

UC SANTA BARBARA

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Bill Schlotter

UCSB STUDY RECOMMENDS SOLUTIONS TO HOUSING, EDUCATION, LANGUAGE PROBLEMS FACED BY I.V. LATINOS

A study of the quality of life of Latino immigrants in the Isla Vista community neighboring the University of California, Santa Barbara,

reports that sub-par housing, education and improving English language skills are among the most pressing concerns of such residents.

The report by UCSB sociology professor Denise Segura also identified job development, employment of bilingual police officers and youth recreational opportunities as areas in need of improvement.

Segura offered recommendations for making the needed improvements.

And she called on the university, Santa Barbara City College and local schools and government to become more involved.

"Reports such as this one are only as good as the positive actions they provoke," Segura wrote in the report's conclusions.

"I hope that this report will be read, discussed and acted upon affirmatively."

According to the study, begun in 1995, Latinos account for about 3,000 of Isla Vista's 20,000 residents. Of the other 17,000, many are UCSB students who only live in the area nine to 10 months of the year.

Latinos have the same problem students have securing adequate housing in the small community, often ending up in substandard, outdated dwellings that rent for premium prices. To afford such prices, often times several families will occupy the same apartment to share expenses.

An effort must be made, the report suggests, to increase construction of affordable housing in the area so Latino families do not have to live in crowded conditions.

Latino families are very concerned about the education of their children, the report says, and both approve and respect teachers' concern for their kids and efforts to find teaching methods their kids understand.

Nonetheless, Segura found there is room for improvement in the education of Latino children, including asking parents and teachers to set high expectations for achievement from Latino kids. Segura also suggests better communication between the schools and their Latino parents.

With regard to the other issues, Segura said UCSB, Santa Barbara City College, local schools and other organizations and public institutions could help improve opportunities for English language acquisition, employment training and after-school recreation and tutoring for children.

And UCSB should make an increased effort to reach out to the Latino community, Segura said.

"UCSB should develop a more effective and consistent system of communication with Latinos in Isla Vista on its diverse educational, cultural and recreational programs," Segura wrote in her report. "It is important that a population living adjacent to a major university

become familiar with educational programs and employment opportunities at UCSB."

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.