



MULTICULTURAL
INSTITUTE

CONNECTING THE MULTICULTURAL INSTITUTE

MI LINKS

TO ITS FRIENDS & SUPPORTERS & APRIL 2015

Dear Friends,

In this issue we highlight the **Mentoring for Academic Success (MAS)** after school program. This program has been around since 1999 and continues to grow with time. MAS provides after-school tutorial sessions with qualified and dedicated tutors. Students from 3rd to 9th grade are welcome at the Berkeley and Richmond site.

Here is a quote from a student in her own words about her experience in the program:

"I have been in the MAS Program for many years, I like this program because tutors help me with my homework, they also help me with subjects that I have trouble with at school. I also like the MAS Program because I have learned a lot of stuff. I like the tutors from the program because they are nice and they help me understand my homework. My experience in MAS has been fun and interesting because I learn and I meet new friends."

-Leslie Saavedra
10 years old

Together we are assisting students in their educational journey.

Sincerely
Fr. Rigo



Site Coordinators: Adan Alberto and Vallery Campos working with students at their sites.

Academic Tutorial Program Creates a Long Lasting Impact

The Mentoring for Academic Success (MAS) program provides a unique opportunity for underrepresented students in the Berkeley and Richmond communities to receive mentoring guidance, homework help, and skill building practices that may not be available to them otherwise. MAS has an impactful presence in Berkeley for 16 years and for the past 3 years in Richmond. The impact that this program has on our students is life changing!

Last year MAS served 80 students that were assisted by 20 dedicated tutors. These tutors are all well prepared and invested undergraduate students from UC Berkeley, St. Mary's College, Berkeley City College, and volunteers from local high schools. Berkeley Site Coordinator Vallery Campos had the following to say after two years of working with the program.

"How could one start to describe MAS? When I was asked this question, I thought at once of one word: transformative. Unfortunately, with large class sizes, talented (but often overworked) teachers cannot afford to provide students with the support and feedback that they require. In this flawed system, parents are left to come in and provide a type of "donut-hole" educational coverage to ensure their child can succeed. Due to limited resources, many parents cannot provide this coverage—this is where MAS comes in. We provide students with a safe space conducive to learning and self-expression. Students know, when they come here, that they are entering a place where they are encouraged and supported to develop their potential. We are part of a movement towards educational equality and empowerment and I couldn't be prouder to be a part of this."



By: Adan Alberto and Vallery Campos the Richmond and Berkeley Site Coordinators.

Hard Work and Dedication Changes MAS Students' Lives

Gandhi once said, "Be the change you wish to see in the world." MAS strives to nurture the students as they flourish within this program. The tutors and Site Coordinators are creating positive change in the lives of these students everyday.

Photo: Guadalupe Paz, 3rd grade student at the Berkeley site showing her love for MAS.



Adan- "I believe it was Confucius that stated, "Choose a job that you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life." This quote resonates in totality with my experience as the Richmond Site Coordinator . More than a job, as the coordinator I have the opportunity to truly make a positive difference in my community. I am very proud of what I do and I feel really blessed to have the opportunity to be in a position where I can offer my time and service for the growth of my community. I have seen the transformation of many students' attitudes towards their academic goals and aspirations, which reminds me of the positive impact that the MAS program has made in individual lives in the

Vallery- "Every time my students tell me something is "too difficult," I remind them of their potential and reaffirm all of the hard work they have done. We take it one step at a time here and patiently work to foster their own skills innately buried within each of our students. Believe me when I say this, I hold the utmost faith that this program changes lives. Last year, I started out as a tutor. One of my 4th grade students, a brilliant mathematician, came to me unable to read more than one sentence without getting stuck on a word. Needless to say, this student hated to read and avoided it at all cost. Within no time, he was not only improving his reading skills he even wanted to read! He is now currently reading at grade level."



What MAS Provided Us, Allows Us to Help Others

By: Erick Dominguez and Martin Gonzalez, Former MAS students and now Volunteer Tutors

Every year MI has been lucky to have former MAS students making a difference by giving back to MAS by volunteering. Erick Dominguez and Martin Gonzalez started as MAS students and now help out the community by volunteering as tutors. It is wonderful to see students grow into leaders and change makers in the community while being part of MAS.

Erick began MAS at the age of 12 years old and has created a great impact amongst the students. Martin started off when he was only 9 years old! He is now in high school and his growth has been commendable.

Left to Right: Martin Gonzalez and Erick Dominguez



Martin- "My experience -as a MAS student started 5 years ago when I was in 4th grade. The travel from a student to tutor was a really fun and educational experience. MAS was really helpful because it was the place where I would go to do HW. If I ever got stuck on my HW or just needed help I could ask my tutor. That is one of the many reasons why I decided to become a tutor at MAS because I wanted to help and give back after the help that I received. I wanted to see more students succeed in their academics. Thanks MAS!"

Erick- "Being involved with MI has been such a blessing, I have been a student and a tutor for the MAS Program and the YWF (Youth Writing Festival). It has been a blast working with such a wonderful family. The Multicultural Institute Staff is a wonderful group of people that love what they do and always have a way to make work fun. I'm so glad to have been informed of the Multicultural Institute. I especially want to thank Fr. Rigo for helping me be in these programs and also for working so hard to have such an awesome organization."



Berkeley and Richmond Program Directors

Who is Mirna Cervantes:



Mirna is a recent UC Berkeley graduate (2013) who majored in Sociology and has a passion for child education. She started off as a volunteer tutor for the MAS program in January 2010. During her last semester at Cal she became Site coordinator and after graduation was hired full time at MI to run the Health program. Due to her love for children and the MAS program she is MAS Berkeley Director.

Mirna- "I have witnessed many students' personal and academic growth throughout the years. To me there is no bigger reward than that. It has been a beautiful unforgettable experience working with MAS students. I have the opportunity to be a mentor to these students everyday and they have become my main reason and motivation to continue helping youth."



Who is Merced Padilla:



Merced has 15 years experience in running her own day care business and working with children. She is the head supervisor of the overall MAS and Youth Writing Festival programs. She has been the Richmond MAS director since the Richmond office opened in 2013. She has been working at MI full time for three years as office manager.

Merced- "It's been a wonderful experience being part of MI for almost 4 years and it's been a privilege to run such an amazing program and be able to help so many students and families. With this program we are able to make a difference in our community. It's very rewarding."



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Our MISSION

We accompany immigrants in their transition from poverty and isolation to prosperity and participation.

Our VISION

We envision a community in which immigrants, regardless of their immigration status, are embraced and valued in the communities in which they work and live.

MULTICULTURAL INSTITUTE

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Our VALUES

Dignity of each person – promoting respect and communication.

Social Equality –believing that resources should be shared by all.

Transparency & Integrity – good stewards of all gifts given to us.

Community Involvement – Supporting those we serve.

Simplicity & Flexibility – keeping our work efficient and effective.

Support MI by Giving on Local Gives: 05.05.15

Donate to MI on May 5th, 2015!

There are 2 online fundraisers that day:

East Bay Gives and **Silicon Valley Gives.**

They start at 12:00 AM and go for 24 hours until midnight.



eastbaygives.org/#npo/multicultural-institute



svgives.razoo.com/story/Multicultural-Institute

Questions or comments?

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