

# *The Capacity Builder*

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Center for Capacity Building on Minorities with Disabilities Research  
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Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to our fifth edition of the newsletter of the Center for Capacity Building on Minorities with Disabilities Research. Our staff and researchers have been very busy during the past months working toward the completion of our research projects and with a variety of community-based organizations, Centers for Independent Living, Vocational Rehabilitation offices and other programs serving people with disabilities from diverse cultural backgrounds. With all of our projects we are either meeting or exceeding the goals we established when we launched our Center in 2004.

During the past four years we have engaged in capacity building efforts through our evaluation capacity building project with 37 organizations and 180 staff and through our cultural competence project with over 35 cultural competence trainings with 68 organizations and 1000 staff. In this issue, we feature a success story from our evaluation capacity building work and present reflections on our cultural competence training efforts. In addition, we are excited to report an update on our forthcoming book.

Please feel free to contact us if you are interested in finding out more about any of our research or training. We would welcome the opportunity to work with you.

Sincerely,

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Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar, Ph.D.  
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## Recent Publications and Accomplishments

- Balcazar, F., Garcia-Iriarte, E. & Suarez-Balcazar, Y. (2009). Participatory action research with Colombian immigrants. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 31(1), 112-127.
- Taylor-Ritzler, T., Balcazar, F., Dimpfl, S., Suarez-Balcazar, Y., Willis, C., & Schiff, R. (2008). Cultural competence training with organizations serving people with disabilities from diverse ethnic backgrounds. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 29(2), 77-91.
- Suarez-Balcazar, Y., Balcazar, F., & Taylor-Ritzler, T. (2008). Using the Internet to conduct research with culturally diverse populations: challenges and opportunities. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 15(1), 96-104.
- Taylor-Ritzler, T., Balcazar, F., Suarez-Balcazar, Y., & Garcia-Iriarte, E. (2008). Conducting disability research with people from diverse ethnic groups: challenges and opportunities. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 74(1), 4-11.
- Suarez-Balcazar, Y., Balcazar, F., Taylor-Ritzler, T. & Garcia, E. (2008). Capacity building and empowerment: A panacea and a challenge for agency-university engagement. *Gateways: International Journal of Community Engagement*, v1, 179-196.
- Katie McDonald received the Stevens Shapiro Award from the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual Disabilities (IASSID). With this award, Katie travelled to Cape Town, South Africa to present research at IASSID's 13th World Congress.

# Building Evaluation Capacity: A Success Story at El Valor's Employment Program

By Edurne García Iriarte, Ph.D.

Given funders' demands for accountability, the capacity to evaluate program outcomes is a critical need for all types of social services agencies. Since 2005, CCBMDR staff has worked with 37 community-based organizations (CBO), centers for independent living and vocational rehabilitation offices across the U.S. to address these accountability needs and build evaluation capacity among their staff. Here, we highlight one of our success stories in building the evaluation capacity of the Employment Program staff at El Valor, a CBO in Chicago that provides services to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).

CCBMDR partnered with the Employment Program at El Valor, and for three years, conducted trainings and provided consultation and technical assistance in order to tailor evaluation processes to program needs. Tangible outcomes of this collaboration were a logic model of the program, an outcomes evaluation report, and a new program to train program participants on job development, a program need identified during the collaboration. A critical feature of this collaboration was the participatory approach to build evaluation capacity. As Maria Luna, the Employment Program Coordinator, shared *"through the whole process I felt I was the one deciding how do I want to see the program, how do I want the program to be"*. The Employment Program Coordinator extended the participatory nature of the collaboration to the program itself and various members of the staff took ownership of different parts of the program evaluation and were held accountable for them.

Evaluation capacity has been defined as

*"Intentional work to continuously create and sustain overall organizational processes that make quality evaluation and its uses routine"*

Stockdill, Baizerman, and Compton (2002, p. 14).

