



**Outreach Extensions**  
***American Family* National Outreach Campaign Evaluation**

Prepared by  
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## I. BACKGROUND

With the broadcast debut of *American Family* in January 2002, PBS embarked upon a groundbreaking initiative of providing programming and support to its Latino viewers, an audience who typically has low involvement with PBS. As the first Latino dramatic series ever to air on broadcast television, *American Family* provided an unparalleled opportunity for PBS and its member stations to demonstrate their commitment to their Latino viewers and community members.

A large part of that commitment was the development and implementation of the *American Family* National Outreach Campaign. To that end, PBS signed a contract with Outreach Extensions on September 1, 2001. The primary objective of the campaign was to help public television stations connect with and provide resources to Latino families, primarily by creating - or sustaining - meaningful, ongoing collaborations with local Latino community groups. These partnerships were intended to help public television stations learn more about the needs, attitudes and concerns of their Latino community members and to establish the necessary infrastructure and trust for the implementation of future Latino-based outreach campaigns created around appropriate public television programs. The campaign also provided all viewers - whether Latino or not - with new perspectives on the diversity of Latino cultures and how they enrich American culture as a whole.

The key strategy for achieving these objectives was the Station Grant and Technical Assistance program. Grants totaling over \$440,000 were awarded to 44 stations for the purposes of establishing and building relationships with national and local Latino groups, for sustaining relationships that were already in place, and for implementing events and activities geared toward the local Latino community. Throughout the campaign, Outreach Extensions provided strategic planning, partnership development, and campaign management services, including technical assistance for the stations as they worked to build or sustain relationships with local community organizations that serve Latino populations. Outreach Extensions advised stations to take a collaborative approach in gaining the involvement of Latino stakeholders to ensure that local issues, needs and assets were addressed.

As part of its responsibilities, Outreach Extensions established the support of key stakeholders, initiated and nurtured partnerships with national nonprofits and community-based organizations, and, with the collaboration of its national partners, developed the content for campaign tools, such as the *American Family Toolkit*, *American Family Album*, *Sharing Our Stories* curriculum, and Spanish/English brochures. The research conducted by Applied Research & Consulting (ARC) was designed to evaluate the efficacy of Outreach Extensions' work and the impact of the campaign for public television stations, their community group partners and their audiences, with particular emphasis on Latino-based organizations and Latino community members.

## II. OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the research were as follows:

- To evaluate the impact of the *American Family* National Outreach Campaign in terms of how effective individual station initiatives were in developing ongoing, sustainable relationships among community-based organizations, particularly Latino organizations;
- To determine the impact of the campaign on Latino organizations and the families they work with;
- To understand how the strategic use of media beyond traditional distribution channels can stimulate community engagement and become a catalyst for meaningful change; and,
- To inform the development and administration of future outreach campaigns.

## III. METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve the above objectives, ARC fielded a qualitative research study with key participants in the campaign. The methodology included both in-depth, one-on-one phone discussions and focus group discussions.

18 in-depth telephone interviews were conducted with the following respondents:

- The Project Director of the *American Family* National Outreach Campaign
- 6 Outreach Directors from participating public television stations
  - KQED, San Francisco and KLRN, San Antonio (Sustainer Grants)
  - KERA, Dallas and Nashville Public Television (Builder Grants)
  - WFYI, Indianapolis and WCET, Cincinnati (Activities Grants)
- 2 outreach staff members from participating stations
- 6 representatives from community partner organizations
- 3 representatives from the national Latino partner organizations
  - MANA (
  - NLCI (National Latino Children's Institute)
  - Generations United

3 focus groups were conducted with community leaders who partnered with one local station from each of the three funding tiers:

- KQED, San Francisco (Sustainer)
- KERA, Dallas (Builder)
- WFYI, Indianapolis (Activities)

The focus groups took place at the public television station offices and included 3 to 7 participants per group. An additional group was conducted in San Francisco with families who had participated in the KQED activities.

A fourth focus group was conducted in San Francisco with adult community members who participated in the KQED *American Family* outreach activities. These respondents were Spanish-speaking, and a Spanish-speaking staff member from the station served as translator for the focus group.

