

LA

CAUSA
DE HOY

CENTRAL AMERICAN UNITED STUDENT ASSOCIATION



LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

We speak for many when we say that the Central American studies program and the Central American United Student Association have made a difference in our lives. As students and young activists we have learned how to organize and make a difference. We have grown as people and hope to use what we learned in our future endeavors. We believe that in order to bring awareness to the issues that surround the Central American community we must first unite and tackle each concern with a creative and new approach; one that will impact the next generation.

Today we pave the way to the future, but we carry the past that has shaped our identities. The events, individuals and our surroundings have fostered a deep understanding of our history and culture. This unique program has given us the opportunity to realize the potential of our people and, hopefully, make history just as our ancestors have done.

Every opportunity that has been presented to us comes from the constant struggle that our families have overcome to be where we are today. We share this common lucha, and we will overcome it through the one of a kind education we have received through CAS and its allies.

We thank all the professors, community activists, families and fellow students who have helped us along the way. You have molded us into the people we are today and have affected our everyday lives, helped us realize and change the injustices around us. We hope this experience has been as fulfilling for you as it has been for us.

La CAUSA de Hoy would like to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Central American studies program and the progress of CAUSA. Throughout our issue you will find references to past events and accomplishments. Enjoy!

¡La lucha sigue!

Amy A. Ulloa
Cindy Von Quednow
Editors, La CAUSA de Hoy

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WHAT WE'RE ABOUT

The objective for this organization is to cultivate the idea of creating unified and coherent strategies for the development of the ideology of self determination for the people of Central America. This organization promotes unity and cooperation among students, faculty and the community with the purpose of developing more effective ways of creating changes within our society. This will be conducted for and by the Central American United Student Association and CSUN as a whole.

MAY DAY 2010

THE IMAGERY OF BRIAN PARADA

Thousands of people came out to march the streets of downtown LA to create awareness for workers and immigrant rights.



NEW ARIZONA LAW REPEATS HISTORY

BY ROBERTO SARAVIA

In recent weeks Arizona has become the focal point of the immigration debate in the United States. SB 1070 has garnered national attention, giving local and state law enforcement the power to ask anyone they suspect may be in the country illegally to show proof of residency or citizenship. What's next? Not too long ago the state of Arizona threatened to close down ethnic studies programs within universities. This bill not only affects immigrants, but it creates byproducts which threaten such programs throughout Arizona.

This is not the first time a state has tried to take on the role of the federal government. A little over a decade ago California responded to undocumented immigrants by passing Proposition 187. The goal of the proposition was to deny public and social services to undocumented immigrants including education and



POSTER BY SHEPARD FAIREY. WWW.OBEYGiant.COM

health services. The proposition also bound state officials by law to report anyone they suspected might be in the country illegally. The proposition was challenged in the courts and was never enforced, but it was California residents who voted for it, and with the recent events in Arizona it could happen again.

We already see advertisements by conservative Steve Poizner who is running for governor on an anti-immigrant platform. The danger is real and for those of us able to vote, we can't let another proposition 187 or SB 1070 happen again. I would like to remind everyone about our 4th amendment right "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated." This should apply to all people in the U.S., documented or not.

¿QUE PENSÁS?

VIA **facebook**



Brian Parada Conversing with people on the subject.. and i hear there might be a march in Arizona at the end of the month.. and i plan on being there.

5 hours ago · [Comment](#) · [Like](#) · [Report](#)



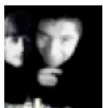
Jacky Guerrero Not buying products that are made in Arizona as well as reposting on my Facebook any opinion pieces and or articles written that critizces Arizona and the bill. I am also planning a trip there, I want to see them try to deport me.

9 hours ago · [Comment](#) · [Like](#) · [Report](#)



Mildred Martin Cetina Spreading the word to friends about items and companies they can boycott. Facebook has become a fast way to spread the word i must add.

April 29 at 11:08am · [Comment](#) · [Like](#) · [Report](#)



Victor Zuniga Making them look bad with a poster and not buying products that are imported from there.

