



Parent Engagement Award Recipients Announced!

Dr. Sylvia Rousseau

In 2015, the Children's Defense Fund-CA (CDF-CA) enlisted the support of Dr. Sylvia Rousseau in the development of a pilot initiative intended to support parents of current and future the Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools® program scholars. For over two years Dr. Rousseau has been the lead curriculum developer and advisor on the development and implementation of the CDF Freedom Schools Parent Engagement Institute (PEI) pilot. In addition to her strong commitment and invaluable support, CDF-CA relied on Dr. Sylvia Rousseau's rich expertise in delivering an invigorating, research-based and culturally-responsive curriculum. The asset-based curriculum which demonstrated effective in equipping low-income, immigrant and parents of color with tools to start as early as their child's infancy to create a mindset, expectation, and a home culture that makes it clear that college is available goal, thus helping to create a pathway to a college for their scholars. It is through the love, commitment and active participation of Dr. Sylvia Rousseau that CDF-CA and its partners, Read Lead and Success In Challenges, are able to serve parents in the Lynwood, Compton and Long Beach communities.

Dr. Rousseau is not only well respected by her peers but by the parents and community partners she aligns her work with. A fierce advocate, Dr. Rousseau empowers parents by providing them with the tools, tactics that can be used at home and school settings and that help parents see the power that they already hold. She reminds us all through her work that it is detrimental to our families when we forge language and literacy on children without acknowledging our very own diverse and cultural backgrounds and learnings. She reminds parents that culture can also be integrated into learning environments and that it starts at home.

Hugo Enciso

Mr. Hugo Enciso has tirelessly worked to improve and further parent engagement in the ABC Unified School District. He is an advocate for parent involvement in word and deed.

Mr. Enciso has been the Chairperson of the District English Learner Parent Advisory Committee (DELAC) and through his leadership and actions, parents are more informed and confident with providing meaningful input into the school and district plans that are developed. He

initiates meetings of the DELAC cabinet to gather and implement ideas, thereby increasing parent knowledge and involvement in order to improve their child's success in school.

An immigrant to the United States at the age of 4, and maintaining his bilingual and biliteracy skills, he is a proponent of the Seal of Biliteracy for students and encourages parents to use their heritage language at home. He organized DELAC cabinet members to attend various Back to School Nights throughout the District as representatives to connect with other English learner parents and encourage their involvement in the various organizations.

Mr. Enciso has inspired the work of the district by compelling them to increase access to flyers, brochures and workshops that provide resources for parents of English Language Learners. Mr. Enciso has served on non-profit boards and volunteered for several organization, and is a well-respected member of his community.

Perhaps the most compelling reason why Mr. Enciso is so effective is that he is also a committed father and husband. One sees the respect, admiration and love in the eyes of his family and hears honor in their words.

Hilda Avila

In 2015, Ms. Avila became involved in the Fries Elementary School Parent Center as a volunteer where parent involvement was minimal. As a volunteer, Ms. Avila became further involved, and joined several parent committees including ELAC, SSC, PTO, and others. Her goal was to encourage parents to feel like they were a part of a community and therefore she sought workshops and resources that benefited parents and students in the community. In her search for resources, Ms. Avila has become a workshop facilitator and supported outreach efforts for First 5, United Way Greater Los Angeles, I Heart Wilmington, Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors, and so many others. Furthermore, Ms. Avila was recognized by Assemblymember Mike Gipson for her perseverance in the school and community, as well as Councilmember Joe Buscaino as Volunteer of the Year. Her greatest satisfaction and recognition, however is to influence and support families.

Ms. Avila is regarded as an unstoppable parent coordinator volunteer. She is so dedicated to the engagement of families in schools that she attends meetings during her own time and brings new learning to Fries Elementary to share with other parents. She is credited with creating an abundant parent participation and plenty of resources at the school where she volunteered.