



WHAT WORKS FOR LATINO
STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION
COMPENDIUM

2022



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 2022 EXAMPLES OF EXCELENCIA

LATINO STUDENT SUCCESS CHAMPIONS

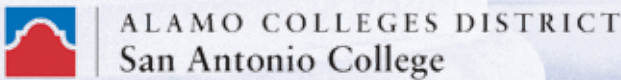
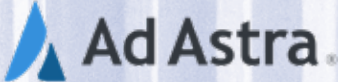


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FOREWORD

We launched Examples of *Excelencia* in 2005. Our motivation? In too many meetings with funders, researchers, policymakers, and leaders across the country, the topic of conversation was robust in diagnosing the barriers and problems of Latinos in higher education. Rarely was there a discussion of how to address these issues. And, we were tired of hearing diagnosis of problems without discussion of investment or action. So, we decided to do something about it. We saw an opportunity to inform and compel action that could bring attention to the many programs and practices making a positive difference for Latino students and leveraged our access to the national stage to make a positive contribution.


We went back to the materials we developed in 2005 to launch Examples of *Excelencia* and extracted the following:

By the year 2025, 22 percent of the US college-age population will be Hispanic. Yet even with the growth of the population there remain significant achievement gaps between Hispanic students and other racial/ethnic groups resulting in fewer college graduates. Accelerating Latino achievement in higher education now, and for the next 15 years, is vital to our national interest. The purpose of Examples of *Excelencia* is to both celebrate the achievements of programs and departments that effectively have responded to this challenge, and to inspire other academic programs to learn about these examples and use their strategies to better serve Latino students.

After 17 years of bringing national attention to what is working across the country to improve Latino student success, we reflect on the aspiration set out in 2005 and the progress made to date to increase the opportunities of so many students and communities.

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

There is no excuse for inaction. The 20 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. These programs 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

SERVING LATINO STUDENTS ON THEIR HIGHER EDUCATION JOURNEYS

In the following pages you will find evidence-based practices situated at institutions and community-based organizations across the country. Each program is making a positive difference in the lives of Latino students on their path to earning a degree. What stood out this year in what program's shared with Excelencia was the innovative work happening on the local level, from connecting first-gen Latino students with employer partners as students take the first steps in their career; to tailoring educational pathways to meet students where they are within financial and social contexts; and building vibrant comunidades where Latino students feel a true sense of belonging.

These high-impact programs prove that when Latino students are served well through their higher education experience, the student-centered lens reverberates across campus to the benefit of all students.

Take a look at a few key themes from the 2022 Examples of *Excelencia's* recognized programs:

<p>Fostering College-Going Cultures</p>	<p>This theme was strongly represented at the Community-based Organization (CBO) level, where programs work to leverage the strengths of immigrant and Spanish-speaking communities to set Latino students up for success on their journey to and through college.</p>
<p>Holistic Support Structures</p>	<p>Finalist programs across the board showcased their commitment to providing supports such as financial aid, summer bridge programming, and connection to mentors. The student impact was clear- access to personalized and timely support played a vital role in many of the student testimonials shared by programs.</p>
<p>Culturally Responsive Programming</p>	<p>From first-year experiences that incorporate <i>familia</i> into the transition process, to courses offered in Spanish, recognized programs are deeply attuned to the values, strengths, and challenges faced by their Latino students. This helps inform culturally responsive program offerings at the Associate and Baccalaureate levels.</p>
<p>Career Identity and Economic Mobility</p>	<p>At the Graduate level, programs are building career identity among the next top scientists, academics, and researchers while prioritizing experiential learning opportunities — practices that take aim at closing the Latino representation gap in various fields.</p>

BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE THAT SHARES WHAT WORKS

For higher education leaders there are many spaces to engage and learn from others. *Excelencia* in Education offers a unique community of common cause for practitioners to engage specifically on what is working for Latino students. *Excelencia* is unique in that it can claim 17 years of investment in this effort that has recognized over 350 programs and supported them with financial resources totaling just under 2.3 million dollars. These programs amplify a national call for institutional practices that are culturally responsive and asset-based in their approach to improving Latino student success.

Excelencia seeks to broaden the scope of knowledge surrounding effective practices for Latino students and bring attention to the noteworthy work that may be overlooked by traditional best-practices models. An evidence-based practice uses data to show student success in ways unique to each program— showing our commitment to meeting programs where they are.

Learn about how we recognize programs:

- Finalists are standout programs that share an aligned narrative around their goals, practices and evidence that show their intentionality and success in serving Latino students.
- Among the finalists, one exemplary program in the associate, baccalaureate, graduate, and community-based organization levels is named the Example of *Excelencia* for the year.
- Programs to Watch are close to being finalists, or are up-and-coming programs that have already positively impacted the success of their Latino students and are growing their evidence of effectiveness.

Examples of *Excelencia* is not merely about the annual recognition cycle; our recognized programs are featured in our policy and research efforts, are invited to present at institutes and conferences, are promoted to reporters and funders learning what works for Latinos, and are convened in small, cohort-based conversations to share and learn about their efforts with other practitioners as part of our *Excelencia* in Action network.

Excelencia believes in the value of shared knowledge and chooses to display practices that work with a community of common cause committed to accelerating Latino student success. We invite you to connect with the programs in our Growing What Works Database, a free, online database designed to connect funders, policymakers, and other practitioners to evidence-based programs working for Latino students. Search today and connect to a program in your state, sector, academic discipline or issue area. Get started here: www.EdExcelencia.org/Growing-What-Works.



RECOGNITION CATEGORIES



PROGRAM TO WATCH



FINALIST











EXAMPLE OF
EXCELENCIA

HOW WE FIND WHAT WORKS FOR LATINO STUDENTS

Finding programs that work for Latino students and sharing their effective practices with other institutions, programs, and stakeholders helps *Excelencia* in Education accelerate Latino student success. The following gives an overview of the annual process for Examples of *Excelencia*:

- The cycle begins with a national call for nominations of initiatives improving Latino student success in higher education.
2022 Results: 232 nominations received from 32 states, D.C., and Puerto Rico.
- Nominated programs are asked to submit their program profiles and *Excelencia* staff review and select a set of finalists.
2022 Results: 20 finalists from 93 profile submissions across 17 states, D.C., and Puerto Rico.
- A national selection committee, composed of leaders with diverse backgrounds in education, public policy, philanthropy, and the workforce review the finalists and select one Example of *Excelencia* for each level: associate, baccalaureate, graduate, and community-based organizations.

Excelencia's criteria for recognizing a program increasing Latino student success in higher education includes the following considerations:

	Cultural Competency: Program takes into account Latino students' cultural background and history and uses practices that reflect that.		Intentionally Serving Latino Students: Program does not need to only serve Latino students but program practices explicitly target Latino student needs.
	Concrete Metrics: Quantitative metrics disaggregated for Latino participants and show correlation between a program's practices and student success. Qualitative metrics are also considered as a supplement to quantitative metrics to show a program's impact on its students.		Elements of a Strong Story: Strong stories of effective programs show alignment between a program's mission, goals, practices, and use of data showing their success.
	Sustainable: Program's essential staff and leadership show commitment to the program's efforts. The program has a diverse set of funding sources and/or secured funding for the future.		Easily Replicable: The ability for other institutions/communities to implement similar program practices at low costs.
	Longevity: Programs that have been in existence for at least three years.		Use of Practices Proven to Work: Program has implemented known practices that have demonstrated successful outcomes for Latino students.

While we look for the aforementioned criteria from a program, it is not necessary for programs recognized through Examples of *Excelencia* to possess all factors. Programs that are effectively tell their Latino success stories have a clear alignment between their mission, goals, practices, and evidence of effectiveness.

2022 EXAMPLES OF EXCELENCIA SELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Each year, *Excelencia* convenes a group of knowledgeable and experienced partners from the community, education, and philanthropy to review and select the four Examples of *Excelencia* from the identified finalist programs.



