



THE WISE ONE

a Great Plains Publication

Volume 2 ♥ Issue 2 ♥ July 6, 2010

Region V
SIGMA
The Great Plains Region
CHI UPSILON

6 UH Students work on Latino Leadership at Harvard

(AP) By JEANNIE KEVER of the Houston Chronicle

Being a role model is nothing new for students at the University of Houston's Academic Achievers program. Most are the first in their family to go to college, and they know their younger siblings and classmates are watching.

"We have to set a good example," said Eva Briones, 22.

But the expectations are about to rise. Briones and five other UH students are at Harvard University this week for a program with the lofty goal of creating a new generation of Latino leaders.

It is the first time Harvard's Kennedy School of Government has focused on Latino leadership, a recognition of how quickly the population is growing.

"Minority leadership is going to be the next big thing," said Dario Collado, a program manager at the Kennedy School.

A decade after Texas higher education leaders began working to increase the number of Latinos who enter college, the emphasis is evolving. Now it's also about ensuring that more Latinos stay in school and earn a degree, and that they are prepared to help those who come after.

Focus on college seniors

Most programs for Latino youth are aimed at high school students, Collado said. Harvard's program will focus on college seniors in an attempt to produce more immediate benefits for the Latino community and society at large.

"We feel we are helping to mold the next generation of leaders," he said.

The other students selected for the program — 28 were chosen in all — attend Texas A&M International University in Laredo, the University of California-Merced, Loyola Marymount-Los Angeles and the University of Massachusetts-Boston.

Collado said universities in Texas and California were asked to nominate students because of dramatic Latino population growth in both states. Latinos are the largest demographic group in Harris County, comprising about 40 percent of the population. About 20 percent of UH students are Latino.

But just a fraction are involved in Academic Achievers, a program run by the UH Center for Mexican-American Studies.

It starts at Austin High School with an attempt to create a college-going culture in Houston's East End. Those who enroll at UH - from Austin or other area high schools - are required to maintain a GPA of

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

6 UH Students work on Latino Leadership at Harvard	1, 6
Women of Wisdom Teach Cowpokes the ABCs	2
The Obstacles of Life	3, 5
Running Just BeCUS	3, 7
The Latino Leadership Initiative: The Experience of a Lifetime	4
Ads/Announcements	5,7-9

"We have to set a good example," said, Eva Briones, 22. (A sister of the Beta Epsilon chapter of Chi Upsilon Sigma National Sorority Inc.)

"Minority leadership is going to be the next big thing",

Please see **HARVARD** on page 6

Women of Wisdom Teach Cowpokes the ABCs

By: Narcely Ruiz, (AZ/E)

This summer the church Camino de Paz (CDP) turned into a Saddle Ridge Ranch, where children as young as 2-years-old were given an opportunity to round up questions and drive home answers, as part of this year's themed Vacation Bible School (VBS). VBS is one of the most effective forms of evangelism. Leaders and volunteers put on their cowboy boots and hats as they led children to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ through songs, crafts, and bible stories. Cowpokes left VBS knowing that God has a great plan and purpose for all of them and that through prayer and a personal relationship with Him, they can find out what that plan is and the resources to achieve it. VBS teachers ensured that issues of self esteem were also addressed. Cowpokes left knowing that they were created in God's image and are therefore beautiful and loved.

The success of this year's VBS can be attributed to the serving hearts of the CDP community, who united their talents, skills, knowledge and resources to make it happen. Smacked in the center of VBS planning was Lisa Cano (AZ/A). While I served as the Director, four months of successful and effective planning were achieved (by the grace of God and) through the lending hand of my chapter sister Lisa who served as the Assistant Director. Lisa was also responsible for creating and executing a follow-up plan to ensure that children and their families stay connected and have the support they need to continue their walk with God.

Beatriz Gutierrez (AZ/Z) served as the Records Leader, and was responsible for collecting registration forms and mailing out information in Spanish and English to over 250 community members. She was also instrumental in leading the youth in distributing over 1,500 flyers by foot to the surrounding community. All her work paid off especially after seeing the participation of the

cowpokes she registered grow. "It was just as nourishing for my Spirit, if not more, seeing them fall in love with God," Beatriz said.



Beatriz Gutierrez, Lisa Cano and Narcely Ruiz at VBS.

Through songs, all three of us and other VBS leaders led the children in learning the ABCs: Admit we are all sinners; Believe Jesus is the Son of God and accept his gift of forgiveness; Confess Jesus is your Savior and Lord. The smiles on the children's faces as they did the songs were indescribable. "To know one has the potential to touch lives and influence behavior with simple gestures was a little intimidating. It makes you realize how impressionable children are and the great responsibility it is of taking a leadership role" Lisa said.

