

## WHY SAVE COMMUNITY ACTION?

CSBG is the ONLY federal program focused on comprehensive services to helping Americans achieve economic security.

Cutting CSBG and pursuing uncertain reforms to the program will undermine the nation's future. Working Americans need jobs that contribute to the nation's overall economic growth. The way to respond to the need for jobs is to invest in employment training programs as well as job creation and placement. That is exactly what CSBG does so well.

In addition, CSBG enables all the other antipoverty programs, including Head Start, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Program, and the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program, to have more of an impact in moving individuals out of poverty.

On August 2, 2011, the U.S. government will reach its debt ceiling, which is set by Congress on the amount of money it can borrow.

Secretary of the Treasury Tim Geithner has been able to stretch the period through administrative means, but has informed the Congress that if they cannot raise the current debt ceiling by that date, the United States will not be able to pay its bills. Economists have warned that failure to increase the debt ceiling will be disastrous to our recovering economy.

Negotiations have broken down in Washington and leaders on both sides of the issue remain deadlocked on an agreement. They are discussing even more severe cuts to federally funded domestic programs including CSBG as part of the agreement to increase the debt limit. As much as \$680 million are likely to be slashed, which will likely to have a direct impact on community action programs and their ability to serve more than 20 million low-income, elderly and disabled Americans.

*This article is reprinted from capworks.com, which represents Community Action Programs across the U.S.*



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# The BRAVO Newsletter



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AUGUST, 2011

## 40 Project BRAVO GED Graduates Accept Their Diplomas

For **Maribi Cepeda**, growing up poor in a small public housing apartment provided obstacles that at times seemed insurmountable. The young woman struggled in high school amid difficult family circumstances and eventually dropped out of school. She became a single mother and raised four children, but she never gave up her dream of someday becoming a health professional.

On July 15, Maribi was among 40-graduates of Project BRAVO's Adult Basic Education Program who formally received their General Educational Development (GED) certificates.

But Maribi's story does not end there. While working on her diploma - and with the help of Project BRAVO's ARRA-Education Program - she enrolled at International Business College where she recently obtained her degree as a Certified Medical Assistant. Maribi graduated with honors at IBC and made the Dean's list. She was also named a member of IBC's Medical Honor Society.

Maribi's success was made possible through the various adult education and job placement services at Project BRAVO.

Project BRAVO's Adult Basic Education Program and its Employment Department work closely together to find jobs for students who successfully obtain their GED diplomas.

Adult Basic Education Instructor Mr. **Alfredo Munoz** received a standing ovation from his students and offered them encouragement to continue their higher educations.

"Action without vision will cost you nothing. Vision without action, you lose your time. But Vision with action will change your life," was a quote Mr. Munoz offered his students, most of whom have spent the last year working to reach this milestone.

In attendance at the graduation ceremonies were Project BRAVO Board Members **Dr. Maria Arias** and Mr. **Doris Evans**. Both spoke words of encouragement to the graduates.

"I was in your situation 40 years ago," said Mr. Evans. "But I worked hard, got my education and retired successfully from the military."



*Maribi Cepeda poses with her children shortly after receiving her GED certificate at Project BRAVO's ceremony.*



*Forty students from Project BRAVO's Adult Education Program proudly accepted their diplomas.*



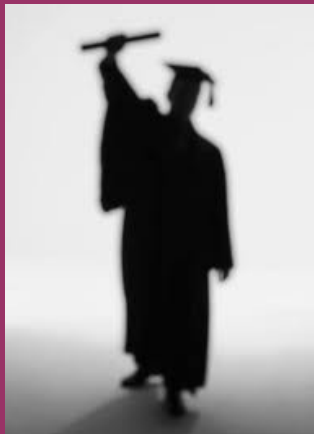
*Corrine Chacon, District Director for State Sen. Jose Rodriguez, offers words of encouragement to the graduates. Each student received a certificate of appreciation signed personally by Sen. Rodriguez.*

*Project BRAVO Board Chair Dr. Maria Arias and Board Secretary Doris Evans address 40 students from Project BRAVO's Adult Education Program on Friday, July 15, 2011 at the EPCC Auditorium.*

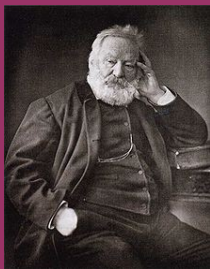
“Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength for our nation.” - John F. Kennedy



“In teaching others we teach ourselves.” - Proverb



“He who opens a school door, closes a prison.” - Victor Hugo, French poet, dramatist and poet.



## Support Mounts for Paint-a-Thon

The **25th Annual Paint-a-Thon** is still two months away but support for the county-wide volunteer event has already begun in earnest. Last month, the **Home Depot Foundation** stepped forward with a substantial grant in the amount of \$2,500 to help purchase paint and supplies to paint the homes of elderly and disabled residents of El Paso County. Local support has also begun arriving. Among the contributors so far are El Paso businessman **Tanny Berg** and El Paso State Representative **Marisa Marquez**.

The annual event is set to take place on Saturday, September 17. This year, Project BRAVO hopes to paint the homes of 75 economically disadvantaged residents who are not physically able to do so on their own. Volunteers for the event have also begun to line up. Volunteers from the office of County Attorney **Jo Anne Bernal**, the local **Church of Latter Day Saints** and several high schools have already registered. Since 1986, the Paint-a-Thon has painted 1,774 homes in El Paso.



### LMO Moving Day



The moving trucks are lined-up. Staff members are packed and ready to vacate the old Loretto Center on Montana Avenue. All that's left is a new coat of paint at the new place and the final approval from the state. After a

lifetime at the Montana Avenue location, Project BRAVO's main office will be moving in August to the La Mujer Obrera (LMO) Building at 2000 Texas Avenue.

### ¿Que ondas? UNIVISION

Congratulations to the Project BRAVO **Housing Department** for generating dozens of new clients during television broadcast appearances on **Univision Noticias 26** last month. Senior Housing Counselor **Pete Huerta** and Counselor **Ignacio Segura** report they're now helping many residents avoid foreclosure proceedings by providing them with direct and indirect assistance and counseling services. Project BRAVO is one of only three HUD-certified housing counseling agencies in El Paso. The others are the El Paso Collaborative and YWCA. With an uneasy



economy, officials say foreclosure rates could increase in the coming months and could affect many residents in El County.