



Focus: Parent and Community Engagement

Community Leaders Discuss How PTA Comunitarios	3
The Family, School and Community Partnership Equation ...	5
Young Tutors Win National Essay Contest.....	7

Family Leadership in the Field Lasting Community Leadership in Education

by Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed.

Parents can be vocal and assertive leaders advocating for excellent schools. Through IDRA's almost 40-year history, a strong model of parent engagement has evolved, constructed from the experiences in the field, especially with Title I schools and the families whose children attend them.

Training Institutes for Parents

The IDRA Family Leadership in Education Model began to take shape in the early 1980s. With support from the then Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs, IDRA held training institutes for parents in Texas for parents of children in bilingual education. Our idea from the start was to have an approach that honors the participants' language and culture and to focus on parent engagement in non-traditional ways. Our approach was participatory, bilingual and focused on parents having influence on their children's education. We saw that parents were seeking to have appropriate curriculum and effective teachers for children who were learning English as a second language.

Families United for Education: Getting Organized (FUEGO)

From 1995 to 2000, as part of the Mobilization for Equity (a collaboration with the National Coalition of Advocates for Students), we trained, supported and facilitated city-wide education conferences for parents by parents. The Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) parent leadership project had trained hundreds

of parents in the San Antonio area, and IDRA provided leadership follow-up and continuity. We created Families United for Education: Getting Organized (FUEGO) and provided a laboratory for parent leadership.

Parent Institutes for TABE and NABE

We also demonstrated our leadership model with state and national organizations in an attempt to increase awareness among educators to see the value of parent leadership for their cause. We worked with the National Association for Bilingual Education and the Texas Association for Bilingual Education to have a strong parent-focused strand at their annual conferences, including parent institutes.

Participants gave high marks to the experiences but returned to their home base without any local institution or group to connect with. It was clear that, for the model to take and have legs, it would have to be housed and nurtured in a local organization, strongly connected to its base and with sufficient history, neighborhood roots and resources to be the carrier of the "family leadership" meme.

Annual IDRA La Semana del Niño Parent Institute™

In 1998, we initiated the Annual IDRA La Semana del Niño Early Childhood Educators Institute™, a unique bilingual early childhood annual conference
(cont. on Page 2)

"As we proceed with different types of collaborations, we must keep in mind that Latino and African American communities themselves are part of the solution."

— Dr. María "Cuca" Robledo
Montecel, IDRA President and CEO

(Family Leadership in the Field, continued from Page 1)

held in San Antonio each year. We began to hold parent institutes in conjunction with the educator activities and have continued to spotlight our Family Leadership in Education Model with presentations by parents. Many a nervous parent has made his or her first conference presentation at our institutes. Each parent group that leads a presentation has sprung from our model.

ARISE

Over time, IDRA forged a strong relationship with ARISE (A Resource In Serving Equality) in the Texas Rio Grande Valley because of its interest in developing family leadership in education, especially among families that are poor, recent immigrant and whose home language is Spanish. ARISE founder, Sr. Gerrie Naughton, invited us in. Over the course of a decade, IDRA has led training and technical assistance for the ARISE centers located in some of the poorest communities in South Texas.

The ARISE promotoras (outreach workers) conduct weekly home visits and are in direct communication and in a meaningful relationship with each family. The Texas IDRA Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC) serves Title I (low-income) school families, especially those whose children are attending schools that are not meeting academic standards. We have conducted yearly institutes, workshops and training of trainers, all based on and extensions of the Family Leadership in Education Model.

IDRA invested significant time and resources guiding these community leaders to put education on the front burner in the midst of multiple pressing issues: immigrant rights, community services, health, employment and housing. The connection remained strong because they gave a high priority

to education.

National Recognition and National PTA

Our work in Texas was receiving some notice nationally, including with the national leadership of PTA. As director of IDRA's PIRC, this author served on the National PTA board for four years, learning about that venerable institution and discerning how PTA fit into our leadership work in low-income neighborhoods. Most of the families we were most concerned about were not PTA members. The organization did not seem inviting or useful for their interests and needs.

In 2007, the U.S. Department of Education published *Engaging Parents in Education: Lessons from Five Parental Information and Resource Centers*, which highlighted the IDRA Texas PIRC work based on our Family Leadership in Education Model and gave us a broader audience and connections. Around the same time, *Our Children*, the National PTA magazine, profiled this author, which was another opportunity to disseminate the family leadership ideas and to remind the PTA family of the importance of supporting leadership from within low-income communities.

