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Five Year Master Plan planned by San Bernardino City School District’s English Learners Support Programs Department

ELSPD Task Force met on January 24 for planning orientation

The San Bernardino City Unified School District’s English Learners/Support Programs Department (ELSPD) has embarked on an ambitious developmental process to update its support programs into a Five Year Master Plan.

ELSPD organized a task force, consisting of district personnel, principals, teachers, board members and parents, which met on January 24th, for orientation. The schedule for termination of the planning process is October, 1997.

Delfina Bryant, ELSPD Director and task force chairperson, stated, “The programs under our jurisdiction are important components to the district and valuable learning tools to the students. We must put forth every effort to review the issues relating to the direction the district will be going, in terms of its master plan.”

Dr. Neal Roberts, District Superintendent, addressed task force members stating that he strongly supports their (task force) involvement and effort. Roberts further emphasized the importance of accountability by educators for the achievement of students. He added that the school board was fully supportive of the task force’s efforts and appreciated their dedication.

Leslie Pulliam, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, stressed the relationship of programs with district’s goals and objectives.

The programs under the administration of the ELSPD are:

- Gifted
- Bilingual Education
- Instructional Support
- English Language Development
- Credit

Continued on page 6

Licenciado Raul C. Heraldez named to Mexican Consul’s Office in San Bernardino

The United States of Mexico-Secretary of Foreign Affairs has appointed Licenciado Raul Cardenas Heraldez to the Mexican Consul’s Office located in the City of San Bernardino.

Heraldez, 53, is a 31 year career diplomat in the foreign Service and has served throughout South America and United States.

He began his career in 1966 in the Consul-General Office in Los Angeles, serving as administrative assistant. In 1972, Heraldez was transferred to the Consulate’s Office in Phoenix, Arizona, serving in the same position. In 1976, he served as District Director for Foreign Relations in Guadalajara, Mexico and in 1981, with the identical title in Torreon, Coahuila.

He spent five years in Lima, Peru in charge of Consular Affairs. Since 1989, he has served as consul in San Jose, California and Laredo, Texas, until his recent local appointment.

Heraldez received his primary education in Guamuchil, Sinaloa, Mexico and secondary education in Tijuana, Lower California. He attended Woodbury College in Los Angeles.

Heraldez and his wife, Irene Ibarra de Cardenas, are the parents of Irene Del Carmen Cardenas Ibarra and Amelia Elizabeth Cardenas Ibarra.

Heraldez stated, “My mandate in the Inland Empire is to represent the interest of the Government of Mexico in the Inland Empire and serve the Mexican citizens living in the areas of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties and Clark County, Nevada. I am also planning to become involved in the many community, cultural and civic activities in this area. I will be available to meet with individuals and local organizations and serve as a source of information to residents and governmental agencies.”

Atencion Mujeres:

Sabia usted que el cancer al seno es la segunda causa de muerte entre las mujeres en los Estados Unidos?

Si usted tiene 40 anos o mas y tiene la mas minima sospecha de anormalidad en los senos, como dolor o una bolla llamado para un examen y mamograma GRATIS al (909) 820-4642 AUN CON LOS CAMBIOS DE LEY, NO TENGA TEMOR A PEDIRNOS ESTE SERVICIO. “SCEDP” “TEMPRANA DETENCION DEL CANCER EN LOS SENOS” ES PARA TODA MUJER QUE LO NECESITA, NO NECESITA NINGUN DOCUMENTO LEGAL, TODA INFORMACION ES COMPLETAMENTE CONFIDENCIAL. Llame hoy mismo (909) 4642 a LIBRERIA DEL PUEBLO Pregunte por Lidia o Sara.
Inland Empire Hispanic News

Developing College Aspirations for Fourth Graders

More than 250 fourth-grade students from Lincoln and Wilson elementary schools in Colton will participate in Cal State, San Bernardino's "I'm Going to College" project.

The goal, says Tom M. Rivera, associate dean of undergraduate studies, "is to create an awareness of college opportunities and to instill in fourth-graders their potential as future college students at an early age so as to build a foundation of self confidence and the basic knowledge of college preparation skills."

