

## **MORENO, LUISA (1907–1992)**

“One person can’t do anything; it’s only with others that things are accomplished.”

Born as Blanca Rosa Rodriguez López into a privileged coffee growing family in Guatemala, Moreno rejected her birthright in the 1920s. She became a journalist in Mexico City and published a collection of poems, *El vendedor de cocuyos*. Married and with a daughter to raise, Moreno moved to New York City where she joined the Communist party and organized la Liga de Costureras, a garment workers’ union in Spanish Harlem. Moreno organized African American and Latino cigar workers for the American Federation of Labor. As an organizer for the newly formed UCAPOWA-CIO, Moreno took charge of the Texas Pecan Sheller’s strike. She became the UCAPOWA-CIO’s vice president and the first Latina to serve on a state CIO council. Her driving commitment to organize a national Latino civil rights conference in 1939 led to the formation of el Congreso de Pueblos de Habla Espanola. The first national civil rights assembly, the group called for an end to segregation in public facilities, housing, education and employment. Pitted against the Teamsters in a campaign to organize canneries in northern California in the 1940s, Moreno faced red-baiting and physical assault. She was deported in 1950, a “voluntary departure under warrant of deportation,” because of her Communist party connections.