



**EXAMPLES OF**  
*iExcelencia!*



# WHAT WORKS FOR LATINO STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

2008 COMPENDIUM

PROFILES OF SELECTED PROGRAMS



**iExcelencia!**  
**IN EDUCATION**

Applying Knowledge  
To Public Policy And  
Institutional Practice

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## CONTENTS

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Foreword.....                     | 4 |
| Overview .....                    | 5 |
| Selection Process .....           | 6 |
| Methodology .....                 | 6 |
| Summary of Program Services ..... | 7 |

### Associate Level

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Bilingual Nursing Fellows Program – South Mountain Community College (AZ)..... | 8 |
|--|---|

#### Semi-Finalists

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Puente Project – The College of the Sequoias (CA) .....  | 9  |
| MESA Community College Program – University of California, Oakland (CA).....                           | 10 |
| Dual Language of the Honors College – Miami Dade College (FL) .....                                    | 11 |
| Transitional Bilingual Learning Community – Truman College (IL) .....                                  | 12 |
| LULAC Parent/Child Program – San Antonio College (TX) .....  | 13 |
| Dual Enrollment Program – The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College (TX)..... | 14 |

### Baccalaureate Level

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Bachelor of Architecture – Woodbury University (CA)..... | 15 |
|--|----|

#### Semi-Finalists

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Mathematics Intensive Summer Session – California State University, Fullerton (CA) .....                            | 16 |
| Hispanic Outreach and Leadership at Armstrong – Armstrong Atlantic University (GA) .....                            | 17 |
| College Assistance Migrant Program – New Mexico State University, Las Cruces (NM).....                              | 18 |
| Preparing Tomorrow’s Teachers Today – Texas A&M International University<br>and Laredo Community College (TX) ..... | 19 |
| Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation – University of Texas System (TX).....                             | 20 |

### Graduate Level

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Intellectual Entrepreneurship Pre-Graduate Internship Program<br>The University of Texas at Austin (TX) ..... | 21 |
|---|----|

#### Semi-Finalists

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Colorado Diversity Initiative – University of Colorado, Boulder (CO) .....               | 22 |
| Educational Leadership Doctoral Program – University of Texas-Pan American (TX).....     | 23 |
| Educational Leadership Doctoral Program –Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi (TX) ..... | 24 |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| <b>About <i>Excelencia</i> in Education</b> ..... | 25 |
|---|----|

The compendium was compiled by Deborah Santiago, Vice President for Policy and Research, with Lourdes Guerrero, Communications and Program Manager, and Estela Lopez, Senior Program Advisor, *Excelencia* in Education. The program summaries in this compendium were edited from information submitted by the nominated programs.

Information about the Examples of *Excelencia* program and a PDF version of this compendium are available on the web at: <http://www.edexcelencia.org/programs/examples/>

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## Foreword

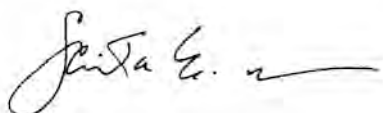
As the college-age Latino population continues to increase throughout the nation, meeting the country's future human capital and workforce needs make it imperative to improve outcomes for Latino students today. As public attention is focused on existing achievement gaps, educators and policymakers are seeking ways to improve educational outcomes for Latinos.

*Excelencia* in Education responds to this need through research, analysis and initiatives advancing practices and policies supporting Latino student achievement in colleges and universities. Premier in this effort is *Examples of Excelencia*, a review of national nominations to recognize exemplary programs and departments at the associate, baccalaureate, and graduate levels with evidence of improving Latino access, retention, and success in higher education.

Now in its fourth year, *Examples of Excelencia* is identifying programs at institutions throughout the country investing strategically to improve results for Latino students, and all students.

The 2008 *Examples of Excelencia* are the **Bilingual Nursing Program** at South Mountain Community College in Arizona (Associate Level), **Bachelor of Architecture** at Woodbury University in California (Baccalaureate Level) and the **Intellectual Entrepreneurship Pre-Graduate Internship Program** at the University of Texas at Austin (Graduate Level). More detailed information about how these three programs positively impact the Latino students they serve follows in this compendium. Also included is information about additional outstanding programs identified as semi-finalists during the 2008 review process.

This compendium is a key component of the *Examples of Excelencia* program. By providing descriptions of approaches used and results achieved by these programs that work, *Excelencia* in Education strives to make educators and policymakers aware of the available tools to challenge the current state of achievement in higher education for Latino students. The promising practices profiled in this edition are successful in propelling Latino students forward and can be adapted to suit the needs of colleges and universities throughout the nation. These practices are at the forefront of a long-needed movement to improve higher educational achievement for Latino students and are to be commended. We hope you will take the lessons gleaned from their efforts and apply them elsewhere to rapidly multiply the number of Latinos entering the workforce well-prepared, with advanced degrees in hand.



Sarita E. Brown, President  
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## Overview

More than 50 programs were nominated for the 2008 Examples of *Excelencia* in three categories: Associate, Baccalaureate and Graduate levels. Representation in each of these categories was diverse in terms of both geography and program activities.

To be considered, each program submitted a brief history, perceived need, immediate solutions, long-term goals and evidence of effectiveness. As in past years, narrowing the list of programs demonstrating promising practices to include in this compendium proved challenging. However, the compendium summarizes the three programs selected as the 2008 Examples of *Excelencia* as well as 14 semi-finalist programs making a positive difference in the educational achievement of Latino students in higher education.

