

## BIOGRAPHY

Armando M. Rodriguez is President of Rodriguez Associates Ltd., a consulting firm. Mr. Rodriguez is working with Hearst Corporation, the San Francisco Unified School District, New York City schools and with the Bakersfield Elementary School District. He is developing and using Computer Aided Educational Programs in schools testing the use of computers in the classroom for children from economically disadvantaged homes.

Mr. Rodriguez a former member of the Board of Education of Fairfax County. He also served as Co-chairman of NCCIJ (National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice) and past President of UCM (United Community Ministries) a social service organization for Fairfax County, Virginia. Mr. Rodriguez also served as a member of the Board of Directors of The Social Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation of Northern Virginia, and serves as the Chairman of The National Hispanic Council On Aging. Mr. Rodriguez serves as a member of The Advisory Committee to President Thomas Day of San Diego State University. He also serves on the Board of Directors of The San Diego Senior Sports Festival.

Commissioner Armando M. Rodriguez, from 1978 to 1983, served with the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The Commission is responsible for the administration of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Pay Act and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act. These statutes prohibit discrimination in employment on the basis of sex, race, national origin, religion, color and age.

Prior to his appointment to the Commission by President Carter, Mr. Rodriguez was President of East Los Angeles College from 1973/78. On a campus with more than 18,000 students, a staff of 1,500 and an annual operating budget of more than \$24 million, President Rodriguez guided the community college through a very extensive expansion of curriculum and outreach to 49 satellite campuses. He also initiated a \$23 million building program to accommodate the increasing enrollment and curriculum offerings.

Mr. Rodriguez served in the United States Office of Education in Washington, D.C., as Assistant Commissioner of Education in the Office of Regional Office Coordination from 1970 to 1973. In this position, Mr. Rodriguez was responsible for the administration of ten (10) regional offices with a program budget of more than \$50 million dollars and a staff of more than 600. From 1967 to 1970 he was appointed by President Johnson as the first Director of Mexican American Affairs Office also in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Mr. Rodriguez began his career in 1949 as a teacher and administrator in San Diego, California. From 1963 to 1965, he was a member of the Compensatory Education Commission for California and in 1966 was appointed Chief of the Bureau of Intergroup Relations in the California State Department of Education.

Mr. Rodriguez has been a Regent's Lecturer at the University of California at Riverside, as well as a visiting professor at the University of Southern California, and at California State University in Los Angeles. He served a term as an Adjunct Professor at Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio. Mr. Rodriguez was a member of the Board of Trustees of Redlands University (1974-78).

Mr. Rodriguez was a member of the R.I.S.E. Commission (Reform of Intermediate/Secondary Education) for the California State Department of Education in 1974-1975. He also participated in the Skyline-Wide Education Project, "Education in the Year 2025," in Dallas, Texas. HE was a member of The Department of HEW, Committee on the Gifted and Talented. Mr. Rodriguez was a member of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities Commission on "The Future of Higher Education" (1971-72).

Mr. Rodriguez has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. He was Chairman of the Bilingual Education Committee of the William Randolph Hearst Foundation. He has been a member of the Board of Directors of KCET TV ( PBS ) in Los Angeles, California. He served as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Los Angeles County Art Museum. He was a member of the Los Angeles County Public Policy Commission. He served a term on the California State Commission on the Humanities. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the United Way in Los Angeles, California, from 1975 to 1978. He was on the Board of Directors of the National Urban Coalition of Washington, D.C. from 1975 to 1979.

Mr. Rodriguez holds a Bachelor and Masters Degree from San Diego State University. He was named Alumnus of the Year at San Diego State University in 1979. Mr. Rodriguez received the "Don Quijote" award from the National Hispanic University in 1985.

Born in Durango, Mexico, Mr. Rodriguez came to the United States in 1927 at the Age of 6 and settled in San Diego, California. He became a naturalized citizen in 1943.

Mr. Armando M. Rodriguez and his wife, Beatriz, now live in El Cajon, California. They have two married children, Christina and Rodrigo, and four grandsons Armando, Emiliano, Miguel, and Nicholas.

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CLASS OF "49"



Armando Rodriguez, '49

## Multicultural Road — The American Way

I want to write about what we as individuals and as members of the Alumni Association can do to help minority students go to college and stay in college.

Recent studies show that the number of minority students enrolling in both two and four year colleges is dropping. And the number of minority students enrolled in both two and four year colleges who fail to graduate is rising. Now we have a proposal that the tuition for next year for state universities be increased 40%, from \$936 to \$1,308. While this increase will hurt all students, obviously it will hit twice as hard on students depending on grants or loans.

