

Department of Community Service



<b>Name of Program:</b>		The Right to Immigration Institute		
<b>Expenses</b>				
Item	Reason	Total # Needed	Cost Per Item (if applicable)	Estimated Cost
Translation Training	To train multi-lingual students in the skills necessary for them to be able to interpret in the legal context	1		\$3,350.00
Food	Food for volunteers during the Spanish Interpretation courses and the Office Hours Event: <b>Course Snacks</b> - Market Basket Snack purchases = \$46.69 Star Market Snacks = \$9.47 <b>Office Hours Event Snacks:</b> Guanachapis = \$15.19 and Snacks= \$37.51	Snacks for all 5 Course dates and for the 1 Office Hours Event		\$108.86
<b>Totals</b>				<b>\$3,458.86</b>

Part 1: Narrative Report (2-4 double spaced pages)

**(1) The implementation of the project, including timing, milestones, partners, and participants**

Once accepted as a recipient of the Rich/Collins grant I made a road map for the success of my project and it looked like this: Meet with Jonathan to call interpretation companies that could teach a class, negotiate with the company, sign the contract, advertise the course, hold the course, schedule a date for Office Hours and finally create a helpful guide for future interpreters at TRII. In the process of applying for the grant Jonathan, my community leader, and I did research regarding companies that could teach a Spanish interpretation course at Brandeis thus once accepted we had two options and eventually we narrowed it down to Language Connections (LC). To make this decision Jonathan and I met to call interpretation companies and receive the prize that they would ask for doing so LC made the best offer and we followed from there. We had a three-way call meeting where we addressed the important points that TRII would like met and LC adjusted the course to our liking. LC sent us two different contracts with two different prizes and we decided on a 20-hour course held every Sunday in March from 12-4 PM. Fortunately, a-board gave TRII a good amount of club money which we combined with the grant to pay LC. Once we agreed on the course I advertised on many sites such as: Facebook, Instagram, the Hispanic Studies and Latin American and Latino Studies departments and the Latinx club on campus. The course received much interest. Nonetheless, the dates and times of the course did not suit everyone. Many folks even asked me if the course would be offered in the future. Hence, the course allowed 20 students to enroll. We started the course with about 20-25 people and as I figured that not all folks would attend I said yes to everyone. At the end approximately 20 people showed up for the first course and by the second course we officially had 13 folks who followed through every course. After the course I asked students what days

would work best for them to put their skills into play at the TRII office and we all agreed on April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Although not everyone could show up that day a descent amount did show, and others have attended at other times/dates. Office Hours went well we helped around 6-7 clients that day in citizenship cases, asylum cases, and first-time intakes. TRII students and the interpreters bonded and found working together easy and better for the clients seeking support/help. If the interpreters did not have anyone to meet with they kept busy with translating important TRII paperwork's.

### **(2) the needs that the project addressed**

This project addressed language barriers between the immigrant Spanish speaking community in Waltham, MA and TRII volunteers. The Waltham community is buildup of a huge immigrant community specifically Spanish speaking immigrants. TRII is meant to support all folks in the community no matter what. Before the project TRII had about four Spanish speaking volunteers who were trained to help in cases and were also required to take up interpreting and translating. This was not fair for those students nor for the community. These students jumped into interpreting without background training on the hardships that come with interpreting for community members who have overcome many obstacles to seek U.S citizenship. Therefore, this project addressed the lack of Spanish interpreters the office healed and the lack of training and preparation that interpreters had in volunteering at the TRII office.