These summaries provide insight into what these successful programs are doing and the characteristics essential to Latino student success. The most effective programs:

- Ensure there is institutional commitment and leadership to serve Latino students.
- Invest in the long-term viability of activities to ensure meaningful impact.
- Allocate resources so activities are sustainable by the institution.
- Have clear goals and objectives that delineate what they plan to achieve.
- Share an understanding of purpose and intended outcomes with staff.
- Use multiple strategies to support students along the pathway, such as tutoring and mentoring services by peers, family involvement in program orientation and participation in living/learning communities.
- Collect data and conduct evaluations to improve their activities.
- Use research-based strategies to recruit, retain and propel Latino students to graduate from college.
- Cultivate partnerships between institutions and sectors to provide access.
- Respect Latino students as an asset.

The compendium begins with an explanation of the Examples of *Excelencia* selection process. Following this section is a brief overview of the program services and the strategies employed in one-page summaries of each program's goals, outcomes, and key personnel. To learn more about any specific program, please contact the individuals listed at the bottom of that particular summary.

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## ***Selection Process***

Following the submission of nominations, staff members of *Excelencia* in Education employed an evidence-based evaluation to analyze both internal information provided in the nominations and external public data sources to assess the nominees' impact on Latino achievement in higher education.

The portfolios of the resulting list of semi-finalists were then forwarded to a panel of nationally recognized experts for review. The 2008 Selection Committee was comprised of the following experts:

- **Margarita Benitez**, Director of Higher Education, Education Trust and Senior Associate, *Excelencia* in Education
- **Sarita Brown**, President, *Excelencia* in Education
- **Jacqueline E. King**, Assistant Vice President, Center for Policy Analysis, American Council on Education
- **Estela Lopez**, Senior Program Advisor, *Excelencia* in Education
- **Mark Lopez**, Associate Director, Pew Hispanic Center
- **Stella Perez**, Vice President, Operations and Technology Programs, League for Innovation in the Community College
- **Bruce Vandal**, Director, Postsecondary Education and Workforce Development Institute, Education Commission of the States
- **Arturo Vargas**, Executive Director National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials

## ***Methodology***

The members of the Selection Committee considered the following criteria to evaluate the nominees:

- Record of high graduation rates for Latino students
- Leadership that demonstrates a commitment to accelerating Latino student achievement by measuring their progress, confronting obstacles to their achievement and implementing strategies to attain specific goals
- Magnitude of the identified need for the services the program offers
- Rationale behind the program component addressing that need
- Application of the concepts central to the program
- Qualitative or quantitative evidence of the impact of the program services.

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## ***Summary of Program Services***

The following outlines by category - Associate, Baccalaureate and Graduate - the significant practices, services and strategies that work for Latinos students offered by this year's selected programs.

### **Associate Level**

- Prepare bilingual nurses for the workforce
- Enable students to earn college credits while still enrolled in high school
- Challenge academically gifted students through a bilingual honors program
- Provide financial aid to immigrant students to enable them to take college courses while improving their English
- Increase educational opportunities for parents and their children by offering financial aid through a scholarship program
- Increase transfer rates and student persistence by offering integrated services and support
- Prepare students in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields so they can successfully transfer to four-year colleges

### **Baccalaureate Level**

- Prepare students to become architects by offering a curriculum matching their needs
- Support female students in their study of mathematics by helping them complete the requisite courses for college admission
- Provide support services and culturally sensitive programs to engage students in learning and enrich their university experience
- Retain migrant workers as they pursue their college education
- Provide a seamless transfer system from community college to a four-year institution
- Increase the number of students in the STEM field disciplines by exposing them to summer research opportunities

### **Graduate Level**

- Increase students' understanding of the value of graduate education through internship experiences
- Increase participants in STEM fields, particularly at the doctorate level
- Graduate individuals to lead in diverse educational settings and emphasize research in Latino and border education issues



**2008 Associate Level  
Bilingual Nursing  
Fellows Program**

**Location**

South Mountain Community College, Phoenix, Arizona

**Description**

South Mountain Community College (SMCC), in partnership with Gateway Community College (GWCC) and Banner Health, Arizona's largest health services provider, created its Bilingual Nursing Fellows Program (BNFP) in 2002 in response to the medical community's critical need for bilingual Registered Nurses. BNFP combines an innovative nursing curriculum with a system of support services to allow students to stay in their cohort by taking prerequisite nursing courses and requisite Registered Nurse (RN) courses simultaneously. The sequence of courses allows for the individual student to earn a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) certificate; become eligible as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN); and then earn licensure as an RN within a two-to-three-year period. These stages of licensure permit students who cannot immediately move to the next sequence or level to qualify for employment as a CNA or as an LPN in a local hospital. At the completion of all nursing requisites and course sequences, BNFP students graduate with an RN degree in 24 to 32 months.

**Goals**

The mission of the Bilingual Nursing Fellows Program (BNFP) is to graduate bilingual nurses to serve Arizona patients who speak only Spanish.

**Outcomes**

The Maricopa Student Information System (MSIS) registered a 95% persistence rate from the start to the end of the semester for BNFP participants and an 89% rate from the end of the semester to the next semester. When compared to the general student population taking the same classes, the BNFP course completion rate of 95% was considerably higher than the 61% rate for non-BNFP students in English, Math, Biology and Chemistry classes. The first cohort, or "pilot," of 27 students started classes in spring 2003 and finished in fall 2006. From this cohort, the program graduated 19 RNs, four LPNs and three CNAs. To date, 66 students have earned RN degrees; 133 completed LPN requirements; and 155 finished their CNA programs. By December 2008, 49 RNs and 23 LPNs were expected to graduate. By 2010, BNFP projects a total of 185 Spanish-speaking Registered Nurses and 263 Licensed Practical Nurses. Ninety percent of BNPF graduates, including the 35% of nurses who work for Banner Health in inner city hospitals, work for hospitals serving a large number of Latino patients.