We are grateful for the time, insight, and commitment to Latino student success from the following members of the 2022 Examples of *Excelencia* Selection committee:

2022 SELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

MEMBER	TITLE	ORGANIZATION
Kevin Christian	Director, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	American Association of Community Colleges
Chris Coxon	Managing Director	Educate Texas
Alfred Herrera	Director, Center for Community College Partnerships & Assistant Vice Provost	University of California, Los Angeles
Estela López	Senior Associate	<i>Excelencia</i> in Education
Rafael Pasillas	Director, Initiatives	The Council for Adult & Experiential Learning
Pamela Quiroz	Executive Director	Inter University Program on Latino Research
Saúl Valdez	Program Officer	<i>ECMC Foundation</i>
Paloma Vargas	Council President	Alliance of Hispanic Serving Institution Educators
Cindia Velasco	Director of Constituency Services, Workforce and Economic Development	NALEO Educational Fund
Maria Paula Zapata	Director of Programs	Conexión Américas

2022 EXAMPLES OF EXCELENCIA

ASSOCIATE LEVEL

EXAMPLE:

Latino Promise and HACER Programs
Fairleigh Dickinson University — Teaneck, NJ

FINALISTS:

Connect4Success
Miami Dade College — Miami, FL

Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Program
County College of Morris — Randolph, NJ

Engineering Program at Wright College (EPW)
Wilbur Wright College, City Colleges of Chicago — Chicago, IL

Title III: Leadership, Excellence and Academic Preparation in STEM (LEAPS) Program
Laredo College — Laredo, TX

BACCALAUREATE LEVEL

EXAMPLE:

Institute of Interdisciplinary Research
University of Puerto Rico, Cayey — Cayey, PR

FINALISTS:

Arizona State University College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) Scholars
School of Transborder Studies, Arizona State University — Tempe, AZ

Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences
Rush University — Chicago, IL

College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) at WSU
Washington State University — Pullman, WA

Preparing Underrepresented Educators to Realize their Teaching Ambitions (PUERTA)
Sonoma State University — Rohnert Park, CA

Supera Spanish Speaking Program
Kean University — Union, NJ

2022 EXAMPLES OF EXCELENCIA

GRADUATE LEVEL

EXAMPLE:

Master of Science (MS) in Environmental Science
The University of Texas, San Antonio — San Antonio, TX

FINALISTS:

Inter-University Program for Latino Research/University of Illinois — Chicago Mellon Fellows Program
University of Illinois, Chicago — Chicago, IL

Knowledge River Program

School of Information, University of Arizona — Tucson, AZ

Master of Social Work (MSW) Program

The University of Texas, San Antonio — San Antonio, TX

Project upGRADS: Utilizing & Promoting Graduate Resources & Access for Disadvantaged Students

California State University, Fullerton — Fullerton, CA

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

EXAMPLE:

Post-Secondary Initiatives
Esperanza, Inc. — Cleveland, OH

FINALISTS:

Career & Life Skills (CLS)
The Next Step Public Charter School — Washington, DC

College & Career Success

Breakthrough Central Texas — Austin, TX

TuFuturo

Community Education Coalition — Columbus, IN

Latino Promise and HACER Programs



Institution: Fairleigh Dickinson University

Website: <https://www.fdu.edu/academics/centers-institutes/hispanic-center/>

Program Location: Teaneck, New Jersey

Year Started: 2007

Issue Area: Access

Program Focus: Bilingual/ESL, First-Year Support

MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of sister programs Latino Promise and HACER is to provide access to higher education for traditional-aged Latino students who may not be directly admissible to a bachelor's program, offering an associate degree in a university setting. Ultimately, Latino Promise-HACER ensures that primarily first-generation college students can transfer into a bachelor's program of their choice. Latino Promise and HACER offer the same curriculum, but HACER (Hispanics Achieving College Education Recognition) differs by admitting high school students who are recent immigrants and whose Spanish skills are stronger than their proficiency in English. HACER helps students preserve and even improve their native Spanish while teaching them English through ESL; these students gradually transition from taking bi-lingual coursework to English-only. The Latino Promise program offers instruction in English.

WHAT STUDENTS SAID ABOUT THIS YEAR'S EXAMPLE:

"With Latino Promise's help, I graduated with my A.A. and continued on to FDU, nearing completion of a B.S. in Electrical Engineering. I have learned much about Latino heritage and further developed my social and business skills that contribute to my career networking. I have grown to step out of my comfort zone; I became an orientation leader for the program and held executive board positions in engineering and business clubs."

The primary academic goals include:

- Developing students' skills in written and oral communications and reading comprehension.
- Developing their skills in mathematical analysis, cross cultural perspectives, and leadership.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

In 2007, the Latino Promise associate's program was created in our continuing education college on our Metro campus to intentionally serve Latino high school students who may not have otherwise considered attending college. One condition for admission is English proficiency, which excluded applicants still learning English. To remedy the situation, Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU) launched HACER in 2015 to serve Spanish-speaking, high school graduates.

Both programs seek to redress educational, economic, and social barriers by recruiting in immigrant-heavy school districts, offering workshops for families on financial aid and a one-credit course on transitioning to college life which promotes student retention.

The programs provide a pre-college summer program, small classes, academic support, financial grants, personalized advising, and cultural enrichment all designed to mold high school graduates from the local communities into successful college students. Reduced-cost, student trips to Philadelphia and/or Boston, to plays on Broadway, and soon to our British campus provide cultural enrichment beyond coursework.

PROGRAM IMPACT

Of the Latino Promise graduates, 106 continued at FDU to complete a Bachelor's and 5 students also completed a Master's in Administrative Science at FDU. The program has had these additional successes.

- The average graduation rate since 2010 for Latino Promise is **40%**, which is more than double the current average of **18%** graduation rate for Latino students in associate programs at New Jersey two- year institutions.
- Latino Promise time to (associate) degree is at **2.19** years (2012-2021 average). For the HACER cohort, it is **2.13** years (2018-2021).
- A persistence rate for Latino Promise students of **93%** from fall to spring over the past three years.
- For HACER, the average graduation rate is **25%** (2019-2022 anticipated).

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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Connect4Success

Institution: Miami Dade College

Website: <https://www.mdc.edu/transfer-information/florida2-2/>

Program Location: Miami, Florida

Year Started: 2006

Issue Area: Support Services

Program Focus: First-Year Support, Transfer

MISSION AND GOALS

Miami Dade College (MDC) and Florida International University (FIU) have collaborated to create the Connect4Success (C4S) program. The mission of the program is to establish a guided transfer pathway that facilitates the admission of MDC Associates of Arts (AA) degree graduates to FIU baccalaureate programs.

The C4S program has two overarching goals:

- Provide students with access to postsecondary educational opportunities.
- Develop support mechanisms for timely degree completion.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

From its original conception in 2006 as a Dual Degree Program, C4S has evolved while building on Florida's 2+2 framework. Approximately 70% of MDC Associates of Arts completers transfer to FIU with the goal of completing a baccalaureate program, which was the main catalyst in creating a structured, seamless process for students to transfer to our partner institution.

The program offers wraparound services beginning with a comprehensive onboarding. After applying to the program, students are assigned an MDC Pre-College advisor who guides them from application through enrollment. Advisors serve as the liaisons to key holistic support services such as Learning Resources, Student Life, Single Stop, and Mental Health Counseling. Students benefit from appreciative advising, extensive co-curricular opportunities, and career and transfer workshops.



Additional benefits include the annual kickoff event, FIU Bridge Advisor at MDC campuses and issuance of an FIU identification card, which provides access to the FIU library, as well as academic, cultural, athletic, social, and C4S signature events. Finally, participants gain guaranteed admission to FIU with the completion of an AA degree within three years.

PROGRAM IMPACT

The partnership between MDC and FIU has been critical to the success of the C4S program, which boasts significant student outcomes.

- Historically, C4S students have higher fall-to-spring retention rates at **95%** versus **83%** and fall-to-fall retention rates, **88%** versus **65%**, respectively.
- Of C4S students, **53%** complete their MDC Associates degrees within 3 years with an average GPA of 3.2. (Historically, this represents a **15-20** percentage point increase versus the overall 3-year college average).
- Over **70%** of C4S graduates who complete an AA at MDC within 3 years matriculate at our partner university.
- Of participants surveyed, **92%** said that they would recommend the C4S program to their peers.
- Of participants surveyed, **89%** agreed that their advisor provided guidance based on educational and career goals.

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Program

Institution: County College of Morris

Website: <https://www.ccm.edu/student-support-services/campus-services/educational-opportunity-fund/>

Program Location: Randolph, New Jersey

Year Started: 1969

Issue Area: Retention

Program Focus: First-Year Support, Transfer

MISSION AND GOALS

The Educational Opportunity Fund at County College of Morris provides a gateway to higher education for students who need academic and financial support. EOF is committed to transform incoming students into scholars.

Goals:

- Encourage students to continue their post-secondary education and/or to become successful professionals in a diverse society.
- Consistently accomplish high retention and transfer rates
- Strive towards timely graduation rates (within 3 years) of students served.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

EOF began at CCM in 1969 as part of legislation to advance college access and opportunities for underserved groups across NJ's colleges and universities. In its inception, EOF/CCM began as a small program representing minority students in a very affluent predominantly Caucasian county. Through the years, EOF at CCM has grown into a comprehensive holistic support system that provides bi-lingual first-generation/low income predominantly Latino college students with customized holistic academic support that fosters persistence to graduation, academic achievement, and personal and leadership development.



Today, services include recruitment, summer bridge/college readiness program, parent orientations, individual academic/social counseling, pre-advisement, academic planning, transfer assistance, workshops, professional mentorship, online academic support, and a scholarship. The program meets students where they are, regardless of their background, academic aptitude, social challenges, and/or needs, customizes the support for students individually, helping them fulfill their academic and professional goals.

PROGRAM IMPACT

For the 2018 cohort, the overall program graduation rate was 38%, compared to the institutional graduation rate of 32%. Below is a breakdown of Latino participant data.

- The EOF Latino graduation rate was **52%**, compared to the institutional graduation rate of **27%**.
- EOF has exceeded even the college's own retention rates, boasting an EOF Latino (FTFT) retention rate of **76%** in AY 2019-20 compared to **71%** for the institution's overall rate.

