

ACCESS AMERICA

U.S. Schools Adjust to Growing Hispanic Population

More than 80 percent of Latino students are U.S.-born, fluent in English



ESL (English-as-a-second-language) teacher Xavier Chavez teaches a summer history class in Portland, Oregon.

Washington — A new report profiling the growing numbers of Hispanic U.S. public school students paints a picture of those students as overwhelmingly U.S.-born (84 percent); living in households with both of their parents (57 percent); and largely of Mexican

origin (69 percent) but also of Puerto Rican, Dominican, Salvadoran and Cuban descent.

The report by the Pew Hispanic Center, a nonpartisan research organization, finds that some 82 percent of Latino students — the report uses Hispanic and Latino interchangeably — speak English fluently, even though 70 percent speak a language other than English at home. While only about half of first-generation Hispanic students live in a home in which English is spoken fluently, by the third generation, almost all Hispanic students live in such homes. Second- and third-generation Hispanic students are also much more likely to be living in homes

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with two parents and incomes comparable to those of their non-Hispanic counterparts.

By 2050, there will be more Hispanic children in U.S. public schools than non-Hispanic white children, the Pew report projects.

In fact, minorities in the United States, now one-third of the population, will become the majority by 2042 and will rise to 54 percent of the population by 2050, according to the latest

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From the Editor

This being a “back-to-school” issue, I’d like to welcome everyone back and introduce myself. As cultural attaché at U.S. Embassy Tunis, I handle cultural programming, international and student exchanges – in addition to supervising our IRC and providing support for the American Corner. I look forward to meeting you out and about town, at cultural activities, or even at your school or institution. In fact, if you’d like me to come and talk to your company executives, staff, or school classrooms this year (elementary or secondary), all you have to do is arrange an official invitation for me from your organization and I will be happy to make a visit. Also, for more information on next year’s exchange offerings, visit <http://tunisia.usembassy.gov/resources/exchanges.html>. And, here’s a tip for potential student applicants: exchange programs are very competitive, so follow the application instructions carefully and submit all the required documentation early. For high school and college programs, remember: high English test scores are crucial.



-D.A. Brown

From the IRC

Books

Latinos in the United States
Cortâes, Carlos E.

Hispanics and the U.S. Political System: Moving Into the Mainstream.
Garcia, F. Chris.

Ethnic identity: formation and transmission among Hispanics and other minorities
Bernal, Martha E. George
P. Knight.

The Latino wave: how Hispanics are transforming politics in America
Ramos, Jorge

Latinos in Changing Society,
Praeger
Monter-Sieburth, Martha

Racial Transformations: Latinos and Asians Remaking the United States
De Genova, Nicholas.

Online resources

Official Site of the Hispanic Society of America:
<http://www.hispanicsociety.org/>

The Census Bureau provides statistics on the hispanic population
<http://www.census.gov/>

— *Khaled Ben Bhouzid*
& the IRC team.



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projections of the U.S. Census Bureau. In schools, the demographic shift will be even more dramatic: the percentage of children now considered to belong to minorities will reach 62 percent by 2050, census projections indicate.

The Hispanic population is projected to triple from 46.7 million to 132.8 million — 30 percent of the total population — by 2050. (See “U.S. Minorities Will Be the Majority by 2042, Census Bureau Says.”)

Many U.S. schools already have Spanish-language versions of their Web sites and school bulletin boards, and bilingual front office staff or Spanish-speaking “parent liaisons.” Some have developed Spanish-language videos to provide

school information. Most schools can conduct meetings with parents in Spanish as well as English or provide devices for simultaneous translation.

In a study of high-performing Hispanic schools in Texas, researchers found that schools need to promote parent involvement by doing three things: understanding cultural values, building on the strength of the extended family by creating a sense of the school as family and making a commitment to learn about Hispanic culture.

This article is adapted from an article on America.gov, a web site delivering information about current U.S. foreign policy and about American life and culture produced by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Information Programs

Obama, McCain Compete in Wooing Hispanic Voters

Hispanics' growing numbers, influence could be decisive in a close election.

Washington -- Hispanics, a rapidly growing segment of the U.S. population, could play a deciding role in a close presidential election, and campaigns are making enormous efforts to attract those potential voters and turn them out on Election Day. Efforts range from speeches delivered before major Hispanic organizations, to creation of new Spanish-language campaign Web sites, to huge budgets for advertising -- mainly television spots -- aimed at Hispanic voters.

Hispanics now account for some 9 percent of the U.S. electorate and are the nation's fastest-growing minority group. A U.S. Census Bureau report released August 14 projects their numbers will nearly triple by the year 2050, to about one-third of the population.

Currently, their uneven dispersion throughout the country gives them a potentially key role in political “swing” states like Florida, Colorado, Nevada and New Mexico. Savvy activists representing more than 100 grassroots Hispanic organizations announced plans in July to register 2 million new voters in 2008.

