

The Luna Light



*“The People’s College”
Becoming The Premier Rural Community College in America*

Volume 2 Issue 33

September 8-September 13

Learning is as easy as ABE

**By Geraldine Romero
ABE/GED Director**

As per our brochure, learning is as easy as ABE (Adult Basic Education). We serve a diverse population of learners on campus and in different communities. We are currently serving the cities of Las Vegas, Santa Rosa, Mora, Springer, Raton, Wagon Mound, and the Detention Center. Our goal is best articulated in our Vision Statement: The Adult Education Program at Luna Community College is committed to excellence in academic achievement and personal growth while providing a basis for students to become life-long learners and productive, responsible citizens.

Our program provides educational services to adult learners (16 years of age and older) who have not completed twelfth grade education and are not currently enrolled in high school. Students younger than 18 years of age must obtain an official release from the last school attended, bring their birth certificate, and be accompanied by their parent or guardian.

The GED program prepares students to successfully complete the GED tests that measure knowledge in five subject areas: writing, social studies, science, interpreting literature and the arts, and mathematics.

Our goal is also to develop or increase the student’s basic academic skills for personal satisfaction, to acquire employment, and to prepare them for further study at the postsecondary levels. The ESL program is a program

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This group are a part of 45 new students who are beginning their first level nursing studies with enthusiasm and dedication to their exciting new journey.



Susan Olson-Smith, Sharon Holguin and Conni Reichert, all long term members of the LCC Nursing Faculty, will be clarifying policies for admission and for progression used in the department in the upcoming September 22 “A Conversation with the Community at the LRC. A light lunch will be held at 11:30 a.m. at the LRC.

Monica Stroud says spending time with her family is precious to her



Stroud says her greatest strength is being true to herself. She doesn't try to be someone she's not.

Name: Monica Mascareñas Stroud

Position: Student Records/Registration Specialist and VA Certifying Official even though it's not on my contract.

How many years at LCC (what year did you start)? I have been working at Luna for 10 years and in the same department. My first day was on 08/23/1999.

Favorite food and why? My favorite food is fried cabbage with ground beef, green chile and tortillas. It is just sooooo good.

Favorite hobby and why? I enjoy reading, four wheeling and spending time with family. Reading and four wheeling are very relaxing for me and spending time with family is precious to me.

Favorite TV show and why? Dancing with the Stars. I just love watching people dance. I think I was a dancer in my previous life. Ha, Ha!!

Where would you like to see yourself five years from now? Five years from now I want to be done with school and teaching our future students ways of succeeding in life. I want to make a positive difference in their lives.

What do you like best about LCC? One of the things I like best about LCC is seeing and working with students who are excited about gaining a great education. I also enjoy the people that I work with. They make me laugh all the time. They can be quite crazy. Even when we are at our busiest, we can always have a good laugh and it makes us feel good. Laughter makes us better at our jobs.

What do you like least about LCC and what would you offer as a solution? What I like least about Luna is the lack of communication between departments. A lot of employees on campus are too territorial and need to realize that all of us are here for the students. Too many employees tend to "pass the buck" instead of handling different situations. Policies need to be adhered to so that things run smoothly. Every employee at LCC should really READ or USE the CATALOG. The catalog, as I was told when I was hired, is the "BIBLE" of the school. It has all the answers in it that everyone needs when it comes to LCC.

What is your greatest strength? My greatest strength is being true to myself. I don't try to be someone I'm not. I am the way I am.

Quote of the Week

"I've been to many places across the United States and no one has treated me better than in Las Vegas, New Mexico,"—Don Perkins, former NFL All-Pro.

**Luna Community College
Student Government wants you!
To Exercise Your Right To Vote!**

ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD
SEPTEMBER 8-11, 2009
FROM 8:00 AM TO 12:00 PM
AND
1:00PM TO 5:00 PM
IN THE ADMISSIONS OFFICE!



Dr. Campos sends letter in support of Luna Charter Academy to PEC

August 30, 2009

Public Education Commission
c/o Ms. Beverly Friedman
300 Don Gaspar Avenue
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Ms. Friedman:

This letter is written with wholehearted conviction and enthusiastic support of the proposed Luna Charter Academy to be located on the main campus of Luna Community College in Las Vegas, New Mexico.

The irony and timeliness of this badly needed leading edge, innovative and precedence setting initiative referred to as the Luna Charter Academy is right on target with Governor Bill Richardson's passion, concern and proposal to boost the number of high school graduates and reduce dropouts. This strategic and bold effort would serve the entire northeastern part of New Mexico and provide those students who need an alternative to complete their high school education, the venue to do so.

This proposal truly puts student success first! As a region of the state where we are constantly asked by governmental, educational and economic development leaders to help ourselves before additional financial leverage and assistance could be offered, I have responded; we are doing all we can with what we have to help ourselves but it needs to be understood we are an area with high poverty and unemployment rates, sparse population in many small communities where students leave out of necessity after high school graduation and we need more niche industries to keep our youth at home.

