

## La juventud está a cargo de marcar la diferencia

Por Donica Mensing

La Conferencia para Incentivar a la Comunidad llevada a cabo el 30 de Mayo cumplió su objetivo, inspirando a la juventud de Tahoe Norte y Truckee a organizarse para marcar una diferencia en sus comunidades.

Como resultado de la conferencia, la juventud local está escribiendo reglamentos sobre el graffiti, investigando como crear un Club de Niños y Niñas en Truckee y abordando problemas de transporte y falta de apoyo para la juventud.

Los participantes a la conferencia incluyeron aproximadamente 70 jóvenes, mayormente latinos de Tahoe Norte, Truckee, Reno, Sparks, Carson City y Virginia City.

Ellos fueron inspirados por el organizador Emilio Vaca, un activista local, recientemente nombrado director ejecutivo del Centro de Recursos para la Familia. Además de su propia energía y los esfuerzos de los patrocinadores Creciendo Unidos y Creando Alternativas, Vaca invitó a organizadores comunitarios nacionales.

La conferencia destacó a Dolores Huerta, cofundadora de la Unión de Trabajadores del Campo (United Farm Workers) conocida por su trabajo con César Chávez. Según vaca, Huerta se impresionó con el nivel de participación comunitaria evidente en la conferencia.

"Ella va a enviar a dos empleados de su organi-

zación a visitarnos, para aprender sobre la conferencia y lo que estamos logrando," dijo Vaca.

Vaca cree que la mejor manera para trabajar con los jóvenes es incentivarlos



Jóvenes participantes en la conferencia con Dolores Huerta (centro).

a confrontar sus propios problemas e involucrarlos en actividades positivas.

"Tuvinos éxito porque realmente nos enfocamos en dos preguntas," dijo Vaca. "¿Cuáles son los problemas y qué podemos hacer al respecto?"

Los jóvenes en la conferencia crearon un plan de acción que les permitirá hacerse cargo de sus propios problemas. Trabajando unidos, los participantes identificaron los cuatro problemas claves:

- Transporte
- Graffiti
- Actividades extra escolares
- Apoyo para los jóvenes en general

Vaca continuamente enfatizó que confrontar estos problemas incluye compromiso y trabajo en equipo por parte del grupo; igual como se necesita un equipo para hacer tamales, se necesita colaboración para crear

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## Youth take charge to make a difference

By Donica Mensing

The Community Empowerment Conference held in Kings Beach on May 30 lived up to its name, inspiring young people in

Workers who is known for her work with Cesar Chávez. According to Vaca, Huerta was extremely impressed with the level of community involvement evident at the conference.

"She is going to send two workers from her organization to visit us, to learn about the conference and what we are doing," Vaca said.

Vaca believes the best way to work with young people is to empower them to work on their own problems and to get them involved in positive activities.

"We were successful partly because we really focused on two questions," Vaca said. "What are the problems and what can we do about them?"

Kids at the conference produced an action plan to enable them to take charge of addressing their own issues. Working together, the participants identified four key problems they felt were most important:

- Transportation
- Graffiti
- Activities for kids outside of school
- Support for young people in general

Vaca continually stressed that addressing these problems would take commitment and team work from the group; just as it takes a team to make tamales, it takes collaboration to create change within a community. People don't make tamales alone, and people don't make change alone.

North Tahoe and Truckee to organize themselves to make a difference in their communities.

As a result of the conference, area youth are busy writing a graffiti ordinance, researching how to start a Boys and Girls Club in Truckee and addressing problems with transportation and lack of support for young people.

Participants in the conference included approximately 70 teenagers, mostly Latino, from North Tahoe, Truckee, Reno, Sparks, Carson City and Virginia City.

They were inspired by conference organizer Emilio Vaca, a local activist and newly appointed executive director of the North Tahoe Family Resource Center. Besides his own energy, and the efforts of sponsors Creciendo Unidos and Creating Alternativas, Vaca also brought in national community organizers.

The conference featured speaker Dolores Huerta, cofounder of the United Farm

Foto por David Escobar/Nuestro Tahoe

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