

## **General Session Proposal**

**Title:** Crossing Borders with Hope and “Big Plans”: Language Education and Young Latino Migrant Laborers’ Struggle to Integrate

**Faculty Mentors** (include EKU e-mail addresses and cell phone numbers):  
Dr. David Coleman

**Student Presenters** (up to 3; include EKU e-mail addresses and cell phone numbers)  
Alicia Gilbert  
Danielle Hachey  
Amber Holbrook

**AV Requests:** None

### **Brief Presentation Content Description for the Program Book:**

This panel explores the experiences of Latino migrant laborers in the South Carolina Lowcountry via the lens of our experiences working with language education programs in the area’s many labor camps.

### **Longer Abstract or Summary of the Proposed Presentation:**

Migrant laborers are among the forgotten people of our country. They arrive quietly, usually undetected. Their struggles are immense with much of their hardships deriving from the fact that many have limited to no English language skills when they arrive in the United States, and some cannot even read and write in Spanish. In January 2015, we were part of an EKU Honors Program “study away” winterim course in which we visited and studied Latino migrant labor camps in the South Carolina Lowcountry. We will be returning to those camps in the summer of 2015 and will be working with local education outreach programs with a focus on the 18-22 year old migrant “out of school” age group. Our panel will explore the challenges faced by these young migrant laborers, the transformative roles that language education programs can play in their lives, and the impacts of such programs on local perceptions of migrant labor in the Beaufort/Hilton Head area. Our collaboration with area language outreach educators has enabled us to step out of our own comfort zone into the everyday life of the migrant workers.

**Audience Type:** Student General Interest

**Strands:** Diversity