

## “Organización Latinoamericana Estudiantil”

*More than just a name, Class 115 brought forth lessons in creativity and teamwork, as they expressed a need for a change to their representatives on Capitol Hill*

WASHINGTON, DC, Aug. 4 — Marqui de Flers Robert and Arman de Caillavet were once quoted saying, “Democracy is the name we give the people whenever we need them.” When it came to great names and a call to civic action, this Experience In Democracy Leadership Program Class, from Santa Clara County, California found a new word for Democracy and called it, “Organización Latinoamericana Estudiantil (Latin American Student Organization),” or in short, “OLE!”

Class 115 was a very dynamic group with the amazing ability to form a camaraderie that would take months to build. The groups enthusiasm and willingness to learn proved to be the key to their success during their stay in Washington, DC. That same enthusiasm and willingness also kept them on their feet as the swept through the week on a very demanding schedule.

Upon their arrival to Washington, Class 115 was on the move with a welcoming evening show at the John F. Kennedy

Center for the Arts. Following the orientation and a thorough understanding of what was expected of them for the week, the participants were engaged in workshops, and meetings that provoked the importance of being an active and responsible citizen.

During their stay, Class 115 met with special BCLI guests and board members, as well as visit with key Washington insiders, and members of their congressional representatives’ offices. Each meeting provided the students the opportunity to voice their needs and express their concerns to many individuals who collaborate their efforts towards advancing the needs of the immigrant and migrant communities.

Among the core educational programming, visits to the Holocaust and Smithsonian’s Air and Space Museums were a few of the attractions that provided additional learning for the week. Another definite highlight included the tour and glimpse of the home of the Presidents, The White House.



*Class 115 student addresses the groups concerns to the Congressman’s (Fortney H. “Pete” Stark; CA,-Dem) legislative aid on immigration and education.*

Class 115 learned the true value of Democracy and the importance of being active representatives and advocates for their communities. They understand more now than ever the need of voicing their opinions in an effort to avoid be under-represented in their government. As a Class 115 chaperone said, “BCLI provides an incredible opportunity for students to develop an awareness of their place in the world.”

We would like to thank Class 115, and look forward to their participation in the upcoming Experience In Democracy Leadership Conference in Sacramento, California in 2003.

## **Congratulations Class 115: “Organización Latinoamericana Estudiantil”**

Jesus Ramirez	Reina Cruz	Vacquer Soto	Daisy Torres	Martha Nieves	Frank Muro*
Ivan Castelo	Guadalupe Villegas	Elias Barocio	Lupita Velarde	Laura Munoz	Gerry Lopez*
Blanca Jauregui	Elizabeth Ochoa	Eli Contreras	Leillani Ortiz	Israel Rodriguez	Maria Russell*
Elvira Espinoza	Nadine Ceja	Iris Rodriguez	Alicia Gonzalez	Pedro Cortez	Braulio Solis*
Martha Ventura	Maria Orozco	Vanessa Yanez	Maricela Castillo	Elizabeth Schuck*	

\* designates chaperone



Students developing agendas (above) in preparation for their congressional visits (below).



## Did you know?

The Bert Corona Leadership Institute Campus was once home to President Warren G. Harding. The mansion, located in Northwest, Washington, DC, was built in the early 1800's and has served as a home to many prominent historical figures, organizations, and embassies, mainly attributed to its easy access to the White House and Downtown, DC. Today the mansion is *A Home Away From Home*, for all the Experience In Democracy Leadership Program participants.



EIDLDP Class 115, O.L.E; Santa Clara County, CA., in front of the BCLI Campus: *A Home Away From Home*.

## Issues Agenda: Santa Clara County, CA

Issues and concerns addressed by Class 115 to their congressional and local representatives:

### I. EDUCATION

- A. We propose legislation that requires states to fund school transportation
- B. We propose the right for immigrants and migrant students to have access to the same scholarships as any other citizen in this country.
- C. In an effort to provide our schools with a safe environment, we propose to reduce class sizes and that the Department of Education should fund more money for school facilities.
- D. We propose that the school system redistribute funds so that school issues be resolved immediately; issues such as the renovation of bathrooms, classrooms, and general school areas.
- E. Any public school funded by the government, should allocate their money, without bias towards any particular area / subject or school related activities. (i.e. football uniforms, facilities, or coaching staff).

### II. TRANSPORTATION

- A. Agricultural business should provide a means of transportation, at a reasonable cost, for their workers to and from work.

### III. IMMIGRATION

- A. We ask for you to take more action on immigration bills that could benefit the migrant and immigrant community in the United States.
- B. In an effort to provide immigrants an opportunity for prosperity in this country we support access to a college education and financial aid.
- C. We propose that Amnesty be given to the Latino population, particularly for those who do not have residency but work and live in the United States.

### IV. HOUSING

- A. Regarding the issue of housing we propose that federal programs should require all water to be filtered. We also propose that federal programs include legislation concerning rent control.

### V. HEALTH

- A. Any individual living and working in the United State should have full access to health benefits and health insurance.

### VI. POLICE BRUTALITY

- A. Police brutality should be dealt with, so that it will no longer be an issue among low-income communities by providing special education such as anger management classes. We will rid ourselves of brutality executed by police officers.