Let's take a quick look at what colleges have been doing in the past two decades to bring minority students to the campus. Most public colleges now have an ethnic studies program. Most public colleges have increased minority faculty. Most public colleges have offered generous minority scholarships, primarily to top achievers (and will probably continue to offer minority scholarships despite warnings from the Department of Education about designating public funds for minority students.) Yet, despite these commendable programs and efforts, the number of minority students enrolling and staying in college until graduation is declining.

What can we do as individuals and as an Association to bring and keep minority students at San Diego State University? We can start by recognizing that the financial aid available to minority students will not meet all the financial barriers facing most minority students. In the first place, most financial aid available on college campuses today is in the form of a loan and not a grant. Already the minority student comes from a poverty or low economic status situation filled with money-management problems and family obligations. Piling on additional financial commitments presents the student and family with a frightening financial burden.

I urge that the Association set up a grant fund program that will help ease the constant financial pressure minority students feel. I also urge that we as individuals commit a sum

of money each year to be given directly to a minority student. Even a modest sum of \$100 could be the difference between staying or leaving.

I think a valuable spin-off of this type of support will be in the development of new social skills by the student. Social skills expected by middle and upper-middle-class people are different from—not better than—those of lower socioeconomic groups. Few colleges have any sort of activities to present this knowledge to students. Availability of resources to meet social obligations with academic peers and colleagues is critical in gaining self confidence.

But money won't be enough. Much as the University would like, too often too little attention is paid to the personal and family factors that cause retention problems. While it is important that professors and advisors at the college realize that families of minority, first-generation students are often unable to give financial or moral or intellectual support a student needs to make it through college, reaching the family may be difficult.

Because this support is critical, I propose that one of the most important ways we can help is to set up a mentor program. Our contribution of time and interest can be as profitable as any amount of money we might provide.

If each of us would become personally acquainted with three or four minority students this fall, I believe we would be able to give them the extra support they need and

this association might enlighten all of us about the values and perceptions that minorities have about our society.

Another benefit will be an understanding of what a college graduate is and does and what going to college can mean to a person. Too often we only talk about the potential financial rewards of a college education and overlook the spiritual and personal aspects.

As an Association our partnership with San Diego State University is imperative. But our partnership with the community in which the future of our college and our society rests is also critical. As our society becomes more diverse, so must our institutions of higher learning. Our university is filled with such mission statements as commitment to American ideals, moral character, service to society, and pursuit of truth. We as alumni must see that all Americans participate in the college's educational, spiritual, economic and social offerings. One of the University's most profound challenges is to lead the way toward a society of truly multicultural individuals.

*Armando M. Rodriguez, '49, is President of Rodriguez Associates, Ltd., working on such projects as the development of computer literacy testing for disadvantaged students. Mr. Rodriguez has served in the U.S. Office of Education, as President of East L.A. College, and as a member of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. He was named SDSU Alumnus of the Year in 1979.*



**Armando Rodriguez '49**

## Reunited Wrestlers

To most of us, Peterson Gym is the sweatbox on the far west end of campus. So, why does Dr. Armando Rodriguez think he's found Peterson Gym at the site of what we know as the Women's Gym? Well, maybe you should ask Bill Cowling, CEO of Dixieline Lumber. Or Ed Streicher of Streicher Shoes. Or try architects Edwin and Felix Hom. Or Tom Pine of Vitek.

They could tell you that Rodriguez knows his campus, because that was the Peterson Gym they knew when he successfully coached them as members of the San Diego State men's wrestling team from 1946 to 1949.

As a student-coach (he graduated in 1949), Rodriguez's team won the CCAA wrestling championships in '47, '48 and '49 from the likes of UCLA and San Jose State. But success did not end there for his players.

Rodriguez still tries to keep in touch with them, and has a ready list of their names. Mention any one of them, and he can tell you exactly why he is proud of his association. More than one attorney, noted engineer, exemplary teacher and successful businessman came out of that group of grapplers. One of his players, **Don Arnold**, even made the leap into the notorious world of professional wrestling as the "Masked Marvel."

After more than 40 years, Rodriguez held a reunion on May 21 for his team members, a couple

of miles from his Peterson Gym at the Admiral Baker Golf Course. They came from as far away as Virginia, not only to pay respect to their coach and mentor, but to share in more good times as well.

When asked why the team's fortune changed after he left, Rodriguez said he wasn't really sure — his team's success had just been one of those things that sometimes happens. In fact, there is no longer an intercollegiate wrestling squad.

But paging through the old *Del Sudoeste* yearbooks, one is struck by the ethnic diversity of his wrestling teams, the team members' obvious shared enthusiasm and their lists of endless awards.

It's just one of those things that sometimes happens.



**Wrestlers gather at the reunion.**