Celebración de Excelencia

What Works for Latino Students in Higher Education Compendium

September 30, 2014 • Washington, DC
The following leaders believe in the promise of America’s future and the abilities and talents of Latino students to carry us forward and support Examples of Excelencia 2014.
**8th Annual Celebración de Excelencia**

**Recognition Program**

**Welcome**

Sarita Brown, President, Excelencia in Education

**Remarks**

Representative Tony Cárdenas (CA), Member, Congressional Hispanic Caucus Education Taskforce

Justin Rodriguez, State Representative (TX), and Board Member, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) and NALEO Educational Fund

**Presentation of the 2014 Examples of Excelencia**

Deborah Santiago, Chief Operating Officer and Vice President for Policy, Excelencia in Education

**Greetings**

Diana Natalicio, President, University of Texas at El Paso

**Keynote Address**

Juliet Garcia, Executive Director, University of Texas Institute of the Americas

**Recognition of Partnerships Ensuring America’s Future**

ACT, Inc.
Jon Whitmore, CEO

Univision Communications, Inc.
Ivelisse Estrada, Senior Vice President Corporate Relations & Community Empowerment, and Honorary Board Member, Excelencia in Education

**Closing Comments**

*Reception directly follows program*
In 2004, we launched Excelencia in Education in the nation’s capitol to put a Latino lens on critical issues in postsecondary education and to provide intentional, strategic and tactical responses to meeting the challenge of accelerating Latino student success. In establishing the organization, we have built a portfolio that links research, policy, and practice to support Latino higher educational achievement. In the process, we created venues and opportunities to examine critical issues from new perspectives and reconsider traditional efforts in a post-traditional context that can benefit all students.

Premier in our work is Examples of Excelencia, the only evidence based national initiative to identify and publicize programs that accelerate Latino student success in postsecondary education. It functions, in part, as an organizing and communication campaign that redirects the field from the repetitive focus on problems to striving for student success solutions. Examples of Excelencia has created new energy, stirred competition, and started a network within higher education to discover and implement innovations that are effective with all students.

This evening we gather to announce the 2014 Examples of Excelencia at the annual Celebracion de Excelencia.

The programs being recognized today are at the forefront of meeting the challenge of improving higher educational achievement for Latino students and we congratulate them for their current and continued efforts. During the recognition program and in the compendium you will find more detailed information about these outstanding programs, the finalists, and honorable mentions. In the coming months video profiles of professionals and students in the programs will be available on our website, www.EdExcelencia.org.

By sharing what works we hope to support educators, community leaders, funders, and policymakers to take an asset-based approach to serving Latino students. Ultimately we strive to inspire and support replicating, and bringing to scale evidence-based practices that serve Latino students and thus serve the country.

Sarita E. Brown
President

Deborah A. Santiago
Chief Operating Officer & Vice President for Policy
2014 Associate Level Example of *ExceLENCIA*

**Express to Success Program**  
Santa Barbara City College • Santa Barbara, CA

*Express to Success* aims to increase success and completion rates in developmental math and English for Latino students who place one to two levels below college level courses through the collaboration between students and teachers in learning communities.

Since 2011, the program has served more than 900 students, and two-thirds have been Latino. Latino participants registered for the next semester at higher rates (83% vs. 73%), were more likely to complete two levels of math or English in one semester of accelerated format (48%), and achieved a higher success rate than Latino students who did not participate (73% vs. 55%).

*Kathy Molloy, Project Director*

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2014 Associate Level Finalists

**BUSCA (Bilingual Undergraduate Studies for Collegiate Advancement)**  
La Salle University • Philadelphia, PA

**Dual Enrollment Academy Programs**  
South Texas College • McAllen, TX

**First Year Pathways**  
Pasadena City College • Pasadena, CA

**STARS (Students Transitioning in Academics and Reaching Success)**  
Cabrillo College • Aptos, CA

2014 Associate Level Honorable Mentions

**STEM Pathways Project**  
Crafton Hills College - Yucaipa, CA

**TCC Education Outreach Center**  
Tulsa Community College – Tulsa, OK
2014 Baccalaureate Level Example of Excelencia

Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services Program
University of Illinois at Chicago – Chicago, IL

The LARES (Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services) Program was founded in 1975 to improve Latino students’ college level skills in math, reading, writing, and critical thinking while developing leadership skills. The LARES program also collaborates with schools, community colleges, social services and community agencies to facilitate college access.

In the past 10 years, Latino freshmen enrollment at UIC has increased by 80% and since the Fall of 1991, the six-year Latino graduation rate increased from 25% to 49%. During recruitment season, LARES assisted more than 10,000 prospective students.

Hugo Teruel, Director

2014 Baccalaureate Level Finalists

Achieving in Research Math and Science (ARMAS) Center
New Mexico Highlands University • Las Vegas, NM

Community Fellows Program of the Community-Based Learning Program
Mount Holyoke College • South Hadley, MA

CMAS Academic Achievers Program
University of Houston • Houston, TX

Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars Program
University of Florida • Gainesville, FL

2014 Baccalaureate Level Honorable Mentions

CSU Northridge Engineering and Computer Science HSI-STEM Initiative
California State University, Northridge • Northridge, CA

GANAS (Gaining Access ‘N Academic Success)
California State University, East Bay • Hayward, CA

Imperial Valley University Partnership
San Diego State University, Imperial Valley Campus • Calexico, CA

Spanish Language Family Orientation
University of North Texas • Denton, TX

The Nepantla Program
Nevada State College • Henderson, NV
The Graduate Support Center was established in 2010 aims to increase the persistence rate of Latino Master’s degree students by implementing academic and support initiatives while integrating engagement of the student’s family. The Center offers an Academic Workshop Series, a Graduate Writing Institute, and Family Orientation to increase student’s educational success. Hispanics represent 48% of master’s degree students.

Hispanic students’ Fall 2011 cohort (three years) persistence to completion rate increased almost double the rate of all master’s students (20% vs. 11%) due to the Center’s work. Further, the Academic Workshops have helped establish a culture of student success with increased attendance (451 to 1,105) and the average attendance at Family Orientation most recently was: 36% parents, 20% children, 19% spouse, 10% sibling, 9% friend, 3% grandparent, and 3% other.

David Ortiz, Director, Assistant Professor, School of Graduate Studies and Research

2014 Graduate Level Finalists

Creating Latino Access to a Valuable Education (CLAVE)
Florida International University • Miami, FL

Department of Occupational Therapy
University of Texas Pan American • Edinburg, TX

INSPIRE (INfluence Student Potential and Increase Representation in Education)
Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science • North Chicago, IL
Supporting Our Leaders (SOL) Youth Program
Hispanic Center of Western Michigan – Grand Rapids, MI

Supporting Our Leaders (SOL) is a program within the education department of the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan founded in 1978. SOL is the only Latino youth program in Kent County designed to promote the educational success of the entire family through innovative and culturally responsive engagement activities. The community surrounding the Center is severely underserved, 76% are Latino and 63% have less than a high school diploma. SOL serves at-risk youth to become academically prepared for college and beyond. Of students served, 85% identify as Latino.

SOL has served more than 800 students since 2008, growing from 88 students in 2008 to 493 in 2013. Of students served, 93% completed the program. The graduation rate of participating students is 89%, compared to 42% of Hispanic students in Grand Rapids Public Schools (GRPS) and 64% in Michigan overall. Over 50% of graduating participants enrolled in post-secondary education, compared to 42% of GRPS students and 79% of SOL students that entered college returned the next year.

Rachel López, Director of Youth and Parent Services

2014 Community-Based Organization Level Finalists

Con Mi MADRE
Con Mi MADRE • Austin, TX

Levante Leadership Institute
Student Action with Farmworkers • Durham, NC

The Abriendo Puertas Program
The United Community Center • Milwaukee, WI

Trinity River Mission Core Programs
Trinity River Mission, Inc. • Dallas, TX

2014 Community-Based Organization Level Honorable Mentions

Colloquium Series Program
1199 SEIU Training & Upgrading Fund • New York, NY

South Los Angeles Math (SLAM) Project
College Bridge • Hacienda Heights, CA

Parent University
Building Skills Partnership • Los Angeles, CA
WHY WE NEED EXAMPLES OF Excelencia

When national attention turns to the state of postsecondary success for Latino students, the focus, too often, begins and ends with data about achievement gaps. Yet, every day programs within colleges, universities and communities demonstrate their positive impact on Latino student access and success in postsecondary education. Excelencia in Education is committed to identifying, celebrating, and disseminating information about these programs to catalyze their wider use throughout the country.

The idea and methods to identify and promote what works for Latinos in education originated even before Excelencia in Education was created. In 1999, First Lady Hilary Clinton held the first ever White House Summit on Latino Youth, bringing people from across federal, state, and community levels together. Excelencia in Education’s co-founders, then in their roles at the White House Initiative for Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, collaborated with the First Lady’s staff to organize the Summit and developed the first What Works for Latino Youth compendium to bring attention to and celebrate the efforts of programs committed to improving the educational preparation and opportunities of Latino youth. The field’s positive response to the Summit and programs in the compendium established a baseline for what, in 2005, became Excelencia in Education’s “Examples of Excelencia.”

