

## **José Valdés Math Institute**

José Valdés Math Institute celebrates the memory of its founder, José Antonio Valdés. Mr. Valdés was born on July 19, 1928 in Cuba, where he became a math teacher. Mr. Valdés believed that all students can learn mathematics and worked to prove this true. He began bilingual classes at Andrew Hill High School in San Jose, California, thus advancing Spanish speaking students in mathematics while they were learning English. He encouraged all students to aspire beyond math and into the more demanding and rigorous classes of Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, and Calculus. Disappointed with the number of students, especially Hispanics and African Americans, who started high school in arithmetic classes, he developed a program of intensive mathematics for middle school students.

The José A. Valdés Summer Math Institute continues Mr. Valdes' dream and his commitment to his belief that all students can learn mathematics.

*Excerpt from <http://www.valdesmath.org/main.html>*

Following Mr. Valdes' philosophy Stockton Unified School District (SUSD) developed a José Valdés Math Institute to increase the number of underrepresented minorities/lower achieving students in programs leading to college entrance and professional careers. The intense math program prepares students to:

1. succeed in Algebra;
2. excel in high school math courses;
3. pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE);
4. stay in school; and,
5. enter a college/university preparatory program.

The SUSD José Valdés Math Institute reduces the risk of students dropping out of school by providing a viable intervention program at an early age, raising self-esteem, and smoothing the transition from elementary school to middle school as well as promoting/supporting continued success during middle school.

The SUSD José Valdés Math Institute, now in its third year, was initiated by San Joaquin Delta College President Raúl Rodríguez who had experienced the program in San Jose and developed a program in partnership with the Pittsburg Unified School District at Los Medanos College. Dr. Rodríguez and SUSD Superintendent George Ridler formed the current partnership in fall 2001.

During the summer the students at San Joaquin Delta College are students who will be entering 7th grade in the fall. We offer 10 classes of 30-35 students. Each class is led by one SUSD certificated teacher and two teaching assistants, most of whom will be current students at Delta College. The program begins in June and extends to July, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Our goal is to help students be better prepared for Pre-Algebra upon entering Middle School.