

I Love My  
Librarian!

**Nomination for Roberto Carlos Delgadillo**

Peter J. Shields Library  
University of California  
Davis, California

**NOMINATOR**

Miroslava Chavez-Garcia

**1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets him/her apart?**

Roberto Delgadillo should win the award because he is passionate about spreading his love for knowledge. His quirky and humorous rapport with students, staff, and faculty and his ability to make the library an easier place to navigate, particularly for historically underrepresented students, makes him an especially valued member on the campus. He is more than a reference librarian or a problem solver, however. He understands the larger academic profession as well as the world of publishing and knows what it takes to carry out first-rate research and publications. He is also familiar with the latest digital and social media that enables him to communicate in effective new ways across the campus. In short, Roberto is an invaluable resource at UC Davis.

**2. Please discuss how the nominee has helped you and/or others and made your experience of the library a more positive one. For instance, did the nominee assist you in a research project or enhance your students' learning experience?**

For the last few years, Roberto has been my “go to” source of information when I am stumped with my own research questions or am in need of assistance in guiding my students on their research projects in the Chicana/o Studies Department, which I chair. Indeed, Roberto, a specialist in Chicano/Latino/Latin American Studies, is an invaluable team player in the Chicana/o Studies Department’s curricular and research needs. Nearly every quarter, I invite Roberto to provide a “how to” session with my students, demonstrating the ways in which to find materials related to themes that are often buried or scarce resources. For instance, he attends my “U.S.-Mexico Border Relations” class every fall to provide students with the latest tools and techniques in finding primary and

secondary sources for their research papers. He's developed several databases (digital media sites) for students to access the latest materials (dissertations, books, articles) related to the U.S.-Mexico border, a topic that is constantly evolving. Roberto does not end his professional relationship with the students in the classroom. Rather, he makes himself available all quarter (in the library, through email, Facebook, etc.) and is ready to offer them assistance in finding resources.

Roberto's knowledge of the Chicano/Latino/Latin American subject areas and his creativity in finding materials has been invaluable not only to students but also to faculty, including myself, in the Chicana/o Studies Department and beyond. He knows where to locate items related to Chicanos/Latinos that are usually overlooked and marginalized in the larger academic world. In my own case, he helped me find a California Appellate Court Case dating to the 1930s, involving a Mexican American woman fighting the State's decision to sterilize her daughter, a case that figure prominently in my latest book, published earlier this year. Without his quick help, my progress in finishing my study would have slowed considerably.

Roberto also offers consulting services to the Chicana/o Studies Department on a regular basis. He works with the Chicana/o Studies Department Chair and faculty to assess current departmental holdings and future collection and curricular needs in the study of the U.S.-Mexican Border region, public health, migrant workers, juvenile delinquency, undocumented students in the educational pipeline, among other areas of study and interest in the department. He advocates, as well, for our curricular needs in the library, which often does not meet our teaching needs. When we request materials such as books, journals, and films for classroom use, he works hard to ensure that we have access to them. Doubtless, Roberto has enhanced significantly our curricular and teaching needs. In my mind, Roberto is a colleague as well as a librarian. On several occasions, I have contacted him for advice in the academic world, particularly publishing. Recently, I asked his input on how to assist a recent graduated undergraduate who seeks to publish an article. While I was quick to have the student pursue publication in a top journal, Roberto made me realize that this prospect was quite remote and suggested that the student continue to work on her project until it was ready. After a little thought, I agreed with him and was grateful for the insight.

**3. How does the nominee make the college, community college, or university a better place?**

Roberto makes UC Davis a better place by providing guidance and nurturance to Chicano/Latino students as well as other underrepresented students. In recent years, UC Davis has had difficulty with the recruitment and retention of Chicano/Latino male students specifically. Mentorship of these young men has become of grave importance as a means to keep them on the campus and to insure their graduation. Roberto has worked toward this effort by volunteering much of his time to connect with the Chicano/Latino community and with Chicano/Latino student organizations. He offers himself as a resource by participating in classrooms and seminars where he shares his passions and skills for research and always does so in a way that expresses his eagerness to help. He has

also connected with students in student-led organizations and with those outside of campus by participating in the annual Chicano/Latino Leadership Retreat (held annually in the fall), where he interacts with students through storytelling and one-on-one games of chess. His mentorship, outgoing personality, and friendly disposition are an added bonus, for it helps students feel less intimidated going into the main library, Shield's Library, where he works. Roberto, in short, helps to break down barriers for students "at risk" of feeling isolated and eventually dropping out of school.

Professor Gloria Rodriguez in the School of Education notes that Roberto, who is the librarian assigned to assist the School of Education, has carried out this work with great professional dedication, a quirky and endearing sense of humor, and the tenacity that is common among librarians but still deeply appreciated among our diverse students. "In particular," she wrote, "we have each year a cohort of students pursuing the Education Doctorate (Ed.D.) who are also full-time employed professionals who attend classes every third weekend throughout the academic year and regularly share rave reviews about their interactions with Roberto. He has accommodated their class schedules both in conducting crucial workshops to launch their dissertation work, as well as in focused one-on-one appointments that allow him to further guide individual students through the mazes that are our electronic databases and other library systems. We can honestly say that the majority of our graduates from that program can attribute the successful completion of their dissertation research, in part, to the support, instruction, and mentoring that Roberto provides along with his witty retorts and creative solutions to various research challenges. The accolades for Roberto also come from our Ph.D. and M.A. students, of course. Thanks to his efforts at making the library and all its resources accessible, understandable, and virtually seamless for our Ed.D. students, who are typically pressed for time and eager for efficient problem-solving strategies, Roberto's contributions are invaluable. The fact that he possesses expertise in such a wide range of disciplines and areas of study adds further to why he is our favorite librarian."

**4. How has the library, and the nominee in particular, had an impact on students and faculty and the teaching and learning process?**

Without Roberto, the UC Davis library and student access to the library would not be the same. Roberto, as noted earlier, makes the library a less intimidating and more inviting place for undergraduates. This makes the students more likely to visit and use the library over an extended period of time. Indeed, I have known students who have been touched by Roberto's generosity with exploring research topics and findings materials. One young man, in fact, an African American young man who happened to be a football player and a student in at least three of my classes, worked closely with Roberto in finding materials for his projects. As I learned later, this young man (who has since graduated and now attends UCLA as a master's student) sought Roberto's services throughout his senior year at UC Davis. Even today, after the student has graduated from UC Davis, Roberto continues to offer him advice on the world of academia.

It is clear to me that Roberto has impacted a wide range of students, particularly those in my classes in the last four-to-five years, if not more. Undoubtedly, his ability to reach out

to students, to teach them about the library's vast holdings, and to create a comfortable, user-friendly environment has affected many students at UC Davis. Not a quarter goes by that I don't have him visit my class or have him meet with students one-on-one. In short, he is critical to the development of a rigorous and well-rounded curriculum.

**5. How has the individual demonstrated leadership in the campus community?**

Roberto's involvement in numerous campus and off-campus organizations and activities demonstrates his leadership across the school community. At UC Davis, Roberto is an active member of the Chicano/Latino staff network and has participated in the annual Chicano/Latino Leadership Retreat. He is also a member of numerous library associations and scholarly societies and conducts outreach with ethnic studies units on and off campus. Roberto, for instance, has worked in collaboration with a local librarian at a nearby community college, Woodland Community College. He has represented the campus in international meetings as well, and has worked diligently on committees promoting diversity and providing library and information services to Latinos and the Spanish-speaking public. In short, Roberto is an extremely active member of our school community.