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Family History of Nedra Gallegos

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The Family History of

Nedra J. Gallegos

23 February 2022

Nedra Gallegos authored this family history as part of the course requirements for HIST 550/700 Your Family in History offered online in Spring 2022 and was submitted to the Pittsburgh State University **Digital Commons**. Please contact the author directly with any questions or comments: woestman@pittstate.edu

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List of Direct Line Family Members

Generation One

A1. Nedra Jasmine Gallegos (2000-)
A2. (spouse or partner name here)

Generation Two

A1a. Maria DelosAngeles Cruz-Rocha (1981-)
A1b. Edgar Velarde (1982-)

Generation Three

A1a1. Ofelia Rocha (1956-)
A1a2. Evaristo Cruz (1953-1998)

A1b1. Teresa Galindo-Gonzalez (1946-)
A1b2. Jose Reyes Velarde-Espinoza (1940-)

Generation Four

A1a1a. Anacleta Carpio-Mata (1935-2019)
A1a1b. Pedro Rocha-Casillas (1920-2014)

A1a2a. Maria Delcarmen Martinez (1914-2004)
A1a2b. Evaristo Cruz-Melendrez (1914-1959)

A1b1a. UNKNOWN
A1b1b. UNKNOWN

A1b2a. UNKNOWN
A1b2b. UNKNOWN

GENERATION ONE

Nedra Jasmine Gallegos (2000-) was born on a cool fall morning in a community hospital in Riverside, California to **Maria DelosAngeles Cruz Rocha (1981-)** and **Marco Antonio Gallegos (1981-)** after a quick three hours of labor for Maria, Nedra came into this world at 7 in the morning weighing 7lbs 1 oz. Nedra was named after an older German woman her mom used to take care of in a nursing home. Her dad chose the name Jasmine after the movie Aladdin. Maria and Marco were made parents at the young age of 19. Marco wasn't prepared to be a father so Maria became a single mother when Nedra was only 9 months old.¹

For the first three years of Nedra's life it was just her and her mom, Maria. Maria worked two jobs to make sure that Nedra and her had somewhere to live and also pay for child care. In the year of 2003, Maria met Nedra's step-dad **Edgar Velarde (1982-)** and they were shortly married after. Edgar stepped in as the father figure for Nedra.

When Nedra turned five years old, **Maria DelosAngeles Cruz Rocha (1981-)** and **Edgar Velarde (1982-)** gave birth to Nedra's sister, **Kenya Sarai Velarde (2005-)** At first Nedra wasn't excited to have another sibling but as time went on Nedra and Kenya did everything together. When Nedra and Kenya were younger their favorite thing to do together was watch princess movies. Despite having multiple rooms in the home, they always insisted on sharing a room. Nedra and Kenya grew up in

¹Personal knowledge of the author, Nedra Gallegos.

Southern California until the ages of 7 and 3. The time that Nedra was in California is very hard for her to remember.

Nedra's parents then relocated them to Bovina, Texas in 2007 where Edgar got a job as a dairy feeder and Maria became a stay at home mom. Nedra grew up in Texas most of her life from the age of 7 to 14.

During their time in Texas Maria and Edgar had two more children. In 2009 Maria and Edgar welcomed a baby boy into the world, Nedra's brother **Edgar Damian Velarde (2009-)** Nedra was at the hospital when Damian was born and she remembers him being the smallest baby she'd ever seen. Damian grew into a chubby baby who would cry until he threw up just to get what he wanted. Nedra and Damian have always been very close. They share the same interests and they have always been able to relate to each other. Only two short years later Nedra's last sibling was born and it was a boy, **Dominick Reyes Velarde (2011-)** Nedra and Dominick have always had a special bond together. Nedra has always been close to all of her siblings. Dominick was a very happy baby who was always laughing. Since Dominick is the youngest, Nedra and her siblings have always played pranks on him.