Why do we need Examples of Excelencia? To underscore there are no more excuses for learning how to engage and serve America’s vibrant and growing Latino student population. Arming educators, community leaders, funders, and policymakers with information and methods to adopt an asset-based approach is a critical step to catalyzing large-scale positive change. The Excelencia in Action network—instutitions and leaders committed to sharing and learning what works for Latino students—furthers the replication and use of evidence-based practices that serve Latino students and enriches our society with their talents and energies.
**EXCELENCIA IN EDUCATION’S WORK**

**Ten Years of Service to Accelerating Latino Student Success in Higher Education**

“Excelencia has played a vital role in higher education policy by focusing policymakers and higher education leaders on the needs of Latino students, and supporting states and institutions whenever and wherever they are needed.”

– Richard W. Riley, Former U.S. Secretary of Education and partner, Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough, LLP

Excelencia in Education believes what describes us need not divide us as a nation. By putting a Latino lens on issues in higher education, Excelencia creates opportunities to examine issues from a new perspective and reconsider traditional efforts in a nontraditional context that can benefit all.

In a decade Excelencia in Education has become a trusted information source on Latinos’ educational achievement, a resource for influencing policy at the state and national levels, and a widely recognized advocate for expanding promising practices to accelerate Latino student success in higher education.

Excelencia in Education:

- Is recognized as a national leader on Latino college success and completion.
- Fills crucial information gaps and identifies the status of Latino success in higher education, what needs to change, and how change can be accomplished.
- Is regularly cited by the media and brings attention to issues and practices proactively addressing Latino student success.
- Serves as advisor to leaders in government, philanthropy, business and institutions of higher education.
- Has developed learning opportunities for professionals in higher education, such as the ALASS (Accelerating Latino Student Success) workshop and the Excelencia in Action Network.
- Garners support by diverse partners and funders, including ACT, Inc., Gilbert and Jacki Cisneros Foundation, Comcast, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Ford Foundation, Helmsley Trust, Kresge Foundation, Lumina Foundation, National Student Clearinghouse, TG, Univision Communications Inc, and USA Funds.

Learn more about Excelencia in Education and how our work supports your efforts to improve Latino student success at www.EdExcelencia.org
WHAT WORKS FOR LATINO STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

2014 COMPENDIUM
PROFILES OF SELECTED PROGRAMS
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview .................................................................................................................. 12
Selection Process ...................................................................................................... 13

**ASSOCIATE** ........................................................................................................... 14
Express to Success Program ...................................................................................... 15

Finalists
BUSCA (Bilingual Undergraduate Studies for Collegiate Advancement) .................. 16
Dual Enrollment Academy Programs ........................................................................ 17
First Year Pathways .................................................................................................. 18
STARS (Students Transitioning in Academics and Reaching Success) ..................... 19

Honorable mention
STEM Pathways Project ............................................................................................ 20
TCC Education Outreach Center ............................................................................... 21

**BACCALAUREATE** .................................................................................................. 12
LARES (Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services) Program .............. 23

Finalists
ARMAS (Achieving in Research Math and Science) Center .................................... 24
CMAS Academic Achievers Program ........................................................................ 25
Community Fellows Program ..................................................................................... 26
Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars Program ...................................................... 27

Honorable mention
CSU Northridge Engineering and Computer Science HSI-STEM Initiative ............. 28
GANAS (Gaining Access ‘N Academic Success) ....................................................... 29
Imperial Valley University Partnership ....................................................................... 30
Spanish Language Family Orientation .................................................................... 31
The Nepantla Program ............................................................................................... 32
GRADUATE ................................................................. 33
Graduate Support Center ............................................. 34

Finalists
Creating Latino Access to a Valuable Education (CLAVE) .................................................. 35
Department of Occupational Therapy .......................................................... 36
INSPIRE (INfluence Student Potential and Increase Representation in Education) ............... 37

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS .................................... 38
Supporting Our Leaders (SOL) Youth Program .................................................. 39

Finalists
Con Mi MADRE .......................................................... 40
Levante Leadership Institute .................................................. 41
The Abriendo Puertas Program (Opening Doors) .................................................. 42
Trinity River Mission Core Programs .................................................. 43

Honorable mention
Colloquium Series Program .................................................. 44
SLAM (South Los Angeles Math) Project .................................................. 45
Parent University ............................................................. 46

2015 EXAMPLES OF EXCELENCIA ........................................ 47
OVERVIEW

Excelencia in Education established Examples of Excelencia in 2005 to identify and honor programs and departments increasing academic opportunities and improving achievement for Latino students in higher education. Since its inception more than 700 programs have been submitted for consideration and over 125 have been highlighted.

For the 2014 Examples of Excelencia, 217 programs from 26 states DC and Puerto Rico were nominated in four categories: Associate, Baccalaureate, Graduate, and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs). Excelencia has always worked with CBOs, and is proud to add this important group for recognition in Examples.

The large number of nominations and the evidence-based practices of these programs show there is a significant portfolio of asset-based practices increasing Latino student success across the country. Examples of Excelencia compiles these evidence-based practices and serves as a resource for other institutions and community-based organizations considering efforts to improve their services to Latino students.

Since 2005, the numbers of programs nominated has increased from 5 to over 215 this year. We’re seeing an increase in newer programs worth noting for those interested in serving students. Among the common threads we saw among nominated programs this year, included bilingual and student services with cultural relevance, disaggregating data to demonstrate success with Latino students include family, mentoring, leadership, and a clear approach that address Latinos as assets for their community. Let us know if you find it helpful as we continue to build a network.

The compendium contains one-page program summary of the 4 Examples of Excelencia, the 15 finalist programs, and the 10 honorable mention programs making a positive difference in the educational achievement of Latino students in higher education. While not exhaustive, these summaries were edited from information submitted by the nominated programs. To find out more about each of the programs, please contact the key personnel listed in each program summary.

For information about the 2014 Examples of Excelencia as well as other programs with evidence of effectiveness for improving Latino student success in higher education recognized in previous years, please access our Growing What Works database at http://www.edExcelencia.org/growing-what-works. Information about the Examples of Excelencia initiative is available at: http://www.edExcelencia.org/examples-of-Excelencia
SELECTION PROCESS

Excelencia in Education reviewed 217 nominations and identified 19 finalists through the analysis of the following criteria:

- Size and need for the program services;
- Record of increased Latino student enrollment, retention, and completion;
- Qualitative or quantitative evidence of the program services’ impact;
- Leadership committed to accelerating Latino student success;
- Strong network with other stakeholders, community leaders, and schools; and
- Services that integrate Latino culture and enhance Latino students’ navigation between their homes, schools, communities, and careers.

In addition, 10 programs with innovative and/or significant improvement of increasing Latino student success in a short period of time were included for recognition as honorable mentions.

A profile of the 19 finalists was shared with an external selection committee to select one Example of Excelencia in each category: Associate, Baccalaureate, Graduate, and Community-Based Organization. The committee included the following experts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee Member</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Susan Albertine</td>
<td>Vice President, Office of Engagement, Inclusion &amp; Success</td>
<td>Association of American Colleges and Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa Corrigan</td>
<td>Vice President, K-Career Continuum Strategy</td>
<td>ACT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristin Boyer</td>
<td>Director of Philanthropy</td>
<td>TG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noël Harmon</td>
<td>National Director of the Talent Dividend and Chief Program Officer</td>
<td>CEO for Cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Hugo Lopez</td>
<td>Director of Hispanic Research</td>
<td>Pew Research and Hispanic Trends Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estela López</td>
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<td>Excelencia in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stella Pérez</td>
<td>Senior Vice President, Communications &amp; Advancement</td>
<td>American Association of Community Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosita Ramirez</td>
<td>Director of Constituency Services—Education</td>
<td>NALEO Education Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joel Vargas</td>
<td>Vice President, High School through College</td>
<td>Jobs for the Future</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ASSOCIATE

WHAT’S WORKING FOR LATINO STUDENTS

2014 Example of Excelencia
Express to Success Program
Santa Barbara City College (CA)

Finalists
BUSCA (Bilingual Undergraduate Studies for Collegiate Advancement)
La Salle University (PA)
Dual Enrollment Academy Programs
South Texas College (TX)
First Year Pathways
Pasadena City College (CA)
STARS (Students Transitioning in Academics and Reaching Success)
Cabrillo College (CA)

Honorable Mentions
STEM Pathways Project
Crafton Hills College (CA)
TCC Education Outreach Center
Tulsa Community College (OK)

The programs recognized at the associate level have accelerated Latino student success using the following practices:

- Offer remedial courses for students, specifically in Math and English.
- Require developmental courses to be taken in the first semesters to ensure students are able to transfer to four-year institutions.
- Offer dual programs where students complete an Associates degree while in High School proves to be a successful tool to create a “college going culture” and motivating students to pursue higher education.
- Provide mentoring between students and faculty and peer mentoring.
- Offer students scholarships and assistance with financial aid.
- Hire bilingual staff to assist students during their college experience.
Express to Success Program

**COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY**
Santa Barbara City College
sbcc.edu/esp/

**GOALS**
Express to Success (ESP) aims to increase success and completion rates for developmental math and English for Latino students who place one to two levels below college level courses. The program strives to create a community of students that works together along with the program’s staff.

