

# the **CollegeKeys** Compact™

## **2011 Catalog of Effective Practices**

Programs and  
practices that expand  
options for students  
from low-income  
backgrounds

## **About the College Board**

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The College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of more than 5,900 of the world's leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, the College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success — including the SAT® and the Advanced Placement Program®. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators and schools.

For further information, visit [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

## **The College Board Advocacy & Policy Center**

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The College Board Advocacy & Policy Center was established to transform education in America. Guided by the College Board's principles of excellence and equity in education, we work to ensure that students from all backgrounds have the opportunity to succeed in college and beyond. We make critical connections between policy, research and real-world practice to develop innovative solutions to the most pressing challenges in education today.

[advocacy.collegeboard.org](http://advocacy.collegeboard.org)

# Contents

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Overview .....iv

## **Effective Practices by Category**

Getting Ready ..... 1

Getting In ..... 17

Getting Through ..... 23

# OVERVIEW

## Successful Strategies for Serving Low-Income Students

The CollegeKeys Compact™ is a national call to action to school districts, colleges and universities, state education agencies, and nonprofit organizations to identify, share and expand programs and practices that address the needs and challenges of low-income students and help them get ready for, get into and get through college. The College Board is committed to disseminating information about these effective practices and recognizing exemplary programs through the Innovation Awards program.

### Effective Practices

To date, more than 570 institutions and organizations have signed on to the Compact, reaffirming their commitment to expanding opportunities for students from low-income backgrounds. This catalog showcases programs that were submitted for consideration in the 2011 Innovation Awards. We hope this catalog will be a useful resource for educators and policymakers alike, and that others are inspired by the excellent work being done around the nation to help more deserving students from low-income backgrounds.

### CollegeKeys Compact™ Statement of Beliefs

In recognition of the right of every student to prepare for, enroll in and succeed in college, as a member of the College Board's CollegeKeys Compact, we believe that:

- All students are capable of being prepared for college and that educators, families, communities and policymakers have the responsibility to ensure that all students, including those from low-income backgrounds, graduate from high school ready for college success.
- All qualified students from low-income backgrounds should receive particular consideration in recruitment, admissions and financial aid, and that colleges and universities should make every effort to meet the financial needs of this population in ways that make enrollment and full participation in the college experience possible.
- Colleges and universities have a responsibility to provide essential academic support, financial aid, and targeted social and emotional support to ensure that all enrolled students will have every chance to succeed in their chosen academic programs.

To learn more and join the CollegeKeys Compact, visit [www.collegeboard.com/collegekeys](http://www.collegeboard.com/collegekeys).

## Low-Income Students

The College Board considers the following students to be low income:

Students enrolled in schools with large numbers of students from low-income backgrounds or enrolled in schools with low college-going or high dropout rates.

**-OR-**

Students whose families are eligible to receive economic subsidies targeted to low-income families, including students who are:

- Eligible for free or reduced-price lunch programs.
- Part of a family receiving public assistance.
- Residents of federally subsidized housing.

**-OR-**

Students who are homeless, in foster care, or deemed to be wards of the court.

**-OR-**

Students who will be first-generation college attendees (neither parent has a college degree) and require some or all of the services needed by the students identified in the first three categories.

# Innovation Awards

The Innovation Awards program was established to:

- **Disseminate** information about effective practices so they can be replicated, adapted and improved.
- **Recognize** exemplary programs that have proven effective in improving success for low-income students.
- **Mobilize** educators, institutional leaders and policymakers to promote policies and practices that expand opportunities for low-income students to get ready for, get into and get through college.

A review committee was established comprising two representatives from each of the College Board's six regions in K–12 and higher education. Submissions were evaluated on the following criteria:

- **Relevance:** Alignment to the principles and priorities outlined in the Compact
- **Innovation:** New, creative and sustainable strategies for advancing the goals of the Compact
- **Impact:** Demonstration of meaningful progress toward stated goals of the initiative
- **Potential:** Opportunity for replication and adaptation by other educators, institutions, and policymakers

In each of the six regions, three exceptional initiatives — one each in the categories of Getting Ready, Getting In, and Getting Through — were eligible to receive special recognition for their innovation and demonstrated efficacy in increasing the percentage of low-income students who get ready for, get into or get through college successfully.

Winning submissions received an award of \$5,000 to help expand or sustain their program. The awards were presented formally in a ceremony at each of the College Board regional forums in February 2011. The College Board applauds these winning programs, whose achievement has been noted throughout the catalog.

# 2011 Innovation Awards Effective Practices Review Committee

Darlene Davenport, Director of Guidance & Counseling, Cypress Fairbanks Independent School District, Texas

Odie Douglas, Assistant Superintendent, Lodi Unified School District, Calif.

Aliza Gilbert, College Counselor, Highland Park High School, Ill.

Linda Glover, Associate Vice President, Educational Outreach and Student Services, Arizona State University, Ariz.

Jean Jordan, Dean of Admission, Emory University, Ga.

Rebecca Lothringer, Director of Admissions, University of North Texas, Texas

Steven Miletto, Principal, Centennial High School, Ga.

Caroline Miller, Senior Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management, University of Cincinnati, Ohio

Beverly Richardson, Interim Vice President of Academic Programs, Burlington County College, N.J.

Arsallah Shairzay, Dean of Early College, Director of Advanced Placement Program, Friendship Collegiate Academy, Washington, D.C.

Audrey Smith, Dean of Enrollment, Smith College, Mass.

Linda Sturm, Director of Guidance, South Portland High School, Maine

# Getting Ready

## The 2010 CSU/AT&T Road to College California State University, Office of the Chancellor Long Beach, Calif.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The California State University (CSU) is the leader in educating students from California's growing, underserved communities, with more than half of all undergraduate degrees granted to the state's African American, Latino and Native American populations. As these students become the majority populations in California, it is even more crucial that CSU continues to reach out to them. Many underserved students come from households where they are the first person in their family to attend college and where English is not the primary language.

The CSU/AT&T Road to College Tour statewide outreach and education campaign takes a unique approach to traditional outreach by bringing the college experience directly to students, parents, teachers and counselors at middle schools and high schools in underserved communities. This mobile campaign helps students visualize themselves in college and see higher education as a reality while also providing resources to help them prepare for and apply to CSU's 23 campuses. The tour features a bio-diesel bus with bold graphics, a dorm room-style interior and state-of-the-art laptop computers connected to a specially designed website ([www.calstate.edu/roadtocollege](http://www.calstate.edu/roadtocollege)). The tour's Get on Board theme underscores CSU's focus on early preparation and its commitment to ensuring that all qualified students can attend college. A multilingual team of CSU student volunteers are at each event to work with the students and provide insight about college. Representatives from CSU and AT&T serve as advisers, and media events are created to generate publicity.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** The goal of the CSU/AT&T Road to College Tour is to reach out to students, parents, teachers and counselors in underserved communities, providing them with resources, tools and information to improve student preparation and increase student access to CSU. CSU developed specific performance measures for the program and achieved the following quantitative results:

- 7,500 students, parents, teachers and counselors were trained in the college admission and financial aid process.
- 7,500 students participated in the hands-on review of the college admission process and career discovery.
- More than 7,000 students and teachers were trained on CSUMentor, an online application.
- 10,000 information packets were distributed to students, parents and counselors.

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## Advanced Placement® Student Curriculum Review

### Miami-Dade County Public Schools

#### Miami, Fla.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The Advanced Placement® Student Curriculum Review (APSCR) is a Saturday event that provides students and their teachers with an end-of-year Advanced Placement course review and test-taking strategies. The presentations are facilitated by veteran AP® teachers of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools. The goal of the event is to provide a districtwide perspective on best practices for instruction and preparation during the final weeks leading up to the AP Exam administration. AP teacher/facilitators are selected from a pool of applicants to develop, prepare and deliver a workshop for students currently enrolled in AP courses. The workshop presentations address AP course content reviews, test-taking skills and study strategies. During the application process, the AP teachers/facilitators are asked specifically about their strengths as AP teachers and must meet minimum requirements: a valid professional education certificate; a minimum of four years successful teaching experience in the AP subject; and an above average Advanced Placement passing rate as determined by the mean passing rate for individual subjects on the previous year's AP Exam administration.

