



BIENVENIDO

July 2005

Northeastern Center Inc.

Bienvenido Acculturation Program Objectives

- ***Present topics related to mental health to achieve a better adjustment to the community.***
- ***Provide life skill training to improve the new immigrant life transition.***
- ***Allow individuals to identify, vent, and process feelings related to a new life in another country.***

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Revisions, Revisions, Revisions

Northeastern Center has begun an evaluation process of the Bienvenido Acculturation Program. This evaluation involves four phases. First, it will involve interviewing Bienvenido Facilitators who have implemented the acculturation program to better determine what has and hasn't worked well in the implementation process of the acculturation classes. Second, it will involve interviewing Bienvenido Facilitators who have not implemented the acculturation program. Third, it will involve conducting focus groups with current and past participants of the acculturation classes in order to gather their thoughts and comments regarding the acculturation program. Fourth, we will take the information gathered, analyze, and interpret the information in order to determine what areas the acculturation program need improvement.

The evaluation process began on July 1, 2005 with four facilitators from NE Indiana. Ellen Krulewitch, Elkhart Community Schools, Lupita Zepeda, Elkhart County Community member, Margarita White, Celebrate Diversity Project, and Frank Pizaña, Northeastern Center, met to express their experiences with facilitating the acculturation classes. It was an enriching, stimulating, and a humbling experience to listen to the facilitators retell their stories and experiences regarding the delivery of the acculturation classes. We looked closely at class lessons, their make-up, set-up and overall flow of the program.

Facilitators gave excellent feedback regarding the implementation of the acculturation program in their respective communities. Our next step involves making contact with additional facilitators and participants in order for them to make comments and provide us with feedback on their experience with the curriculum and acculturation classes.

The evaluation process will involve making revisions to the curriculum and we hope to learn the effectiveness of the acculturation program in different community settings. Ultimately, we believe the evaluation process will increase the effectiveness of the Bienvenido Acculturation Program.

***- Gilberto Pérez Jr., MSW, ACSW
Services Team Leader***

Student Letters

Nereida Mojica, Migrant Education Coordinator, at West Noble High School, in Ligonier, IN implemented the acculturation program with four high school students. At the completion of their classes students wrote letters to Northeastern Center expressing some of their thoughts and feelings regarding their experience in the acculturation program.

Below are excerpts from their letters.

"I thank you for creating this program for those who have recently arrived from Mexico. With this program I have learned more about this country. I believe this program could work well in the future for those who arrive in this country seeking a better life and other life opportunities."

-José Barrera

"I am writing to share a few words to thank you for the classes because they helped me reflect many things about myself. In this class I was taught that I shouldn't isolate myself from others just because I don't speak English. I was reminded of my family in Mexico and shared things with my parents I hadn't shared before.

- Lucero Cortez

"I want to thank you for these classes that helped us a lot because I learned how to adapt to this new country since our cultures are very different. Mrs. Mojica behaved very well with us and she helped us think about our country, our family, and friends. When I arrived I knew very few people. I felt alone and sad because I knew very little about this country. I thank you for having this class.

- Juan Silva

"I thank you for creating the acculturation program. Through this program I have learned many things I did not know. For example, life's needs of groups and many other things. Thank you."

- Oscar Barrera

We thank José, Lucero, Juan, and Oscar for writing us their stories and experiences regarding the acculturation classes!!

Excerpts were used with permission.



Lupita Zepeda and students from Pierre Moran Middle School, IN

Activities and Partnerships

- In June Northeastern Center (NEC) had the opportunity to attend the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) Annual Conference in Austin, TX. We were invited to present the Bienvenido Acculturation Program with NAMI attendees.
- NEC received a signed agreement from the University of Costa Rica supporting our efforts to conduct a research project with the acculturation program. Dr. Vanessa Smith Castro, Ph.D., has offered to support NEC in the tabulation of the multiethnic identity scale and contact scale.
- NEC has agreed to participate as an evaluator for University of Costa Rica immigrant symposium to be held in 2006 in San José, Costa Rica. NEC will serve as a consultant to the work being done with immigrant children in Costa Rica.
- NEC has coordinated a meeting with Juana Watson, Senior Advisor for Hispanic/Latino Affairs, Governor's Office, Indiana. The meeting to be held on July 20, 2005 at the Noble County Community Foundation will bring together local leaders from Noble, Elkhart, and Kosciusko Counties. Leaders will have an opportunity to ask questions regarding Latino issues.
- **Bienvenido Refresher Training held on July 1.**



Bienvenido Facilitators: Margarita White (top left), Ellen Krulewitch, Frank Pizana, and Lupita Zepeda.

Latino Behavioral Health Summit 2005

Building Sustainable Behavioral Health Initiatives in the Latino Community, is our summit theme. The summit is to be held at Pokagon State Park, Angola, IN.

Our co-sponsors are **Goshen College Social Work Education Program, Celebrate Diversity Project, and Drug-Free Noble County.**

Keynote speaker:

Dr. Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola, California State University

Summit goals:

Goal - Increase knowledge and understanding of culturally appropriate behavioral health services for Latinos.

Goal - Increase linkages among the Latino community and community social service agencies in order to decrease barriers to service delivery.

Summit schedule at a glance

November 2

Registration

Welcome/Dinner

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola, M.D., Ph.D.

Entertainment: Grupo Folclórico

November 3

Registration

Welcome/Introductions

Four Breakout sessions

Individual presentations: policies and mental health

Lunch/Keynote: Dr. Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola, M.D., Ph.D.

Four breakout sessions

Art activity

Evaluations

Visit our website www.nec.org for more information. Registration form will be available late July.

Scheduled Workshops

1A. Family to Family Education Program – Majose Carrasco, B.A., Director Multicultural Action Center, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, Alexandria, Virginia and Henry Acosta, M.A. MSW, LSW, Project Director, Changing Minds, Advancing Mental Health for Hispanics, New Jersey.

2B. “Mujeres que Sufren Angustia: a psychoeducational format for Latina relational empowerment” -Marcia Good, Ph.D., Anthropology, University of Notre Dame, IN and Lideth Ortega Villalobos, Doctoral student in Psychology, University of Notre Dame.

3C. How to Reduce Drug Use: Lessons from Colombia – Daniel Lende, Ph.D. Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of Notre Dame.

4D. Barriers When Working With Latina Women, Ana Giusti, Latino Program Coordinator, Center for Nonviolence, José Luis Rivera, Latino Men’s Program Coordinator, Center for Nonviolence, Fort Wayne, IN.

5A. Bienvenido Acculturation Program, Gilberto Pérez Jr., MSW, ACSW, Northeastern Center, Inc., Ligonier, IN.

6B. Strategies for Enhancing Mental Health Services for Latino Community, Ambrose Rodriguez, M.P.A., President & Founder Latino Behavioral Health Institute, Los Angeles, CA, Irma Martinez, M.A., Director, Latino Access Program, Los Angeles, CA.

7C. Latino Batterer Intervention Program, Jorge Vielman, M.A., ICADV, Center for Problem Resolution, Goshen, IN.

8D. Building Community Partnerships – Sonia Acosta, Ph.D., Director, El Centro la Familia, Debra Ehrmann, Healthcare Coordinator, Pontiac, MI

Individual Presentations:

Amy Mendoza, Executive Director, Commission of Hispanic/Latino Affairs, Governor’s Office. Amy Mendoza will share current policies and bills that affect Latinos in Indiana.

Dr. Emilia Lucio Gómez, Universidad Nacional Autónoma, Mexico City. Dr. Gómez will discuss mental health of Mexican immigrants.