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Chicana and Chicano Studies Scholar to Receive II Galardón Don Luis Leal

María Herrera-Sobek, professor of Chicano and Chicana Studies at UC Santa Barbara, has been named to receive the II Galardón Don Luis Leal award from Asociación HispaUSA, a non-profit organization that promotes the study and research of the Hispanic community in the United States.

The award will be presented in May at a special ceremony to be held during the organization's IX International Conference on Chicano Literature and Culture in Orviedo, Spain.

Bestowed every two years, the Galardón Don Luis Leal recognizes the scholarly research of an outstanding scholar of Latino origin in the U.S. It is named for Don Luis Leal, a professor in the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies at UCSB for 30 years, until his death in 2010. Leal was a world-renowned scholar of Mexican, Chicano and Latin American literature.

According to the nominating committee, Herrera-Sobek, who is also UCSB's vice chancellor for diversity, equity and academic policy, was recognized for her scholarly and creative writing trajectory in the cultural and literary world of Chicano letters. "Her work is highly respected both inside and outside the United States and she is known for her commitment to making Chicano/a literature and culture known all over the world," the committee noted.

“The decision by the Asociación HispaUSA to honor the scholarly contributions of internationally acclaimed scholar, María Herrera-Sobek with the II Galardón Don Luis Leal award is another impressive achievement for our renowned colleague,” said Denise Segura, professor and chair of the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies.

“I am delighted and honored to be selected as the recipient of the II Galardón Don Luis Leal award,” said Herrera-Sobek. “Professor Luis Leal was a great scholar and showed the outmost integrity and generosity of spirit toward his students. To receive an award bearing Professor Leal’s name greatly honors me and I am grateful to the nominating committee for bestowing this upon me.”

Herrera-Sobek has taught courses in Chicano and Chicana Studies for 40 years, including 17 at UCSB. Among her research interests are film documentaries, nationalist and ethnic construction theories and theories on aesthetic activism. She is the author of numerous books, articles and scholarly essays, including “Chicano Folklore: A Handbook”; “Northward Bound: The Mexican Immigrant Experience in Ballad and Song”; and “The Mexican Corrido: A Feminist Analysis.”

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.