

2-19-2007

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### Recommended Citation

Office of Public Affairs, "Local Author to Speak at Governors State University" (2007). *Press Releases*. Paper 232.  
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For Immediate Release

## Local Author to Speak at Governors State University

University Park, Illinois, February 19, 2007 – The Association of Latin American Students (ALAS) at Governors State University is sponsoring a unique and inspiring presentation by Rita Jirasek, author of "Mexican Chicago," on March 1, from 5 to 7 p.m. in Sherman Hall.

Jirasek, of Beverly, is a counselor at Thornridge High School in Dolton. As a daughter and granddaughter of immigrants, she realized the need to record local Latino history. After extensive research, compilation of personal histories, and review of photographs and news stories, Jirasek compiled an account of previously undocumented history. Her book, "Mexican Chicago," provides photos and detailed information on the 150 years of Mexican history in Chicago.

"We were deluged with people wanting to help us. Everyone had stories to tell. We thought this would certainly give kids access to the wide ranging experiences of their ancestors," said Jirasek.

In her presentation at Governors State University, Jirasek will use information gathered while researching materials for her book. She will discuss the importance of learning personal histories to understanding local Latino history. The title of her presentation is "Huellas Fotograficas/Photographic Footprints of Unsung Mexicans."

The Association of Latin American Students (ALAS) at Governors State University works to provide information inspiration to both students at the university and to the community. Its members are dedicated to increasing the accessibility of educational opportunities.

The presentation is free and open to the public. Governors State University is located at 1 University Parkway, University Park. For more information, call (708) 534-4554