Following the completion of the AP Student Curriculum Review workshop, AP teachers/facilitators are paid for the hours of planning and for the six-hour presentation. AP teachers who serve as chaperones for students attending the workshop receive a stipend of \$100. AP teachers who wish to attend in order to learn best practices also receive a \$100 stipend.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** The success of the APSCR is measured by the number of student participants, the number of AP teachers in attendance, and an analysis of AP scores by school and by subject. During the APSCR of spring 2010, 550 AP students from across the district attended 24 different AP review sessions that included: Biology; Calculus AB (two sessions); Chemistry; English Language (two sessions); English Literature (two sessions); Environmental Science; European History (two sessions); French Language; Government & Politics: U.S.; Human Geography; Macroeconomics; Physics B; Psychology; Spanish Language (two sessions); Spanish Literature; Statistics; U.S. History (two sessions); and World History. In addition, 62 AP teachers attended as chaperones and also benefited from the instruction delivered.

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## Are You Ready?

### Oak Hill High School

#### Sabattus, Maine

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** Oak Hill High School supports student college readiness by offering one college- and career-ready level of instruction with open access to nine Advanced Placement courses and access to college classes through College for ME — Androscoggin. The PSAT/NMSQT® is administered to all 10th- and 11th-grade students, and presentations on how to use the PSAT/NMSQT results to improve performance are facilitated by the guidance department and student advisers. Oak Hill High School encourages students to use MyRoad™ as a tool. The program's goals include:

1. Providing a college-ready level of instruction grounded in a common syllabus.
2. Providing open access to all AP courses.
3. Providing an opportunity for all juniors to participate in a college visit by providing transportation and supervision to Maine colleges.
4. Providing financial support for economically disadvantaged students to attend college classes.
5. Creating a college-going environment where the faculty expect and respond to every student as a potential college student.

The target audience is the 45 percent of the student population that is economically disadvantaged.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** Success is measured by tracking Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) scores, PSAT/NMSQT and SAT® scores, and the success rates of students in attaining graduation credits. On average, NWEA reading scores show an increase of 1.5 to 2 grade levels after the ninth- and 10th-grade college-ready instruction. SAT scores, as measured by the Maine High School Assessment, increased 14 percent in reading and 11 percent in mathematics for the class of 2010. Students in the economically disadvantaged subgroup increased their scores by 18 percent in reading and 23 percent in mathematics.

In addition:

- Student data on college enrollment and graduation are tracked through Student Tracker.
- Access to AP is measured by the number of students who successfully complete the courses.
- College visits are measured by the number of students who attend the college tours.

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# Blueprint: College

## The Ohio State University

### Columbus, Ohio

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The Ohio State University (OSU) Office of Undergraduate Admissions and First Year Experience is working to ensure that low-income, first-generation and minority students will not lack the academic preparation necessary to enroll in college and be successful. Through the implementation and ongoing expansion of Blueprint: College and Blueprint: College 2.0, OSU increases college awareness among underserved families; expands parental involvement in education; fosters educational dreams in children; creates a college-going culture within families, schools and communities; and educates current college students on the social justice issue of access to education.

The Blueprint: College program is offered to families of students enrolled in Columbus City Schools, with a particular focus on families who have students preparing to transition into middle school. While parents attend workshops to learn about college admission, financial aid and strategies to improve their students' chances for academic success, current OSU students serve as mentors for children in grades K–6, implementing an age-appropriate college planning curriculum. In 2009, Blueprint: College 2.0 was designed and implemented to provide quarterly workshops that serve as booster shots for middle school families who graduated from the elementary school version of the program.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** Formative evaluations are conducted to evaluate the degree to which the program activities are implemented in accordance with the established goals and to explore alternative delivery procedures. The evaluations include parent perceptions of the value of the service and administrator views of the content and success of the program. Summative outcome evaluations are used to investigate whether the programs met the stated objectives. Pre- and post-testing methodology is employed. Data on other measures, such as whether or not the target number of families was served, are also analyzed. Parent participants yield statistically significant, improved outcomes on several measures compared to their non-program peers. These outcomes include improved attitudes and behaviors related to the value of higher education, financial preparation for college, involvement in day-to-day learning opportunities, involvement in community-based educational opportunities and conversations about college with children. Parents also demonstrate improved outcomes related to their understanding of the importance of high school graduation, higher education options available to students, and the middle and high school courses most important to academic success. Focus groups and meetings with a parent advisory council provide qualitative support for these outcome measures.

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# College Readiness for All: A Systemwide Approach Hillsborough County Public Schools Tampa, Fla.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The college readiness program in Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS) is built on attainment of the following goals and objectives: increasing the percentage of underrepresented students participating in AP classes to mirror the demographics of the school; providing all students as early as the sixth grade with Pre-AP® strategies; providing support for students new to AP classes with tutorial classes; fostering study groups; and assigning mentors for AP teachers and students. HCPS prepares students in grades six–12 for college through the implementation of a districtwide college readiness program that includes two components: academic rigor for all students and a comprehensive support system. HCPS has expanded AP courses at each of our 27 high schools and offers an average of 18 AP courses per site. The PSAT/NMSQT is offered at no charge to all students in grades nine–11, and AP Potential™ software is used to identify students for AP placement and to open access to AP classes. All students are provided with online access to the SAT to prepare for the test, and the SAT is provided free of charge to all juniors. A college and career counselor is in place at each high school, and staff development is provided to teachers, administrators and counselors to encourage equity and access for all students.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** Student participation in Pre-AP and AP course work has increased 36 percent in the past two years, more than 7,500 students are currently in AVID classes, and increased numbers of students are taking the PSAT/NMSQT and the SAT. The number of students scoring 3, 4 or 5 on AP Exams increased in all AP classes, with an increase of 100 percent for Hispanic students and 125 percent for African American students. In 2009, HCPS administered more than 26,000 AP Exams with a 36 percent pass rate, and 29,000 AP Exams in 2010 with a 38 percent pass rate. The number of principals, counselors and teachers trained in all aspects of the college readiness system increased. This past summer, HCPS, the University of South Florida and the College Board developed a Pre-AP strategies course to prepare middle and high school teachers on document-based questions. HCPS has an established successful partnership with the University of Tampa and the University of South Florida to provide on-site summer programs that focus on college readiness skills. More than 400 students participated last summer, and more than 1,600 students participated during the past four summers. Also, HCPS hosted a Summer Bridge Program on high school campuses that focused on the middle to high school transition and on the preparation of students for AP classes, with more than 2,700 ninth-graders participating last year.

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# Dream Project

## University of Washington

Seattle, Wash.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The University of Washington (UW) Dream Project is a student-initiated and student-led outreach program that aims to make higher education more accessible for first-generation and low-income students. The project is structured around peer-to-peer mentorship; UW students partner with local high school students to guide them through the college admission process. The Dream Project offers a unique opportunity for UW students to apply principles of social justice in a real-life context.

Partner high schools are selected on the availability of college access programs and the number of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches. The Dream Project mitigates obstacles to higher education by providing first-generation and low-income students with an outreach program that educates them about educational opportunities and assists the students in taking advantage of them. It works in concert with the UW Office of Undergraduate Academic Affairs, the Office of Minority Affairs & Diversity and the Department of Education, as well as administrators and teachers at 15 partner schools.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** Of the first three Dream Project cohorts, 84 percent (397 students) have attended college at more than 50 different institutions. These data include students deemed “at risk” to not graduate from high school and students with low GPAs. Students who attend the Admissions Workshop Weekend event are more likely than other applicants to be accepted to college in general and, specifically, to the University of Washington.

Many Dream Project college student participants responded to in-class reflections by stating that they learned more about social inequities and educational mobility through their hands-on experiences than through any other experience.

The Dream Project is implementing a four-year longitudinal study to be conducted by a third-party research group that will assess the value of its work for the high school and college participants as well as for the high schools and districts served.

