a car accident and could no longer work. He had to quit school in order to help support his family.

César once recalled the backbreaking work that working in the fields required:

***“It’s like being nailed to a cross. You have to walk twisted, as you’re stooped over, facing the row, and walking perpendicular to it. You are always trying to find the best position because you can’t walk completely sideways, it’s too difficult ...”***

As a result of this experience, one of César’s goals was to make working conditions for the migrant worker more tolerable.

## **Chapter 4: *Dignidad* (Dignity)**

***“Years of misguided teaching have resulted in the destruction of the best in our society, in our cultures and the environment.”***

***“Real education should consist of drawing the goodness and the best out of our own students. What better books can there be than the book of humanity.”***

**~ César E. Chávez**

During his teenage years in the 1940s, César encountered ugly racism that made a strong impression on his conscience. César remembers going to a diner where a “White Trade Only” sign was posted. When he ordered a hamburger the waitress laughed at him and said: “We don’t sell to Mexicans.” César was once arrested for sitting in a section of a movie theater not designated for Mexicans. The schools that César attended were also segregated and full of prejudice. César remembers students being made to run laps around the track because they spoke Spanish or being forced to write “I will not speak Spanish” 300 times on the board. Once César even had to wear a sign that said, “I am a clown. I speak Spanish.” These experiences taught César that segregation destroys people’s worth in the eyes of others. Later in his life, he talked about how hurtful this racism was and the scar that it left on his self-esteem, “I still feel the prejudice, whenever I go through a door. I expect to be rejected, even when I know there is no prejudice there.” Throughout his life, César did everything he could to include others, so that they did not feel like outsiders.

César grew up in a time when Mexican American youth were trying to distance themselves from the mainstream. Many Mexican American teenagers adopted the *pachuco* or zoot suit. It usually consisted of a long suit coat with trousers that were pegged (tapered) at the cuff, draped around the knees with deep pleats at the waist, and a low-hanging watch chain. This style of dress

became their symbol of individuality. Unfortunately, many other Americans, especially those in the armed forces, saw these *pachucos* as anti-American. During a brief period in Los Angeles, in 1943, a series of Zoot Suit Riots occurred when American servicemen went around beating up Zoot Suiters. In his book *Up From Mexico*, Carey McWilliams (who was an eyewitness) describes a scene during the Zoot Suit Riots:

***Marching through the streets of downtown Los Angeles, a mob of several thousand soldiers, sailors, and civilians, proceeded to beat up every zootsuiter they could find. Pushing its way into the important motion picture theaters, the mob ordered the management to turn on the house lights and then ranged up and down the aisles dragging Mexicans out of their seats. Streetcars were halted while Mexicans, and some Filipinos and Negroes, were jerked out of their seats, pushed into the streets and beaten with sadistic frenzy.***

César, like many other Mexican American youth, wanted to escape this world. For many Mexican American men, the only way to escape life in the *barrio* or the fields was to join the military. César joined the Navy when he was seventeen. He served in the Navy for two years during World War II, then rejoined his family in the fields. However, he was no longer a teenage boy; César was fully ready to become a grown-up in terms of family and union activity.

In 1948, César Estrada Chávez married Helen Fabela. César and Helen were partners in marriage and work. Helen quietly supported César in his efforts and provided stability for the family while César was working tirelessly for the cause of the migrant workers. Between 1949 and 1958,

Helen and César had eight children. Helen helped to support the family by working in the fields, since César was not paid very well for his work. Helen's strength can be seen in her response to César as he was preparing to start his own union. César was concerned that his new venture would be too hard on Helen. Her memory: "... it didn't worry me. It didn't frighten me ... I never had any doubts that he would succeed." Helen knew that together they would be able to face whatever life threw at them.

## **Chapter 5: *La Causa* (The Cause)**

***"It is possible to become discouraged about the injustice we see everywhere. But God did not promise us that the world would be humane and just. He gives us the gift of life and allows us to choose the way we will use our limited time on earth. It is an awesome opportunity."***

**~ César E. Chávez**

The importance of a union was obvious to César as he was growing up and working the fields. Migrant workers tried to unite in order to get better pay and better working conditions through unions. Most migrant workers wanted better pay for the amount of produce that they helped harvest, fairer treatment on the part of labor contractors, and insurance for accidents. They even had to petition in order to get outhouses and accessible drinking water in the fields.

For the companies, these demands cost money—so they did everything they could to avoid paying. Many companies felt that if they gave in to any of the demands by a group of workers,

then they would have to meet other demands, as well. Even small improvements would cost a lot of money since they involved thousands of workers and large amounts of land. In addition, many companies felt that the workers' demands would never be satisfied, so why start on a road that cost money and had no end. So, instead of helping the workers, the majority of companies employed tactics to beat the unions. They asked the courts to prevent the unions from boycotting or picketing. They hired "goons" from other parts of the valley to come in and beat up strikers. They brought in undocumented foreign workers to help to replace picketing workers. They had the police come and arrest the strikers for causing disturbances. Finally, they used the media to make the strikers seem violent and un-American. Since there was anti-communist feeling throughout the country, the companies tried to make the union leaders appear to be anti-American socialists and communists. This is known as "red-baiting" since many communist countries adopted a red flag, the color red will many times represent socialism or communism. People who use red-baiting hoped that the "red" label would cause people to reject the strikers. The red-baiting of César would continue throughout the 60s and 70s. FBI files were kept on César and other leaders of the UFW during these years.

César had a number of people as role models for his union activity. The first was his father, Librado, who joined many unions while César was growing up. Another was Ernesto Galarza, who organized many of the strikes during the 1940s in which the Chávez' family participated. Galarza later served as an advisor to César as he began to form his own union's leadership. However, his first taste of what it meant to be an organizer was given to him by a Catholic priest. Father Donald McDonnell decided that the physical needs of the migrant workers needed as much nourishment as their spiritual needs. He set about to teach some of the migrant workers about organizing themselves to improve their conditions. He taught them that organizing and bettering themselves went along with the teachings of the Catholic Church. In César, Father McDonnell found a friend and assistant. Father McDonnell saw a lot of potential in César and encouraged him to read. One of the readings that César took on was the Life of Gandhi by Louis Fisher. This book made a deep impression on Chávez and he took the teachings of Gandhi quite seriously, as he would later demonstrate.

