



BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS to Serve Immigrant Workers

AUTHORS

Darlene G. Miller, Ed.D., Executive Director, The National Council for Workforce Education

Nancy Poppe, Ed.D., Consultant, The National Council for Workforce Education

TEAM MEMBERS

Centro Laboral de Graton and Santa Rosa Junior College, Calif.: Maureen Purtil, Co-Director, Christy Lubin, Co-Director, and Jesús Guzmán, Lead Organizer and Program Manager, Centro Laboral de Graton; and Nancy Miller, Director of Regional Adult Education Programs, and Héctor V. Delgado, Manager, Southwest Santa Rosa Center, Santa Rosa Junior College

Jewish Vocational Service and Skyline College, Calif.: Ray Hernandez, Dean Science, Math and Technology, and Paul Rueckhaus, Health Science Faculty, Skyline College; and Beth Urfer, Vice President of Programs, and Kristine Hess, Manager of Health Care Sector Programs, Jewish Vocational Service

National Day Laborer Organizing Network and Pasadena City College, Calif.: Xochi Flores, Development Associate, and Omar Leon, Workforce Development Coordinator, National Day Laborer Organizing; and Dr. Roberto Flores, ESL Faculty, and Shannon L Maraghy, ESL Faculty, Pasadena City College

Community College of Aurora, the Learning Source, and Community Campus Partnerships, Colo.: Christopher Ward, Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness, and Joyce Benson-Fox, Director Center for Workforce Development, Community College of Aurora; Lisa Jensen, Campus Connections Director, Community Campus Partnership, University of Colorado of Denver Anschutz Medical Campus; and Josh Evans, Executive Director, The Learning Source

Kentucky Dream Coalition and Bluegrass Community and Technical College, Ky.: Jim Fenton, Ph.D., Associate Professor, ESL/Humanities Writing Coordinator, and Keith Allen, BCTC Faculty Biotechnology, Bluegrass Community Technical College; and Gaby Baca and Veva Segura, Kentucky Dream Coalition

International Institute of Minnesota and Saint Paul College, Minn.: Jane Graupman, Executive Director, and Merle Greene, Program Director, College Readiness Academy, International Institute of Minnesota; and Kelly Murtaugh, Ph. D., Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, and Linda Kingston, Ph.D., Dean of STEM, Saint Paul College

Neighbors Link Northern Westchester and Westchester Community College, N.Y.: Carola Otero Bracco, Executive Director, Ramiro Rincon, Skills Development Manager, and Luisa Granda, Director of Adult Education and Operations, Neighbors Link Northern Westchester; and Robert Nechols, Director, English Language Institute, and Kathy Graf, ESL Coordinator, Westchester Community College

Highline Community College, Puget Sound Welcome Center and One America, Wash.: Vy Nguyen, Policy Associate, and Roxana Norouzi, Director of Education and Integration Policy, OneAmerica; and Patricia McDonald, Education Faculty, Highline College; and Linda Faaren, Director Puget Sound Welcome Back Center and Special ESL Projects, Puget Sound Welcome Back Center

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YEAR ONE REPORT

BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS to Serve Immigrant Workers

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Description of the Problem	6
The Important Role of Partnerships	6
Why Worker Centers	7
Summary Description of the Project	8
Measures of Success	9
Value of Technical Assistance	10
Case Studies	11
Pasadena Community Job Center and Pasadena City College	11
International Institute of Minnesota and Saint Paul College	14
Centro Laboral de Graton and Santa Rosa Junior College	16
Neighbors Link Northern Westchester and Westchester Community College	19
Community Campus Partnership, The Learning Center and Community College of Aurora	22
Jewish Vocational Service and Skyline College	24
Kentucky Dream Coalition and Bluegrass Community and Technical College.	27
OneAmerica, Puget Sound Welcome Back Center and Highline College	30
Lessons Learned and Concluding Thoughts	32

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the U.S. population ages and baby-boomers retire, the U.S. labor market faces a potential shortage of skilled workers. In the next decade, two-thirds of all job openings will require education beyond a high school degree. Given the current rate of production of individuals with the requisite postsecondary education and skills, the U.S. will fall short by 5 million workers by the year 2020.¹

Immigrants and their children are expected to account for a majority of the workforce growth over the next 20 years with one study estimating that by 2030, nearly one in five U.S. workers will be an immigrant.² The workforce drawn from this immigrant population will be a critical economic driver that supports future prosperity in the metropolitan, suburban and rural areas throughout the U.S. However, many of these immigrant workers do not possess, or are unable to obtain, the skills they need for high-demand jobs, because they lack the Basic English language skills or math skills to succeed in a workforce education program, or postsecondary career and technical education program.

In May of 2013, the Ford Foundation and the UCLA Labor Center convened a meeting of worker centers, community-based organizations, workforce development professionals, community colleges and others to address Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) and its implications for next generation workforce strategy implementation. One outcome of the convening was that worker centers and community-based organizations (CBO) knew very little about community colleges and vice versa. Furthermore, they did not understand each other's roles in supporting immigrants and immigrant workers.

To dig deeper into this issue and to gain a better understanding of the components of successful initiatives and strategies, in May of 2014, the Ford Foundation and the Kellogg Foundation hosted a second meeting of key stakeholders. The goal of this meeting was to understand both the innovative work that is being done across the country to better serve immigrants and immigrant workers and to identify the gaps and barriers that impede more effective community college/worker center/CBO partnerships. Two model programs were identified: Instituto del Progreso Latino and Wilbur Wright College; and Casa de Maryland and Prince Georges Community College.

The result of these efforts was the creation of the *Building Community Partnerships to Serve Immigrant Workers (BCPIW)* initiative which was designed to replicate and expand effective community college/ worker center/community-based organization partnerships to address the workforce development needs of immigrants and immigrant workers. The activities and goals of BCPIW provided eight new community teams with the tools necessary to create and/or expand successful partnerships that improve access to education, and training opportunities that help immigrants and immigrant workers achieve family-wage careers.

PARTNERSHIPS AND WORKER CENTERS

Traditionally, low-skilled adults have grappled with significant challenges that impede both their academic success and success in attaining family-wage employment. Many of these individuals require some type of assistance in navigating the foreign culture of higher education. Others require support in dealing with barriers such as balancing education and family, transportation needs, child-care needs, and other family-based hurdles. Numerous recent initiatives have demonstrated the success of community college/nonprofit partnerships in improving academic achievement and employment attainment. These initiatives have proven that by leveraging and integrating resources, partners are able to expand their capacity and better serve their students.

Worker centers are non-profit community-based mediating organizations that organize and provide support to low-wage workers who are not already members of a collective bargaining organization or have been legally excluded from coverage by U.S. labor laws. They serve as community-based mediating institutions that provide support to and organize members, as well as take on the role as defender of

¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment Statistics by State, May 2012

² B. Lindsay Lowell, Julia Gelatt, and Jeanne Batalova, *Immigrants and Labor Force Trends: The Future, Past and Present*, 2006. Washington, D.C.: Migration Policy Institute, 4, 6, http://www.migrationpolicy.org/ITFIAF/TF17_Lowell.pdf

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rights for immigrants in their communities.³ Most centers are in large metropolitan areas; however, increasingly more centers are being organized in suburban and rural communities in response to immigration to those areas in which there is growing employment demand. What is unique about worker centers, and makes them unlike unions, is that there is not one specific organizational model, strategy or structure; thus, they use diverse strategies, tactics and approaches to serve the needs of their workers.

Nevertheless, historically, we have not seen robust partnerships between worker centers and community colleges. A number of challenges have hampered efforts to provide education and training to workers,

including difficulty in scheduling classes due to the day laborers' changing worksites and work schedules, and laborers, mistrust of formal institutions. Despite these complications, this project proved that it is imperative that we learn how to foster and sustain partnerships, because without access to the technical education and the credentials community colleges can provide, day laborers find it difficult to obtain a secure footing in the labor market.

Accordingly, four of the eight teams selected for this project consisted of community college and worker center partnerships. The other four teams were comprised of partnerships between community colleges and community-based organizations whose mission is to serve immigrants and immigrant workers.

Community-Based Organization and/or Worker Center	Community College	Location
Centro Laboral de Graton	Santa Rosa Junior College	California
Jewish Vocational Service	Skyline College	California
National Day Laborer Organizing Network	Pasadena City College	California
The Learning Source and Community Campus Partnerships	Community College of Aurora	Colorado
Kentucky Dream Coalition	Bluegrass Community and Technical College	Kentucky
International Institute of Minnesota	Saint Paul College	Minnesota
Neighbors Link Northern Westchester	Westchester Community College	New York
Puget Sound Welcome Back Center and OneAmerica	Highline College	Washington

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Worker_center

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The project was conducted in three phases. During the first phase of the project, each of the eight teams participated in a 1.5-day Learning Lab. Four teams participated in a learning lab at Instituto del Progreso Latino and Wilbur Wright Community College in Illinois, and the other four teams participated in a learning lab at Casa de Maryland and Prince Georges Community College in Maryland. The purpose of these visits was to provide first-hand exposure for team members to successful community college/worker center/CBO partnerships that serve immigrant workers. The day-and-a-half-long sessions combined technical assistance with team work and action planning.

The second phase of the project consisted of monthly follow-up calls conducted by the NCWE grant co-directors. The purpose of the calls was to provide strategic counsel and resources to each team as they implemented their work plan. Progress towards work plan goals, as well as issues and concerns, were discussed. The calls provided a level of accountability, sustained the momentum of the project, and provided support and encouragement when unexpected obstacles arose and initial plans needed to be revised.

The third phase of the project entailed a reconvening of the eight community teams at the National Council for Workforce Education's (NCWE) annual conference in Portland, Oregon in October 2015. Prior to the conference, the teams participated in a peer learning meeting that combined technical assistance with peer-to-peer discussion and problem-solving. Through this peer learning approach, the teams were able to build on their collective experiences. The design of the day-long meeting provided participants with the opportunity to hear presentations from national experts on fundraising, employer engagement, and creating integrated career pathways for low-level learners. The teams engaged in peer-to-peer learning, sharing their projects with their colleagues, and receiving input on their challenges and needs. The teams also attended the National Council for Workforce Education's Annual Conference – *Workforce Education For All!* This conference was held in partnership with the Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education (CCCIE). Team members attended workshops and networked with peers from all over the country who are committed to ensuring that workforce education opportunities are available to all members of their communities.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

This project achieved a number of successes that have both short- and long-term impact on the eight communities. Clearly, the initiative:

- increased knowledge regarding how to design successful training and education programs for immigrant workers based upon participant evaluations;
- created a larger network of partners across the country that are committed to improving immigrant workers access to, and completion of, training programs provided by community colleges as reflected by the diversity of program participants;
- increased access to community college programs by immigrant workers in seven of the eight targeted communities through the development of specific noncredit and credit integrated career pathways designed specifically to meet the needs of immigrant workers; and,

PEER LEARNING AND PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

"Being together among peers really helped to build a real partnership. Between our time together at the peer learning days and the social time we spent together in the evenings, trust and familiarity were built that had not existed before. We believe that our college partner began to realize that active, productive partnership between community-based organizations and colleges is worth their time and attention. Observing significantly greater cooperation between some of the other programs than what currently existed in our own partnership gave our CBO greater credibility. And, because it was a national initiative funded by a national funder, it raised the importance and really improved our relationship putting us on equal footing."