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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Engineering Program at Wright College

Institution: Wilbur Wright College, One of the City Colleges of Chicago

Program Location: Chicago, Illinois

Website: engineering.ccc.edu

Year Started: 2018

Issue Area: Transfer

Program Focus: First-Year Support, Transfer

MISSION AND GOALS

The Engineering Program at Wright's mission is to provide equitable, affordable, and quality education for all students interested in engineering or CS. The EPW is a research-based program that aims to create data-driven frameworks to provide Latino and other underrepresented students access, make them feel they belong, and offer them intentional, holistic, and programmatic support to be successful engineers or computer scientists.

The program's immediate goals are to:

- Increase Hispanic students pursuing and completing an associate/bachelor's degree in engineering or computer science.
- Streamline two transitions: high school to community college and 2-year to 4-year institutions.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

The Engineering Program at Wright (EPW) is a robust and equitable program built upon the outcomes of the 2015-2017 Engineering Pathways (EP) Pilot. The EP is a guaranteed transfer program to The Grainger College of Engineering at UIUC. It is a 2+2 cohort model with a rigorous curriculum that intentionally supports students from admission to transfer. However, the Engineering Pathways was selective and had denied underprepared students admission.



Most underprepared students are underrepresented in engineering, mostly Black, Hispanic and women. To address this, a National Science Foundation- Hispanic Serving Institution (NSF-HSI) research inaugural grant launched EPW in 2018. EPW developed the "Contextualized Engineering Bridge" that lifts students' academic preparation, enhances first-year experience, increases retention and transfer rates, offers Engineering Success seminars, and expands guaranteed admission status to more institutions.

PROGRAM IMPACT

The most significant overall qualitative outcome of the EPW is changing mindsets. The program increases student belonging and self-efficacy (belief they can succeed as engineers or computer scientists). Below are some quantitative data points about the program.

- Enrollment: Overall EPW enrollment increased from **25** in 2018 to **238** in 2021 (950%), and increased Latino enrollment from **32%** (8) to **70%** (167).
- Eliminating Remedial Math: All Bridge participants eliminated at least a semester of remedial Math and **54%** were directly placed in Calculus. Bridge participants thrived in Calculus, and transferred after 2-2.5 years. **15** Latinos out of **31** first Bridge participants completely eliminated remediation.
- Retention: Over the course of 3 years, EPW boasts a **95%** Fall to Fall retention with **85%** transfer rate within 2-3 years.

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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Title III: Leadership, Excellence and Academic Preparation in STEM (LEAPS)

Institution: Laredo College

Website: www.laredo.edu/stem

Program Location: Laredo, Texas

Year Started: 2017

Issue Area: Support Services

Program Focus: First-Year Support, Undergraduate Research

MISSION AND GOALS

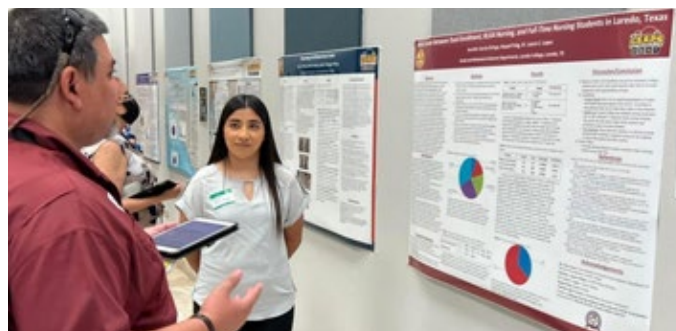
The Leadership, Excellence and Academic Preparedness in STEM Project (LEAPS) aims to increase the number of Hispanic and low-income students who attain degrees in the STEM fields. The overall goal of the program is to help students majoring in STEM overcome academic and financial barriers and generate the following long-term impacts:

- Enhance the academic quality of students' educational experience to increase retention, graduation, and transfer rates of Hispanic and low-income students in STEM through Undergraduate Research Opportunities.
- Enhance STEM student support services (advisement) through personal and web-based technology.
- Increase the number of STEM articulation transfer programs.
- Increase the body of knowledge on strategies that impact Hispanic STEM student success.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

Three Components address interventions to increase STEM student enrollment, retention, persistence, graduation, and transfer rates.

Component I: Increasing the number of Hispanic and other low-income students attaining degree in the fields of Science,



Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) through active engagement in faculty undergraduate partnerships with LEAPS students, intrusive academic advisement, tutoring services and exposure to real-life experiences within the STEM Workforce.

Component 2: Articulation Programs and Outreach to develop model transfer and additional articulation agreements to different STEM fields between Laredo College and Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Texas A&M International University, and the University of Texas at San Antonio.

Component 3: Advising and Student Support includes academic support for students through advising, tutoring, counseling and other support services that aid in increasing student engagement, sense of belonging and increase student success (Summer Bridge).

PROGRAM IMPACT

LEAPS has 165 graduates from Cohort 1-4 (n=380; 43% graduation rate). From those 165 LEAPS students, 135 graduated as a STEM major. For Fall-to-fall Persistence Rates the non-program participant campus retention rate was 50%. Below are annual rates and each cohort began in the Fall of the stated year.

- Cohort 2017 had 115 students and **79%** persisted.
- Cohort 2018 had 113 students and **86%** persisted.
- Cohort 2019 had 97 students and **92%** persisted.

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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What students said about this year's Associate Level finalists...

“Being part of Connect4Success has given me peace of mind. I did not worry about my next step and was able to focus solely on doing well in my classes at MDC. It has also been great to know I have resources from both institutions always readily available for me. This has allowed me to improve my work in my courses as well as my own personal knowledge about careers and steps for the future.”

Connect4Success

Students consistently share that EOF was their top support system while at CCM and carried them throughout their college journey. Students comment on the Counseling Team as an attentive, accessible, and motivating support system.

Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Program

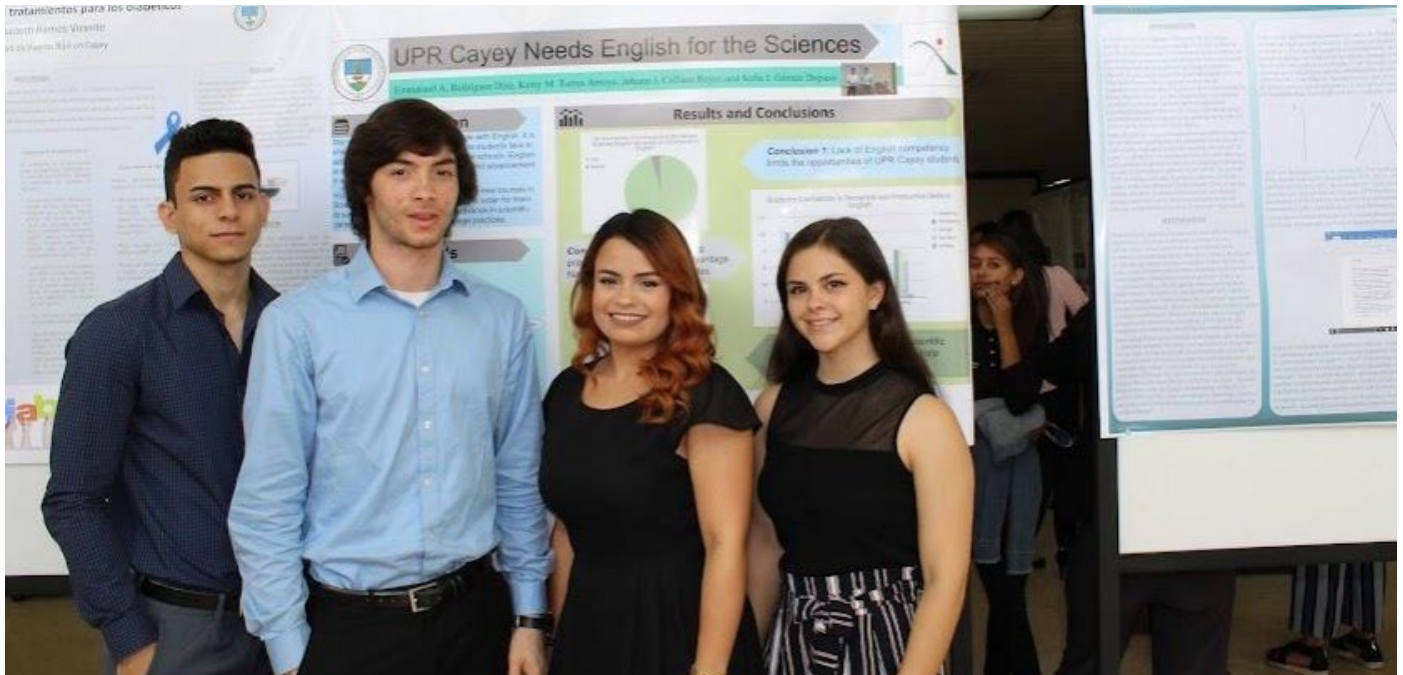
One of our students, a Latina who just moved to the US two years prior to her college application, was denied admission to her dream school and the EPW provided her a second chance. She joined EPW, transferred and completed bachelor's degree at our transfer institution. She is a software engineer who is launching a program between her employer and EPW

Engineering Program at Wright College

“As I enter my last semester, and I am so grateful for the many opportunities LEAPS and Laredo College have offered me. ... My high school self would never have imagined that one day, the shy and quiet band girl would become an honors student, undergraduate researcher, student mentor and math tutor during her first two years as a college student.”

