



WHAT WORKS FOR LATINO STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION COMPENDIUM

2021



EXCELENCIA IN EDUCATION ACCELERATES LATINO STUDENT SUCCESS IN
HIGHER EDUCATION BY LINKING RESEARCH, POLICY, AND PRACTICE.

The following organizations demonstrate their belief in the abilities and talents of Latino students to succeed in higher education by supporting

THE 2021 EXAMPLES OF *EXCELENCIA*

LATINO STUDENT SUCCESS CHAMPIONS


BANK OF AMERICA 

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Google



ACT Center for Equity in Learning

 **Ad Astra**

Ascendium
Elevating opportunity

 **TRELLIS**
FOUNDATION

 **territorium**
AI-POWERED SKILLS PATHWAYS

Heli
Education Foundation

Diverse
ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

 **CollegeBoard**

 **workday**

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FOREWORD

What works to improve the success of Latino college students?

Excelencia has been finding answers to this question for the last 16 years by working with leaders in higher education and the community who strive to serve students. We have listened, learned, and played our role in bringing positive attention to programs and practices with evidence of effectiveness in advancing Latino student success in higher education. We have made common cause with these leaders and join them in raising funds, awareness, and opportunities in challenging times; sometimes with the support of others, and other times despite the hesitancy or reluctance of others. Working together we are putting into action a shared commitment to make a positive difference for students to thrive and succeed.

Excelencia knows the power of individuals, of community, and of leaders committed to a common cause of Latino student success, and most of all, students. We also know what works for Latino students can work for others, and are unapologetically focused on telling the story and bringing national attention to these local and personalized efforts across the country.

The continued challenges of the pandemic and its disproportionately negative impact on our community exacerbates resource limitations and real tradeoffs our community had already been experiencing. Yet, there is no excuse for inaction. The 21 programs *Excelencia* recognizes in this compendium have found ways to ensure Latino students, and all they serve, are able to meet their own educational goals to improve their lives, and that of their families and community through a college education.

They are inspiring and show explicit commitment to student-centered efforts and their evidence of effectiveness despite resource limitations. They remind us that we each have an opportunity to make a positive difference for others to access the opportunities for a better future.



Sarita E. Brown
President



Deborah A. Santiago
CEO

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES ANSWERING A NATIONAL CALL

There is a renewed national conversation about college completion as proposals for investment in the College Completion Fund are making headway in the federal government as part of the American Families Plan. With the belief that good policy is informed by good practice, *Excelencia* in Education brings national attention to programs having an impact on Latino student success to an audience of funders, policymakers, practitioners and partner organizations. The 2021 Examples of *Excelencia* and Finalists are student-centered efforts that not only tell a story of individual student impact but can also quantify their impact over time and for the many students served. Located at institutions and community-based organizations across the country and varying in size and scope, these 21 programs do share some common elements on how they intentionally SERVE Latino students while serving all. *Excelencia* in Education invites readers to learn about some of these themes below and to explore more of what they told us in their individual profiles that follow.

- **Asset Based** - These programs are focused on leveraging student strengths and not leaning into what others may see as deficits. They celebrate and promote the unique contributions of their students, their families and their communities. This often shows up in culturally responsive events and promotional materials.
- **Data Informed** - Programs shared how they use data to design and redesign their programs. They leveraged many types of data like student surveys, community analysis data, course grades and GPAs to find out what was needed for students. Then they are able to use institutional data like retention, persistence and completion rates to show the impact of their programs.
- **Building Comunidad (Community)** - Many programs had two lenses to their community work. They articulated how they connect with and engage their students' community to bring them into their institution. Then they shared how they help students build *comunidad* at their institution through cohort based models, learning communities and mentorship opportunities.
- **Holistic** - With an understanding that students are far more likely to succeed when support extends beyond an academic focus, programs designed comprehensive and holistic supports and programming to ensure student success including career exploration, programming for parents, or mentoring opportunities.
- **Affordability** - The majority of programs recognized that student financial circumstances and needs were often barriers to transitioning to postsecondary education. As such, many programs shared ways they ensured affordability by offering scholarships, paid internships, fee waivers, FAFSA workshops and fully covered bridge/summer programs.

Since 2005, *Excelencia* has identified over 350 evidence-based programs that are improving Latino student success through Examples of *Excelencia*. *Excelencia* identifies and disseminates these effective practices to others interested in serving Latino students and in particular with the only national, online searchable database. The Growing What Works Database is a free database that serves as a resource for institutional leaders, funders, policymakers and others interested in evidence-based practices accelerating Latino student success in higher education. Visit the database: www.EdExcelencia.org/Growing-What-Works.

HOW WE FIND WHAT WORKS FOR LATINO STUDENTS

For *Excelencia* in Education, finding programs that work for Latino students and sharing their effective practices with other institutions, programs, and stakeholders helps us further accelerate Latino student success. The following describes the annual process for Examples of *Excelencia*:

- Every year, Examples of *Excelencia* begins with a national call for nominations encouraging individuals to share initiatives accelerating Latino student success in higher education. This year we received 314 nominations from 24 states, DC and Puerto Rico.
- Nominated programs are asked to submit their program profiles to *Excelencia*. The program submissions are reviewed by staff, who then select a set of finalists. This year the 21 finalists were selected from 145 profile submissions across 23 states and Puerto Rico.
- Finalist profile submissions are shared with their national selection committee, composed of leaders with diverse backgrounds in education, public policy, philanthropy, and the workforce. The committee conducts their own review and then selects one Example of *Excelencia* for each level: associate, baccalaureate, graduate, and community-based organizations.

The programs in our annual compendium, *What Works for Latino Students in Higher Education*, are featured with an individual profile. Each profile states their mission and goals, some of their practices and evidence of effectiveness. These program overviews are not intended to be exhaustive, but provide insight into their efforts increasing Latino student success. To learn more about each program, please reach out to the contact listed at the end of each summary.

An evidence-based practice uses data to show student success in ways unique to each program. Submissions are reviewed for the elements below and the overall alignment of these elements throughout the narrative.

MISSION

- Program is meeting a defined need related to serving Latino students.

GOALS

- Goals are related to program practices and are realistic, attainable, and measurable.

NEED

- The need or challenges students face is articulated.
- Program has shown growth over time to better serve students.

PRACTICES

- Practices are aligned to the need and goals.
- Practices show indicators of cultural competency and employ elements that are proven effective in serving Latino students.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Funding model is sustainable and diversified.
- Indicated that there were plans for future funding.

LEADERSHIP

- Dedicated leadership and staff with clear roles that support Latino student success.

EVIDENCE

- Metrics are aligned with stated goals.
- Outcomes show progress/achievement in reaching goals to support Latino students in given areas.
- Data show baselines and comparisons between cohorts and others.
- Data is disaggregated by race/ethnicity to highlight the status of Latino students.

