

The CollegeKeys Compact[™]

2013 Catalog of Effective Practices

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

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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 650 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 2013 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 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, admission 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.org/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.

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 January and February 2013. The College Board applauds these winning programs, whose achievements have been noted throughout the catalog.

2013 Innovation Awards Effective Practices Review Committee

Antonio Boyle, Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management, South Carolina State University, S.C.

Henry Fernandez, Vice President for Government Relations and Outreach, USA Funds, Ind.

Steven Miletto, Principal, Centennial High School, Ga.

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

Thomas Moore, Assistant Superintendent for Administration, West Hartford Public Schools, Conn.

David Page, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Director of Financial Aid, Philander Smith College, Ark.

Edward Park, Principal, Barnard Mandarin Chinese Magnet School, Calif.

Patricia Peek, Director of Undergraduate Admission, Fordham University, N.Y.

Wendy Jo Peterson, Director of Admissions, Washington State University, Wash.

Guy Sconzo, Superintendent, Humble Independent School District, Tex.

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

Wanda Suriel, Director of Admissions, Regis College, Mass.



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Introduction

In 2007, at the urging of the Financial Aid Standards and Services Advisory Committee of the College Scholarship Service Assembly, the Board of Trustees of the College Board convened a Task Force on College Access for Students from Low-Income Backgrounds.

The Task Force forged a collaborative agreement between the College Board and its members that created a commonly accepted definition of “low-income student” and identified ways to remove all identifiable barriers, financial and nonfinancial, to college access for those students meeting the definition. Task Force subcommittee members, with broad experience in administration, counseling, admission, financial aid, student services and enrollment management, explored the issues raised by the Trustee resolution. They identified barriers, research findings and strategies for success to ensure that all students, especially low-income students, get ready for, get into and get through college successfully.

Based on research conducted by the Task Force, the CollegeKeys Compact (CKC) was released in 2007. The Compact is a national call to action to school districts, colleges and universities, state education agencies, and nonprofit organizations to make college success a reality for all students, including those from low-income backgrounds. With a network of more than 650 members, the Compact focuses on finding model solutions that help low-income students get ready for, get into and get through college. Through the Compact, the College Board and its CKC partners affirm their belief that all underserved students have a right to an affordable, accessible and successful college experience.



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GETTING READY



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AP[®] Boot Camp

Conard High School

West Hartford, Conn.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION The AP[®] Boot Camp targets students who are often underrepresented in AP courses; specifically, students who are in poverty, are in a minority group, or do not speak English at home are targeted. Conard High School data indicated that despite the fact that 75 percent of its 350–400 graduates per year take at least one AP course, many of the “stretch” students struggled in AP classes, or enrolled and then dropped the course. To address this issue, Conard High School implemented AP Boot Camp to help build the “college ready” skills students need to be successful in AP courses and in postsecondary learning. The AP Boot Camp sessions extend over five evenings in the late summer, and include collaboration skills, critical reading, critical writing, time management and test-taking skills. Students are engaged in small-group tutorials with the teachers they are going to have in the upcoming school year, developing positive relationships and getting a start on the key learning skills needed in each course.

MEASURING SUCCESS Indicators of success include a decrease in withdrawals from AP courses in the first quarter, a high percentage of minority students and low-income students participating in the program (over 40 percent), and increased AP scores.

Student surveys indicated that participants felt “well prepared” to engage in college-level work as they started school. Students specifically indicated that the reading, writing, time management and test-taking skills helped them to not only develop their capacity for rigorous content but also build their confidence and sense of persistence. Teachers reported that students were starting the year with skills not typically developed until well into the first semester.

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AVID — Where Failure is Not an Option

Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School

Beltsville, Md.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION Under the umbrella program known as AVID, Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School takes the program a step further to meet each student's individual needs in every subject area. Students are "chosen" to be in the program due to their "potential" and "need." Students are recommended by teachers according to organizational challenges; ADD/ADHD status; minority status (African American/Hispanic); gender (with a focus on African American males); data from standardized testing; single-parent household situations; or homeless circumstances. Every ESOL student is also enrolled.

From the beginning, AVID students believe they are part of their AVID family, that they are in college-prep classes and that they will remain in them for three years. Highly effective teachers are chosen to teach the classes. Students' grades are monitored every four weeks, and students have academic/social conferences with the AVID teacher to ensure that grades are improving. Further, each student is a member of an academic or social club.

MEASURING SUCCESS A variety of testing measures ensure the success of the program and the success of each student. The program focuses on the mathematics and language arts skills needed in order to pass the Maryland School Assessment (MSA). In the past year, the data from the fifth to sixth grade shows similar scores in the language arts scores, but a tremendous increase of 21 percent in the advanced mathematics scores. There was also a decrease of 5 percent of basic scores. The data from sixth to seventh grade shows a decrease of 2 percent of basic scores in language arts and an increase of 19 percent in advanced scores. In mathematics, the seventh grade decreased by 5 percent in basic scores and stayed about the same in the other categories. The data from seventh to eighth grade decreased in many categories; overall this grade is the hardest to maintain due to new "social awareness" and the tremendous amount of information needed to learn for High School Assessments (HSA) testing and MSA testing in the same year. Ninety-eight percent of the eighth-grade AVID students passed the high school mathematics HSA test this year.

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Breakthrough Middle School Program

Breakthrough Collaborative

San Francisco, Calif.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION Breakthrough Collaborative guides promising low-income students of color from underserved elementary schools onto a path that leads from middle school to a diploma from a four-year college. Every year, at 32 sites in 22 cities, Breakthrough prepares 2,500 low-income, high-potential middle school students to enter and succeed in college-preparatory programs, provides college-readiness programming to 2,500 underserved high school students, and recruits and trains more than 700 outstanding high school and college students to teach their younger peers. Breakthrough students are recruited from underresourced urban public schools. All students “demonstrate need” for Breakthrough in at least two of the five following ways: first generation in their family to attend a four-year college in the United States; free or reduced-price lunch; English as a second language; single-parent household; and racial or ethnic minority. Breakthrough uses the synergy of the Students Teaching Students model to provide services simultaneously to underresourced middle school students and outstanding, but otherwise unlikely, future teachers. The middle school students identify with their young teaching fellows as role models on the path to college, and the young teaching fellows are inspired by their younger students to consider whether they might change the trajectories of other children through careers in education.

MEASURING SUCCESS Breakthrough’s student retention rate of 95 percent exceeds the retention rates for similar enrichment programs. In the summer of 2012, 87 percent of Breakthrough middle school students completed pre- and post-summer assessments to measure growth in student learning over the course of the summer program. Students increased their algebra readiness performance by 20 to 25 percent. For the class of 2011 (the most recent class for college enrollment data), 60 percent of the students entered four-year colleges, 12 percent of the students entered two-year colleges, and 2 percent of students did not enroll in college (enrollment status for 26 percent of the students is unknown). A longitudinal study by Stanford University and the American Institutes of Research confirmed that Breakthrough changes the academic trajectories of underserved middle school students, sending almost 80 percent of its students into college-preparatory high school programs, and influences the career aspirations and career choices of high school and college student teaching interns, launching at least 72 percent into the field of education.

