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# Sister City - Ciudad Hermana Watsonville & Veracruz



Presentation for Watsonville City Council

December 12, 2023

Esperanza del Valle: Janet R Johns, Ruby Ann Vasquez & Leticia Gonzalez Ponce

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# Watsonville City Council - Dec. 12, 2023

**Purpose:** To propose the establishment of a Sister City between Watsonville and H.Veracruz

We will share Esperanza del Valle's (EDV):

- Relationship with Watsonville community
  - Historical collaboration with the dance community of Veracruz
  - Current relationship between EDV and Veracruz
  - Rationale for establishing this Sister City
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# **EDV's Impact in the Watsonville Community**

- **Founded in 1980 by Janet Johns & Frances Urbina**
  - **Original members were bilingual educators to serve the students & families of Watsonville**
  - **Performing in local community events, in PVUSD schools and local venues**
  - **Immediately began working with Master Instructors**
  - **Youth dance groups were formed by various EDV members**
  - **EDV's open door policy at no charge has allowed 100's of community members to take classes & perform with the company**
  - **Resident dance company of Watsonville, received various proclamations and the City has sponsored multiple events for the 40+ years**
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# EDV's Impact in the Watsonville Community

- **Commitment to maintain authenticity of style, movement and attire by working with Mexico's renowned Master Instructors**
  - **EDV hosts Master Instructors to come to Watsonville annually and shares their knowledge in our community**
  - **Offers classes to many adult and youth organizations**
  - **Offers workshops, open studios and lectures free to the community**
  - **Showcases dances at local community events, very often free of charge**



EDV with SC Symphony, Fall  
2019 @ Watsonville Plaza

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**Recipient of the US-Mexico Fund for Culture Grant allows us to**

- Take a team of 7 to Veracruz, Huasteca region during Dia de los Muertos
- Begin our research on 7 indigenous danzas
- Return to Port to resume classes w/ Maestro Cabrera

**5 EDV dancers travel to Xalapa Veracruz to attend the ANGF conference**

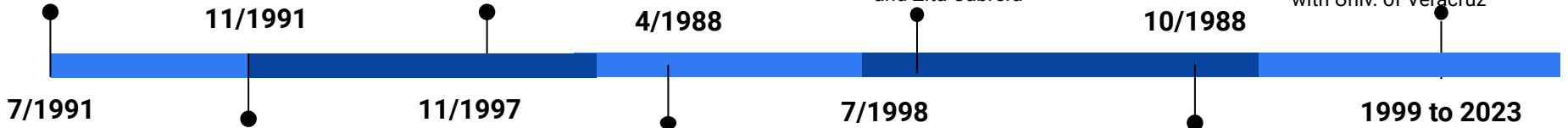


**Continuing Collaboration**

- Janet & Ruby continue travelling to Veracruz to learn
- Takes youth dancers and other EDV dancers, Summer 2023
- Establish formal agreement with Univ. of Veracruz

**Return to Veracruz**

- Complete research in the Huasteca
- Return to Puerto to continue working with Maestro Mario and Zita Cabrera



**Maestro Mario Cabrera Salgado arrives to Watsonville**

- Teach 6 new dances
- Produce performance of Los Panaderos

**Maestro Navarette arrives to Watsonville**

- EDV works with Maestro for 2 weeks
- Choreograph dances of the Huasteca and to prepare for our performance at the Mello Center, Fall

**Maestro Navarette returns to Watsonville**

- Mounts & produce the performance at the Mello



**Prof. Gabriel Mendoza Torres**

***“El propósito principal fundamental de ustedes es verificar si el material que aprendieron en Xalapa es real. No puede difundir algo como institución si no tiene la certeza que es una realidad...que es cierto, lo que están haciendo.”***



**Prof. Candido Hernandez  
Navarrete**

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## Fieldwork

- EDV team went to each community to experience and document (videotape, audiotape, photograph, interview) the dances as they are traditionally presented.
  - Research began in each comunidad indigena with the elders or leaders of the danza
  - Interviews conducted in Spanish
  - Trust established
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# El Tigrillo

Mata del Tigre, Tantoyuca (étnia huasteco)









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# Danza San José, Danza de las Mujeres

Tepexocoyo, Chicontepepec, Veracruz

étnia mexicana - nahuatl









# Danza Moctezuma

Taxtitla, Chalma, Veracruz

Étnia nahua



# The First International Dance Symposium: Migrants with Roots in Veracruz June 12 to 20, 2023

“No teaching is or ever can be innocent –it must be situated in a cultural context, a historical flow, and economic condition.”

William Ayers



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# Highlights of the Symposium - Daily Rehearsals



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# Dance Classes & Fandango in Tlacotalpan





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# Todos bailan su son - Zocalo in Veracruz



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# Todos bailan su son ... Zocalo in Veracruz



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# Ballet Folklórico del Puerto de Veracruz, EDV and Estrellas de Esperanza



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## **Establishing a Formal Collaboration between the University of Veracruz and EDV/Cabrillo College**

- Janet, Ruby and Leti met with Dr. Leon Colorado, Lic. Ana Lilia Saldaña Ortiz and Daniel del Valle Hernandez (Veracruz, June, 2023)
  - Met with Lic. Elizabeth Guerrero Jimenez at the Teatro Reforma in Veracruz to discuss establishing a Sister City between Veracruz and Watsonville
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## Met with Lic. Elizabeth Guerrero Jimenez



On behalf of the Mayor Lic. Patricia Lobeira Rodriguez de Yunez, Lic. Elizabeth Guerrero Jimenez met with us and affirmed the idea of establishing a Sister City with Watsonville.

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# Establishing a Formal Collaboration between the University of Veracruz and EDV/Cabrillo College

- We met with Dr. John Gaulty, Dean of VAPA and David King, Director of the Dance Department at Cabrillo to seek endorsement of the Agreement between the two institutions (Cabrillo College, July, 2023)
- Agreement was written up and signed on Sunday, November 19, 2023
- Three visiting maestros came for three weeks Oct. 30-Nov. 21 to work with EDV dancers to mount the production of “México en el Corazón”
- The maestros worked with over 200 PVUSD students over the course of three weeks



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# 2023 México en el Corazón



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# First International Folklórico Dance Conference in California, August 2024

"Por el Reforzamiento de la Identidad Cultural"

“Reinforcing Cultural Identity”

- **Who:** Ballet Folklórico del Puerto de Veracruz de la Universidad Veracruzana is bringing 20 dancers and 8 musicians to Watsonville/Aptos
  - **What:** Dance and Music classes for youth and adults
  - **When:** August 15-25, 2023
  - **Where:** Watsonville Cabrillo College, PVUSD Schools, Watsonville Art Center, Aptos Cabrillo College
  - **Why:** To learn the dance and music traditions from Veracruz and
    - to elevate and broaden the relationship established over the past three decades between the dance communities of Watsonville and Veracruz
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## **Why a Sister City with H. Veracruz, Mexico?**

1. The focus on cultural arts elevates our city onto the international stage
  2. The groundwork is set. This foundation allows for further development and exploration
  3. Veracruz and Watsonville also have strong agricultural traditions
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Universidad Veracruzana



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***This is a collaborative effort, established between relationships and commitments with those who hold the keys to the funds of knowledge in the indigenous communities of México and those who are learners, committed to transfer this knowledge to their own community.***



Watsonville  
CALIFORNIA

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**Thank you for your time**  
**Questions?**



*40 años de Esperanza*

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