

**Virginia Escalante**  
**Educator – Journalist – Social Activist**  
**Inducted into the SC Hall of Fame October 12, 2012**

A farmworker born and raised in Eloy, Virginia Escalante went on to become an educator and Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist for the *Los Angeles Times*.

At Santa Cruz Valley Union High School, she served as editor of the newspaper and yearbook; won numerous awards in several subjects, including chemistry, English, and office practice. She was also named Girl of the Year and was salutatorian of her graduating class.

After high school, Escalante earned a bachelor of arts in education with a major in English and minor in journalism from the University of Arizona. In her forties, Escalante returned to college to earn a master's degree in communication from the University of California San Diego.

After teaching English and journalism in Ajo and Tucson high schools in the 1970s, Escalante became a reporter at the *Stockton Record* and at the *Los Angeles Times*. At the *Los Angeles Times*, she was a member of a reporting team that produced a series on "Southern California's Latino Community," which was awarded the Pulitzer Prize gold medal for meritorious public service. Escalante was cited for her contributions to the series.

In the late 1980s, the reporter became a professor at the University of Arizona, where she taught journalism and served as adviser to the bilingual newspaper, *El Independiente*, which covered the City of South Tucson.

In 1990, Escalante was recognized for her university efforts with a Community Service Award from Chicanos Por La Causa for her "perseverance, invaluable contribution, and commitment to our youth." She also received the University of Arizona Hispanic Alumni Award for "indefatigable teaching efforts and academic excellence. In addition, her efforts were lauded with an appreciation award from Pueblo High School for *El Independiente* and its support of Pueblo High School and its community. *El Independiente* also earned an award from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Social Services for its coverage of the amnesty issue.

In pursuing graduate studies in the 1990s, Escalante was awarded the University of California San Diego President's Dissertation Fellowship for Under Represented Minorities; the UC Mexus Dissertation Grant for Chicano Studies; and the Ruben Salazar Award most Outstanding Candidate, Graduate Communications Scholarship from the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund. She was also named a San Diego Fellow, a fellowship for underrepresented minorities at UCSD, and a Freedom Forum Journalism Scholar, a graduate scholarship awarded by the Freedom Forum in Arlington, Virginia.

After her graduate studies, Escalante remained in San Diego, where she taught English, journalism, and Chicano Studies at San Diego Mesa College and where she was also advisor to its campus paper, which won several local, regional, and national awards.

She now teaches English and Chicano Studies at San Diego City College.