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UNM CAMP NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2012

UNM CAMP
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In a few sentences, I would like to share with our readers my story of how I became part of the CAMP family. I will start by telling our readers that like our CAMP students, three years ago, I was part of a migrant program as well. In 2008, I heard about the UNM High School Equivalency Program (HEP), and since I came from a family of migrant/seasonal workers, I qualified to be part of the HEP Program. In 2009, I obtained my High School Diploma, and with the advice and help from the HEP Program, I enrolled in a two year college program. Now being a full-time student, working full-time, and being a mother of two little girls is hard, and my journey through school seems like a long journey, but in the summer of 2012, I will conclude my two year degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Management. Due to the great experience I had being a HEP student and seeing the effort and dedication the HEP Program offers to migrant farm workers, I made a promise to myself that someday I would be a staff member of a Migrant Program. Two years later an amazing opportunity to be hired as an Administrative Assistant with the CAMP Program came up. Ever since I have been hired, I am so proud of being a piece of the puzzle, CAMP’s puzzle. No other job could give me the professional satisfaction I feel when helping my Hispanic community obtaining an education and finding their way to succeed in life.

Thank you, y buena suerte para todos nuestros estudiantes.

-Bertha Rodriguez
Guest Chef Night

Our service learning projects are continuing here at the College Assistance Migrant Program. This year we participated in our first Guest Chef Night; this event takes place at the Ronald McDonald House (RMDH). RMDH provides for the families’ basic needs while keeping the healing touch of parents within reach of their hospitalized children. This year our students made dinner for the families at RMDH. On March 1st, 2012 the CAMP staff and students made a delicious pot roast dinner. We collaborated together to provide a healthy and delicious dinner. Our students made a mountain of mashed potatoes, literally, steamed carrots, three pot roasts, numerous oatmeal cookies and Kool-Aid. Our students felt a strong emotional reaction to the families at RMDH. One our students stated that she felt “a connection to the families at RMDH. It was rewarding to see them in the house” says Anissa Ybarra. The CAMP staff and students truly enjoyed giving back to the community.

At Ronald McDonald House, we discovered that Guest Chef Night is an event that takes place all year long. Kara Bergevin informed us that last year Guest Chef Night took place 363 days out of the year. This is a very impressive turnout. Guest Chefs must cook and prepare food for 50 people. Guest Chefs can supply their own food or utilize the numerous food resources at RMDH. This was an extremely fun event and just as rewarding as it was delicious. As a team we decided that this would not be the only Guest Chef Night that CAMP attends. If you are looking for something positive to do, please look into Guest Chef Night at www.rmhc-nm.org.

-Sami Luna

Movie Night

For our CAMP Movie Night, I worked hard to get input from the students as to what movie they wanted to watch. So I created a poll and sent it out to all the students, so that we would show the movie everyone wanted to see. The choices were between, Warrior, The Hammer, Coach Carter, Despicable Me, and Under the Same Moon. After 2 weeks I closed the poll, tallied up all 18 votes and according to the majority, the students chose Warrior. The movie is about two brothers competing to win a Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) tournament awarding the biggest purse in the history of the sport. Tommy, an ex-marine with a mysterious past, returns home and recruits his father to train him for the tournament. Not too far away, Brendan, Tommy’s brother, is struggling to make ends meet as a public school teacher, so decides to return to the ring in order to provide for his family. However, Brendan’s unlikely rise as the underdog set him on a collision course with his brother Tommy. Now, they must confront the emotions that tore them apart.

It was a great movie, and the students really enjoyed the message behind it as well as the multitude of snacks and drinks that CAMP provided. -Orlando Obeso

Advisor’s Corner

As the program advisor, I have had the opportunity to work closely with all of our students throughout the past academic year. Getting to know the students on a personal level has truly been an enjoyable experience and I certainly appreciate the diversity that each of them brought to CAMP. We definitely kept the students engaged socially and academically all year. A series of workshops was held each month which varied in topics including; CAMPus Involvement, Financial Management, Interview Skills and Life After CAMP, just to name a few. Each of these workshops was facilitated by our Educational Mentor/Tutors or by professional staff from other departments on campus, such as Career Services. In addition to these workshops, we coordinated off-campus trips with UNM’s Recreation- al Services to expose the students to the natural beauty of New Mexico as well as give them a break from the books and time to reenergize.