**DESCRIPTION**
In Fall 2011, ten accelerated learning communities were offered, and seven more were added in Fall 2012. ESP students have one teacher for their classes in all of the math and English learning communities and take two classes together, working collaboratively in class and forming study groups outside of class to support their learning. Peer tutors also support students inside and outside of the classroom. In addition, ESP counselors work closely with students and instructors throughout the semester. Starting with ten accelerated learning communities in Fall 2011, ESP has grown to twenty-one learning communities for Fall 2014.

Since 2013-14, the program has enrolled 940 students and enrollment will grow to 1200 students in 2014-15. Over two-thirds of participants have been Latino and they understand this is their program and is designed to help them reach their goals.

**OUTCOMES**
- Latino ESP students achieve higher success rates than non-ESP Latinos in comparable courses (79% ESP vs. 58% in Spring 2013; 73% ESP vs. 55% in Fall 2013).
- Latino students are more likely to complete two levels of math or English in one semester of accelerated format at a rate of 48% than Latinos not enrolled in the program (Spring 2013).
- Students enrolled in the program in 2013 were registering for the next semester at higher rates than students not enrolled (83% vs. 73%).
- In the Fall 2013 exit survey, 93% of math students reported their skills are now good or strong; and 97% of English students, many with ESL backgrounds, reported their skills are now good or strong.

As students build their math and English skills, they are gaining confidence in themselves and their ability to succeed in college and beyond.

**KEY PERSONNEL**
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BUSCA (Bilingual Undergraduate Studies for Collegiate Advancement)

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
La Salle University
http://www.lasalle.edu/schools/sas/busca/

GOALS
The mission of BUSCA is to engage students in educational programs designed to empower Latinos to be bilingual/bicultural leaders in contemporary U.S. society. BUSCA offers the unique opportunity to begin university studies with a series of intensive courses in English, a curriculum developed by a team of faculty with expertise in English language acquisition, curriculum development and assessment. La Salle provides academic and financial advising as well as motivational counseling in Spanish for all students. The program is designed to fully meet the needs of our at-risk student population, many of whom are the first in their families to attend college, are developing their academic English, come from the lowest performing schools in Philadelphia, and live below the poverty line.

DESCRIPTION
BUSCA began in 1993 with 10 students, 1 staff, and 4 teachers. Since 1998, BUSCA has served more than 825 students and currently has 180 students and 34 faculty members. Since 2003 BUSCA classes have been taught exclusively in English, with first semester teachers focusing on ESL instruction. The program has a specialized curriculum combined with targeted support services. Upon successfully completing their 60 credits, BUSCA graduates earn an Associate’s Degree in Liberal Arts, which fulfills core requirements for those continuing to bachelor’s degrees. BUSCA actively recruits students from the community by holding informational sessions and conducting outreach activities in various schools and migrant programs.

OUTCOMES
BUSCA continues to successfully educate the next generation of Philadelphia Latino leaders: 375 students have earned their associate’s degrees; many have gone on to earn their bachelors’ degrees here (88) and at other institutions. Six students have earned master’s degrees from La Salle. In January 2014, 49 students graduated from BUSCA. Of that group, 75% immediately enrolled in a bachelor’s degree program. For the past five years, BUSCA’s graduation rate has been above 50%; two years it was over 60%.

KEY PERSONNEL
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Dual Enrollment Academy Programs

**COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY**
South Texas College
http://academicaffairs.southtexascollege.edu/highschool/academies/index.html

**GOALS**
Our goal is to provide Hispanic students the opportunity to obtain an associate’s degree before completing high school. The mission of the Academies is to inculcate a “college-going” culture within their student body by providing the unique opportunity for students to complete an associate’s degree while also completing their high school requirements.

**DESCRIPTION**
The Academies was introduced in 2005 to provide Hispanic students a unique opportunity for high-achieving high school juniors to earn an associate degree from South Texas College tuition-free while completing their high school graduation requirements, specifically in the STEM fields. Through partnerships with school districts, parents, and the community the Academies successfully serves more than 250 students annually through 10 academies across 4 campuses. The Academies focus on: Dual Enrollment Engineering, Computer Science Academy, Criminal Justice Academy, and Medical Science Academy. Participants gain exposure to a college atmosphere at an early age. Students have the opportunity to receive hands-on experiences, and every Friday the program hosts professionals from local universities to speak to the students about various bachelor degrees, financial aid, campus housing, admissions, etc.

**OUTCOMES**
- Since 2005, 597 students have graduated with an associate’s degree through the program. There were 293 students enrolled in the Academies for spring 2014. Further, 65% are first-generation college students, 99% are Hispanic, and 52% are female.
- Students’ overall have an average GPA of 3.2.
- 100% of students completing the Academies have successfully transitioned to 4-year institutions.
- Academies students are required to apply for at least 4 scholarships per month. As a result, over $8.8 million in scholarships has been awarded.
- 10 Academies students have been awarded the Bill and Melinda Gates Scholarship and 5 have received the Dell Scholarship.

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First Year Pathways

**COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY**
Pasadena City College
www.pasadena.edu/pathways

**GOALS**
First Year Pathways aims to serve students in their first year of college by providing support inside and outside the classroom. It is particularly dedicated to students of color, many of who are under-prepared for college-level work. It does so by providing students with the courses they need and support both in and out of the classroom. Pathways goals include: 1) connectedness to the campus community, 2) development of a network of support, 3) successful completion of at least 20 units of coursework, including English and math, within the first year at PCC, and 4) persistence to fall of the second year of college.

**DESCRIPTION**
In 2010 Pasadena City College’s research office reported on a cohort of developmental education students who were tracked for six years. Findings revealed that almost 20% dropped out in their first year and that 65% had no discernible milestone. In 2011, in response to the dismal findings, PCC created the First Year Pathway. Pathway Components are: 1) Summer Bridge: Math Jam, a one-week, no-cost program, serves as the entry point to the First-Year Pathways program, 2) Priority Registration: Pathways students are required to enroll in and are guaranteed a full-time schedule, including English and math, in the fall and spring semesters, 3) The FYP Student Success Team: counselors, coaches, and peer tutors, and 4) College 1 (a first year seminar) and “One Book, One College”. In 2012-2013 more than 770 students were enrolled and in 2013-2014, more than 1,300 students were enrolled in the program, 51% who were Latino.

**OUTCOMES**
Research reveals the Pathways is closing the achievement gap for Latino and African American students and moving students closer to completion.
- After one year for the Fall 2012 cohort (n=637): Latino FYP students earned more credits compared to Latino non-FYP students (25.8 vs. 15.1 credits).
- Latino FYP students in the Fall 2012 cohort persisted to second year at higher rates compared to Latino non-FYP students (93% vs. 75%).
- FYP students reported a higher level of engagement with faculty and peers than non-participants.
- Course taking data reveals that FYP students appear to be progressing through developmental math sequence at a faster rate than other first-year students.

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STARS (Students Transitioning in Academics and Reaching Success)

**COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY**
Cabrillo College  
http://www.cabrillo.edu/services/stars/fye.php

**GOALS**
The mission of the STARS First Year Experience (FYE) program is to help and encourage students with multiple barriers successfully achieve their educational goals. The goals are to set up structures that will guide students to success, such as learning communities, guided course sequences intended to provide the necessary foundation for progress toward educational goals, and utilizing supporting resources such as tutoring, financial aid, accommodations for learning disabilities when necessary, etc. STARS also engages students with the college and a cohort of fellow students that will provide support and assistance throughout the challenges of higher education.

**DESCRIPTION**
The focus of the STARS program is to ensure that students who place at a developmental level in math and English upon entering college take these courses early. STARS faculty have found that students often postpone taking developmental courses and in turn do not have the required courses to transfer to four-year institutions. STARS also provides students a summer bridge program, college success class, and a peer led Supplemental Instruction (SI) for math courses. STARS has served over 230 participants since the fall 2010 through its FYE cohorts and 305 participants have been served through the SI program. FYE cohorts were 85% Latino and SI cohorts were 74% Latino.

**OUTCOMES**
- Students that attended 10 or more SI sessions during a semester had a 75% success rate in their math courses, vs. 47% success rate for non-SI.
- Latino students enrolled in STARS were 47% more likely than Latino students not enrolled in the program to complete transfer level English.
- Latino students enrolled were 61% more likely to complete transfer level math courses than Latino students not enrolled.
- The overall success rate of the STARS cohorts is 76%.
- The retention rate for the STARS program is 63%

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STEM Pathways Project

**COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY**
Crafton Hills College
www.craftonhills.edu/STEM

**GOALS**
STEM Pathways aims to increase the STEM degree attainment and transfer rate of Hispanic and low-income students while also providing outreach to the Hispanic community by introducing middle and high school students to STEM fields and careers at an early age.

