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This project was funded through a Federal College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) awarded to the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (cicu) by the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation, the state agency designated to administer the state’s CACG program since 2008.
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Introduction

The Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (cIcu), supported by federal funding through a College Access Challenge Grant, has collected information about how New York State’s independent colleges and universities help non-traditional college students enter and succeed in college. Non-traditional students may include:

- Economically disadvantaged students. These are students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches under the National School Lunch Program, but it can also include others whose primary obstacle to attending college is its cost.
- Historically underrepresented students. Generally, students who are African-American, Latino, American Indian, Native Alaskan, Asian/Pacific Islander, or first in their family to attend college are considered part of this group.
- High school graduates or GED recipients who did not go on to college immediately after earning a high school diploma.
- Part-time students. This group includes students who for various reasons – the demands of work or family, financial reasons, or a desire to explore college work before deciding on a course of study – are not full-time college students.
- Older adult students. These may be older people who have not attended college before, students who did not complete degrees when younger, or college graduates undertaking coursework in a different field for a different degree.
- Veterans of military service, who may in addition be members of one or more of the above groups.

Each of these groups has different needs than traditional college students (those who attend college full-time after graduating from high school). Even if they successfully enter college, they tend to have lower graduation rates than traditional full-time college students. For example, the difference between white and minority graduation rates in New York State is more than 28 percentage points.¹

Another important component of outreach programs, activities or services for non-traditional students is a focus on college awareness among middle-school students in high-need schools. Teachers, counselors, and mentors aid students’ success by working together to promote a college-going culture in their schools and communities. The more non-traditional students learn about college and prepare for college-level work, the more likely they are to succeed in college.

About the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (cIcu)

cIcu is a statewide association representing the public policy interests of the chief executives of more than 100 independent colleges and universities in New York State, the largest private sector of higher education in the world. Although not a government agency, cIcu is an educational corporation formed under the New York State Regents. Its mission is to develop consensus among a diverse membership and to advance higher education public policy as the formal organizational liaison with the New York State Board of Regents, the State Commissioner of Education, and the chancellors of the State University (SUNY) and City University (CUNY), and with the proprietary sector. Since 1978, cIcu’s Outreach Programs have produced helpful resources and publications for students, families, and schools about cIcu’s 100+ member private colleges and universities, college admissions, and financial aid. Available free of charge, the latest series includes Your College Search and Affording College. These publications are distributed to New York State high school guidance and counseling offices, school superintendents, public libraries and to selected high schools in surrounding states. An extensive admissions and financial aid Web site, www.nycolleges.org, contains a growing library of downloadable college awareness resources as well as databases of information about New York’s private, not-for-profit colleges and universities and their degree offerings.

Background on the Handbook of Best Practices for College Preparation and Success, 2nd Edition

The sampling of innovative programs, focused activities and targeted initiatives in this Handbook are evidence of the importance that New York’s independent colleges and universities place on college preparation, access and success for traditionally underrepresented students. Yet this is but a first step. We hope that the sample of programs here will inspire new initiatives, promote productive collaborations, spur innovation and encourage replication of these and other best practices across the state.

The activities described in this edition of the Handbook include programs that focus on improving preparation for and access to postsecondary education. Themes that run through these activities include the importance of providing students and families with the knowledge and tools to navigate the steps to applying to college. Colleges have found numerous ways to ease college entry through early experiences on campuses, including academic courses, visits, and familiarization with campus life. Faculty involvement in development of programs is also crucial.

¹June 17, 2013, NYSED Press Release. Education Department releases high school graduation rates; overall rates remain the same and are still too low for our students to be competitive. Accessed from: http://www.oms.nysed.gov/press/GradRates.2013.StatewideHSGradRateStaysAt74PercentDespiteHigherGradStandards.html
Providing financial aid to lower the expense of college has been shown to help students get to college. That, combined with other ongoing, consistent support services, leads to student success. For adult students, flexible and accelerated programs offer opportunities for study at times that better accommodate busy schedules. For our military and veterans, many campuses offer financial assistance beyond the GI Bill along with on-campus advisors and meeting spaces specifically set aside for them.

This *Handbook of Best Practices for College Preparation and Success, 2nd Edition* was made possible with support from clcu member colleges and universities who provided the activities and initiatives described in this Handbook. The project was funded with a federal College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) awarded to the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (clcu) by the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC), the state agency designated to administer the State’s CACG program since 2008.

**Organization of Best Practices in this Handbook**

The Handbook is organized into five sections with best practices described within each section. The best practice topics include:

I. Early College Awareness and Preparation
II. Comprehensive Student Support Programs
III. Campus Support Programs and Services for Student Persistence and Academic Success
IV. Supporting Veterans and Military Students
V. Alternative and Accelerated Degree Programs for Adults, Non-Traditional Students, Students with Exceptional Needs.

Descriptions of the best practices include information about:

- Purpose/goal of program
- Brief description of program
- Effectiveness of the program and program evaluation
- Contact information to learn more about the initiative

**Private Colleges and Universities Featured in the Handbook**

Albany Medical College
Canisius College
The College of Saint Rose
Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities
Daemen College
D’Youville College
Fordham University
Hamilton College
Hartwick College
LIU Brooklyn
LIU Post
Marist College
Metropolitan College of New York
Molloy College
Niagara University
Pace University
Paul Smith’s College
Polytechnic Institute of New York University
Rochester Institute of Technology
Sarah Lawrence College
St. Bonaventure University
St. Francis College
St. John Fisher College
St. Joseph’s College
St. Lawrence University
St. Thomas Aquinas College
Syracuse University
The Sage Colleges
Utica College
Vassar College

For additional information about this project, or if you wish to reproduce any part of this publication, please contact us at: Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (clcu), 17 Elk St., PO Box 7289, Albany, NY 12224. (518) 436-4781. E-mail: outreach@cicu.org. Web: www.nycolleges.org or www.cicu.org. © 2013
I. Early College Awareness and Preparation

In this section:

Starting in Middle School or Earlier
- After School Tutoring (VAST)
- Colleges2Kids-Kids2College®
- Say Yes to Education Syracuse

College Awareness Programs for High School Students
- College Bound Program
- College Affordability Seminars for High School Students and Their Families
- Exploring College
- Overnight Visitation Program
- Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP): Enhanced Programming
- Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP): Nurturing STEM Leaders
- Summer College for High School Students

College During High School
- Early College International High School
- Smart Scholars Early College High School Program
**Best Practice:**

**Vassar After School Tutoring (VAST)**

**Institution:** Vassar College

**Students Served:** MS Level

**Focus:**
- Academic At-Risk
- Ethnic Minority
- Economic Hardship
- Undocumented Students
- Parents/Guardians
- Single Parents

**Goals**

The VAST program seeks to foster confidence, competence, and caring by creating an inspiring learning environment for middle school students and their college mentors. The focus is on homework and academic enrichment along with extracurricular activities that enhance students’ understanding of pertinent local and global issues.

**Description of Best Practice**

The program operates Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 3:00-4:30 p.m. at Poughkeepsie Middle School during Vassar’s academic year. The afternoon is divided into two sections: academic tutoring and an activity/enrichment component. The academic portion is a one-on-one tutoring session between college and middle school students where homework is reviewed and/or completed. The Vassar tutor consults with the scholar about homework of the day, upcoming tests, and ongoing projects. VAST provides textbooks, enrichment work sheets, and online resources in the subject areas to facilitate the tutoring process. The enrichment portion of the day is activity-based and designed by Vassar students and the VAST Fellow. In conjunction with the students, they create interesting crafts, learn languages and culture, design games and build machines. Cooking classes, photography and art appreciation are also popular activities. Middle school students enjoy interacting with another Vassar student while learning a new skill or expanding an interest.

**Why is it Successful?**

Collaboration between the VAST fellow, Vassar administrative director, and Vassar students is crucial to the success of the program. Through this foundation, we are able to support the college mentors as they build relationships and foster academic skills with their middle school students. The college students complete a rigorous pre-service orientation, meet with the VAST Fellow and attend reflections on best practices. Communication between school personnel, parents, and students is also extremely important. Parent/guardian participation is encouraged through evening and weekend events where topics of interest and social interactions are shared.

**Evaluation**

This fall we initiated some evaluation tools to measure the effectiveness of the program. For instance, we were interested in knowing how well we met the needs of the students so we conducted a survey asking various questions such as “What have you learned during VAST tutoring time?” “Do you like working with your mentor?” The questions were open-ended and we compiled all their responses for a record of student opinions of the program. For the mentors, we had mentor reflections in November so we could check in with them halfway through the semester. They provided feedback regarding their relationship with their student and addressed any concerns. They worked together to come up with solutions to issues that frequently arise. During meetings with parents, students and mentors, a series of appropriate questions was asked. The data collected are useful for future planning and confirms the many positives that this program has created.
Collaboration

Some of the VAST activities have been born from college student organizations at Vassar College. Others originate in major departments, such as the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, that facilitate the art appreciation activity led by their student docents. Others are based on academic subjects such as Chinese, Portuguese, and Drama. Collaboration exists among faculty members of these departments, and includes various others such as the A/V department, campus dining, transportation, and computing and information center. Without the cooperation of all departments, the wide range of services and support would not be possible. There is also collaboration within the Vassar College Urban Education Initiative office. The fellows, interns and directors meet regularly to support one another in various ways – from actual presence at events to being a concerned and interested colleague. Support from within the college education department is also very important. Education Professors encourage their students to participate as VAST mentors and serve as advisors for the program, which has been crucial to our success.

