

Did you have a teacher who deeply affected you? Perhaps, changed the course of your life?

Fior Baez is both teacher and student. By day, she runs a successful childcare business, where she takes the job of educating young children seriously.

“For me, running a good child care business means being a good educator, teaching the children well, and communicating with the parents. I want to do a really good job and teach the children right.”

By night, she is on the other side of the desk, learning English in the ENB-funded ESOL for Entrepreneurs Class at Worker Education Program, to improve her business and her communication with families. **“Learning English has helped me to do lessons and read to children in English. I can provide children with a good start for school.”**

Fior got her own start at school in the Dominican Republic. When her two children came of school age, she wanted something more for them. Seeking better opportunities for the family, she immigrated to America.

For years, she worked long, hard hours in restaurants and cleaning companies in the Boston area. **“But I was not treated well, and I believed I could start my own business because I was good with children,”** says Fior.

Fior went through training and was licensed to open her home-based childcare business in 2006. Ten years later, Fior’s business is flourishing in Mattapan, with both Spanish and English speaking families. Through the ESOL class, she’s expanded her English to

include CPR training, marketing (she's preparing a handbook for parents), and perhaps most importantly, her self-esteem has been boosted.

"I have built my confidence. I know people understand me now. I feel professional."

What's more, Fior is not content to rest on her laurels - **"Now, I want to take another, higher level English class because I still have more to learn. Then, I want to go to Urban College, so I can run a bigger child care center. And, I plan to buy my own home."**

Fior's story is not unique. ESOL classes time and time again are the entry point by which immigrants are able to transform their lives and their families' lives. In Fior's case, however, the ESOL for Entrepreneurs class fit her needs as a small business owner uniquely well, providing her business-specific English to grow her enterprise. And in turn Fior is transforming the lives of the young children in her care by providing an early literacy component to her child care program.