2021 EXAMPLES OF EXCELENCIA SELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Each year, *Excelencia* convenes a group of knowledgeable partners from community, education, and philanthropy to review and select the four Examples of *Excelencia* from the identified finalist programs. *Excelencia* is grateful to the following members of the 2021 Examples of *Excelencia* selection committee:



SELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

MEMBER	TITLE	ORGANIZATION
Isis Artze-Vega	Vice President of Academic Affairs	Valencia College
José Cabrales	Vice President and Chief of Staff	American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU)
Chris Coxon	Managing Director, Programs	Educate Texas
Estela López	Senior Associate	Excelencia in Education
Tia Brown McNair	Vice President for Diversity, Equity, & Student Success and Executive Director for the TRHT Campus Centers	Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU)
Rafael Pasillas	Director, Initiatives	Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)
Edward Smith	Program Officer, Education	The Kresge Foundation
Cindia Velasco	Director of Constituency Services – Education	National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund

2021 EXAMPLES OF *EXCELENCIA*

ASSOCIATE LEVEL

EXAMPLE:

Ambiciones

Howard Community College – Columbia, Maryland

FINALISTS:

Austin Community College Guided Pathways Advising through Coaching

Austin Community College – Austin, Texas

EDGE/pLEDGE

College of the Desert – Palm Desert, California

Miami Dade College School of Science STEM Research Institute (SRI)

Miami Dade College – Miami, Florida

The Hostos Community College Joint Dual Engineering Degree Program

CUNY Hostos Community College – Bronx, New York

Transitional Bilingual Learning Community (TBLC)

Harry S. Truman College – Chicago, Illinois

BACCALAUREATE LEVEL

EXAMPLE:

Cardinal First

North Central College – Naperville, Illinois

FINALISTS:

FIU Connect4Success (C4S)

Florida International University – Miami, Florida

Gaining Awareness and Networking for Academic Success (GANAS) Program

Portland State University – Portland, Oregon

The Gateway Project

Florida International University – Miami, Florida

Mathematics Intensive Summer Session (MISS)

California State University, Fullerton – Fullerton, California

2021 EXAMPLES OF EXCELENCIA

BACCALAUREATE LEVEL FINALISTS CONTINUED

Peer and Academic Resource Center (PARC) Supplemental Instruction (SI) Program

California State University, Sacramento – Sacramento, California

PIONERAS (Professional Improvement through Optimization of Native-language Education and the Realization of Academic/familial Symbiosis)

Texas Woman's University – Denton, Texas

UHD STEM Training Center for Underrepresented Future Workforce

University of Houston-Downtown – Houston, Texas

GRADUATE LEVEL

EXAMPLE:

Éxito! Latino Cancer Research Leadership Training

Institute for Health Promotion Research at UT Health San Antonio – San Antonio, Texas

FINALISTS:

UTSA M.S. Business Program

University of Texas at San Antonio – San Antonio, Texas

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION LEVEL

EXAMPLE:

Conexión Américas' College Success Program

Conexión Américas – Nashville, Tennessee

FINALISTS:

Catch the Next Ascender Program

Catch the Next, Inc. – San Antonio, Texas

Building Bridges Through Education

West Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce – Grand Rapids, Michigan

First-Gen Forward

Latino U College Access (LUCA) – White Plains, New York

Kid City Hope Place

Los Angeles United Methodist Urban Foundation – Los Angeles, California

Ambiciones

Howard Community College
Columbia, MD



MISSION AND GOALS

Ambiciones' mission is to provide pathways to college completion for Latino students by providing support from application to graduation. First, the program assists students and their families in navigating the Howard Community College (HCC) entrance process. Once students are enrolled, the program aims to improve Latino students' academic success by providing tailored Latino student support services that include advising, financial aid assistance, scholarship support, and culturally specific programming.

Ambiciones has three core goals with corresponding student outcomes: **1)** Assist students with maintaining good academic standing; **2)** Increase retention rates of first-year participants; and **3)** Increase student participant transfer/graduation rates.

PRACTICES

Ambiciones endeavors to support students and families "from application to graduation." The program provides bilingual outreach to Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) students, and staff members are trained in intrusive academic advising, financial aid, and also provide culturally relevant programming to keep students engaged. Additionally, Ambiciones provides scholarships to first-year students, increasing their awards in the second year to promote retention.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- Program participants that earned a GPA of 2.0 or higher in FY20 was 72% compared to 69% of non-program participants in fall 2019.
- In spring 2020, 90% of program participants met the good academic standing goal compared to 81% of non-program participants.
- In FY20, the fall-to-fall retention rate for first-year/full-time participants was 79% compared to 58% for non-program participants.
- The retention rate for first-time/full time student participants was 91% compared to 67% of non-participants. The retention rate for part-time program participants was 50% compared to 45% for non-program participants.

PROGRAM CONTACT

Sandy Cos, Assistant Director of Ambiciones, Learning Assistance Center

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<https://www.howardcc.edu/services-support/academic-support/academic-support-programs/ambiciones/index.html>

Austin Community College **Guided Pathways Advising** **through Coaching**

Austin Community College
Austin, TX



MISSION AND GOALS

The Guided Pathways Advising through Coaching Program seeks to move Austin Community College (ACC) from a Hispanic-Serving Institution to a Hispanic-Graduating Institution by accelerating Latinx students to college-level coursework and providing a structure of support to increase persistence and graduation rates. The program's mission is to provide students with highly personalized and proactive support to help them select an academic path, stay on the path, and achieve their goals of graduation, transfer, or career readiness.

The goals of the program include: **1)** engaging students through advisor coaching and helping students develop agency to create their academic path; **2)** establishing proactive and highly personalized interactions by fostering student-advisor-faculty and student-mentor relationships; and **3)** providing significant internal support resources and helping students navigate external resources to support their success.

PRACTICES

ACC redesigned their advising training, program development, and student engagement to empower staff and students to make holistically informed decisions. They redesigned transfer and career pathways to minimize barriers and prepare students for degrees and gainful employment. ACC also reimagined a student-centered community through the college's Diversity Framework to create equitable outcomes for all students. In 2019, the advising team formed a close alliance with the Ascender program contributing to ACC's strategic goals of advancing inclusion, equity, social justice, persistence, and completion. About 10,000 first-time at ACC (FTACC) students with less than 12 credit hours are case managed, where advisors interact with their caseload a minimum of 5 times a term, providing tutoring information, student engagement, and continued registration.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- From 2017 to 2019, the number of Latinx students persisting from fall to spring increased by 9%. From fall 2017 to fall 2019, the number of Latinx students persisting increased by two and half percent. In that same time period Latinx students with a GPA over 2.0 increased by 8%.
- The program has helped all students in that ACC's first time in college (FTIC) full time student increase the graduation rate from 7% to 19% in that same 2017 to 2019 period.
- For fall 2019, the students participating in Ascender had success rates in Engl 1301 of 81% versus 78% for non-Ascender students and 81% for EDUC 1300 versus 71% for non-Ascender students.

PROGRAM CONTACT

Ruth Reinhart, Associate Vice Chancellor, Student Support Services

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<https://www.austincc.edu/students/advising/areas-of-study-advising>

EDGE/pLEDGE

College of the Desert
Palm Desert, CA



MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of the EDGE (Engage, Develop, Grow, Empower) program is to remove barriers, increase student success, and mitigate achievement gaps in access, persistence, and completion. The goals of the program are to **1)** increase access, success, persistence, and completion; **2)** prepare students for college-level coursework; and **3)** promote equity for minority, low-income, and first-generation students.

