
Promising Practice Fact Sheet – Workforce Development

Project ARRIBA – El Paso, Texas

Project

Description: Based on the “Project QUEST” model, program is run by a CBO that serves as an intermediary between local training providers and employers; emphasis on support services to help overcome obstacles to graduation, including securing prior support from participant’s family, friends, and community.

Target Population: Mostly Hispanic, female parents, 75% at or below Federal Poverty level, 58% get food stamps

Goal: To assist economically disadvantaged adults gain the education and workforce skills needed for El Paso’s demand occupations.

Cost: 2009 annual budget = \$1.351 million from a mix of public and private sources; total cost (direct plus overhead) per participant = \$4,371.

Evidence: “The Economic Impact of Project ARRIBA on El Paso, Texas”, report by Institute for Policy and Economic Development, University of Texas, Technical report #2010-03

Caseload Data: Has assisted over 1,400 and graduated 763 from 1999 to 2009 (102 graduated in 2009)

Assessment: Screened and assessed by case managers

Services Overview:

- Long-term, high skilled training for demand occupations in El Paso
- Specialized case management to facilitate successful graduation and job placement
- Support services to help overcome obstacles to graduation, including securing prior support from participant’s family, friends, and community.
- Current in-demand occupations are in health care, education, and IT.

Eligibility:

- Targets a range of populations from adults with a HS diploma or GED, who speak English proficiently and test at 12th grade or higher to, more recently, adults without a HS diploma or GED, do not speak English proficiently, and have other significant life barriers.

Findings:

- Average pre-enrollment wage of about \$7,500 compared to average graduate wage of about \$37,700 with benefits.
- Estimated \$26.36 return for every dollar invested in program since inception.
- Administrative data shows 94% academic retention rate for SFY 2008 and 95% job retention rate.

Implications for policymakers and program developers to consider:

- Community-based organization serves as an intermediary between local training providers and employers.
- Mix of public and private spending.
- Program may be “creaming” best applicants.