The specially designed "I'm Going to College" Activity Book will introduce students to college through various activities and exercises. Classroom instruction also will give students a chance to complete a "mock" admission and financial aid application to Cal State.

The six week classroom instructional program begins Feb. 19 at Lincoln and March 12 at Wilson.

Once students complete the program, they will visit Cal State as first-year college students to simulate a first day on campus. They'll be given a photo ID card permitting them to receive their "scholarship checks" to purchase books and educational materials at the college bookstore. They also will go on a campus tour and attend a series of lectures by university professors on the art of the Egyptian pharaohs, African traditions and the Huichol Indians of Mexico.

"The I'm Going to College" Project was developed by the California Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (CASFAA) in 1990 to assist with the California State University's goal of increasing the number of low-income and under represented students within the CSU system, and to reach the long term goal of educational equity and diversity.

Letter to the Editor

latino-imPAC...Main Stream of Inland Empire Political Process

For many years, latino-imPAC has been hard at work, dedicated in its efforts to help provide information, leadership and candidates necessary to meet the needs of the entire community with specific emphasis on the needs of the Hispanic community. In 1996 latino-imPAC came of age.

Due principally to the dedication and efforts of many, LAPAC has finally emerged as a leading Political Action Committee in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. Its endorsements are sought by many public officials and those aspiring to serve as public officials. In concert with endorsements, LAPAC has also emerged as a voice and focal point to provide education about political processes and has involved itself in a major way in providing resources for voter registration. "1996 was a good year".

Among the accomplishments, LAPAC successfully:
- Attracted the attention of no less than 31 candidates running for public office who appeared at a scheduled endorsement conference seeking support and an official endorsement;
- Reviewed the credential of candidates and officially endorsed 23 candidates who could best meet the needs of the entire community, including the Hispanic community;
- Sponsored and funded a voter registration drive that successfully registered nearly two thousand persons who had not previously registered to vote;
- Joined with more than 50 other organizations and individuals in insuring the success of voter registration in our community;
- Raised funds to defray the high cost of registering voters;
- Helped lobby to stay the course on the previously approved Mount Vernon Corridor project;
- Took an official position on the appointment of a member to the San Bernardino city Unified School District board of Education; and
- Lobbied the Board of Education, San Bernardino, on the importance of appointment of Hispanics to high administrative positions within the district including assistant superintendent positions.

For the future, latino-imPAC will endeavor to:
- Continue to educate the general public, including the Hispanic community on issues of political awareness;
- Identify and support (in a grassroots approach) candidates who can be successful in winning offices and who could best represent the needs of the community, including the Hispanic community;
- Continue to register citizens to vote; and
- Inform citizens through personal communication on the importance of voting.

Latino-imPAC installed its new board of Directors on January 21, 1997. The new officers pledged to continue the programs instituted in 1996, and will endeavor to develop new approaches that will keep the organization in the forefront of American politics.

As I leave the presidency of this fine organization, I urge citizens to remember, it does not matter what you get involved with that is good for our community. The important thing is to get involved! Join us in continuing our total program of political activities. Jesse Valenzuela, (909) 885-222 is available to accept new members.

If our community is a reflection of ourselves, let us work together to insure that it truly does! Does it, doesn't it?" Ray Quinto
Past President latino-imPAC I

When you want to reach... The Hispanic Community Advertise in the Inland Empire Hispanic News

(909) 381-6259
President Clinton Appoints Policy Institute Head

Harry P. Pachon, Ph.D.
Claremont, CA - In an announcement this week, President Clinton appointed Harry P. Pachon, Ph.D., President of the Torres River Policy Institute (TRPI), to the President's advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans (PACEEHA). "This is a tremendous honor," said Pachon. "I look forward to participating in the Commission's mission to enhance the educational opportunities of all Latinos."

In fact, Pachon brings more than 20 years of social science, policy research and management experience to the Commission. Since 1993, he has been President of TRPI, a national independent policy research organization founded to foster sound public policies and programs relevant to the Latino community. He also is Kenan Professor of Political studies at Pitzer College and The Claremont Graduate School.

Prior to his position at TRPI, Pachon was Executive Director of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO). His previous Congressional experience includes serving as an Associate Staff Member to the Appropriations Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and acting as Administrative Assistant to Rep. Edward R. Roybal. Pachon's teaching experience has extended from City University's Baruch College in New York to Michigan State University and Loyola University, in the fields of urban development and ethnic politics.

