SHARE YOUR STORY
BERKSHIRE IMMIGRANT STORIES PROJECT

TOOLKIT
2018 Teaching, Learning & Student Development Conference

BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
massHUMANITIES
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In 2016, Berkshire Community College (BCC) was one of three Massachusetts colleges (along with Holyoke and Middlesex) to receive a planning grant from Mass Humanities. The grant is designed to pave the way for the development of a BCC Public Humanities Center whose mission would focus on humanities programming and initiatives that are of interest to and easily accessed by underserved populations living in Berkshire County. The mission of the proposed Public Humanities Center is:

Contribute to the intellectual and cultural life of BCC and Berkshire County by
- facilitating teaching, writing, and research in the humanities
- developing educational events and programming open to everyone in the community
- increasing opportunities for students to engage in the civic and cultural life of Berkshire County

Encourage and facilitate collaboration
- among humanities and non-humanities faculty members
- between BCC and community-based organizations in Berkshire County

Prioritize programming and initiatives that
- are of interest to and easily accessed by traditionally underserved populations living in Berkshire County
- encourage awareness of the cultural heritage of Berkshire County

The planning grant required the three colleges to build programming and events around the theme of recent immigration. At BCC we formed an advisory group consisting of members of the college and wider community, and we developed the Berkshire Immigrant Stories project which enables immigrants and their families to tell their own story, accompanied by the photograph of an object of importance to them. Collection of these moving and beautiful stories is ongoing. From bringing in world-renowned poets like Martin Espada, to expanding the platform for immigrant voices onstage and online, the grant has enabled us to build a diversity of humanities events and programming around these stories.

The long term goal is the establishment of a BCC Public Humanities Center which can carry out this mission more broadly. But even if this does not happen, we believe in the value of the activities which have already occurred, and in the value of the lessons learned, which can be applicable in other settings.
2. BERKSHIRE IMMIGRANT STORIES

SHARE YOUR STORY - SHARE YOUR OBJECT

- **Mission**
  The Berkshire Immigrant Stories highlight immigration and migration stories of the past and the present. Each story reveals one person’s family experience. Collectively, the stories tell America’s story and highlight the patterns that bind us together, no matter where we came from or how long we’ve been there.
  WE WANT TO GIVE HOPE & INSPIRE OTHERS!

- **Create a Group Gallery**
  a. Go to: http://yourstory.tenement.org/for-educators/resources
  b. Click “Start a Group Page”
  c. Complete all required fields, using Tips for Starting a Group
  d. Give students link to group gallery to submit their stories.

- **Explore the Your Story Our Story Exhibit**
  a. Select a story from the site, or upload your own, to introduce the project.
  b. Consider how the project will align with your course aims and objectives.
  c. Consider exploring the exhibit’s feature stories through these guiding questions:
     - What historical trends are revealed by the stories?
     - What is cultural identity and how does it shift over time?
     - What does it mean to be American?
     - How does personal history relate to American history?

- **Story Composition**
  a. Assign students or community members to write their object story and to photograph or draw their object.
  It requires a photo of the object, and students can choose to include a photo of themselves and a family member connected to the object.
  b. Distribute the Writing Your Story (attached to this toolkit) checklist so students can ensure their story includes all the necessary components for inclusion in the exhibit.

*For more detailed resources for classes go to*
http://yourstory.tenement.org/for-educators/resources
2.1 PREPARING YOUR STORY

Once you have selected an object, begin the story writing process by answering these questions:

1. What is your object called?

2. Which category does the object fit into (circle one)
   - Attire
   - Foodways
   - Fun
   - Miscellaneous
   - Religion
   - Work/Education

3. Describe the object. What is it made from? How is it used?

4. Where in the world did this object come from?

5. Who in your life gave you or told you about this object?

6. What special occasions, celebrations or holidays do you connect to this object?

7. Why is this object important to you?

8. How does this object connect you to your identity/culture?

9. Write a list of the tags (topics) that are related to this object story:
2.2 WRITING YOUR STORY CHECKLIST

When you’re ready to add YOUR STORY to the Tenement Museum’s digital exhibit of American immigrant and migrant stories, please review this checklist to ensure that your submission meets the criteria for participation.

☐ You have the link provided by your teacher to submit your story.

