

## Early Start to College Holds Summer Mini Camp at ASU

The Early Start to College Program has experienced a busy and productive year! The staff at ESC is pleased to announce that we have successfully completed the first year of outreach activities with the 2003 student cohort, culminating with the three day mini-camp on the ASU main campus.

The Early Start to College Program is geared to target and reach primarily Hispanic low-income families, first-generation college students attending the middle grades. The mission of Early Start to College is to motivate and expand the knowledge base of these students and their parents, through structured activities designed to send the message that college is accessible, attainable, and necessary in today's competitive and global economy.

Fifty-three spirited and raring to go students, joined us in the three-day mini summer camp event that was held on campus, from June 13-15, 2004. The students stayed at Sahuaro Residence Hall, as they participated in the varying events and activities designed to introduce them to campus life, and to the many opportunities that await them after completing high school.

The students and their parents were welcomed by a Mariachi reception on Sunday evening, where they heard role model guest speaker, Francisca Montoya of the Stardust House share her experiences and challenges of being the first family member to attend college and complete a post-secondary education in her family. The students were provided additional opportunities to hear similar stories and partake in discussions with other role model speakers like Diane Aguilar, Vice President of the Arizona Diamondbacks, throughout the three-day stay.

As a result of collaborative and team efforts from adjoining departments throughout the campus, the students were afforded the experience of participating in workshops that ranged from orientation on admissions and financial aid, visiting the MARS Project and the Planetarium, to writing their own poetry after completing the Young Writer's Workshop. To help ensure that they were very tired before they returned to the dorms, the students engaged in team building activities on the first night, and a dance activity that was coordinated and choreographed by students from the dance and theatre depart-

ments the second night. The students also took advantage of the campus recreational center to partake in swimming and racquetball during their stay.

Students participated in activities designed to introduce them to aspects of cultures in the southwest

that they may not be as familiar with. On the last day of their stay, the students attended a performance where a Native American dance group from New Mexico performed traditional dances and played music with traditional instruments. Later, the group shared the history and tradition of the songs and dances with the students.

Whether it was through the activities that were implemented during the mini-camp stay, or through the varied activities that incorporated a much larger number of Early Start to College participants during the academic year, the thread of the program's mission was woven through these activities. The student and parent workshops, the role model presentations, and the community college visits consistently provided information, increasing awareness and motivation of the participants. By stressing the importance of taking early and proactive steps to prepare for college, and demonstrating the various ways that college is accessible, the dream of attending college and attaining a college education can become a reality for students who may have college aspirations, but may not think it is a possibility, or do not know how to prepare for college.



## HBLI Supports Chicano Youth Leadership Conference in Southern California

HBLI recently participated and was co-sponsor in The Chicano Youth Leadership Conferences, Inc. (CYLC Inc.) held April 2nd through April, 4th, 2004. The conference was held at the beautiful facilities of Camp Hess Kramer, in the Malibu foothills of California. The conference is a three day camp attended by approximately 100 Chicano students and staffed by 35 college-educated volunteers. The purpose of the camp is to invoke college awareness, confidence skills, cultural respect, and heritage building during the three days. Alumni of the conference read like a "Who's Who" of Mexican-Americans; from California Supreme Court Justices, to members of the United States Congress, to County Supervisors, to California State Legislators, to University Professors, to members of the printed and electronics media, to Hollywood producers, to members of every profession. All have come away from the experience with added strength, which assisted

them to overcome societal barriers that too often doom our young people to failure.

The Chicano Youth Leadership Conferences, Inc. has been developing leaderships in the Mexican-American community since 1963. Over the years each conference has hosted an average of about one hundred 11th grade college bound students from throughout Southern California for a three-day conference. This translates to more than five thousand young people.

The words of the 19th century English poet William Thackeray captured the mission of the Chicano Youth Leadership Conferences, Inc. (CYLC Inc):

"We sow a thought and reap an act,  
We sow an act and reap a habit,  
We sow a habit and reap a character,  
We sow a character and reap a destiny."

CYLC is led by Mr. Sal Castro, nationally known as a school reformer and a life-long Los Angeles school teacher. In the 1960s and

1970s, he became a leader in the tumultuous school battles of East LA, culminating in the 1968 school "blowouts" in which thousands of students from schools such as Lincoln, Roosevelt, Garfield and Wilson walked out to demand better education and respect for the

majority Mexican students. Born and raised in East Los Angeles, Mr. Castro also lived in the Belmont-Echo Park area. He attended Cathedral High School in Chinatown. He has dedicated his life to the betterment of Xicanos and Xicanas everywhere.



Chicano Youth Leadership Conference (CYLC), Inc. staff, all volunteers.