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CARE

Medaille College

Buffalo, N.Y.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION The CARE (Cultivating Awareness, Relationships, and Excellence) Program is a class that orients first-year students at Riverside High School to the high school environment, introduces them to different career options, and helps them choose a Career Academy. Riverside students select one of three academies in which to participate: Finance, Healthcare or Entrepreneurship. Programs are also provided for upperclass students at Riverside. Students can receive assistance with preparation of the FAFSA financial aid forms for college, as well as tutoring. Lunchtime workshops on a variety of topics are also held. Students at Riverside High School face significant barriers to educational attainment. A majority of the students are low income, and a majority of the school's student population is from minority populations. The Center for Entrepreneurship and Change (CEC) program provides services including mentoring, college planning seminars, assistance with college financial aid forms, financial literacy workshops and job search skills. Since many of these students will remain in Buffalo after high school, strengthening their connection to the community through field trips and guest speakers is a focus. Another component is the Entrepreneurship Club, in which Riverside students learn skills such as public speaking, marketing and running a business. The Academy for Creativity and Entrepreneurship (ACE) extends learning from the school year to the summer and from Riverside to the Medaille Campus.

MEASURING SUCCESS The Center for Entrepreneurship and Change has proven to be immensely popular with Riverside students. In the spring of 2012, Center for Entrepreneurship and Change members hosted a series of workshops for Riverside High School juniors. The workshops were a resounding success, with 100 students attending and 30 students present for two or more sessions. At the conclusion of the 2011–2012 school year, 150 students were participating in the Entrepreneurship Academy. A further indication of the initiative's success can be seen in the attendance figures for this summer's Academy for Creativity and Entrepreneurship. A total of 45 Riverside students participated in this week-long camp titled "Environmental Entrepreneurs: Developing Urban Micro-Parks." During the camp, students worked in teams to develop mini-business plans, which they presented to a panel of community business leaders who provided feedback.

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College for Me (C4ME)

Helix Charter High School

La Mesa, Calif.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION Through the College for Me (C4ME) program, low-income juniors participate in a minicourse about attending a university in California. The program began in the spring of 2006 with 50 female students from three underrepresented student populations: low-income students, first-generation college students and/or members of an ethnic group that do not traditionally attend college. The students attended three workshops as part of the course to prepare for college. The workshops included college searching, SAT®/ACT registration and test prep, financing a college education, and starting the college application process. The program culminated with a campus tour of 13 colleges. Students were accompanied by five female staff members and were met at campus by Helix graduates. The program grew to include a group of boys from the same underrepresented populations; the male students had their own courses and campus tours the following year. Most recently, there were three trips that included 133 girls and boys. Due to increased graduation requirements and improved student performance, the number of eligible students has grown from 50 to more than 300.

All participants are expected to apply to at least one college or university in the fall semester of their senior year. A “Club College” program throughout the entire application season provides all students assistance with their applications. Students can come each Wednesday and work on their applications with counselors.

MEASURING SUCCESS C4ME success is measured by the number of participants applying to, being accepted to, and attending four-year colleges and universities. In 2008, a total of 94 boys and girls completed the program; 70 of them enrolled in a four-year university, 18 enrolled in a two-year college, one enlisted in the military, and five were unverified. In 2009, a total of 80 boys and girls completed the program; 51 of them enrolled in a four-year university, 15 enrolled in a two-year college, two enlisted in the military, and 12 were unverified. In 2010, a total of 103 boys and girls completed the program; 65 of them enrolled in a four-year university, 19 enrolled in a two-year college, and 19 were unverified. In 2011, a total of 101 boys and girls completed the program; 65 of them enrolled in a four-year university, 32 enrolled in a two-year college, one enlisted in the military, and four were unverified. In 2012, a total of 133 boys and girls completed the program; the students are now in their senior year of high school.

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College Exam Testing Support

Curtis High School

University Place, Wash.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION In an attempt to eliminate barriers for Curtis High School students who are not academically prepared for a four-year college, Curtis High School allows students to take all ACCUPLACER® exams for free. They also provide study support for students through the ACCUPLACER Diagnostic Exam and MyFoundationsLab, which help students review and prepare for the exam. Curtis High School uses these tools to help students understand the value of performing at a college level on the exams, given that the tools save students a substantial amount of time and money. Curtis High School wants to help its students develop the tools to be successful in college and ensure that they will remain in college once they enter the program. The opportunity to offer all exams for free, and on the high school campus, is a huge barrier reduction for students. Students do not have to worry about paying fees and going to an unfamiliar campus. Many students are intimidated by college and will be more successful if they are eased into the process by exploring their strengths and weaknesses while still on their high school campus.

MEASURING SUCCESS In its first year, six of 60 students passed the ACCUPLACER exam at the college level. The exam was optional to seniors, as were the tutorials. In the second year, the exam was optional to seniors, and tutorials were required if students were not passing the practice exam. Curtis saw a 41 percent increase in students passing at the college level, with 11 out of 50 students passing. This year, Curtis High School is requiring all students who are bound for two-year colleges to take the exam.

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Gateway to College

Mount Wachusett Community College

Gardner, Mass.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION The goal of the Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC) Gateway to College program is to afford students who have not been successful in the traditional high school environment a true second chance at earning a diploma. This is accomplished through offering courses on a college campus in a supportive cohort environment where students earn dual credit toward a high school diploma and a community college degree or certificate. The wraparound support and intensive advising model within these learning communities has led to 121 MWCC Gateway to College students earning their high school diplomas as of May 2012. To promote student retention and persistence, one specific goal is to connect the foundation (first-semester) students with the college campus and with each other. Program mainstays that support this goal include adding an extensive one-day team-building event — low- and high-element ropes course — into the three-day Gateway new student orientation, and adding a three-credit yoga class from the college's Complementary Health Care curriculum into the foundation semester course lineup. It is through these innovations that Gateway to College continues to address the dropout epidemic, and students are experiencing success not only at MWCC but also at 33 community colleges (five in Massachusetts) in 20 states.

MEASURING SUCCESS The success of the Gateway to College program is measured through multiple specific target areas, including the following:

1. Foundation (first-semester) completion rates
2. Foundation to Transition (second-semester) entry
3. Program graduation rate, which is calculated using the number of students age 21 or younger who have completed their core high school courses on the MWCC campus. The MWCC Gateway to College program's graduation rate among students who have completed a Foundation semester is 74.13 percent.

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Preparing Students to Compete and Succeed in College-Prep Programs

Reach for Excellence

Atlanta, Ga.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION Many students in Atlanta do not have access to the kinds of schools, teachers and resources that can set them on a path toward success in high school that will keep them on the path to college. Reach for Excellence addresses that challenge. Through its mix of academic, cultural and community-based experiences, this tuition-free program prepares talented, limited-income middle school students to meet the challenges of college-preparatory programs and high schools. Students, along with their families, commit to three six-week summer sessions and two years of Saturday sessions throughout the school year. Class sizes are small, averaging 12 students per class, allowing for one-on-one instruction. Certified teachers integrate academic skills with life experiences and expose students to opportunities available at college-prep programs in and around Atlanta and at boarding schools throughout the United States.