ARISE South Tower PTA Comunitario

Given our work with ARISE, we saw that the conditions were ripe for establishing a long-term site for our Family Leadership in Education Model within a grassroots organization. It took three years of conversation to convince ARISE's Lourdes Flores to organize a community PTA. When she agreed, ARISE became the first PTA Comunitario in the nation. The original group has multiplied its membership, elected its third-year officers and has been coaching other groups interested in starting

a community PTA. A second one was founded in Brownsville, Texas, and others are considering doing likewise.



A parallel direction is to organize campus-based PTAs in the schools their children attend, but to follow the principles that have been central to the movement. Following are the necessary conditions for institutionalizing family leadership in education.

- It is vital to establish a relationship with a grassroots community organization that has education as a priority. IDRA is a child advocacy organization that focuses on strengthening neighborhood public schools to work for all children. As an intermediary, we can bring skills and resources that are useful to the local group.
- Build trust, communication and carefully identify mutual goals and objectives. Most community organizations have multiple goals, and it is very important to highlight the educational goals held

(cont. on Page 6)

IDRA South Central Collaborative for Equity

For more information about the IDRA South Central Collaborative for Equity or to request technical assistance, contact us at 210-444-1710 or contact@idra.org.

Additional resources are available online at http://www.idra.org/South_Central_Collaborative_for_Equity/

funded by the U.S. Department of Education

The Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) is a non-profit organization with a 501(c)(3) tax exempt status. The purpose of the organization is to disseminate information concerning equality of educational opportunity.

The IDRA Newsletter (ISSN 1069-5672, ©2011) serves as a vehicle for communication with educators, school board members, decision-makers, parents, and the general public concerning the educational needs of all children in Texas and across the United States.

Permission to reproduce material contained herein is granted provided the article or item is reprinted

www.idra.org

in its entirety and proper credit is given to IDRA and the author. Please send a copy of the material in its reprinted form to the IDRA Newsletter production offices. Editorial submissions, news releases, subscription requests, and change-of-address data should be submitted in writing to the IDRA Newsletter production editor. The IDRA Newsletter staff welcomes your comments on editorial material.

Portions of the contents of this newsletter were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and endorsement by the federal government should not be assumed.

Publication offices:
5815 Callaghan Road, Suite 101
San Antonio, Texas 78228
210-444-1710; Fax 210-444-1714
www.idra.org | contact@idra.org

Maria Robledo Montecel, Ph. D.
IDRA President and CEO
Newsletter Executive Editor

Christie L. Goodman, APR
IDRA Communication Manager
Newsletter Production Editor

Sarah H. Aleman
Secretary
Newsletter Layout

Courageous Connections...

Community Leaders Discuss How PTA Comunitarios Give Voice to Parents in their Children's Education

Editor's Note: IDRA's Quality Schools Action Framework emphasizes connections among schools and communities to secure success for all students. One innovative PTA Comunitario (Community PTA) was initiated two years ago in South Texas and is now multiplying. A second has been formally organized, and a third is in development. In this interview, four leaders of the nation's first PTA Comunitario talk about their experience and passion for community engagement in education. The four leaders interviewed are Eva Carranza, Emilia Vega, Angelica Nava and Carmen Vargas. The conversation was in Spanish. What follows is a condensed, translated version. The full interview is available in Spanish through the IDRA Classnotes Podcast (via iTunes or <http://www.idra.org/Podcasts/>) and in video on IDRA's Courageous Connections website (www.idra.org/Courageous_Connections/).



Four leaders of the ARISE South Tower PTA Comunitario interviewed: (left to right): Angelica Nava, Emilia Vega, Carmen Vargas and Eva Carranza.

On Choosing the Name: ARISE South Tower PTA Comunitario: ARISE (A Resource In Serving Equality) because it is the name that Sr. Gerrie Naughton our founder gave to the organization. "South Tower" is one of the four ARISE centers. And "Community PTA" because it is based in the community. The name was chosen by the organizing group at our very first meeting.

On Spreading the Word: We are interested in forming other PTAs like this one so parents have a voice in their children's schools, and also so that they have the right to go to their children's schools and find out about the children's education and that parents do it without fear as they approach the school. This new PTA has been beneficial because the parents are active participants in the meetings. They come every month. And at each one, they have learned something new about the education of their children.

