



EDUCATION

Smithsonian Center Selects Young Latino Ambassadors



El Centro Smithsonian Selecciona Jóvenes Embajadores Latinos

Among the 19 applicants, Chicago student Edgar Urbina was selected to partake in the Smithsonian Latino Center's Young Ambassador program last month. The program is designed to foster leadership in the next generation of Latinos.

Entre 19 solicitantes, el estudiante de Chicago, Edgar Urbina, fue seleccionado para participar en el programa Joven Embajador del Centro Smithsonian Latino, el mes pasado. El programa está diseñado para promover el liderazgo en la próxima generación de latinos.

Después de un competitivo proceso de solicitud, 19 estudiantes senior por graduarse fueron seleccionados para participar en el *Programa Jóvenes Embajadores*, programa nacional, interdisciplinario, de desarrollo de liderazgo, creado por el Centro Smithsonian Latino para promover la nueva generación de líderes latinos en artes, ciencias y humanidades. Del 20 de junio al 26 de junio, los estudiantes participaron en un seminario de entrenamiento y enriquecimiento en la Institución Smithsonian y otros lugares de Washington. Después de la semana de Washington, los Jóvenes Embajadores regresaron a sus comunidades locales para terminar un internado de cuatro semanas en una institución cultural o un museo para ganar experiencia práctica y tener una oportunidad práctica de promover la herencia latina.

“Una de las metas de este programa es presentar una

amplia gama de opciones de carreras y recursos para los jóvenes interesados en las artes, las ciencias y las humanidades”, dijo Eduardo Díaz, director del Centro Smithsonian Latino. “La comunidad latina es muy dinámica y queremos promover su talento individual para desarrollar la próxima generación de educadores, científicos, ingenieros, historiadores y artistas. La Institución Smithsonian, con todos sus recursos y amplia variedad de disciplinas, es el ambiente perfecto para desarrollar ese interés”. El Programa de Jóvenes Embajadores exhorta a los jóvenes a explorar y entender la identidad latina y abrazar su propia herencia cultural por medio de visitas a las colecciones latinas del Smithsonian y la interacción con expertos del Smithsonian, artistas, periodistas, científicos y otros profesionales del museo. Para más información sobre el Programa de Jóvenes Embajadores y el Centro Smithsonian Latino, visitar www.latino.si.edu.

After a competitive application process, 19 graduating seniors were selected to participate in the Young Ambassadors Program, a national, interdisciplinary, leadership development program created by the Smithsonian Latino Center to foster the next generation of Latino leaders in the arts, sciences and humanities. From June 20 to June 26, students participated in a training and enrichment seminar at the Smithsonian Institution and other Washington venues. Following the Washington week, the Young Ambassadors returned to their local communities to complete a four-week internship at a museum or cultural institution to gain practical experience and have a hands-on opportunity to promote Latino heritage.

“One of the goals of this program is to present a range of career options and resources for youth interested in the arts, sciences, and humanities,” said Eduardo Díaz, director of the Smithsonian Latino Center. “The Latino community is very dynamic, and we want to foster their individual talents to develop the next generation of educators, scientists, engineers, historians and artists. The Smithsonian Institution, with all its resources and wide-ranging disciplines, is the perfect environment to develop that interest.” The Young Ambassadors Program encourages youth to explore and understand Latino identity and embrace their own

Early Childhood Education Remains Intact in Illinois



Parents of preschool-age children – numbering in the hundreds of thousands across Illinois – breathed a collective sigh of relief yesterday as Gov. Quinn signed the FY 2011 budget bills, maintaining funding for early childhood education (ECE) across the state. Gov. Quinn’s commitment to investment in Illinois youngest learners reflects research that overwhelmingly demonstrates the link between participation in preschool and early care programs and success in later years of schooling – and in life. The need for ECE is particularly urgent in low-income and underserved communities, including Illinois’ fast-growing Latino community. Research has shown that Latino children cognitively lag behind their peers before they even set foot in kindergarten – and that access to quality, linguistically appropriate ECE can improve that gap. Given that Illinois’ Latino community has accounted for 90 percent of the state’s population growth since 2000 and that one-in-four Illinois children under age five is Latino, significant cuts proposed earlier this year would have gone especially deep for already-struggling, Latino-serving preschool and early care programs. Currently, ECE programs simply are not accessible in many predominately-Latino communities. Compounding the access issue, the limited number of available programs, particularly in areas of new suburban growth, must be enhanced to culturally reflect the needs of Latino youth. For more information, visit www.latinopolicyforum.org.

cultural heritage through visits to the Smithsonian’s Latino collections and one-on-one interaction with Smithsonian experts, artists, journalists, scientists and other

museum professionals. For more information about the Young Ambassadors Program and the Smithsonian Latino Center, go to www.latino.si.edu.