

New Speaker:	00:00	
Introduction:	00:05	welcome to the Magic Mountie podcast. This is a podcast that's dedicated to helping faculty and other college employees as they try and navigate the challenging fabric of serving students, especially at Mount San Antonio College. But everyone's welcome.
Liesel Reinhart:	00:25	Hey everyone. I'm Liesel Reinhart. I'm a professor of communication at Mount San Antonio College and Faculty Professional Development Coordinator and one of the things I get to do is to be a part of our flex day, a huge team of people working on it. But um, it's always an exciting and fun day where people come together and there are a lot of people bustling around and getting excited for today. And we've done something a little bit different today. We've invited a former student of ours, Christina Barsi, who is now a professional podcast producer, which I didn't even know it was a job until a few months ago. And she's come out today, say hi. Hi everyone. That's me. And she's come out today to help us record our very first ever podcast that's going to be professional development themed for Mount San Antonio College. We're calling it the, uh, the Magic Mounty Podcast. So Christina, what do you think...you see all these people wandering around, what visually is happening here at Flex Day?
Christina Barsi:	01:22	Well, there's definitely a lot of buzz going around about our guest speaker today, which you'll hear a lot of people talking about her. Sonia, and give me her last name... Nazario. Sonia Nazario. Yeah, she's quite the buzz for the campus this, this, this morning. There's a lot of other things going on. Faculty is presenting for faculty, which is a really fun experience from someone who has only experienced being a student. So I used to come to this college. I attended this college as well, so it's really fun for me to see the other side of what goes on to prepare for all of these students and it seems from my perspective, that's kind of what this day is about. Can you explain Flex Day a little bit further for us?
Liesel Reinhart:	01:58	Yep. It's. Is it short for the flexible calendar program at the Chancellor's Office of California community colleges has set aside some time that we're paid where we're not just working with students and teaching, but we actually have to think about our teaching and the work that we do. It can be for planning, um, learning. Um, working on collaborative projects and so we do two days a year. One of them is optional. That's today and it's just a great turnout for an optional flex day. Uh, it's sort of called floating so you can do it whenever you want and the

other one is a required one. And so this is a day we do a were faculty choose to come and we have several hundred people who've chosen to come in today and be a part of a variety of different sessions. So we'll do everything from how to use the new email system to, um, how to get your students to ask more questions in class. Oh. And also the open educational resources session. This is really interesting. You know, free books, how do we, how do we find it free and inexpensive materials to substitute that for our classes instead of expensive textbooks as a major initiative so you can choose your own adventure. But we also have one session that everyone will do and that's our opening session. And for this year we were fortunate enough to get a guest speaker, Sonia Nazario, who you mentioned, she is the author of Enrique's Journey. She has won two Pulitzer prizes and number of other awards for her work. She's a reporter for the New York Times, Los Angeles Times a specialist on matters of immigration. And uh, I saw her speak at the RP group conference, a statewide conference last fall and I thought she'd be an outstanding speaker for our campus to help us marry together a lot of the initiatives we're doing on campus this year. So everyone's really excited to hear her speak. We can't record her session. Uh, but we, uh, we have copies of her book available and we're doing the book discussion groups for anybody who couldn't attend. And we'll also get some reactions today, I think, from some of the people who participated and, uh, and share some other sessions with you too that we could record.

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| Christina Barsi: | 04:01 | That sounds great. I'm really excited to hear what everyone has to say after they see her presentation and, uh, I'm expecting it to be very inspiring. |
| Liesel Reinhart: | 04:10 | Yeah, it seems inevitable that it's going to be inspiring. Ah, she's a bold lady and as anyone who reads her book knows, she rode the top of a train or several trains, freight trains, ah, traveling from Central America up into northern Mexico not once but twice to try and capture the story of young, um, young people who are trying to reconnect with their family after their parents have immigrated to the United States often as young as six or seven years old through very, very dangerous and perilous journeys. And she tells the story of one such young man named Enrique. Enrique's Journey is the book. |
| Christina Barsi: | 04:49 | Wow. What a powerful story. I'm definitely intrigued to read it now. And I suggest everyone does. We should just do a book club of Enrique's Journey. |
| Liesel Reinhart: | 04:56 | I think, I think we are actually. |

