

**UCLA REPORT  
FERIA DEJA HUELLA  
Event Survey, 2009**

Inspired by the success of the community education fair, Feria Para Aprender, sponsored by the Austin Independent School District and the Austin-area Spanish-language media outlets, the Spanish-language television KMEX, channel 34 sought to replicated the event in the nation's largest Latino market: the Los Angeles-Orange County-Riverside-San Bernardino metropolitan region, home to nearly 10 million Latinos.

Feria Deja Huella was organized by KMEX in conjunction with numerous school districts, community colleges, state university, private university and University of California representatives, with the assistance of Sylvia Acevedo, the chair and a key organizer of the Austin event.

KMEX has had a lengthy history of community-oriented communication events. The on-going series "A Su Lado", has provided information about key institutions that can provide assistance to viewers with problems ranging from access to health care to immigration problems. Another series, "El Quince Por ciento" was a month-long news-hour series of 10 seven-minute segments based on the recently published book, *La Nueva California: Latinos in the Golden State* (University of California Press, 2004) by David E. Hayes-Bautista, Professor of Medicine at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. This series won a Peabody Award.

Feria Deja Huella was another of KMEX's community education and involvement efforts. The event was promoted via numerous in-air announcements four nearly four weeks prior to the event, and by a one hour special about two weeks before the event, with numerous educational personalities provided on-air time to discuss the event and its relation to the all-important task of increasing Latino involvement in the educational system.

**Feria Deja Huella Venue**

The event was held at the student union building of California State University Dominguez Hills. Interestingly, the Dominguez family that donated some of the land for the campus has held the original land grant in the areas ever since 1791, and the family's history is recounted in a wall-mounted display right above the registration area for Feria Deja Huella.

The event was held on the second floor of the student union. A "racetrack" layout was utilized, so that attendees would move in one direction through a registration area, an educational information area with booths staffed by representatives of various colleges and universities, a reading area with books, a child health (i.e. vision and dental) screening, and a careers orientation area. Parents were given a passport, that was to be stamped at every booth they visited.

After the various staging areas was a “wind-down” area, with a stage for live entertainment performances, with food and drinks available for purchase. After leaving the “wind-down” area, attendees were exit-interviewed for the evaluation, then were provided an opportunity to “Dejar Huella” by writing their thoughts on large rolls of paper.

Outside the student union, a number of booths provided further information and entertainment for the crowds awaiting entry to the main event. The KMEX booth housed a number of KMEX personalities who interacted with the crowd, and autographed photographs for those who asked.

**The Event**

The event Feria Deja Huella can best be described as a knock-out success. All during the event, long lines of people stood outside the entry doors, awaiting entry. Station officials estimate the crowd awaiting entry at around 20,000 throughout the day.

**Event Information.** Perhaps reflecting the power of Spanish-language media such as KMEX in a dispersed market such as the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area, the vast majority of the attendees obtained their information about Feria Deja Huella via television: 83.7%. The next most often mentioned source of information about the event was from friends (9.5%)

Table 1: Event Information

Heard event from...	Percentage
Television	83.7%
Radio	2.7%
Newspaper	2.0%
Friend	9.5%
Child’s teacher/school	4.1%
Other	5.4%

\* multiple responses permitted

**Residence of Attendees.** While the Los Angeles region is famously dispersed, about 22% of the attendees came from seven Zip-codes, primarily close to the campus of California State University Dominguez Hills.

Table 2: Common Zip Codes

Zip Code	City	Distance to Feria Deja Huella	Percentage
90805	Long Beach, CA	6.06 miles	4.8%
90201	Bell, CA	13.18 miles	4.1%
90220	Crystal City, CA	3.92 miles	4.0%
90011	Los Angeles, CA	13.70 miles	3.5%
90745	Carson, CA	1.43 miles	2.9%
90262	Lynwood, CA	9.95 miles	2.7%

90002	Watts, CA	10.00 miles	2.7%
-------	-----------	-------------	------

**Age of Children.** While information from the “passports” showed a presence of children from nearly all age groups, one characteristic distinguishes the children of Feria Deja Huella from the Austin Feria Para Aprender: they were quite a bit older. The children of Feria Deja Huella were nearly twice as likely to be in the adolescent years (ages 11-17) and in the young adult (18+) compared to the children of Feria Para Aprender. It may well be that the presence of representatives from so many colleges and universities influenced the attendance of an older crowd.

