

CLASS 132: San Joaquin County Migrant Education Program Region 23

Experience in Democracy Leadership Program

Training Week: June 20– June 26, 2004

June 27, 2004

In Search for Change, Migrant Youth Express Their Concerns to Capitol Hill Leaders

WASHINGTON, DC, On June 26, 2004, thirty students from San Joaquin County, successfully completed a leadership training week with definite plans to make change in their local communities. The Bert Corona Leadership Institute's civic leadership program provided the students with the practical insight of their role in government.

The students of Class 132 were quick to realize that possessing the skills and know-how of civic participation is half the battle toward achieving change in a democratic society. The students were challenged and tested to enable them to accept the civic responsibilities that lie ahead.

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.

Class 132 participants were able to learn the practical mechanics of public policy. They developed their own issues agenda and diligently prepared a persuasive argument for their proposals.

After their rigorous training sessions, Class 132 met with members of the offices of U. S. Representatives Richard Pombo, and Senators Barbara Boxer and Diane Feinstein. Each meeting was a success, as Class 132 took advantage of the opportunity to implement their newly acquired skills.



Students preparing for government meeting



Congratulations Graduating Class 132

Nallely Albor	Zaida Guzman	Carolina Paniagua	Veronica Silva
Elsa Ayala	Raquel Hernandez	Edgar Parra	Edith Tejada-Gonzalez
Jorge Cabral	Edauto Lopez	Alicia Perez Uribe	Vanessa Valencia
Maria S. Capurro	Lani Lopez	Gretel Quintero	Maria Vargas
Maricela Diaz	Lizette Lopez	Mara del Carmen Ramos	Ana Zamudio
Lourdes Estrada	Julio Cesar Luna	Andrea Resendiz	Brenda L. Zepeda
Mayra Jazmin Garcia	Elizabeth Meza	Maria Ruiz	<i>Chaperones:</i> Jose Bobadilla,
Alejandro Gil	Patricia Munoz	Maricela Salcedo	Manuel Nunez
			Marisol Jacquez

Issues Agenda: Class 132

These issues, concerns and proposed solutions were developed by EIDLDP Class 132. Their purpose is to make a difference in their community and make their community a better place.

We are students representing the San Joaquin County, California and we propose the following:

Education

- We encourage you to support the “Dream Act” which is a bill that has not reached the floor yet. This Act will allow illegal, hard-working immigrants who grew up in the United States and graduated from high schools access to higher education. For these students opportunities and options are limited to a high school education.
- The cut of federal funds that help our schools with various after school programs or employment opportunities for ourselves and our peers is causing more damage than you can imagine. Furthermore without help, our schools and youth are going down hill. Meaning without these programs perhaps our peers might be at risk of exposure to criminal activities such as joining gangs and doing drugs.
- In order to get a better education we propose that more schools are built as opposed to the number of jails being built. This will provide a better learning environment with smaller classrooms that will help students focus and receive more help from their teachers. Our school buildings and classrooms are at times unsafe. Providing a suitable working environment includes safe buildings, and safe classrooms in our community.
- School bus transportation used to be available to all students. We propose that this service be reinstated because it is the most effective and efficient way to get to school.
- We propose there be a better program for integrating Spanish-speaking students into the school system. Spanish speaking students are left behind because English is not their first language.

Environment

- The increasing housing developments are over taking our farmland. Agriculture in the long run will scarcely decrease with expansion of housing in our community. This rapid growth causes overcrowding in our community and it increases not only the population but also the pollution in our area. We propose that congress support any legislation that maintains a healthy environment in our daily lives

Immigration

- We would like Congress to support the idea of immigrant access to driver’s licensing. We want other legal documents to be accepted in lieu of a social security number.
- We propose that Immigrants have access to medical care regardless of where they work. Farm workers need better medical care and higher wages.



Jin Lee Parada, a recent EIDLDP alumnus speaks to the recent graduates of Class 132