LEAPS Program

Institute of Interdisciplinary Research



Institution: University of Puerto Rico at Cayey

Website: <https://www.upr.edu/iii-cayey/>

Program Location: Cayey, Puerto Rico

Year Started: 2003

Issue Area: Academic Program

Program Focus: Mentoring, Undergraduate Research

MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of the Institute of Interdisciplinary Research (IIR) is to advance undergraduate research, community service, and academic creation at UPR Cayey by supporting interdisciplinary, regional, and applied research projects.

Their goals are:

- To advance and facilitate interdisciplinary research.
- To produce knowledge relevant to Puerto Rico and to the UPR-C service region.

- To provide undergraduate research experiences that lead to student success.
- To provide a supportive environment for researchers.
- To disseminate the results of their research projects.

To attain these goals, they work in strengthening their research environment to engage faculty (mentors) and students in research. This entails: training, monetary support, pre/post-award support, and research-friendly policy development.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

The IIR started as an undergraduate research effort in 2003 and spearheaded an institutional transformation from being a predominantly teaching institution to one where scholarly research is valued and supported. Students participate as research assistants and receive mentorship in research methodologies, Personal Development Plans, coaching, a network of mentors and opportunities from partnerships in PR and US, travel awards, and opportunities for publication.

The IIR has developed a multi-pronged model to provide research opportunities for the success of their 100% Latino students by providing interdisciplinary courses, research capacity and training for students, and professional development opportunities.

Additional innovative strategies have been developed during the COVID-19 pandemic to support students. These practices include: a coaching program, stipends for enrollment and participation in research programs, monetary support for tuition costs, reinvestment of F&A, and the creation of the Antonia Pantojas program that serves as a mentorship program.

PROGRAM IMPACT

The UPRC serves the greatest number of students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds from the southwestern and central regions of the Island. In the fall of 2020-2021, enrollment consisted of 2,773, 100% Latino undergraduates, 67% female, and 82% Pell Grant recipients.

- Of UGR participants, **762** out of **968 (79%)** applied to graduate school and **92%** of the applicants were accepted. In contrast **41%** of the overall body of students from 2015 to 2018, applied to a graduate school.
- UGR participants have higher graduation rates (**90%**) than the institutional graduation rates (**50%**) for the same cohort period.

WHAT STUDENTS SAID ABOUT THIS YEAR'S EXAMPLE:

“UPR IPERT has helped me gain a broader perspective of university life...through research opportunities...and skills to connect with mentors in my research area.”

- Student involvement in research has increased from **eight** in 2003 to an average of **205** annually in the past ten years; a total of 1,619 students. The IIR supports a third of the UPRC graduating class.
- During 2011–2013 UPRC facilitated the participation of approximately **300** undergraduates annually in mentored research projects. **66%** of these students are affiliated with the IIR.

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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Arizona State University College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) Scholars

Institution: Arizona State University

Website: <https://campscholar.asu.edu>

Program Location: Tempe, Arizona

Year Started: 2017

Issue Area: Retention

Program Focus: First-Year Support, Mentoring

MISSION AND GOALS

ASU CAMP's mission is to create a comprehensive, responsive, sustainable, and rigorous retention program for migrant students through a focus on a successful first year of college.

The goals are:

- Ensure the academic success of first-year migrant students through the provision of financial, transitional, and academic support.
- Create 'whole person' CAMP scholars and leaders.
- Create 'whole family' support networks for CAMP scholars.
- Ensure retention and academic persistence of CAMP scholars.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

Arizona has the 7th largest migrant student population in the US with 97% of those estimated to be of Hispanic descent. Migrant youth often leave school to contribute to household economic survival by working on farms.

ASU CAMP promotes the academic success of migrant and seasonal farmworkers MSFW students through culturally-responsive services offered most intensively in students' first year. The Bienvenida program demystifies the college environment and helps CAMP Scholars and their families prepare for the academic and social demands of a 4-year university via peer and professional mentoring, workshops, bilingual newsletters, and social media available in both English and Spanish.



ASU CAMP provides need-based financial support to assist with housing, meal plans, transportation, health services, and educational costs; financial aid review, counseling and financial literacy, and scholarship search workshops. To meet the academic needs, ASU CAMP offers tutoring, mandatory study halls, academic mentoring, peer coaching, and educational programming.

PROGRAM IMPACT:

The ASU CAMP Scholars Project is demonstrably achieving its goals and advancing Latino student success.

- Over the last 5 years, CAMP Scholars had higher one-year retention rates (90%), four-year graduation rates (54%), and five-year graduation rates (86%) when compared to ASU students from a similar demographic who did not participate in CAMP (85%, 45%, and 57%, respectively).
- Of the Scholars who have received their undergraduate degrees, 27% have gone on to pursue a graduate degree.
- Among CAMP Scholars, 95% have received additional financial support for housing, transportation, healthcare, and educational expenses; 82% have participated in intensive transitional programming (La Bienvenida); and 100% have received academic mentoring/coaching from CAMP staff.

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences

Institution: Rush University

Website: <https://www.rushu.rush.edu/college-health-sciences/academic-programs/bachelor-science-bs-health-sciences>

Program Location: Chicago, Illinois

Year Started: 2013

Issue Area: Academic Program

Program Focus: Adult Learners, Discipline/Subject

MISSION AND GOALS

The Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences (BSHS) degree completion program's mission is to prepare highly qualified, diverse graduates interested in pursuing healthcare careers that require advanced levels of professional education.

The BSHS program outcome goals are twofold:

- Graduate Latino and minority students so they can enter or advance in health science careers that require a bachelor's degree.
- Provide Latino and minority students a path to advance their career goals by preparing them for acceptance into a variety of graduate/post-baccalaureate healthcare programs, including but not limited to, medicine, nursing, physician assistant studies, respiratory care, health administration, research, and occupational therapy.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

The BSHS was launched in 2013 at Rush University in collaboration with City Colleges of Chicago – College to Careers initiative to provide minority students a pathway to complete a bachelor's degree focused on healthcare. A cohort model (23 students) is designed to allow for significant student/faculty interaction with individualized plans of study being developed for each student.

Each term, students meet with their Academic Advisor and the Student Professional & Career Development Manager (SPCDM). When students receive below 70% on an assessment they are required to meet with the SPCDM. Additionally, faculty meet weekly to discuss support strategies



for each student. Programming for students includes professional and personal development seminar series and the opportunity to learn from alumni. During a student's last term they complete a clinical practicum (approximately 220 hours) where they are able to apply their didactic education at a hospital with various professionals (e.g. OTs, RNs, MDs).

PROGRAM IMPACT:

Upon graduation, students work in health-related positions (e.g. mental health counselor, patient coordinator, research assistant/coordinator, health safety manager) or pursue graduate education.

- Latino students who matriculated Fall 2016 to Fall 2019 (graduating spring 2018 through 2021), **82%** graduated, **9%** are continuing, **5%** military leave and **5%** transferred/attrition.
- During 2018-2021, **72%** of Latino graduates were accepted into graduate or post-baccalaureate education (e.g. medicine, health systems management, respiratory therapy, medical laboratory sciences, counseling, and occupational therapy).
- Of the 2019 graduates, **100%** have continued their education. In comparison, according to Hispanic Outlook, only **4%** of Latinos are pursuing graduate degrees. In 2017, the Council of Graduate Schools stated that **11%** of graduate students were Latino.

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP)

Institution: Washington State University

Website: camp.wsu.edu

Program Location: Pullman, Washington

Year Started: 2006

Issue Area: Retention

Program Focus: First-year support

MISSION AND GOALS:

WSU CAMP's mission is to improve the lives of migrant or seasonal farmworkers (MSFW) and their families through higher education attainment. CAMP's claim is that qualified and motivated MSFW students, who participate in WSU CAMP and actively seek opportunities to engage with the university community will successfully complete their freshman year (24 credits) and be retained as they continue to their sophomore year. Additionally, students receive non-monetary support from CAMP staff during the entirety of their academic careers to reach the ultimate goal of graduation.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

In 2006, Latinx undergraduate enrollment at WSU was at about 1000 of 19,000 students – about 5% of the student body. This low number of Latinx students prompted the university to strategically provide programming which targeted Latinx student success. CAMP was part of this strategy. 4-year graduation rates for Latinx students were at 31% and 5-year rates were at 55.6% by 2009. Currently, WSU serves just over 4,100 Latino students on its main campus in Pullman, WA; approximately 16% of the undergraduate student body is Latinx.

CAMP is housed within Student Affairs with the intent to easily connect students to other service departments. WSU CAMP has evolved to include priority registration for classes, personalized academic coaching, a Spanish language parent-centric orientation, collaboration with other institutions, departments, and constituents for a regional leadership conference, a weekend personal development retreat, the



inclusion of a career development course, and increased financial assistance (\$1000 stipend).

PROGRAM IMPACT

Students participating in CAMP are more likely to graduate compared to the control group, Latinx students not participating in CAMP, and the general student population at WSU.

- WSU CAMP has averaged **90%** first-year completion of 24 credits, and **98%** retention Fall-to-Fall for freshmen completing 24 credits over the past ten (10) years. This performance is significant compared to WSU's general New Freshmen Full-Time Student Fall-to-Fall retention rate of **79%**, and all other Fall-to-Fall full-time, minority, low-income, and first-generation students of **75%**.
- The WSU CAMP Graduation Rate for 4 – 6 years is **13%** higher than the general WSU population, **16%** higher than the control group made up of migrant or seasonal farm working qualified students, and **19%** higher than the general Latinx student population.

