

ALLIES MINI-GRANT PROJECT SUMMARY
NORTH SANTA CLARA COUNTY STUDENT TRANSITIONS CONSORTIUM

Agencies Participating in the Grant: Mountain View Adult School, Palo Alto Adult School, Sunnyvale-Cupertino Adult School, Building Skills Partnership, Palo Alto Housing Corporation (PAHC) and Vision Literacy

Project Coordinators: Alexandra Scott – Palo Alto Adult School
Pat Lawson-North – Vision Literacy

I: PURPOSE

The goals of our mini-grant project were: 1) to build and expand relationships with the regional CBOs who attended the March 13th 2015 ALLIES EPN meeting (Building Skills Partnership – BSP, Cell-Ed and Vision Literacy) and others in the North Santa Clara County Student Transitions Consortium (NSCCSTC) region and 2) create a project that would address some of the barriers that CBO clients face that prevent them from accessing adult school classes, programs and training.

II: ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

- **Partners Meeting/Breakfast at Michael’s Restaurant in Mountain View on June 9, 2015** – The meeting was designed as a follow-up to a breakfast that our consortium hosted in December 2014 for CBOs and industry representatives. The CBOs who attended that meeting were invited along with the CBOs who attended the EPN meeting – Building Skills Partnership (BSP), Vision Literacy and Cell-Ed.

The purpose of the meeting was to provide an update on the consortium’s activities and introduce the mini-grant and the “Student Ambassadors” proposal that was suggested in our consortium’s brainstorming session at the March EPN meeting. ALLIES facilitated the meeting and because only 3 of the 20 attendees represented CBOs, it was recommended that we further extend our outreach efforts to CBOs in our region and convene a future meeting to brainstorm additional project ideas. We spent the remainder of the breakfast meeting listing CBOs and assigning agency staff to initiate contact.

- **Expanded Outreach to CBOs** - 24 CBOs were identified at the Partners Breakfast. In preparation for initial (or follow-up) contact, the project coordinators prepared and distributed call scripts and conversation guides (i.e. “talking points”) (see attachments) to the adult school and community college staff assigned to the outreach effort. The call script introduced the goals of the consortium and explained the role that community-based organizations could play by identifying adult students with educational and employment needs and providing support services to enable them to access

training and job opportunities. Consortium staff were instructed to request a follow-up meeting or phone call to discuss these objectives. If a follow-up meeting or call was scheduled, staff solicited information and feedback on CBO core programs, the demographics of the clients served, the “Student Ambassadors” proposal, and ideas for other potential projects. Outreach results were compiled in a shared Google Sheet.

10 CBOs responded to staff contacts. Of the 10, 4 requested follow-up phone calls or meetings, 1 - Palo Alto Housing Corporation (PAHC) – requested to be included in the Student Ambassadors project, if implemented and 2 proposed other project ideas. Neither of those proposal ideas fell within the scope and purpose of the mini-grant as described in our application.

- **Student Ambassadors Project** – After reviewing the results of the expanded outreach effort, the consortium leadership team and our CBO project coordinator decided to move forward with “Student Ambassadors” project proposed at the EPN meeting and presented at the Partners Breakfast. Vision Literacy staff created a Google Survey to gather more detailed information from BSP, Vision Literacy and PAHC about services provided and clients served to help with the selection of appropriate student ambassadors and informational materials. The leadership team also agreed to the suggestion that mini-grant funds be used to pay \$50 stipends to the student ambassadors.

As stated in our grant proposal, the goals of the project were to familiarize CBO clients with adult school classes and programs, requirements and enrollment procedures by 1) identifying and training adult school students to meet and talk with CBO clients 2) coordinating student ambassador visits to CBO sites and field trips for CBO clients to visit adult schools 3) arranging for CBO clients to attend adult school placement testing, registration and orientation sessions and 4) creating informational materials that describe adult school programs to distribute to CBO partners.

To date, Sunnyvale-Cupertino Adult School has identified 3 students interested in becoming student ambassadors. When they complete their training in the new year, they will reach out to clients served by BSP, Vision Literacy, Sacred Heart and Recovery Café.

Palo Alto Adult School (PAAS) recruited and trained a student ambassador from its HSE (GED) program. On December 14th, the student ambassador, the mini-grant and volunteer coordinators from PAAS and the director of PAHC organized a pizza lunch meeting at one of the PAHC residential sites. 5 residents attended the lunch. The student ambassador shared his story about dropping out of high school and talked about his experience in the PAAS HSE

preparation class. PAHC participants were encouraged to talk about their educational and career goals and PAAS staff presented information on the HSE class and the CTE programs offered at the adult school and Foothill College. The residents asked questions and were given contact information for the various programs. PAAS requested that the student ambassador receive a \$50 stipend for his time and effort.

III: FUTURE STEPS

- **Continued Implementation of the “Student Ambassadors” Project** - Mountain View/Los Altos (MVLA) Adult School will identify 3 student ambassadors - 1 from each core program -, prepare an outline of material to be presented using input from current students and teachers, train the ambassadors and present to CBO clients. Palo Alto Adult School will follow-up with PAHC residents who attended the lunch, identify and train additional ambassadors and schedule visits to BSP classes on the Stanford campus. As noted above, Sunnyvale-Cupertino Adult School will train their ambassador recruits and schedule visits to the CBOs previously mentioned.
- **Collect and Exchange Information and Materials** – include information and contacts for all NSCCSTC adult school and community college programs in student ambassador outreach events.
- **Consortium Exploration of the 2 Additional Proposals for CBO/Adult School/Community College Collaboration**

IV: RECOMMENDATIONS TO ALLIES

The mini-grant provided a great incentive for consortia to take the first steps towards identifying CBOs in their region, the services they provide and opportunities for collaboration. NSCCSTC appreciated the opportunity that the grant provided to embark on this effort.

However, the time frame for implementation was very limited given the scope of our project. In addition, we lost momentum when we had to re-group and rethink our initial proposal after the Partners Breakfast. By the time we came back around to our original plan, it was the beginning of the school year and we were in the midst of the required planning and preparation for other school-based initiatives. Perhaps future RFPs could extend the time frame for implementation and/or be released earlier in the calendar year.