## IV. FINDINGS

### Overall Context

Through the *American Family* National Outreach Campaign, public television stations and their community partners developed highly creative campaigns to reach Latino community groups and community members. The projects used resources effectively to meet both the goals of the campaign and the needs of the community. Overall, the activities were relevant, appealing, well-designed and well-executed. As Monica Medina, the campaign's Project Director commented,

*"The stations that participated in the campaign did an outstanding job."*

### **Relationship-building was the cornerstone of the campaign**

The development of on-going relationships between stations and community organizations was by many accounts the most notable and successful outcome of the campaign.

With no exceptions, all respondents reported that the *American Family* National Outreach Campaign served as the impetus for the creation of new partnerships and for building upon partnerships that had already been established. For those public television stations in markets with smaller, growing Latino populations, the campaign was an important starting point. In markets with a larger Latino presence, the outreach campaign provided opportunity for a significant deepening of already-established relationships.

*"Our goal was to build connections to start serving the Latino community. We couldn't penetrate deeply, but it was a start." – Station Outreach Director, Activities Grant*

*"We partnered with a number of organizations that hadn't worked with us before, including Hermanitas, Youth Incorporated, Nashville Read and Parents First." – Station Outreach Director, Builder Grant*

*"We worked with a diverse population on El Día de los Niños – one that we hadn't reached before, not all middle or upper-middle class." – Station Outreach Director*

*"It gave us a chance to expand the experiences of the adults we work with so that they don't just see us as PBS kids providers, but as providing*

*programs that they might be interested in as families.” – Station Outreach Director, Sustainer Grant*

One of the key reasons for the success of the partnership building is that the series and the campaign fit the needs of all the participants. From the stations’ perspective, the *American Family* series gave them a strong, “legitimate” entrée to the Latino community.

*“Many of the organizations from the National Hispanic Leadership Institute were impressed at this type of outreach, that it was going beyond just ‘hey, we’re doing this show and watch it.’ PBS got a lot of extra pluses because the networks don’t normally come to us and ask how we feel about a program that’s being aired. This type of initiative is going to give them a lot better credibility than any of the networks.” – National Partner*

*“We have major issues with diversity here and I had been searching for a way to connect positively with the Hispanic community. We had had almost no contact with that audience in the past.” – Station Outreach Director, Activities Grant*

*“Nashville Public Television had the same goals as we do: to come together and see how we all could serve Latino audiences. Also, linking our name with NPT was a real plus because of their very fine reputation in education.” – Community Leader*

*“It was a great topic, a good quality program, and we all felt comfortable being affiliated with something that was coming out of PBS and WFYI.” – Community Leader*

As far as the community organizations were concerned, the quality of the *American Family* series and the sensitivity and verisimilitude with which the family and situations were portrayed were compelling reasons to join the public television stations in their efforts.

*“What I loved about American Family was that it showed a much more sophisticated look at a non-white family and that it showed that many of their issues are ‘Latino’ but are primarily family issues. And yet it also showed the enormous diversity of culture.” – Community Leader*

*“It was a family venture. A lot of us could identify with a lot of the things that were being presented and it was great that it wasn’t like most Hispanic films that show negative things like gangs.” – Community Leader*

*“I think it was great to have Latinos see themselves in a more positive light, rather than the token beautiful Latina or the at-risk Latino youth. This series showed more diversity and a little more dimension to how we are.”  
– Community Leader*

*“I said to our clients this show would be interesting, because this is going to be the story of our children, this is about that generational difference between the first and second generations. I also said, this is an American family, so don’t think you’re not the American family.” – Community Leader*

*“It was pretty much the first time we used media. The biggest benefit was being able to reach a lot more people than we could just in our local neighborhood.” – Community Leader*

National organizations also reported that they had an opportunity to work with groups that they had never worked with before, including PBS.

*“Through this campaign, we had the opportunity to connect directly with Hispanic organizations for the first time. It was an important bridge for us.” – National Partner*

*“I’d say that our goals were met and were furthered. It was great to work with PBS in a give-and-take relationship. Very positive.”  
– National Partner*

Advisory committees were often pivotal in the development and sustaining of relationships. For instance, the KERA Hispanic Advisory Committee in Dallas was briefed on everything the station was doing that might be of interest to the Latino communities, including the *American Family* National Outreach Campaign. The committee members then determined how the campaign could be used within the community as a whole or within individual organizations.

*“Every time we went to a meeting, we got an update on what KERA was doing, so I got to understand the context of the initiative and a better understanding of my role as an advisor. It was very professionally managed.” – Community Leader*

In fact, word-of-mouth about the campaign spread so effectively through the KERA Hispanic Advisory Board that the station had to turn down several opportunities to conduct events due to lack of time or money.