We have formed committees and are going out to other communities who have invited us to teach them how to start their own PTA Comunitario. Our goal is that more parents in other communities

benefit from an organization like this one. We want other parents to have the same opportunities we have had here with this organization.

On the Benefits of a PTA Comunitario: Community PTAs like ours will benefit schools because parents will be much more involved. The difference between our PTA and the traditional kind is that ours is based not in a school but in a community organization. Parents have the leadership in this organization, not the principal or the professionals in a campus. Our organization is not run by the administrators. Our meetings are in Spanish, and parents are educated about many important topics related to school. Parents are trained to face the challenges brought upon by the continuous changes in schools. Title I schools can be even more supported by a PTA like this one.

Through the training offered by this PTA, parents are more informed about how the school is carrying out the educational program and therefore can be better partners in the education of their children.

We are communicating more with our children and supporting them to develop and grow. We are better prepared for all the changes happening in our

(cont. on Page 4)

(Community Leaders Discuss How PTA Comunitarios Give Voice to Parents in their Children's Education, continued from Page 3)

schools. Our PTA is working hard so that schools don't have so much difficulty in communicating with parents. Our parents are better informed about what is happening in schools.

On the Unique Strengths of a PTA Comunitario: Two basic things make our organization very strong and unique: Our principles and IDRA's training and support. One key principle from ARISE that this PTA adheres to and is ingrained in us by our founder is the respect and dignity of every human being. She instilled in us that all human beings are created in the image of God and have many gifts and talents. Now, we as leaders pass on these same values with the confidence and trust she gave us. Each person's dignity as a human being, his or her right to be listened to, and the right to receive an education... these are the principles we are grounded in.

We support parents to prepare themselves. We remind them that they are their child's first teacher, that they are key to their children's success.

Our meetings are in contrast to the meetings typical PTA school campus meetings. Ours are dynamic with much participation. We conduct them in Spanish using words the community understands rather than complicated education words and concepts presented in English. Our meetings are lively.

On Meshing with ARISE: At our community centers, we have program cycles of 12 weeks, and we celebrate the completion of a cycle. Each participant of a program presents what he or she created, completed or learned. Our PTA follows that pattern. We have educational festivals with parents and students so that parents and young people learn together. We celebrate PTA cycles using our standard way of communicating: visiting homes and talking face-to-face with families. Nothing can take the place of real, personal communication. We visit our families, assuring ourselves that they have the necessary information and offering transportation if needed. The Community PTA is in perfect ARISE sync and meshes with how our centers operate.

We have seasoned staff who have been with the organization for a good while and have observed that when ladies leave our PTA meeting or training session, they are ready to pass the information on to their neighbors, relatives and friends. New leadership is emerging from their PTA participation.

On Starting Your Own Community PTA:

If anyone wants to consider starting their own community PTA they should be part of a community, love that community and especially love the children of that community. You need an organization that is based in that community and serves that community to provide the base. Families should be visited in person, not contacted through phone calls or notes sent with children or left in mail boxes. That doesn't work. The ARISE approach of personal communication is key. Our very young PTA has had such success through the personal connections and trust the community has for us. We are very grateful that those who provide the training from IDRA are very respectful of staff, volunteers and all our families. We are treated as equals.

On Challenges: One big challenge our PTA Comunitario leadership has had was in getting schools to receive us. Some administrators said they did not have time to meet with us. Schools might perceive three or four mothers gathered together as a group coming to argue or fight. We've learned to be more organized and not to go to a school without an appointment.

There is a great difference between how a school communicates with families and how ARISE communicates with families. We make personal visits to families. Families are informed as to what is happening, such as the PTA meetings. We make personal invitations when there is a presenter coming.

On Seeing Impact: We have discovered that when the woman gets educated, the whole family gets educated. Parents who participate in our PTA then approach their school with much more confidence. They are much more self assured in dealing with their children's issues at school. We observe much more confident parents when confronting problems their children are having in school. They are much more ready to talk with school people asking more questions and seeking solutions. Our community is more informed and more assertive.

Get More Online at IDRA's Newsletter Plus

- Classnotes podcast interview in Spanish with four PTA Comunitario leaders
- HIPPIY information
- Steps to creating your own Community PTA
- IDRA's Family Leadership in Education Model
- Family and community engagement resources for schools

Visit www.idra.org for more information.



Scan this code to go directly to IDRA's Newsletter Plus, the web-based supplement to the IDRA Newsletter where you can view videos, hear podcasts and get resources related to newsletter articles.