April 29 at 10:37am · [Comment](#) · [Like](#) · [Report](#)

LA CAUSA DE HOY

EDITORS:

Amy A. Ulloa
Cindy Von Quednow
Stephanie Olmedo

STAFF WRITERS:

Giovanni Batz Ginger Orsi
Roberto Saravia Kristopher Fortin
Victoria Chavez Stephanie Lemus
Shayla Selva Moises Linares

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHERS:

Kristian Garay
Brian Parada
Nelson Lemus

DESIGN

Josué A. Guaján Orellana
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? Did you know...? CAUSA was founded in 1993

SB1070: "IT'S A FORM OF TERRORISM AGAINST LATINOS"

BY AMY A. ULLOA

In the past 10 years, Jaime Sutachan hasn't seen much change during his frequent travels between Arizona and California. But with the recent passing of SB 1070, this CSUN student majoring in civil engineering and business marketing has seen how looking, speaking or acting Latino might as well be criminal.

SB 1070 allows police officers to act as immigration officials and demand documentation to prove a person's legal status in the country.

"It's a form of terrorism against Latinos," says the 23-year-old. "(The police and the government) are kicking them out, instilling fear in their lives. They have to leave and cannot see their families. Illegal immigrants can't live off the system (by using welfare) like citizens can."

Jaime's mother emigrated from her native Colombia to the U.S. with all of her children and raised them on her own. Today they're all residents, but

Jaime admits that his mother was also one of the undocumented immigrants who would've been affected by this controversial law. The Sutachan family has managed to break the stereotypes that exist about immigrants by owning a successful real estate business in Southern California, Southbay Executive Realty.

"This law not only oppresses illegal immigrants, but anyone who knows or is related to illegal immigrants in Arizona," explains Jaime.

The bill is also affecting other regions of the Tri-state area like Laughlin, Nevada. Laughlin is directly across the Colorado River from Bullhead City, and its casinos and other services supply much of the employment for the area.

"There are no Latinos working inside the casinos or other places such as



PHOTOGRAPH BY AMY A. ULLOA

Lowe's and Walmart and you used to see many of them there," Jaime observed.

"When I spoke Spanish, people glared at me, which incited me to keep speaking Spanish," he said recalling a recent visit.

Since selling their Arizona home is not an option, his family is boycotting the Grand Canyon State by not purchasing goods within the state. Instead, they take groceries and other necessities from their home in Redondo Beach. "People in Laughlin have no choice but to travel to Bullhead for their necessities because it's the closest city," he says.

In response to this blatant discrimination, Jaime says, "It's scary to see that I was just on the border between Arizona and Nevada. I can only imagine what it's like deeper in Arizona."

370 MILES FROM CSUN

BY JOSUÉ A. GUAJÁN ORELLANA

On March 24, 160 CSUN students organized a trip to Sacramento to march the streets and up the steps of the capitol building. Our purpose was to denounce the California government and the tremendous fee increases that are being implemented every semester at our university. After the home demonstrations of March 4, students were eager to continue fighting for their education. Through the unity of several student organizations like CAUSA, BSU, MEChA, and the cooperation of A.S, three buses were filled up and embarked to Sacramento. Drums, chants, dances and activism made this a unique experience for CSUN students and other students from throughout California who voiced their anger against a broken system.



? Did you know...? The Central American Studies Program become a major in fall 2007



CAS/CAUSA Graduation 2008



CAUSA Fundraiser Meeting



CAUSA Retreat



CAUSA Annual Fundraiser



Elementary School Visit



Central American Film Experience



Culture Clash's Zorro in Hell with Herbert Sigüenza

CAS & CAUSA ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Central American Community Project
Escuintla, Guatemala



Garifuna Drumming and Dancing Event



CAUSA High School Conference



CAUSA and the Community



1st CAUSA Newsletter Meeting



Dia de los Muertos 2009



Cutumay Camones at Indigenous Resistance Day

PHOTOGRAPHS PROVIDED BY
CHRISTIAN GARAY
JOSUÉ A. GUAJÁN ORELLANA
NELSON LEMUS



LA LIMONADA, GUATEMALA:

A TRIP TO THE MOTHERLAND

BY GIOVANNI BATZ

As I walked down La Limonada, a notoriously rough neighborhood in the Zona 5 of the Guatemalan capital, I never once felt nervous. This was probably due to the fact that I was with my abuelita, Doña Clara Ixcot Coyoy, an 88-year old K'iche' woman from Xela, Quetzaltenango. Before I left to Guatemala, everyone who was familiar with Guatemala City, warned me by saying, "¡ten cuidado te van asaltar!" These warnings were heightened when I told them that I was planning on documenting life in La Limonada.

