

# **Breaking Down Barriers for Foreign Degreed English Language Learners**

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- Olga Escamilla: TX A&M PD Center Specialist
- Leticia “Lety” Farrera: Career Pathways Coordinator
- Elizabeth “Liz” Moya: AE Program Coordinator
- Claudette Session: Instructional Lead & ESL Career Navigator

# Objectives

- Discuss the Internationally Trained Professional Project and how individuals were recruited and selected
- Provide a Project Overview
- Discuss Barriers for ITP ELL's
- Share Program Design Solutions
- Assess ITP Barriers and Create Program Approach

# Selection Process of Cohort Members

- ☐ Individuals interested in the project completed a survey
- ☐ Selection was made based on a multi-step process
- ☐ Invitations were sent to those selected
- ☐ Individuals selected completed a Commitment Form
- ☐ Directors also completed a Commitment Form for those selected, committing to provide support in the effort

# PD Project - Cohort Overview

## Career Pathways Guide Workgroup

- ★ Leticia Farrera, Austin CC
- ★ Mauro Hernandez, Region 1
- ★ Mechelle Marler, Austin CC
- ★ Louis Martinez, Ysleta Community Center
- ★ Alma Ramon, Region 1
- ★ Kerri Rhodes, Restore Education
- ★ Leticia Sanchez, Region 1
- ★ Delia Watley, Irving ISD

# Summary Of Collaboration (Project Timeline)

## Career Pathways Guide Workgroup

Feb 2021 - Initial meeting

March 2021 - Meeting to review Project Outline

April 2021 - Held various meetings with members, provided guidance and feedback

May 2021 - Held various meetings and Submitted completed work in progress for Phase I

# What is an Internationally Trained Professional English Language Learner

ITP ELL

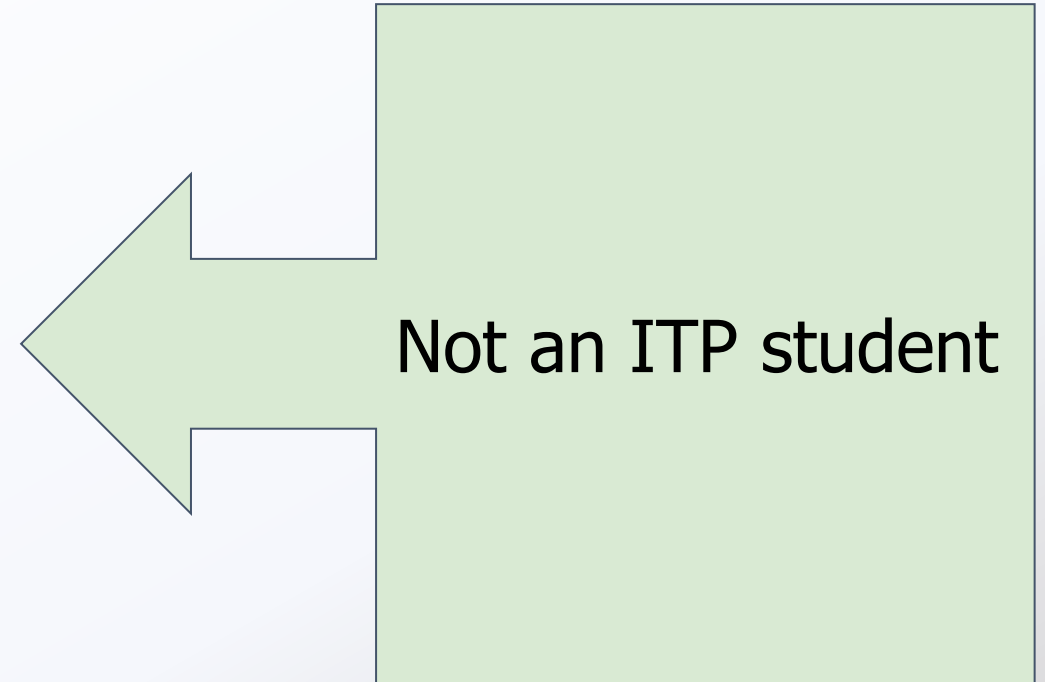


# What is an Internationally Trained Professional English Language Learner?



## Immigrant and/or Refugee

- may have attended school and/or completed secondary equivalence
- may have work experience
- may or may not be work authorized
- may or may not be interested in working
- English language learner



