

“College Para Ti y Para Mí!”

Mujeres Unidas Avanzando
First Literacy Lab Project
2019-2020



Who We Are



- **Our mission:** To provide low-income Latina girls, women, and other English Language Learners (ELLs) the tools and resources necessary to empower themselves and to effect liberating changes in their lives, those of their families, and society at large
- Fields Corner, Dorchester
- 40+ years
- Morning, afternoon, and evening classes
- Day program: Open to women
- Evening program: Open to women and men

A Holistic Approach to Education



Classes

- Three levels of ESOL
- HiSET Preparation (in Spanish)
- Office Administration
- Tech Goes Home
- Home Health Aide
- Phlebotomy
- Clinical Medical Assistant (CMA)
- Citizenship Preparation
- Spanish Literacy

Trainings and Events

- Parenting Skills
- Self-Care
- CPR Training
- Domestic Violence Support Groups
- Financial Literacy
- Know Your Rights
- Field Trips
- Community Service Projects
- Holiday Celebrations

Next Steps

- Career Coaching
- Support with job search / resume creation
- Individualized advising appointments
- Presentations from community partners
- Visits to career centers
- **Visits to community colleges**
- **Scholarship application assistance**

Intentions of “¡College Para Ti y Para Mí!”



- 1x/week class, 3hrs/week
- Primarily our ESOL III, HiSET III, and Computer Training students; intermediate/advanced English, hoping to go to college after MUA
- **Help them to decide:** Is college the right choice? If yes, which college, how to apply, and how to pay for it?

Scope & Sequence Overview

1. “Is college right for me?”
2. College Vocabulary / Different types of programs
3. Choosing a program of study
4. Paying for College
5. Preparing to Apply for College
6. Completing the Application
7. Preparing for College and Beyond (Study skills, time management, resume creation)



“¡College Para Ti y Para Mí!” Scope & Sequence

Mujeres Unidas Avanzando

2019-2020

Course Overview

Mujeres Unidas Avanzando, through the support of a First Literacy Lab Grant, will be offering for the first time this year “¡College Para Ti y Para Mí! (College for You and Me!).” The course will be taught by Leda Grossman and advised by Lead ESOL Instructor Caitie Shalvey.

This class will meet 3 hours per week and will focus on the college experience in the United States. The main purpose of the course is to help students to first decide if college is the right choice for them and then, if yes, to give them the tools needed to achieve this educational goal. The curriculum will span from an overview of the U.S. education system, to different types of

Additional Class Features



- Tours of local community colleges + UMass Boston
- Presentation from Boston's Tuition-Free Community College Plan
- One-on-one advising sessions with instructor to complete application documents, apply for scholarships, etc.
- Access to MUA's career coaching services

Initial Challenges

- Finding the students
- Asking students to think about next steps so early in the year
- Keeping them engaged
- Some students interested in college: Already in college! Taking college courses and MUA classes simultaneously



Adaptations



- Opened it up to our ESOL II groups
- Expanded the scope of the class: Same end goal of college, but Leda created more “college-style” discussion-based lessons, covering education in the U.S. at large
- Intention to return to a shortened version of the initial scope later in the spring (April/May) when students are more focused on next steps
- Teacher would host an information session for the student body to encourage participation

Successes

- Visit from an admissions counselor at Roxbury Community College
- Individualized coaching with a few students who did know what they wanted to do after MUA: Comparison of interior design program options; Another student intended to enroll at Urban College upon learning of their Spanish course options; Two students applied and were accepted to ABCD's Childcare Training Program



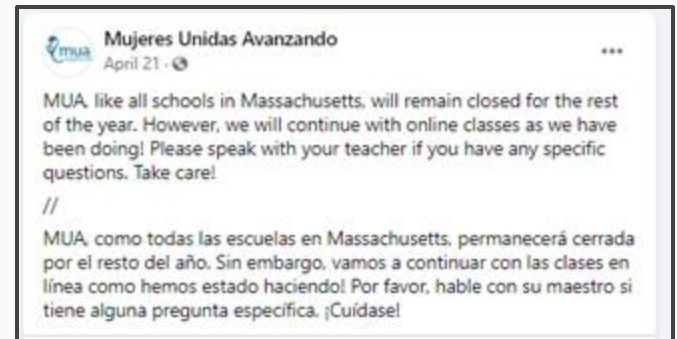
Successes, Continued

- Conversation topics: Charter schools vs. public schools; Iniquities in education in the U.S. (at all levels); "How does family wealth impact students' applications and preparedness for college?"; Paying for college as an immigrant (documented, undocumented)



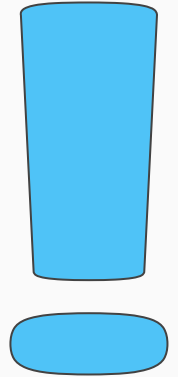
COVID-19...

- Had to cancel scheduled speakers from Bunker Hill Community College and from Boston's Tuition-Free Community College Program, planned for late March
- Could not promote the class to the student body as planned; Our students who were thinking about college put all plans on hold
- Did our best to retain students after mid-March; Teacher continued reaching out to this group to check on their well-being



What We Learned

- Should not be a full-year course
- Should start in the spring semester
- If we were to re-do it: A series of workshops opened to the whole student body: “How to Choose a College Program; How to Apply for College; How to Pay for College,” along with one-on-one advising sessions with the students immediately ready to go to college, to help them with each step of this process
- Continued partnerships with the City of Boston and local colleges



For More Information...

- *Johannah Malone*, Co-Director: johannahmalone@gmail.com
- *Caitie Shalvey*, Lead ESOL Instructor: cjshalvey17@gmail.com

- www.muaboston.org
- www.facebook.com/muadorchester
- 617-282-3500



In Conclusion...

A very sincere thank you to **First Literacy** for their support for this project, and thank you all for your attention today!