**DESCRIPTION**
The STEM Pathways Project was launched in 2011 with the goal of strengthening systems and services to better support the success of Latino and other low-income students. Students enrolled receive a rigorous STEM education at Crafton Hills College in an environment that provides an integrated network of social and academic support with the end goal of transferring into STEM programs at highly regarded four year institutions. The program offers two pathways to students: STEMTrek, which offers support to successfully transfer to four year institutions and, STEMAcademy, supporting students beginning their studies. Participation in the program requires students to participate in program events as well as 18 hours of tutoring support. Both programs serve approximately 80 students per year. Overall, 41% of students participating in these programs identify as Latino.

**OUTCOMES**
The percentage of Hispanic students attending Crafton Hills College has increased from approximately 25% to 42% since the program began.

- STEMTrek students are more likely to enroll in STEM courses than non-participating students.
- Latino students enrolled in STEMTrek are 76% more likely to successfully complete their STEM courses than non-participating Latino students (70%).
- Latino students that participated in STEMTrek had a higher cumulative GPA (2.7) at the end of 2013-2014 than Latino students who did not participate (2.5).
- Students who seek counseling as a part of STEMTrek are more likely to both complete (90%) and succeed (80%) in STEM courses than those who did not (83% and 62%).
- In just two years, the program has graduate 54 students in STEM fields, a significant increase from its baseline year were only 9 students graduated in STEM fields.
- Supplemental Instruction is also provided to students and it has proven to be successful. Participating students have a GPA of 3.0 and success rate of 75%.

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TCC Education Outreach Center

**COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY**

Tulsa Community College (TCC)
http://www.tulsacc.edu/campuses-and-centers/education-outreach-center

**GOALS**

The Education Outreach Center aims to assist, inform, and empower those populations traditionally underserved in higher education and to provide a gateway to college through effective, accessible services that ultimately ensure student success and excellence.

**DESCRIPTION**

The Outreach Center began in 2007 as a gateway to college for any interested student by focusing on the individual’s needs and family integration. The Center offers a large array of services, such as TCC application, enrollment assistance; Academic advisement; Financial aid assistance; Computer placement testing; Computer lab, Internet; General education credit classes; Personal and academic enrichment classes and Spanish-speaking services. The Outreach Center offers a scholarship specifically for undocumented or DACA students. The Center conducts yearly events for their student body as Luncheons and Career Days. More than 60% of patrons are Latinos.

**OUTCOMES**

The Outreach Center receives more than 3,000 patrons per year, their main goal is to guide them in the right direction and empower them to seek and make the correct choices for their education, due to this, not much data is available.

TCC is the #1 institution in Oklahoma enrolling and graduating Latinos. They awarded more than two times the number of Associates Degrees than the 2nd institution on the list. Tulsa Public schools, the largest school system in Tulsa, is now over 50% Hispanic so efforts to reach out to this population are always evolving.

**KEY PERSONNEL**

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What Works For Latino Student Success in Higher Education 2014

BACCALAUREATE

WHAT’S WORKING FOR LATINO STUDENTS

Example
LARES (Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services) Program
University of Illinois at Chicago (IL)

Finalists
Achieving in Research Math and Science (ARMAS) Center
New Mexico Highlands University (NM)
CMAS Academic Achievers Program
University of Houston (TX)
Community Fellows Program of the Community-Based Learning Program
Mount Holyoke College (MA)
Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars Program
University of Florida (FL)

Honorable Mentions
CSU Northridge Engineering and Computer Science HSI-STEM Initiative
California State University, Northridge (CA)
GANAS (Gaining Access ‘N Academic Success) - California State University
East Bay (CA)
Imperial Valley University Partnership
San Diego State University, Imperial Valley Campus (CA)
Spanish Language Family Orientation
University of North Texas (TX)
The Nepantla Program
Nevada State College (NV)

The programs at the baccalaureate level implemented the following practices to accelerate Latino student success:

- Offering an accelerated format for remedial courses.
- Assisting students with financial aid and scholarship options.
- Developing leadership through community service, workshops, and mentoring.
- Integrating a cultural component to their curriculum that encourages students to be more active on campus and in their communities.
- Mentoring students throughout their college careers.
- Offering ESL (English as a Second Language) courses during the first semester.
- Fostering faculty-student relations through mentoring and research opportunities.
- Offering courses on navigating college to ease the transition for new students.
LARES (Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services) Program

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
University of Illinois at Chicago
http://lares.uic.edu

GOALS
The LARES mission is “To provide personal growth and educational opportunities to UIC students and prepare leaders who will make individual and collective contributions toward the educational, cultural and social advancement of the Latino community”. The program encourages student participation in leadership activities that enrich their undergraduate education and increase their chances for success. The LARES program also provides educational opportunities through various initiatives that improve the students college level skills in math, reading, writing, and critical thinking while developing leadership skills.

DESCRIPTION
In 1975, the Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services (LARES) Program was founded within the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) to address the growing educational needs of the Latino community, including student access, and degree completion. LARES has an established track record of developing the program’s innovative recruitment and retention strategies that have contributed to UIC’s leadership in Latino education. LARES has formed partnerships, and works closely with grammar schools, public and private high schools, city and community colleges, and social service and community agencies to help facilitate college access. Services provided include academic advising, financial aid, scholarship assistance, tutoring, supplemental instruction, preparation for graduate school, student and parent orientation, admissions, and recruitment.

OUTCOMES
- In the past 10 years, Latino freshmen enrollment has increased by 80% (from 488 to 879), representing 28% of the total UIC freshmen enrollment.
- Since the Fall 1991, six-year Latino graduation rates grew from 25% to 49%.
- LARES assisted more than 10,000 prospective students in recruitment related activities.
- In the State of Illinois, UIC graduates more Latino students than any other university. Nationally, UIC ranks 55th granting baccalaureates. UIC enrolls more Latino students than any other four-year private or public university in Illinois.

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ARMAS
(Achieving in Research Math and Science) Center

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
New Mexico Highlands University
http://www.armasineducation.com/

GOALS
The mission of ARMAS is to provide comprehensive support to STEM students and faculty, recognizing our historical commitment as a Hispanic Serving Institution. The ARMAS Center’s overarching goal is to increase STEM student retention and graduation through collaborative-based and innovative best practices.

DESCRIPTION
The ARMAS Center opened in 2009 to support students majoring in Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) disciplines at NMHU as well as the faculty who teach these courses. ARMAS’ Student Retention Services include: Training of Supplemental Instruction Leaders; provision of Supplemental Instruction in STEM gateway courses; academic coaching; Math tutoring; Textbook lending library; STEM internship and research fellowship opportunities; and On-campus, academically-engaging student employment. ARMAS STEM Faculty Support includes: professional development workshops; orientation on the use of Supplemental Instruction Leaders; interdisciplinary discussions on best practices in STEM pedagogy; and student support services in grants requiring this aspect. Of NMHU’s main campus STEM majors (312), 60% are served by ARMAS and 51% are Latino. In 2012-2013, 438 students registered and visited the center 8,202 times.

OUTCOMES
- ARMAS students have higher graduation rates than non-participants (72% vs. 40%).
- Students who participated in ARMAS in the fall of 2012 were 4 times more likely to have graduated with STEM degrees or still be enrolled in STEM majors than students who did not participate in ARMAS.
- There has been a 29% increase in the number of STEM majors since ARMAS began (70 STEM majors). Of the 312 STEM majors, 39% are underrepresented minority students.
- Students average 488 visits to Supplemental Instruction and 271 visits for Math Tutoring per semester.
- ARMAS has hosted 12 professional development workshops for STEM faculty.
- Since 2010, ARMAS has placed students in 99 paid internships with 22 community partners and faculty research mentors.

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CMAS Academic Achievers Program (AAP)

**COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY**
University of Houston
www.class.uh.edu/cmas

**GOALS**
CMAS aims to increase the low education attainment level of Latino students in the community by reducing the high school drop out rate and increasing the number of students that attend and graduate from college.

**DESCRIPTION**
The Center for Mexican American Studies (CMAS) has a variety of programs designed to support the unique needs of the Hispanic population it serves. The Academic Achievers Program (AAP) was created in 1994 to serve students who face many obstacles including minimal if any family financial contribution to college expenses, insufficient academic preparation or study skills, and attitudinal conflicts like family pressure to leave school and work full time. To date, 420 Latino students have been served in the AAP-Austin High School and 312 students have participated in the AAP-UH program. Students enrolled in this program receive extensive academic monitoring and counseling by faculty.