### **(3) unexpected successes and obstacles**

Obstacles of the program were maintaining commitment from students throughout the course in March, advertising the course and office hours, and receiving engagement not only from upper classmen who are graduating but also from lowerclassmen who can provide services to TRII longer than a period of two months. I believe that the difficulty of commitment for the course

were due to 1) the Posse event held during the same time of the second course, and not being able to reschedule a class for folks who had to miss for personal emergencies. This is why I think that a course like this should be offered by Brandeis. Secondly, advertisement of the courses was not done in a timely manner (my fault). Although I had planned when I would begin advertising the event I did not follow through this and practically advertised about two weeks before the course. This made it difficult because it was late notice for some and some did not find out about the course by the second course we held. Additionally, advertising the Office Hours was difficult because I did not have connections with community members who work with the Spanish speaking community in Waltham (although TRII did but not a strong one). Finally, I became worried that many folks who showed interest were upper classmen who would not be at Brandeis or within the Waltham community for long some were studying abroad for a semester and others were graduating. At the end we had about four seniors and five juniors who became certified to interpret. Unexpected success however is that we got more than 10 folks certified, we gained new members outside of the 13 members who became certified, and upperclassmen are more than willing to continue doing external work for TRII such as translating documents.

**(4) the current status and future plans for the program.**

Currently the status of the project is great in the fact that we have 13 new Spanish speaking members who are certified to interpret and willing to interpret and translate for TRII. In total the interpreters have assisted in 30 cases not including the translated paperwork/ documents that they have also worked on. My future plans for the program is to properly prepare future interpreters joining TRII by setting up a google folder with information such as: Legal terms in Spanish, what to look forward to, who they can speak to when an issue happens, setting up a google doc for TRII trained students to seek out interpreters for their meetings and build a

connection between TRII and Spanish speaking departments and clubs on campus. I would like for the university to actually create a course such as the one provided through TRII and Rich/Collins grant as Brandeis Students showed much interest in it and described it not only as helpful for their preparation to volunteer at TRII but also for their future.

**Part 2: The Evaluation (1.5-3 double-spaced pages; include surveys used)**

The best way to assess the success of the project at the TRII office is by tracking the amount of cases worked on by the Spanish interpreters which is currently about 30 cases. TRII volunteers have expressed positive comments on the new skill set brought to the office. In addition, the matter in which I measured how the project impacted the participants is through a survey. The questions I asked were personal once in which I asked students to reflect on the courses, their work at TRII and how they planned on using their new Legal interpreting skills in the future. I found students really enjoyed the course and found it useful in preparing them for the work at TRII and for their future jobs. I shared the survey with all 12 students and 10 responded meaning 2 did not. Students answered the survey knowing that it will be shared with the Rich/Collins program, and Language Connections company (not including myself as the 13<sup>th</sup> student to become certified). I could not download the survey as a PDF, but I have shared it with William.

**Part 3: Final Budget (An Excel sheet listing your budget w/notes to explain)**

Through the Rich/Collins grant I was fortunate enough to receive an amount of \$3,500.00 and at the end of the project my final budgeted expenditure totaled up to \$3,458.86 meaning I did not spend an amount of \$41.14. Originally, I was supposed to budget the amount I was granted to pay for the Language Connection (LC) courses, snacks for the courses and the Office Hours, and a Data Management program. I ended up not going through with the Data management program

as the LC fee was very expensive and TRII began a new program that resembled a Data Management program through Google Docs. It was important for TRII to save a bit of money. Below I have added a PDF version of the excel sheet listing my budget with notes that explain. I have also shared the excel sheet with William.

**Part 4: Personal Growth/Reflection and Final Thoughts (1.5-2 pages double space)**

In sum, this project has given me the opportunity to lead with confidence. Although there were many up's and down's throughout the project I am thankful for them. I realized that when I needed answers I had no one to go to because I was the project leader hence, I came up with the answers. I also learned the importance of being very detail oriented as I found small errors that could have been avoided had I paid attention to small details. I am a perfectionist so when something did not go the way I expected it to it really hit me hard. Such as not having 20 students fulfill the course and not having reached out to too many community members to advertise the new services provided by TRII. Nonetheless, through the support of William, my advisor throughout the project, and Jonathan, my community advisor, I learned to be proud of my work no matter the set-backs or changes. I learned to communicate and express myself better and to always expect small unexpected changes, and challenges. I am extremely thankful to the program and the abilities it provided me and enhanced in community leading, and grant writing skills.