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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Preparing Underrepresented Educators to Realize their Teaching Ambitions (PUERTA)

Institution: Sonoma State University

Website: <https://education.sonoma.edu/programs/puerta-project>

Program Location: Rohnert Park, California

Year Started: 2017

Issue Area: Support Services

Program Focus: Career/Workforce

MISSION AND GOALS

As a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), Sonoma State University is committed to the recruitment, retention, and preparation of our students in order to go back into their community and become educators. This is a grow your own model in teacher preparation. The best teachers are those who reflect the population they serve.

PUERTA Project has three primary goals:

- Increase Hispanic and Latina/o student persistence and graduation rates.
- Increase the number of Hispanic and Latino students who earn a teaching credential.
- Increase the number of students who transfer to SSU from a two-year HSI.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

There is a high need for educators of color in California, specifically in the field of bilingual education. PUERTA aims to increase teachers of color who are also linguistically competent.

PUERTA implemented the following activities at SSU that focus on achieving project goals such as, implementing a continuum of academic and student support services, Summer Bridge programming, outreach and career development support, improving first-year Latinx students' access to General Education (GE) courses, and providing professional development engagement for aspiring teachers.



PROGRAM IMPACT:

PUERTA provides evidence-based, high-impact programming that supports academic success and helps students realize their full potential in becoming educators.

- In 2022, the average GPA for 238 students was **3.06**.
- Between 2019-20 and 2020-21 Latinx students transferring to SSU from a community college increased **40%** from 234 to 327.
- Between 2019-20 and 2020-21 enrolling in a SSU credential program increased from **15 to 52**, and earning a teaching credential at SSU increased from **6 to 34**.
- Between fall 2019 and fall 2020, **50%** of Latinx students completed 30 units in their first year of college, compared to **59%** of PUERTA students
- Latinx students increased their retention from **83%** to **90%**. **100%** of transfer students returned.

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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Supera Spanish Speaking Program

Institution: Kean University

Website: www.kean.edu/supera

Program Location: Union, New Jersey

Year Started: 1972

Issue Area: Access

Program Focus: Bilingual/ESL

MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of the Kean University Supera Spanish Speaking Program (SSP) is to increase the number of Hispanic students attaining a bachelor's degree by providing access to higher education to students who are English Language Learners (ELL). Through Supera, students follow a structured study program designed to achieve full integration into university life. This includes taking courses in Spanish during their first years of study. As part of the General Education (GE) curriculum, these courses allow students to advance in their university careers while acquiring the necessary knowledge of English through the ESL program.

Program Goals:

1. Gain access to higher education.
2. Obtain acquisition of the English language.
3. Progress in their college career and complete their degrees.
4. Increase graduation rates to 75%.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

SSP was established in 1972 by a group of faculty members concerned with the low number of Hispanic students enrolled in the university at the time. The program does not require SAT scores and allows participants to submit admission essays and letters of recommendation in Spanish. The admission GPA is 2.5, and TOEFL is not required.

The following services are offered to help students persist to graduation: academic advisement, financial aid assistance, career counseling, tutoring, peer mentoring,



scholarship awareness, and completing the FAFSA and the New Jersey Alternative Financial Aid Application for Dreamers. Additionally, students participate in a four-week summer academy, at no cost to them, that assists them with on-campus job placement. High school information sessions, parent-teacher conferences, and parent orientations help raise program exposure and enrollment.

PROGRAM IMPACT:

Since its inception in 1972, Supera has served over **2,250** students.

- The number of applications for the fall of 2022 is **262** thus far, compared to **148** in 2021 and **244** in 2020, representing an increase of **43%** from Fall 2021 for program enrollment.
- There was a significant **10%** increase in retention from the academic year 2020-2021 to the academic year 2021-2022.
- The first-semester retention rates for program participants have been **89%**, **82%**, and **92%** for academic years 2019, 2020, and 2021, in comparison to the university rates of **89%**, **86%**, and **88%**.

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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What students said about this year's Baccalaureate Level finalists...

A mom of the program has emphasized the importance of individual self-determination and the communal benefits of [the student's] experiences in CAMP, asserting, "Mis hijos tienen que volar algún día." ("My children have to fly someday.")

Arizona State University College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) Scholars

"The BSHS was the platform to launch my career and find my calling. Today, I am a master's prepared nurse and current student in the Doctor of Nursing Practice program at Rush University. Soon I will be the first Doctor in my family! I can honestly say that the success of my story started at BSHS program. Therefore, I will forever be grateful to the faculty and staff at the BSHS program for ALWAYS believing in me. *Si se puede!*"

Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences at Rush University

"As a first-generation, Mexican-American Latina who is the proud daughter of immigrants, I felt supported once I entered the program. I immediately got a sense of belonging and created so many valuable relationships within the CAMP Program. This program taught me the importance of belonging in higher education and propelled me not only in academia but in personal development. The CAMP program is my home away from home and an environment I want other first-generation students with a background in farm work to have as well."

College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) at Washington State University

"PUERTA helped me with personalized academic advising and helped me discover different ways I can be a future educator. PUERTA has also helped me navigate college as a first generation student by offering technology support, the Summer Bridge program, and offering a community through CAASE. PUERTA also offered me my first paid job and has kept me employed throughout my college experience so far!"

Preparing Underrepresented Educators to Realize their Teaching Ambitions (PUERTA)

Master of Science (MS) in Environmental Science



Institution: University of Texas, San Antonio

Website: <https://www.utsa.edu/crts/TuggleScholars/>

Program Location: San Antonio, Texas

Year Started: 2017

Issue Area: Academic Program

Program Focus: Discipline/Subject, Mentoring

MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of the Master's Program in Environmental Science is to educate, inspire, assist, and prepare students through a comprehensive curriculum, emergent pedagogy, and collaborative research to become scientists and leaders in environmental science.

Goals:

- Develop students' science identity and prepare them to be leaders in environmental science.
- Increase graduation rates, thesis completion, and job placement among students.
- Develop written and oral communication skills, teamwork, and leadership skills

WHAT STUDENTS SAID ABOUT THIS YEAR'S EXAMPLE:

"In my experience, this program undoubtedly helped me grow as a scientist, but a more unexpected outcome is how much it has helped me explore and connect with my own culture. It has prepared me to pay it forward and help younger generations of Latinos see themselves as future scientists as well. As a Latina scientist and instructor, I cannot imagine another program that would have provided me with more life changing experiences and opportunities. By changing the life of one Latina, this program will change the lives of many young Latinos who will look at me and think 'sí se puede'."

Graduate Fall 2018, Lecturer, UT San Antonio

Developing the skills above is essential for all students but is most important for our Latino participants. Previous to implementing our intentional mentoring initiatives, Latino participants were challenged by a thesis project, lacked a science identity, and often did not complete the thesis or degree.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

Initial need analysis occurred in 2015, after recognizing that there were enthusiastic Latino graduate students interested in completing our thesis-track master's program, but after a few semesters, they switched to the less challenging non-thesis degree. In consultation with employers who hire our students, the faculty understood that the thesis track would be the most beneficial for our students to be competitive in the job market, advance in these agencies, and become leaders in these agencies. The model tackles imposter syndrome through holistic mentoring, science writing, and public science communication, focusing on developing their science identity, in addition to:

paragraph to read as: developing writing-to-learn pedagogy, experiential learning opportunities, professionalization opportunities designed explicitly for minoritized students, development of a science communication scholar's program, recruitment of successful minority role-model professionals, and workshops for faculty to specifically address the unique need for mentoring and validation for Latino participants.

PROGRAM IMPACT:

We have seen an increase in the number of Latino students recruited into our program and the number of Latino students completing the more rigorous thesis option.

- The total number of Latino students enrolled in the program has increased from **9 (32%)** to **23 (55%)** to **32 (60%)** over the last three years.
- Latino student retention increased from **91%** (prior to the implementation of the program) to **98%** (2017-present; program participants), this was even while the overall program saw a slight decrease for the same time period.
- Prior to the implementation of the program **33%** of the Latino students pursued the thesis option, and after the implementation of the program **45%** of the Latino participants completed the thesis-track.

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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IUPLR/UIC Mellon Fellows Program

Institution: Inter-University Program for Latino Research and the University of Illinois-Chicago

Website: <https://mfpl.lals.uic.edu/>

Program Location: Chicago, Illinois

Year Started: 2015

Issue Area: Support Services

Program Focus: Career/Workforce, Scholarship

MISSION AND GOALS

The IUPLR/UIC Mellon is a Ph.D. dissertation completion fellowship that mentors, supports, and professionalizes an annual national cohort of humanities-based doctoral candidates specializing in Latino Studies. Its mission is to strengthen the field of Latino Studies by building a growing network of early-career academics, researchers, and professionals.