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**Associate Level Semi-Finalist  
Puente Project**

**Location**

College of the Sequoias, Visalia, California

**Description**

Since its inception in 1996, the Puente Project at College of the Sequoias (COS) has served more than 400 students, of whom approximately 99% are Latinos. At present, Puente reaches 100 to 150 students per year. Puente has four main components: (1) First-year students take English 251 (Intro to Academic Writing) in the fall and English 001 (College Reading and Composition) in the spring. The content of both courses focuses on Latino authors and issues. The same instructor teaches both classes and offers extra support to assist students in developing their writing skills. These classes are taken concurrently with Counseling 120AB (Student Success), a study skills class. (2) Puente students work closely with their counselors, meeting several times each semester to develop educational plans designed to facilitate transfer to four-year institutions and for personal counseling. (3) Students are matched with professionals from the community willing to share their knowledge and experience. (4) Puente students take educational field trips to universities each year and attend an annual statewide Puente Conference.

**Goals**

The COS Puente Project seeks to improve student persistence and college transfer rates in a county that continues to hover near the bottom of several socio-economic measures. Tulare County ranks 54th of 58 counties in California in the percentage of children living in low-income households and is 47th in terms of the percentage of high school students eligible for admission to one of California's public universities.

**Outcomes**

The overall COS one-year persistence rate for 2005-06 was 62%; however, the Puente one-year persistence rate for the same period was 83%. For students enrolled in English 001 (Transfer), the one-year persistence rate from 1997-2004 was 83%. The two-year persistence rate for the same time period was 70%. The average retention rate for Puente students taking English 251 in fall 2006 continuing to English 001 in spring 2007 was 72%, compared to 62% for non-Puente students during the same period. Puente students transfer at rates more than one and a half times the general student population (students completing at least 12 units and attempting to transfer English or Math courses). From 1997 to 2003, 52% of COS Puente students transferred to four-year institutions, compared to 34% of all other COS students. Fifty-two of the 223 students enrolled in Puente at COS between 1997 and 2003 earned Associate degrees; 42 went on to earn Bachelor's degrees; and five earned Master's degrees.

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**Associate Level Semi-Finalist  
MESA Community College  
Program**

**Location**

University of California, Oakland, California

**Description**

The MESA (Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement) Community College Program (MCCP) provides academic and social support needed to succeed in science and math, and to transfer to four-year institutions as majors in those fields. A major MCCP initiative is to develop a strong peer Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) network for its students. As most community college students are commuters (with many holding jobs while attending school and/or shouldering significant family responsibilities), they lack the benefit of the informal connections developed by full-time students residing on campus while attending four-year institutions. While important to all majors, these contacts play a particularly crucial role for students majoring in STEM fields. The development of an alternative network allows MCCP students to obtain the needed support from fellow STEM majors who come from similar backgrounds and face equally demanding challenges. MCCP's peer networks disseminate information about the best ways to study, how to succeed in difficult classes and how to approach complicated coursework.

Latinos comprise nearly 50% of the students served by MCCP and by MESA. Most MESA students come from underperforming schools. Most Latino MESA students come from immigrant households and are the first in their families to attend college.

**Goals**

The MESA Community College Program helps educationally disadvantaged community college students succeed in STEM studies and transfer to four-year institutions as math-based majors.

**Outcomes**

In 2006-07 (the academic year with the latest compiled data), 467 MCCP students transferred to four-year institutions. Of these students, 95% transferred as majors in STEM fields. Forty-five percent transferred to California State University; 47% transferred to the University of California; and 6% transferred to independent California or out-of-state universities and colleges. Latinos comprised 41% of all transfers.

**Key Personnel**

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**Associate Level Semi-Finalist  
Dual Language Program of  
the Honors College**

### **Location**

Miami Dade College, Miami, Florida

### **Description**

The Dual Language Program of the Honors College at Miami Dade College (MDC) is the first and only associate degree program of its kind in the United States. Courses and academic activities immerse students in both English and Spanish. Students completing the program are prepared to transfer to upper-level institutions or enter the workforce fully biliterate and bicultural. Established in 2006 with 46 students, the Dual Language Program has expanded enrollment to 77 students.

### **Goals**

The program aspires to offer an intensive, challenging curriculum in English and Spanish to a special population of academically gifted, bilingual students.

### **Outcomes**

Of the 489 students enrolled in MDC's Honors College in fall 2007, 17% (n = 87) were in the Dual Language Program. While 75% of the students in the Honors College are Latino, 99% of those served in the Dual Language Program are Latino. The Honors College inaugurated its innovative Dual Language Program in 2006 and graduated the first cohort this spring, with a 74% graduation rate. The graduates earned a minimum of 60 credits, with more than 36 credits in honors-designated courses, and maintained a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.5. In the first two years of its existence, the Dual Language Program registered a retention rate of 69%.

### **Key Personnel**

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**Associate Level Semi-Finalist  
Transitional Bilingual  
Learning Community**

**Location**

Truman College, Chicago, Illinois

**Description**

The Transitional Bilingual Learning Community (TBLC) program was inaugurated at Truman College in spring 2002, with the first cohort launched in fall 2002. Each cohort of approximately 25 students participates in a two-semester, full-time college credit program. Unlike other programs (General Educational Development, Adult Learning, English as a Second Language) at Truman College, TBLC students receive college credit for the majority of the courses taken while enrolled in the TBLC program. Except in the English class, both English and Spanish are used for instruction in the early stages of the program. Spanish language instruction gradually diminishes during the second semester. Since most TBLC students do not qualify for traditional financial aid due to their undocumented status, the TBLC program assists them with other financial aid opportunities. The Harold Washington Scholarship covers the cost of tuition for students who do not qualify for federal financial aid. Those receiving the scholarship must be enrolled as full-time students (12 credit hours or more each semester) and maintain a cumulative 3.0 grade point average. Since fall 2002, 20 TBLC students have qualified for and received this scholarship each year.