MEASURING SUCCESS One-hundred percent of Reach for Excellence graduates attend high school, and of the 2012 graduating class from high school, 96 percent are going on to college, with one student choosing to enlist in the armed services. Students stay in touch with the Reach for Excellence directors through a Reach for Excellence Facebook page, and recently, Reach for Excellence paid for the services of the Student Clearing House to track students who have lost touch with the program.

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UPIKE Today

University of Pikeville

Pikeville, Ky.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION UPIKE Today is a dual-credit program whose major goals are to enable students from schools with large numbers of low-income families to earn college credits that will transfer to other postsecondary institutions, and to encourage students to believe that they can graduate from high school and be ready for success in college. The program offers extra challenges for high-achieving students while at the same time affording other students the opportunity to become acquainted with college experiences. Dual-credit students are brought to the University of Pikeville campus, where they are given a tour of the grounds. They are also issued identification cards that allow for free admission to all university sports events and discounts at local restaurants and businesses, and they complete paperwork to set up their Web accounts. Students' course grades are posted online on Web Advisor, and they have access to campus facilities and services, including the university library. Graduating high school students who successfully obtain at least five dual-credit hours from UPIKE are eligible for a \$2,000 academic scholarship that is renewable for four years if the student maintains a 2.5 GPA while enrolled at UPIKE. Having their own personalized IDs and Web accounts makes students feel like they are part of the university. Campus visits and tours help them become familiar with what education after high school is really like. The scholarship opportunity reinforces that financial assistance is available, and that they already have a start on obtaining the resources necessary to pay for their college education.

MEASURING SUCCESS The success of UPIKE Today is currently being tracked using the number of students enrolled in dual-credit courses and by the number of schools and districts involved with the program. Before the program's inception in 2010, only one local high school was involved with dual credit. Students were allowed to come to the campus to take a course or two during the school day. For the 2010–2011 school year, a total of 86 students representing three different high schools (from three school systems) were enrolled in at least one dual-credit course. In August 2011, UPIKE enrolled 304 high school juniors or seniors in the dual-credit program, which represented an increase of 353 percent over 2010 enrollment in the same program. There are currently 405 high school students enrolled in dual credit for the 2012–2013 academic year. Eleven high schools encompassing seven Kentucky school districts are currently participating in UPIKE Today. Thirteen different courses are being offered for dual credit, varying in schools according to teacher qualifications. Although the program has seen tremendous growth over the last year, UPIKE continues to strive to reach other high schools and districts that have large numbers of low-income families.

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YLA Program

Youth Leadership Academy

Elgin, Ill.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION The goal of the Youth Leadership Academy (YLA) program is to provide cadets with the experiences that will help them reach their full potential as individuals who are young and learning how to make responsible choices about their adult life. Using a combination of learning experiences based on service learning, self-determination principles and college readiness, the YLA program seeks to meet the challenge of preparing low-income students to make the most out of their future in higher education. All YLA cadets who graduate from this program are offered a two-year, full-tuition scholarship to attend Elgin Community College. YLA's cadets come from four Illinois school districts, including U-46, the largest in the state of Illinois next to Chicago Public Schools. The cadets begin the program in seventh grade. The program requires a minimum attendance of two Saturdays per month during the school year, translating to a minimum of 96 days spent in leadership training between the ages of 12 and 18.

MEASURING SUCCESS Since the YLA's first graduating class in 2002, more than 100 students have gone on to college. Retention has varied over the years. In the spring of 2012, YLA had a graduating class of 15 cadets, the largest in its history.

In the fall of 2010, YLA started tracking the observable behaviors of cadets following the five steps of service learning (investigation, preparation and planning, action, reflection, and demonstration). This data has been transformative in identifying the largest skill needs of the students served. Similarly, the YLA started in the 2011–2012 school year to gather data from cadets about their self-reported needs in the category of self-determination. This information was critical to the YLA staff team of trainers in designing lessons that best met the needs of each class.

Participation in YLA PLUS Tutoring, a new extension of the YLA Program, has doubled just in the past year from a handful of students per session to a regular dozen students asking for help with either homework or a particular study skill.

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GETTING IN



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College Guidance Component of the LEDA Scholars Program

Leadership Enterprise for a Diverse America (LEDA)

New York, N.Y.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION The goal of the college admission component of Leadership Enterprise for a Diverse America (LEDA) is to make the nation's most selective colleges and universities accessible to students from every background, regardless of income level. The target audience of the LEDA Scholars Program is low-income students (average family income of under \$37,000 per year) who are high academic achievers (typically in the top 10 percent of their class with GPAs of 3.5 or higher), and who come from communities that are underrepresented at our nation's most competitive colleges. LEDA's practice includes:

- Locating and recruiting low-income students who are underrepresented in our nation's top colleges.
- Administering a rigorous and holistic application process that includes both cognitive and noncognitive measures, which exposes students to and prepares them for the rigors of the college application process.
- Providing academic interventions that help level the playing field (standardized test preparation, training on the college admission and financial aid process, support for families, one-on-one college counseling and writing instruction, visits to college campuses).
- Raising student expectations and building confidence to demonstrate that they are capable of attending, and entitled to attend, these institutions.

MEASURING SUCCESS At the conclusion of the summer program, the majority of LEDA Scholars agreed that the program prepared them to continue the college application process (97 percent), that College Guidance workshops provided valuable information about the college application process (100 percent), and that visits to college campuses helped shape college choices (100 percent).

College admission results for the high school class of 2012 (60 scholars):

- Forty-five percent of the students were admitted to at least one Ivy League school/MIT/Stanford.
- Scholars were admitted to a total of 166 colleges and universities.
- LEDA Scholars' acceptance rates to these institutions surpassed the institutions' overall acceptance rates in many cases (Brown: LEDA acceptance rate of 22 percent versus an overall rate of 9.6 percent; Harvard, 44 percent versus 5.9 percent; Princeton, 73 percent versus 7.9 percent; Yale, 32 percent versus 6.8 percent).

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Commence! College Counseling

Commence! College Counseling

Fairfield, Conn.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION For the past five years, Commence! College Counseling has worked to level the playing field for high-achieving students from Central Magnet High School in Bridgeport, Conn. With two overburdened counselors assigned to almost 500 seniors, highly motivated students are in jeopardy of missing out on college options for which they have worked so hard. Students have an unwavering desire to succeed but little understanding of realistic college choices, and SAT scores well below the national average. Commence! College Counseling seeks to replicate the support of an independent consultant by offering expert, adult help to highly motivated, needy students. Supplementing informational presentations, Commence! College Counseling works individually with juniors and seniors, often focusing on the most competitive schools in America that promise need-blind admission and full, need-based financial aid. Knowing that admission is only the first step to college success, the program supports students throughout their college journey and beyond. Students are mostly immigrants or children of immigrants raised in inner-city, non-English-speaking households. Some parents live in Nigeria or Jamaica; others are incarcerated or otherwise out of the picture. Most parents have no experience whatsoever with college admission or college. In a school community where all qualify for free lunch, there are no resources for tutors, college visits or even prep books. Donating hours and hours of one-on-one assistance, Commence! College Counseling offers unlimited assistance, whenever needed. The program has helped students gain prized, affordable, acceptances to a range of colleges, including every school in the Ivy League.

