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Kentucky Migrant Education Program

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Recognizing and celebrating one of our own

By Michael S. Skuczas, Harrison County Recruiter/Advocate

On April 14, Harrison County Migrant Advocate Pavel Romero, was awarded Northern Kentucky University's first Latino Programs and Services Outstanding Alumni Award. Pavel is a summa cum laude graduate of NKU, where he earned his Bachelor of Liberal Arts with a minor in international studies. While at NKU, Romero was an instrumental committee member and organizer for:

- The Northern Kentucky 2005 Noche Latina Dance
- The Centro de Amistad and Cristo Rey Parish Kermesse Festival
- The NKU Latino Film Festival
- The NKU Latino Arts Festival
- The NKU 2006 Education for Success Workshop sponsored by the National Hispanic Association of MBA's (NSHMBA)
- The 2006 NSHMBA's National Convention and Exposition, for which he served as a college ambassador
- The Su Casa Hispanic Center Dinner Banquet
- The Centro the Amistad Noche de Otoño Awards Dinner
- The CincyCinco Festival

As a student, Romero distinguished himself as:

- Elected senator in NKU's student government, the first Latino student to be elected to the body.
- Member of the NKU Catholic Newman Club

Romero's contributions did not stop after graduation. He was recognized for spending most of 2010 in Washington, D.C. lobbying for the passage of the DREAM Act. Although the law did not pass, his contributions helped get the Deferred Actions for Childhood Arrivals program approved in 2012. Romero is such a familiar face at NKU that one could assume that he's an admissions officer. Romero has participated in almost every NKU Latino event, and during the Latino college fairs he is always accompanied by a large number of Latino high school students.

Romero's contributions have changed the lives of many.

Making dreams come true

By Rona Comley and Lili Sanchez, Madison County Migrant Education Program Advocates/Recruiters

The decision to leave Venezuela and come to the United States was not an easy one for Luis Chacon Olivar and his mother.

"My country's situation is not good these days. If you are not from a well-off family your life's goals and ambitions are limited. The United States is known as the country of opportunities," the teenager said. "I knew it was not going to be easy to come to a new world. It takes a lot of courage. But, I knew that I wanted a better future for myself and my mom."

Olivar and his mother, Luz, arrived in Lexington, in August 2015. The Fayette County Migrant Program enrolled Olivar as an Out-of-School Youth (OSY). He obtained work cutting and loading tobacco alongside his mother. The work was hard but provided for them. In January, the family moved from Fayette County to Madison County. The Madison County migrant recruiters qualified Olivar on continuation of eligibility. The Graduations and Outcomes for Success for OSY (GOSOSY) student profile was completed and discussed with Olivar. The profile targeted his interest in earning a diploma by May 2016.

Olivar enrolled in Madison Central High School as a senior. His counselor, Brenda Thompson, migrant advocate, Rona Comley, and others discussed the graduation plan. To graduate in five short months Olivar needed to take five credit recovery classes in addition to his regular classes. A monumental task but he was up for the challenge. Fortunately, Olivar had his transcript from Venezuela that was helpful in satisfying some graduation requirements.

From January to May migrant staff met with Olivar regularly to help reduce barriers and set benchmarks as graduation approached.

"The migrant program provided me with school supplies, an iPad and more. No one can imagine how hard it is until you live it. In addition to the new language, you face a different environment, different situations and different people," he said. "It is impossible to explain in words. It requires much effort and dedication to adapt to a new life. The migrant program's support and guidance encouraged me to not fail, but take advantage."

During Olivar's spring semester he maintained a 3.5 GPA, completed his credit recovery classes and attended a workshop by Keith Ritchie, of the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority. He met with Liliana Gomez, the Latino recruitment specialist at Eastern Kentucky University, to learn about applying to college. When he learned that he would not qualify for financial aid, Olivar spoke with migrant staff with some discouragement.

"I did not realize that graduating from high school and applying to college could be so hard," he told the staff. "My biggest dream is to become an electrical engineer."

Migrant staff and others continued to support and encourage Olivar. He scored a 21 composite on his first ACT, applied and was accepted into Bluegrass Community and Technical College in Lexington. He also applied for two migrant scholarships.

