Proposal for Xavier University's
Women of Excellence Grant

Career Pathways and Empowerment Workshops for
Bhutanese Nepali Teenage Refugee Girls:

Submitted by:

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Mark Meyers, Dean of College of Social Science, Health & Education

Janice Walker, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences
Title of Project:
Career Pathways and Empowerment Workshops for Bhutanese Nepali Teenage Refugee Girls

Amount requested:
$5465.00

Abstract:

The program proposed would connect female Xavier Psychology graduate students and professional women who will be speakers representing their vocation with Bhutanese Nepali teenage refugee girls in Cincinnati through two day long workshop events in the summer of 2013. The goals and indicators of success of the two day event are two-fold: 1) to build self-esteem as a teenage girl and refugee, showing the girls their future potential and setting the standard for future experiences in the U.S. of celebrating diversity, women, and youth, through culturally sensitive creative projects and discussion and 2) to provide information on career options, their requirements and pathways, through presentations by and discussion with professionally established female speakers, gifted professional materials; and peer networking with Xavier students. Broader goals of the project and indicators of success include creating a service opportunity for Xavier students and exposure to cultural diversity and creating pathways of success among the Bhutanese Nepali refugees to contribute to the community in the future. One measured indicator of success will be surveys filled out by the participants assessing their overall experience and how prepared the girls feel professionally after the program.
## BUDGET

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<th>Supplies</th>
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### Food and Venue (2 days)

<table>
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<th></th>
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### Human Resources

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<td>Transportation -- Gift cards for volunteer drivers</td>
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<td>Gift cards for speakers</td>
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### Project Total Cost/Requested Amount

| Project Total Cost/Requested Amount | $5465.00 |

1 Several volunteer drivers will pick up the refugee girls which will be more efficient than utilizing a single bus due to the refugees' geographically distributed housing.
How does this proposed project enhance the mission and purpose of the Women of Excellence Giving Circle?

Xavier’s Women of Excellence created the Giving Circle to “allow women to collectively support Xavier and encourage the development of women as philanthropic leaders.” Xavier Graduate Psychology women would be connected together across all different years and programs (Industrial Psychology Masters and Clinical Psychology Doctoral), and Xavier’s name as a community service and diversity leader would be enhanced as well as linked to other influential organizations and community leaders in the Cincinnati community that aid refugees in terms of service projects and charitable donations. In addition to the development of Xavier women as philanthropic leaders, the Bhutanese refugee high school girls will also be encouraged as future leaders in their chosen field who can give back to others.

How will this project further the mission of Xavier University to “engage and form students intellectually, morally and spiritually, with rigor and compassion, toward lives of solidarity, service and success?”

The government website of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2012) provides the following population movement history: The Bhutanese Nepali refugees were victims of racist practices in Bhutan due to their Nepalese background and as such, forced to leave Bhutan in the early 1990s. From there, over 100,000 refugees have been living in refugee camps with sub-standard living conditions in Nepal—with rationed food and homes without electricity or indoor plumbing. The UN is relocating these refugees into several countries including the U.S. In 2006, the United States began resettling these refugees, and as of early 2012, more than 49,000 have resettled to the United States, with more continuing to arrive, adjust to, and at best, thrive in their more complex, new life in America. According to discussion with Sheryl Rajbhandari, Executive Director of Heartfelt Tidbits, a non-profit that provides educational, citizenship and job mentoring programs for local refugees, there are over 700 Bhutanese Nepali refugees in Cincinnati and approximately 100 teenagers and 60 female teenagers. The refugee population served by this project has a unique cultural history as described above which will intellectually expand Xavier students’ understanding of global and political issues as well as their cultural sensitivity and humanity, important in the increasing global and diverse workplace. Further, Xavier students would serve as professional role models for high school youth, encouraging them to exercise their communication, mentoring, and professional development skills.

Why is this project important? Does it address a gap within existing University programs?

This project is important because it not only addresses a gap within existing University programs in regards to the Bhutanese Nepali refugee population served but even among other programs in Cincinnati aiding the Bhutanese Nepali refugees. Though other programs in Cincinnati, such as the most comprehensive and irreplaceable provided by Catholic Charities through government funding, offer services in many fundamental domains such as language, orientation, housing, health, education, etc., this program is personalized to the teenage female population and also utilizes Xavier students as mentors. The teenage female population has
unique self-esteem and professional needs. Socializing with other non-Bhutanese peers may be a leap of faith due to language barriers, cultural differences, and a refugee past of discrimination, in addition to the standard uncertainty of adolescence. Yet this program could help ease that interaction due to its leadership from Nepalese community members and open minded volunteers. Further, the girls have few professional female role models in the family or refugee contacts to draw from, and due to cultural norms in the refugee camps, may be primed towards early marriage and children over education and professional development. This program could instill a small, but important message, of the many professional options available in the United States and the refugee girls’ potential for success.

