

# University of New Mexico

## Institute for Social Research

Prepared for: Albuquerque ENGaging Latino Communities for Education (ENLACE)

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### Preliminary Findings

Academic Year 2001-2002

- \* In the Family Centers, parent volunteers worked together to create common vision statements and objectives for all three centers.
- \* The Family Centers have involved parents in critical roles within the schools, rather than in supportive roles. This feature has set Albuquerque Family Centers apart from others nationwide.
- \* In the Los Compañeros, parents noticed an increase in their child's quality of homework, general interest in school, reading ability, grades, and self-esteem.
- \* Chicano Studies report the percentage of students who took the ACT increased from 3.7% to 12.0%.
- \* Most mentees indicated that they had built long-lasting and positive relationships with their mentors in Los Compañeros.
- \* In the Summer Bridge program, students found the teachers to be supportive, encouraging, and dedicated.

*Continued. . .*

### Report in Brief:

## ENLACE in Albuquerque

### Overview of ENLACE

For most young people, education is a way to opportunity. But for millions of Latino students more than 90 percent, the path stops short of college. The educational level of Latinos in the United States is the lowest of any group. Latinos have the highest dropout rates, as high as 30 percent or more. Barely half of Latinos age 25 and older have earned high school diplomas. Only two percent of all doctorates are awarded to Latinos.

The nation's Hispanic population is the fastest-growing segment of the population. By 2020, Latinos will constitute one-fifth of the workforce. Preparing students for success in the workforce or later education is critical. Generally, current approaches target specific parts of the educational continuum and work in relative isolation. ENLACE will enhance these efforts by uniting institutions, organizations, and communities in single-minded commitment to improving education for Latino youth.

### The ENLACE Initiative

The ENLACE initiative is a national, multi-million effort funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to help communities weave together elements of existing programs and introduce new ones to increase opportunities for Latino students to enter and complete college. An initiative is comprised of a collection of projects that have a common goal, objectives, strategies, and support interventions that guide individual projects' work. Each project has its own unique efforts and goals that result from local needs but also inform the work of the broad initiative. For this reason, networking and sharing across projects are encouraged within the initiative. The Kellogg Foundation board of directors has approved funds to assist with overall networking,

<i>Albuquerque ENLACE</i>		
Main Components	Programs	Students Served
<i>Family &amp; Community Education</i>	• Family Centers	• 75
	• Educational Access Rooms	• 29
<i>Retention</i>	• Chicano Studies	• 113
	• Los Compañeros Mentoring	• 72
	• Summer Bridge	• 55
	• UNM Student Success-Counselor	• 86
	• TVI Ambassadors	• 30
<i>Pathways to Teaching</i>	• Scholarships	• 14
	• Student Shadows	• 20
	• Champion Teachers	• Just began

## Findings

*Continued. . .*

- \* The Family Centers report, that parent volunteers served as advocates for parents; provided materials and held Spanish GED preparation course for monolingual and bilingual Spanish-speaking parents. Also, parent volunteers physically tracked down dropouts in an attempt to re-enroll them into school.
- \* In the Pathways to Teaching program, several college graduates who received funding to complete their senior year are teaching in the APS district.
- \* Summer Bridge gave students an opportunity to earn the equivalent of one high school academic credit before entry into high school.
- \* Over 95% of participants were retained and enrolled for their Sophomore year at UNM according to UNM Student Success Counselor program.
- \* During the academic year 2001-2002, 9 EARs students graduated.
- \* This year, the UNM Student Success counselor is still in contact with the students who have continued their education and the counselor has been able to identify new incoming freshmen and has started retention efforts.

sharing, evaluation, communication, and dissemination of collective lessons learned from ENLACE to a broader audience, including policy-makers.

### Program Highlights

Albuquerque ENLACE is a comprehensive educational intervention effort targeting Hispanic students at critical points of the educational pipeline. ENLACE in Albuquerque has presented their programs at national conferences in Chicago, Washington DC and Los Angeles.

#### *Chicano Studies:*

This program offers Chicano Studies courses at Albuquerque High, West Mesa High and Valley High. By incorporating culturally inclusive materials and lessons, this class hopes to raise self-esteem, cultural awareness and expose students to Hispanic role models and their contributions to United States and Mexican history. Students receive an English credit for taking this class. During the 2001-2002 academic year, **113** students took this class.