Pachon is the author of three books on the state of the Latino community in the United States, as well as numerous scholarly articles. He is the Chair and founding board member of the NALEO Education Fund and also serves on the boards of the Council on Foreign Relations, Rebuild L.A. and Project Democracy.

Pachon's role on the PACEEHA will be to advise the President and Secretary of Education on the progress of Hispanic Americans toward national standards of educational accomplishment.

"A number of TRPI projects, such as Out of Reach, our study on Latinos, education and technology, contain information which is vital to the Commission's interests," said Pachon. "By bringing these issues to the table, I hope to help the commission make a positive impact on public policy."

Sunrise Inland Empire Surpasses $7.5 Million Goal

San Bernardino, CA - It was announced on January 30, 1997 that Sunrise Inland Empire, the economic development campaign designed to encourage business growth and to create 50,000 higher-paying jobs in the Inland Empire, has raised more than $8 million to fund the extensive five year marketing program.

The Inland Empire Economic Partnership (IEEP) hosted an innovative multimedia presentation created by University of California, Riverside to celebrate the conclusion of the campaign efforts which exceeded the goal of $7.5 million. The presentation, for Sunrise Inland Empire investors and regional media, was held at the San Bernardino Hilton. Jack Kyser, Chief Economist of the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation spoke on the Inland Empire's role in the new Southern California economy.

"The IEEP, in conjunction with the Suddes Group, developed the economic development plan which calls for investment from both the public and private sectors. "We are extremely happy to announce at the conclusion of the Sunrise Inland Empire Campaign that we exceeded our goal of $7.5 million with investments from more than 80 Inland Empire organizations, governing bodies and businesses," said Don Ecker, Managing Partner of Ernst & Young LLP and outgoing chairman of the IEEP.

"The new jobs created by the overall program during the next five years will have an economic impact of $9 billion on the two county region," said Ecker. Ecker handed over his responsibilities as chairman of the IEEP to Jim Gourley as part of Thursday's program. "This is only the beginning. I see great things happening in the Inland Empire in terms of job growth and opportunity, and I look forward to participating in our region's future," said Gourley, who is Inland Empire Region Manager for the Southern California Gas Company.

Participants in the presentation included, renowned speaker and chief economist of the LA County Economic Development Corporation, Jack Kyser, president and CEO of the IEEP, Brian Collins; and Tom Suddes, founder of the Suddes Group, the entity retained by the IEEP to coordinate the investment campaign.

The IEEP is a private, non-profit organization of two counties, 27 cities and 140 businesses designed to encourage business growth in the region.

Citizens For Our Town Say:

Keep an Eye on Redlands Preserve Community Values

Renew Our Utility Tax on March 4th

Remember Your Valentine on February 14th
Inland Empire Hispanic News

Former US Surgeon General To Speak at UCR February 13

Dr. M. Joycelyn Elders, the first African American woman to hold the post of U.S. Surgeon General, will present "U.S. Health Care Crisis: My Cure," a free public lecture at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 13, in University Theatre at the University of California, Riverside. A reception will follow where Dr. Elders will sign her new book, "Joycelyn Elders, M.D.: From Sharecropper's Daughter to Surgeon General of the United States of America."

Dr. Elders was sworn in as Surgeon General in September 1993 with the pledge "I want to change the way we think about health by putting prevention first. I want to be the voice and vision of the poor and powerless. I want to change concern about social problems that affect health into commitment. And I would like to make every child born in America a wanted child."

She herself was born into a low-income family of eight children and did not make her first visit to a doctor's office until she was a freshman in college.

Dr. Elders, a pediatric endocrinologist, was the second woman to hold the post in its 123-year history. As surgeon general, she held the rank of three-star admiral and directed a 6,000-member corps of doctors, nurses, pharmacists and scientists, all responsible for the nation's health. She resigned her post in December 1994 and is currently on the faculty of the University of Arkansas School of Medicine.

The lecture is sponsored by the Office of Campus Relations and the Center for Ideas and Society at UCR. For more information about the lecture, call the office of campus relations at (909) 787-4234.