The Family, School and Community Partnership Equation

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) Program

by Frances M. Guzmán, M.Ed.

Everyone who insists on students' academic success fully understands in their head and their heart that family engagement is a key element in the equation for education for all children, along with quality instruction, equitable funding, developmentally appropriate curriculum and access. The current research on family engagement and active partnerships between the home, school and community contributes to this understanding by demonstrating the positive relationship between parent involvement and student achievement (Harvard Family Research Project, 2011; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; U.S. Department of Education, 2007).

Specifically, active and continuous involvement appears to account for better grades, higher test scores, better attendance, enhanced self-esteem and motivation, lower rates of suspension, and improved behavior (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

The most effective forms of involvement are those in which parents work directly with their children on learning activities in the home (Henderson & Mapp, 2002) and the earlier in the student's academic career, the better (Kagitcibasi, et al., 2001). In particular, early childhood programs with a strong family engagement component have been shown to be effective (Jordan, et al., 2000).

The current federal law requires schools to engage families and sets aside a percentage of funding for this. For example, with everyone agreeing in principle to the role that parents play in the education of their children, one large urban school district brought in the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) using Title I funding at 12 elementary schools. They were assisted by the national and state HIPPY offices and received training and technical assistance from the IDRA Texas Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC).

HIPPY is a home-based instructional program targeting the families of 3-, 4- and 5-year-olds before

these children enter a public school setting. It was developed in Israel in 1969 at the National Council of Jewish Women Research Institute for Innovation in Education at the Hebrew University. And it was introduced to the United States in 1984.

In Texas, the HIPPY program is in seven public school districts. The program consists of a highly structured, 30-week curriculum in English or Spanish. A typical lesson for parents and their children includes such things as reading stories together, answering questions, predicting what will come next, learning sounds, increasing vocabulary, counting, grouping and identifying opposites. It teaches parents ways to teach their own children particular skills, concepts and experiences needed for school success by valuing and building on what families already bring to the table from both formal and informal learning. In turn, participating parents work with their children on a daily basis on school readiness, literacy, math and socialization skills. Also, the program helps parents know and understand the public school system.

The training is given by HIPPY home instructors who are active parents themselves and live in the community they are serving. These instructors visit the homes of the HIPPY parents weekly, provide them with educational materials, review and role-play a typical 20-minute lesson, provide support and encouragement, and teach other skills as identified by the receiving parents. Also, the parent educators, who are based in the elementary schools where the families will send their children, organize a monthly group meeting where all of the HIPPY parents from that school, can meet and share ideas and experiences.

These home instructors are part-time employees of the district and are supervised by a full-time district employee who provides weekly staff development activities to the home instructors. Each home instructor provides services to 30 families.

(cont. on Page 6)

School districts would be wise to research and implement programs that assist children and families who will be their constituency in a few short years now rather than later when they get to their school doors.

IDRA Texas PIRC

For more information about the Texas IDRA Parent Information and Resource Center or to request technical assistance, contact us at 210-444-1710 or contact@idra.org.

Additional resources are available online at www.idra.org/Texas_IDRA_PIRC.htm

funded by the U.S. Department of Education to serve the state of Texas

(The Family, School and Community Partnership Equation, continued from Page 5)

If the proof is in the pudding, then the evaluation results from this sample district and related support from the IDRA Texas PIRC indicate that parent engagement in curriculum activities increased from monthly to weekly. Once their children were in a public school setting, HIPPY families had more frequent and positive interactions with their schools and classroom teachers via written, telephone and face-to-face methods. The classroom teachers reported that over 83 percent of the HIPPY children were ready for school, specifically in classroom adaptability and classroom behavior. The analysis for 2008-09 show that HIPPY children are doing better in reading, and that progress is cumulative overtime. In other words, they continue to get better scores as they progress in their academic careers.

An integral part of the HIPPY program is the IDRA Parent Leadership in Education Model as described in many IDRA publications on partnership, including *Courage to Connect – A Quality Schools Action Framework* (Robledo Montecel & Goodman, 2010), and as highlighted the U.S. Department of Education (2007). IDRA partners with HIPPY statewide and in this school district in particular because both entities have an advocacy for bilingual early childhood education and the continued development of leadership in all families, not just those typically chosen by schools.