Christina Barsi:	04:56	Great!
Liesel Reinhart:	05:00	Yeah, you can check out the website, mtsac.edu/pod . P. O. D and find ah, find the book discussions and um, a lot of other offerings that we'll talk about today.
Christina Barsi:	05:10	Wonderful. Thank you so much.
Interviewee:	05:15	Hi, I'm Lianne Greenlee. I'm director and professional and organizational development and uh, we're here for Flex Day today. Super exciting day for faculty to gather, um, focus on learning new instructional strategies, network, collaborate and um, have an opportunity to hear different experts in the field, um, whether sometimes it's somebody we hire like Sonia Nazario who's coming in today um, to share her experiences and other times it's faculty themselves who have something that they feel would be of benefit for other faculty to learn about and share. So they conduct sessions that they, um, put together themselves. And so it really feeds the energy of the teaching that happens on the campus here for students.
Christina Barsi:	05:55	Awesome. Is there something that you're excited to see today?
Interviewee:	05:58	I'm really excited to see Sonia Nazario. I got to read her book, Enrique's Journey and it was so compelling and really informative about the journeys that some of our students here on campus go through and so, um, I want to hear more about what she's learned since she's read the book and think more deeply about our role on campus here for serving all different types of students, um, and hearing more about what they go through so we can support them in ways that we may not have thought of before hearing her speak.
Christina Barsi:	06:27	Wow, that's really exciting. All right, great. Thanks for sharing.
Interviewee:	06:31	Good morning. Um, my name is Perla. I am a student and a Peer Mentor here in San Antonio College. Um, thank you for listening. I'm, I, I'm more than thrilled. I am excited and it is an honor to be presenting Sonia Nazario today. So I'm really excited.
Christina Barsi:	06:49	That's awesome. Can you tell us a little bit about who she is?
Interviewee:	06:54	Yeah. So Sonia Nazario, she's probably best known for her, um, book Enrique's Journey. It's an amazing book. It's about an Honduran boy who has struggled to migrate from Central America all the way to the US and all his struggles and his drug

addiction and it's just a very compelling story. I feel like, uh, a lot of our, of the undocumented community and the immigrant community can definitely relate to his story, whether it's, you know, like personally or like someone in their, in their family. So it's a very touching story. She is such an honorable woman. Um, she has received multiple awards and she's just an amazing woman and it's, it's an honor.

Christina Barsi:	07:33	That's amazing. And why do you think it's important to tell stories like this right now?
Interviewee:	07:38	I think now more than ever just given the political climate, um, I feel like a lot of the times people judge immigrants without really knowing their background, without really knowing their story. And I think it's important that they actually have like a talk about it, you know, so that we can, we can have empathy within both ways. It's important to have those conversations on both ways.
Christina Barsi:	08:00	Yes. To have both sides of the story. Right?
Interviewee:	08:00	Definitely.
Christina Barsi:	08:03	Yeah. Thank you so much.
Interviewee:	08:03	No, thank you.
Christina Barsi:	08:03	Good luck today.
Interviewee:	08:03	Thank you.
Christina Barsi:	08:08	I'm sitting here, in the Sophia B. Clark theater for Flex Day. The students are going to be performing a dance called "Some Things You Keep" and it's all done by student choreographers. After that, there'll be a guest speaker, Sonia Nazario, which will be introduced by Perla. She'll be introducing her on stage as well, and she'll be talking about "From Trauma To Resiliency: Struggles And Strengths And Students Journeys To College". And uh, we're really excited to hear what she has to say.
Liesel Reinhart:	08:08	First of all, tell me who you are and what you teach here.
Interviewee:	08:08	Ah, Luisa Howell. I'm with World Languages, I teach Spanish.
Liesel Reinhart:	08:44	Do you normally come to Flex Day?
Interviewee:	08:44	Always, always.

