u i c n i
UIC Neighborhoods Initiative
Great Cities Institute
Spring 2004

Mentored BSN Program: Creating Career Ladders with a Population Focus

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than one million new and replacement nurses will be needed by 2010. Illinois mirrors this national trend in facing a nursing manpower shortage. In economic terms, supply is not meeting demand and the shortfall is widening. The UIC College of Nursing (CON) has developed the Career Ladders program under the direction of Kathleen Baldwin, PhD, Program Investigator (PI), Michele Issel, PhD, co-PI and Cynthia Barnes-Boyd, PhD, co-PI and Director of UIC Neighborhoods Initiative to address the issue of a lack of professional nurses with a specific population focus.

The Career Ladders program will address two serious modern problems. First, it is well known that there are wide disparities in health outcomes, life expectancy and quality of life when comparisons are made between the dominant culture and those of ethnic minorities. Among the strategies to address these inequities are efforts to improve the use of existing health care resources. Key among these strategies is the preparation and strategic placement of ethnic minority nurses in settings serving minority populations. A second and closely related concern is the severe nursing shortage. Not only are there fewer nurses from under-represented groups, there is a shortage of nurses in general, particularly in rural and high need communities. The UIC Career Ladders Program addresses both concerns by working with community based organizations and individuals to identify and introduce ethnic minorities to career opportunities in nursing. The program is designed to offer career advancement opportunities to individuals who are currently working in the health field as community workers, peer health educators, medical assistants, and technicians among other similar roles.

Glenda Morris Burnett, RN, BSN, MUPP, will direct the Mentored BSN Program

The UIC CON's extensive and respected community collaborations, through such partnerships as the UIC Neighborhoods Initiative and Great Cities Institute, make it possible to recruit potential students from non-traditional pools of individuals interested in public health nursing. And, because of its regional programs, UIC CON is uniquely positioned to recruit from throughout Illinois. For instance, recruitment efforts will interface with the UIC Great Cities Institute, which trains and employs paraprofessionals in Chicago.

The Career Ladders program will identify, prepare and support individuals currently engaged in health work who are interested in becoming a registered nurse. Applicants should have a minimum of 2 years work experience, a high school diploma or its equivalent and good written and verbal communication skills. Applicants will be responsible for the full cost of tuition and other educational fees. While the student is responsible for all educational cost, the Career Ladders program will support all costs associated with the mentoring program, college preparatory sessions and field experiences.

The program is organized into three distinct phases. Phase I requires a minimum one-year commitment to a program that will focus on self-assessment, college preparation, development of study skills, and personal and professional development. Individuals who advance to Phase II will be supported through the process of enrollment in a defined course of study to complete prerequisite courses at a college level. Applicants may enroll at UIC or in a junior or city college, depending on individual interest and capabilities. After completion of prerequisite courses, Career Ladder program participants will be supported through their application, entry and study in a nursing program. During Phase III participants will meet monthly with student peers and professional nurses to address academic, personal and professional concerns.

The Mentored BSN Career Ladders program will be launched under the direction of Glenda Morris Burnett, RN, BSN, MUPP a community nurse planner/community nurse specialist with considerable experience in community outreach and training of community health outreach workers.

For further information about this program, please contact Glenda Morris Burnett at 312 996-4656 or by e-mail at Gburnett@uic.edu.

Nursing Statistics

· There are 2,558,874 licensed regstered nurses in the U.S.

· 9% of all RNs are under the age of 30. Nearly 30% are over the age of 50

· Approximately 90% of all RNs are Caucasian; 4.2% are African American; 3.4% are Asian or Pacific Islander; 1.6% are Hispanic; and .5% are American Indian or Alaskan Native

· Average salary for all RNs is $42,071

· 72% of B.S.N graduates have jobs waiting for them upon graduation

Source: www.MinorityNurse.com

IPL & UICNI Partner to Bridge the Digital Divide & Create Career Paths in Pilsen

While knowledge is power, in today's economy, knowledge of computers is even more powerful. Martha Suzanna Badillo recognized this five months ago when she enrolled in Instituto del Progreso Latino's (IPL) Saturday computer-based education and training program. As a mother of two teenagers, she saw her children work on their home computer for school assignments and determined that she too needed to become computer literate. Since then, every Saturday she commutes to one of IPL's computer training sites in Pilsen to learn Microsoft Word, Excel, Power Point and Access software applications. As a teaching assistant at a Cicero high school, she hopes that her new computer skills will lead to "greater opportunity in an administrative position."

Ms. Badillo's impulse is well founded. As more and more job opportunities become reliant on computer-based knowledge, it is crucial that workers have access to and are proficient in computer technology as a way to find and obtain a job. Founded in 1975 to "contribute to the fullest development of Latino immigrants and their families through education, training, and employment that fosters full participation in the changing United States society while preserving cultural identity and dignity," IPL has fulfilled its mission in part by opening several computer technology centers (CTC) in Chicago's predominantly Hispanic West Side communities.

