



Dr. Maria Elena Cruz

Dr. Maria Elena Cruz is an Adjunct Professor in Chicana/o Studies at California State University, Northridge (CSUN), Northridge, CA. Also, Dr. Cruz is Director of one of the fourteen LULAC National Educational Service Centers located in Oxnard, CA. The Center houses the TRIO Program, Upward Bound, a pre-college federal program designed to prepare and motivate students for success in education beyond secondary school. Additional programs include CIDream, CI STEM and Project Islas.

Dr. Cruz earned a Master of Arts in Experimental Psychology and holds a Doctorate in Education from the University of California, Santa Barbara. She dedicates her professional life working at the grassroots level with low-income Latino and Indigenous Mexican-American students and their parents in making the leap from high school to higher education. She has co-authored peer-review articles on Latina sexual and reproductive health and Latinx/Chicanx teacher preparation.

Dr. Cruz is the past immediate LULAC National Education Chair. She served as Deputy State Director of California LULAC and has been a LULAC member since a young adult beginning in Texas. She currently resides in Southern California with her husband, David Cruz.

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