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## Early Start Program

### California State University, Bakersfield

Bakersfield, Calif.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The goal of the Early Start Program is to provide students an opportunity to complete remedial/developmental education the summer before enrolling at California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB). CSUB operates in a region where more than 60 percent of the students come from a first-generation, low-income background. In addition, over 70 percent of the entering class at CSUB is not ready for college-level math and English. Students are invited through e-mails, high-school counselors and new student orientation programs on campus at CSUB. The Early Start classes are taught on campus by CSUB faculty, giving participants a chance to become accustomed to the campus and meet faculty before beginning their academic careers. Students attend classes for two weeks, from Monday to Thursday for four hours a day. To maximize success and reduce the load on students, only one subject matter may be taken at a time. Therefore, if a student selects to enroll in the math class, he or she is not allowed to enroll in the English class concurrently. The program is offered at no cost to students.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** Students are placed at a remedial level based on their score on the CSU placement exams: the English Placement Test (EPT) and the Entry Level Math (ELM) exam. There are two levels of remediation in math and English at CSUB. Each student's EPT/ELM score determines the level upon which he or she is placed. Instructors are provided with the scores and set the curriculum accordingly for each group of students. The success of the program is measured by the placement of the student after the two weeks of class. A student may move up one level of remediation, two levels of remediation (i.e., college ready) or no level. A student who moves up at least one level is an indicator of success for the Early Start Program.

Over the past four years, the Early Start Program has experienced an average success rate of 60 percent in English and 55 percent in math. Further study is needed to track the Early Start participants to analyze their performance in their first year of college. The Early Start Program held during summer 2010 was the largest ever, with over 560 participants. For fall 2010, the percentage of incoming students who needed remediation in math and English at CSUB decreased by 8 percent and 5 percent, respectively.

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## Heritage/University of Portland Immersion Project Heritage High School Vancouver, Wash.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The goal of the Heritage/University of Portland Immersion Project is to provide 11th-grade AVID students with full access to the college admission and course selection process. Additionally, this program provides a unique opportunity to experience life on a college campus. Students begin by completing a slightly modified version of the Common Application, which is submitted and reviewed by admission counselors at the University of Portland. Authentic feedback is provided directly to the AVID students when they receive their “letter of acceptance” for the three-day immersion program. Heritage AVID students select their courses from the summer offerings at the University of Portland, are assigned roommates in the dormitory and follow general orientation procedures on campus. Each morning, AVID students complete physical training with Army cadets in the Reserve Officer Training Corps. AVID students sit side-by-side with university undergraduates in courses ranging from philosophy to physiology, and they attend special evening seminars with university students and non-instructional staff. A writing and seminar experience offers an opportunity for students to process and reflect on their experiences. The three-day immersion culminates with families joining university faculty and staff in a closing formal dinner.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** The Heritage AVID Program has grown from 54 students in 2006 to 172 in September 2010. A requirement of the AVID program is that students take the PSAT/NMSQT in the 10th grade and the SAT by graduation. In order to enroll in AVID, students must take at least one AP course by the 11th grade and at least two AP courses by graduation. As a result, schoolwide AP course completion and exam participation increased from 158 exams in May 2006 to 475 exams in May 2010.

Results for the Heritage/University of Portland (UP) Immersion project:

- School Year 2008: Of 39 students, 30 completed UP Immersion, 25 enrolled in college and two were accepted at the University of Portland.
- School Year 2009: Of 28 students, 27 completed UP Immersion, 24 enrolled in college, three were accepted at the University of Portland and one enrolled.
- School Year 2010: Of 30 students, 24 completed UP Immersion.

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## Leadership in College

### Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities

San Antonio, Texas

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), through its affiliation with Hispanic-Serving School Districts and the U.S. Army Accessions Command, is working to increase the number of minority officers in the U.S. Army and to increase college awareness and knowledge among first-generation minority students (neither parents nor guardians of the students have college degrees). In order for students to fully envision pursuing a college education, they must have the opportunity to visit a university campus, meet the administrators and talk to admission representatives. These visits can help students learn first-hand about an institution's admission process, financial aid policies, leadership programs such as ROTC, and other opportunities that will help them succeed in college and in life. Unfortunately, in tight economic times, college trips are among the first things to be cut from K–12 budgets. Another barrier to college trips is a lack of time from counselors and school administrators to plan and implement the tours. In response to this critical need, HACU has partnered with the U.S. Army to bring 500 local high school students over a five-day period to one of the member colleges and universities in San Antonio, Texas.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** The success of the program is measured against the following quantitative criteria: an increase in the number of low-income, first-generation minority students visiting a college; an increase in the number of colleges visited per student; an increase in the number of applications submitted to the visited institution; an increase in the number of students matriculated from participating high schools to the participating institutions; and an increase in the number of students enrolled in ROTC programs. Based on the evaluations completed, 600 students, primarily graduating seniors, have obtained knowledge not only about a local university but also about ROTC programs; key questions to ask offices of admission and financial aid; where to look for scholarships; and what a student must observe when visiting a university. For 550 of the 600 participating students, this was their first time on a college campus. Five hundred of the 600 students stated that the college admission and financial aid process seemed less intimidating. Since the visit, students have been followed as they applied to colleges. Four hundred twenty-nine of the 600 students who visited the University of Texas at San Antonio during this program submitted an application to the institution.

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## The LIGHT (Leading, Implementing, Guiding High School Transition) Mentoring Program

### Prince George's Community College

Largo, Md.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The LIGHT (Leading, Implementing, Guiding High School Transition) Mentoring Program was created in 2006 at Prince George's Community College (PGCC) by the Office of Recruitment. The program's goal is to assist incoming high school students and their parents with the transition from high school to college via workshops and mentoring from enrollment services student ambassadors and recruitment staff. The student ambassadors are currently enrolled students who assist the Office of Recruitment with recruitment initiatives. The program reaches out to students graduating from the county high schools and is held throughout the summer preceding fall enrollment. The prospective students and the student ambassadors work closely together in a workshop setting to prepare for the fall semester. Workshop topics include time management, deciphering a college syllabus, goal setting, orientation to "Owl Link" (PGCC's registration system), study skills, note-taking skills, financial aid, high school transition, FERPA and other topics that promote success. To ensure a smooth transition, the recruitment staff works closely with the parents on FERPA, financial aid and "letting go." Once the students begin their first semester, they are then transitioned into retention services programs at Prince George's Community College.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** The success of this program is measured by the retention of students from the fall to the spring semesters. This program is only meant to be a first-semester enrollment mentoring program. Once the students are successfully in their first semester, they are moved to retention services and the faculty mentoring program for additional support. The program has shown growth and success over the past four years. In 2006, 19 of the 22 program participants were retained to the spring semester. In 2007, 40 of the 44 program participants were retained to the spring semester. In 2008, there was a large increase in participants and retention of 63 of the 82 program participants. In 2009, the college retained 44 of 67 program participants. The 2010 program currently works with 71 students.

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# SEO Scholars Program

## Sponsors for Educational Opportunity

New York, N.Y.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The SEO Scholars Program is an out-of-school-time program designed to bridge the academic divide between urban students of color and students who have had rigorous educational opportunities. The program targets low-income public high school students who demonstrate the motivation to succeed. The college readiness component of the Scholars Program provides rigorous academic preparation that helps students build the core academic skills they need to gain admission to and succeed in college. Students attend more than 600 hours of classes in critical reading, critical writing, vocabulary, grammar and mathematics. Classes are held three Saturdays per month, plus one day each week after school, and for three weeks during the summer. Beginning in the ninth grade, the academic components are augmented by leadership experiences and college exploration. The services continue through to the students' college graduation. During the 2009-10 program year, 261 high school students and 193 college students participated in the Scholars Program. In January 2010, 80 ninth-graders entered the Scholars Program Class of 2013. Members of this class attend more than 50 New York City public high schools.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** In 2009, the 45 SEO seniors outperformed all college-bound seniors nationally on SAT scores at each GPA level. The 22 African American SEO seniors outperformed white college-bound seniors and their African American peers at each GPA level, as well as all college-bound seniors nationally. All 45 students received college admission offers; 86.6 percent received offers of admission from colleges ranked in the top three Barron's tiers; 73.3 percent received offers from colleges ranked in the top two tiers. The students received more than \$950,000 in grants and awards for their first year of college.