These concerns emerge from the stereotype of La Limonada as a place where vagrants, ladrones, drugs, maras and violence prevail. Unfortunately, while some of these elements do exist in La Limonada, they also exist in most Guatemalan streets and other urban areas throughout the Americas, from Baranquilla to Los Angeles. Yet, La Limonada is still viewed as an extremely dangerous barrio.

The root of this stereotype is a result of the origins of the neighborhood. In 1959, landless peasants and those seeking a place to live in Guatemala City (including my abuelita and dad), "invaded" a patch of uninhabited land next to the soccer stadium around a ravine. People used anything they could find in order to create shelter. My abuelita says that when she first arrived with her four young children, they had nothing but their clothes and lived under plastic nylon supported by a few pieces of wood with no walls or shelter from the cold or rain. Soon hundreds of *cobachas* o *casas de lámina* sprung up.

The government responded by sending the military and police to kick them out and led to the destruction of everything they had. But through resistance, organization, protests and marches to the National Palace, La Limonada was left to exist in

the early 1960s under the Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes regime, yet land titles were not granted until 1999.

When I returned to the neighborhood that my father grew up in, I felt a sense of home, especially since a lot of people knew my abuelita who is viewed as an "invasora" (one of the original people of the community).

Yet, I recognized the power relations that exist between me and the people that live in La Limonada. As a U.S. citizen I am part of the dominant hegemonic structure (even though I am part of the lower class) and have certain privileges such as the access to higher education, which continues to be underrepresented by people of color.

This was made clear when I entered the Masters program at the University of Texas at Austin where there were only five Latinos and one African-American in my Latin American Studies program out of a pool of 30 students.

As children of Central American, indigenous and Latino immigrants, it is our responsibility to represent and empower our communities in the U.S. and abroad, with education serving as one of many vehicles to accomplish such goals. My trip to the La Limonada served to further motivate me. Yes, it may be dangerous, but for those who have the opportunity to travel to our parent's homelands, I encourage you to do so despite the claims that it may be too *peligroso*.

As Central Americans, we need to know our roots and history and correct the social injustices that exist within the U.S. and achieve goals such as the Dream Act and the promotion of college rather than the military (which my little brother joined). As cliché and idealistic as this may sound, it is possible and we need to make our voices and the voices of those who have been silenced, heard!

PHOTOGRAPH BY GIOVANNI BATZ



MORE THAN A CARETAKER, UNA INSPIRACIÓN

BY GINGER ORSI

As a child, I remember the preparations we would make before my nanny, Aodiosa “Dochita” Gonzalez, returned to Nicaragua. My siblings and I would bring her our old shoes, clothes and even piggy bank money. She would stuff her allowed baggage to the brim with her collections reserving only the carry on for herself. There was a shoe box in her closet where she kept all of her extra money. Considering that she had little overhead costs, it added up to hundreds, then thousands.

Every few years she would board a plane to Nicaragua and bring extended family, among others, all of our discarded toys and clothes. She would give her money to her sons, their wives, widows, and children. At one point we counted that she was supporting 13 people on a housekeeper’s salary, and giving to countless more.

I became very curious about her life and country. The following is what I have learned about her life.

Dochita was born in Matagalpa, Nicaragua, to a father who had 53 children. Her mother passed away when she was young and Dochita raised some of her siblings. Although Nicaragua was a country ruled by a dictatorship dynasty, the Somozas, she remembers that life was more stable at that time. As an adult she had a family with a husband and three sons, owned property and a small store. Despite



PHOTOGRAPH BY GINGER ORSI

this, they were not well off. Her husband died while flying a crop dusting plane and she had to make ends meet alone.

A few years later the dictatorship was overthrown. After the Sandinistas were elected the U.S. began funding the counter-revolutionary movement, the Contras, and the civil war began.

Dochita remembers: “la guerra estalló en Matagalpa, en la esquina de mi barrio”. the war erupted in her backyard in Matagalpa. Before long it had taken all of her sons. Her oldest son was illegally arrested, held and tortured by the Somoza regime. With the help of a lawyer she was eventually able to free him from captivity, after months of anguish. Her middle son joined the Sandinistas at the age of 17. After searching for him tirelessly, she eventually received a telegram announcing his death. This of course, devastated Dochita.

