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Italian American Institute



## Amici

*The Italian American  
Mentoring Project*

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The City University of New York

## AMICI: Italian American Mentoring Program

### Statement of Purpose

The Italian American Mentoring Program known as "AMICI" is an initiative of the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute (IAI) of The City University of New York (IAI) in collaboration with the New York State Mentoring Program, (headed by Mrs. Matilda Cuomo, First Lady of the State of New York), the Governor's Office of Ethnic Relations, the United Federation of Teachers, the New York City Board of Education, the Conference Committee for "The Education of Italian American Youth" and the Italian American community at large.

The purpose of the program is to address and ameliorate the drop-out rate among Italian American high school students in New York. Thus, the target population of the project will be those Italian American youths who, given the benefits of a mentoring relationship, have the potential to complete their secondary schooling. For a complete listing of high schools serviced by the Calandra Institute outreach counselors and their feeder schools (Intermediate Schools), please see Appendix A.

### Program Objective and Goals

The primary objective of the program is to provide Italian American students, who have been identified as being "at-risk" of not finishing high school, with the opportunity to develop a supportive mentoring relationship through which they can be encouraged to complete high school and go on to actualize their full career potential. The five program goals associated with the primary objective are:

- o To increase the self-esteem of each mentee (student).
- o To promote a positive ethnic self identity and an acceptance and respect of others.
- o To provide students with the necessary skills to develop successful interpersonal relationships.
- o To improve students' overall success in school.
- o To help students make successful transitions, through adolescence to adulthood, via the formulation of a life plan.

## Recruitment of Mentors

### PHASE 1

All of the above mentioned organizations will be responsible for the recruitment of mentors. (To this end the intern assigned to the Governor's Office of Ethnic Relations will assist as an "Information Conduit" in dissemination of program information to potential mentors. In the future additional aides could be identified in the district offices of elected officers for this purpose.) In order to recruit mentors, presentations will be made to various Italian American Organizations with special attention being given to those who have had previous experiences in mentoring programs (e.g. NIAF, NOIAW, FIERI, Columbus Citizens Foundation, CIAA, A.I.H.A., etc). Community agencies and the business sector will also be addressed in order to encourage successful adults to participate.

### PHASE 2

In addition to volunteers from public and private sectors, CUNY college students enrolled in credit bearing courses such as "Mentoring the Italian American Student in an Urban Environment" will be trained and supervised as mentors. CUNY students who are members of the campus based Italian American clubs as well as members of the Inter CUNY Italian American Student Association will be encouraged to participate in this program.\*

\* Note: In order for Phase 2 of this program to be realized, a status change is necessary for the Calandra Institute and its counselors. The Calandra Institute MUST be given academic standing in CUNY and its counselors afforded teaching faculty status within it. This is in keeping with the status of other Centers and Institutes in CUNY and special program counselors (e.g., HEOP-SEEK counselors) in the University. This change would also allow Institute counselors to teach Italian American studies courses on their campuses, a role which they were originally intended to fill but was never realized due to the lower, inappropriate, administrative status given to the Calandra Institute and its counselors by CUNY.

## Program Operation

- o Each community mentor participates in a two-part initial training program. Training sessions will include generic information regarding the mentoring process and specific information related to Italian American youth. Opportunities for role-playing and goal setting will be presented (see Training Sessions and Meetings).
- o The Calandra Institute, through its borough outreach counselors (one per borough), will provide ongoing orientation (back up and support) in the form of group guidance and counseling sessions to ALL community mentors.
- o Each CUNY student/mentor will register for the course "Mentoring the Italian American Student in an Urban Environment," which includes the mentoring of an Italian American student as a requirement. The Calandra Institute campus based counselors will instruct students and provide ongoing orientation, training and supervision within the context of the course.
- o Each school selected will assign an in-school mentee coordinator who will identify potential mentees, overseeing and monitoring his or her progress. These coordinators will be trained and supported by The Board of Education's Office of School and Business Linkages.
- o Each mentor/mentee pair will meet once per week for approximately one to two hours.
- o The Calandra Institute will establish a data base on all mentors and mentees, which will be maintained by the Institute's project coordinator. (During the pilot phase of the program the Institute's Assistant Director of Specialized Counseling will be responsible for maintaining the data base).
- o The Calandra Institute, with the assistance of its research unit, will issue an annual mentoring report as part of its Annual Report which will assess the overall success of the program.