☐ Your story is based on a physical object.

☐ Your story has a title that relates to the object.

☐ Your story fits into one of these categories: Attire, Foodways, Fun, Miscellaneous, Religion, Work/Education.

☐ You know the year your story takes place—guessing is okay.

☐ You have a photo of your object, or you have drawn a picture of your object.

☐ OPTIONAL: you have a photo of the family member(s) the object reminds you of, and/or a photo of yourself.

☐ Your story is based on immigration to the United States, migration within the United States and/or American identity.

☐ Your story is no more than 240 words.

☐ You have chosen tags (topics) related to your story.

☐ You have included the group tag assigned to you by your teacher/group leader.

Once you have met all of these requirements, you are ready to submit your object story.

Thank you for your contribution to this important project!
3. PROGRAM & EVENT IDEAS

- Luncheon “Celebrating Immigration: Lunch & Connect“
  • Invite community leaders and organizations from your community that have already worked with immigrants or are planning on supporting the immigrant community in your town or county. Bring people together and give them space and time to connect. Food is one of the best ways of sharing another culture.

- "We Need to Talk“ Day
  • Create a space for community members to talk in front of the community, to ask questions and start discussions.
  • It is a place for people to share their stories, for organizations to explain their services, a place for music, dance & poetry and for sharing food.

- Songwriting workshops "JAMMS“ by Music in Common
  • Music in Common is a non-profit organization that empowers diverse cultures and faiths to discover common ground through collaborative songwriting and multimedia. Since 2005, Music in Common has directly served thousands of people in more than 250 communities across the globe, including Israelis and Palestinians, Christians, Jews and Muslims, as well as American-born, refugee and immigrant youth. In any community, our programs can transform apprehension into trust, fear into acceptance, powerlessness into action. Working together face to face, participants expand understanding, build confidence, strengthen community, wage peace and - yes - change the world. Contact Music in Common Western MA Coordinator Marisa Massery at marisa@musicincommon.org / (413) 248-6070

- Story Collecting
  • Story Writing Parties at a private home are a very personal way of collecting stories. Get in touch with a small group of community members with immigrant background and meet with them at one of their homes. A potluck with food from all kinds of different countries or a meal cooked by the host creates the right atmosphere to eventually share your stories with each other and write them down. People can help each other with the writing or translating process.
  
  • Story Writing Workshops with local ESOL classes are another way of collecting stories in a group.
  
  • Collaboration with local High Schools: Students visit either ESOL classes in town or nursing homes to interview people with immigrant background and write their stories for them.
FINDING AN AUTHOR

Think Local First
Your Institution Might Be Its Own Best Resource

- Does your institution have its own Speaker’s Bureau?

- Do any area Colleges or Universities have a Speaker’s Bureau that you can tap into?

- Are there faculty authors or poets at your college?

- One way to identify local authors is to check out the local authors bookcase at your independent book store, or Barnes & Noble.

- You can always ask a Librarian for leads on local writers.

- Word of mouth and recommendations. One of our speakers was suggested by a student, and another by Mass Humanities Director, David Tebaldi.

Organizational Resources
Local writer’s groups and organizations that you can contact for suggestions. Other resources:

- Mass Poetry
  Mass Poetry supports poets and poetry in Massachusetts. We help to broaden the audience of poetry readers, bring poetry to readers of all ages and transform people’s lives through inspiring verse. https://masspoetry.wordpress.com/

- Massachusetts Libraries Performers Directory.
  This State directory allows you to search for performers, educators, authors, or musicians that offer library programming in Massachusetts. https://mblc.state.ma.us/directories/performers/index.php
SPEAKER BUREAUS

For profit Speakers Bureaus are best for finding published authors with a national or larger regional following. Speakers Bureaus normally will act as the go-between for your organization and the writer. They handle all contractual issues, as well as travel, accommodations and per diem arrangements FOR the author.

Often fees are set, although there may be room for some negotiations. Please be mindful that often a considerable part of an author’s livelihood, especially for poets, comes from speaking engagements. Fees run from several hundred to thousands of dollars. $1,000 for an author visit is on the low side of average.

