



## NMSU Library News Release

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### **Participant in “Salt of the Earth” Strike to Speak at University Library**

Lorenzo Torrez, a labor activist from New Mexico, will visit the New Mexico State University campus on Monday and Tuesday October 15 and 16, 2001. The University Library will sponsor a program featuring a talk by Torrez followed by a screening of the 1954 film “Salt of the Earth” about the Empire Zinc Strike in Hurley, New Mexico. Torrez, one of the actual participants in the strike, has a small role in the film. The program will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, October 15, 2001, on the second floor of Branson Library. A library Special Collections exhibit highlighting local involvement in the film, based on Torrez’ papers and local newspapers from 1950-1952, will be available for viewing.

During his visit to campus, Torrez will also speak to several classes about his labor experiences. His presentation to Professor Janet Tanski’s class “Economic Development of Latin America” is open to the public as seating permits. The class is scheduled for 10:20 a.m. to 11:35 a.m. on Tuesday, October 16, 2001, in Room 106 of the Business Complex.

Born in Gila, New Mexico, Torrez began working in mining camps at the age of 16 and continued working in them for the next 25 years. In 1950 his unit of the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers Union went on strike for better wages and working conditions from the Empire Zinc Corporation. The strike ended successfully in February 1952.

During the strike Torrez became associated with the Communist Party and has remained affiliated with it. Currently living in Tucson, Arizona, he is active in politics, and with his wife, Anita, he runs the Salt of the Earth Labor School.

Torrez has donated his personal papers and book collection to the University Library Southwest and Border Research Center. The papers are available for use by researchers in the Rio Grande Historical Collections and the books will be cataloged for Special Collections.

For more information regarding Lorenzo Torrez’ visit to campus, please contact Molly Molloy at 646-6931 or email [mmolloy@lib.nmsu.edu](mailto:mmolloy@lib.nmsu.edu). For information regarding the use of the Lorenzo Torrez Papers, please contact Portia Vescio at 646-4746 or email [pvescio@lib.nmsu.edu](mailto:pvescio@lib.nmsu.edu).