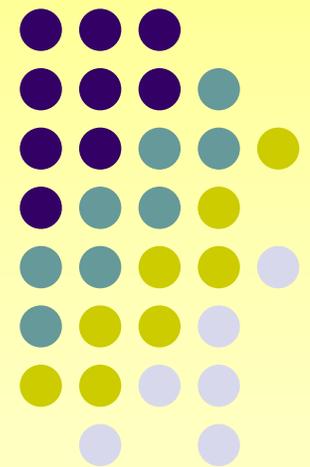
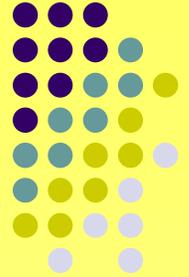


Leadership Development Project: the experience of working and growing with youth in Puerto Rico

Annie Alonso-Amador, Psy. D., MSW
Ilia M. Torres-Avillán, M.S
Maria N. Reyes, MSW
Mario H. Rodríguez, Ph. D., MPH
Ricardo Figueroa, BBA

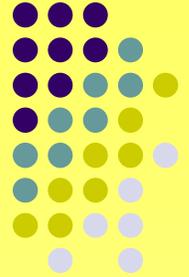


Introduction



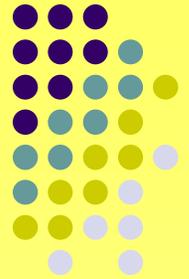
- In Puerto Rico, there is a need to create initiatives that promote the development of the leadership in young people with disabilities.
- The Training and Leadership project of youth with disabilities is a unique career leadership training program for high school seniors and college students with disabilities to promote their optimal potential that contribute to a full participation in the society.
- The Leadership Project of youngsters with disabilities consisted of the creation a curriculum to guide these trainees to clarify their goals and personal choices, develop self-advocacy strategies and acquire leadership skills.

Introduction



- Aim
 - The purpose of this presentation is to share the methods and findings of the evaluation process of the youth participating in the leadership project.
 - The results will describe youth achievements and grow in their communities.

Competencies Model



- Learn to take control of situations that difficult personal goals achievement.
- In the light of new information, constantly review their decisions.
- Identified the need and strengths they posses for achieving their goals.
- Developing ideas that lead to achievement of successful projects.
- To take advantage of opportunities for organizing activities that result in benefits for other and for self.
- Utilized own knowledge in the search of alternatives in the decision making process.

Leadership Development Project



Leadership Formation in Youths

Capacity building in Leadership

Participation in Training in diverse subjects related to the Leadership.

To promote the development of skills by means of the Participation in Scenes of Practice in Agencies and organizations of the community.

Formation of peer Advisors in leadership of people with disabilities

To develop to the self-management and the self-determination in the youth people of the Project.

Changes in Organizations and the Community

To promote actions directed to include young people with disabilities in positions of leadership in the society.

To foment the creation and the development of public policies that include to the population with disabilities.

To create opportunities and to prepare other peers to work like intercessors in the society.

Greater sensitivity towards the population with disabilities.

Greater participation of young people with disabilities in the community.

Changes in Society

Greater participation in rolls of leadership of the people with disabilities in the society.

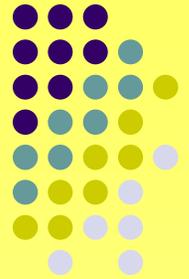
Greater participation of the people with disabilities in the community.

Sustainability of the organization formed by the young people of the Project.

Greater sensitivity towards the people with disabilities.

