

Building Capacity With Newcomers: An Initiative of the Pilot Street Project / Coalition for Refugee Resettlement

Mission Statement

The central mission of the Center for Student Engagement & Community Partnerships (hereafter CSECP) is to coordinate and strengthen partnerships between the university and the community, enhance service-learning opportunities and experiential learning activities, and develop faculty and partner capacity for community-university engagement.

The Pilot Street Project is an outreach to families who have resettled in Roanoke City on refugee status. The project is a partnership between CSECP and the office of Refugee and Immigration Services and Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority. The project assists refugee families in achieving self-sufficiency through educational programs and cultural mediation support. In doing so, the Pilot Street Project fills a critical gap in services to high need, low literacy families who have exceeded the one year term of service sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, yet still requiring intensive support.

Project Objectives:

The cornerstone of the Pilot Street Project is the Adult ESL program. Our desire is to expand Adult ESL and Capacity Building programs so that more adults can access classes that simultaneously increase language proficiency and convey practical skills leading to economic and educational achievement. Our objectives for expanding Adult ESL are:

- To sustain the number of instructional hours available to adult students at 20 hours a week for 45 weeks of the year, for a total of 900 instructional hours.
- To supplement basic adult ESL classes with pre-GED tutoring in order to better serve higher functioning language learners.
- To diversify the kind of ESL opportunities available through short courses related to citizenship preparation, financial and health literacy, workplace preparation, and agricultural business development.
- To demonstrate a level gain among 60% of the participating adult students.

Overall, our goal is to promote literacy and language fluency across newcomer communities, with programming that serves learners at all levels, and includes opportunities for community leadership in the delivery of these programs.

Project Design and Evaluation

The Project offers nine 90-minute Adult ESL classes Mondays through Thursdays, at four public housing sites year round, providing 607 available instructional hours. Adult classes use a Survival English curriculum based on practical commands and

vocabulary used in daily life. “Lead Teachers” trained in adult ESL methodologies teach the classes. Virginia Tech students assist by facilitating small-group activities within the larger classes.

In addition to ongoing ESL classes, the Project provides short courses with specific content areas, including 12-week citizenship preparation courses in the fall and spring, and financial literacy workshops. Recently, the Project collaborated with VT Earthworks to include seven ESL learners and three interpreters from the Somali Bantu community in a six-week Grower’s Academy that prepares people for small-scale farming. Additionally, the Project worked with Refugee and Immigration Services to provide a 12-hour ESL Teacher Training for three newcomers with high proficiency.

We will continue to develop diverse adult programming through two new initiatives:

- Pre-GED tutoring that matches Virginia Tech students with young adults preparing for their high school equivalency exam in preparation for college or vocational training; and
- Awarding small grants to Virginia Tech faculty to develop short courses that are responsive to the learning goals of the newcomer communities. Short courses might be in the areas of health literacy, writing for work purposes, or workplace preparation.

Across the spectrum of programming, we want to make it possible for more people to attend classes by providing child care, holding classes in locations convenient to learners, giving learners materials they can use in their homes, and preparing higher functioning adults from within newcomer communities to assume Lead Teacher roles.

Budget Narrative

Personnel

Title	Time on Project	Percentage of Time	Salary: To Raise	Salary: Other
Director of Service-Learning	12 months @ 16 hours / week	40%	0	24,405
Project Manager (AmeriCorps*VISTA)	12 months @ 40 hours/week	100%	0	12,500
	Wage Rate		Wage: To Raise	Wage: Other
Lead Teachers	@ \$40 / class x 9 classes x 45 weeks		8,100	8,100
Student Assistant	@ \$8 / hour x 5 hours week x 30 weeks		1,200	0
TOTAL Salary & Wage			9,300	45,005

FRINGE BENEFITS

Position	Rate	Fringes To Raise:	Fringes on Other
Faculty	@ 35.25%	0	8,603
Project Manager:	Classified @ 45%	0	5,625
Lead Teachers	Wage @ 7.25%	0	1,175
Student Assistant	Wage @ 7.25%	0	87
Total Fringes		0	15,490

Line Items

	Rate	To Raise	Other
Instructional Materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Textbooks and workbooks Citizenship: Passing the Test Literacy Skills @ \$12 x 50 = 600 Let's Learn English Picture Dictionary @ \$9.50 x 30 = \$285 		1,500	1,800
Software:		0	0
Supplies: Consumables (notebooks, pencils, post-it flip pads)		153	250
Travel:		0	0
Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESL Training @ \$350 x 5 participants=1,750 Grower's Academy tuition @ \$250 x 7 participants =1,750 		2,635	875
Printing / Pubs: Volunteer Training Handbooks and Materials		0	200
Telephone / Fax	Included in Administrative Cost Rate	0	0
Postage / Shipping		0	0
Rent	In-Kind donation valued @ \$18.75/hour x 1,038 hours*	0	19,463
Computer:		0	0
Other: Lease of university van to transport volunteers to Roanoke.	@ \$326 / month x 12 months	3,912	0
Mini-grants for short courses	@ \$500 x 5	2,500	0
On Campus Outreach Rate for Administrative Costs	@ 32.6% of direct costs (not including in-kind donation of rent, VISTA salary / fringes, Grower's Academy tuition / scholarships)	0	17,689

*This figure deducts hours for Citizenship Classes taught at the Public Library.

Total Salary & Fringes		9,300	45,005
Total Line Items		10,700	22,588
Total In-Kind		0	19,463
Total Indirect (On Campus Outreach Rate for administrative costs)	@ 32.5% of direct costs not including in-kind.	0	17,689
TOTAL		20,000	104,745
			124,745