We recognize the importance of continuing to improve the collaboration between the college program directors and the public school administrators and staff. Efforts were made by the fellows to acknowledge the support received thus far. With continued efforts, we hope to strengthen these relationships as we recognize the common goal of enriching the educational experience for the middle school students, one student at a time.

Additional Comments

The Vassar College Urban Education Initiative (VCUEI) has many college students involved in their community through service to young people. VCUEI is involved with training college students to assist students through various programs. At the local high school, there are three programs that work with students. Exploring College is a four-year enrichment program that aims to better prepare high school students with high academic achievement and low income backgrounds to apply for college and experience success while there. Through workshops designed to improve their college readiness, application and essay submissions, and goal setting skills, students are encouraged to participate in many facets of the program. There is an expanded after school tutoring session, a writing group and one-on-one scholarly advising led by the program fellow. The two-week summer residential program for sophomores is the capstone project. Students experience college inspired courses led by professors and high school educators. They also enjoy the camaraderie of other students and counselors as they experience dorm living.

The Vassar College Urban Education Initiative programming is aimed at enriching the lives of young people through direct relationships with college fellows and students. These relationships are fostered through programs that incorporate the needs of the youth in our community with the ideals and enthusiasm of college students.

VELLOP (Vassar English Language Learner Outreach Program) is an ELL program that pairs high school students with college student tutors. Throughout the school day, the college mentors sit in to assist their students by offering additional language or academic content support.

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BEST PRACTICE:
Colleges2Kids – Kids2College® (C2K-K2C)

Institution: Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities

Students Served: MS Level

Focus: Academic At-Risk
Economic Hardship
Undocumented Students
K-12 Administrators/Teachers
Parents/Guardians
Single Parents

Goals
The Colleges2Kids – Kids2College® (C2K-K2C) program, based on a program developed by The Sallie Mae Fund in consultation with the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships, seeks to inform middle school students and their families of the benefits and opportunities a college education can provide. It also helps to make students and their families aware of the relationship between future careers and middle and high school academic preparation. Students made aware of these connections in middle school are more motivated to prepare for high school work and, later on, college-level work.

Description of Best Practice
The C2K-K2C program consists of six classroom sessions, conducted in the participating middle school’s classrooms, and concludes with a visit to a college or university campus located near the middle school. Each classroom session, guided by a middle school teacher or staff member, is about 45 minutes in length. Student handbooks and a companion teacher’s guide are used with the program in the classroom.

Sample C2K-K2C Lessons
- Lesson One: Education Options
- Lesson Two: Career Exploration
- Lesson Three: I’m Going to College
- Lesson Four: Paying for College
- Lesson Five: Connecting College and Careers
- Lesson Six: Career Day
- College Campus Visit

Why is it Successful?
Hands-on learning activities are part of this program and very popular with the students. The college campus visit allows the students to envision themselves in college and is often cited by them as one of the most rewarding C2K-K2C activities. Involving the entire community – students, their families, their teachers, their counselors, and staff members at their schools and at the college – helps all the participants to form the connections and gain the knowledge that can aid them in achieving their common goal – preparing young people to apply to, attend, pay for, and successfully complete college.

Evaluation
At the start of the program, students fill out a pre-survey that asks questions about their knowledge of college, their understanding of the college process, and their plans for the future. At the end of the program, after the college visit, students complete a post-survey with similar questions. Responses in both surveys are compared to assess what students have learned and how their attitudes have changed.
Collaboration
The C2K-K2C initiative works in collaboration with clcu, The Sallie Mae Fund, a participating independent college or university,* and a local middle school where 50% or more of the students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. It is because of this collaboration with diverse organizations that clcu is able to work with so many middle school students across New York State. The Sallie Mae Fund provides necessary training materials on the K2C curriculum for teachers and counselors within the participating middle school, while the college partner provides oversight, additional informational resources and contacts for the college awareness components, maintains necessary program logistics and organizes the campus visit. clcu, as grant lead, provides all necessary supplies and materials, and secures grant funding for the program, currently through a federal College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) awarded to clcu by the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC), the state agency designated to administer the state’s CACG program since 2008. Through this collaboration, the program seeks to help change the college-going culture of the school. By working with the teachers and building these effective relationships, it is hoped that the initiative will continue to foster a sustainable partnership between the middle school and partner college.

*clcu has worked with Alfred University, Daemen College, D’Youville College, and New York Institute of Technology.

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“This program and the experience on a college campus helped the middle school students see that planning for their future is necessary and college is possible.”
– Christopher Romanchock, Alfred University, Director, Children and Youth Learning Initiative

“Thinking about college in middle school will help you know what classes you need to take and the scholarships you are able to get.”
– Morgan, 7th grade student
BEST PRACTICE:
Say Yes to Education Syracuse

Institution: Syracuse University

Students Served: MS Level
          HS Level

Focus: Academic At-Risk
       Economic Hardship
       Parents/Guardians

Goals
Say Yes to Education Syracuse was created to increase high school and college graduation rates for urban students. It is the first Say Yes chapter to embrace an entire city school district. Since 2008, Say Yes Syracuse has provided holistic, year-round support to our students throughout their K-12 years and beyond.

Say Yes provides comprehensive supports to City of Syracuse students, including scholarships for those who meet residency, graduation and admission requirements. These supports are aligned with what research indicates is needed to enable every child in the program to achieve his or her potential. The range of services Say Yes offers across its chapters include everything from extended day and year programming, mentoring, tutoring, and school-day academic support to family outreach, scholarships, and social work/psychological services. Additionally, Say Yes partners provide high-quality health care and legal assistance. These services help to create a positive, sustainable framework for each student’s academic experience, one that encourages and rewards continued effort.

Description of Best Practice
Say Yes to Education Syracuse is a city-wide initiative that leverages its collaborative efforts with city government, business sectors, universities and school districts to bring about urban reform. Say Yes is the only organization that brings together the leadership from these three avenues to collaborate on the best ways to institute urban reform. In addition to collaboration, education is central to Say Yes’s mission. Say Yes Syracuse provides access to education for urban students by providing scholarships to all who complete the Say Yes program.

One program out of Say Yes’s broad portfolio of supports is the Say Yes Collegiate Preparatory Academy (SYCPA). SYCPA supports high school students while they navigate the college selection process. The tools provided to do so include SAT and Regents tutoring, personal mentoring sessions with current Syracuse University students, information sessions regarding types of colleges or universities, major selection, financing and more. Each student also receives an individualized academic plan (IAP) that is tailored to meet the student’s academic goals and objectives and to ensure that a student is in alignment with the admission criteria for the colleges/universities that they have an interest in.

Why is it Successful?
Say Yes has been able to have an impact on Syracuse students because it utilizes a number of resources already in place, rather than creating a new infrastructure. The Say Yes Syracuse family includes a diverse array of supporters including civic, corporate, and higher education partners, and calls upon social service agencies, legal services, and philanthropic interests. Say Yes simply brings all those groups to the same table to strategically institute and coordinate effective policies.

Evaluation
The program’s effectiveness is evaluated by producing a bi-annual report card detailing its successes and areas for improvement. Say Yes also assesses its “Lessons Learned,” so that best practices acquired along the way can be further utilized and applied to future programs.

Currently, almost 2,000 students are attending college or receiving scholarships since Say Yes began in Syracuse. There are 156 Say Yes students attending SU during this academic year.

Collaboration
Collaboration is central to Say Yes to Education Syracuse’s success. With partners from a number of different sectors, including: business, education, non-profit and higher education, Say Yes Syracuse has implemented a full range of programs to assist students’ diverse needs.

Additional Comments
Recent achievements include:
- 9th grade discontinuation rate (drop-out, incarceration, or transfer) is down 44 percent
- 9th grade passing rate on the Regents’ algebra exam is up 31 percent
- High school graduation is up 6 percent
- College matriculation is up more than 24 percent

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Best Practice:
College Bound Program

Institution: St. John Fisher College
Students Served: Late HS
Focus: Economic Hardship Parents/Guardians

Goals
Recognizing that many first generation students lack the resources to deal with the college admissions and financial aid processes, the College Bound program offers tools, resources, and continuous support for these high school students to complete the college admissions and financial aid processes. The program is directed to academically-qualified, low-income students who will be the first in their family to attend college and who are enrolled in Rochester-area high schools.

Description of Best Practice
College Bound equips students with the knowledge, skills, and resources to manage the admissions process from beginning to end. Before the start of the program, students reflect on their future and career choices through a workshop designed to elicit information about their academic background, educational goals, and college aspirations.

Offered for the first time in summer 2007, the College Bound program has helped to ensure that academically-qualified, low-income Rochester-area students are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and support necessary to complete the college admissions and financial aid application processes. College Bound is targeted to students whose parents/guardians did not attend college. The program, which comprises a week-long summer residential experience on St. John Fisher College campus, a follow-up workshop during the student’s senior year of high school, and year-long direction and guidance by a program mentor, offers continuous professional support and assistance to students interested in applying to college. Through the program, participants explore career options, develop a group of colleges to consider, and become familiar with specific aspects of the college admission, application, and selection processes.