*What is the expected outcome of your project? How many people (faculty, staff, students) will be engaged in your project?*

The expected outcome of the program is to provide the Bhutanese Nepali teenage girls with the information, materials, and confidence to pursue the most rewarding professional future, as well as set the standard for future experiences and interactions in the United States of celebrating diversity, women, and youth. This will be achieved through the two days of workshop events (See Appendix A). Additionally, the grant writers, Pooja Amatyra and Dr. Hem Raj Joshi are from a Nepalese background, with Dr. Joshi being a well respected leader in the Nepalese community, which will help ensure that the event is culturally appealing and comfortable for the girls. Xavier students would also further their sense of service and appreciation of diversity. Dr. Hem Raj Joshi has been working at Xavier since 2003 and is currently Associate Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science. Due to his decade at Xavier, he will be valuable in reaching out to the Xavier community, including students and faculty, about the program for securing speakers and volunteers. Additionally, his experience in organizing previous community projects will make him valuable in his advice and organization of the event. The projected number of volunteers (including speakers), many of which will be Xavier students and faculty, is 40, and the projected number of refugee students is 60, for approximately 100 attendees total.

*How will you measure the success of your project, if funded? What are the qualitative and quantitative measures that you will use to assess impact and effectiveness?*

Through the Department of Psychology at Xavier, statistical programming can evaluate the outcomes of the event. The refugee participants will fill out surveys at the end of the event assessing their overall experience (on a multi-point Likert scale) and qualitative data will also be collected by asking for narrative comments (See Appendix B). We will also compare pre and post program feelings on SPSS to measure if the event made a statistically significant difference in how prepared the girls feel professionally.

*If your project is funded, how will the WOX Giving Circle be recognized as having played a role in the success/completion of your project? Give specific examples.*

The generosity of the WOX Giving Circle will be included in messages such as communication directed towards the refugee girls about the event and the program lectures. In addition, the t-shirts provided to all the volunteers and participants will prominently feature the WOX name and serve as a lasting and tangible reminder of the gift of the WOX Giving Circle, encouraging participants to strive to become future Women of Excellence in our community.
Figure 1.1 Recruitment of refugee girls: According to discussion with Sheryl Rajbhandari, Executive Director of Heartfelt Tidbits, a non-profit that provides educational, citizenship and job mentoring programs for local refugees, there are approximately 60 female Bhutanese Nepali teenagers in Cincinnati. Due to prior and current involvement with the refugee girls, Sheryl Rajbhandari will help in recruitment and has information about the girls’ addresses and contacts. Additionally, a separate monthly teenage workshop for the girls is currently being planned and in addition to the Facebook Cincinnati Bhutani Nepali group will be a good place to advertise the event and get feedback from the girls about event details.

Tentative Program Workshop Schedule

**Day 1:**

10:00 - 10:30 Registration, breakfast, passing out supplies

10:30 - 11:00 Introduction

11:00 - 12:30 Art Project

12:30 - 1:30 Lunch

1:30 - 3:00 Career Presentations

3:00 - 4:30 Rotating discussion sessions with speakers

**Day 2:**

10:00 - 10:30 Registration, breakfast

10:30 - 12:00 Career Presentations

12:00 - 1:30 Rotating discussion sessions with speakers

1:30 - 2:30 Lunch

2:30 - 3:30 Drumming Circle

3:30 - 4:00 Filling out survey and conclusion
Figure 1.2  *Art Project Day 1 to encourage reflection on personal strengths and feelings*
APPENDIX B

Program Evaluation

PRE-PROGRAM

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not at all, 3 = somewhat prepared, 5 = very prepared) how motivated and prepared do you feel to pursue a career of your choice? Circle ONE.

1 -------------------------- 2 -------------------------- 3 -------------------------- 4 -------------------------- 5

POST-PROGRAM

Overall Experience

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = did not enjoy, 3 = somewhat enjoy, 5 = greatly enjoy) how much did you enjoy the overall experience of the workshops? Circle ONE.

1 -------------------------- 2 -------------------------- 3 -------------------------- 4 -------------------------- 5

Preparedness

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not at all, 3 = somewhat prepared, 5 = very prepared) how motivated and prepared do you feel to pursue a career of your choice? Circle ONE.

1 -------------------------- 2 -------------------------- 3 -------------------------- 4 -------------------------- 5

Please write below any comments, concerns, or improvements you have for similar future workshops:
References
