



# EL SOL

The Newsletter of El Centrito De La Colonia

## Celebrating The Class Of 2001

### *El Centrito Participants Are On Their Way To College*

El Centrito's Class of 2001 has established a significant benchmark— **100% of graduating participants are enrolled in college this fall.** As an agency dedicated to preparing youth to become productive members of the community, El Centrito celebrates its graduates and the fulfillment of mission they represent. Participants of the Youth Leadership Group soar confidently forward with their determination, hard work and high expectations.

Susana has wanted to be a teacher since she was nine years old. Soft-spoken, but firm, she credits El Centrito with, "helping me meet new people and improving my computer and internet skills which will be important in college." A graduate of Oxnard High School, she received the Paul Lehman Memorial Scholarship and was named a Governor's Scholar. She is registered as a Liberal Studies major at Cal State Northridge and admits to being a bit nervous about living away from home for the first time.

Coming to El Centrito since she was eleven, Lupe received eight, *yes eight*, college scholarships from groups including the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Oxnard Police and the Eagles Fraternity. "My dream is to be a Pediatric Neonatologist, so I'll be majoring in Pre-Med," she shares. Her college

plans will keep her close to home at Oxnard College for two years, followed by studies at the University of California, San Diego.

"El Centrito has been an unlimited resource for me," says Wendy. "The Leadership Group enabled me to overcome shyness and express myself. The Computer Lab is where I learned how to study and do research.

Lizeth helped me to apply for college and financial aid. El Centrito is the place where I can go when I don't have anyplace else." Wendy is now attending the University of California, Santa Barbara, majoring in Chicano Studies to become a high school history teacher.

In total, 13 program participants completed high school and are on

their way to college. Without exception, each speaks of giving back to the community. "El Centrito opened my eyes to the community," reflects Ana who graduated from Oxnard High School and will be attending Oxnard College to study business. "I know I'm going to come back to help, either by working in community service or by creating a business that will employ people."

El Centrito sends its warmest congratulations to each of its graduates. Their accomplishments are our greatest pride, and their dreams our brightest source of inspiration.



*Denise (left) and Lupita are all smiles on their graduation day from Oxnard High School.*

### *Inside...*

- ◆ *Letter from the President of El Centrito's Board of Directors...*
- ◆ *Listing: El Centrito Board of Directors...*
- ◆ *Celebrating Success... page 2*
- ◆ *'Techie' Teens Leading the Way...*
- ◆ *Listing: El Centrito Staff... page 3*
- ◆ *Donors... page 4*
- ◆ *El Centrito Rocks! Free Concert Promotes Higher Education...*
- ◆ *Listing: El Centrito Programs... page 5*
- ◆ *¿Qué Pasa en El Centrito?*
- ◆ *Mission Statement... page 6*

# Letter From Peter Favero, President of El Centrito

## El Centrito's Board of Directors

President:  
**Peter T. Favero**  
(City National Bank)

Vice-President:  
**Laura D. Hernandez**  
(Ventura County Sheriff's Dept.)

Treasurer:  
**Juan Soto, CPA**  
(Soares, Sandall, Bernacchi & Petrovich)

Secretary  
**James D. Parriott**

**Members:**  
**Margie Borjon-Miller**  
(Superior Court, County of Ventura)

**Gabriella Navarro Busch, Esq.**  
(911 Notify)

**Helen Galindo**  
(Ventura College)

**Carolina Guillen**  
(RE/MAX Gold Coast Realtors)

**Chief Art Lopez**  
(Oxnard Police Department)

**Richard D. McNish**  
(Strathmore Paseo LLC)

**William Paterson, Esq.** (Ferguson, Case, Orr, Paterson & Cunningham)

**Paul Russell, MD,**  
(Ventura County Dept. of Public Health)

**Douglas F. Wax**  
(Industrial Parks Associates)

It is our pleasure to once again send you this latest edition of *El Sol* detailing the events and achievements of the past year. We place a high value on accountability to the community as well as to our donors. This newsletter serves as our most important means of communicating our progress, creating an awareness of changing needs, and sharing the stories that have touched us.