*“Our strategic partnerships with Latino groups couldn't have been better. Our staff got to know all the key people and people made key contacts and relationships through the station.” – Station Outreach Director, Builder Grant*

### **Genuine, ongoing support and mutuality are both rare and valued**

A couple of representatives from Latino organizations commented that they sometimes feel that non-Latino organizations contact them for expediency's sake, and that they feel “used” by organizations that are trying to demonstrate connection with the Latino community. In the case of *American Family*, those Latino organizations that had not had prior experience working with public television felt a qualitative difference in the situation for the following reasons:

- the program was an ongoing television series,
- the themes explored in the campaign activities were pertinent and valuable to their audiences,
- the stations brought meaningful resources (including materials and financial support) to the table, and
- the stations solicited the organizations' input and active collaboration rather than imposing a pre-determined plan.

The fact that *American Family* was an on-going series rather than a one-off made the collaborations much easier to effect and allowed for a deeper, more authentic collaboration.

*“We've worked with other stand-alone shows on PBS, but the fact that this was a series made it very different.” – National Partner*

*“It's not a movie that hits or misses, it's something ongoing, just like*

*life is.” – Community Leader*

*“The series broadcast really gave the station outreach energy. It wasn’t perceived as a token gesture, but more genuine and substantial because it was ongoing.” – Station Outreach Director, Sustainer Grant*

*“We’ve done other campaigns before, but this one is different because others were a topic, and this is a culture. Others were one-time deals, this can be applied in so many different ways.”  
– Station Outreach Director, Builder Grant*

*“We love that the station is willing to come to us and ask our opinion – ‘Is this something that could help you build the relationships in your community? – here are the options, tell us what you want and what we can do to help you.’” – Community Leader*

*“Our strategy was based on the belief that we should not go to organizations with a pre-packaged set of resources and plans, but rather we should meet with them, hear what their goals and objectives were and mold the outreach activity as much as we could to fit their needs.”  
– Station Outreach Director, Sustainer Grant*

*“The station was sharing the activities with us in a very positive way.” –  
Community Leader*

## **Relationships will continue**

It was clear from all respondents that the relationships forged in the course of the campaign would continue beyond the *American Family* broadcast to include other public television programs (like *The New Americans*) and projects (like Ready To Learn), as well as events that were strengthened or inspired by the campaign, like El Día de los Niños (San Francisco, Nashville), Share-A-Legacy Family History Day (Indianapolis), and Celebration of Cultures: A Party with a Purpose (Nashville).

*“This was the first time we worked with our public television station, and it was wonderful! They are very good at what they do; their materials are outstanding; they made a real effort and made a real impact with our girls.”  
– Community Leader*

*“Now that we know we can ‘play well together,’ we will be more aggressive about fundraising for more funding. The relationship-building is probably the most important part, anyway.” – Community Leader*

*“We also connected with a group of Hispanic professionals in the medical/psychological field who will collaborate with us on RTL tips in Spanish for the Hispanic community.” – Station Outreach Director, Builder Grant*

*“I just got a call from the public television station to talk about another initiative, and the other day they called me for advice on a school program they’re developing.” – Community Leader*

*“We met our expectations in connecting with the Latino community, making two entry points that we feel really good about.”  
– Station Outreach Director, Activities Grant*

*“Our public television station has agreed to produce PSAs for the Family Strengthening Coalition with the footage they shot at the Share-A-Legacy Family History Day.” – Community Leader*

*“The really nice thing was we had a debriefing session and we all agreed that next year we’re going to be totally unified [rather than scheduling three separate events].” – Station Outreach Director, Sustainer Grant*

*“We’ve met with the public television station again about possible future programs dealing with citizenship, maybe with voting, and other issues. I think they’re pleased with our participation, and we’re definitely pleased with their coming to us.” – Community Leader*

*“The comments I had from most of the staff was, ‘When are you coming back? When are you going to do another workshop?’” – Station Outreach Staff, Sustainer Grant*

### **Bridge-building strategy is of tremendous value**

One station outreach director summed up the attitude of all the station respondents regarding the value of connecting PBS programming over time with ongoing support and thematic links:

*“This pipeline that Outreach Extensions has put together [with American Family and Legacy and The New Americans] is a dream for me because usually the programming for outreach is scattered, and I’m all over the map in what I can do. This pipeline is focused and there’s always something coming in that I can build on. My time is more productive because after I build relationships, it takes less time to implement new activities because I already know their goals, their mission, their needs.”*  
– Station Outreach Director, Sustainer Grant

*“Continuing ongoing funding for thematically related programming is very helpful. We’re already continuing our work we started on American Family with The New Americans.”*  
– Station Outreach Director, Builder Grant

### **Impact on Latino organizations and their constituencies**

Most important, the organizations and the families that they serve felt valued and respected by the campaign.