## **Chapter 6: *Entrenando* (The Power of Organizing)**

***"When you have people together who believe in something very strongly—  
whether it's religion or politics or unions —things happen."***

***~ César E. Chávez***

Through his association with Father McDonnell, César met another man who would strongly influence his life: Fred Ross. While the migrant workers plight was not well known outside of California and Texas, the plight of the inner city Latino was at least given some attention. Fred Ross represented the Community Service Organization whose mission was to help train community leaders to change their own communities. Ross was sent to set up chapters of the CSO throughout California. In his travels Fred asked Father McDonnell if he could recommend some local Mexican Americans to train. César was on the list Father McDonnell provided. After a two hour meeting Fred Ross wrote in his diary, "I think I've found the guy I'm looking for." César ended up volunteering, then working, for the CSO from 1952-1962.

César quickly learned how to become an organizer through his involvement with the CSO. He started out as a volunteer helping with voter registration. He was soon promoted to chairman of the CSO voter registration drives. César and his friends signed up so many new voters that they were soon challenged. He was accused of being a communist and was red-baited in the local

papers. When César would not back down, he started gaining sympathy and support from neighboring citizens. César quickly recognized the importance of standing his ground even when outnumbered and out-spent. He learned that with time people would recognize the a just cause and support it. César continued to volunteer for the CSO and learned many other valuable lessons, one of which was the importance of helping others in order to establish a bond with them. He later said: “Once you helped people, most became very loyal. The people who helped us ... when we wanted volunteers were the people we had helped.” Eventually, Fred Ross was able to hire César as a full- time worker for the CSO, at \$35 a week. It is interesting to note that for all his fame and hard work, César Chávez, throughout his life, never made more than \$6,000 a year.

César became a force within the CSO—his personal experiences and labor training having prepared him to be an effective organizer. In 1958, he got involved in a farm worker’s dispute in Oxnard. César first ordered a sit-down strike in the fields to challenge negative hiring practices by the growers. He also organized the first of many boycotts against the merchants who are selling the product. Chávez also made sure the workers kept meticulous records so that he could use the records to prove what had really happened (instead of relying on hearsay). In addition, the workers picketed meetings, filed formal complaints with the government, and marched with a banner of the Virgin de Guadalupe. It was in Oxnard that César saw it all come together. The use of boycotts, marches, religious images, and political lobbying became associated with César in later years, but it began at Oxnard. The Oxnard experience also taught him that the workers needed to establish formal contracts with the growers in order to keep their hard fought gains. He knew that without a formal union contract, the growers would be free to go back to their usual practices. He felt that the CSO needed to form a union. However, the CSO leadership disagreed with César’s attempts to start one.

César continued working for the CSO and, in this capacity, came to see the problems that urban minorities were suffering. Life in the cities for minorities had its own set of challenges and César never forgot that all people needed to be helped. He worked for the CSO for three more years and came to gain many valuable political friendships through his work. One of these early associates was Dolores Huerta, who would one of César’s strongest supporters. Still, his heart was with the migrant worker. The CSO felt that its mission was in the cities; César felt that his was in the fields. In one of many acts of conscience, César decided to do what he felt was the best thing for the migrant workers. He resigned from the CSO and decided to organize farm workers.

## **Chapter 7: ¡Sí, Se Puede (Yes, it can be done)**

***“We are tired of words, of betrayals, of indifference ... they are gone when the farm worker said nothing and did nothing to help himself ... Now we have new faith. Through our strong will, our movement is changing these conditions ... We shall be heard.”***

***~ César E. Chávez***

From the (United Farm Workers’) (UFW’s) very beginning, César’s base was Delano, California. It was in Delano that César set up his first headquarters. He chose Delano because there was a year round farming community and because César’s brother Richard lived there and could help out. From Delano, California, the Farm Workers Association was born in 1962. He set about to organize a strong union, knowing that it would be a while before he would have enough of a

membership to be effective. He traveled from camp to camp passing out questionnaires and meeting with the workers so that he would know what their needs were.

The first order of business was directly helping the workers. With the help of his brother Richard and the union's membership, César opened up a small credit union to help the workers weather financial problems. He opened up his home to farm workers and many would travel to Delano to tell César of the hardships they encountered. Like his mother's house, the Chávez home was open to all who needed it. Slowly, César started recruiting other leaders to help him. The Reverend Jim Drake, of the California Migrant Ministry (CMM) started working with César and he was able to bring an established ecumenical (many faiths) movement with him. The CMM was made up of Protestant leaders committed to helping the farm workers in the fields. The relationship of these ministers to the workers was very moving to César. He pleaded with the leadership of the Catholic Church to send more priests to the fields to minister to the needs of the workers. Though César was a Catholic, he always believed that the movement should include all others, regardless of race, creed or religion. For the remainder of his life César had strong ecumenical support. César also recruited his cousin Manuel to help (throughout his life César relied on his family to serve as his advisors). César was also able to convince Dolores Huerta to join him once again.

It was now time to formally establish the association. On September 30, 1962 the new association, the National Farm Workers Association was established (it later became known as the United Farm Workers). Chávez was elected President, Dolores Huerta and Gilbert Padilla vice-presidents, and Antonio Orendain, secretary-treasurer.

It was at their first mass meeting that the powerful flag of the union was unveiled. The black eagle and red and white flag became a rallying image for the union and Mexican Americans throughout the United States. That night, Manuel Chávez explained the symbolism behind the flag: The black eagle signified the dark situation of the farm worker. The white circle signified hope and aspirations. The red background stood for the hard work and sacrifice that the union members would have to give. They also adopted an official motto, "Viva la Causa" (Long Live Our Cause). Union opinions would be spread through its newspaper "El Malcriado" (the unruly one).