Comments extracted from surveys.

- increased community awareness of the needs of immigrant workers in moving from low-wage to high-wage jobs.

LESSONS LEARNED

Being part of a national initiative was very empowering to the teams. It gave them credibility within their own institutions/organizations and helped them leverage both internal and external additional resources. The project and the participating organizations were able to achieve an economy of scale as a result of being part of a larger community of practice.

Developing partnerships, which are lasting and productive, is hard work. Despite significant variances in resources, salaries and the number of staff, both organizations in each of the partnerships needed to be perceived as equal partners that brought valuable expertise to the table. While each of the partnerships were somewhat collaborative in the beginning, as the project evolved the partners became more adept at joint decision-making and valuing each other's input.

A number of the local teams focused on the health-care sector because of the high labor market demand for health-care workers in their communities. It became evident early on that many of the refugees and immigrants did not possess the requisite literacy skills to enter the health-care programs. Additionally, many of the immigrants were unaware of variety of health-care employment opportunities that were available in their respective communities. Many believed that nursing was the only potential career pathway in healthcare. To address this issue, one team developed an assessment process that could be used to create a better understanding of the strengths and interests of the workers and to assist them in making better career decisions. Two other teams redesigned introductory classes and orientations to include career awareness instruction.

Teams that worked with day laborers learned that this population was not always ready to become part of what they perceived to be a "formal institution." Historically this group has been largely ignored and oftentimes shut out of institutions of higher learning. In addition, many refugees are distrustful of public institutions, because they are from countries where they needed to fear persecution from their own governments because of their race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion. For those reasons it was critical that the teams create a safe environment and provide consistent follow-through on commitments, in order to build a trusting relationship that eventually led to participation and enrollment.

Many of the workers were focused on the short-term, as the need "to work and provide for family today" was more important than considering a future long-term career. It was critical to assist workers in shifting to a longer-term perspective by creating an understanding of the benefits of more comprehensive training and education designed around a career pathway that would lead to more gainful employment and a better life for their families.

Despite all of the challenges and the nascent nature of these partnerships, this initiative proved that with very little money and lots of hard work, and by working together to achieve a common goal, community college/worker center/community-based organization teams can affect change. The teams built partnerships that are long lasting and vibrant, and they learned to shift and compromise to ensure the success of their learners. Together, they built programs and services that moved from "one-off" quick training programs to programs embedded in career pathways leading to family-wage jobs. Unquestionably, the immigrants in their communities benefited!



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BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS TO SERVE IMMIGRANT WORKERS (BPCIW)

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

As the U.S. population ages and baby-boomers retire, the U.S. labor market faces a potential shortage of skilled workers. In the next decade, two-thirds of all job openings will require education beyond a high school degree. Given the current rate of production of individuals with the requisite postsecondary education and skills, the U.S. will fall short by 5 million workers by the year 2020.¹

Concomitantly, immigrants and their children are expected to account for a majority of the workforce growth over the next 20 years with one study estimating that by 2030, nearly one in five U.S. workers will be an immigrant.² The workforce drawn from this immigrant population will be a critical economic driver that supports future prosperity in the metropolitan, suburban and rural areas throughout the U.S.

Many of these immigrant workers do not possess or are unable to obtain the skills they need for high-demand jobs because they lack the basic English language skills or math skills to succeed in a workforce education program or postsecondary career and technical education program. A recent Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) report found that immigrants who have been in the U.S. more than five years have lower basic skills than those who arrived more recently. According to the Migration Policy Institute (MPI), more than three million undocumented adults have a family income below the poverty level and over six million speak English “not well” or “not at all.” Moreover, the recently enacted Dream Act does not include technical and career training as an option for Dreamers – the most likely path into the labor market for many immigrant youth. Unfortunately, other than funding for refugee services, there are no current federal funding streams directly targeted to address the workforce development needs of immigrants.

THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF PARTNERSHIPS

Traditionally, low-skilled adults have grappled with significant challenges that impede both their academic success and success in attaining family-wage employment. Many of these individuals require some type of assistance in navigating the foreign culture of higher education. Others require support in dealing with barriers such as balancing education and family, transportation needs, child-care needs, and other family-based hurdles. Nonetheless, recent initiatives like Breaking Through, Washington State’s Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training, Courses to Employment, and Accelerating Opportunity have demonstrated the success of community college/nonprofit partnerships in improving academic achievement and employment attainment.

Washington’s Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training Program (I-BEST) integrates literacy skill development with technical curricula to help students move through community college programs and into living-wage jobs faster.³ I-BEST challenges the traditional notion that students must move through a set sequence of basic education or pre-college courses before they can start working on certificates or degrees.

Recognizing that traditional approaches to higher education were not adequately serving low-skilled adults as demonstrated by low completion rates in academic and training programs, the Aspen Institute launched the Courses to Employment (C2E) initiative in 2006.⁴ C2E was premised on the idea that by partnering, community colleges and workforce nonprofits could combine their unique strengths to serve adult learners more effectively than either organization on their own.

The Breaking Through Initiative (BT) focused on four key strategies to improve the success

¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment Statistics by State, May 2012

² B. Lindsay Lowell, Julia Gelatt, and Jeanne Batalova, *Immigrants and Labor Force Trends: The Future, Past and Present*, 2006. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 4, 6, http://www.migrationpolicy.org/ITFI/TF17_Lowell.pdf

³ <http://www.sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/programs-services/i-best/default.aspx>

⁴ *Courses to Employment: Partnering to Create Paths to Education and Careers*, Maureen Conway, Amy Blair, and Matt Helmer, Workforce Strategies Initiative – the Aspen Institute, 2012

of low-skilled adults in community college credit-level programs.⁵ Through program realignment, accelerated learning, comprehensive student support services, the use of strong labor market data, and partnerships, community colleges across the country were better able to move academically underprepared adults into postsecondary occupational and technical career programs. Accelerating Opportunity (AO) combined the proven BT strategies with the integrated career pathway approach proven effective by the WA-IBEST initiative to once again prove that with the right interventions and partnerships, low-skilled adults could successfully complete college-level occupational training programs and achieve family-wage employment.⁶

Collectively, the results of these initiatives and further research on community college-nonprofit partnerships have proven that by leveraging and integrating resources, partners are able to expand their capacity and better serve their students. Through comprehensive student support systems and instruction designed to improve literacy skill development integrated with technical skill training, retention and persistence improved. By focusing on targeted industries to improve career knowledge and awareness, integrating workplace readiness skills into curriculum, and providing labor market navigation services, more learners attained family-wage employment.

Why Worker Centers

Worker centers are non-profit community-based mediating organizations that organize and provide support to low-wage workers who are not already members of a collective bargaining organization or have been legally excluded from coverage by U.S. labor laws. They serve as community-based mediating institutions that provide support to and organize members, as well as take on the role of defender of rights for immigrants in their communities.⁷ Most centers are in large metropolitan areas; however, increasingly more centers are being organized in suburban and rural communities, in response to immigration to those areas in which there is growing employment demand. What is unique about worker centers, and makes them unlike unions, is that there is not one specific organizational model, strategy or structure; thus, they use diverse strategies, tactics and approaches to serve the needs of their workers.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CENTRO LABORAL DE GRATON

⁵ <http://www.jff.org/initiatives/breaking-through>

⁶ <http://www.jff.org/initiatives/accelerating-opportunity>

⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Worker_center

Most often, worker centers support employment of day laborers in three ways: they ensure that workers are paid a minimum wage rate; they serve as a repository for local job opportunities connecting their workers with employers; and they maintain wage standards through their support to workers victimized through wage withholding from employers. Additionally, in order to best assist in improving working conditions and necessary wages, many centers include services such as English language instruction and skills training.

Historically, we have not seen robust partnerships between worker centers and community colleges. A number of challenges have hampered efforts to provide education and training to workers, including difficulty in scheduling classes due to the day laborers' changing worksites and work schedules, and laborers, mistrust of formal institutions. Despite these complications, it is imperative we learn how to foster and sustain partnerships, because, without access to the technical education and the credentials community colleges can provide, day laborers will find it difficult to obtain a secure footing in the labor market.

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

In May of 2013, the Ford Foundation and the UCLA Labor Center convened a meeting of worker centers, community-based organizations, workforce development professionals, community colleges and others to address Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) and its implications for next generation workforce strategy implementation. One key finding of the convening was that worker centers and community-based organizations (CBO) knew very little about community colleges and vice versa. Furthermore, they did not understand each other's roles in supporting immigrants and immigrant workers.

To dig deeper into this issue and to gain a better understanding of the components of successful initiatives and strategies, in May of 2014, the Ford Foundation and the Kellogg Foundation hosted a second meeting of key stakeholders. The goal of this meeting was to understand both the innovative work that is being done across the country to better serve immigrants and immigrant workers, and to identify the gaps and barriers that impede more effective community college/worker center/CBO partnerships. Two model programs were identified: Instituto del Progreso Latino and Wilbur Wright College; and Casa de Maryland and Prince Georges Community College.

The result of these efforts led to the creation of the "Building Community Partnerships to Serve Immigrant Workers (BCPIW)" initiative. BCPIW was designed to replicate and expand effective community college/worker center/community-based organization partnerships to address the workforce development needs of immigrants and immigrant workers. The activities and goals of BCPIW provided eight new community teams with the tools necessary to create and/or expand successful partnerships that improve access to education and training opportunities that help immigrants and immigrant workers achieve family-wage careers. This project also demonstrated that with innovative thinking, organizational flexibility, and trust, deep and robust partnerships can be created and day laborers and immigrant workers can enroll and succeed in college programming.

The work was conducted in three phases.

PHASE I: During the first phase of the project, each of the eight teams participated in a 1.5-day Learning Lab. Four teams participated in a learning lab at Instituto del Progreso Latino and Wilbur Wright Community College in Illinois, and the other four teams participated in a learning lab at Casa de Maryland and Prince Georges Community College in Maryland. The purpose of these visits was to provide first-hand exposure for team members to successful community college/worker center/CBO partnerships that serve immigrant workers. The day-and-a-half-long sessions combined technical assistance with team work and action planning. In an interactive format, learning lab professionals served as peer learning leaders teaching their peers the "nuts and bolts" of creating and sustaining effective partnerships while also affecting institutional culture change. At the end of the site visit, each team produced a work plan to guide their work over the next eight months of the project.

