

Web Accessibility Laboratories

Annie Carrillo

**HearColors
Mexico**

Parallel Session: Training accessible ICT



**Friday February 23, 13:00-
14:20**



Background

- Legislative reforms in Mexico introduced web accessibility in 2015.
- In spite of this progress, implementation and enforcement of the laws remains slow and inconsistent.
- Very few developers are aware of what web accessibility is.

Top 10 universities in LATAM / 2014	Architecture Physical Accessibility	Computer Science Web Accessibility
Universidad de Sao Paulo		x
Pontificia Universidad católica de Chile		x
Universidad de Chile		x
Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro		x
UNAM		x
Universidad de los Andes		x
UNESP		x
ITESM		x
Universidad de Colombia		x
Universidad de Buenos Aires		x



The HearColors approach

- HearColors was born in 2014 with the mission of socializing web accessibility and making it affordable.
- Creating capacities and awareness was crucial to make web accessibility a reality.
- Building a network of committed stakeholders and end users was our main strategy.

Accessible

Affordable

Attainable



Web Accessibility Labs (PAW)

- Our target partner: **UNIVERSITIES**
- Our objective: To install a sustainable process:
 1. To create capabilities on digital accessibility among students and young professionals
 2. To help clients from the public and private sector implement web accessibility at an affordable price
 3. To develop social impact projects

PUNTOS DE
ACCESIBILIDAD
WEB.



PAW Evolution

- **2015** / Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México: **first PAW**
 - 7 volunteer students, 3 hours a week.
 - Good results but lack of commitment.
- **2016** / Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México: **second PAW**
 - UNAM is the most important public University in Mexico serving almost 350,000 students, with more than 40,000 professors and teaching 121 different BA.s.
 - 15 paid intern students of computer science engineering, selected among 35 applicants, 15 hours a week, more than 100 hours of training on coding and web accessibility

ITAM





First year results

- An accessible website template was developed by the students, which was donated to NGO's.
- Assessments of the accessibility of main UNAM sites were produced along with specific recommendations to comply with WCAG 2.0, positioning the Lab internally as the web accessibility “vendor”.
- Group of committed professionals, enthusiastic to start their career with the added value of accessibility skills.

“I am here because I first thought this was a very interesting and innovative project, as I didn't have much knowledge of what Web Accessibility was. At the Lab I was able to learn the theory and put it into practice. I also realized the big impact I can make in the lives of persons with disabilities. I am very happy to be part of this positive change”.

UNAM PAW Intern, Daniela Camacho



Next steps:

2018 UNAM PAW call for applications has innovative changes:

- **Students from other specialties:** we will expand to designers, as we need to create awareness amongst them of the importance of universal design.
- **Students with disabilities:** we will strengthen our promotion to include students with disabilities so they can learn to execute user testing.
- **New services:** We are working on an alliance with Digital Libraries so we can open a document remediation section in the Lab.
- **NGO's:** We also plan to maintain the call for applications for NGO's to be able to expand accessible web sites amongst those organizations.



Next steps: sustainability

- We believe in positioning the Labs as an affordable option for web accessibility services in Mexico. Clients win by solving their accessibility problems at a very competitive price and we produce new generations of professionals with digital accessibility capabilities.
- In 2018 the National Human Rights Commission will start a project with PAW UNAM to remediate the accessibility of all the documents of its digital library.
- In 2018, PAW UNAM will offer web accessibility courses once a month, opened to all public.



Next steps: replicability

- We are ready to expand to other cities and countries.
- Sine qua non factors:
 - Paid students
 - University has to understand and believe in the business opportunity
 - Patience: first year is an investment, second year results come forward

PUNTOS DE
ACCESIBILIDAD
WEB!

www.hearcolors.com.mx