VBS ended Thursday night with the help of the participants' parents and friends. Our cowpokes were able to share what they learned during the week with their loved ones. It was truly an inspiring experience and I was blessed to have shared it with my sisters in more ways than one. :::

The Obstacles of Life

By: Norma Sanchez, (AT/A)

January 1, 2009, yes 2009, while everyone (well almost everyone) was making losing weight their new year's resolution I decided that this was the year that I was going to get out of debt and that in a year and a half from now I would be buying a house. My strategy was simple cut up all of my credit cards so I wouldn't accumulate any new debit. Though little did I know what 2009 had in store for me. As the first half of the year flew by with little goals accomplished and very little changes in my daily life I was still optimistic and told my friends that my goal was to buy a house in about a year or so. Then in July, I became a mom to a four year old whom had not



Norma (AT/A)

seen me in two years and whom probably had no recollection of who I was – her auntie. Momentarily my life stopped – working two jobs, getting ready for my first semester of graduate school and living the typical 25 year old life was not top priority any more. Now I had a daughter, I soon realized how hard moms have it and could not imagine how single moms did it ALL! I know I could not have done it without the support of my family or sisters. CUS became another type of sisterhood for me, one that helped me transition from one part of my life to another.

Once my fall semester began, I once again got back in my groove of things and kept pushing for

Please see *LIFE* on page 5

Running Just BeCUS

By: Monica J. Esquivel (AZ/Γ)

It seems running is the latest craze within Region V, and around the nation; which says a lot about the Women of Wisdom we are. Less than 1% of the American population has completed a marathon, the legendary 26.2 miles. Even if the mileage is divided in half to 13.1, the percentage only rises to 2%.

This year many sisters are completing their first, second or even seventh long distance race; and every time is a huge accomplishment worth acknowledging. In January, Marie Hernandez completed her first marathon, The Chevron Houston Marathon. In the same marathon Natalia Alejandro completed her second. The

following month I took on my first Half Marathon in Fort Worth, The Cowtown; which was quickly followed by a second Half Marathon in May, Heels & Hills. Every race is usually followed by a few days of elevating the feet and icing knees, but it is the thought of the adrenaline rush felt after crossing the finish line that has ever runner back online searching for their next race.

I know many sisters can understand the thrill of a long distance race, while the non-runners think we are all insane. That is

Monica (AZ/Γ)



Natalia (Φ/A) and) Marie (AH/A)

Please see *RUNNING* on page 7

The Latino Leadership Initiative: The experience of a lifetime

By: Priscilla Benitez (BE/A) & Alice Vadez (BE/A)

We received a phone call by Dario Collado and he asked “Are you ready to change the world?” Each of us answered yes, without a clue about what he was referring to. How were WE going to change the world? But it was this challenge that inspired us to be part of this change. The inaugural class of the Harvard Kennedy School Latino Leadership Initiative (LLI) 2010 consisted of the following schools: University of Massachusetts–Boston, Texas A&M International University, University of California–Merced, Loyola Marymount University and the University of Houston. The aim of the LLI is to enhance the

leadership capacity and understanding of a group of students committed to serving the Latino community. The program consists of a week of 15-hour days.

Our week began when we were greeted by Omar Yanar, the Harvard graduate mentor for the University of Houston team. He had the biggest smile on his face and knew each of us by name. “It felt like we had known him long before coming to the LLI,” Alice Valdez. This was a sentiment that we started to experience with each person we encountered in the LLI. Everyone was so welcoming and it quickly felt like a home away from home. Although we had a strenuous schedule, the hours seem to fly by when professors like Andy Zelleke, Robert J. Bies and Marshall Ganz are enlightening you. We took classes like *Public Speaking*, *Negotiations*,



Alice Valdez, Priscilla Benitez, and Eva Briones, all founders of Beta Epsilon Chapter at the University of Houston were selected to attend the LLI.

Networking and Leadership & Public Service. During our lunch and dinner times we had speakers who are leaders in their field, these included Farouk Shami, Alonzo Cantu, Cesar Conde and Hon. Carlos Gutierrez. David Ortiz, from the Boston Red Sox, even made a surprise appearance!

The Latino Leadership Initiative can only be described as the experience of a lifetime. To be surrounded by so many influential and hard working leaders is truly an honor. By sharing our stories we grew into a support system and the bonds created in that week are strong enough to last a lifetime. During his lecture, David Gergan stated that “Its not about the sage on the stage but the guide on the side.” This theme kept reoccurring throughout the week because leadership is not about the recognition but about the legacy you leave behind when you lend a hand or serve as a mentor to those you encounter.

