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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