Low Income Schools Stalled on Internet

(Claremont, CA) - "In the 21st century, compute literacy will be as vital as reading literacy is today," said Tomás Rivera Policy Institute (TRPI) President Dr. Harry Pachon at a news conference this morning, where TRPI revealed the findings of its new research study, Out of Reach: Latinos, Education and Technology. The conference, held at El Rancho High School in Pico Rivera, simultaneously was broadcast live for the first time on the Internet at http://www.h-span.net for a nationwide audience.

TRPI Senior Research Associate and report author Anthony Wilhelm and Pachon presented a disturbing picture of the state's technology development in schools based on its findings, the result of a comprehensive study of 22 school districts in Southern California which utilized principal surveys, site visits and interviews. The study was designed to examine whether a gap exists in technology access between Hispanic and non-Hispanic students in K-12 public schools. While there is a difference between direct computer classroom use by Hispanic and non-Hispanic students (10.4 percent to 55.6 percent in the state and 51.4 percent to 66.7 percent among schools surveyed, respectively), TRPI's analysis found that the true gap is not in the quantity of computers used by students; rather, it is the quality of technology access that has the greatest impact.

For example, teachers in predominantly Hispanic schools reported that only 12.8 percent of their classrooms have internet access for students, compared to 41.9 percent of classrooms in predominantly non-Hispanic white schools. Universal problems among all educators surveyed included a lack of computer training for teachers, which 54.8 percent cited as an obstacle, and a lack of preparation time to incorporate computers into the curriculum, a concern identified by 66 percent of teachers.

Utilizing its primary data in conjunction with data from the Department of Education, TRPI was able to determine the throughout California, though the average number of computers per classroom was on par with the national average, computers tend to be older and unlikely to have multimedia access. Additionally, the number of students per computer is much higher than the national average among schools participating in the Out of Reach study. Simply stated, the study's results conclude that California ranks near the bottom of the nation in terms of multimedia access for its students - this in an era when an estimated 60 percent of all jobs require some level of familiarity for information technology.

Though the federal government's Telecommunications Act of 1996 and Governor Wilson's plan to provide 400,000 computers for California schools are important steps in the effort to improve education technology, TRPI stressed that these programs cover only the need for computer hardware in classrooms. Qualitative indicators, such as professional development, technical support and school environmental factors are equally important and must be addressed as such. To assist policy makers in this process, TRPI has developed the "Rivera Index," a checklist of nine qualitative factors addressed as such. To assist policy makers in this process, TRPI has developed the "Rivera Index," a checklist of nine qualitative factors that provide indicators to identify technology-rich learning environments for all students.

"Out of Reach was made possible by the generosity of GTE. "Without GTE's support, this ground-breaking study would not have been possible," said Pachon. "GTE is assisting us in enhancing a awareness of the Latino community on a national level."
Univision Appointment of Henry Cisneros

(Montebello, CA) "Southwest Voter Research Institute continues Univision on their choice of Henry Cisneros as their new President and Chief Operating Officer," stated SVRI President and CEO, Antonio González. "Mr. Cisneros has an impeccable record of service to the Latino public in particular, and to the American public in general. We look forward to his tenure at Univision and we expect him to continue his tradition of excellent service to our community.

Univision announced its appointment of former Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Cisneros late Thursday evening. Cisneros, "the former four-term mayor of San Antonio, Texas from 1981 to 1997, is a widely recognized leader for private companies and foundations, as well as top positions in financial institutions. He also served as SVRI board member from 1989-92."

"Mr. Cisneros' new position comes at a very opportune moment in U.S. history," stated González. "This is a time in which we are seeing not only a growth in the Latino population, but also a dramatic growth in Latino participation in U.S. politics, especially considering the decline in the overall participation of other groups. Because of this, our voice as a community is being increasingly heeded by leaders in our highest offices.

"Given this situation, the significance of Mr. Cisneros heading the nation's leading Spanish-language television network takes on an added importance," continued González. "We hope that Mr. Cisneros' influence as Univision's leader will push the discourse on the U.S. Latino community's issues to even greater heights. We wish him the best of luck."