*“The families were very excited that someone was celebrating that they had something to say.”* – Station Outreach Director, Builder Grant

*“The kids just loved the attention, they loved talking about themselves, and one of the things that we were really happy about is that they saw similarities between each other.”* – Community Leader

*“We were amazed at just how responsive people were.”*  
– Station Outreach Director, Sustainer Grant

Community members – both Latino and non-Latino – really enjoyed the wide range of activities offered by station-community events like El Día de los Niños festivities, the Celebration of Cultures fair in Nashville, the Share-A-Legacy Family History Day in Indianapolis, and community screenings in Dallas. Smaller events, like family album workshops and Ready To Learn (RTL) workshops, were enjoyed by smaller numbers of families, but were nonetheless perceived to be important ways for the public television stations to collaborate with community groups and to connect with their audiences.

- The “family” message resonated strongly for community members.

*“A lot of family issues – like how do parents cope with children who have one parent – are being brought up by the ‘American Family’ series, and it seems that through our neighborhood screenings, people are reaching out and voicing their concerns, and asking what they can do.”*

*– Community Leader*

- Both children and their parents loved the scrapbooking activities.

*“In addition to the First Book workshop, we also came to the family album workshop and that was very nice and we worked on the family history on the Web and that was great, too.” – Community Leader*

Scrapbooking activities were adapted in many different ways, and station outreach directors reported that the ideas and materials will be used for future projects with Latino audiences and other constituencies.

*“‘American Family’ gave us the chance to start this Web presence, and we’re going to keep adding to those family albums through ‘New Americans’ and ‘Matters of Race,’ and through ‘Becoming American: The Chinese Experience.’” – Station Outreach Director, Sustainer Grant*

- Participants found value in viewing key episodes and in discussing the themes in the show.

*“Men don’t like to watch serious movies, but we got a lot of men to come in our men’s groups, which is great because it’s so hard to reach these macho men.” – Community Leader*

- RTL was a fruitful, appropriate connection for the project and helped bring in families who already had a connection with their local public television station.

*“By participating in the campaign, we were able to add to the capabilities of our Ready To Learn department.”*  
*– Station Outreach Director, Activities Grant*

*“We did two community screenings of American Family episodes, one being a covered-dish dinner with 200 all-Latino attendees, and as a result we put together a bilingual RTL workshop.” – Station Outreach Director*

In some markets, the campaign prompted an unprecedented reach into the Latino community. For instance WCET in Cincinnati did a pledge drive entirely in Spanish, which the station outreach director characterized as “a great way to reach out to the community” and “a success. . . Even though it wasn’t our biggest money-maker, we got a lot of new members for the station.”

*“One of the major highlights of the outreach was that people who called in for the pledge told the volunteers that ‘this is the first time in Cincinnati public television that someone is speaking to us in Spanish.’” – Community Leader*

Similarly, NPT had an all-bilingual phone bank during the pledge drive and featured the Tennessee Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. KERA held debates in Spanish language for the local election, and WCET’s outreach department hired a new Spanish-speaking administrative assistant.

### **National partners played key role, but one not always integrated with local activities**

The national partners were extremely enthusiastic about the campaign and the role they played in developing and disseminating materials, conducting screenings, sponsoring workshops, and serving as a resource for the participating public television stations.

*“The match with our mission was huge. The program was so germane to what we do, that we knew it was important to get information to the folks who work in the communities.” – National Partner*

*“Something that was really geared to the Latino community and that actually had a Mexican-American perspective was to me a real winner.” – National Partner*

Most stations reported that they did not avail themselves directly of the services of the national partners, generally because they had sufficient local organizations with which to work, and sometimes because there was limited local presence of the national partner organizations in their region. They did, however, find the materials created by the national partners –

like the Sharing Our Stories curriculum – to be extremely well done and of significant value.

### **Outreach materials were very well-regarded**

Most respondents gave high marks to the outreach campaign materials both in terms of quality of design and functionality.