**Goals**

The goal of the TBLC program is to enable Spanish-speaking immigrant students to undertake credit courses in English by the time they complete the two-semester program.

**Outcomes**

Approximately 88% of 145 TBLC students have completed the two-semester, full-time college credit program. Based on student interviews and academic records, projections are that, by spring 2010, 63% of TBLC students (cohorts 2-6) will have completed Associate degrees and/or transferred to four-year institutions. After finishing the first two semesters of the program, students in cohorts 2-6 had a retention rate of 87.8% and an overall grade point average of 2.77. The TBLC retention rate was almost 70% after five years, and the rate of full-time student enrollment was 60%. Twenty-six students have graduated with Associate degrees or transferred to four-year universities, including those graduating in spring 2008. Most of them graduated with honors. The TBLC program has been institutionalized at Truman College as part of the Student Success and Leadership Institute (SSLI) department. As a result of TBLC's success, other new learning communities will be established in fall 2008: a Math and Science Learning Community, a QUICK Learning Community for developmental classes and a second TBLC program starting fall 2009.

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**Associate Level Semi-Finalist**  
**LULAC Parent/Child Program**

### **Location**

San Antonio College, San Antonio, Texas

### **Description**

Recognizing the dismal rates of Latinos attending college, several visionary members of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Council #2 approached the Chancellor of the Alamo Community College District (ACCD) in 1997 to develop a program providing scholarships to two generations of Latino students: parents *and* their children. Since then, LULAC Council #2 has donated \$25,000 annually to fund 25 scholarship endowments per year for the children of each new cycle of 25 recipients (\$1,000 for each child). The child is “vested” in the program at the point his or her parent completes his or her educational objective (a certificate, Associate degree or the first two years of a transfer program to a four-year institution), making the child eligible to claim the scholarship upon high school graduation. The ACCD Foundation matches LULAC’s donation with another \$25,000 to fund scholarships for the program’s adult participants (\$1,000 for each person). To date, 63 students (76% of whom are Hispanic) have achieved their educational objectives by completing a certificate, associate degree or the first half of a 2+2 transfer plan, thereby ensuring their children college educations when they graduate from high school. A total of 225 students have been accepted into the program, and LULAC has donated \$275,000 for the scholarship endowment.

### **Goals**

LULAC’s Parent/Child Program aspires to increase the college participation rates of both parents and children who are low-income and first-generation college students.

### **Outcomes**

Over a five-year period (1997-2004), the outcomes of the Parent/Child Scholarship Program have been impressive. Forty-one percent have successfully completed the program, and 23% have completed an Associate degree or a certificate. Eighty-four percent of these have either received Associate degrees or transferred into four-year academic programs after completing the first half of a 2+2 transfer plan. Although participants are more at risk for failure than San Antonio College’s general student population because they are low-income and first-generation college students, a comparison of program completion rates with non-program participants shows that program participants are five times more likely to complete a certificate or Associate degree than non-participants - 23% compared to 4.2%. Additionally, 17% have transferred to a four-year college or university compared to only 9.9% of San Antonio College's general student population. Fall to spring semester retention rates exceeded those of non-program participants by 30%, and fall to fall retention rates were 27% higher than those for non-program participants.

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**Associate Level Semi-Finalist  
Dual Enrollment Program**

**Location**

The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College, Brownsville, Texas

**Description**

Dual Enrollment enables high school students who meet institutional and course-based admissions requirements to receive simultaneous credit for high school level and college level classes. Students also receive instruction and support services, such as advising, tutoring and library access. Dual Enrollment students receive eight-year advisory plans outlining classes they will take in both high school and college to eventually graduate with degrees appropriate for their chosen career paths. The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College (UTB/TSC) serve more than 17,000 students per term, 93% of whom are Hispanic, 60% female and 80% on financial aid. During 2007-08, 6,933 students enrolled in dual enrollment classes.

**Goals**

The Dual Enrollment Program at the UTB/TSC is designed to give South Texas high school students access to learning and skills necessary for successful graduation from post-secondary institutions. Dual Enrollment provides high school students the opportunity to simultaneously earn high school and college credit for classes they take on their high school campuses or the college campuses. These courses are offered at no cost to the students; with the school districts paying a \$5 per class fee. UTB/TSC has articulation agreements with 23 South Texas high schools.

**Outcomes**

In fall 2007, dual enrollment population accounted for approximately one-third of the UTB/TSC total enrollment of 17,215 and represented 18 South Texas high schools. Dual enrollment students complete three to four credit hours per term and are enrolling at UTB/TSC classes at a rapidly increasing rate. The total credit hours for all students increased from 774 in fall 2000 to 24,412 in fall 2007. According to the most recent figures available, the average term grade point average (GPA) for dual enrollment students was 3.1 for fall 2005 and 3.08 for fall 2006. In fall 2006, 55% of the former dual students were college-ready (did not need remediation), compared to 31% for the non-dual freshman. Former dual students enrolled for more hours of coursework, an average of 12.7 hours, compared to the non-dual students, who enrolled for an average of 11.2 hours. The average fall 2006 GPA for former dual students was 2.23 compared to 2.13 for non-dual students. The one-year retention rate for former dual students was 73%, compared to 59% for non-dual students.