Goals:

- Increase Ph.D. completion rates by maximizing effectual progress.
- Foster sustainable writing practices that minimize burnout and encourage long-term productivity.
- Increase job-market readiness.
- Expand intellectual communities through a cohort system and mentorship program.
- Establish a transition to a permanent model that ensures the humanities fellowship continues as a self-sustaining program at participating universities.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

The IUPLR/UIC Mellon Fellows Program began as an initiative to increase the number of Latino scholars and advance dissertations and research in Latino Studies. Through a multi-faceted approach, the program has accelerated fellows' time to degree completion, prepared them professionally, expanded their networks, and equipped them with long-term research and writing strategies.



The program is organized around four guiding practices: 1) financial support; 2) creating a supportive environment through mentoring, cohorts, and structure; 3) writing support; and 4) preparing the fellows for the job market through workshops and ongoing consultation.

PROGRAM IMPACT

Fellows received guidance on navigating the academic job market, including revising application materials and performing mock interviews. The 2021-22 fellows have had three successful defenses, with the other three forthcoming. The program shares additional program outcomes below.

- In all cases, the program shortened the time to degree by helping doctoral candidates maintain a dissertation writing schedule.
- As of 2021, **95%** of our alumni have graduated with their PhDs; the remaining two doctoral candidates are set to defend their dissertations this year.
- As of 2021, we have a **0% attrition rate** which we attribute in large part to their participation in the program.
- Approximately **77%** of fellows have full-time work, which is significantly higher than the **59%** average. The most recent cohort (not in these calculations) has already received two tenure-track offers.

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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Knowledge River Program

Institution: University of Arizona

Website: <https://ischool.arizona.edu/knowledge-river>

Program Location: Tucson, Arizona

Year Started: 2001

Issue Area: Academic Program

Program Focus: Discipline/Subject, Other

MISSION AND GOALS

The Knowledge River Program recruits, retains, and empowers ethnically diverse practitioners in libraries, archives, and museums; and ensures equitable access to information for underrepresented communities with a focus on Latino/Chicano, Black, and Indigenous scholars. The program, within the School of Information, was built with an understanding that a program in the borderlands, a highly Hispanic-populated area, has a duty to serve the Hispanic community.

Program Goals:

- Recruit, support and train Hispanic scholars who can meet the needs in libraries, archives, and museums.
- Build knowledge, skills, and abilities of information science professionals towards understanding the needs of Hispanic end users and adjusting services to meet those needs.
- Develop and enact diversity and inclusivity in the library field to fully engage the community.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

Knowledge River was founded in 2001 at the University of Arizona (UA) by School of Information faculty who recognized the need for increasing Latino/Hispanic scholars in the field of Information Science to serve the ongoing and rising need of Latino/Hispanic library users. Based on a previous model, GLISA: the Graduate Library Institute for Spanish Speaking Americans which was also founded here at the UA and ran from 1975-1980.

The Knowledge River program partners with Pima County Public Library, Arizona State University, and others to place



scholars in learn-by-doing positions to support their academic studies and provide opportunities to work with the needs of Hispanic library users. These placements are classified as graduate-assistant positions that include a salary at 20 hours per week, health benefits, and tuition remission. The model of the program is to fully fund scholars during their master's program.

PROGRAM IMPACT:

- Of the **34** Knowledge River Scholars in the last three academic years, **22** scholars have identified as Hispanic/Latino (**64%**).
- The graduation rate for all KR Scholars is **96%**.
- Program alumni are now working in almost half of US states, and in Sydney, Australia, and Puerto Rico. Job placements range from federal agencies to tribal libraries and cultural centers. Some are working at national professional organizations such as the Association of College and Research Libraries at four-year universities and community colleges while others still are working at public libraries, archives, and museums.
- Of Knowledge River scholars, **19** have earned or are currently pursuing a Ph.D., **15** of whom are Hispanic (**79%**).

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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Master of Social Work (MSW) Program

Institution: University of Texas, San Antonio

Website: <https://hcap.utsa.edu/social-work/>

Program Location: San Antonio, Texas

Year Started: 2005

Issue Area: Academic Program

Program Focus: Discipline/Subject

MISSION AND GOALS

The MSW program's mission is to serve as a catalyst for transformative, culturally competent social work through research, education, and service within a local-global context.

Program goals include:

- Prepare social workers to be critically self-reflective, creative, flexible, open to possibilities, innovative and collaborative in order to engage in social work practice that catalyzes positive change for individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Develop social workers specialized in culturally competent practice with diverse populations within a local-global context.
- Prepare social workers for socially responsible and ethically-grounded practice that advances social, economic, and environmental justice and human rights.
- Enhance the social work profession and broader society through knowledge building, research, community engagement, and social action.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

The program launched in 2005 with 17 students and achieved initial CSWE accreditation in 2008. Students learn to tackle society's most challenging problems through intervention with individuals, groups, families, organizations, communities, and/or through addressing policy.

The program design supports career development of first-generation, returning students, students working full-time, and curriculum emphasizes material relevant to Latino/a communities. Every student completes two 450-hour



practicums, and students contribute 60,000+ service hours annually through community practicums. The mission's local-global aspect and location near the U.S.-Mexico border ensures that focus on intragroup diversity within the Latino/a population and unique intersectional identities.

PROGRAM IMPACT

Per the Association of Social Work Boards, the average licensure exam passage rate of UTSA MSW graduates is higher than the average rate of all US MSW graduates. UTSA (2020–21: 40/76 (53%) MSW degrees awarded to Latino/a students).

- Average time-to-degree was **2.8** years for Latino/a MSW students, **3.0** for all MSW students (2018–2019).
- In terms of social work competencies assessed by 3 reporters per student, the program shared the percent of students who met all competency benchmarks during the evaluation held prior to graduation. For academic years 2018-2020 percentages rates were **90%** and above across all of the 9 competency areas.
- Additionally, the rates increased across all 9 areas with 'Engage in Policy Practice' and 'Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, & Communities' being among the areas seeing the biggest increases.

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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Project upGRADS: Utilizing & Promoting Graduate Resources & Access for Disadvantaged Students

Institution: California State University, Fullerton

Website: <http://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/upgrads/>

Program Location: Fullerton, California

Year Started: 2019

Issue Area: Access

Program Focus: First-Year Support, Mentoring



MISSION AND GOALS

Project upGRADS mission is to improve access to graduate education for Hispanics by addressing barriers this population commonly faces, thus improving the enrollment, persistence, and graduation of Hispanic graduate students at Cal State Fullerton (CSUF).

Program goals:

- Increase the number of Hispanic applications.
- Increase the number of Hispanic applicants who are admitted.
- Improve the persistence of Hispanic graduate students in their first year.
- By 2025 increase the number of Hispanic graduate students to 35% of the total graduate student population at CSUF.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

Project upGRADS employs the following practices:

1. Outreach and workshops on the value of graduate education, admissions processes, and resources and funding for graduate school.
2. Tracking Hispanic applications with proactive 1:1 admissions advising.
3. Summer bridge program to fine-tune student readiness plus build community and sense of belonging.

4. Fellowship program for first-year graduate students including mentoring, networking, scholarship funds, and professional development activities.
5. Faculty mentoring program matching new Hispanic graduate students with trained faculty allies to enhance the student's engagement with their studies.
6. Faculty advisor and mentor training on cultural competency, understanding challenges students face, and effective communications.

PROGRAM IMPACT

Project upGRADS shares the following outcomes aligned with its overall goals.

- Admissions Advising: Proactive advising produced higher application and admissions rates for those Hispanic students who were advised: 1) completed admissions applications (**90% vs. 83%** for control group) and 2) admitted (**67% vs. 52.5%** control group).
- Summer Bridge Program for Admitted Hispanic graduate students: Hispanic students who completed the program had a **98.6%** persistence rate during their first year in graduate school vs. **95.2%** for the control group.
- Pa'lante Fellowship: **68** new Hispanic graduate students received a Pa'lante Fellowship (mentoring, networking, professional development, and financial scholarship).
- Cultural Competency Training: **131** individual faculty have completed the faculty training program on cultural competency since the program's inception in 2019.
- Overall Enrollment of Hispanic graduate students: Enrollment of Hispanic graduate students has increased from **27.9%** of the total graduate student population in Fall 2019 to **32.5%** of total in Fall 2021

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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What students said about this year's Graduate Level finalists...

"The IUPLR-UIC Mellon Fellows program has literally changed my life...No one in my family had been to college before me, and now thanks to a crucial year of writing and job searching that the fellowship gave me, I will be a Ph.D."

IUPLR/UIC Mellon Fellows Program

"Knowledge River has been integral to my success as a first-generation Latinx scholar. It is distinct from other information science focused diversity scholar programs in that it provides embedded curricular support and endeavors to be responsive to the needs of each intersectional cohort. As part of a community of BIPOC scholars, I critically engaged with issues that affect minoritized and marginalized communities underserved in libraries, archives, and museums. Participation in the program empowered me to share my unique knowledge and experiences in the classroom to challenge dominant perspectives and to bring my authentic self to the information profession."

Knowledge River

"I definitely would encourage another student to attend UTSA for the MSW program as it is a program focused on cultural competence, inclusion, self-awareness, with classes that truly highlight the core values of social work. The program has instructors that are truly passionate about the field and that have left a lasting impression on me personally and professionally. I had moments in that program that challenged me and helped me grow into a true social worker."

