



## Promising Practices in Immigrant Education

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**Name of Community College:** Johnson County Community College

**Title of Program:** Community Links

**Type of Program:** Community/Outreach/Partnership

**Primary Division(s) or Department(s) involved:** International and Immigrant Student Services

### 1. Need for Program

Navigating processes such as for driver's licenses, automobile licensing, establishing bank accounts, locating medical care, accessing community support services, understanding customary practices in housing and utilities establishment, etc. is difficult for and confusing to non-native students and can be nearly impossible for undocumented students.

JCCC's Community Links program is a service of the International and Immigrant Student Services department and have been in place since 2002.

### 2. Brief Description of Program

JCCC's *Community Links* supports non-native and undocumented students in developing everyday life skills in order to navigate processes and procedures to access community support services.

*Community Links* has developed an especially innovative approach to building support and trust in the community and paving the way for immigrant students' integration. It has developed a network of specially trained community "ambassadors" who have the cultural awareness, sensitivity, and skills to work effectively with immigrant students. Local vendors are familiarized with customary buying and renting practices in other countries. The staff even work with nearby grocers to help them stock certain foods that are staples for immigrants. Business owners welcome the added customers *Community Links* brings to their stores. Connections are also maintained with a network of families interested in renting rooms to immigrant students and residents interested in developing their language skills.

### 3. Specific Population Served

Populations served include immigrant, non-immigrant and /international students, undocumented students and community members.



#### **4. Goals and Objectives**

Goal: Position JCCC as a dynamic leader in public policy, strategic planning and workforce and economic development.

Initiative: Assess and respond to the educational needs of traditionally underserved populations.

Student Learning Objective: Develop relationships students and community and provide programming and referrals to community agencies providing healthcare, financial assistance, scholarships, community support, immigration assistance, etc. to non-native and undocumented students to ensure a successful living and learning experience.

Student Learning Activities:

- Individual advisement
- Referrals
- Online resources
- Programming
- Publications

#### **5. Outcomes**

- Assessment Method: International and Immigrant Student Services with the assistance of Institutional Research, measures student's and community organization's and/or member's satisfaction with support services, collaboration and outreach.
- Benchmarks: Average satisfaction scores of 4.0 or higher on a 5.0 scale.
- Analysis: Institutional Research analyzes evaluative data of service satisfaction and data from assessments.

#### **6. Collaboration**

Resources:

- Institutional Research collaboration
- Johnson County Health Department collaboration
- Don Bosco Collaboration
- Jewish Vocational Services collaboration
- Catholic Charities collaboration
- Intersivity collaboration
- Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund collaboration
- America Immigration Lawyers Association collaboration



## **7. Success Factors**

Establishing relationships of trust with community and students.

## **8. Challenges Faced and Overcome**

The college has been very supportive, but still getting college administrators to truly understand the immigrant population and their various needs—there are still so many caveats and compliance issues. Another challenge is the willingness of campus staff members to have the patience to work with this population. Things just take longer because the students many not be proficient in language skills or they are not familiar with our systems or the vernacular phrases we use.

## **9. Funding and Sustainability**

College general funds

For more information, please contact:

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