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Budweiser Salutes the Inland Empire Hispanic Community

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San Bernardino - Riverside
Botts Named Chairman of Board of Community Hospital of San Bernardino Foundation

San Bernardino, CA - Robert E. Botts was recently elected Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Community Hospital of San Bernardino Foundation.

Currently, Botts is a Vice President with the Business Bank of California, Executive Director of Business Development. Botts is a long time resident of Coombs, and with the city of San Bernardino as Manager of the Office of Business Development.

Botts is also active in the President’s Advisory Board at California State University, San Bernardino, The Private Industry Council, and The San Bernardino Concert Association.

The mission of the Community Hospital of San Bernardino Foundation is to provide funds to assist in the development of Community Hospital of San Bernardino and its goals to provide quality care to its patients, and to continue its commitment to meeting the health care needs of the community.

The foundation, founded in 1976, participates in a variety of local community programs including Kids Care Fair, Casa Ramona Health Fair, the Senior Health Fair at Carousel Mall and the Senior Flu Vaccination Clinic. In addition, the Foundation has provided funding for modern state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment and for renovations to several departments throughout Community Hospital.

S.B. City School's ELSPD Five Year Plan

and Talented Education (GATE), Family/Community Involvement, Early Childhood Education and the English Language Learners (previously the bilingual program).

The English Language Learners Program has had a long and controversial history at the state and local level since its implementation in the early 1970's. Critics have repeatedly questioned the need for "bilingual programs" in the state's school systems, and others have criticized the teaching methodology of programs and the time element in the transition of students into standard classroom settings.

However, English Language Programs are mandated throughout the school districts in California based on the huge immigration of people from Asia and Latin America within the last three decades and the educational need for English-learning transitional programs.

According to San Bernardino School District statistics, the following is the ethnic student population: White 28%, African-American 18%, Asian 5%. Indian 1% and Hispanic 50%, of which approximately 25% (of Hispanics) are enrolled in English Learner Learning.

Bryant outlined the district's mission for each program:

- GATE Program will expand to seek out and identify gifted and talented pupils from diverse linguistic, economic and cultural backgrounds and increase the opportunity for all students to participate;
- Child Development Program will provide high quality pre-school to students in a nurturing, safe environment that promotes social, emotional, creative, linguistic and cognitive environment;
- Family-Community Involvement will involve families to become full partners in the educational achievement of their children, providing a caring atmosphere of mutual respect at the school sites. Participation will be promoted by providing programs, services and training to family and student needs;
- English Language Learners will create a greater increase in number of students who will demonstrate proficiency in English, transition to English classes, acquiring the skills to meet the Ninth Grade Objective and pursue higher education and ultimately achieve career goals.

Bryant discussed the specific requirements that are essential toward achieving the stated goals. "In the English Learners Master Plan, there is an initial identification of the student's dominant language and development of English Language strategies," he said.

New students are tested in the Bilingual Assessment Center with the parents receiving information about the

FREE Income Tax Assistance

FREE Income tax assistance for elderly and/or disabled persons of low to middle income will be available again this year. The program is sponsored by the Internal Revenue Service and administered by the AARP. Assistance will be available from February 1 through April 15 on the days and times indicated as listed below.

Taxpayers are requested to bring with them the 1995 tax packages (Federal and State) which they received in the mail. Also bring forms W-2, 1099 SSA, 1099 RRB, Dividend and Interest statements and other pertinent records, including a copy of their 1995 tax return, if filed. Younger taxpayers will also be helped but seniors will be given priority at all sites.

Persons who are physically unable to leave their home may call 384-5430. Arrangements will be made for volunteers to visit them.

No appointments are necessary. Membership in AARP is not required.

The four locations where tax help is available are as follows:

Senior Citizens Service Center
600 W. 5th St., San Bernardino
Tues & Wed, 9 am - 12:30 pm
384-5430

YMCA-Upton Family Branch
800 E. 21st St., San Bernardino
Thurs, 3-6 pm; Fri, 10-3 pm
384-7078

San Bernardino County Library
Highland Branch
2716 E. Baseline, Highland
Mon, 9:30 am - 1 pm
862-8549

Highland Senior Center
3102 E. Highland Ave., Highland
Fri, 9 am - 12:30 pm
862-8104

CALL FOR ADVERTISING RATES: (909) 381-6259

Continued on back page
BACA NAMED TO APPROPRIATIONS, UTILITIES, TRANSPORTATION, AND GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION COMMITTEES

SACRAMENTO — January 31, 1997 — Assemblyman Joe Baca was named today to some of the California State Assembly's most powerful committees by Speaker Cruz M. Bustamante. Baca, who is assistant speaker pro tempore and the Speaker's federal government liaison, will be one of the more senior members of the Assembly Appropriations Committee. This committee is perhaps the most influential legislative group because short of the governor's veto, it determines how the state spends its money from year to year.

