



STEP UP

Paving the Way for College Success

THE 4TH ANNUAL STEP UP PROGRAM

Period: June 17 - June 27, 2019
Place: University of Massachusetts Boston

EQR
Educational Divide Reform



PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The 4th Step-Up Summer Program “**Becoming a Freshman: Paving the Way for College Success**”, as the program is known, is an innovative, two-week educational program offered by the Educational Divide Reform (EDR). The overarching goals of the Program are for underserved and overaged immigrant highschool graduates succeed in their upcoming freshman year of college through academic preparation and development of confidence. The Program aims to help students to acquire sufficient English language skills to increase their ability to successfully participate in college education, and improve their chances of participation in future educational programs.

The program provides scholarships for graduates to spend up to two weeks in the University of Massachusetts Boston campus. This year’s program took place at the Bayside building of the UMASS Boston from June 17 - June 27, 2019. The Program brought together eight (8) students. All participants were from the Boston Adult Technical Academy (BATA), and English was not a native language for any participant. EDR teachers used a communicative approach that encouraged students’ active engagement in learning and the exchange of their ideas and experiences.



*“ TO INCREASE THEIR
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IN COLLEGE EDUCATION ”*

PROGRAM CONTENT

Three experienced teachers in collaboration with the leadership team designed the class activities following the main goal and objectives of the program. As part of creating a collaborative learning environment the teachers had a number of group activities, work in pairs and role plays. In designing the classes, the teachers tried to connect and integrate English learning with acquiring and accelerating knowledge and skills in Science. The table below provides a more detailed description of the taught subjects.

day 1 06.17	Launch of Program	Introduction, Expectations, and Overview of Program	Dr. Mary Cazabon, Dr. Jay Jang, Jessica, Brandon
	College Prep	Basics of Oral Presentation in Academic Setting	Rebecca Doverspike
day 2 06.18	English Proficiency Class	Basics of Reading/Listening in Academic Setting	Rebecca Doverspike
	College Prep	College Life, Powerpoint Project	
day 3 06.19	Science Class	Foundational Chemistry, Cell Structure, Structure of DNA/RNA	Megha Majumder
	College Prep	College Life - Coping Strategies, Notetaking Skills	
	College Tour	Bunker Hill Community College	
day 4 06.20	English Proficiency Class	Basics of Writing in Academic Setting Basics of Oral Presentation in Academic Setting	Rachel Stern
	Science Class	The Basic principles of points, angles, lines; Perpendicular and parallel concepts; Triangles, Linear Equations Functions	Megha Majumder
day 5 06.24	College Prep	College Life (on-campus resources, financial support)	
	English Proficiency Class	Basics of Reading/Listening in Academic Setting	Rebecca Doverspike
day 6 06.25	College Prep	Powerpoint Project	
	English Proficiency Class	Basics of Writing in Academic Setting Basics of Oral Presentation in Academic Setting	Rachel Stern
day 7 06.26	English Proficiency Class	Basics of Writing in Academic Setting Basics of Oral Presentation in Academic Setting	Rachel Stern
	English Proficiency Class	Final Presentation	Rebecca Doverspike/Rachel Stern
day 8 06.27	Completion of the Program	Overview of the Courses Concluding Remarks, Certificates	Dr. Mary Cazabon, Dr. Jay Jang, Jessica

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE STEP-UP SUMMER PROGRAM

This section details the effectiveness of the Step-Up Summer Program for BATA graduates to be successful at the freshmen level of higher education in meeting the following programmatic goals:

- 1 To provide an English language learning experience to students in a cost-effective manner to maximize the number of students reached.
- 2 To improve academic English (academic writing, reading, speaking, and listening skills).
- 3 To advance understanding of basic level of math (algebra and geometry) and science (biology and chemistry) classes.
- 4 To equip students with knowledge on basic computer skills to complete PowerPoint Project.
- 5 To assist with determining which college and which academic program might be the right fit.
- 6 To improve students' skills in self-reflection and self-discipline.
- 7 To recognize student achievement through award certificates signed by the founder of EDR.



