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Chon Noriega

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NAME: Chon Noriega

HOMETOWN: Los Angeles

PROFESSION: Professor of Film, Television, & Digital Media, UCLA; Dir. Chicano Studies Research Center; Author; Editor; Producer

"Hello my name is Chon Noriega and my vision is for people to make an impact—no matter

how big or small—because we are all created equal and we all have a voice.”

Chon Noriega has had a major impact on the story of Latino Americans.

He’s professor at [UCLA \(http://www.ucla.edu/\)](http://www.ucla.edu/)’s Department of [Theatre, Film, Television and Digital Media \(http://www.tft.ucla.edu/\)](http://www.tft.ucla.edu/); author of *Shot in America: Television, the State, and the Rise of Chicano Cinema*; editor of nine books dealing with Latino Media; and co-founder of the [National Association of Latino Independent Producers \(http://www.nalip.org/\)](http://www.nalip.org/)—so it’s no wonder he was named one of the top 100 Most Influential Hispanics by [Hispanic Business \(http://www.hispanicbusiness.com/\)](http://www.hispanicbusiness.com/).

Noriega says he’s so passionate about what he does and so involved in his community, because he wants to ensure Latinos are portrayed accurately in the media.

“The representation either was not there or was problematic, so I started looking at filmmakers who were trying to change that,” he said. “There was a fascinating history to be told in how they opened up space for themselves within TV and film in the 1970’s.”

Once he became a teacher, he started curating for museums and film festivals to bring the story to a wider audience. “I didn’t just want to sit back and do nothing. I wanted to improve the situation for these filmmakers.”

Noriega also helps ensure scholarships are available—including foundation funding for independent filmmakers and public funding for producers working in public TV.

“Education is essential as an investment in our future—not just economically but as a democracy,” said Noriega. “Within civil discourse and political interaction, we can have a debate about what’s important, particularly in a moment when we have limited resources.”

Noriega believes this year’s election is going to be critical— and citizens have a responsibility to be informed and care about things that go beyond their own personal stake in life.

“You can’t do anything until you figure out how you’re going to be involved. It’s as simple as being a part of bringing certain issues and certain facts into a broader dialogue.”

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