Approximately 36 students from area high schools (including Rochester City School District schools) will be selected to participate in the College Bound program each year. High school principals and school guidance counselors nominate second semester high school juniors for the program.

In August, College Bound participants convene on the St. John Fisher College campus for an intensive, week-long residential program designed to help students discover their academic and career interests and familiarize themselves with the various aspects of the college admissions process. The week-long summer program helps students to focus on career choices and develop a consideration list of colleges.

A follow-up bi-monthly workshop is task-oriented, ensuring that the students complete their admissions and financial aid applications in a timely manner.

Why is it Successful?
- Student participants develop a comprehensive plan of action that includes identifying and engaging in a comparative analysis of colleges.
- During their senior year, with assistance and encouragement from the College Bound Program, student participants complete a minimum of three admissions applications by December 1, and complete the FAFSA application by February 15.
- The summer residential component provides participants an opportunity to interact with and learn about the college admissions process from College staff and currently enrolled first generation college students as a member of a peer cohort. The week-long intensive summer residence program:
  - Helps student discover their academic interests
  - Familiarizes students with the college application process
  - Empowers students to manage their college admissions process
  - Motivates students to consider a set of colleges appropriate for their educational interests
  - Exposes students to the college experience
- The College Bound Program is successful because it builds upon the foundation provided in the high schools to students by the counselors and it includes their parents/guardians in the college search and selection process.

College Bound assists highly motivated students in overcoming the challenges and eliminating the obstacles associated with completing the admission and financial aid application processes, helping them to become the first generation of their family to attend college.
College Bound has successfully assisted 97% of its participants to enroll in college since its inception in 2007.

A comprehensive follow-up workshop for high school seniors and their parents/guardians during the academic year helps them complete the admission and financial aid application processes. The workshop is four hours in duration. Participating students accomplish the following during their senior year of high school:

- Develop a comprehensive plan that includes identifying preferences, evaluating colleges, writing an action plan, evaluating colleges after visiting them, weighing the pros and cons of colleges, and developing a comparative analysis of colleges
- Complete a minimum of 3 admissions applications by December 1
- Complete the FAFSA application by February 15.

Ongoing communication among program mentors and College Bound students continues throughout the academic year.

Evaluation

The primary criterion for success is the college enrollment rate of program participants. Over the last four years, the average success rate of the College Bound program is 97 percent. This figure provides strong evidence that College Bound is successfully helping students to be the first in their families to apply to and enroll in college.

Collaboration

In addition to Fisher staff, program mentors include professional staff from several Rochester-area colleges including Nazareth College, Roberts Wesleyan College, Alfred University, SUNY Brockport, and the University of Rochester. In addition, these colleges host the students for visits to their respective campuses during the summer workshop week. This provides participating students with a broader exposure to college options, as well as sources of advice and assistance.

Additional Comments

There is a great need for this type of program in the Rochester area:

- At the end of the 2008-09 school year, only 23 percent of Rochester City School District high school graduates intended to enroll at a four-year college the following year (https://www.nystart.gov/publicweb-rc/2009/2b/CIR-2009-26160010000.pdf).
- With 88 percent of Rochester City School District students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch based on family income (http://www.rcsdk12.org/197310416151348457/blank/browse.asp?A=383&BMDRN=2000&BCOB=0&C=55469), many students do not have the resources to successfully negotiate the college admissions and financial aid processes. The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 2005 study states that low-income, first-generation, minority students have lower participation rates in higher education.
- According to The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 2005, approximately 16 percent of the nation’s entering college freshmen in fall 2005 were first-generation college students.
- The Rochester City School District is interested in taking “bold steps” to help students realize their goal of attending college. (http://www.rcsdk12.org/news/0407/RCSD_Stats.htm).

Throughout its history, St. John Fisher College has responded to the needs of Rochester by launching community service programs such as the Fisher Service Scholars Program, where students are encouraged to volunteer at community organizations, and the First Generation Scholars Program in which students engage in mentoring of high school students, as well as Project Community Convergence, a student-led program designed to help beautify Rochester City Schools. By responding to the needs of city youth, College Bound continues the rich tradition of community service at the College. College Bound assists highly motivated students to overcome the challenges and eliminate the obstacles associated with completing the admission and financial aid application processes, helping them to become the first generation of their family to attend college. With approximately 25 percent of Fisher undergraduates identifying themselves as first-generation college students, St. John Fisher College has the experience and track record to attend to the needs of these students, ensuring their success as they pursue higher education.

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BEST PRACTICE:
College Affordability Seminars for High School Students and Their Families

Institution: LIU Post

Students Served: HS Level
College 1st Yr
College 2nd Yr
Veterans
Adults

Focus: Academic At-Risk
Ethnic Minority
Economic Hardship
Homeless Minors
Undocumented Students
Wards of the Court
K-12 Administrators/Teachers
Parents/Guardians
Single Parents

Goals
LIU Post Admissions and Student Financial Services Office provide free financial literacy seminars to high school students and their parents to inform them about opportunities to obtain scholarships, grants, internships, loans, and work experiences that may significantly reduce the cost of college tuition. Counselors provide detailed information and personal guidance in completing the FAFSA application. Bilingual counselors provide assistance in both English and Spanish.

Description of Best Practice
A two-hour seminar is typically held on Saturday mornings from November through March. The format of the seminars includes an introductory overview of the state, federal and institutional aid process led by the director and staff of the Office of Student Financial Services. Counselors also provide line-by-line instruction of the FAFSA in both one-on-one and small group sessions.

Why is it Successful?
This is a service we provide to the community free of charge. The student is not required to attend our university. Since its launch in 2008, the numbers of participants have steadily increased and additional workshops have been added. Approximately 300-400 people participate each year.

Evaluation
Although we do not require students to attend the university to participate in the College Affordability Seminars, approximately 20% of participants have enrolled as matriculated students.

Collaboration
The program is a collaboration between the campus Admissions and Student Financial Services Office. Financial literacy is vital to a student’s success in college. We strive to create an environment where incoming students do not feel hindered by the anxiety associated with paying for college. We teach them how to take advantage of financial aid opportunities early in their academic careers, thereby allowing them to focus fully on their classroom studies. Our Financial Aid Office advises students through the process from application through graduation. The academic advisors in our Division for Student Success also work closely with our Financial Aid counselors to identify and assist students who may be at risk for leaving college due to financial constraints.

For Further Information
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Financial literacy is vital to a student’s success in college. We strive to create an environment where incoming students do not feel hindered by the anxiety associated with paying for college.
BEST PRACTICE: 
Exploring College

Institution: Vassar College

Students Served: HS Level
- Program graduates who are now first year college students and
- Vassar College students who serve as mentors and tutors

Focus:
- Minority
- Economic Hardship
- Parents/Guardians
- Single Parents
- Students with Learning Differences

Goals
Exploring College is a four-year enrichment program, generously funded by the Dyson Foundation. Its aims are to better prepare Dutchess County high school students with combined high academic achievement and low-income backgrounds for admission and success in college through workshops, mentoring, and personalized counseling.

Description of Best Practice
The program operates year round with weekly workshops, after school tutoring, community service events, and college visits run by Exploring College faculty and staff. Each cohort works alongside Vassar student-mentors, who meet with our students individually and during scheduled events to provide additional support and motivation. These mentorships create connections and continuity over the course of the program, as well as provide guidance for students and their families at critical points in the college preparation process.

The other central feature of Exploring College is a two-week residential experience at Vassar scheduled for the summer between the students’ sophomore and junior years. The program is modeled after Vassar’s award-winning Exploring Transfer program—which for 25 years has served a similar role for community college students. Exploring College scholars enroll in two courses, team-taught by Vassar/Secondary education faculty. Moreover, program counselors assist with coursework, writing, and other academic and social issues in preparation for college success.

Why is it Successful?
Collaboration among the Exploring College staff, Program Director, and high school administrations are crucial to the success of the program. Through continued communication with key school personnel and an increased presence at the high schools, and through our after-school programming, Exploring College has built a network that allows all parties to comprehensively meet the needs of the students we service. Additionally, the one-on-one guidance students receive from the Exploring College Fellow and their Vassar student-mentor makes it possible to provide all Exploring College students with individually tailored counseling throughout their academic careers.

Evaluation
Through a series of questionnaires, interviews, and collection of quantitative data of students’ academic performance, Exploring College is able to gauge program strengths and areas of needed improvement. At weekly workshops, students evaluate the effectiveness of workshop presentations and make suggestions for future workshop topics.

A member of the 2012 cohort won a local essay contest.
Exploring College is a long-term mentoring program where high school students participate in college preparedness through weekly workshops, mentoring, and tutoring by a college fellow and college student mentors.

Collaboration

Without the cooperation of all departments, the wide range of services and support would not be possible. There is also collaboration within the Vassar College Urban Education Initiative office. The fellows, interns, and directors meet regularly to support one another in various ways – from assisting at various events to collaborating on major programming projects. Support from Vassar’s Education Department is also very important. Support from professors through their classes in the form of projects or becoming more involved as advisors has been crucial to the success of the program.

