



New listings of local real estate. [CLICK HERE](#) [CLICK H](#)

with News & Classifieds From: **The Star-Ledger**

It's New Jersey's

[SEARCH](#) Pick Newspaper Enter Keyword(s) [GO](#) [FIND A BUSINESS](#) Enter Category

- [Home](#)
- [News+Biz](#)
- [Local](#)
- [Sports](#)
- [Forums+Chat](#)
- [Cams+Radio](#)
- [Living](#)
- [Entertainment](#)
- [CLASSIFIEDS](#)

NEWS

BRIDGETON NEWS [Click here to subscribe!](#)

» More From The Bridgeton News

Local News

Hispanics get motivated

Thursday, April 08, 2004

By **PETE McCARTHY**
Staff Writer

"Life is not measured by the breaths you take, but rather by the moments in life that take your breath away."

-- Carlos Ojeda Jr.

--

VINELAND -- Those words were etched in the minds of about 200 Latino high school and college students throughout the county as they took part in the 16th Annual Hispanic Student Leadership Conference at Cumberland County College Wednesday.

Keynote speaker Carlos Ojeda Jr. kept the students laughing as he told his story of being a first generation Latino in a diverse and troubled community.

"It inspires you a lot," said Millville High School junior Charles Gomez. "This is someone who is just like you. It pushes you forward."

Ojeda recalled the advice his father gave him.

"You can stay in school and live or drop out and die," he said.

Teachers said he had two options: Become a beautician or a mechanic.

INSIDE News

- » [Elections](#)
- » [Español](#)
- » [NewsFlash](#)
- » [Newspapers](#)
- » [News Obituaries](#)
- » [Paid Death Notices](#)
- » [Photos](#)
- » [Weather Center](#)
- » [WebFlash](#)

[SEND THIS PAGE](#)

[PRINT THIS PAGE](#)

SPEAK UP!

- » [National Politics](#)
- » [Cumberland Co.](#)
- » [More Forums](#)
- » [Log On to ChatXtra!](#)

NEW JERSEY LOTTERY

» [MEGAMILLIONS JACKPOT is \\$ 36 MEGA MILLION](#)

An Advertising Section

[Get The E Jobs | Autos](#)
[All Classifieds](#)

"Avenue Q!"
» [Shopping: Stores &](#)
» [Fun Guide: Things t](#)

Fleet HomeLink

Fleet HomeLinkSM

The Fleet Home Equ
Get smarter with your
Rates as low as 2.99%

Mortgage Real Estate Insurance Pro

Our Online De
Shows How To
Income Whil
Your Cli

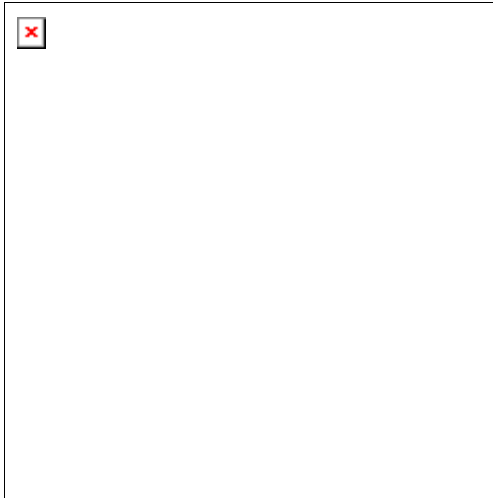
The Equity Accel
is a registered tra
Mortgage Red
THE NATIONAL SINCE
[CLICK HERE FOR A](#)



BRIDGETON

» [South Jersey Spring](#)
» [Subscribe Now for F](#)

Information from Our Advertisers



Neither of those appealed to Ojeda, 28, who is now president of Distinct Communications, a motivational speaking firm in Pennsylvania.

But when he was in high school, Ojeda's teachers never had high expectations.

"I was told I was the greatest piece of garbage," Ojeda recalled.

It was those words that motivated him to go to college, where he graduated with a degree business administration with a minor in marketing and law.

He also has a master's degree from Kutztown University, where he now teaches and spends the rest of his time speaking to groups all over the region.

"Don't ever let anyone tell you who you are or what you're going to become," he said.

Ojeda said he wanted to be different from his friends.

One of them is now on Death Row in Pennsylvania, another is dead and one is dying of AIDS, he told the group.

Students leaving Wednesday's presentation agreed that the words spoken hit home.

"It was really good," said Cumberland Regional High School sophomore Jessica Espinoza. "(These speakers) give us encouragement to go to college. It helps us to do something in life."

Senior admissions counselor at CCC and conference coordinator Lucy Acevedo explained the growth of the conference over the past few years.

At first, it was just for those at CCC, but then they expressed interest in offering such a program to high school students.

"It's to help them succeed in life," Acevedo said. "Every year, we try something different and exciting for them. My hope is that they become positive leaders."

» [Send This Page](#) | » [Print This Page](#)

Copyright 2004 Bridgeton News. Used with permission.

MORE LOCAL NEWS

- Simon Shiloh write-in winner
- Police arrest woman after low-speed chase
- HOLLY column

[More Stories](#) | [14-Day Archive](#)

[The Best Local Classifieds:](#) [Jobs](#) | [Autos](#) | [Real Estate](#) | [Place An Ad](#)



Special Home Delivery Offers!
[The Star-Ledger](#) | [The Times, Trenton](#) | [The Jersey Journal](#)
[Gloucester Co. Times](#) | [The Express-Times](#)
[Bridgeton News](#) | [Today's Sunbeam](#)

[About Us](#) | [Help/Feedback](#) | [Advertise With Us](#)

» **Advertise**

VISIT OUR AD

>> [Interested in a pe term weight-loss solt free seminar.](#)
 >> [Horizon Blue Cros NJ - Making Healthcar](#)
 >> [Visit SI Bank & Tr](#)
 >> [Brought to you by unwinding roads of Rf](#)

Use of this site constitutes acceptance of our [User Agreement](#). Please read our [Privacy Policy](#).
© 2004 [NJ.com](#). All Rights Reserved.