PRACTICES

EDGE provides students with a structured onboarding process, a summer bridge component to prepare for college and college-level coursework, comprehensive wrap-around support services, and financial support (pLEDGE) for students' first two-years of college. Another important aspect of the program is providing an opportunity for students to connect with faculty, staff and other students before they start their academic journey. During the program, students participate in a rigorous review of subject-specific content in math and English, attend counseling sessions, learn about campus resources, attend special program presentations, and build lasting connections. The program also provides extensive outreach services in English and Spanish to our local high schools and the community at large to increase access and educational attainment within their service area.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- EDGE students persist from fall to spring at higher rates than non-EDGE students. In 2017, EDGE participant persistence rates were 88% compared to 66% of non-EDGE participants. Since 2013, data among participants and non-participants showed similar persistence rates.
- EDGE/pLEDGE students complete more units in their first semester (9.5) compared to their non-EDGE/pLEDGE counterparts (7 units). Additionally, EDGE/pLEDGE students complete more units in their first year (17.2 units) compared to their non-EDGE/pLEDGE counterparts (12 units).
- pLEDGE students also have a higher 3-year completion rate (14%) compared to their non-pLEDGE counterparts (9%).
- EDGE students have higher success rates in college-level English (68% compared to 66%, Fall 2017), degree-applicable math (40% to 30%, Fall 2017), and college-level statistical methods (50% to 36%, Fall 2017), compared to their non-EDGE counterparts. When comparing success rates in college level English, Hispanic/Latino EDGE students were more successful compared to their non-EDGE counterparts (66% vs. 54%, Fall 2018).

PROGRAM CONTACT

Katie Chartier, Assistant Director, First Year Experience/EDGE/pLEDGE

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<http://collegeofthedesert.edu/students/EDGE>

Miami Dade College School of Science STEM Research Institute (SRI)

Miami Dade College
Miami, FL



MISSION AND GOALS

The School of Science STEM Research Institute's (SRI) mission is to provide Hispanic and other underrepresented minority STEM students with high-quality, early research experiences to help them acquire the knowledge and skills important to their academic success and critical to be competitive in the STEM workforce of the 21st century. Undergraduate research experiences have proven to benefit minorities by promoting early engagement, subject matter knowledge, and interaction with faculty members. The research experiences help them see the connection between their academic work and their future career goals. This leads to persistence in STEM majors and attainment of STEM degrees. The goals of the program are to provide Hispanic and other underrepresented minority students with authentic undergraduate research experiences, increase their awareness of STEM careers, and encourage them to apply to external research experiences for undergraduates as well as to transfer to four-year universities and graduate programs.

PRACTICES

The SRI provides an intellectually stimulating environment and exposes the students to the world of scientific research. The program is made up of 200 hours of research in the summer or 100 hours in the spring over 10-12 weeks, professional and soft skills workshops, and various deliverables. All summer interns must present their independent research projects at the annual STEM Research Symposium at the close of the program. Participants work in interdisciplinary teams with opportunities to apply and transfer classroom knowledge to the research environment. All eligible students receive a stipend for their participation.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- Data from the three-year graduation rates of MDC students showed that STEM students who participated in research experiences were 2.4 times more likely to graduate within three years (68%) than MDC students who were STEM majors but did not participate in undergraduate research (28%) and three times more likely to graduate in three years as compared to all other MDC students (non-STEM, non-SRI).
- The fall-to-fall retention rate of SRI participants for the academic year 2019-2020 was 96% compared to 67% of STEM students who did not participate in undergraduate research experiences during the same time period.
- The average GPA of SRI students who enrolled and participated in research in the spring 2020 term was 3.6 compared to registered STEM students, excluding SRI students, whose average was 2.8.

PROGRAM CONTACT

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<https://www.mdc.edu/science/research-opportunities/>

The Hostos Community College Joint Dual Engineering Degree Program with The City College of New York's Grove School of Engineering
CUNY Hostos Community College
Bronx, NY



MISSION AND GOALS

Hostos Community College (HCC), a Hispanic-Serving Institution located in the South Bronx, established a successful Joint Dual (JD) Engineering Degree Program with The City College of New York's Grove School of Engineering (GSoE) of CUNY. The primary mission of the program is to provide a strong foundation of knowledge in science and mathematics for their multicultural and underrepresented student population as well as provide them with a high-quality general education needed for the training of future engineers. The Program goals are to better prepare students to earn advanced degrees in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields, and to increase the number of underrepresented students, particularly Latinos and Black, who earn associate and baccalaureate degrees in STEM fields, especially in engineering. One of HCC-GSoE partnership's major achievements has been the creation of a viable pipeline from the South Bronx to Engineering Programs of leading four-year institutions and graduate schools.

PRACTICES

To achieve the program mission, the Mathematics and the Natural Sciences Departments are committed to maintaining the highest standards of excellence in teaching and service. Key interventions that promote high transfer/graduation rates of JD engineering students include a robust HCC-GSoE curriculum alignment, excellent HCC-GSoE communication, well-organized network of tutoring, mentoring, STEM Boot Camps, and undergraduate research programs, and requirements to take engineering classes at GSoE (ePermit) before transferring. The Engineering Program also provides a series of quality curricular and co-extra-curricular activities, as well as an advisement/mentoring model that nurtures the transition from a community college to a four-year institution.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- The current three-year graduation rate for students in the JD Engineering Program per major is higher or similar than the institutional average for STEM majors of 25%. For students starting out at Calculus I or higher the rate is closer to ~40%.
- Over the last five years, the number of graduates has increased significantly, with fewer than 10 graduates in the early years of the program (2004-2007) to well over 20 graduates per year in the last 5 years. As of AY2019-20, 267 students have graduated with an AS in Engineering. (~48% Latinos).
- As of Fall 2019 approximately 70% of these graduates have transferred to CCNY's GSoE. Over 90% of JD Engineering transfer students who do switch majors or drop during their first year at GSoE persisted to STEM majors other than engineering at 4-year institutions.

PROGRAM CONTACT

Yoel Rodriguez, Professor/Engineering Program Coordinator

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<https://www.hostos.cuny.edu/Administrative-Offices/Office-of-Academic-Affairs/Dual-Degree-Program>

Transitional Bilingual Learning Community (TBLC)

**Harry S. Truman College,
City Colleges of Chicago
Chicago, IL**



MISSION AND GOALS

The Transitional Bilingual Learning Community (TBLC) was established at Truman College recognizing that Latinx ELLs (English Language Learners) needed specially designed and targeted support that recognizes their linguistic, cultural and academic characteristics. The mission of TBLC is to provide Latinx English language learners attending Truman College the best opportunity to acquire solid academic skills and knowledge, to be part of a supportive community of students, staff and faculty, and to develop self-confidence and leadership. The program goals are to: **1)** Strengthen college retention and persistence; **2)** Increase the number of Latinx ELLs successfully completing English 101 (credit gateway course) and increase overall average course GPAs; **3)** Increase the number of Associate degrees and/or Advanced and Basic Certificates attained, and increase the rates of students transferring to four-year colleges or universities; and **4)** Enhance the college experience using the learning community model; parent, peer, and cultural activities; and embedded college and career advisement.