Beyond the collaboration that exists between the Urban Education Initiative and other Departments and programs at the college, UEI programs also collaborate with local, community-based organizations. With continued efforts, we hope to strengthen these relationships as we recognize the common goal of enriching the educational experience for K-12 students.

Additional Comments

The Vassar College Urban Education Initiative (VCUEI) has many college students involved in their community through service to young people. The VCUEI is involved with training college students to assist K-12 students through various programs. At a local school, Poughkeepsie High School, there are two additional programs for secondary school-age students.

The Urban Education Initiative has a Let’s Get Ready chapter that is overseen by VCUEI staff and Vassar students. The program offers SAT prep and additional college-readiness support to enrolled high school students.

VELLOP (Vassar English Language Learner Outreach Program) is an ELL program that pairs high school and elementary students with Vassar student-tutors. Throughout the school day, the college mentors sit in to assist ELLs with additional language and/or academic content support.

All students in the 2012 cohort had viable post-secondary education plans.

For Further Information

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BEST PRACTICE:  
Overnight Visitation Program

Institution:  D’Youville College  
Students Served:  Late HS  
Focus:  
- Academic At-Risk  
- Economic Hardship  
- Parents/Guardians  
- Single Parents  

Goals
The Overnight Visitation is a program for students looking for an immersion experience at the campus. We do many social and academic activities and have since included a program for parents/guardians the evening that students get dropped off. Students who attend are more likely to enroll.

Collaboration
The Overnight Visitation Program includes a Financial Aid seminar with personal counseling appointments as well as a “File your FAFSA” session where families can complete their FAFSA application.

For Further Information
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The Overnight Visitation Program is a great opportunity for students looking for an immersion experience at the campus.
BEST PRACTICE:
Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP): Enhanced Programming

Institution: Albany Medical College

Students Served:
- MS Level
- HS Level

Focus:
- Ethnic Minority
- Low Socio-Economic
- Parents/Guardians

Goals
The purpose of STEP (New York State’s Science and Technology Entry Program) is to prepare minorities, historically under-represented, or economically disadvantaged secondary school students, for entry into post-secondary degree programs in scientific, technical and health-related fields and the licensed professions. Albany Medical College has developed a series of enhancements to the State guidelines to address the challenges of the communities it serves.

Description of Best Practice
Albany Medical College’s STEP, with enhancements designed by the Office of Community Outreach and Medical Education, and informed by parents, students and community leaders, takes a holistic approach to preparing students in STEP for college. Not only does it ready students for further education in science, technology and health-related fields, but it also incorporates learning and training into other important aspects of student life and culture, critical to success in these fields. The students meet in two-hour sessions twice weekly during the academic year, in classrooms at Albany Medical College.

The College has augmented STEP with programs that are “wraparounds” to STEP’s core activities and education prescribed by New York State, including:

- **Parents Symposium:** Each spring, the college invites several hundred parents of middle and high school students, as well as anyone interested in the achievement and academic success of minority students, to a day-long forum at Albany Medical College. It aims to help parents prepare their children to succeed in high school and to prepare them – and their teens – for college and the future. Typically the event includes a series of presentations by physicians and experts in financial aid, clinical psychology and teen health from Albany Medical College, community educators from several area school districts, BOCES and the College of Nanoscale Science at the University at Albany. Participants learn about careers of the future, how high school “really” works and how to get the most out of high school years, along with information on adolescent health, financial aid for college and scholarships.

- **MedQuest:** Each summer, Albany Medical College welcomes 20 high school students, many who participate in STEP, for a free week of career exploration and a college campus experience. The “camp,” which runs from 9:00 am-3:00 pm weekdays, features introductions to numerous health-care professionals representing a wide range of disciplines, CPR training, hands-on workshops, an introduction to nursing, and tours of the Emergency Department and specialized labs. Students also participate in a computer-based career exploration review.

- **Money 101 for Teenagers:** Partnering with an internationally recognized financial consultant and author of the book, *Teen Money 101*, Albany Medical College hosts a four-hour session each fall for high school students. It is billed as an “interactive adventure in personal financial literacy,” and promotes financial literacy for parents and students, and prepares its participants for high-paying careers as a means of financial security.

- **Individualized Counseling Sessions:** A seasoned college admissions professional is contracted to provide one-on-one guidance, advice and counseling for seniors and their parents as they formulate college applications and make decisions about final college selections.

- **Youth Leadership in Public Speaking:** In collaboration with the Stratton VA Club of Toastmasters International in Albany, Albany Medical College offers a series of eight workshops to help students build communications skills.

Why is it Successful?
The activities designed and/or selected are based on the observed and assessed needs of the population served and the requests of students and parents.

“MedQuest was VERY informational, yet FUN and enjoyable, which kept me interested while learning.”

– High school student who participated in Albany Medical College’s MedQuest program.
Evaluation
Student and parent satisfaction surveys for both STEP and the wraparound programs indicate a high level of approval – and need for such opportunities. Pre- and post-test questionnaires for all extra-curricular cognitive activities are frequently employed. For example, the financial literacy seminar, “Money 101 for Teenagers,” resulted in an increase in financial knowledge of 85-95 percent for more than two-thirds of the participants.

Collaboration
The culture of Albany Medical Center and Albany Medical College is imbued with collaboration because it inevitably strengthens and helps broaden programs that the Center and College are involved in, including STEP and its enhancements. Not only does the College’s Office of Community Outreach and Medical Education engage individuals from clinical, teaching and administrative departments as well as medical students, but it also seeks partners outside its walls, including the Albany, Bethlehem and Shenendehowa school districts, the Catskill Hudson Area Health Education Center, Questar BOCES and the Stratton VA Hospital Toastmasters Club, among others.

These collaborations underscore Albany Medical College’s commitment to the community as a valuable resource and an institution that believes strongly in the importance of participating in bettering the health and quality of life for all in the region.

“I learned so much at this camp. It opened my eyes to new health careers.”
– High school student who participated in Albany Medical College’s MedQuest program.

For Further Information
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Not only does the program provide early career exposure, it also promotes the value of internships.
BEST PRACTICE:
Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP): Nurturing STEM Leaders

Institution: Fordham University

Students Served: MS Level
                HS Level

Focus: Minority
       Economic Hardship

Goals
The Fordham University STEP Program is designed to motivate and better prepare minority and disadvantaged secondary school students for future post-secondary studies and careers in STEM, health and licensed fields. The program emphasizes academic preparation and career awareness through enrichment, tutorials, standardized testing preparation, and career counseling activities.

Description of Best Practice
STEP conducts a five-week summer program that provides academic enrichment classes in science, mathematics and writing, and the following:
- Internships for high school students to provide exposure to targeted professions
- Tutorials and Study Groups
- Academic, Career, Financial Aid Counseling
- College and High School Selection Counseling
- Specialized High School Entrance Exam (Sci-Hi) and T.A.C.H.S. Preparation
- Special Lectures and Workshops to introduce students to STEM, health and licensed fields
- Leadership Training and Career Development Institute
- Cultural and Recreational Activities and Field Trips

Why is it Successful?
Comprehensive program services and activities assist students in achieving academic excellence and developing career goals and objectives.

Evaluation
Program reports data regarding student enrollment and success annually. In addition, students evaluate various program components (i.e. program evaluation) annually to determine effectiveness of services provided.

The Fordham University STEP program has been in operation for over 25 years.
BEST PRACTICE:
Summer College for High School Students

Institution: Hartwick College
Students Served: HS Level
Focus: Ethnic Minority

Goals
The Hartwick College Summer College Program gives students an opportunity to experience a college environment and take a college course. Students enroll in a three-credit course while living on campus for three weeks. The program includes a variety of social activities in the evenings and on weekends.

Description of Best Practice
Students enroll in one three-credit course during the three-week program. They live on campus, take classes, meet with professors during study hours and participate in on- and off-campus activities. It is a mini-college experience and helps students better understand what life will be like when they enroll in college.

Why is it Successful?
Full-time faculty teach the courses that incorporate hands-on activities and experiential learning opportunities. The faculty and staff provide mentoring and supervision to create a nurturing and safe environment for students to be successful.

Evaluation
End-of-program interviews are conducted with each student. The program will conduct surveys and SUMMAs to assess the success of the program.

For Further Information
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“Summer College prepared me for college because I became familiar with diversity and the college environment.”
– Sabrina Sweet, Summer College Student

“I received high quality learning from talented faculty.”
– Claire Taversa, Summer College Student

Collaboration
The Summer College program works with a variety of campus departments. The Program staff collaborates with the Campus Activities Department to design fun activities for students to participate in. Residence Life staff support students during their time on campus. Hartwick’s environmental campus at Pine Lake provides outdoor educational and social activities including a ropes course to help build bonding and confidence.

