

Education

Anchoring achievement

Deutsche Bank's signature *Born to Be* initiative in the US yields great gains for low-income immigrants and their US-born children

Learning for life



Anchoring Achievement provides support for young learners to be ready to enter and perform well in school Photograph: Ana Cuadros

Anchoring achievement
People reached

12,401

Engagement
Points of contact with students
and their family members

19,947

Anchoring Achievement was designed as a demonstration project, to provide a successful engagement model and inform future work by practitioners, policymakers and other funders.

To respond to low-income immigrant communities' evolving and unique needs, the bank leverages high-quality research to understand and address the most pressing challenges. This knowledge helps determine the right combination of high-quality services to weave together to effect meaningful and lasting change.

So it was with Anchoring Achievement in Mexican Communities, one of CSR Americas' signature *Born to Be* youth engagement initiatives. The project was launched in 2013 to improve the long-term educational and economic well-being of Mexican families in New York City. It aimed to create and strengthen education pathways for Mexican and Mexican-American students and deepen family engagement. This three-year demonstration project touched over 12,000 lives and counted 19,947 total points of contact with students and families, including program referrals, activities and other engagements.

The impetus for the initiative was a report that two in every five Mexicans aged 16 to 19 in New York City had dropped out of school, more than four times the district-wide rate – a compelling indication of a weak education pipeline for this group of New York City students. The bank commissioned new research by the Community Service Society

to investigate the education, employment and income trends in this community. It revealed that nearly half of Mexican children in New York City were growing up in poverty and that Mexicans had among the lowest rates of school enrollment and high school completion of public school students in the city.

After extensive literature review and consultations with over 50 nonprofit, private and public sector leaders, two student populations surfaced as most in need of additional intensive education engagement: young learners from pre-school through grade 3, and high school students. The research indicated that a two-generation approach, engaging students and their parents, would be most effective.

For this initiative, the bank employed a collaborative structure of 'neighborhood networks', one in each of the city's five boroughs. They were located in neighborhoods with large Mexican populations and served to link previously disconnected nonprofits, schools, libraries and other community institutions in a shared geography, forming integrated educational hubs. Each network was led by a community-based organization that was well-positioned for outreach, and offered a coordinated spectrum of high-quality educational services tailored

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for local families' specific needs.

The Youth Development Institute provided extensive capacity building and technical assistance to the networks. The Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of School at New York University also supported the initiative and its networks through applied research and evaluation study.

In just three years, the networks reported academic and employment gains amongst their participants. The Bushwick network in Brooklyn achieved 75% high school equivalency attainment, 85% vocational credential/certification and 72% job retention for its participants. In the Mott Haven network in the Bronx, 60% of students showed improvement in their English Language Art grades.

Deutsche Bank recognizes that education and youth development are important to community well-being, and that family stability is an essential factor for student success. That's why, beyond focused educational programs and services, the networks also helped families access a holistic menu of other supports, most critically, legal, language and housing-related services. The Jackson Heights network in Queens, for example, helped 148 students become new Deferred Action for Childhood



The initiative helped equip students for the world of work Photograph: Jennifer Timmer Trail

Arrivals (DACA) recipients, and helped 421 students with DACA renewals in Year 3. The East Harlem network in Manhattan provided intensive case management to approximately 450 community members, and the Mott Haven Network made over 650 individual referrals for outside services.

Anchoring Achievement was conceived as a demonstration project, to prove out a successful engagement model and inform future work by practitioners, policymakers and other funders. Particularly promising practices emerged around grassroots outreach, cultural congruence and fluency, an emphasis on personal connections, parental engagement and empowerment, methods for delivery of high-touch, intensive services, and responsiveness to undocumented and indigenous communities.

The project has had significant ripple effects as well. Wagner College, a partner in the Port Richmond network in Staten Island, developed an innovative curriculum and practicum for training teachers who work in classrooms with families facing linguistic and other educational barriers. Collectively, the networks are beginning to advocate for policies informed by their findings. For example, in early 2017, network partners signed a letter to local politicians to push for better funding for adult basic literacy programs; many of the parents they engaged in Anchoring Achievement were better able to support their children's learning by developing their own literacy skills in their native languages.

Deutsche Bank has been recognized for its corporate citizenship and philanthropic partnerships in Anchoring Achievement. It received awards from New York Immigration Coalition, Internationals Network for Public Schools, Parent-Child Home Program and Union Settlement Association.

In 2017, the Jaime Lucero Institute for Mexican Studies at the City University of New York will assume leadership of Anchoring Achievement and will continue to support the network partners to further improve the educational and economic well-being of Mexican and Mexican-American children, youth and families in New York and beyond. ■

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Thought leadership

On completion of its *Anchoring Achievement in Mexican Communities* initiative, Deutsche Bank hosted a Thought Leaders Forum exploring equity and civic engagement.

This was the third in a series of Thought Leaders Forums, which are organized by CSR Americas and bring together employees and nonprofit partners to discuss key challenges shaping society. Acclaimed journalist and NPR host Maria Hinojosa gave the keynote address, discussing the need for diverse voices in media as well as the important role of the public in this historic moment.