PHASE II: The second phase of the project consisted of monthly follow-up calls conducted by the NCWE grant co-directors. The purpose of the calls was to provide strategic counsel and resources to each team as they implemented their work plan. Progress towards work plan goals as well as issues and concerns were discussed. The calls provided a level of accountability, sustained the

momentum of the project, and provided support and encouragement when unexpected obstacles arose and initial plans needed to be revised. For example, two of the teams wanted to infuse into their program curriculum to help immigrants understand workplace behavior and ethics. The co-directors connected these teams with two other colleges that had developed similar coursework to serve low-skilled adults. The two colleges shared their curriculum with the BCPIW teams resulting in the BCPIW teams redesigning the curriculum for English language learners.

PHASE III: The third phase of the project entailed a reconvening of the eight community teams at the National Council for Workforce Education's (NCWE) annual conference in Portland, Oregon, in October 2015. Prior to the conference, the teams participated in a peer learning meeting that

combined technical assistance with peer-to-peer discussion and problem-solving. Through this peer learning approach, the teams were able to build on their collective experiences and catalyze creative partnership models to address the workforce needs of immigrant workers. The design of the day-long meeting provided participants with the opportunity to hear presentations from national experts on fundraising, employer engagement, and creating integrated career pathways for low-level learners. After each presentation the participants interacted with the presenters and one another regarding their specific situations. The remainder of the day was devoted to peer-to-peer learning. Each group shared their projects with their colleagues and received input on their challenges and needs. The teams also broke into small groups and engaged in facilitated group discussion around common interests such as serving undocumented students and bringing more entities into their partnerships.

Also, during phase three, the teams attended the National Council for Workforce Education's Annual Conference – *Workforce Education For All!* This conference was held in partnership with the Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education (CCCIE). BCPIW participants attended workshops and networked with peers from all over the country who are committed to ensuring that workforce education opportunities are available to all members of their communities.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

This project achieved a number of successes that have both short- and long-term impact on the eight communities. Clearly, the initiative:

- increased knowledge regarding how to design successful training and education programs for immigrant workers based upon participant evaluations;
- created a larger network of partners across the country that are committed to improving immigrant workers access to, and completion of, training programs provided by community colleges as reflected by the diversity of program participants;
- increased access to community college programs by immigrant workers in seven of the eight targeted communities through the development of specific noncredit and credit integrated career pathways designed specifically to meet the needs of immigrant workers; and
- increased community awareness of the needs of immigrant workers in moving from low-wage to high-wage jobs.



PHOTO COURTESY OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MINNESOTA

VALUE OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Supporting each team through technical assistance and peer learning helped them achieve success. After the site visits and the peer learning meetings, and throughout the project, participants were queried as to the value of the activities and support provided. Below are comments from the evaluation.

“Going to the learning labs and seeing the vision of a strong partnership and how each played to their strength was so beneficial. It was so awesome being in the presence of success! And the chance to be in the classroom and see how it all impacts the students affirmed that our model of combining learning with strong support services is the right model for success.”

“The peer learning meetings helped us realize that we are part of a larger network of folks trying to achieve the same goals, to see the progress of each of the groups, to network with group members, and to be inspired for future workforce development projects. Meetings supported our momentum and encouraged us to keep going. It invested us in doing this work as part of a national initiative.”

“All three round table discussions had an impact in helping me navigate how to serve the students I work with on a daily basis. All the different ideas that were shared have increased my knowledge to be more productive, attentive and engaged in providing different career pathways for students facing many obstacles in accessing higher education. However, the majority of the students I serve are undocumented, so the round table discussion on this topic had a bit more impact in increasing my knowledge.”

“As a CBO, I found the NCWE conference by far the best conference interfacing community colleges with community-based organizations. It was very gratifying to hear that the most successful and innovative college training programs contained this very important component in partnership with a CBO.”

“We learned from other programs about the resources that are available to better serve immigrant students (like WIOA, DACA, DAPA, etc.). It was so great to be able to learn about the myriad of examples of CC and CBO partnerships and what brings them together to achieve success and the practical resources other colleges and partners are using to facilitate immigrant education. The experience was inspirational and helped us envision what our partnership could achieve.”

PHOTO COURTESY OF NEIGHBORS LINK NORTHERN WESTCHESTER



CASE STUDIES

The following case studies summarize the progress made by the eight teams, showcasing the work the teams did throughout the year to build their respective partnerships. At the onset, most of the teams encountered fundamental challenges to building their partnerships, such as lack of knowledge and understanding of how each organization is structured and funded, and how they go about doing their work. Other challenges included lack of time and resources, which hindered the teams from being able to deep dive into the time-consuming work of building effective partnerships. Nonetheless, this project provided the teams with the space and resources, albeit somewhat limited, to get to know each other better both personally and professionally, to bridge the knowledge gap between the organizations, and to plan together to combine resources and expertise as they built programs to help immigrants and immigrant workers attain workforce training while building their English language skills.

PASADENA COMMUNITY JOB CENTER AND PASADENA CITY COLLEGE

Statement of Problem

In the greater Pasadena community, the vast majority of the day laborers are Latino men, primarily from Mexico and Central America, and about 10 percent are homeless. The National Day Laborer Organizing Network recognizes that a number of trends appear to be shaping the future of work in the U.S. and have significant impact on the opportunities for day laborers and immigrant workers: (1) firms' increasing use of contingent workers, including temps, day laborers, and on-call workers as a way to hold down labor costs and increase managerial flexibility; (2) the segmentation of the labor force which consigns undocumented immigrants, the formerly incarcerated, and other disadvantaged subgroups to second-class status in the workplace; (3) ongoing industry restructuring, which is remaking career pathways and leading to the proliferation of dead-end jobs; and (4) patterns of U-shaped growth, with increasing numbers of low- and high-wage jobs, but with fewer middle-wage positions.

In the Pasadena community, the provider of ESL and technical training programs is Pasadena Area Community College District (PAACD). However, the PAACD noncredit division offers limited programs and services for immigrants, especially those with very low literacy skills in their native languages. The lack of literacy skills in an immigrant's native language prevents them from accelerating the acquisition of the English language and, thus, being able to access workforce education and training programs.

Description of the Partners

The National Day Laborer Organizing Network (NDLON) improves the lives of day laborers in the United States. To that end, NDLON works to unify and strengthen its member organizations to be more strategic and effective in their efforts to develop leadership, mobilize and organize day laborers in order to protect and expand their civil, labor and human rights. NDLON fosters safer and more humane environments for day laborers, both men and women, to earn a living, contribute to society and integrate into the community. Pasadena Community Job Center (PDJC) serves as the NDLON worker center for the greater Pasadena community.

Pasadena City College (PCC) is one of 112 California Community Colleges established in 1966. PCC is located in West San Gabriel Valley of Los Angeles County and has an enrollment of 22,735 credit and 3,000 noncredit students. The mission of PCC is to provide a high quality, academically robust learning environment that encourages, supports, and facilitates student learning and success. The College provides an academically rigorous and comprehensive curriculum for students pursuing educational and career goals, as well as learning opportunities designed for individual development. The College is committed to providing access to higher education for members of the diverse communities within the District service area and to offering courses, programs, and other activities to enhance the economic conditions and the quality of life in these communities.

Original Work Plan and Initial Team Response

The Pasadena City College (PCC)-Pasadena Community Job Center (PCJC) Partnership was formed as part of the California AB 86 Adult Learner Initiative to address gaps in instruction and student support services, including those that impact the immigrant community. As such, PCC named PDJC as their regional partner for AB 86 and began offering ESL courses on-site. In the spring of 2015, the college offered two ESL classes (levels 1 and 2) and over the summer, offered a conversational ESL class in combination with the AB60 Driver Written Test Preparation course.

From the start, it was clear that a few ESL courses were not enough to meet the needs of the day laborers and their families. The BCPIW initiative helped to solidify a formal partnership with a more comprehensive mission regarding providing the immigrant and day laborer workforce at PCJC with educational opportunities relevant to their realities.

The team identified three goals that they hoped to achieve as part of BPCIW:

1. Analyze and assess the gaps between the types of training the day laborer clients needed and those offered by the college.
2. Strengthen educational pathways to better serve the immigrant population and to formalize an educational pathway for adult learners from noncredit English as a Second Language and Immigrant Education programs to other noncredit workforce education programs.
3. Develop a plan to implement pre-apprentice programs for day laborers.

Progress To-Date

The team brought together faculty from ESL, short-term CTE faculty, and credit CTE faculty to work in collaboration to determine the gaps and new curriculum that needed to be developed to provide low-skilled adults with both the academic and workforce skills needed to complete a short-term CTE certificate, transition to credit CTE programs, or transition to the workforce in a family-wage earning field. As a result, in the fall of 2015, the team launched a new series of courses including: Green Construction, Green Housekeeping and ESL Conversation.

Presently, to complement these classes, the team is building more comprehensive career pathway programs that lead towards either a) employment in Green Construction, Green Housecleaning, and Green Landscaping and/or, b) a pre-apprentice certificate aligned to the college's construction and/or landscape programs. To support this effort, the team developed a bilingual pre-construction pathway class and is actively searching for a bilingual faculty member to teach the class.

Impact of the Initiative and Lessons Learned

One of the key lessons learned very early was that the day laborer population is not always ready to become part of what they perceive as a formal institution. Historically, this population has been largely ignored, oftentimes shut out of institutions of higher learning. Therefore, it took some convincing and some building up of trust to create enough interest that would lead to enrollment. Initially, enrollments were low and the classes were slated for cancellation by the college. Knowing that the PCJC clients would perceive the cancelling of classes as "abandonment" even for low enrollment, the team worked with the

IMPACT OF PEER LEARNING

"Bringing us together in peer learning has had a profound impact on all of us and our projects. As much as learning about other groups, getting ideas and sharing best practices, I feel like we came away feeling proud of what we are doing. It is very easy to get caught up in the day-to-day and get frustrated by the tiny baby steps that we are taking, but when we present and receive feedback from our peers, when folks tell us how we have impacted their projects, I just come away feeling re-energized and proud of the work we do. Thank you for opening the space for us to cultivate meaningful partnerships with such powerhouse people across the country."

- **Xochi Flores**

Development Associate, Pasadena Community Job Center



PHOTO COURTESY OF PASADENA COMMUNITY JOB CENTER

college administration to develop a longer-term strategic plan. As a result, the college agreed to keep the classes open to support the partnership and the trust issue was abated with more and more of the workers seeing the courses as “their own education.”

