



Media Contact:
Oné Musel-Gilley
for Feria Para Aprender/The Learning Fair
cell: 512.576.0219
CommuniCard@gmail.com

Cassandra Hinojosa
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
361.825.2337
Cassandra.hinojosa@tamucc.edu

For Immediate Release

ACCLAIMED EDUCATIONAL MODEL ‘FERIA PARA APRENDER™’ EXPANDS TO CORPUS CHRISTI AREA

**The Coastal Bend ‘Learning Fair’ to Feature 75 Educational Exhibits Hosted by 40 Nonprofits
and Numerous School Districts around the Region**

AUSTIN, Texas (July 21, 2010) – A nationally-acclaimed education program for increased parental involvement and college-readiness in Latino communities is headed to the Corpus Christi, Texas, area. The **Feria Para Aprender (The Learning Fair)** will take place on Saturday, August 14, from 1-5 p.m. at the Borchard Regional Fairgrounds in Robstown, Texas. The event is free and open to the public.

Feria Para Aprender is defined as a “mobilization event” with a three-tiered methodology focused year-round on a region’s nonprofit educational alignment, parental navigation, and economic development. The program culminates with a Feria where Hispanic and Spanish language communities are shown how to navigate the U.S. education system from cradle to career through a systematic design around pre-K, primary and secondary education, college, and careers.

“We’re very excited to bring the Feria Para Aprender to our area. We will be the second Texas market to hold this event before others launch across Texas within the year,” said Dr. Janet Cunningham, executive director of the Coastal Bend Partners for College & Career Readiness, the area’s Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board P-16 Council. “The Feria is not just about one day but rather a long-term plan to train nonprofits and education groups in a region to scale with the demographic shifts and to better engage the fast-growing Hispanic population in a region.”

At the Coastal Bend Feria, more than 40 nonprofits and 80 volunteers are being trained with a curriculum that will allow them to better frame their organization’s message to parents at the event and help them navigate through more than 75 educational exhibits and enrichment activities. The day will include the following:

- An educational pathway from pre-K to college
- Five career zones focused on the critical workforce development areas for the region: Education, Healthcare, Industry, Energy, and Tourism.
- Reading gardens and theatrical story-reading with over 1,000 books given away
- Photo visualization area (every child gets a photo in cap and gown or professional attire)
- Mock bilingual education and dual language classrooms
- Hands-on science and technology activities such as robotics and medical demonstrations; industrial equipment demonstrations

(more)

Page 2, FERIA PARA APRENDER LAUNCHES IN COASTAL BEND REGION

- A Commitment Zone™ where parents and students illustrate their aspirations on a mural
- Back-to-school supplies give-a-way.

“We’ve made excellent strides in our area to decrease drop-out rates and get more of our Hispanic youth into college. What the Feria brings is a proven methodology for parental involvement and an approach that is helping us to align our efforts, strengthen our outreach strategies, and expand our vision for economic prosperity in the region,” said Dr. Arthur Hernandez, dean of the College of Education for Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

More than 25 area organizations, school districts, institutions, and agencies are helping to organize the first Coastal Bend Feria Para Aprender. Nonprofits include Citizens for Educational Excellence, Coastal Bend Partners for College & Career Readiness, Craft Training Center, and Communities in Schools, United Way of the Coastal Bend, Workforce of the Coastal Bend, Corpus Christi Regional Economic Development Corporation, CBAF Project Turnaround, Corpus Christi Community Action Agency, and Corpus Christi Literacy Council.

School districts include Calallen ISD, Corpus Christi ISD, Flour Bluff ISD, Mathis ISD, Sinton ISD, Taft ISD. Educational agencies include the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Education Service Center Region II, and GEAR-UP/STAR Texas. Universities and colleges include Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, Texas A&M-Kingsville, Del Mar College and Coastal Bend College. Media partners include KEDT-TV, KORO-TV and others.

“Already we’re seeing the power of the Feria alignment and community mobilization take place in Corpus Christi and the surrounding area,” said Sylvia Acevedo, Feria founder and CEO of CommuniCard. “The Feria is that one time of the year when nonprofits and institutions must come prepared to engage parents in the most impactful way so as to drive improvement around education and economic development.”

About Feria Para Aprender

Feria Para Aprender debuted in Austin in 2007 as the vision of workforce strategist Sylvia Acevedo, the CEO of CommuniCard, a firm that works with institutions to strategize with the demographic shifts. The Feria Para Aprender is the nation’s largest Spanish language education event and expanded last year to Los Angeles, Calif., with 20,000 attendees. CommuniCard is currently planning other sites around the nation and throughout Texas for 2010 and 2011. At the fourth annual 2010 Central Texas Feria Para Aprender, more than 20,000 books were distributed, the single largest book give-a-way in Texas history. Visit www.FeriaParaAprender.com to learn more about the program’s background, read research reports, and see prior events in Central Texas and Los Angeles.

###