

Latino Community Learning Center

The Opportunity: To Build an English-Literate Workforce for Local Industry

Purdue Extension's Latino Community Learning Center (LCLC) in Clinton County has been operating since November 2005. Five years later in 2010, after switching funding streams several times (from the original OCRA grant in 2004, to the LEAP grant in 2007, to the ESL/Civics funding in 2008, with the addition of IMHC funding in 2009), it's still going strong. Now, the LCLC is viewed as a regional model for adult basic education, particularly for immigrants, laying a foundation of English literacy, health/safety training, computer instruction, and adult basic education through online certifications. Over the past five years, the LCLC program has built trust within the Latino community. Though we feel we serve the community well, there's always more to do. As soon as one programmatic goal is met, we dutifully charge on towards meeting the next. A team of three staff members, each paid through a different funding stream, drive the mission and faithfully serve all residents of Clinton County. They include: Melinda Grismer, economic & community development educator for Purdue Extension's Cooperative Service in Clinton County; Claudia Houchen, Indiana Minority Health Coalition coordinator for Clinton County and language coordinator for Purdue Extension's Learning Network; and Esmeralda Cruz, program director of Frankfort's 21st Century Community Learning Center afterschool tutoring program.

The Response: Indiana Minority Health Coalition & IDOE Partner to Provide 12 Hours of ESL/Civics Classes Weekly for 40 Weeks a Year

With the addition of the IMHC funding for health/safety programs and the IME Becas funding for computer training program to our existing ESL/Civics funding, the LCLC reached the pinnacle of its operating capacity in 2009-10. For 40 weeks during the academic year (September 2009-June 2010), the LCLC offered Monday/Wednesday evening classes (5-8 p.m.) and Tuesday/Thursday morning classes (9 a.m.-noon). In addition to these weekly offerings, we sponsored these special trainings/events: (1) the Latino Forum at the Marion County Extension office (Oct. 14, 2009), Latino Night at Frankfort Middle School (Oct. 20, 2009), Las Posadas Holiday Celebration at St. Matthew UMC (December 2009), Algerian



ESL teachers toured our LCLC (January 2010), international visitors toured our LCLC (on Feb. 12, 2010), Health Literacy Project (survey of 110 Latino participants in May 2010), the MESA presentation at Oak Hill Mansion in Carmel, Ind. (in May 2010), and the poverty simulation at Frankfort Middle School (on Aug. 10, 2010). In addition to the ESL/Civics program, computer classes, and health/safety training, the LCLC also offered citizenship classes for legal permanent residents with USCIS interview appointments. The local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution sponsored our class, offering mentoring services for one-on-one practice interview for citizenship students. The LCLC staff made a presentation to the DAR group at Old Stoney in Frankfort in April 2010, reporting on the success of the collaboration and providing basic immigration and naturalization information to the local DAR members. In March, LCLC staff members attended the COABE conference, where we received professional development resources and made valuable connections. One of those connections enabled us to make a reservation to host the Declaration of the Right to Literacy Scroll, being signed across the county (similar to the Olympic torch) and making its way toward Washington, D.C. for national Senators and representatives to sign. The Literacy Scroll was signed by local residents—including teachers, adult learners, and youth—involved in literacy programs through Head Start, the Frankfort Public Library, the Frankfort Adult Learning Center, and all four school districts in Clinton County.

The Impact: 56,378 Direct & Indirect Educational Encounters in 2009-10

During the past year, the LCLC has helped 56,378 adult learners, their children, and our youth volunteers/program participants to attain the following educational goals:

- 1) 208 ESL learners attended classes twice a week for 6 hours per week for 40 weeks, resulting in 49,920 educational encounters
- 2) 73 Plaza Comunitaria students graduated with primaria (grades 1-6) or secundaria (grades 7-9) certificates
- 3) 25 GED learners prepared to take the GED test in Spanish, with 6 graduates in 2009-10
- 4) 17,353 adult learners heard health education and awareness presentations in 2009-10
- 5) 1,260 community members received health information and resources at four local health fairs
- 6) 200 children received instruction on how to “cover your cough” and prevent the spread of disease before, during & after the H191 outbreak in 2009-10
- 7) 86 youth and adults participated in three comprehensive health programs, including Dining with Diabetes, Operation Fit Kids & Bienvenido (mental health for the immigrant)
- 8) 54 non-Spanish-speaking community members received bilingual tours of a local Mexican grocery store
- 9) 187 people received translation and interpretation services
- 10) 260 people were referred to the LCLC from other local agencies