

PROGRAM:

Education is the Future

OBJECTIVES:

Help parents of Pasco students prepare their children for higher education and realize the necessity of a college education to achieve high goals.

LOCATION:

The event took place at Washington State University Tri-Cities.

DESCRIPTION:

The program was part of WSU Tri-Cities Latina/o Outreach, which its mission is to provide middle school students and their parents with knowledge of post-secondary educational opportunities. Program services are based on the notion that *College is Possible* for all students. Students and their parents should be the decision makers regarding their educational goals, but college attendance and graduation should be possible for everyone.

Education is the Future was an all-day Saturday event for 170 parents and students. The program had a Latino cultural emphasis, and strove to be culturally sensitive and appropriate for this target population.

Different sessions were planned for parents, and students in grades 1-3; 4-5; 6-8; and 9-12. All ages participated in the morning registration and snack; they heard the welcoming statements of the university chancellor, Vicky Carwein, and Brad Fisher from RBC Wealth Management, and the opening statements from Early Outreach Director Genoveva Morales-Ledesma, and event coordinator, JR Gomez. Students in grades 1-3 and 4-5 were sent off to attend their own sessions. The younger group learned “How to Make Gooney,” (a scientific experience), while the fourth and fifth grade students played “College Bingo” (a game that incorporates knowledge about college into the action).

At the same time parents and students in grades 6-12, listened to the keynote presentation by Dr. Epifanio Elizondo. Dr. Elizondo described his education and successful career. He talked about his attendance at Granger High School, his association with Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers as a young man, his eventual admission to the University of Washington and graduation with a BA degree in drama. Dr. Elizondo discussed his service record with a number of branches of the United States military forces, including the U.S. Army, the Navy, the U.S. Air Force, the Marines, and the Kansas National Guard. He spoke of earning a Master’s of Health Services degree from Wichita State University, and a Ph.D. degree in Public Health from Kansas State University.

Dr. Elizondo emphasized that it is crucial for parents to encourage their children to have healthy lifestyles and to aim for high academic and career goals. He detailed the achievements of his own children at the University of Texas, Harvard University, and UCLA. Finally, he spoke extensively about his work in his current position, where he achieved the rank of Rear Admiral in the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General.

Parents and students in Grades 6-12 watched a NCCEP produced “telenovela”- about a Latino family and their children’s paths to college. Students in grades 1-3 had another hands-on scientific experience with the “Volcano Project,” while students in grades 4-5 learned how to make ice cream.

During the last session, parents were given a choice of attending separate presentations about educational opportunities, one in Spanish, and another in English. Students in grades 1-3 had a structured activity, grades 4-5 were introduced to computer science concepts, and grades 6-8 discussed healthy lifestyles, or received a campus tour. Boys in grades 9-12 were divided into one group and girls into another.

During the session for parents between 1:50-2:20, Dr. Elizondo discussed parent involvement in education. At the same time students in grades 1-3 participated in the “Future Cougs Project,” grades 4-5 were given a Healthy Lifestyle presentation in the Nursing Lab, sixth through eighth grade students either went to a computer science presentation or went on a campus tour, while all the students in grades 9-12 went on campus tours.

From 2:35-3:05 p.m. parents attended a presentation titled, “Do you know?” which concerned facts and information about students, schools, academic and career success. Students in grades four and five attended a session titled “Career Exploration.” Students in grades 9-12 registered for scholarships, or were given the presentation, “ID: Education; Password: Future.” From 3:10-3:30 there were closing statements and participants were given an opportunity to complete an evaluation of the event.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE: PREPARATION ACTIVITIES:

It was important to provide a keynote speaker and presenters that parents could relate to. Because Dr. Elizondo is Latino, he was able to reach out to Latino families. As can be seen from the timeline detailed below, the event took at least three months of planning and organization. Below are some of the pre- activities.