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**2008 Baccalaureate Level  
Bachelor of Architecture**

**Location**

Woodbury University, Burbank, California

**Description**

Latino students comprise 35% of Woodbury University's enrollment. In the School of Architecture, however, Hispanic enrollment is greater than 40%, in part because the program's mission, curricular focus and support systems are matched to the needs of the Latino population. Woodbury Architecture does not require a portfolio for entrance, a rarity among National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB)-accredited programs. As schools in low-income communities seldom can afford art or design programs that result in portfolios, Woodbury's Bachelor of Architecture (BArch) program targets students who display passion for the discipline and habits of hard work. The program actively encourages students to express their identities and value their heritage through the practice of architecture.

**Goals**

Consistent with the Woodbury University's mission, the School of Architecture is committed to the training and education of innovative design professionals. The curriculum prepares students to balance the need to work competitively in the marketplace with the equally important concerns of ethical conduct and social responsibility. Woodbury's BArch develops the voices of the students it serves and fosters respect for their natural, social and cultural environments.

**Outcomes**

In the past five years, the number of Latino students in BArch has grown steadily from 127 to 203 in academic year 2007. In the same period, the number of undergraduate architecture students has grown from 323 to 487. The percentage of Latino architecture students has grown from 39% to 42% of the total. First-year retention rates for Latinos in BArch, a five-year program, surpass the university average for a total of 80% compared to 76% for all students. The university does not have disaggregated data on graduation for architecture, but graduation rates reported by the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) indicate Latinos at Woodbury graduate at a higher rate than the general student population.

The number of Latinos finishing their degrees has risen nearly 90% since 2003, going from 18% of the graduating class that year to 34% in 2007. This is due in part to the advising, mentoring, and academic support programs that were developed for Latino students as part of a Title V grant. Many of these students came from low-income households and were the first in their families to attend college. The majority of them required remedial courses in English and math on entrance. Recent Latino architecture graduates have gained admission to a number of prestigious graduate schools.

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**Baccalaureate Level Semi-Finalist  
Mathematics Intensive  
Summer Session**

**Location**

California State University, Fullerton, California

**Description**

The Mathematics Intensive Summer Session (MISS) program at California State University was established to address a nationally shared concern for the shortage of young people opting for careers in Science, Mathematics and Engineering. Designed particularly to serve females and underrepresented ethnic groups, arenas in which the shortage is particularly acute, MISS has been providing an intensive mathematics experience primarily for underrepresented young women for the past 17 years. For four weeks during the summer, high school girls attend MISS classes in college preparatory mathematics at the Algebra II level and above.

**Goals**

The long-term goal of MISS is to encourage young women to take and complete calculus at the college level, thus creating access for them to university majors, such as Chemistry, Engineering, Geology, Biology, Physics and Mathematics. Short-term, the aim of MISS is to support these students in their study of mathematics by bolstering their essential understanding of mathematics and assisting them in the successful completion of the requisite courses for college admission.

**Outcomes**

While growth varies from year to year, on average there has been a 55% mean improvement rate in elementary algebra skills among MISS students; 67% mean improvement rate in intermediate algebra skills; 19% mean gain in students' attitude toward mathematics; and 18% mean gain in students' self-concept in mathematics. These figures were derived from the pre- and post- tests administered during the program each year. As a result of participating in MISS, follow-up questionnaires indicate that 99% of the students we are able advance to college, with 34% attending California State University, Fullerton. Fifteen percent have chosen a Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM) major. In the Student Evaluation of Program questionnaires, students have stated they gained much from the program; they were very interested in the program; and they had a positive attitude toward MISS.

**Key Personnel**

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**Baccalaureate Level Semi-Finalist  
Hispanic Outreach and  
Leadership at Armstrong  
(HOLA)**

**Location**

Armstrong Atlantic State University, Savannah, Georgia

**Description**

Hispanic Outreach and Leadership at Armstrong (HOLA) was founded in May 2003 with a grant from the Goizueta Foundation. Since its creation, HOLA has nearly doubled the enrollment of Hispanic and Latino students at Armstrong Atlantic State University (AASU), which is located in a predominantly non-Latino area. The program has been responsive to the needs of the growing Latino population in Georgia and sensitive to the needs of high-achieving undocumented students. HOLA has received \$1,146,250 in grants and cultural performance contracts to further its mission

**Goals**

The mission of HOLA is to help Hispanic-Latino students succeed at AASU by providing support services and culturally sensitive programs engaging students in learning and enriching their university experience. HOLA is a recruitment, retention and outreach program serving Latino students at the university from enrollment to graduation and beyond.

**Outcomes**

Overall, Hispanic enrollment at AASU has increased by 36%. Despite the passage of SB 529, Georgia's Immigration Compliance Act, AASU continues to be the only university of its size outside of Atlanta to commit to the advancement of Hispanic higher education. AASU enrolled 253 Hispanic students in fall 2007, and HOLA directly assisted 70 of these through a variety of walk-in and scheduled services.

**Key Personnel**

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**Baccalaureate Level Semi-Finalist  
College Assistance  
Migrant Program (CAMP)**

### **Location**

New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico

### **Description**

In 2002, the Department of Education awarded New Mexico State University a College Assistance Migrant Program (NMSU-CAMP) grant to serve the educational needs of migrant and seasonal farm workers. Currently in its sixth year, the program serves 134 Latino students. CAMP is a residential program based in a centralized dormitory to facilitate access to university resources and to CAMP offices, study halls and computer labs. First-year mechanisms to retain students include: support from staff, peers and CAMP alumni; family involvement; learning community residential living system; a special course section of University 150 exclusively for CAMP students; educationally tailored workshops; and art and cultural activities. The program also provides financial assistance for housing, meal plans, comprehensive health exams and stipends for textbooks and training during freshman year.