In 2010, all 61 high school students received college admission offers, 93.5 percent from colleges ranked in the top three Barron's tiers and 68.9 percent from colleges ranked in the top two tiers. The students received grants and awards totaling more than \$1.5 million for their first year of college.

Of the 45 students in the SEO Class of 2006/College Class of 2010, 42 (93 percent) participated in the college-support component of the Scholars Program, 33 (79 percent) graduated or will graduate on time, and nine (21 percent) are expected to graduate one to two semesters late due to issues with financial aid or credits lost in transfer.

The average cumulative GPA of all 193 SEO College Scholars as of spring 2010 was 3.12.

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## SpringBoard® in all English I and English II Classes

### Baton Rouge Magnet High School

Baton Rouge, La.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The SpringBoard® curriculum was chosen out of concern for the lack of minority students in Advanced Placement classes that are offered in the 11th- and 12th-grade AP English classes at Baton Rouge Magnet High School. The SpringBoard system integrates four essential characteristics, including rigor that emphasizes higher-order thinking skills as well as the students' own responsibility for their learning. Relevance is another essential characteristic that explores real-world contextual settings and situations. Relationships enhance the connections among students, their teachers and the academic content; and the results extend from both student performance and increased AP enrollment and diversity. The SpringBoard curriculum fosters student critical thinking skills that will enable all students in the 10th-grade to be successful in Advanced Placement classes during the last two years in high school.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** The success of the SpringBoard program is measured by the number of students who register for AP classes the following year. Students who would never consider taking these classes are now enrolled for the first time. Data from the Louisiana High Stakes Testing are also reviewed. Tenth-grade students from the 2009-10 school year are the first group of students to complete two years of the SpringBoard curriculum. These students showed a six-point increase in critical thinking and an eight-point increase in reading. Minority students closed the achievement gap to two percentage points in reading and three percentage points in applying reasoning and problem solving. Although the scores did not increase significantly in other areas, there is no achievement gap in the areas of reading, analyzing and responding to literature, and in locating, selecting and synthesizing information; there is only a one-percentage point gap in writing competency. The SpringBoard curriculum is responsible for closing the achievement gap with Baton Rouge Magnet High School students.

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## **STAC (Start Thinking About College)** University of Nevada, Reno — The Center for Student Cultural Diversity Reno, Nev.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** STAC (Start Thinking About College) was launched by the Center for Student Cultural Diversity in spring 2007 in collaboration with the Washoe County School District. The program brings seventh-graders from all over the school district to the University of Nevada, Reno. Students attend workshops about the benefits of earning a postsecondary degree and hear from motivational guest speakers. The objective of the program is to expose students at a young age so they can be better prepared when entering high school and can start planning to attend a university. STAC has served more than 3,000 students, the majority of whom are from low-income backgrounds and are Hispanics/Latinos. STAC also works with parents, the majority of whom do not have a postsecondary education, so they have the information they need to help their children succeed.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** The program's success is measured by Likert scale evaluations. Students evaluate the workshops as well as the guest speakers. Parents and chaperones also take part in the survey.

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## Steps to Getting Ready for College

### I CAN Center of Excellence

Marion, Ohio

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The I CAN Center of Excellence provides college access services in an area with a poverty level of 19.7 percent, free and reduced lunch rates of 60–70 percent, and households that have college degrees averaging 11.1 percent. I CAN delivers targeted classroom programs in K–12, with the goal of motivating and encouraging all children in the region (particularly those who are first-generation, minority and financially in need) to stay in school, receive their diplomas and pursue postsecondary education. The program advises students and parents on the benefits of postsecondary education and how to pay for it. Last dollar grant assistance is provided to qualified students who have demonstrated financial need and have been admitted to a postsecondary program of study.

Steps to Getting Ready for College targets students in the eighth-grade and follows them with individual and group programs in each succeeding year. In a series of sessions, students see the contrast of expected salaries and types of jobs they can expect without a high school diploma, with a diploma, and with a two-year, four-year and graduate degree. Using the KnowHow2GO plan, students are counseled in goal setting and the types of courses that they should be taking. Moving into the ninth-grade, students participate in the “college justification” program. Through the use of the KnowHow2GO program and the college.gov website, students are given a tour of admission processes, dormitory living, use of transcripts, and the importance of extracurricular activities and volunteerism. During the 10th-grade, students attend a series of panel discussions by college students who are recipients of I CAN’s Last Dollar Grants, and sessions on financial aid, grants and work-study, college applications, essay writing, and the importance of admission testing. As 11th-graders, planning with a calendar is initiated. I CAN conducts several six-hour intensive admission testing workshops for juniors and seniors. Juniors also receive counseling in college searches and visits via the Internet. Sessions are conducted on FAFSA forecasting and summer job opportunities. Seniors receive seven individual and small group sessions where they are assisted with admission testing, FAFSA completion, admission applications, financial aid, scholarships, grants and loans. Students have an opportunity for individual sessions to deal with problems they are encountering.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** The Steps to Getting Ready for College program follows students from the eighth-grade through the 12th-grade and compiles the success rate of graduation and matriculation to postsecondary education. Success is measured by tracking students who begin the practice in grade eight and complete it in grade 12 as a percentage. Since the inception of the practice, the percentages have increased steadily. In the 2009-10 class, 41 percent enrolled in college.

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## Youth With Purpose, Inc. Mentoring Program Youth With Purpose, Inc. Beltsville, Md.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** Youth With Purpose is an after-school support and intervention mentoring program for at-risk ninth- and 10th-grade students, most of whom qualify for free lunches. The students remain in the program until graduation. The specific goals are to improve academic achievement and social skills and to enhance character. The ultimate goal is for students to graduate and go on to college. Participants in the Youth With Purpose program meet after school and on occasional weekends for social and intellectual engagement. The program includes mentoring, tutoring, character and self-esteem education, skill-building and financial literacy workshops, debate, motivational speakers, chess strategies, and critical thinking discussions. Field trips to college campuses, museums and cultural events offer opportunities for students to expand their horizons. Community service is an important component of the program, and students are required to make regular visits to a nearby nursing home, distribute food to homeless residents and participate in other humanitarian outreach projects.

Youth With Purpose offers positive alternatives and support before at-risk students become alienated and involved in drugs and gang violence. It engages students, providing a sense of belonging to achieve positive results.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** The success of Youth With Purpose is measured by the number of students who graduate from high school and the number of students who attend college. The number of students who have turned away from antisocial behavior to become productive citizens is also an affirmation of the program's success. Before graduating, many students become involved in helping the school and neighboring communities.

Another measure of success is the popularity of Youth With Purpose, both in the school and in the community. There is a waiting list to get into the program. Administrators, counselors, teachers and parents recommend Youth With Purpose as a positive program for all students.

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# Getting In



# ISA College Prep/Acceptance

## Wyandanch Memorial High School

Wyandanch, N.Y.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The Institute of Student Achievement (ISA) establishes small learning communities within the school to help support the low-income student population/district toward college entry. Resources are used to promote a positive climate for success. Fridays are College T-Shirt Day and all staff and students wear a college T-shirt. Beginning as early as December, districtwide announcements of every student who is accepted into college are made on the loudspeaker and via e-mail. Students submit applications on-site to a college representative and receive an on-site acceptance. The “Finish Strong” theme encourages students to make the choice to finish the school year to the best of their ability. After school preparation for Regents exams is provided, DVDs and pictures around the school reflect the college visits taken over the years.

