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**Chicano Latino Youth Leadership Project**  
**Strategic Plan 2009-2014 Synopsis**  
**July 2009**

Dear Friends:

On behalf of the Board of the Chicano Latino Youth Leadership Project (CLYLP), we are excited to introduce the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan. This document presents a “big picture” agenda to guide leaders in keeping the work mission-driven, inspired by common goals, firmly grounded in organizational values and by a clear vision. It provides a broad roadmap to leverage strengths and resources most effectively while responding to changes in the environment driven as we take our work to a new level.

This plan was developed by the CLYLP Board of Directors with major contributions from the chairs of CLYLP committees. Interviews with institutional partners, former board members and key supporters also provided crucial perspectives. In this process, we challenged ourselves to step back from day-to-day details in order to think critically and creatively about the current status and direction of the organization.

This plan is not a blueprint, but rather a guide for planning and decision-making. The success of the plan hinges on strengthening the capacity of the organization - a key priority. The board of directors will review the strategic plan annually to assess progress and make adjustments based on changing circumstances both outside and inside the organization.

In unveiling this plan, the board of directors extends its heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has supported our efforts and rededicates itself to a future in which California and all of its communities prosper as a result of a new generation of leadership.

Sincerely,

Max Espinoza, President  
 CLYLP Board of Directors  
 '92 Alumnus

Norma Dominguez, Chair  
 CLYLP Strategic Planning Committee  
 '96 Alumnus



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We believe that youth leadership development and educational opportunity, grounded in a strong sense of culture, gives young people the ability to realize their potential as contributors to their communities and society at large. As more Latinos gain leadership positions, the state, in general and Latino communities, in particular, gain strength and prosper.

The following are the principles that guide CLYLP in its work:

Youth leadership as a social imperative and a sound investment:

- All young people deserve opportunities to reach their full potential as contributors to society.
- A small investment at a crucial development stage can make a huge difference in a young person's life course.

Our approach to youth leadership development:

- Educational attainment is an important pathway for career and leadership growth.
- Exposure to successful role models helps build self-confidence and motivation.
- The development of young people and their families is interconnected, with each playing an essential role in the growth and transformation of the other.

Our model of community leadership and partnership:

- A community-led, volunteer-based model can have an ever-expanding impact through involvement of large numbers of people and organizations in diverse regions and sectors.
- Giving back to communities provides opportunities for empowerment, growth and enrichment for those who give.

## VALUES

The CLYLP values, listed below are infused through our work to promote leadership with humility and commitment:

- **Service to the community** – Those who serve develop leadership qualities and skills that are carried forward in many areas of community service.
- **Cultural identity and motivation** – CLYLP enhances leadership potential, motivation and self-confidence by exposing young people to Chicano/Latino history, cultural values and role models.
- **Self-realization and continuous learning** – CLYLP exposes young people to new possibilities that can change their futures.
- **Equity** – CLYLP opens doors to educational and career opportunities for young people with limited access to resources and develops leaders who participate in creating equitable policies and institutions in many arenas of our society.

- **Collaboration** – CLYLP partners with academic institutions, corporations, community leaders and professionals to continuously identify and work toward shared goals that advance youth and their development.
- **Community-based leadership** – CLYLP is a community-driven model founded by leaders in the Latino community.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

In the next five years CLYLP will continue to be at the forefront in developing the Latino leaders of tomorrow. It will build upon its core strengths: a program that has been tested over time and an engaged and active community of volunteers. The program will be documented and expanded as a comprehensive model that links alumni to a community of leaders. The range of services will also expand to provide youth and alumni of different ages with more resources, such as fellowships and volunteer opportunities for continuing their development as leaders.

Acknowledging that CLYLP programs reach a small percentage of youth directly, CLYLP will partner more actively with others and will focus on strategic communications to promote best practices and strengthen support for culturally responsive, community-based youth leadership development. CLYLP will focus significant efforts on fund development, staffing and infrastructure development during the next two years.

This strategic direction was designed based on analysis and discussion of 1) organizational strengths and challenges; 2) environmental factors that impact the work; and 3) critical issues, which are summarized in the following sections.

### RESPONDING TO ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

There are many important changes in the environment that impact CLYLP and its work. The following are the most salient opportunities and threats that will be addressed by the strategic plan:

### CONTINUED GROWTH OF LATINO COMMUNITY

While the population is growing in numbers and influence, there remains a tremendous unmet need. Large segments of the community face barriers to educational opportunities and other resources. These realities impact the quality of life for families and communities.

*Implications:* The future of California depends upon the future of the Latino community. There is a need to develop leaders engaged in all aspects of society with an understanding of the community and a global perspective.

#### ECONOMIC/BUDGET CRISIS

Young people in the Latino community are being placed at a further disadvantage as a result of the dire economic situation.

*Implications:* The opportunity provided by CLYLP takes on more importance in the lives of underserved young people. Furthermore, CLYLP's model of volunteerism has greater relevance as a cost-effective way to have a growing impact.

#### INCREASED DIVERSITY AND MULTICULTURALISM

California is leading the nation in diversity.

*Implications:* California's future leaders need to understand and provide leadership in a multicultural context. They will need to be able to work effectively with and build partnerships among people from many backgrounds.

#### PERSISTENT GAPS IN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Although population growth gives the Latino community increased significance in the political and economic future of the state, the educational system is not preparing Latino students to rise to this challenge.

*Implications:* There is a critical need to develop leaders with the capacity to understand and navigate through complex challenges.

#### RENEWED COMMITMENT TO VOLUNTEERISM AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

In an era of program reductions, unemployment, and social isolation, there is a higher motivation to organize and encourage volunteerism to enable people to apply their talents and energies to make a difference.

*Implications:* CLYLP's model, founded on principles of volunteerism and civic engagement, has increased relevance in this period.



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#### EMERGENCE/GROWTH OF YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

One major change in the landscape since CLYLP's inception is the emergence of numerous programs addressing youth leadership development.

*Implications:* No single program can address the vast challenge of leadership development for the future. The existence of numerous youth leadership programs represent resources geared towards a common goal and present an enormous opportunity for collaboration.

#### CLYLP GOALS

**Goal #1:** Expand and strengthen the CLYLP as a model that engages youth throughout California and provides ongoing leadership development and civic engagement opportunities for program participants, alumni and volunteers.

**Goal #2:** Build and expand partnerships to develop collaborative approaches to leadership development and foster culturally responsive, community-based leadership programs for young people from diverse backgrounds in California.

**Goal #3:** Establish CLYLP as a professional, fully funded, sustainable organization with full time staff, an active volunteer base and effective systems and structures.

#### SUMMARY

The strategic plan that has been adopted by the CLYLP Board of Directors is both a validation of core strengths and a call to stretch beyond the organization's current capacities. In adopting this plan, the CLYLP Board rededicates itself to continuing the legacy of the CLYLP program model, which has changed thousands of lives. We rise to the challenge of expanding our model so that we can reach more youth with a more comprehensive range of services. With the support of volunteers, we are committed to sharing the lessons from our work with others engaged in youth leadership development to ensure a future in which California and all of its communities prosper as the result of a new generation of leadership.

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partnership  
equity  
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