Progress is monitored in three different ways. One, during the semester teachers and professors at Austin High School and the University of Houston send out semester progress reports to professors. Progress reports help staff identify any academic issues that students may have so that we may address them immediately. Early identification of problems is the key to success. Second, at the end of each semester grades are assessed, problem areas identified and the students counseled. At the University of Houston (UH) students who do not meet the 2.7 GPA are put on probation and required to participate in additional hours of one-on-one tutoring. Third, The UH Office of Institutional Research conducts an evaluation to measure graduation rates of AAP-UH students and compare our rates to other groups on campus.

**OUTCOMES**
- Participating students have significantly higher graduate rates than all UH students (72% vs. 46%) and is also higher than the Texas (49%) and U.S. graduation rates (60%).
- In the Fall of 2013, 80 students in AAP obtained an average cumulative GPA of 3.2 and 29 AAP students made the Dean’s list.

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Community Fellows Program of the Community-Based Learning Program

**COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY**

Mount Holyoke College  
http://www.mtholyoke.edu/cb

**GOALS**

Mount Holyoke’s “Community-Based Learning Program” (CBL) at the Weisman Center for Leadership was created in the 1990s to enable students to connect passions for public service and community development, academic studies, career preparation, and wage earning while attending college and avoiding the unfortunate trade-off students are often forced to make, between work and typically unpaid community engagement/volunteerism.

**DESCRIPTION**

CBL integrates academic and experiential learning. “Community Fellows” undertake community-based leadership development that is embedded in responses to community needs that leverage Mount Holyoke courses, volunteers, and work-study students to support community programs and organizations. Since 2008, over 50 students per year leverage CBL course, work-study, and volunteer placements in more than 35 organizations in Holyoke and Springfield, Massachusetts with large Latino/a populations. As recruiters and mentors to peer tutors/mentors, Latina leaders leverage increased Latina participation across college community engagement, and as Fellows involve peer networks and cultural organizations, building solidarity on and off campus among Latina/o communities. The Program is recruiting and retaining cohorts of predominantly Latina students and partnered with the “Posse Scholars Program” (bringing 10 low-income, first-generation students from Miami annually) to establish the first ever “Civic Engagement Posse”.

**OUTCOMES**

Since 2008, CBL has grown Latina participation among Community Fellows to now “over represent” the College’s Latina population, establishing CBL as an important home and a visible leadership development environment for Latina students.

- This year, 30% of Fellows are Latina, compared to their 9% representation college-wide.
- Between 2005-13, 15% of Fellows were Latina (out of 234) and 100% have graduated.
- Fellows advance K12 student achievement and engagement, and address college access among 200-250 Latina/o youth of Holyoke and Springfield, as they support retention and civic development among 30-40+ Latina student recruits at Mount Holyoke.

**KEY PERSONNEL**

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Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars Program

**COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY**
University of Florida  
http://fos.ufsa.ufl.edu/

**GOALS**
The Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars (MFOS) Program goal is for first-generation, low-income students students at the University of Florida (UF) to earn a bachelor’s degree without relying on student loans by providing a full grant and scholarship package and opportunities for personal development.

**DESCRIPTION**
The MFOS Program was created in 2006. UF and President Machen recognized students from low socio-economic backgrounds can be deterred from enrolling in college because of fear of debt and concern that working while in school could hinder the chances for academic success. The MFOS program provides grant/scholarship financial aid packages to cover the full cost of attendance for first-generation in college freshmen Florida residents from historically low-income families who make less than $40,000 per year. The program also provides opportunities to develop life skills, increase self-awareness, plan for a meaningful career, and financial literacy education. Students are encouraged to join in the Florida Opportunity Scholars Academy of Leadership (FOSAL). FOSAL is a year-long leadership program that teaches about self-awareness, career preparation, and global citizenship. To date, MFOS has supported over 2,900 students with more than 820 of them being Latinos.

**OUTCOMES**
- By March 2014, 71% of Latino MFOS scholars earned a GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- 22% of Latino MFOS scholars study abroad.
- 8 MFOS Latino students have applied to a graduate or professional degree program and 15 MFOS Latino students have already graduated with a graduate degree from UF.
- Latino students enrolled are from 40 counties out of the 67 counties in Florida.
- In 2008, MFOS supported 361 incoming first-year students, 90 of those being Latino students. Of these students 95% were retained for 4 years and 75% graduated within four years or less.
- During this same time, a total of 1,001 Hispanic/Latino students were FTIC students at UF. Of these students, 92% were retained for 4 years and 67% graduated within 4 years or less.
- Additionally, MFOS provides access for first-generation Latino students to participate in student organizations on campus.

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CSU Northridge Engineering and Computer Science HSI-STEM Initiative

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
California State University, Northridge
www.ecs.csun.edu/aims2

GOALS
The HSI-STEM Initiative aims to increase the number of Hispanic and low-income students who successfully transfer from Glendale Community College (GCC), and College of the Canyons (COC) to California State University, Northridge, to pursue majors in Engineering and/or Computer Science.

DESCRIPTION
In October 2011 the College of Engineering and Computer Science at California State University, Northridge, was awarded a five-year, $5.5 million HSI STEM grant by the U.S. Department of Education to implement a program designed to increase the number of low-income, Hispanic and other underrepresented students graduating from CSUN with engineering and computer science majors. This collaborative project entitled AIMS? (for Attract, Inspire, Mentor and Support Students), is led by CSUN, in partnership with Glendale Community College (GCC) and the College of the Canyons (COC). Students enrolled in the AIMS? cohorts have access to special mentoring and advisement by faculty, tutoring and peer mentoring, social activities, field trips and opportunities to take part in summer research projects. Students enrolled in the program receive a stipend to motivate and inspire them to succeed. Outreach activities by cohort students to other colleges and high schools helps raise awareness of the grant and encourages future students. Since 2012, more than 160 students have been served in three cohorts and 67% have been Latino. The program has served 87 first-time transfer students at CSUN, 39 at GCC, and 36 at COC.

OUTCOMES
- On average, cohort participants when compared with a control group, completed 5.9 more units (30 units/year), earned a cumulative GPA of 3.03 vs. 2.38, and experienced a higher persistence rate (97% vs. 79%).
- Of participating students, 40% have completed degree programs.
- Student-faculty interaction has increased in all three campuses.

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GANAS (Gaining Access 'N Academic Success)

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
California State University, East Bay
http://www20.csueastbay.edu/class/ganas/

GOALS
The mission of the GANAS (Gaining Access ‘N Academic Success) Program is to increase the number of educationally underserved students who graduate with baccalaureate degrees or higher. The GANAS Program aims to help transfer students: 1) Make a smooth transition from a two-year college to a four-year university; 2) Develop a network of support; 3) Succeed academically; and 4) Reduce time to degree completion.

DESCRIPTION
GANAS is the first program within the CSU system to develop an academic and student success program that targets and serves Latino/a transfer students in a culturally responsive way. The GANAS program was implemented in 2013 as an innovative initiative that focuses on encouraging transfer students to participate in a one-year cohort-based learning community that is paired with a success seminar, intrusive academic counseling, and mentoring. By completing the required GANAS courses, students fulfill their upper division GE requirements. The GE courses focus on themes related to Latino/a identity and are taught by Latino/a professors using innovative pedagogy. The first cohort was composed of 33 students from 23 different community colleges within California.

OUTCOMES
- From fall quarter to winter quarter, GANAS students persisted at a rate of 97% compared to 91% of all Latino/a transfer students.
- From winter quarter to spring quarter, 97% of GANAS students persisted, compared to 90% of all Latino/a transfer students.
- Winter quarter 2014, 24 of 32 GANAS students had a GPA of 3.0 or higher and 3 students had GPAs above 3.75.
- The average Spring 2014 GPA for the GANAS cohort is 3.26 — a fifth (.20 points) higher than the average for all transfer populations, and a quarter (.25 points) higher than the average for all Latinos/as at CSUEB.

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Imperial Valley University Partnership

**COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY**
San Diego State University, Imperial Valley Campus
www.ivup.org

**GOALS**
IVUP aims to support first generation, low income Latino students in successfully enrolling, persisting, and graduating from SDSU-IV in four years with the option of completing an Associates degree. The IVUP focuses on four strategies to recruit and retain students: 1) access to priority registration at SDSU-IV and IVC; 2) adhering to a cohort structure; 3) close mentoring and advising; and 4) the opportunity to complete a four-year degree locally.

**DESCRIPTION**
The Imperial Valley University Partnership (IVUP) is an innovative higher education initiative that began in May 2011 as a collaboration between San Diego State University’s Imperial Valley Campus (SDSU-IV), Imperial Valley College (IVC), and the Imperial County Office of Education (ICOE). The program offers students a seamless, accessible, affordable, and high quality education with a clear path to a Bachelor’s degree in four years. It also includes the option of earning an Associate’s degree integrated into their degree pathway. IVUP is an accessible and affordable program that combines the part-time CSU fee with community college tuition and significantly reduces the overall cost of tuition. IVUP accepts approximately 100 students each fall. Students enrolled take a minimum of five classes each semester. The program currently serves more than 190 students, 179 of which are Latino/a students.

