

Bilingual (Spanish and English) Community Forum on October 15th, 2022- Debrief

Organizers of the event: [Blanca Melchor](#), [Elizabeth Flores](#), [Gladys Elizondo](#)

#### *What happened?*

- 103 people came (190 registered in advance, and there were 30 walk-ins - overcast weather may have impacted attendance). Most people were from Gilroy, Holister and Morgan Hill.
- There was food, music, raffle prizes, 13 tables with info on Gavilan and community resources, keynote speaker (President), MC (PIO); career panel
- Content was in Spanish with English translation available
- Total expenses were \$5,000 (over \$2,000 was for food, as well as costs for translation, music and other on-site activities)
- Outreach was through Gavilan, and Gavilan social media accounts.
- Texted everyone who registered in advance with parking info and times.

#### *What was challenging in doing the event?*

- Was not a Gavilan department to host the event, although did do it through UndocuAlly which helped but didn't have a way to collect money to pay for the event. Also, because the event was broad community outreach, did not fit into typically outreach activities.
- Not having a host department made planning harder, did not have someone who knew about and could take care of administrative requirements or have access to a budget to pay for expenses. Also some funding sources are not allowed to pay for food.
- Learned that if contract with outside vendors, they all had to fill out W-9 form from the business office and submit it in advance so could get paid by the college. Gladys Elizondo helped with the requisition forms.
- Learned there were a lot of processes to follow to have an event, but didn't know what they were in advance (Covid protocols, facilities support ....). Received approval for the event in August, so only two months to plan which was tight, and then found out would have to go to the Covid Committee for approval, fortunately some of the Covid restrictions were lifted and this was no longer an issue.
- Still have some administrative follow-ups (sending out the evaluation form to attendees; thank you notes to the people involved; tax deductible letters to contributors).
- People were looking at the community resource fair for opportunities for short term training, but there were very few programs like that that participated. This is an area that Gavilan could offer more courses in, as the people who came are looking for something short and quick.

#### *What went well?*

- Atmosphere was terrific, very welcoming for everyone, aided by the music/ entertaining, food, and raffle. Helped people come into an institution they were not familiar with, but in this event it was presented as culturally aware. People could ask questions, and felt acknowledged they were there.
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- Messaging to people was about the joy of people being there, and was very uplifting. “ you can do this, no matter where you come from and your age, we are so happy you’re here.”
- Having the President be part of the event, and be the keynote. And now can reach out to him and other leadership so can establish an official association/ support for future years, and find ways to get funds to pay for keynotes.
- Career panel was the highlight. Everyone was crying. Nice diversity of panelists. Panelists remembered what it was like when they were starting, where they are at and where they come from. Communications that you’re not alone, there are other folks there. People could really relate to the panelists. Panelists also talked about life challenges, for example, a mom in the audience spoke about a son with special needs and that she was able to connect with what the panelists were saying, or a panelist about the trauma about being left at the border and being found by 12 year old sister. Being undocumented is an unknown for careers, and two of the panelists were undocumented and talked about how despite this situation you can overcome obstacles and be who you want to be and continue your education.
- Because the event was on a Saturday, it had a lot more flexibility and saved money. Did not need to contract with dining commons/ on-campus food service and we could bring in our own food vendors. Theatre was available for free, with a sound system, and Izzy was a great help. Since a Gavilan event did not need to pay for facilities/ maintenance.
- Carina Cisneros found funding

*What would you do differently next time?*

- Plan further in advance, secure funding and have the event be hosted by a department.
- Do outreach to parents in the schools, and find other ways to do community presentations to tell people about the event.