



The Chicano Latino Youth Leadership Project prepares Latino youth for governmental and civic leadership.

Capitol to learn firsthand about the legislative process through mock hearings and personal interaction with state legislators and legislative staff.

“Our goal is to expose these students to a world outside their immediate communities,” says Norma Dominguez, president of the CLYLP board of directors. “They are California’s future leaders. We want to help them see themselves that way. We want them to understand that there is work beyond their immediate lives that they have an opportunity to address issues of equity, access, collaboration and community-based leadership. Through this program, we want to play a role in their leadership development.”

CLYLP Summer Leadership Conference attendees also receive valuable information about educational opportunities and professional careers during their stay at Sacramento State, including a college fair featuring top schools from around the country.

While the CLYLP board of directors oversees strategic planning, fundraising and overall program implementation, volunteers play a significant role handling all of the work and planning. In all, more than 200 volunteers contribute more than 25,000 total hours to achieve the program’s success.

In 2010, the Sacramento State College of Continuing Education (CCE) took on the role of liaison for all of the program’s campus aspects. While Garcia still

serves as the official CLYLP host, CCE handled catering, logistics, meeting planning, and dorm lodging among other responsibilities.

“This is first year CCE is acting as a liaison for the campus in terms of logistical coordination on campus,” says Susan Gonzalez, senior director for CCE’s Conference and Training Services. “We coordinate conferences on a regular basis, so we have that expertise to add. We hope that through our involvement we can help make this incredible event run even more smoothly and seamlessly.”

A Bright Future

That Latinos won’t always be an underrepresented population is a guiding principle behind CLYLP. According to CLYLP statistics, Latinos will be California’s largest population group by 2025, and by 2040, half of all Californians will be Latino. Therefore, developing the next generation of Latino leaders is a critical investment in California’s future and beyond.

“I believe in the mission of the organization,” says Dominguez, who is not only president of the CLYLP board of directors, but also participated in the



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CLYLP Planning Committee Members (partial) L to R: Gerardo Correa, conference coordinator, CLYLP; Natalia Valdez, assistant conference coordinator, CLYLP; Norma E. Fernandez, program committee member, CLYLP; Susan Gonzalez, senior director, Sacramento State Conference and Training Services; Sarah Tieszen, conference planner, Sacramento State Conference and Training Services; Fernando Ramirez, assistant conference coordinator and program committee chair, CLYLP.

PHOTO BY HITOMI AMUNDSEN



PHOTO COURTESY OF FELIPE FUENTES

Assemblymember Felipe Fuentes Welcomes CLYLP Comcast Fellow

BY JUSTINE BROWN

In July 2010, the Chicano Latino Youth Leadership Project sponsored a four-week fellowship program for six CLYLP summer conference alumni who have completed at least one year of college studies.

Through this experience, fellows had an opportunity to engage key leaders in various sectors of California's life and culture and experience a leadership curriculum that focused on the inner workings of California government, the factors that influence policy makers and current and future policy issues facing California. As part of that fellowship, Assemblymember Felipe Fuentes (39th district) hosted Yadira Brisbeca in his assembly office.

"Yadira was able to help a lot in working with legislative staff and got some first-hand experience in the state legislative and budget processes," says Raul Bocanegra, who joined Fuentes' staff in 2007 and currently serves as his chief of staff. "I think it provided her a good deal of exposure to current and future statewide policy issues. I think she took away a sense of responsibility and a sense of the importance of giving back, as well as a perspective of what it's like to work in government in California."

Both Assemblymember Fuentes and Bocanegra are strong supporters of programs like CLYLP that expose Latino students to the world outside their communities. This was the second year that their office participated in a CLYLP program and they hope to continue.

"It's a very interesting time in California politics with all the challenges going on right now," Bocanegra says. "It's a great time for someone to get involved in a program like this."

The CLYLP Comcast Fellowship Program was made possible through a generous grant from the Comcast Foundation and in partnership with the California Latino Legislative Caucus; the California State University, Sacramento — Center for California Studies; the University of California Center at Sacramento; the University of Southern California; and the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities.

program as a student in 1996. "When I went through the program as a high school student, it definitely made an impact on me. It helped me understand the value of a college education, the significance of how important it is for Latinos to go to college and to give back to the community."

Garcia says that for many students, the CLYLP program represents the first time they step out of their communities. "It is critical to provide a positive experience to them," he says. "If we do it right, the program will provide moti-

vation for these students to continue their education and to prosper in the community."

For Dominguez, and many others, the program succeeded in doing just that. "It was clear to me that getting to go to the CLYLP Summer Leadership Conference and doing well there wasn't an individual accomplishment," she says. "It was also critical for the state to continue to prosper. It gave me a larger network of mentors to connect with; it made me feel like I was part of

a larger organization."

"It's an outstanding program," says Garcia, who plans to stay involved for years to come. "We're privileged and honored that [the CLYLP board] continues to choose Sacramento State as the venue for this incredible student experience."

To learn about other programs offered through the CLYLP, please visit www.clylp.org.