The team also recognized early on that a lot of workers were focused on the short-term, “Am I going to work today?” question. It was critical to assist the workers in shifting to a longer-term perspective through an understanding of the benefits of more comprehensive training and education designed around a career pathway that would lead to more gainful employment. Thus, the partners worked diligently to ensure that the program was accessible, rather than intimidating, and pertinent and relevant to the workers’ lives.

More importantly, the team learned early on that many of the workers had no understanding of the types of employment opportunities available to them. Clearly, the partnership would be able to more efficiently and comprehensively serve their workers if they were able to place the workers into the most appropriate certificated program and, ultimately, connect them with employers who are looking for workers with their skill set. As such, two new initiatives were developed and are in progress. First, the team is exploring funding to hire a career-navigator or success coach. Second, the team is developing an evaluation instrument. Every worker interested in training will complete the evaluation, and the results will be used to create an individualized education plan and to track educational successes and challenges. The tool will be made available to all of the NDLO member organizations offering community college courses to their constituents.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

Obviously, this team is energized and steadfast. They are committed to ensuring sustainability and in growing the relationship. And, they clearly know that while the program was conceived and implemented by the PCJC in partnership with PCC, the team is clear about its true constituency. They recognize the importance of engaging the workers in every step of the process to ensure that they are in charge of their own education plan. The team serves as facilitators, guiding them along the pathway and providing them with the comprehensive supports to ensure their success. But, in the long-run, the day laborers are the stakeholders, and the partners have pledged to ensure that their stakeholders are served.

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MINNESOTA AND SAINT PAUL COLLEGE

Statement of Problem

The population of Minnesota's Twin Cities metro area is nearly 10 percent foreign born, with more than 336,000 individuals born outside the United States. The Twin Cities and greater Minnesota have the largest Somali, Korean and urban Hmong populations in the country, as well as one of the largest Ethiopian and Liberian populations nationally. The Minnesota Compass project identified that immigrant workers in Minnesota are concentrated at the high- and low-skill ends of the workforce, with educational attainment rates showing that 25 percent possess less than a high school diploma and 33 percent as having attained a bachelor's degree or higher. Between these extremes, 42 percent of the foreign-born population age 25 and older have either a high school diploma (or equivalent), some college experience or an associate degree.

One major challenge for New Americans who want to pursue a college education is developmental education. These individuals are often tracked into developmental classes (pre-college-level reading and writing) prior to entering their college program of choice. In 2012, more than 49.2 percent of the students enrolled at Saint Paul College took one or more developmental education courses. Alarming, 92.7 percent of these students belonged to groups that were underrepresented in higher education (including immigrant populations). Students tracked into these courses often have lower academic success rates, spend more money, take much longer to complete their college programs (if they complete them at all), and have greater barriers to college completion than those who do not require these courses.

Description of the Partners

Fulfilling its mission of "Helping New Americans achieve self-sufficiency and full membership in American life," the International Institute of Minnesota (IIM), located in Saint Paul, Minnesota, assists New Americans who are transitioning to a new homeland by providing critical programs and services to enable their successful integration into a new community. The Institute welcomes New Americans to Minnesota by providing a wide variety of services from food and shelter to educational programs, workforce readiness, and citizenship services. Throughout its 97-year history, the Institute has adapted to the needs of new immigrant groups by hiring bilingual staff, designing relevant programs and services, and responding to the evolving needs of clients. The Institute's Medical Careers Pathway provides academic and technical skills training, paired with wrap-around support services, to help New Americans begin their careers in healthcare and advance to higher-paying jobs. The Institute serves approximately 3,000 individuals annually through refugee resettlement, education and workforce training, immigration and other walk-in services. All program participants are low-income refugees and immigrants.

Saint Paul College (SPC) is a two-year community and technical college located near downtown Saint Paul. The College has a 100-year tradition of serving the diverse communities of the Saint Paul and Minneapolis metropolitan areas. Since its inception in 1910, SPC has provided outreach to urban residents, underrepresented students and immigrants who are new to the city. Nearly 70 percent of the 9,690 students live in the inner city, and the average student age is 29. Saint Paul College is the most diverse college in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system, enrolling 61 percent students of color. An estimated 40 percent of students attending SPC are New Americans, with a large increase in the population of full-time students who speak a language other than English at home.

Original Work Plan and Initial Team Response

IIM has operated a Medical Careers Pathway program for more than 20 years and knows, based on experience, that with effective teaching and support, immigrants can succeed in higher education and move into higher-wage careers that can sustain their families. The pathway has entry points for individuals at all levels of college preparedness and utilizes tools such as bridge classes, integrated

instruction and support services to help New Americans advance into better-paying jobs. However, many New American nursing assistant graduates from both IIM and Saint Paul College want to enter the LPN program to advance their careers and increase their earning power, but need academic support in order to do so. Additionally, they have had a history of doing poorly in prerequisite (gateway) classes and/or are ill-prepared for the required Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS) entrance test. Consequently, their low grade point average and/or low TEAS scores prevent them



PHOTO COURTESY OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MINNESOTA

from entering the LPN program. In an effort to improve the transition of New Americans from the IIM Medical Careers Pathway program to the credit-bearing health-care programs at SPC, the team identified two goals that they hoped to achieve as part of BCPIW:

1. Offer an effective TEAS test preparation course.
2. Implement bridge and support classes for the LPN pre-requisite courses at SPC, including English Composition, biology and psychology. These classes have proven to be a barrier to immigrant students' success.

Progress To-Date

The first pilot of the TEAS Prep class was offered September 9 – October 21, 2015. Twenty-eight students attended the class with one half attending at least 75 percent of the sessions, three-fourths attending at least 50 percent of the sessions, and 18 completing. New Americans accounted for 75 percent of the students who expressed interest in the pilot class and 75 percent of those who actually participated.

The team pre-tested all of the students with an official practice exam to measure progress. Both average and median scores on the students' pre-class practice TEAS test were roughly 55 percent in reading, English and math. Their science scores were 20 points lower at 35 percent. The overall average score was 50 percent. Practice post-test scores revealed marked improvement: the average science score had risen to 63 percent, and the average overall score was 57 percent.

Of the nine students who submitted their TEAS exam scores to the team, six were admitted to the LPN program. Many of the students delayed testing until they felt they were better prepared. Ninety-four percent of the students who submitted program evaluations stated that they would have benefited from a longer session – 16–20 three-hour classes rather than the 13 three-hour classes offered in the fall pilot. They also overwhelmingly agreed that the online pre- and post-practice tests that they were required to purchase – as well as TEAS practice book – were valuable preparation tools.

Although obtaining additional funding to expand programming to include biology, composition, and psychology classes has proven to be a challenge, it appears that there may be funding to offer a supported biology class during the next academic year.

Impact of the Initiative and Lessons Learned

There is a significant demand for TEAS prep classes – 36 applicants and an additional 15 queries during the week-long period when applications were being accepted. As of November 30, 2015, there were 33 additional queries about the January 2016 class even though it had not yet formally been

announced. A small number of students who participated in the pilot expressed a desire to repeat it, since many of them were only able to attend one day a week. Others entered the pilot with significant academic deficits in multiple subject areas. Still others were taking too many required classes to devote the needed time to TEAS preparation. In the future, twice weekly attendance will be required. Moreover, students who plan to take a class load that may interfere with TEAS prep will be identified during the application process. The program manager will work with these students one-to-one to ensure that they take the TEAS Prep class at the optimal moment. Also, in the future, the online pre- and post-practice tests will be offered during class time to ensure that all students get test-taking experience and that adequate data is available to evaluate the program's success.

For the pilot program, all of the applicants were accepted into the program. In the future, a more comprehensive assessment process and criteria for acceptance into classes will need to be modified if the demand for classes increases significantly. Preference will be given to students who are referred by IIM and plan to apply to the LPN program at SPC, who needed remedial reading and writing classes before they were college-ready.

Many students were unaware of, or had misinformation about, the required nursing seminar, TEAS testing and LPN application deadlines at Saint Paul College. To rectify this situation, the TEAS instructor – supported by the IIM program manager – will assume a proactive role to ensure that all students understand application requirements and deadlines. SPC will also identify more effective ways of communicating LPN-related information to all LPN candidates, including those who are not in the IIM Medical Careers Pathway or TEAS Prep class.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

The team is very much committed to sustaining the TEAS Prep class well into the future. The second session will be longer – January 12 – March 17, 2016 (20 three-hour classes). The plan is to include a curriculum component on health-care careers to raise awareness of the many other health-care options that are available. A third session is likely to be scheduled for late summer through early autumn 2016.

Although funding will continue to be an issue, the positive news is that the team may be able to sustain part of program costs for the TEAS Preparation class with reimbursements from the Minnesota Adult Basic Education funding with the remainder of the costs covered by another grant source. The team is also submitting a grant to the Saint Paul Foundation for Education to Employment (E2E), a collaboration among SPC, IIM and the YWCA to support the health-care pathway to employment.

CENTRO LABORAL DE GRATON AND SANTA ROSA JUNIOR COLLEGE

Statement of Problem

Day laborers and domestic workers are extremely low-income, immigrant workers, who seek work through day labor centers or on street corners. In Sonoma County, day laborers and domestic workers often work for individual homeowners in landscaping, general yard maintenance, digging, moving, housecleaning, and some heavy and skilled jobs. As a largely undocumented immigrant labor force, they lack access to a living wage, health care, education and affordable housing. Because of poverty, lack of access to education, and language barriers, there are few meaningful points of entry into technical training and access to career pathways.

Description of the Partners

Centro Laboral de Graton (CLG) is a worker-led day labor center in Sonoma County, California, that primarily addresses the workforce development needs of low-wage, predominantly non-English speaking, and undocumented immigrant workers. These needs are addressed by providing training, employment, and civic engagement and advocacy opportunities to day laborers and domestic workers.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CENTRO LABORAL DE GRATON

Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) is a public, two-year community college, accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (2015 WASC). The college has an annual student enrollment of 26,833 students, supported by 2,078 staff at two campuses, a 100+ acre campus in the heart of Santa Rosa, and a 40-acre campus in Petaluma. SRJC offers a strong-general education program that includes 240 general education courses and 90 majors for students planning to transfer to four-year colleges and universities, as well as more than 113 career and technical certificate programs that prepare students for the workforce. SRJC awards both associate in arts (A.A.) and associate in science (A.S.) degrees and supports a robust basic skills program designed to prepare students for college-level courses. The college provides non-credit English as a Second Language (ESL) and operates a High School Equivalency Program (HEP), funded by the Office of Migrant Education to assist migrant and seasonal agricultural workers with obtaining a high school equivalency certificate and matriculating into college, technical training or improved employment.

