

VIRGINIA URIBE

b. December 20, 1933

“As long as I have a breath in me, I will continue to fight for the rights of gay and lesbian students.”

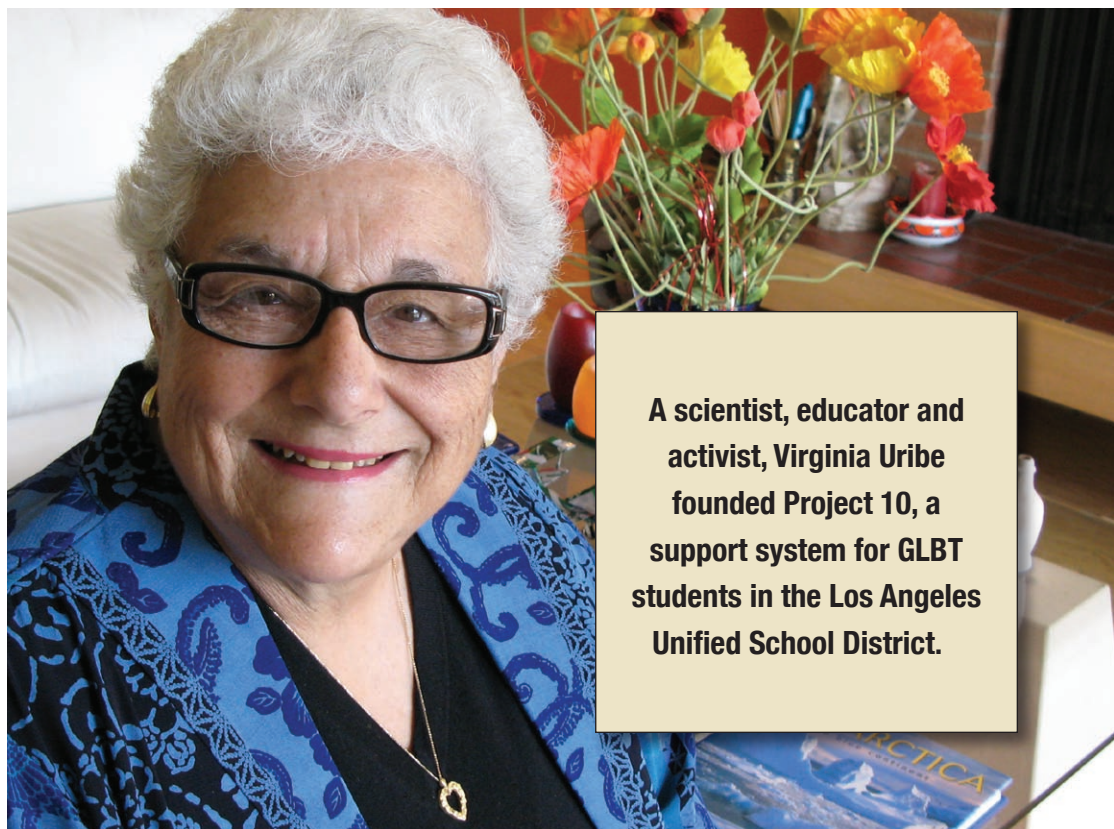
As a counselor and science teacher at Fairfax High School in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), Virginia Uribe witnessed the troubles of gay students. The plight of one student, who had been kicked out of his house and had dropped out of four different high schools because of sexual harassment, convinced Uribe to take action. In 1984, she founded Project 10, a dropout prevention program for GLBT youth.

The program met resistance. Conservative groups, led by the Traditional Values Coalition, attacked Project 10 and used their influence to threaten to cut funding for the LAUSD. Uribe prevailed at the court hearing and Project 10 continued to provide assistance to GLBT teenagers.

Project 10 focuses on building school-based support for teens by training school personnel in conflict resolution and suicide prevention, helping students participate in the development of school protection policies, and providing access to information about human sexuality. In 1998, when she retired from teaching, Uribe became the executive director of Friends of Project 10, Inc., the nonprofit arm of Project 10. The nonprofit organization funds programs not covered by the district, including a gay and lesbian prom and a lobbying day for educational issues in Sacramento.

Uribe's program has spread to dozens of schools in the LAUSD, but her vision has extended to many other parts of the country as well. High schools throughout the nation incorporate aspects of Project 10. Uribe, a Ph.D. in counseling psychology, influences policy through her writing. Her articles have appeared in Education Digest, High School Journal, Theory Into Practice, and a special issue of the Harvard Education Review. Her writing has appeared in USA Today and the LA Times, and she has spoken on public radio and television.

In 1992, Virginia Uribe received the National Education Association's Annual Human and Civil Rights Award for Creative Leadership in Human Rights, now renamed the Virginia Uribe Award for Creative Leadership in Human Rights. She has been honored by the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, the California State Senate and Assembly, the Los Angeles City Council, and the American Civil Liberties Union.



A scientist, educator and activist, Virginia Uribe founded Project 10, a support system for GLBT students in the Los Angeles Unified School District.

