



**NEW TECHNOLOGIES FOR
AG EXTENSION**

**Grant projects improve
human, environmental,
and community health.**



PUBLISHED BY

**EXTENSION
FOUNDATION**

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach

Welcome.

“Una educación sobre la educación” is a publication of the New Technologies for Ag Extension (NTAE) program. This publication celebrates the accomplishments of a team at Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, which received funding for this project in 2022-2023.

NTAE is a grant program generously supported by the USDA-National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and administered through a partnership between Oklahoma State University and the Extension Foundation (EXF). The primary objective of NTAE is to provide financial assistance to competitively selected Extension programs that align with the strategic goal and priority program areas of the USDA and the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP). Through this support, NTAE helps teams catalyze, accelerate, and expand their work in their respective fields.

Since its inception in 2019, the NTAE program has successfully funded and supported a total of 72 projects and leaders. This includes collaborations with all Regional Rural Development Centers (RRDCs) and ECOP Program Action Teams (PATs).

Selected programs receive support for a period of one year. The project leader and their team are provided with invaluable mentoring from a team of catalysts, key informants, and coaches from the EXF. This customized and innovative support model assists teams in exploring new possibilities, enhancing the intended impact of their projects, and sharing their work with a national audience. Additionally, each team receives additional resources and support to create materials and experiences that speed the development of their projects and bring about desired changes.

The project showcased in this publication reflects the diversity and breadth of Extension disciplinary work and programming. In this publication, you will gain deeper insights into this exciting project, including the lessons learned, the project’s significance for Extension in a broader context, and what lies ahead for the team.

We are thrilled to share the remarkable work featured in this publication with you,

Sincerely,

Beverly Coberly, Ph.D.

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IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
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4 WAYS TO USE THIS PUBLICATION.

1. BE INSPIRED.

Use our model to create a program for underserved families in your state or region.

2. ADVOCATE.

Show this publication to your Extension Director and talk about how to use it to enhance your institution’s public outreach.

3. SHARE.

Share this publication with potential community partners who could help you scale your program.

4. GIVE FEEDBACK.

Did this publication inform your Extension work? Share what you’ve learned with us by emailing: contact-us@extension.org.

Una Educación Sobre la Educación

¡Salir Adelante! teaches Latino youth, parents how to navigate education in the U.S.



From back left, Salir Adelante participants Carlos Merlos, Ana L. Rojas, and Carlos Merlos-Rojas; back right, Michelle Schott, family well-being county educator; front left, Rosa Gonzalez, family well-being & human sciences program specialist

higher education and then watch them discover they have the skills to help their children make a plan for the future. We care about them and their success, and I think they quickly realize that.

Survey data from parents and youth support these anecdotal experiences. The data from before and after the six-week program indicate improvements among approximately two-thirds of respondents in the following areas:

- youth problem-solving
- parent involvement in their youth's education
- family communication

Speaking of Extension councils, how do you work with them to make ¡Salir Adelante! a programming priority?

We share information about ¡Salir Adelante! and how it works with the statewide Extension council members association and local Extension staff—in the process, we help them see how ¡Salir Adelante! aligns with the needs and goals of their communities and the ISU Extension and Outreach strategic plan. Many councils are very supportive of ¡Salir Adelante! and have budgeted money to support the program locally.

What have you discovered about how to operate within your team that could make you even more effective program facilitators?

We help families learn how to communicate more effectively with each other and strengthen youth's decision-making and problem-solving skills, and we discovered that we had opportunities to hone our own skills in these areas. We have spent time with Karl Bradley, the Extension Foundation's >

Kimberly Greder was at a “¡Salir Adelante!” workshop for Latino youth and their families last year when a parent walked up to her and said, with tears in their eyes, “You did this for us!? Just for Latino families? You don’t want anything in return?”



The short answer to the parent's question was “no.” The longer answer was that Greder and her Extension colleagues do want something in return: for Latino youth and their families to realize that they belong in this country's educational and career system. “All people have the right to pursue their hopes and dreams, and education is the gateway,” she says. That's why Greder and her colleagues at Iowa State University (ISU) Extension and Outreach developed ¡Salir Adelante! Caminos a Nuestro Futuro” (Pathways for our Future), a program that offers Latino lowans tools and support to reach their hopes and dreams for education to help their families thrive.

Piloted in 2019, ¡Salir Adelante! was developed to increase the number of Latino students in Iowa who graduate from high school and enroll in higher education, making them more likely to be financially secure and live healthier lives. In the last four years, the program has served more than 500 youth and their families with culturally tailored workshops that help youth develop critical thinking skills and decision-making skills and foster parent involvement in their child's learning.

They also teach families how to communicate with each other. All of these factors are linked to academic success and participation in postsecondary education. Sessions also help participants connect to other families and professionals in the community, learn how to explore college and career options, and find ways to finance higher education. Program leaders say they're on track to reach 800 youth and families over the next two years.

