



WELCOME BACK CENTER

Issue 18

Fall 2007

Welcome Back Staff

José Ramón Fernández-Peña
Initiative Director

Teresa Betancourt
Educational Case Manager

Adolfo L. Echeverry
Research Associate

Douglas Vasquez
Management Assistant

Fall Office Hours

Monday—CLOSED

Tuesday

8:00 a.m. to 1 p.m. &
2 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday

8:00 a.m. to 1 p.m. &
2 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Thursday

8:00 a.m. to 1 p.m. &
2 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Friday

8:00 a.m. to 1 p.m. &
2 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday

8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

**To make an appointment
with the Educational Case
Manager or to confirm
class or workshop registra-
tion, please contact
(415) 561-1833**

City College of San Francisco
John Adams Campus
1860 Hayes Street, Room 221
San Francisco, CA 94117

Transitions at the San Francisco Welcome Back Center

Over the year, there have been a number of changes here at the SF WBC. Early in the year, we were given the opportunity to begin the institutionalization of our case management services at City College. Unfortunately, this meant the loss of our case manager Naomi Marcus. In August, Nancy Mullenax, after two years as director of the Center, left us for a new job opportunity in Los Angeles where she would also be closer to her family. Two weeks later, Amelia Martinez left us as well. Amelia had been at the SF WBC almost five years, first as office manager and then as research associate. They are missed, but we wish them the best in their new endeavors.

While change is always difficult, it has provided us with an opportunity to think carefully about the staff we will need at this point at the Center. Here's what's happening:

Adolfo Echeverry, our former office manager is now our research associate working closely with the evaluation team and the Center director in the development of our new database system. We've hired a new office manager, Douglas Vasquez who will be the first person you see when you come into

the office or when you call us. Douglas has many years experience working with immigrant communities and his background in information technology will be an important asset to the center. We have also hired a new person for the reconfigured position of educational case manager/trainer, Teresa Betancourt. Teresa will bring to the center not only her experience in direct service but also her experience as a trainer, which will be much needed as we embark in the replication of the WB model in other sites around the country. We are currently interviewing for the director's position and hope to have someone here before the end of the year.

In terms of our activities, the San Francisco Welcome Back has 1,010 active participants. Outcomes for our participants include: 236 passed licensing exams, 134 obtained their licenses in their original profession, 57 obtained an alternative career or license, 288 obtained employment in the U.S. health sector for the first time, and 28 were accepted into medical residencies. At the initiative level, we have 7,546 participants. Of these, 891 passed their licensing exams, 740 obtained license in their original pro-

fession, 524 entered new careers in health, 958 obtained employment in the US health sector for the first time, and 56 were accepted into residency training programs.

We are working with our friends at JVS in developing a pilot program for nurses in the East Bay. One of the activities we expect to launch in January is a series of courses for our nurses who need to take additional classes in Psychiatry, Pediatrics and OB.

At the policy level, we continue to work with several coalitions at the local, state, and national level, involved on issues related to improving diversity in the health workforce. We are doing this work in tandem with the San Diego and the Los Angeles centers in order to facilitate the creation of additional opportunities for our participants.

In this issue of the newsletter, you will meet the new team at the SF WBC. If you haven't been here for a while, give us a call or come by to check in with us. We want to hear about you!

Warmly,

José Ramón Fernández-Peña
Initiative Director

The San Francisco Welcome Back Center Staff: Who they are.

Adolfo Echeverry, Research Associate. Formerly Management Assistant, he has been working at the San Francisco Welcome Back Center for a year and a half.

His job consists in giving support to the Director as well as both the Office and the Educational Case Manager, providing them with whatever information they may need in terms of resources and statistics. He's also in charge of keeping the website updated. He is Bilingual in Spanish and English.

Douglas Vasquez, Management Assistant. He is the main contact for general questions that you may have about the Welcome Back Center services. He can also be reached for scheduling appointments and enrolling in workshops. With previous experience at Catholic Charities CYO and Arriba Juntos, he also supports the Educational Case Manager, the Research Associate, and the SFWBC Director, with any assistance that they may need. He is bilingual English-Spanish.

Teresa Betancourt, Educational Case Manager/Trainer. Being raised in Mexico City, she is bicultural and bilingual in Spanish and English, and has a good understanding of the challenges that imply moving to a new country and trying to navigate new systems.

She has extensive experience working in social services and provides counseling, support, information, and guidance to the Welcome Back participants.