• Blue Flower Arts - http://blueflowerarts.com/
  BCC used this agency to work with Richard Blanco, and our experience was excellent. Blue Flower Arts is a literary speaker’s agency, a personal, hands-on company founded by Alison Granucci, dedicated to the beauty of words. Their “mission is advocating for poetry and literature; our dedication is to the beauty of words; our vehicle is the grace of our poets, writers and speakers, all of whom hold in their creative work a sense of yearning for that which is unattainable yet necessary to the richness and meaningfulness of existence—our very own votaries of the Blue Flower.”

• Jack Jones – http://www.jackjonesliteraryarts.com/speakers-bureau/
  Jack Jones Literary Arts, “Jack Jones is shifting how literature by women—queer, feminist, of color, of a certain age—is reviewed and discussed by broadening the conversation and opening avenues formerly closed by mainstream outlets.” Jack Jones has been highly praised by national press.

Other Speakers Bureaus
• Jodi Solomon Speakers  - http://www.jodisolomonspeakers.com/

• All American Speakers
https://www.allamericanspeakers.com/localspeakers/Massachusetts

• Speakerpedia https://speakerpedia.com/

Publishers

Some publishers offer speakers bureaus for their authors. Fees can be high. Like with other Speakers Bureaus, the organization will act as an agent for the author.
• Harper Collins
  http://www.harpercollinsspeakersbureau.com/
  This was the first in-house publishing agency.

• Hatchette Speakers Bureau
  http://www.hachettespeakersbureau.com/
  Represents authors from Hachette’s many imprints, including Grand Central; Little, Brown and Company; Hachette Books; Orbit; Center Street; and Perseus Books.

• Penguin/Random House
  https://www.prhspeakers.com/
  Penguin Random House Speakers Bureau represents best-selling authors, literary legends, and cutting-edge thinkers.

• Massachusetts Libraries Performers Directory
  https://mblc.state.ma.us/directories/performers/index.php
  Search for performers, educators, authors, or musicians that offer library programming in Massachusetts. You can browse by category, or keyword search by name or topic.

FOLLOW-UP, FOLLOW-THROUGH - THE FINE PRINT

Contracts and Paperwork
After securing an author and negotiating fees, you may have to enter a formal contractual agreement with the writer, either directly or through an agent or speakers bureau. This can be a time consuming process, with permission and signatures required from a number of individuals at your institution. It is important to review all contracts well in advance, and submit paperwork in a timely fashion. Also make sure you know well in advance whether the author will be paid at the time of the event, or after, and if any per diem and/or accommodation fees are expected.

Funding
It is important to understand the requirements of funding sources that your organization is applying for that will contribute to all or part of your literary events. While grant proposals are time consuming, the requisite reporting on how funds were spent may take a lot more time than expected. Detailed descriptions may be necessary, so accurate record keeping is essential.
Initial Funding

- **Massachusetts Cultural Council**: MCC receives an annual appropriation from the state Legislature and funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Wallace Foundation, and others. In turn, MCC makes thousands of grants directly to non-profit cultural organizations, schools, communities, and individuals artists, through funding programs that use arts, science, and the humanities to build strong, diverse, livable communities. The beneficiaries of these programs comprise a cross-section of the population and citizens in each Massachusetts city and town. http://www.massculturalcouncil.org/

- **MASSCreative**: MASSCreative empowers creative organizations and the public with a powerful voice that brings the attention and resources necessary to build vibrant, creative communities. MASSCreative works with creative leaders, working artists, arts educators and arts and cultural supporters to empower creative organizations and the public with a powerful voice to advocate for the resources and attention necessary to build vibrant, connected, and creative communities. http://www.mass-creative.org/

- **Americans For The Arts Funding Resources**: While Americans for the Arts is not a grant making organization, it does offer members the tools, professional development, and programming that will prepare them and their communities to access and better qualify for funding opportunities. Membership Is Required. https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-topic/funding-resources

- **Mass Humanities**: Mass Humanities supports programs that use history, literature, philosophy, and the other humanities disciplines to enhance and improve civic life throughout Massachusetts. Grants support public programming in the humanities in Massachusetts, including film-, lecture-, reading-, and discussion series; exhibits; media pre-production and distribution; and other public activities. The standard maximum award is $5,000, though some thematic and media grants can be as high as $10,000. http://www.masshumanities.org

Supplemental Funding

Your institution may provide additional internal grants or resources for your project. Depending upon regulations at your institutions, low-key fundraising may be possible in the way of raffles, and donations. For some program funding, for instance, the Jonathan Edwards Library has set up a Library Programming Fund through the BCC Foundation.
3.2 Mini-Grants

The Berkshire Immigrant Stories (BIS), in conjunction with MassHumanities, has established the Faculty & Staff Grant to help fund faculty and staff projects that furthers the discussion and understanding of immigrant experiences in The Berkshires.

