

Collaborative Educational Programs for the Americas
Leadership Conference
Innovation through Leadership
San Antonio, Texas, October 22-24, 2015
Executive Summary



CEPA 2015 once again proved to be a most enjoyable and gratifying event with the Honorable Ivy R. Taylor, Mayor of San Antonio serving as the keynote speaker. Kicking off the event in dynamic fashion was the Mayor's reading of the proclamation announcing October 22-24, 2015, to be "*CEPA Conference Days*."

Her welcome letter also captured the theme of the conference: *Innovation through Leadership*. The Mayor encouraged the participants in this collaborative forum, to explore solutions to prepare our future leaders to meet the dynamic challenges of tomorrow. She also emphasized that "together you will build a foundation that will provide others the opportunity to succeed." She stressed that "now more than ever, it is imperative to encourage mentorship," and she further urged that "we must inspire our youth to embrace risk, engage in collaboration, and think creatively," if we are to inspire a new generation of leaders that will create a better tomorrow.



What made CEPA 2015 so unique was that the most important academic leaders in San Antonio worked in partnership to host this special event, which included: Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU), the H-E-B School of Business and Administration at (UIW), St. Mary's University (St. Mary's), Texas A&M University-San Antonio (TAMUSA), and the University of Texas at San Antonio. (UTSA). Also joining the partnership as major contributors were Texas Christian University (TCU) and Texas A&M University-College Station (TAMU). This conference attracted not only established scholars, but undergraduate honor students, as well as doctoral-level future leaders.



Collaboration and global leadership

Envisioning a model that encourages all universities to be at the forefront in dealing with the challenges of the 21st century, the Mayor also reminded everyone of the connection that exists among the universities in San Antonio and campuses throughout the hemisphere for developing tomorrow's leaders, today. Specifically, she challenged every university in San Antonio to get involved in providing educational leadership for all young people to become productive leaders throughout the Americas.



The rally point



The El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel was the perfect setting. A retreat away from an individual's campus is ideal for stimulating futuristic thinking in a collaborative setting. For example, McNair scholars and other undergraduate students in honors programs from OLLU, UIW, TAMUSA, and UTSA rallied on Thursday for discussions, analysis of current events,

trends affecting higher education, and to share their vision on leadership. They affirmed that attending CEPA 2015 was a good way to get the mind in shape. Participants reaped many benefits, to include: socializing with colleagues from other institutions, listening to engaging presentations, and sharing their research with other thinkers. It was inspiring to hear different styles of presentations.



Dr. Michael Laney, OLLU; Dr. Forrest Aven and Dr. Jeannie Scott, UIW; and Dr. Eric Lopez, TAMUSA; founders of the Undergraduate Leadership Forum, believe that great leadership experiences should aspire to achieve ingenuity, creativity, and the inspiration to bring something extra to whatever the students end up doing. These leaders, along with Dr. Aaron Tyler at St. Mary's University and Dr. Jude Valdez at UTSA, are encouraging their students to engage their brains in extra leadership opportunities and combine it with a way for them to discover their individual interests. Being average is over.

Graduate students excel

Texas Christian University and Our Lady of the Lake University sent entire classes of doctoral students to CEPA 2015 to explore ideas with other thinkers throughout the nation. Texas A&M University at College Station, University of Incarnate Word and others, also sent graduate students.



At many top-level universities, the trend is for advocating a different approach for preparing leaders. There is a need to move from the antiquated culture of demanding compliance to one of gaining commitment. These young thinkers took advantage of working shoulder-to-shoulder with each other and with top-notch professors from around the nation.

Great leadership experiences help young people to aspire to achieve: ingenuity, creativity, and the inspiration to bring something extra to whatever they finally choose to do. The premise that these leadership enrichment initiatives augmenting the formal academic program are wonderful and serve as a model for preparing future leaders, was echoed by these young scholars.

