

Wednesday, June 16th, 2010

Dear Aprendamos Supporter,

The Instituto De Educación Popular Del Sur De California (IDEPSCA) respectfully seeks your support for Aprendamos Academic and Cultural Enrichment Summer Program 2010.

IDEPSCA is a non-profit community-based educational organization incorporated in 1991 whose mission is to educate and organize low-income immigrants concerned with solving problems in their own communities. |

In the summer of 2009, IDEPSCA expanded our intersession model to reach kindergarten through fifth grade students, parents, and volunteers in order to adapt to greater community needs. The Aprendamos Summer Program 2009 reached a total of 102 children, parents, and volunteers during the 8-week session. Through our partnership with the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC), undergraduate students received University credit for teaching in Aprendamos, but most importantly they gained significant experience creating and practicing popular education based curriculum with children. This existing partnership will continue to help us meet student needs this summer.

This year, summer school programs continue to be non existent or inaccessible to the communities Aprendamos reaches. The Pico Union community that Aprendamos works with is severely underserved with regard to educational opportunities. According to UCLA's Institute for Democracy, Education & Access and UC/All Campus Consortium on Research for Diversity 2010's California Education Opportunity Report titled "Educational Opportunities in Hard Times: The Impact of the Economic Crisis on Public Schools and Working Families" states that:

"Programs outside the instructional core (of reading and math) were cut back or eliminated, with many costs shifted to parents. Most principals reported that summer school was reduced or eliminated."

Currently, various local schools that Aprendamos students attend regularly, such as Gratts Elementary and Charles White Elementary, ended their year-round track system this school year (2009-2010), leaving Track D students, whose last day of instruction was in May 2010, with an extended summer vacation of more than four months. This gap in education has increased the demand for community-based programs like Aprendamos to reach low-performing students to try to fulfill this disparity in education by providing a much needed learning environment for students.

Hence the continued lack of summer school and current academic performance of low-income children in Pico Union drives Aprendamos to provide another enriching summer program in 2010.

The goal of Aprendamos Academic and Cultural Enrichment Summer Program 2010 is to improve educational outcomes for low-income elementary school children (K-5th grade) in the Pico Union neighborhood by providing a popular education-based curriculum that strengthens students' academic skills in Reading, Writing, Mathematics, and Science, while engaging them in meaningful collaborative projects focused on arts, multimedia, and cultural pride for 8 weeks, Monday through Thursday, 8:30am-12:30pm. Aprendamos engages children to see themselves as creators of knowledge and producers of culture through a student-centered curriculum, guided by the following themes: Community, Family, Identity, Environmental Justice, and Social Change.

In our multimedia projects children learn how to operate video cameras, digital cameras, and other tools to create, document, and share their own stories. Field trips and outdoor activities are also an essential part of the summer program. Community observations and clean-ups provide children a service-learning experience emphasizing environmental justice. Some local sites include the Francis Ave. Community Garden, MacArthur Park, and LaFayette Park. Moreover, the culmination of our summer program will be celebrated through our annual photo gallery which will exhibit students' photography, identifying problems and proposing solutions to issues existing in their lives.

Aprendamos Academic and Cultural Enrichment Summer Program's project budget is \$77,260. Currently, Aprendamos receives \$24,000 from the Whitecap Foundation, \$3,500 from the United Latino Fund and In-kind support of interns valued at \$22,000.

**We hope you can join us to improve Pico Union children's summer experience by making a \$100, \$50, \$25 or other amount donation today.**

Please make check payable to: IDEPSCA  
Memo line: Aprendamos  
Mail to: IDEPSCA Attn: Summer Program,  
1565 W. 14th St. Los Angeles, CA 90015.

For more information, please feel free to contact me via telephone at (213) 385-7800 ext. 131 or via e-mail at [mariella@idepsca.org](mailto:mariella@idepsca.org).

Sincerely,

Mariella Saba  
Aprendamos Program Coordinator