Yuris Perez

"This program helped me to improve academic English especially writing... Jessica texted me everyday to let me know the class and check if I come. I really felt they cared about me. Thank you."



Luis Pacheco

"I gained knowledge on how the college classroom experience would be... What I learned most during the program is to read syllabus an hour before class starts, and how to work with study groups. This is a great Summer Program for students to prepare for the college life."



Erickson Alves

"I am very satisfied with the program because it helped us to get prepare for college... I hope they will keep doing this program so other students who is come can have the opportunities. I want to say thanks to EDR. They are doing really good jobs."



Darliny Monteiro

"They help me to prepare for college, to improve my writing, reading, and speaking... so that I can be successful in my career goal. I also learned from the program that never give up on my career goal."

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

During May-June, 2019, EDR staff representatives had a number of meetings with BATA students and staff. The meetings helped identify students' needs and interest in the summer program, as well as allowed to present the program to students.

In order to enroll into the program, the students had to fill out the registration forms and sign an agreement with EDR on complying with the following requirements of the Step-Up Summer Program: to regularly attend offered classes; show up on time; actively participate in class activities; complete homework assignments and to be respectful towards others.

Classes were held at the University of Massachusetts Boston at Bayside building the University of Massachusetts Boston (UMass Boston) at 150 Mt. Vernon Street, Dorchester in order to allow students to experience a college campus life.



PROGRAM DESIGN

Effective instruction for English learners starts with an effective program design. The Step-Up program, in this context, encompasses the pedagogy, instructional practices, and expected outcomes for the students during the entire program. That is to say that the design incorporates a coherent and consistent pedagogical approach to core content instruction, English language development, and intervention services.

Thematically, the program consists of the following courses:

english proficiency

English Proficiency Course aims at assisting students to further advance the English skills they need for academic study in the U.S. higher education setting. The course also aims to help students develop a positive, constructive and practical approach to effective written and oral communication for educational and self-improvement. The purpose of the course is to build confidence among the students and encourage them to write and speak proper English.

math & science

Math & Science Course aims at improving students' readiness for college level education by learning basic concepts in the fields of Algebra, Geometry, Biology, and Chemistry.

college preparation

College Preparation Course aims at helping students by providing instruction and support in the skills required to achieve success in their academic, professional, and college lives. It also assists students to determine which college and which academic program might be the right fit, including development of social and emotional skills such as coping strategies in college settings, note taking skills, using available on-campus resources, interview skills, and asking for help and financial support.

NEW courses

In this year's Step-Up Program, a follow-up English course was newly offered to those who were selected to be continuing EDR scholarship recipients. EDR representatives decided to award the scholarship to these students for outstanding performance and academic achievement during the program. In addition, unusual personal and family circumstances are taken into account. These include, for example, taking care of relatives, a migrant background, or similar circumstances.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

EDR representatives conducted evaluation study of Step-Up participants. The evaluation aimed to measure the program's stated goals in terms of the following four outcomes:

- Satisfaction with the summer program
- Learning and Understanding
- Behavioral Changes
- Personal Linkages

The evaluation was to explore how the Step-Up students perceived themselves, their outlook and opinions, their attitude towards the goals, and the college life. Data was collected at two stages:

- At the beginning of the program (Survey 1, using an online questionnaire)
- At the end of their two week of study (Survey 2, using hard copy questionnaires)

Survey 1 profiled student attitudes, opinions, knowledge, skills, behaviors and expectation about the program prior to participation in the program. Survey 2 aimed to explore its impacts on their attitudes, knowledge, skills and behaviors about college life and goals.

OVERALL PROGRAM EVALUATION FINDINGS

ACHIEVEMENT OF PROGRAM GOALS

1. Satisfaction of the Program

Step-Up students reported strong levels of satisfaction with the overall Step-Up Program outputs. They agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the Program administration, content, variety of experience, and the relevance of the Program to professional or educational development.

