

In 1966, Dolores negotiated the first UFWOC contract with the Schenley Wine Company. This was the first time in the history of the United States that a negotiating committee comprised of farmworkers negotiated a collective bargaining agreement with an agricultural corporation. The grape strike continued and Dolores, as the main UFWOC negotiator, not only successfully negotiated more contracts for farmworkers,

she also set up the hiring halls, the farm worker ranch committees, administered the contracts and conducted over one hundred grievance procedures on the workers behalf.

These contracts established the first health and benefit plans for farmworkers

Dolores spoke out early and often against toxic pesticides that threaten farm workers, consumers, and the environment. These early UFWOC agreements required growers to stop using such dangerous pesticides as DDT and Parathyon. Dolores lobbied in Sacramento and Washington D.C., organized field strikes, directed UFW boycotts, and led farm workers campaigns for political candidates. As a legislative advocate, Dolores became one of the UFW's most visible spokespersons. Robert F. Kennedy acknowledged her help in winning the 1968 California Democratic Presidential Primary moments before he was shot in Los Angeles.

Dolores directed the UFW's national grape boycott taking the plight of the farmworkers to the consumers. The boycott resulted in the entire California table grape industry signing a three-year collective bargaining agreement with the United Farm Workers.

In 1973 the grape contracts expired and the grape growers signed sweetheart contracts with the Teamsters Union. Dolores organized picket lines and continued to lobby. In 1974 she was instrumental in securing unemployment benefits for farmworkers. The UFW continued to organize not only the grape workers but the workers in the vegetable industry as well until violence erupted and farm workers were being killed. Once again the UFW turned to the consumer boycott. Dolores directed the east coast boycott of grapes, lettuce, and Gallo wines. The boycott resulted in the enactment of the Agricultural Labor Relations Act, the first law of its kind in the United States, which granted farm workers the right to collectively organize and bargain for better wages and working conditions. In 1975 Dolores lobbied against federal guest worker programs and spearheaded legislation granting amnesty for farm workers that had lived, worked, and paid taxes in the United States for many years but were unable to enjoy the privileges of citizenship. This resulted in the Immigration Act of 1985.

At 69, Dolores Huerta still works long hours for the union she co-founded and nurtured. Many days find her in cities across North America promoting "La Causa" (the farmworkers' cause) and women's rights. For more than thirty years Dolores Huerta remained Cesar Chavez' most loyal and trusted advisor. Together they founded the Robert F. Kennedy Medical Plan, the Juan De La Cruz Farm Worker Pension Fund, the the Farm Workers Credit Union, the first medical and pension plan and credit union for farm workers. They also formed the National Farm Workers Service Center, Inc., an community based affordable housing and Spanish language radio communications organization with five Spanish radio stations.

As an advocate for farm worker rights Dolores has been arrested twenty-two times for non-violent peaceful union activities.

In 1984 the California State Senate bestowed upon her the Outstanding Labor Leader Award. In 1993 Dolores was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame. That same year she received the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Roger Baldwin Medal of Liberty Award; and the Eugene V. Debs Foundation Outstanding American Award, and the Ellis Island Medal of Freedom Award. She is also the recipient of the Consumers' Union Trumpeter's Award. In 1998 she was one of three Ms. Magazine's, "*Women of the Year*", and the *Ladies Home Journal's*, "*100 Most Important Women of the 20th Century*".

Dolores has received honorary doctorate degrees from:



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Dolores Huerta Biography

Dolores C. Huerta is the co-founder and First Vice President Emeritus of the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO ("UFW"). The mother of 11 children, 14 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, Dolores has played a major role in the American civil rights movement.

Dolores Huerta was born on April 10, 1930 in a mining town in northern New Mexico, where her father, Juan Fernandez, was a miner, field worker, union activist and State Assemblyman. Her parents divorced when she was three years

old. Her mother, Alicia Chavez, raised Dolores, along with her two brothers, and two sisters, in the central San Joaquin Valley farm worker community of Stockton, California. Her mother was a businesswoman who owned a restaurant and a 70-room hotel, which often put up farm worker families for free.

Dolores' mother taught her to be generous and caring for others. Because of her mother's community activism, Dolores learned to be outspoken. After high school, Dolores attended the University of Pacific's Delta Community College and received a teaching degree. After teaching grammar school, Dolores left her job because in her words, "I couldn't stand seeing kids come to class hungry and needing shoes. I thought I could do more by organizing farm workers than by trying to teach their hungry children."

In 1955, she was a founding member of the Stockton chapter of the Community Service Organization ("CSO"), a grass roots organization started by Fred Ross, Sr. The CSO battled segregation and police brutality, led voter registration drives, pushed for improved public services and fought to enact new legislation. Recognizing the needs of farm workers, while working for the CSO, Dolores organized and founded the Agricultural Workers Association in 1960. She became a fearless lobbyist in Sacramento, and in 1961 succeeded in obtaining the citizenship requirements removed from pension, and public assistance programs. She also was instrumental in passage of legislation allowing voters the right to vote in Spanish, and the right of individuals to take the driver's license examination in their native language. In 1962 she lobbied in and Washington DC for an end to the "captive labor" Bracero Program.

It was through her work with the CSO that Dolores met Cesar Chavez. They both realized the need to organize farm workers. In 1962, after the CSO turned down Cesar's request, as their president, to organize farm workers, Cesar and Dolores resigned from the CSO. Dolores, single with seven children, joining Cesar and his family in Delano, California. There they formed the National Farm Workers Association ("NFWA"), the predecessor to the UFW.

In addition to organizing, Dolores continued to lobby.. In 1963 she was instrumental in securing Aid For Dependent Families ("AFDC"), for the unemployed and underemployed, and disability insurance for farm workers in the State of California.

By 1965 Dolores and Cesar had recruited farm workers, and their families, throughout

the San Joaquin Valley. On September 8th of that year, Filipino members of the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee ("AWOC") demanded higher wages and struck Delano area grape growers. Although Dolores and Cesar had planned to organize farmworkers for several more years before confronting the large corporate grape industry, they could not ignore their Filipino brothers' request. On September 16, 1965 the NFWA voted to join in the strike. Over 5,000 grape workers walked off their jobs in what is now known as the famous "Delano Grape Strike." The two organizations merged in 1966 to form the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee ("UFWOC"). The strike would last five years.

New College of San Francisco, 1990

San Francisco State University, 1993

N.I. New Palz University, 1999

Aside from currently serving as the Secretary-Treasurer of the United Farm Workers, she is the Vice-President for the Coalition for Labor Union Women, the Vice-President of the California AFL-CIO, and is a board member for the Fund For The Feminist Majority which advocates for the political and equal rights for women.

OTHER BOARDS:

Democratic Socialist of America

Latinas for Choice

FAIR (Fairness in Media Reporting)

Center for Voting and Democracy

FEDERAL COMMISSIONS:

Minority Apprentice Programs, 1965

Advisory Committee on Immigration, 1980

Commission of Agricultural Workers, 1988 to 1993

STATE COMMISSIONS:

Industrial Welfare Commission, 1960

Board of Directors of the California State Library Services, 1980-1982