Olivar's discouragement faded away and was replaced with college dreams and goals. On May 21, Olivar graduated with distinction from Madison Central.

"With God's help, my mother's support and my dedication I will become an electrical engineer," he said. "This is the land of opportunity. The life you dream of is possible. The fight depends on you."

Pictures Used with Permission

Students learn about Olympics, host their own ceremony

By Emily Vinson, The Winchester Sun

The 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro were still weeks away, but this June students in the Clark County Migrant Education Summer Program held their own opening ceremony at Campbell Junior High School.

Students in the 2nd through 4th-grade classes learned about the Olympics, summer program's theme, in preparation for the ceremony.

"The students have been learning about the ancient and modern Olympics for two weeks," said Kim Daniels, special education teacher at Strode Station Elementary.

"We've been watching YouTube videos of past ceremonies, which they have really enjoyed and it's helped them learn quickly."

The students also learned the history of the Olympics and some of the rituals in the opening ceremony, such as the parade of nations and the torch relay.

Daniels, who worked with the 2nd-, 3rd- and 4th-graders, said she remembered doing similar activities in school.

"I learned all about the Olympics when I was in elementary school. I won the dash and I didn't know I was athletic," she said. "I hope some of the kids realize they are athletic too and expand their interests in middle school, maybe join the track team. It's all about building motivation."

The ceremony was put on for the other age groups as a way to kick off the last week of the four-week camp. The Olympic competitions took place during the final week. The students learned about Olympic-style gymnastics on a field trip to Thoroughbred Gymnastics.

"We have divided the kids into city-states, just like in ancient Greece, and had preliminary competitions," Daniels said. "Next week they are going to compete, which they are really excited about."

The 2016 summer program, which has students from preschool through 12th grade, focused on reading and social studies, with a little bit of fun mixed in, Daniels said.

"It's exciting to work with these kids to build their reading skills and get their test scores up," she said. "They're great kids."

David Torres, right, hands off the Olympic torch to Jonathan Estrada, left, during the torch relay.

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2016 KY Migrant Program Association Scholarship Recipients		
Applicant	District	Award Amount
Gustavo Cuevas	Metcalfe	$1,250
Kyra Brown	Mason	$1,000
Goretti Torres	Jessamine	$750
Daisi Huerta	Clark	$500
Arely Gutierrez	Mason	$500
Dinorah Rivera	Fayette	$500
Brian Sandoval	Glasgow Independent	$250
Luis Chacon Olivar	Madison	$250
Pablo Plancarte	Adair	$250
Daniel Ramirez	Russellville Independent	$250
	Total	**$5,500**
2016 KY Migrant Scholarship Fund Foundation for the Tri-State Community		
Applicant	District	Award Amount
Pablo Plancarte	Adair	$1,000

Highlights from local MEP monitoring in 2016

By Heather Rhorer, State Director

Several districts were monitored by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), ESCORT, regional and local Migrant Education Program (MEP) staff members this spring.

Here are some promising practices staff observed:

Graves County: The Migrant Education Program staff are well known throughout Graves County by school staff, community members, MEP families and farmers. The staff are known for being accessible at all times and are invaluable to the farmers. One local tobacco farmer wrote a letter to the program praising the work of staff member Eva Rodriguez and Maria Cruz.

The letter reads in part:

> This program has been a huge asset to our business for several years now. Your employees are extremely helpful in so many ways. Your employees come to my farm to help with translations and hands on training. This service is invaluable to our operation.
>
> Probably the thing I appreciate most, is that I can contact at least one of them, by phone at any given time. Sometime an issue arises that Must be handled Now. Between the two of them, they seem to always be available. Morning, noon, or night. The girls come out on a regular basis to provide an education class. They arrange this with my men, on their time, where it does not interfere with our work.
>
> I really appreciate that they ask for my input. I am allowed to request lessons, which directly relate to our daily work. My men look forward to their visits.
>
> Over the years I consider this program to be a huge asset to my business. They contribute to friendships and general good camaraderie on my farm on a daily basis.

For tips on building relationships with farmers or providing farm or tobacco specific training to workers please contact the Graves County MEP staff, Eva.Rodriguez@graves.kyschools.us

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or Maria.Cruz@graves.kyschools.us.