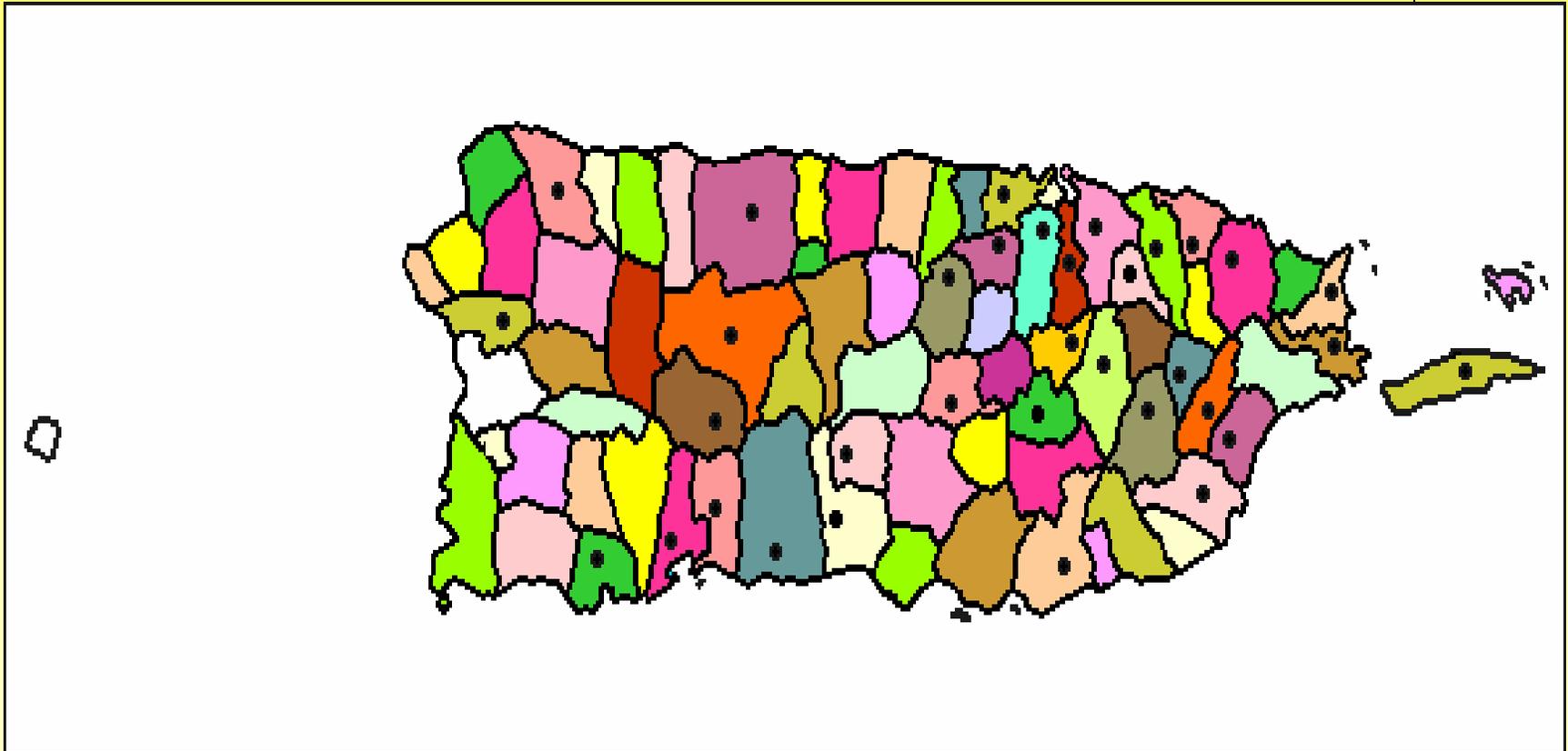
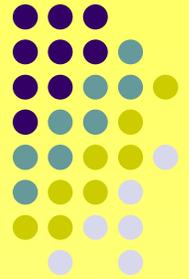
Development of Public Policies that included to the population with disabilities

Training and Technical Assistance Activities



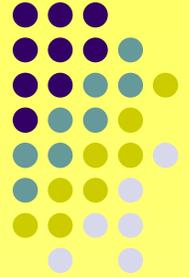
- They received training and technical assistance in the following themes:
 - Mission and vision of life
 - Self-determination and power
 - Decision making
 - Parliamentary Process
 - Management of groups
 - Travel Orientation to Washington, D.C.
 - Orientation about ADA, IDEA and VRA laws
 - Help in the Organization GOOPI Group

Geographic Location of Leadership Trainees



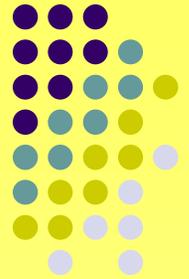
Black dots represent municipalities from where our participants come from

Trainees Activities



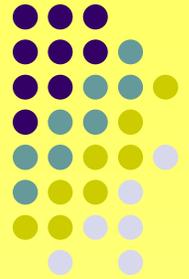
- Follow the performance of trainees as leaders one year after the training.
- Already 86 youngsters are participated as trainees in the Leadership Project in the last five years.
 - Average Increase in Knowledge based on Pre-post test: 30%
- Trainees still are receiving ongoing support on how advocate for their rights, access resources and participate fully in their community.
- Some of the trainees participated in Forums as mentors of other youngsters with disabilities, some others have organized an advocacy group to work in their universities.

