

CLASS 136:
San Joaquin County
Migrant Education Region 23

Experience in Democracy Leadership Program

Training Week: July 18 - July 24, 2004

July 25, 2004

*Migrant Youth Express
Their Concerns to
Capitol Hill Leaders*

WASHINGTON, DC, On July 24, 2004, thirty students from the San Joaquin County Migrant Region 23 in 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 136 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 136 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 136 met with members of the offices of U. S. Representatives Richard Pombo, and Senators Diane Feinstein and Barbara Boxer. Each meeting was a success, as Class 136 took advantage of the opportunity to implement their newly acquired skills.

The students of Class 136 showed much resolve in their newfound dedication to make a difference. They recognize civic responsibility as a call that they must answer.



Students preparing for meetings



Students expressing their concerns

Congratulations Graduating Class 136

Javier Anaya
Jose Avalos
Jaime Benitez
Paula Cano
Liliana Carrasco
Rocio Carrasco
Esbeydy Castellanos
Juan Chavez

Janet Estrada
Ivone Fregoso
Monica Fuentes
Perla Garcia
Wendy Guzman
Ana Hernandez
Yesenia Hurtado
Miguel Lemus

Alejandra Lopez
Freddy Martinez
Elva Medina
Marcos Medoza
Fernando Millan
Francisco Ochoa
Teresa Angelica Perez
Maria Sandoval

Ruben Silva
Miguel Solis
Hector Talamantes
Adriana Torres
Erika Valadez
Susana Viramontes
*Chaperones: David Cruz
Lupe Puge,
Margaret Huerta-Salazar*

Issues Agendas: Class 136 San Joaquin County, CA Migrant Region 23

These issues, concerns and proposed solutions were developed by EIDLDP Class 136. Their purpose is to make a difference in their community and make their community a better place.

We are students representing Migrant Education Region 23 in California and we propose the following:

In California there are many important issues that need attention like education, immigration and health are a few; yet it seems that not much is being done about the issues concerning our environment.

Environment

- California's environment suffers in many ways; forest fires, pollution and many other causes. We propose that there be some type of "cut and plant" law that would make people who cut trees down plant new ones in their place. In order to help our environment there needs to be promotion of environment conservation. Along with those lines, there should also be support for companies that make cars that cause less pollution, like the hybrid cars.

Education

- Leaders of tomorrow, need education today. School funds are being decreased and we as students are suffering the consequences. Recreational activities are being cut, teachers are not as dedicated, and school buildings deteriorate more and more each day making it easier for students to become more vulnerable to negative influences.
- Overcrowding in classrooms is not unusual for students in California. It is a fact that in California there are more jails than there are schools. This results in over crowded classrooms; over crowded classrooms create an unhealthy environment that does not let students learn to the best of their ability. We propose to Congress to build more schools than jails.

Violence/Drugs

- In our community there is a high rate of crime, gangs, and drugs. We would like law enforcement to be increased as well as more youth centers built. We propose to Congress to provide more rehabilitation centers and prevention programs. We also believe there should be hardship punishment for criminals.

Health

- We propose to Congress to provide immigrants and farm workers with access to medical care and higher wages.

Budget Crisis

- In California we have a budget crisis. We propose to congress to split money evenly among high priority interests like education, health care, immigration, etc.. We would really appreciate if we work hard to resolve the budget crisis.

Immigration

- In order to secure a future for immigrants in the state of California we propose to Congress to support the Dream Act, which will grant more opportunities and growth in America.
- In our community, many immigrants are being unfairly deported outside the U.S. We are being stopped in the streets and asked for our citizen status. We propose to Congress to stop the illegal raids and to stop the separation of hard working families. As we know without immigrants, there would be no one to gather the food and crops of our nation.