



## Press Release

**For Immediate Release:**  
March 31, 2015

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## Vail High Students Visit Unique Latin American Art Museum, Inspired by MUSD's Ethnic Studies Resolution

**MONTEBELLO** – Encouraged by Montebello Unified's recent resolution to adopt an Ethnic Studies graduation requirement, nearly 40 Vail High School students on March 20 visited the Museum of Latin American Art (MOLAA) in Long Beach – the only museum in the United States dedicated to modern and contemporary Latin American art.

"Understanding the history of our ancestors – especially through the medium of art – can speak volumes to our students who, when exposed to the many layers of race and culture, become more insightful and well-rounded citizens," Montebello Unified Board President Edgar Cisneros said. "We commend teachers and staff at Vail High for bridging our Ethnic Studies mission with experiences that continue to enrich the lives of our students."

Accompanied by Vail ASB Director Dr. Gloria Olivares, who was instrumental in securing a scholarship for the field trip, and Board Clerk Lani Cupchoy, the teens learned about the "Mexico: Fantastic Identity" exhibit, which featured paintings, photographs and mixed media works by artists just before, during and after the Mexican Revolution.

In addition to learning different forms of modern Mexican art, MOLAA docents showed students how the Mexican Revolution affected all aspects of life in Mexico and how the Revolution may have touched students' own ancestors' lives as well.

"This opportunity served as a powerful way to engage students in Latino arts education," said Montebello Unified Clerk Lani Cupchoy. "By connecting them to a vibrant history and culture, students can better understand their own identities, which then allows them to be receptive and respectful of different worlds, techniques, imaginations and philosophies."

Students shared how the field trip made altered perceptions of art and their lives; they felt more connected to their culture after learning about the various contemporary Mexican artists. ASB President Joel Hernandez added that he learned that there is a story behind each piece of art.

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“This field trip to MOLAA gave Vail students the opportunity to understand their history, their culture, and their art,” said Vail High Principal Horacio Perez. “By knowing where they come from, students can create their own paths.”

While on a tour of the museum, Vail students investigated artists such as David Alfaro Siqueiros, Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo and Manuel Alvarez Bravo. Students also learned about the concepts of Surrealism and abstract art.

“Visiting this unique Latin art museum, which is fortunately right in our back yard, is one of many experiences we are encouraging and supporting for our students,” Superintendent of Education Susanna Contreras Smith said. “Exposing our students to cultural, artistic and historical experiences is not only in line with our mission at MUSD, but in line with our Ethnic Studies resolution to bring diversity and inclusiveness to all corners of our District.”

**Photo Captions:**

VHS MOLAA1: Encouraged by Montebello Unified’s recent resolution to adopt an Ethnic Studies graduation requirement, nearly 40 Vail High School students (some pictured here with VHS ASB Director Dr. Gloria Olivares, MUSD Board Clerk Lani Cupchoy and VHS Principal Horacio Perez) on March 20 visited the Museum of Latin American Art (MOLAA) in Long Beach – the only museum in the United States dedicated to modern and contemporary Latin American art.

VHS MOLAA2: Encouraged by Montebello Unified’s recent resolution to adopt an Ethnic Studies graduation requirement, nearly 40 Vail High School students (some pictured here while on a tour of the museum) on March 20 visited the Museum of Latin American Art (MOLAA) in Long Beach – the only museum in the United States dedicated to modern and contemporary Latin American art.

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**Montebello Unified School District** is a dynamic learning institution employing top-quality educators. It is the combined work of many that allows the District to continue educating more than 30,000 students every year using the 40 Developmental Assets at all of our school sites. It is through everyone’s efforts – students, parents, teachers, staff and administrators – that we are achieving the District’s number one goal of raising student achievement. Learn more online at [www.montebello.k12.ca.us](http://www.montebello.k12.ca.us).