The work of El Centrito is the work of the future. In preparing Latino youth to take their place in the world full of confidence and hope, we must also take care to inspire them with our own positive example and imbue them with a heritage that must be preserved in their family, career and community lives. It is with great pride that El Centrito recognizes its graduates from the Class of 2001. They inspire us with

their many accomplishments and dreams.

As we quickly approach a milestone decade of service in Oxnard, El Centrito looks back with gratitude to those of you who have generously supported us throughout the years. The board and staff are dedicated to honoring this rich legacy by working to create the premier youth agency in this community. In other words, stay with us. . .the best is yet to come!

Con cariño,  
Peter T. Favero, Board President



## Celebrating Success

### El Centrito Prepares for 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

In February, 2002 El Centrito De La Colonia will celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of presence and service in the Colonia community.

Sometimes it's difficult to recall how the thriving and multifaceted agency of today was once a tiny, but big hearted, part-time one-room drop-in center. Though its services have evolved to meet changing needs, El Centrito's commitment to educational enrichment programs remains true to its beginnings.

We will be commemorating this significant achievement with special events and publications throughout the year. We will

be celebrating our anniversary with a **COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE** to be held in February at El Centrito's headquarters (the old Oxnard High School/PAL site.)

Please save the date for our annual fundraiser, **FIESTA CENTRITO**, to be held on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2001 at the Olivas Adobe in Ventura. Corporate sponsorship opportunities will be available for this fun and casual event featuring an Early California theme and barbeque feast. We welcome all of

our friends and supporters to these events and will keep you posted regarding further developments. 



# ‘Techie’ Teens

## Participants Use Technology to Build A Better Community

As part of its three year U. S. Department of Education Community Technology Center Network (CTCnet) grant, El Centrito has successfully completed its first year “Techie Project” with 18 participating teens. Designed to reach high school and community college students, the Techie Project is a five-month curriculum of technology training and applied learning. Participants attend weekly progress sessions where they receive technical assistance in graphic design, internet research and computer-assisted presentations. They also receive peer support while learning project management and team building skills. Throughout the program, teens select and work on three “Techie Projects” that must combine technology with community service. Upon the completion of all three projects, program graduates receive a \$300 scholarship.

As with all of El Centrito’s programs, the ultimate goal of the Techie Project is provide Latino teens with necessary career and technology skills, while developing an awareness of personal responsibility for bettering the community. “The projects are meant to be created and used for service. We don’t want to see them sitting on a shelf once the project is completed,” says Daniela Ramirez, Community Technology Coordinator.

Working as a team, Denise and Eliza conducted extensive research on the internet to learn about Chicana writers for one of their Techie projects. For the community service component of the project they designed a booth at the Educate Raza concert where they displayed graphic arts presentations of their findings, and handed out bibliography and resource materials to interested students. “This project opened me up to new experiences,” shares Denise. “I realize that I have




Ana, a techie (left), helped organize a Chicana Writers booth for Educate Raza Day. Ana is shown here setting up the booth with staff member Sandra Martinez.

more options and that I can affect people in a profound way.”

Other Techie projects included an informational graphic design display documenting the treatment of women in Afghanistan, a resource bank for internet research, flyers and informational print materials for various community events, and a Power Point presentation about the Youth Group to be used for community outreach and publicity purposes.

“After our first year, we see where the program can be strengthened,” says Luann Rocha, Executive Director. “Our second year goals will involve greater outreach to increase the number of participants, expanded technical support capacity, and a team building focus requiring teens to work in groups on one or more of their projects.”

As the Techie Project begins its second year, there is great anticipation about the new projects yet to be imagined. With technical confidence, creativity and a heart for the community, the opportunities for these talented young people are limitless. Bill Gates, watch out! 

