Bogotá, Colombia
Grant Period: 2007 - 2010

Jump starting a career for every student.

Bridge to Employment – Bogotá, Colombia targeted young people transitioning to and preparing for health care careers. The program, a unique partnership between Johnson & Johnson de Colombia, Politécnico International, and Fundación CariolInfantil, helped students overcome the social, academic, and geographical barriers that prevent them from gaining health care jobs. Activities, including academic enrichment, applied learning opportunities, and links to continuing education, paved the way for student success. These activities gave the students the skills and knowledge needed to find real jobs.

Throughout the three years, the program focused on key areas such as college transitions, career development, and job placement activities. To help students further their education, BTE selected students in need, assumed an average of 40 percent of their tuition, and provided other resources to help them perform well, such as tutoring, workshops, and conferences. All these activities created real opportunities and delivered real results for students.
Before BTE Catalina was living on the streets, selling drugs, and trying to support her family. She had a dream of becoming a nurse, but didn’t see a path to that dream. Then BTE came along. For Catalina, it changed everything. She was selected to receive 40 percent of her tuition paid at the Politécnico Internacional post-secondary technical school. She is pursuing a nursing assistant degree and knows she will become a nurse after that. Catalina sees how BTE helped pave the way to her future. More important than the tuition dollars, the BTE tutorials and workshops helped her pass her classes, better comprehend material, and learn to work with others.

Catalina’s experience isn’t unique. Consider BTE- Bogotá’s results:

* Students Pursued Health Careers. 37 BTE students graduated with a degree in a health-related discipline; additional graduates are expected in subsequent years.

* Increased School Completion Rates. BTE students were less likely to drop out (12.5 percent vs. 35 percent). BTE students earned higher grades than those of their peers. The students reported feeling more knowledgeable, skilled, confident, and prepared to join the work world, and, because of BTE, felt able to give back to the community;

* Improved Coordination & Collaboration. Health experts and BTE partners reviewed the curriculum of three disciplines and revised it to align with the City’s employment needs.