Nedra's siblings have always been important to her but school and running were also very important to her. Nedra always cared about receiving an education and doing well in school. One of her dreams has always been to go to college. In Middle School Nedra became more involved in school activities, she joined the band and both the cross country and track team.

Nedra decided to learn how to play the flute. She was part of the marching band and would attend state band competitions. The

competitions were always nerve wracking for Nedra, she has a small fear of performing and public speaking. However, Nedra's favorite thing to do was to run. She has always found it calming but demanding at the same time. If she had a bad day she could always go for a run and switch it all around. Nedra was very good at long distance running. She competed in cross country meets and track meets. Throughout her running career in Middle School and High School, she gained many medals. During Nedra's Freshman year of high school she moved to Syracuse, Kansas. Syracuse is a small town in Southwest Kansas with a population of 1,826 people.²

In high school Nedra was very involved in other organizations as well. Nedra joined these organizations because she wanted to help her chances of getting into college. During Nedra's senior year of high school she received an offer to run cross country and track at Cottey College in Nevada, MO. Nedra took the offer to run at Cottey. Nedra wanted to be able to experience life on her own for once. After she graduated high school in May 2018 she headed to Cottey College in August 2018.

Nedra's time at Cottey was very interesting. The atmosphere was different than it was in Syracuse, Ks. Nedra attended Cottey College during her Freshman and Sophomore year of college (2018-2020). During her time there Nedra met many new interesting people from different walks of life. Nedra was undeclared with her major during her two

² Wikipedia. "Syracuse, Kansas." Accessed 28 April 2022. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syracuse,_Kansas

years at Cottey College.³ On January 20, 2020 the CDC confirmed the first case of COVID-19 in the U.S.⁴

The spread of the Coronavirus cut Nedra's time at Cottey College short. Nedra wasn't able to afford the school without her cross country and track scholarships. Nedra decided to transfer to Pittsburg State University because the price of the school made it possible for her to continue her education. Nedra decided to end her running career once she left Cottey.

Once Nedra transferred to Pittsburg State University she declared her major and minor. Nedra gained many new friends who will be around for a lifetime. Nedra also adopted her first dog, a german shepherd pitbull mix named Bentley. Nedra will also be the first person to graduate from College in her family.⁵

GENERATION TWO

A1a. Maria DelosAngeles Cruz-Rocha (1981-)

A1b. Edgar Velarde (1982-)

Maria DelosAngeles Cruz-Rocha (1981-) was born on August 2nd, in Leon Guanajuato, Mexico to **Ofelia Rocha (1956-)** and **Evaristo Cruz (1953-1998)** León Guanajuato, Mexico is the fourth most populous

³Personal knowledge of the author, Nedra Gallegos.

⁴“CDC Museum Covid-19 Timeline” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Accessed 28 April 2022. <https://www.cdc.gov/museum/timeline/covid19.html#:~:text=January%2020%2C%202020,January%2018%20in%20Washington%20state.>

⁵ Personal knowledge of the author, Nedra Gallegos.

municipality in Mexico with a population of 1,721,626.⁶ Maria is the third oldest child out of 9. Maria has five brothers and three sisters. Maria was named after the Catholic Saint that falls on her birthday on August 2nd. Maria remembers growing up in Mexico as a tomboy and she always wanted to do what the boys were doing. She also had a strong admiration for her grandmother **Anacleta Carpio-Mata (1935-2019)** who raised Maria for a small part of her life. Maria remembers life in Mexico being fun and adventurous but economically it was tough for her family.⁷

When Maria was 6 years old her mother and father immigrated to the United States from Mexico. Maria was left behind with three of her brothers. Maria's parents couldn't afford to bring the entire family to the United States at first. A coyote is a person who smuggles immigrants across the Mexico-United States border.⁸ Maria's parents couldn't afford to pay the coyote for the entire family. In Figure 3.5 "Continent-of-Origin Diversity Grew Rapidly After 1960" the authors find that in the twentieth century the rise of diversity is largely caused by waves of immigration. The authors also find that in the last decade of the century, immigration accounted for as much as half of the population growth in the United States.⁹

⁶ Wikipedia. "León, Guanajuato." Accessed 28 April 2022. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Le%C3%B3n,_Guanajuato

⁷ Maria DelosAngeles Cruz-Rocha, interview with Nedra Gallegos. 17 February 2022.