Todd County: The local Migrant Edcucation Program staff partners with a church and Adult Education to provide a family literacy night every Wednesday.

Adult Education provides GED classes before the event and English as Second Language for adults, including high school students, Out-of-School Youth (OSY) and parents, during the event. Students are able to participate in the church's children's activities while the adults learn English. After the classes, the families usually come together to prepare a healthy meal with the assistance of the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Office. For more information regarding Todd County's Family Literacy Night contact Laura Voth at Laura.Voth@todd.kyschools.us.

Caldwell and Trigg counties: Here a member of the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Office travels with Migrant Education Program staff member Rachel Bloodworth- to the homes and bunkhouses of Out-of-School Youths (OSY) for lessons. The duo offer cooking and nutrition lessons to the OSYs in the evenings. This is a great way to make learning fun, get the youth involved with community partners and build rapport with the youth and farmers.

For more information regarding partnering with the Extension Office to provide services please contact the Caldwell/Trigg MEP at Rachel.bloodworth@caldwell.kyschools.us.

The Certificate of Eligibility in review

By Christina Benassi, State ID&R Coordinator

For the past few months, our Certificate of Eligibility (COE) errors have drastically decreased. Although we always have some, everyone has done an outstanding job making sure everything is in compliance before it comes to the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE). There are a few areas that I would like to remind staff about.

First, think about the words that you are using and how they can be used to describe the actions. For example, "packing peaches," could be work on a farm or in a processing plant. Those are two different actions because one is seasonal and does not require a time frame, while the other is temporary and requires a time frame. In those situations be sure to add a comment stating where the worker is packing peaches and how it relates to either seasonal or temporary employment.

Another time to be particularly careful is when there is a "to join" move. Properly documenting these moves can be difficult. We must remember that in order for these moves to qualify, one of the purposes of the children moving is to enable the worker to obtain qualifying work. Typically this occurs within 12 months; in instances when the move occurs after 12 months there needs to be a comment stating why it took longer. The regional office and/or KDE will determine if additional information is needed. When in doubt ask. Heather Rhorer, state director, and I are here to help you in any way possible.

For the first time in Kentucky, we have students that qualify with "fishing work" instead of "agriculture". There is a processing plant in Jefferson County and the regional recruiters, Pedro Santiago and Robert Bell, have both recruited families that qualify. Always be on the lookout for "fishing" work, even fish processing.

ESSA updates

By Heather Rhorer, State Director

Many of you attended the National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education (NASDME) conference in San Diego, Calif. this spring where you heard from national leaders regarding the new Every Student Succeeds Act. You may also be receiving updates from your local education agencies, the news and the KDE website. There have been several changes in the new federal law and it will have a lasting effect on the Migrant Education Program. For the 2016-17 school year we are operating as we have in the past; most changes take effect July 1, 2017. However there are a few things that we would like to make you aware of:

- There is no new guidance yet.
- Some eligibility criteria will change.
- The Certificate of Eligibility will change.
- Allocations will change.

You will learn more about these changes during the closing session of the 2016-17 Kentucky Migrant Education Program Fall Academy Kentucky which will be held Sept. 13-15 at the Embassy Suites Downtown in Louisville.

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Kentucky Migrant Education Program Fall Academy schedule at a glance

Tuesday, September 13, 2016	
7:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Registration
8:30 – 11:30 a.m.	**New Recruiter Training:** Required for all recruiters with two years or less experience. *Attendance in this session involves the following staff: recruiters with two years or less experience in migrant education and regional service center recruiters.* *EILA Credit awarded for this session.*
	Administrator Training: Required for all district administrators or their designee. Administrators with two years or less experience with migrant education should attend at 8:30 a.m. All other administrators (three years or more experience with migrant education) may arrive at 9:30 a.m. Attendance to this session involves the following staff: district migrant program administrators (or regionally approved designee) and regional center directors. EILA Credit awarded for this session.
8:30 – 10 a.m.	**Preschool Workshop**
10:15 – 11:30 a.m	**MSIX Presentation**
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.	**LUNCH (on your own)**
1 – 2:30 p.m.	**Opening General Session** *Welcome / Academy Overview*
2:30 – 2:45 p.m.	**Break**
2:45 – 4 p.m.	**Breakout Session 1**