Out of despair, Dochita had to send her youngest son of 13, to Costa Rica, where he picked crops. He remains there today

and has built a good life for himself. Looking back Dochita says she never took sides in the war or politics, because to her it was all the same: “Nunca fui involucrada en la política, nunca me gustó”. All she saw was a war torn country.

Faced with the loss of her family and no way to support herself, she boarded a truck to California in 1989. Shortly after, she was united with my family and came to be our live-in nanny.

She tells me that all of the love she had for her family she gave to mine: “Fue durísimo separarme de mis hijos, pero todo el amor fue para esta familia, mis nuevos niños” Her work and loving spirit was the backbone of my family for 25 years. She gave me great appreciation for immigrants and the need to see all people as equals. Her life has inspired a passion for transnational aid and combating ethnocentrism. It is amazing how hardworking and selfless she has been in her difficult life and yet she has managed to help so many people with a smile.

? Did you know...?

The Central American United Student Association was born in the spring of 1993. A majority of the students were former or current students of Professor Alberto Garcia, a faculty member in the Chicana/o Studies Department. This small group of CSUN students represented nations within and outside of Central America. The group shared a common interest, which was to expand their knowledge of Central American culture, history and politics. The group held meetings in an open, outdoor courtyard with shady trees – today, there stands a building called Sierra Center. Later that year, CAUSA became incorporated under the umbrella of MEChA and went on to become an independent CSUN student organization.

– Marvin Villanueva
Former CAUSA member, current EOP Adviser



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF CECILIA BOGRAN

A MOTHER, REPORTER & ROLEMODEL

BY SHAYLA SELVA

Cecilia Bogran has covered a wide range of issues from entertainment news to international events for Univision's Primera Edición. This includes the natural disasters devastating Central America such as Hurricane Mitch in 1998 and the 2001 earthquake in El Salvador. She has cultivated a body of work on social and political issues concerning the Latino community.

Despite growing up in the midst of poverty in Honduras, Cecilia never questioned her surroundings because it seemed normal. It wasn't until she was 13 years old, that Cecilia developed an itch for journalism, but her desire to change the world came later. Her love for the arts flourished when she received a bachelor's degree in theatre arts from The University of the South in Tennessee, but after three years of tireless auditions, closed doors, and a weary heart, in Los Angeles Cecilia decided to try journalism.

Without a degree in the field, Cecilia still landed an opportunity. While she was being interviewed about a role she was portraying in a play, she asked the reporter if there was any work available at the station. She landed an interview with the executive producer and became an assistant producer.

"I said yes to everything and just pretended like I knew everything and then I would ask someone you knew what it was, and that's how little by little they kept calling me back ... and now it's been 12 years," said Cecilia about her first time at Spanish-language television network, Univision, but it wasn't until three years ago that Cecilia began reporting news stories that were challenging.

"I feel that I have found what I was first looking for when I thought about going into journalism, which is something that I can do to change the world", said Cecilia.

Cecilia has collected a reflection of her work through a variety of awards in her journalism career. She recently received an Emmy Award on a report titled, "Israel, Aquí es Donde" in 2008. While Cecilia makes time for developing media packages she embodies valuable moments of new motherhood and marriage, she also reaches out to the Central American community in Los Angeles.

As a board member of CARECEN and an active voice in the Honduran community, Cecilia says she does not forget where she comes from.

Whether her picture hangs on the walls of local Honduran restaurants or someone is shouting her name to get her autograph, Cecilia is aware of her influence on the Honduran community and understands her responsibility to them everyday.

"I make a point of whenever I can to mention that I am from Honduras or that I am Central American because I am very proud of that and I think that in our Central American community, needs role models," expressed Cecilia.

HISTORICAL CORNER: COLOMBIA & PANAMA RELATIONS

BY STEPHANIE LEMUS

Since Panama's break from Colombia and declaring its independence in 1903, the two countries have had a less than an amiable relationship. Panama was once part of the Viceroyalty of New Granada formed in the Spanish colonial era of the 1700's, which consisted of Colombia, Panama, Ecuador and Venezuela. With U.S. support, Panama was able to gain its sovereignty making the construction of the Panama Canal possible. Colombia demanded to be compensated by the U.S. for the loss of Panama in the amount of \$25 million.