⁸ Wikipedia. "Coyote (person)" Accessed 28 April 2022. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coyote_\(person\)#:~:text=Colloquially%2C%20a%20coyote%20is%20a,guide%20the%20across%20the%20border](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coyote_(person)#:~:text=Colloquially%2C%20a%20coyote%20is%20a,guide%20the%20across%20the%20border).

⁹ Claude S. Fischer and Michael Hout, *Century of Difference; How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006), 36-37.

Maria's maternal grandmother began caring for her and her brothers for two years. When Maria was 8 years old her father returned for her and her brothers after he had established himself in Riverside, California. Riverside County, California is located in the Inland Empire metropolitan area, it is the most populous city in the Inland Empire and in Riverside County.¹⁰

Maria attended the schools in Riverside where she learned to speak English. When Maria was 16, everything changed for her. On Halloween night her father **Evaristo Cruz (1953-1998)** passed away in his sleep. Maria and her three eldest brothers sacrificed their education to get jobs in order to support the family. Maria started working in restaurants and nursing homes to bring income in. The thought of going to school and getting an education was long gone for her. Maria felt that she had a duty to her mother and siblings.¹¹

At the age of 17 Maria met **Marco Antonio Gallegos (1981-)** who she had her first child with at the age of 19 **Nedra Jasmine Gallegos (2000-)** After the birth of her first child, Maria and Marco separated. Maria became a single mother, she worked hard for her and her child. She purchased her first home in Riverside and her first vehicle. Maria had always been very independent. Maria was a single mother for three years until she met **Edgar Velarde (1982-)** through mutual friends.

Edgar Velarde (1982-) was born in Durango, Durango, Mexico on April 21st to **Teresa Galindo-Gonzalez (1946-)** and **Jose Reyes Velarde-**

¹⁰ Wikipedia. "Riverside, California." Accessed 28 April 2022. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riverside,_California

¹¹ Maria DelosAngeles Cruz-Rocha, interview with Nedra Gallegos. 17 February 2022.

Espinoza (1940-) Durango is in the Northwest area of Mexico with a population of 1,832,650 making it the second-lowest population density.¹² Edgar grew up with 11 siblings in the countryside of Durango, Mexico. He remembers life as a child as fun and full of trouble. One of his favorite childhood memories is skipping school with his friends and siblings to go to the store and buy candy.¹³ Edgar grew up taking care of chickens, goats, pigs and cows. This is where his love for livestock came from. Before immigrating to the United States, Edgar was a teacher in Mexico where he taught math.

Edgar immigrated to the United States in the year 2000 in hopes of a better future. In Century of Difference the authors find that most adult immigrants came to America to seek economic advancement.¹⁴ Edgar immigrated to Riverside, California upon his arrival he gained employment as a rancher. Edgar was considered a "feeder" at the ranch, meaning he kept the cows regularly fed. This wasn't his first choice of employment but his options were limited.

In the year of 2003 Edgar met his wife **Maria DelosAngeles Cruz-Rocha (1981-)** and step-daughter **Nedra Jasmine Gallegos (2000-)** Edgar and Maria married only after a short three months. They started to create a life together in California. Two years later they had their second child **Kenya Sarai Velarde (2005-)**. Edgar was proud to be a father of two girls. Edgar worked hard to provide a safe childhood for

¹² Wikipedia. "Durango." Accessed 28 April 2022. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Durango>

¹³ Edgar Velarde, interview with Nedra Gallegos. 17 February 2022.