*“We always use everything we get. These materials were really well done, very polished and better than anything we could have produced ourselves.”*

*– Station Outreach Director, Activities Grant*

Respondents indicated that the **most useful materials were the bilingual brochure, the electronic toolkit, and the Web site template**. All public television respondents used the brochure as a “calling card” for their campaign with community organizations and distributed it widely through those groups, as well as schools, local businesses and religious organizations. A number of stations reported that they will be using the materials for future projects.

*“The brochures were used at every workshop, but it was a little word-heavy for my population which has low literacy.”*

*– Station Outreach Staff, Sustainer Grant*

*“The toolkit gave me good, practical information.”*

*– Station Outreach Director, Activities Grant*

One respondent reported feeling swamped by the amount of material in the toolkit and suggested that the materials be more focused and streamlined and be developed to address the needs of stations with different levels of expertise in outreach.

*“There were a lot of materials, which is good, because there’s usually not enough and people want information. But for me it was too much.”–*

*Station Outreach Director, Sustainer Grant*

*“What’s your main point? What’s your main message? Make it big, make it bold, make it simple.”– Station Outreach Director, Builder Grant*

Others used the toolkit to the degree that they had either the time or need for the information.

**Videos, the Web site template, and the scrapbooking materials** all received very high marks from the respondents.

*“The videos were incredibly helpful, and I thought the template for the Web activity was great, and I’m not a Web person.” – Station Outreach Staff, Sustainer Grant*

*“The toolkit and instructions were great and were what made it feasible for the girls to do the albums. The Web site tools were great, too, but it was a little bit difficult because it’s well documented that the Latino community does not have great access to computers and the Internet and color printers.” – National Partner*

*“The most fun was the scrapbook materials. We used it for American Family and later for another Making Connections event.” – Station Outreach Director, Activities Grant*

*“The smartest thing they did was to tie in the family album with the program. That was very creative and a really smart way to say ‘here’s how you can help develop your community beyond just watching and supporting the program.’ Quite honestly, that would make me want to be super loyal to the program and the people who are providing it because they are really investing in the community, which is something we really value.” – National Partner*

The **electronic newsletters** were of varying value. Some respondents reported that they enjoyed and valued reading what was going on with other stations participating in the campaign. Others indicated that they were so busy implementing the activities and carrying on with other work that they did not have enough time to read all the materials that crossed their desks in the course of the campaign.

*“The newsletter was nice but not terribly useful.” – Station Outreach Director, Activities Grant*

A number of respondents noted that many of the printed materials (like the *American Family* album, Sharing Our Stories curriculum for RTL

coordinators and bilingual brochures) arrived after the campaign was underway.

*“The bilingual brochure was very useful, but it got here four weeks after the series got on the air, the posters even later than that, and the grant was almost over before the RTL unit was released.” – Station Outreach Director, Builder Grant*

*“I would have liked the workshop outline earlier, that would have been great, because it was good content.” – Station Outreach Director, Sustainer Grant*

In some cases, the community groups themselves reported that they could have used more materials (like videotapes) or different materials (audio cassettes for those without video equipment or brochures that were less text-heavy for the less literate audiences). One outreach staff member recommended making something useful like notepads or bookmarks or refrigerator magnets as a leave-behind, rather than a brochure which gets thrown away.

*“I find that those outreach materials work better. The people will take them home and they’ll use them.” – Station Outreach Staff, Sustainer Grant*

### **Mentoring program had mixed results, but sharing ideas was valued**

While everyone agreed that the mentoring program was a good concept, it seemed to have had less resounding success than other elements of the campaign did.

In most instances, it was a lack of time – or need – rather than a lack of effort that made the mentor relationship ineffectual.

*“I had a mentor who was wonderful, but I was so busy doing the project that I couldn’t get back to her.” – Station Outreach Director, Builder Grant*

*“My mentor tried to help us, but we were pretty clear on what we wanted to do.” – Station Outreach Director, Builder Grant*

On the other hand, regular communications and an opportunity to share ideas were of great value to most respondents, especially if those conversations were in person.

*“They had a format for sharing ideas through the newsletters and at different conferences, so you could learn what other stations had done and even get a chance to meet face to face.”*

*– Station Outreach Director, Builder Grant*

*“We had monthly phone calls, which was great. It was really nice to be able to share information with each other.”*

*– Station Outreach Director, Sustainer Grant*

*“The best part of it was the opportunity for one-on-one communications with the stations and the chance to meet in person. It was inspiring for them to hear what other stations were doing and to get the individualized help. I wish I could have done more.” – Project Director*

## **Campaign challenges**

Most respondents were unqualified in their praise of the campaign and their belief that both the *American Family* series its National Outreach Campaign are very important first steps in connecting public television with Latino audiences.