MEASURING SUCCESS Commence! College Counseling is changing the culture at Central High, inspiring students to work harder and reach higher. Quantitatively, success can be demonstrated with changes in the junior and senior class over the years: a 200 percent increase in students taking AP classes, a 400 percent increase in teachers who are seeking services, and a 500 percent increase in rising seniors contacting the program for help during this summer alone. The program is changing the lives of individual students, who, with the program's assistance, are gaining acceptances to top colleges. Among the students in the class of 2012, 100 percent are attending a four-year college on an affordable financial aid package. Through Commence! College Counseling's web presence — Facebook, LinkedIn and email contacts — the program works to support graduates throughout college and beyond.

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Crew to College Program

Springfield Renaissance School

Springfield, Mass.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION The Springfield Renaissance School, an urban public school serving grades six to 12, has defied the odds in Springfield, Mass., since opening in 2006. All of Renaissance's 700 students, 78.5 percent of whom meet the federal requirements for free or reduced lunch (compared to 29.5 percent in the state), know very clearly that college is in their future. Springfield Renaissance School's mission is to see 100 percent of its students gain admission to, attend and graduate from college. The school is a member of the Expeditionary Learning school network and combines a thematic, interdisciplinary and academically rigorous curriculum with field-based learning, collaborative work and student-centered instruction to help students learn in a context that is challenging, engaging and relevant to their lives. Personal and public reflection is a common element to all course work. Most importantly, all Renaissance students know that they are college bound. With nearly 100 students in each graduating class, the majority of who are first-generation college students, the services of the two school counselors at the school must be maximized in order to ensure that students get the support they need to begin and follow through on the college-planning process. To maximize support for students, administrators and counselors have trained all teachers to implement a college-bound curriculum in "Crew." This is a curriculum-based advisory program that affords daily small group work for students in grades six to 12. The Crew program allows students to explore their own interests and abilities, explore concurrent careers, and connect those interests to college majors and appropriate colleges. Students work in Crew to develop four-year high school plans, plan internships and begin work on the college-planning process. Parents and guardians are an integral part of the process in grades six to 12, and attend Crew-based student-led family conferences throughout a Renaissance student's career. Crew allows Springfield Renaissance School to meet its goal of 100 percent college attendance because students have daily support from Crew advisors, and because all teachers have the resources they need to shepherd students through this complicated process.

MEASURING SUCCESS Thus far, Renaissance has three graduating classes in which 100 percent of all graduates were admitted into two-year and/or four-year colleges. According to the 2011 National Clearinghouse, 82 percent of students in the first class and 74 percent in the second were enrolled in a two- or four-year college following graduation in September (Springfield Public Schools has 59 percent and 56 percent, respectively, for the same years). The class of 2012 saw 100 percent of its graduates admitted into college, and students earned nearly \$3.6 million in scholarships and grants. Subsequently, 86 percent enrolled in a two- or four-year college.

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Educate Tomorrow

Educate Tomorrow

Miami, Fla.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION Educate Tomorrow's mission is to create independence for foster youth in Miami-Dade County through education, mentoring and life skills training. Educate Tomorrow addresses the issue of educational attainment by integrating activities designed to support the physical, emotional, social and academic needs of current and former foster youth. This integration creates a program that is ultimately more effective than a more traditional mentoring program. Educate Tomorrow is guided by the principles of collaboration, accountability and civic engagement. Educate Tomorrow is a mentoring program that matches foster youth with community volunteers for a one-on-one, community-based mentoring relationship that focuses specifically on educational attainment, and it provides events and activities designed to provide educational and independent-living skills to the youth in the program.

MEASURING SUCCESS Since 2003, Educate Tomorrow has provided mentors for 385 transitioning foster youth. A longitudinal study on the outcomes of 115 current participants shows that 87 of those students were in high school at the time of enrollment into the program. Of those 87, one-third are still in high school, one-third are now enrolled in a community college or university, nine have entered vocational programs, one completed a vocational program, and six have completed college (of which two have gone on to graduate school). Of the 115, 12 were in a GED program when beginning Educate Tomorrow's program. Since then, 10 completed their GED, five enrolled in community college, one remains in a GED program, and one dropped out. Of the 115, three were in vocational programs when they began, two have gone on to community college, and one dropped out. Eleven participants were enrolled in community college when starting the program, nine of them have remained in community college, and two graduated with an associate degree. Of the high school-aged mentees in the 2010-11 school year, 90 percent moved on to the next grade, and 80 percent of the seniors not only graduated but also enrolled in college in the fall. Educate Tomorrow's success was recently noted in the Final Report on Foster Care Review's Independent Living/Administrative Review Project, a November 2011 study funded by The Miami Foundation. The report noted that of six former foster youth with mentors (five with Educate Tomorrow), four were enrolled in college and five reported receiving support from their mentors in helping with their education. These youth had "a sense of identity and had developed positive attachments." The report recommends that "every transitioning youth should have an education mentor."

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Getting In and Getting Through

Young Scholars Program

Hayward, Calif.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION Young Scholars serves a population of students who dream of a college education but who lack access to information and resources, creating obstacles to college matriculation. The Young Scholars Program (YSP) offers promising students guidance for continuing their education, leadership and life skills, with the goal of a postsecondary education that will change not only the student's life but those of generations to come. The organization's objectives are to promote self-efficacy or a belief in one's academic abilities, while teaching the correlation between education and the quality of one's life; to give students a sense of responsibility for their own destiny while developing individualized life plans to help them be successful; to teach life skills as well as college-preparation skills; and to train and empower parents to be advocates in their children's quest for college education.

YSP offers student-mentoring programs, one for males (Prince 2B King) and one for females, Women Intelligent Strong and Empowered (WISE). A Parent Academy empowers parents to be active partners in the college access and success process. YSP also provides parent support groups, such as Mothers Raising Sons (M.R.S.) Club, The Sister Circle: Mothers of WISE Girls, and the Dynamic And Determined (D.A.D.) Club. YSP provides college tours and experiential learning opportunities. The program also provides enrichment activities and experiences outside the students' neighborhoods, and it offers culturally relevant experiences.