Activities during the internship



- Preparation of presentations related to people with disabilities
- Participate in the design of proposal related to services
- Coordination of services
- Clerical work
- Participation in advocacy groups
- Review law statements

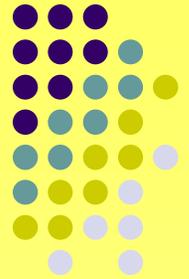
Activities of Leadership in which the Trainees are Involved:



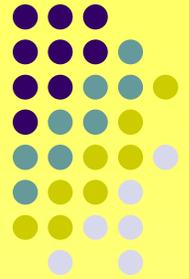
- Participation in university student associations
- Activities with children with disabilities
- Participate in retreats of young people with disabilities
- Organization of Conferences, forums, symposiums
- Instruct people with disabilities about the laws that protect them
- Work in public policy
- Collect funds for the student associations
- The visit to the Puerto Rico resident commissioner in Washington DC.

“What I learn from this experience?”

- To facilitate group work
- To improve interpersonal relationships
- To be a mentor for other student
- To help other people with disabilities
- To attain academic and professional goals
- To offer tutoring services to people with disabilities

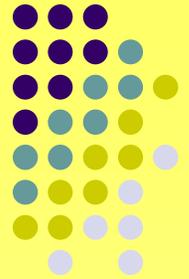


“What I learn from this experience?”



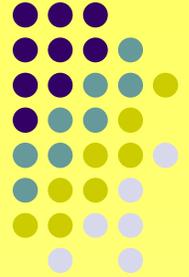
- To be more confident
- To become part of GOOPI
- To learn about laws and communicate them
- To manage a mission in life
- To participate in support groups of families with people with disabilities
- To have a high self esteem
- To be more independent

Living my vision



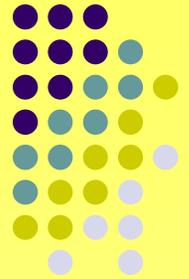
- GOOPI-“Grupo de Orientadores para Orientar Personas con Impedimentos”.
- Vision
 - To enhance leadership sense in persons with disabilities through counseling, chats and activities that promote inclusion in society.
- Mission
 - To counsel the population in general on what disabilities are, so that they learn to know them and start creating conscience about them.

Living my vision-Ponce Trainees



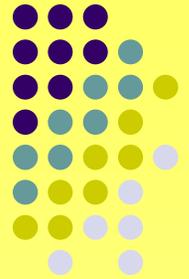
- Creation of the university student with disability organization “Derribando Barreras”.
- Assistive Technology (AT) activities
 - Training students in Windows XP.
- One Proposal submitted to a store through external resources to find support equipment for the assistive technology room (Title V).
 - The store will donate \$32,000 to equip the room with assistive technology at the university.

Living my vision- Ponce Trainees



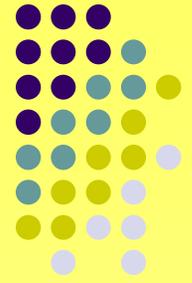
- Advocacy activities
 - Training for university new students and professors about State and Federal legislation concerning people with disability.
 - Student Presentation about a research study “Knowledge about the State and federal Laws that protect people with disabilities” to students and professors of the University of Puerto Rico, Ponce campus during the academic year 2004 - 2005.
 - Dialogue with University administration about architectural barriers at the university campus.

What comes in the Future with trainees?



- To develop a mentorship program
- Trainings such as; Lobbying and conflict mediation
- Grant Writing
- To replicate the leadership project with other universities students





To facilitate work group



To be more self confident



To improve personal relationships



To learn about laws and communicate them



To help other people with disabilities



To attain academic and professional goals



To have high self esteem



To manage a mission in the life