



Citywide outreach campaign launched as College Readiness Academy shows success and legislative agendas are set

Citywide outreach begins

SPCLC began a two-month outreach campaign Jan. 1st. Throughout January, large signs ('tails') will be posted on the back ends of over 35 east metro buses. In addition, posters will run in over 300 internal bus locations through February.

"While we are proud of our work as the largest Minnesota ABE consortium, we know there are many St. Paul residents who could benefit from our services who don't know how to access classes," said facilitator Tom Cytron-Hysom. "We are trying new ways of letting people know there are free ABE resources available throughout the city."

The ads feature photos of a variety of St. Paul ABE learners, with the text "For a good job in your future...FREE Classes for Adults!"



For a good job in your future...

FREE Classes for Adults!

CALL **800.222.1990**
TEXT **612.424.1211** OR VISIT **spclc.org**




GED/ADULT DIPLOMA COLLEGE PREP ENGLISH JOB SKILLS COMPUTER SKILLS

College Readiness Academy completes first year of operation

The College Readiness Academy (CRA), a collaborative SPCLC program involving the International Institute, Hubbs Center, and Neighborhood House, has shown impressive results during its first year of operation:

- 166 adult learners have been served to date, with an 89% retention rate
- 30 students have completed and are enrolled in college, with most bypassing developmental education entirely and enrolled in credit-bearing courses
- 6 additional students are college-ready but not yet enrolled
- CRA students have bypassed 67 developmental education and ESOL classes

The program helps students overcome barriers, through academic instruction and skilled navigation, that would otherwise prevent successful college enrollment. Many CRA students, after one semester at college, have achieved GPAs above 3.0.

Navigator Fatima Omar reviewed some of the lessons learned. “We were surprised by the sheer number of barriers facing students, some totally unexpected. For instance, the first day of classes really stressed students, who were confused by such issues as where and how to purchase textbooks,” she said. “We were surprised by the resistance of high schools to referring recent graduates who lacked some of the academic preparation needed for college. And, the gratitude of our students was unexpected.”

Navigators spend many hours with students individually, working on such tasks as registering for classes and applying for financial aid. They also work extensively with students on other issues that affect their ability to be successful in college. These include providing mental health referrals, resume work, facilitating appeals on academic, financial, and scholarship issues, and supporting students seeking jobs.



Jane Graupman, Executive Director of the International Institute, testified about the CRA at a recent legislative hearing on economic disparities.

Future plans include providing a specific orientation for CRA students at the start of each semester at Saint Paul College, offering financial literacy workshops for students, providing trainings on applying for financial aid, and integrating smart phone usage into navigation.

Legislative agendas set

While the Minnesota legislature has a ‘short’ session this year, several factors are leading to hope for action that may help ABE learners. There is widespread concern over great economic disparities related to race. At the same time, employers are having more and more trouble filling jobs as Baby Boomers retire and the workforce isn’t expanding to fill vacated positions.

- SPCLC is pursuing a targeted allocation for the College Readiness Program, to cover costs not covered by the ABE formula.
- Literacy Action Network is beginning a discussion with legislators over the need to fund ABE navigators to work with all learners.
- MSPWin is leading a coalition effort to improve Career Pathways programming statewide.