Table 3: Age of Children

Age of Children	Percentage
None	0%
0 – 5	39.5%
6 – 10	54.4%
11 – 13	32.1%
14 – 17	34.9%
18 – 21	12.7%
21 +	9.5%

**Frequently Mentioned Reasons for Attending Feria Deja Huella.** Clearly parents were interested in their children’s education. Yet, the most often-mentioned reason for deciding to attend the Feria Deja Huella shows an internalization of Latino parental interest in their children’s education: “My personal enrichment”.

Table 4: Frequently Mentioned Reasons for Attending Feria Deja Huella

Why did you attend the Feria Deja Huella...	Percentage
Information on child’s education	18.4%
Information on higher education	15.0%
My personal enrichment	39.5%

Some examples of the responses provided by respondents regarding why they attended are below.

<p>“To be prepared for when my children go to college.”</p> <p>“To be informed on my children’s education and mine.”</p> <p>“Queremos ayudar a nuestros hijos estudiar.” Translation: “We want to help our children study.”</p>
---

“Para que mis hijos tengan las oportunidades que yo no tuve.”  
Translation: “So that my children have the opportunities I did not have.”

“Educarme y dejar huella.”  
Translation: “To educate myself and leave a mark.”

“Involucrarme mas en la educación de mis hijos.”  
Translation: “I want to become more involved with my child’s education.”

**Information Obtained at Feria Deja Huella.** The attendees demonstrated an interest in two very different areas of education: Infant/elementary education and college education. The interest in infant/elementary education is quite encouraging, as it signals parental interest in their children’s early education preparation. However, pleasantly surprising was the overwhelming attention placed on college level information. This was the most-often mentioned area, literally blowing past all other educational stages. This is a significant pattern, in that it illustrates that Latino parents are indeed concerned about their children’s higher education, in spite of continued stereotypes about Latino parental lack of interest in higher education.

Table 5: Information obtained at Feria Deja Huella

Information about...	Percentage
Infants	31.3%
Elementary	41.5%
Middle School	28.6%
High School	32.0%
GED	10.2%
College	57.1%

\*multiple responses permitted

**Plans After Feria Deja Huella.** While parental interest in their children’s educational was obviously high, and was most likely a motivator, attendance at the fair appears to have activated plans for direct parental involvement in their children’s education. Parents were nearly unanimous in their strong agreement to:

- I plan to be even more involved in my children’s education
- I plan to talk with my children about their education even more

There was also a near-unanimously perceived increase in knowledge about their children’s education.

- I learned about educational opportunities that I didn’t know about before.

Table 6: Plans after the Feria Deja Huella

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
I plan to be <i>even more involved</i> in my children’s education...	92.6%	3.0%	4.4%
I plan to visit with my children about their education <i>even more</i> ...	94.1%	3.7%	2.2%
I learned about educational opportunities <i>that I didn’t know about</i> before...	89.6%	3.7%	6.7%

The classic social-marketing educational approach is to affect an individual’s Knowledge, Attitudes and Behavior: Feria Deja Huella appears to have resonated with pre-existed Attitudes, and has improved both Knowledge and Behavior.

**Frequently Mentioned Event Learning.** Attendees were asked an “open-ended” question, and the responses were subsequently collapsed into naturally-occurring categories. Three of the most-often mentioned Event Learnings were:

- The importance of education
- How to prepare for college
- Importance of reading.

Table 7: Frequently Mentioned Event Learning

<b>What if anything did you learn at the Feria Deja Huella...</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
How to prepare for college	20.4%
Importance of reading	10.2%
Importance of education	25.9%

Below are several examples of the verbatim responses to what respondents learned at the Feria Deja Huella:

“Diferentes maneras para los padres ayudar a sus hijos en grados diferentes.”  
 Translation: “Different methods to help our children through their different school grades.”

“It is important to spend time reading with my children.”

“Los Latinos tenemos derecho sobre la escuela de gobierno.”  
Translation: “Latinos have the right to public schools.”

“Como planificar y ayudar a mis niños ir a la Universidad.”  
Translation: “How to help children, and plan for them to attend a University.”

“How to talk to my children about their education.”

