

Es El Momento

By Mildred García

Committed to the success of our communities, California State University, Dominguez Hills joined Univision Los Angeles, the California State University Chancellor's Office, and numerous other partners four years ago to launch a Spanish-speaking education event, "Es El Momento." This event is part of Univision's social marketing, multi-media campaign aimed at increasing the graduation rate among Hispanics.

Held on the CSU Dominguez Hills campus since 2008, Es El Momento has grown from 15,000 attendees in its first year to nearly 50,000 in 2011. CSU Dominguez Hills is uniquely positioned to play a leadership role with this program, not only because of the institution's student make-up (over 45 percent Latino Students), but also because its geographic location is central to numerous communities with a large Latino population.

Es El Momento seeks to inform and motivate and provides resources to Hispanic parents and students that convey the importance of education from preschool to college. Additionally, parents receive the information and tools necessary to effectively support their children. The program addresses important educational milestones, a parent's impact on a child's attitude towards school, and the early warning signs of dropout. The program has now expanded to include issues of health and wellness.

The event's physical layout reinforces the U.S. educational system, starting with pre-K, kindergarten, elementary, middle, high school and then college. Breakout areas include reading gardens, science activity centers, a visualization space for careers, and now immunization, vision and dental screening.

While Univision, CSU Dominguez Hills and the CSU play strong leadership roles, we now boast more than 120 partners from across various industries and sectors. More than 400 volunteers, four radio stations, eight elected officials and 35 universities and colleges come together to make this event a success.

Outcomes and Assessment

Researchers at the University of California, Los Angeles collect qualitative and quantitative data on the event. All three years show that Latino parents attending are indeed interested and concerned about their children's education, and are very

quick to avail themselves of information about all levels of education.

The survey from the 2011 event revealed that 74.2 percent of attendees strongly agreed that they learned about educational activities that they had not learned before. While 87 percent of attendees knew

that their children need to complete

12 years of school,

only 1.5 percent

knew that their

children should

complete more

than 13 years of

education. When

asked which

subjects they

learned about

at the event,

the responses

revealed science,

36.9 percent;

math, 30.2

percent; and

healthcare,

29.3 percent.

Importantly,

parents stated

that they felt

empowered; since

the entire day was

in Spanish, they

were able to learn without needing their children to translate.

It has been wonderful to see so many organizations come together with a commitment to further educational opportunities for Latinos—the largest ethnic group in the country and the group with the lowest graduation rates.

I am extremely proud of the collaboration that makes Es El Momento a success and a true partnership in our community. **P**

Mildred García is president of California State University, Fullerton; she previously served as president of California State University, Dominguez Hills.

A Sampling of Es El Momento Partners

- Univision
- California State University, Dominguez Hills
- California State University
- CommuniCard LLC
- Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE)
- Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce
- Los Angeles Unified School District
- Mexican Consulate
- Molina Foundation
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Los Angeles
- Jet Propulsion Lab
- Chivas USA
- COFEM
- First 5 Los Angeles
- Jumpstart
- Metro PCS
- Los Angeles Kings
- State Farm
- Buick
- Los Angeles Galaxy
- Natural History Museum of Los Angeles
- Long Beach Aquarium
- McDonalds
- Laser Eye Center
- Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center
- Colgate Bright Smiles