**OUTCOMES**
- Retention rate for students in year one was 93%.
- Of the 2012 cohort, 72% is graduating with an associate’s degree in just two years, compared to just 9% of students enrolled exclusively at IVC.
- 13% of students completed a study abroad in their first two years of college.
- 21% of students have a 3.7 or above GPA which makes them eligible for a scholarship that covers tuition and fees that are not already covered by other resources such as federal, state, institutional grant, scholarship, or other gift-aid programs.
- The program offers the following majors: Criminal Justice, Liberal Studies and Psychology, History, Public Administration, and Spanish.

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Spanish Language Family Orientation

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
University of North Texas
http://parents.unt.edu

GOALS
The goal of the Spanish Language Family Orientation is to provide Parent Orientation to families in the Latino community in Spanish, to ensure the effective communication and understanding of the college experience and key UNT processes and resources.

DESCRIPTION
The Spanish Language Family Orientation was implemented in July 2013 to better serve the growing number of Spanish speaking families by providing in Spanish the services already in place through the Office of Parent Programs. Specially, the program sought to: Create a meaningful orientation experience for Spanish-speaking parents and families; Effectively provide information regarding the Student Accounting and Financial Aid processes to parents and families in Spanish; Effectively provide information regarding student services and campus involvement opportunities to parents and families in Spanish; and Understand how to best serve this population of parents and families in the future based on parent and staff feedback.

OUTCOMES
- In the first year, 98 parents and family members, from across Texas, participated in the program.
- Participant evaluations showed statistically significant gains (p<.001) in a parent’s perception of their ability to understand key university resources and procedures.
- Parents surveyed considered themselves highly informed on the policies and procedures related to student accounting, financial aid processes, student services, and involvement opportunities available to students.
- Students whose parents participate in an orientation program have higher retention rates and higher GPAs.

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The Nepantla Program

**COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY**
Nevada State College
http://www.nscnepantla.com

**GOALS**
The Nepantla Program has five goals: 1) create a college-going environment for underrepresented/first generation high school students; 2) provide remedial courses to address equity academic gaps for incoming freshman students; 3) offer specialized social justice and identity formation college courses; 4) advise and mentor students on academic, career, and professional development all four years they are enrolled; and 5) facilitate a familia cohort anchored in community involvement.

**DESCRIPTION**
The Nepantla Program is an alternative space carved out in higher education that reinterprets and redefines the role of a college education by connecting culture to recruitment, provides special designed social justice and identity formation courses, hosts a summer bridge that teaches students how to navigate college, and creates a familia amongst Latina/o students at the college. This academic program recruits and enrolls over 20 incoming freshman students each year and provides peer-to-peer support along with faculty and administrative support from their freshman to senior year of college. Of students served, 85% were Latino. Further, outreach efforts have reached over 500 high school students.

**OUTCOMES**
In summer 2013, compared to non-Nepantla students, participating students:
- had higher pass rates in ENG 100 (100% vs. 75%).
- had a lower DFWI rate in ENG 100 (0% vs. 30%).
- had higher remedial pass rate in Math 93 (100% vs. 71%).
- had higher remedial pass rate in Math 95 (100% vs. 78%).

In fall 2013, compared to non-Nepantla students, participating students:
- had higher pass rates in ENG 102 (100% vs. 77%).
- had higher pass rates in Math 120 (80% vs. 68%).
- had higher average semester GPA by 0.3 points.

In the Spring 2014, all (21) Nepantla students were retained from fall 2013.

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GRADUATE

WHAT’S WORKING FOR LATINO STUDENTS

Example
Graduate Support Center
University of the Incarnate Word (TX)

Finalists
Creating Latino Access to a Valuable Education (CLAVE)
Florida International University (FL)

Department of Occupational Therapy
University of Texas Pan American (TX)

INfluence Student Potential and Increase Representation in Education
Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science (IL)

The programs recognized at the graduate level have implemented the following successful practices to accelerate Latino student success:

- Offering specific concentrations within the program to improve cultural competence in serving the Latino community as professionals.
- Providing support centers where students can seek assistance for financial aid, internships, and other services.
- Integrating high school students, undergrads, and graduate students in creating a “college going culture” as well as offering peer mentoring to all students involved.
- Providing faculty support and development throughout the academic year to ensure all individuals in the program advance as students and professionals.
Graduate Support Center

**OUTCOMES**

- Hispanic students’ Fall 2011 cohort (three years) persistence to completion rate increased almost double the rate of all master’s students (20% vs. 11%) due to the Center’s work.
- Average enrollment of Latino students has nearly doubled and now represents 48% of all students enrolled.
- The Academic Workshops and Family Orientation have helped establish a culture of student success with increased attendance over a 3-year period (from 451 to 1,105 in three years) and the average attendance at Family Orientation most recently was: 36% parents, 20% children, 19% spouse, 10% sibling, 9% friend, 3% grandparent, and 3% other.

**KEY PERSONNEL**

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Creating Latino Access to a Valuable Education (CLAVE)

**COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY**
Florida International University
http://education.fiu.edu/community/research_and_grants

**GOALS**
The goal of the CLAVE project is to increase the number of Hispanic American graduate students enrolled in the College of Education (COE) and to enhance the academic support services available at the College to increase degree completion rates. The enhanced services include tutoring, mentoring, advising, and support for collaborative research activities between faculty and students. In addition, faculty development, faculty research and curriculum development are supported to build on the overall academic quality in COE.

**DESCRIPTION**
CLAVE is housed in the College of Education and during the five years of implementation, the project has enhanced three key areas: graduate student support services, professional development support for faculty, and upgrading of instructional facilities. The CLAVE project is a collaboration between the College of Education (COE) at Florida International University and Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), the fourth largest school district in the United States. In order to increase the number of Hispanic/Latino educators with advanced degrees in M-DCPS, the CLAVE project has provided tuition scholarships to four cohorts of Latino teachers and administrators from the district seeking Master’s and Doctoral degrees. The College of Education has over 920 students, and about half are Latino.

**OUTCOMES**
- One cohort of 11 educators graduated in the spring of 2012 with a Master of Science in Urban Education, a second cohort of ten educators graduated in the spring of 2014, and a third cohort of 15 educators has completed the first six credits of their program of studies.
- Qualitative feedback from the first graduating master’s cohort of educators included improvements in teachers’ attitudes toward the urban child, increases in knowledge about working with diverse populations and commitment to self-reflection as teachers.
- Services include student mentoring and technical and academic writing assistance through the Office of Academic Writing and Publication Support.
- To encourage collaborative research between faculty and students at professional conferences, over 35 travel awards have been provided.
- Additional professional development opportunities in the form of hands-on workshops and discussion forums with educational experts brought to campus have been provided to a combined 895 graduate students and faculty.

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Department of Occupational Therapy

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
University of Texas Pan American
www.utpa.edu/dept/otctherapy

GOALS
The mission of the Department of Occupational Therapy is to prepare graduate level professionals capable of meeting the challenges of health care and community environments, and the needs of the growing international and multi-cultural populations of the south Texas region. The goals of the program are: 1) to expose the students to the influence and impact of occupation, culture, systems, and disabilities on a variety of age groups and settings; 2) to prepare graduates to assume the roles of life-long learners, innovators, and leaders; and 3) to serve the health care needs of the region and state.

DESCRIPTION
The Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (OT) Program was created in 1996 and provides education to prepare entry-level occupational therapists that will primarily serve the underserved population of the border region of south Texas. This is the only occupational therapy program within the medically underserved communities of the Rio Grande Valley. It is one of a few OT programs nationally that graduates a high number of Hispanic (95%) students each year. The program began as cooperative baccalaureate program and quickly moved to independent status in 1999 and was successfully accredited in 2000. The program offers scholarships, research opportunities, and culturally competent courses that ensure students will become well-rounded professionals. The typical student is 27-28 years of age, Hispanic, and on a second career with family responsibilities. All students commute, a few from as much as 80 miles away. While an intensive program, many students continue to work as a means of financing their 2.5 years education.

OUTCOMES
- The OT program has graduated 163 students on time from the Rio Grande Valley, with most (95%) choosing to stay and work in the Valley.
- Graduates of the program have a 100% pass rate on the national OT examination.
- The number of applicants to the program has grown from 60 to 200 individuals seeking admission. Of the applicants, 98% are Hispanics.
- UTPA MS in OT program’s student body averages 95% Hispanic and 25% male, thus producing a high percentage of minority graduates.
- Scholarly inquiry by students has also increased. Since 2009, 10 MS in OT students have collaborated and presented with faculty professional posters at the national conference and at 4 state conferences.

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INSPIRE (INfluence Student Potential and Increase Representation in Education)

**GOALS**
INSPIRE’s goal is to better prepare students to enter into college and obtain an advanced degree in the biomedical and health professions. The long-term program goal is to act as a model for engaging students from under-represented populations in obtaining advanced degrees within the health professions.

