

# California State University, Fullerton- WoMen's and Adult Reentry Center- Summer 2017

Vanessa H. Aragon



## Introduction

This summer session has been extremely busy as well as fulfilling. From May 30 to June 28, 2017, I completed 125 hours at the California State University, Fullerton WoMen's and Adult Reentry Center. Under the supervision of Chalea Forgues, Adult Reentry and Parenting Student Program Coordinator. During my summer internship, I learned new computer skills, was involved in program planning, reached out to students, and attended an Inclusive Language presentation. Some skills I picked up over the summer were: communication, marketing and program planning skills.

## Background

The WoMen's and Adult reentry Center has three programs.

1. The Women and Gender Initiatives program serves to empower students to explore issues of gender and identity across social, historical and cultural contexts within a safe space. Some topics discussed are religion, sex, and gender equity.
2. The Violence Prevention program provides confidential advocacy, support services like legal advice, and education about issues of sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, and stalking. Students in this program are taught to educate others on campus about these issues.
3. The Adult Reentry and Parenting Students program is dedicated to the success of non traditional students, students who are over the age of 25 or students who have dependents. Reentry and parenting support services, leadership opportunities and programs to enhance academic and personal development are examples of what is offered.

## Population

The population served in the WoMen's and Adult Reentry Center varies, depending on what program they want to take part of.

1. The Women and Gender Initiatives program is for students who are interested in getting a better understanding of oneself and other students. Tolerance is a very important part of our lives especially if we want a peaceful campus, where diversity is embraced.
2. The Violence Prevention program is meant to put an end to sexual assault, intimate partner violence and stalking by educating fellow students how they can stand up for victims. While also teaching the signs and red flags of an abusive or unhealthy relationship. There is a confidential Advocate on campus who is there to support students who have experienced assault, stalking, or intimate partner violence. She is there for any student who wants her assistance in finding a Counselor, filing a police report, getting a restraining order or just listen to their story.
3. The Adult and Parenting Students Program specialises in helping students who are 25 years and older, usually they have been out of school for several years and may need special admissions assistance specifically in reading and understanding their transcripts. Another set of students served are those who have dependents and are receiving Government assistance. Chalea helps these students with their verification of hours and proof of class attendance. She also makes sure nursing mothers have a lactation space when ever they need.

## Team Members

From top left: Alisa Foreman Flowers, Director, Vanessa Aragon, Intern, Elizabeth Rubio, Student Assistant, Jose Contreras, Graduate Assistant, Alyssa Avila, Violence Prevention Educator, Rosalina Camacho, Coordinator of the WoMen's Center, Magdalena Diaz, Campus Confidential Advocate, Vanessa Almanza, Office Coordinator, Chalea Forgues, Coordinator of the Adult Reentry Center (not shown)



## Objectives

- I. One of my objectives was to get a better understanding of mental health issues that have an affect on college students and educate students on how to care for their mental health.
- II. Another objective was to develop and implement the development of a program that will educate students at CSUF about the resources available to them on campus.

## Activities

- In trying to understand the stressors of college students, I found that a great deal of stress comes from not knowing what the next step for them should be. We collaborated with the Career center to gathered information and created a workshop for students interested in going to graduate school.
- A self-care workshop dedicated to mental health was also organized for non-traditional student week that will focus on a fun activity meant to alleviate stress.
- During the days of new student orientation, I was out at the Quad explaining to students what resources the WoMen's and Adult Reentry Center has. Resources like, student organizations, , scholarship opportunities, discussing groups, and workshops
- Rosalina Camacho presented at a training for orientation leaders and explained to them the importance of using inclusive language and the impact words have on others. This was a very interesting presentation because we all need to be consciences of others feelings and emotional needs.

## Lessons Learned

- While planning a program I learned to create a workshop that will help students prepare for graduate school. A PowerPoint presentation was put together to give step by step instructions on how to request letters of recommendation, taking the GRE, writing a personal statement, etc. I also created a social media post to advertise this workshop.
- Attending an Inclusive language presentation taught me to have a better understanding of words and phrases that should be avoided.
- Working the front desk allowed me to acquire reception experience, which lead me to learn computer skills, and improve my communication skills.

The most important lesson I learned was that I definitely want to pursue a career in higher education. My passion is helping others and I have enjoyed doing so at the college/university level.

## Conclusions & Recommendations

When I was involved in program planning i grew to appreciate student affairs staff. I would recommend the WoMen's and Adult Reentry Center for students who are looking for resources as well as a place to get advice. The staff there is very open-minded and enjoy being involved in campus events and activities that are beneficial to the students. For example the Violence Prevention Conference, walk for change event, New Student Orientation, and Student Life and Leadership trainings.

References: <http://www.fullerton.edu/womenscenter/>