By the late 1990's drugs and violence, and rampant poverty ruled Colombia, and the Right-wing parties were in a never-ending war against Left-wing guerillas. Colombia battled the immense impoverishment and eliminated the drug crops destroying the country and sought help from its Latin American brethren to take part in it's Plan Colombia strategy.

Plan Colombia originally sought out to eradicate the drug crops, such as the coca leaf, from its country and focus on social programs in order to give better opportunities to its people, and prevent the drug business' growth and strength.

The U.S. plays a significant role in Plan Colombia's turn from a social oriented strategy to a militaristic one. In 2000, the first year of Plan Colombia's implementation, the U.S. gave \$54 million in aid, with less than 1% for economic and social programs.

Today, drugs and violence are still a problem and there are

millions of Colombians displaced internally, with Thousands escaping to bordering countries.

As Colombia's battle against guerillas increased, the struggle has been pushed out from its borders, and the conflict has entered neighboring countries. Panama has thousands of Colombian refugees, who enter the country illegally and are subject to harsh laws by the Panamanian government. There are accounts of illegal Colombians being rounded up and deported back to their place of origin, without care of the danger the deportees may face upon their return.

According to Alfredo Infante director of the Servicio Jesuita a Refugiados en America Latina y Caribe (Jesuit Services for Refugees in Latin America and Caribbean), "the Colombian conflict is motivating the expulsion of many people toward the border through (Panama's) The Darien Province." It is here where most Colombian's reside working as street vendors, or other low paying jobs; as immigration laws have not yet been implemented in order to legalize their status. According to Infante, the status that Colombians have attained from the Panamanian government is as "temporarily protected humanitarians", which is not recognized by International Human Rights.

The implication of Colombian's halfway status means practically no basic human rights, and a real hard time job finding a descent job. On the Panama-Colombia border, we can expect more militarization, more refugees, and violence.

EL SALVADOR AND THE ARTS: THE EFFECTS OF FUNES' DECISION

BY STEPHANIE OLMEDO & VICTORIA CHAVEZ

The voices of Salvadoreños are heard through stories, poetry and art, through which we have come to understand Salvadoran history and culture. Through artistic beauty, Salvadoreños have expressed their desire for change, something that didn't always seem possible.

When Mauricio Funes, of the FMLN (Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front) was elected president of El Salvador in March 2009, there was hope for a different democratic state. But earlier this year President Funes dismissed the Secretary of Culture, Breni Cuenca, which created a stir among Salvadorans.

Cuenca argues there are two possibilities for her dismissal. One is she refused to dismiss Oscar Soles, a painter and director of Arts, in exchange for a new director, Rolando Reyes. Cuenca says Funes did not have a real reason to dismiss Soles. The second of Cuenca's theories is because first lady Vanda Pignato wanted to use the funds for personal and political purposes. Many believe that her

dismissal has led to the downfall of El Salvador's culture.

In response to the dismantling of cultural projects, authors and artists have come together to find alternative forms of publishing their works. One of the artists is Otoniel Guevara from El Salvador. He was invited to CSUN, where he gave poetry readings and spoke on the importance of publishing works of poetry, narratives, and testimonials in El Salvador. Guevara was forced to resign from the radio station and newspaper he worked for because he was being censored for speaking out against the government. Guevara adds that through the preservation of testimonials we may one day be able to learn the truth about Monseñor Romero's assassination.

A Los Angeles transnational worker and strong supporter of President Funes, Rafael Mendez says many of his friends are upset by the cuts that would continue to preserve culture in El Salvador.

"The population wants to agree that he did it for a better cause but he has to step up his game because people are getting restless, and this is not the first thing that has made President Funes look bad," Mendez said. They feel that President Funes has not held onto his promises since his election. The long-term effects of the dismissal of Cuenca on El Salvador are still unknown. We can only hope that President Funes holds true to the rest of his promises.

A GUATEMALAN ARTIST FINDS HER ROOTS

BY KRISTOPHER FORTIN

Susana "Timoi" de Leon compares her love for graffiti to the rough experience she had riding horses in rural Guatemala.

"I used to ride horses, and get lost in the woods, and here it was exciting to catch a tag, and get on the rooftop," says Timoi, who is now 29.

Graffiti was Timoi's main form of expression for seven years and opened up the door to experimentation with other media. Timoi has moved past her work as a graffiti artist and learned to combine spray paint, acrylic and oil paints into her work. She practices her art on walls, canvases, even a bedroom door. Timoi's appreciation for her Chapina roots has paralleled her growth as an artist, has helped her art and personal life.

