

One of the original Freedom Writers to speak to Area Families

The Corry Area School District Family Involvement Council And The Union City Family Support Center Present:

**MAURICIO ANTONIO (TONY)
BECERRA**



Tony Becerra is a first generation American, born and raised in Long Beach, California. Tony grew up in poverty with an alcoholic father and busy mother working hard to keep the family together. He was often left to fend for himself. Tony's parents didn't learn English until he was in high school, and he himself didn't learn until he started school.

Often teased and beat up, Tony ended up hating school and doing poorly. By the time he arrived in teacher Erin Gruwell's freshmen English class he had gone to eight different schools as a result of busing and overcrowding. Tony grew up amidst violence, and suffered the loss of a close family member to senseless gang violence.

Tony found acceptance in Ms. Gruwell's classroom where students from very different backgrounds learned they were not so different when they really got to know each other. They began writing stories about their lives, which would later be compiled in the book *The Freedom Writers Diary*. **The book- whose cover features Tony as a young student- was later made into the major motion picture *Freedom Writers*.**

Since high school, Tony has worked as an Americorp volunteer in New York, speaking to over 50,000 students and being awarded a Certificate of National Service.

See Tony live, in person as he inspires parents to keep in touch with children and students to never give up!

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12TH AT 6:00PM

CORRY HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

FREE ADMISSION & REFRESHMENTS

FREE CHILDCARE (AGES 2-10) CALL MRS. MORTON AT 664-4677