## Training Sessions and Meetings

### Community Mentor Training

Each community mentor participates in a one-day initial training program. The program consists of two distinct sessions:

- 1) A three-hour session led by the Board of Education Office of School and Business Linkages will introduce mentor candidates to the generic objective of the mentoring program. Participants will be given the opportunity to role play the mentor/mentee relationship. Goals and plans for mentoring sessions are established.
- 2) A three-hour session led by Calandra Institute counselors will introduce mentor candidates to the specific objectives of the mentoring program. Among the issues to be highlighted are: the impact of ethnicity upon educational aspirations and the relationships between stereotypes and self-esteem. Typical concerns of Italian American youth will also be discussed.

Note: After the initial phase of the program, Calandra Institute counselors will conduct both three hour sessions.

### CUNY Student Mentor Training

Each CUNY student mentor registers for the course "Mentoring the Italian American Student in an Urban Environment," at his/her respective campus offered through the Institute. Student mentors receive academic credit (generally 3-4 credits) upon completion of class and field work requirements. The Italian American experience, as it relates to young people, will be the focus of the curriculum, with mentoring as a requirement. Calandra Institute counselors will serve as instructors for the course on each respective campus, and provide ongoing training and supervision within the context of this course. Each field work component requires a minimum of 20 hours, during which the college student (mentor) meets and interacts in the mentoring relationship with his/her student (mentee).

## Meetings

### Parent Orientation Meeting

An evening meeting led by Calandra Institute outreach counselors, in conjunction with the School-Based Management Team, will introduce AMICI: The Italian American Mentoring Program to parents in the community. The meeting would explain the program's goals, objective parameters, and the role parents play in supporting their child's mentoring relationship.

### Mentor Support Meetings

Monthly orientation sessions will be led by Calandra Institute outreach counselors in each outer borough of NYC (Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island). These meetings will be designed to allow for discussion on how individual mentoring relationships are progressing, and provide a supportive forum to share their experiences in the mentoring relationship.

Note: Institute staff counselors are master and doctoral level "Professional Counselors" fully capable of ALL professional roles and functions described above.

AMICI Project - Phase 2: College Mentoring Course

Title:

Course Objectives:

- 1) For Mentors/College Students: By incorporating didactic and experiential learning situations, college students are given the opportunity to develop human relations skills and self-esteem through the process of a helping relationship.
- 2) For Mentees/Junior H.S. Students: Through a one-to-one relationship, N.Y.C. junior high school students are provided with positive educational role models who will encourage them to remain in school and heighten educational aspirations.

Course duration: one semester

Requirements: classroom work and field work

- a) class participation: 3 hours per week, which will consist of 2 hours classroom work and 1 hour group supervision
- b) field work: mentoring sessions - 1 hour per week at school site

Credits: 3.0

Course Outline

- Week 1 Introduction
- Group discusssion and process
- Experiential questions:
- a) Who made a difference in your life?  
(Past)
  - b) What's in it for you? (Expectations and Future)
  - c) If it wasn't for me . . . . (Self-Esteem)
- Week 2 What is Mentoring?
- What does a mentor do?  
Suggested activities for mentors/mentees  
Designing mentoring sessions

- Week 3 Course requirements:  
weekly logs  
assigned readings  
mentoring sessions  
goal setting  
class participation  
final paper
- Week 4 Who are the mentees?  
Developmental overview  
Discussion: look back to when you were that  
age . . .
- Week 5 Skill building  
Active listening skills  
Role-playing
- Week 6 Skill building - continued  
Attitudes  
Role-playing
- Week 7 Skill building - continued  
The on-going mentoring relationship:  
exploration, clarification, empathy,  
rapport  
Role-playing
- Week 8 Skill building - continued  
The on-going mentoring relationship: how to  
react to student problems and issues  
Role-playing
- Week 9 Mentor/Mentee Panel discussion  
Mentors and mentees will discuss the benefits  
of participating in mentor programs
- Week 10 Ethnicity  
Exploration of ethnicity in light of value  
orientation  
Required text: Ethnicity and Family Therapy