There is a large leadership deficit in the Latino population and we have made it our responsibility to be these leaders not only within our community but also in the nation as a whole. One of the biggest aspects of the LLI is the commitment from each university to return to our respective communities to develop and implement a service project. Our goal now is to dream big, work hard and stay humble. ∴

“How were WE going to change the world?”

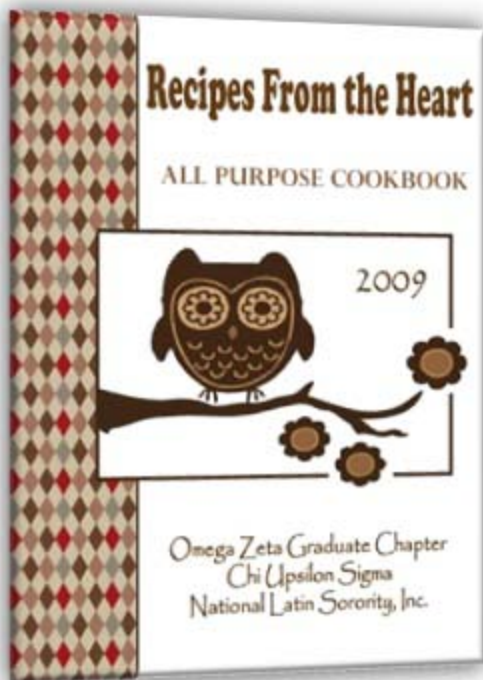
LIFE Continued from page 3

my goals; to be debt free and buy a home (who doesn't want that lol?). I then began looking at my spending, and began looking where my money was going. I was shocked to realize that in a matter of five days I spent nearly \$100 dollars in fast food. Everything seemed to be going as planned, birthdays, thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years all passed without a glitch. I even signed a contract in February and assumed it was smooth and clear sailing from then. I work with the salesperson on so many different floor plans that I was sick of seeing them all. Then around spring break my partner, Dorrena, lost her job, of course I didn't panic we had plenty of time before closing. Later that week I found out that the builder I was working with pulled out and would not have the home built in time for the tax credit deadline. With the deadline quickly approaching, for a new home to be built and closed on by June 30th I had to make hurried decisions. As luck would have it, I found another builder with even better floor plans and incentives. Then it was early May which meant it was crunch time. Dorrena had still not found a job meaning the possibility of not having all of the down payment in time. I did what I had to do, with graduate school over for the summer I got a second job.

If I thought keeping a budget was tough before, my checking account was now on an extreme fad diet with no swipes unless it was a necessity. Now it is a week away till I close on my house, Dorrena got a job and like a fairy would have it everything is approaching happily ever after. I even have a Princess in my story! :::



A picture of Norma Sanchez's (AT/A) House in Construction in May 2010.



READY TO ORDER!

Sisters, friends, and family of CUS the much anticipated CUS cookbook *Recipes From the Heart* is here. Your purchase of this cookbook will enable the sisters of Omega Zeta Graduate Chapter to provide scholarships to high school seniors in the Houston area.

The sisters of Omega Zeta Graduate Chapter would like to thank all those who have submitted recipes and who have already ordered books; it is with your effort and participation that will help future college students in the Houston Area.

Visit www.OmegaZeta.webs.com for more information!

HARVARD Continued from page 1

2.7 or higher, as well as to participate in tutoring, study sessions and other activities.

The intense work appears to pay off.

Center Director Tatcho Mindiola said 77 percent of participants graduate within six years, compared with 46 percent of UH students overall, and 50 percent of all Texas college students.

Most of the 54 students in the program are the first in their family to attend college.

That includes Cynthia Medina, 21, a senior from Baytown who plans to become a high school teacher.

She said her mother encouraged her to stay in school, even though money is tight.

"That's always been the No. 1 thing," she said. "I've worked up to three jobs, in addition to being a full-time student. I don't let myself give up."

A Gergen brainchild

The leadership initiative was the brainchild of David Gergen, director of the Center for Public Leadership at Harvard and best-known as a political analyst for CNN and an adviser for presidents ranging from Ronald Reagan to Bill Clinton.



University of Houston students: Ricardo Saldana, left, Alice Valdez (BE/A), Cynthia Medina, Priscilla Benitez (BE/A) and Eva Briones (BE/A), were selected for a Latino Leadership initiative at Harvard.

The students are spending the week on campus, meeting with Latino leaders including former cabinet secretaries Henry Cisneros and Carlos Gutierrez. During a series of 15-hour days, they are attending classes on public speaking, negotiations, networking and more.