Concerns were generally not specific to the design or implementation of the campaign and its materials, but instead concerned the following:

- Diversity within the Latino population
- Limitations of the broadcast schedule and series marketing campaign
- Timing of the campaign

### *Diversity of Latino population*

One of the great strengths of the *American Family* series and its outreach campaign was its ability to highlight what all Latino Americans – and, by extension, all Americans – have in common: i.e., a strong sense of family and family values.

*“We need to get the word out. These are normal people who have wonderful backgrounds, great resources, and capabilities to contribute to our society.” – Community Leader*

However, because of the wide diversity within the American Latino population, some respondents commented that it was not entirely clear who the target audience was for the campaign. Several respondents, especially those from Latino organizations or from stations in cities with large Latino populations, commented that there are two potential audiences for the series, and that each requires a different approach and different kinds of outreach materials:

- New immigrants
- More assimilated, English-speaking Latinos

*“Be strategic about who you target, because they will carry the message to others.” – Community Leader*

*“We need education in both directions, one for the new immigrants and one for those who have been here for a long time to understand some of the nuances of the issues that the new immigrant has to deal with.” – National Partner*

There is great sensitivity in the Latino communities about English-Spanish translation issues and the differences in experience between recent immigrants and more established, assimilated Latinos. While it was natural for a number of stations to do outreach with the recent immigrant groups, they questioned whether these new immigrants are really the target audience for the program or the campaign, partly because of the language/translation issue and partly because the experiences of the Gonzalez family feel somewhat far removed from the experiences of new, non-English speaking families.

*“You’re talking about two types of Latino populations: the recent immigration population who are the people I work with everyday, and the first, second and third-generation English-speaking Latino population who have already been going through a process of acculturation.” – Station Outreach Staff, Sustainer Grant*

*"The ballerina character, Kate del Castillo, wasn't in any of the outreach materials, but she's the hook for people who watch novellas. My clients are South and Central American and they know her better than Olmos or Esai or Raquel Welch." – Community Leader*

In addition, there are some built-in prejudices among Latinos about other Latino groups that need to be accounted for when approaching these communities.

*"Because it is Mexican-American, we had some comments that other Latinos don't quite relate to it. And that bothered me, because it means we're not there yet, and we've got to promote the understanding that there's diversity within our group and that there's nothing wrong when you have an emphasis on one group " – National Partner*

*"There a lot of similarities between the various Hispanic groups, but there are a lot of differences, too. It's not monolithic. We weren't really aware of that fact before this campaign."*  
– Station Outreach Director, Activities Grant

*"Nobody wants to talk about it, but there's a big problem with racism within the Latino community, with very negative attitudes about the Mexican-Americans, even though they're the largest group and have been here the longest. Latinos with those kinds of prejudices have got to get over it." – National Partner*

*"We heard some strong comments in our workshops along the lines of 'this is just one experience, it's about Los Angeles Mexican-Americans, and that's not our family.' But it sparked conversations where the mixed populations were actually learning more about each other."*  
– Station Outreach Director, Sustainer Grant

English-Spanish translation was a cause of concern for a number of respondents, and in some cases, the lack of Spanish translations limited the campaign's effectiveness. Since many newer immigrants only speak Spanish and the series was broadcast in English, the question became: "Is this project really for us?"

*"The reading tips from National Latino Children's Institute were all in English and that surprised me and seemed really odd. We're reaching 95%*

*mono-lingual Spanish speaking, and so the materials should be in Spanish, too.” – Station Outreach Director, Sustainer Grant*

*“How can you target the Spanish-speaking community if the program is only in English?” – Station Outreach Staff, Sustainer Grant*

Some community groups wanted to use the series and the materials as a tool, but they felt thwarted by the language barrier. Spanish translations of all materials – including the television program itself – would go a long way in overcoming those concerns.