#### *Los Compañeros:*

UNM undergraduates are paid mentors for sixth graders at Washington Middle School, Truman Middle School and Garfield Middle School. In one-on-one sessions, the mentors work with their students on activities aimed at improving self-esteem, literacy levels and cultural awareness. The mentors meet with their students at least once a week. This year, the program will be incorporating an after-school tutoring component as well. Last year, **72** students were served by Los Compañeros mentors.

This year, the same students will be mentored in the seventh grade and **15** new sixth graders have been added to the program. Another new addition is an *after-school tutoring component*, which

#### **ENLACE Objectives**

Strengthen select Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs) and other qualifying institutions to serve as catalysts and models for educational and community change.

Support higher education/community coalitions and partnerships that increase educational success for Latino and other students.

Support the creation or adoption of educational models based on best practices that improve enrollment, academic performance and graduation rates of Hispanic high school and college students.

Facilitate sustainable implementation or scale-up of successful programs through strategic planning, networking, leadership development, and policy efforts.

Infuse into key stakeholder groups information and models that stimulate changes in policies and practices related to the education of Latinos.

will prevent ENLACE students from falling behind in their schoolwork.

#### *Family Centers:*

Parents and community members from each of the targeted high schools maintain a 'family' environment within the school campus. Parent volunteers serve as advocates for Hispanic students and their families. Additionally, parent volunteers strive to make the school more accessible to Hispanic, especially monolingual, parents by providing information in Spanish. Volunteers support parents and families by providing school information in Spanish, attending parent/ teacher conferences with parents and showing parents how to prepare their children for college. The centers provide a 'direct-link' to school administration. The Family Centers have implemented a number of outreach efforts in order to encourage parents to take critical roles within their children's schools. Last year, the family centers saw more than **75** students. Over the 2001-2002 academic year, parent volunteers visited the homes of over **67** families.

#### *Pathways to Teaching:*

In order to combat the great discrepancy between Hispanic students and Hispanic teachers in Albuquerque, this program grants scholarships to Hispanic undergraduate students from UNM and TVI who are pursuing an education degree. The scholarship allows the students to complete

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their degree sooner so they can teach in APS. Many of the recipients are already employed as educational assistants. Additionally, the program offers professional development through advisement and mentorship with education faculty. Last year, **14** students from both schools were granted scholarships. Four of these students have graduated and are now teaching in APS schools.

Another component of this program is the Student Shadows, which takes the shape of an ‘apprenticeship.’ Here, **20** middle and high school students, who have expressed an interest in teaching, are paired with a **Champion Teacher** at an elementary school. The Shadows are given the opportunity and responsibility to work in a classroom setting under the guidance of the Champion Teacher. This component will begin this year.

### *TVI Ambassadors:*

This program is designed to transfer community college students to the university to complete a bachelor’s degree. TVI students meet with TVI Ambassadors, who are also students, to discuss UNM admissions, financial aid and the process of transferring credits. The Ambassadors also work with students on professional development, such as resume writing and portfolio building. During the 2001-2002, academic year, over **30** students were served by the TVI Ambassadors.

### *UNM Student Success Counselor:*

College dropout rates are highest between students’ first and second years of attendance. ENLACE funded a Success Counselor who works with incoming freshmen who graduated from the targeted high schools. The counselor ‘hooks’ students into other university programs for tutoring, academic advisement and mentoring. The counselor also provides information on financial aid, scholarships and study

skills. In the 2001-2002 school year, the counselor saw **86** students.

### *Educational Access Rooms (EARs):*

The EARs are designed to give students a chance to catch-up on missed credits so they can graduate. Currently, the EARs are operating out of West Mesa Community Center and Los Duranes Community Center. The EARs offer small classes taught by retired teachers and professors. The classes are for credit and are taught in the late afternoon so students can attend classes or work during the day. Classes include English, World History, Government/Economics and Algebra. Last year, **29** students took classes at the EARs, and **9** were able to graduate.

