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# The Eastsider

## **East L.A. special effects team creates for a post-pandemic future**

### **Plus: COVID-19 test site at East LA College expands services and former Congressman Esteban Torres honored at UCLA**

July 22, 2020

By Antonio Mejías-Rentas

## **Hometown hero honored**

Former congressman **Esteban Torres** will receive the UCLA Medal, the university's highest honor, in a [virtual ceremony](#) at 5pm on Wednesday.

Torres served eight terms in the House of Representatives, from **1983 to 1999**, representing the 34th Congressional District –which includes East LA. He had been a labor organizer for the United Auto Workers union and later served as an ambassador to UNESCO.

A lifelong advocate for the arts, and an artist himself, he chaired the National Latino Media Council from 1999 to 2016.

“His life is exemplary of the standards that are represented in UCLA’s mission as a public university,” said Chon Noriega, director of the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center and professor in the School of Theater, Film and Television. The center is home to Torres’ extensive personal papers.

Born in Arizona in 1930, Torres moved to East LA with his mother and grandmother in 1936, after his father was deported to Mexico. He attended public school in East L.A. and graduated from Garfield in 1949.

In 2010, a new high school in East Los Angeles was named in his honor.