As the end of the spring semester approaches, the students are filled with mixed emotions. Nervous about those dreaded final exams, excited to be completing their freshman year of college, and a bit uncertain about what lies ahead in their undergraduate journeys. I hope that CAMP has provided them with the fundamental tools to be successful students and that they will utilize the resources available to them. I wish them all the best of luck on their future endeavors and hope they remember that they will always have a home away from home here at UNM CAMP!

-Jeremiah Vasquez
Valeria Zerecero is a CAMP student who has shown some of the greatest progression within the program. Originally from Guadalajara, Valeria is a native Spanish speaker who graduated from Deming High School and ventured to the big city of Albuquerque. Since her first day at UNM, Valeria has put 100% effort into integrating within the group and being an active member of CAMP. She has transformed from a shy girl to one of the most voiced and confident speakers of the group, all while maintaining a solid GPA. She has faced adversity by dominating the English barrier she was presented with and has gone through many trials and tribulations, but this semester, and overall this year, she has proved that her determination, work ethic, and desire to excel successfully get her through all her endeavors.

Rodrigo Rosalez is another one of our students who hails from the southern part of the state. Having originated from Aguscalientes, Mexico, and graduated from Hatch High School, Rodrigo has ventured across both many plains of land and educational exploits. Rodrigo has proven his leadership abilities and thirst for knowledge and personal growth by not only being really involved in our program, but by getting even more involved on campus. He joined both Emerging Lobo Leaders and the CAMPerinos student organization. Rodrigo holds the current position of Academic Chair within the CAMPerinos program in which he continually exhibits his passion for succeeding in his education, but more importantly, he shows his passion of wanting to help his peers succeed as well. Rodrigo is a kind-hearted student who is always helping everyone and anyone within the office, regardless of the task at hand. His helpfulness and motivation to exceed all expectations are amazing traits that are going to help him continue his legacy in the university setting.

Soccer Night

This year's CAMP vs. El Centro de la Raza soccer game was another exciting and hard fought match between friends. The game was a closely fought battle that ended with a score of 9-7, with El centro coming out with the victory. Unfortunately, El Centro had a very skilled team that reclaimed the trophy and earned their bragging rights for the year to come. Although we did not win this year, Jesus "Chewy" Lares was the clear MVP of the game, scoring almost all of CAMP's goals. Without Jesus in the game it would have definitely not been a close game. Regardless of the score, everyone had a great time cherring and encouraging the players on the field. Overall, it was a great end of the year game between an outstanding CAMP cohort and friends alike.
Student Spotlight

Coming to a university of thirty thousand people could have been difficult for a small town girl of only five feet. However Mayra Rodríguez from Hatch, New Mexico has had no problem making this transition. She has shown the leadership, she began to develop in high school, here in the college setting at a new level. Here at UNM, Mayra has involved herself in numerous programs including Emerging Lobo Leaders, CAMPerinos, and of course the CAMP program. She has done all of this while at the same time managing to obtain a high enough GPA to secure a spot in the National Society of Collegiate Scholars and maintaining a job. Although she has been busy Mayra attributes most of her success to her participation in the program saying “It has definitely been the CAMP program and all the people/opportunities the program exposes us too.”

Hailing from the Navajo reservation in Torreon, New Mexico, Cheyenne Antonio has displayed the qualities necessary for success here at the University of New Mexico. During her time here at UNM Cheyenne has involved herself in other programs while still participating in CAMP. She’s an active participant in programs such as the Dine of UNM. While involved with Dine at UNM Cheyenne has been able to get involved in a variety of workshops and gained invaluable experiences while doing so. Cheyenne says most of her success is attributed to “the teachings I’ve gone through in the past. Nothing was given to me, I had to work for things and till this day I still do that.” She goes on to say “CAMP has also helped me it motivated me to do better and my family also wants me to be my best.” Cheyenne has used the skills she has learned throughout the year to become an exemplary student. It is with initiative like this that will propel Cheyenne in her student career.

CAMP Blood Drive

CAMP has always been proud of its clear commitment to citizenship and public service but one of our most gratifying events is the annual CAMP blood drive. Inspired by the constant shortage of blood donors here in New Mexico, the CAMP program some years ago saw the potential to become an inspirational catalyst for community involvement. Aimed at enlisting the support from students here on UNM campus, our CAMP sponsored Blood Drive has hopefully encouraged participants to make blood donation an essential element of their effort to make a difference in people’s lives.