MEASURING SUCCESS

- Percentage of students who actively participate throughout the year: 90 percent
- Percentage of active parents who participate in parent meetings, activities or events, and parent support-group meetings: 85 percent
- Percentage of students who are on track for college eligibility for admission: 95 percent
- Percentage of seniors who matriculate to college each year: 100 percent
- Percentage of students who participate in the mentoring components: 95 percent
- One-hundred percent of scholars pass the high school California Exit Exam; 100 percent graduate from high school; 100 percent are eligible for admission to college; 100 percent matriculate to college; 85 percent graduate within a four- to five-year period; and 65 percent pursue graduate or professional degrees

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Helping Parents Propel Their Children Toward Higher Education

Families United in Educational Leadership (FUEL)

Boston, Mass.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION FUEL believes that all students, regardless of income level, can and should reap the benefits of higher education, and that parent involvement is the key to moving young people through high school and on to college. FUEL's driving objective is to bring parents into the equation, giving them the information and skills they need to support their children's higher education ambitions. FUEL shows them how to navigate the process and set their children on the road to college. FUEL's model requires families to make regular deposits in educational savings accounts and participate in Savings Circle college access workshops. In return for this, FUEL provides the knowledge, financial literacy, advocacy skills and tuition seed money that will propel students into higher education. FUEL is unique in having created a program that engages the entire family. Students work hard in high school and set their eye on the prize of going to college, while parents participate in Savings Circles and slowly and purposefully save money.

MEASURING SUCCESS FUEL uses Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) to streamline data tracking and analysis, attendance monitoring, and analysis of participants' progress toward their college-related goals. The continuous awareness of outcomes allows expanded collaboration among the program staff and helps improve the efficiency and flexibility of the organization. In turn, this results in program improvements for all families and the ability to expand the work to other communities. Just as FUEL uses data to improve its own work, the program also returns monthly statements to the families. In vivid graphic format, charts specify how much families have saved relative to their savings goal, indicate how many Savings Circles they have attended, and offer encouraging notes from the program director. These statements motivate the families by giving them short-term feedback about their long-term goals. They help keep families on course so they can earn the match by remaining in good standing. One of the metrics that is most difficult to assess is also one of the most critical: the increase in parents' skills and knowledge about college access. To evaluate this learning, pre- and post-program surveys delve into areas that include participants' knowledge about how to apply and pay for higher education, where they might find help with the application process, how to talk with teachers and admission officers, and their concerns about the process. Over the last three years, FUEL has shown that its parent engagement model inspires students to finish high school and move toward college. Our innovative program has helped 450 families save over \$300,000 toward higher education and propelled almost 100 students into a postsecondary degree program, nearly all of whom have continued their studies each year. One-hundred percent of FUEL graduates were accepted into college and collectively received millions of dollars in scholarship offers.

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Mayor's Intern Fellows Program

Education is Freedom

Dallas, Texas

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION The Mayor's Intern Fellows Program (MIFP) is a competitive program based on the White House fellows program. MIFP provides job skills training and an eight-week, paid summer internship that teaches students about professional expectations and provides experiential career exploration in diverse fields such as business, education, information technology, architecture, health care and law. MIFP provides compensation beyond a typical summer job and helps students visualize their future, understand the importance of higher education to their career, and chart a course to accomplish their goals. The experience will benefit students as they prepare for, enter and graduate from college and begin their career. Participants receive job skills training related to finances, office etiquette, communication, professional attire and interviewing, and attend a job fair where they compete for placement in Fortune 500 corporations, local companies and nonprofits. Placed interns are expected to journal daily about their work experience, participate in team building and complete a team-based community service project. Students may intern in the summer following their 10th- and 11th-grade years if they (a) attend a public or charter school in Dallas; (b) are age 16 or older; (c) have a 2.5 to 4.0 GPA or 80 to 100 grade average or better; (d) have solid school attendance; and (e) are U.S. citizens. All participants are from low-income families. MIFP simultaneously satisfies the growing need of employers to hire skilled, motivated, dedicated employees who possess a strong work ethic, and the need of urban youth to secure employment. It also promotes networking and social capital building for low-income students. MIFP's primary goal is to strengthen students' college and career readiness.

MEASURING SUCCESS The Mayor's Intern Fellows Program has achieved remarkable outcomes, growing from 84 internships in 2008 to 173 internships in 2012. During the same period, the number of participating companies grew from 46 to 120. Due to the success of the program, Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings requested expansion of the program from select public high schools to include all public high schools and charter schools in Dallas, and selected Education is Freedom as the administrator. As a result of program expansion, 35 high schools participated in 2012, up from just three in 2008. All student interns (100 percent) are enrolled in a college access program at their respective high school. Additionally, research has shown that students are more engaged and better prepared for the transition to higher education after interning. The college-going rate among interns is significantly higher than the average college-going rate across the country: 82 percent of student interns from 2008 to 2011 enrolled in college.

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Clarence T.C. Ching PUEO Program at Punahou School

Punahou School

Honolulu, Hawaii

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION The Clarence T.C. Ching PUEO Program at Punahou School was launched in 2005 as a partnership with the Hawaii State Department of Education. PUEO (Partnerships in Unlimited Educational Opportunities) is designed to motivate students to develop the skills and confidence to excel in school, attain their college aspirations and contribute to Hawaii's future. Forty students enter the program each year as rising sixth-graders, representing 16 partner elementary schools in three districts, and remain with the program for seven summers. At capacity, PUEO serves 280 students, making it one of the largest programs of its kind in the country. Students are recommended by their principals based on two essential criteria: eligible students must come from the middle 60 percent of their class and participate in the free or reduced-price lunch program. Today, the number of partner schools has grown to 50 public and private schools. In middle school, PUEO students attend Punahou summer school classes, which are supplemented by tutoring in writing and mathematics. In high school, PUEO students continue with specifically designed credit-bearing, standards-based summer courses in which they may earn up to 2½ graduation credits, enabling them to undertake more college-bound courses during the school year. PUEO pays for PSAT/NMSQT®, SAT and ACT testing, and coordinates summer and school-year visits to public and private colleges and junior colleges throughout the state. The University of Hawaii's competitive main Manoa campus guarantees admission to PUEO students who meet the minimum requirements, and the year-round PUEO college counselor proactively visits the public high schools where PUEO students are enrolled at least eight times each during the senior year to provide individualized counseling.

MEASURING SUCCESS Of the 40 students in the 2012 graduating cohort, 80 percent have been with the program for at least five years, and 70 percent for the full eight years. Every summer, external evaluators from other states and programs visit the PUEO program to critique its curriculum, structure, administration and efficacy. Additional dedicated grant support has allowed PUEO to undertake a longitudinal evaluation to track the progress of individual students and to assess the program as a whole.

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Valley View High School Medical Spanish Minor Initiative

Valley View High School

Hidalgo, Texas

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION The Valley View High School Medical Spanish Minor Initiative is the only one of its kind in the United States. It was formed by a binding Memorandum of Agreement between Valley View ISD and the University of Texas–Pan American in Edinburg, Texas, in the quest for better health care for Spanish-speaking patients, and it was established to combat the language-based health disparity that this particular population confronts on a daily basis. The initiative recruits the student population from low-income households and provides them with academic support to achieve college success. The program uses Spanish language and literature classes to teach medical terminology and to develop language skills specific to health care professions. This system incorporates the course work with community college and university classes to develop the required communication skills. As students acquire advanced proficiency in their heritage language of Spanish, they benefit from hands-on experiences in the medical field. Motivated students prove their acquisition of skills by taking AP Exams and earning a minor in medical Spanish in conjunction with the University of Texas–Pan American. Upon graduation from high school, some of the students will have earned an associate degree with a Spanish minor, and others will be prepared to finish their studies at a four-year tertiary institution or enter directly into the health care profession as a certified nurse’s assistant.

