

April 6, 2012

Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors  
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To Whom It May Concern:

The Partnership for Community Action (PCA) works to build strong healthy communities through relationship building, civic engagement and leadership development. We believe that early childhood education is an important key to a strong and healthy community and throughout the Country there is room for growth in this area. We believe most powerful change is achievable when we engage and develop leaders from within communities. The PCA's *Communities for Education and Action* uses the *Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors* (AP) curriculum for setting a strong early childhood development foundation for community leaders because, "*Lo que bien empiza, bien acaba*, what begins well, ends well"!

The best way to demonstrate how the AP curriculum plays a pivotal role in our work is to share a story that demonstrates our model. From each class that the PCA conducts, the facilitator works with parents who exhibit leadership skills. After in-depth leadership development, these parents then become facilitators of future classes within their community.

Each facilitator's journey is unique, but there are many similarities amongst the group of astounding leaders. Zully is one of these astonishing leaders. When she signed up for the class, she was a stay-at-home mom. She had a professional degree from Mexico, but was not utilizing it. During the class she transformed from a woman who felt alone and isolated to a woman who felt knowledgeable and empowered. This made her vehemently question why this class was not available to more parents. She had learned so much about parenting skills and the development of children, as well as gained new knowledge about physical and mental health. Towards the end of the class, she realized the need to get involved in her children's school so she decided to join the Parent Teacher Organization, in which she now holds a leadership role. Through her participation in the class she became a stronger leader in her home and began to embark on the journey of opening doors for herself and others to follow. After graduation from the class and after an in-depth leadership and curriculum, Zully became a facilitator of the class.

By fully implementing the idea of popular education, Zully and the other facilitators are able to weave a rich discussion with the parents. They start by building on the pride of where the parents come from, and then analyze and discuss the realities they face. This builds a deep conviction to work hard and ensure their children's success. Over the process of facilitating many classes, the facilitators have become strong leaders in their community, backed by the power of the AP curriculum which encourages parents to not only be admirable first teachers of their children, but to also analyze the systems that can make success difficult. The facilitators share with the parents that they are the most powerful agents in making change within the schools. Together, with other parents, they have much more power than they might believe.

This transformation would not be possible without the well developed AP curriculum which empowers parents on a personal level by acknowledging and honoring their *raíces* or roots, sharing eye opening statistics and finally equipping them with tools to make change at home, in the school, and within the larger community. *Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors* can help create the opportunity for parents to take the lead in transforming their communities!

Sincerely,

*PCA Team*

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