Introduction

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Beyond learning the rules and complexities of the legal system, law school presents an opportunity to build networks with peers, practitioners, scholars, and community leaders. The Berkeley La Raza Law Journal ("the Journal") recognizes the importance of building and nourishing these connections, especially within minority communities. The Journal began with the vision of providing a voice to legal issues affecting the Latino and other underrepresented communities and creating a forum where Latinas/os and minority scholars could publish their legal research. Drawing from this historic vision, our current editorial board dedicated itself to rebuilding and establishing new partnerships that strengthen our presence in the legal community.

We are pleased to present the nineteenth volume of the Journal, composed of articles covering a wide range of issues affecting the Latino community. In her article, Embedded Whiteness: Theorizing Exclusion in Public Contracting, Sumi Cho writes about contemporary issues of racism in social networks and proposes a new analytic framework for such discourse to occur. Next, for the first time in the Journal's history, this volume publishes the article, Time To Revive Puerto Rican Voting written by Katherine Culliton-González in English and Spanish. Culliton-González's article analyzes the application of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the language barriers that Puerto Ricans faced in an effort to exercise their right to vote. Next, Ernesto Hernández-López's article, Law and Popular Culture: Examples From Colombian Slang and Spanish-Language Radio in the U.S., draws attention to how different forms of popular culture serve as effective forms of political and cultural resistance even though they are often overlooked by legal scholarship. Next, Emily Ludmir Aviad provides an extensive critique of Samuel Huntington's book Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity. She argues against Huntington's proposition that America is defined by the Anglo-Protestant identity and that we should instead embrace the idea that the American identity is composed of a wide range of races, cultures, and identities. Finally, SpearIt, a current UC Berkeley School of Law student, provides four book reviews examining how issues like crime, politics, genetic technology, and Supreme Court cases impact the lives of Latinos and other minority communities.

The publication of volume 19 and the continued success of the Journal could not be realized without the hard work and passion of our membership. Our editors and editorial teams have worked under tight deadlines, including working during summer and winter vacations. Additionally, our production team has spent considerable time reviewing and refining each article. Even though our members are

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highly involved in numerous other organizations, journals, clinics, and other endeavors, they have always taken their commitment to the *Journal* seriously. Through the publication process and various projects we initiated, we formed a community that has reenergized the historic vision of the *Journal*.

Recognizing that our community extends beyond the law school and includes undergraduate students, the *Journal’s* Undergraduate Law Fellows Program entered its second year. Through our program, undergraduates are assigned law student mentors and gain invaluable experience reading and editing legal scholarship. Our current class of fellows has been an inspiration to our membership as they have gone above and beyond what was expected of them. They have also taken an active role by contributing great ideas for our various projects and speaker events. This program was founded with the objective of becoming part of the pipeline that creates more competitive law school applicants from diverse backgrounds. Our vision was realized when one of our current fellows, Sara Rosell, was admitted into a top 10 law school. We have no doubt that Sara and our other undergraduate fellows will be exceptional law students, future attorneys, and community leaders.

The 2008-09 term marked the first year where students attending other schools participated in the editing work of the *Journal*. Two of our members, Monica Castillo and Alberto Muñoz, attend the University of Southern California Gould School of Law. Additionally, Emma Greenman, a UC Berkeley School of Law student contributed editing work while attending the Harvard Kennedy School of Policy. The energy and contributions that these members bring to our organization are considerable. Their membership has motivated us to explore a program that will enable more students from other schools to contribute to our publication.

Volume 19 includes the inaugural *Berkeley La Raza Law Journal* Alumni Advisory Board. The purpose of this board is to foster communication between current *Journal* members and alumni and create a support network that will promote the work of the organization. We are excited to welcome our first six Alumni Advisory Board members to this endeavor. A related initiative that our Editorial Board has engaged in is a drive to contact alumni and encourage them to subscribe to the *Journal*. By increasing our subscription base, alumni can provide needed financial support that will allow the organization to progress.

Another goal we fulfilled was to improve communication with our Board of Faculty Advisors. We reached out to faculty to inform them of the *Journal’s* progress and to help promote the scholarship we produce. This year we are also blessed to announce the addition of a new faculty advisor, Ms. Mary Louise Frampton, Faculty Director for the UC Berkeley Thelton E. Henderson Center for Social Justice. Ms. Frampton has been an excellent resource and we look forward to continuing our relationship with her and the Henderson Center.

This year we also developed a new student writing competition program. As an organization, we value providing students with the opportunity to become published legal scholars. The author of the winning selection will be published in a future volume and will receive a cash award. The program was advertised nationally and allowed us to expose the *Journal* to students across the country. We look forward to promoting the scholarship produced by students and helping this project flourish in the coming years.
Representatives from the *Journal* had the opportunity to attend the National Latina/o Law Student Association (NLSSA) Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Our presence at this national gathering of Raza students, lawyers, judges, and scholars revitalized our historical involvement in the organization. Networking with Raza students from across the country was an excellent opportunity and we returned with a greater appreciation for our organization. We encountered numerous law students who longed for an outlet that would enable them to produce legal scholarship with relevance to their communities. Additionally, one of our members, Oriana Sandoval, participated as an expert panelist in a breakout session focused on building stronger Latina/o student organizations. Her presentation exemplified the activist and community-oriented spirit of the Raza community that defines UC Berkeley School of Law.

Additionally, being in New Mexico in October of 2008 was exciting because it was two weeks before our nation would elect its forty-fourth President. New Mexico was a critical swing-state in the Southwest and it was impossible not to take notice of the political activism so many people in the state were engaged in. Democratic and Republican elected officials were in attendance throughout the conference and could not hold back their excitement for both the conference and the election. We could not help but to join the fun and help Get Out The Vote for Barack Obama!

Regardless of political preferences, this has been an exciting and historic moment in our nation. The excitement generated throughout the campaign season, President Obama’s message of hope and ultimate victory has inspired our organization. With the election of the first African American President of the United States, we are entering an era where people of color know they can achieve what has historically seemed impossible. As an organization we have always sought to highlight and improve the conditions of underrepresented communities. Now, we are inspired by the message of our President, who declares that our voice is not only wanted but also needed to enact social and political change. We remain committed to our mission and aspire to be catalysts for change in the pursuit of justicia.