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News Release

Union Pacific Railroad Museum Partners with the University of Nebraska at Omaha to Memorialize Latino Railroad Workers

For Immediate Release:

Council Bluffs, Iowa, June 1, 2021 – The Union Pacific Railroad Museum has received grant funding to partner with the University of Nebraska at Omaha’s Office of Latino/Latin American Studies (OLLAS) to capture the oral histories of Latino railroad workers in the Omaha Metro area. The Omaha Community Foundation provided a grant for the project, which will be managed by UNO professor Ramon Guerra and overseen by OLLAS Director, Cristián Doña-Reveco.

The stories that are gathered will be cataloged and added to the Criss Library collection, as well as the Union Pacific Collection at the Union Pacific Museum. Work on the project is expected to continue throughout 2021.

This collaborative project seeks to improve and expand the documentation of the history of Omaha’s Latino communities, as well as shine a light on the Latino experience in the early 21st century. Interviewees will be invited to participate with the assistance of the Union Pacific’s Latino Employee Network (LEN) and other community organizations and networks.

Oral histories like these are used to fill in the gaps in historical documentation by allowing those usually not included on the historical record— often ethnic and racial minorities, women, disenfranchised populations, among others—to have a voice and a presence in history. This is particularly relevant in the case of Latino railroad workers. The Latino community played a significant role in the construction of the railroad, but their participation is mostly unrecognized, as is the continuous role Latinos have played in every aspect of railroad work.

The Union Pacific Railroad Museum is located at 200 Pearl Street in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and is reopening for public admission July 2, 2021. Hours will be Friday and Saturday, 12:00 – 6:00 p.m. Admission is free. Please visit www.uprrmuseum.org to reserve your visitation time.

www.uprrmuseum.org

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About Union Pacific Railroad Museum

The Union Pacific Railroad Museum is housed in a historic Carnegie Library building in Council Bluffs, Iowa, where visitors will discover an extensive compilation of artifacts, photographs, documents, and equipment from more than 150 years of our nation's most ambitious endeavors – including constructing the transcontinental railroad and settling the West. Among the most popular museum exhibits are "America Travels by Rail," which celebrates the height of passenger travel; the Lincoln Collection, featuring artifacts from President Abraham Lincoln's rail car and funeral; and an exhibit that features the technology and innovation that sustain Union Pacific as a railroad industry leader. Our mission is to share American History through the lens of the railroad; connecting generations who have been impacted by Union Pacific.

About the University of Nebraska at Omaha's Office of Latino/Latin American Studies (OLLAS)

Established in 2003 with the support of UNO faculty, staff, and students as well as the metropolitan community, OLLAS has helped fill a void in the Nebraska and Great Plains region's infrastructure dedicated to the productive incorporation of the new and growing Latino population into the political, economic, and social life of the region. The office is dedicated to developing our institutional capacities and academic initiatives aimed at improving our understanding of Latino/Latin American issues and populations within and across borders.

About Union Pacific's Latino Employee Network

The Latino Employee Network was established to serve as a liaison with management to promote a better understanding of the issues and concerns among Latino employees. LEN endeavors to ensure the full integration of Latinos into the workplace through partnering with the company on recruitment, development and retention initiatives. LEN also has established strong partnerships with Omaha's Hispanic community through its many social and cultural projects. Founded in 2005, LEN now has a membership with fully functioning field chapters in Ft. Worth, San Antonio and Houston, and interest groups in Cheyenne and Denver.