¹⁴ Claude S. Fischer and Michael Hout, Century of Difference; How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006), 41.

his daughters. In 2007 Edgar moved his family to Bovina, Texas because the ranch where he was employed in California was relocating. With limited options and opportunities, Edgar relocated his family to Texas.

Edgar and Maria were able to obtain a small home for the four of them in the small town of Bovina. With a mere population of 2,000 people. In the year of 2009 Edgar and Maria had their first son, **Edgar Damian Velarde (2009-)**. After the delivery of Edgar Damian, Maria fell asleep from exhaustion and Edgar decided to go ahead and name his son after himself despite having a name already picked by him and Maria. Two years later in 2011, they had their second son and fourth and final child, **Dominick Reyes Velarde (2011-)**. Edgar has missed out on many of life's moments because of the hours he is required to work at his job but he says he does it to give his children a better life.¹⁵

In the year of 2015, Edgar suffered a tragic loss in his family. This caused him to move his family from Bovina, Texas to Syracuse, Kansas. A small farming community in Southwest Kansas. Edgar got a job at a ranch as a feeder. Edgar and Maria were also able to purchase their first home together in 2015 after it being a dream of theirs for many years. Edgar has also suffered from health issues. Despite these health issues he refuses to stop working long draining hours. Now that his children are getting older and moving out of the home, Edgar hopes to return to Mexico and retire on his land.¹⁶

¹⁵ Edgar Velarde, interview with Nedra Gallegos, 17 February 2022.

¹⁶ Edgar Velarde, interview with Nedra Gallegos, 17 February 2022.

GENERATION THREE

A1a1. Ofelia Rocha (1956-)

A1a2. Evaristo Cruz (1953-1998)

A1b1. Teresa Galindo-Gonzalez (1946-)

A1b2. Jose Reyes Velarde-Espinoza (1940-)

Ofelia Rocha (1956-) was born in Leon, Guanajuato, Mexico to **Anaclea Carpio-Mata (1935-2019)** and **Pedro Rocha-Casillas (1920-2014)**. Ofelia grew up with 10 siblings, 5 girls and 5 boys. Ofelia had a rough childhood. Her family was very impoverished in Mexico.¹⁷ As a child, Ofelia enjoyed learning about the history of Mexico, she

¹⁷ Ofelia Cruz, interview with Nedra Gallegos. 27 February 2022.

believes that the country has a lot of "magic."¹⁸ Her favorite pastime was picking fruits and vegetables with her mom and going into town to shop.

Ofelia met her husband in Leon, Guanajuato, he was **Evaristo Cruz (1953-1998)** Ofelia and Evaristo had nine children, seven were born in Mexico and the youngest two were born in Riverside, California. This is where Ofelia and Evaristo immigrated to with the help of a coyote. Ofelia remembers the journey as a very long and hard one. She says leaving her home forever has been one of the hardest moments of her life.¹⁹

Once Ofelia was established in Riverside she became a stay at home mom. She looked after all 9 children, she made sure they ate, went to school, did their homework and she kept them all out of trouble. Ofelia and Evaristo helped some of their siblings in Mexico come to the United States in order to gain better opportunities for their families.

Ofelia suffered from a tragic loss in 1998 when her husband **Evaristo Cruz (1953-1998)** died on Halloween night in his sleep. Ofelia's three oldest children took the reins and became the breadwinners of the home. Ofelia had to find a way to move on in life. After the death of her husband many of his relatives still stayed in contact with Ofelia. Riverside was home for Ofelia and she didn't want to be far from her husband's gravesite.

¹⁸ Ofelia Cruz, interview with Nedra Gallegos, 27 February 2022.

¹⁹ Ofelia Cruz, interview with Nedra Gallegos, 27 February 2022.

In 2007, Ofelia and her children/grandchildren moved to Bovina, Texas. She followed her sons who had promised her a job, in 2008 Ofelia acquired the first job she had ever had. In the Century of Difference the authors note that in 2000 the percentage of women at work or seeking work was only thirteen points below that of men the same age.²⁰ Ofelia started working at a dairy, feeding the baby calves and helping the cows give birth.