Luna Community College is addressing the health care, educational and economic development issues of the region. This proposed Luna Charter Academy is an integral part of our long term master and strategic plan.

This academy would provide the springboard for non-traditional students who are frantically searching for options. These would be non-traditional students are raising families, working minimum wage jobs, dealing with daily difficulties and struggling to overcome life's hurdles. Throughout our state, more and more of this population are attempting to return and advance their education. In most cases, they are doing this because they have spent time in the real world learning the true value of formal education.

Today, more opportunities than ever before are available for students to receive a high school diploma. However, research indicates that many of today's students do better when they are instructed, not in the traditional lecture setting but in hands-on practitioner lab settings with intensive tutorial services. This model greatly improves student's self-esteem, understanding of core academic and vocational subject matter and inspires them to achieve their educational, employment and life's goals. The Luna Charter Academy will focus on and be held fully accountable for student success.

I greatly appreciate your consideration of the application for the Luna Charter Academy. This could be the most innovative and precedence setting charter ever approved within the State of New Mexico.

Siempre,
Pete Campos, EdD

Copy: Governor Bill Richardson
Secretary Veronica Garcia, PED
Secretary Designate Peter White, HED

**LCC Foundation Fundraising
2009 Reverse Drawing
The Plaza Hotel
Friday – August 28, 2009**

TICKET WINNERS:

1st Ticket Drawn:

\$300.00 - Keith Quintana

50th Ticket Drawn:

\$100.00 - Don Quintana

Grand Prize – Last Ticket Drawn:

\$5,000.00 – Carlos E. Coca

TICKETS SOLD: 199

AMOUNT OF TICKETS: 300

APPROXIMATE / ESTIMATION:

Reverse Drawing Gross Amount:

\$19,371.00

Outstanding:

\$ 1,500.00

Expenses:

\$ 9,000.00

Net Amount:

\$10,371.00

Learning is as easy...

Continued from page 1

of instruction designed to help adults become proficient in English: to achieve competence in writing, reading, and speaking the English language.

The courses offered incorporate both independent, self-paced studies with structured classroom studies. ABE students work with individualized learning plans that correspond to their personal needs, test scores, and goals. These classes are offered free to the public.

The statistic of high poverty in New Mexico as mentioned in Barry Massey's article "New Mexico's poverty still among worst in country" seems to have a direct correlation to our high percentage of adults without a high school diploma or equivalent; New Mexico's test scores are some of the lowest in the nation.

Because of the low-income levels, we find there are many barriers to an educational attainment: low levels of education, high unemployment, overcrowded and dilapidated housing, high rates of divorce, family dysfunction, high crime rates, and low levels of social capital or human interaction. New Mexico also continues to be in the bottom five in four key indicators of the AP report's 10 key indicators: 49th in teen birth rate, 48th in percentage of children living in single-parent families, 47th in the child poverty rate, and 44th in the percentage of families in which no parent has a full-time, year round job. However, New Mexico did improve in overall ranking from 48th last year to 43rd this year.

Another factor that seems to impact GED attainments is the unbroken cycle of the previous generations' inability to achieve their high school diplomas.

Students whose parents have attained their high school diploma seem to dramatically improve their chances of also receiving their high school diploma.