The four core dimensions of the IDRA Parent Leadership in Education Model that are in tandem with the HIPPY program are the valuing of parents as first teachers, the information sharing of the many traditional and non-traditional ways that families can be equal and important resources to schools, assisting families to obtain actionable knowledge to become shared decision makers and advocates not only for their own child but for all children, and creating opportunities for parents and parent educators to share with and teach other parents and educators.

Is the HIPPY program the only family-school partnership that works? Of course not, but it is one that is having notable impact. Parents, in particular, grow in their ability to teach their children academic and social skills. They learn that school districts are partners in the same goal of student achievement. Both school and home become equal partners and consequently advocates for each other. Our children are the ones who profit the most from this partnership.

School districts would be wise to research and implement programs that assist children and families who will be their constituency in a few short years now rather than later when they get to their school doors. Funding is always an issue, but, in addition to Title I funds, foundations and the private sector are often interested in funding something in the educational realm that works, is asset-based and is pro-active rather than reactionary and deficit in nature. Partnerships make sense, but in this endeavor that we call education, it is a must and definitely a big part of the equation.

Resources

Harvard Family Research Project. *Family Involvement News* (May 2011).
Henderson, A.T. & K. Mapp. *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections on Student Achievement* (Austin, Texas: National Center for

Family & Community Connections with Schools, 2002).
Jordan, E.E., & C.E. Snow, M.V. Porche. "Project EASE: The Effects of a Family Literacy Project on Kindergarten Students' Early Literacy Skills," *Reading Research Quarterly* (2000). 35 (4), 524-546.
Kagitcibasi, C., & D. Sunar, S. Beckman. "Long-Term Effects of Early Interventions: Turkish Low-Income Mothers and Children," *Applied Developmental Psychology* (2001) 22, 333-361.
Robledo Montecel, M., & Goodman, C.L. (eds). *Courage to Connect – A Quality Schools Action Framework* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2010).
U.S. Department of Education. *Engaging Parents in Education: Lessons from Five Parental Information and Resource Centers* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Innovation and Improvement, 2007).

Frances M. Guzmán, M.Ed., is an education associate in IDRA Field Services. Comments and questions may be directed to her via e-mail at comment@idra.org.

(Family Leadership in the Field, continued from Page 2)

in common.

- Transform the traditional PTA organizational model into a more effective vehicle for parents who have been previously excluded or underserved. Our Community PTA model transforms that traditional model of volunteerism and fundraising to one of a mutual school-home partnership in support of children's academic and social success.
- Provide mutually agreed upon training, technical assistance and support to achieve the school transformation goals.

Where and Why

Currently, the IDRA Family Leadership in Education Model is carried out in many places but it is most visible in some very small, very poor communities in south Texas. The vehicle for transmitting the model is the community PTA as developed and carried out in south Texas by ARISE and others.

Why is it important? At the May meeting of the ARISE South Tower Community PTA, the 30 participants were asked why this organization was important to them. The essence of their responses was: "We can understand what is said," "We all

participate," "We learn something important about the education of our children at every meeting," and "Our voice is heard."

Resources

Montemayor, A.M. "IDRA's Family Leadership Principles," *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, September 2007).
Montemayor, A.M. "The ARISE South Tower PTA Comunitario – An Example Community-Based School Engagement," *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, September 2010).
PTA. "Meet Aurelio Montemayor," *Our Children* (October-November 2008).
U.S. Department of Education. *Engaging Parents in Education: Lessons from Five Parental Information and Resource Centers* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Innovation and Improvement, 2007).

Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed., is a senior education associate in IDRA Field Services and director of the IDRA Texas Parent Information and Resource Center. Comments and questions may be directed to him via e-mail at comment@idra.org.



Young Tutors Win National Essay Contest

“I don’t want to go back to the way things were before. I only want to become even better at helping others.” – Isaac Mata

Six students received prizes in a national competition among participants in the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, a nationally-recognized cross-age tutoring program of the Intercultural Development Research Association. Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program tutors wrote about how the program had helped them do better in school and how they had helped their tutees to do better.

- **First Place High School Winner** – Kayla Rugg, Fuller Performance Learning Center, Cumberland County Schools, North Carolina
- **Second Place High School Winner** – Nabeel Sattar, Lee High School, Houston
- **Third Place High School Winner** – Briana Pardue, Odessa High School, Odessa, Texas
- **First Place Middle School Winner** – Isaac Mata, Ann W. Richards Middle School, La Joya, Texas
- **Second Place Middle School Winner** – Luis Vallejo, Juan D. Salinas Middle School, La Joya, Texas
- **Third Place Middle School Winner** – Arlette Calderon, Memorial Middle School, La Joya, Texas

There were competitions at both the middle school and high school levels in the United States. Winners from each competition were awarded \$200 for first place, \$150 for second place and \$100 for third place.