Hartwick’s Summer College Program gives students the experience of attending college and allows students to earn transferable college credits.
BEST PRACTICE:
Early College International High School

Institution: St. John Fisher College with Monroe Community College

Students Served: HS Level
Focus: High school students who choose to attain college credit to support their graduation from high school and their advancement to college

Goals
With a “Smart Scholars” grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation and the collaborative support of the NYSED, St. John Fisher College entered into a collaborative partnership with the Rochester City School District (RCSD) and Monroe Community College to support RCSD high school students toward high school graduation while in turn preparing them more directly for college-level skills expectations and college-level curriculum. The collaboration, a Smart Scholars partnership between RCSD, Monroe Community College and St. John Fisher College, increases students’ belief that college is a viable choice, allows expert college resources to assist with their academic support during the formative years of high school study, and assists the students in the school on every plane as they choose colleges, prepare financial aid documents, and set personal expectations with the goal of graduating from college.

Description of Best Practice
Whereas many middle and upper class students who attend suburban schools grow up in a culture of achievement that “expects” them to graduate from high school and attend college, students from disadvantaged, primarily urban districts, have the weight of numbers against them. Fewer than 60 percent of all high school enrollees in at-risk urban schools will graduate from high school, which precludes their going to college. Those who graduate from city schools find themselves in college without the requisite knowledge, skills and preparation they will need to survive even their first year. Retention rates of at-risk or underrepresented groups in colleges nationwide is lower than retention rates for middle class majority candidates from more “college bound” school districts. This lack of successful college matriculation adversely affects colleges as well since they encounter great and persistent challenges in attracting and graduating students from underrepresented groups.

Why is it Successful?
The program engages both 9th graders and their parents and “grows” them toward the goal of achieving college credit while still in high school. Once students have successfully completed college-level courses, the dream of college is no longer only a possibility. It is now a choice. This also allows the colleges to better prepare high school students for their particular and specific general education curriculum. The collaborative planning and interrelationship between high school faculty and administrators and college faculty and administrators is the key to the successful design and delivery of the program.

The collaboration, a Smart Scholars partnership between RCSD, Monroe Community College and St. John Fisher College, increases students’ belief that college is a viable choice.
Evaluation

The college courses are evaluated with instruments designed by college faculty. Students in the early college high school complete standardized assessments from NYSED and other instruments commonly used by 2-year colleges to judge “college readiness” and skills. Our program has not yet begun the first of the college courses. Success at this point will be measured by the outcomes of the first candidates engaged in college-level study.

Collaboration

RCSD, the college partners and the Smart Scholars grant program support the program. College partners send key administrators (deans) to joint planning meetings. The high school principal is a regular participant in college advisory groups and meets regularly with the college liaison, a faculty member with expertise in adolescence education. College faculty who offer to teach courses will allow high school students to engage with a variety of faculty. The high school faculty are also engaged as adjuncts who teach our college-level methods of teaching courses for the School of Education. These front line exchanges are meant to pervade both college and high school practices of planning and evaluation.

Additional Comments

The eventual success and impact of the program will not be realized until the first early college high school students complete their first college-level course this fall. At that time we will assess the success of the design and make any necessary adjustments.

For Further Information

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Retention rates of at-risk or underrepresented groups in colleges nationwide is lower than retention rates for middle class majority candidates from more “college bound” school districts ... The early college high school design [is] meant to “grab” high school students and their parents as early as 9th grade and to prepare them deliberately and through careful collaborative design to amass college credits while still in high school.
BEST PRACTICE:
Smart Scholars Early College High School Program

Institution: LIU Brooklyn
Students Served: HS Level
College 1st Yr
Focus: Academic At-Risk
Ethnic Minority
Economic Hardship
K-12 Administrators/Teachers
Parents/Guardians
Single Parents

Goals
The chief goal of Smart Scholars Early College High School Program is to establish early college high schools where students have the opportunity to earn college credits. The program is specifically geared toward groups of students who historically have not had access to college. At the end of the first three-year cycle of the program, Long Island University (LIU) Brooklyn will have served 100 students at Brooklyn’s Boys and Girls High School in a rigorous academic program that includes high school and college-level coursework. Students in the program also benefit from increased academic and co-curricular support, ensuring that they obtain a Regents diploma and are prepared for college.

Description of Best Practice
Throughout the academic year, the program is conducted in the high school during regular school hours, through academic seminars and advisement. In the Weekend Academy, the students come to classes at LIU Brooklyn’s campus in downtown Brooklyn. During the summer, there is a four-week intensive program on the LIU Brooklyn campus for high school students. By the time the high school students complete the three-year program, they will have completed up to 20 college credits and will have earned a Regents high school diploma. The curriculum is science and literacy based, and aligned with New York State standards in English, science, mathematics, and technology.

Why is it Successful?
The program supports student learning, teacher development and parent enrichment by creating a learning community that involves students and their parents and teachers. This level of support is critical to student success in college. The students learn in cohort groups. There are teacher development sessions throughout the academic year as well as parent/guardian retreats.

Evaluation
We measure student retention and student GPAs. We also use ACCUPLACER, a standardized measurement of a student’s ability in math and reading and writing, and digital learning portfolios. For the Boys and Girls High School teachers, LIU Brooklyn tracks teacher performance with digital teacher portfolios. LIU Brooklyn also conducts parent/guardian surveys periodically.

Collaboration
The program works closely with the campus’s admissions office, tutoring center and numerous academic departments within LIU. There is constant communication and collaboration among the stakeholders in the program to make sure that the educational experience of the students is seamless between the high school and the college.

Additional Comments
The program primarily serves a predominantly minority, male population. Additionally, the high school served by the program is located in an economically challenged area, Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn.

For Further Information
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The Smart Scholars Early College High School Program supports student learning, teacher development and parent enrichment by creating a learning community that involves students and their parents/guardians and teachers.
II. Comprehensive Student Support Programs

In this section:

Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Programs (HEOP): Highlights
- HEOP at Fordham University
- HEOP at Hamilton College
- HEOP at Molloy College
- NUOP at Niagara University: Summer Program
- HEOP Summer Enrichment Program at Polytechnic Institute of New York University
- HEOP at St. Bonaventure University: Professional Enrichment
- HEOP at St. Lawrence University
- HEOP at Syracuse University

Other Comprehensive Student Support Programs
- ACES Program
- Albertus Magnus Program (AMP)
- Collegiate Science and Technology Program (CSTEP)
- General Studies Program
- Presidential Referral Program
- Project Access
- Removing Obstacles to Success (ROS)
- Summer Institute
- Urban Leadership Learning Community

Innovative Programming
- Back to the Future: A Diversity Workshop for Education Student Teachers
- Community Involvement/Summer Program
- Life After Bonas
- A Play on Words
- Routine for Learning
BEST PRACTICE:
HEOP at Fordham University

Students Served: Enrolled College Students
Focus: Academic At-Risk
         Economic Hardship

Goals
The purpose of the HEOP program is to provide students who demonstrate potential for academic success with the educational supportive services and the supplementary financial assistance they need to become successful college students and graduates.

Description of Best Practice
The supportive services offered upon admission to the HEOP program include a mandatory pre-freshman summer program that consist of college-level math and composition courses; tutorial services; academic advisement; career, personal and financial aid counseling; developmental reading; and selected workshops in various academic and non-academic areas. All HEOP students continue to receive the program’s supportive services, including financial assistance, throughout their undergraduate careers.

Why is it Successful?
There are a number of factors that contribute to the program’s success: personal attention; dedicated staff; a comprehensive advising structure; tutoring services; financial support of students; collaboration among students, staff and faculty across the university, and; regular assessment of student progress from admission to graduation.

Evaluation
■ Admission: The HEOP staff partners with the office of undergraduate admission and the financial aid office at Fordham to holistically evaluate candidates for entrance into the HEOP program. The process includes a holistic academic review, a financial eligibility review and an interview. Each year Fordham enrolls 100 students into program.
■ Summer Program: Students are required to complete a summer pre-freshman program for credit toward their degree that prepares them for the academic and social rigors of college life.
■ Advising: Students attend mandatory academic advising sessions to monitor and assess their progress toward graduation. The comprehensive support services provided are both program specific and university wide.
■ Assessment: The graduation rate of the HEOP students ultimately assesses the effectiveness of the program. As of 2002 the 6-year graduation rate was at 73.5%.

Collaboration
The support services of the HEOP are primarily funded by a grant from the State Education Department of New York. The HEOP program maintains many full-time staff members who teach, mentor and advise the students enrolled. Additionally, Fordham University provides comprehensive student support services for all enrolled students.

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BEST PRACTICE:
HEOP at Hamilton College

Students Served: Enrolled College Students

Focus:
- Academic At-Risk
- Ethnic Minority
- Economic Hardship
- Wards of the Court
- Single Parent

Goals
The primary objective of the Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) is to help provide a broad range of services to New York State residents who, because of academic and economic circumstances, would otherwise be unable to attend a postsecondary educational institution.

Description of Best Practice
Students accepted as Hamilton College HEOP start their academic careers with an intensive five-week summer program before they matriculate in the fall semester. During the summer, students participate in a total of 9 academic and support classes. All students participate in math, English, campus psychology, philosophy, physical fitness, oral communications, routine for learning (self-designed study routine), government, and are assigned to one of 3 sciences: geology, biology, or chemistry. In addition, students participate in library resource seminars, workshops with the Career Center, and receive a thorough introduction to the campus Information Technology Systems. Integrated within the Summer Program are also unique opportunities to fulfill the College’s Quantitative Literacy and Fitness requirements for graduation. The Summer Program also provides opportunities for cultural enrichment, camaraderie, and civic engagement through planned weekend excursions that include art, fine dining, collective and community collaboration, and team building.