*“It was really time consuming for us to translate everything in the show. And even subtitles wouldn’t necessarily work because though all of our clients speak Spanish, some can’t even read the Spanish.”  
– Community Leader*

*“One of the hardest things from our end was the translation into Spanish. There are so many dialects, that it’s hard to satisfy everyone.”  
– Project Director*

The fact that it was called *American Family*, that it appeared on PBS, and that it was not translated made some people feel that it wasn’t “for them.” On the other hand, some respondents praised the name, and one community leader commented that,

*“For me what resonates most is the name. I like that it’s a program about Latinos and its called ‘American Family.’”*

Many respondents – particularly from the national and community Latino organizations – suggested that the single most important element to making an outreach campaign like this successful is the hiring of a Spanish-speaking coordinator who knows the community well or, at the very least, who has the necessary contacts to learn about the community in sufficient depth to understand its make-up and its needs.

*“The key was the Latino educator whom we hired. She had a high profile in the community and she knew the system and knew who to call.” – Station Outreach Director, Activities Grant*

*“If you’re going to work in the Latino community, you’ve got to know the people. Sometimes it’s a very different experience than what you might expect. You’ve got to find out who is in your community – who it is that you’re trying to serve.” – National Partner*

*“We could not have had the same level of success without Ruperto Garcia. He’s Hispanic and he helped me with a lot of cultural sensitivity issues. He was really important and he and Outreach Extensions (who financially supported our hiring him) should get a lot of credit.” – Station Outreach Director, Sustainer Grant*

*“In some cases the biggest problem was that the stations that had not worked with the Latino community tried to use the same kind of formula they’ve used for other projects. To solve the problem, they had to go the extra mile and really go into the communities.” – Project Director*

*“The invitation to events like this should come from the churches, counselors, English teachers. Word-of-mouth is really important. If we get one Hispanic family who has a good experience, they’ll bring in their neighbors and friends and family.” – Community Leader*

### Synergy between the American Family broadcast and the campaign

The series itself and its PBS broadcast were used in a variety of ways for the different campaigns. In some cases, the broadcast served primarily as a catalyst to generate interest and participation in the campaign activities.

*“Frankly, the series was just an entry point for us. We really didn’t use the program itself in the activities we did.” – Community Leader*

For other stations and community groups, the series was a key component in the campaign.

*“The series was crucial. It was a catalyst that gave us something to talk about.” – Station Outreach Director, Builder Grant*

However, there was some disappointment expressed on the part of both stations and community partners about the erratic programming of the series on their local stations. Counter programming by other

broadcasters, pre-emptions for pledge, and other changes in the schedule made it difficult for audiences to find the series. While these programming idiosyncracies did not necessarily negatively effect the impact of the outreach activities, they did make it more difficult for the outreach campaign and the broadcast to support one another.

### Campaign timing

One of the biggest challenges for the respondents from all levels of the campaign was the tight time-frame. The scheduling pressure made it challenging for stations to reach out and form new partnerships and increased the difficulty in making those partnerships truly collaborative. Many of the proposed events were demanding in terms of scheduling and logistics, and several respondents commented that having made the necessary connections this year, they will start to plan a full year ahead for next year's events.

*"The biggest thing that would have made the process easier would be more planning time. We got the money in December and rolled out in January."  
- Station Outreach Director, Builder Grant*

*"The biggest challenge was the timing. Ideally, we would have had most of our plans set before the Christmas holidays." - Community Leader*

Additionally, the exceedingly short time-frame made it difficult to create the content, design, produce, and deliver the materials to the stations.

*"There was too quick of a turnaround in the curriculum that we created. It needed to be done with more time." - National Partner*

Several stations commented that they ideally would like to receive materials like the toolkit, workshop curriculum, videos, brochures at least three to six months before a campaign begins in order to use them to their greatest capacity.

Because of the very compressed campaign schedule, and the already-overworked outreach departments, monthly progress reports were a significant administrative burden for the station participants. ARC

recommends that future campaigns require a single, brief interim report and a final report as requirements for the grant.

## V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The **most important elements to the success** of the *American Family* National Outreach Campaign were as follows:

**1) Match of need and “product:”** As discussed above, one of the main reasons for the campaign’s success was that the *American Family* series and outreach campaign fit a real need in the community landscape, that is, to help make Latinos feel “seen” and valuable. The many Latino communities across the country are hungry for sensitive and realistic media representations of their lives and for opportunities to collaborate and connect with other organizations in a meaningful, “non-token” way.