### *Se Puede Summer Bridge:*

The Summer Bridge Program is a six-week reading program that provides students a chance to read and discuss books written by Hispanic authors that address cultural issues such as immigration, family and ethnicity. The main objective of this program is to prepare students for high school by increasing literacy levels, getting the students familiar with the campus and exposing them to the university by taking weekly field trips. The Summer Bridge classes are in the three targeted high schools. During the summer of 2002, **55** students attended the classes.

### *Preliminary Findings For Academic Year 2001-2002*

#### *Chicano Studies:*

- Students’ self-esteem increased from 32.8 to 33.1 on the Rosenberg Scale (0-40).
- Percentage of students planning to attend a 4-year college increased from 44.4% to 52.0%.

- Percentage of students who took the ACT increased from 3.7% to 12.0%.
- One teacher found that the “course provides a good opportunity for Mexicano/bilingual/immigrant students to co-exist with New Mexican (Chicano/Hispanic/Latino) students.
- One teacher strongly encouraged students to participate in community/cultural events, such as museum exhibits and performances.

#### *Los Compañeros:*

- Most surveyed parents noticed an increase in their child’s quality of homework, general interest in school, reading ability, grades, and self-esteem.
- Most mentees indicated that they had built long-lasting and positive relationships with their mentors: “The mentors understand us. They help more [than my parents] because my parents don’t really know how to do the stuff I’m doing and the mentors do.” [Focus group excerpt]
- During the New Mexico State Legislative Session, mentees met State Legislators and “other important people,” which gave them the opportunity to see Hispanics in critical roles in the State government. [Based on focus group interviews]

#### *Family Centers:*

- Parent volunteers identified and addressed specific concerns and issues facing Hispanic high school students, such as poverty, domestic issues, and academic barriers.
- Parent volunteers served as advocates for parents as well as students during parent-teacher conferences.
- Parent volunteers provided materials for monolingual and bilingual

## Evaluation Methodology

The ISR staff has implemented a variety of data collection methods (quantitative and qualitative) for use in short- and long-term project assessments, drawing on multiple information sources and perspectives. In addition, the staff has developed culturally specific (bilingual) evaluation instruments, methods, and protocols for use in conducting more thorough evaluations of the impacts of statewide ENLACE initiatives on our targeted population, i.e., K-16 Hispanic students. The evaluation team makes extensive efforts to triangulate research methods because, clearly, a project as dynamic as ENLACE cannot rely on quantitative measures for sustainability. The following quantitative and qualitative research methodologies are used to answer key research questions for evaluating the overall impacts of

ENLACE in New Mexico.

### *Non-Participant and Participant Observation*

The ISR staff attends several of the program-level and administrative meetings (state and regional), program activities, trainings, and conferences. Moreover, observations by staff are framed by guidelines put forth by standards of ethnographic fieldwork, in which interpersonal relationships and interactions are examined among the staff, students, parents, administrators, and program representatives. Further, the staff studies and documents the progress of the programs and their efforts. At the observations site, the staff takes observation notes, which are objective descriptions of the activity. Additionally, the staff creates analytical notes, which offer an analysis and educated interpretation of the event or

activity. Typically, the staff does not participate in program activities so as not to influence the process and impact of the services. However, in some cases, the ISR staff participates in the activities. For example, an ISR representative completed the training for the mentors of the Los Compañeros program. In addition, ISR representatives participate in leadership trainings and seminars sponsored by ENLACE in order to document the process from the perspective of the participant.

### *Focus Groups*

Focus groups are an effective method of data collection when attempting to study reactions without limiting or restricting responses. Moreover, this method allows for higher levels of variance in responses, which is appropriate when examining how

Spanish speakers.

- Parent volunteers held Spanish GED preparation course for monolingual and bilingual Spanish-speaking parents.
- Parent volunteers coined the term “knock-and-talks” to describe their outreach activities in which they physically tracked down dropouts in an attempt to re-enroll them back into school.

### *Pathways to Teaching:*

- Several college undergraduates who received funding to complete their senior year are now teaching in the APS district.
- Scholarship recipients were offered professional development and academic advisement from UNM faculty.
- TVI students who completed their 2-year course work in education transferred successfully to UNM to

earn a bachelor’s degree in education.