Master of Social Work (MSW) Program

"The upGRADS faculty/students/panelists who spoke to us were amazing individuals; I could tell they really cared about our well-being and success in our graduate programs. They gave great advice for both school and for our personal lives... The topic of imposter syndrome was brought up a few times throughout our sessions, but they always reassured us we earned our spot in our programs, and it was no accident we were chosen."

Project upGRADS: Utilizing & Promoting Graduate Resources & Access for Disadvantaged Students

Post-Secondary Initiatives



Organization: Esperanza, Inc.

Website: www.esperanzainc.org

Program Location: Cleveland, Ohio

Year Started: 2016

Issue Area: Retention

Program Focus: First-Year Support, Mentoring

MISSION AND GOALS

Esperanza's mission: "To improve the academic achievement of Hispanics in Greater Cleveland by supporting students to graduate high school and promoting postsecondary educational attainment." We were established in 1983 to help Hispanic immigrants access education and employment, and now provide direct, culturally competent support to Hispanic students from middle school through postsecondary. In this way, we ensure the long-term educational needs of our community are met in a changing and demanding environment while staying true to our mission.

Our goal is to steward Hispanic college success and entry into the workforce measured by persistence and graduation at 70% or higher. To do this, the program provides services relevant to students' cultural experiences, while developing skills/knowledge to navigate the college experience and persist to graduation. Our services serve 100% Latinx students, including undocumented students.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

Esperanza developed our postsecondary support in 2016 as an expansion of our successful, longstanding high school programming. This effort offers a continuum of care for Latinx students who had historically relied heavily on Esperanza's programs throughout high school and serves as a complement to Esperanza's existing postsecondary scholarship program.

When first developed, the program provided cohorts of students programming using UnidosUS' Lideres Avanzando curriculum, allowing them to participate in interactive

activities/workshops on topics relevant to the first-gen college experience. Over time, we have built upon this model, offering more robust case management, internship support, and additional scholarship opportunities, in addition to Lideres Avanzando. These add-ons have allowed Esperanza to better support college persistence, graduation, and preparedness for the job market upon graduation.

Further, over the last several years Esperanza has built relationships with college administrators and established a presence on college campuses. The pandemic transitioned services to virtual programming which allowed for expanded geographic reach to Latinx students nationwide.

PROGRAM IMPACT

All students served by Esperanza's Postsecondary Support Programs are Latinx, and though our program is fairly new, it is showing great success.

- The retention rate of **90%** is well above the average retention rate of Hispanic students nationwide.
- The 2018 cohort has a persistence rate of **92%**, 2019 cohort **93%**, and the 2020 cohort **99%**
- Though the program is too new to report on a 6-year graduation metric (our first cohort will hit this benchmark in Spring of 2022), we are on the path to experiencing a college graduation rate of over **90%**.
- Esperanza's persistence rates have stayed relatively stable through the pandemic and are **31%** higher than the reported national Latinx persistence rate and nearly **22%** higher than students overall

WHAT STUDENTS SAID ABOUT THIS YEAR'S EXAMPLE:

I learned about the program through Esperanza as it is a requirement for all first-year scholarship recipients. The program has had a significant positive impact on my very first semester of college. It allowed me to build up and use the skills that I will use throughout the rest of my college and even professional career. My journey through Lideres was completely virtual but still ended up being meaningful in such a way that I would say it helped mold me into a true leader. Lastly, I am connected to Esperanza through my amazing mentors and peers that were a part of Lideres at heart!

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

Germaine Peña
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216-651-7178

Career & Life Skills (CLS)

Organization: The Next Step Public Charter School

Website: <https://sites.google.com/nextsteppcs.org/cls/home?authuser=0>

Program Location: Washington, District of Columbia

Year Started: 2000

Issue Area: Support Services

Program Focus: Adult Learners, College Prep



MISSION AND GOALS

The Next Step (TNS) Public Charter School’s mission is to provide students who face extraordinary challenges and who are not supported in traditional high schools with the opportunity to continue their education. TNS provides a nurturing environment with a holistic approach in which the Career & Life Skills (CLS) team builds rapport through intrusive advising practices in order to get to know the “whole” student to appropriately transition them to their next steps.

The program goals include:

- Expose 100% of enrolled students to post-secondary opportunities.
- Create career plans with 80% of the graduating class.
- Provide support to alumni who return for career advising.
- Establish/maintain community partnerships to enrich program services and events.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

TNS is located in Columbia Heights near Mt. Pleasant, which are neighborhoods in the heart of a high Latino community in Washington, DC. Once a parenting program with a handful of students is now one of the oldest charter schools with 300-400 students.

CLS advisors take an active approach through creating student experiences by cross-department collaboration, planning, and executing school-wide bilingual college, career & life skills events, workshops, and initiatives. These efforts encourage all students to seek their advisor for 1:1 sessions that can include: career advising,

SMART goals/plans, assistance with institution and scholarship applications, mock interviews, resume/cover letters, and building rapport. Additional programming includes GED preparation, College Wear Wednesdays, career expo, college road trip, alumni panels, bilingual graduation ceremonies, and free dual enrollment in college courses. Alumni often return throughout their post-secondary journey for advising and to participate in panels.

PROGRAM IMPACT

- During the SY18-19, Latino graduates accounted for 82% of graduates, 33 (90% Latino) out of 45 eligible graduates participated in dual enrollment & 85% of the 33 retained & completed the course
- During the SY19-20, 33 Latino graduates accounted for 100% of graduates, 30 (92% Latino) out of 40 eligible graduates participated in dual enrollment & 83% of the 30 retained & completed the course
- During the SY20-21, Latino graduates accounted for 96% of graduates, 26 (90% Latino) out of 32 eligible graduates participated in dual enrollment & 80% of the 26 retained & completed the course
- Every year, 100% of graduates receive a scholarship to use towards post-secondary education and/or towards a laptop or tablet.

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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 202-319-2249

College & Career Success

Organization: Breakthrough Central Texas

Website: <http://breakthroughctx.org>

Program Location: Austin, Texas

Year Started: 2001

Issue Area: Support Services

Program Focus: First-Year Support, Mentoring

MISSION AND GOALS

Breakthrough's mission is to build a path to and through college for students who will become the first in their family to earn a college degree. Breakthrough's program provides 12 years of wrap-around support to help students of color from low-income communities become the first in their families to earn a college degree.

In 2022, Breakthrough's College Success Programming will help 800 high school graduates from low-income communities on their journey to achieving their dream of becoming the first in their family to graduate from college.

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

Founded in 2001, our proven model is shaped by years of research on the underlying drivers of poverty and educational attainment. Breakthrough's College Success Program supports low-income high school graduates of color to become first-generation college graduates.

We offer year-round advising, career exploration opportunities, personalized guidance on the college admissions and financial aid process, and provide intensive support once students enroll at institutions. Advisors are trained in preparing and supporting students of color to navigate predominately White institutions, as well as supporting Latinx students that are immigrants.

The Breakthrough Internship Network provides students with professional skills training and are placed in paid summer internships. Breakthrough offers touchpoints throughout the year, including a summer conference to prepare for freshman year, care packages, and near-peer support. With



76% of students—and nearly half of our staff and Board — identifying as Hispanic, Breakthrough is committed to and embedded in the Latino community.

PROGRAM IMPACT

Breakthrough has ambitious targets for success, including 95% of Latino students graduating from high school in four years, 80% enrolling in college directly after high school, and 60% graduating from college within six years. By comparison, only 12% of our students' peers from low-income communities earn a post-secondary degree. Further, an independent study confirmed that Breakthrough students, even when compared to students with similar demographics and academic standing, are twice as likely to graduate from college as their peers. To date, Breakthrough has seen 226 students all the way to college graduation with hundreds following in their footsteps.

Specific to our Latino students, in the last three years:

- **96%** of our Latino students graduated from high school on time.
- **88%** of our Latino students enrolled directly in college.
- **51%** of our Latino students graduated from college within six years.

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

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512-692-9444

TuFuturo

Organization: Community Education Coalition

Website: <https://educationcoalition.com/latino-outreach/>

Program Location: Columbus, Indiana

Year Started: 2011

Issue Area: Access

Program Focus: College Prep, Family Engagement

MISSION AND GOALS

The objective of TuFuturo was to develop a “learning system” which would ensure each student (with support from their parents) is ready for the next step in their education pathway. Our mission is to support the Latino community to improve their lives through education. Support is provided from Pre-k through community college and/or baccalaureate degree attainment.

The primary goals are to co-create solutions to eliminate Latino education achievement gaps, align Latino education programming, and create a network for information sharing

HISTORY AND PRACTICES

The Community Education Coalition of Columbus, Indiana is a nationally recognized partnership of education, business, and community leaders focused on aligning and integrating Columbus, Indiana, and the region’s community learning system with economic growth and a high quality of life. Since 2011, TuFuturo has implemented a number of strategies to improve educational outcomes for our Latino community.

The team has identified initial steps to improve the “learning system” for Latino students. Services are provided to the youngest children and their parents as a gateway to the rest of the educational system and college and career readiness support is provided through workshops from middle school through college for Latino students and families.



PROGRAM IMPACT:

TuFuturo has made a significant impact on education outcomes for Latinx students.

