



HACIENDA LA PUENTE

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Hacienda La Puente Middle School Students Hone Communication Skills at Summer Camp

CITY OF INDUSTRY – Hacienda La Puente Unified middle school students sharpened their communication skills and gained confidence as public speakers during a two-week Speech and Debate Summer Camp, held July 11 to 22 at Newton Middle School.

The speech and debate summer camp is designed to develop future community leaders, encourage creativity and prepare the students for the rigors of speech competitions. The camp was attended by more than 100 Hacienda La Puente Unified sixth- to eighth-grade students and led by District partner Advantage Communications, which provided the coaches and staff under the leadership of Advantage HLPUSD District Director Joel Anguiano. Hacienda La Puente Unified has offered the speech and debate program since 2020.

“Our goal is to reach as many students throughout the school year as we can, and this year was the largest group we have ever had at summer camp,” Anguiano said. “We focus on advocacy, public speaking, confidence and team building to ensure our students become better learners and leaders.”

A typical day at speech and debate summer camp begins with students gathering in the quad for warmup exercises as a group before breaking up into classrooms that feature different labs, including a writer’s workshop, an acting class and a direct public speaking class.

Newton Middle School eighth-grade student Leah Marie Mendoza enrolled in the program as a sixth-grader and attends the summer camp to focus on expanding her skill sets as a writer, public speaker and budding poet.

“I can’t say enough about what an amazing opportunity this program is,” Mendoza said. “I have gained public speaking skills and I know that this opportunity will help me succeed in high school and college as well as open many avenues for potential scholarships. Thank you to the District for providing us with this camp and program that have helped me become the communicator and student I am today.”

Newton Middle School eighth-grade student Vianney Miranda Rivera is an aspiring actor and said she attends the summer camp to perfect her pronunciation and enunciation skills, as well as to discuss topics and issues that are important to her.

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"I have learned to be a better communicator and share my voice with the world," Rivera said. "I have gained confidence and learned to speak slower and clearer. As an actor, I know this course will help me prepare for the future and better convey my emotions. Thank you to our director Joel Anguiano and the amazing Advantage coaches for all of your support."

The speech and debate summer camp presented a showcase on July 19 to highlight the progress of 10 Hacienda La Puente Unified students for family, friends, HLPUSD Board members and Superintendent Dr. Alfonso Jiménez.

"I am thrilled to see so many Hacienda La Puente students take the initiative to work on their speech and debate skills at summer camp. Since we have introduced this program to the District, it has grown and expanded every year," Jiménez said. "Our students are learning valuable skills that will shape them into future leaders. Thank you to Advantage Communications for giving them a platform to pursue their dreams and to our Board of Education for approving diverse programs for our students."

PHOTO CAPTION:

HLPUSD_SPEECHDEBATE: From left to right: Vice President of Advantage Communications Adriana Toghia, Newton Middle School eighth-grade students Vianney Miranda Rivera and Leah Marie Mendoza and Advantage Communications District Director Joel Anguiano prepare for a successful day at Speech and Debate Summer Camp on July 13.

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