What Projects are Eligible?

Any program that focuses on sharing immigrant experiences; enlarging understanding of the history of immigration; and/or facilitating research in immigration, provided that all findings are shared publicly. Although projects can focus on immigrant experiences in the US broadly, priority will be given to those that focus on The Berkshires.

Grants may be used for speakers, forums, presentations, screenings, or other events, but they must be open to the public.

Who is Eligible?

Any faculty or staff of Berkshire Community College (BCC). Students of BCC are also eligible, as long as they have a faculty or staff advisor.

When are the Deadlines?

Proposals will be accepted throughout the Spring 2018 semester. Programming should occur by the end of June 2018.
4. MARKETING & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

4.1 MARKETING

- **Social Media**
  a. Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and more
  b. Targeted audiences on Facebook
  c. Boost posts for events and call to action (sharing your story)

- **Local Media**
  a. Local TV
  b. Local radio shows and npr.org
  c. Facebook TV shows (if existend in your community)
  d. Newspapers and magazines
  e. Free listings in local publications, radio and TV and organizations, such as Mass Poetry - http://www.masspoetry.org/submitanevent

- **College**
  a. Advertise on campus TVs, signage and screens
  b. Advertise events in college program
  c. Emails to all faculty, staff and students

- **Posters & Invites**

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**Celebrating BERKSHIRE IMMIGRANTS**

**LUNCH & CONNECT**

Because of your work in the community and your experiences with immigrants and immigration in the Berkshires, one is invited to join us for a "Lunch & Connect" at the Berkshire Arts Center.

Berkshire Community College has received a grant from Mass Humanities and the National Endowment for the Humanities for a public project — Berkshire Immigrant Stories. This project is expected to pave the way for a Public Humanities Center in the Berkshires.

We look forward to sharing an authentic Middle Eastern lunch with you, and hearing your ideas for supporting and celebrating Berkshire County's immigrant community through the humanities.

December 5, 2017  -  12-2pm  -  Berkshire Arts Center, Pittsfield

Please RSVP via Toni Buckley, Berkshire Immigrant Stories Coordinator, at abuckley@berkshirecc.edu by November 30th.

**FREE & OPEN TO ALL!**

- **FREE Puerto Rican food while it lasts!**
- **FREE transportation to and from the event.**
- **Sign up for hosting "We Need to Talk" Day at Rose & Cole at 413-841-0836.**

**Saturday, February 24 from 12–4 pm**

Berkshire Dream Center  -  475 Tyler St., Pittsfield, 413-522-3495

The first "We Need to Talk" Day is a platform for you to tell your story, explain the services of your group or organization, to ask questions, and to start discussions.

It is also a place for art, music, poetry and comedy — everything under the topic of celebrating immigration!

Have a talk idea? Contact Toni at abuckley@berkshirecc.edu.

www.facebook.com/berkshireimmigrantstories

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**STORY TELLING**

WITH NORMAN ROCKWELL

MARCH 29, 10AM - 12PM
at the Norman Rockwell Museum,
5 Greenlawn Rd / Box 183, Stockbridge, MA

Share your Berkshire immigrant story.

Inspire others & give hope!

Share your story - share your object.

Take a photo of an object from your home country, your family history or one that simply reminds you of your story and where you’re from.

Share your story anonymously, or just use your first name.

Get help from your ESL teacher and tutor!
- Postcards (w/ Photos of Berkshire Immigrants)

**Inspire others & give hope!**

**Share your story — share your object.**

The Tenement Museum in New York has created an online exhibit featuring immigration and migration narratives. Take a photo of an object from your family history and tell the story of that object.

**Submit your story here:**

[www.shareyourstorytenant.org](http://www.shareyourstorytenant.org/groups/berkshire-immigrant-stories)

Share your story anonymously, or just use your first name. You can also submit in your first language!