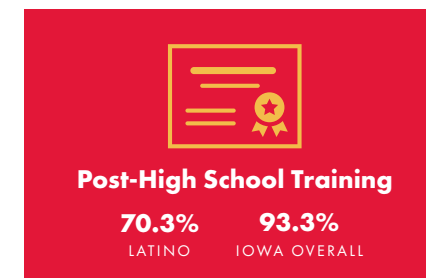
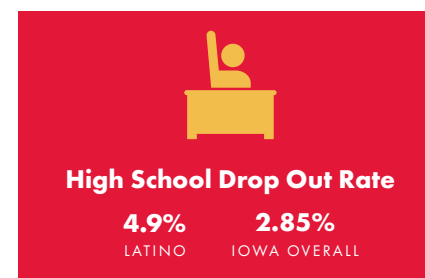
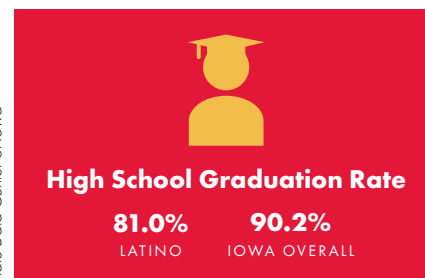
Just as the Juntos program—which was created by North Carolina State University Extension and which has similar goals and has scaled to other states—¡Salir Adelante! can be a framework for other Extension organizations to serve Latino populations in their states. It also can support Extension's commitment to extend the resources of the land-grant university system to all people, Greder says. In this Q&A, Greder talks about the program's wins and the lessons she and her team have learned as they've refined ¡Salir Adelante! and as they have worked with the Extension Foundation as a recipient of a 2022-2023 New Technologies for Ag Extension grant.

Share some of your program's success stories.

After graduating from community college, one of our former participants ended up working for Extension part time as part of the ¡Salir Adelante! program in Muscatine County, Iowa. That student's mother, who also came to our sessions, has told us that she'd like to be a program facilitator. Because of the work we do to help families realize the many ways to finance postsecondary education—including applying for financial aid and scholarships—another student recently won a soccer scholarship at Grand View University in Des Moines. And some past participants are now members of local Extension youth councils, which help plan youth events and determine what programs to offer in their communities. Our walls are filling up with photographs of our students holding college acceptance letters and certificates. It's deeply gratifying to work with parents who don't have a history of

Educational Attainment Gap

Sources: Iowa Department of Education State Data Center of Iowa



leadership expert, focusing on how to better communicate as a team and integrate diverse perspectives. The Extension Foundation's Catalysts also have helped us improve how we articulate our value proposition and talk about our outcomes in broader, economic terms.

Over these last few years, we've also learned to be more intentional about collaborating with other educators in our Extension organization. We can't assume that it's obvious to everyone how we can complement each other. Just because it makes sense to us doesn't mean it won't take time and effort for other educators to see how our programs can align with theirs.

One of the outcomes of being more intentional is that we have built a stronger relationship with our 4-H program. Because we had intentional conversations and identified common goals across human sciences and 4-H, we have a 4-H specialist on our statewide ¡Salir Adelante! work team, who works with human sciences to train Extension staff and their community partners to implement ¡Salir Adelante! Furthermore, 4-H and Human Sciences Extension and Outreach recently were awarded a five-year USDA NIFA CYFAR grant to grow and build sustainability in ¡Salir Adelante! in two Iowa communities. Local county extension directors and 4-H program staff have partnered with Human Sciences Extension and Outreach to incorporate ¡Salir Adelante! into their county-level career and college readiness programs.

What are the most important criteria for a program like ¡Salir Adelante! to be successful?

One of the biggest ones is understanding and being responsive to your audience. In our early days, youth and families told us how we could engage them even more effectively. We listened to what they said and developed ¡Salir Adelante! as a result. We created sessions that built on the knowledge and experiences of families, incorporated phrases and activities that were culturally familiar, and actively engaged them in learning, reflecting, and applying. During each session, families gather in the beginning, then divide into youth and parent groups, and then come back together as families.

It's critical to have strong partnerships with local school systems so that you are clear about the schools' expectations and can help participants be clear on them, too. It is also really important to identify complementary goals with local Latino organizations and ways to work together to complement each other's efforts. In Iowa, volunteers and staff from local Latino organizations are commonly trained to facilitate ¡Salir Adelante! in collaboration with Extension staff. And communities need to see the value and support ¡Salir Adelante! locally—in Iowa, 19 community teams have been trained so far.

Our Extension administration has been very supportive of ¡Salir Adelante! and has helped provide funding for the development of the curriculum and for initial training of Extension staff and their community partners. Our statewide work team has received grants to help support training additional Extension staff and their local partners to implement the program and has offered mini grants that require a local cash match. ■



“Salir Adelante is fun. It helped my family grow closer and learn ways we can afford college.”

—Youth

“¡Salir Adelante! is helping us better understand how to be in the lives of our children in a way that we can help them get ahead and have a career.”

—Parent

“Salir Adelante helped us connect with families we haven't been able to connect with.”

—School Principal

