



## Montebello Unified School District Safe Schools/Healthy Students Grant Initiative

### Newsletter

### Upcoming Activities

- September 2 SS/HS Grant Kick-Off
- September 16 SSC Meeting
- September 28 Core Management Team Meeting
- September 28 Element Working Group Meeting

### September 2009

#### “40 Assets” Presentation Opens MUSD New School Year

On Monday, August 24, teachers, staff members and administrators from Montebello Unified School District gathered at Bell Gardens High School to kick off the District-wide school year featuring keynote speaker, Clay Roberts. Mr. Roberts is a trainer for the 40 Developmental Assets program.

Prior to Mr. Roberts’ presentation, Assistant Superintendent of Pupil and Community Services, Bo Henke welcomed the attendees and emphasized that a huge plus for the District was the awarding of a four year \$9 million federally-funded grant to promote school safety and health for the students of MUSD. District Superintendent Edward Velasquez opening remarks charged teachers and staffs members to ensure that all students be provided high quality learning environments. Following Superintendent Velasquez’s remarks, School Board President, Gerri Guzman reiterated that MUSD will strive to move forward in the coming school year despite the challenges of cutbacks and declining enrollment. She emphasized that the 40 Developmental Assets program is critical for the development of young people and noted that all school personnel should use the quality character traits the program details.

Clay Roberts, of The Search Institute gave his featured presentation of the 40 Developmental Assets program that MUSD will be employing this year, to demonstrate how internal and external characteristics and behaviors can inspire and protect our students from risky behaviors. He maintains that fostering a healthy environment not only benefits students, but teachers and staffers can reap the rewards a positive attitude brings into the classroom. He used this clever analogy to illustrate: “Feed the staff so they don’t eat the kids”.

As a reminder for adults and students, the District is distributing 3x5 cards throughout the system to emphasize The Montebello Five and tips for fostering positive adult/student interaction. To learn more about the 40 Developmental Assets program, go to: <http://www.spsg-software.com/montebello/en/grant-programs/40-developmental-assets.html> on MUSD’s official website.

#### Anonymous Tip Line -Now In Place

Telling is not tattling when school safety is at stake. That’s the message students and community members will be receiving with the newly implemented Tip Line. The Tip Line is an online /telephone system designed to give students and others an opportunity to report suspicious behavior, threats, bullying, and possible acts of violence without fear of reprisal when they believe that their safety or the safety of others is at risk.

According to school safety experts, communication is the most preventative tool schools have, but few have harnessed their best resource: the students themselves. When provided the technological tools they use daily in their personal life, i.e., the Internet and texting, students can freely and safely share knowledge of upcoming or ongoing incidents. - It is widely held that 4 out of 5 incidences of violence were known to other students or community members before the event occurred. It’s what authorities call the “Code of Silence”, but schools nationwide are now turning to anonymous tip lines to break this pervasive silence by providing the technology students know and use best, without endangering their confidences through an anonymous means of communication. It also empowers administrators, teachers and counselors with an ‘early warning system’ to prevent incidents from escalating into irreparable harm or catastrophic damage. By bridging the communication gap between students and faculty the anonymous tip line will foster a safer, more comfortable environment for learning.

To this end, MUSD has developed such a system of communication for its students and community members. The school police department will monitor the Tip Line, and the Safe Schools/Healthy Students database will track and report all calls for immediate responsive action. Please make note of these confidential contacts: Call – (323) 887-7903 or Email [tipline@montebello.k12.ca.us](mailto:tipline@montebello.k12.ca.us)

#### For additional information

Contact Michael Cobarrubias, Grant Director  
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[www.spsg-software.com/montebello](http://www.spsg-software.com/montebello)



#### Michael Ladjevic

##### **40 Developmental Assets Coordinator and member of the SS/HS Grant Initiative Element Working Group**

Michael Ladjevic has a long and varied history of service to the Montebello School District. And now being responsible for the new *40 Developmental Assets* program being launched this school year, he can add another line to his resume. By fully implementing the *Assets* program within the District, Mike is taking on the monumental task of educating, providing support, marketing materials, maintaining the curriculum libraries, and working closely with the principals at all MUSD schools. In addition, he will be responsible for the fidelity of the program, tracking its progress as it relates to outcomes and goals.

Under the ongoing SS/HS Grant Initiative, Mr. Ladjevic has the additional responsibility for overseeing the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program*. Tall orders indeed, but Mike is used to handling big projects.

Mike received his B.A. degree from California State University, Los Angeles in 1979 and took a Masters Degree from Azusa Pacific University in 1999. He enjoys sports, acting as a coach at Bell Gardens High School for 4 years. He’s also a mathematician, teaching the subject for 16 years, also at Bell Gardens. He served 8 years as Assistant Principal at Montebello High School as well as several other positions in his years of service to the District.

Mike’s tireless dedication to MUSD has garnered respect and admiration from school officials, community and state associations alike. Keep up the good work and many thanks, Mike Ladjevic, for your exemplary service to the students, parents, and educators throughout the Montebello community.