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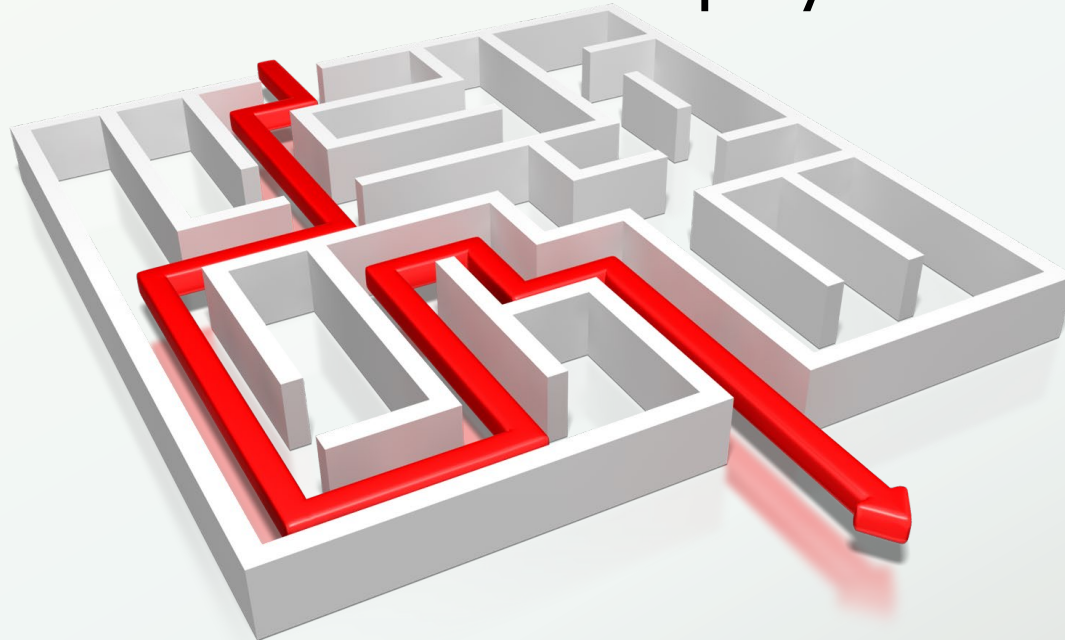
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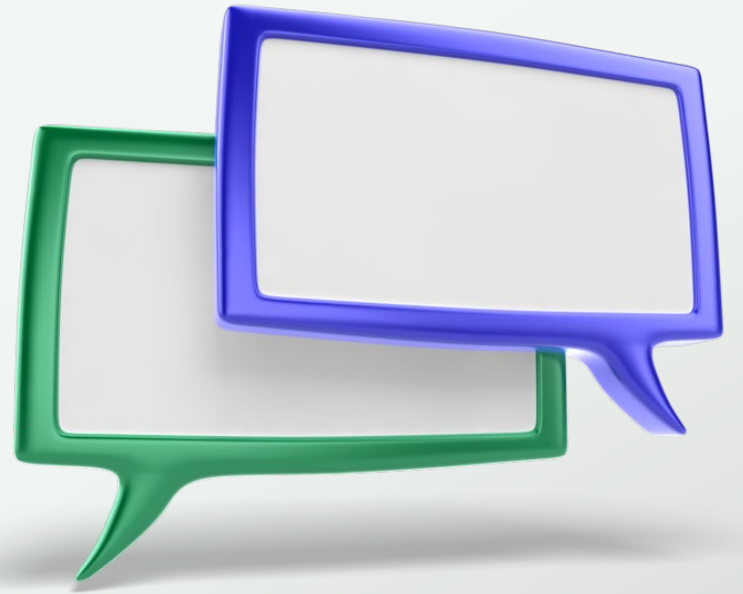
# Brain Waste: Internationally Trained Professionals

“...unemployed or working in jobs that require no more than a high school diploma—an outcome often referred to as “brain waste” or underemployment”



# Post in Chat

What are some of the challenges ITP students face?





# Barriers that Exist





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- Lack of Information and Guidance



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- Challenge of Language



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- Lack of Information and Guidance
- Challenge of Language
- Gaps in Education
- Certification and Exam Challenges
- Foreign Degree Validation Process and Cost
- Lack of Professional Networks
- Employer Bias



Source: Nguyen, V., Norouzi, R. & Montalto, N. V.. (2015). Reducing Brain Waste: Creating Career Pathways for Foreign- Educated Immigrants in Washington State. Untapped Talent: The Costs of Brain Waste among Highly Skilled Immigrants in the United States1-28.