Successful completion of the five-week summer program allows students to earn (1) one general studies credit. Students also have the opportunity to begin developing strong working relationships with college faculty, interacting with key college officers, and working with program counselors to help students optimize their academic experience.

Why is it Successful?
The HEOP program works because it deals with each student’s needs on a personal and individual basis. This starts on the first day of the summer program and continues throughout their college careers. A 4-year protocol is in place so that students focus not only on the acquisition of knowledge, but its application; allowing students to create options and choices that lead to highly successful and satisfying futures.

Evaluation
- Since 2004, the average first-year retention rate is 99%.
- Hamilton HEOP students have been awarded research grants, leadership grants, scholarships, and Fulbright scholarships.
- Hamilton HEOP continues to meet the guidelines set by New York State.

Collaboration
Hamilton HEOP collaborates with all cultural offices, The Office of Admissions and Financial Aid. HEOP also works closely with the Dean of Faculty’s Office, Registrar’s Office, and all Academic Resource Centers (Writing Center, Oral Communication, Levitt, ESOL, Library, and Informational Technology Services) to ensure that students have access to all the opportunities that Hamilton has to offer.

Additional Comments
Our approach is to meet the students where they are to help students create independence and vision through our support.

For Further Information
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HEOP Student, Class of 2012, received the George Watson Teaching Internship in Scotland

HEOP Student, Class of 2002, is currently the NY State Assemblyman for District 40

HEOP Student, Class of 1980, is currently director of Hamilton College HEOP Program and the HEOPPO President
BEST PRACTICE:
HEOP at Molloy College

Students Served: Enrolled College Students

Focus: Academic At-Risk
Ethnic Minority
Economic Hardship
Homeless Minors
Wards of the Court
Single Parents

Goals
The principal purpose of the HEOP program is to provide a broad range of services to New York State residents who, because of academic and economic circumstances, would otherwise be unable to attend a postsecondary institution. Services provided include academic support course/curriculum, a pre-freshman summer academic institute, additional state and institutional financial aid support, mandatory tutorials, and individual academic/economic/financial/personal counseling.

Description of Best Practice
The Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) is a state-based matching grant program designed to help students unable to get to college because of academic and economic circumstances, attend and succeed. All HEOP programs operate under the same guidelines and parameters established by the New York State Education Department; however, given the variances in size, location, purpose and focus of institutions throughout the State, each HEOP program’s admission criteria are unique to the particular institution.

Why is it Successful?
- Counselor/student/faculty direct interaction
- Individual weekly meetings (freshmen, sophomores); bimonthly (juniors); monthly (seniors)
- Direct student progress reports each semester, through Professor Inquiry reports on individual students
- Utilization of Academic Planning Sheets to track usage of semesters of eligibility, utilization of financial aid and progress toward degree requirements each semester
- Creation of and monitoring of all Program student financial aid package letters and allocations
- A comprehensive, extended Summer (pre-freshman) academic support program experience
- Comprehensive biennial reports prepared by Program staff reflecting outcomes of support structures provided for students
- Outreach and referral to social, civic, health-related and other outside support services and related networks for students and their families

Evaluation
The success and effectiveness of the HEOP Program is evaluated by both the college and state, using the data and reports created and designed for these purposes. At the college, outcomes of tutorial hours utilized along with financial expenditures per student, per semester are monitored, as well as final course grades and transcript reviews that include annual GPA calculation/comparison in relation to the major. We also evaluate the total hours the student is employed in comparison to grades achieved and correlation to financial aid awards, etc. Reporting to the state also includes evaluation components: adherence to the HEOP Quadrennial Grant Proposal, analysis and evaluation of statistical, financial, and annual data compiled and submitted in biennial reports submitted to the oversight state agency for HEOP, the New York State Education Department.

Collaboration
The Molloy HEOP Program administration, staff and students interface with all academic and student support services: tutorial services, health services, counseling center staff, Campus Ministry, the Albertus Magnus Student division, Financial Aid Office and staff, student academic computer lab staff, faculty, student government and many others. HEOP administrators are in constant contact with these offices, as required throughout the academic year, for purposes of program planning and collaboration on projects and processes, and to conduct consistent, accurate and on-going evaluation of the program.

For Further Information
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Our Higher Education Opportunity Program is successful because of direct counselor/student/faculty interaction, ongoing monitoring of student progress and campus-wide collaboration to provide academic, social and any other needed support services to our HEOP students.
**BEST PRACTICE:**
**NUOP at Niagara University:**
**Summer Program**

**Students Served:** Enrolled College Students

**Focus:**
- Academic At-Risk
- Economic Hardship
- Wards of the Court

**Goals**
The primary objective of the Niagara University Opportunity Program (NUOP) is to help provide a broad range of services to New York State residents who, because of academic and economic circumstances, would otherwise be unable to attend a postsecondary educational institution.

**Description of Best Practice**
NUOP is a primary vehicle through which students from disadvantaged backgrounds have access to a baccalaureate degree at Niagara. NUOP shares responsibility with the Office of Admissions and Records for recruiting and admitting students who are academically and economically disadvantaged and has a primary responsibility both for identifying the academic and personal needs of these students and providing the appropriate academic and counseling support to them. NUOP fulfills this role through the sponsorship of a comprehensive pre-freshman summer program, close work with the University offices, which provide remedial/developmental coursework to level the playing field for program participants, and the development of ties with other campus offices that contribute to the developmental needs of program students. NUOP is valued and endorsed by the Niagara University board of trustees, administration, faculty, and staff.

The NUOP Summer Program is a five-week program that employs a holistic approach designed to integrate the various aspects of college life and promote personal growth and educational achievement for entering freshmen. It incorporates the following objectives:

- Provide basic and academic skills instruction and teach appropriate study skills to NUOP pre-freshmen
- Orient the pre-freshmen to academic life and academic resources at Niagara
- Foster in the pre-freshmen an awareness of the need to develop their academic skills
- Introduce them to the counseling process and encourage them to accept and become willing partners in the helping relationship
- Foster in the pre-freshmen a respect for all rights and responsibilities of being a NUOP student

The individualized attention given to the students in the Niagara University Opportunity Program accounts for its success.

- Provide NUOP staff and students with the opportunity to establish solid working relationships
- NUOP pre-freshman students are required to live in the university’s residence hall for the five-week session.

**Why is it Successful?**
The individualized attention given to the students in the Niagara University Opportunity Program accounts for its success.

**Evaluation**
Before students are enrolled in the NUOP Summer Program, they are required to take the university’s assessment test in reading comprehension/vocabulary, writing and mathematics. At the end of the Summer Program, the assessment is given once again to measure what gains, if any, have been made by each student as a result of the summer coursework.

**Collaboration**
Our successes are made possible by the comprehensive support we receive from the university as a whole with special emphasis on collaborations with the following departments: Office of Admissions, Office of Academic Support, Office of Financial Aid, Counseling Services, Residence Life, Office of Student Affairs, and Hospitality Services.

**For Further Information**
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[The] five-week program employs a holistic approach designed to integrate the various aspects of college life and promote personal growth and educational achievement for entering freshmen.
BEST PRACTICE:
HEOP Summer Enrichment Program at Polytechnic Institute of New York University

Students Served: Enrolled College Students
Focus: Academic At-Risk
Ethnic Minority
Economic Hardship
Homeless Minors
Wards of the Court
Students in STEM College majors

Goals
The NYU-Poly HEOP Summer Enrichment program was designed to assist the incoming HEOP students in building a sound academic foundation to aid them in their freshman year as well as allowing them to become familiar with the campus and resources offered at NYU-Poly.

Description of Best Practice
HEOP pre-freshmen participate in a six-week summer program in which they take courses in pre-calculus, computer science and physics. The students are mandated to attend daily peer tutoring in the courses. Students attend weekly workshops concerning college life, which include topics on financial aid, registration, and on-campus services. Recreational events are also planned such as barbecues and field trips. The students also receive HEOP counseling sessions to discuss their academic goals, academic progress during the summer and other issues that may arise.

Why is it Successful?
The premise of the summer program is to prepare students for the rigors of a NYU-Poly education. The majority of the students take similar courses during the academic year. The students generally state that the summer program has prepared them for their first year at NYU-Poly and given them a good academic foundation. The program also allows them to build a relationship with the HEOP support staff of counselors and tutors before the academic year begins. The students become familiar with the campus, the classes and instructors. They are also able to forge relationships and support systems within the incoming HEOP class, which is extremely beneficial.

“The NYU-Poly HEOP Summer Enrichment Program was an amazing head start for the incoming freshmen and we had a better idea about what to expect in the fall semester. It prepared us really well for the challenge.”
– Farjad Alam, 2012-2013 Freshman

Evaluation
During the program, the summer instructors give the students homework, quizzes and exams to determine their progress. The instructors also fill out evaluations on each student. The grades and evaluations determine if the student is academically ready for NYU-Poly. We also have the students do evaluations of their instructors and their overall thoughts of the summer program. The students’ evaluations are heavily taken into consideration for the rehiring of instructors and the coordination of the following summer programs.
"The NYU-Poly HEOP Summer Enrichment Program was a wonderful opportunity that helped me grow and to prepare for the fall and I do not know what I would have done without it."