Scholars and educators



Dr. Virginia Garland

Dr. Virginia E. Garland, a tenured associate professor in the Department of Education for the College of Liberal Arts at the University of New Hampshire, shared her recently published textbook, *Educational Leadership and Technology*, published by Routledge/Taylor and Francis. She addressed the attrition of adult learners in higher education online courses: Issues that impede success.



*Dr. Janet Hammer, Dr. Fred Rodríguez, Dr. Cindy Boettcher
Samantha Shields (Doctoral Student) (L to R)*



Dr. Janet Hammer and Dr. Cindy Boettcher, Texas A&M University, unveiled their approach to developing innovators and leaders through an International Baccalaureate degree at TAMU, the only institution of higher education in the nation to implement this unique and innovative program beginning 2016. Dr. Hammer is the recipient of the 2015 Texas A&M Presidential Professor Excellence Award, the highest award at A&M for teaching. As part of this award she received \$25,000 and will maintain the title for the rest of her career. Dr. Boettcher is the recipient of the 2013 George Bush International Teaching Award at Texas A&M. They, along with their doctoral student, Samantha Shields, shared their vision on leadership.

Panel of leaders



Moderated by Dr. Theresa Garfield Dorel and her graduate student, Catherine Carreon, this panel pulled together the expertise and experience of thinkers to discuss their philosophies of leadership. Serving on the panel were Dr. Betty Merchant, The University of Texas at San Antonio; Dr. Michael Laney, Our Lady of the Lake University; Dr. Aaron Tyler, St. Mary's University; Dr. Jeannie Scott, University of the Incarnate Word; and Dr. Eric Lopez, Texas A&M University-San Antonio. The question was posed, how can leadership in higher education continue to employ innovation to meet the challenges of the 21st century student, while maintaining a focus on values and ethical practices? This and other thought-provoking questions were debated.

The panelists underscored what Thomas Friedman stated in his book, *That Used To Be Us*, which encourages future leaders to explore a world of ideas. Friedman states that at many top-level universities, the direction has moved to “coach and inspire a new generation of leaders so that they will not only do today’s important work but also invent tomorrow’s.” Friedman goes on to say that “critical thinking alone just doesn’t buy what it used to buy. Critical thinking has become the basic price of admission.” Therefore, as colleges and universities know, if they want to succeed they must seek faculty and students with the ability to innovate. Friedman believes, with change coming as fast as it is, that is the only thing that will save them.

Visionary Paradigms

CEPA provided formal and informal opportunities for leaders to learn to be visionary, become risk-takers, and break away from old paradigms to make positive changes. Through CEPA, qualities and skills are gained for a strong foundation of leadership to include relentless drive to improve education, and a deep sense of integrity and inner strength.

The goals of this event were to encourage, mentor and support new and upcoming leaders in diverse fields of interest; improve leadership through collaboration; maintain a focus on humanistic values and ethical practices; and develop independent, innovative and creative thinkers.

LEADERSHIP



“Our efforts will inspire a new generation of leaders that will create a better tomorrow, “ as eloquently stated by the Honorable Ivy R. Taylor, Mayor of San Antonio.



Special recognition

Dr. Diane E. Melby, President, Our Lady of the Lake University



Community engagement is at the core of Our Lady of the Lake University's values. With the recent appointment of Dr. Diane Melby, the university has taken the lead in San Antonio to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; prepare educated, engaged citizens; and strengthen civic responsibility. "The United States is an increasingly more diverse country," says Melby. "And while the confluence of cultures adds to the complexity of the issues we face in this nation, it can also be our greatest asset. In order to take advantage of this asset we must develop leadership that emanates from every corner of every community and I applaud CEPA for taking a lead in addressing this truth." Dr. Melby's inspired leadership paved the way for CEPA 2015 and the positive humanistic change that is so needed right now.