Once the union was well established, it began a series of strikes that would give César national prominence. The workers came to trust César because he managed to help them help themselves. In a news interview with Wendy Goepel, César commented on his commitment to empowering workers. She paraphrased some of his words during the interview as follows:

***"A Union must be built around the idea that people must do things by themselves, in order to help themselves. Too many people, César feels, have the idea that the farm worker is capable only of being helped by others. People want to give things to him. So, in time, some workers come to expect help from the outside. They change their idea of themselves. They become unaccustomed to the idea that they can do anything by themselves for themselves. They have accepted the idea that they are 'too small' to do anything, too weak to make themselves heard, powerless to change their own destinies. The leader, of course, gives himself selflessly to the members, but he must expect and demand that they give themselves to the organization at the same time. He exists only to help make the people strong."***

This empowerment was the goal of the UFW. The union had many successes and failures toward this end in its early stages, but its greatest test would come with the Delano Grape Strike that started in 1965.

## Chapter 8: *La Huelga* (The Strike)

***“We are going to pray a lot and picket a lot.”***

***“There is no such thing as defeat in nonviolence.”***

***“I am convinced that the truest act of courage, the strongest act of [humanness] is to sacrifice ourselves for others in a totally nonviolent struggle for justice.”***

**~ César E. Chávez**

The Delano Grape Strike grew from a small strike to one of national importance. It began with a Filipino organization known as the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC) who asked the NFWA to support their strike. Chávez agreed and spent the next days campaigning among the workers to support the strike. César saw an opening to accomplish something major with this strike. A large meeting was scheduled for September 16 (Mexico’s Independence Day). Though there were mostly Mexicans and Mexican Americans in attendance, the hall also contained African Americans, Puerto Ricans, Filipinos, Arabs and Anglo Americans. After a spirited speech by César, all those attending voted to join the strike. The *Huelga* (strike) had begun and it involved an area of more than 400 square miles. Soon, the strike took on the look and feel of most other major farm strikes. The ranchers brought in strikebreakers and harassed the picketers. They also tried to intimidate the picketers with shotguns and dogs. They sprayed chemicals on the picketers and had the police harass them. However, the majority of farm workers remained committed to the strike.

On the union’s side of the strike, César preached a call for nonviolence. César recognized the spiritual and political power of nonviolence from his studying of Gandhi’s struggle in India and that of the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. in the United States. César saw the sympathy that nonviolent measures gave to the African American community as it struggled with authorities in the South. Many saw César’s movement as an extension of the nonviolent civil rights movement of the previous decade. It was César’s call for nonviolence that convinced so many to support his political actions and boycotts. César Chávez and Martin Luther King, Jr. were symbols of a nationwide movement for civil rights. Though the majority of César’s actions were intended specifically for the migrant farm worker, he was also concerned about the plight of all people—especially those that were disenfranchised—much like Dr. King before him.

As more and more people came to support his strike, César began getting more national attention. César took his message to college students throughout California and the students supported him. Large unions like the United Auto Workers lent their support. Soon came the media. A national TV special, “The Harvest of Shame” showed America the miserable working conditions that the migrant workers had to endure. Reporters from all over the country started coming to Delano to interview César and other union officers. But the highpoint of the strike was still coming.

César planned a march from Delano to Sacramento in March 1966. The reason for the march to Sacramento was to get the support of the Governor of California, Edmund “Pat” Brown, while also getting increased exposure to the union’s cause. It was called a pilgrimage because it was

as much a unification effort as it was a protest march. César marched the entire way, gathering more supporters the farther he went. The march was a procession of many nationalities, all fighting for the same cause. They carried the banners of the union, the flags of the United States and Mexico, and a flag with the image of the *Virgin de Guadalupe*. As the march came closer to Sacramento, César was called to an emergency meeting with the head of the grower's association. The owners conceded to the demands of the Union. The farm workers had won. It was the first union contract between growers and a farm workers' union in United States' history. The owners caved-in under the pressure they were receiving from citizens, buyers, and even workers from other areas that supported the strike. A few days later the marchers all celebrated on the steps of the State Capitol. The Governor was not around to greet them but it did not matter; they had won what they had started out for: a real and long-lasting contract. They did it in a spirit of nonviolence and cooperation among people of different races and different religions. It was truly a people's victory. Though they had achieved their goal, the struggle for continued contracts with other grape growers would remain for many years to come.

## **Chapter 9: *Problemas y Ayuda* (Problems and Help)**

***"You are never strong enough that you don't need help."***

***~ César E. Chávez***

For the next decade, the UFW continued to fight for migrant workers' rights with the grape growers. They continued to struggle to obtain union contracts with growers. In each action, César and his staff employed the same tactics of boycotts, marches, religious images, and political lobbying. There were also many heated fights for the workers themselves between the Teamsters Union and the UFW. The Teamsters are a national union with millions of members. They fought the UFW for contracts with the growers. The UFW did not want the teamsters to represent the migrant workers because they felt the Teamsters were signing contracts that favored the growers. They felt that the Teamsters did not understand the needs of the workers in the way that the UFW did. For their part, the Teamsters believed that they would be able to use their large union to offer security and a large union's strength to the workers. The battles for representation of the workers were almost as bitter as those between the growers and the UFW. In the end, the UFW was able to win the majority of battles for representation. These victories came from the combined leadership of César and his close associate, Dolores Huerta.

No biography of Chávez's life would be complete without mentioning his lifelong friend and political ally, Dolores Huerta. Dolores and César worked so well together that it is difficult to separate one from the other in terms of importance to the union. Dolores worked both behind the scenes and as an outspoken and fiery leader. Dolores was a keen organizer and was responsible for much of the policymaking and legislative activity. She wrote speeches, organized rallies, put in countless hours to make sure that events would be successful. She also worked hard to make sure the daily operations of a union were taken care of. The members of the union respected her views and were willing to follow her leadership. She was a powerful woman who helped the migrant workers to see the benefits of uniting under a common cause.

Like César, Dolores did not draw lines based on race or religion. She looked for the ability that each individual could bring, regardless of his or her background. One important dimension that she brought to the cause was the importance of treating women as equals. She personified what she hoped society would someday allow: women to be individuals valued for accomplishments. She believed that all people, and each person, have the potential to succeed. She was very influential in helping people achieve success and, therefore, the ability to direct

their own lives. The issues and organizational efforts attributed to the UFW are a result of Dolores, César, and other union leaders working together. It would be unfair to attribute all the success to just César because there were many others working together to ensure the success of the movement.

