

## DIA DE LOS MUERTOS – ALTAR DESCRIPTION

In honor of Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead), a Mexican holiday celebrated on Nov 1-2, students in Intro to Chican@ studies collectively created an altar. Traditionally found Mexican and Mexican-American homes, on Day of the Dead, a special altar is created to honor those we've loved who have passed on. Representations of things that person loved in life are placed on the altar, along with other traditional symbolic items, like flowers and incense – whose scent guides the spirit of the loved one back home, and candles, which light the path. The altar is a celebration of death and of life, and it's a place where the spirits of those we loved are invited to return to savor for what they enjoyed in this world.

Students brought items representative of someone they have lost. These take the form of photos, that person's favorite food, or an artifact symbolic of the bond they shared. Students also contributed items to honor people they may not have met in life – poets and artists, the men and women gunned down at a gay nightclub in Florida this year, and the black and brown lives lost to police brutality. Finally, students also brought something sacred that they imagined a love one might place on their own altars to commemorate their own lives.

\*Please don't touch/take any of these items.