

NEWS FROM ...

CITY COLLEGE OF SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF MARKETING AND PUBLIC INFORMATION
S-194, 50 Phelan Avenue • San Francisco, CA 94112
Phone (415) 239-3680 • Fax (415) 452-5150
Contact: MARTHA LUCEY, Dean



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City College of San Francisco to dedicate Olmec Head October 9

SAN FRANCISCO, California, September 21, 2004 — A replica of a giant Olmec Head, San Lorenzo #1, will be dedicated on Saturday, October 9 at 1:30 P.M. in the garden courtyard adjacent to the Diego Rivera Theatre on City College of San Francisco's Ocean Avenue Campus, 50 Phelan Avenue (near Judson).

The Honorable Miguel Aleman Velazco, the popular outgoing governor of the Mexican state of Veracruz, will lead the celebration of the installation of the multi-ton stone sculpture known as "El Rey." Alfonso de Maria y Campos, Consul General of Mexico in San Francisco; Harry S. Parker III, Director of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; and Dr. Philip R. Day, Jr., Chancellor of City College of San Francisco will be part of the ceremony.

In 1862 workmen clearing a field in the state of Veracruz uncovered a stone sculpture in the shape of an expressionless face with piercing eyes, a flat broad nose, and thick, down-turned lips. This discovery would open the door to scientific inquiry into the mysterious Olmec culture that thrived in the fertile jungles of lowland Mexico 1200 B.C.—400 B.C. It was one of the earliest civilizations in the Americas.

There are 17 classic heads which are considered by scholars to be the hallmark of Olmec civilization, believed by archaeologists to be the 'mother culture' of Mexico, the roots of the later Maya and Aztec cultures.

Under the leadership of Governor Miguel Aleman Velazco, the state of Veracruz has commissioned faithful replicas of the heads and placed them in different cities around the globe. Through the sponsorship of Harry S. Parker III, City College of San Francisco has been selected as a recipient of one of the heads.

To give the massive sculpture a Mexican cultural setting, the plaza area is being reconfigured to be evocative of Frida Kahlo's garden at the Casa Azul, the colonial-style house in suburban Coyoacan, Mexico, where Kahlo was born, grew up and later lived with her muralist husband Diego Rivera from 1941 until her death at age 47 in 1954.