The participatory approach of the partnership resulted in increased evaluation knowledge and the development of evaluation skills in the Employment Program staff (e.g., develop evaluation questions, obtain information from participants, develop outcome indicators). Even more importantly, the Employment Program Coordinator reported that evaluation had previously been focused only on outputs that funders required, such as number of participants employed and their length of employment. Through our partnership, the Employment Program staff began to use their evaluation skills and knowledge to assess whether the employment program participants felt more independent and were contributing in meaningful ways to their communities. Thus, staff became motivated to instill an evaluation culture, and as such institutionalized evaluation activities in their work. New evaluation knowledge and skills coupled with evaluation findings also provided the staff with justification to apply for more funding and advocate for changes in their programs.

Despite these successes, the process was not without challenges. Among them were finding time to focus on learning about evaluation and to develop a program logic model that incorporated demands from funders across a variety of program areas. Other challenges included a lack of staff, high workloads and a lack of technology at the agency, including an electronic database system for capturing program participant information. Despite these challenges, employment program staff increased their evaluation capacity, allowing them to look at evaluation as a continuous process of use. What had been experienced as a documentation burden to report to funders became an internal program tool to improve the outcomes of people with I/DD. In fact, several researchers have identified the change from external to internal motivation to conduct program evaluation as the indicator of sustainable evaluation capacity.

In summary, the evaluation process helped the employment program staff to incorporate staff activities, outcomes for clients, and funders' requirements into a comprehensive vision that advances their organization's mission. The process of building the evaluation capacity of the El Valor Employment Program staff epitomizes a success story; one that owes much to the dedication of the Employment Program Coordinator, Maria Luna.



*"Evaluation reports used to be something we had to do for funders... Now we are using the evaluation to set new program goals."*

*Maria Luna  
Employment Program Coordinator  
El Valor*

## Reflecting on Our Cultural Competence Training Efforts

By Fabricio Balcazar, Ph.D.

During the last four years, our Center has been engaged in providing cultural competence trainings to staff from vocational rehabilitation offices, centers for independent living and community-based organizations that serve people with developmental, physical and psychiatric disabilities from across the Midwest. As reported on page 1, to date over 1000 staff of 68 organizations have participated in the trainings. We are currently completing a state-wide effort to train all Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselors from Illinois in two-day face-to-face workshops. We have received very positive feedback from participants regarding their satisfaction with the trainings (average= 4.83 on a 1 to 5 scale).

A unique aspect of our training approach is our recognition of the fact that real organizational change takes time and commitment. That is why we ask training participants to set goals to improve some aspect of their agency diversity or outreach activities. Our training staff follows up with agency representatives appointed by their peers during the training session to assess progress on goal pursuit and/or attainment for up to 6-months. This has been a very worthwhile effort, with some agencies choosing to implement important organizational changes in order to outreach to minority consumers. We are very pleased with the data we are collecting and have recently published the results of one of our studies (see Taylor-Ritzler, Balcazar, Dimpfl, Suarez-Balcazar, Willis, & Schiff, 2008).

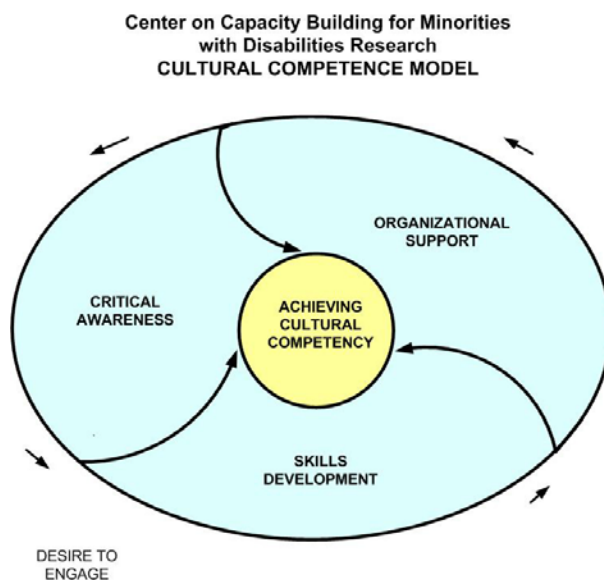
In 2007, we decided to develop an instrument to assess and validate our cultural competence model, which has three main components: (a) developing critical awareness about your own cultural biases and a desire to seek knowledge, (b) developing skills to interact more effectively with individuals from other cultures, and (c) receiving organizational support for cultural competence within the workplace. Our validation study was conducted with a sample of 477 occupational therapy clinicians who responded to our survey. The original instrument had 47 items and the factor analysis we conducted yielded 24 items that clustered around three main factors. We are using the conceptual framework in our cultural competence trainings in order to reflect the empirical validation of the model. We are also collecting data on participants' cultural competence skills and will publish these results soon.