– Ayla Decavallas, 2012-2013 Freshman

Collaboration

There are a lot of collaborative efforts during the summer program. The HEOP staff coordinates with the Academic Advisement, Career Services and Counseling and Wellness Center in order to provide an enriching experience for the incoming students.

For Further Information

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We supplement the academic background and preparation of our students by giving them the professional skills that they will need to gain a job and thrive in a professional environment.

**BEST PRACTICE:**
**HEOP at St. Bonaventure University: Professional Enrichment**

**Students Served:** Enrolled College Students  
**Focus:**  
Academic At-Risk  
Economic Hardship  
Homeless Minors  
HEOP Students

**Goals**  
We believe that students experience greater success in a professional environment and at their university when they are grounded in service projects, campus activities and time management training.

**Description of Best Practice**  
Our HEOP students are required to complete eight hours of service each semester. This shows them a pathway to community service in the University and also in the larger, surrounding community. As they help with local and national emergencies, they gain appreciation for the importance of giving back. They realize that they have been fortunate and they begin to enjoy their ability to contribute. These offerings are also valuable resume builders.

Our students’ service accomplishments are highlighted on a service and activity board that is displayed as part of the HEOP Honors/XAE Reception. During the reception, the faculty and staff have the opportunity to witness the students’ involvement, to get to know them better and to have the opportunity to congratulate them and discuss their accomplishments in more detail.

The HEOP Honors/XAE Reception is our opportunity to recognize the students for their outstanding academic achievements, campus activities and service. The Reception takes place each semester and honors outstanding work during the previous semester. All faculty and staff are invited. The students are also encouraged to invite their favorite faculty/staff person with a personal invitation that we provide for them. We also recognize those who are inducted into Chi Alpha Epsilon. Chi Alpha Epsilon is a national honor society that was formed to recognize the academic achievements of students admitted to colleges and universities through non-traditional criteria. To be inducted, each student must obtain a cumulative 3.0 GPA for two consecutive semesters. The reception also provides a valuable opportunity for our students to network with other students, as well as members of the faculty and staff.

Another important area of professional development that we offer is our Professional Dinner. This training begins during the Summer Challenge, where the incoming pre-freshmen attend an introduction to dining etiquette. The next day, they participate in an etiquette dinner where students can practice what they know or what they just learned. In the spring semester the Career and Professional Readiness Center (CPRC) offers another etiquette session, which our students are encouraged to attend. Every spring semester the HEOP office hosts a Professional dinner, which honors the seniors. During this dinner an alumnus/alumna or a distinguished professional is invited to address the group. Students are responsible for inviting faculty and staff members that they would like to include. This is an excellent opportunity for students to dress in professional attire, practice good dining etiquette, and to practice their developing networking skills.

**Why is it Successful?**  
Underclassmen are greatly influenced by their older classmates. As they see them behaving, dressing and communicating with others in professional social situations, they become aware of the necessity to learn these skills in order to make their way successfully in the world that they, too, will enter soon. Younger students thus become motivated and involved as part of the natural process.

**Evaluation**  
We evaluate some of these activities by distributing evaluations to the students after the respective activity. The students have the opportunity to express their needs and opinions through these evaluations. Some of these are just anecdotal but give us an idea what the students are thinking. Therefore, the activities can be adjusted and revamped to meet the needs of each student.
Collaboration
For the service component of our program, we work with a variety of offices on campus. These include but are not limited to BonaResponds, the Center for Social Concern, Bona Buddies, The Warming House, and University Ministries. We also work with the Career and Professional Readiness Center. By encouraging students to work with the Career Center, they become more comfortable with the staff and are much more likely to take advantage of the services that are offered.

Additional Comments
We introduce our students to our expectations from the time they arrive on campus during the Summer Challenge. By presenting these expectations from the beginning, the students realize that this is an inherent and important part of the program that will ultimately benefit them greatly.

For Further Information
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Our HEOP alums tell us that the professionalism that we require throughout their time here and the dining etiquette has made their transition easier into the professional world.
BEST PRACTICE:  
HEOP at St. Lawrence University

Students Served:  Enrolled College Students  
Focus:  Academic At-Risk  
         Ethnic Minority  
         Economic Hardship  
         Homeless Minors  
         Wards of the Court

Goals
The goal of St. Lawrence University’s HEOP program is to recruit, enroll, and support capable, motivated people who are very low income and who are not prepared for the rigors of postsecondary education and are therefore deemed inadmissible to the University.

Description of Best Practice
- Program staff visit high schools and community-based organizations (CBOs) in the fall to recruit applicants.
- Students admitted through HEOP attend a five-week summer transition program. They attend classes 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, have mandatory study time 7 – 11 p.m. Monday – Friday, and participate in cultural enrichment programs Saturdays and Sundays. They earn credit for 2 graded courses.
- Students and staff develop post-graduation career plans including job applications and/or graduate/professional school applications.

Why is it Successful?
Each student has a completely individualized set of plans that are beneficial and revisited continually.

Evaluation
- Many are in the top 50 percent of class ranking
- Placement rates for our HEOP students are identical to the University’s overall rate
- Graduation rates are equal to those of regularly admitted students

Collaboration
HEOP co-sponsors social events with CSTEP and McNair, exposing students from all three programs to the variety of supports. HEOP collaborates very closely with Admissions and Financial Aid to ensure streamlined processes.

Additional Comments
HEOP is very visible on campus, with regular participation of senior staff, the president, and faculty at all our events. HEOP has a positive identity at St. Lawrence University.

For Further Information
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Prepare for success. Graduation and placement rates that defy statistical predictions.
BEST PRACTICE:
HEOP at Syracuse University
Institution: Syracuse University
Students Served: Enrolled College Students
Focus: Academic At-Risk, Ethnic Minority, Economic Hardship, Parents/Guardians

Goals
The Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) is a program for New York State residents that recognizes the qualities sometimes overlooked in standard admissions decisions. It identifies, recruits and supports students who possess the potential and initiative to succeed academically, although their initial academic record might exclude them from being considered for admission.

Description of Best Practice
- The program requires that all HEOP pre-freshmen attend SummerStart, a six-week summer academic program that provides a structured living-learning environment that enables each participant to successfully adapt to the academic and social expectations of Syracuse University. SummerStart allows HEOP students to earn seven credits in skills-based courses (writing and math) as well as regular university courses in a range of subject areas. Students also participate in a pre-freshman seminar that provides an orientation to university resources, study skills and critical thinking.
- Computer Cluster: Our computer cluster is used by staff and students for workshops on various topics (e.g. career development, mentoring, and networking) as well as meetings and study sessions. Students frequent the cluster throughout the day to study, complete homework, do research, and meet with tutors.
- We provide in-house tutoring in a variety of subjects for our students (e.g. biology, math, and economics). We also offer students support for reading and writing with a writing consultant who is available for one-on-one appointments 20 hours a week. If students need tutoring in subjects we do not provide in-house, we pay for outside tutoring as well.
- We reach out to Syracuse City School District high schools and participate in regional college fairs across upstate New York and in New York City through Syracuse University’s Lubin House to make students aware of the opportunities that HEOP provides.

- HEOP, along with the Student Support Services, has collaborated with Syracuse University’s Parents Office to develop a comprehensive initiative that brings parents and students together and provides educational programming to ensure that parents have the information and experience to resume their supporting role. As these students prepare for and matriculate through the transition to college, there is a parallel calendar of meetings and activities to assist their parents with understanding this transition:
  - April – An informational meeting for parents and incoming students in NYC
  - July – Parent Orientation at SummerStart
  - August – Orientation evaluation
  - October – Family weekend with reception, meeting, educational activities, qualitative and quantitative assessment
  - January – Informational meeting for parents in NYC to discuss goals and resources in the light of fall semester grades
  - May – Capstone event, dinner for graduating seniors and parents

The goals of this initiative are to:
- Acknowledge the important contribution of parents to student success and retention
- Enable parents to support students as they make the transition from high school to college
- Acquaint parents with the campus and community
- Educate parents about university policies and procedures
- Inform parents about university resources through a personal connection to the Parents Office
- Inform parents of educational experiences available to them and their students

There has been a strong correlation between family participation in these activities and the graduation rates of students.

- We hold a yearly reception for alumni. In this forum we look to them for creative suggestions on how we can best engage with them while continuing to support the development and career success of our current student population. At a typical reception we look to incorporate internship opportunities for current students, informal interviews, job opening announcements and career preparation activities. Our primary focus is to foster student/alumni networking opportunities, alumni/alumni networking and the maintenance of a connection to our office.

HEOP has a First Year retention rate ranging from 90.8–97.7 percent over six years. The Syracuse University First Year retention rate during the same period ranges from 90.1–92.0 percent.
**Why is it Successful?**

Providing individualized and culturally sensitive services that focus on academic, career and personal issues, our counselors work to assist students in crafting the best possible educational experience that Syracuse University has to offer. We achieve this by implementing the Intrusive and Early Model of counseling. We strongly emphasize first year student retention. We strive for early academic success by covering every aspect of the college experience. The counseling relationship, more than anything else, makes our program effective.