### **Goals**

The mission of NMSU-CAMP is to retain students at the end of the freshman year and enroll them into their second academic year. The long-term goal is to graduate CAMP alumni with Bachelor's degrees from NMSU.

### **Outcomes**

One of CAMP's greatest accomplishments is the recruitment of Latino students to post-secondary education who otherwise would not have entered a college setting. Ninety-five percent of the students who enter NMSU via CAMP finish their first full year of college. NMSU-CAMP's average freshman retention rate over a four-year period is 77%, which is high for a four-year institution and higher than NMSU's general first-year retention rate of 70%. All 133 of the students who have participated in CAMP since 2002 have been Latino.

Seventeen CAMP alumni have graduated with four-year degrees from NMSU in various disciplines, including Biology, Accounting, Chemical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Criminal Justice, Government and Social Work. Three CAMP alumni have graduated with two-year degrees, and at least six are pursuing Graduate degrees. One completed his Master's in Accounting this June.

### **Key Personnel**

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**Baccalaureate Level Semi-Finalist**  
**Preparing Tomorrow's**  
**Teachers Today**

### **Location**

Texas A&M International University and Laredo Community College, Laredo, Texas

### **Description**

Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) and Laredo Community College (LCC), the only institutions of higher education in a 150-mile radius from Laredo, Texas, serve the combined service area of Webb, Jim Hogg, Maverick, Uvalde, LaSalle and Zapata counties in South Texas. These two schools serve as the intellectual centers for a vibrant bilingual, bicultural community. Increased educational standards from external certification agencies have begun to impede admission of incoming and transferring students, generated primarily from LCC, to TAMIU's College of Education (COE). Both institutions have addressed this issue individually and together through a number of activities, including the development and implementation of an effective advisement and retention system at both. One tool is the establishment of Freshmen Interest Groups (FIGs), clusters of courses bound together by a common thread, in this case, writing. Students also have access to the Learning Activity Center (LAC), which provides teacher-guided lessons to students in need of tutoring. The LAC has 10 tutors who are evaluated on a weekly basis.

### **Goal**

The project goal is to increase the number of students accepted in the College of Education by 25% from the native TAMIU students and LCC transfers. This increase will result primarily from cohort activities.

### **Outcomes**

The number of students accepted into the College of Education has increased by 26% from the TAMIU and LCC Cohort I transfers. The transfers from LCC occur after the student has completed the core curriculum. The retention rate for students from Cohorts I and II from TAMIU is 95.6%, and for LCC students, 87.5%. Students who drop do so because they change majors and/or are receiving failing grades. The Learning Activity Centers (LACs) at both sites have assisted students in various content areas as well as with effective instructional pedagogy. In addition, students participate in community outreach programs by volunteering their time for training and teaching mini-lessons in the public schools.

The College of Education at TAMIU has presented annual awards to students for Excellence in Education. Eleven students were presented awards in spring 2008. Although the Title V-HSSI:PTTT grant is midway through the grant period, initial assessments indicate students who are accepted into the College of Education will be better prepared to work with students in the public schools.

### **Key Personnel**

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**Baccalaureate Level Semi-Finalist**  
**Louis Stokes Alliance for**  
**Minority Participation**

### **Location**

University of Texas System, El Paso, Texas

### **Description**

The primary vehicle by which University of Texas Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (UT-LSAMP) has maintained its success is the Summer Research Academy (SRA). SRA is a residential program in which undergraduate Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) majors spend a summer working full-time on stipend-supported, ongoing research projects under the direction of tenured faculty mentors. Approximately 50 students are chosen as SRA scholars each summer. These students are encouraged to participate in a "university exchange" by selecting summer research sites away from their home campuses. Their faculty mentors receive funding support for supplies or student travel. In addition to obtaining research experience and funding, SRA scholars are involved in several videoconferences during their research experience. Since 1992, the UT-LSAMP program has served a total of 1,171 undergraduate students. Of this total, 618 students (53%) are Latinos; the remaining 47% are students belonging to other underrepresented minorities (URMs).

### **Goals**

In 1991, a state-wide effort was initiated by the nine University of Texas (UT) System universities and six community college districts to increase the number of URMs who complete Bachelor's degrees and pursue Graduate degrees in STEM fields. This mission was presented to the National Science Foundation (NSF), and, in 1992, the NSF officially awarded and recognized the UT System as a Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP).

### **Outcomes**

Over the life of the program, more than 90% of the LSAMP scholars (n=1171) have graduated from UT System institutions, and the remaining students are currently enrolled and making progress toward their STEM degree. This 90% rate is significant because UT-LSAMP's original goal was to graduate 50% of participating students. UT-LSAMP students have engaged in numerous research presentations and have published several journal articles. LSAMP graduates are in high demand and are recruited by major corporations and graduate/professional universities. Several LSAMP graduates also have participated as Bridge to the Doctorate Fellows with the UT System and other LSAMP Alliances.

### **Key Personnel**

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**2008 Graduate Level  
The Intellectual  
Entrepreneurship  
Pre-Graduate School  
Internship Program**

**Location**

The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas

**Description**

The University of Texas' Intellectual Entrepreneurship Consortium (IE) offers a distinctive vision of education attractive to minorities as well as a unique methodology for expanding the minority graduate applicant pool and improving undergraduate education for all students. The IE Pre-Grad Internship is offered for academic credit, and student participants work closely with graduate student mentors and faculty supervisors to create internship experiences aimed at exploring, anthropologically and from the ground up, their chosen fields of study. Participants learn about the unique aspects of graduate study that distinguish it from the undergraduate experience. Examples of internship activities include attending graduate school classes; shadowing graduate student teaching and research assistants; attending seminars and departmental colloquia; working with their mentors on research projects; attending meetings for graduate professional organizations and lab sessions; and discussing graduate study and career development with faculty and graduate students.

