



## **Atrévete a Soñar: ¡Educate!** *Dare to Dream: Get Educated!*

### CONFERENCE DESCRIPTION

The Elmhurst Area Branch of the American Association of University Women, in partnership with the Addison School District 4 Foundation for Excellence, a 501(c)3 organization, has received partial grant funding from the National AAUW Educational Foundation for Atrévete a Soñar ¡Educate! a one-day conference for Latina girls in the sixth through eighth grades. The purpose of the conference is to empower these young women to create an educational vision for their futures and then to start them on their way to making that vision a reality.

Atrévete a Soñar: ¡Educate! will invite Latina middle school girls and their mothers and/or mentors to a Saturday conference which will focus on the personal, professional and financial value of education in general and higher education in particular. The primary goal of the conference is to encourage the envisioning of a college education and a professional career, and to explore cultural norms which often result in dropping out of high school.

The conference will begin with a keynote address and then offer various breakout sessions in the following areas of interest for the girls. These sessions will be presented in English.

- The value and advantages of achievement and completion of all levels of education – middle school, high school and college
- Career opportunities, particularly those that require bi-lingual speakers
- The relationship between higher education and economic opportunities
- High school preparation required for college acceptance
- Financial aid availability and support
- Goal-setting skills and strategies
- Mentoring programs

Separate alternative sessions will be offered in Spanish for the mothers/mentors. These will focus on the physical and psychological growth and development of their daughters and on American cultural norms, expectations and pressures.

Atrévete a Soñar ¡Educate! will take place on Saturday, April 4, 2009, on the campus of Elmhurst College. Bus transportation will be available. Juice and rolls will be provided in the morning with a lunch at midday. Participants will receive a tote bag with program schedule and support materials as well as conference gear (pencils, pens, note paper) solicited from participating educational and business partners.

A participant survey will be done at the end of the conference to elicit immediate feedback from the girls and their mothers/mentors. A follow-up survey will be mailed to these same participants in October of 2009 to track continued school attendance, choice of curriculum and general scholastic achievement.

The objectives of the Atrévete a Soñar ¡Educate! Conference that support the mission of the AAUW Educational Foundation are:

- (1) To encourage the education and self development of the young Latina girls who attend, and
- (2) To promote and enable a positive educational vision.

Four AAUW Branches are cooperating in administration and presentation of Atrévete a Soñar ¡Educate! – Lombard Area Branch, Wheaton/Glen Ellyn Branch, Downers Grove Branch, Elmhurst Area Branch.

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