Liesel Reinhart:	08:48	And so, uh, tell me a little bit about what you think about how this session, um, maybe it was the same or different than another, other sessions you've come to.
Interviewee:	08:58	Ah, I think the speaker. Ah, actually made it quite different and I think it's really important, especially at this time, ah my, ah where my department has a lot lower enrollment, so does Mount SAC and after listening to her, that's when it hit me. That partially all that fear that our students have is probably responsible for some of this. I know people that are, you know, people that don't have papers that are just scared of their shadow today. So why would they come to campus and maybe risk something else or why would they come if they need to keep the job they have. Last semester I had two students who quit their, drop drop out of school. Two of them were working for Sears and they were, Sears is, they were closing stores. That's why they were doing that. They're just changing my schedule all the time. There is no way I can make it. I have to work. Nobody else in my family is working and they need the money. We have to pay rent, you know, between that and the fear...we lost students.
Interviewee:	09:50	So my name is Rudy, uh, this is my second year here at Mount SAC. Um, I am a counselor. I'm with the counseling center and I enjoyed my experience here so far. So I'm just super thrilled that, um, Mount SAC has a culture of care for it's students. Um, speakers like a Sonia and the Cornell West, ah, presentations were just amazing. And then, um, being a advocate for equity, um, it, it's really humbling to know that Mount SAC has a culture of that's it's developing to make sure that we bridge that equity in our educational system.
Liesel Reinhart:	10:31	This is Liesel Reinhart and I'm here with Sonia Nazario, Lina Soto, Lianne Greenlee, and Christina Barsi and we're just having some lunch after a pretty, pretty successful Flex Day so far.
Sonia Nazario:	10:43	My name is Sonia Nazario. I'm an author, a journalist. I guess I can now say I'm an activist, although I used to cringe at that word as a journalist. Um and I'm here today as part of Flex Say to educate ah, Mount SAC educators about Latino first generation, educationally disadvantaged students and how to best understand them and help them.
Liesel Reinhart:	11:09	You know we can't recapture what we missed in your lecture, but I, I sort of want to, my agenda is to excite people to come to Flex Day so that they know sort of what the experience is and also to get a enough motivation to participate in our book

discussions and other events that we do associated with you being here.

- Sonia Nazario: 11:27 I hear you're having some book discussions in the spring, so that'll be great. I heard four from, I think Lina was mentioning like four different book discussions, right? Yeah.
- Liesel Reinhart: 11:37 So, uh, what's your sense of, um, the community college systems, you know, biggest needs or challenges that we need to, to face moving forward?
- Sonia Nazario: 11:49 I think not trapping a Latino and first generation educationally disadvantaged students in these remedial remedial courses that had been kind of the death now, for people advancing. They drop out and instead doing developmental education where they're put into regular classes with tutoring, with supports, they're much more likely to go through and to keep going. And I think you need more guided pathways where students from the very beginning identify, you know, this is likely what I'm going to go into, or at least this is a meta major I'm going to go into and tracking with a counselor. Actually meeting with a counselor which most kids don't do initially. That would be a great idea. And tracking how do you get from point a to c in that major and having somebody kind of monitor, are you, are you doing OK? Are you following that course? Are you taking the right courses to get there? I think this takes six, eight years for students and it shouldn't take six or eight years to get through college. Um, if we're more organized about it and more purposeful and kind of tracking how students do and I think um, you know, needing to diversify faculty, diversify what students are reading in terms of making this more relevant to a lot of students who are, you know, this is a Hispanic serving institution and making what they read and, and who they see, you know, having some role models. You see a professor who's brown and you think maybe I can be successful too. And if you don't see that at all, I think that that affects you in some way. So I think, but I hope today also in talking about what so many Latino students have been through who have made journeys to get here from other countries that people understand kind of the huge trauma that kids have been through that in their home countries, the majority are coming from Central American countries that are now the most violent places in the world and the tremendous journey that they make to get here and some of the issues they're dealing with now primarily fearing ah, with a 40 percent increase in, in, uh, in apprehensions in the interior of the country, um, that my mom can walk out the front door and be pulled over for a broken taillight or anything and be handed over to ICE and I'll never see her again. So I think a lot of

