

Grant Funding Application

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LIBS 656: User Services

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Speak Up Speak Out in English!

A Grant Proposal Submitted to JSBC LLC “Service to the Underserved”

Summary of Proposal

Fairfax county’s affluence masks poverty among its immigrant population with limited English language proficiency. The program will provide specialty English conversation classes for employment success and social connections for adults in the workforce with limited English language proficiency. It will offer opportunities to practice situational conversation essential for work and social interactions in a stress-free environment so that participants might grow in confidence in their communications, adapt to a different culture, and explore new career and other horizons. It is targeted at the limited English working poor - - the largely Latinx and Asian workforce employed in home care, home health care, nail salons, hospitality, landscaping and building maintenance. The program will operate for 30 weeks. It will be structured around rolling six-week sessions and operate during hours convenient for the working poor. It will be anchored at the Tysons-Pimmit Regional library because it is located amidst heavy concentrations of businesses that employ immigrants in the areas described. Also, it is in a major transportation corridor served by multiple public bus lines and is open daily, including Sundays with extended hours to 9pm three days a week. Community partners will include the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia, and the ESL Department of the Northern Virginia Community College. An outreach campaign will be launched, mainly within the targeted communities, in multiple languages to publicize the program. The proposal requests \$5,000 for this new program that if evaluated as a success could become a mainstay at Tysons-Pimmit.

Justification

Target Population

Fairfax county, Virginia, is located in the shadows of Washington DC. A relatively high median income of \$127,000 and unemployment rate of 5% disguise poverty among immigrants - the underserved population being targeted for this new program. Limited English language skills, low skilled labor, and poverty are closely linked. 32% of the county’s residents are immigrants; and 39% have Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and primarily speak languages other than English at home.

People with limited English language skills have limited employment and social mobility options when compared to the English-proficient population. According to the Migration Policy institute, they are less educated and more likely to live in poverty. Also, employed LEP men are more likely to work in construction, natural resources, and maintenance occupations than English-proficient men, while LEP women are much more likely to be employed in service and personal-care occupations than English-proficient women. Fairfax county as a whole, and the Tysons-Pimmit service area, mirror these MPI findings. In Fairfax county, 58% of immigrants are aged between 18 and 54, and 72.3% of them are in the labor force employed heavily in construction, home care, home health care, hospitality, and landscaping. Immigrants’ top countries of origin are El Salvador, Mexico, India, Korea, Vietnam, and China. The dominant foreign languages are Spanish, Korean, and Vietnamese. Latinx immigrants have the lowest levels of English-speaking ability, followed by Asian immigrants. The Poverty in Fairfax County

Report notes that close to 10 % of persons aged five and older who speak a language other than English at home live in poverty. The numbers of working poor - people working full-time for an income below 150% of the poverty level - are on the rise and these households spend 30% or more of their income on rent. Of the nearly 9,000 youth currently considered disconnected, half of them is Latinx, and more than a quarter of those Latinx are immigrants. While overall unemployment in Fairfax county is low, Latinx residents have much higher rates of unemployment than whites and earn lower wages than whites at every education level.

This program will be limited to members of the target population who will benefit in the following ways. Repetition and practice in English with their peers and coaching from trained ESL experts will instill the self-confidence to tackle workplace and social situations in English. These could pertain to resolving workplace conflict, asking for a promotion, or explaining an unplanned absence. Improved ease with English will lay the foundation for acting on educational and career aspirations that require higher levels of English speech and pathways out of poverty. This program for adults will contribute to the library system's mission to "build communities and promote literacies through programming, etc., and to its civic engagement goal of designing "events and services that engage our diverse and dynamic community". Bringing this underserved population into the library will facilitate exposure to important immigrant-focused services at the library, notably the dedicated "citizenship corner". This space contains CDs for learning English by speakers of Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Hindi, and Punjab; DVDs in five of these languages on citizenship preparation; books on business English and English for job hunting; and ESL test preparation books. These services can assist the target population with their adaptation and social mobility objectives.

Measures to ensure that the program will be convenient for the target population include the following: The program will run for five cycles of six-week sessions and operate during hours convenient for the working poor. It will be anchored at the Tysons-Pimmit Regional library because it is located amidst heavy concentrations of businesses that employ immigrants in the areas described; in a major transportation corridor served by multiple public bus lines with a bus stop at the entrance to the library complex (important because residents earning less than \$35,000 annually rely most heavily on the public transportation network for essential mobility); an abundance of surface parking; and, it is open daily, including Sundays with extended hours to 9pm on three days.

While the outreach program will be directed at the target population, the fliers radio and TV announcements will be broadly accessible to county residents.

Project Information

Goals

The goals of the *Speak Up Speak Out in English!* program are: to provide focused literacy services for adults from immigrant communities; support participants' learning objectives related to improving their education, economic, and social well-being; and encourage cultural exchange across communities to facilitate communication and foster a sense of shared belonging to the broader community. Program objectives are:

1. To provide targeted English as a Second Language services for speakers of other languages in communities of need.

2. To assist community members to improve their employment prospects and increase cross cultural social interactions.

Detailed Description

The program will consist of specialty English conversation classes for employment success and social connections for adults in the workforce with limited English language proficiency. The program will offer opportunities to practice situational conversation essential for work and social interactions in a stress-free environment so that participants might grow in confidence in their communications, adapt to a different culture, and explore new careers and other horizons. This program is expected to serve the limited English working poor - - the largely Latinx and Asian workforce employed in home care, home health care, nail salons, hospitality, landscaping and building maintenance. This is a new program that will fill a gap. Existing programs are part of the county's Adult Community Education services that have stringent intake requirements, and formats not convenient nor welcoming for hourly wage workers.

