

*Serving the Twin Cities since 1987, La Oportunidad's mission is to champion the development of Latino individuals and families to create a strong, peaceful community. Our ultimate goal is to close the achievement gap and to break the cycle of poverty and violence.*

## El Camino Children's Program

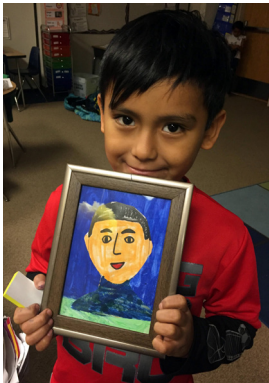


This summer, La Oportunidad participated in the summer program Camp Andersen in collaboration with Andersen Community School. One weekly group was designated for the El Camino Program Coordinator of La Oportunidad. The summer class, which was carried out in Minneapolis, took two hours every Monday for six weeks. Ten students enrolled in our group and learned six themes during the program: All About Me, Nature, Sports, Around the World, Outer Space and Fiesta. The kids had a wonderful experience learning through the fun activities, games, and arts & crafts.

The first week of the program focused on self-esteem. The kids drew pictures of themselves and read the book *What I Like About Me*. During the second week, the students learned about nature and built a habitat. They painted small rocks in animal forms and decorated them with plastic flowers and plants. The kids also learned about the importance of protect-

ing the environment, and shared their experiences connecting with nature. The third week, the kids talked together about their favorites sports, and worked on self-portraits. They drew themselves playing a sport and decorated the frame with sports stickers. The next class, the students shared their knowledge about outer space and painted a rocket. Finally, the kids celebrated the last day of the class by designing a piñata. The kids used paper bags, tissue paper, candies, and small gifts to create the piñata. We had a group conversation about family celebrations in different cultures, and they shared their own experience and learned the meaning of the piñata in Latinx culture.

Overall, the summer class has been a positive experience for students who learned different topics for six weeks through arts & crafts and fun activities. We want to thank the school staff for continuing the collaboration and making the program a great success!





# Latinx Youth Leadership Conference

On May 3, 2019, 264 youth representing 23 schools gathered at Augsburg University for La Oportunidad's 19th annual Latinx Youth Leadership Conference. Environmental Justice and Sustainability was the theme selected by the Youth Planning Committee. The Committee titled the 2019 Conference, "Tierra Mia." The Committee's President Alan Galarza emphasized the reason for the theme was because "the world is changing, and many of those changes are not good. We're seeing rapid climate change. Many of these new changes are having an impact on our lives whether we see it or not."

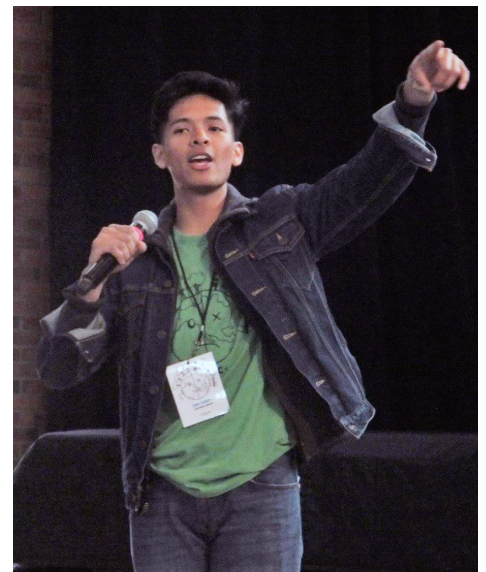
"We hope to cultivate new ideas and new understandings of how youth see the world, and what it means to them," Galarza continued. "We hope they took advantage of this opportunity and that they go on to raise awareness in their community!"

The event's highlights were a powerful message from local keynote speakers Adrian Diaz and Erik Garcia, as well as 12 energetic and interactive workshop breakout sessions led by local Latino leaders. Workshops covered all aspects of environmental justice and sustainability: agriculture, health,

politics and inequality, technology, art and culture, history, renewable energy, education, and resource consumption. Topics ranged from understanding how Latinxs and other minorities are disproportionately affected by climate change and contamination to the importance of finding ways to reduce waste. Performances by the Bailadores Alegres and Grupo Inti Samay livened the overall environment.