PRACTICES

The TBLC provides its students with a place where their bilingual/bicultural experience is supported and strengthened. TBLC instructors design and develop an academic curriculum that meets the needs of its Latino immigrant students. Each academic year, the TBLC Program recruits a group of Latinx ELL students to form a cohort. Using the learning community model, TBLC delivers program services that include a 2-week orientation to college, tutoring, an interdisciplinary teaching model, academic advisement, career planning and development, transfer information and assistance, financial aid advisement, club activities, service learning, parent seminars, university and museum field trips, TBLC Student Scholarship Fund Committee, and other scholarship opportunities. Over the years, the program has adjusted to the changing environment and added features to improve program success, including most recently extending the program to three semesters with two new classes including ESL 100 and English 101 that directly supports meeting one of the TBLC program goals. The program has relationships with several Chicago Public High Schools (CPS) and adult education program advisors in the area to help refer and recruit Latinx ELL students and Latino adult learners, respectively.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

Across 19 years, 61% of TBLC students have graduated with AA/AS/BC/AC degrees and/or have transferred to a four-year college or university. Seventy-six percent (76%) of those degrees were earned with honors. Additionally, data collected during the last two academic years show that:

- Latino TBLC students recorded an average of 3.0 GPA compared to Latino non-TBLC students that recorded an average of 2.66 GPA.
- 96% of Latino TBLC students passed the ESL 99 developmental class compared to 66% Latino non-TBLC students.
- Latino TBLC students recorded an 82% retention rate compared to Latino non-TBLC students that recorded 16% retention rates.

PROGRAM CONTACT

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<https://www.ccc.edu/colleges/truman/departments/Pages/Transitional-Bilingual-Learning-Community.aspx>

Cardinal First

North Central College

Naperville, IL



MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of Cardinal First is to **1)** provide a supportive and welcoming community for first-generation college students and their families; **2)** provide a campus culture that recognizes and celebrates first-generation student identity as an asset; and **3)** provide a program that intentionally connects students to faculty, resources, information and experiences that promote academic and personal success from enrollment through graduation. The goals of the program are aligned to the mission of the program and seek to increase the retention and graduation rate of first-generation students at the college; to provide a network of first-gen peers, faculty, and staff who serve as caring mentors; and to increase a sense of belonging for first-gen students and families within our community. The program goals are also to establish pride in being a first-generation college student; to provide ongoing, timely information/guidance/connection to resources and opportunities; and deliver a series of interactive, engaging, and transformational student success workshops.

PRACTICES

Cardinal First prioritizes retention across all four years through cohort-based, interactive monthly workshops (offered at multiple times) for all first-gen students including Cardinal First Fridays (first-years), Sophomore Suppers, Penultimate (juniors), and Homestretch (seniors). Each one-hour workshop includes food and fellowship, first-gen faculty sharing, peer mentoring, and asset-based, student success content. (125 workshops offered annually). To incentivize participation, a meal is provided at every workshop and a renewable \$1,000 scholarship is awarded to students meeting the participation requirements. Additionally, the program hosts a robust First-generation Celebration Week in November. Intrusive outreach is ongoing to all first-gen students and families (in Spanish as needed). All first-gen students are invited to participate and can join anytime throughout the year. Every participant is provided with a CF t-shirt, calendar/planner, and swag. Finally, 120+ first-gen faculty/staff have CF attire and first-gen office signs inviting first-gen students to connect.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- Average first-to-second year retention rate for all students who completed Cardinal First workshop series is 92% vs. 78% for all NC students and 61% for first-gen students not participating.
- Average first-to-second year retention rate for Latino students in Cardinal First is 89% vs. 72% for all Latino students and 52% for Latino first-gen students not participating.
- Average first-to-third year retention rate for all students in CF is 84% vs. 71% for all NC students and 53% for first-gen not participating.
- Average first-to-third year retention rate for Latino Students in CF is 85% vs. 69% for all Latino students and 47% for Latino first-gen not participating.

PROGRAM CONTACT

Julie Carballo, Director of First-generation Initiatives and Veteran & Military-Affiliated Student Services
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www.noctrl.edu/cardinal-first

FIU Connect4Success (C4S) Florida International University Miami, FL



MISSION AND GOALS

Florida International University (FIU) Connect4Success (C4S) launched in 2016 as a redesigned, rebranded, and strategically funded pathway from its original (2006) conception, Dual Degree Program. The C4S pathway builds on Florida's 2+2 framework with evidence-based transfer affirming and transfer receptive approaches to impact student outcomes in transformational ways. They uphold students' transfer goals and assert their commitment to helping them meet those goals through strengths-based, personalized advising and coaching and in maintaining students' 4-year identity and momentum. They are advocates and myth busters who spotlight the talents and assets their students possess. The program's goals are to increase **1)** access to the baccalaureate degree; **2)** timely completion of the baccalaureate degree; and **3)** the percentage of Florida College System (FCS) students who graduate without excess credits. Goals 2 and 3 are rooted in preparing all FIU-bound students from their three C4S partners—our largest sending partners—to be transfer/major ready.

PRACTICES

C4S practices drive their access and success goals and represent their asset-based approach to empowering students throughout their transfer journey—one that is too often stigmatized for community college students. Specific practices include:

- Guaranteed admission to FIU with an AA degree earned within 3 years, recently incentivized with micro-scholarships earned while completing the AA.
- Strengths-based advising by FIU Bridge Advisors that are housed at partner colleges, supplemented by customized programming and transfer guides.
- Issuance of FIU student ID card, providing access to FIU events, and a powerful reminder that a seat awaits them at FIU!
- Peer engagement with Transfer Ambassadors.
- Transfer merit scholarships/stipends post-transfer.
- Undergraduate research opportunities.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- Of C4S students who start at a partner college in a given cohort (approximately 1,200), 32% transition to FIU in three years or less with the AA degree, and another 12% transfer in the fourth year (44% in four years or less).
- At least 80% of students from each cohort meeting C4S criteria earned a bachelor's degree at FIU within 3 years or are actively enrolled. These graduation rates are highest for Latino students (62%).
- In broadening their reach, FIU increased Florida College System (FCS) Transfer-In with AA rates (78% to 83%); the percentage of transfer students graduating from FIU without excess credit hours (78% in 2014-15 to 86% in 2019-20); and 2- and 3-year completion rates.

PROGRAM CONTACT

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<https://admissions.fiu.edu/how-to-apply/connect4success/index.html>

Gaining Awareness and Networking for Academic Success (GANAS) Program

Portland State University
Portland, OR



MISSION AND GOALS

The goal of the Gaining Awareness and Networking for Academic Success (GANAS) Program is to help support and retain students throughout their first year at Portland State University. The program works to create a sense of community that reflects the Latinx culture. By building a shared sense of community, the student can create a support network, which helps the student feel safe and comfortable on campus. Students want to come to campus knowing that a community is waiting for them. This sense of community helps students stay involved and increases the likelihood of being retained and graduating. Progress toward their program goal is measured by tracking term-term retention rates, GPA, and 4-6 year graduation rates.

PRACTICES

The GANAS program consists of a bridge program prior to the first week of classes. Each student is required to meet with the GANAS adviser once a month where the adviser uses a holistic approach to support the student. The adviser also tracks the academic progress of the student through grade reports and grade checks each term. Students also meet with their mentors, who host events throughout each term to create community and build relationships across the program. Students also receive priority registration to ensure they can get into the classes they need. Lastly, each student is presented with a financial award in the form of tuition remission.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- The average retention rate for all cohorts into their second year is 87%. The institution's overall first-year retention rate from 2010-2017 is 71.8%.
- Compared to overall Latinx retention and graduation rates, the GANAS program has far exceeded the average graduation rates. The 4-year graduation rate for the most recent year was 41% compared to approximately 25% 4- year graduation rate with the overall university. The 6-year graduation rate average is 63% across all cohorts. PSU's 6-year graduation rate is approximately 47% compared to the same time frame as the GANAS program.
- The GANAS Program saw the biggest jump in 4-year graduation rates between 2012-2013 and 2015-2016 from 3% to 45%. Data collected also showed 5-year retention numbers steadily increased from 40% with their first cohort to 62% with their 2015-2016 cohort.

