

USO

CAR CLUB



Kita Lealao of UCE Lowrider Car Club.

Lowriding car clubs started out when individuals sharing a common aim and interest in automobile customization decided as a collective they could not only share and exchange ideas and aspirations with their fellow club members but help promote positive social change. Rather than be involved with gang life and getting into beef with the law, young car enthusiast decided that they would rather focus their attention and energy on their cars with the view of building the coolest ride on the boulevard. Car clubs gave a sense of belonging through mutual interest.

One club not only followed this ethos but also went one step further. What started out as a humble beginning for Car Club president Kita Lealao's commitment to his new found artform, Uce formally Uso Lowrider Car Club went on to become the largest lowrider car club in the world. Today not only is Uce Car Club one of the most respected clubs in the US, the clubs president Kita Lealao has also become one of the most important spokesmen for the lowrider community and a celebrity in his own right.

How Did You First Get Into Lowriding?

I started back in the late 60's going to Compton for summer vacation where I saw my first lowrider and I was hooked.

Why Lowriding?

The mechanics of the hydros and the candy paint/patterned cars was unexplainable. I've always loved lowriding. It's been a part of me and im proud to live the whole lifestyle.

Chicanos Reflect Their Culture In Their Rides With Floorless Murals & Flags, How and Do You Reflect Your Samoan Heritage Into Your Chosen Artform.

Our honour and respect, loyalty and fellowship with other races. It has always been my people's philosophy...that is our contribution to the lowriding art form.

How Did You Come To Become The Largest Lowrider Car Club In The World?

I have been fortunate to be part of something that has allowed me to meet people all over the world. Going to car shows and sharing ideas and thoughts

with different people and cultures is what lowriding is all about and it changed my life. There are many people who also felt the same as what I did. Slowly more and more people who shared this view joined our club and now we are the biggest.

What Is A Typical Week For El Presidente Of UCE Car Club?

Well, since I had my stroke back in Oct '02, my time is spent taking care of my seven grandchildren and building my car. I don't spend as much time as I used to but by communication I get to help run the club. Arranging meetings and attending shows.

The Lowrider Community Used To Face Harassments From Cops Who Viewed The Sport As A Nuisance, Today What Are The Problems Still Faced By Lowriders?

The problems faced by lowriders today are mostly due to the stereotypical views that people have for them. Aside from that, the internal struggles of trying to coexist with each other and adapt (accept) each others' styles still seems to be an ongoing struggle.

With All The Bureaucracy The Lowriding World Suffers From, What Would You Like To See Change?

First off, the fact that we don't seem to want to occupy the same space with each other is the main thing to address. One can only spread love if he loves himself. We need to respect each other and our different views.

While Many Clubs Get The Rides To Be The Focal Point, You On The Other Hand Are In Some Ways A Celebrity In Your Own Right, I Mean Part From The Boo Yaa Tribe You Gotta Be The Most Recognized Samoan in Aztlan?

I grew up in a mixture of cultures that evolved around the lowriding movements. Being recognised for helping the movement progress is enough for me.

How Many Members Are In UCE?

We are proudly 700 members strong.

Your Family Must Be Understanding With That Many Members It Must Take Most Of Your Time?

Yes they are, my family have been my backbone, I pretty much split my time with my family and my club.