Because the initiative covers all the students’ expenses, it offers them a financial benefit by fast-tracking their college course work so that there is less need to finance a great portion of their university academic load.

MEASURING SUCCESS According to figures from the University of Texas–Pan American, 98 percent of Valley View High School students who participated in the Medical Spanish program continued on to postsecondary education, 75 percent declared a major in the health sciences, and 69 percent enrolled in a four-year institution. Of the students who enrolled at the University of Texas–Pan American, 100 percent maintained a GPA of 3.5 or above. The Medical Spanish program benefits the community in numerous ways because it promotes the addition of jobs to the medical field in the region, encourages higher salaries for bilingual personnel, encourages students to consider professions in the medical field, and creates awareness in the community about the prevention of disease.

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Young Scholars Program

Ohio State University

Columbus, Ohio

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION The Young Scholars Program (YSP), housed in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at The Ohio State University, is a comprehensive precollegiate and collegiate program designed to enhance the academic, personal and career development of students from economically challenged backgrounds. YSP annually identifies and serves hundreds of academically talented first-generation middle and high school students from Ohio's nine largest urban school districts. The Young Scholars Program's mission emphasizes academic success in school and university studies, exposure to career exploration opportunities throughout the program, and continuous personal growth and development of its Young Scholars. One key purpose of the program is to provide consistent educational development opportunities and personal adult support for underrepresented youths whose life circumstances constitute a severe impediment to academic attainment. Students are selected during the spring of sixth grade. Most students enter the program with "A" averages and rank in the top 10 percent of their class, but students are also eligible for admission with a minimum "B" average. Once selected, Young Scholars must agree to enroll in college-preparatory courses in high school and maintain a minimum 3.3 GPA. Young Scholars also receive tutoring and mentoring for a college-preparatory curriculum, ACT/SAT test preparation, and guidance for collegiate and financial aid applications. High school seniors spend two weeks on campus, where they participate in a variety of academic classes and career-related internships, and familiarize themselves with the campus and collegiate life. Those who successfully complete program requirements are admitted to the university and guaranteed appropriate financial support provided they attain satisfactory grades.

MEASURING SUCCESS Currently, the Young Scholars Program inducts more than 120 new participants each year. The current program has 640 active precollegiate and 258 collegiate Young Scholars on Ohio State's campus. Over the past five years, the YSP first-year retention rate has increased from 80 to 90 percent. Approximately 85 percent of YSP students enroll at The Ohio State University or have been actively recruited for their unique experiences and characteristics by another university or college. These students are representative of a legacy that has involved more than 3,100 precollegiate participants and 1,521 OSU enrollees. The university has awarded 750 degrees to YSP students. For the three-year period 2008–2010, 15 percent of all Ohio State University admits from the nine Young Scholars Program school districts were graduates of YSP. The YSP pipeline supplied 27 percent of African American admits from the urban districts during the three-year period. YSP accounted for more than half of the African American admits from Canton, Lorain and Youngstown.

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GETTING THROUGH



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Arizona Assurance Scholars Program

University of Arizona

Tucson, Ariz.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION The Arizona Assurance (AZA) Scholars Program is a comprehensive four-year financial aid, retention and graduation program for low-income students from the state of Arizona. Faculty, instructional specialists, career counselors, academic advisers, financial aid counselors, faculty/staff mentors and transition programs within Student Services and Academic Colleges collaborate to increase retention and graduation rates for these students. The program is designed to assist students to successfully attain their bachelor's degree by providing both financial aid and support services. It provides access to students who may not have attended a university directly out of high school, and it increases the number of low-income students who obtain a bachelor's degree. Students in the program receive funding through grants, scholarships and part-time employment to cover their tuition and fees, housing, food and books. The target audience is Arizona resident high school students who have applied to the University of Arizona and meet the AZA Scholars' program eligibility criteria, which includes submission of the FAFSA and completed admission application by March 1, a high school GPA of 3.0 or higher, family income of \$42,400 or below, Arizona residency, and Federal Pell Grant eligibility. Students who meet the eligibility criteria are then asked to submit the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE®.

MEASURING SUCCESS Quantitative measures used to determine the success of the program are first-year retention rates and academic GPA. The retention rate from first-year to second-year scholars is compared to that of their peers. In addition, the program examined a comparison group of students who would have been eligible for the program before the AZA Scholars program was implemented to see how the respective retention rates compare. Those who are a part of the AZA scholars program consistently (with the exception of one year) were at least one percentage point higher in first-year retention rates, and in this recent year the first-year retention rate was 86 percent, six percentage points higher. In addition, the Center for the Study of Higher Education analyzes surveys to determine the effectiveness of various aspects of the support services provided to scholars in their first year. Preliminary studies show that students who complete a first-year success course or program have a higher academic GPA after their first year than students who do not.

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Brumley–GRAD Scholars Persistence and Leadership Initiative

Project GRAD Atlanta

Atlanta, Ga.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION The Brumley–GRAD Scholars Persistence and Leadership Initiative (BGSPLI) provides a holistic approach to impacting scholars as they successfully engage in and graduate from higher education institutions. The initiative’s programs aim to impact scholars’ preparation for and persistence in college, provide financial assistance, encourage academic enhancement, and foster leadership and professional growth. Programs include the Brumley–GRAD Ambassadors program, which identifies campus leaders to act as a liaison between Project GRAD Atlanta and the scholars on their campus; the Scholar Support Division campus visits, which are strategic and based on research surrounding student persistence and retention issues; Brumley–GRAD Scholar Care Packages, which provide moral support, academic advice and a campus “where-to-go-if” guide for first-year scholars; the Winter Celebration for Brumley–GRAD Scholars and a select group of Project GRAD High School Senior Scholars, which provides an opportunity for the two groups to commune while candidly discussing important tools of collegiate success; the Senior Scholar–Parent Institute, which exposes GRAD parents and high school senior scholars to issues relevant to transitioning from high school to college; the Summer Institute Teaching Assistant appointment and training, where scholars employed in this capacity participate in professional development training, focusing on the theoretical perspectives of being a student leader and an effective education paraprofessional; and the GRAD-for-Grad (Graduate and Professional Studies Symposium), a summer professional development experience designed to provide scholars with tools and information for successful graduate and professional school admission.

