

BIENVENIDO

The Bienvenido Program is a prevention intervention program that increases access to mental health services, improves mental health, and quality of life of Latino immigrants.

Bienvenido groups continue to unfold in Northeast Indiana

In our last newsletter we reported that several Bienvenido groups were launched. We are happy to report that additional Bienvenido groups are being implemented in Northeast Indiana and Bienvenido Facilitators are actively meeting with school officials to bring the Bienvenido Program to their school community. Northeastern Center congratulates each one of the facilitators for taking the initiative to work with the Latino community:

Martha Huttleston, Bienvenido Facilitator, Laporte, IN launched a Bienvenido group with fourteen individuals. Martha reports that enthusiasm was high and participants were eager to share about their migration experiences and their stories of adjusting to this culture. Martha launched a second Bienvenido group in October with a local Spanish AA group.

Laura Garcia and **Dr. Margarita Alvarez** launched a Bienvenido Group at St. Vincent Catholic Church in Elkhart. Laura serves as coordinator of the Bienvenido Facilitator Network Facebook account and updates the site with articles and videos related to mental health. Thanks Laura!! Dr. Alvarez recently arrived from the Dominican Republic and volunteers with the Hispanic/Latino Health Coalition.

Melanie Tijerina, Bienvenido Facilitator launched a Bienvenido Group at West Noble High School-Ligonier with nine Latino students. Melanie has facilitated various groups at the high school in Ligonier. Her ability to relate to students is phenomenal and students like her energy and sense of humor. Melanie is also assistant principal at West Noble Elementary and Director of the ENL Program at West Noble Schools.

Araceli Pacheco, Bienvenido Facilitator launched a Latino parent support group. After having completed a Bienvenido group in Ligonier, participants asked for additional classes that addressed parenting issues. Araceli invited people from her church to consider this idea and 10 couples responded to her call. Araceli and the Latino parents meet weekly at Comunidad Cristiana Adulam in Goshen. It is exciting to see additional services being offered to the Latino community.

Aurora Leon, Bienvenido Facilitator met with school officials at Osolo Elementary School in Elkhart to discuss launching a Bienvenido Program for Latino parents. Principal, social worker, and ENL staff approved a Bienvenido group that will start in November. Aurora will launch the Bienvenido Group in November.

Bienvenido Facilitator Network Members in Action

Morella Santos co-presented with Gilberto Pérez at the 3rd Annual Latino Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence, September 18, 2008. Morella presented her story of overcoming depression and how she now helps Latina women overcome their depression. Morella is in the process of starting a Bienvenido group at Templo Sinai.

Liliana Quintero coordinated the Hispanic/Latino Health Coalition of Elkhart County Annual Health Fair on September 20, 2008. Over 1600 Latinos were present for a full day of health screenings. Liliana was instrumental in coordinating the event and we congratulate her and her volunteers for coordinating an excellent event for the Latino community of Northeast Indiana.

Elias Garcia co-presented with Gilberto Perez at the National Association of Social Workers Indiana Chapter Annual Conference on October 16, 2008. Elias talked about his experience with the Bienvenido Facilitator Training and his thoughts on mental health leadership. Elias writes, "It was a great experience. It motivated me to want to be more professional and help my community, and my family."

Bienvenido Facilitator Reflections

The Bienvenido Program has a very significant meaning to me. My grandparents came over from Poland and like with any other immigrant group, they faced very similar issues like many Hispanics are dealing with today. I never knew my grandpa and to this day know very little about him. My dad and grandma don't talk about him much, but what they have said is that he committed suicide because he couldn't handle the stress of his new life here in the States. He was a very good carpenter, but he couldn't find work, he couldn't speak the language and he couldn't support his family....so from what I've heard he thought it'd be better to end it all. So, I know how important Bienvenido is and can be for someone and their family. **Karie Karasiak, Bienvenido Facilitator, St. Patrick's Catholic Church and LEAP of Noble County**

Bienvenido has been successful here because of the honesty and truthfulness of the participants. Many of the participants, whether students or adults, have said that this was their only means of talking about their experiences in arriving here from 2 months to 12 years ago. And, many had breakthroughs in talking about the emotions, the difficulties, the hardships they faced in leaving their native country to come here in hopes of better opportunities. **Ellen Krulewitch, Bienvenido Facilitator, Elkhart Community Schools**

