

David A. Fredrickson Lifetime Achievement Award, March 2020

Julia Bendímez Patterson

by Richard Carrico and William Eckhardt

In March 2020, at the annual meeting in Riverside, the Society for California Archaeology proudly presented the David A. Fredrickson Lifetime Achievement Award to Julia Bendímez Patterson for her 30+ years of dedication and work as a strong advocate for archaeology in both of the Californias. Given California's geography and well-known historic human factors, the heritage of California is truly multi-cultural and bi-national. California's border region between Mexico and the United States is composed of diverse terrains in which various species, peoples, and indigenous tribes have made their homes. The International Boundary, shaped by the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, draws an artificial and solely political boundary bisecting the Peninsula of Baja California from Alta California. Over time the environmental issues and challenges faced in management of bi-national distribution of shared resources, water supplies, and conservation of eco-systems have increased.

Since 1986, Julia has served in the complex and trying role as the *delegada* for Mexico's Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) in Baja California. The position of *delegada* is an appointed position meaning that she served under six national administrations and decades of waning and waxing financial and political support from the government. Through it all she has grown the Baja California INAH Center, ensured its stability, and positioned personnel to continue the preservation and enhancement of Mexico's patrimonial resources. For many agencies and government functionaries in Baja California Julia has been the face of cultural resource management. In addition to her daily duties of overseeing the daily activities of INAH

and its tens of archaeologists, ethnographers, linguists, and historians, Julia has taken the time to publish articles in academic journals on both sides of the border.

A major contribution that we are all grateful for, and enriched by, is her role in establishing and overseeing the annual conference *Encuentro Binacional Balances y Perspectivas de la Antropología e Historia de Baja California*. At the onset, some funding supporting the conferences came from both Mexican and United States federal agencies. Now in its 20<sup>th</sup> year this important gathering of scholars and researchers from both sides of the border promotes transborder cooperation and furthers our understanding of human culture on a broad scale. Without her enlistment of support from several SCA members over the years and her dogged ability to procure funding and resources for the conference it would have no doubt faltered and perhaps been discontinued. These annual reunions strengthen the professional bonds between California and Mexico, they have encouraged heightened levels of achievement and participation in borderlands research, they are leading to new knowledge and understanding of our cultural history, and they have enriched the lives of every participant, each in their own way.

In the field of archaeology, it is easy to get lost in the politics of what we do, or to focus on our own geographic realm, or to push ourselves to the forefront using our colleagues as stepping-stones or worse. During her career, Julia has always risen above the border issues. The Mexican government and government agencies in Baja California have given several awards to her. It is now SCA's turn to reach across the border and recognize her achievements.