

## RECRUITING AND SUPPORTING THE LATINO VOLUNTEER ( /HELPER /MENTOR /COLLABORATOR)

### Goal:

- To provide resources, strategies, and tools to successfully recruit and train Latino Volunteers ( /Helpers /Mentors /Collaborators).

### Objectives:

- To identify resources in order to recruit volunteers.
- To identify strategies to train volunteers.
- To identify benefits and incentives for Latino volunteers.

A major challenge cited by many 4-H professionals is recruiting prospective Latino volunteers. Throughout the country, many successful recruiting efforts exist where efforts have gone into recruiting Latino youth participants only to discover limited or no volunteers ready to lead clubs or activities without the presence of the 4-H professional. When this occurs, it becomes an impossible situation and results in most youth never getting a chance to participate. 4-H needs to be careful to recruit youth only when they have volunteers ready to lead clubs or activities.

Research shows that personal conversations with Latinos works best when trying to recruit volunteers and youth participants. During these conversations, explain how their time, skills, and knowledge would help make a positive difference in the lives of youth, and in turn, their community. Staff will be more successful in recruiting adult

### Inviting Participation

- From a cultural perspective, a personal invitation is the most successful way to recruit Latino participants.
- Avoid using the word volunteer whenever possible, and use help or helping instead.
- Avoid comparing a 4-H helper to a teacher. Instead compare work with 4-H youth to how a parent works to help their children.
- Ask the adult volunteers for short term commitments.
- Provide specialized training for Latino volunteers / helpers /collaborators as needed, and allow for extra time for translation if needed. Preferably, the trainer should speak Spanish fluently.

volunteers if they ask for short term commitments. In most cases, staff may need to initially conduct programs so that Latino families can better understand what 4-H “looks like” in action.

In the spring of 1997, the Oregon 4-H program identified outreach to Latino youth and families as a program priority. As a result greater participation by Latino youth was achieved but with little increase in Latino adult volunteers. Oregon 4-H recognized that its approach to volunteer recruitment had to change. The resource below provides proven strategies for identifying, recruiting Latino adult volunteers based on the qualitative study performed by Dr. Beverly B. Hobbs, Profession Emerita, Oregon State University.



<http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1957/20722/pnw536.pdf>