

TCN Alumni Night 2008

Think College Now's First Group of Grads Returns for 1st Annual Reunion

Think College Now's familiar "two claps" rung out in the crowded gymnasium as the TCN community welcomed back its first class of students to move on to middle school.

Thanks to planning between Family Resource Center Coordinator Mara Chavez and the East Bay College Fund, two local first-year college students set the tone by sharing their university experiences. Both women were the first in their family to go to college, and their speeches inspired the crowd of students and families. Praising TCN students' college focus, one said, "You're off to a great start – I didn't think about college until 10th grade. If I can make it, I know you can!"

Next, a panel of TCN grads shared stories from their first year in middle school. Represented on stage by Mario, LaMarr, Alberto, Niet, and former class president Claudia, the 6th-grade panelists fielded questions from TCN's current 5th-graders. They reflected on how well TCN prepared them for junior high, specifically how teachers and staff taught them to "not give up when things get hard." Offering advice about handling the different classes taught in middle school, Mario explained how "one thing has to do with everything *else*. So pay close attention to all of it!"

Like any good reunion, Alumni Night had a distinct air of nostalgia. More than one 6th-grader was overheard saying, "I miss TCN!" or "I miss Ms. Tuohy and Ms. Howe!" When asked to describe memorable moments from their TCN tenures, for many it was field trips that stood out most vividly, namely "[Science Week at the Marin Headlands](#)." ("Remember when Coach Bill took us on the 'ninja hike!'")

But the event was also about looking forward and furthering TCN's college-going culture. In that spirit, representatives from the [East Bay College Fund](#) pledged another set of \$1,000 scholarships to this year's departing 5th-graders. Also with an eye toward the future, one 6th-grader suggested a day when the alums could visit TCN's 5th-graders "to do buddy reading, and bring



6th-grade panelists Mario, LaMarr, and Alberto answer questions about middle school from current 5th-graders

stuff from our schools to teach them what we do." Another grad added, "After that, we can take them on a field trip to our schools so they can see what middle school is like. And then we can challenge them to a soccer match!"

Ms. Tuohy and Principal Silver stressed the importance of staying in touch with the TCN community, reminding them to use the Gmail accounts they set up before leaving TCN. "There will be challenges in middle school, high school, and college," said Silver. "Sometimes it may be hard to make the right choices. We want you to come back – to Ms. Tuohy, to Ms. Howe, to the Family Resource Center – and connect. TCN is a family, and we're here for you."

As students, families, and staff lingered over extended goodbyes, it was easy to picture the 8th Annual Alumni Event, when the room would be filled with TCN alums from middle schools, high schools – and, for the first time, colleges. To see more photos from Alumni Night, [click here](#).



TCN 5th-graders Emerald and Stephanie then (at the Headlands retreat)...and now (at Alumni Night)

SPECIAL THANKS

The following individuals and organizations were instrumental in making Alumni Night 2008 a major success

Mara Chavez

Ms. Howe

Ms. Tuohy

AIM High

East Bay College Fund

All the 5th- and 6th-graders and their families

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