

Early Start to College Program Gets Great Response

Early Start to College (ESC) has had a successful start. We originally planned on serving 200 students, but we now have over 500 students and parents that have signed up for our program. One of the first activities of the year was a Role Model Presentation at Gilliland Middle School in Tempe on September 17, 2003. The presentation included lunch for all 14 students and featured guest speaker, Arizona State University student and former Gilliland student, Bernadette Chávez. Bernadette shared her story of the transition from middle school to high school and how she chose to attend ASU. The students closely related to her story because many are currently in the same situation of moving on to high school. The eighth-grade students were very excited and asked Bernadette numerous questions about her college experience, as well as when the next ESC activity was going to be.

The second Role Model Presentation was held on October 3, 2003, at Phoenix Preparatory Academy and featured speakers Alex Cruz and Daniel Ferrer, both ASU engineering students and members of the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE). Alex and Daniel, speaking to the 23 students who attended the presentation, addressed many topics, including engineering, college life, scholarship information, and extra-curricular activities. Many of the eighth-grade students who had never thought of exploring

an engineering field were treated to an overview of what jobs could be available to them if they pursued an engineering degree.

On October 14, 2003, Stardust House was the site for our third Role Model Presentation. Over pizza and sodas, guest speaker Marisol Molina, an ASU journalism student, spoke to the 23 eighth and ninth graders about her decision to go to college. Marisol talked about her struggle to make it to college and how she dealt with her cultural identity. Many students related to her story because they are facing similar cultural issues. The students who attended had specific

P. H. Gonzales Elementary School in Tolleson on October 24, 2003. All 83 eighth graders, teachers, and the principal, Jim Paxinos, benefited from Dr. Díaz's knowledge and experience. Dr. Díaz, who was born and raised in Tolleson, shared stories about what Tolleson was like when he was growing up. He spoke about the hard labor that his parents had to endure partly due to their lack of education and how that motivated him to pursue an education. He emphasized the importance of finishing school, having a positive attitude on a daily basis, and identifying role models in one's own life.

addresses this issue by providing parents with workshops, informational materials on financial aid and admissions, and direct access to the colleges and universities in Arizona. By going through the workshops parents acquire greater knowledge about the importance of a college degree.

Our first "Introduction to College/University" workshop was held on October 14, 2003, at the Stardust House in South Ranch. Jasmín De León, ESC parent advisor, spoke to 20 parents (in both English and Spanish) about what they can do now to start preparing for their child to go to college. "The Introduction



College Recruitment Night at César Chávez High School; Students listen to Role Model Presentation at Stardust House.

questions for Marisol concerning dorm life, choosing classes, and why she chose journalism as her major. Marisol provided many of the students with first-time knowledge of what a college life was like.

Dr. René Díaz, superintendent of Phoenix Elementary School District, was the featured presenter at

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

In order to relay the importance of higher education to the students, one valuable part of the ESC program is working directly with the parents. A key component to educating parents about higher education is encouraging them to be involved in their child's life. ESC

to College/University" workshop provided parents with the general knowledge of college-bound courses that students should take in order to have a better chance of being accepted into a university. It also informed parents on the differences

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School Board Leadership Seminars Keep Improving

The leadership seminars continue to bring K-12 school board members and educational leaders together. The last seminar was presented to Texas school board members in San Antonio, Texas, at the Plaza San Antonio Marriott, from Thursday, October 9 through Saturday, October 11, 2003. Eleven school board members (see photo) were in attendance and were presented a strong program. No Child Left Behind was presented by Dr. Joe J. Bernal, state school board member; Georgia González and Anita Villarreal both from the Texas Education Agency; Mr. Craig Foster of the Equity Center talked about the Texas equalization of school funding and the *Edgewood ISD vs. Kirby* ruling that recaptures taxes that are equitably redistributed to all school districts across the state. In addition, Dr.

Omar López, representing The College Board, talked about identifying educational practices; Dr. Patricia Guerra, Research Fellow and Co-Director of the Leadership for Equity and Access Project at the University of Texas at Austin made a presentation on teacher quality and teacher cultural diversity training that benefits all students; Dr. Jimmy Vásquez, Executive Director Region 19 Education Service Center and Óscar García, Ben Bolt-Palito Blanco I.S.D. talked about superintendent/school board relations; and San Antonio Councilman Julián Castro shared his views and experiences on relationship building between the school board members and local and state officials. Friday evening's special guest speaker was Dr. Gilberto Hinojosa, Dean of the Office of Graduate Studies at the University of the Incarnate Word

who provided the historical information, through story telling, about the famous battle at the Alamo and the Mexican American involvement. Friday evening's dinner started with the melodious Mexican music by El Mariachi Los Parientes de Pedro Moreno.

Participating school board members gleaned much information at the seminar as indicated by the following comments:

"I believe I received more information this weekend than I believe I ever had with any of the TASB conferences. I wish I would have known the information that I received this weekend many years ago. But, like they say, it's never too late to forge on! Thanks again."

Rose Olmos Herrera, Ft. Worth I.S.D.

"The sharing of information is great with a smaller group. The presen-

ters were very informative and prepared. I really got a lot of valuable information; the handouts are very helpful. I would like to be able to attend next year if given the opportunity. Excellent, great!"

Carmen Elguezábal, Presidio I.S.D.

"Thank you for the wonderful opportunity to be a part of the HBLI training again. It was the best! I have shared everything with our board members and others in the school district I work at. Our board president and superintendent wanted to know if they could go and be part of the training. When I spoke to our superintendent about some of the things I learned, she was aware of much of it. It was a confirmation to me that we chose the right person for the job. In January she will be here a year."

Ciccy Gonzales, Pawnee I.S.D.