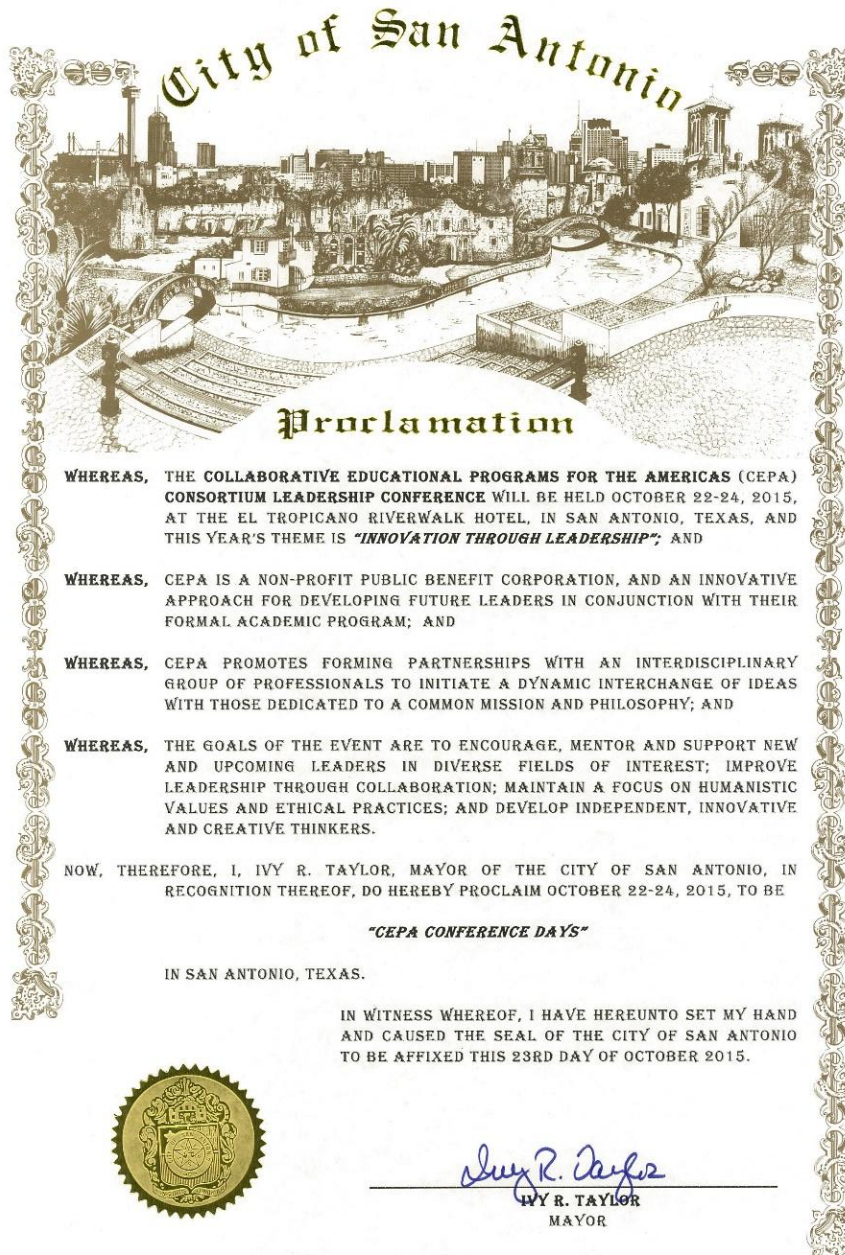
Dr. Victor J. Boschini, Jr., Chancellor, Texas Christian University



Special thanks and recognition are extended to Dr. Victor J. Boschini, Jr., Chancellor at Texas Christian University. When asked, TCU was the first to extend its leadership and influence as a top-tier university in support of CEPA. "We are certainly proud of our wonderful Chancellor," stated Jean Mrasek, Chief of Staff and Donald Whelan, Vice President for University Advancement in describing their leadership team at TCU. TCU now joins the long list of thinkers that have graced the conferences for over two decades.

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CEPA Days



A Memorable Experience