Dolores worked alongside César for more than 30 years. She continued her fight for equality through the 1980s and 1990s. In 1988, she was hospitalized after being beaten by a San Francisco policeman during a nonviolent protest rally. She was taken to the emergency room where she was diagnosed with a ruptured spleen and broken ribs. Tapes of the rally showed a policeman severely beating her while she was complying with their demands to back away from the police line. Dolores, like César and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was champion for the civil rights of all people.

## **Chapter 10: *Tiene La Lumbre Adentro* (He has the light inside)**

***“There are many reasons for why a man does what he does. To be himself he must be able to give it all. If a leader cannot give it all he cannot expect his people to give anything.”***

**~ César E. Chávez**

During many of the labor struggles that took place after Delano, César began using “the fast” as a way of protesting and speaking up for the injustices that were occurring. A fast is when someone chooses to abstain from eating for a period of time. Sometimes people will go on a water fast which means they will go without eating but will continue to drink water. César went on many hunger fasts throughout his life in order to bring attention to important events.

For César, the fast was as spiritual as it was political. César prepared for his fasts by praying and meditating. He often began his fasts without telling anyone, since it was a very spiritual endeavor. Throughout his life, César saw the fast as a spiritual action that would help him overcome his own weaknesses, as well as a force to gather continued support from others. César saw that he could not do all of this work by himself so he hoped that by sacrificing himself he would be able to enlist support from a variety of sources. It is important to remember that, though spiritual, the fasts were also a very effective tactical weapon. They brought national attention and support from millions. People saw a man willing to sacrifice himself in ways that they would not be willing to sacrifice. As a result, they supported him in ways that they could, such as boycotting. Though César’s fasts were politically motivated, it does not mean that they were insincere. They were both. He once said of his fasts, “The fast is a very personal spiritual thing, and it is not done out of recklessness. It’s not done out of a desire to destroy yourself, but it’s done out of a deep conviction that we can communicate with people, either those who are for us or against us, faster and more effectively spiritually than we can in any other way.”

In 1968, César went on a 25–day fast that brought national attention to *La Causa*. The point of his fast was to bring attention to the principle of nonviolence. During one tense strike, some of the members of the UFW wanted to retaliate for violence that was being used against them. César pleaded with the membership to remain committed to the principles of nonviolence for which he and the union stood. 1968 was a turbulent year and it was difficult to convince people everywhere that violence was not the answer to their problems. César did not want this attitude

among the union so he told the union leadership that he was going to fast until the members “made up their minds that they were not going to be committing violence.” César knew the importance of this fast. He knew he would have to get the attention of many in order for the fast to have an influence on them so he moved into a storage room at the union’s headquarters. All he had was a small cot and a few religious articles. Soon hundreds were visiting him and holding mass with him on a daily basis. They knew that César was fasting to help them and to bring attention to their needs, not his. César rarely left the small room, but the union was continuing in its work and César was called to testify before a judge about some of the union’s activities. Thousands surrounded the courthouse to offer César their support, since they knew that he needed it in his weakened state. As Chávez struggled to offer testimony, the media began to see the news-worthiness of covering a man so sincere in his efforts that he continued to defend what he believed in even though he was starving himself. Soon, his fast became a national event. Letters of support came from all over the country. Leaders like Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy sent him encouragement. The entire country became aware of what César stood for: nonviolence, unity, and *La Causa*. César decided to end the fast after 25 days. The fast ended with an outdoor Roman Catholic Mass. Although too weak to stand or speak, César had a friend read a message that César had written earlier. It expresses his powerful spiritual reasons for his fast. It read:

***“Our struggle is not easy. Those that oppose our cause are rich and powerful, and they have many allies in high places. We are poor. Our allies are few. But we have something the rich do not own. We have our own bodies and spirits and the justice of our cause as our weapons. When we are really honest with ourselves, we must admit that our lives are all that really belong to us. So it is how we use our lives that determine what kind of men we really are. It is my deepest belief that only by giving of our lives do we find life. I am convinced that the truest act of courage, the strongest act of manliness, is to sacrifice ourselves for others in a totally nonviolent struggle for justice. To be a man is to suffer for others. God help us to be men.”***

**~ César E. Chávez**

By 1969 Chávez could command a national stage for *La Causa*. The efforts of the California growers to circumvent the boycotts of specific labels led the union to ask for a national boycott of all table grapes. Grapes became a national symbol of farm worker exploitation and soon people throughout the nation were choosing to boycott grapes. Volunteers began picketing supermarkets that sold grapes. Buying grapes became a moral issue. Many chose not to purchase grapes because they sympathized with the struggle. Others purposely bought grapes to show their support for the growers. However, most sided with the migrant workers and the boycott became a national issue. César was at the center of this movement and was even put on the cover of Time magazine on July 4, 1969.

In time, most of the major cities in America (and some in Canada) started refusing shipments of grapes since millions of pounds were rotting because so few people were buying them. As a result, on July 29, 1970 the majority of the grape growers in the region agreed to sign contracts with the union. The UFW had won. It took five years but the union finally achieved its goal of getting contracts with the large majority of growers. The union had won because it used solid union tactics in California; but also because it was able to get the support of millions throughout the United States. The battle of the grapes came to symbolize the power of Americans to unite for a common cause.