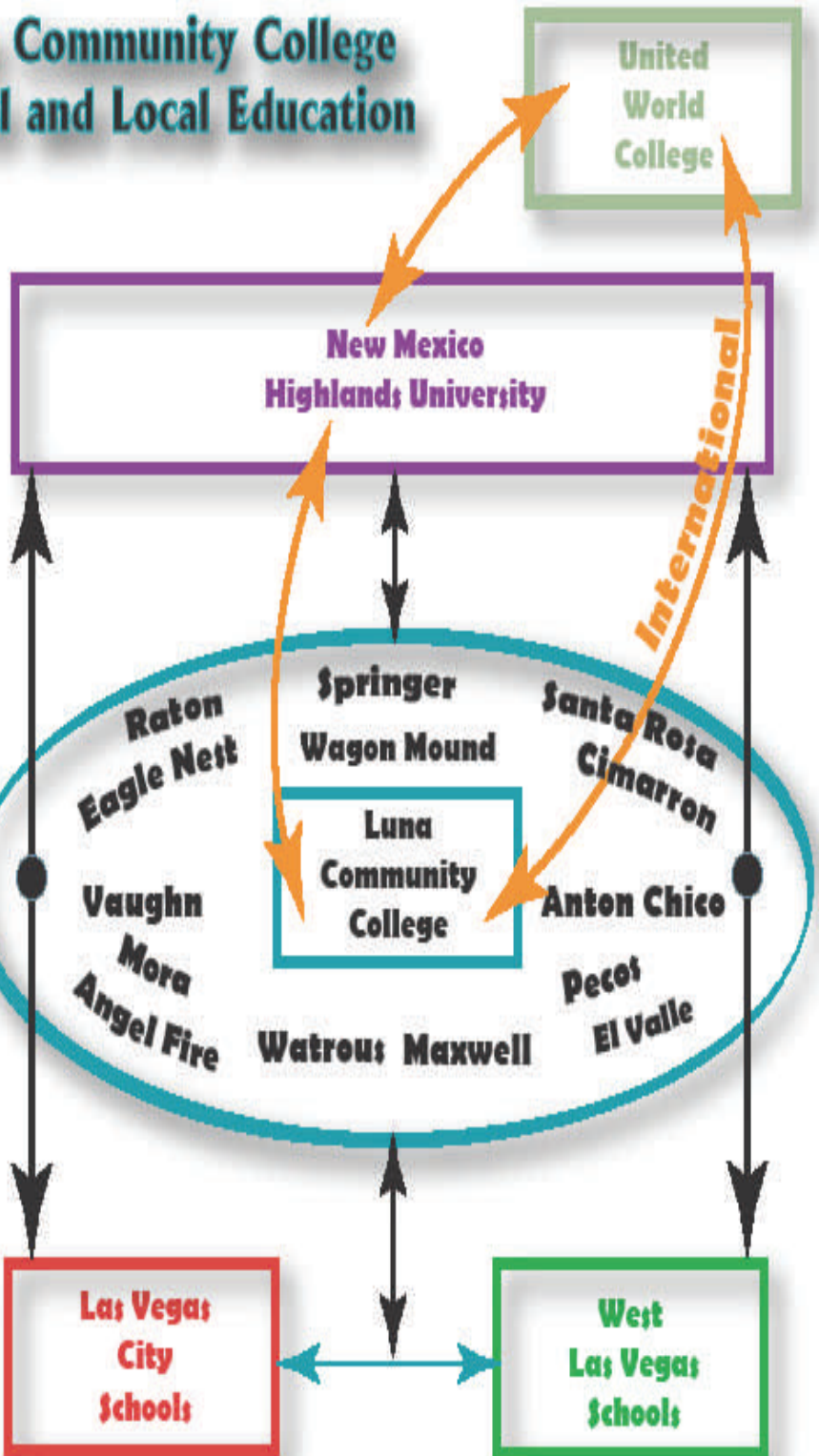
Consequently, research shows that students at most risk of low educational achievement are those with parents who did not graduate from high school, but the ABE program is designed to help adults of all walks of life.

There have been many success stories in the GED program. One of our recent graduates, Decarlo Briancesco, is one of our most recent success stories. He is currently preparing for an all expense paid trip to the Philippines. He attributes his luck, his trip, and his job to acquiring his GED. He states that everything immediately started happening after receiving his GED. He walked into an AT & T office and declared that he wanted to be a manager. He was told that they would put him on as manager and see how he handled himself on the "floor." Apparently he did well because he is now on his way to the Philippines for four months to train other employees. He states that this opportunity would have never come his way without the GED program. Therefore, I will reiterate "learning is as easy as ABE," and it pays to have an education.



Luna Community College employee Stephanie Vigil and LCC student Aaron Jorgeson were two of several hundred people that participated in last week's Welcome Back Fiesta held at Plaza Park.

Luna Community College Global and Local Education



wkhp 09.03.09

SCHOOL
DISTRICTS



Dual Credit
Concurrent Enrollment

GED
Certificates
Degrees
On-Line Education
Community Education

- Work
- Military
- Higher Education

Better

- Quality of Life
- Education
- Research
- Jobs
- Training
- Mental Health
- Physical Health
- Chance for Career Advancement

More

- Intellectual Growth
- Advancement Opportunities
- Skills

Bailey's Story

The struggles and triumphs of a little baby boy

The following letter was sent to KOAT TV's Melissa Montoya by Cathy Juarez, Bailey Chavez' aunt.

Melissa,

I am sending this information about Bailey Emmanuel Chavez on behalf of his father Chris Chavez. Chris can be reached at 505-980-6734.

I was wondering if you or if you knew of anyone that could help us with my great-nephew Bailey (there are a few shots of him attached). Bailey has a very rare disorder called Ohtahara Syndrome.

Ohtahara Syndrome is a rare form of epilepsy characterized on an EEG by a burst suppression of activity—lots of activity followed by a flatline (both awake and asleep). That is the one common that all children with Ohtahara have. Other than that, the children can have a range of anomalies. Children diagnosed with Ohtahara do not have a good prognosis. Usually death occurs in infancy. Their little brains are wrecked by seizures that are never-ending and do not allow the brain to rest or develop. All children diagnosed with Ohtahara are profoundly retarded. Their little brains do not get a chance to develop and this affects their breathing along with low to no muscle tone; lots of OS children (like Bailey) are immobile. We belong to a great support group online and there are 161 current and former members.

