



A Partnership between the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce and the Los Angeles Unified School District

### SPOTLIGHT ENTRY # 7

1. Please enter your contact information:

2. Please enter your partner's contact information:

Name: - Beth B. Kennedy Company or School: - Leadership in Entertainment & Media Arts Title - Lead Teacher; Design Team Chair	Name: - Leslie Criswell Company or School: - Tucker Ellis & West, LLP Title: - Partner
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#### 1. How did you meet your business or school partner?

Other (please describe) - Introduced by another one of our amazing partners, the Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF)

#### 2. What activities does the business partner participate in at the school?

- Classroom Speaking
- Mentors Students
- Serves on Advisory Board
- Sponsors Student Activities
- Donates Goods or Services
- Other (please describe) - With other SLC teachers, and CRF, over the summer, Ms. Criswell and her team created a Legal-Related Education (LRE) Pipeline for law related classes, including a complete lawsuit with all copies (based on facts in a 10th grade short story, "Harrison Bergeron.:

#### 3. How often do these activities occur?

Once a month

#### 4. What has been the result of your partnership?

(For example, students have been placed in internships, student academic achievement has improved, etc.)

Students received incentives for our SLC Achievement Awards, which acknowledges students who have improved (in attendance as well as grades). Ms. Criswell and her firm donated funds to buy students theater-ticket packages, complete with popcorn and soft drinks. These were a tremendous hit with the students, were presented in an Assembly in front of all SLC students, and made students realize that it's improvements that matter.

#### 5. How has this partnership helped students?

The monthly career-related meetings as well as the quarterly LRE Pipeline classes gives students an opportunity to meet young lawyers (who look like them), hear their stories (how they got there) and realize that high school is just the beginning. In addition, the LRE courses focus on areas of the law which students are interested in -- criminal law, misdemeanors, immigration law -- and provide valuable information which all US residents are supposed to know, but are rarely taught.

## **6. How has this partnership helped the educator(s) achieve their instructional goals?**

It is only through our business and legal partnerships, with Tucker, Ellis & West, LLP and The Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF) that students are exposed to the real-life realities of the "college prepared, career ready" mantra which educators preach to them -- we need to decrease the gap and increase the relevance of education, and specifically high school.

## **7. How did you initiate this partnership after initially meeting your partner?**

We spent most of the summer on regular conference calls, working out the plan and curriculum for this first year. After an initial meeting, organized by Gregorio Medina and Laura Wellsley of the Constitutional Rights Foundation, hosted by Tucker, Ellis & West, LLP, many of us continued the conversation over numerous conference calls, while TEW attorneys drafted the documents and pleadings for the case of "Harrison Bergeron."

## **8. What was the biggest challenge you had to overcome?**

Trying to fit the LRE Pipeline curriculum into the already jammed state mandated (and district mandated) curricular requirements. Teachers within the SLC did not participate to the extent we would have wished for a variety of reasons that have nothing to do with the partner or the curriculum.

## **9. What would you say are the greatest achievements of the partnership?**

We just completed the student evaluations of the LRE Pipeline courses -- 88% were taught by a visiting professor from CRF or TEW; 92% of the students believed the curriculum was relevant to the SLC's vision and objectives; 50% understood the wide variety of legal careers open to them; 74% understood the importance of the Supreme Court's role in interpreting our Constitutional Rights, 80% understood the role of attorneys in defending and challenging our rights; 83% are more able to develop a more convincing persuasive argument and 25% have decided to become a judge or an attorney.

## **10. What are your short-term goals for further developing the partnership?**

We hope to expand the partnership next year to the 9th and 10th grades, building on our existing work and expanding the scope and sequence of the curricular offerings.

## **11. What advice would you give schools that want to start a similar partnership program?**

Everyone has to understand that at least the first year will require a huge investment of time -- planning, and then evaluating each session. Having a joint partnership between Tucker, Ellis & West, LLP AND The Constitutional Rights Foundation has been a dream We hope that you will be able to honor them BOTH (although I was only able to list one of the partners names!)