**Goals**

The mission of Intellectual Entrepreneurship (IE) is to educate "citizen-scholars"—individuals who utilize their intellectual capital to leverage social good. One of the (IE) initiatives, the Pre-Graduate School Internship program, began from a philosophy of education geared towards increasing students' awareness of the value of graduate education and enabling them to attain ownership of and accountability for their education.

**Outcomes**

The Pre-Graduate School Internship has been successful in bringing a new population into the graduate school pipeline and has been effective in making sure that students' passions and professional aspirations are consciously reflected in their decisions about whether to seek advanced degrees and, if so, in which field. Each semester, between 40 to 50% of IE Pre-Grad Interns are underrepresented minorities or first-generation students.

**Key Personnel**

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**Graduate Level Semi-Finalist**  
**Colorado Diversity Initiative**

**Location**

University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado

**Description**

The Colorado Diversity Initiative (CDI) prepares undergraduates for graduate school; recruits and retains a growing number of doctoral students; and prepares recent PhD recipients for faculty positions through elite postdoctoral fellowships. Its Summer Multicultural Access to Research Training (SMART) program prepares 25 high achieving minority students from institutions nation-wide for doctoral programs in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields. The 10-week summer program provides in-depth research experience with a faculty mentor at a leading research university. The National Institutes of Health–Howard Hughes Medical Institute Scholars Program is a year-round comprehensive research program for University of Colorado (CU)-Boulder students majoring in any bioscience or bioengineering field. Approximately 25 NIH-HHMI scholars participate in either entry- or advanced-level research. Both programs offer workshops on scientific writing and dissemination, GRE preparation and the application process for graduate school.

**Goals**

The overall mission of CDI is to catalyze institutional transformation, reinforcing the principal that diversity is valued at all educational and administrative levels in academe. To this end, CDI oversees the National Science Foundation Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (NSF-AGEP) and the National Institutes of Health Initiative for Maximizing Student Diversity (NIH-IMSD) to (1) enlarge the national pool of prospective minority STEM graduate students; (2) recruit minority students into Colorado STEM doctoral programs; (3) retain and graduate minority STEM doctoral students; and (4) prepare students for careers in academe with elite postdoctoral fellowships.

**Outcomes**

CU-Boulder first applied for NSF-AGEP funding in spring 2000. Fall 1999 enrollments were used as a baseline, and, at that time, there were 41 underrepresented doctoral students in STEM departments (4% of total enrollment). Data from fall 2007 indicates enrollment of 80 underrepresented minority doctoral students, an increase of almost 100% and 6% of total STEM students. Of the 80 doctoral students, 56 (70%) are Hispanic. The minority enrollment in the College of Engineering more than tripled during this same time period, increasing from eight students (2% of total) to 26 (6%) in fall 2007. The College awarded seven PhDs to underrepresented minorities in the fiscal year ending June 2007. Since fiscal year 2000, CU-Boulder has awarded 65 PhDs to minorities, 46 (70%) of which went to Hispanics.

**Key Personnel**

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**Graduate Level Semi-Finalist  
Educational Leadership  
Doctoral Program**

**Location**

University of Texas-Pan American, McAllen, Texas

**Description**

The Educational Leadership Doctoral Program (ELDP) at the University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA) prepares educational leaders to respond to the academic needs of students from diverse, multicultural backgrounds. The program is designed to emphasize preparation for leadership careers in a variety of educational settings. The program is uniquely oriented toward the application of theory and knowledge derived from research on the educational needs of Latino students from a variety of socio-economic, socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

**Goals**

The goals of ELDP are to graduate highly educated individuals prepared to lead in a variety of educational settings; to emphasize research in Latino and border education issues; to improve educational outcomes to enhance economic conditions for Latino communities; to promote instructional programs of high quality for diverse students; and to support leadership development for members of nationally underrepresented groups in high level academic positions. The overall vision of the program is to be foremost in the United States in producing educational leaders who understand the needs of educationally disadvantaged students and are committed to changing conditions to improve educational opportunities for all.

**Outcomes**

In the 10 years that ELDP-UTPA has been a stand-alone program, 123 students have participated in cohort study. The first three graduate degrees were conferred in May 2001. From 2001 to 2008, 34 students have graduated and received their EdD in Educational Leadership; 75% of these graduates were Latino. Currently, 27 students have passed their comprehensive exams and are in the dissertation-writing phase; 85% of these students are Latino. Of the Texas public universities offering doctoral programs (EdD and PhD) in Educational Leadership or Educational Administration, UTPA awards the largest percentage of doctoral degrees to Hispanics.

**Key Personnel**

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**Graduate Level Semi-Finalist  
Educational Leadership  
Doctoral Program**

**Location**

Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi, Texas

**Description**

The doctoral program offers students a program of study leading to the EdD in Educational Leadership. To the greatest extent possible, the curriculum will come to the students, therefore, on-site courses, web-based courses, blended courses, accelerated weekend schedules and/or any combination are offered. In addition to providing specialties in public school or higher education administration, the program allows students the flexibility to pick an area of concentration outside the College of Education.