Cohorts track students from the time they enter ninth-grade to their senior year. The ISA provides data from eighth-grade assessments that allow teachers to provide remedial instruction where students need it the most, along with surveys that allow students and parents to provide feedback toward the curriculum, high school graduation requirements and college plans. The school counselor provides the teachers and administration with data that show the students’ highest Regents scores and highlight the scores that are below passing to identify students who are in jeopardy of not graduating. ISA utilizes the data to become more aware of the students’ academic standing, and provides individual mentors to help students and parents reach their graduation and college goals.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** By March 2010, more than 85 students were accepted into college and 80 percent of the class of 2010 graduated. By January 2011, Wyandanch predicts that 126 of 136 students will graduate, with 90 students going to a two- or a four-year college.

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# Kenwood Academy Brotherhood

## Kenwood Academy

Chicago, Ill.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The Kenwood Academy Brotherhood program seeks to help young men from the south side of Chicago make good choices when it comes to academics, social engagement and community involvement. It has become clear that minority men (especially African Americans and Latinos) and lower-income men in the Chicago Public Schools are severely less likely to graduate from high school. The challenge that the Kenwood Academy Brotherhood faces is that many of these young men have problems outside of the classroom. In order to help these young men in the classroom pursue higher education, the Brotherhood helps them break through the boundaries that are found in their home environment. In order to do this, the Brotherhood implements a program that combines the social aspects these young men face every day with the challenges they face in the classroom.

The program is an intensive student leadership group to help train freshmen males of Kenwood Academy to become leaders for themselves, their families, their communities and the school. The Brotherhood meets weekly and offers activities such as open forums, tutoring, homework/class work assistance, college visits, computer exploration, public speaking, and creative expressions through poetry, rap and short stories.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** The success of the program is measured, in part, by the grade point averages and graduation rates of the Brotherhood's young men against their peers. The in-program GPA has been consistently between 0.7 to 1.0 points higher than the GPA for Kenwood male students who are not in the program. The Brotherhood has also consistently graduated between 92–100 percent of its senior students on time, which is much higher than the 38 percent of Latino and African American men who, on average, graduate from the Chicago Public Schools. Program success is also measured by how many young men show up every Friday afternoon. The Brotherhood meeting is purposely planned on Friday because that is a night where young people can get into trouble. Since the second year of the Brotherhood, anywhere from 60–90 young men have been active participants in the program in an academic year. Weekly participation is active, providing anecdotal evidence that the Brotherhood is a success.

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## Take Stock in Children Monroe County School District Key West, Fla.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The overarching goal of the Take Stock in Children program is to provide opportunities for low-income students to receive a college education. Take Stock in Children students sign contracts agreeing to keep their grades at the A, B or C levels throughout high school, obey the code of student conduct, stay crime- and drug-free, and meet with their mentor weekly.

All students from low-income families in Monroe County with the desire, motivation and potential to go to college are awarded a scholarship opportunity. Take Stock in Children and the Monroe County Education Foundation promise to pay all tuition and student fees for a four-year college education. Students can attend any of Florida's 28 community colleges for two years, followed by two more years at any of Florida's 11 state universities.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** The program's success is measured by the number of Take Stock in Children high school graduates who matriculate to college. In 2010, 33 seniors from the three Monroe County School District high schools, along with their families, friends, mentors and program supporters attended the event, bringing the 10-year graduation total for the program to 301 students who may not have otherwise attended college.

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## Vandy Fan for a Day

### Vanderbilt University

Nashville, Tenn.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** Vanderbilt University hosts low-income ninth- to 11th-grade students, and their families, from the greater Vanderbilt area (encompassing a four-state region) for a day. After the students participate in small group workshops on academic, admission and financial aid issues, the day's highlight is attending a Vanderbilt football game. Vanderbilt launched this new outreach initiative with the goal of engaging, early on, low-income students who are excelling in their high school careers. High school counselors choose the students, invitations are sent, and the student and his or her family are invited to attend. The purpose is to let students and their parents realize that attending a highly selective college is possible and to help the entire family unit become comfortable on a college campus. The purpose of Vandy Fan for a Day is to ensure that students attend college and to instill in these families the reality that, with hard work and academic success, their children can attend college.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** This initiative has led to tremendous success in an increase of applications for this group of students. Of the students who attend Vandy Fan for a Day, 39 percent apply, and the acceptance rate was 44 percent versus our overall admission rate of 17.9 percent for fall 2010. The yield rate for Vandy Fan for a Day participants is 82 percent versus 40.9 percent for the entire fall 2010 freshmen class. These are students who would have likely never applied to Vanderbilt.

Each year, attendance for this event has grown. In 2007, 27 students and their families attended. In 2008, 45 students and their families attended; in 2009, there were 53 students and their families. In 2010, the program is completely full, with a waiting list.

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## **YEP Scholars Program**

### **Education Services Foundation**

Jackson, Miss.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** Youth Employment Program (YEP) Scholars is a partnership with Operation Shoestring, a community organization, and Lanier High School, an inner-city public high school, both serving low-income students and families. The YEP program is provided to 11th-grade students at Lanier High School who commit to a training program that teaches them how to look for a job, interview, dress professionally, and excel at work and in their lives. Community partners employ the students during the summer and serve as mentors. Education Services Foundation (ESF) assists the students in applying to and paying for college. On a regular basis, ESF works with students on researching colleges, taking college tours, writing an essay, completing an application, completing the FAFSA and state grant applications, and providing laundry bags of towels, sheets and other necessities for moving into a residence hall. The program reaches students from high school through the college transition and remains a part of students' lives until college graduation.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** During 2009-10, 11 students participated in the YEP program. ESF worked with 10 of the 11 students and all 10 entered four-year colleges and universities in fall 2010. The 2010-11 class has 18 students. Success is measured during the high school senior year by meeting the goals of completing applications for admission and attending college tours, and in the spring by participation in FAFSA days, receipt of award letters and other college admission activities. The true success will be measured as the students continue through college to graduation.

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# Getting Through

## Canton Early College High School Stark Education Partnership Canton, Ohio

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** In 2005, the Canton City Schools (CCS), Stark State College of Technology (SSCT), Canton Professional Educators Association (CPEA) and the Stark Education Partnership (SEP) came together to found Canton Early College High School (CECHS). With only 12.5 percent of its adults with a bachelor's degree or higher and 78 percent of its students living in poverty, Canton's poorest neighborhoods needed a compelling example that college is possible. From the onset, CECHS was envisioned not just as a school but also as a culture-shifting proof-point for the community.

The target audiences are low-income, minority, low-performing, first-generation college-going students. CECHS partners are fully committed to the goal of both a high school diploma and an associate degree for each student at the end of four years. When the inaugural class graduated in 2009, 32 students had succeeded in meeting this goal. This meant that 53 percent of CECHS graduates earned an associate degree compared to 33 percent at other early colleges in Ohio and 10 percent nationally. Another 28 earned between 21 and 59 hours of college credit. The remaining students had returned to regular high school or had left the district. Even for those who had returned to regular high school, the results were impressive. Ninety-one percent of all the inaugural class had graduated high school on time. In 2010, a second class graduated with 31 students earning associate degrees and another 31 with between 15 and 59 hours of college credit.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** SSCT and CCS conduct ongoing formative evaluation by monitoring and measuring student progress toward earning high school and college credit. On behalf of CCS, SEP conducts summative evaluations by measuring outcomes associated with the primary goal of 100 percent of all students with an associate degree and high school diploma. Using SSCT and CCS data, student results are disaggregated on the basis of gender, race, poverty, performance and first-generation college-going status. Students returning to regular high school are tracked for on-time graduation relative to college hours earned.

Graduates are surveyed on their plans to complete associate degrees or to continue for bachelor's degrees. Last year, CCS instituted the National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker System, which will enable further college enrollment and completion tracking.

