



Mission of the Fé Foundation of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of the Lehigh Valley

The Fé Foundation of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of the Lehigh Valley was organized for the purpose of implementing the educational community outreach programs of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, primarily the “*Futuros Empresarios*”/Future Entrepreneurs” (FE) Program. The FE Program has the objective to deliver “life skills” and entrepreneurial training to potential Latino entrepreneurs (high school students) aiming at increasing their rates of educational, economic and social success. It offers students the opportunity to learn comprehensive skills that will enable them to become self sufficient productive citizens whether they elect to pursue post secondary education or some other type of gainful endeavor.

Funds are used to support mostly low and moderate income individuals and communities

The FE Program is a two part five week summer entrepreneurial training program for local high school sophomore and juniors. Students experience a week long academic session with residential stay at DeSales University Center Valley campus followed by a four week paid mentoring internship at Lehigh Valley companies and organizations. Selected students come from high schools in the Lehigh Valley. Although the majority of participants is predominantly Latino, coming from inner city neighborhoods, the program is open to all underserved and underrepresented students.

While at their mentoring internships, the students earn a stipend (\$100 per week) provided by the Fé Foundation upon completion of the program. This stipend is a key part of the program as potential candidates weigh the opportunity costs of entering the program versus what they could earn from a summer job. Also, many families depend on their children’s summer income to make ends meet, especially in these difficult economic times.



FE Program Metrics

The Fé Foundation was incorporated in December 2009 and received 501(c)3 tax-exempt status in July 2010. The Lehigh Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce started the FE Program in 2009 and managed it for two years. Since 2011, the Fé Foundation has been responsible for administering and maintaining the program. To date, the program has benefitted 299 students across the Lehigh Valley:

- 68 FE graduates have participated in the Math & Verbal Enrichment (SAT Prep) Program,
- 74 FE alumni have been awarded Textbook Scholarships (each with a valued of \$100):
 - per Fé statistics (2015), nearly two-thirds of our program graduates are pursuing higher education,
 - two FE alumni are attending Ivy League schools (Princeton University and the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania), and
 - one FE alumna received the 2016 YWCA of Bethlehem Teen of the Year Award;
- 10 middle school students participated in the Fé Foundation sponsored STEM Pilot Program at Penn State Lehigh Valley in July 2017.

The Fé Foundation measures its success in a number of ways. Considering that in general the Latino population is highly mobile, completion of the FE Program is in itself a measure of success. All FE Program students are expected to have absolute attendance at both the academic and internship portions of the program as well as full adherence to the Code of Conduct that is provided to them at the time of their selection. Compliance is monitored on a regular basis by the Executive Director and volunteer support staff. Students are evaluated twice throughout the program: upon conclusion of the academic program by the DeSales University FE Program Coordinator and the Fé Foundation Board of Trustees and again upon conclusion of the internship by the respective site supervisors. The textbook scholarship applications allow tracking of students pursuing post high school education while pre and post-test evaluations assess student progress of those participating in the Math and Verbal Enrichment Program (SAT Prep). Using past performance data as an indicator, students on average improve their math scores by 20 points.