

# Partner of Cesar Chavez, Dolores Huerta, appears with Bill Clinton at rally

By Rosendo Ramirez  
Hispanic Triangle News

Dolores Huerta, co-founder of the United Farm Workers, labor leader and organizer, social activist, recently joined past President Bill Clinton in Beaumont at the Hillary Clinton rally.

She urged everyone to vote for her friend Hillary.

"Mrs. Clinton has the experience that is needed to be president because of her involvement representing those who could not defend themselves against big corporations," she said.

When asked what she thought about the renaming of Fletcher Elementary School to Cesar Chavez, she said that it would be a fitting tribute now that the school was 80 percent Hispanic. Chavez is the perfect role model for the young Hispanic students and other children, she said.

Huerta was born in 1930 in New Mexico. Her parents divorced when she was very young, and her mother in Stockton, Calif., raised her. Dolores Huerta helped her mother run a restaurant and hotel to support the family. She continued to follow her father's career as a migrant laborer and coal miner.

His union activity helped inspire

her work with the unions. Her involvement with the unions put strains on her first two marriages ending in divorce. Dolores Huerta became involved in a community group supporting farm workers, which merged with the AFL-CIO's Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee. Dolores Huerta served as secretary-treasurer of the AWOC.

It was during this time that she met Cesar Chavez, and they formed the Farm Workers Association, which became the United Farm Workers. Dolores Huerta served a key role in the early years of farm worker organizing for which, she has only recently been given full credit.

She also worked as the coordinator for the East Coast efforts in the table grape boycott. It was during this time that she also became connected with the growing feminist movement.

In the 1970s, Huerta ran the farm workers' union's political arm and helped lobby for legislative protections. In 1988, while demonstrating peacefully against the policies of candidate George Bush, she was severely injured when the police clubbed the demonstrators; she eventually won a considerable financial settlement from the police, as well as changes in police policy on handling demonstrations.



Roger Cowles/Special to Hispanic Triangle News

Doloris Huerta listens as former President Bill Clinton speaks at a rally in Beaumont in support of the candidacy of Hillary Clinton.



File photo

Cesar Chavez used non-violent protests to bring unsafe and unfair working conditions to the attention of the country and win rights for farm workers.

## Chavez leader in bringing rights to workers

Cesar Chavez was a union organizer and social activist of the 1960s. The son of migrant laborers, Chavez founded the National Farm Workers Association and later the United Farm Workers.

He led a five-year nonviolent boycott against California grape growers, protesting poor working conditions and the use of pesticides harmful to farm workers. The boycott became a cause throughout the nation and was finally successful in winning new rights for workers. Chavez achieved national prominence becoming the most well-

### Spotlight: Cesar Chavez

- Born: 31 March 1927
- Birthplace: Yuma, Arizona
- Died: 23 April 1993 (natural causes)
- Best Known As: Leader of the 1960s grape boycott
- April is Cesar Chavez Month

known Chicano leader of his time.

Union contracts delivered better wages and working conditions for farmers and their families. His

union grew to a peak of about 70,000 members and engaged in a range of other successful boycott campaigns. Largely as a result of Chavez's pressure, California in 1975 enacted an Agricultural Labor Relations Act which recognized the right of farm workers to organize collectively.

In 1994 Chavez was posthumously awarded the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. "Sí Se Puede (Yes WE Can)" became the battle cry of the Hispanic Community.