This year’s Blood Drive was headed by Desiree Triste-Aragon, our graduate assistant and Cierra Dorado, one of this year’s outstanding CAMP students. Although Desiree was in charge of the logistics surrounding the Blood Drive, it was Cierra herself who enlisted and coordinated the event. Their remarkable work made this year’s event one of the most successful in all CAMP history, resulting in the donation of over 25 pints of blood! To put this into perspective, the average human body contains 10 pints of blood total while an average of three pints of blood is used per trauma accident. This means that our CAMP blood drive alone produced enough blood to make a complete blood transfusion two and half times or help save the lives of almost 9 trauma victims! -David H.

Tutor Sami Luna showing her support for student Miguel Vasquez
Words from the Program Specialist

The first year of the UNM CAMP program is coming to an end. This is the first year in our third installment cycle at the University of New Mexico. The federal government awards universities where migrant and seasonal farm-working families and their college-age students can benefit the most. Every year the Office of Migrant Education holds a competition for institutes of higher education to submit applications to receive funds to create a CAMP program. When a university is awarded a CAMP grant, they fund the program for five years. After the five year “cycle” is completed, they must resubmit to continue to be funded and serve students. With that said, UNM is in its third cycle and its completing its 11th year.

We submitted our program application in mid-January and we had to wait till June to find out if we were coming back. It was a stressful time because students were depending on CAMP to be there for them their freshman year. As we waited to hear if we would be coming back for our third cycle, all the CAMP staff was nervous of the real possibility that we wouldn’t have a program to serve students in the fall of 2011. What would happen if UNM CAMP didn’t return? In the economic climate that we live in today, it was uncertain what would happen. As a testament of the CAMP staff, they pushed on as if we already knew we were re-awarded. To make a long story short, we are here for our third cycle!

Every year CAMP evolves and the staff works to improve the program to better serve the students. One big change this year was to have a three-day orientation; the purpose was not only to help the students acclimate to the university and the program, but also for them to get to know their CAMP peers. This year we also augmented a CAMP specific class for our students. Instead of having a once-a-week class, we meet three times a week. In addition to learning the resources on campus, they were assigned to create community service projects with measurable outcomes. CAMP was fortunate to have a project assistant, Desiree Triste-Aragon, who has helped us many facets of the program but was a big part of the CAMP class. She assisted the students in creating their presentations, guiding the students and teaching them how to research information on the internet. The students presented on their projects and educated their classmates of the many causes in the state that need support from the community. These are a couple of enhancements that CAMP implemented this year.

The group of students CAMP serves every year is always unique and special, this year was no different. For our recruiter, Marlene Sanchez, this is the first group she has worked from beginning to end. I unfortunately, do not have the pleasure to work with them as closely as Jeremiah Vasquez, our Student Advisor, or the seven student employees we have to tutor and mentor each of our students but I can see they all have the potential of being a great success.

Also new to the program is Bertha Rodriguez, our CAMP Administrative Assistant who works hard to keep the program functioning so students can receive the most benefits. I do have the pleasure of having the office in front of the conference room where student congregate at one time or another. It’s great to hear the hustle and bustle of the students doing their homework, discussing their daily lives and in the process strengthening the bonds between each other. This year we had a very representative group of students from all of New Mexico; we had students from Cuba, Deming, Dexter, Santa Rosa, Taos, Artesia, and Hatch just to name a few. Over the years, there has always being a great presence of one part of the New Mexico, but this year we were diverse in the sense of regional representation.

As I mentioned, every year CAMP improves and so does our cohort. This year CAMP has been blessed to have a very active, involved and charismatic group of students. It’s the CAMP mission that each student continues to reach for their bachelor’s degree and beyond. CAMP presented the students the tools to begin a successful journey at UNM or any college. It will be up to the students to use them and seek additional resources to complement those they already have. Although the freshmen year in CAMP is quickly coming to an end, students should know that CAMP is here for them until the day they graduate. Students can come back to seek advisement, tutoring, mentoring and of course, they are all welcomed to our activities such as kickball and karaoke.

Ivan Olay
CAMP Staff

Ivan Olay
Program Specialist

Jeremiah O. Vasquez
Sr. Student Program Advisor

Marlene Sanchez
Sr. Student Program Advisor/Recruiter

Bertha Rodriguez
Administrative Assistant

Desiree Triste-Aragon
Program Assistant

Good Luck Graduating Tutors

Sami Luna-Educational Mentor/Tutor
Bachelors of Arts in Spanish and American Studies

Christopher Cordova-Educational Mentor/Tutor
Bachelors of University Studies