Our validated conceptual model is displayed here. These factors represent cognitive, behavioral and contextual components. We feel that this model is an improvement over other models in the literature as its development was based on a synthesis of 18 unique

models that we had identified in the literature. The main components of the models that are prevalent in the cultural competence literature have too much emphasis on the individual service provider, while minimizing the role of the context in which professionals operate. The inclusion of the organization component recognizes the fact that people operate in a context that may or may not support their individual efforts to engage individuals from diverse cultures in an effective way. These efforts may include transforming the physical environment of the office to make it more welcoming, having more flexibility with the time staff members are available to provide services, changing policies that would allow consumers to show up for services without appointments, changing the physical location of the office, hiring translators, translating materials into other languages, etc.

We are also now utilizing a new instrument to assess organizational readiness for change with the organizations that we train. We have added this measure to our battery of assessment instruments and it is allowing us to give feedback to managers about the way staff members perceive the agency regarding capacity for organizational change. We are very pleased with the ways that our research in this area is advancing our own knowledge and hopefully the scientific knowledge in this important area of research.

I would also like to mention that in our work with many agencies in the Midwest, we have often heard about staff's challenges in outreaching and in effectively engaging certain immigrant populations. This is an important area for intervention. I believe that our challenge is to encourage a more positive dialogue and understanding of the values of diversity and the contributions of immigrants to the continued development of our great nation.



**RACE, CULTURE AND DISABILITY: REHABILITATION SCIENCE AND PRACTICE**

Editors: Balcazar, F. E., Suarez-Balcazar, Y., Taylor-Ritzler, T., & Keys, C. B.

Publisher: Jones and Bartlett: Boston, MA.

Preface by Kenneth Ottenbacher, Ph.D., University of Texas Medical Branch

**INTRODUCTION:**

*Examining the Nexus of Race, Culture and Disability*, Fabricio E. Balcazar, Ph.D. University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC)

**THE NATURE OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AT THE NEXUS OF RACE, CULTURE AND DISABILITY**

*"Ways of Seeing" in Race and Disability Research*, Glenn T. Fujiura, Ph.D., and Carlos Drazen, M.A., UIC

*Disability, Ethnicity and Identity*, Carol Gill, Ph.D., UIC, and William Cross, Ph.D., University of Nevada at Las Vegas

**THE NATURE OF DISPARITIES IN OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE OF COLOR WITH DISABILITIES**

*Psychological Testing and Multicultural Populations*, Brigida Hernandez, Ph.D., YAI/National Institute for People with Disabilities, Elizabeth Horin, Ph.D., Hines VA, Oscar Donoso, M.A., and Carrie Kaufman, B.A., DePaul University

*Access to Vocational Rehabilitation Services for Black Latinos with Disabilities: Colorism in the 21st Century*, Keith B. Wilson, Ph.D., CRC, NCC, ABDA, LPC, Pennsylvania State University, and Julissa Senices, Ph.D.