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## Center for Academic Transitions

### Palo Alto College

San Antonio, Texas

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The Center for Academic Transitions (CAT) at Palo Alto College provides comprehensive services to help students in the following areas: transferring to four-year institutions, graduating with degrees, connecting with the college through alumni services and/or finding employment. All areas have the common challenge of student use of services and seek to accomplish the common goal of helping students make the transition successfully. For assisting students in transferring, the effective practices include continued development of partnerships with four-year institutions, joint admission agreements, dedicated transfer advisers and year-round events such as thematic major months. The effective practices of the graduation initiative include receiving, reviewing and processing degree audits and academic plans for students with more than 45 credit hours. This initiative includes an outreach component that involves contacting students eligible for or close to graduation. In an effort to assist students in obtaining employment, CAT offers résumé, interview skills, financial planning and etiquette workshops. The career and job placement portion of the center also provides employer panel and employment site visit events for students. The target audience at Palo Alto included more than 9,000 students for fall 2010. Approximately 66 percent of the students at Palo Alto were Hispanic, with an average age of 24. Over half of the student population receives the Federal Pell Grant and almost three quarters of the student population receive some form of financial aid. Finally, a large percentage of the students are considered to be the first in their families to enroll in college.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** The overall transfer rate for students at Palo Alto is 18.9 percent, and the percentage of students enrolled in Texas senior institutions within six months of graduation is 20.3 percent, compared to a benchmark of the overall Alamo college rate of 17 percent. The average transfer rate for Hispanic students in Texas is 8.9 percent, and is 38 percent at Palo Alto College. In 2008-09, CAT worked with 29 institutions to create partnerships and articulation agreements. In 2009-10, those partnerships increased by 28 percent to include 40 institutions. CAT also has a strong partnership with the University of Northern Iowa. Fourteen students began at Northern Iowa this fall; more than 140 students participated in the program since fall 1998, with a graduation rate of 83.9 percent. Through the Palo Alto College Graduation Initiative, CAT increased the number of degrees and certificates awarded to students from 712 in 2009 to 1,296 in 2010, an increase of 82 percent. Finally, in 2008, 20.7 percent of Palo Alto graduates were employed within six months of graduation and 32.4 percent of technical students were employed within six months of graduation. In 2010, 12 résumé workshops and six interview skills workshops were held.

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## College Life 101

### University of Nevada, Reno — The Center for Student Cultural Diversity Reno, Nev.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** College Life 101 (CL 101) is a retention and support program designed to help students graduate. It is comprised of three main components: weekly meetings with an adviser, mid-term progress reports and required volunteer hours. The target audience of College Life 101 is college students who self-identify as being low income and first generation, and each component of the program has been designed to meet the unique challenges of these students. Low-income students require special assistance to overcome obstacles that wealthier students may not encounter. Some of their unique challenges include absence of material and emotional resources, unstable family life, the politics surrounding immigration, and unpreparedness caused by under-resourced public schools. College Life 101 offers services to address these issues to help students persist in their course work, graduate with a four-year degree, and achieve a future of prosperity and stability.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** The success of College Life 101 is measured by program retention rates and successful academic interventions. The Fall 2009 CL 101 cohort consisted of 192 students, with 182 (95 percent) retained or graduated for spring 2010 and 174 (91 percent) retained or graduated for fall 2010. A total of 10 students in the program graduated from the university in the 2009-10 academic year. The average cumulative GPA for CL 101 students is 2.88. The Fall 2010 College Life 101 cohort currently is 296 students, a 54 percent increase over last year.

Of the 186 interventions conducted in fall 2009, 131 (63 percent) were successful, as defined by the students improving their grades to above a C- by semester's end or by dropping the course before the final drop date. Of the 143 interventions conducted in spring 2010, 96 (67 percent) were successful.

Program success is also measured by a survey conducted the first week of the fall semester each year and by the number of students entering the program through student referrals. The director reads the responses, and if there are ways that the program can be changed to improve its effectiveness, steps are taken to change the program. The student referral rate is measured as part of the intake interview for the College Life 101 program.

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# College Persistence Program

## College Forward

Austin, Texas

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The College Persistence Program supports low-income and first-generation college students who have a proven record of achievement in the College Forward program. Program students face tremendous financial, social, academic, cultural and emotional barriers to college persistence and graduation. With oversight from a full-time College Persistence Program manager, eight full-time AmeriCorps College Persistence coaches work one-on-one with students to provide academic and student support services throughout the four to six years the students attend college, including:

1. Transition support: introduction to college life, registration, housing
2. Academic mentoring: course selection, college road map, study skills and test-taking
3. Financial aid counseling: individualized intervention and advocacy
4. Campus engagement: club and activity guidance, AmeriCorps and service opportunities
5. Peer networking and leadership: reunions, online networking and the Collegian Leadership Council
6. Career development: internships, résumé/interview workshops and job hunting guidance

**MEASURING SUCCESS** The performance measures include:

1. The number of seniors accepted to college who enroll in college within 12 months of high school graduation. Last year, 89.5 percent of seniors from the class of 2009 (198 out of 221 students) enrolled in college within 12 months of their May/June 2009 graduation. Thus far, 87.7 percent of seniors from the class of 2010 (285 out of 325 students) have enrolled in college.
2. The number of students who enrolled in college and have persisted in college. At the end of the 2009-10 school year, 86 percent (389 out of 453 students) who enrolled in college also persisted in college. (This represents the percentage for all students, regardless of what year they graduated from high school.) College enrollment data are tracked through the National Student Clearinghouse. Persistence is measured from first to second year, second to third year and third to fourth year. In the last year, these numbers were 83.8 percent, 86.2 percent and 90.4 percent, respectively.
3. Retention of AmeriCorps College Persistence coaches. College Forward has one of the best retention records for AmeriCorps members nationwide and was selected as one of the 52 most innovative AmeriCorps programs this year. Since the beginning of the program, College Forward has maintained 100 percent of the AmeriCorps members who serve as College Persistence coaches.

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# College Success Program

## Bottom Line

Jamaica Plain, Mass.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** By acting as a parent, counselor and mentor, Bottom Line offers low-income and first-generation students the support that a wealthier student with college-educated parents typically receives. In the College Access Program, counselors help high school seniors navigate every step of the application process, including researching schools, writing essays and applying for financial aid. Counselors build a strong relationship with each student during individual meetings. When acceptance letters arrive, they help students select a suitable college. After college decisions are made, students who go on to attend specific local colleges are invited to join the College Success Program. As a first step to success, rising freshman participate in summer transitional programming. When students arrive on campus, Bottom Line becomes a financial aid advocate, academic adviser, career counselor and mentor. Support is offered to students in four areas: degree, employability, aid and life (DEAL). Bottom Line offers guidance for up to six years or until a degree is earned. The strong relationships that counselors maintain with students enable them to resolve problems and help the students achieve success. With this method, 73 percent of the program's college students graduate within six years, approximately the same rate as their wealthier peers.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** Since its founding, 98 percent of the program's high school seniors have been accepted to at least one college and 73 percent have graduated from college in six years or less. Short-term success is measured via campus visits, phone calls, e-mails and surveys when students arrive on campus. Information about each student's financial aid, grades, credits, employment and general well-being are regularly updated in a database, which allows for easy reporting. As part of the program model, Bottom Line conducts a formal diagnostic twice a year to resolve any problems students are having in the degree, employability, aid and life categories.

According to a study conducted by a doctoral candidate at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, students who participate in Bottom Line's College Success Program are up to 43 percent more likely to graduate than their peers. The results of this evaluation demonstrate the success of Bottom Line's programs and the organization's progress toward reaching its goals.

The results of a 2008 survey showed that 92 percent of College Success Program graduates obtained full-time positions within six months of graduating. Of the alumni who graduated more than two years earlier, 90 percent were earning over \$30,000 per year, more than most of their families earned only several years earlier.

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## Developmental Education Academy California State University, Dominguez Hills Carson, Calif.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** Not only do many California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH) students face complex challenges in preparing for college-level work, once at CSUDH they are required to achieve college-level proficiency in math and English within two semesters or face the possibility of being disenrolled. The Developmental Education Academy is designed to permanently increase institutional capacity to dramatically shift the number of students achieving success in their first two years so that they will remain on track to degree completion. CSUDH accomplishes this through collaboration among instruction, wide-ranging staff development, comprehensive student success services, the implementation of best practices and the integration of a new early warning system.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** The Developmental Education Academy evaluates its effectiveness in achieving the following four objectives:

1. A minimum of 70 percent of all students entering the Academy who need math remediation will successfully complete their remediation requirements within one year.
2. A minimum of 75 percent of all students entering the Academy who need English remediation will successfully complete remediation requirements within one year.
3. Given enhanced advising, tracking and student support initiatives, 70 percent of first-time freshmen entering the Academy will be in good standing by the end of the first year.
4. A matched sample of freshmen nonparticipants will be used to gauge the impact of the Academy at the end of fall 2008, 2009 and 2010 and the end of spring 2009, 2010 and 2011 by comparing: developmental education course completion, grade point average, attrition, academic standing and probation rates.