Timoi is currently the president of Mujeres Iniciando en Las Americas, an organization that advocates for Guatemalans that suffer from or are at risk of domestic violence and femicide.



PHOTOGRAPH BY OF RAFAEL CARDENAS

Timoi came to the U.S. at the age of 10, after being shuffled between family members all over Guatemala.

It was difficult for her to connect with her roots in the U.S. since she would be teased for not speaking English. "I came here with the intention of wanting to go back," Timoi says. Despite this, her involvement in art continued to flourish.

Besides a constant immersion in images of graffiti and Japanese anime, her peers exposed her to works by Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo and Salvador Dali.

Timoi's transition from billboards to canvases was gradual. A friend taught her how to paint acrylic at 21, and then she practiced oil paints on her own. It was during this time that Timoi began embracing her Guatemalan roots in the form of violence in her family. Four of Timoi's family members

were killed in Guatemala.

When Timoi went back to Guatemala for the first time in 2007, she met with different women's organizations to educate herself on issues about femicide. She met with organizations that work with victims of abuse in different communities.

She hopes to depict all the stories she gathered during her visit to Guatemala, with a project on the victims of femicide.

Despite her recent Central American influence, Timoi says she doesn't consider herself a Latina or Central American artist.

Like the image of a Queztal in her painting "The game of Life/Me, myself, and I/Trinity," it is a large part in her life, but it is only a piece that makes her identity.

"I am Guatemalan," Timoi said. "Even though I don't know my blood line, I know enough."



HONDURAS IN SEARCH OF MAKING HISTORY

BY MOISES LINARES

The countdown to the World Cup has begun and is a couple of months away. This is a long time coming for Hondureños, the last time the country participated in the cup was 1982 in Spain.

After a long difficult two-year process on the road to the World Cup 2010 in South Africa, Honduras finally earned their ticket to the tournament. The decision came in the last seconds of a match between U.S and Costa Rica.

To the faith of all of Central America, that match decided the final spot to South Africa from CONCACAF. In the end the Catrachos obtained their long awaited return to the tournament.

After a nerve-wrecking draw in December, Honduras was placed in 'Group H', along with Chile, Spain and Switzerland. The Catrachos will begin their return to a World Cup when they open against rival Chile in Nelspruit.

With players like Wilson Palacios (Tottenham Hotspurs), Hendry Thomas (Wigan Athletic), and veterans like Carlos Pavon and Amado Guevara, many call this ensemble the best Honduran team ever assembled.

This will be the last opportunity for veteran players on the team to go down in Honduran soccer history. Since the World Cup is played every four years, it is nearly impossible to make it to the World Cup after the age of 34.

For Honduras the match against Chile will determine if they can advance to the second round of the competition. Chile is no pushover opponent and is considered to be one of the countries that can advance far.

These two countries are no strangers to each other and the last time they met in a friendly match, Honduras came away with the victory, which should give them confidence going into their first match.

The lack of experience at the World Cup stage can be a factor against the Catrachos.

Yet Honduras has a number of players in the most important leagues in the world, which will benefit them.

A win against Chile should give Honduras a ticket into the second round and momentum into its second match against "soccer giant" Spain in Johannesburg.

The current Euro-cup champions are favorites to win the World Cup and are also favorites to dominate the group easily. The last and only time these two countries met was in the 1982 World Cup, and Honduras came away with a 1-1 tie.

The final match of the group stages will be between Honduras-Switzerland in Bloemfontein. Honduras will have to tie or win depending on the outcome of the first two matches.

It is hard to imagine Honduras surviving in a group that contains two World Cup contenders. On the other hand, this would not be the World Cup if everything was already decided and determined. We have seen it in the past, come June anything is possible. This doesn't mean Honduras will win the World Cup, but advancing to a second round would be phenomenal to a country that has been waiting almost 30 years for this moment.

CAUSA CONGRATULATES IT'S 2010 GRADUATES



Robin Alfaro
Ailyana Barrera
Jocelyn Bonilla
Josué A. Guaján Orellana
David Guzman
Nelson Lemus
José Lino
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Every Monday at 3:30PM

Jerome Ritchfield

causa.club@my.csun.edu

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