I guess what I am asking is if you know of a way or know of someone that may help us spread the word about our Bailey...to get him the help he needs...cut through bureaucracy...we would forever be grateful.

Bailey became a big brother to a healthy younger brother, Braden on March 23, 2009. Their older sister Tessa has been such a pillar of strength at such a young age. She is constantly terrified her new brother will have seizures and have to be on oxygen 24 hours a day. Its hard to comprehend everything in a 7-year olds mind, but Tessa gets it and that is what I find to be so sad. Braden's cord blood was saved so that stem cells could be retrieved and hopefully help Bailey in the near future. Bailey is now getting over his fifth bout of pneumonia this year (it is very scary when he gets pneumonia because chest infections are usually what end up killing young OS children). When other children catch a slight colds, Bailey contracts pneumonia, his little body just can't fight everyday diseases like we can.

Here is a testimonial that Bailey's parents have sent out about their

wonderful son:

Bailey Emmanuel Chavez blessed us with his presence on August 26, 2007. From the beginning, Bailey had jerks and twitches and was a poor feeder; he just wanted to sleep all the time. He was severely jaundiced and was treated for that at two days old. At five days old he was taken to UNMH for a consultation regarding his sleepiness and twitches and jerks.

He was admitted and stayed for 3 ½ weeks. During this time, Bailey had numerous tests, spinal taps, 8 lumbar punctures, EEGs and all types of blood work and metabolic testing. As you may know, babies are not given anesthesia for most invasive procedures as “they will not remember the pain”. MRIs did not show any brain abnormalities nor have subsequent MRIs and PET scans. The doctors could give no explanations as to what was wrong with our little guy.

He was sent home with a NG feeding tube and actually thrived

with loving care from his family (especially his Nana). In October of 2007 Bailey was life-flighted from Las Vegas to Albuquerque (Presbyterian Hospital) because of uncontrolled seizures and a decrease in body temperature and oxygen levels. He was given heavy duty medications to try and control the seizures. He also was given another EEG which showed a burst-suppression pattern (lots of activity followed by no activity) during awake and sleep times. At this time, his neuro-

rologist consulted with a noted pediatric neurologist from Chicago and we were given the diagnosis of Ohtahara syndrome.

We were told that Bailey could stay in the hospital until he passed away, or he could be taken home and cared for by his family. We chose the latter. Most children diagnosed with Ohtahara syndrome pass away in infancy.

Bailey is cared for during the week by his great grandmother (Nana) who commutes from Albuquerque to be his home health care provider. He has an awesome pediatrician in Dr. Mary Schipper who has taken our calls late at night, during weekends and if need be, comes to our home. He also has home health care provided by Victory Home Health Care and his nurse Andrea has provided him with extraordinary care. We belong to a very good support group for children with Ohtahara syndrome. Currently there are 158 members (including those with children that have passed on) from all over the world.

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Although Bailey will never be known for getting into messes or tormenting his big sister or his younger brother Braden and his family will never be able to watch him play sports, Bailey is more. He is our teacher. Bailey has shown us the true meaning of life. He has taught us to rejoice in even the smallest accomplishment, a smile, a laugh, a cry.

Bailey's Story...

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Ohtahara is a syndrome, not a disease in and of itself and is a very rare condition with a poor prognosis. A syndrome, by definition, is a group of complex signs and symptoms that together indicate or characterize a clinical picture of a disease. In other words, the connection between all children with Ohtahara syndrome is the symptoms they are presenting with, most notable the burst-suppression pattern from EEGs. The underlying cause of the symptoms may be different in each case so no one drug works for all children diagnosed with Ohtahara. In fact, many children are on a variety of anti-seizure medications along with other medications to help a variety of symptoms.

Our family has truly been blessed with the addition of Bailey Emmanuel. He has showed us compassion, strength and fortitude and how grateful we are for all the little things in life that most of us take for granted each day.

We have had a couple of instances where Bailey caught pneumonia (he is susceptible due to his compromised immune system and lack of mobility) and his condition was dire. With prayer and strength that none of his family can imagine, Bailey has continued to fight back and be with us. For that we are eternally grateful.

