



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 21, 2018

CONTACT: Jahmal Corner, Maritza Fairfield PHONE: 909-445-1001

Cal State Long Beach Ethnic Studies Exchange Inspires Lynwood Students Considering College

Lynwood – Lynwood High School ethnic studies students toured Cal State University Long Beach, sat in on a history class, received student support advice and talked with CSULB students about African-American and Latinx student life as part of the inaugural College Bridge: An Ethnic Studies Exchange, a collaboration between Lynwood High teacher Ana Orozco and her former CSULB professor Dr. Emily Berquist, designed to introduce Orozco’s students to college life.

“As a senior and first-generation student, my experience was motivational,” Lynwood High senior Andrea Lopez said. “Sitting in a college classroom and listening to Dr. Berquist’s lecture made me realize how college might be challenging, but there are many resources available for you to succeed in life. As a Latina I feel proud of myself for stepping outside my comfort zone and challenging myself for a better future. Everything is possible if you have the will to change.”

Orozco’s students prepared for Berquist’s history class by reading a passage that focused on the 18th-century Tupac Amaru Indian resistance movement against Spanish rule in Peru. Berquist led a classroom discussion, followed by breakout sessions led by CSULB history students.

After a campus tour and lunch, Orozco, a 2014 CSULB graduate, led a student life presentation by describing the thrill of discovering her life’s calling inside a college classroom.

“My life changed when I took my first cultural studies class at Long Beach,” Orozco said. “There are so many voices that go unheard, and so often we hear only one side of the conversation. I realized then I wanted to teach an ethnic studies class and stress how important it is for people of color to speak up and be part of the conversation.”

CSULB Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) Student Organization President Justin Hatchett made a tremendous impression on the Lynwood students by rejecting the socioeconomic barriers that conspire to hold back students of color.

“It doesn’t matter where I come from,” Hatchett said. “It only matters where I am going.”

This sentiment resounded with Lynwood High senior Shayla Ritchie.

“The things that inspired me at CSULB were the students – students like me who share the same struggle, who can succeed no matter what their background, Ritchie said. “Hearing their stories motivate me to pursue my future. Those students opened my eyes.”

MORE

The **Lynwood Unified School District** is dedicated to offering students a world-class education to prepare them for success in college and career in the 21st century. Under its Achieving Greatness Initiative, the district is realigning all aspects of its organization to strengthen and expand instructional programs, enrichment and extracurricular activities, and support system for students and staff. For more information, visit www.lynwood.k12.ca.us.

Follow us on  Twitter @LynwoodSchools, or “like” us on  Facebook at www.facebook.com/LynwoodUSD



The visit concluded with a college-bound workshop where the students met with representatives from EOP, student support services and the Dreamers Success Center, learning about the admissions and application process, financial aid, scholarships and the resources and support available to undocumented students in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.

Orozco and Berquist plan to make College Bridge an annual spring event, where ethnic studies students will review the same passage on Tupac Amaru and participate in a series of workshops.

“For Lynwood Unified students, college is more than a dream, it is their birthright as Americans,” LUSD Superintendent Gudiel R. Crosthwaite said. “The College Bridge Exchange at CSULB gives our students the opportunity to see the inclusiveness that is reshaping higher education, and demonstrates how their presence and participation is vital to their future success as well as the democratic process. Thank you to Ms. Orozco and Dr. Berquist for providing this service on behalf of our community.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

032118_LUSD_STUDIESEXCHANGE1: Lynwood High School ethnic studies students toured Cal State University Long Beach, as part of an exchange that helped them learn about college life.

032118_LUSD_STUDIESEXCHANGE2: Lynwood High School students learn about the college admissions and application process during a visit to Cal State University Long Beach.

###

The mission of **Lynwood Unified School District**, the cultivator of innovative thinkers, is to ensure each student fearlessly achieves his or her highest academic and personal aspirations while contributing to the greater society through a unique system distinguished by:

★ People of great character who inspire and lead by example ★ The instilling of courage to be creative ★ The transformative uses of