

# CLASS 120: SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY, CA

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The Training Week

April 2003

## Recognizing the Importance of Their Civic Duty

WASHINGTON, DC, Apr. 14 — Twenty-nine students graduated from the Experience In Democracy Leadership Program this past week, and one lesson stood out from all, that lesson the importance of civic responsibility.



*Congresswoman Maxine Waters (CA-Dem.) with student representatives from San Joaquin County, California during the Migrant .*

ing the Annual Migrant Youth Dinner held in downtown Washington. An event that support the advancement of migrant youth through civic education. Among the special guests were Congressman Solomon Ortiz (TX-Dem.), Congresswoman Maxine Waters (CA-Dem.), representatives from the DC Council, and many other representatives from government and private agencies servicing migrant communities in the

The students of Class 120 was quick to realize that possessing the skills and know-how of civic participation in only half the battle. Like the many before them, these students were challenged and tested so to enable them to accept the civic responsibilities that lie ahead. This sense of empowerment is what the Experience In Democracy Leadership Program is all about. It comes from teaching the values of democracy, building and refining leadership skills, and entrusting them with the duty of civic engagement.

Class 120 was taught the meaning of power in politics. They were constantly reminded of the values of education for the future. They were guided to identify

and harness their civic agenda, and ultimately they were tested against the key Washington insiders who make the differences in their communities.

Their meetings with Congressman Richard Pombo, Senator Dianne Feinstein, and members from the staff of Senator Barbara Boxer were each successful interactions for the students. During these meetings the students were given the opportunity to address their concerns and hear from their representatives their stances on issues revolving immigration, education, the economy and more.

Class 120 also had the unique pleasure to meet with other Washington insiders dur-

United States.

The students from Class 120 showed much resolve in their new found dedication to make a change in their communities. They recognize the importance of civic responsibility as a call that all must answer. In the words of Robert Hutchins (professor and writer), "The death of democracy is not likely to be an assassination from ambush. It will be a slow extinction from apathy, indifference and undernourishment." Though such a threat may exist, we rest assured that Class 120 will continue their efforts and keep democracy alive and forever well. Thank you, Class 120, and good luck.

### **Congratulations Class 120:**

Daisy Garcia	Omar Huerta	Celene Ayala	Maria Gonzalez	Daisy Hurtado	Elizabeth Lopez
Rigoberto Pena	Salvador Sandoval	Diana Campos	Luisa A. Lopez	Fernando Rodriguez	Mayra Martinez
Martha Ortiz	Mario Bravo	Nolberto Leyva	Claudia Murga	Lizeth Guillan	Maria Medina
Christopher Jacobo	Hermelinda Regalado	Eliseo Hernandez	Adriana Espino	Yanley Rodriguez	Emmanuel Lopez
Evanjelina Soto	Gisela Alvarez	Alma Belmontez	Luz Alcazar	Brigido Hernandez	Sergio Vasquez*
Regina Sanchez*	Mary Calvo Hopkins*				

\* designates chaperone

## Issues Agenda: Class 120 - San Joaquin County, CA

*These issues, concerns and solutions (as shown) were developed by EIDLDP Class 120. Their purpose to make a difference in their communities, and make their communities a better place.*

We are 29 constituents from California, representing the migrant education program. The purpose why we are all gathered here today is to discuss the issues we face everyday in our community.

### **GAS PRICES:**

#### **PROBLEM**

1. They are too high and they keep escalating. There needs to be a limit.

#### **SOLUTIONS**

1. Hybrid (electric) cars
2. Fuel efficient cars
3. Other arrangements for oil from other countries.
4. Make more affordable and obtainable to general public.
5. Agreements between the U.S. and neighboring countries on oil, to help gas prices go down.
6. Increase wages to make gas affordable to the people who need it to commute to their jobs on a daily bases.

### **EDUCATION:**

#### **PROBLEMS**

1. Old buildings at schools
2. School discrimination
3. Small classrooms
4. Bilingual education
5. Immigrants don't have same opportunities and are judged, discrimination when put in classes
6. For non-speaking English students the counselors put students in classes just to accumulated credits to be able to graduate but not in classes to attend college and/or university.
7. Teach adults English

#### **SOLUTIONS**

1. Fund programs to remodel schools
2. Build more classes and schools and lower the students per classroom
3. Another solution will be to fund programs such as the "Academia" to help these students:
  - a. The Academia de Español, The Academy of Spanish, is the only program, which benefits immigrant students that arrive to the United States to acquire the necessary credits to attend a university.
4. Fund programs to increase enrollment for English classes for our parents, it's very important that our parents know the language. This will help them with their jobs and with our education.

### **MINIMUM WAGE:**

#### **PROBLEM**

1. It is too low. Not enough for health care, insurance and money for college.



Congressman Richard Pombo (CA-Rep.) attentively listens to Class 120 as they present their issues and concerns.

#### **SOLUTIONS**

1. The minimum wage should be raised for the reason that rent is high and we need the money to pay for it.

### **DISCRIMINATION:**

#### **PROBLEM**

1. It's seen at schools and works.

#### **SOLUTIONS**

1. Schools should teach cultural education to teach the different ways of everyone. This way they will not be treated different because everyone understand their culture and finally they will be treated equally.
2. Affirmative action should be used to grant immigrants opportunities to attend college and apply, to get certain job.

### **DRIVING LICENSE:**

#### **PROBLEM**

1. Illegal residents not having a driver's license.

#### **SOLUTIONS**

1. For safety reasons if immigrants get into an accident, they have no insurance, they will run away, and leave the scene for fear of deportation.
2. They can and should still take a drivers test but not ask for social security card, they are still going to drive. So it is better to give them a license to be sure that they are insured.

### **CONCLUSION:**

On behalf of our 29 constituents, we would like to thank you for listening to our petitions and we hope you take our concerns in consideration. It was an honor speaking with you. We believe that with your help we can make our community a much better environment once again, thank you.