

# focus

## Pride of Place

Former Housing Projects Resident Returns to Reshape Inner City Living

By Jennifer Olds



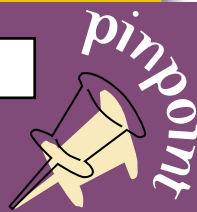
Photos by Tom Zasadzinski



Alumnus Ricardo Rodriguez, talks with members of his Quatro Design Group, from left, Nestor Oropeza, senior architecture major, Araceli Gomez, '99, and Lisa Tabuchi, '89 architecture alumni.

### focus

Cal Poly Pomona awards more bachelor's degrees in architecture to Hispanics than any other university in the country, according to Hispanic Outlook magazine. Only 4.4% of the 194,000 architects in the United States are Hispanic.



#### SUBMITTING A DESIGN PROPOSAL FOR THE CESAR CHAVEZ STREETScape

Beautification Plan wasn't just a business decision for Ricardo Rodriguez, it was a personal one. After all, it was a quote from Chavez that shaped the Cal Poly Pomona architecture alumnus' vision of the future.

"You don't just change a man," Chavez wrote. "You've got to change his environment."

These words have come to inspire the life-work of Rodriguez, who—along with David Stokes and Javier Molina—are partners at Quatro Design Group (ODG) in Los Angeles. Rodriguez grew up in the East Los Angeles Maravilla housing projects with his mother and five siblings. As early as the age of seven, his future role in the community became clear. He entered and won a design contest for Maravilla children to come up with plans for their ideal living space. Rodriguez's prize-winning design featured an apartment complex with open floor plans, small yards and low fences.

"I feel that quality of life is dependent on the physical space people live in," he explains. "If you design spaces that stimulate a sense of ownership, the inhabitants feel more responsible for taking care of that space. It changes their perspective on their own quality of life," says Rodriguez, who lives in Hacienda Heights.

Moved by his mother's work ethic and her insistence on the importance of education, he became the first in his family—including his extended family—to attain a university education. Rodriguez credits his success today to the influence of the strong women in his life—his mother, Margarita, his wife, Elena, and his daughter, Alegria.

With his early life shaped by sight and sound of the projects, Rodriguez learned a new frame of reference at Cal Poly Pomona.

(Please see page 7)

## Returning Home Again

Home is not just a place where people reside, but where one finds comfort in a world of hectic schedules and daily demands. For many, home is also a place where communities are fostered. You could say that Cal Poly Pomona is considered home to many of our alumni and community members.

Alumnus Ricardo Rodriguez remembers growing up in the Maravilla Housing Projects of East Los Angeles. So when he and his partners at Quatro Design Group got involved in Housing and Urban Development's East Los Angeles revitalization project, he made sure buildings they designed reflected the area's cultural heritage and offered a welcoming sense of community.

You can learn more about Rodriguez's work, as well as other aspects of Cal Poly Pomona, in this issue of *Panorama*. We invite your feedback and welcome any comments or suggestions you might have for future issues.

For more information, contact the Public Affairs office at (909) 869-3342 or [publicaffair@csupomona.edu](mailto:publicaffair@csupomona.edu).

*Bob*

President  
Bob H. Suzuki



## Why are YOU Receiving Panorama?

### FOR MANY REASONS.

You may reside in one of the communities surrounding the university, be part of our alumni or VIP database, be a local business owner or a supporter of the university. *Panorama* was created to inform, invite and involve our extended community.

# dates



## COMMENCEMENT 2002

### Friday, June 14

2:00 p.m. Collins School of Hospitality Management  
5:30 p.m. College of Business Administration

### Saturday, June 15

9:00 a.m. College of Engineering  
2:00 p.m. College of Education & Integrative Studies  
5:30 p.m. College of Science  
8:30 p.m. I-Poly High

### Sunday, June 16

10:00 a.m. College of Environmental Design  
2:00 p.m. College of Agriculture  
5:30 p.m. College of Letters, Arts & Social Sciences  
*Ceremonies will be held in the University Quad. For more information, call the Commencement Hotline at (909) 869-5369.*

## Musical Notes

The following events will be held in the Music Recital Hall at 8 p.m. unless otherwise noted. Admission is \$7. (909) 869-3554.