students are under enormous stress and just understanding that many of these students live in a place with three other families and it's just very hard to study and they don't have a parent who's gotten past the sixth grade who can help them with their homework. So I just kind of understanding where these kids are coming from and maybe having more empathy for what they're going through and reaching out to help them because they're great gritty kids with lots of ganas, lots of determination. And if you extend a hand and you understand where they're coming from, I think a lot more of them would succeed. And that's what we want in California. This is, these are the folks who are going to run this state in the near future. So we better do better at this.

Liesel Reinhart:	14:47	So tell me your names and what you thought of the sessions from Sonia today.
Gary Enke:	14:53	My name is Gary Enke from the English department.
Laura Muniz:	14:53	And my name is Laura Muniz, I am the counselor for the Dream Program.
Gary Enke:	15:00	And Laura and I have taught together in the Dream Program. She's taught the counseling class and I teach the English.
Liesel Reinhart:	15:06	So what were your impressions of the presentation this morning and what impact do you think it might have on campus?
Gary Enke:	15:15	I think, actually the presentation is actually what got me to come to flex day. I read the book and I've taught it in the past and um, so her advocacy for immigration issues to me is personally meaningful and I think the more people we can get to hear the struggles of our student population. And I think just I was impressed by her knowledge. She says she's not an educator, but she's clearly done her research about every major initiative.
Laura Muniz:	15:42	And I'm with Gary, you know, I came here because of ah, her her talk about immigration. I work with undocumented students and that is very close to my heart and I think it was good because the campus needs to know what the students are going through and their stories, what's behind just their, their, their, each student and what is it that they're going through in their, in their challenges. And as well as administrators, what can we do to continue helping and supporting the students.

Liesel Reinhart:	16:12	Can you give me a quick blurb? How do faculty get students to the dream program? If they, if they have these students and they want to get them to you.
Laura Muniz:	16:22	Um faculty can just refer the students to our Dream Center. Right now we're looking at in building 16C, pretty soon what I'm told in the fall semester, the new equity center will be open. It is right across from the 16C, which is on Miracle Mile, so they just send them to any students to us, and then we can start and just talk to them.
Liesel Reinhart:	16:43	Tell us your name and, uh, what your role is with the Dream Program.
Interviewee:	16:48	My name's Adriana Trujillo and I am the front desk. My official title is student services support.
Liesel Reinhart:	16:55	So what happens when a student is referred to the Dream Program? They come in and they probably see you first, right?
Interviewee:	17:03	Yes. So we welcome them then, um, and we ask them a series of questions just to make sure that they're in the right place and we get them the correct information. Um, we then we introduce them to our peer mentors, which do like a little intake and then the student gets all the references that they need. Um, the flier, our application, we tell them about our services.
Liesel Reinhart:	17:23	And have you seen some students who, who are able to improve their situation either academically or personally because of the Dream Program?
Interviewee:	17:32	Yes, definitely. Um, I think all of our students are very resilient and all of them have grown. Um, with our program.
Liesel Reinhart:	17:40	You said something in the session that, you know, you traveled around and there's two kinds of teachers there's sort of the kind that students do disclose their stories to, they do reveal themselves to and others who don't. What do you think is the big difference of what teachers are doing and saying in their classroom to invite students to feel safe and share in front of them?
Sonia Nazario:	17:58	I think when a student perceives that a teacher truly cares and that makes all the difference in the world. I see teachers who say, all my students who are undocumented come up to me and tell me that and they tell me about the fears that they're living through now. And I see teachers who say, these kids never talk

to me and I know that that teacher has issues. So, um, I think you want to be the first. You want to be a teacher who, I mean, when I interview people as a journalist, people can tell that I care. I look at their eyes, I, I focus, I listen. Um, it's not that hard to do these things and people immediately pick up on that. You, you're engaged and you're pulling for that kid and you're pulling for that student. And I think if a teacher sees that, if a student sees that they'll open up and they'll work harder. They want to please that person, right? They want to, you tell them to jump this high, they'll jump that high. So I think those are the qualities that you want in teachers. And I think that's what teachers should, should push themselves more to do. I know the teachers have a lot of students and a lot of classes and it's hard to focus in on that one student, but I'm glad that, that some of my teachers focused in on me when I was drowning my first year and said she's got potential. I'm gonna, I'm gonna try to help her. And that's what made the difference for me.