Although Bailey will never be known for getting into messes or tormenting his big sister or his younger brother Braden and his family will never be able to watch him play sports, Bailey is more. He is our teacher. Bailey has shown us the true meaning of life. He has taught us to rejoice in even the smallest accomplishment, a smile, a laugh, a cry. He has taught his family, especially his big sister Tessa the meaning of compassion for others. To be champions for those that are not as fortunate. What the true meaning of unselfish love and tolerance for others is about. To know what is important in life and what is irrelevant. The strength he has instilled in his family to be a loving, indestructible entity. To be thankful when his oxygen needs come down, for a day when he can stay awake for more than three hours. To be thankful for a day when his little brain is seizure free and his true personality shines through like the sun after a rainstorm. For the times you don't think he

is listening to you and then he will give you that lopsided smirk, just like his Pampo. For all the times he has shown us the strength he has to pull through another bad bout of pneumonia when others said to prepare for the worst. He has shown us the power of prayer. Bailey, our amazing Bailey, at almost 2, is the greatest teacher our family has known.

We know that Bailey's prognosis is not good. However, this amazing little boy has shown us that doctors and specialists can be wrong. He has made it through many difficult times and continues to struggle for life every day.

We are asking for awareness for children with disabilities. Especially very rare illnesses where there is no definitive answer as to what caused Bailey's condition. We would also like to see an increase in the amount of stem-cell research being performed for different neurological disorders and how it may help children like Bailey.

Bailey has truly changed our lives for the better. we don't take little things or life for granted anymore. We are truly thankful for each and every day Bailey is able to be with us.

About four weeks ago Bailey caught pneumonia again and his condition was dire. His regular Doctor was out of town and the local Doctors did not want to do anything for Bailey because they did not know his case. They sent him home with morphine "to keep him comfortable". We truly thought this might be God calling Bailey home because his oxygen needs were through the roof, at one time 7L. Thankfully Bailey pulled through once again. His Doctor came to the house to see Bailey when she got back and gave us some news we weren't prepared for. She said that the seizures were now affecting Bailey's brain stem and that was affecting his ability to breathe and that she didn't expect Bailey to be around for more than another year. That was the hardest news to hear. How do you prepare for something like that? You never are prepared.

Bailey was two-years-old on Aug. 26. We can't believe all he has been through and the fortitude and love for life this little guy shows.

If you meet Bailey...he will change your life.

Thank you for your time, Cathy- Bailey's great aunt



Pictured are: Chris, Tessa, Bailey, Braden and Nicaea Chavez. The Chavez family would like to start a support group for anyone that has a sick family member. If you are interested, call Chris at 980-6734. Chris is an employee at LCC.

ONLINE REGISTRATION

IS HERE!!!

Register for 8 week courses today!

@

<http://pathways.luna.edu>



**Luna
Community
College**

**8 WEEK COURSES
CLASSES BEGIN OCT 12, 2009**

Course	Sec	Hours	Title	Days	Dates	Times	Campus	Bldg	Room	Instructor
ASE101	02	3.0	Introduction to Renewable Energy	--T-R--	10/13/09 - 12/04/09	11:30AM - 2:10PM	MAIN	ADMN	103	Jencka, D
BIO103E	02	2.0	Medical Terminology (DL)	-M-----	10/12/09 - 12/04/09	TBA	EWEB	MAIN		Roybal, E
CCT110E	01	3.0	Community College Teaching (DL)	-M-----	10/12/09 - 12/04/09	TBA	EWEB	MAIN		Trujillo, F
CCT116E	01	3.0	Faculty & the Community College (DL)	---W---	10/14/09 - 12/04/09	TBA	EWEB	MAIN		Trujillo, F
ELEC102	02	4.0	Electronic Circuits/AC	-M-W---	10/12/09 - 12/04/09	9:00AM - 11:50AM	MAIN	TECH	130	Duncan, R
ELEC102L	02	0.0	Electronic Circuits/AC Lab	----R--	10/15/09 - 12/04/09	1:00PM - 4:50PM	MAIN	TECH	130	Duncan, R
ENG111E	21	3.0	Freshman Composition I (DL)	--T-R--	10/13/09 - 12/04/09	6:00PM - 8:50PM	EWEB	SPRG		Otto, K.
FCMK100	41	3.0	Intro to Furniture & Cabinet-Making	-M-W---	10/12/09 - 12/04/09	3:00PM - 6:30PM	OFFS	OFFS	MOR3	Laumbach, H
FS115	01	4.0	Introduction to Firefighting	-MTWR--	10/12/09 - 12/04/09	5:15PM - 8:15PM	MAIN	GEN	104	Sauter, R.
HIST101	02	3.0	Western Civilization I	-M-W---	10/12/09 - 12/04/09	2:00PM - 4:50PM	MAIN	GEN	109	Garcia, T.
HPS140	01	3.0	Sports Officiating	----FS	10/09/09 - 12/04/09	5:00PM - 8:50PM	MAIN	GEN	110	Abreu, A
HPS210	01	3.0	Administration and Evaluation	--T-R--	10/13/09 - 12/04/09	6:00PM - 8:50PM	MAIN	GEN	110	Abreu, A
MATH105	06	4.0	General Mathematics	-M-W-F-	10/12/09 - 12/04/09	4:00PM - 6:20PM	MAIN	TECH	126A	Stockett
MS125E	01	3.0	Military Professionalism (DL)	-M-W---	10/12/09 - 12/04/09	TBA	EWEB	MAIN		{Staff}
MS140E	01	3.0	Military Leadership: Theory/Practice (DL)	--T-R--	10/13/09 - 12/04/09	TBA	EWEB	MAIN		{Staff}
NRS099	01	1.0	Student Nurse Success	-----F-	08/21/09 - 10/09/09	1:00PM - 2:50PM	MAIN	AHC	NO9	Weinkauff, A
NRS0101	01	1.0	Therapeutic Communication	-M-----	08/17/09 - 10/05/09	2:00PM - 3:50PM	MAIN	AHC	NO10	Reichert, C
NRS0101	02	1.0	Therapeutic Communication	--T---	08/18/09 - 10/06/09	2:00PM - 3:50PM	MAIN	AHC	NO10	Reichert, C
PE112	31	1.0	Physical Fitness	-MTWRF-	10/12/09 - 12/04/09	7:00AM - 8:00PM	SROS	OFFS		Campos A
PE112	43	1.0	Physical Fitness	-MTWR--	10/12/09 - 12/04/09	6:15PM - 7:05PM	OFFS	OFFS	MOR2	Abeyta, J
PSYC101E	20	3.0	Introduction to Psychology (DL)	-M-W---	10/12/09 - 12/04/09	6:00PM - 8:50PM	EWEB	SPRG		Robbins, J
PSYC242E	02	3.0	Developmental Life Span (DL)	---WR--	10/14/09 - 12/04/09	6:00PM - 8:50PM	EWEB	MAIN		Hughes, R
READ105	20	3.0	Developmental Reading	-----F-	10/16/09 - 12/04/09	8:00AM - 1:50PM	SPRG	FORR	107	Otto, K.