Houston businessman and former gubernatorial candidate Farouk Shami will talk about entrepreneurship, Collado said.

They're staying in a campus dorm, itself an inspiration for the students, most of whom live with their families and commute to school.

"To stay on campus at Harvard, it's an honor," said Priscilla Benitez, 22. But it's not entirely a free ride.

'I'll stand out'

Their expenses are paid by the program, but they are expected

to leave with a plan for putting their newfound skills to work.

Several of the students work as mentors to current Austin High students, and they expect to remain involved with students there and at UH even after they graduate.

Ultimately, they say they will use what they learn in their careers and volunteer work.

Medina hopes to find ideas for inspiring high school students once she begins work as a teacher. Alice Valdez, who is majoring in electrical power engineering technology, said she knows her position in a male-dominated field will make her a role model for younger women.

"As a Latina, I'll stand out," she said.

RUNNING Continued from page 3

understandable, because it was not long ago I that thought the same. I spent a great deal of energy whining about not being athletic and hating running which could have been used training. We all run for different reasons, Natalia is highly motivated by breaking personal records and staying in shape. As for myself, I love passing people on the course, finisher medals, and race photos. Others I know run for lost loved ones, their children, weight loss and other causes. Whatever your passion there is a race for you! Remember running is simple, don't make it complicated. Take baby steps and enter a local 5K as a first race, then move up to 10K and so on. Always remember the hardest thing about running is getting out of the door! :::

Editor's Note: Melissa Garcia (Φ/A) and her sister Desiree also ran their 2nd half marathon this year.



Congrats to our Wise Women on their Bachelor's

Elizabeth Ramos

Φ/Z #1 SP07

From Texas A&M University

Carolina Chavarria

AZ/I #1 FA09

From Texas Christian University

Rosamaria Garcia

AX/B #1 SP09

B.S. Health Sciences: Physiology

B.A. Spanish

Translation/Interpretation

Cynthia Sorto

AZ/H #1 SP07

From Texas Christian University

She will be heading to UT Austin for
Grad school!

Sonia Arredondo

BA/A

from The University of Texas

Karla Acosta

AX/B #2 SP09

B.S. Health Sciences: Physiology

Monica Rae Russell

AX/A #3 SP08

B.A. Mexican American Studies

Ana E. Orozco

AX/B #4 SP09

B.S. Veterinary Sciences

Amanda Kruse

AZ/H #4 SP07

From Texas Christian University

B.S. Criminal Justice

Janeth Retamoza

AX/A #4 SP08

B.A. Bilingual Elementary Education

Congrats to our Extra Wise Women on their Masters!

Julie Lynn Ellis

Δ/E #4 SP01

M.S. Nursing

Narcely L. Ruiz

AZ/E #1 SP06

From University of Texas Arlington

Deborah Murillo

Π/E #1 SP02

From Texas A&M University -

Commerce

Danita Gallegos

Φ/Γ #3 SU02

From The University of Houston

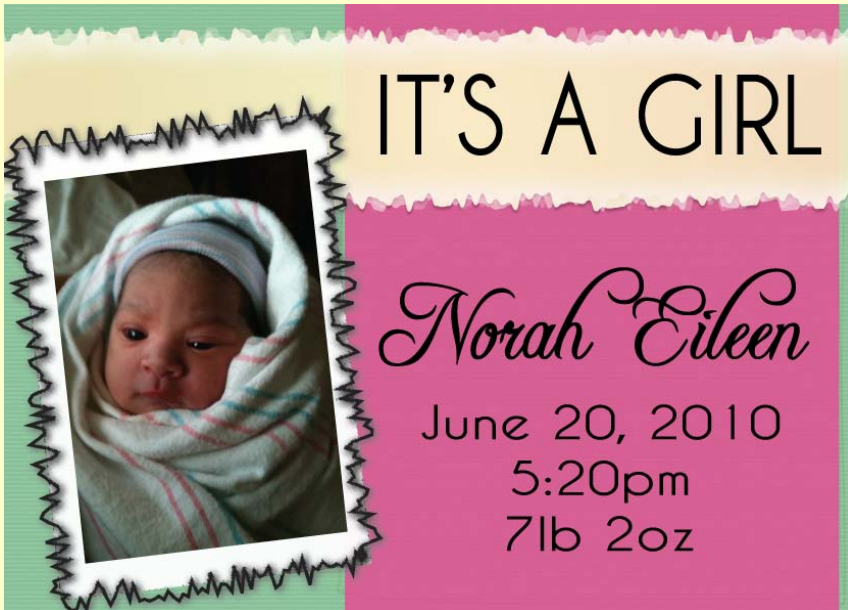
Masters in Social Work

Yuritzi G. Garcia

AZ/E #2 SP06

From Texas A&M University

Shout outs!!!!