# Solution: AEL Program Design





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## **Program Leadership:**

- ensure funding
- secure staffing
- support curricula design
- develop comprehensive assessment
- provide support measures

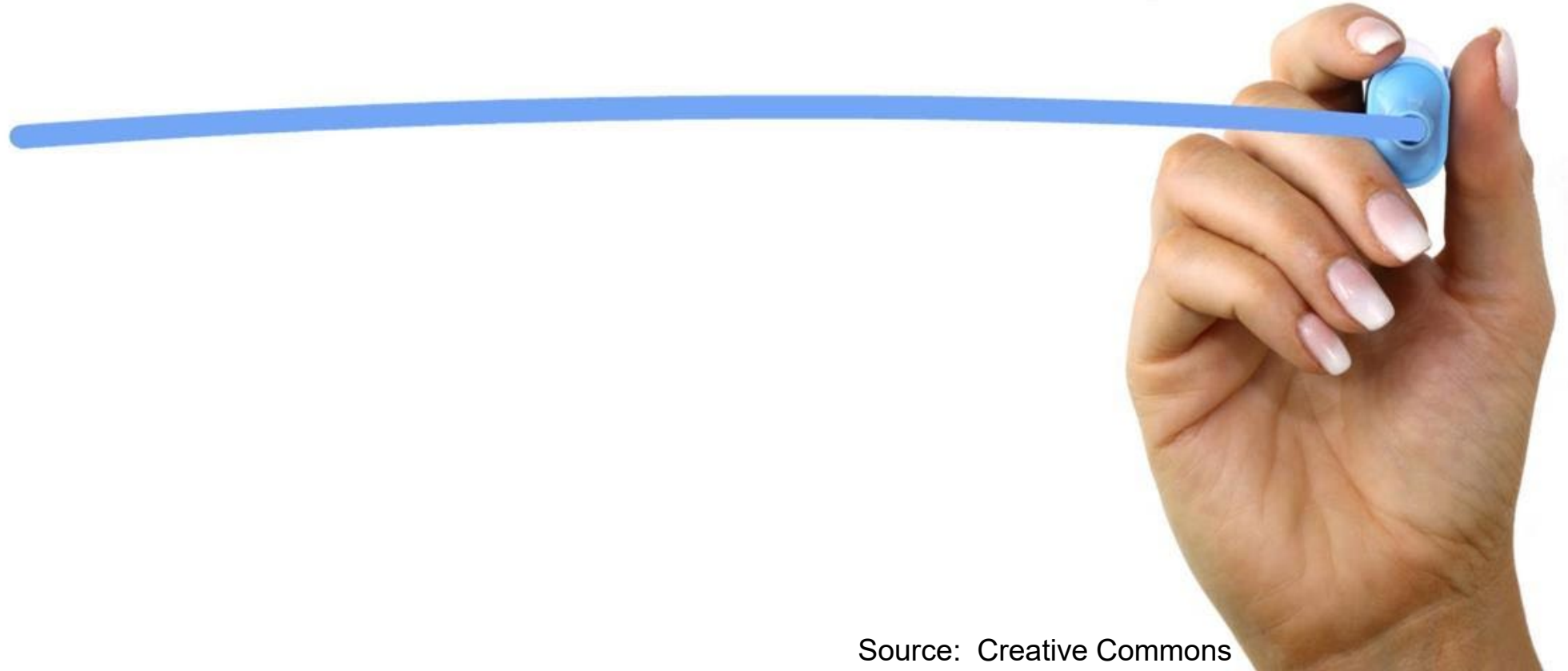
# Solution: AEL Program Design

## Intake Personnel:

- sell the program
- determine eligibility
- serve as gatekeepers
- gather data for monitoring and reporting
- need to understand how their contributions fit in big picture



# QUESTIONS



Source: Creative Commons



## **Case Studies:**

We will split you into groups 1-4.  
Please open the google doc in the chat and find your group number.

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**Your Task:** Read about your case study, find potential barriers, and come up with a plan from the teacher, navigator, director and State point of view for your student to help prevent Brain Waste.

