

# Building Collective Leadership for Culture Change

Stories of Relational Organizing on Campus and Beyond

Maria Avila

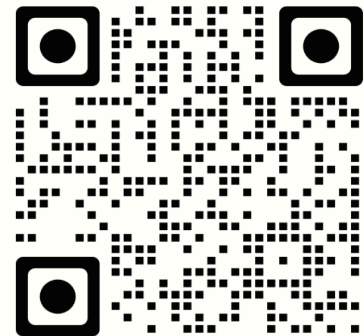
“As a former labor organizer with deep training and extensive experience in community organizing, Maria Avila takes on universities as sites for experimentation and collaboration with community partners. This engaging book shows how changing cultures benefit from sharing stories and quiet reflections on smaller gains, regrets and disappointments, lessons learned, and shifts in hopes and visions.”—Teresa Mangum, University of Iowa

“In this time of contentious and polarized divisions around racial justice, politics, public health, and climate change, this compelling book is a crucial call for collaborative change in our institutions and public life to create a dynamic and equitable democracy for all.”—Karin Trail-Johnson, founder and former Director/Associate Dean of Macalester College’s Civic Engagement Center

*Building Collective Leadership for Culture Change* shows how five community engagement research projects in the greater Los Angeles area were able to create more collaborative and participatory cultures in their academic institutions and nonacademic settings by using community organizing, research in action, and narrative inquiry. These projects focused on incorporating civic engagement into the work of scholars, creating a civic engagement minor at California State University, Dominguez Hills, integrating community organizing practices within the Los Angeles Unified School District, and building a regional organizing network among civically engaged higher education institutions.

As the case studies authored by Maria Avila and her collaborators show, these projects succeeded because they took place in collaborative spaces where participants were part of designing the purpose, goals, and specific actions to create culture change. *Building Collective Leadership for Culture Change* is a vital inquiry into the possibilities of collective interpretation of accomplishments among researchers and participants.

**Maria Avila** is an independent consultant, collaborative researcher, and relational organizer. Previously an Associate Professor in the Department of Social Work at California State University, Dominguez Hills, she is the author of *Transformative Civic Engagement through Community Organizing*.



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