2. Improved English Language

Step-Up students felt their English language competency had improved because of the Step-Up Program. Responses to the assessment of language ability while still completing their study were markedly improved from their beginning levels. Since 93

percent of the Step-Up participants said improving their English was their aim in enrolling in the Step-Up Program, this is a very important result, both for the students and as an indicator of success for the Program. Program administrators and teachers indicated that the students had improved their English language writing abilities, in particular, and many were proud of their students' achievements and progress. Overall, the teachers thought that the most significant benefit of the Program for the students is that they have learned English or improved upon their English language skills. Many felt that this is essential in order to pursue higher education.

3. College Readiness

A majority of Step-Up students feel confident in their abilities for college study and college life. They indicat-

ed that their skills (note-taking skills; solving problems; planning for future; and asking for help) had improved. In addition, the program has helped students improve the knowledge and understanding of the basic concepts of Algebra & Geometry, and Biology, and Chemistry, thus preparing them for potential careers in Nursing, IT and Engineering. The students reported that the Step-Up Program provided successful transitions between high school and college or work by helping them gain the skills, knowledge, and expertise needed for their postsecondary success. The program has contributed to increasing students' interests in continuing education, and has helped students more clearly articulate their college/career plans and outline their strengths and weaknesses, thus paving the way for making an action plan for future educational and professional success.

4. Positive Changes in Student Aspirations and Self-Confidence

Many Step-Up teachers commented on the noticeable improvement students have made in expressing themselves in class. Their self-confidence has increased, and they find they have an easier time expressing their ideas and feelings. The students reported that they gained confidence through the Step-Up Program, increased their level of self-motivation and learned to take initiative. Through interactive program approach and engaging techniques, the program has contributed to the process of building a positive self-image, confidence and leadership skills among participants. The Program, they report, has opened up the way the students think about their lives and their opportunities. They have been able to discuss different ideas, and it has changed their attitudes.



LEADERSHIP TEAM

DR. MARY CAZABON is one of the founders of EDR. Holding an advanced degree in Applied Linguistics and a doctorate in Urban School Leadership, she has extensive experience in conducting educational research and evaluation, in developing academic content and English as a Second Language curricula, and in delivering technical assistance to schools, districts, universities, and state departments of education. From 1994-2008, she served as Director of Bilingual/ESL Programs (Kindergarten through Grade 12) in Cambridge, MA.



DR. JAY JANG is one of the founders of the Educational Divide Reform. He has held leadership positions in the non-profit sector, government and business sectors for the past 20 years. He received a PhD in Global Governance and Human Security from the University of Massachusetts Boston. He also has MPA from Harvard Kennedy School and MBA from New York University.



JESSICA JO started to work with EDR in September 2018 as a Coordinator/Project Development Manager and Residence Hall Manager. She has a B.A. in English Linguistics and M.A. in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) in Boston University.

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RACHEL STERN has more than 5 years of teaching experience in Harvard University Department of English as a teaching fellow. She has also provided in-depth individual guidance as well as writing-oriented group programming to students in the English Department's Junior Tutorial Program. She graduated from Harvard University with Ph.D. in English and earned her B.A. with highest honor in English from Duke University.



MEGHA MAJUMDER has teaching experience of Health Innovation Course in UC Berkeley Department of Public Health, and also in Fung Fellowship for Wellness Technology Innovations. She is currently studying in Harvard Medical School. She graduated from University of California at Berkeley with B.A. in Molecular Toxicology, Public Health and Sociology.



REBECCA DOVERSPIKE has experience of tutoring undergraduate and graduate students across disciplines at various stages in their writing process in Writing Center of West Virginia University. She graduated from Harvard Divinity School and West Virginia University with M.A. in Creative Nonfiction and earned her B.A. in English Literacy Studies from Beloit College.



Partners of the Program

The Academy at Harvard Square
The University of Massachusetts Boston
Boston Adult Technical Academy