## Chapter 11: *Viva La Causa* (Long Live The Cause)

***“It’s amazing how people can get so excited about a rocket to the moon and not give a damn about smog, oil leaks, the devastation of the environment with pesticides, hunger, disease. When the poor share some of the power that the affluent now monopolize, we will give a damn.”***

**~ César E. Chávez**

Throughout the 1970s, César E. Chávez and the union continued to fight for the workers on the picket lines and in the political arena. In 1972, the UFW became an independent affiliate (partner) with a large national union—the AFL-CIO. This merger increased the power of the union. The union was also able to use its political muscle to defeat California Proposition 22 that would have taken away much of the political power that the UFW and other unions fought so hard to win. In 1975, the short handled hoe, which required the user to work in such a way that put excruciating pressure on his back, was finally outlawed because of the union’s efforts. However, there were continued clashes with growers and with the unionization efforts of the Teamsters. Though Chávez had the support of many, he was not always able to persuade the politicians and voters to the goals of the UFW. Several California propositions went against his wishes. Government agencies, like the Agricultural Labor Relations Board in charge of labor relations, voted against the union’s demands. Anti- farm labor politicians often appointed members of the Farm Labor Board. For César and the union, there were always victories followed by defeats, but the struggle continued. The UFW boycotts of lettuce and grapes would continue for years, though tied to a variety of different specific issues. Though they lost their share of battles, the migrant worker continued to be better off than before in areas where political pressure was maintained. Even in their losses, the union was at least able to bring up issues that would serve as rallying points in future negotiations. César’s story is not one of always winning; it is one of always struggling for the good.

César continued his advocacy for the worker into the 1980s and 1990s. Though union membership fell during these periods, César continued to fight the good fight. This was especially true in terms of fighting against the heavy use of pesticides. In the 1970s, many growers did not want to negotiate with the UFW because it meant they had to respect the union’s strong stance against heavy pesticide use. Other unions were willing to ignore the effects of the pesticides; not the UFW. In 1980, the UFW produced a movie, “The Wrath of Grapes” that showed evidence of the birth defects and high cancer rates the pesticides were causing. Many of the issues that César fought for in terms of pesticide abuses can be found in segments from a speech he gave in 1990:

***“Many decades ago the chemical industry promised the growers that pesticides would bring great wealth and bountiful harvests to the fields ... What, then, is the effect of pesticides? Pesticides have created a legacy of pain, and misery, and death for farm workers and consumers alike ... These pesticides soak the fields. Drift with the wind, pollute the water, and are eaten by unwitting consumers. These poisons are designed to kill, and pose a very real threat to consumers and farm workers alike. The fields are sprayed with pesticides: like Captan, Parathion, Phosdrin, and Methyl Bromide. The poisons cause cancer, DNA mutation, and horrible birth defects. The Central Valley of California is one of the wealthiest agricultural regions in the world. In its midst are clusters of children dying from cancer. The children live in communities surrounded by the grape***

***fields that employ their parents. The children come into contact with the poisons when they play outside, when they drink the water and when they hug their parents returning from the fields. And the children are dying...***

César took his crusade against unsafe pesticide use around the U.S. He did everything he could, including fasting, to get support for his cause. In 1988, he went on a 36-day water fast; it was called a “Fast for Life.” Once again, the nation took notice. Supporters rallied around César and put pressure on the companies that were using the strong pesticides. Many politicians and celebrities underwent 3-day mini-fasts to show their support for Chávez. Eventually, César’s strength and determination won out and the growers listened to his concern and began reviewing their use of chemicals. César was still concerned about the use of pesticides before his death; he did not feel that the battle had been won.

## **Chapter 12: *El Fin y El Futuro* (The End and a New Beginning)**

***“There’s no turning back ... We will win. We are winning because ours is a revolution of mind and heart ...”***

***“In this world it is possible to achieve great material wealth, to live an opulent life. But a life built upon those things alone leaves a shallow legacy. In the end, we will be judged by other standards.”***

**~ César E. Chávez**

Chávez’s concern for his people continued until the end of his life. He continued to organize political action into the early 1990s. He continued to coordinate strikes and spoke at rallies and colleges, continually spreading the message that the battle for human rights and human safety was not yet over. He battled in the Courts, as growers tried to use legal loopholes like switching ownership rights to void previous contracts with the union. He went from town to town trying to convince consumers not to eat grapes until grapes were pesticide free.

César’s body finally gave out in April, 1993. When he died in his sleep of natural causes, he was in the middle of defending the union in a court action. He was sixty-six years old. His funeral took place on April 29, 1993. More than 30,000 people came from all over the United States to pay their last respects. In his funeral mass, Cardinal Roger M. Mahoney called Chávez, “a special prophet for the world’s farm workers.”

César is buried at the UFW’s California headquarters at La Paz and his influence continues to be felt.

In 1994, César Estrada Chávez was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the United State’s highest honor for nonmilitary personnel. It was accepted by his wife and long time partner, Helen F. Chávez. During the ceremony President Clinton said of Chávez:

***“Born into Depression-era poverty in Arizona in 1927, he served in the United States Navy in the Second World War, and rose to become one of our greatest advocates of nonviolent change. He was for his own people a Moses figure. The farm workers who labored in the fields and yearned for respect and self-sufficiency pinned their hopes on this remarkable man,***

*who, with faith and discipline, with soft-spoken humility and amazing inner strength, led a very courageous life. And in so doing, brought dignity to the lives of so many others, and provided for us inspiration for the rest of our nation's history."*

## **Chapter 13: The Legacy of César E. Chávez**

### **United Farm Workers**

In 1993, Arturo Rodriguez succeeded César Chávez as President of the UFW continuing the fight for social and economic justice for farm workers and Latinos. Through education and union organizing, the UFW continues to improve living and working conditions for farm workers and other workers. Since kicking off a new field organizing campaign in 1994, a year after Cesar's death, farm workers—mostly in California—have voted for the union in 21 elections and the UFW has signed 25 new, or first-time, contracts with growers.

These employer-employee partnerships include a contract with the nation's largest berry employer, Coastal Berry Co., covering 750 Ventura County strawberry workers; a contract with long-time UFW adversary, Gallo Vineyards, covering 450 wine grape workers, the first contract in 27 years; and an agreement with Bear Creek Co., America's largest rose producer, covering 1,400 rose workers. Successes outside California include recent pacts with Chateau Ste. Michelle, Washington state's biggest winery, and Quincy Farms, the U.S. southeast's largest mushroom producer in the state of Florida.

### **César E. Chávez Foundation**

In 1993, César's family and friends established the César E. Chávez Foundation to educate people about the life and work of this great American civil rights leader and to engage all, particularly youth, to carry on his values and timeless vision for a better world. The Foundation pursues its mission of education through programs such as the César Chávez Service Clubs, soon to be implemented in high schools across the country, the development of the César E. Chávez Education and Retreat Center, the development of curricular materials on César's values and principles, and scholarships for students.