Liesel Reinhart: 19:23 So you had a really powerful speech introducing Sonia Nazario this morning onstage ah, were you nervous about it and how did you think it went?

Interviewee: 19:41 My name is Perla. Um, I was a little bit nervous, um, but honestly when I was backstage with Sonia, I felt she really empowered me. I felt like from woman to woman, there's just that power that can be, you know, like shared and I think that's what really helped me ah, when I got onstage. I, it kind of really calmed me down and I felt it, I felt it.

Liesel Reinhart: 19:55 So what was it like, you were in the breakout session afterwards. What was it like, um, just knowing that in the two sessions today, faculty and managers and staff were hearing these messages. What does that mean to you?

Interviewee: 20:08 Um, in the beginning I felt like it was a little bit, um, uh, I was a little bit kind of nervous because I felt like some of the faculty didn't know where that I was undocumented, so I was a little bit overwhelming just because I didn't have my first thought is like, oh my God, they're going to judge me because I'm undocumented. Um, but I feel like after like hearing the talks and hearing the conversations I felt, I think it was, it was really beautiful to know that these conversations are happening because they're very important and more than anything that there is staff and faculty who are supporting this. So I'm really, I'm really, I feel really blessed.

Liesel Reinhart: 20:45 Well, we're super appreciative that you're willing share your story, today is a lot about stories and narratives and how the

courage that it takes to discover them. Obviously Sonia has a lot of courage and I like that she inspires courage in us to change and to do things. And um, we have no excuses. If she can ride the top of a train, we can also get out of our comfort zones to make change happen.

- Interviewee: 21:06 Yes, I agree. I totally agree. And I feel like women, we have a lot of power to do so.
- Lianne Greenlee: 21:11 Hi, this is Lianne Greenlee. I'm director of professional and organizational development. And, um, Sonia, one of the things that really spoke to me during your talk this morning was how you really encourage those who are in leadership positions to take a stand and to put money behind to fund those movements that we need to do to support students. And there's a lot of people on campus who are either leaders or they're classified staff are so critical in supporting our students in the face to face daily interaction outside of the classroom. Do you have any suggestions for what their role can be in supporting our Latino students on campus and specific actions that they can take in order to do that.
- Sonia Nazario: 21:49 Just seeing someone who's maybe struggling and offering a hand in whatever way that you can is a huge thing. Um, I think many Latinos culturally, there's that sense of being humble and I'm not gonna ask for help and I'm going to do this on my own and I'm going to struggle through it. And so I think it's particularly imperative to like recognize that that somebody is having problems. Maybe they're not getting the A, maybe they're getting the C or the C minus or the D and seeing that and saying, what can I do to help that kid? What, where can I refer him or her? How can I hold his or her hand to go there because they don't feel comfortable going there. Uh, no one that I know goes there. So I think all of us have a role in somehow identifying kids who are struggling and finding them help. And that's critical to having these kids not drop out. We have way too many kids dropping out and way too many that take six or eight years to get through college. Um, that shouldn't be the case. So I think if everyone tried to identify those kids and help them in whatever way they need help, we could reduce that.
- Outro: 23:05 Hey, thanks so much for joining us for the Magic Mounty Podcast. We love your likes, we love your shares and we love your comments. So please engage with our community, download from wherever you'd love to get your podcasts, itunes, Google, Rate-My-Professor, we're there! And we want you to be back with us next week. Remember, any opinions that

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