Original Work Plan and Initial Team Response

To respond to the needs of the community, the partners made the commitment to develop and maintain a meaningful partnership with the end goal of building bridges for day laborers and domestic workers, so that they can access technical training that allows them to obtain family-wage jobs. The team identified four goals that they hoped to achieve as part of BPCIW:

1. Complete a needs assessment to determine: a) the types of programs that the day laborers and domestic workers are interested in pursuing, b) the local labor market, and c) the programs offered by the college and new programs that need to be developed.
2. Analyze potential funding for curriculum development and a career navigator position.
3. Based on the needs assessment, develop new curriculum or revise curriculum that integrates basic skills and English language learning with technical skill development.
4. Create agreements for the partnership that will sustain the relationship beyond the length of the grant.

Progress To-Date

Based on the needs assessment, the team determined that an area of interest to their day laborer population was Green Landscaping, also called Xeriscaping. Recognizing the success achieved in the state of Washington with their IBEST program, the college adapted a Xeriscape curriculum created by Santa Barbara City College to integrate English language skill development with the technical skill curricula. The program design includes an introductory course that uses bilingual instruction for OSHA 10 certification, job communication skills, basic mathematics, and basic xeriscape plant identification and installation techniques. Scheduled to launch in March 2016, the program will be between 40 and 50 hours, delivered in an accelerated format (eight hours/week for five or six weeks), and offered during times requested by the potential participants (Friday night and Saturday morning). Phase two of this collaboration will be the development of an advanced course that will prepare students for low-flow irrigation installation certification.

Day laborers encounter many unique barriers and challenges as they try to gain a foothold in our nation's economy. Prior to launching their pilot project, the team knew figuring out how to eliminate or mitigate the barriers facing day laborers in participating and succeeding in training and education would be their number one challenge. Much has been learned about the student supports needed and the resources and expertise each partner brings to the table. Part of the team's work going forward (January–March 2016) will be to evaluate their respective roles and ensure they are fully capitalizing on the strengths and resources of both organizations.

Impact of the Initiative and Lessons Learned

As a community-based organization devoted to serving the immigrant day laborer community, CLG has been committed to providing greater employment opportunities for day laborers and domestic workers through workforce development programming and services. A regular challenge for CLG has been developing job skills training opportunities that lead to steady employment with a living wage. This new partnership with SRJC has led to the development of technical career pathways that were built from an evidence-based model that accounted for the numerous challenges day laborers and domestic workers frequently face.

Additionally, CLG has been engaged in an organizational development phase to improve program evaluation and impact measurement determination. Working in partnership with SRJC has complemented CLG's growth by learning how larger institutions, such as community colleges, measure impact and outcomes. In assessing impact, CLG has initiated a dialogue on how to determine successful outcomes for different demographical categories of day laborers and domestic workers, and in matching those outcomes to the appropriate programming, such as the technical certificate program.

Historically, SRJC has been at the forefront in providing high quality education to its community, including English language learners. Even with the adaptation of this premise by the college, the thought of serving an increasingly diverse student body and community was not fully understood. The initiative to build community partnerships to serve immigrant workers brought with it a new perception of how the college can improve services for its large noncredit student population, mostly made up of migrant workers. The college now recognizes and embraces their role in developing noncredit technical certificates to provide different career pathways to immigrant workers.

The technical assistance provided through the project and the opportunity to meet with peers and attend the NCWE conference, resulted in college staff becoming more aware of new and innovative models that are utilized at other colleges. SRJC is committed to adopting some of these new ideas and innovations to better serve their immigrant student population in the future.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

As with any nascent relationship, the team has encountered challenges along the way. Staffing changes have led to confusion as to the roles of each of the partners. CLG is struggling to determine what role the organization and its staff will play in the implementation of the training programs aside from

recruiting and assuring attendance of workers at trainings. Funding and future funding are always issues, particularly for CLG as a nonprofit organization. SRJC has confronted resistance by some faculty and administrators regarding a comprehensive understanding of the benefits of developing noncredit short-term vocational certificates. As both partners want to ensure that learners achieve family-wage jobs upon completion of the training, the team remains diligent in their efforts to identify employer partners with appropriate job opportunities. Even though they have developed a number of new employer partners, many more relationships need to be built to have a successful, creditable and robust program.

Nonetheless, the team remains confident that this is a long-term relationship and has begun discussions on new programs for personal home-care assistance and day-care providers, and on exploring opportunities in the hospitality industry. They are fully committed to the next phase of the initiative and to fostering and growing their new partnership to its fullest.

NEIGHBORS LINK NORTHERN WESTCHESTER AND WESTCHESTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Statement of Problem

There is a growing need for health-care workers in Westchester County. Business associations indicate that healthcare is emerging as “the largest economic engine in the Hudson Valley, contributing \$15 billion to the regional economy.”⁸ Changing demographics, including an aging older adult population, is contributing to the need for health-care workers, especially those who are qualified for employment in long-term care facilities and related service groups. New York State’s population as a whole will grow only 1.3 percent by 2040, but the population of those who are 80+ will grow by 42.2 percent. The growth of older cohorts is expected to have the most impact in upstate New York; however, the growth in Westchester County is still substantial at nearly 30 percent. Surrounding counties are expected to experience even higher increases.

Immigrants are poised to contribute to addressing the state-wide need for health-care workers, and provide the additional benefit of being bilingual. The number of immigrants in Westchester County has grown significantly over the last decade. Limited English proficiency creates integration barriers for immigrants, and the level of language proficiency required to enroll in health-care education programs requires a significant investment of time and money. Currently, there are relatively few opportunities for immigrants with limited English language proficiency to enter health-care programs that provide language contextualization, thereby enabling participants to both gain job skills and concurrently develop English language skills. While successful instructional models, such as I-Best, present examples of how contextualization can accelerate the path to credential attainment and job placement, widespread implementation of this model has not occurred in Westchester County.

Description of the Partners

Based in Mt. Kisco, Neighbors Link Northern Westchester (NL) is a community center providing critical education and employment opportunities for over 2,500 immigrant and working poor families in northern Westchester County, New York, each year. The NL mission is to strengthen the whole community by actively enhancing the healthy integration of immigrants. Their mission is achieved by offering programs for new immigrant individuals and families, involving longer-term residents in volunteer opportunities, and creating substantive partnerships with local organizations. Neighbors Link was formed in 1999 by a group of community organizers and volunteers in response to an increasingly hostile environment for new immigrants in Mount Kisco and the surrounding area. Today, NL employs 10 full-time staff members, four part-time staff members, and 13 part-time teachers for afterschool and summer academic programs for children. The participation of over 300 diverse volunteers who donate 35,000 hours annually, including half who are high

⁸ <http://www.westchestermagazine.com/Blogs/914INC-Incoming/January-2015/Westchester-County-Association-Healthcare-Academy/>



school students from a wide range of area school districts, are critical to the organization's success.

Located in Valhalla, New York, Westchester Community College (WCC) was founded in 1946. Enrollment at the College includes over 13,000 full- and part-time college credit students each semester. Continuing Education and Workforce training students bring the total number of individuals served by the college each semester to more than 24,000. The mission of WCC is to provide accessible, high-quality and affordable education to meet the needs of the area's diverse community. WCC is committed to student success, academic excellence, workforce development, economic development and lifelong learning. The members of the college community

strive to address the mission through all activities, and by providing access to education on the Valhalla Campus, at five full-service, hub extension centers, five school-based education sites, and throughout the county at community-based agency sites.

Original Work Plan and Team Initial Response

There is a documented need in New York State for Home Health Aides with an anticipated increase of 29 percent from 2012–2022. Neighbors Link and Westchester Community College have created a Home Companion Course in order to create a stackable credential for students and prepare them for participation in Home Health Aide programs. Building on their partnership of eight years to deliver English as a Second Language (ESL) classes to over 300 learners each year, this new BCPIW project will integrate contextualized ESL with a Home Companion training curriculum. Currently there are relatively few opportunities for immigrants with limited English language proficiency to enter health-care programs that develop job skills and English language skills concurrently. To accomplish their plan, the team identified five goals to accomplish as part of the BCPIW initiative:

1. Develop a stackable pathway to health-care professions.
2. Recruit students and assess their basic literacy skill levels to determine the contextualized curriculum content.
3. Foster current relationships and develop new partnerships in the community to ensure that completers of the program can achieve employment.
4. Participate in fundraising to support the initiative.
5. Develop a plan to deliver comprehensive support services to students.

Progress To-Date

To ensure employment in the region, the team utilized Burning Glass Technology to assess local labor market data. The data supported the need and provided valuable insight into employer's needs for the curriculum.

The Home Companion curriculum was developed by the team and is ready to enroll students in January 2016. The program will train immigrant students in non-medical services for seniors and adults with physical challenges. Home Companions not only provide companionship, but also encourage independence. The initial cohort will be comprised of 12–16 immigrant candidates who will be recruited by NL and identified as having a high potential for success based on initial screening. WCC will assess

the English skills for each of these students for program readiness. The Home Companion Certificate will be the first step in the career pathway. Completers of HC will be eligible for the Personal Care Aide Certificate and completers of that certificate could pursue the Home Health Aide Certificate, both of which are offered by WCC.

To ensure a candidate pool for enrollment, the team developed marketing materials including flyers and postcards. In addition, a newspaper ad was put into circulation in early December 2015. On December 21, 2015, the team hosted an open house to engage the community and build excitement about the new program.

Because the team has extensive experience working with immigrants and immigrant workers, they knew that comprehensive student supports would be critical to ensuring retention and success. Based on that knowledge, NL established a wrap-around services plan for students. NL will provide a half-hour dinner before each 2.5-hour class and child-care services as part of the wrap-around services plan. Each block of class/community building time will be three hours. NL also created the format for three learning facilitator meetings in the beginning, middle and end of the course to support the students at crucial junctures. This comprehensive support plan will help the team achieve their goal of enrolling and completing 12–16 immigrant Home Companions.

Impact of the Initiative and Lessons Learned

The initial plan was to develop the Home Health Aide certificate. After the team realized that this curriculum required strong communication skills, they reconsidered their decision. After assessing the English language skills of many of their clients, the team reorganized and decided that Home Companion was a better first step. Currently, the team is exploring alternative education for clients who are interested in the program, but do not yet meet the ESL requirements.

The team encountered some unexpected state licensing challenges during program development. Every conversation with staff in the NY State Education Department and NY State Department of Health offices raised new questions and issues. Nonetheless, these conversations proved to be productive in removing roadblocks for immigrants, such as registry and certification issues.

The importance of face-to-face meetings with partners was evident. The team was re-energized after each meeting. The meetings helped the partners to maintain clear communication about the project. While phone meetings were helpful, due to busy schedules, the face-to-face meetings kept the team connected. The technical assistance calls also kept the team on track. The team realized early on that they needed to create realistic deadlines and be flexible because of the nature of their extensive work plan.