Operating four CTCs in Pilsen, Back-of-the-Yards, Little Village and South Deering, IPL serves a population with limited access to information technology. The poverty rate is 25%, 41% are foreign-born, 37% speak English "less than very well," and 34% of residents over age 16 are not in the labor force (2000 Census). "With our technology programs, IPL is bridging the gap between those with technology access and education and those without, to better prepare the low-income population we serve to compete for well-paying jobs in the new economy" says Tom DuBois, Director of Workforce Development at IPL. IPL serves 5,000 clients annually.

Victor Vizueta conducts Power Point training at a Saturday workshop.

In November 2002, the University of Illinois at Chicago Neighborhoods Initiative (UICNI) and IPL joined in partnership to expand IPL's CTCs and provide additional computer education programs to 570 low-income Latinos and African Americans in Pilsen.

(Continued on back page)

With a grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, UICNI and IPL has launched two courses, Computers en Español and Computers for Careers, developed specialized software curriculum and offered career training and counseling to participants.

Student Martha Suzanna Badillo uses Internet access at her local library to complete Saturday class assignments.

Taught in Spanish on Saturdays, Computers en Español introduces non-English speakers to computers through coursework including basic keyboarding, word processing, and Internet training. Under the tutelage of Victor Vizueta, participants like Martha Badillo enroll in 48-hours of free computer training. For course completers who are not prepared to advance to the next rung on the computer career ladder, IPL will assess their skills and, if there is a need for and interest in, create more advanced beginning computertraining. Computers for Careers teach participants how to use a computer to search for and apply for jobs. Both courses prepare participants to enter IPL's Career Paths or ESL/Family Literacy programs.

These expanded services have enabled IPL to take on a challenge that rocked the West Side community earlier this year: the closing of the Fannie May Candies' manufacturing plant. Yesenia Cervantes, IPL Workforce Investment Act coordinator, worked closely with Fannie May's human resources department to spread the word on programs offered at IPL. "The last few months have been very busy for me! Since the announcement of Fannie May's closing, I have conducted several presentations at the manufacturing plant and IPL to former employees. I suspect about 500 people have attended these sessions," says Ms. Cervantes. At the sessions, Ms. Cervantes advertised IPL's employment services including resume workshops, Saturday computer classes, job readiness and career counseling, and resource center for Internet access and resume faxing.

Former Fannie May employees seeking bilingual services headed straight to IPL for training and support.

According to the Chicago Federation of Labor, approximately 60% of Fannie May employees are Hispanic, which has created a boom for IPL as former employees seek bilingual services. Since the closing, IPL has noticed a spike in requests for service provision including an increased demand for computer classes and an almost 70% increase in the daily use of the resource center. "Many Fannie May employees look at the closing as an opportunity to acquire new skills especially on the computer," asserts Ms. Cervantes. To meet demand, IPL added six computers as an addition to the existing high school computer lab for this program in order to accommodate 84 new students on Saturdays.

The closing of the Fannie May plant demonstrates that a community must always be prepared to respond to a changing environment. "Having ongoing services readily available, like IPL's community technology center and training programs, is important both in stabilizing a community and helping to offer residents employment opportunities in a new economy," says Nacho Gonzalez, UICNI Associate Director. "UICNI is excited to be partnering with IPL and helping to secure the future of Pilsen."

In Their Own Words: UICNI Research Assistants Reflect on Their Experiences

Xin Li

"The research assistant experience with UICNI provided me an opportunity to excel my planning knowledge and make a positive contribution to the community. I am very devoted to a career in planning and UICNI helped to strengthen my determination to be an excellent planner, no matter if it is in the private or public sector."

Ann Barnds

"Through the Ford Foundation Project, I have gained valuable experience about how multi-agency collaborations are developed and implemented. I am specializing in planning for persons with disabilities, and seeing how Neighborhoods Initiative brings different partners to the table has given me some insights into how the voices of marginalized populations can be brought more effectively into the planning dialogue."

Ginger White

"Having moved to Chicago to pursue a Masters degree in urban planning, UICNI provided me the opportunity to learn about the various neighborhoods surrounding the University and the issues and challenges they face within an urban context. As editor of the bi-annual UICNI newsletter, I have been able to research and learn about the various ways in which community partners are solving complex problems."

Nameeta Lobo

"I maintain various key web pages for the Great Cities Institute. I coordinated the design and production of the GCI Monthly. I have aided in the design and maintainance of the annual Winter Forum Website and moderate seven listservs for the Institute, adding subscribers and facilitating electronic discussions. Currently, I am designing a new web site for UICNI."

UIC Neighborhoods *Initiative* is published quarterly by the UIC Neighborhoods Initiative (UICNI)
phone 312/996-8700
fax 312/996-8933
web **http://uicni.cuppa.uic.edu**.
Please send correspondence to Chang Lee at clee10@uic.edu or call 312/996-4617.

UIC Neighborhoods Initiative (M/C 107)
The University of Illinois at Chicago
East Campus
412 South Peoria Street, Suite 400
Chicago, Illinois 60607-7067
West Campus
845 South Damen Street, Suite 506
Chicago, Illinois 60612

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Chicago, IL
Permit No. 4860

A Focus On Career Ladders