**2) Funding:** Adequate funding was a crucial element in the success of the campaign. Most public television outreach departments are over-worked and under-budgeted, so the financial support provided – in addition to the outreach tools, materials and technical assistance – was of inestimable value. At NPT, for instance, the funding was large enough that it “got the attention” and support of other departments at the station and helped leverage more funding for the campaign to support additional activities.

The funding allowed the stations to provide their partners with materials and resources that are often not available, and the partnering organizations were motivated and gratified by the support.

*“It was incredible. The station brought all the scrapbooking materials, all the video and digital camera equipment, everything that was needed. It was absolutely wonderful!” – Community Leader*

The grant to MANA allowed for the purchase of materials by the chapters to be used in the scrapbooking workshops. Because MANA is run almost entirely by volunteers, the financial assistance was very meaningful for its participation in the campaign.

*“Quite honestly, the funding that American Family provided really helped to tie my chapters in to the program, but also the tie-in activities, which we're still doing; and, that meant that you were then building a longer-term relationship with the stations and with Outreach Extensions, so that was a real plus.” – National Partner*

MANA recognized the importance of Johnson & Johnson’s corporate sponsorship, and their President commented,

*“One of the things that I asked my members to do is to let the sponsors know that we appreciate the fact that they’re sponsoring the project.”*

Similarly, the grant to Generations United was key in their being able to work extensively in the Latino community.

*“Through the mini-grant funding, we were able to work with many more Hispanic organizations than we ever had before.”*

**3) Public television station outreach departments:** Without the energy and passionate involvement of the station outreach staff members, the campaign could not have reached the same high level of impact nor achieved the same positive coalition-building with community organizations and families. ARC researchers were struck by the high level of creativity and commitment exhibited by all the station outreach staff members whom they interviewed. And those impressions were confirmed unanimously by the community leaders with whom the research team spoke.

**4) Outreach Extensions:** The respondents on the station and national partner level gave exceptionally positive feedback about the support provided by Outreach Extensions. Most comments focused on the accessibility of the staff by telephone, their prompt, friendly responsiveness, and their collegiality. The hiring of Monica Medina as Project Director was applauded by several participants on both the station and the national Latino partner level.

*“Outreach Extensions and Monica Medina were extremely Johnny-on-the-Spot. Any time we had a question, we got an immediate answer. Their follow-up calls were very helpful.”*  
– Station Outreach Director, Builder Grant

*“They’re just so responsive to questions, to needs, and they’re so eager for us to succeed. More than all the different tools, their process assistance and support was most beneficial.”*  
– Station Outreach Director, Sustainer Grant

*“Outreach Extensions’ support was really good. Everyone was so helpful.”* – Station Outreach Director, Builder Grant

*“They were always wonderful. Very supportive. Anything that we needed – they tried really hard to create support systems like the newsletter and the phone calls.”* – Station Outreach Director, Sustainer Grant

*“The Outreach Extensions folks have so much energy that they keep it rolling. They’re always on top of it and were able to make things happen even when the situation got really complex.”*  
– Project Director

*“Outreach Extensions did a great job. I like that they dealt with the changing demographics and expanding the diversity of the audience. It was really good on their part and it was smart business. More power to them.”* – National Partner

## **Best practices**

Recommendations were made by participants to help ensure the success of future campaigns: These recommendations include that Outreach Extensions consider the following when designing and implementing future outreach campaigns:

- Continue to provide simple, engaging activities in which people of many different ages can participate – like the family album scrapbook project.
- Streamline and focus explanatory and instructional materials.
- Develop an action plan or a guide to help stations manage the outreach resources.
- Create “useful” leave-behind outreach materials for the community members, like notepads, bookmarks, refrigerator paper holder.

- Create materials or action plans for different levels of station experience.
- Provide all materials in both English and Spanish.
- Including “face-to-face” opportunities for station outreach staff members to meet with each other and discuss the campaign.

Stations should consider the following recommendations:

- Hire a staff person or a key person in the community who speaks Spanish fluently and who knows the community.
- Put in the time and energy to get into the community and learn the specific issues and needs of the particular audiences in each market.
- Hold events in locations that are familiar to the Latino community and that are easy to get to.
- Do not rely too heavily on Web site or Internet connectivity with the Latino communities.
- Do not assume that the tactics used in most typical outreach campaigns will be well suited for the Latino community.

*“I really see this campaign as a way for us to build this audience and to make a concerted effort to reach this community. Now this project has given us the tools and the contacts; we have the underlying foundation to move forward in the future.” – Station Outreach Director, Builder Grant*

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