The team encountered one final challenge. In developing the marketing materials, they could not find a Spanish equivalent for the name "Home Companion." None of the translations seemed suitable. In the end, the team decided to just use the English term "Home Companion" for the Spanish marketing materials realizing that the name itself carried weight and could be used whether a student was a Spanish or English speaker.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

As previously stated, the first Home Companion Certificate program will begin in January 2016. The partners are developing marketing materials for employers and are working with local employers and agencies to develop hands-on experience outside of the classroom. The team is also seeking volunteers to provide support in the classroom and during the learning facilitative meetings. WCC is confirming the curriculum for the next two steps on the career pathway – Personal Care Aide and Home Health Aide. Plans are currently in place to run the program at least two to three times per year. This team is very engaged and committed to serving their community long into the future.

COMMUNITY CAMPUS PARTNERSHIP, THE LEARNING CENTER AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF AURORA

Statement of Problem

According to the 2010 census, 31 percent of Aurora, Colorado's, residents speak a language other than English at home. Twenty percent are foreign-born, and 37 percent of Aurora's foreign-born population arrived in the U.S. since 2010. Immigrant workers in Aurora experience challenges with being prepared for and obtaining jobs that pay livable wages and offer career pathways. A majority of the population lacks English language skills and basic literacy and math skills, and many have cultural misperceptions and/or lack of understanding of U.S. workplace norms. Finally, academic credentials and professional experiences are not readily transferrable. In addition, local employers possess cultural biases and misperceptions about the immigrant community that further inhibit hiring from this population.

Home to Children's Hospital of Colorado, University of Colorado Hospital, University Physicians, Inc., the University of Colorado's health sciences schools and research centers, and the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, the Anschutz Medical Campus employs approximately 19,000 individuals. While the number of employees is substantial, fewer than three percent of those employees are residents of the surrounding neighborhoods. Immigrants comprise a significant population in the neighborhoods surrounding these medical facilities and offer language and cultural skills that are in increasing demand in hospitals and health-care settings. This partnership was formed to examine strategic and cost-effective ways to help close the gap between employer hiring needs and the immigrant community's employment aspirations.

Description of the Partners

The Community-Campus Partnership (CCP) was established by the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus in 2013 to build connections between the campus and the surrounding community to improve the health and quality of life of area residents. Because job opportunities and long-term career pathway options are a key determinant of individual and community health, CCP's first initiative was the "Hire Local" program. The goal of this initiative is to expand access to jobs on the medical campus to community residents.

The Community College of Aurora (CCA) is a public, two-year institution of higher learning in Aurora. CCA serves 12,000 students annually offering ABE/GED, English as a Second Language (ESL), and an array of technical college certificates and associate degree programs.

The Learning Center (TLC) is a community-based, nonprofit organization located in Lakewood, Colorado that operates over 30 programs in the Denver Metro Area serving over 2,000 students annually. TLC promotes and provides ABE, GED and ESL educational opportunities through collaborative partnerships for adults and families.

Original Work Plan and Team Initial Response

In the fall of 2014, the partners, along with a number of other organizations in the area, came together to develop a shared vision to increase the number of Aurora residents who are employed on the Anschutz Medical Campus. The partners envisioned the design of a "Healthcare Bridge" program that integrated ABE, ESL, job readiness, health-care skills training, coaching, supportive services, and job placement services. This program was developed and piloted in April 2015.

Three of the partners came together for the BCPIW initiative in order to learn first-hand from nationally recognized programs about effective services and models to strengthen and expand the ESL Healthcare Bridge program. The team identified five goals that they hoped to achieve as part of BCPIW:

1. Develop an overall project goal and related strategies to improve outreach to immigrants.
2. Assess immigrant community needs and develop future programs, referrals and collaborations.
3. Explore new models for building career pathway programs and designing health-care programs at CCA that align with occupations and employers' needs on the Anschutz campus.
4. Research funding opportunities to support the Healthcare Workforce Bridge.

5. Identify and develop collaborative efforts with local and metro-wide agencies with the immigrant communities.

Progress To-Date

The Aurora BCPIW initiative includes two Healthcare Bridge programs offered by CCA, one for ABE students and one for ESL students. The ESL Healthcare Bridge focuses on training residents of two neighborhoods immediately surrounding the Anschutz Medical Campus. The ABE Healthcare Bridge is a combination of several classes: ABE/HSE, Job Readiness, Medical



PHOTO COURTESY OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF AURORA

Terminology, Customer Service in Healthcare, and Computers in Healthcare. Two tracks were added as a part of the BPCIW initiative: Patient Services and Sterile Processing. While it is composed of several different classes, students go through the program as a cohort and must take and pass all of the classes to complete the program. Immigrant students who possess the literacy and language skills enroll into the ABE Healthcare Bridge.

The ESL Healthcare Bridge program focuses on providing immigrants and refugees who do not possess basic language and literacy skills with these skills through an integrated curriculum designed to assist them in pursuing certificate programs in healthcare such as Integrated Nursing Pathways, CNA, Phlebotomy, EKG and Patient Care Technician.

To improve the effectiveness of the ESL Healthcare Bridge, college staff are exploring effective models, such as the I-BEST model and other models for effectively delivering contextualized instruction, in order to improve student success. Discussions are currently underway regarding the professional development needs of the staff and how to effectively create a pathway for students between the ABE and ESL Healthcare Bridge programs and into college certificate programs.

One of the most important outcomes of the initiative has been the continued maturation of the current partnerships and adding new partners. The City of Aurora Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs, Colorado Welcome Back, the Colorado Department of Human Services – Refugee Services Employment Programs, the Asian Pacific Development Center, Aurora – Sister Cities, and the African Community Center have all joined the partnership. These new partners will aid in recruitment efforts, ensure appropriate programming, expand supportive services, and help students establish residency.

Impact of the Initiative and Lessons Learned

The Community Campus Partnership developed relationships, hiring processes, etc. with the employers on the Anschutz Medical Campus, which was essential to the successes to date. CCA provided the education and training necessary for preparing individuals for employment; however, structural barriers to employment for immigrants existed that could only be removed internally by the employers. CCP worked with the employers to develop strategies and processes for identifying and removing those barriers, so that a resume that may otherwise be tossed aside due to name, background, etc. was considered for employment.

A key lesson learned was that many of the refugees and immigrants did not possess the literacy skills to enter the health-care programs. Additionally, many individuals were unaware of all of the

available employment opportunities. Additional wrap-around support, including career development and awareness, are critical factors in addressing these issues.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

By bringing new partners to the table, the team affirmed its commitment to serving the immigrant populations in their community. They plan to explore other partnerships and engage their new partners in determining how to make the ABE and ESL Healthcare Bridge programs more effective with smoother pathways for students. Possible future opportunities that are being discussed include whether the college should expand the bridge program model to other technical areas, and how the partners can build bridges from other community education partners to the CCA ESL Healthcare Bridge. The partners are committed to supporting CCP's "Hire Local" program by ensuring access to quality job opportunities and long-term career pathway opportunities that are available on the Anschutz Medical Campus.

JEWISH VOCATIONAL SERVICE AND SKYLINE COLLEGE

Statement of Problem

Between 2000 and 2010, San Mateo County saw the most significant increase in the number of immigrants of any county in the state. The top countries of origin for immigrants to San Mateo County are Mexico, the Philippines, China and El Salvador, with 53 percent being U.S. citizens, 24.5 percent being non-citizens with a green card or visa, and 22.5 percent being undocumented. According to a recent survey conducted by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation in partnership with the Silicon Valley Center for Global Studies at San Jose State University, the median length of time that immigrants had been living in the county was 14 years. While the majority of immigrants in San Mateo County are long-term residents, a significant number struggle with low-wage jobs, limited prospects for advancement (and the economic insecurity that it creates), and discrimination. The survey also showed that 74 percent of respondents cited the need for assistance in finding a job as one of their most significant needs. Other critical needs that were identified included access to healthy food (83 percent), affordable housing (80 percent), and access to health care (78 percent).

Implicit in the survey findings was the need for immigrants to access training that could help position them for better jobs that would provide opportunities for advancement and the ability to earn a living wage. Forty percent of survey respondents reported earning less than \$20,000 per year. To put this in context, the Insight Center for Community Economic Development has determined that to meet basic expenses for a family of four in San Mateo County an income of \$78,945 per year is required – which is the equivalent of more than four minimum-wage, full-time jobs.

In the region, healthcare continues to provide strong job opportunities for residents with an anticipated growth rate of 12 percent over the next five years (between 2015 and 2020). Healthcare is a priority sector in the region and provides a sufficient number of entry level and middle-wage jobs with clear

IMMIGRANT WORKERS AND HEALTH-CARE CAREER PATHWAYS

Due to the abundance of employment opportunities in the health-care industry, many of the teams focused on developing health-care programs or bridges. Two important findings emerged resulting in program and curriculum redesign.

1. Many refugees and immigrants do not possess both the language and literacy skills to enter health-care programs.
2. Many immigrant and immigrant workers are unaware of all of the available employment opportunities in healthcare, envisioning nursing as the only potential career pathway. Good career advising is essential.

skills sets and competencies that are associated with each occupation. These health-care occupations and related career pathways are also closely aligned with a credential-bearing training. Between 2013 and 2014, almost a quarter of all health-care job postings were middle-skill jobs which required less than a bachelor's degree. This suggested that there was a strong and growing demand for positions for which candidates could seek stackable credentials in order to enhance their potential for employment.

Description of the Partners

Jewish Vocational Service (JVS) transforms lives by helping people build skills and find jobs to achieve self-sufficiency. For the past 40 years, the agency has provided employment and training services to jobseekers throughout the Bay Area. As a result, JVS has emerged as a leader in the field of workforce development, serving approximately 4,000 job seekers each year, with specializations in youth training and supportive needs and a sector approach to connecting clients with training and employment.

Complex and constantly shifting labor market dynamics, coupled with the varied needs of jobseekers, require a collaborative approach to building a strong and sustainable workforce. JVS is recognized for partnering closely with employers, government, educational institutions, philanthropic organizations and community-based organizations to develop programs that match the needs of clients with the hiring needs of regional employers. The JVS dual customer approach to workforce development has been proven to lead to high job placement rates and employer satisfaction.

