

PROCLAMATION



City and County of Denver

Proclamation No. 19-0233

Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the National Chicano Youth Liberation Conference in Denver and the West High Blowouts

WHEREAS, led by two young Chicanas, Jeannie Perez and Pricilla Martinez, students at West High School walked out of class on March 20, 1969, in protest of discrimination and institutional racism by faculty and administrators; and

WHEREAS, the students—supported by their families, community members, and the Crusade for Justice—demonstrated, and were met by police batons and tear gas canisters; and

WHEREAS, the Crusade for Justice, founded in 1965 and led by Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales, was a community-based organization focused on providing employment, legal defense, education, civil rights, political action, immigration, cultural and recreation services; and

WHEREAS, weeks later, the first National Chicano Youth Liberation Conference was held in Denver on March 27-30 at the Crusade for Justice, where students and leaders from across the country gathered to create El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán and El Plan de Santa Barbara: a Chicano Plan for Higher Education both which gave rise to the Chicano movement throughout the country; and

WHEREAS, these events helped created a national movimiento that inspired and gave rise to today’s Mexican American leaders in the arts, business, community, education, government, law, literature, and medicine; and

WHEREAS, nearly one in three persons in Denver, and one of every four children in Colorado, is of Mexican American decent, still faces discrimination in the classroom, workplace and in public life, resulting in high poverty rates and growing disparities of access in education, healthcare, income, justice and political representation; and

WHEREAS, the week of March 19-30, 2019 will mark the 50th Anniversary of the West High Blowouts and the first National Chicano Youth Liberation conference in Denver.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER:

Section 1. That the Council of the City and County of Denver honors Colorado’s Mexican roots, Chicano history, and recognizes the values, and rich contributions to science, philosophy, arts and culture to the history of our City, State, and Country.

Section 2. That the Council of the City and County of Denver shall continue to promote equality and justice for all people and opposes discrimination in our city.

Section 3. That the Clerk of the City and County of Denver shall attest and affix the seal of the City and County of Denver to this proclamation, and that copies be transmitted to the Denver Agency for Human Rights & Community Partnerships, the Denver Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales Branch Library, Denver West High School, and the Colorado History Museum.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL March 11, 2019

PRESIDENT