- Increased Latinx high school graduation rates from **64%** in 2007 to **83%** in 2021.
- The equity gap for high school graduation rates between Latinx vs. all students in 2007 was **-17.6%**, in 2021 the gap was reduced to **-1.9%**
- Increase percent of Latinx students who transition to postsecondary education by **13%**.
- In 2011 just **39%** of the Latinx high school grads enrolled in postsecondary education but by 2019 it increased to **52%** enrolled in postsecondary education.

PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT:

Luz Elena Michel

lmichel@educationcoalition.com

812-314-8636

What students said about this year's CBO finalists...

"Without the support and guidance offered at TNS, it would have been very difficult for me to pursue with confidence a college career."

Career & Life Skills

From a young age, Breakthrough taught me that the sky's the limit and they would help me get to and through college. As a young kid, I didn't understand how serious that promise was. From tutoring, to giving me vouchers to be able to afford my SAT and ACT exams, to helping me with financial aid, the college application process, scholarships, and everything in between—I don't know where I would be right now if it weren't for this beautiful support system helping me and students like me navigate a system that was foreign to me and my family.

College & Career Success

The assistance I received through TuFuturo in their events, workshops, programs, were crucial to my personal and academic development. Without a doubt, all the people involved in these projects always put their best and encouraged all of us in doing better every day; personally, I think that if it was not for them, I would have had a harder time in achieving my goal of graduating from high school. I will always appreciate their care.

TuFuturo (Latino Education Group)

2022 PROGRAMS TO WATCH

The Programs to Watch exemplify the work *Excelencia* promotes and the various ways serving Latino students can be approached. Programs to Watch may not have met all the criteria used to evaluate our Examples of *Excelencia* programs, however, we see potential in their efforts to date and intend to follow them as their work evolves. The identified programs: (a) use practices that can be replicated at other institutions, (b) have implemented practices that are proven to work for Latino students, and/or (c) are growing in their evidence of effectiveness to show intentionality and positive impact for Latino students.

COMMON THEMES AND PRACTICES

Student centered institutions recognize that programs need to evolve from one-size- fits-all into ones that can recognize the unique needs of students. These programs identified the specific needs their Latino populations encountered and are designing practices to address them. Some of the common practices found throughout this year's Programs to Watch include leveraging shared culture and language to build a sense of belonging and improving academic success. Others used targeted programs and peer support to strengthen educational transitions. Lastly, we found strong employment partnerships to support a more diverse workforce.

ASSOCIATE

Pathway to Law School Program

Santa Ana College, Santa Ana, California

Year started: 2015

Website: <https://www.sac.edu/AcademicProgs/Business/Pages/Pathway-to-Law-School.aspx>

The Santa Ana College (SAC) Pathway to Law program focuses on providing community college students with a streamlined transition into law school and contributing to a diverse paralegal workforce. In the past five years, course success rates have increased from 77% to 86% and the program boasts a 70% job placement rate for program participants.

First Year Experience Program

Long Beach City College, Long Beach, California

Year started: 2019

Website: <https://www.lbcc.edu/post/viking-advantage>

The mission of the First Year Experience (FYE) Program aims to provide a welcoming experience for new students in their transition to college. The completion of transfer-level math has increased for Latinx students, it was 75% higher in 2020- 2021 compared to 2016- 2017.

Puente Project

Sacramento City College, Sacramento California

Year started: 1983

Website: <https://scc.losrios.edu/student-resources/cultural-engagement-centers/puente-project>

SCC was one of three original “pilot” Puente programs in 1983 and has thrived following the program’s model of English Writing, Counseling, and Mentoring, through a Learning Community. The retention rate for 2019-20 was 87% for Puente students, compared to 58% of all students at the college, and 68% for all Hispanic students.

BACCALAUREATE

ASSET (Academic Student Success Excellence Team) Scholars Program

California State University, Channel Islands, Camarillo, California

Year Started: 2020

The Academic Student Success Excellence Team (ASSET) Scholars Program brings together specialized knowledge to provide first-year, first-generation, and undeclared students academic success and connection to CSUCI. Within the Fall 2020 FTFT cohort, Latinx students were retained to the second year at a rate of 82% compared to 79% of white students.

University of Illinois, Chicago Flames Leadership Network

University of Illinois, Chicago, Chicago, Illinois

Year Started: 2017

Website: <https://fln.uic.edu>

The Flames Leadership Network’s (FLN) mission is to empower students to reach their fullest potential and achieve self-sufficiency in taking advantage of opportunities at UIC and beyond through a holistic, asset-based approach. In the pilot year (2017), FLN students were retained at 70% versus the eligible-decline group, 56%, and the control group, 50%.

GRADUATE

Ánimo Counseling Emphasis

CSU Fullerton, Fullerton, CA

Year started: 2018

Website: <http://hhd.fullerton.edu/counsel/program/animo.php>

CSUF’s Department of Counseling Ánimo Latinx Counseling Emphasis aims to increase the number of bilingual and bicultural professional clinical counselors to provide culturally responsive mental health services to the Latinx community. Annually, the program seeks to accept 15-18 students and has met this goal every year except for Fall 2020 (pandemic). The Counseling program requires at least 3 years to complete, and working students take 4 years. So far Ánimo has graduated 10 students.

Competitive Edge Summer Bridge Program for Incoming Ph.D. Students

University of California, Merced, Merced, California

Year started: 2016

Website: <https://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/grad-resource-center/signature->

UC Merced's Competitive Edge Summer Bridge Program is dedicated to excellence in mentoring and training that will guide Latino, first-generation, and underrepresented minority students towards completing their doctoral degrees and becoming leaders in academia, government, and industry. After five years in operation, the program has yielded a retention rate of 84% of program participants in comparison to the 60% retention rate for UC doctoral students not in the program.

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Angelo Del Toro Puerto Rican/Hispanic Youth Leadership Institute

Questar III Rens. Columbia Greene BOCES, Castleton, New York

Year Started: 1990

Website: www.prhyli.org

The Angelo Del Toro Puerto Rican/Hispanic Youth Leadership Institute serves Puerto Rican/Hispanic high school students. The program strives to develop civically minded, critical thinkers, and advocates among high school students from across New York State to have a deep understanding of the New York State government. Among alumni, 75% have entered a four-year college program immediately after high school and 95% are currently enrolled in a two-year or four-year program.

College Bound Program

Foundation for a College Education, East Palo Alto, California

Year Started: 1995

Website: www.collegefoundation.org

Foundation for a College Education's mission is to increase the number of students of color from East Palo Alto and similar communities who graduate from a four-year college or university. Their tailored, high-touch programming yields strong results: 100% of their Latinx students enroll in college as compared to the national average of 36% and since 2019, of the 24 Latinx FCE students who graduated college, 21 (84%) graduated in 5 years.

Emerging Leaders Program (ELP)

Edu-Futuro, Arlington, Virginia

Year Started: 2006

Website: <https://edu-futuro.org/emerging-leaders-programs/>

Edu-Futuro's mission is to break the cycle of poverty by empowering immigrant and underserved youth and families through mentorship, education, leadership development, and parental engagement. During the past three years, Edu-Futuro served 1,672 unduplicated students. Of the ELP II students who completed the program last year, 100% graduated from high school, 100% enrolled in college, and 73% secured a college scholarship and/or financial aid.

By highlighting these programs, *Excelexia* encourages institutions, practitioners, funders, policymakers, and other stakeholders to take note, and keep an eye out as these programs continue to accelerate Latino student success.

2023 Examples of *Excelencia* Call For Nominations

Ready to get started on a 2023 submission profile?

Do you manage a program that can be the next Examples of Excelencia? If so, we invite you to learn more about our submission process by exploring the ‘Tools’ tab of our Examples of *Excelencia* website by visiting <https://excelencia.secure-platform.com>.

Know of a program accelerating Latino student success?

Nominate programs for 2023 Examples of *Excelencia*! Nominations will open in early 2023.

Check out our website in January for more details.

<https://www.edexcelencia.org/programs-initiatives/examples-excelencia>

How are programs recognized through Examples of Excelencia?

Programs may be recognized as a Program to Watch, Finalist, or Example of *Excelencia*. *Excelencia* in Education is committed to promoting and leveraging programs nationally that work for Latino students in higher education. *Excelencia* brings attention to what works for Latino students through some of the following:

PROGRAM TO WATCH	EXAMPLE OF EXCELENCIA FINALIST	EXAMPLE OF EXCELENCIA
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National recognition by <i>Excelencia</i> in Education• Inclusion in the annual publication of our What Works for Latino Students in Higher Education Compendium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inclusion in the Growing What Works Database• Invitation to participate and present at future convenings, <i>Excelencia</i> webinars, and P4LSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A \$5,000 financial contribution• Inclusion in research and publications• One complimentary registration and travel to <i>Celebración de Excelencia</i>

- The Programs recognized as the Example will receive Finalist and Program to Watch recognition benefits and Finalists will receive Program to Watch recognition benefits.

Have questions? Email Examples@EdExcelencia.org

Want to stay informed? Visit <https://www.edexcelencia.org/contact-us> to sign up today!



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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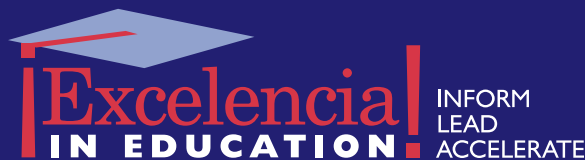
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