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## César E. Chávez Timeline

***"Once social change begins it cannot be reversed. You cannot uneducated the person who has learned to read. You cannot humiliate the person who feels pride. You cannot oppress the people that are not afraid anymore."***

**1927, March 31** – Césario Estrada Chávez was born on a small farm near Yuma, Arizona.

**1937** – César's family moved to California and became migrant farm workers after they lost their farm during the depression.

**1942** – César left school after the eighth grade to work in the fields full-time to help support his family.

**1946** – He joined the U.S. Navy at the end of World War II, where he served in the Western Pacific.

**1948** – After serving in the Navy, César returned to the United States where he met and married Helen Fabela. They had eight children together.

**1952** – Fred Ross, an organizer with the Community Service Organization (CSO), met and recruited César to register voters in the barrio of "Sal Si Puedes" (get out if you can). The CSO was a civil rights organization that battled racial and economic discrimination primarily in urban areas.

**1952-1962** – In the next ten years, César and Fred Ross established 22 CSO chapters across California. They fought against police brutality, organized voter registration drives, advocated for neighborhood improvements and workers rights. Under César 's leadership the CSO became one of the most effective Latino civil rights groups.

**1958** – César and the CSO got involved in a farm worker dispute in Oxnard, California to challenge negative hiring practices employed by local growers. Although minor successes were made, César's experiences in Oxnard helped him realize the necessity for a farm worker organization.

**1962, March 31** – On his 35th birthday, César resigned from the CSO and moved to Delano, California with his family, where he, alongside others, began the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA), later known as the United Farm Workers (UFW), devoting himself to organizing farm workers full-time.

**1962-1965** – César spent the next three years traveling throughout California conducting what he called the Farm Worker Census to begin talking to workers about their needs and concerns. César's organizing techniques were extremely unique since he realized early on that in order to effectively organize farm workers the NFWA could not solely focus on workplace issues but instead it needed to build community amongst the workers.

**1965, September** – The Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO (AWOC), a Filipino-American farm worker organization, begins the Delano grape strike to combat the unjust treatment of the Delano grape growers.

**1965, September 16** – On Mexican Independence Day, the NFWA with a 1,200-person membership voted to join AWOC and the strike against Delano grape growers, forming the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFWOC). The strike lasted for five years.

**1966, March - April** – César and dozens of strikers embarked upon a 340-mile Peregrinación (or Pilgrimage) from Delano to the steps of the state Capitol in Sacramento to draw national attention to the unjust treatment of farm workers.

**1966, April** – During the Peregrinación and after a four-month boycott, Schenley Vineyards negotiated a contract with UFWOC, establishing the first successful contract between a grower and farm workers in United States history. The contract also included a provision prohibiting the use of DDT, prior to the Federal Government's ban.

**1966, Spring-Summer** – As a result of unresponsiveness from other major grape growers the UFWOC mounts a boycott against DiGiorgio Fruit Corporation forcing the giant grape grower to agree to an election among its workers. The company brings in the Teamsters Union to oppose the UFWOC. DiGiorgio workers vote for the UFWOC.

**1967** – The UFWOC mounts a boycott against the Giumarra Vineyards Corporation, California's largest table grape grower. In response to a UFWOC boycott, other grape growers allow Giumarra to use their labels. The UFWOC, in turn begins a boycott of all California table grapes. Meanwhile, strikes continue against grape growers throughout the state.

**1967-1970** – Hundreds of grape strikers fan out across North America to organize an international grape boycott. Millions of Americans rally to La Causa, the farm workers' cause.

**1968, February-March** – To call attention to the plight of farm workers and to reaffirm the Farm Worker Movement's commitment to non-violence, César conducted a 25 day public fast in Delano, California. U.S. Senator Robert F. Kennedy joined 8,000 farm workers and supporters at a mass, where César broke his fast. Senator Kennedy said César was "one of the heroic figures of our time."

**1970, Spring-Summer** – As the boycott continues picking up steam, most California table grape growers sign UFW contracts.

**1970, Summer** – César called for a nationwide boycott of lettuce when growers in the Salinas Valley signed sweetheart deals with the Teamsters Union to block the UFWOC's organizing efforts in the region. More than 10,000 farm workers walked out on strike demonstrating their support of the UFWOC.

**1970, December 10 -24** – César was jailed in Salinas, California for refusing to obey a court order to stop the boycott against one of the major lettuce growers in the area. Coretta Scott King, widow of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Ethel Kennedy, widow of Robert F. Kennedy, visited César in jail to offer their support for his non-violent struggle for social justice.

**1971** – The UFW moved from Delano to its current headquarters at Nuestra Señora Reina de La Paz (Our Lady of the Peace) in Keene, California, just 30 miles southeast of Bakersfield, with a membership of 80,000 farm workers.

**1972** – The UFW was chartered as an independent affiliate by the AFLCIO; it became the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO.

**1972, May 11-June 4** – César began his second public fast, which lasted 25 days, in Phoenix, Arizona to protest a law that banned and denied farm workers the right to strike or boycott.

**1973, Spring-Summer** – When the UFW's three-year table grape contracts came up for renewal, the growers signed contracts with the Teamsters without an election or any representation procedure. The result was a bitter three-month strike by grape workers in California's Coachella and San Joaquin valleys. Thousands of strikers were arrested for violating anti-picketing injunctions, hundreds were beaten, dozens were shot and two were murdered. In response to the violence, César calls off the strike and begins a second grape boycott.

**1973-1975** – According to a nationwide 1975 Louis Harris poll, 17 million Americans are boycotting grapes. Many are also boycotting lettuce and Gallo wine after winery workers strike the mammoth Modesto, California-based producer.

**1975, June** – After Jerry Brown becomes governor, the boycott convinces growers to agree to a state law guaranteeing California farm workers the right to organize and bargain with their employers. César gets the landmark Agricultural Labor Relations Act through the state Legislature.

**Mid-to-late 1970s** – The UFW continues winning elections and signing contracts with growers. In 1977, the Teamsters Union signs a "jurisdictional" agreement with the UFW and agrees to leave the fields. In 1978, the UFW calls off its boycotts of grapes, lettuce and Gallo wine.