**Goals**

The doctoral program in Educational Leadership seeks to enhance the leadership capabilities of those who serve or plan to serve in leadership roles in schools, education districts, community colleges or universities. The purpose of the program is to enable doctoral students to develop a style of thinking grounded in knowledge of professional literature, inquiry and critical reflection. The major goals of the program are to equip students with knowledge and skills empowering them to: develop successful leadership practices and processes; acquire knowledge and understanding of the most recent theory and research in education; appreciate the relationship of educational organizations to their political and social environments and historical context; apply research methodology and data analysis to solving educational problems; apply theory and research on change to improve educational programs; and identify a research agenda that will serve them as scholars and practitioners.

**Outcomes**

In the past five years, the program has graduated 51 students, of whom Latinos are 46%, or 24 students. This number does not include the nine Latino students who were expected to complete all the requirements for the doctoral degree in academic year 2007-08 and graduate in spring 2008. As of April 2008 ten additional Latino students were in the process of writing their dissertations, which should be completed by December 2008. In the past five years alone, the doctoral program at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi will have produced 43 Latino EdDs in Educational Leadership. The majority of the dissertations address issues of importance to Latinos in every educational stage, from pre-K through the doctoral level.

**Key Personnel**

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## ***About Excelencia in Education***

Examples of *Excelencia* is one important part of the overall effort by *Excelencia* in Education to support and engage campus leaders and policymakers in accelerating higher educational success of our diverse Latino populations and thus grow this country's human capital.

Launched five years ago, *Excelencia* in Education serves Latino students by linking research, policy and practice and by building a network of results-oriented educators and policymakers focused on education policies and institutional practices that support Latino academic achievement. Its work has been supported by major national and regional foundations, including the Ford Foundation, Lumina Foundation for Education, Sallie Mae, TG, UNIVISION, USA Funds, Verizon Communications, Wal-Mart, individual contributors and others.

*Excelencia* in Education has become a trusted advisor of leaders in Washington, DC and in states with the largest and fastest growing Latino populations. The organization has worked closely with state officials and educational institutions and organizations in Texas, Florida, New York, California, and New Mexico to develop consensus around strategies that research shows can have a significant impact on Latino student outcomes in higher education.

Equally significant, *Excelencia* in Education regularly benchmarks strategies used in high-performing Hispanic-Serving Institutions and is working with 8 Texas border institutions to support their efforts to accelerate Latino student success and assess their impact their impact on Latino students in Texas and around the nation.

*Excelencia* in Education has developed varied research reports, policy analyses, and informational tools that helped policymakers and institutional leaders advance Latino student success. The research, which is available free of charge on our Web site, has been widely disseminated and broadly cited by the U.S Department of Education and key national education, policy, and advocacy organizations that promote higher educational attainment.

The organization has built an e-network of more than 13,000 institutional leaders, policymakers, practitioners, and citizens who regularly receive *Excelencia* postings, policy briefs, and reports. Its capacity for outreach is greatly enhanced as a result of partnerships with major policy, higher education and Latino-serving groups, including the Hispanic Heritage Foundation, the Institute for Higher Education Policy, the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund, the National Center for Business Champions, the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education and the National College Access Network (NCAN).

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## ***Excelencia's Work -- Excelencia Works!***

Our efforts include ...

Research: analysis on Latinos in the educational pipeline and develop studies, issue briefs, fact sheets, and other resources to inform decision makers.

Examples of *Excelencia*: national program that annually recognizes practices that accelerate Latino student success at the associate, baccalaureate and graduate levels.

*Accelerating Latino Student Success (ALASS)* institutional network: collaborate with institutions across the country committed to Latino student success to identify, document and replicate effective practices.

Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) series: issue briefs that examine the creation of HSIs, their popularity with Latino students, institutional practices, leadership, and measures of success.

State and federal level policy: work with state legislators, members of congress and other educational leaders to assess the current condition and policies to improve Latino educational attainment.

We invite you to visit our Web site to learn more about *Excelencia* and how our work supports your efforts to improve Latino student success. [www.EdExcelencia.org](http://www.EdExcelencia.org)

## *EXCELENCIA'S TEAM IS WHY EXCELENCIA WORKS!*

*Excelencia's* people are our greatest resource. Our staff, associates, board of directors, and honorary board are all committed to meeting our mission—accelerating Latino student success in higher education.

### **THE STAFF AND ASSOCIATE TEAM INCLUDE:**

Sarita Brown, *founding president*

Deborah Santiago, *co-founder,*  
*vice president for policy and research*

Lourdes Guerrero, *communication*  
*and program manager*

Estela Lopez, *senior program advisor*

Sally Andrade, *associate*

Margarita Benítez, *associate*

Carlos Rodríguez, *associate*

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Sarita E. Brown, *President*

Norma V. Cantú, *Vice Chair*

Anthony Chapa, *Secretary-Treasurer*

Reginald Wilson

*Excelencia's* Honorary Board provides leadership, advocacy, and considerable prestige to our mission—accelerating Latino student success in higher education.

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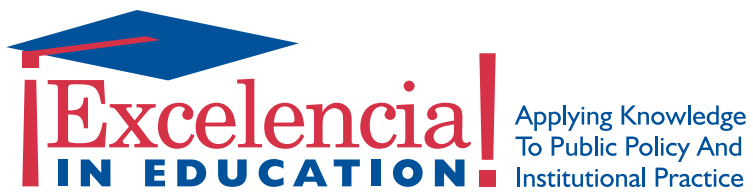
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***Excelencia in Education*** aims to accelerate higher education success for Latino students. A 501(c)(3) organization, *Excelencia* serves its mission by linking research, policy and practice and by building a network of results-oriented educators and policymakers focused on education policies and institutional practices that support Latino academic achievement. For more information, please visit **[www.EdExcelencia.org](http://www.EdExcelencia.org)**

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