Program presenters had to be found to make presentations of 30-45 minutes in length that were appropriate for early college outreach. Presenters were advised to set the stage during the next six minutes:

- Gather ideas about student knowledge of your topic/career. Ask students open-ended questions: “What do you know about _____?” “What do you think (physicists) do?”
- Record their ideas on a chart of chalkboard. Take all answers as they respond
- This sets the stage for students and activates their thinking about your career/topic.
- This also gives you an idea of what their level of understanding is.

To make their workshops more enjoyable, presenters were asked to do the following:

- **Explain** the type of work you do. Begin the session with an overview of the discipline. Emphasize that this workshop is just one aspect of your career field. The challenge is to expand their view of your career and spark an interest to learn more about your field.

- **Talk** about yourself and your background. What do you find most interesting about the field? How did you arrive at your decision to pursue your career?
- **Do more hand-on** activities rather than straight lecture.
- **Relate** the workshop/topic to everyday life if possible.
- **Use age appropriate language.** Define uncommon terms for students.
- **Relate the demonstrations,** labs, workshops, or research projects to everyday life. It is important that students see the significance in what they are observing or viewing.
- **Ask questions** to stimulate their thinking.

In addition to making preparations for workshops and program presenters, arrangements for the participation of dignitaries, including the main speaker, the university chancellor, and the corporate sponsor, needed to be made. Volunteers were recruited and were assigned a number of activities, including signing up participants and issuing nametags, assisting presenters, leading groups to sessions and floating throughout the hallways to assist parents or students that need help getting to their sessions.

Parents had to complete event applications that included their preferred language (Spanish or English) and needed to sign the event agreement, which included information about the event's purpose, time commitment, attendance, childcare, data collection, and publicity. In addition, parents needed to sign an additional permission slip for the child's school if they chose to ride on the school bus.

The following timeline was followed to ensure success of the workshop:

2-3 Months Prior to the Event

- Introduce the program at schools and receive approval for implementation.
- School engagement letter signed by schools site coordinator.
- Pre-Survey completed prior to introduction of workbook activities.
- Establish time frame with teachers to conduct activities.
- Coordinate event date with schools and WSU Tri-Cities.
- Secure transportation from schools to WSU Tri-Cities.
- Lesson Plans begin at schools.

1-2 Months Prior

- Provide an electronic list of students on an Excel Spreadsheet.
- Provide a list of volunteers/staff available for event day.
- Work through activities in the workbook.
- Document any in-kind support such as donations, dollars, time and effort from school on the forms provided.

Final Month

- Secure student permission slips from school.
- Secure and mail photo release forms to the event coordinator.
- Secure and mail teacher evaluation forms provided to the event coordinator.
- Receive name badges for the event from WSU Tri-Cities.
- Go over the day’s itinerary with volunteers and staff at schools.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES:

At the end of the day’s activities participants were given a 16-item questionnaire to complete in order to evaluate the event. The questionnaire was written in both Spanish and English, and was oriented towards parents. The questionnaire attempted to measure the satisfaction of the parents with the event. Questions concerning whether parents now saw the necessity of their children attending college, and whether they would recommend the event to other parents were asked. Demographic information was also collected, including the number of persons in the household attending elementary, middle school and high school, the number of years the respondent had lived in the Tri-Cities, gender of the respondent, number of years the respondent had completed in school (less than six, six to 12, more than 12), and occupation (worker, administrative, professional/technical).

COSTS OR COST CONSIDERATIONS:

The major project cost considerations were the following:	
Interpreter services for simultaneous interpretation of Spanish/English, English/Spanish were needed. Eight hours of interpretation services by one interpreter cost. Translation of printed material was also necessary.	\$144.00
Evening refreshments. Costs can be saved by using community volunteers and donations, or in the absence of these, vendors with whom one has an established relationship, and can offer refreshments at a reasonable rate. In this case, 170 lunches at \$8.50 per unit (\$1,564.94) and 170 morning snacks at \$2.50 per unit (\$460.28) were major considerations.	1,564.94 460.28
WSU Tri-City Early Outreach bags for the participants cost \$404.50.	404.50
Bus transportation	335.00
Travel expenses for the keynote speaker were \$1,550.	1,550.00
Total expenses for the event were \$4,458.72.	\$4,458.72

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