**1979, September** – After a strike and boycott, the UFW wins its demands for a significant pay raise and other contract improvements from SunHarvest, the nation's largest lettuce producer. Other growers also soon settle.

**1982** – George Deukmejian is elected California governor with \$1 million in grower campaign contributions.

**1983-1990** – Governor Deukmejian begins shutting down enforcement of the state's historic farm labor law. Thousands of farm workers lose their UFW contracts. Many are fired and blacklisted. Fresno-area dairy worker Rene Lopez, 19, is shot to death by grower agents after voting in a 1983 union election. César declares a third grape boycott in 1984.

**1986** – César began the "Wrath of Grapes" campaign to draw attention to the harmful effects of pesticides on farm workers, their children, consumers and communities surrounded by agricultural fields. The campaign targeted 5 cancer-causing pesticides used by the California Table Grape Industry, captan, dinoseb, methyl-bromide, parathion, and phosdrin. With the exception of methyl bromide, these pesticides are no longer used in the United States.

**1988** – At age 61, Chavez engaged in his last and longest public fast for 36 days in Delano, California to draw attention to the numerous cancer clusters that developed in and around agricultural communities.

**1980's - Early 1990's** – César continued to empower farm workers and other individuals working for social and economic justice, by providing them with useful organizing tools and techniques. He forged a diverse and extraordinary national coalition of students, religious figures and minorities, including Latinos, Filipinos, Jews, Native Americans, African Americans, and gays and lesbians to continue the fight for justice and equality.

**1993, April 23** – César passed away in his sleep on April 23, 1993, in San Luis, Arizona, only miles from the farm where he was born 66 years earlier.

**1993, April 29** – 50,000 mourners marched behind César 's simple pine casket during funeral services in Delano, California. The world mourned César, recognizing his accomplishments as a great American civil rights leader.

**1993** – The César E. Chavez Foundation, a non-profit charitable organization (501(c)(3)), was established by César's family and friends to educate people about the life and work of this American hero and to engage all, particularly youth, in carrying on his values and timeless vision for a better world.

**2000, August** – César Chavez Day of Service and Learning, California's official state holiday, was signed into law by Governor Gray Davis to ensure that the life, work, and values of César E. Chavez continue to inspire all Californians.

**2001, March 30** – The first ever César Chavez Day of Service and Learning was celebrated in California on March 30. Sixty-six service-learning projects were funded by the César Chavez Day Grants statewide, engaging K-12 youth in meaningful service activities that correspond to César's 10 core values.

**2002** – California is now one of five states to celebrate César's birthday, March 31, as an official holiday. Other states include Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Texas.

**2006** – California's sixth annual César Chavez Day of Service and Learning will be celebrated on Friday, March 31. Seven other states will also celebrate César's birthday as an official holiday, including Arizona, Colorado, Michigan, New Mexico, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin.

For additional chronology information about César and the Farm Worker Movement, please visit <http://www.ufw.org/cecchron.htm>.

# The Life of César Chávez



Day 1

## Elements of a Community

<b>Community Element</b>	<b>Definition</b> <sup>4</sup>	<b>Examples</b>
Government	The complex of political institutions, laws, and customs through which the function of governing is carried out.	Police Department Social Services Court System Transportation Department Public School System
Private Industry	A distinct group of productive or profit-making enterprises.	Local manufacturers Restaurants Businesses
Environment	The complex of physical, chemical, and biotic factors (as climate, soil, and living things) that act upon an organism or an ecological community and ultimately determine its form and survival.	Natural parks and playgrounds Industrial Parks Ecosystems
Community Institutions	Voluntary associations or groups devoted to the larger public good.	Community hospital Local homeless shelter A synagogue, church, or mosque

<sup>4</sup> [Source](#): Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Law, © 1996 Merriam-Webster, Inc.

## Comparison of Historical Influences

Economic	
Social	
Technological	
Political	

## Decision Making Chart

Criteria to evaluate choices in making decisions:

Saleable (Can you convince others that it is a good idea?)

Affordable (Is it within the allotted budget?)

Workable (Is it appropriate and are we able to do it?)

Effective (Does it meet an identified need?)

**Rating System: 3=Good or High      2=Okay      1=Low or Poor**

Issue Options	SALEABLE	AFFORDABLE	WORKABLE	EFFECTIVE	TOTAL

# CHÁVEZ CAMPAIGN ACTION PLAN

## IMAGINE

**What real community need will we address in this project?** What is the identified issue? What do we want to change? What is our vision?

**Who is our target audience?** Who would we like our message to reach? Who do we want to help us create our vision?

**What message would we like to share about this issue?** Who are we? What are we about? Why should they care?

**What is our intended outcome of the project?** What do we want to happen?

**Description of the project:**





What challenges might we encounter along the way and how might we address them?

What types of ongoing reflection will we use to help us analyze our process and product and tell us what worked, what didn't, and how we can improve it?

How will we celebrate our success?

What might our next steps be after this project is completed?

# CITRUS FREEZE RELIEF

## SUGGESTED ITEMS FOR DONATION

### **Canned Food Items**

Tuna  
Stew  
Chili w/beans  
Peanut butter  
Corn  
Mixed vegetables  
Green beans  
Peas  
Spinach  
Mixed fruit  
Peaches  
Pears  
Apricots  
Soup  
Cup noodles  
Menudo  
Albondigas  
Tomato sauce  
Spaghetti sauce

### **Boxed/Bagged Food Items**

Powdered milk  
Beans  
Rice  
Macaroni & cheese  
Oatmeal  
Cream of wheat  
Cereal  
Crackers  
Cookies  
Spaghetti

### **Toiletries**

Toothpaste  
Shampoo  
Lotion  
Soap  
Deodorant



# CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

PRESENTED TO

FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE  
**Cesar E. Chavez Foundation's 2007 Chavez Campaign**

*“THE END OF ALL EDUCATION SHOULD SURELY BE SERVICE TO OTHERS”*

---

Helen F. Chavez, Founder, Cesar E. Chavez Foundation

# PROJECT REPORT FORM

## Contact Information

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Web: \_\_\_\_\_

## Project Information

# Students Engaged \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

How much food/toiletries \_\_\_\_\_ and/or money \_\_\_\_\_ did you collect for the farm workers?