In her talk, Hinojosa described her 'outsider status' – as a Mexican-born woman in American journalism – as an asset: a unique perspective that allows her to tell the stories of communities and issues that are often ignored. She discussed her work as a teacher and mentor to young journalists with immigrant backgrounds. Her mission, she said, is to help these young people embrace their own outsider status as a source of strength and opportunity.

Hinojosa encouraged those in attendance to start seeing themselves as leaders if they have not already. "We all have to understand that we are leaders in this moment of history, and we have to take that leadership seriously." She added that

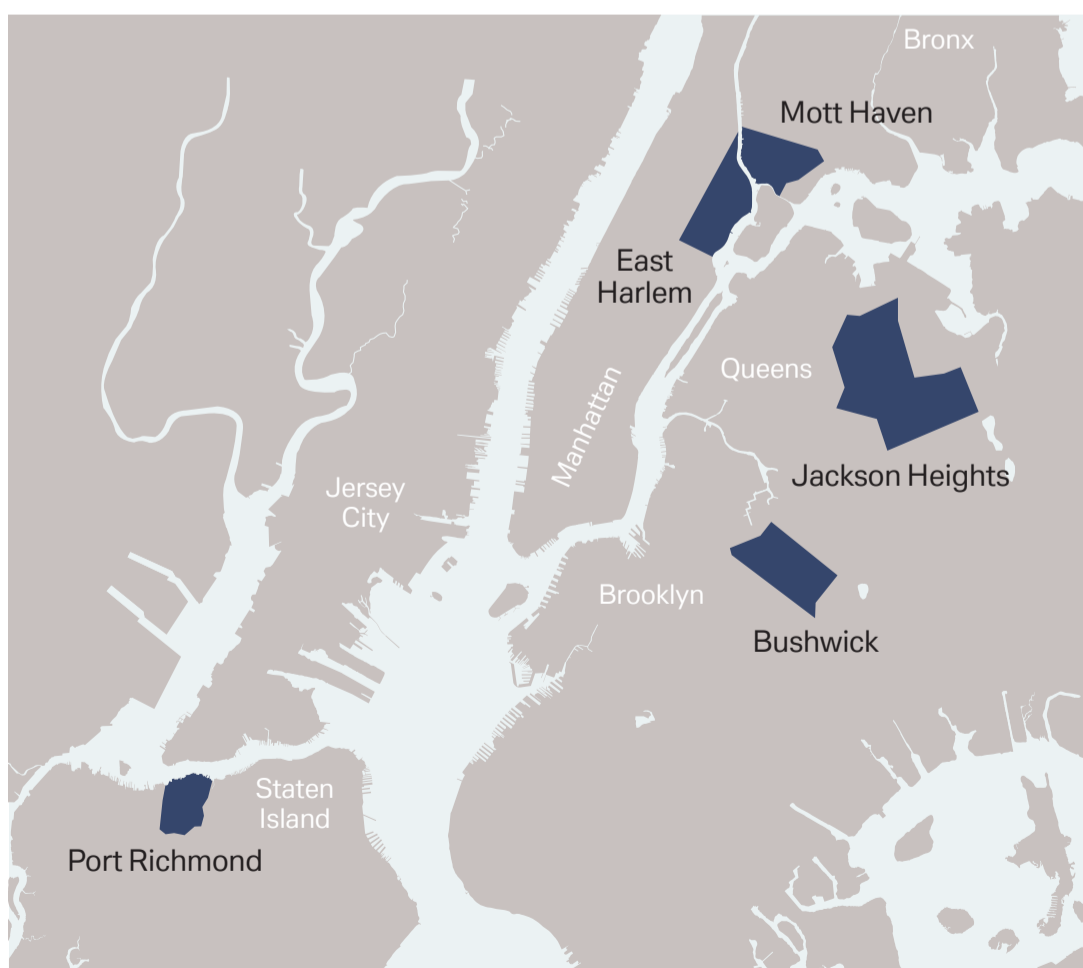


Maria Hinojosa Photograph: Liz Ligon

it is now especially important for people to engage with the media they consume, ask challenging questions and continually try to understand perspectives that differ from their own. The event concluded with a preview of the Anchoring Achievement impact report. ■

Anchoring Achievement partnerships

Networks of community organizations formed integrated education hubs across New York City



Port Richmond, Staten Island
Project Hospitality, with Wagner College, El Centro del Inmigrante and Make the Road New York, worked to boost 3rd grade literacy through school-home connections, parent leadership, teacher training and language development.

East Harlem, Manhattan
Union Settlement Association, with LSA and The Boys' Club of New York, delivered high-quality early childhood and after-school supports, and connected families to critical wraparound services.

Mott Haven, Bronx
MASA, with Parent-Child Home Program, expanded literacy supports for children, from the toddler years through middle school, and served as a portal for families to access housing, legal and employment assistance.

Bushwick, Brooklyn
Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow, with Churches United for Fair Housing and the Academy of Urban Planning High School, reconnected out-of-school youth and their families to education and job training programs.

The Bronx
Six in ten of the Mott Haven network's students showed an improvement in their English Language Art grades

60%

Brooklyn
The Bushwick network achieved 75% high school equivalency attainment

75%

Jackson Heights and Corona/Elmhurst, Queens
Internationals Network for Public Schools designed an education program for students new to the US and, with Make the Road New York and the City University of New York, provided a comprehensive support system that included mentoring and college preparation.