

## San Jose, CA School Board Leadership Seminar Gives Rise to Hope

In keeping with tradition, the HBLI school board leadership seminars have been afforded with the expertise and breadth of knowledge brought forth by the presenters who share the mission of HBLI. Regardless of the topic addressed or the area of expertise, each presenter conveyed the message that change is needed in order to make and sustain improvement in our education system. The most recent seminar, held in San Jose California, was no exception.

Jimmy Vasquez, the Executive Director of the Education Service Center in Texas, was one of the several guest presenters who addressed the board members in California. Mr. Vasquez, who is also a former superintendent with many years of experience with school districts, shared his expertise with board members, stressing the importance of developing and sustaining strong relationships with superintendents.

Senator John Vasconcellos was among the guest speakers, whose presentation to the board members



From left to right, back row: Felix Robles, Esau Herrera, Maria Diza-Slocum, Kim Mesa. Front row: Rebecca Garcia, Blanca Diaz, Felix Elizalde, Frank Herrera

conveyed and reinforced the mission of HBLI; the goal of improving education and enhancing educational opportunities to the people of the southwest. Senator Vasconcellos, who has over 30 years of legislative service in California, articulated to the members the value of increasing visibility by tak-

ing a proactive role as it pertains to the specific educational needs of individual districts. The senator concluded his presentation on an optimistic note, indicating that the educational future of students of color will continue to improve.

As the training sessions drew to a close, the evening was enhanced

with musical entertainment by the Mariachi of the Alum Rock School District, comprised of elementary and middle school students. The outstanding performance by the group represents within our children and devotion by their maestros. The evening concluded with guest speaker, Dr. Robert Haro, Professor of San Francisco State University. The message conveyed by Dr. Haro, spoke to the current economic conditions that can serve as barriers to accessible education for students, specifically Latino students. In spite of these potential barriers, Dr. Haro was passionate about the determination necessary to press forth with making continued progress in making higher education for Latino students more accessible and attainable. Dr. Haro's message was well received. The seminar concluded with Teacher Retention/Quality presented by Dr. Patricia L. Guerra, research fellow and co-director of the Leadership for Equity and Access Project at the University of Texas at Austin.

## Early Start to College Receives Two Awards

The ASU President's Medal for Social Embeddedness was awarded to the Early Start to College program at a Recognition Reception held March 24, 2004. This new award recognizes ASU teams that have identified community needs and issues and then developed partnerships with the community to provide solutions. Early Start to College (ESC) is designed to provide essential early information to the central Maricopa area Latino eighth and ninth grade students and their parents about college academic preparation, selecting a college, admission requirements, the application process, and financial aid. "The program is helping Latino youth and their Spanish speaking parents to believe that a college education can become a reality," says Leonard A. Valverde, executive

director of Hispanic Border Leadership Institute and education professor. ESC was begun with a grant from Lumina Foundation's McCabe Fund, which supports organizations that enable students—particularly first-generation college students, low-income students, and students of color—to broaden and make the most of their opportunities in postsecondary education. Early Start to College is now serving 500 students and over 200 parents in collaboration with Isaac, Phoenix, Tempe, and Tolleson Elementary School Districts; Phoenix and Tolleson Union Districts, Stardust House, Phoenix Teacher Prep Charter High School; and three community colleges—Phoenix, South Mountain, and Estrella Mountain Community College.

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Standing left to right: Leonard A. Valverde, HBLI; Lilly Schults, Tolleson High School; President Michael Crow, ASU; Consuelo Nava, Phoenix Preparatory Academy; Dan Garcia, Phoenix Preparatory Academy; Isabel LeRoy, South Mountain College; Jim Paxino, P.H. Gonzalez Elementary School; Jacob Chavez, Gililand Middle School; Pete Garcia, Cesar Chavez High School  
Sitting left to right: Leticia Ruiz, MCCC Teacher Prep. Academy; Linda Walker, Southwest Student Services Corporation; Jasmin DeLeon, HBLI; Rebecca Valenzuela, Phoenix College; Debra Gomez, Tempe Elementary School District; Amalia Humada, HBLI; Francisca Montoya, Stardust House

## Early Start to College Fall 2004 Program

With the successful completion of the Early Start to College activities that were implemented during the 2003-2004 academic school years, we are now focusing on the planning and coordination of the activities that are scheduled for this fall. First, we would like to share the exciting news that we are honored to have received two awards reflecting our collaborative efforts and contributions to the students and parents of our community. We proudly received the ASU President's Social Embeddedness Award in March 2004. During the present-

ation, we were joined by representatives of our partnering school districts. On June 17th, the Early Start to College program was recognized by Stardust House, another of our partners, with the "Rising Star" award (see related story).

Although the Early Start to College program was initially designed to serve 200 students and 100 parents, we are pleased with the overwhelming response that we received; our first year. We attribute much of our growth to the support of our dedicated colleagues at the various school sites whose efforts contributed to

the quality of the program. As a result, the Early Start to College program, serving seven school districts and one community based agency, was able to target and reach over 480 students, and 200 parents who attended and participated in the varying activities that were provided throughout the year.

As part of our planning efforts for this fall, we are pleased to announce that we are exploring the possibilities of sustaining and forming new creative partnerships with outreach programs that contribute to strengthening and expand-

ing outreach services that are provided throughout the Phoenix area. We are working with an ASU based partnership called College Knowledge, as well as a community based agency, Friendly House. These two collaboratives share a similar mission of providing early outreach services to first-generation college students, with the intended outcome of increasing the percentage of students who attend and attain a college education, stressing the importance of early preparation.

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