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LNESC

The LatinEd Connection

An LNESC Quarterly Publication

WINTER 2026 EDITION

We welcome you to the Winter 2026 edition of The LatinEd Connection!

As we settle into a new semester that growth doesn't stop just because the temperatures drop. Across the country, our LNESC education centers are buzzing with activity: from college tours and academic competitions to students wrapping up their FAFSA applications, we are setting exciting goals in time for the spring flow and the year ahead!

We hope the updates, stories, and resources in this edition keep you inspired and connected to the incredible work happening in our communities.

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Our Peak: Updates and Happenings at LNESC

LULAC National Scholarship Fund (LNSF)

LNESC is pleased to announce that the LULAC National Scholarship Fund (LNSF) online application is now open to qualified students.

The application deadline is March 31, 2026

Students interested in applying are encouraged to visit the LULAC National Scholarship Fund website to review the LNSF FAQs, complete eligibility assessments, scholarship profiles, and application details. We encourage all eligible students to apply and take advantage of this opportunity to receive financial support for their educational goals.

In 1975, LNESC and LULAC established the LULAC National Scholarship Fund to help students turn the dream of college enrollment into reality. The LNSF program is a unique collaboration between grassroots advocates and corporate partners, working together to fund educational opportunities for deserving youth across the U.S. and expand access to higher education nationwide.

For 2025–2026, 95 LULAC Councils awarded more than $170,000 in scholarships to over 1,500 students, demonstrating the strength and success of this collaborative model.

Since its inception, the LNSF program has awarded over $22 million in scholarships to over 40,000 students — helping make higher education more accessible for thousands of families.

To apply, please click here

Macy's Emergency Scholarship Program

Are you a full-time undergrad or grad student facing financial hardship? LNESC, in partnership with Macy's, is here to help through the Macy's Emergency Scholarship Fund.

This joint partnership provides emergency financial resources to full-time undergraduate and graduate students in **California, Florida, Missouri, New York, Ohio, North Carolina, Puerto Rico**, or **Texas** who are experiencing economic hardship and immediate monetary need.

Through the support of Macy's, LNESC will award **$11,500** in emergency funds to **63** students for the 2025–2026 academic year.

Students interested in applying are encouraged to visit the Macy's Emergency Scholarship webpage on the LNESC website for complete eligibility requirements and application details.

For additional non-LNESC scholarship resources, click here.

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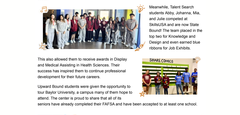
Connecting the Community to Education: LNESC in the Field

LNESC Kansas City

Over at LNESC Kansas City, the team has been keeping students connected to what's possible after high school. This winter, staff took 16 students on a walking tour of the University of Kansas (KU) in Lawrence. The visit made an impression: one student was so inspired that they spoke with admissions afterward and now have a planned date to apply.

These kinds of moments remind us why college tours matter, especially for students who may be the first in their families to consider a four-year university.



The center also received an incredible act of generosity from Kansas City Councilman Crispin Rios, who sent a former Upward Bound student.

After meeting with the center's interim Director, Sharon Ko and learning that students walking in school needed winter gear, Councilman Rios purchased 14 winter coats and gloves for students. It's a powerful reminder that the impact of the center's programs extends well past graduation!

Student Spotlight: Alliana is active in everything Upward Bound has to offer, from tutoring and college tours to cultural events. Alliana is a straight-A student with a 4.12 GPA and comes from a long line of former Upward Bound participants in his family. He hopes to earn a full ride to college and dream big in the field of medicine. Upward Bound education improves the dedication that LNESC KC fosters every day. Keep it up, Alliana!

LNESC Corpus Christi

In Corpus Christi, students across both Talent Search and Upward Bound have been making waves this semester.

On the Talent Search side, 12th-grade students Kayla and Camila competed alongside their school teammates at the King Invitational UIL Academic Decathlon.

They both entered the Essay Writing competition, representing their school for the top three. Their hard work earned them medals and motivated them to make the dream of college a reality. They reflected this commitment by attending the center's College Awareness and Financial Aid workshops, which was led by Karla Chavez and other staff at LNESC Corpus Christi.

Meanwhile, Talent Search students Abby, Johanna, Mia, and Julie completed at Bishop Lamar Upward Bound. The team placed in the top ten for Knowledge and Design and even earned blue ribbons for Job Exhibits.

