

2013 Hispanic/Latino Summit Report

The Tenth Annual Hispanic/Latino Summit was held on October 28, 2013 at the Kearney Younes Conference Center. This year's theme was "Looking Forward: High School Is Not Enough." The purpose of the Summit was to increase the academic success of Hispanic/Latino students. The day long Summit provided the following:

- Opportunities to showcase student success through positive role models,
- Information sessions on how to graduate college and career ready,
- Guidance on how to plan for the future with intentionality, and
- Resources available to support student success.

The Summit was sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Education and the Latino American Commission with support from the Nebraska Council of School Administrators, Nebraska State Education Association, Avenue Scholars Foundation, and Nebraska Association of School Boards. Over the past years the planning committee has focused on adding more sessions for youth and more sessions led by youth. Conference registration this year totaled over 550 students and staff.

This year over 22 districts participated. One district had 119 registered. A variety of large and small schools provided their students with this opportunity.

Each year the Summit features students who are role models for other students. The students and the description of their accomplishments were featured in the conference brochure "*Gallery of Stars*". This year 48 students were showcased in the *Gallery of Stars*. The students were nominated by school staff, who described how they have demonstrated exemplary leadership capabilities in the classroom, community, and with their peers.

The 2013 evaluations were again very positive. The keynote session was presented by Guadalupe Quintanilla who gave a motivational account of how she overcame many challenges to become a college graduate, earn her Ed.D., become an Associate Professor at the University of Houston and be recognized as one of the Nation's leading Latino educators. On a 5 point scale with 1 low and 5 high the keynote session received a 4.70 rating. Some of the following student comments were summarized from the conference evaluation about what they learned in the keynote session:

- Never give up on your dreams
- Education is very important
- You are what you make of yourself, not what other people tell you
- To achieve your goals, be more proactive

Always highly rated by participants was the general session featuring the Student Panel. The panelists gave students and staff opportunities to learn their paths to success. The four students who participated in this year's panel attended UNL, UNK and Metropolitan Community College. Each student shared insights on how they were able to pursue a college education.

A sampling of the concurrent session topics were: “Hungry for college?” – tips on how to identify your priorities and shop for a college; “Serving: It Is Not All About a You” – how to be successful through adversity; “A Smart Start for Your College Education” – the role of community colleges; “Call Me A Winner” – current teachers sharing how to become a teacher; “Could This M.D. Be Me?” – a medical doctor shared his story; “Dress for Success” – steps on how to interview successfully. Some of the following were student comments on the concurrent sessions:

- The importance of going to college
- How to apply for scholarships
- How to show up for an interview
- Stories and journeys of how people made it to a career.

Students were encouraged throughout the day to think about how this information could be used to plan for their futures. Some of the following were youth comments on how they would use what they learned:

- Study, get good grades, learn more English, and don't be scared about my future
- Plan for my future
- Share what I learned to help others
- Ask for help
- Apply for college scholarships
- Focus on my goals, always have goals.

Summit comments which give perspective on the value of this day included the following:

- Be a lifetime learner
- You want it, you plan it, you persist
- More conferences like this
- Plan for college earlier
- Having the many different speakers speak about the many opportunities there are

The Summit planning committee will be reviewing the 2013 evaluations and discuss recommendations for the next Summit. For more information contact Mary Ann Losh at maryann.losh@nebraska.gov