

YOUTH ENRICHMENT POLICY PROJECT

THE EDMUND G. "PAT" BROWN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS | California State University, Los Angeles

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On November 4, 2010, the decathlon team was invited to attend a conference hosted by the Pat Brown Institute on the campus of California State University, Los Angeles. The conference was composed of various workshops—each addressing a different political matter. After the introductory workshop, my group attended the workshop for a *Greener Future* followed by a workshop on *Immigration* and lastly a final workshop on *Business*. Though regrettably my group did not have time to finish the final workshop, I learned a lot thanks to the Pat Brown Institute.

The first workshop spoke of how to make a greener future. Each of the speakers had their say on how we can become a greener and safer country. The speakers spoke about alternative energy sources and how we can change our ways in order to benefit us both environmentally and financially. In the first workshop I learned that there are various alternatives to our energy sources. I learned that one can now buy a solar panel or a wind turbine to power one's home and/or business. Though some may say that both alternatives to our energy sources are not reliable—in that if there is neither sun nor wind then there is no power. I learned that we are now working on ways to cultivate the energy for those days that are not sunny or windy. Another subject that came up in this workshop is the retro fitting of homes. I learned that we can now modify our homes in order to make them more environmentally friendly.

The second workshop I attended addressed the topic of immigration. In this workshop the speakers spoke about immigration and the Dream Act. Though many of the audience wanted to speak about immigration reform, the speakers decided that it was not a suitable place to speak about such a racy topic. Many of the audience insisted the workshop speak about how immigrants come to large cities and live in poverty and how we as citizens can assist the newcomers. I learned that there exists certain organizations that are working to help immigrants in need. I also learned that there are many people depending on the Dream Act to pass. In the workshop, one of the speakers said that many of his students have been AB540 students that could not further their career because of their legal status.

Though I did not finish the final workshop, I did learn something about business. I learned that in order to be successful one must be dedicated and willing to make connections with all kinds of people. I also learned that sometimes the jobs of others can rely on the job of a single person. I learned that sometimes in order to be successful one may have to make difficult decisions and even take risks. Though we did not finish the entire conference we learned how things work in our communities. We learned how little changes can bring forth big results.