While the fall 2008 cohort and the rest of the freshman class showed significant differences in academic preparation, they were on par after year 1 and year 2. The Academy was instrumental in keeping the cohort on pace with their better-prepared peers. The grade point, SAT, and entry-level math and English averages for Academy students all showed improvement.

The fall 2009 cohort was on par with their peers after the first semester, with a 90 percent retention rate. Academy students boasted a 3.57 grade point average and completed at least 18 units, far surpassing their counterparts. The first-year retention rate stands at 89 percent and the grade point average and units completed continue to surpass the general population.

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## First Year Experience

### California State University, Fresno

Fresno, Calif.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** First-generation students at California State University Fresno who are not judged proficient in either math or English are placed in a four course, general education-based learning community in the fall semester (or five courses in the spring semester). Several of the courses are writing intensive, and the faculty integrate their courses around a common theme. Students participate in a leadership development short course, are provided mentors and engage in a community-based service learning project of their choosing. The goals of the First Year Experience (FYE) program include preparing students for college-level work in math and English, helping them successfully transition from high school to college, involving them in the larger community, preparing them to be student mentors for the subsequent year's FYE program, and increasing the likelihood they will persist to graduation.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** FYE measures of effectiveness include the number of students completing remedial work, the students' GPAs compared to a cohort of similar students, the first-year retention rate and the number of students who become mentors in subsequent years. During the first semester, FYE student grades and first-term retention were equivalent to those in their cohort. In the second semester, FYE students earned higher GPAs and had a higher percentage on the Dean's List or the President's List. The percentage of FYE students in academic trouble was lower. A full report can be found at:  
[http://www.csufresno.edu/irap/research/documents/2010/fye\\_and%20asc\\_progress.pdf](http://www.csufresno.edu/irap/research/documents/2010/fye_and%20asc_progress.pdf).

While all of the high-impact educational practices being used in the program exist elsewhere on campus, FYE is the only program that has integrated all of them. Thus, it is the sum of all of these practices that is innovative. Students truly appreciate the work that is being done on their behalf and have committed to working hard to be successful as well as making an effort to give back.

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## Husky Promise

### University of Washington

Seattle, Wash.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The Husky Promise is a guarantee to Washington state students from low-income and lower-middle-income families that finances will not deter them from reaching their goals and realizing their potential if they are admitted to the University of Washington (UW). With the Husky Promise, UW promises to cover the cost of tuition for qualified students who otherwise could not afford to attend. Tuition for students eligible for the Husky Promise will be covered first by federal and state grants such as the Pell Grant or Washington State Need Grant. If a student's eligibility for these programs does not equal the full cost of tuition, the University of Washington will make up the difference with institutional grants or scholarships. To be eligible for a Husky Promise, the student must:

- Be a Washington state resident.
- Be eligible for the Pell Grant or Washington State Need Grant Program. (Currently, the Washington State Need Grant program funds students with family incomes at or below 70 percent of the state median family income.)
- Submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid by the priority deadline and enroll full time.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** The success of the Husky Promise program is measured by the growth in admission of low-income and lower-middle-income students. When Husky Promise started in 2007-08, 5,680 students qualified for the program. In 2010-11, an estimated 7,800 students will qualify for Husky Promise — an increase of 37 percent. The economic downturn and changes to the federal family contribution formulas have increased the Husky Promise population, but the existence of the program has raised awareness of UW accessibility and encouraged students to enroll and continue to attend.

The percentage of eligible Pell recipients at the University of Washington is monitored. In 2007-08, UW had approximately 22 percent Pell-eligible undergraduates at its three campuses. In 2009-10, the projection of Pell-eligible undergraduates is 29 percent.

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# Onward College Support Program

## Harlem Educational Activities Fund

New York, N.Y.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** Onward is the college support component of the Harlem Educational Activities Fund (HEAF) academic and youth development program. Its goal is to provide first-generation college students with the social, emotional and community support needed to successfully transition to college and obtain an undergraduate degree. HEAF cultivates the expectation that students will go to college and graduate, and Onward offers students the tools and support to do so. Nearly 90 percent of HEAF students are African Americans or Latinos and come from neighborhoods of extreme poverty and high crime, drug use, and unemployment. The vast majority of Onward students have never had a family member attend college, and 80 percent are from immigrant families.

Onward begins preparing high school students for the college transition through such programs as the yearlong Senior Seminar and end-of-year Senior Retreat, where students discuss their expectations of college and how they may differ from reality, and receive college and financial counseling. The Onward program coordinator remains in contact with students throughout their college education, providing advice, encouragement and interventions when students are struggling or at risk of dropping out. Onward connects students to the HEAF community through college student conferences, service and volunteer opportunities for college students and alumni, and social networking sites. Onward facilitates career advancement through such programs as HEAF Fellows, where top-performing HEAF college juniors and seniors visit companies in New York City to conduct informational interviews and explore professional opportunities.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** HEAF measures the success of the Onward program by the percentage of students who graduate from college within six years or less, as well as the percentage of HEAF college students who continue their relationship with HEAF through service, participation in Onward programs or visits to HEAF.

The college graduation rate within six years for HEAF students is 95 percent. Of those, 35 percent pursue a postbaccalaureate degree. Since 2006, 90 percent of HEAF's college students continued their relationship with Onward, 85 percent took part in HEAF programming, and 53 percent took part in Onward volunteering or service projects.

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## Professional and Academic Support System Hispanic College Fund Washington, D.C.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The mission of the Hispanic College Fund (HCF) is to develop the next generation of Hispanic professionals by providing Hispanic high school and college students from families of low-socioeconomic status with the vision, resources and mentorship needed to become community leaders and achieve successful careers. HCF's high school to career pipeline begins in the ninth grade with the Hispanic Youth Institute and continues through college with HCF's Professional and Academic Support System (PASS). The goals of PASS are to increase the number of Hispanic college graduates, expand their personal and professional networks, boost college retention rates, and prepare students to strategically pursue graduate school. PASS provides support in the form of scholarships, monthly personal development e-mails, mentoring opportunities, and connections to community and corporate leaders. PASS promotes on-campus engagement and involvement in academic research opportunities, cocurricular activities, on-campus jobs and work-study, and relationships with faculty and peer mentoring. PASS serves Hispanic students enrolled in institutions of higher education. Of the 494 scholarship recipients for the 2010-11 academic year, 52 percent were first-generation college students, with an average household income of \$30,800. PASS recipients are primarily enrolled in science, technology, engineering, math, health care and business-related majors.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** HCF measures the success of its program by evaluating whether students have internships or jobs that advance their careers, have expanded their personal and professional networks, have mentors to further their careers, graduate from college with a bachelor's degree, enter the workforce with a professional job or strategically pursue a graduate education, and serve their respective communities. HCF conducts online surveys and written questionnaires regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of PASS. Surveys show that 82 percent of HCF scholars find the information provided in HCF newsletters and other communications useful; 64 percent of the students agree that their GPA increased as a result of being an HCF scholar. Overall, 93 percent of HCF scholars report that they plan to graduate on time, a significant increase to the 51 percent of Hispanic students nationwide who graduate on time. Finally, 67 percent of the students agree that they volunteer more as a result of being an HCF scholar. HCF also administers the Motivating Undergraduates in Science and Technology (MUST) Project for NASA. MUST demonstrates the success of the PASS workforce placement and graduate degree attainment in the STEM fields. Of the MUST graduates to date, 45 percent matriculated to aerospace or STEM graduate schools, 25 percent acquired jobs in aerospace or STEM industries, and 18 percent continued to work with NASA.