They also allowed them to receive awards in Display and Media Assessing in Health Sciences. Their success has inspired them to continue professional development for their future careers.

Upward Bound students were given the opportunity to tour Baylor University, a campus many of them hope to attend. The center is proud to share that all of its seniors have already completed their FAFSA and have been accepted to at least one school.

SHARE Criteria

Listeners in Action: Rising Stars of LNESC

In this edition, we're excited to spotlight two staff members of the LNESC community who bring creativity, passion and dedication to educationally enriched students everyday!

KIRSTIN LENT

Program Coordinator, LNESC Vancouver

Kirstin Lent was born and raised on the Oregon Coast, where she spent her free time on the beach or in the forest with her two older sisters and parents.

She comes from a long line of educators. She elaborated further by noting that "education was always very important in my family. My mom and dad spend a lot of time at my mom's school, where I'd hang with various teens around the school."

Kirstin graduated from Arizona State University in 2023 with a degree in Anthropology and a minor in Spanish. During her time at ASU, she was a Student Ambassador.

JANELLE ANN CASAREZ

Administrative Assistant, LNESC San Antonio

Outside of work, Janelle enjoys cast coffee and quiet spaces to practice sewing and watercolor painting.

As we reach the new year, Janelle is looking forward to celebrating her students' success in graduating high school and preparing for college. Though she's only been with LNESC a short time, one moment has stuck with her:

During a class presentation to recruit students for Upward Bound, Janelle spoke with a small group of ninth graders alongside a current Upward Bound student.

"The student we spoke to seemed quiet and shy at first, so I wasn't sure if I had made an impact. But a few weeks later, those very same students were the ones who enrolled in the program!" It reminded her of the quiet power of small moments.

For Janelle, education is all about opening doors:

> *"Education opens doors for all to reach their highest potential. It prepares us to tackle life's challenges with resilience and curiosity in mind. It has the power to demystify the unknown and pave a clear pathway to success."*

Her favorite book is The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros. "I was introduced to the novel in high school as part of a book club reading. I fell in love with the storytelling and writing style of the author," she said.

Janelle's journey with the LNESC San Antonio team has just started and we're looking forward to all that she will accomplish at LNESC and beyond!

College Cues: Tips for Student Readiness

February brings with it a reminder that we have just stepped foot into a new year. Springtime is just around the corner and brings with it even more possibilities for new beginnings. As such, it's an ideal time for students to plant goals that can blossom throughout the year.

Below, you will find a few goal-setting tips and tricks to get you started!

Take Time to Reflect Before You Set Goals

A fresh start allows us to take time to reflect on what we've accomplished, and what still has a issue to go.

Setting goals can easily become overwhelming, but grounding yourself at the beginning of the year helps clarify priorities and turn ambition into action!

According to the American Psychological Association, research shows that the more often you monitor your progress, the greater the likelihood that you will succeed.

Read more here

Parent Forum: Strategies for Student Success

Winter also means that spring is just around the corner. February is still the beginning of the new year, so it's an excellent opportunity for students and learners of all ages to set clear goals for the year ahead.

Of course, it is an opportunity for families to get involved, too. When parents take an active role in the goal-setting process, it sends a clear message that matters to your child matters to you.

Below you can find tips on how parental involvement can transform a goal-setting pep rally into a breakthrough!

Guiding the Reflection Process

Before your child jumps into making a list of resolutions, encourage them to slow down and reflect.

Help them think through what went well, what felt hard, and what they'd like to change. This kind of reflection helps them see how the past year will serve them well beyond school.

You can find printable reflection and journaling prompts here, designed for families to work through together.

Read more here

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Your contributions are what help us continue with our educational and leadership programs.

Together we can continue making an impact in our communities.

Support LNESC today by making a donation.

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About LNESC

LNESC LULAC National Educational Service Centers, Inc.

Established in 1973, LULAC National Educational Service Centers (LNESC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that provides scholarships, educational programming, resources, and leadership empowerment to students across the United States and Puerto Rico.

The mission of LNESC is to advance educational excellence and leadership development programs to create lifelong learners and leaders in communities with limited opportunities.We build our community's strength by empowering students to reach their highest potential.

For more information, visit the LNESC website.

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