Located on an 111-acre site overlooking the Pacific Ocean just south of San Francisco in San Bruno, Skyline College offers world-class educational opportunities to residents from North San Mateo County and beyond in a culturally rich and globally informed environment. Over 17,000 students enroll annually in a broad range of affordable day, evening, weekend and online courses. Students can complete transfer degrees (AA-T/AS-T), guaranteeing admission into the CSU system, or lower division general education requirements at Skyline College and then transfer to four-year colleges and universities to earn a bachelor's degree. Other Skyline College students graduate and achieve an Associate in Arts (A.A.) or Associate in Science (A.S.) degree. Skyline College also offers the latest in career technical education through nationally acclaimed programs in Allied Health, Automotive Technology, Business, Cosmetology, Emergency Medical Technician, Environmental Technology, Hospitality, Retail and Tourism, Massage Therapy, Respiratory Therapy and Surgical Technology. Skyline offers a total of 34 associate degree and 53 certificate programs. Students benefit from excellent educational programs, state-of-the-art technology, One Stop Student Support Services, integrated student services, instruction through learning communities, and an innovative environment that supports student success.

Original Work Plan and Team Initial Response

JVS has long-term experience in supporting and leading the City of San Francisco's Healthcare Academy. The Academy serves clients who meet the federal "low income" guidelines, aligns local health-care training programs with labor market needs, and builds on partner strengths to increase the number of allied health training and employment opportunities in San Francisco. The Academy leverages the experience of JVS and other partners in health-care training, certification and wrap-around support services to create a streamlined experience for individual job-seekers and employers. Skyline Community College offers in-demand certificates in Allied Health as part of the college's Career Advancement Academies. The team came together through the BCPIW project to examine and learn from best practices and model partnerships, as well as to dive deeply into training and work-based learning for immigrants within Allied Health occupations.

To accomplish their initial plan, the team identified three goals they wished to accomplish as part of the BCPIW initiative:

1. Define a program model.
2. Determine and reach the target population to be included in the cohort.
3. Determine employer(s) for customized training and internship/workplace learning.



Progress To-Date

Beginning with the Spring 2016 semester, Skyline will offer a targeted ESOL for healthcare course that emphasizes patient navigation and preparation for other allied health careers at the South San Francisco and Jefferson Adult Schools. While this offering will not encompass the full 17-unit certificate, it will articulate with existing pathways in allied health including patient navigation, medical assisting and the Career Advancement Academy for Allied Health at Skyline. In addition to healthcare, communication, medical terminology, health systems and disease management, the curriculum will embed the following elements: college counseling to help interested students transition to Skyline, career counseling to identify pathways and pursue opportunities for internships and employment, and First Aid & Healthcare CPR training and certification.

Initially, the team planned to replicate the model used by JVS for the Healthcare Academy in which work-based learning and internships are a required component. The team struggled with recruiting employers to provide internships and, as a result, had to reconsider and redefine the partnership and their roles. As such, the team has addressed the ways in which JVS outreach, support and placement expertise could support immigrant job seekers through outreach to eligible students at Skyline who are not yet connected to Allied Health programs. In addition, they will reach out to recipients of services at other CBOs in the area. Students enrolled at Skyline and individuals who are enrolled with other CBOs would receive additional supports and job readiness training while in the program and supported job placement upon program completion.

Impact of the Initiative and Lessons Learned

Because Patient Navigator, like Community Health Worker, is an emerging occupation and is neither recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor's O*Net System nor have a designated Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Code, it has been more challenging to define the labor market need and potential employer partners than originally anticipated. These roles are defined differently depending upon how each organization is deploying them. For some organizations, patient navigation is an activity rather than a full-time position. JVS is actively pursuing employers around their need for support in these emerging roles within allied health, both to support this partnership and as part of their work around Community Health Workers as a possible growth occupation. While the team has made

some progress establishing relations with providers, such as Stanford and Dignity Health, they have not been able to secure commitment from an employer for a partnership focused on placing job seekers.

The team recognized how important it is to remain flexible and that initial plans may need to be reassessed. The team found that they would not have been able to pursue the partnership with the SSF and Jefferson adult schools if the team was wedded to the 17-unit certificate model. As a result, they are repackaging the essential elements of patient navigation in an accelerated curriculum. This readjusted curriculum will target English language learners to prepare them to matriculate to Skyline for further education, or, for those ready for employment, with the essential skills to obtain a job in patient navigation, community health work or other health careers.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

Even though the team has encountered a number of challenges along the way, they believe they have forged a stronger partnership in which they are better able to build a stronger base of knowledge about each partner's areas of expertise and partnership needs. They have pledged to continue to meet on a quarterly basis, and are working to identify more employer partners. Ultimately, the team would like to offer qualified students internship opportunities directly from the adult school to expedite entry into the job market.

The partners also see two potential pathways emerging: 1) an integrated pathway for ELLs, immigrants and refugees that blends Skyline's training with JVS workforce services and supports once a committed employer is in place; or, 2) a blended model that meets the training and employment needs of immigrant and non-immigrant participants. In either scenario, JVS would provide extra training and support to help move participants through the hiring process and support job retention within the employment setting. Skyline would expand the certificate trainings offerings to potentially incorporate a short-course Home Health Aide and/or a Community Emergency Response Team certificate.

KENTUCKY DREAM COALITION AND BLUEGRASS COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Statement of Problem

The Brookings Institute reports that Lexington ranks second in a list of the 100 largest U.S. cities with substantive changes in the Latino population from 2000 to 2007. Despite this growth, the city has few organizations that are dedicated to working with immigrants. Employment data for the Latino immigrant population indicates that there is an opportunity to impact Latino family income. The Pew Hispanic Center reports that in 2010, the Kentucky median income for Hispanics 16 years or older was \$18,000, compared to \$25,500 for non-Hispanic whites in the same age group. Data on educational attainment indicates that only 19.7 percent of Latinos in Kentucky have an associate's degree or higher (Lumina Foundation 2014). Additionally, 42 percent of Lexington's Latino adults lack a high school diploma, and of the 15 percent of Latinos enrolled in higher education, only 13 percent obtain a degree.

On a yearly basis, the Kentucky Dream Coalition conducts a survey of Latino youth and families to gauge their knowledge of higher educational opportunities. On average, about a third of respondents do not know about the post-secondary opportunities available to them. Combatting widespread ignorance about educational opportunities will be a key part of the partnership. Other hurdles include the language barrier (only 23 percent of those surveyed responded that they "spoke English very well"), cost and inaccessible financial aid due to documentation status. These barriers result in high levels of family poverty.

Description of the Partners

Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC) supports access, success and completion of educational goals through comprehensive and responsive programs and services at six campuses across

Central Kentucky. BCTC provides the region with a skilled workforce, through high-quality career and technical programs, workforce training, and continuing education, and prepares students for transfer to baccalaureate degree programs. The college also promotes regional economic vitality through diversity and inclusion. Annually the College enrolls approximately 11,000 students in a region of Kentucky that has experienced rapid growth in immigration over the last decade. In response to this immigrant expansion, BCTC established the Office of Latino Outreach and Support Services more than 10 years ago. Since that time, immigrant settlement has increased and diversified. For example, Lexington is the third largest resettlement location of Congolese refugees in the U.S.

The Kentucky Dream Coalition (KDC) is a broad-based youth and young adult community network that was created to help immigrant youth and their parents to access higher education through mentoring, programming and advocacy. In addition to the KDC's strong advocacy for immigration reform, KDC members focus on helping youth stay in school, helping adults connect to GED programs, and assisting students to make plans for college and serve their community through meaningful leadership development, and empowerment projects. KDC is also home to The DREAM Educational Empowerment Program (DEEP). DEEP is a catalyst for educational justice and empowerment for all immigrant students whose goal is to educate, connect and empower immigrant students, parents and educators to close the opportunity gap and engage in local efforts to improve educational equity. KDC is a perfect community partner to connect with BCTC because of its broadly engaged Latino community, its national network connections, and its focus on educational access and achievement in the Bluegrass Region.

Original Work Plan and Team Initial Response

The Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC) / Kentucky Dream Coalition (KDC) partnership was created to support a pathway for immigrant/Latino students to enter high-paying jobs in the field of biotechnology, which is a growth industry in the region. BCTC has a national reputation as a prominent supporter of immigrant education, and graduates Latino students at a higher rate than any other higher education institution in the region.

Based on the knowledge of the partners and the community dynamics, the team identified four goals that they hoped to achieve as part of BCPIW:

1. Develop a bilingual pathway for Latino students in biotechnology.
2. Develop marketing materials about the new pathway.
3. Increase the number of events offered by KDC to make more Latinos aware of biotechnology as a career option.
4. Work with college administration to change the "Mandatory Placement" policy at BCTC to accommodate ESL students in the biotechnology pathway.

Progress To-Date

Working with employers, the faculty identified 17 credit hours of study that lead to an entry-level biotechnology certificate pathway for immigrant/Latino students. These courses teach the necessary language, concepts and mathematical tools for entry level jobs in laboratory employment. To support this new biotechnology certificate, the faculty adopted four three-credit hour bearing ESL classes in lieu of

INTENTIONALITY

The 2014 White House Task Force on New Americans formalized a federal immigration integration agenda that emphasizes the importance of the "intentional" collaboration among several different federal agencies that serve immigrants in order to improve services to more effectively integrate immigrants linguistically, economically and politically.

Thus, many of the teams recognized that when they were intentional in addressing the needs of immigrants through planning and/or changing of policies and practices, they were more likely to achieve success.

The White House Task Force on New Americans. Strengthening Communities by Welcoming All Residents. A Federal Strategic Plan on Immigrant and Refugee Integration, April 2015.

noncredit classes for advanced Speaking/Listening, Reading and Writing. This adaptation allows students to complete the ESL/developmental sequence within the Federal financial guidelines of 30 credit hours, as a result of the advanced classes no longer being considered developmental in nature.

Currently at the college, there are no clear pathways or support mechanisms in place to help AE/ESL students transition into technical programs. The team worked with the adult education department to develop a workshop for faculty which provides them with the tools they need to support AE/ESL students who wish to make the transition to credit programs. This workshop identifies the transition processes and procedures, and provides faculty with contact information for key staff/faculty at the college. This workshop helps to improve college processes and creates a clear pathway to credit technical programs for AE/ESL students.

To improve the promotion of the biotechnology program, the team, in conjunction with the faculty, developed a calendar of local events and venues related to the immigrant/Latino community so the college can target market the new program option. The team created the English language content for marketing materials to promote biotechnology careers. In addition, the team presented a biotechnology workshop at the 2015 Latino Multicultural College Fair at Eastern Kentucky University where more than 500 students from 12 central Kentucky high schools participated. The team has also scheduled a "Take your GED/ESL to college night" for April 2016 to present the biotechnology workshop to current AE/ESL students.

Impact of the Initiative and Lessons Learned

As the initiative progressed, the team learned that "intentionality" is an important process that the college needs to adopt. Many of the College's processes do not take into account immigrant students. For example, the "Mandatory Placement" policy at BCTC is the policy that controls enrollment of developmental and ESL students (those individuals who are not deemed college-ready students as attested by ACT or COMPASS scores). Students are required to complete the developmental or ESL sequence before entering college-level classes. This policy and related process delays student entry into career pathways. Another example centers on the evaluation of transcripts from other countries. Typically, the college would routinely assign elective credit instead of transfer credit which could impede the student's acceleration to degree completion. As a result, the team is looking at other college policies in an "intentional" manner to ascertain if they also impede the success of immigrant students.

