

New York City STARTALK Summer Intensive Hindi Program

Summer 2009



Carlos Guevera speaks Spanish at home and goes to Queens Gateway High School. In the summer of 2009, he and his friends, Livia Zambrano and Evelyn Vargas were among the 70 participants in the free STARTALK language program offered at New York City Thomas Edison High School. They learned to speak Hindi and learned about the rich Indian culture that is so different, and so interesting to them. The STARTALK program is funded by a federal government grant dedicated to teaching and learning critical languages identified by the National Security Language Initiative.

Sushma Malhotra, Director of the 2009 STARTALK Hindi summer program, is proud that the program sparked great interest in the Indian community and attracted non-heritage students like Carlos and his friends. Thanks to the generous STARTALK funding, the Hindi program was able to hire six dedicated teachers to conduct 3 classes of beginning, intermediate and advanced level language instruction. We would also like to thank site principal, Anthony Barbetta, and the staff at Thomas Edison High School for their tremendous support of the program. As a result of their efforts, participating students were able to access the computer lab to do research and on-line self-evaluation. Advanced level students took the Foreign Language Proficiency Examination and were awarded foreign language credits based on their performance by New York University.



The curriculum for this program is theme-based “A Virtual Trip to India.” Cultural learning is not only embedded in the daily instruction, it is also learned through experiences such as viewing a cultural performance and visiting the Rubin Museum and the South Indian Temple in Flushing. On the last day of the program all three classes presented their projects, based on the theme of the program, in the auditorium of Thomas Edison High School. The presentation included music, art, dance, and songs from all parts of India with Principal Anthony Barbetta as the keynote speaker for a gathering of 150 students and their parents. All students received certificates and enjoyed Indian food at the end of the program.