In their own voices: Welcome Back Participants Speak About Their Experiences

*"...then I met
Welcome Back
Center and it
changed my life."*

Eugene, a young physician from Russia, was working as a security guard when he found the Welcome Back Center. *"I want to express my appreciation and describe my experience related to Welcome Back Center. I came to America in 2001. It wasn't easy. I had planned to go back to Russia, but something unpredictable happened: I loved this country, loved the spirit of freedom, these amazing people. Even though my English was terrible, and I had no idea what I was going to do for a living, I decided to stay to see what would happen. I worked as a construction worker for \$5.00/hour. As limo driver, waiter, in security. I had many tough*

days. But then I met Welcome Back Center and it changed my life. The counselor provided all the information I needed to come back to health care, to begin working on getting my physician's license (passing the U.S. Medical Exams). Welcome Back's classes helped me understand American medical culture, U.S. health care philosophy, and so on. If you never had cultural shock in your life, you would never understand the person who did. Because it's really, really tough. That's where you can get stuck forever. That's where you really need help. And I was able to get it because the staff at the Welcome Back Center cared

about me and didn't let me get stuck! The counselor played a crucial role: she's a bridge between cultures. She helped me to find a medical job as a pathology assistant at St. Mary's Hospital. I was promoted several times, working side by side with American physicians. Inspired, I studied at night and passed all the U.S. Medical Licensing exams in one year. Welcome Back made a difference in my life, and in the community. I had many interviews for residency and I just found out that I matched at U.C. Irvine in Anatomical and Clinical Pathology. Once again, thank you for your hearts, dedication, and kindness."

Join a Study Group

If you are interested in forming or joining a study group to prepare for licensing exams (USMLE, NCLEX, and others) please contact Teresa Betancourt, the Educational Case Manager at 415-561-1831.

Upcoming HLTH courses and Presentations

The Welcome Back Program is pleased to announce its Fall 2007 series of noncredit courses, specifically designed to assist internationally-trained health care professionals. Location for this course will be the CCSF John Adams Campus, 1860 Hayes Street. Room 218.

HLTH 5430—Health Professions & Practice

December 1 & 8, 2007 9:00 AM to 1:00PM

This course was developed to give participants an overview of health care practices and professional culture and will describe the major health professions and occupations, educational pathways, the organization and culture of their practice, licensure, and other regulations affecting professional practices and delivery of health services.

If you are interested in enrolling in the non-credit course listed above, please contact (415) 561-1833 as soon as possible. If you leave a voicemail message, please spell your first and last names and leave a phone number so we may return your call.

JVS SPRING LVN REFRESER COURSE

The LVN Refresher course offers nursing theory and laboratory classes at the John Adams-DeAvila campus of CCSF and clinical assignments in medical/surgical, psychiatry, trauma, and leadership in skilled nursing at local medical facilities (San Francisco General Hospital and Laguna Honda Hospital.)

Completed Application should be submitted by November 21, 2007. Priority will be given to those received before November 1, 2007.

Spring cycle will be offered tentatively from January 25-May 21, 2008

To find out more about this program, contact:

JVS: Django Rampley at (415) 782-6287 or drampley@jvs.org or

San Francisco Welcome Back Center: Teresa Betancourt (415) 561-1831

CITY COLLEGE OF SAN FRANCISCO ENGLISH COMMUNICATION FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS—ESL 20

ESL 20 will help participants improve their English communication skills and cultural competence so that they can succeed in working or advancing in health care careers.

ESL 20 is offered on Mondays and Wednesdays from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM. The class meets at Batmale Hall, Room 751 at the Ocean Campus.

You can fill in the application and register at the Ocean Campus in Conlan Hall. You can also fill out an application and register online at www.ccsf.edu The CRN for this class is 77723.

Admission Requirements: You must complete ESL 120 or score 130 on the ESL Credit Placement Test.

For more information please contact Terri Massin at tmassin@ccsf.edu or call (415) 241-2299.



The San Francisco Welcome Back Center is sponsored by City College of San Francisco and San Francisco State University through the Community Health Works of San Francisco, a joint program of the two institutions, and by the San Francisco Bay Area Regional Health Occupation Resource Center.

Mission Statement

“To build a bridge between the pool of internationally trained health workers living in California and the need for linguistically and culturally competent health services in underserved communities.”

CONTACT US

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We're also on the web at
www.e-welcomeback.org



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