PROGRAM CONTACT

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The Gateway Project

Florida International University

Miami, FL



MISSION AND GOALS

The Gateway Project at Florida International University (FIU) fosters the transformation of foundational courses (sometimes known as gate-keeper courses) into gateways to success, centered on student learning and the development of complex skills and habits that support persistence through degree completion. Additionally, the role of foundational courses extends beyond teaching the specific course content; they also provide the environments in which students learn and develop skills and habits needed for university-level work, develop confidence, and adapt to the large, diverse university population. To achieve this transformation at scale, the Gateway Project goals include: **1)** Reducing the number of courses first-year students fail; **2)** Identifying student's perceptions, experiences and behaviors associated with performance; **3)** Supporting the redesign of gateway courses; **4)** Promoting evidence based, learning centered, and culturally responsive instruction; and **5)** Empowering faculty and varied stakeholders as partners in student success. This transformation means that each year thousands of additional students – most who are Hispanic/Latino - progress toward the degrees and careers of their dreams.

PRACTICES

FIU faculty support these outcomes by developing learning centered and inclusive course design and pedagogy, while student feedback guides their work. To support faculty, the Gateway Project provides professional development opportunities and course assessment surveys. In 2019-20, 130 faculty participated in The Gateway Project professional development opportunities. Understanding student perspectives and needs is essential to course transformation. This is a foundation of the Gateway Project and key to supporting the success of Hispanic/Latino students. Some of the program's continuous improvement activities include:

- Gateway Student Perceptions & Behaviors Surveys illuminate challenges and differences in student experiences and engagement. Survey results inform gateway project programming and provide measures for impacts of course redesign (more than 8,000 student responses).
- Inquiry Institutes guide faculty through an analysis of course survey data as well as course outcomes disaggregated by demographic and academic factors. Faculty identify disparities in course experiences and outcomes and develop strategies to ameliorate differences and improve student learning.
- Gateway workshops disseminate the findings of student success research throughout the university community, using the words of students to illustrate course experiences.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- Since the inception of the Gateway Project, over 21,000 additional students have passed 21 gateway courses than would have at the 2013-14 passing rates (21 courses with combined > 35,000 enrolled students annually, including Biology, Chemistry, English, History, Psychology, Math, Statistics, Economics). The average passing rate across these courses has increased from 65% to 82%.
- In First-to-second-year retention has increased from 85% (2013-14 cohort) to 91% (2019-20 cohort). For Hispanic/Latino students, retention increased from 87% to 93%.
- The ripple effects continue as 4-yr. graduation rates increased from 33% to 48% and 6-yr rates from 61% to 66%. For Hispanic/Latino students, 4-yr. graduation rates increased from 34% to 50%, and 6-yr graduation rates increased from 63% to 69%.

PROGRAM CONTACT

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Mathematics Intensive Summer Session (MISS)

California State University, Fullerton
Fullerton, FL



MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of the Mathematics Intensive Summer Session (MISS) is to support high school Latina students interested in STEM careers, and to give them the support needed to access and successfully transition to college as STEM majors. Specifically, the goal of the program is to see that student participants successfully complete the necessary courses required for college admission, with a programmatic goal to achieve a high college-going rate with each year of the program.

PRACTICES

Designed to serve females from underrepresented ethnic groups, with the majority being Latinas, MISS has been providing an intensive math experience for the last 31 summers. Females from local high schools attend daily MISS courses for four weeks during the summer in college prep math at the Algebra 2 or Pre-calculus level. Additionally, female role models serve as guest speakers and include successful women in business, education, or industry, many of whom are Latina. There is no cost to students to participate, and those who complete the program earn a graphing calculator. The program also encourages students to take on leadership roles in supporting their peers to succeed in college prep courses.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- Over one-third of MISS students enroll at CSU Fullerton where their progress is tracked showing them successfully completing college at over a 90% rate. Overall, 98% of MISS participants go on to college.
- Pre- and post-tests identify math knowledge gained from the program as well as improved attitude and confidence in learning math. Disaggregating the pre-post content knowledge gains for the summers of 2017-2019, data showed slightly better gains for Latina vs. non-Latina students.
- Gains in math attitude and math self-concept also showed that the program was effective in instilling confidence and self-reliance for learning math with an average of a 17% gain in attitude and a 12% gain in confidence in doing math over the years.

PROGRAM CONTACT

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Peer and Academic Resource Center (PARC) Supplemental Instruction (SI) Program

California State University,
Sacramento Sacramento, CA



MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of the Peer and Academic Resource Center (PARC) is to support the scholastic achievements of students through peer-led learning programs that strengthen the pathways to degree attainment. The motto of PARC is "Successful Students Promoting Student Success." Within PARC, the International Certified Supplemental Instruction (SI) Program offers undergraduate students consistent academic support in historically high fail-rate, large-lecture General Education and/or major courses at Sacramento State. The overall goal of the SI program is to reduce the rate of students receiving a D, F, or W, and to help students develop the necessary skills and study strategies to ensure that they pass difficult courses the first time that they are enrolled.

PRACTICES

The SI program specifically serves the Latino student population in two ways: **1)** by hiring Latinx student leaders to facilitate weekly, peer-to-peer 1-unit courses in their majors, and **2)** by enrolling over 43% of Latinx students in the 1-unit courses so that they are successful in their large lecture courses. Students enrolled in SI meet twice weekly and attend the large-lecture course. Student leaders work at least 10 hours weekly and meet with professors to discuss testing/assessment and the academic performance of students in SI courses. Robust training is embedded to support student leaders in facilitation skills to support participants in high fail-rate courses. Students were trained in positive culture identity as well as learned about others' cultural identities.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- In Fall 2019, 87% of Hispanic students who enrolled in SI did better in passing the large lecture compared to 75% of Hispanic students who did not enroll in the SI program. In Spring 2020, 83% of Hispanic students who enrolled in SI did better in passing the large lecture compared to 79% of Hispanic students who did not enroll in the SI program.
- Students enrolled in SI have an overall higher passing rate in their GE courses than their non-SI counterparts. Data from 2015-2020 academic years show passing rates of SI students between 80-90% compared to their non-SI counterparts that ranged from 71-81%..
- Across the years, the average GPAs for students who took the 1-unit course were above 2.5 and were higher (by .25 - .50 points) than students who did not enroll in the 1-unit courses attached to the GE courses.

PROGRAM CONTACT

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**PIONERAS (Professional Improvement
through Optimization of Native-language
Education and the Realization of
Academic/familial Symbiosis)**

**Texas Woman's University
Denton, TX**



MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of PIONERAS is to improve language and literacy skills and the academic achievement of Spanish dominant Emergent Bilinguals (EBs) in Dual Language (DL) classrooms in North Texas. In improving EBs' academic achievement, PIONERAS's main goal is to improve the proficiency and content pedagogy in Spanish of 42 pre-service undergraduate bilingual education teachers. PIONERAS aims to: **1)** increase overall level of academic Spanish as evidenced by the Bilingual Target Language Proficiency Test (BTLPT) exam; **2)** increase level of academic Spanish (reading, writing, speaking, and listening); **3)** increase pedagogical knowledge of bilingual education evidenced by the TExES EC-6 Bilingual/ESL exam; **4)** complete three specially designed undergraduate courses taught in Spanish; and **5)** provide a three-week summer study abroad program including two Texas Woman's University's (TWU) pedagogy courses required for certification and an intensive Spanish language course.