### El Centrito Staff

Luann Rocha,  
Executive Director

Terry Spehar-Fahey,  
Deputy Director-  
Controller

Lizeth Barretto,  
Program Manager

Nancie Cirillo  
Lucia García  
Juan Hernandez  
Anacelia Madrigal

Robert Magaña  
Sandra Martinez  
Imelda Morales

Sandra Morales  
Cenobia Orduña  
Ana Perez

Daniela Ramirez  
Hugo Tapia  
Poi Tofiga



# El Centrito De La Colonia Donors

July 2000 through June 2001



United Way  
Member Agency

## Foundations and Grants

City of Oxnard  
Martin & Martha Smith Foundation  
Oxnard Elementary School District  
Oxnard Housing Authority  
Reiter Bros.  
Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange  
Target Stores  
The GAP  
Times Mirror Foundation  
United Way of Ventura County  
U.S. Department of Education  
Ventura County Children & Families  
First Commission  
Ventura County Community  
Foundation (VCCF)  
VCCF - Destino 2000  
VCCF-SUN Fund  
Ventura County Human Services  
Department, Cal Works Program  
Ventura County Probation  
Department  
Weingart Foundation  
Wood-Claeyssens Foundation

## Benefactores \$1,000 - and up

Anonymous  
Blue Cross of California  
Malinda Chouinard  
Cosmetic Specialties, Inc.  
Peter & Beth Favero  
Harry & Mary Glass  
Harry Ross Industries  
Jose Martinez  
James & Mary Parriott  
Shirley Spehar  
St. John's Regional Medical Ctr.

## Angeles \$500 - \$999

Barber Ford  
Hank & Ellen Brokaw  
Casual Living Worldwide  
Chicago Title Company  
City National Bank  
Ken & Doris Collin  
Ferguson, Case, Orr, Paterson &  
Cunningham LLP  
Mary Helen Galindo  
Gluck Development Company  
Harbor Freight Tools USA, Inc.  
Industrial Park Associates  
Richard McNish  
Mission Produce Inc.  
William & Colleen Paterson  
Promotion Associates, Inc.  
Paul & Kate Russell  
Maricela Santana  
Soroptimist of Oxnard

## Padrinos \$250 - \$499

Boskovich Farms, Inc.  
Javier & Nancy Castro  
Miguel & Leticia Cervantes  
Claudia Dorrington  
Priscilla Herrera  
Omaha Woodmen Lodge  
Pablo Miguel Parker  
Procter & Gamble Co.  
Carol Ramsey  
James & Genevieve Santo

Tony & Terry Spehar-Fahey

## Compadres \$100 - \$249

American Commercial Bank  
Austin Reiley and Doud Insurance  
Services, Inc.  
Bank of America, Hueneme Branch  
Paul & Barbara Becker  
Carniceria La Purica  
Kym & Hugo Citera  
Jorge & Myrna Cueto  
Lucille Diener-Dougan  
William Everhart  
Kenneth Finger  
John Flynn  
Maria Gonzalez  
Salvador Gonzalez  
Ray & Carolina Guillen  
Cecil & Pat Hoffman, Jr.  
James A Reardon Mortuary  
Law Offices of Joseph John Beltran  
Lawyers Title Company  
Lexus of Oxnard  
Teresa & Claude Madden  
Martinez Amador Architects, Inc.  
Martinez Architects  
Maulhardt Industrial Center  
R. McPherson  
Mildred Murray-Ward  
The Performance Group  
Lyle & Barbara Price  
Rescue Mission Alliance  
Fred & Gail Rosenmund  
Patty Ruiz  
H.C. Solis  
Juan & Araceli Soto  
Allan & Berta Steele  
Carlos Tamayo  
Jerry Wells  
West Coast Business Consultants  
Yolanda's

## Companeros \$50 - \$99

Asahi Company  
Albert Aubin  
Dom & Elaine Castanoli  
Chase Bros.  
Adriana Cruz  
James Diego  
Carol & John Dunbar  
Cynthia Eckert  
Veronica Gomez  
Ms. Herrera  
L. Leanos  
Jonathan Fraser Light  
Imelda Morales  
Robert Mullaney  
Hal Nelson  
Noel Osheroff  
D. W. Partridge  
Shirley Reynolds  
Alfonso Salinas  
Tita Sanchez  
Catherine Sever  
Ms. Kelly Kester Smith  
Beverly & Richard Testwuide

