

Scholars Latino Initiative: UN Programa Beneficial para los Estudiantes Latinos

Por Alyssa Goodwin

Para muchos estudiantes Latinos, la posibilidad de asistir a la universidad no es una idea real. Sin embargo, los estudiantes latinos que participan en el programa de Scholars Latino Initiative reciben las herramientas ellos necesitan para tener éxito en las escuelas secundarias y más adelante, las universidades. Scholars Latino Initiative (SLI) es una organización diferente a cualquier otro programa para los estudiantes. Scholars Latino Initiative se creó en 2003 entre la Universidad de Carolina de Norte en Chapel Hill y la escuela secundaria, Jordan Matthews en Siler City. El programa tiene más de setenta estudiantes de UNC y veinte cinco estudiantes de segundo año en la escuela secundaria.

Cuando los estudiantes están en el segundo año en la escuela secundaria, ellos pueden solicitar para una posición en el programa. Muchos de los estudiantes aceptados son estudiantes universitarios de primera generación y no tienen acceso a los recursos necesarios para tener éxito con su educación. El programa ayuda a los participantes con el acceso a recursos educativos y el proceso



para solicitar a la universidad. Los estudiantes de UNC que participan en Scholars Latino Initiative son mentores para los estudiantes en la escuela secundaria.

Los mentores desarrollan relaciones con los estudiantes y les proveen con la orientación para tener una educación superior. En los tres años del programa, los estudiantes toman cursos de preparación para la universidad y participan en proyectos de servicio en la comunidad. En Jordan Matthews, los mentores de Scholars Latino Initiative ayudan a los estudiantes con las clases

avanzadas y todos que participaron en el programa han asistido a la universidad.

Hay recursos para los padres de los estudiantes también. Jakelin Bonilla fue un participante en Scholars Latino Initiative cuando ella asistía a Jordan Matthews, pero ahora, ella es un mentor para otros estudiantes. Con la ayuda de SLI, los padres de Bonilla entendieron más del proceso para solicitar a la universidad. "Al principio, mis padres no me animaban de practicar deportes o unirse a clubes, pero SLI les ayudo a comprender que si quería ir a la universidad, que tenía que hacer otras cosas aparte de sacar buenas notas" dijo Bonilla. El programa ha tenido mucho éxito y como resultado, se ha extendido para los condados de Randolph y Lee. También, hay un programa como Scholars Latino Initiative que fue creado en la Universidad de Richmond en Virginia. Si quiere más información sobre SLI, por favor visite www.unc.edu/sli/ y vea cómo puede apoyar Scholars Latino Initiative.

Alyssa Goodwin creció en Siler City y fue al colegio de Jordan Matthews. Ella es un estudiante del último año de sociología a la universidad del Carolina del Norte en Chapel Hill.

A Beneficial Program For Latino Students

By Alyssa Goodwin

For many Latino students, the possibility of attending college is not a realistic concept. However, Latino students who participate in the program Scholars Latino Initiative receive the tools they need in order to have success in their high schools and later on, in college. Scholars Latino Initiative (SLI) is different than any other program for students. Scholars Latino Initiative was created in 2003 between the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Jordan Matthews High School in Siler City. The program has more than 70 UNC students and 25 high school sophomores.

When students are in their second year of high school, they can apply to participate in the program. Many of the students accepted are first generation high school students



and do not have access to the resources necessary for success with their education. The program helps

participants with access to education resources and the process of applying to college. UNC students who participate in Scholars Latino Initiative are mentors for the high school students. The mentors develop relationships with the students and provide them with the guidance they need for a higher education. In the three years of the program, students take preparation courses for college and participate in service projects in the community. At Jordan Matthews, the mentors of Scholars Latino Initiative help students with their advanced classes and everyone that has participated in the program has attended college.

There are resources for the students' parents as well. Jakelin Bonilla was a participant in Scholars Latino Initiative when she attended Jordan Matthews, but now, she is a mentor for other students. With the help of

SLI, Bonilla's parents understood more about the process of applying to college. "My parents did not encourage me at first to play sports or join clubs, but SLI helped them to understand if I wanted to go to college, I needed to do other things than make good grades," she said. The program has had much success and as a result, it has extended to Randolph and Lee Counties. There is also a program similar to Scholars Latino Initiative that has been created at the University of Richmond in Virginia. If you want more information about SLI, please visit www.unc.edu/sli/ and see how you can help support Scholars Latino Initiative.

Alyssa Goodwin grew up in Siler City and attended Jordan Matthews High School. She is a senior sociology major at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Apex peaks with 'destination downtown'

By Bob Crowley

Just east of Chatham lays a town as tied to the culture and ambience of the area as any. The Town of Apex is a gem accessible to us all and well worth the trip. Pittsboro may have existed for a century before a wide spot in the road, then called "Log Pond," became Apex, but both towns now serve their respective sides of Jordan Lake in an almost equal manner.

Apex began as a town serving the then burgeoning lumber and railroad industries of the latter half of the nineteenth century. Back then, many of the business establishments along the Heywood Road (now renamed Salem Street) catered more to the needs of the young men working in those

industries. That all ended in June of 1911 when a massive fire swept through the town, destroying most of the downtown area. Those wooden buildings not consumed by that conflagration disappeared in another, somewhat smaller, fire in 1923. The pleasant brick storefronts found along Salem Street today were built as replacements for the older buildings. They now form a charming and unique downtown.

A walk down Salem Street is a dream for the shopper and browser. The thoroughfare is studded with restaurants, antique stores, and clothing shops, each more fascinating than the next.

When you visit Apex, consider going during one of the many civic and cultural events held in the town.

Peakfest is held the first Saturday of each May when Salem Street is closed to traffic, and given over to booths for vendors of all manner of foods and merchandise. Come the first Saturday in October for the Salem Street Arts Festival, an event similar to Peakfest but with most of the booths occupied by local artists of all types. Come the evening of the first Friday of December for the tree lighting, all evening shopping, and horse-drawn carriage rides up and down Salem Street. And if you cannot make any of those, check out the schedule of events at the Halle Cultural Arts Center or the performances of music, poetry, and even magic held regularly at the various restaurants along the street. Also, contact the Apex Arts Council

(www.ApexArts.org) for more information on the cultural scene in town.

Chatham is a wonderful place. The shops in downtown Pittsboro, Siler City, and our other towns have their own special delights on offer. Still, the surrounding area provides us with a rich diversity of choices we all should enjoy. Apex has a great deal to offer to any of us on either side of the lake, so spend a productive day there soon.

Bob Crowley serves as president of the Apex Arts Council, Ambassador for the Apex Chamber of Commerce, Marketing Director for the New Hope Valley Railway, and vice-president of the Kiwanis Club of Apex. He also runs Front Porch Associates, a marketing firm.