PRACTICES

PIONERAS operationalizes its mission and goals by serving both undergraduate and graduate students through four components: **1)** University coursework focused on educational practices, bilingualism, and second language acquisition delivered fully in Spanish (five courses for undergraduates and three for graduates); **2)** A study abroad program in Central America including advanced Spanish courses, teaching experience in country, and university coursework; **3)** The possibility for graduate students to receive additional scholarships for a full graduate degree; and **4)** Collaborative mentorship between undergraduate and graduate students. All of these supports, including mentorship, tailored coursework, and intense academic language in Spanish, ensure the success of our teachers. All PIONERAS undergraduate and graduate students receive full scholarships for the program, as well as specialized tutoring and assistance including free workshops designed to support their coursework and testing.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

Using the BTLPT to measure changes in Spanish language skills for PIONERAS program participants, pre to post-intervention percentage change comparison showed a statistically significant increase of these teachers' overall level of academic Spanish in years with available data.

- Pre to post-intervention percentage change comparison showed a statistically significant improvement of these participants' writing and oral skills in years with available data. Statistically significant improvement in their reading and listening skills was also shown in Year 2018-2019.
- All students (100%) completed a series of three specially designed undergraduate courses taught in Spanish.
- Compared to non-PIONERAS students, PIONERAS students' mean score in the BTLPT was higher or equal in all years with available data. Their TExES scores were equal to non-PIONERAS' in the year 2019- 2020.
- In academic years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, 100% of students completed a 3-week summer study abroad program including two TWU undergraduate pedagogy courses required for certification and an intensive Spanish language course.

PROGRAM CONTACT

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www.twu.edu/pioneras

UHD STEM Training Center for Underrepresented Future Workforce

University of Houston-Downtown
Houston, TX



MISSION AND GOALS

The University of Houston-Downtown (UHD) in partnership with local school districts and a workforce board, delivers programs to pre-college students, current undergraduates, and upper division undergraduates near graduation to advance their awareness of and preparedness for STEM careers. In conjunction with all partners, the STEM Training Center aims to meet the following annual objectives: **1)** Increase the number of underrepresented STEM pre-college and college-goer competencies needed in the workforce through its annual programming; **2)** Offer pre-college and undergraduate tuition support to improve affordability of college STEM degree attainment and to ensure full-time status during the course of the project; and **3)** Train participants in occupational/career soft skills, leadership, and team-building skills for the workplace, entrance into university study, graduate programs, and job acquisitions.

PRACTICES

All PhDs partnering with the STEM training program have several years of experience working with underrepresented students. They come together with the above mentioned three groups for: **1)** an academic 6-Saturday program and the intensive 15-day summer workshop program supporting training and mentored STEM laboratory research training, including new instrumentation usage such as 3-CAD and 3-D Printing training, inverted microscopy use, robotic arm use for automation, robots and artificial intelligence, and electrophoresis gel and PCR uses; **2)** scholarship/research training stipends and internship placements for current underrepresented undergraduates; and **3)** training in occupational/career soft skills, leadership and team-building skills to assist with gaining employment with Houston-based industries or application to/acceptance into graduate programs or professional schools.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- Participants in all three groups generate over 100 hours of lab time. For approximately 114 per summer, all participants totaled 920 research lab hours each year for a four-year total of 3,680 hours of research in labs. Over the four year period, 116 hours of career skills made up this part of the program. Each year, the precollege participants moved up to the next grade level. Grade ranges of participants include all high school grade levels and graduates.
- Among 28 undergraduates 100% applied for internships/summer research; 32% were accepted to present at a research conference; 100% applied for scholarships; 100% advanced to the next semester at UHD, this data translated across the four years.
- Among Undergraduate Research leaders: selected to present at research conferences >100%; obtained interviews and jobs >100%; graduating in May 61%; entering graduate programs 5%; entering workforce 61%; advancing next UHD semester 39%.

PROGRAM CONTACT

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Éxito! Latino Cancer Research Leadership Training

Institute for Health Promotion
Research at UT Health San Antonio
San Antonio, TX



MISSION AND GOALS

Latinos are expected to suffer a 142% increase in cancer diagnoses. This burden—coupled with the continued rise of this large population and a shortage of Latino doctors and researchers—requires a boost in the Latino cancer health disparities research workforce. In response, the Éxito! Latino Cancer Research Leadership Training program's mission is to increase the number of Latinos pursuing a doctoral degree and a career in Latino cancer health disparities. Activities include a five-day culturally tailored summer institute for training, motivation, and networking; optional paid internships; and ongoing alumni career-building and networking support, both peer-to-peer and digitally. Goals of the program are to increase participants' confidence for applying to a doctoral program, and to drive at least 20% of Éxito! participants to enroll in and stay in a doctoral program (with at least half of them focused on cancer control research).

PRACTICES

The program recruits an annual cohort of 25 U.S. master's-level students or health professionals to attend a culturally tailored five-day summer institute designed to address overarching learning objectives including: exposure to the need for Latino/a researchers in the field of cancer health disparities research, knowledge of Latino cancer control, networking with Latino researchers, and skills, resources, and support needed to apply to a doctoral program. The program also provides up to 10 annual paid internships to build research skills and experience in cancer research. Lastly, the program promotes an academic-support and career-building pipeline via interactive dialogue with program alumni on a constant basis with quarterly webinars, an annual newsletter, and Facebook groups.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- Éxito! has recruited 202 participants for their Summer Institute and awarded 59 internships from 2011- 2018.
- About 27% of Éxito! alumni are currently enrolled in a doctoral program (55) or have gone on to earn their doctoral degree (14). 51 of these 55 are Latinos. Even though some are non-Latino themselves, all alumni either pursued an academic study or career field specific to Latinos and public health..
- Seventy two percent (72%) of Exito! alumni were employed full time, and 18% were employed part time. Thirty-two percent currently work in a field directly related to cancer and 31% in a field indirectly related to cancer. 42% strongly agree or agree that they will pursue a career directly related to cancer if they obtain a doctoral degree.

PROGRAM CONTACT

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UTSA M.S. Business Program

University of Texas at San Antonio

San Antonio, TX



MISSION AND GOALS

The M.S. in Business (MSB) program's mission is to equip recent college graduates from non-business majors with fundamental business knowledge and focused career coaching to help them take the next step in their career. Diversity is a key goal for the program. Each cohort represents a diverse set of individuals with backgrounds in such areas as biology, communications, criminal justice, English, kinesiology, psychology and multidisciplinary studies. For the past 3 years, 57% of the students enrolled in the program are of Hispanic descent, compared to 40% graduate Hispanic students in the College of Business. The percentage of Hispanic students has grown to 64% of new MSB students in the 2019-2020 academic year.