MEASURING SUCCESS Project GRAD Atlanta Scholar Support BGSPLI goals are to:

- Ensure that Brumley–GRAD Scholars enroll in college within one year of graduation and persist for two years. As of today, 75 percent of all Brumley–GRAD Scholars have enrolled in a postsecondary institution within one year of graduation from high school. Sixty-two percent of those students returned their second year.
- Increase the number of Brumley–GRAD Scholars enrolled in college. From 2008 to 2012, enrollees increased from 358 to 752, an increase of 110 percent. In addition, since 2008, the states where students were enrolled in a postsecondary institution increased by 41 percent, and, since 2004, Project GRAD Atlanta has paid out over \$2 million in scholarships.
- Assist Brumley–GRAD Scholars with persistence. The college persistence rate of Brumley–GRAD Scholars in spring 2012 was 48 percent.

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CBO

College Bound Opportunities

Riverwoods, Ill.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION College Bound Opportunities (CBO) is a community-based, community-supported organization that mentors economically disadvantaged students to unleash their potential, graduate from college, pursue meaningful professions and inspire others to follow in their footsteps. CBO believes that if students have the desire and the ability to attend college, then a way should be found for them to do so. CBO helps students bridge gaps in their life experiences, prepares them to succeed beyond college in a professional work environment and assists them in achieving their full potential. CBO is a competitive program that seeks students with a minimum GPA of 2.8. Each scholar is supplied with a personal computer and an annual stipend of up to \$4,000 per year for four years of college. Upon selection as a CBO scholar, students are paired with their own mentor, who commits to a minimum of six years of continuous service with their mentee. At the same time, CBO mentors build strong relationships with the scholars' families. The unique one-to-one relationship between mentor and mentee is essential to prepare and support low-income students and their families for college success. CBO scholars are multicultural and often are transplants to the area. The CBO scholars group becomes closely knit, and they serve as role models not only for younger siblings but also for other students who aspire to the program.

MEASURING SUCCESS An outcome chart tracks all CBO scholars as they graduate from high school, matriculate into college, remain in college and ultimately graduate from college. College credits earned toward graduation are tracked, as are the grades of students from high school through college graduation. In the first two graduating classes, CBO graduated 13 students from college, and 97 percent of scholars remain on track to graduate college. CBO's impact can be felt throughout the communities served, as scholars talk to their friends and families about how CBO is changing their lives and the lives of their families. In anticipation of expansion into other communities, the mentoring program has been codified into a mentor training manual and mentoring timeline.

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College Access and Success

Bright Prospect

Pomona, Calif.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION Bright Prospect's mission is to empower high-potential, low-income students to gain admission to, succeed in and graduate from four-year colleges and universities by providing a comprehensive counseling and support system. Bright Prospect currently conducts its college access and success program at seven high schools in California's Inland Empire region. Students join Bright Prospect the summer after their first year of high school and remain in the program until they complete their degree, no matter where they attend college or how many years it takes them. Student demographics break down to 83 percent Latino, 10 percent Asian and Pacific Islander, 4 percent African American, 2 percent Native American and other, and 1 percent Caucasian. Eighty-eight percent of the students receive free or reduced-price lunch. The Bright Prospect Institute was created for the purpose of teaching methods to other community-based nonprofits that want to incorporate a college access and success program.

MEASURING SUCCESS Bright Prospect continuously evaluates success by monitoring student participation, attendance, graduation rates, college admission rates, SAT and GPA improvement, summer internships and postgraduation employment. Bright Prospect increased the number of student participants from 542 high school and 240 college students in FY 2011 to 777 high school and 323 college students in FY 2012, and the program works with 954 high school and 436 college students in FY 2013. One-hundred percent of high school seniors from the class of 2012 graduated and matriculated into college (148 total); 31 percent of Bright Prospect's college students are attending California colleges; 83 percent of Bright Prospect's high school class of 2008 graduated from college within four years (up from 79 percent for the class of 2007); and 31 Bright Prospect students graduated from college in May 2012. The Summer Academy's attendance increased from 270 in 2011 to 340 in 2012. Approximately 515 students volunteered for Bright Prospect to conduct activities for younger students throughout the year, including 13 dedicated summer interns. Bright Prospect students' persistence rates are 89 percent in community colleges, 99 percent in private colleges, and 97 percent in Cal State Universities and Universities of California.

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College Possible College Program

College Possible

Saint Paul, Minn.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION Upon completion of the College Possible high school program, students automatically become part of the College Possible college program and are assigned a coach. The college program targets low-income students who are former participants of College Possible's high school program. College coaches utilize a structured curriculum to focus on academic, financial and cultural factors identified as barriers to college success. Such factors include providing targeted support around FAFSA renewal, understanding tuition statements, registering for classes each semester, and applying for scholarships. Coaches work to connect students to their campus resources, to each other and to potential employers in order to help build a network that will support them as they make the difficult transition from high school to college and beyond. Helping students on college campuses nationwide, college coaches also provide targeted troubleshooting using Web 2.0 tools, one-on-one assistance (in person and by phone), group workshops, and on-campus support. The college program works with students for up to six years, or longer if they are continuing to actively pursue their degree. The program's ultimate goal is to increase students' college degree completion rates.

MEASURING SUCCESS College Possible continually monitors interim measures to determine progress toward the final goal of raising college degree completion for low-income students. Students in College Possible's high school class of 2012 had a college acceptance rate of 98 percent, a four-year college acceptance rate of 94 percent, and a FAFSA completion rate of 96 percent. In 2011-12, College Possible's first-year retention rate for students who started college in the fall of 2010 was 82 percent. Last year, the retention rate between first and second semesters for all college students was 89 percent, and the FAFSA renewal rate for the same group was 91 percent. Fifty-seven percent of College Possible students who enroll in college have graduated from a four-year college in six years or less; this is five times the rate of low-income students nationwide and on par with the college graduation rate for students of all income levels.

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College Success Program

Project GRAD Houston

Houston, Texas

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION The Project GRAD Houston College Success Program (CSP) addresses college persistence and success for Project GRAD Scholars receiving the \$4,000 Project GRAD Scholarship, the majority of whom are Hispanic or African American, low-income and first-generation college students. The goal of the CSP is to reverse low degree attainment trends for low-income, first-generation, and African American or Hispanic students by providing simple, straightforward and scalable support systems that build on existing assets to increase the knowledge, skills and habits of mind necessary to graduate from college. The CSP consists of three initiatives available to students: iMentor for College Success, which utilizes technology to connect students enrolled at out-of-town colleges and universities to trained corporate volunteer mentors; PG at the U, whereby the Project GRAD College Success Manager travels to Houston-area colleges and universities each week to meet with struggling students who need additional support, to monitor their progress throughout the school year, and to connect them to existing resources on their college campus; and GRAD Ambassadors, in which successful junior or senior Project GRAD Scholars enrolled at out-of-town universities meet once a month and build a community among their first-year peers to provide guidance, connection to campus resources, networking and valuable social support.

MEASURING SUCCESS The CSP currently maintains a 40 percent rate of students either persisting in or graduating from college, and it has set an organizational goal of 60 percent degree completion. Three metrics function as benchmarks to inform the effectiveness of the program and are the most reliable indicators of degree completion. The following are results for the three metrics for the matched group of 2011 high school graduates: (1) student persistence to year two: 72 percent of CSP participants persisted to year two compared to 48 percent of non-program participants, a 48 percent increase; (2) college GPA: both CSP participants and matched non-CSP participants averaged a 2.7 college GPA; (3) credit hours earned: CSP participants earned an average of 24 hours (i.e., full-time enrollment) compared to an average of 21.8 hours for non-CSP participants, a 10 percent increase. Students are making progress toward their degrees and, most importantly, toward on-time degree completion in four years.

