

BBVA Bancomer recognises best students in Mexico

7th Children's Knowledge Olympics

- Speaking in the presence of Mexican President Felipe Calderón Hinojosa, Ignacio Deschamps González confirmed the commitment of BBVA Bancomer to education and its support for the Federal Government's *Alianza para la Calidad Educativa* ["Partnership for Quality in Education"] project
- Management staff from the bank welcomed the students who obtained the highest scores in the 2007-2008 Children's Knowledge Olympics, which was organised jointly by the Secretariat for Public Education (SEP) and BBVA Bancomer
- This year scholarships were symbolically awarded to 1000 winners
- Since 2002, BBVA Bancomer has spent over 140 million pesos (9.038 billion euros) to help more than 5000 students over seven generations of the Children's Knowledge Olympiad

The 1000 winners of this year's Children's Knowledge Olympics were welcomed to the event at



the Museum of Anthropology and History, which was chaired by the President of Mexico Felipe Calderón Hinojosa, together with Josefina Vázquez Mota, Secretary of State for Public Education, and BBVA Bancomer General Manager Ignacio Deschamps González. The winning students came from all over the country, and the recognition given to them here is highly important for BBVA Bancomer. "It gives the BBVA Bancomer financial group great satisfaction to be able to share in this huge effort of President Felipe Calderón to promote education", said Mr. Deschamps.

At the ceremony, Mr Deschamps González thanked Secretary of State for Public Education Josefina Vázquez Mota for her interest, efforts and dedication in the field of education in Mexico because, he said, this was the best way to overcome poverty and multiply individual and collective opportunities. He also assured the Mexican President of BBVA Bancomer's commitment to the education sector, and said that "to overcome the problem of children dropping out of school and the lack of opportunities to study, we must all make joint efforts. The main lines of the *Alianza para la Calidad Educativa* project will provide a way for new generations of students to compete better from their classrooms in this globalised world".

He went on to mention the programme of integration scholarships known as *Por los que se quedan* ["For those who stay behind"], designed to provide aid to the tune of 1000 pesos per month (€64.53) for the children of migrants over the three years of their secondary education. He stated that "our financial support may account for up to one third of the income of a household, and this considerably reduces the risk of children with great academic potential dropping out of school and thus decreases the likelihood that those students will emigrate". In this cycle of education scholarships will be awarded to 10,600 students from 78 municipalities in 10 states in Mexico. The amount earmarked for this purpose this year is over 180 million pesos (€11.61 million). The 1000 children and young people whose academic prowess led them to win

the Children's Knowledge Olympics, organised jointly by the Secretariat for Public Education (SEP) and BBVA Bancomer, will take part in various activities in the course of Cultural Coexistence Week.

After being welcomed by the President, the winners attended a forum organised by management and staff of BBVA Bancomer involving a brief ceremony in which they were awarded their scholarships. Héctor Rangel Domene, Chairman of the Board of BBVA Bancomer; Fernando González Sánchez, Under-Secretary for Basic Education at the Secretariat for Public Education, and Gustavo Lara Alcántara, head of the BBVA Bancomer Foundation, were also present at the ceremony.

Double the number of scholarships

With the support of the Secretariat for Public Education, the number of scholarships has been increased from 550 at the 2006-2007 Children's Knowledge Olympics to 1000 for this and future editions of the event.

Seven generations of students have now been awarded scholarships for academic excellence, for a total amount from 2002 to 2008 of over 140 million pesos (€9.038 billion).

This means a strengthening of the valuable co-operation and commitment of the SEP and BBVA Bancomer, always with a single goal in mind: quality in education and rewarding the academic efforts of students.

To support academic development and help scholarship holders to obtain the best possible assessment from the SEP, when they complete their secondary schooling they have the opportunity to obtain a support scholarship for the upper secondary level.

BBVA Bancomer is Mexico's leading financial institution, and has been recognized as a "socially responsible company" by CERNEFI, the Mexican Centre for Philanthropy. It provides support for education and academic excellence through various projects and through the *Por los que se quedan* programme of scholarships for the children of migrants.