

Strengthening the Puerto Rican Educational Pipeline

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Currently, there is no more urgent need for Puerto Rican youth than completing a college education. Obtaining a bachelor's degree is closely linked to access to professional careers that offer higher wages, increased job stability, and potential for career advancement. However, more than any other racial or ethnic group, Puerto Ricans are underrepresented in higher education, in professional occupational strata, and in the corporate and public sectors. One of Centro's new areas for development would be to advance Centro's participation in college educational programs.

Centro has implemented a three tier approach to improve the Puerto Rican Educational Pipeline. The first is work on the transitioning from high school to college, the second is at the undergraduate level, and the third at the graduate level.

At the [high school level](#) [2], Centro has been collaborating with El Puente, a community-based organization in Brooklyn, for more than 12 years working on research focused on their innovative high school, the El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice. Centro is currently working on a page with resources to aid those students transitioning from high school to college.

At the [undergraduate level](#) [3], we seek to create a multi-disciplinary (leadership) program modeled after the ASPIRA philosophy of learning through engagement and public and community services.

At the [graduate level](#) [4] and in collaboration with Hunter's professional schools, we are developing courses with a focus on cultural competence and the understanding of the social conditions that affect the Puerto Rican community. In addition to the work Centro is doing with institutions to improve the Puerto Rican pipeline, we also strive to maintain up to date with the latest policy developments as they pertain

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to the Puerto Rican pipeline.

Please let us know if you would like to contribute to Centro's education programs. For more information contact Luis O. Reyes, Research Associate, 212-772-5708; luisoreyes@aol.com, or Iris Zavala-Martinez, Distinguished Lecturer, 212-772-5692/ izavalam@hunter.cuny.edu.

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