

UCSD Joins With Community In Sponsoring Cesar Chavez Essay Contest For Students; Entry Deadline March 1

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The University of California, San Diego is joining with the San Diego Cesar E. Chavez Commemoration Committee in sponsoring the Fifth Annual Cesar E. Chavez Essay Contest for high school students in San Diego and Imperial Counties to honor the life and achievements of the late civil rights and labor leader. The deadline for entries is March 1, 2004.

The contest, organized by UCSD's Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP), is open to students in grades 9 through 12 and will be part of a wide range of community celebrations sponsored by UCSD and the commemoration committee recognizing Chavez and the state holiday named in his honor.

Dedicated to non-violence, Chavez founded and led the first successful farm workers union in American history and was a principal figure in the Chicano Civil Rights Movement. He died in 1993, and his birthday, March 31, has been designated a state holiday.

Students of all ethnic backgrounds are encouraged to enter by composing their essays on the following theme: *This year in particular, we will face major decisions on how we must allocate our society's resources. If Cesar E. Chavez were alive today, how would he want you to make a difference in our world? Describe the issues you face in your community. How have you demonstrated your passion and involvement to overcome injustices, while keeping Chavez's principles and values in mind?*

Essays should be 2 pages in length, typed and double-spaced, and written in a clear, logical and concise manner.

"Through the contest," says Rafael Hernandez, EAOP Director, "we are not only encouraging students to become more familiar with the life and ideals of Cesar E. Chavez, but also how they can apply his principles to everyday life." Hernandez adds: "We also hope the contest will motivate students to become skilled in the art of essay writing. Being able to express one's thoughts through the written and spoken word - in a clear and persuasive manner - are skills that pay big dividends towards college and throughout life."

Winners will be awarded the following prizes: Grand prize winner will receive a laptop computer and 1,000 college savings bond, and the 12th grade winner, 11th grade winner, 10th grade winner, and the 9th grade winner will each be awarded a laptop computer and a \$150 college savings bond.

The grand prize author will be invited to read his or her composition at the Fifth Annual Cesar E. Chavez Commemorative Breakfast on Friday, April 9 at the San Diego Convention Center.

Students may obtain an entry application and contest guidelines by visiting the Cesar E. Chavez Commemoration Committee website at www.cesar-e-chavez.org, or by contacting Rafael Hernandez at the EAOP office, rs Hernandez@ucsd.edu; (858) 534-4250. (An essay application must accompany all entries.)

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