*Challenges to Providing Culturally Competent Care in Medical Rehabilitation Settings: Defining an Evidence-Based Behavioral Research Agenda and Examining Recent Advances with African Americans*,

Felicia Hill-Briggs, Ph.D. ABPP, Kennesha Kelly, B.A., and Charisse Ewing, M.A., Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions

*Cultural Diversity and How It May Differ for Programs and Providers Serving People with Psychiatric Disabilities*, Judith A. Cook, Ph.D., Lisa A. Razzano, Ph.D., CPRP, and Jessica A. Jonikas, M.A., UIC National Research and Training Center on Psychiatric Disability, UIC

*Community Infrastructure and Employment Opportunities for American Indians and Alaska Natives with Disabilities Living on Tribal Lands*, Julie Clay, MPH, Tom Seekins, Ph.D., and Jeanie Castillo, M.A., Rural Institute, University of Montana

*Employment and Rehabilitation Issues for Racially and Ethnically Diverse Women with Disabilities*, Diane Smith, Ph.D., OTR/L., University of Missouri, and Reginald Alston, Ph.D., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

*Cross-Cultural Issues for Asian Pacific Americans with Disabilities in the Vocational Rehabilitation System*, Rooshey Hasnain, Ed.D., UIC, and Paul Leung, Ph.D., University of North Texas

**MODELS TO IMPROVE REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR PEOPLE OF COLOR WITH DISABILITIES**

**-MODELS FOR REHABILITATION TRAINING**

*Cultural Competence Education in Rehabilitation*, Mary Matteliano, M.S., OTR/L, and John Stone, Ph.D., Center for International Rehabilitation Research Information and Exchange (CIRRIE), State University of New York at Buffalo

*A Three-Dimensional Model for Assessing People with Disabilities from Multicultural Backgrounds*, Allen N. Lewis, Ph.D., CRC, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Aisha Shamburger, M.S., CRC, Richmond Public Schools

*Theory and Research on Ethical Decision-Making Models: Implications for Multicultural Rehabilitation Counseling*, Jorge Garcia, Ph.D., The George Washington University

**-MODELS FOR REHABILITATION PRACTICE**

*Cultural Competence: A Review of Conceptual Frameworks*, Fabricio Balcazar, Ph.D., Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar, Ph.D., Celestine Willis, M.A., UIC, and Francisco Alvarado, M.D., M.A., Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services

*Evaluation Capacity Building: A Cultural and Contextual Framework*, Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar, Ph.D., Tina Taylor-Ritzler, Ph.D., Edurne Garcia-Iriarte, Ph.D., UIC, Christopher Keys, Ph.D., DePaul University, Leah Kinney, M.A., Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois, Holly Ruch-Ross, Sc.D., Independent Consultant, Maria Restrepo-Toro, M.S., Boston University, and Gloria Morales-Curtin, M.Ed., El Valor

*A Systems Approach to Placement: A Culturally Sensitive Model for People with Disabilities*, Madan M. Kundu, Ph.D., FNRC, CRC, NCC, LRC, Alo Dutta, Ph.D., CRC, Southern University, and Fong Chan, Ph.D., CRC, University of Wisconsin-Madison

**INTEGRATIVE COMMENTARIES**

*Exploring Cultural Competence: Implications for Research*, Juan Carlos Arango, Ph.D., Virginia Commonwealth University, Glen White, Ph.D., University of Montana, Gary Kielhofner, DrPH, OTR, UIC, Angela Odoms-Young, Ph.D., UIC, and Felicia Wilkins-Turner, Ed.D., Mashantucket Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program

*Race, Culture and Disability: Implications for Practice in Rehabilitation*, Teresa Garate, M.Ed., Chicago Public Schools, Jim Charlton, Access Living, Rene Luna, Access Living, and Orville Townsend, M.A., Iowa Department of Vocational Rehabilitation

*Race, Culture, and Disability: Implications for Training and Educating Future Generations*, Juleen Rodakowski, M.S., OTR/L, UIC, Erin Kelly, Ph.D., Shriners Hospitals for Children, Chicago, and Yanling Li Gould, M.S., M.A., UIC

**CONCLUSION:**

*Concluding Thoughts on Race, Culture and Disability: Pragmatic and Generative Perspectives*, Christopher B. Keys, Ph.D., DePaul University

Check out our new website:  
[www.disabilityempowerment.org](http://www.disabilityempowerment.org)