- May 23 Cal Poly Middle East Ensemble presents "A Thousand & One Nights"
- May 29 Cal Poly Concert Band with the Cal Poly Brass Ensemble
- May 30 University Concert Choir and Kellogg Chamber Singers present "Sing Americana"
- June 4 Cal Poly String Ensemble presents "Double Your Pleasure."  
(This free event will be held at 1:30 p.m. in Building 24, Room 105)
- June 7 Cal Poly Guitar Ensemble present "Tempos & Techniques"

## Kellogg House Pomona Tours

**June 2**—See the historic Kellogg House Pomona on the Cal Poly Pomona campus at a free open house between noon and 2 p.m. The 1920s home was designed by Myron Hunt of Rose Bowl fame for cereal magnate W.K. Kellogg. Private tours for groups of 20 are available at 10:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. for \$25 per person, which includes lunch and a horse show. (909) 869-2272.



Photos by Tom Zasadzinski

## Arabian Horse Show

**June 2**—The Kellogg Arabian horses perform at 2 p.m. in their last Sunday show of the season. Admission is \$3 for adults, \$2 for senior citizens, \$2 for children ages 6-18, and free for children ages 5 and under. (909) 869-2272.

## Antique-Collectible Market

**June 15, July 20, Aug. 17**—Pick up a few knick-knacks or treasures at the Antique Collectible Market, which is held year-round on the third Saturday of the month. Open from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., the market is located in Parking Lot F-10 at the corner of Kellogg and University drives at Cal Poly Pomona. (909) 869-5315.

## SUMMER CAMPS

### Science and Math Camps for Elementary School Students

**July 29-Aug. 2, Aug. 26-30**—Students entering second through fifth grade will enjoy many creative science and math activities such as physics and chemistry magic shows. The camp runs 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The cost is \$225, with a \$50 deposit due July 1. (909) 869-4512.

### Science and Math Camp for Middle School Students

**Aug. 12-16**—Students entering sixth through ninth grade can attend a weeklong interactive science experience on the Cal Poly Pomona campus. Students will enjoy physics and chemistry magic shows plus many innovative math workshops that are conducted by Cal Poly Pomona faculty. The camp costs \$500, which includes supervised on-campus accommodations and meals. A \$50 deposit is due July 1. (909) 869-4512.

## SPORTS CAMPS

The Cal Poly Pomona athletics department is providing sports camps this summer for youth ages 6 to 17. Camps range in cost from \$80 to \$320, with a discount if enrolled before May 31. (909) 869-2825.

BASKETBALL	June 24-28, Aug. 12-16, Aug. 19-23
GIRLS' BASKETBALL	June 5-9
SOCCER	July 8-12, July 15-19, July 28-Aug. 2
BASEBALL	July 29-Aug. 2
TENNIS	July 29-Aug. 2, Aug. 5-9
VOLLEYBALL	July 29-Aug. 2



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**STAFF**  
Charles Bentley • Ron Fremont  
Uyen Mai • Jennifer Olds  
Tom Zasadzinski  
Ani Markarian, Designer  
Aida Morad, Editor

(PRIDE OF PLACE continued from page 1)



"When seen through the eyes of my faculty and peers, architecture brought new meaning and interest in how different cultures live," he says. "The psychology and social aspect of architecture intrigued me tremendously and I started to realize that buildings affect neighborhoods, not just the people living in them."

QDG is one of four firms involved in the Housing and Urban Development's East Los Angeles revitalization project. The prison-like concrete projects of Rodriguez's youth have been cleared away to create a new kind of inner city life, one that instills something Rodriguez calls "pride of place." The Aliso Village public housing project will provide new rental units designed to resemble suburban townhouses—much like in the seven-year-old Rodriguez's prize-winning design—as well as nearly 100 single-family homes. One-third of these homes will be offered at special rates to former public housing residents.

In addition to his work with Aliso Village and the Cesar Chavez Streetscape Beautification Plan, Rodriguez and QDG are also creating the East L.A. Civic Center Plaza and an affordable apartment complex on Whittier Boulevard. The buildings reflect the cultural heritage of East L.A., featuring fiesta-colored complexes that inspire comment and a sense of community.

"Unlike suburban sprawls and gated communities, urban environments can benefit from local synergy, built history, culture and surrounding neighborhoods," he says.

Every piece of architecture is a link to an existing chain, he explains.

"We must tap into that chain either visually or physically."