

2012

Nuestra Voz- Aug/Sep. 2012

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Providing Access and Educational **Opportunities** to the **Latino** Community Since 1969

MESSAGE from the DIRECTOR



As we complete the summer semester and begin the new academic year, there is a lot to be thankful for. The Summer Transition Program (STP) at El Centro Campus, sponsored by Student Affairs, began strong with 19 students who completed the program and have now enrolled for their first semester

as incoming freshmen at Northeastern Illinois University. These students are full of hopes and dreams for their future and wish to make positive contributions to their communities. As the students began STP, they did not know what to expect and were looking a bit nervous, but eager to learn. As the summer progressed, new friendships were born, and they were able to support each other through their academic journey. STP at El Centro Campus introduced them to mentors from the Guidance, Inspiration, and Academic Support (GUIAS) Mentoring Program, who met with them every week during the summer. I am thankful to all of the mentors who volunteered week after week to work with the El Centro STP students. I invite you to learn more about STP in the following pages of the newsletter.

A glimmer of hope for DREAMERS who want to continue their education without fear came to light through the new Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), a directive of President Barack Obama. On August 2, El Centro, along with NEIU's Admission Office and the Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA), hosted an informational session for

students who may qualify for this relief. The informational session provided detailed information about this program, so that individuals that choose to apply for it can make an informed decision. We will continue to provide information related to this policy to help families understand the program and the application process. I invite you to visit our website for upcoming workshop opportunities.

I am happy to share with you that students can now find information or connect with an El Centro staff member to ask questions and/or make an appointment by visiting www.neiu.edu/elcentro. Also, we are using social media to stay connected with our various constituencies. Please like our page Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/NeiuElCentroCampus> or follow us on twitter.

I wish you much success during the Fall 2012 semester! Remember that life is a journey, and we should celebrate our accomplishments one day at a time. Through your continued support and participation, NEIU-El Centro Campus will remain a leader in providing access to opportunities to underserved communities!

Maria E. Luna-Duarte,
Northeastern Illinois University-El Centro Campus

Community Education!

English as a Second Language (ESL) Workshops

The first half of 2012 was an exciting year for the English Language Program at Northeastern Illinois University-El Centro Campus. There were over 200 members from the Avondale and Logan Square neighborhoods interested in taking the English as a Second Language (ESL) Workshops at El Centro Campus. All of the new students, approximately 90 of them, took the ESL placement exam in order to participate in one of the three ESL level workshops offered. ESL students are thankful for this program and their instructor, as they have given positive reviews about their classroom experience and their ESL Workshop Facilitator, Courtney Francis. Courtney Francis is a graduate student in the Teaching English as a Second Language Program at Northeastern Illinois University.

ESL students that have completed all three levels are more confident in their language abilities, both written and verbal. They are also able to communicate better in public, at school with the teachers of their children, and at work. Anyone interested in learning English for free, regardless of their background or skill level, is encouraged to visit El Centro Campus for more information. The only requirements to register for the workshop are to take a placement exam and to have a strong desire to learn. We look forward toward the completion of the Fall 2012 semester of the ESL Workshop Program.

ELCStaff

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Coordinator

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Office Support Associate

Hugo Vasquez
Office Support Associate

 **GIVE NOW**

Individuals that are interested in making a gift to the El Centro Campus Scholarship Fund can now do it on our website by visiting www.neiu.edu/elcentro

NuestraVoz Our Voice

A newsletter of



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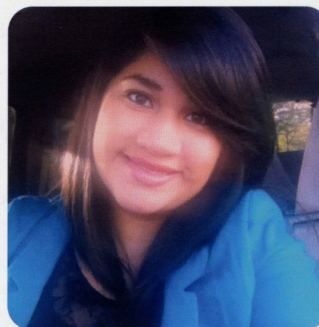
Email: elcentro@neiu.edu

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Find us on Facebook

Student Success Story: Sherry Cornelio



Sherry Cornelio, a senior, social work, is President of the Alliance for Student Social Workers, and enjoys being a student leader at NEIU. Sherry's poised and confident demeanor suggests that things have always come easily to her in life, but that is not Sherry's story.

One of the biggest challenges of Sherry's life happened at the age of three, when her family immigrated to the U.S. The family left behind their home country with the idea that things would be better in the U.S. After arriving in Chicago, Sherry attended two different schools, one middle school, and two different high schools. Her family had to move frequently from one neighborhood to another, and during this time she experienced firsthand the diversity of communities that Chicago is known for. Throughout this time she was oblivious to her condition to the fact that she was undocumented. Reality hit her during her junior year of high school when she realized how much she wanted to go to college. Sherry was very self conscious about her immigration status, thinking that she could never attend college, but she had the willingness and determination to succeed and knew that obtaining an education was important in order for her to be successful.

"If it had not been for STP I probably would have decided to put school off for a couple or many years."

While she never lost the hope of attending college, she began to explore possible alternatives during her senior year of high school. Shortly before graduation, she learned of the Summer Transition Program (STP) at Northeastern's El Centro Campus. She was excited by a program that would accept her regardless of her citizenship status and provide her with a head start on a college degree.