For an updated list of classes, go to <http://www.luna.edu>

NEED HELP WITH YOUR ONLINE CLASSES?

Then you need to attend one of LCC's

Blackboard Student Trainings

- Tuesday, September 8, 2009
- Monday, September 14, 2009
- Tuesday, September 22, 2009
- Monday, September 28, 2009
- Tuesday, October 6, 2009
- Monday, October 12, 2009
- Tuesday, October 20, 2009



All trainings will be held at 10:00am in the
Student Online Learning Lab
Student Services Building Room 204

Weekly activities

Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2009

- ▣ 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. *Conversation Stewardship Prog. Mtg. (Stud. Serv./Conf. Rm)*
- ▣ 7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. *Study Hall – LCC Softball (General Studies/Room 112)*

Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2009

- ▣ 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. *Line Dance Class (IPC/Cafe)*

Thursday, Sept. 10, 2009

- ▣ 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. *Presentation on Essential Oils (LRC/Lecture Hall)*

Friday, Sept. 11, 2009

- ▣ 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. *Defensive Driving Class/ Spons. CDD (LRC/Lecture Hall)*
- ▣ 4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. *Las Vegas Land Grant Board Mtg. (Stud. Serv./Conf. Rm)*

Saturday, Sept. 12, 2009

- ▣ 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. *C.N.A. Testing (Allied Health Center /N7&3)*
- ▣ 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. *Defensive Driving Class (General Studies/Room 102B)*

Sunday, Sept. 13, 2009

- ▣ *No Activities Scheduled*

Images around Luna CC



Pictured clockwise are: Diana Alderette and Louise Portillos at a recruitment booth set up at K-Mart in Raton; Daniel Archuleta avoids a puddle of water. The Roughriders second game with Trinidad Jr. College was cancelled because of rain. LCC went 2-1 on the weekend; Benjamin Crespin talks to Vince Howell during the Welcome Back Fiesta; LCC baseball player George Dellos enjoys a soda during the Welcome Back Fiestas; LCC nursing faculty meet to discuss the nursing program with the State Board of Nursing site visitors during a consultative visit. Pictured left to right are faculty members Susan Olson, Maxine Hughes, Director Conni Reichert and site visitors Dr. Mary Moser-Gautreaux, Director of Apollo College; Mr. Tony Escudero, Former chairman of the Board and Ms. Jackie Waggoner, interim co-chairman and assistant director to the New Mexico State Board of Nursing and Tom Herrera promotes the college at The People's Fair.





Dr. David Abbey
Executive Director
Legislative Finance Committee

Will present the
State of the State Address of
New Mexico's Finances

Wednesday, September 09, 2009
12:00pm - 1:00pm
at the
Rough Rider Grill
on the campus of
Luna Community College



Barack Obama's Back to School Speech

The following is a speech given by President Barack Obama intended for all students.

