

Middle School Scholars Express Their Concerns to Capitol Hill Leaders

WASHINGTON, DC, On July 1, 2004, thirty middle school students from Bakersfield, California, 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 133 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 133 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 133 met with members of the offices of U. S. Representatives William Thomas, and Senators Diane Feinstein and Barbara Boxer. Each meeting was a success, as Class 133 took advantage of the opportunity to implement their newly acquired skills.

The students of Class 133 showed much resolve in their newfound dedication to make a difference. They recognize civic responsibility as a call that they must answer.



Class 133 preparing for government meeting



Class 133 expressing their concerns

Congratulations Graduating Class 133

Luis Alvarado
Mithra Arambula
Hilda Arenas
Marisela Arreola
Nancy Arreola
Marcela Camacho
Sonia Chavez
Gemma Cuevas
Chaperones:
Cecilia Arambula

Omar Cuevas
Amber Diaz
Harold Diaz
Jose Espinosa

Maria Fonseca
Jaqueline Garcia
Jorge Garcia

Vincent Cardenas

Jeanette Gonzalez
Yanina Hernandez
William Iniguez
Jesus Lopez

Irene Loza
Bianca Marin
Erica Mejia

Olga Gonzalez

Emma Mendoza
Jaime Mendoza
Briseyda Monge
Omar Rangel
Andrew Ruiz
Heliodoro Sanchez
Humberto Sanchez
Maria Zepeda

Jose Herrera

Issues Agendas: Class 133 Bakersfield, CA Migrant Region 21

These issues, concerns and proposed solutions were developed by EIDLDP Class 133. Their purpose is to make a difference in their community and make their community a better place.

We are students of the Migrant Education Program Regent 21 in Bakersfield California and we propose the following:

Immigration

- Immigrants contribute to the country and pay taxes. Most immigrants in our community are farm workers, which is a very demanding job with low salaries. The conditions in the field are very bad. For example, they have low quality drinking water and no bathrooms. For this hard work we propose to congress better wages and better medical care.

Unemployment

- The jobs in our community that are available are short term and low paying. This is not enough to support a family. We propose to Congress to provide more jobs with better wages.

Education

- We need more teachers and teachers that are qualified. We need more equipment and school supplies. We propose to congress to give more money to education. Different schools are cutting after school programs and electives like: choir, art, cooking classes, home economics, models club, and etc.

The Environment

- We are concerned about the environment and pollution. There may be too many vehicles on the road. The more cars, the more pollution will be produced. We need a better public transportation system so that people do not have to rely on their cars all the time. Also, this high pollution in our community causes breathing problems and cancer.
- Many people in our community are not very happy about their trashcans being vandalized. This is related to the issue of education. Because so many after school programs are being cut, students look for things to do. Some times they are negative things like vandalizing trashcans and different buildings.
- The environment is not very clean including our parks and forests. We propose to Congress to enforce the cleaning of parks and maintaining them clean.

Teen pregnancy

- Teen pregnancy is very high in our community. There are not enough prevention programs. We propose to Congress to support more prevention programs to stop the rate of teen pregnancy. Teens need a lot of support with all the drugs available and after schools programs being cut. Also, teen parents especially need the community's support.