



**SB 845 - Higher Education - Maryland Corps Program Fund - Alterations  
Testimony of Jose Granados, Latin American Youth Center  
On March 4, 2020  
Before the Budget & Taxation Committee**

My name is Jose Granados and I grew up in Prince George's County, Maryland. I graduated from college in 2015 as a first generation immigrant to go to college, with the intention of becoming a teacher. In order to teach, I planned to go to graduate school. I applied and was unfortunately not accepted to the program I had my heart set on. When grad school fell through I didn't have much else going on. I was applying to jobs without much luck and was discouraged.

One of my friends did an internship at Latin America Youth Center (LAYC) and ended up telling me about their AmeriCorps service year doing educational programming for youth.

I ended up interviewing at LAYC where I could dedicate a year of service to the community, help youth with tutoring, and give students the tools they needed to navigate the school year through LAYC's afterschool tutoring program. I ended up doing a part-time service year as an AmeriCorps member and fell in love with the program.

I tutored "English as a Second Language" (ESL) students, and, as an ESL student myself, I understood the struggles and challenges they face. I was honored to have the opportunity to use my bilingual skills throughout my service year to help ESL students with their homework and guide them to get to the next level and achieve their educational goals.

My AmeriCorps service year was a gratifying moment that ultimately helped me become a teacher. When my original plans to go to grad school fell through, my service year helped me pave a new path to my dream career. I was a middle school teacher for 2 years in Maryland where I taught Spanish.



And today, I manage Curriculum Development and Instruction at Latin American Youth Center in Prince George's County — where I did my year of service.

I am proud to support this bill and speak today about the importance of service years both for the young person who serves as well as for the communities in which we serve. My service year made my career possible and showed me that I could give back to the community where I grew up and be a role model to younger generations of what is possible.