“Lo importante que es la educación, y lo mucho que se puede ganar con ir a la escuela.”  
Translation: “The importance of education, and how much one can gain from an education.”

**Event Enjoyment.** By and large, the attendees enjoyed the Feria Deja Huella. Nearly 90% remarked that they enjoyed the event. Less than 11% were either neutral or negative about the event.

Table 8: Event Enjoyment

<b>I enjoyed the Feria Deja Huella.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly Agree	76.9%
Somewhat Agree	12.2%
Neither Agree or Disagree	2.7%
Somewhat Disagree	1.4%
Strongly Disagree	6.8%

**Event Expectations.** The Feria Deja Huella built upon a history of previous events and activities sponsored by KMEX, as mentioned above. In a way, the success of earlier KMEX-sponsored events most likely colored the respondents' expectations of a new event sponsored by the institution. While more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the attendees enjoyed the event very much (see Table 8 above), only  $\frac{1}{3}$  mentioned that it exceeded their expectations. This needs to be interpreted that the expectations for a KMEX-sponsored event are quite high, and this event met the expectations.

Table 9: Event Expectations

<b>The Feria Deja Huella...</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Exceeded my expectations	35.4%
Met my expectations	53.7%
Did not meet my expectations	10.9%

**Frequently Mentioned Suggestions for Future Ferias.** A huge turnout materialized for Feria Deja Huella. Before the event, KMEX officials shared that they were expecting maybe 5,000 to 7,000 attendees. When an estimated 20,000 showed up, the event suffered from the type of problem an event like this wants to have: too much demand. Not surprisingly, the most often mentioned suggestion for a future Feria was a desire for a “larger venue”. Yet, while the lines were long, and the facility was definitely filled to capacity at all moments, these conditions did not dampen enthusiasm for the event, as seen in Table 8 above: nearly 90% enjoyed the event. The crowds were largely taken in stride.

The large crowds made it difficult for attendees to have immediate access to all the booths and activities, so the second most often-mentioned suggestion was for “more organization” in the event. This response needs to be interpreted to mean that attendees wanted more booths and activity areas relative to the crowd, not that the event was disorganized.

Table 10: Frequently Mentioned Suggestions For Future Ferias

<b>What suggestions would you make for next years feria...</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
More organization	23.1%
Larger venue	31.3%
Host ferias in several counties	8.2%

A solution to the issue of large crowds may possibly be contained in the third most frequently mentioned suggestion: a number of Ferias in different counties.

### **Conclusions**

Feria Deja Huella has to be considered a tremendous success. Attendance far exceeded expectations, and attendees nearly unanimously enjoyed the event, and learned a number of things. This fair appears to have resonated with Latino parental desire for education in general, and for higher education (college) in particular. This event built upon years of KMEX community involvement, and the attendees’ responses are, in many ways, an affirmation of KMEX being “A su lado” yet one more time.

## **Methodology**

An exit survey was conducted as participants were leaving the event. A total of 147 adult attendees were surveyed, one adult per family group leaving the venue. In addition, information was collected from 629 “passports” filled out by attendees. Because of the unexpectedly large crowds, and subsequent issues of crowd management, the sample could not be a random, representative sample, hence needs to be considered a convenience sample. The findings should be considered “sensitizing” rather than definitive, but nonetheless, the extremely lopsided response patterns provide an indication that the overall experience for the attendees was quite favorable.

The evaluation interviews were conducted by Latino pre-health professional students who volunteered their time and efforts during the summer vacation. The students were participants in the MEDPEP (Medicos, Enfermeras y Dentistas Para El Pueblo) programs operating at Cerritos, Imperial Valley and Porterville community colleges. All interviews were available in Spanish and English. As all interviewers were bilingual, language of the interview was left to the attendee’s choice.

The students were coordinated by Mirella Cobarruvia of the MEDPEP central office at UCLA. Technical supervision was provided by David E. Hayes-Bautista, PhD.

## **Acknowledgements**

Sylvia Acevedo of Austin provided much support to the evaluation: not only the questionnaire and implementation support, but much-needed moral support during the long day while the students dealt with large crowds. And, of course, the staff of KMEX can never be thanked enough for giving of their time and effort for an effort that is so important for all, not only the Latino community, but all those interested in the education of the next generation of Americans.