One office that implements intentionality as its basic operational ethos is the Office of Latino Outreach. The team hopes to extend this ethos to other areas of the college that affect immigrant student outcomes. The college needs an immigrant student coordinator/navigator who can link the different college processes and navigate bottlenecks. Currently, the college has coordinators/navigators for Latino Students and Military/Veteran students. Adoption of this model to assist all immigrants would improve student access to, and completion of, credentials leading to careers.

The college also needs to improve other career pathways options. The website has online career information; however, this website is difficult to negotiate and is edited across many different areas of the college. The college needs to undergo a website update in an "intentional" process to help immigrant students make the connection between ABE/ESL courses and career options.

As is the case with many institutions of higher education, the team has struggled with making change. Because curriculum in the Kentucky Community and Technical College System is considered "state-wide" curriculum, any changes to the curriculum can take more than 18 months to implement, and then only if approval is obtained across the system. Rather than develop new curriculum to facilitate immigrant enrollment into the biotechnology career pathway, the team adopted biotech courses that had been developed as part of the Accelerating Opportunity (AO) project. To help Latinos recognize this opportunity as a viable career pathway, the team acknowledged the importance of developing bilingual materials to promote the certificate program. To accommodate Latino students, the college's mandatory placement policy that restricted ABE/ESL student enrollment needed to be addressed. These factors slowed the development of the contextualized curriculum which embeds biotechnology with ESL and literacy skill development. As a result of these broad scale changes on several fronts, enrollment was delayed and is now targeted for Fall 2016.



Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

The team is committed to improving access to the biotechnology career pathway for Latino students. They are working with the college's marketing department to develop bilingual marketing materials to promote biotechnology careers. They are also working with the marketing department to review other college marketing materials that can be modified to include culturally appropriate language. Through partnerships with other departments on campus, the team is seeking wider college input to ensure that default processes are more "intentional" and beneficial for immigrant student access and credentialing. The team is also continuing their efforts to secure financial support via grants to create and support a position for an immigrant educational coordinator.

Finally, the team's work is expanding beyond the biotechnology program. The team has engaged in initial conversations with the Adult Education Directors to investigate the creation and implementation of an ESL health/sciences curriculum option for immigrant students who wish to pursue or recertify in careers in healthcare or biological sciences. The current curriculum design requires all AE/ESL students to follow the same curriculum, with no consideration given to all of the career options that are available in healthcare at the college.

ONEAMERICA, PUGET SOUND WELCOME BACK CENTER AND HIGHLINE COLLEGE

Statement of Problem

Population demographics in Washington state have significantly diversified since 2000. Nearly 40 percent of the foreign-born residents in Washington have arrived in the last 15 years, and over 80 percent of immigrants and refugees are adults of working age. Unfortunately, there is a growing gap in programs and services that are available for a very specific population of immigrants and immigrant workers, those immigrants who are highly skilled and/or educated. For those immigrants arriving to the U.S. with foreign degrees, there is insufficient infrastructure to help these immigrants and refugees translate their education and previous careers into professional work in Washington state.

Concomitantly, as Washington's secondary student population grows increasingly diverse with more multilingual and multicultural students in the schools, there is a clear need for ELL and bilingual/dual language education. The teacher workforce has been slow to diversify with teachers of color only representing 9 percent of the workforce. Given that 31.7 percent of foreign-born adults hold a bachelor's degree or higher, there is a tremendous opportunity to develop career pathways for immigrants to enter this sector and to strengthen the teaching workforce for improved student learning and outcomes.

Description of the Partners

OneAmerica is an immigrant advocacy non-profit located in Seattle, Washington. Working statewide to organize around issues impacting communities, OneAmerica is committed to building power in immigrant communities by advancing the principles of democracy and justice. Some of OneAmerica's work includes civic engagement, community organizing and mobilizing stakeholders to influence policies that impact immigrant communities. OneAmerica employs a staff of 25–30, depending on current projects and ongoing work at the organization.

The Puget Sound Welcome Back Center (PSWBC) at Highline Community College is located in Des Moines, Washington. A member of the national Welcome Back Initiative, PSWBC has been working to assist internationally trained health professionals re-enter the workforce. Services include individual educational case management, orienting students to the licensing procedures, and delivering workshops and classes to meet the professional development needs of students. PSWBC receives support from Highline Community College, the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and BuRSST for Prosperity.

Original Work Plan and Team Initial Response

OneAmerica and PSWBC came together to form a team for the BPCIW initiative to launch a new partnership, the Career Pathways Workgroup (CPW). CPW was charged with identifying and involving other partners and stakeholders to develop career pathways in the education sector and to affect systems level policy and programmatic changes. The team identified two goals to accomplish their plan:

1. Engage partners in meaningful, productive dialogue to develop a pipeline for bilingual teacher candidates to gain employment.
2. Create a career ladder for bilingual educators.

Progress To-Date

The team convened a meeting with stakeholders from the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB), Highline School District, and the ELL workgroup. By coordinating with the existing Road Map Project/ELL workgroup, the team was able to broaden the group of professionals to shape this work. A clear map of the route to teacher certification for a bilingual candidate was created. This represented the first time that this career pathway has been mapped in Washington with stakeholders beyond the ELL workgroup. Everyone who was involved in the process expressed an interest in future conversations around how this map could be utilized. The team also submitted a proposal for a data collection project to gain a deeper sense of language capacities, education levels and career goals of district classified staff. This proposal was awarded funding in September 2015 and will be implemented by Summer 2016.

Impact of the Initiative and Lessons Learned

The most significant challenge for the team was shifting culture and attitudes. To attain greater teacher diversity numbers, many different institutions need to be more intentional about how immigrants and refugees navigate their spaces or programming. There are very few resources available to help guide immigrants and refugees, even those with degrees, through the process of becoming licensed. There is little support for building professional relationships, which are essential in becoming a teacher, and there are only a few places for these individuals to receive guidance and career navigation support. There is also a disconnect between community colleges and university teacher preparation programs which makes it difficult to transition from immigrant friendly and accessible programs at the community college to the university environment. Finally, even though many school districts state that they want more bilingual educators, efforts to bring bilingual candidates into the workforce is nearly nonexistent.

Future Plans and Sustainability of the Partnership

OneAmerica, Highline College and PSWBC are committed to the partnership and substantially increasing the numbers of immigrants and refugees in the teaching workforce. Through data collection and the convening of ELL and HR directors in the school districts that were identified by the Road Map, the team hopes to frame a common language and objectives among all of the other agencies engaged in this workspace. The team is also committed to connecting with other stakeholders in the state to build a bilingual teacher pipeline and ensure that immigrants and refugees moving through this process are able to find living-wage jobs.

LESSONS LEARNED & CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Being part of a national initiative was very empowering to the teams. It gave them credibility within their own institutions/organizations and helped them leverage both internal and external additional resources. The project and the participating organizations were able to achieve an economy of scale as a result of being part of a larger community of practice. The participants shared and learned from each other and also benefited from the knowledge and experiences of the “experts” who they were able to work with during the project. The peer learning meetings allowed the individual teams to get to know each other and establish personal relationships. These relationships, deepened as a result of participating in meetings together, sharing meals and socializing, which resulted in increased trust levels and the motivation to work collectively during and after the project.

The take-away for the participants was that developing partnerships that are lasting and productive is hard work. Despite significant variances in resources, salaries and the number of staff, both organizations in each of the partnerships needed to be perceived as equal partners that brought valuable expertise to the table. While each of the partnerships were somewhat collaborative in the beginning, as the project evolved the partners became more adept at joint decision-making and valuing each other’s input. This was achieved in part through technical assistance support, which sometimes was akin to mediation and helped teams become more cooperative and functional, resulting in true partnerships.

The technical assistance team required the partnerships to check in with the team on a monthly basis which enhanced their overall accountability. Participants indicated that these “mini-deadlines” kept them on track and helped maintain momentum. Face-to-face team meetings were also important to each project’s continuity. While phone meetings frequently occurred due to busy schedules, the face-to-face meetings enhanced communications and kept the teams energized, organized and moving forward. Flexibility was also critical as work plan goals sometimes needed to be altered and timelines shifted. Without regular meetings the teams would not have been able to alter plans, develop new solutions or realign priorities.

A number of the local teams focused on the health-care sector because of the high labor market demand for health-care workers in their communities. It became evident early on that many of the refugees and immigrants did not possess the requisite literacy skills to enter the health-care programs. This forced the teams to rethink their original work plan and redesign curriculum to align with the literacy skill levels of their clients. Additionally, many of the immigrants were unaware of the variety of health-care employment opportunities that were available in their respective communities. Many believed that nursing was the only potential career pathway in healthcare. To address this issue, one team developed an assessment process that could be used to create a better understanding of the strengths and interests of the workers and to assist them in making better career decisions. Two other teams redesigned introductory classes and orientations to include career awareness instruction.

Teams that worked with day laborers learned that this population was not always ready to become part of what they perceived to be a “formal institution.” Historically, this group has been largely ignored

and oftentimes shut out of institutions of higher learning. In addition, many refugees are distrustful of public institutions, because they are from countries where they needed to fear persecution from own governments because of their race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion. For those reasons it was critical that the teams create a safe environment and provide consistent follow through on commitments, in order to build a trusting relationship which eventually led to participation and enrollment.

Many of the workers were focused on the short-term, as the need "to work and provide for family today" was more important than considering a future long-term career. It was critical to assist workers in shifting to a longer-term perspective by creating an understanding of the benefits of more comprehensive training and education designed around a career pathway that would lead to more gainful employment and a better life for their families. With that premise in mind, education and training programs needed to be designed that were accessible, pertinent and relevant to the workers' lives.

Finally, as the initiative progressed, the teams learned that "intentionality" is an important process that the college needs to adopt. Many of the colleges' processes do not take into account immigrant students and their needs, and, in fact, may be operating using processes that are discriminatory. The teams had to work across many areas of their respective college's and their campuses to modify or create new policies and procedures to replace those which in the past had impeded the success of immigrant learners.

With very little money and lots of hard work, these teams proved the importance of this initiative in their local communities and of the overall project. The teams built partnerships that are long-lasting and vibrant, and they learned to shift and compromise to ensure the success of their learners. Together, they built programs and services that moved from "one-off" quick training programs to programs embedded in career pathways leading to family-wage jobs. Unquestionably, the immigrants in their communities benefited!



1050 Larrabee Avenue #104-308
Bellingham, WA 98225
603.714.1918 • ncwe.org