PRACTICES

The MSB program is designed as a 1- year program with flexibility for those that wish/need to complete the program at a slower pace due to personal considerations. As part of a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), the MSB program exemplifies the university's efforts to serve Hispanic students. In a concentrated effort to enable Hispanic students to achieve meaningful careers, the MSB program's on-campus recruiting focuses on HSIs (UTSA, Texas A&M Kingsville, UT Rio Grande Valley, etc.). The program also offers automatic admission to qualified students which enables the students to be admitted without additional expense (e.g., GMAT/GRE exam fee is waived which avoids time and costs) and refunds the application fee. As a result, the MSB program has grown by 270% over the past 5 years. More importantly, the number of Hispanic students entering the program has grown by 369%, a reflection of the College of Business's commitment to fulfilling its HSI mission. The College of Business reserves about 15% of the graduate-student scholarships exclusively for MSB students. Scholarships are awarded with consideration of need and first-generation status. In addition, many students receive paid Teaching Assistant or Graduate Assistant positions. Approximately 20% of the MSB students receive scholarships and/or assistantship positions.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- The retention and graduation rates are proof of the effectiveness of the program. Ninety-three percent (93%) of students graduate and are awarded a graduate degree, with 84% of those enrolled in the program graduating within 1 year. MSB alumni achieve an average 35% salary increase after graduation.
- For the past 3 years, 57% of the students enrolled in the MSB program are of Hispanic descent, compared to 40% graduate Hispanic students in the College of Business. The percentage of Hispanic students has grown to 64% of new MSB students in the 2019- 2020 academic year.
- Between 20% to 30% of the students who apply to the MSB program each year are referred by a current or former MSB student. The high level of referral – and the high retention and graduation rates – is partly attributed to the comradery created within the cohort and the servant leadership displayed by administrators and faculty members.

PROGRAM CONTACT

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Conexión Américas' College Success Program

Conexión Américas
Nashville, TN



MISSION AND GOALS

Conexión Américas' vision for the College Success Program is to help first-generation immigrant and refugee students in Nashville complete college and impact their families' long-term success. The College Success Program is a continuation of Conexión Américas' Escalera College Access program located at three high schools in Southeast Nashville. The program's primary goal is to equip first-generation Latino college students to persist in and graduate from college with career readiness. The program aims to increase students' knowledge and confidence in applying to college, to connect students with enriching career exploration opportunities, and to build more understanding and capacity throughout their community about the specific needs and challenges of their students, particularly undocumented/DACA students.

PRACTICES

The College Success program provides first-year student programming including a Summer Bridge Program, 1:1 individual coaching sessions, individual case management, FAFSA assistance, and bilingual Spanish and English information and referrals. The program provides job readiness training, college and career exploration sessions, career mentors, alumni events, and networking opportunities. Program practices intentionally provide Latino students with culturally and linguistically relevant programming and wraparound support services. College Success Coaches provide a variety of postsecondary support sessions to students who have completed Escalera and who opt-in to postsecondary programming. Lastly, College Success Coaches conduct presentations to students at school events throughout Middle Tennessee, specifically as it relates to college access and resources for undocumented/DACA students.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- In the College Success program, the persistence rate for Latino students who first entered postsecondary education in 2018 was 80%. The program's year 1 to year 2 persistence rate for 2017 - 2019 Latino cohorts is 95%. Additionally, Term 1 to Term 2 persistence rates from 2017 - 2020 also remained above 77% among Latino students. By comparison, Latinos who enrolled at any U.S. institution as a first-time undergraduate student in fall 2018, had a 72% persistence rate according to the National Student Clearinghouse 2020 Persistence and Retention Report.
- The College Success program saw a 74% college completion rate for Latino students who graduated from high school in 2015 or 2016. Students who remained active in the program in the inaugural 2015 cohort completed their college degree in less than six years. By comparison, the six-year college completion rate for Latino students in Tennessee who started as an undergraduate student in fall 2014 was 63.6%, according to the National Student Clearinghouse Completing College 2020 report.

PROGRAM CONTACT

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Building Bridges Through Education

West Michigan Hispanic Chamber of
Commerce
Grand Rapids, MI



MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of Building Bridges Through Education (BBTE) is to help grow a dynamic and inclusive workforce in West Michigan and impact the workplace by cultivating a Latino talent pipeline. BBTE is an education and workforce development program with a goal to prepare and connect high potential Latinx college students with the tools and opportunities to reach their career goals while educating and encouraging businesses to invest in their communities by creating job and internship opportunities. BBTE is grounded as a collective impact initiative that partners with Michigan industry-leading partners and Michigan colleges and universities.

PRACTICES

BBTE supports pathways to success for future leaders by providing coaching to Latinx college students. Face-to-face and online, their collective effort serves all majors, developing career-ready characteristics and sparking leadership in all Michigan colleges & universities. The program fosters success and builds upon the skills and assets of Latinx talent that promote candidacy for career placement. Students in the program live as everyday examples of leadership principles and skills they've gained from education, lived experiences, and BBTE's experiential programming. Additionally, BBTE's signature Get Focused events were designed by BBTE Interns to focus on early career readiness and placement with an average attendance of 130 students and hiring managers. Finally, in response to the need to support students in resume writing and job interviews, BBTE launched the BBTE Fellowship, where students from colleges and universities across Michigan gain skills in emotional intelligence, online branding, and design thinking.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- BBTE's initial planning and design work received input from over 100 Michigan Latinx college students—perspectives that became key in the blueprints of a pilot program. In 2019, BBTE launched a soft pilot of internship placements that provided coaching and mentoring from the initial application to the end of the internship. Of those initial six participants, 100% successfully completed the internship and 67% were offered continuing employment (part-time jobs or full-time positions).
- Data analysis in January of 2020 showed BBTE serving 160 students statewide and working with 52 (33%) to find internship/job placement. Of the 100 applications submitted, 27% were offered interviews and 6% received employment offers. Placements have been greatly impacted by the pandemic, but BBTE continued with virtual programming and by the end of 2020 doubled the number of students served to 300.

PROGRAM CONTACT

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Catch the Next Ascender Program

Catch the Next, Inc.
San Antonio, TX



MISSION AND GOALS

The Catch the Next Ascender Program's mission is to increase the educational attainment of Latinos and other underserved communities in order to close the equity gap in higher education. Ascender's goals are to enrich, motivate and inspire the lives of all Ascender program participants by providing navigational, academic, and student engagement support. By 2025, the Ascender program strives to be one of the top college readiness and completion programs in the world as measured through key metrics such as college readiness, on-time completion, and on-time transfer.

PRACTICES

Catch the Next Ascender Program intentionally serves Latino students by engaging students through **1)** a culturally-relevant curriculum across multiple courses (learning communities); **2)** holistic advising, personal counseling, and mentorship; and **3)** leadership development and family and community engagement. Faculty and staff facilitate programming through: a three-part experiential training sequence that is eligible for graduate credit at UT-Austin's Department of Educational Leadership and Policy; open source, culturally relevant and innovative course materials; semester site visits by experienced practitioners and trainers; access to a national network of scholars, authors, and community mentors; monthly professional development webinars; and opportunities for publication and research through our Journal of Ideas and Pedagogy.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

Since the program's first semester, Catch the Next focused on its success rates per three courses. Reading and Writing were identified as the most important to focus on given they were the courses that kept students from moving on to college credit courses. Outcomes for the program were determined by comparing the program's averages, with the state average for Reading and Writing courses.

- Eight years of reading data showed an increase over time of passage rates for Ascender participants (and were always above 60%).
- These same years showed Ascender rates at least 15% points higher than non-Arcender participants (state average).
- In 2019-20, Catch the Next's success rate for participants testing in reading and writing was 83%, compared to the state average of 54%. Participant success rate in math was 81%, compared to the state average of 53%.