I will tell you that the people thought the group was good. The people participated a lot. I could hardly talk. Especially the people who are currently in therapy for depression knew a lot about the topic and they helped the others. There were six women and one man. A lot of them have lived here for a long time, but all remembered their beginnings. **Martha Huttleston, Bienvenido Facilitator, LaPorte, IN**

Bienvenido Facilitators thank Silverwood Mennonite Church children



On October 19 Elias García, Luz Durán, Irma Ortiz and Gilberto Pérez attended a morning service with Silverwood Mennonite in Goshen to thank the children for the donation given to Northeastern Center for the Bienvenido Program. The children of Silverwood Mennonite donated a total of \$672.00. The funds will be used to provide Bienvenido student manuals to Bienvenido Facilitators.

Bienvenido Facilitator Network on Facebook

The Bienvenido Program is being promoted on Facebook. Interested individuals can log on at www.facebook.com and search under Groups for Bienvenido Facilitator Network. Here you will find recent news, videos, articles, and meet friends of the Bienvenido Program. Currently we have 50 members in the group. Our friends come as far a Panama, Paraguay, and Swaziland. You are welcome to visit us and join the Bienvenido Facilitator Network. Connect with others across Indiana, the U.S., Latin America, and Africa who support the Bienvenido Program. **See you on Facebook!**

Northeastern Center launches Spanish mental health radio program

NEC launched a Spanish mental health radio program for the Latino community in July 2008. The radio program addresses mental health issues in the Latino community and has special guests who share about community resources. NEC is grateful for the opportunity to partner with WLDC, 105.9 FM. The radio program has brought listeners from Venezuela, Haiti, Mexico, Honduras, and the US.



Londy Velazco and Mariela Gomez

Northeastern Center partners with the Indiana Minority Health Coalition and Univisión

Northeastern Center, Indiana Minority Health Coalition (IMHC) and Univisión Indianapolis have partnered to record five Spanish mental health videos. The mental health videos address depression, anxiety, family, acculturation, and anger. The segments are meant to reach the Latino community in Central Indiana via Univisión TV Station. Individuals who call for more information are being referred to mental health centers with bilingual therapists.

For more information visit: <http://www.indyunivision.com> (Click noticias en video and scroll to find interview with Gilberto Pérez).

[The Bienvenido Program makes its way to Baltimore, MD](#)

Northeastern Center conducted a Bienvenido Facilitator Training with the Baltimore Medical System, Inc. Nine mental health promoters were trained in the Bienvenido curriculum. Emily Heinlein, Director of Conectando Familias (Connecting Families) writes, "We had been looking for a program to help us reach the Latino community here in Baltimore. We are excited to have connected with Northeastern Center." The Bienvenido Facilitators in Baltimore began their work at Head Start on October 20, 2008. Adelante Baltimore Facilitators!

[Northeastern Center offers training to Health Visions of Fort Wayne](#)

Northeastern Center conducted a Bienvenido Facilitator Training with Health Visions of Fort Wayne on September 4-5, 2008. Zenaida Velez, Program Coordinator, will implement the Bienvenido Program in Fort Wayne in October 2008.

[Latino Behavioral Health Summit](#)

On November 6, 2008 members from the community, mental health professionals, law enforcement officials, college students, professors, and others will meet for the 4th Annual Latino Behavioral Health Summit to be held at the Public Safety Academy in Fort Wayne, IN.

Our keynote speakers are **Dr. Norah Mulvaney-Day, Ph.D., Cambridge Health Alliance** and **Mr. John Viernes Jr., Division of Mental Health and Addiction**. A total of 14 breakout sessions will be offered ranging from hospitalization versus incarceration, cultural competency with the Latino community, suicide and the Latino community, bridging adult literacy and mental health literacy, engaging the underserved, and others.

We invite you to visit the NEC website at www.nec.org to read the abstracts and download the registration form.

If you are interested in learning more about the Bienvenido Program, feel free to visit www.nec.org (Click Latino Services). You may also contact Gilberto Pérez at 260-318-5042 or at gperez@nec.org and Jon Fisher at 260-347-2453.