Wednesday, September 14, 2016	
7:30 – 8:15 a.m.	**Registration**
8:15 – 9:30 a.m.	**SDP Rotation 1**
9:30 – 9:45 a.m.	**Break & Visit Auction**

Thursday, September 15, 2016	
7:30 – 8 a.m.	**Registration**
8 – 9 a.m.	**Breakout Session 3**
9 – 9:15 a.m.	**Break & Visit Vendors**
9:15 – 10:15 a.m.	**Breakout Session 4**
10:15 – 10:45 a.m.	**Break & Visit Vendors**
10:45 – 11:45 a.m.	**Breakout Session 5**
Noon– 1:15 p.m.	**LUNCH (provided)** *Migrant Education Staff Awards* *Migrant Students Share Their Stories*
1:15 – 1:30 p.m.	**Break & Visit Vendors**
1:30 – 2:45 p.m.	**Competitive Learning Activity**
2:45 – 3 p.m.	**Break & Visit Vendors**

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Kentucky Migrant Education Program Fall Academy schedule at a glance

Friday, September 16, 2016	
9:45 – 11 a.m.	**SDP Rotation 2**
11 – 11:15 a.m.	**Break & Visit Auction**
11:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	**SDP Rotation 3**
12:30 – 1:45 p.m.	**LUNCH (on your own)**
1:45 – 3p.m.	**SDP Rotation 4**
3 – 3:30 p.m.	**Break, Networking & Visit Auction**
3:30 – 4:30 p.m.	**Breakout Session 2**
4:30 – 5 p.m.	**AUCTION (pick up items)**
3– 4p.m.	**Closing General Session** *Federal Update* *KDE Closing Remarks & ESSA Update*
4 – 4:15 p.m.	**Pick up materials in regional groups**

Russell D. Weatherwax Kentucky Migrant Scholarship Auction

By Michael Hay, Southern Regional Coordinator

You can help raise money to send migrant students to college by donating to and participating in a scholarship auction Sept. 14 during the Kentucky Migrant Education Program Fall Academy Sept. 13-15 in Louisville.

The auction, named for Russell D. Weatherwax, a long-time educator and administrator with the Kentucky Migrant Education Program, funded $6,500 in scholarships to 10 migrant students who will attend colleges and universities across the state this fall.

In 2000, Weatherwax, and several other dedicated migrant educators created a scholarship fund to help Kentucky's migrant children attend college. They decided to fund the scholarship by holding a silent auction.

The auction was successful and the first two scholarships were awarded in 2001. The auction's success was credited to Weatherwax's system of tagging items, creating bid sheets and making sure the financial records were accounted and processed. After Weatherwax retired, he returned to the Migrant Academy help run the auction.

Weatherwax passed away in 2011, just months before the auction. That year the auction was named the Russell D. Weatherwax Kentucky Migrant Scholarship Auction.

We hope to continue this effort for years to come and we will always honor his memory and the dedication and support he had for our Kentucky migrant children. To do that, we need your help and participation.

It will be lots of fun to help our kids attend postsecondary programs. Think about what you can donated to the auction or ask a bank, florist, furniture store or other local business to provide donations for this worthy project.

A few examples of good auction items include: arts and crafts (could be holiday season), prints/paintings, jewelry, furniture/lamps, floral arrangements, sports memorabilia, event tickets, hotel/vacation packages and gift certificates.

The sky is the limit. Monetary donations are also accepted and gladly appreciated.

Pull your office, school and district staff together, solicit your family and friends and make this the biggest scholarship auction in our history. Watch your email for more detailed info as we get closer to the Fall Academy. If you have questions, please email michael.hay@eku.edu.

Upcoming Dates:

Sept. 1: Begin verification signatures

Sept. 13-15: Fall Academy Louisville

Oct. 15: State Parent Advisory Council, location to be determined

Oct. 18-20: ID&R conference San Antonio, Texas

Nov. 8: Election Day

Nov. 14-18: Western/Central Blitz/Sweep

Dec. 5: Verifications due to regional office