# Group 1- Bruno

- **Degree-** Biology and teaching certificate from Congo
- **Experience-** 4 years as a High-School science/math teacher
- **Time in the U.S-** 2 years
- **Current Job-** Uber eats
- **Immigration Status-** Refugee status
- **Family/Friends-** Spouse as well as children live in the Congo
- **ESL level-** Level 3
- **Goal-** Get GED



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# Group 2- Maria

- **Degree-** Chemical Engineering from Venezuela
- **Experience-** 10 years of experience
- **Time in the U.S-** 6 years
- **Current Job-** Stay at home mom for 6 years
- **Immigration Status-** Resident
- **Family/Friends-** 2 children under 10 and husband works in HVAC
- **ESL level-** Level 4
- **Goal-** Working in Chemical engineering again

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- **ESL level-** Level 4 **Improve English!**
- **Goal-** Working in Chemical engineering again

# Group 3- Sunhee

- **Degree-** Dentistry from Korea
- **Experience-** 2 years of experience as a Dentist
- **Time in the U.S-** 6 months
- **Current Job-** Unemployed
- **Immigration Status-** Citizen
- **Family/Friends-** Husband works with Dell in Computer science, no children
- **ESL level-** Level 2
- **Goal-** Dentist in the US maybe Dental hygienist

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- **ESL level-** Level 2 **Focus on English!**
- **Goal-** **Dentist in the US maybe Dental hygienist** **Realistic plan!**

# Group 4- Raj

- **Degree:** Masters in Marketing from India
- **Experience:** 5 years
- **Time in the U.S:** 1 year
- **Current Job:** Dishwasher at restaurant
- **Immigration status:** Work Permit
- **Family/Friends:** Single, lives with a roommate
- **ESL level:** fluent in French, Hindi and English
- **Goal:** Get back into business world

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# Group 5- Pedro

- **Degree:** Bachelors in Chemistry from Cuba
- **Experience:** 18 years
- **Time in the U.S:** 8 years
- **Current Job:** School Custodian
- **Immigration status:** Naturalized Citizen
- **Family/Friends:** Spouse is a homemaker; children are grown and live in different states
- **ESL level:** Level 2
- **Goal:** Wants a job with a better salary



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- **ESL level:** Level 2
- **Goal:** Wants a job with a better salary Career Exploration!

# Group 6- Shari

- **Degree:** Masters in architectural engineering from Iran
- **Experience:** 12 years
- **Time in the U.S:** 4 years
- **Current Job:** Volunteers at church as bookkeeper
- **Immigration status:** Naturalized Citizen
- **Family/Friends:** Spouse is retail warehouse distribution manager;  
daughter in elementary
- **ESL level:** Level 6
- **Goal:** Work at adult daycare to help with living expenses

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# Group 7- Charlie

- **Degree:** Bachelors: Teacher in Vietnam
- **Experience:** 18 months
- **Time in the U.S:** 3 years
- **Current Job:** Works with cousin in nail salon
- **Immigration status:** Resident
- **Family/Friends:** Single; supports family back home
- **ESL level:** Level 5
- **Goal:** GED to open own salon

# Group 7- Charlie

- **Degree:** Bachelors: Teacher in Vietnam
- **Experience:** 18 months
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- **Current Job:** Works with cousin in nail salon
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# Available Resources

- ITP Upward Mobility Guide for Education - **NEW!**
- TWC AEL Letters
  - 01-17 - Services for ELLs
  - 02-17 - Assessing ELLs
  - 06-15, Change 1 - Expansion of Eligible Population
  - 02-21, Attachment 3 - TEAMS Activity and Funding Codes
- PD Portal Webinars - next slide
- National publications and resources
  - Migration Policy Institute: Leaving Money on the Table: The Persistence of Brain Waste among College-Educated Immigrants
  - IMPRINT - <https://www.imprintproject.org/resources>



# ITP Webinar Series in PD Portal



- Internationally Trained Professionals: Addressing Barriers and Opportunities for Upward Mobility
- Advanced English Language Proficiency: Launchpad to ITP Workforce Integration
- Digital Literacy to Digital Fluency: Working with ITP Students to Develop the Skills They Need to Succeed
- How to Fit In American Culture: Leveraging Social Capital in the American Workplace
- ITP Upward Mobility Guide for Education

# Thank You!

## Questions?

Contact us at:

Olga- [Olga.Escamilla@tamu.edu](mailto:Olga.Escamilla@tamu.edu)

Lety- [Leticia.Farrera@austincc.edu](mailto:Leticia.Farrera@austincc.edu)

Liz- [emoya@yisd.net](mailto:emoya@yisd.net)

Claudette – [csession@esc5.net](mailto:csession@esc5.net)

# References

- Images not otherwise noted from Presenter Media
- Migration Policy Institute -  
<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/brain-waste-college-educated-immigrants>
- Nguyen, V., Norouzi, R. & Montalto, N. V.. (2015).  
Reducing Brain Waste: Creating Career Pathways for Foreign- Educated Immigrants in Washington State.  
Untapped Talent: The Costs of Brain Waste among Highly Skilled Immigrants in the United States 1-28.