Our participation was worthwhile Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\* Please Fax to Julie Rodriguez at 818-265-0312 \*\*\*\*

## Chavez Foundation's Educational Programs

The **Educating the Heart School Program** works with K-12 schools and community-based organizations across the country to combat academic and civic disengagement among youth. Through training workshops and professional development, we provide educators, community members, youth, and parents with the skills, tools, and resources necessary to develop school and community-based service-learning programs that address social justice issues in their own communities.

The primary goals of the program are:

- To increase academic achievement and civic responsibility
- To engage students in positive, effective service projects in their community
- To enhance students' self-confidence and sense of purpose

The Educating the Heart School Program is a way to transform Cesar's life and teachings into tangible community action projects that address local social problems. Over 20,000 students nationwide are engaged in the Educating the Heart School Program in California, Arizona, Florida, Illinois, and Texas. In learning about Cesar's life and values, students have learned about history, self-determination, help for the needy, and actions that promote equity and justice. In applying these lessons through service-learning projects, students have become life-long learners and active citizens.

Your participation in the Foundation's Educating the Heart School Program will help to develop a new generation of young leaders here in our communities and across the country. Talk to your teacher, principal, or school board member about getting involved.

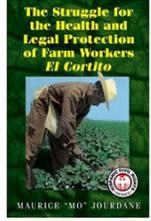
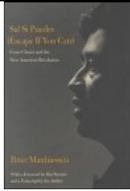
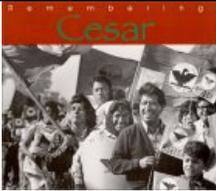
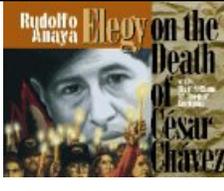
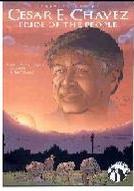
**National Chavez Center Programs** are available to schools, districts, youth groups, and community organizations. Please note that all Chavez Foundation educational programs are tied to California Curricular Content Standards in Language Arts and History Social Science.

Programmatic offerings include:

- School Tours and Field Trips of National Chavez Center and featured exhibits
- Teacher Training and Professional Development Workshops on Chavez curricula, conflict-resolution and character education programs, service-learning, and youth/adult collaboration
- Student/Youth Workshops on leadership development, conflict-resolution and violence prevention strategies, literacy, and art and culture
- Volunteer Service Days for Youth and Community Members, including Cesar Chavez Day, March 31<sup>st</sup>

To learn more about the Chavez Foundation's Programs and how you can support the Foundation, please contact our Programs Director, Julie Chavez Rodriguez at (818) 265-0300, Ext. 233 or by E-mail at [jrodriguez@cecfmail.org](mailto:jrodriguez@cecfmail.org).

**MERCHANDISE ORDER FORM**

 <p><b>Chavez Stamp Poster</b></p> <p>\$15 (# Ordered _____)</p>	 <p><b>CEC Field Poster</b></p> <p>\$20 (# Ordered _____)</p>	 <p><b>Official 2001 Chavez Day Poster</b></p> <p>\$5 (# Ordered _____)</p>	 <p><b>La Causa (Book)</b></p> <p>\$5 (# Ordered _____)</p>	 <p><b>The Struggle for the Health and Legal Protection of Farm Workers (Book)</b></p> <p>\$18 (# Ordered _____)</p>
 <p><b>Sal Si Puedes (Book)</b></p> <p>\$18 (# Ordered _____)</p>	 <p><b>Remembering Cesar (Book)</b></p> <p>\$25 (# Ordered _____)</p>	 <p><b>Cesar Chavez: A Triumph of Spirit (Book)</b></p> <p>\$16 (# Ordered _____)</p>	 <p><b>Elegy on the Death of Cesar Chavez (Book)</b></p> <p>\$20 (# Ordered _____)</p>	 <p><b>Cesar E. Chavez Pride of the People (Book)</b></p> <p>\$2 (# Ordered _____)</p>
 <p><b>Harvesting Hope (Book)</b></p> <p>\$20 (# Ordered _____)</p>	 <p><b>Cosechando Esperanza (Book)</b></p> <p>\$20 (# Ordered _____)</p>	 <p><b>Nosotros Venceremos (DVD)</b></p> <p>\$15 (# Ordered _____)</p>	 <p><b>Common Man Uncommon Vision: The Cesar Chavez Story (DVD)</b></p> <p>\$20 (# Ordered _____)</p>	 <p><b>Folder</b></p> <p>\$1 (# Ordered _____)</p>
 <p><b>Pens</b></p> <p>\$1 for3(# Ordered _____)</p>	 <p><b>Pencils</b></p> <p>\$1 for3(# Ordered _____)</p>	<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____ Fax: _____</p> <p>E-MAIL: _____</p>		
<p><b>TO SUBMIT YOUR ORDER PLEASE FAX OR MAIL THIS FORM TO:</b></p> <p align="center">NATIONAL CHAVEZ CENTER P.O. BOX 62 KEENE, CA 93531 PHONE: 661 823-6134 FAX: 661 823 6246 E-MAIL: <a href="mailto:chavezcenter@cecfmail.org">chavezcenter@cecfmail.org</a></p>			<p align="center">PLEASE VISIT OUR ONLINE STORE AT: <a href="http://www.chavezfoundation.org">www.chavezfoundation.org</a></p>	

## SPECIAL THANKS TO:

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#### Educators

Please feel free to photocopy this guide and distribute it to colleagues who wish to use the program with their students

### Our financial supporter:



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### Chavez Foundation Project Team:

Beatriz Beltran, Executive Assistant  
Celestina Garcia, Programs Coordinator  
Arthur Rodriguez, Programs Intern  
Reymond Velasco, Programs Intern  
Julie Chavez Rodríguez, Programs Director



500 N. Brand Blvd. Ste. 1650  
Glendale, CA 91203  
(818) 265-0300  
[www.chavezfoundation.org](http://www.chavezfoundation.org)