### *Summer Bridge:*

- The class materials were very useful in promoting cultural relativity. One teacher found that the culturally relevant materials made it easier for the students to relate to the subject and/or characters in the various stories presented in the class.
- Students were given the opportunity to earn the equivalent of one high school academic credit before entry into high school.
- Students found the teachers to be supportive, encouraging, and dedicated.
- Each week, students went to UNM for activities geared toward college preparation.

### *UNM Student Success Counselor:*

- Counselor was able to identify

incoming Freshmen who graduated from the three targeted high schools (Albuquerque, Valley, and West Mesa).

- Counselor linked each student with appropriate campus organizations such as the Center for Academic Program Support (tutoring and academic support), Amistades (mentoring), and the University College Advisement Center (academic advisement).
- Counselor devised and distributed a Retention Alert System (RAS) form to instructors in an attempt to track participants’ academic progress.
- Over 95% of participants were retained and enrolled for their Sophomore year at UNM.

## Future Research Plans

ISR has created a research plan that outlines evaluation activities that will take place over the 2002-2003 academic

students feel toward their mentors. Focus groups have proved to be a valuable tool when asking middle school students how they feel about their ENLACE mentors and the activities they participate in.

### *Interviews*

The ISR staff has conducted interviews with school personnel to study the levels of support that administrators provide to the ENLACE programs. Further, to accommodate busy school officials who cannot participate in face to face interviews due to time constraints, the staff conducts structured and semi-structured telephone interviews. Overall, interviews have proven very useful in identifying obstacles in program implementation.

### *Surveys*

Surveys are probably the best way to sample many students or participants at once. The ISR staff surveys Chicano Studies students, program coordinators, administrators, mentors, and educators. In addition, surveys are useful when studying statewide aspects of the ENLACE collaborative; this has allowed the staff to create comparable bodies of data from around the state. Typically, surveys are developed in both English and Spanish.

### *Official School Data*

Educational learning outcomes can be adequately measured using official school data. The ISR staff is collecting and recording several educational indicators such as standardized test scores, absenteeism, grade point averages, and class standing. This

effort required the staff to request information releases for all participating students (or their parents, if the students are minors). For this purpose, the staff developed information release forms by using mandates of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

### *Student Tracking*

An essential aspect of the evaluation is student tracking. The ISR staff collects residential information on students, mentors, and tutors. This collection allows the staff to track students who drop from either the classes or the mentoring programs. With this information, the staff can successfully locate them and investigate why they have left the programs.

year. In summary,

- \* ISR will continue to track students as they transition from grade to grade, and from school to school. This includes students at the middle schools, high schools and institutions of higher learning.
- \* ISR will obtain official APS records to evaluate changes in GPAs, standardized test scores and absenteeism as a result of ENLACE programs. ISR will also obtain academic information from UNM and TVI.
- \* ISR will conduct interviews with school faculty and administrators to assess institutional support and participation. Additionally, this will provide insight to ENLACE's impact at an institutional level.
- \* ISR will study how ENLACE's efforts have resulted in policy changes.
- \* ISR will conduct focus groups to reveal the mentoring relationships between Los Compañeros and their students.
- \* ISR will document case studies, or

'success stories' of students who have benefited from the Family Centers' services.

- \* ISR will track ENLACE students who have dropped out in order to assess what needs were unmet by the school.
- \* ISR will continue to observe Chicano Studies and EAR classes to study classroom dynamics, student engagement and class discussions.

### **Policy Initiatives of Albuquerque ENLACE**

Albuquerque and its partners have established a "Framework for Success." This is a list of policy initiatives that Albuquerque ENLACE with other partners has selected to advance. ENLACE is determined that research must prove the success or failure of educational programs and that successful programs should be adopted as district policy.

The Framework of Success focuses on

four initiatives: Curriculum; Family/Community Participation; Dropouts and; Access and Testing Opportunities for College.

*Curriculum:* Raise self-esteem, cultural awareness and expose students to Hispanic role models.

*Family & Community participation:* Living concerns and academic needs.

*Drop-outs:* Establish family centers.

*Access and /or testing for college opportunities:* Organized support for Hispanic students to meet college preparation requirements.

A format based on best practices and research; a philosophy of linking and weaving together individuals into communities; and an initiative to build partnerships for learning are the keys of ENLACE. 🇺🇸



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