**Problem:**
Generations of impoverished Mexican residents have crossed the border to find work in Imperial Valley. These immigrant students and their families face multiple challenges associated with their immigration, acculturation and limited English language skills. They are at high risk for depression, anxiety and substance abuse problems and tend not to seek mental health care because of the stigma.

**Solution:**
Reduce barriers to mental health services by implementing culturally-focused principles and practices of community health promotion.

**Program:**
Proyecto Puentes, located in D’Anza Junior High School and Heber Elementary School, trains and employs lay workers (promotoras) who share language, culture and life experiences of new arrivals to educate students and their families about social-emotional wellness and help students and parents secure access to care.

**Impact:**
Well-attended parent workshops and student groups. Topics for group discussions include coping skills, self-awareness, communication, stress-management and mental health issues related to migration. Children and families needing more help are successfully connected to services.