87% of youth participants expressed an increase in cultural pride, 80% expressed an increased sense of and capacity for leadership, and 86% expressed an increase in skills, knowledge and/or positive attitudes in at least one of the following areas: self, relationships, education, and/or community. 100% of school chaperones mentioned they were happy with the event. Many youth specifically mentioned that one of their favorite parts of the Conference was not only learning about new things, but learning them from Latinx professionals in their community who have so much pride for their cultural background.

The success of this day-long event was a result of a labor of love from the 20 members of the Youth Plan-



ning Committee. This year's theme was something many youth planning members had never discussed or learned about. For this reason, mentors facilitated interactive activities to teach youth members about the complexities of the theme and the way it has an impact on all aspects of society. The planning committee, made up of high school Latinx youth leaders and mentors, met for two hours every Thursday over an 8-month period to plan all aspects of the conference: theme, presenters, keynote speaker, conference design logo, performance groups, and even the food served.

In addition to the mentors, huge support came from our sponsors: Augsburg University, Youthprise, East Minneapolis Exchange Club, McDonalds, Blick Art Studio, and Mall of America. The Conference would not be possible without the support and passion of the many groups who contributed.





# Padres Parenting Program

The Padres Parenting Program provides positive parenting education and support services for Latino adults. Parents attend weekly group meetings to receive positive parenting training and support in addressing family issues. Groups are offered in Spanish at La Oportunidad's office and various local schools. The Padres Parenting Program also offers special curriculum and services for Latino parents referred by Child Protection Units.

This year, the Padres Parenting Program continued its collaboration with the nutrition program of the University of Minnesota at Andersen United Community School. Through this collaboration, Community Nutrition Educator Alma Galvez educated the parents about the importance of eating healthy food and healthy nutrition for the whole family. The parents also learned tips for good health and healthy physical activity.

This year, in collaboration with Andersen United Community School, we offered an Immigration Workshop that was presented by Meg Hennessy, Staff Attorney with the Immigration Law Project Mid MN Legal Assistance. The workshop presented information about the rights that immigrants have, the different immigration statuses, how to look for help, and how to find adequate legal advice.

The Padres Program in Andersen offers a wide range of information to parents and the tools to help them in the parenting

and education of their children. Some of the topics that we have explored include communication, discipline, safety, decision making, prevention of child abuse, and more.

The Padres Parenting Program also had the opportunity to offer a presentation on domestic violence prevention to a group of Latino parents in Urban Ventures in Minneapolis.

## A Padres Success Story

Jose is a 40 year old client and the father of one child. He began the group this year and he was mandated by the court to complete the Padres Program. In the beginning, Jose's attitude in the group was quite negative. However, with time, attention, and dedication, he became more responsible and positive. Jose successfully completed the 12 group sessions and even helped new group members to understand and reflect on their own actions. Jose is starting to see his child at home now without supervision.





## **Benefiting the Entire Family and Community!**

La Oportunidad's diverse programming helps Latinos of all ages achieve success. Latino children and youth are provided culturally enriched education that promotes positive attitudes and fundamental life skills. Teens and young adults develop leadership skills, explore cultural identity and plan for education and future careers. Programs for Latino parents deliver positive techniques to enhance parenting skills, maintain a stable home life and support their children's education. Other programs for Latino adults offer assistance in domestic abuse intervention and prevention. Specific programs include:

**El Camino Children's Program**

**Young Professionals**

**Latinx Youth Leadership Program**

**Latinx Youth Leadership - Mentorship Academy & Conference**

**Latino Power Youth Summer Program**

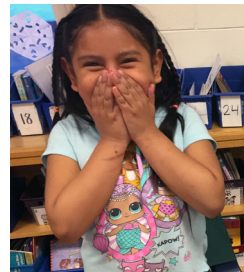
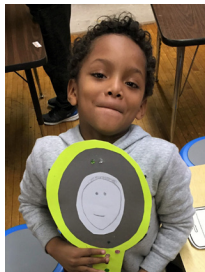
**Latinos Ending Abuse Program**

**Padres Parenting Program**



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