In 2007, Sherry was accepted to STP, and while it was challenging at times, she completed the program with flying colors. Of her experience, Sherry noted, "STP and the staff from El Centro have always been extremely helpful, encouraging, and involved in my education." Through STP, Sherry learned how important education is and the major role that determination would have to play if she were going to reach her goals. Since she was undocumented, her school tuition had to be paid out of pocket, and Sherry did not have the means to pay for it. She decided to take a year off to work and save money for school and to adjust her legal status. In March of 2008, she became a legal permanent resident of the U.S., and immediately re-enrolled at NEIU.

Sherry commented, "If it had not been for STP I probably would have decided to put school off for a couple or many years. STP provided me with the experience I needed to fuel my determination. If there is something I have learned throughout my years of schooling it is that, it takes dedication to do the work, to study, and stay focused even when you do not feel like it. I am so happy that I found that determination, and now I know I'm on the path to success."

Northeastern ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

EL CENTRO CAMPUS

Invites you to an

ART exhibit

Heritage ... Ethnicity



Opening Reception

Friday, September 21, 2012

6:00pm to 8:00pm

The exhibit will be on view until Friday, November 23, 2012.

3119 North Pulaski Rd., Chicago, Illinois 60641
(One block South of Belmont)

Sponsored by: NEIU-El Centro Campus and the Consulate General of Peru.



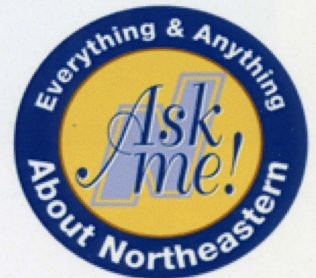
by Elsa Anaya

In this exhibit, Elsa Anaya (also known as "Wari") creates a vision of the Andean world, translating her techniques and worldview through oil pastels with her expanded pallet, representing her ethnic roots and multicultural heritage through her indigenous and "mestizo" ancestors, creating, shaping and exalting their traditions, customs, popular and daily life scenes, festivities and creative activities. Her artistic name "Wari" is a Quechuan word from the language of the Incas, which means "joyful".

*This exhibit is dedicated to the recently deceased
Irene Snyder, who inspired Elsa to pursue her artistic passion.*

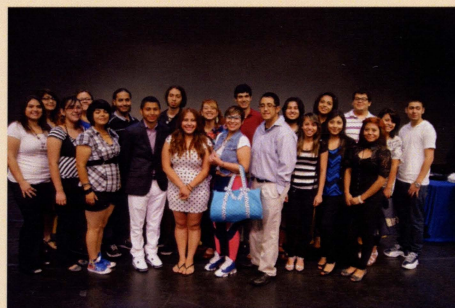
Ask Me! Campaign at El Centro Campus

NEIU-El Centro Campus kicked off the ASK ME! Campaign on Saturday, August 25, and continued until Friday, August 31. At the beginning of each semester, El Centro staff and student leaders wear official ASK ME! buttons and display the campaign logo at an information table to welcome first year, transfer, and returning students to El Centro and answer questions. This campaign helps students gather important information including classroom locations, Beck's Bookstore locations, parking information, and general information about NEIU. El Centro ASK ME! representatives received about 100 inquiries each day during the first week of classes and were able to help students.



New Beginnings, New Opportunities

The Summer Transition Program (STP) at El Centro Campus began with a welcome ceremony for students from all NEIU Campuses, on Monday, July 2 in Alumni Hall on NEIU's main campus. El Centro registered a full cohort of 19 students this fall, each of whom participated in STP this summer. Students were supported with tutoring and workshops to enhance their math, reading comprehension, and writing skills prior to enrolling at NEIU for their first college semester. This year the Summer Transition Program at El Centro included informational tours of NEIU's Main Campus and the Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies. STP students also participated in civic engagement workshops that provided students with opportunities to learn about work being done in their communities. Some of the students joined the El Centro Serve and Learn Volunteer Program, whose mission is to enhance civic engagement of NEIU students by providing them with experiential opportunities designed to help them grow professionally.



The STP El Centro students were provided with a mentor from the Guidance Inspiration and Academic Support (GUIAS) mentoring program. The mentors, who themselves were once mentees, worked with the new STP students twice a week, about an hour each session. Mentors offered support and shared insights about how to navigate NEIU successfully as new freshmen. Mentors also provide information about university resources, tutoring, and social support, helping the new students plan for how they will reach their educational and personal goals. The STP students also participated in a retreat featuring team building activities that touched on the importance of time management, networking, and reaching out for help.

A closing ceremony was held on Friday, August 17, in Alumni Hall. All STP students were recognized. This year's STP, like other years has created a lasting network of support and resources that continue to make an impact in the continued success of our students.

SAVE THE DATE

December 7, 2012

6:30PM

Noche Cultural

Northeastern Illinois University (Auditorium)
5500 North St. Louis Ave.
Chicago, Illinois 60625

Join us for a full night of cultural performances.
All proceeds will benefit the
NEIU-El Centro Campus Endowment Fund.

Nuestra Voz
Our Voice

N Northeastern
Illinois
University

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