## Amigos \$1 - \$49

Elaine & Armando Aguilar  
Susan Alvarez

Hortencia Ambriz  
Olga Angel  
Aztec Travel Service  
Diana Barajas  
Bob Braitman  
Tony Castro  
GA Castro-Bejar  
Ignacio Cota  
Evita's Restaurant  
Betty & D.P. Frelinger  
Angel Gutierrez  
Cheryl Hamilton  
Amelia Honea  
Shelly R. Johnson  
Maciek Kolodziejczak  
LPL Financial Services  
Joe & Maria Luna  
Regina Lundgren  
Eileen McCarthy  
Joseph O'Neill, Jr.  
D.W. Partridge  
Yolanda & Clifford Rodrigues  
Carmen Rodriguez  
Diane & William Sabol  
Santana Psychotherapy, Inc.  
Harry Silberman  
Studio 226  
J.O. Torres  
Jackson Wheeler

## Donors of Goods & Services

Adelphia Cable  
Air Hollywood  
Herbert J. Aquino  
Aspen Helicopters  
Deborah Barnes  
Beach Hut  
Birch Aquarium  
Penny Bohannon  
Margie Borjon-Miller  
Gabby Busch  
Busch Ranch  
Cabo Seafood Grill and Cantina  
Café on A  
California State University Northridge  
at Channel Islands  
Capistrano's Restaurant  
Captain Hook's Sportfishing  
Channel Island Aviation  
Children's Museum of San Diego  
Cisco Sportfishing  
Asst. Chief Crombach  
CSI Cast  
Ding Masters  
Disneyland  
Dominick's Italian Restaurant  
Richard & Dolores Duarte  
Embassy Suites Hotel  
ERG International  
Ericsson's at the Pier  
Flamingo Laughlin  
Maria Flores  
GAP Stores, Inc.  
Gateway Country  
Jerry Garcia  
Giessinger Winery  
Cesar Guerra  
GW Surface  
Harrah's Laughlin Casino/Hotel  
Laura Hernandez

Jane Hespenheide  
Holiday Inn, Santa Barbara  
Howard's Carpet One  
Industrial Park Associates  
Island Packers  
Juro Cho Sushi  
K&R Tools  
Kennedy's Photography  
L.A. Sparks  
Jonathan Fraser Light  
Griselle Little  
Lobster Trap Restaurant  
Chief Art Lopez  
Marie Callenders  
Maritime Museum of San Diego  
Josanne McGibbon  
Jeff Miller  
Bob & Diane Miner  
Xavier Raul Montes  
Moses Mora  
Norman, Cormany, Hair and  
Compton  
Olive Garden  
Outback Steak House  
Oxnard Elementary School District  
Oxnard Firefighters Assoc.  
Oxnard Skating Center  
Pacific Corinthian Yacht Club  
Palisades Interiors  
Sara Parriott  
Patagonia  
Pirates' Grub N Grog  
Port Hueneme Fire Department  
Renee Posin  
Lyle & Barbara Price  
Barbara Price  
Red Lobster  
Redz Salon  
Restaurant Skadi  
Chuy Rocha  
Rubicon Theatre  
Diane & Bill Sabol  
Salon Panache  
Salty Dog Gift Emporium  
Salzers  
Sam's Club  
Tony Sanchez  
Santa Barbara Light Opera Assoc.  
Santa Barbara Zoological Gardens  
Marciela Santana  
Sea Fresh Restaurant  
Terry Spehar-Fahey  
Studio Gallery  
Martin Sturman  
TGIF  
The Oaks at Ojai  
Trader Joe's  
Universal Studios Hollywood  
Jose Velasco  
Ventura County Maritime Museum  
Doug & Arja Wax  
Whale's Tale Seafood Restaurant  
Wickes Furniture  
Phil & Sue Woolf  
Walt & Judy Wosicki

# El Centrito Rocks!

## Free Concert Promotes Higher Education

El Centrito's Youth Leadership Group once again rallied its members to serve their community in an innovative and popular way. *Educate Raza, 2001!* brought college recruiters together with local rock bands to promote the value of higher education. Made possible by a grant from the Ventura County Community Foundation's Destino 2000 Hispanic Legacy Fund, the free concert was held on Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup>, at La Colonia Memorial Park.

"Many youth from the Oxnard think of attending college as something they could never do, either because of their grades or because of the expense," shares Lizeth Barretto, Program Manager. "We knew it was important to provide a teen-friendly venue to share information and promote our message of college attendance."