In her essay, **Kayla Rugg** wrote: “What will I remember the most about this whole experience in the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program?... I was on the brink of losing everything that I had worked so hard for. Then, things just went from bad and skipped over worse to extremely terrible. The only thing that kept my feet firmly planted on the ground was the knowledge that I was here for someone else, and they were depending on me... These children were my light.”

“The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program has helped me in a variety of ways. It has given me new experiences that have made me a more compassionate and patient person... tutoring

opened up my eyes to many things,” **Nabeel Sattar** wrote in his essay. “Since I started tutoring, I have also come to appreciate my teachers more. I understand the struggles they go through and how demanding and difficult their job is... The experiences I have had in the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program have been very unique and eye opening, and the lessons I have learned have helped me become a better person in and outside of the classroom.”

“The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program has made me a better student because interaction with children has helped me be more caring and understanding,” wrote **Briana Pardue**. “Knowing that my tutees are expecting me to be there, I enjoy going every day. I stand in the teacher’s shoes as far as knowing how the student feels when he or she doesn’t want to cooperate, so I try to work with my teachers more closely because of it... I understand now that we can all improve a student’s outlook on school by taking time a few minutes a day to help out.”

In his essay, **Isaac Mata** wrote: “I feel so excited every day when I go to school because my student is learning a lot, and I learned how to be calmer with kids, my family and my friends. I feel I have grown in many ways. I am very grateful to the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program for giving me this opportunity... I don’t want to go back to the way things were before. I only want to become even better at helping others. I signed up to help a student with his schoolwork, but in the end he helped me become a better person.”

“When school started, I felt a big emptiness inside me. I felt that if I missed a day of class no one would notice. I also felt that I didn’t make a difference in anyone’s life. With me or without me, the world would be the same,” **Luis Vallejo** wrote in his essay. “Now that I started this program called the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, I have a better self-esteem. Through the VYP, three kids have made a change in my life... I now know that I am making a big difference in their lives as they are making one in my life.”

Arlette Calderon wrote: “Tutoring means a whole lot to me. I can’t explain how it has not only helped me and many others who have struggled in school with academics... This opportunity doesn’t come knocking on the door everyday, so I’m really lucky. I not only have such great tutees, but throughout the time, I think we have become friends... I feel that I have made a difference in their lives. I will always remember being part of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program.”

The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, created by IDRA, is an internationally-recognized cross-age tutoring program. Since its inception in 1984, the program has kept more than 32,000 students in school, young people who were previously at risk of dropping out. According to the Valued Youth creed, *all students are valuable, none is expendable*. The lives of more than 721,000 children, families and educators have been positively impacted by the program.



Scan this code to see the full winning essays and to learn more about the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program.



INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION
5815 CALLAGHAN ROAD, SUITE 101
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78228

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. POSTAGE PAID

Permit No. 3192
San Antonio, TX 78228

Focus: Parent and Community Engagement

“Our families contribute much. The day-to-day activities that families do with their children – story-telling, singing, playing games, reading, talking and listening – all these have intellectual, emotional and physical benefits that enhance the child’s development and are strengths that the school can use.”

– Dr. María “Cuca” Robledo Montecel, IDRA President and CEO

Intercultural Development Research Association

Classnotes Podcast



Twice monthly, award-winning podcast for people who care about excellent and equitable education for all children.

New Classnotes Podcast Episodes

This award-winning podcast series for teachers and administrators explores issues facing U.S. education today and strategies to better serve every student.

- “A New Model for Community Engagement in Education,” featuring Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed.
- “A Discussion about Diversity Training,” featuring Bradley Scott, Ph.D.
- “Parent Institutes for Education,” featuring Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed.
- “The Civil Rights Issue of Our Generation,” featuring María Robledo Montecel, Ph.D.
- “Higher Math for All,” featuring Paula Martin Johnson, M.A.
- “Principal on Creating a College Going Culture,” featuring Roland Toscano, M.S.

Visit www.idra.org/Podcasts. Also available from iTunes. Free!

*Creating schools that work for all children
through research, materials development, training, technical assistance, evaluation and information dissemination*