CONTACT

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Engineering Career Awareness Program

University of Arkansas

Fayetteville, Ark.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION The goal of the Engineering Career Awareness Program (ECAP) is to increase the number of underrepresented students — especially those that are capable but financially challenged — who obtain engineering degrees and enter engineering graduate studies or the engineering workforce. ECAP cornerstones focus primarily on proven recruitment and retention strategies. It is imperative that engineering colleges respond to the significant demographic shifts in the national workforce and tailor their recruitment and retention efforts to reach diverse populations that previously have been overlooked and underrepresented in the engineering professions. In response to the urgent calls by the National Science Foundation and U.S. industry for action to address these issues, the University of Arkansas College of Engineering has committed itself to increasing both the number and diversity of students entering and graduating from engineering disciplines. In the fall of 2007, the College of Engineering implemented ECAP as a recruitment-to-graduation diversity initiative designed to increase the number of underrepresented students entering and graduating from engineering disciplines by removing traditional barriers to success.

MEASURING SUCCESS ECAP has been and continues to be an overwhelming success. Since ECAP's implementation, the number of first-year ethnic minority students increased 190 percent, from 48 (12 percent of the entering class) in 2006 (pre-ECAP) to 139 (20 percent of the class) in 2011. The university competitively awards the Silas Hunt Scholarship to underrepresented students. ECAP has raised the Silas Hunt acceptance rate from 60 percent to 79 percent, with the number of engineering recipients increasing from seven in 2006 to 32 in 2011. The retention rate of ECAP students is significantly higher than those of non-ECAP students for all cohort years. Of the students who entered the College of Engineering in 2008, their third-year retention rate in the college was 49 percent compared to 66 percent for ECAP students; for students entering in 2009, their second-year retention rate in the college was 49 percent compared to 60 percent for ECAP students; and for students entering in 2010, their first-year retention rate was 68 percent compared to 90 percent for ECAP students. Of the students who entered ECAP in 2007, 48 percent graduated in four years and 71 percent graduated in six years. The best historical engineering four- and six-year graduation rates are 17 and 43 percent, respectively. ECAP students participated in internships with at least 24 companies. Of the 2011 graduates, 27 percent pursued engineering graduate degrees, with the remaining students obtaining placement with corporations at an average starting salary of \$62,000.

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THE COLLEGE BOARD—COLLEGEKEYS COMPACT™
PARTNERS' COMMITMENT

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 need 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 ensure that all students from low-income backgrounds have the full array of college opportunities, (name of school, local education agency, college or university, state education agency, or nonprofit organization) agrees to expand its current efforts by:

1. Conducting the CollegeKeys™ inventory of our current initiatives to support the college readiness, achievement, and success of students from low-income backgrounds.
2. Engaging a team of senior leaders to review our current commitments to supporting the college aspirations of students from low-income backgrounds and identifying opportunities for expanding these efforts.
3. Establishing measurable institutional goals for expanding our current efforts to support the college aspirations of students from low-income backgrounds and implementing strategies for achieving these goals.
4. Monitoring and publicly reporting our progress in achieving our institution's CollegeKeys goals.

Within six months of signing this pledge, we agree to complete the CollegeKeys inventory and to establish goals for expanding our current efforts to improve college access and success for students from low-income backgrounds. We agree also to provide the College Board with a statement of our goals and a summary of our inventory results.

Institutional Leader's Signature (Principal, Superintendent, Chancellor, President, CSSO, SHEEO, or CEO)

Name: _____

Position Title: _____ E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Institution Name and Address: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Person responsible for coordinating Compact-related efforts: _____

Position Title: _____ E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Previous Innovation Award Winners

2010

GETTING READY:

- Advancing College Opportunity — Stark Education Partnership, OH
- College Conexión — Our Lady of the Lake University, TX
- Connecting Aspirations to a Plan — South Portland High School, ME
- Destination College: It's Elementary! — Orange County Public Schools, FL
- Getting Ready — Punahou School, HI
- Hispanic Youth Institute — Hispanic College Fund, Washington, DC

GETTING IN:

- Admission Possible — Admission Possible, MN
- Close the Deal — Jefferson County Public Schools, KY
- Dual Enrollment Initiative — Eastern Connecticut State University, CT
- Reach for College! in Schools — Reach for College!, Washington, DC
- Registration for a College-Ready Transcript for All — North Central High School, WA
- Sophomore Summit — Klein Forest High School, TX

GETTING THROUGH:

- Chico Student Success Center — California State University Chico, CA
- Compass Learning Community — University of Central Oklahoma, OK
- Gen-1 Theme House — University of Cincinnati, OH
- Learning Outcomes Initiative — Miami Dade College, FL
- Program for Students with Cumulative GPAs of Less than 2.0 — Westchester Community College, NY

2011

GETTING READY:

- Blueprint: College — Ohio State University, OH
- College Readiness for All: A System-wide Approach — Hillsborough County Public Schools, FL
- Dream Project — University of Washington, WA
- SEO Scholars Program — Sponsors for Educational Opportunity, NY

GETTING IN:

- ISA College Prep/Acceptance — Wyandanch Memorial High School, NY
- Vandy Fan for a Day — Vanderbilt University, TN

GETTING THROUGH:

- College Life 101 — University of Nevada, Reno, NV
- College Persistence Program — College Forward, TX
- College Success Program — Bottom Line, MA
- Onward College Support Program — Harlem Educational Activities Fund, NY
- Purdue Promise — Purdue University, IN
- Student Transition Empowerment Program — George Mason University, VA

2012

GETTING READY:

- Achieve Transition Program — Seminole County Public Schools, FL
- The College Crusade of Rhode Island — The College Crusade of Rhode Island, RI
- College Institutes — Project GRAD Houston, TX
- College Quest — Harlem Educational Activities Fund, NY
- Compact for Success — Sweetwater Union High School District, CA
- Higher Education Mentoring Initiative (HEMI) — University of Cincinnati, OH

GETTING IN:

- College Access Initiative — Thurgood Marshall Academy Public Charter High School, Washington, DC
- College Access Program — Bottom Line, MA
- GO Center Program — Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, TX
- Sacramento State 4 All — Valley High School, CA
- Single Stop MDC — Miami Dade College, FL

GETTING THROUGH:

- Carolina Firsts — The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC
- Designing Our Community (DOC) — Montana State University, MT
- EDGE (Engage, Develop, Guide, Empower) — Thomas College, ME
- EOE First-Year Interest Groups: Success in Engineering Starts Here — The University of Texas at Austin, TX
- Retention Outreach Team — Georgian Court University, NJ

About the College Board

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 6,000 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.org.

The Advocacy & Policy Center

The College Board Advocacy & Policy Center was established to help 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

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