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## Project IGNITE

### West Virginia University at Parkersburg Parkersburg, W.Va.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** Because the required mathematics course, Math 107, Technical Math, was an obstacle for students majoring in the AAS in Welding program, West Virginia University at Parkersburg developed a new program that would incorporate the 35 competencies from Math 107 into three welding courses. The name of the program is Project IGNITE (Infusing GeN-ed Into Technical Education). The innovative technique infuses the mathematics competencies directly into the welding course work. The primary approach is project based, hands-on and interdisciplinary. For example, this year students are learning the math concepts while building a trash dumpster that will be donated to the county. As they build the dumpster, the students apply their welding skills while concurrently learning about volume, weight, measurements, angles, proportions and other math skills. This relevant and engaged approach anchors learning and promotes retention of information and a successful mathematics experience. After passing the test, students are given credit for Math 107.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** Students must take an end-of-course test developed by the mathematics faculty to ensure that they have successfully learned all the mathematical competencies for Math 107, Technical Math. This summer, a cohort with the “infused” approach for mathematics had a pass rate of 72 percent, much higher than the 50 percent pass rate for students enrolled in Math 107.

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# Purdue Promise

## Purdue University

West Lafayette, Ind.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** Indiana identifies as Twenty-first Century Scholars low-income, largely first-generation sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students who commit to good citizenship and high school graduation. Purdue Promise is a financial and personal support program for eligible Twenty-first Century Scholars attending Purdue University. By combining financial aid and focused academic and social support, Purdue Promise helps students in completing a baccalaureate degree. These students (each with a total annual family income of \$40,000 or less) receive state, institutional funding and Federal Work-Study that meet their full financial needs.

Purdue Promise was created as a response to the Twenty-first Century Scholars low college completion rates and research demonstrating that income-restricted and first-generation students greatly benefit from a combination of aid and support programming designed to their specific needs. Purdue Promise offers four years of assistance. In order to receive the funds, students sign a participation agreement and are actively involved in support activities that include a learning community, orientation, mentoring, tutoring, social events, and a one- or two-credit course every year taught by program staff. The first-year course focuses on orientation, the second on purpose and connections, the third on employment preparation, and the fourth on reflection, application and life skills. An academic success component pairs students on academic probation with a trained student leader who guides the student through a structured improvement process.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** Purdue Promise measures success with:

- Pretest
  - First-year students take the pretest with a post-registration day survey in the summer (Qualtrics)
  - All other years take the pretest at the beginning of the fall semester (Qualtrics)
- Student readiness inventory taken in the first-year experience class
- End-of-semester focus groups
- End-of-year posttest (Qualtrics)
- Grades
- Retention rates
- Graduation rates (2012 will be the first cohort to graduate)

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# Student Transition Empowerment Program

## George Mason University Fairfax, Va.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The Student Transition Empowerment Program (STEP) is intended for first-generation college students and students from historically underrepresented populations in the state of Virginia. STEP is an intensive academic empowerment program designed for first-year students to enhance their scholastic and interpersonal growth as they transition to college. STEP enables students to experience residential life, enroll in two general education courses, participate in community building experiences and connect with key administrators during a five-week summer session.

STEP staff consists of student-mentors, faculty advisers, an empowerment seminar instructor and program coordinators. The students are assigned a faculty adviser and a mentor who meet with them weekly throughout the summer semester. During the fall semester, STEP students are enrolled in a section of University 100: Transitions (one credit) as a cohort, which furthers their transition to college. By participating in this course, students continue to receive the support of the program as they acclimate to a full course load and engage in cocurricular activities with the remainder of the freshman class.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** STEP measures the success of the program with quantitative methods that include the comparison of first-year retention rates and cumulative GPAs. Students also complete a survey that contains both quantitative and qualitative items regarding various components of STEP.

Each STEP cohort has consistently obtained higher retention rates than their fellow first-year students.

Comparing GPAs is challenging because the STEP cohorts are minimally six credits ahead of their counterparts through their participation in STEP. Students in the 2010 cohort completed a revised survey and were asked: "To what extent did STEP help you deepen your understanding of college academics, college resources and personal transition?" On a scale of 1–5, the overall rating was 4.7. At the end of the summer semester, students are also required to write an essay describing their experience and what they have learned through STEP. In a written survey, the 2010 cohort overwhelmingly reported that their interactions with one another, mentors and faculty advisers were the most influential factors in their satisfaction with STEP.

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## Summer Intervention Program

### University of Pittsburgh

Pittsburgh, Pa.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** The University of Pittsburgh Summer Intervention Program is targeted to underrepresented diversity award scholarship recipients who are at risk of falling below a 3.0 GPA, the cumulative GPA required to retain an academic scholarship at the University of Pittsburgh. By providing the financial support to take a summer course, these students are more likely to repeat a failed course or take a new course to improve their GPA, retain their diversity scholarship award, and continue their education at the University of Pittsburgh.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** In summer 2008, 28 rising sophomores and juniors were at risk of losing their university scholarship. After taking summer courses:

- Twenty-four students increased their GPAs.
- Nineteen students who improved their GPAs but still fell below the required 3.0 GPA received a one-time provisional award of their scholarships for the fall 2008 term.
- Seven students who had above a 3.0 after the summer term received their scholarships for the entire 2008-09 school year.
- Overall, 26 of the 28 students renewed their academic scholarships for the fall term.

In the summer of 2009, 23 rising sophomores and juniors were at risk. After taking summer courses:

- Fifteen students increased their GPAs.
- Five students who improved their GPAs but still fell below the required 3.0 GPA received a one-time provisional award of their scholarships for the fall 2009 term.
- Eight students who had above a 3.0 after the summer term received their scholarships for the entire 2009-10 school year.
- Overall, 13 of the 23 students renewed their academic scholarships for the fall term.

In the summer of 2010, 30 rising sophomores and juniors were at risk. After taking summer courses:

- Twenty-four students increased their GPAs.
- Seven students who improved their GPAs but still fell below the required 3.0 GPA received a one-time provisional award of their scholarships for the fall 2010 term.
- Fifteen students who had above a 3.0 after the summer term received their scholarships for the entire 2010-11 school year.
- Overall, 22 of the 30 students renewed their academic scholarships for the fall term.

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## Summer START

### North Carolina State University

Raleigh, N.C.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION** Summer START is designed to give students a head start in making a seamless academic and social transition from high school to college. For five weeks, students attend an array of structured (tutoring, classes) and voluntary (cultural events, service learning projects) activities. Small class sizes and top instructors give START students an opportunity to strengthen their academic skills while developing support networks and familiarizing themselves with the campus resources and the local community. The participants are largely African American, first-generation students from low-socioeconomic areas. Summer START is comprised of four cohorts: student-athletes, international students, students in STEM majors and participants in North Carolina State University's Transition Program. While living together on campus, these cohorts are involved in three different curricula that provide up to seven credit hours. The student-athlete and Transition Program cohorts are enrolled in linked humanities courses to foster increased reading comprehension and writing competencies. In order to gain full admittance to NC State University, the international cohort is required to successfully complete courses in ESL and U.S. culture. The STEM students are selected by identifying North Carolina high schools where the average grade achieved by all UNC enrollees from that high school is below a C in either first math or first science. These students are placed in select math and science courses designed to enhance success in their calculus-based majors.

**MEASURING SUCCESS** The assessment of Summer START is based on two objectives: to increase academic success of the participating students (by comparison to a cohort of similar students) and to enhance the social success of the participating students.

In measuring academic success, the focus is to show that participants have improved their academic performance. These improvements are reflected in higher mean grade point averages, credit hours passed after two semesters and higher fall-to-fall retention rates. The outcomes are assessed by constructing a comparison cohort and, with the use of university data sets, comparing the academic performance of participants (grade point average, credit hours completed and enrollment/retention data) with the comparison cohort.

Social success is measured by participant satisfaction with their preparation for college, by their feeling of comfort at NC State University and by their involvement in campus life outside of the classroom.

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