Congratulations!!

Jennifer Ramirez (Φ/A)
& Henry Rodriguez

On their 2nd Bundle or Joy!

Congratulations!!

Natalia Padilla (Φ/A)
& Arturo Padilla

For tying the knot!



Congratulations to
Founding Sister Vanessa Guerrero
Alpha Phi/Alpha #2
Spring 2008
Pre-Dent / B.S in Biology from Boston University

She will be attending UMass Boston to finish her last few classes before applying to Dental School. I'm so proud of you! I love you!

Your AA,
Klaudia

More Shout Outs!!!!

THE AMAZING ZEALOUS ALPHA ZETA CHAPTER GRADUATES OF SPRING 2010



Yuritzi G. Garcia

Texas A&M University

Master's Degree Spanish Literature

Amanda Kruse

Texas Christian University

Bachelor's Degree Criminal Justice



Narcely L. Ruiz

University of Texas at Arlington
Master's Degree Social Work

Cynthia Sorto

Texas Christian University
Bachelor's Degree Social Work

Carolina Chavarria

Texas Christian University
Bachelor's Degree Psychology
& Spanish

Congratulations

Submitted by:

Monica J. Esquivel
(AZ/Γ)

CONGRATULATIONS!



XYΣ

Sister of the
Year!

**CYNTHIA
GUZMAN**

Happy 8 Year Anniversary For Phi/Gamma July 27, 2002

MiAlicia & Danita



Congratulations to
AnneMarie Garza(Φ/B)
On receiving a Full Ride to
the University of Texas
Masters of Education
Program

The Wise One: GPP Staff

Angelica Saldaña (Φ/E)
Anna Castillo (Π/A)
Jennifer Ramirez (Φ/A)
Kris Delgado (Φ/A)
Lisa Cano (AZ/A)
MiAlicia Amaya (Φ/Γ)
Narcely Ruiz (AZ/E)
Natalia Alejandro(Φ/A)
Norma Sanchez (AT/A)

I would like to congratulate all the women who graduated from the University of Arizona this past May. They are true women of wisdom and have many plans for the future!!!!

Julie Ellis just recently got a job at the Tucson Medical Center as a nurse practitioner in Tucson, AZ. Janeth Retamoza will be teaching in Nogales, AZ at Mexitayotl Elementary School as a 1st grade teacher. Ana Orozco got an apprenticeship working with horses, and she is planning on going to Veterinary School. Karla Acosta will be going to graduate school in West Chester University in Pennsylvania. Rosamaria will be applying to Physician Assistant school and will also be working in the medical setting.

Julie Lynn Ellis

Δ/Ε #4 Sp'01

"Aurora"

M.S. Nursing

Janeth Retamoza

AX/A FS#4 Sp'08

"Apache"

B.A. Bilingual Elementary Education

Karla Acosta

AX/B #2 Sp'09

"Citadel"

B.S. Health Sciences: Physiology

Monica Rae Russell

AX/A FS#3 Sp'08

"Arsenal"

B.A. Mexican American Studies

Rosamaria Garcia

AX/B #1 Sp'09

"Night Hawk"

B.S. Health Sciences: Physiology

B.A. Spanish

Translation/Interpretation

Ana E. Orozco

AX/B #4 Sp'09

"Marinea"

B.S. Veterinary Science



Submitted by: Rosamaria (AX/B)

Corazaones Unidos Siempre

Chi Upsilon Sigma
National Latin Sorority Inc.

Founded:

April 29, 1980
Rutgers University–New
Brunswick

Chapters/Colonies

Over 40

Colors:

Red, Black, Beige

Motto:

“Wisdom through Education”

Want to know more about the sisters of CUS?
Do you want to learn what's on our minds?
Are you interested in what we have to say?
Want a chance to tell us what's on your mind?

*Then subscribe to our
Great Plains Region
Quarterly Newsletter!!!!*

To join the listserv visit:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/subscribe/GPPsubscription>

We're on the WEB:
www.JustBeCUS.org

Would you like to
submit an article,
advertisement,
announcement?

Contact: mialicia@yahoo.com
or nubylalala@hotmail.com
for more information

The Great Plains Publication
3819 Colley St.
Houston, TX 77093



This Could be YOU!
1980 Hibiscus Rd.
New Brunswick, NJ 42980

If you would like to receive this publication via US Postal Services please contact
mialicia@yahoo.com or nubylalala@hotmail.com

For Pricing Details!