That drive could affect even states without large Hispanic populations. An August 11 analysis by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported efforts by Democrat Barack Obama and Republican John McCain to reach Hispanics “could be pivotal in Midwestern states --

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Wisconsin, Iowa and Ohio among them -- where the election could be decided by just a few percentage points."

Both Obama and McCain spoke in July at the annual convention of the National Council of La Raza, a major Hispanic advocacy group. That marked the third time in 15 days each had

appeared before a national Latino organization. Both emphasized education, health care and housing, along with immigration reform and other border issues.

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Program Announcements

The Fulbright Visiting Program

To conduct Research, lecture or pursue combined lecturing and research in the U.S.A.

Length of program: 3 to 10 months

Deadline: **October 20, 2008**

For more information: Please visit <http://www.cies.org/>

or contact Ms. Faouzia Ben Kheder at benkhederf@state.gov, or 71-107-438

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Nosra

Ayari

MEPI

Home in Tunisia: Tunis

Home in the U.S.: Dickinson College
Carlisle PA, Washington DC, New York,
Maryland and San Francisco, CA.

Fondest Memory of the U.S.:

One of my fondest memories of the U.S. is my home stay with the Ellis Family. Although it was only one night long, I enjoyed every second of it, chatting with Rebecca Ellis and her husband about their lifestyle and the way they're raising their two cute daughters Elise and Julia. Maybe they aren't the typical American family, but surely an impressive one in the way they interacted with one another, their house rules and their personal interests.

My Experience:

Being part of this exchange was one of the most amazing and enriching experiences that I have ever had throughout my entire life. The thing that I enjoyed most and affected me positively was the leadership and collective solving-problem training. I challenged myself many times in doing this because I never thought that I would be able to do the "zip line" - walking on a tight rope twenty feet high. I remember when I was climbing, at some point I told Sepi -our professional trainer- that I couldn't



Photo courtesy Nosra Ayari

climb anymore, but he kept saying "yes, you can." I climbed more and felt extremely satisfied. I can still remember him saying, when I finished climbing" see, you've said you can't but you did it. It's not about what you can't do, it's about what you think you can't do." Those words changed my perception of myself, in terms of what I can do, and made me much stronger and self-confident.

What I loved too was the holistic view that I had about US history and culture -in terms of cinema, music, theatre, food, clothing, politics, economy, ethnicity, religion, community service, media, ...-while having our study tours. I definitely liked the fact that I explored the different facets of the US so smoothly and from different perspectives so that to be critical and make my own deductions.

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I relished doing community service such as Habitat for Humanity, Domestic Shelter, Project Share (Soup Kitchen)...Although they were tiring, they were all worth doing. They just loaded me with experience and had me meet awesome and inspiring people who have devoted their hearts, bodies, minds and souls to the aid of others without expecting anything in return.

Lessons Learned:

I learned a lot from this experience: It made me discover different sides of my personality that I wasn't aware of. It taught me how to be a free thinker, critical and at the same time professional, diplomatic too. Not to draw my own limits before going into something but knowing what I want instead and go for it whatever it takes. How I can get from the simplest activities huge outcomes i.e. how to create something from almost nothing. I made outstanding friends with whom I'm still in contact; each one of them affected me somehow and I'm thankful for this. I interacted with great professors who pushed me always to think out of the box, have a smart presence and do take the initiative. Too many lessons that take one's life time to learn.

Advice for others:

I definitely encourage everyone who meets the required criteria to go for this experience



Photo courtesy, Nostra Ayari

because I'm sure that it will turn your life upside down in a very positive way as it turned mine. The only advice that I can give is that you try to avail of such an opportunity as much as you can while baring in mind that you are there to represent your country and leave a good impression about Tunisian Youth. Go for it! You won't regret it !!

What I miss most about the U.S.:

I miss after-class chats with my Professors, my dearest host family, Dickinson College and our dorm -Morgan hall- where I shared the funniest and most unforgettable moments with my lovely friends ...-not to mention bagles, strawberry smoothy and mocca frappucino.

Calendar

Statement of Purpose Workshops

Wednesday, September 24

AMIDEAST

10:00 AM

Graduate Statement of Purpose workshop

11:00 AM

Undergraduate Statement of Purpose workshop

**Please call or send an email so we will know to expect you. **

Study in the USA Consultations

Every Tuesday-Friday

AMIDEAST Advising Resource

Library

8:30-3:30 PM

Browse materials from U.S. universities, consult resources on applications and scholarships.

Movie and Discussion

Every Friday

AMIDEAST Advising Resource

Library

2:00 PM

Open Access

Every Monday-Friday

American Corner at AMIDEAST

Peruse books and magazines in English on topics from history to pop culture and more.

Free English Conversation

Every Tuesday & Thursday

American Corner at AMIDEAST

2:00 PM

Weekly discussions on topics from films and music to religion. Topics are posted weekly in the American Corner and at AMIDEAST.

American Corner at AMIDEAST

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