

Deepening Our Roots: Advancing Community Engagement in Higher Education

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Objectives

- Enhance understanding of how establishing community partnerships/relationships contributes to increasing access to postsecondary education
- Identify strategies for engaging a community partner in promoting postsecondary access for historically underrepresented students
- Learn how summer institutes/bridge programs contribute to the multiple forms of capital (i.e., social, aspirational, navigational) necessary for postsecondary success

Literature Review

- Students from historically underrepresented populations continue receiving advanced degrees at significantly lower rates than their more affluent counterparts (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017; Perna, 2004).
- Students of Color do not perceive predominantly White institutions (PWIs) to be welcoming or inclusive to them (Daniel, 2007; Dortch, 2016; Gay, 2014; Winkle-Wagner, 2009).
- Students from historically underrepresented populations who enroll in college at various levels report a lack of mentoring from faculty, a lack of peer support, and multiple incidences of racial hostility, particularly on predominantly White campuses (Ellis, 2001; Winkle-Wagner & McCoy, 2016).

Literature Review

- Bridge programs encourage aspirations toward postsecondary education for underrepresented students (Gardner, 2009; McCoy & Winkle-Wagner, 2015).
- Summer bridge programs which are intentional about nurturing students' cultural backgrounds and identities are able to contribute to and expand students' existing educational aspirations (Luedke et al. 2019; McCoy & Winkle-Wagner, 2017).
- College programming that uses students' backgrounds and identities as assets are a welcome reprieve for Students of Color who often feel isolated or distanced from educational programming that is not inclusive of students' backgrounds (Luedke et al., 2019; Posselt & Black, 2012; Winkle-Wagner & McCoy, 2016).

College Access Program (CAP)

- Partnership between CAP and multiple postsecondary institutions
- Comprehensive community effort to both prepare and grow students from historically underrepresented populations in college-readiness.
- Provide students ways to explore various forms of higher education
- Postsecondary institutions have a tangible means for facilitating these students' journeys to and through higher education

Community Partners

- College Access Program (CAP)
- Local Public School Board
- Local/State/Federal Partners
- Multiple Postsecondary Institutions
 - Technical College
 - Community College
 - Land-Grant Institution

Current Initiatives

- College and career access and success
- Social services support
- Family, neighborhood and community engagement
- Intentional support for students from disadvantaged circumstances

Current Research

- Qualitative study utilizing Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth
 - Aspirational Capital
 - The participants shared how the program “planted a seed” for education beyond the undergraduate degree.
 - Participation in CAP extended the participants “hopes and dreams” (Yosso, 2005, p. 77).

Current Research

- Resistance Capital
 - CAP encouraged students to resist institutional norms that were exclusionary
 - Participants recognized that their degrees could be used as forms of resistance in their communities

Implications for Community Partners

- Increased graduation rates
- Disrupting the “school-to-prison” pipeline (Wald & Losen, 2003, p. 11)
- Holistic mentoring practices (Luedke, McCoy, Winkle-Wagner, & Lee-Johnson, 2019)

Implications for Postsecondary Education

- College access programs contribute to underrepresented/minoritized students aspirational capital (on multiple levels)
- Bridge/transition programs contribute to underrepresented/minoritized students acquisition of multiple forms of capital (McCoy & Winkle-Wagner, 2015; Winkle-Wagner & McCoy, 2016; Yosso, 2005)

Partnership Strategies

- Strategic planning with clear vision-casting
- Transparency
- Embedding leaders and advocates within community
- Team Building
 - Community Mapping
- Strong community leadership development

Future Research

- Assessment of Middle School Programs
- Survey Instrument
 - Self Efficacy
 - Cultural Capital
 - Social Capital

Q & A

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