The President: Hello everyone – how's everybody doing today? I'm here with students at Wakefield High School in Arlington, Virginia. And we've got students tuning in from all across America, kindergarten through twelfth grade. I'm glad you all could join us today.

I know that for many of you, today is the first day of school. And for those of you in kindergarten, or starting middle or high school, it's your first day in a new school, so it's understandable if you're a little nervous. I imagine there are some seniors out there who are feeling pretty good right now, with just one more year to go. And no matter what grade you're in, some of you are probably wishing it were still summer, and you could've stayed in bed just a little longer this morning.

I know that feeling. When I was young, my family lived in Indonesia for a few years, and my mother didn't have the money to send me where all the American kids went to school. So she decided to teach me extra lessons herself, Monday through Friday – at 4:30 in the morning.

Now I wasn't too happy about getting up that early. A lot of times, I'd fall asleep right there at the kitchen table. But whenever I'd complain, my mother would just give me one of those looks and say, "This is no picnic for me either, buster."

So I know some of you are still adjusting to being back at school. But I'm here today because I have something important to discuss with you. I'm here because I want to talk with you about your education and what's expected of all of you in this new school year.

Now I've given a lot of speeches about education. And I've talked a lot about responsibility.

I've talked about your teachers' responsibility for inspiring you, and pushing you to learn.

I've talked about your parents' responsibility for making sure you stay on track, and get your homework done, and don't spend every waking hour in front of the TV or with that Xbox.

I've talked a lot about your government's responsibility for setting high standards, supporting teachers and principals, and turning around schools that aren't working where students aren't getting the opportunities they deserve.

But at the end of the day, we can have the most dedicated teachers, the most supportive parents, and the best schools in the world – and none of it will matter unless all of you fulfill your responsibilities. Unless you show up to those schools; pay attention to those teachers; listen to your parents, grandparents and other adults; and put in the hard work it takes to succeed.

And that's what I want to focus on today: the responsibility each of you has for your education. I want to start with the responsibility you have to yourself.

Every single one of you has something you're good at. Every single one of you has something to offer. And you have a responsibility to yourself to discover what that is. That's the opportunity an education

can provide.

Maybe you could be a good writer – maybe even good enough to write a book or articles in a newspaper – but you might not know it until you write a paper for your English class. Maybe you could be an innovator or an inventor – maybe even good enough to come up with the next iPhone or a new medicine or vaccine – but you might not know it until you do a project for your science class. Maybe you could be a mayor or a Senator or a Supreme Court Justice, but you might not know that until you join student government or the debate team.

And no matter what you want to do with your life – I guarantee that you'll need an education to do it. You want to be a doctor, or a teacher, or a police officer? You want to be a nurse or an architect, a lawyer or a member of our military? You're going to need a good education for every single one of those careers. You can't drop out of school and just drop into a good job. You've got to work for it and train for it and learn for it.

And this isn't just important for your own life and your own future. What you make of your education will decide nothing less than the future of this country. What you're learning in school today will determine whether we as a nation can meet our greatest challenges in the future.

You'll need the knowledge and problem-solving skills you learn in science and math to cure diseases like cancer and AIDS, and to develop new energy technologies and protect our environment. You'll need the insights and critical thinking skills you gain in history and social studies to fight poverty and homelessness, crime and discrimination, and make our nation more fair and more free. You'll need the creativity and ingenuity you develop in all your classes to build new companies that will create new jobs and boost our economy.

We need every single one of you to develop your talents, skills and intellect so you can help solve our most difficult problems. If you don't do that – if you quit on school – you're not just quitting on yourself, you're quitting on your country.

Now I know it's not always easy to do well in school. I know a lot of you have challenges in your lives right now that can make it hard to focus on your schoolwork.

I get it. I know what that's like. My father left my family when I was two years old, and I was raised by a single mother who struggled at times to pay the bills and wasn't always able to give us things the other kids had. There were times when I missed having a father in my life. There were times when I was lonely and felt like I didn't fit in.

So I wasn't always as focused as I should have been. I did some things I'm not proud of, and got in more trouble than I should have. And my life could have easily taken a turn for the worse.

But I was fortunate. I got a lot of second chances and had the opportunity to go to college, and law school, and follow my dreams. My wife, our First Lady Michelle Obama, has a similar story. Neither of her parents had gone to college, and they didn't have much. But they worked hard, and she worked hard, so that she could go to the best schools in this country.

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Barack Obama's...

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Some of you might not have those advantages. Maybe you don't have adults in your life who give you the support that you need. Maybe someone in your family has lost their job, and there's not enough money to go around. Maybe you live in a neighborhood where you don't feel safe, or have friends who are pressuring you to do things you know aren't right.

But at the end of the day, the circumstances of your life – what you look like, where you come from, how much money you have, what you've got going on at home – that's no excuse for neglecting your homework or having a bad attitude. That's no excuse for talking back to your teacher, or cutting class, or dropping out of school. That's no excuse for not trying.