- Week 11 Ethnicity (continued)  
Groups and cultural concerns  
Stereotypes: positive and negative  
Film (Marty, Do The Right Thing, etc.)  
Newspaper articles, Perrone report
- Week 12 The effect of culture/ethnicity on the mentor  
Experiential sessions focusing on  
developmental concerns of mentors,  
including: decision-making, career choice,  
personal and family issues, etc.
- Week 13 The effect of culture/ethnicity on the mentor  
(continued)
- Week 14 Panel discussion  
Cultural context and career choice: a panel  
of role-models will discuss career choice and  
how culture/ethnicity impact career  
decision-making  
Final paper due
- Week 15 Wrap - up  
Discussion of final paper

Appendix A

High schools serviced by Calandra Institute  
Outreach Counselors and their feeder  
schools in the boroughs of New York City.

BROOKLYN

High School

Feeder Schools

New Utrecht and F.D.R.

IS 96 Seth Low  
99 Avenue P  
Brooklyn, NY 11204  
(718) 236-1344

"

Edward B. Shallow  
6500 16th Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11204  
(718) 256-8218

"

JHS 201 Dyker Heights  
8010 12th Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11228  
(718) 833-9363

John Dewey & Lafayette

JHS 281 Joseph B. Cavallaro  
8787 24th Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11214  
(718) 996-6706

"

IS 96 Seth Low  
99 Avenue P  
Brooklyn, NY 11204  
(718) 236-1344

"

JH 239 Mark Twain  
2401 Neptune Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11224  
(718) 266-0814

"

JHS 228 David Boody  
Avenue S & West 4th Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11223  
(718) 375-7635

Fort Hamilton

JHS 259 William McKinley  
7305 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy  
Brooklyn, NY 11228  
(718) 833-1000

"

Edward B. Shallow  
6500 16th Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11204  
(718) 256-8218

Queens

High School

Feeder Schools

Grover Cleveland

JHS 73 Marie Cowper  
70-02 54th Avenue  
Maspeth, NY 11373  
(718) 639-3817

"

JHS 93 Ridgewood  
66-56 Forest Avenue  
Ridgewood, NY 11385  
(718) 821-4882

John Adams & Richmond Hill

JHS 202 Robert H. Goddard  
138-30 Lafayette Street  
Ozone Park, NY 11417  
(718) 848-0001

"

JHS 226 Virgil Grissom  
121-10 Rockaway Blvd  
South Ozone Park, NY 11420  
(718) 843-2260

"

JHS 210 Elizabeth Blackwell  
93-11 101st Avenue  
Ozone Park, NY 11416  
(718) 845-5942

Long Island City

JHS 125 Woodside  
46-02 47th Avenue  
Woodside, NY 11377  
(718) 937-0320

"

JHS 204 Oliver W. Holmes  
36-41 28th Street  
Long Island City, NY 11103  
(718) 937-1463

"

JHS 141 Steinway  
37-11 21st Street  
Long Island City, NY 11105  
(718) 278-6403

"

IS 126 Astoria  
31-51 21st Street  
Long Island City, NY 11106  
(718) 274-8316

BRONX

High School

Feeder Schools

Columbus High School

IS 144 Michaelangelo  
2545 Gunther Avenue  
Bronx, NY 10469  
(212) 379-7400

"

JHS 135 Frank D. Whalen  
2441 Wallace Avenue  
Bronx, NY 10467  
(212) 653-1237

"

JHS 127 Castle Hill  
1560 Purdy Street  
Bronx, NY 10462  
(212) 892-8600

Lehman High School

IS 192 Piagentini - Jones  
650 Hollywood Avenue  
Bronx, NY 10465  
(212) 822-5381

"

JHS 127 Castle Hill  
1560 Purdy Street  
Bronx, NY 10462