These stories will be part of a Public Humanities Center project from Berkshire Community College and Mass Humanities.

**Contact**

TONI BUCKLEY
Berkshire Immigrant Stories Project Coordinator
obuckley@berkshire.edu

CHARLES PARK
Associate Professor of English at ECC & Berkshire Immigrant Stories Project Director
cpark@berkshire.edu

Stay tuned, follow & like:

Facebook: [berkshireimmigrantstories](https://www.facebook.com/berkshireimmigrantstories)

[BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE](http://www.berkshirecommunitycollege.edu)

[BERKSHIRE INSTITUTE FOR HUMANITIES](http://www.berkshireinstitutehumanities.org)

[BERKSHIRE INSTITUTE FOR HUMANITIES](http://www.berkshireinstitutehumanities.org) is a joint venture of the Berkshire Athenaeum, the Berkshire Athenaeum Museum of Art, and Berkshire Community College.

Help support this project by making a tax-deductible gift through [the Athenaeum’s website](http://www.berkshireathenaeum.org)

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4.2 COMMUNITY OUTREACH

We are working with and for a very vulnerable group of people. Especially in times of increased ICE raids, deportation, travel ban and an increased number of hate crimes, we have to create a safe space. Giving people the opportunity to share their stories anonymously is essential for being able to include everybody with an immigrant background - documented and undocumented. Holding events at sensitive locations, like churches, are another way of creating a safe environment.

We can’t expect people to trust us - we have to prove that we deserve their trust!

Sensitive Locations

- **Schools**, such as known and licensed daycares, pre-schools and other early learning programs; primary schools; secondary schools; post-secondary schools up to and including colleges and universities; as well as scholastic or education-related activities or events, and school bus stops that are marked and or known to the officer, during periods when school children are present at the stop;

- **Medical treatment and health care facilities**, such as hospitals, doctors’ offices, accredited health clinics, and emergent or urgent care facilities;

- **Places of worship**, such as churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples;

- **Religious or civil ceremonies or observances**, such as funerals and weddings;

- **During a public demonstration**, such as a march, rally, or parade.

Be present in the community

- Spend time in the community: churches, community centers and volunteer in food pantries and other nonprofit organizations that serve the immigrant community;

- Become a known part of the community, a familiar face, someone that people know they can trust.
Personal invitations

Invite people in person, one on one! Trust plays an essential role in reaching out to the immigrant community. When you talk and empathize with people in person and share your own personal story, you are better able to create real relationships with the people you want to serve. Flyers and postcards help remind people of your conversation, event, program, etc. - even after they come home at night after a long day of work, English classes, school, etc.

Find opportunities to talk to people with immigrant background:

- **ESOL classes and tutoring programs;**
- **churches;**
- **food pantries;**
- **festivals in the community**, like Latino festival of the Berkshires, Harvest of Hope, Third Thursday, etc.;
- **local Immigrant Center;**
- **multicultural student clubs;**
- **demonstrations, marches, etc.**

Connect and collaborate with other organizations that serve the immigrant community, like (examples in Berkshire County):

- **Manos Unidas Multicultural Educational Co-op;**
- **BASIC “Berkshires Advocacy and Support for the Immigrant Community“;**
- **Multicultural Bridge and Working Cities Pittsfield;**
- **Berkshire Immigrant Center;**
- **Williams College** (No Lost Generation club, VISTA, SUMMIT magazine).
5. Presenters

Chris Laney is Professor of History, currently serving as Interim Dean of Humanities at Berkshire Community College. He has been involved in the Mass Humanities grant and the Berkshire Immigrant Stories project from its inception.

Toni Buckley is the Berkshire Immigrant Stories Project coordinator since October 2017. In the beginning of 2018 she also became the coordinator for the Road Scholar program in the Berkshires and will be teaching Digital Photography at BCC, starting this fall semester.

Karen Carreras-Hubbard is the Coordinator of Library Services, and has been involved with the Berkshire Immigrant Stories Project, as well as with Latino Americans: 500 Years Of History grant.

Dr. Charles Park is an Associate Professor of English. He has served as the Director of the Berkshire Immigrant Stories (BIS) project during the 2016-17 AY, and is currently the faculty fellow for the BIS.