Where you are right now doesn't have to determine where you'll end up. No one's written your destiny for you. Here in America, you write your own destiny. You make your own future.

That's what young people like you are doing every day, all across America.

Young people like Jazmin Perez, from Roma, Texas. Jazmin didn't speak English when she first started school. Hardly anyone in her hometown went to college, and neither of her parents had gone either. But she worked hard, earned good grades, got a scholarship to Brown University, and is now in graduate school, studying public health, on her way to being Dr. Jazmin Perez.

I'm thinking about Andoni Schultz, from Los Altos, California, who's fought brain cancer since he was three. He's endured all sorts of treatments and surgeries, one of which affected his memory, so it took him much longer – hundreds of extra hours – to do his schoolwork. But he never fell behind, and he's headed to college this fall.

And then there's Shantell Steve, from my hometown of Chicago, Illinois. Even when bouncing from foster home to foster home in the toughest neighborhoods, she managed to get a job at a local health center; start a program to keep young people out of gangs; and she's on track to graduate high school with honors and go on to college.

Jazmin, Andoni and Shantell aren't any different from any of you. They faced challenges in their lives just like you do. But they refused to give up. They chose to take responsibility for their education and set goals for themselves. And I expect all of you to do the same.

That's why today, I'm calling on each of you to set your own goals for your education – and to do everything you can to meet them. Your goal can be something as simple as doing all your homework, paying attention in class, or spending time each day reading a book. Maybe you'll decide to get involved in an extracurricular activity, or volunteer in your community. Maybe you'll decide to stand up for kids who are being teased or bullied because of who they are or how they look, because you believe, like I do, that all kids deserve a safe environment to study and learn. Maybe you'll decide to take better care of yourself so you can be more ready to learn. And along those lines, I hope you'll all wash your hands a lot, and stay home from school when you don't feel well, so we can keep people from getting the flu this fall and winter.

Whatever you resolve to do, I want you to commit to it. I want you to really work at it.

I know that sometimes, you get the sense from TV that you can be rich and successful without any hard work -- that your ticket to success is through rapping or basketball or being a reality TV star, when chances are, you're not going to be any of those things.

But the truth is, being successful is hard. You won't love every sub-

ject you study. You won't click with every teacher. Not every homework assignment will seem completely relevant to your life right this minute. And you won't necessarily succeed at everything the first time you try.

That's OK. Some of the most successful people in the world are the ones who've had the most failures. JK Rowling's first Harry Potter book was rejected twelve times before it was finally published. Michael Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team, and he lost hundreds of games and missed thousands of shots during his career. But he once said, "I have failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."

These people succeeded because they understand that you can't let your failures define you – you have to let them teach you. You have to let them show you what to do differently next time. If you get in trouble, that doesn't mean you're a troublemaker, it means you need to try harder to behave. If you get a bad grade, that doesn't mean you're stupid, it just means you need to spend more time studying.

No one's born being good at things, you become good at things through hard work. You're not a varsity athlete the first time you play a new sport. You don't hit every note the first time you sing a song. You've got to practice. It's the same with your schoolwork. You might have to do a math problem a few times before you get it right, or read something a few times before you understand it, or do a few drafts of a paper before it's good enough to hand in.

Don't be afraid to ask questions. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it. I do that every day. Asking for help isn't a sign of weakness, it's a sign of strength. It shows you have the courage to admit when you don't know something, and to learn something new. So find an adult you trust – a parent, grandparent or teacher; a coach or counselor – and ask them to help you stay on track to meet your goals.

And even when you're struggling, even when you're discouraged, and you feel like other people have given up on you – don't ever give up on yourself. Because when you give up on yourself, you give up on your country.

The story of America isn't about people who quit when things got tough. It's about people who kept going, who tried harder, who loved their country too much to do anything less than their best.

It's the story of students who sat where you sit 250 years ago, and went on to wage a revolution and found this nation. Students who sat where you sit 75 years ago who overcame a Depression and won a world war; who fought for civil rights and put a man on the moon. Students who sat where you sit 20 years ago who founded Google, Twitter and Facebook and changed the way we communicate with each other.

So today, I want to ask you, what's your contribution going to be? What problems are you going to solve? What discoveries will you make? What will a president who comes here in twenty or fifty or one hundred years say about what all of you did for this country?

Your families, your teachers, and I are doing everything we can to make sure you have the education you need to answer these questions. I'm working hard to fix up your classrooms and get you the books, equipment and computers you need to learn. But you've got to do your part too. So I expect you to get serious this year. I expect you to put your best effort into everything you do. I expect great things from each of you. So don't let us down – don't let your family or your country or yourself down. Make us all proud. I know you can do it.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless America.

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