Ofelia worked at Optima dairy for 8 years. In 2016 she stopped working because she broke her ankle bone so she decided to retire. Once Ofelia retired she started adopting dogs and taking in stray dogs. She dedicated herself to giving them a home.²¹ After so many years of enduring the harsh winters of West Texas in 2020 Ofelia decided to return to California but this time in Madera. Madera, California is located in the Central Valley of Northern California and has a population of 65,860.²² Ofelia spends her days picking almonds in Madera, which is what they grow in the City.

Evaristo Cruz (1953-1998) was born in Leon, Guanajuato, Mexico to **Maria Delcarmen Martinez (1914-2004)** and **Evaristo Cruz-Melendrez (1914-1959)** He grew up with six siblings, three sisters and two brothers. Evaristo lost his father at a very young age. He was primarily raised by his mother.

²⁰ Claude S. Fischer and Michael Hout, *Century of Difference; How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006), 98.

²¹ Personal knowledge of the author Nedra Gallegos.

²² Wikipedia, "Madera, California" Accessed 28 April 2022. https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madera,_California

In Mexico Evaristo met his wife **Ofelia Rocha (1956-)** together they had nine children. **Juan Marcos Cruz (1978-)**, **Jose Cruz (1980-)**, **Maria DelosAngeles Cruz-Rocha (1982-)**, **Rigo Cruz (1984-)**, **Braulio Cruz (1985-)**, **Maria Ines Cruz (1987-)**, **Isaura Cruz (1989-)**, **Julieta Cruz (1992-)** and **Pedro Cruz (1994-)** Evaristo immigrated to the United States with his wife Ofelia in 1990, he settled them in Riverside, California. Evaristo chose to settle in Riverside, California because of the citrus industry.²³

Evaristo was a very kind hearted man. He owned an apartment complex where his family lived. He would also rent apartments to low-income families. Most of the families were immigrants from Mexico, Evaristo knew these families didn't have money or food. He would feed the entire apartment complex from the youngest to the oldest out of good will.²⁴

Evaristo was known as a "man of all trades" he worked as a line chef, in a milking barn, for the coca cola company in Mexico for many years before he immigrated to the U.S.²⁵ Evaristo didn't want his wife to work. He worked side jobs such as gardening and handy-man jobs in order to support his wife, his nine children and to help families at the apartment complex. He was also very involved in the church community. He would attend services three to four times a week and he went on to take the role of Deacon of the church.²⁶ In the Century of

²³ Wikipedia "Riverside, California" Accessed 28 April 2022. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riverside,_California

²⁴ Isaura Cruz, interview with Nedra Gallegos, 27 February 2022.

²⁵ Ines Cruz, interview with Nedra Gallegos, 27 February 2022.

²⁶ Ines Cruz, interview with Nedra Gallegos, 27 February 2022.

Difference the authors note that immigrants brought different faiths with them. Catholic immigrants tended to resist "protestanization."²⁷

On October 31, 1998 Evaristo passed away peacefully in his sleep. His wife Ofelia realized something was wrong because he always snored in his sleep.²⁸ Evaristo is buried in Riverside, California's cemetery. Evaristo's children work really hard to keep his memory alive. They honor him on his birthday and speak about him with their children/his grandchildren. After the passing of Evaristo, his children made sure that their mother Ofelia never had to work and have anything to worry about. They wanted to keep treating her like their father did.²⁹

Teresa Galindo-Gonzalez (1946-) was born in Durango, Mexico. The information for her parents is unknown but she has 11 siblings. The childhood of Teresa is unknown. Teresa married **Jose Reyes Velarde-Espinoza (1940-)** and together they had 10 children. Including **Edgar Velarde (1982-)** Teresa was a very stern and strict mother.³⁰

Teresa and her husband divorced when their children were still young. In the Century of Difference the authors find that divorce replaced death as the prime reason marriages ended. The annual ratio of divorces increased gradually since WWII.³¹ Teresa never remarried and was taken care of by her children.

