

Positive Feedback from Congressional Leaders Allowed Students to Gain Insight on Important Issues

WASHINGTON, DC - On June 17, 2006, twenty-nine students from El Paso, TX realized their potential as future leaders after an intensive week of training and meetings with their Congressional leaders.

The main objective of the Experience In Democracy Leadership Program is to provide a sense of empowerment and become effective leaders. The training encompasses teaching the values of democracy, building and refining leadership skills, and entrusting them with the duty of civic engagement.

The students of Region 19 were motivated to become leaders. The week started with an educational tour of all the famous Washington, D.C. sites. The students had the opportunity to learn more about the famous monuments that they only used to see in their history books.

After an exciting day of touring, the students were given an intense day of training and knowledge. They gained insight on our government and how it really works. During this training, they created an issues agenda. In their agenda, they focused on issues that affect their community and ways they feel they can be improved.

After their training, Region 19 met with Congressman Silvestre Reyes, staff members from the offices of Senators Kay Bailey Hutchison and John Cornyn. The students presented their agendas to their Congressional leaders and were also given the opportunity to ask questions and gain insight on the daily lives of their Congressman and Senators. Each meeting was a success and students walked out of each meeting more confident than the last. They left with the motivation to become true leaders in their communities.

Student participation in this institute was made possible by the following sponsors:

- Marisela Fernandez**
- Aurora Martinez**
- Ana Ansin**
- Marta Rivera**
- Elvia Orona**
- Gabriela Mendoza**



Students with the Honorable Silvestre Reyes.



Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison alongside El Paso Students.

Congratulations Graduating Class — Region 19, El Paso, TX

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Gabriel Elizondo | Hazael Leanos | Marina Olivares | Erina Rios |
| Cynthia Pena | Juan Adame | Carla Banuelos | Eddy Serna |
| Pablo Gonzalez | Hugo Macias Lopez | Julio Soto | Martiza Jimenez |
| Tomas Cruz | Eduardo Garcia | Dionisio Cordero | Mario Reyes |
| Miguel Marquez | Oscar Lopez | Alfredo Nunez | Antonio Juarez |
| Lorenzo Sanchez | Maria Oporto | Lucero Alvidrez | Jerry Gonzalez |
| Elsa Moreno | Veronica Rodriguez | Juan Martinez | Jacqueline Loweree |
| Yeiny Rodriguez Perez | | | |

June 12– June 17, 2006

Issues Agenda: Class 150 - El Paso, Texas

These issues, concerns and proposed solutions were developed by EIDLDP Class 150. Their purpose is to make a difference in their communities and make their communities a better place.

We are students representing Migrant Region 19 in El Paso, Texas. We are here today to discuss issues that are affecting our community, and we propose the following:



Region 19 delegates on Capitol Hill.

School Funding

We propose to Congress that schools receive better and more adequate funding. Classes are being cut due to the lack of funds and other services students enjoyed in the past that are no longer available.

Adequate funding will have various positive results, such as extracurricular activities to keep students off the streets and better salaries to hire better teachers.

Drugs in Schools

The increasing presence of drugs in schools target young people, who are already easy prey to peer pressure and the need to fit in. The end result is an increase in violence and crime.

We propose that Congress encourage the implementation of programs to offer effective counseling in all schools. We would also like to propose an increase in security inside and outside schools in order to make them safe again.

Immigration

We propose to Congress to approve legislation for a faster legalization process for those who have lived in the U.S. for a long period of time and have contributed to the economy of this country.

We also believe that a well-planned temporary work permit program should be considered. The criteria for both options should be a thorough background check to ensure national security.

We thank you for the time you have taken to speak with us regarding some of the issues facing our community, our proposals and solutions.



El Paso students in front of the Washington Monument.