**DESCRIPTION**
INSPIRE is a pipeline program that provides Hispanic high school students the opportunity to engage in hands-on biomedical original research with faculty advisors and graduate student mentors. Students learn laboratory techniques, bioethics, experimental design, and data entry and analysis at a graduate-level institution. The program was piloted in 2011, in response to the low percentage of Latino/as obtaining advanced degrees nationally (3%). The Program embraces a collaborative approach to academic success by bringing high schools, community colleges, four-year institutions, and graduate schools together to jointly address this national issue. The 4th cohort (2014) will have a total of 14 students enrolled.

**OUTCOMES**
- The program has had a 100% matriculation rate for participants entering two or four-year college programs upon high school graduation.
- Within the first year, participants have had an increase of 70% in their GPA for science courses.
- 100% of participants that retake the ACT average an improvement of nearly 2 points on their second attempt.
- High school level participants average an attendance rate of 98% (4% higher than state average).
- The overall GPA of the first cohort was 3.2.

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Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science
http://www.rosalindfranklin.edu/ia/Development/inspire.aspx
COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

WHAT’S WORKING FOR LATINO STUDENTS

**Example**

*Supporting Our Leaders (SOL) Youth Program*
*Hispanic Center of Western Michigan (MI)*

**Finalists**

Con Mi MADRE  
*Con Mi MADRE (TX)*

Levante Leadership Institute  
*Student Action with Farmworkers (NC)*

The Abriendo Puertas Program  
*The United Community Center (WI)*

Trinity River Mission Core Programs  
*Trinity River Mission, Inc. (TX)*

**Honorable Mentions**

Colloquium Series Program  
*1199 SEIU Training & Upgrading Fund (NY)*

South Los Angeles Math (SLAM) Project  
*College Bridge (CA)*

Parent University  
*Building Skills Partnership (CA)*

The programs recognized at the community-based organization level have implemented the following practices to accelerate Latino student success:

- Providing culturally relevant and holistic support services to students and families.
- Engaging families and community volunteers in the educational services provided to Latino students.
- Offering students college preparation courses, workshops, tours, and advising to create a college-going pathway and culture.
- Partnering with local colleges, organizations, and the community to support Latino students.
Supporting Our Leaders (SOL) Youth Program

**ORGANIZATION**
Hispanic Center of Western Michigan
http://hispanic-center.org/youth/youth/

**GOALS**
SOL aims to lessen the Latino achievement gap, increase college readiness, increase high school graduation rates, and increase college enrollment and retention with the ultimate goal of developing a talented and diverse workforce of educated and bilingual individuals that will positively affect their community.

**DESCRIPTION**
From 2008 to 2010, Supporting Our Leaders (SOL) evolved and is the only Latino youth program in Kent County designed to promote the educational success of the entire family through innovative and culturally responsive engagement activities. The community surrounding the Hispanic Center is severely underserved, 76% are Latino and 63% have less than a high school diploma. SOL serves more than 200 at-risk Latino youth, ages 14-21, to become academically prepared for college and beyond. SOL provides after-school tutoring, leadership development, college preparation activities, college visits, fieldtrips, service projects, parent engagement activities, and summer programming. SOL also added more structured programming like gang intervention services, summer learning academies, workforce development, paid work experiences, mentorship, and intensive case management. Last year SOL served over 490 youth in eight different programs. SOL is a program of the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan founded in 1978. The Center has always offered youth services like leadership development and academic preparation.

**OUTCOMES**
- SOL has served more than 800 students since 2008 and 85% of students served are Latino.
- SOL students are more likely to graduate from high school compared to students at all Grand Rapids Public Schools (89% vs. 64%).
- Of SOL students enrolled in college, 79% returned the next year.
- Of students served, 93% complete the program.
- In 2013, there was a 250% increase in scholarships earned. In 2014, students earned over $60,000 in scholarships.

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Con Mi MADRE

**ORGANIZATION**
Con Mi MADRE  
www.conmimadre.org

**GOALS**
Con Mi MADRE aims to empower young Latinas and their mothers through education and support services that increase preparedness, participation, and success in post-secondary education. Starting in 6th grade, CMM programming is designed to 1) keep young Latinas in school; 2) develop a healthy self-esteem; avoid risky behavior and establish relationships with adults and peers; 3) guide them through the post-secondary education application, enrollment, and matriculation process; and 4) assist students throughout their post-secondary career to ensure that they obtain a post-secondary degree.

**DESCRIPTION**
Con Mi MADRE was founded in 1992 but received its non-profit status in 2009. It is currently the only non-profit in Central Texas that supports and encourages young Latinas in their pursuit of post secondary education while requiring mothers to be a part of the process. The majority of the girls are from low-income backgrounds and are first generation college students. Con Mi MADRE has a long collaborative history with UT-Austin’s School of Social Work, and offices within the School with access to academic experts and interns. The curriculum provided to the mother-daughter teams is completely bilingual and culturally relevant in order to provide an inclusive learning environment. Since 1992, more than 2,840 Latina mother-daughter teams have been served. The program serves approximately 700 mother-daughter teams annually (1,400 individuals). In 2012, Con Mi MADRE expanded programming to include post-secondary persistence services. First-year post-secondary students received one-on-one mentoring and workshops throughout the year to help them navigate the higher education system.

**OUTCOMES**
- In 2013, 65% of all young Latinas enrolled had a 2.5 GPA or higher (42% had a 3.0 GPA or higher) and 75% of upperclassmen were enrolled in rigorous courses (e.g., AP, dual credit courses).
- Of the 122 participating seniors in 2013, 100% graduated high school and 92% enrolled in post-secondary education.
- Of first year post-secondary students, 95% matriculated into their second year in 2013.
- Collectively students received $1,013,760 in financial aid and scholarships in 2013.
- All of girls and mothers reported that getting a post secondary degree as a top priority.

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GOALS

The goal of the Levante Leadership Institute is to provide farmworker youth in Eastern North Carolina with the necessary tools, mentorship, and support to achieve in school and become leaders in their community. Through the Levante Leadership Institute, youth and their parents learn how education can have a positive, long-term impact on their families’ ability to move out of poverty. Participants meet other youth who share their experiences, and they support each other to gain the self-confidence needed to fully participate in their schools and communities.

SAF has focused on education reform since its inception over 20 years ago. The Levante program began through a partnership with the North Carolina Migrant Education Program in 1998. Through this partnership, SAF developed 17 peer support groups in high schools, organized college access workshops, retreats, and college tours for over 1,000 migrant youth, provided over 100 college student mentors, and offered information about scholarships and other resources for farmworker youth. In 2006, SAF began working more deeply with a small group of farmworker teens. The Levante program provides monthly trainings on college access, academics, life skills, and advocacy, have helped participating families and students successfully explore options for staying in school, furthering their education beyond high school, and addressing injustices in their communities. The project is a part of the Triangle for Latino Student Success project, through which SAF is aligning curriculum with two other after-school programs targeting Latino students and school success. The Levante program uses cultural arts and organizing as a means to successfully engage the students and annually works with up to 20 farmworker teens and their families.

OUTCOMES

- Over the past five years, 85% of participating youth successfully completed the program.
- Of the participating youth that graduated from high school, 75% enrolled in college.
- Youth worked with The Beehive Design Collective on a portable mural creation process and learned how to use their stories to graphically tell a collective story to capture their experiences and those of other Latinos, as well as farmworker injustice. The youth now see themselves as part of this larger Latino and immigrant movement for social change.

KEY PERSONNEL

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2014 Community-Based Organization – Finalist
The Abriendo Puertas Program (Opening Doors)

**ORGANIZATION**
The United Community Center
www.unitedcc.org

**GOALS**
The mission of the Abriendo Puertas Program is to support undergraduate students from traditionally underserved backgrounds (first generation, low income, minority status students) in maximizing academic and social integration, goal setting, and commitment to achieving goals in a culturally relevant manner in order to remain in and finish college. Program services are individualized and designed to empower Latino students to overcome obstacles, complete higher education, and commence successful careers.

**DESCRIPTION**
The United Community Center (UCC) is a 43-year-old nonprofit, community-based agency that provides a range of programs and services to generations of Latinos of all ages in Milwaukee’s near Southside. In 2012, UCC received funding from Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation for a College Success grant: Abriendo Puertas (Opening Doors). UCC was awarded this postsecondary persistence grant to significantly enhance and expand its Pre-College Departments efforts to support its college students. Abriendo Puertas aided 154 undergraduates to achieve success in college by helping them develop and maintain connections on/off campus to boost their odds of finishing their programs of study; over 90% were Latino. In 2013 UCC received funds to continue the success of the AP Program to serve 100 Latino undergraduates. Enhanced programming includes a more profound professional development series of workshops, intentional mentorship/networking opportunities with industry professionals from over 60 corporate partners and organizations. Students receive mentoring, counseling, career development and professional/social connections designed to provide academic, financial, career development and social resources/support that Latino students need to feel empowered to persist and achieve their higher education career goals.