Structure: The program will be structured around rolling six-week sessions for five cycles. Once a six-week cycle ends, a new cycle will be launched and run for six weeks with new registrants. Over the life of the program, 100 registered participants (20 per six-week cycle) plus drop-ins will be served. The program will operate twice weekly in the evenings and once on Sunday. Each session will be focused on practicing dialogue based on realistic scenarios related to job hunting, workplace situations (discussing performance, resolving workplace conflict, etc.). Social and workplace situations participants are facing or have faced will be solicited, associated English vocabulary grammar and vernacular will be identified, program facilitators will develop dialogue based on the situations, and students will spend the session alternating roles practicing the dialogue with each other. Repetition will facilitate internalization and increased confidence. Clear pronunciation will be emphasized. A final component of each session will be a cultural exchange where participants will be encouraged to share aspects of their culture using acquired conversation skills.

Collaborators: This program will be staffed by Literacy Council of Northern Virginia volunteers whose mission includes teaching adults the basic literacy skills for accessing "employment and educational opportunities and more fully and equitably participate in the community." Through a collaboration with the ESL Department of the Northern Virginia Community College, students working towards ESL teaching certifications will serve as facilitators as part of their practicum requirement. The Tysons-Pimmit Library outreach librarian will oversee and coordinate the program.

Measuring Success: Success will be measured as follows: Evaluation. Impact and outcome evaluations will be done. On outcomes, the evaluation will look at individual progress and program effectiveness. The program will be assessed in terms of its goals and also individual participant goals. Information will be collected at the beginning and end of each program cycle and the difference will be taken to represent the effect the program had on the desired ends. A mid-term evaluation will be done to assess effectiveness and inform program adjustments. A final evaluation will be done at the end of the final cycle. In sum, the outcomes portion of the evaluation will glean information on how much benefits the participants derived from the program and provide a sense of what works.

Marketing/Outreach: Three principal means will be employed for reaching the target population. First, fliers will be disseminated and posted on existing bulletin boards in the shopping malls, shopping centers and markets within immigrant communities or spaces that overwhelmingly cater to immigrant populations. These include the numerous Hispanic, Vietnamese, and Korean neighborhood commercial centers and Halal markets. Bus shelters will be targeted, as well as the numerous community newspapers published weekly in Spanish, Korean, and Vietnamese. Social media will be employed. Information will be posted to social media in multiple languages including Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Arabic, Persian/Farsi, Mandarin, Urdu, Hindi - a practice already common in public announcements the county disseminates. Second, targeted Facebook ads and Facebook event pages will be created for sharing via other Facebook users and community organizations; Twitter will be used, and Posts will be made to websites of targeted community organizations and their own social media pages. Third, marketing via the public libraries, public access TV and radio, and outreach with community leaders, their festivals, etc.

Documenting the project: Documentation will be done through regularly posted blog updates. These posts will feature interviews with various participants, documenting their progress. Photos of activities will be posted with consent from participants.

Project Budget and Justification

Speak Up Speak Out in English!		
Budget Category	Justification	Requested Amount
Marketing & Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fliers 2 Banners Display board 	\$193.00 \$207.00 \$30.00
Classroom materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notepads Workbooks Literacy Council	\$200.00 (in kind)
Personnel:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer Stipends (2 volunteers per class) 	\$20 per class x3 classes Wk x 6wk x5 cycles	\$3,600
Evaluation	1 Consultant @\$30/hr x 12hrs	\$360.00
Refreshments	Students to Provide ACE Collaborative contributions Grant request	(in kind) (in kind) \$410.00
	Total:	5,000.00

Timeline and Action Steps

Action	Target Date
Mobilize Partners, Review Proposal Elements, Share Notional Calendar	April 2022
Grant Proposal Submitted	May 2
Grant Approved	July 1
Program Launch preparations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage Partners/Review Approved Elements Develop/Finalize Calendar of Sessions Design fliers, print, disseminate fliers Reserve Location 	July 1, 2022 - July 15, 2022
Plan/Launch Outreach Campaign <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue dissemination of fliers Social Media TV & Radio 	August 22, 2022
Identify 12 Volunteer Instructors	August 15, 2022
Orientation for Instructors	August 15, 2022
Purchase materials	August 15 2022
Program Registration Closes	August 22, 2022
Cycle 1 begins/ends	September 6 - October 14 2022
Cycle 2 begins/ends	October 17 - November 22, 2022
Holiday Break	November 22, 2022 - January 2, 2023
Midpoint Evaluation Initiated	December 1, 2022
Midpoint Evaluation Submitted	January 5 2023
Cycle 3 begins/ends	January 2 - February 9, 2023
Cycle 4 begins/ends	February 13 - March 31, 2023
Cycle 5 begins/end	April 3 - May 12, 2023
Final Evaluation Initiated	April 15 2023
Grant Closeout Initiated (Vouchers paid)	May 15 2023
Grant Period Ends	May 31, 2023
Final Evaluation Submitted to JSB LLC	June 30, 2022