Aztlán Underground, a Los Angeles Hip Hop/rock band headlined the event, with other performances by Leche Cruda, 5mentario, and Behind the Commodores. *Educate Raza, 2001!* also featured indigenous dance, poetry, and theater by Danza Nahui Ollin, Luzma Espinoza and Chicano Secret Service respectively. An array of informational booths were set up around the park where college recruiters distributed materials and answered questions. Participating colleges and universities included University of California at Santa Barbara, University of California at San Diego, California State University Channel Islands, California State University Northridge, California State University Dominguez Hills, California Lutheran University, Mount St. Mary's College, Oxnard College and Ventura College.


Members of the Youth Leadership Group were involved in every step of planning the event from lining up acts to concert promo-



Mark, a Youth Group Leadership member, celebrates the group's success with two friends at the *Educate Raza Concert*.

tion. "Helping to plan this event has given us the opportunity to meet new people and to help bring a positive message of education for other youth of La Colonia," says Mark, Youth Leadership Group member. The mission of the group is to use developing leadership skills to provide community service. Other service projects have included assisting with the organization of the annual Toys For Tots drive and participation in various civic conferences.

*Educate Raza, 2001!* presented an ideal opportunity to recognize artist Judy Suzuki for her efforts in creating El Centrito's latest mural, "Historical Images of La Colonia," which is located in Colonia Park. Judy designed the mural after youth and staff spent many hours interviewing residents to determine the images and events that most impacted the community.

El Centrito's Youth Group members are all encouraged and assisted in their efforts to complete high school and attend college. The concert provided an opportunity for others to meet recruiters and learn more about future opportunities. "The concert was awesome!" says Teresa, "Going to college is just necessary for me to succeed." Her enthusiasm is music to our ears. 

### El Centrito Programs

- ◆ *Chavez After-School Program*
- ◆ *Downtown Computer Technology Center*
- ◆ *La Colonia Computer Technology Center*
- ◆ *School Readiness Program*
- ◆ *Youth and Family Programs*



**El Centrito De La Colonia**  
 P. O. Box 1613  
 Oxnard, CA 93032-1613

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
 U. S. POSTAGE  
 PAID  
 OXNARD, CA  
 PERMIT #2269

Return Service Requested

## ¿Qué Pasa En El Centrito?

◆ **Chicana author and Oxnard native**

**Michelle Serros** traveled from New York to read from her latest novel, “How To Be A Chicana Role Model.” Co-hosting with the Oxnard Public Library, El Centrito’s Youth group promoted the event, sold books at the reading and introduced the author.

◆ **Volunteering for her son’s School Readiness class**, Maria developed a keen interest in the



Young students in the School Readiness Program enjoy themselves in the dramatic play area. Clockwise from left, they are: Estefania, Joseph, Eduardo, Christian, Harold and Ruben.

development of young children. Taking her interest to the next level, she enrolled at Oxnard College where she has already completed six units qualifying her to work as an early childhood education assistant. By the end of the year she will have completed enough units to independently teach her own classroom. *Best of luck, Maria!*

◆ **It’s not just for kids anymore.** El Centrito now offers an Evening Computer course for adults. Taught in Spanish at both the Colonia and Downtown labs, these classes were initiated at the request of neighborhood residents.

◆ **El Centrito was pleased to learn** that three graduates of Group #5 of the School Readiness Program have been accepted into G.A.T.E. (Gifted and Talented Program) Congratulations to Group #5!

◆ **Waving enthusiastically to the crowd**, participants of the Chavez After-School program rode on the Food Share float in the Ventura County Fair parade. El Centrito’s After-School program receives daily snacks from the Kids Café Program sponsored by Food Share.

◆ **Come and visit El Centrito** on the web at [www.elcentrito.org](http://www.elcentrito.org). 

### Our Mission

*The mission of El Centrito De La Colonia is to prepare youth of Oxnard to meet the future, confident in their bicultural heritage, able to utilize educational and career opportunities, and ready to be productive members of the community. We accomplish this mission through directed educational, recreational, cultural, and counseling programs for our youth and their families.*