**OUTCOMES**
- Despite serving a cohort of 154 undergraduates from disadvantaged backgrounds (100% minority, 94% Latino, 83% 1st generation, 73% low-income), the semester-to-semester (Fall 2012) retention rate was 97% and persistence rate was 96%.
- Of students with 12 or more credits, 99% had a GPA equal or greater than a 2.0.
- Participating students completed 97% of attempted credits.

**KEY PERSONNEL**
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Trinity River Mission Core Programs

**ORGANIZATION**
Trinity River Mission, Inc.
www.trinityrivermission.org

**GOALS**
TRM Programs’ Goals:
1) Serve as an educational support system for children in the public school system;
2) Provide English literacy to facilitate learning in all English speaking classrooms;
3) Model educational values and tasks that will motivate students to stay in school;
4) Coach students to seek higher education which will earn better jobs with opportunities for further learning and advancement.

**DESCRIPTION**
Trinity River Mission (TRM) began in the early 1960’s, as a volunteer-based community-learning center that promotes literacy, encourages academic success, and develops effective life skills among disadvantaged youth and families in west Dallas. Since 1988 TRM’s focus has been to promote literacy, augment academic skills, and develop educational success among children, youth, and families. TRM has fostered a reputation for keeping kids in school, creating a culture of achievement for students and their families from when they enter in Kindergarten to when they graduate in 12th grade, and engaging parents, who willingly volunteer more than 6,000 hours/year as an investment in their children’s education. Of students served, 98% were Hispanic. TRM serves 508 K-12 grade students from over 67 different schools, with the intention to serve 550 students by 2015.

**OUTCOMES**
- Students enrolled exhibit a 90% average retention rate year after year.
- Average promotion rate: 95%
- Average high school graduation rate: 98%
- Average college enrollment rate: 80%
- TRM tutors volunteer their time for an average of seven years.
- TRM participants have achieved high school graduation rates between 90-100% since 2004, far above their West Dallas community peers.
- In 2012, 80% went on to college or technical school.
- In 2009 and 2010, 100% pursued postsecondary studies.
- In 2013, 91% of students pursued postsecondary studies.

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Colloquium Series Program

ORGANIZATION

1199 SEIU Training & Upgrading Fund
http://1199seiubenefits.org/funds-and-services/training-and-employment/

GOALS

The program aims to identify Latino adult learners/workers interested in college degrees in Health, engage them in career/education pathways, address deficiencies providing composition, quantitative reasoning skills, prepare students for admission tests, avoid remediation – offer college level/credit bearing contextualized courses, increase retention and completion through workshops, tutoring, childcare, case management, curricula, and expand the program to the community.

DESCRIPTION

The Colloquium, a one-year bridge to college, is designed to assist Adult Learners/Healthcare Workers through a contextualized curricula and a series of workshops to help participants pass CUNY tests without taking remediation. The Colloquium does outreach in workplaces and offers bilingual brochures and Latino recruiters. Candidates that completed high school & passed the Reading test enroll in 3 college level evening courses (12 weeks each) at the 1199SEIU-CUNY joint campus to prepare for the Writing & Math tests, enhance literacy skills, earn 9 college credits, and develop critical thinking. In 2.5 years, 55 Latinos enrolled in the program; and 50% of participants were immigrants.

OUTCOMES

- Cohort 1 (2011): 16 enrolled; 69% completed; 73% passed tests and in college.
- Cohort 2 (2012): 21 enrolled; 62% completed; 62% passed all tests and in college; 38% are getting educational support to pass tests.
- Cohort 3 (2013): 18 enrolled; 61% completed Writing course & in Math courses.
- Of participants in Cohorts 1 & 2, 65% completed the full program, and 67% of those are in college.
- Strategy: Case management (47%), childcare (47%), and tutoring (29%).
- Most important workshop: Responsibility & Commitment (47%), Computer Refresher (41%), Time Management (29%), and College Tour (24%).

KEY PERSONNEL

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SLAM (South Los Angeles Math) Project

**ORGANIZATION**
College Bridge  
www.college-bridge.org

**GOALS**
SLAM’s overarching goal is to learn the best practices to increase college access and success for under-represented students. SLAM aims to:
1) Increase the pass rate of MATH 109; 2) Increase the graduation rate of students; 3) Increase the college matriculation rate of students; 4) Increase Cohort 1’s college persistence from year 2 to year 3; 5) Increase Cohort 1’s number of credits toward degree; 6) Increase the number of credits toward degree of Cohorts 2 and 3; 7) Decrease the time to college degree completion with graduation rates.

**DESCRIPTION**
The SLAM program is the flagship initiative at College Bridge, a nonprofit organization founded in 2011. The program is a partnership between College Bridge, The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), and The California State University, Los Angeles (CSULA). SLAM offers LAUSD students the opportunity to enroll in CSULA’s MATH 109 (Statistics) course, which is co-taught by a LAUSD teacher and a CSULA professor. Students who successfully complete the course, earn college math credit and satisfy all remediation requirements across all 23 CSU campuses. This galvanizes their college matriculation rates and shortens their time to degree considerably.

**OUTCOMES**
- 76% of LAUSD students earned college level math credit from CSULA compared to the University’s average of 65%.
- The first pilot cohort launched in the fall of the 2013-2014 school year resulting in a 59% decrease in the college math remediation rate.
- 90% of students have been accepted to four-year institutions.
- 100% of students completed and received the FAFSA or Dream Act Applications.

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Parent University

ORGANIZATION

Building Skills Partnership
www.buildingskills.org

GOALS

Building Skills Partnership’s (BSP) Parent University mission is to break cycles of poverty through education. Each year, BSP sets a goal of increasing its workplace parent outreach efforts and increasing its capacity to expand the parent university program to include more families. Annually, BSP provides support to over 450 participants through a combination of one-on-one advising and group workshops.

DESCRIPTION

Building Skills Partnership (BSP) and UCLA Center for Labor Research began their collaboration in 2007 to form a unique partnership of over 75 janitorial companies, more than 40 building owners, the janitor’s union (SEIU-USWW), and colleges, all coming together to break cycles of poverty through education. BSP has engaged parents as the advocate and facilitator towards college while simultaneously working with their children to instill a family centered college-going culture. The Parent University curriculum provides immigrant-working parents the tools needed to navigate a complex educational system, gives the skills to build parents’ advocacy voice, and provides direct support to their children in meeting educational goals. Since 2007, over 2,000 families have participated in the Parent University.

OUTCOMES

- 85% of students are on track to complete A-G admission requirements.
- Students who enroll and are in the 2.0-2.6 GPA average, able to increase their GPA from 2.5 to 3.1 GPA as a result of the program.
- 90% of students enrolled graduate high school.
- 88% of participants apply to a post-secondary education.
- 98% percent complete a FAFSA application.
- 75% of participating students enroll in college.
- 100% of parents report having a better understanding of the K-16 educational system after the Parent University program, and a 30-35% increase in participation in their children’s school.

KEY PERSONNEL

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2015 EXAMPLES OF EXCELENCIA

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS AND PROFILES

Start thinking now about the programs in your community and institutions increasing Latino student success!

Examples of Excelencia is the only national data-driven initiative identifying and recognizing programs with evidenced-based practices that increase Latino student success in higher education. We focus on results and on disseminating these promising practices to others interested in serving Latino students.

WHAT: Nominate a program for consideration as a 2015 Example of Excelencia! Receive national recognition for your program’s work of accelerating Latino student success in higher education. Share your program’s successful outcomes. Leverage the work that you do to help Latino students at other higher education institutions.

WHO: Community-based organizations and programs or departments at institutions of higher education are eligible for nomination.

WHEN: On January 30, 2015, the Call for Nominations will be released

Nominations for 2015 Examples of Excelencia, will be sought in each of four categories: associate, baccalaureate, graduate, and community-based organizations. As an Example of Excelencia, your program will receive:

- A $5,000 financial award to be used to support your efforts;
- Recognition at our 9th annual Celebración de Excelencia held in Washington DC;
- Invitation to be part of a plenary panel to discuss your work at the Accelerating Latino Student Success (ALASS) Workshop;
- Inclusion in the 2015 edition of What Works for Latino Students in Higher Education Compendium widely distributed on-line to Excelencia in Education’s constituents, including key funders, educational organizations, and leaders; and,
- Inclusion in the Growing What Works Database, our online searchable database shared to promote effective institutional practices with real evidence of supporting greater numbers of Latino students succeeding in higher education.

LEARN MORE in January 2015 on our website: http://www.edExcelencia.org

CONTACT: For questions, email examples@edExcelencia.org
ACT salutes *Excelencia* in Education for its dedication in helping all students achieve their dreams by encouraging postsecondary success.
Excelencia in Education accelerates Latino student success in higher education by linking research, policy, and practice and by promoting education policies and institutional practices that support Latino student achievement. A national, not-for-profit organization, Excelencia is building a network of results-oriented educators and policymakers to address the U.S. economy’s need for a highly educated workforce and engaged civic leadership.