

## **Celebrating Diversity Throughout the Year Elementary Classroom Community**

“Books can make a difference in dispelling prejudice and building community: not with role models and recipes, not with noble messages, but with stories that make us imagine the lives of others.” ~Hazel Rochman, *Against Borders: Promoting Books for a Multicultural World*

**About Equity & Diversity within the Classroom Community:** We believe that the inclusion of multiple voices is multi-pronged. As we revise Shared Literacy, we seek to include titles within each unit that represent the myriad of voices that make up our global society. In addition, we believe that we can also celebrate diversity through the nationally designated months to shine a spotlight on the contributions that have often been left out.

As an educational institution, we value curiosity around cultures, celebrations, and traditions that make up the complexity of our global society. As a public education institution, we are mindful that we want learners to be well-rounded and aware of the complexity of our global society. Because of this, the equity team has designed the following principles to guide decision-making around activities within the learning environment and school community. We are also mindful that the celebration of any one tradition should not outweigh the traditions and celebrations of others. We want every person in the organization to feel welcomed, seen, and safe at school. All belong here; when we embrace the diversity of our community, we add to the collective experience, thus creating joyful learning opportunities for all.

In District 129, we are guided by the following principles when deciding on activities:

- We believe that all learners have the right to and deserve to be included, accepted, and to contribute unique perspectives and experiences.
- We value the creation of a school community where each individual is accepted and embraced for who and what they bring to the learning space.
- We believe that a sense of belonging involves the acceptance, care for the needs, and growth of all learners.
- We believe that every individual is shaped and influenced by multiple factors that add to an educational community's rich tapestry.

“Let's invite one another in. Maybe then we can begin to fear less, to make fewer wrong assumptions, to let go of the biases and stereotypes that unnecessarily divide us.”

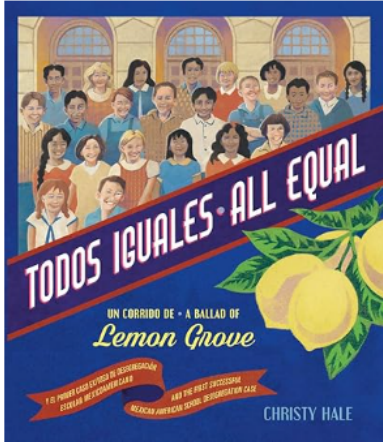
~Michelle Obama, *Becoming*

“In diversity there is beauty and there is strength.” ~Maya Angelou

## National Hispanic Heritage Month - Sept. 15 - Oct. 15

### [Todos Iguales: All Equal](#)

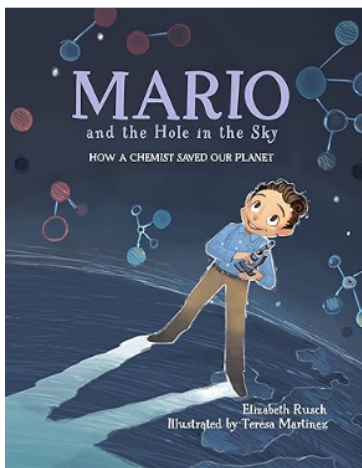
By Christy Hale  
978-0892394272



Ten-year-old Roberto Álvarez loved school. He, his siblings, and neighbors attended the Lemon Grove School along with the white children from nearby homes. The children studied and played together as equals. In the summer of 1930, the Lemon Grove School Board decided to segregate the Mexican American students. The board claimed the children had a "language handicap" and needed to be "Americanized." When the Mexican families learned of this plan, they refused to let their children enter the new, inferior school that had been erected. They formed a neighborhood committee and sought legal help. Roberto, a bright boy who spoke English well, became the plaintiff in a suit filed by the Mexican families. On March 12, 1931, the case of Roberto Álvarez v. the Board of Trustees of the Lemon Grove School District was decided. The judge ruled in favor of the children's right to equal education, ordering that Roberto and all the other Mexican American students be immediately reinstated in the Lemon Grove School. This nonfiction bilingual picture book, written in both English and Spanish, tells the empowering story of The Lemon Grove Incident--a major victory in the battle against school segregation, and a testament to the tenacity of an immigrant community and its fight for equal rights.

### [Mario and the Hole in the Sky](#)

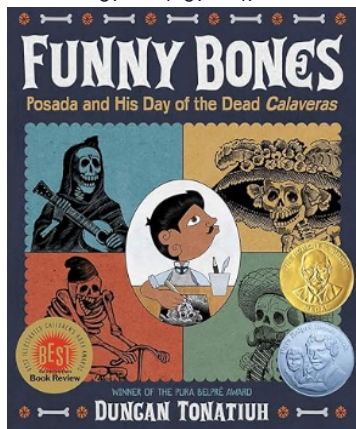
By Elizabeth Rusch  
978-1580895811



Mexican American Mario Molina is a modern-day hero who helped solve the ozone crisis of the 1980s. Growing up in Mexico City, Mario was a curious boy who studied hidden worlds through a microscope. As a young man in California, he discovered that CFCs, used in millions of refrigerators and spray cans, were tearing a hole in the earth's protective ozone layer. Mario knew the world had to be warned--and quickly. Today Mario is a Nobel laureate and a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. His inspiring story gives hope in the fight against global warming.

### [Funny Bones](#)

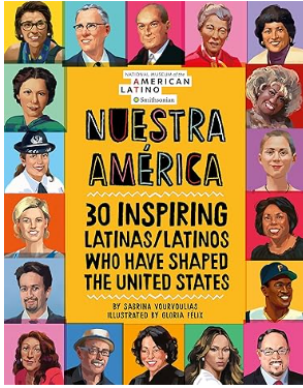
By Duncan Tonatiuh  
978-1419716478



Funny Bones tells the story of how calaveras came to be. The amusing figures are the creation of Mexican artist José Guadalupe (Lupe) Posada (1852–1913). Lupe learned the art of printing at a young age and soon had his own shop. In a country that was not known for freedom of speech, he drew political cartoons, much to the amusement of the local population but not to the politicians. While he continued to draw cartoons, he is best known today for his calavera drawings. They have become synonymous with Mexico's Día de Muertos festival. Calaveras are skeletons performing all sorts of activities, both everyday and festive: dancing in the streets, playing instruments in a band, pedaling bicycles, promenading in the park, and even sweeping the sidewalks. They are not intended to be frightening, but rather to celebrate the joy of living and provide humorous observations about people. Author and illustrator Tonatiuh relates the pivotal moments of Lupe's life and explains the different artistic processes he used. Juxtaposing his own artwork with Lupe's, Tonatiuh brings to light the remarkable life and work of a man beloved by many but whose name has remained in obscurity.

[Nuestra America](#)

By Sabrina Vourvoulias  
978-0762497478



The stories in this book cover each figure's cultural background, childhood, and the challenges and opportunities they met in pursuit of their goals. A glossary of terms and discussion question-filled reading guide, created by the Smithsonian Latino Center, encourage further research and exploration. Twenty-three of the stories featured in this anthology will also be included in the future Molina Family Latino Gallery, the first national gallery dedicated to Latina/o/xs at the Smithsonian. This book is a must-have for teachers looking to create a more inclusive curriculum, Latina/o/x youth who need to see themselves represented as an important part of the American story, and all parents who want their kids to have a better understanding of American history. Featuring beautiful portraits by Gloria Félix, this is a book that children (and adults) will page through and learn from again and again.