2003 LULAC PRESIDENT’S CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS ANNOUNCED

Jaime Chahín (HBLI Coordinating Council member) in higher education, Belén Robles (former HBLI National Advisory Panel member) as national Hispanic advocate, Loretta Sánchez (NAP member) in politics, and Leonard Valverde (HBLI Executive Director) in higher education are recipients of the 2003 ExxonMobil LULAC President’s Circle of Excellence Awards. The awards were presented at the seventy-fourth LULAC National Convention June 19, 2003, in Orlando, Florida. The Executive Office of the President of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) established this award to recognize individuals whose contributions have helped advance the status of Latinos through education, health, civil rights activism, volunteerism, philanthropy, the arts, and/or corporate responsibility.

HBLI ORGANIZES EDUCATIONAL FORUM AT ASU

On September 19, 2003, HBLI will host a one-day forum entitled “Latino Education—All One System: Increasing Educational Achievement, K-12, and Accessing/Succeeding in College.” The focus of the forum will be on solutions to educational problems and challenges faced by the Latino community: children, parents, educators, and administrators.

Presentations by scholars such as Jorge Chapa (Indiana University), Angela Valenzuela (University of Texas at Austin), Albert Cortez (IDRA), Baltazar Acevedo (University of Texas at Brownsville), and Eugene García (Arizona State University) will provide new viewpoints, proven programs, and strategic approaches to historical problems that Latino students in public schools, community colleges, and universities have faced. The forum will de-emphasize documenting the problems and will underscore solutions that will answer questions such as “What can we do, as individuals or as a group, to improve the educational experiences of Latino youths?” or “What systemic changes need to take place in order to improve the education of Latino youth?”

The one-day forum is intended to present the schooling of Latinos as interconnected from kindergarten to graduate school. The day is organized so that a particular segment of the educational pipeline is examined: the morning is dedicated to K-12 issues and the afternoon to higher education. Attendance is limited to permit the panelists and participants to engage in dialogue, an exchange of ideas, and a question-and-answer session.

HBLI EARLY START TO COLLEGE PROGRAM GETS UNDERWAY

HBLI’s Early Start to College program, funded by a seed grant from the Lumina Foundation, is on track to begin presentations to eighth and ninth grade students and their parents in fall 2003. Three cluster groups of schools in the metropolitan Phoenix area have been established: (1) Estrella Mountain Community College, Tolleson Elementary District (Diane Hamilton, superintendent), and Tolleson Union High School District (Kino Flores, superintendent); (2) Phoenix Community College (Corina Gardea, president, and Jesse Mireles, executive assistant to the president), Phoenix Elementary District (Rene Diaz, superintendent), Isaac Elementary District (Kent Scribner, superintendent), and Phoenix Union High School District (Rosalie Franco Perez, director of magnet programs); and (3) South Mountain Community College (Isabel Leroy, director of instructional programs), Tempe Elementary District (Debra Gómez, assistant superintendent for teaching and learning, and Jacob Chávez, principal of Gilliland Middle School), Roosevelt Elementary District (Frederick Warren, superintendent), and César Chávez High School (James McElroy, principal, and Pete García, assistant principal). To date, two sets of organizational meetings have been held; the first with all school district and community college partners in attendance was held at the ASU Downtown campus, and the second was a round of separate meetings by cluster groups.
Four principal activities will take place throughout the year: (1) half-day visits to community college campuses where students can learn about educational opportunities, listen to college representatives, and visit with current students; (2) role-model presentations by recognizable individuals who have attended or are attending college and will express the value of education to students and parents; (3) college recruitment nights at the local middle and high schools conducted by Arizona-based community colleges and universities; and (4) ASU summer mini-camp during which students will stay in dormitories, attend classes, take part in social activities, tour the campus, and attend information sessions led by ASU representatives and current students.

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL BOARD LEADERSHIP SEMINAR HELD IN LONG BEACH

“Thank you for the opportunity to attend the California leadership seminar. Your staff did a superb job providing us critical, current, and important information. The knowledge we gained and the network we established empowers us as board members to set direction, shape policy, and take a lead role in the education of all student with specific emphasis on the needs of Latino students.”

—Lillian Tafoya, Trustee/Bakersfield City School District, Vice President/CA Latino School Board Members Association.

Ms. Tafoya was one of the participants at the California Leadership Seminar for Latino School Board Members that was held in Long Beach May 2-4, 2003. The presenter/facilitators provided the participants information and food for thought about superintendent/board member relationship, Roberts Rules of Order, school finance, local/state relations, plus the school board responsibilities in line with the No Child Left Behind Act, and identifying education practices such as closing the achievement gap and raising test scores. Sal Castro, activist and educator, was our special guest and presenter for the Saturday evening reception and dinner.

The next leadership seminar is scheduled for October in San Antonio, Texas, with another California leadership seminar scheduled in April 2004.

RETIREMENT ANNOUNCED

Tomás Arciniega, NAP member and president of the California State University campus at Bakersfield, just announced his retirement, to take effect June 2004. Dr. Arciniega, a native of Texas, has provided much needed leadership and service to the entire education community during his long (over 40 years) and distinguished career with the California State University system as dean of education at San Diego and as vice president of academic affairs at Fresno.

NEW STAFF MEMBER JOINS HBLI

In May 2003, Sandra Chávez-López joined HBLI as administrative assistant. Born and raised in Las Cruces, New Mexico, she recently moved to Arizona from El Paso, where she worked in the public schools. The field of education has always been important to Sandra: she studied bilingual elementary education at New Mexico State University; also she worked at NMSU, the Doña Ana Branch Community College, and in the public schools in Las Cruces. “I have always enjoyed working with students, administrators, and parents and in having one goal: to see our children succeed. I am very excited to be working for the Hispanic Border Leadership Institute where I can share my experience and assist the administration and staff in making this program a continued success.”