PROGRAM CONTACT

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First-Gen Forward

Latino U College Access (LUCA)

White Plains, NY



MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of Latino U College Access's (LUCA) First-Gen Forward (FGF) program is to empower low-income, first-generation students on their journeys through college. Each year that Scholars are in college, the LUCA team engages with them and their families to ensure they have the necessary tools and resources to persist and graduate. Additionally, the organization collaborates with corporate volunteers to deliver career-readiness programs that engage Scholars on topics such as resume writing, interviewing skills, networking, professional etiquette, site visits and other soft skills that first-gen students may not be otherwise exposed to. LUCA envisions a world where low-income, first-generation students have equal access to higher education that will open doors to professional positions of influence.

PRACTICES

First-Gen Forward provides a multifaceted approach to ensure hard-working students learn how to navigate college, how to be resilient in the face of challenges, and how to succeed academically. The program has five pillars: College Transition Workshops; Corporate Site Visits; Individualized Scholar Check-Ins; College and Career Success Workshops; and Mentorship. The program ensures successful course registration, provides financial aid support, and access to an emergency Scholar Support Fund. The program also leverages an evidence-based curriculum from The Opportunity Network designed for first-generation, low-income students. The program's College 411 Network provides peer-to-peer mentoring, while teaching Scholars the importance of collaboration and giving back to the community. Lastly, the First-Gen Padres program component provides opportunities to educate and support parents on the expectations and preparations for their child's transition to college, academic success, and graduation.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- FGF Scholars in college and on track to graduate within four years is 98%.
- FGF Scholars that maintain a GPA of 3.0 or better is 70%.
- All FGF Scholars (100%) rated corporate site visits extremely useful in helping them explore career opportunities.
- Over half of FGF Scholars (57%) are studying in STEM-related fields.

PROGRAM CONTACT

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www.latinou.org

Kid City Hope Place

Los Angeles United Methodist Urban
Foundation
Los Angeles, CA



MISSION AND GOALS

Since its inception in 2008, Kid City Hope Place has sought to fulfill its mission of transforming young people's lives by welcoming them into a caring, college-going culture and by nurturing the development of leadership and agency. The road to college has multiple financial and institutional barriers for their students who are mostly Latino, low-income, and first-generation college goers. These students are at risk not only for lack of socioeconomic mobility, but also for academic, economic, mental, and emotional hardships. Kid City Hope Place helps these students overcome barriers, especially to a higher education, and become empowered, with an ultimate goal, to increase their opportunities for leadership, career, and civic engagement. Kid City's program goals align with the mission to increase college access, develop leadership and advocacy, stimulate creativity through music and arts, and increase socio-emotional wellness in students. Kid City's programs equip young people in various ways to creatively and powerfully express themselves and become advocates for their communities.

PRACTICES

To better meet the needs of students, Kid City pivoted from an after-school program to become a highly sought after college access program. Through Kid City, student participants have access to computers and printers, study skills, academic guidance, and especially for community college students, a sense of community. Leadership and wellness programs are offered during summer, winter, and spring breaks. Ultimately, students say Kid City is "a second home," and the program works to foster long term, close relationships. Volunteers prepare care packages twice a year, food is always available, and when students graduate, they receive business cards. The program provides safe spaces that promote inclusivity of students' identities and backgrounds. All programs emphasize the value of sharing unique stories that highlight students' struggles and successes. This way, students feel empowered to use their voices and individual strengths. As students graduate from college, they can participate in online interviews and get help with resumes. Lastly, Kid City's internship program, in collaboration with two providers, pays at least 25 college students per year as they gain valuable job experience.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

Kid City reaches 400-500 youth and their parents annually. This includes 80-120 high school participants ages 15-18, 200+ participants ages 19-21, and about 90% are Latino.

- Of Kid City's high school program participants, 100% graduated from high school, and 100% were accepted and enrolled in college.
- Of these students, all attend or have attended Title I high schools, and at least 50% have graduated from college. Of those they were to track, nearly all are still enrolled in college and are determined to finish.
- At least 80% of program participants volunteer at Kid City during high school, and a growing number return to volunteer during college and following college graduation.

PROGRAM CONTACT

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2022 Examples of *Excelencia*: Call for Nominations

Know of a program accelerating Latino student success that should be recognized as an Example of *Excelencia*?

Nominate them for 2022 Examples of *Excelencia*!

Nominations for 2022 Examples of *Excelencia* will open in early 2022. Check out our website in January for more details. <https://www.edexcelencia.org/programs-initiatives/examples-excelencia>

Do you run a program and are ready to get started on a submission profile?

We invite you to explore the 'Tools' tab of our Examples of *Excelencia* microsite by visiting <https://excelencia.secure-platform.com/a/>

How are programs recognized through Examples of *Excelencia*?

Excelencia in *Education* is committed to accurately promoting and leveraging programs nationally that work for Latino students in higher education. Therefore, *Excelencia* brings attention to what works for Latino students through the following:

- National recognition via *Excelencia*'s website, social media platforms, and publications.
- A \$5,000 financial contribution to further sustain programmatic efforts.
- Recognition at *Excelencia*'s annual *Celebración de Excelencia*, held in Washington, DC.
- Invitation to participate in the plenary session at the Accelerating Latino Student Success (ALASS) Institute in Washington, DC.
- Inclusion in the 2022 edition of our *What Works for Latino Students in Higher Education Compendium*, widely distributed online to *Excelencia* in Education's constituents including key funders, educational organizations, and civic leaders.
- Inclusion in *Excelencia*'s Growing What Works Database—the only national online, searchable database—to promote effective institutional practices for Latino students.
- Complimentary enrollment in *Excelencia* in Action—our national network taking action to accelerate Latino student success.
- Program recognition by their respective members of Congress through *Excelencia*'s outreach.

WANT TO STAY INFORMED? Visit <https://www.edexcelencia.org/contact-us> to sign up today!

QUESTIONS? EMAIL: Examples@EdExcelencia.org



THE POWER TO aspire and inspire

Thank you to *Excelencia* in Education for charting a course for innovative, collaborative and actionable efforts to accelerate the success of Latino students in higher education.

Bank of America shares your determination, passion and commitment. That's why we've accelerated our efforts through a \$1.25 billion, five-year commitment to advance racial equality and economic opportunity, which includes a focus on jobs and reskilling.

Our actions include:

- \$25 million commitment to enhancing up-skilling and reskilling for Hispanic/Latino and Black individuals through partnerships with 21 higher education institutions, including 10 Hispanic-serving institutions such as Arizona State University — Downtown Phoenix, Florida International University, Dallas College — El Centro and Los Angeles Trade Technical College, to help expand the job pipeline for people of color
- \$750,000 in philanthropic funding to the Hispanic Scholarship Fund's Support Services program
- \$4.2 million commitment to advancing training and job placement for Hispanic-Latino and Black students through a partnership with NPower and Urban Alliance
- Expanded partnership with UnidosUS on the Latinos in Finance program to assist Hispanic-Latinos in navigating career pathways in financial services

These are just some examples of how we're working with community partners, academic institutions, business leaders and experts across the public and private sectors to continue to drive progress.

What would you like the power to do?®

Visit **bankofamerica.com/hispanicprogress** to learn more.



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