

GOVEA, JESSICA (1947–2005)

A fighter for justice and the underprivileged, Govea hailed from Porterville, California where she harvested the fields alongside her parents. Fortunate to receive an education, she attended Bakersfield Community College during the height of the civil rights movement. Govea began to organize with the United Farm Workers during the Delano grape strike, promoted civic participation among Mexicans, and community activism. She became a full time organizer traveling to Canada to direct the international boycott. Govea was elected to the national executive board of La Causa in 1977, the second woman after Dolores Huerta to be so honored. After the strikes were settled, she turned her attention to working with Central American activists in refugee communities in the U.S. Govea held a number of positions in labor organizations including the AFL-CIO, and has been appointed to faculty positions such as the Department of Labor and Employment Relations at Rutgers University. A recognized leader in American labor history, Govea has appeared in numerous films on the Chicano movement and women's issues.