Assemblyman Baca sat on the committee two years ago as it was in the midst of work on utilities deregulation. This year will see some of those legislative changes take effect as competition takes shape between large private power companies and smaller municipal utilities.

The Assemblyman, who is a member of the powerful Rules Committee, also will be a member of the Assembly Transportation Committee and a member of the Governmental Organization Committee.

"My new committee assignments will compliment my work as the Speaker's federal government liaison," Baca said. "It will be especially important that I be able to convey our spending priorities to our congressional delegation and work with U.S. Department of Transportation as the states are given greater responsibility for the federal highway system."

"And, as our state's economy continues to recover from the recession," Baca said, "I look forward to my role on the Utilities and Commerce Committee as a member who will do his part to ensure there is healthy competition in the energy marketplace and that we continue to retain and attract good-paying, quality jobs for all Californians. At the same time, the committee needs to protect consumers from rates which are unduly high."

I also look forward to returning to the Governmental Organization Committee, especially at a time when the state has suffered historic levels of damage due to flooding," Assemblyman Baca said. "The committee also has jurisdiction over all state gaming issues, including horse racing, Indian gaming and the State Lottery. I also expect we will be dealing with significant legislation concerning the regulation of alcohol and tobacco sales."

S.B. City School's ELSPD Five Year Plan

educational process. Thereafter, a placement recommendation is based on language proficiency test scores and consultation between bilingual personnel and parents.

Bryant said, "It is important that our goals and objectives are compatible with the superintendent's five year plan and essentially redirecting our programs accordingly. The evaluation process is an important part of our program in order to adjust program plans accordingly."

"Providing the best input to this process via the task force is critical to the success of our department's responsibility toward the district."

The total effort by our task force and district personnel is to meet the challenges as we enter into the 21st century."

"The bottom line is to give our students the best education possible and prepare them to become productive citizens in our society." Community persons and parents interested in participating in the Task Force may call the English Learners' Support Programs Department at (909) 381-1340.

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Hispanic Interest
Wednesday, February 5, 1997

NALEO MOURNS THE PASSING OF CONGRESSMEMBER FRANK TEJEDA

Washington, D.C. - The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) mourns the tragic loss of Congressmember Frank Tejeda. Congressmember Tejeda was a member of the 105th Congress representing the 28th District of Texas. Congressmember Tejeda had served in public office since 1977 when he served as a member to the Texas House of Representatives and later as Texas State Senator. Congressmember Tejeda was also a member of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and served on the National Security and Veteran's Affairs Committees. "Congressmember Tejeda had a long history of placing the welfare of others before his own," said NALEO Executive Director Arturo Vargas. "He will be deeply missed by all at NALEO." While in the Marine Corps during Vietnam, he earned the Bronze Star for Valor and received the Purple Heart. Congressmember Tejeda was a staunch supporter of National Defense, expanded educational opportunities and enhanced benefits for veterans.

Congressmember Tejeda's office indicated that the Congressmember asked that in lieu of flowers, contributions be made to the Frank Tejeda Scholarship Fund at 1400 West Villaret Blvd., San Antonio, TX 78224-2499.

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL MEETING AT COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

San Bernardino, CA — The Neighborhood Council, which is working on Focus 92411: A Community Partnership, a collaborative partnership with Community Hospital of San Bernardino, California State University, San Bernardino, and the San Bernardino County Public Health Department, will be holding an open meeting on Wednesday, February 19, 1997 at 6 p.m. in the Auditorium of Community Hospital. The role of the Neighborhood Council is to represent the community in this partnership, and all residents of the 92411 zip code area are encouraged to attend this important meeting. Leader...