²⁷ Claude S. Fischer and Michael Hout, *Century of Difference; How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006), 186-187.

²⁸ Ofelia Cruz, interview with Nedra Gallegos, 27 February 2022.

²⁹ Ofelia Cruz, interview with Nedra Gallegos, 27 February 2022.

³⁰ Edgar Velarde, interview with Nedra Gallegos, 17 February 2022.

³¹ Claude S. Fischer and Michael Hout, *Century of Difference; How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006), 70.

In the early 2000s Teresa was able to acquire her visitor's visa. When she was in better health conditions she would often travel between Mexico and California to see her children that are in the United States. Teresa would also travel back and forth in order to see her grandchildren.

As Teresa has grown older she has gained many health concerns. With the help of her children she has been able to battle many of those health concerns. Teresa lives in Mexico permanently now, she has retired.³²

Jose Reyes Velarde-Espinoza (1940-) was born in Durango, Mexico. The information of his parents is unknown but he does have 10 siblings. Jose has spent his whole life in Mexico. He lives on his ranch with his animals that he spends his time with and taking care of.

Jose married **Teresa Galindo-Gonzalez (1946-)** who he had ten children with. Jose wasn't a stern or strict parent, he was very lenient with his children.³³ Jose doesn't have a very strong relationship with his children. After his divorce with Teresa he secluded himself deeper into the countryside of Durango.³⁴

³² Edgar Velarde, interview with Nedra Gallegos, 27 February 2022.

³³ Edgar Velarde, interview with Nedra Gallegos, 17 February 2022.

³⁴ Edgar Velarde, interview with Nedra Gallegos, 17 February 2022.

Generation Four

A1a1a. Anacleta Carpio-Mata (1935-2019)

A1a1b. Pedro Rocha-Casillas (1920-2014)

A1a2a. Maria Delcarmen Martinez (1914-2004)

A1a2b. Evaristo Cruz-Melendrez (1914-1959)

A1b1a. UNKNOWN

A1b1b. UNKNOWN

A1b2a. UNKNOWN

A1b2b. UNKNOWN

Anacleta Carpio-Mata (1935-2019) was born in Leon, Guanajuato, Mexico. The history of her parents is unknown. Anacleta had ten children with her husband **Pedro Rocha-Casillas (1920-2014)**. They were all born in Mexico. Anacleta also took part in raising her grandchildren.³⁵ In return in her final years her grandchildren started taking care of her when her health began to decline. Anacleta is buried in the local cemetery in Leon.

³⁵ Maria DelosAngeles Cruz-Rocha, interview with Nedra Gallegos, 17 February 2022.

Pedro Rocha-Casillas (1920-2014) was born in Leon, Guanajuato, Mexico. The history of his parents is unknown. Pedro had ten children with his wife. Pedro was known to be a hard worker and a vibrant human being.³⁶ Pedro is buried alongside his wife in the local cemetery in Leon.

Maria DelCarmen Martinez (1914-2004) was born in Winslow, Arizona. The story of Maria is unknown, many of her relatives believe she was part of a Native American tribe. Many of Maria's relatives believe she left to Mexico to avoid the negative treatment towards Native Americans.³⁷ Once in Mexico, Maria met her husband in Leon, Guanajuato, Mexico. Maria had six children that she primarily raised on her own because of the sudden death of her husband. Maria is buried in Riverside, California with her son **Evaristo Cruz (1953-1998)**.

Evaristo Cruz-Melendrez (1914-1959)no information.

³⁶ Ofelia Cruz, interview with Nedra Gallegos, 27 February 2022.

³⁷ Julieta Cruz, interview with Nedra Gallegos, 17 February 2022.

