

Cal Poly Division of Student Affairs presents  
**Provocative Perspectives**  
 2008-09



Luis Urrea

Thursday, October 2 - Luis Urrea  
*"The Devil's Highway"*

Luis Alberto Urrea, 2005 Pulitzer Prize finalist for non-fiction and member of the Latino Literature Hall of Fame, is a prolific and acclaimed writer who uses his dual-culture life experiences to explore greater themes of love, loss and triumph. Born in Tijuana, Mexico to a Mexican father and an American mother, Urrea is the critically acclaimed author of 11 books. *The Devil's Highway*, his 2004 non-fiction account of a group of Mexican immigrants lost in the Arizona desert, won the 2004 Lannan Literary Award and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and the Pacific Rim Kiriyaama Prize. A national best-seller, *The Devil's Highway* was also named a best book of the year by the *Los Angeles Times*, *Miami Herald*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Kansas City Star* and many other publications.



Ray Suarez

Thursday, November 13 - Ray Suarez  
*"Media, Politics and Washington: A Morning with Ray Suarez"*

With more than 25 years of varied experience in journalism, Ray Suarez, one of the most respected news anchors in Washington today, continues to make major contributions to the public understanding of the most important stories of our times. Currently Senior Correspondent for the PBS show "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer," Suarez was previously host of National Public Radio's nationwide, call-in news program, "Talk of the Nation." He is the author of the recent book, *The Old Neighborhood: What We Lost in the Great Suburban Migration*, and has been honored with a number of prestigious awards, including the 1996 Ruben Salazar Award from the National Council of La Raza, *Current History Magazine's* 1995 Global Awareness Award, and a Chicago Emmy Award.



Lawrence Baca

Thursday, January 22 - Lawrence Baca  
*"American Indians: The Race That Sometimes Isn't"*

Lawrence Baca has been a leading proponent on behalf of the civil rights of American Indians for the past 30 years. He served as Deputy Director of the Office of Tribal Justice, United States Department of Justice from 2004-2008 and previously was a Senior Trial Attorney in the Civil Rights Division. A 1976 graduate of Harvard Law School, Baca was one of the first American Indians to graduate from Harvard and the first American Indian ever hired through the Department of Justice's Honor Law Program. Baca's legal work has been profiled in the *American Bar Association Journal*, *Minority Lawyer Magazine*, *CLEO Edge*, and *Indian Country Today*. In 2008, Baca received the American Bar Association Spirit of Excellence Award for his recruitment and mentoring of young Indian lawyers; the Federal Bar Association Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Federal Indian Law; and upon his retirement, was presented with the Attorney General's Medallion.



Niki Sandoval

Thursday, February 5 - Niki Sandoval  
*"Honoring Our Past, Building Our Future: Cultures in Native California"*

A descendant of the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, Niki Sandoval is the first in her Nation to earn a Doctor of Philosophy degree. During her 17-year career in the nonprofit sector, she has dedicated her life to increasing access to cultural and educational opportunities. Sandoval is a lecturer in the Education and Chicano Studies departments at the University of California, Santa Barbara, co-editor of a book on Native American community-based museums, and author of published essays and articles on indigenous cultural issues. As Assistant Director for Community Services at Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian from 1999 until 2002, she conceptualized, delivered, and evaluated outreach products and services targeting Native American communities in the Western Hemisphere.



Dawn-Elissa Fischer

Thursday, March 5 - Dawn-Elissa Fischer  
*"Is Oprah Right? Hip Hop's Race and Gender Politics"*

Dawn-Elissa Fischer (a.k.a. the "D.E.F." Professor) is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Africana Studies at San Francisco State University, where she teaches courses on black popular culture, digital research design and visual ethnography. Fischer has used Hip Hop to address issues of voter disenfranchisement, gender-based violence, literacy and the digital divide. She is the executive director of Edutainment4Life, an organization dedicated to life skills and self-help of underserved children and families and a cofounder of the National Hip Hop Political Convention, a Hip Hop civic engagement project. She is a founding staff member of the Hip Hop Archive at Harvard University, and she co-produced the Hip Hop Archive's first film, "Nihon Style" with filmmaker Bianca White. Dr. Fischer currently serves as the Hip Hop Archive's Associate Director of Research and Development, and she is working with talented community educators, artists and pioneer scholars developing the Hip Hop University Project.



Claude Steele

Thursday, May 7 - Claude Steele  
*"The Psychology of Social Identity: Its Role in Group Performance Differences and the Challenges of an Integrated Society"*

Claude Steele, Director of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University, will address the unseen pressures on the academic performance of certain groups—groups whose abilities are negatively stereotyped such as women in math and minorities in most academic fields. Steele, the Lucie Stern Professor in the Social Sciences and past chair of the Department of Psychology at Stanford University, has received the Dean's Teaching Award at Stanford University, the William James Fellow Award from the American Psychological Society, the Kurt Lewin Award and the Gordon Allport Prize in Social Psychology from the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, the Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award and the Senior Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychology in the Public Interest from the American Psychological Association, and the Cattell Faculty Fellowship. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the National Academy of Education, the American Philosophical Society and the National Academy of Sciences and he has been awarded honorary doctorates from the University of Michigan, University of Chicago, Yale University, Princeton University and the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

All programs are held in Vista Grande Cafe from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m.

Reservations are required - To make a reservation, please contact Liz Cofer at 756-0327, or [lcofer@calpoly.edu](mailto:lcofer@calpoly.edu). For more information on any of these events, contact Anita Wickers at 756-5996, or [amwicker@calpoly.edu](mailto:amwicker@calpoly.edu).

Persons with disabilities may request accommodations in advance by contacting the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs at 756-1521.

**Program sponsors and supporters:** Division of Student Affairs, Cal Poly Corporation, University Advancement, Office of the Provost, Dean of Students Office, Career Services, Student Life & Leadership, MultiCultural Center, Inclusive Excellence Council, and the Committee on University Citizenship. Special thanks to Days Inn of San Luis Obispo for providing accommodations for our speakers.