**Evaluation**

- HEOp has a First Year retention rate ranging from 90.8–97.7 percent over six years. The Syracuse University First Year retention rate during the same period ranges from 90.1–92.0 percent.
- In the 2012 fall semester, 39 (of 209) HEOp students earned Dean’s List honors (>3.4 GPA); 92 (of 209) HEOp students earned greater than a 3.0 GPA. In all, 95 percent of HEOp students are in good academic standing according to University standards.
- In the 2012 annual Student Survey, conducted by the Syracuse University Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, more than 90 percent of HEOp students strongly agreed with the statements that “My counselor is concerned about my success”, “I am satisfied with the HEOp counseling services” and “I feel supported by HEOp.”

**Collaboration**

Since HEOp falls under the administrative responsibility of the Syracuse University School of Education, the program collaborates with many campus offices including, but not limited to: the Admissions Office; the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarship Programs; the Tutoring and Study Center; SU Abroad; the Office of Residential Life and the Office of Multicultural Affairs; Ronald E. McNair; C-STEP; STEP. HEOp also works collectively with all nine university colleges. These partners and the resources they provide give HEOp students the finest educational opportunities in the country.

**Additional Comments**

Our students are enrolled in all the schools and colleges at Syracuse University. Scholarship, engagement, professionalism and integrity are fundamental characteristics we look for in an HEOp student. They are mentors, tutors, student leaders, political activists, scholarship winners, artists, athletes and international travelers. Our staff supports our students academically, and in any hardship they may face during their time at SU. We offer comprehensive services to address academic, social and personal needs. We work with all University departments to ensure that HEOp students have access to the support they need.

**For Further Information**

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“Being able to attend Syracuse University was one the best things that ever happened to me. Syracuse University has opened so many doors and offered many opportunities for me. Thanks to HEOp and Syracuse University, I am one step closer to my dreams.”  
– Shatique Hicks, Class of 2015
BEST PRACTICE:
ACES Program

Institution: St. Joseph’s College
Students Served: Enrolled College Students
Focus: Academic At-Risk
Ethnic Minority
Economic Hardship

Goals
St. Joseph’s ACES program was established in 2000 and is designed for high-achieving students who speak English as a second language. The ACES program is structured to address the needs of these students because their communication skills are not yet on par with their cognitive skills.

Description of Best Practice
Although an “ESL program,” the ACES curriculum is not remedial, as its program of study moves away from standard “drills and skills” lessons usually associated with ESL instruction. Instead, the program focuses more on “theme-based teaching,” or instruction that involves reading a series of works that address the same subject matter. In addition to reading and writing about the same topics, theme-based teaching involves experiential learning, with students having opportunities to visit museums or historical sites, all of which are within the context of the theme being studied. For example, last semester, the theme was “New Orleans.” Students read A Streetcar Named Desire, visited the Queens home of jazz musician Louis Armstrong, and even sampled New Orleans cuisine. According to the Director of the ACES program, Mik Larson, students need a “context to learn a language” and theme-based teaching provides that background. Also, by focusing on a theme, students become familiar with vocabulary because they are seeing the same words and phrases more frequently throughout different works. In addition to unique learning opportunities, ACES students benefit from two semesters of intensive reading and writing courses. ACES freshmen also have the support of a weekly writing lab and specialized tutoring. For the remaining three years of their college careers, ACES students can take advantage of the specialized ACES tutors for written assignments in any subject. ACES students are also encouraged to seek academic advisement from the ACES instructors who, having taught them, understand their academic strengths and weaknesses.

Why is it Successful?
In addition to the learning community and collaborative learning models we follow in our workshop/seminar style classes, which both create a supportive community and help to build strong critical thinking and study habits, the in-class writing lab with the instructors (which the non-ACES sections of SJC 100 and ENG 103 do not have), the extensive tutoring support and our recruitment of highly motivated students who did well in high school all contribute to the program’s great success.

Evaluation
In addition to having an above 90 percent success rate at graduating students in 4 years and an above 85 percent overall retention rate, about a third of our students historically have graduated with departmental honors and are accepted to campus honor societies; and about 20 percent make it to the Dean’s List. Over 85 percent of our students earn above a 3.0 GPA, and the graduation or final cumulative GPA for our students is closer to a 3.5.

Collaboration
Our program works extensively with the SJC library staff to prepare students for and aid them with their research work for our courses; we work with Institutional Advancement to secure grants to support our off-campus activities (trips and shows) which in turn strengthen the course themes we are teaching; we work closely with other department chairs (Art, Math, Chemistry) to plan and hold events that present cross-curricular topics; and we have a strong relationship with the IT department, who support our mobile laptop unit (which makes our in-class writing workshops possible).

For Further Information
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The Albertus Magnus Program (AMP) provides services to students who lack the standard academic credentials required for regular admission by providing extensive support and guidance, especially during freshman year. For the Fall 2012-2013 semester the retention rate for AMP freshmen was 95%.

Why is it Successful?
The AMP utilizes small classroom sizes, proper student-to-faculty pairing (especially for first semester), collaboration and referrals to support services, as well as a comprehensive approach to student achievement to ensure success. The use of weekly workshops and heavy interaction with the AMP counselor also enhances the success of the program.

Evaluation
Retention rates, GPAs, assimilation into a major course of study, student surveys and qualitative observations are all used to evaluate the AMP.

BEST PRACTICE:
Albertus Magnus Program (AMP)

Institution: Molloy College

Students Served:
- Late HS
- Enrolled College Students

Students accepted into AMP are considered AMP students until they graduate.

Focus: Academic At-Risk

Goals
The Albertus Magnus Program (AMP) was founded under the philosophy that traditional methods for measuring academic achievement (SAT/ACT and GPA) are not always the most accurate for determining a student’s potential for success at the college level. The AMP provides services to students who lack the standard academic credentials required for regular admission by providing extensive support and guidance, especially during freshman year.

Description of Best Practice
Students who fall below traditional admission standards, but exhibit a high potential for success at the collegiate level are admitted into the AMP. The AMP counselor works closely with Admissions to determine eligible students. Students admitted in the AMP are provided with skill development in Math and English (as determined by SAT scores) and are linked with fellow students, faculty members and administrators to aid their assimilation to the college campus.

AMP students have access to individualized academic advisement on an as-needed basis with their AMP counselor who maintains an “open-door policy.” Walk-in appointments are welcomed.

AMP students are mandated to attend weekly group sessions that place strong emphasis on skill and attitude development and include topics such as higher education “jargon,” career counseling, financial aid counseling, time management, learning styles, study skills, resume and cover letter writing, test anxiety, stress relief and course registration.
Collaboration

The AMP links students with important academic resources such as the Writing Resource Center, peer and professional tutors, older AMP students, career development center, department chairpersons, clubs and organizations, “skill-building” faculty and personal counseling center. Through the use of referrals, the AMP is able to enhance the AMP student experience on more than an academic level, subsequently raising academic achievement. The AMP recognizes that a comprehensive approach when working with students will ultimately lead to a higher retention rate, higher GPAs and more successful transitions into the college culture – all of which are the goals of the program.

For Further Information
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AMP utilizes a comprehensive approach when working with students that leads to a higher retention rate, higher GPAs and more successful transitions into the college culture. The program is successful because it utilizes small classroom sizes, proper student-to-faculty pairing, collaboration and referrals to support services, as well as a comprehensive approach to student achievement to ensure success.

Examples of our AMP students’ activities:
- An AMP student organized a month-long, campus-wide event where students, faculty and administration used manual wheelchairs to raise disability and accessibility awareness on campus.
- An event involving collaboration with more than eight different campus organizations, other students, faculty and administration in order to promote and celebrate Black History Month was organized by an AMP student.
- One of our AMP students is president of the South Asian Cultural Exchange Club, which works to promote events that focus on South Asian culture.
BEST PRACTICE:
Collegiate Science and Technology Program (CSTEP)

Institution: Fordham University
Students Served: College 1st Yr
Focus:
Ethnic Minority
African American/Black
Hispanic/Latino
Native American
Alaskan Native
Economic Hardship

Goals
Fordham CSTEP is part of a New York statewide initiative to prepare and direct historically underrepresented minorities (African American/Black, Latino/Hispanic, Alaskan Native, Native American) and/or economically disadvantaged students to pursue careers in STEM, health and licensed fields.

Description of Best Practice
CSTEP is an academic year and summer program. Program highlights include:
- The summer program provides a five-week pre-health summer program for incoming freshmen
- Paid internships and research opportunities
- Scholarships for test preparation courses
- Financial aid for graduate applications
- Academic and career counseling
- Free tutorials
- Career seminars, speakers and networking opportunities
- Writing skills and study skills workshops and tutorials
- Computer lab and laptop loaners
- Faculty-led review sessions in all Pre-Med required coursework

Why is it Successful?
Comprehensive program services provide opportunities for academic, personal and professional development of each student.

Evaluation
Program reports data regarding student enrollment and success annually. In addition, students evaluate various program components (i.e., pre-freshmen summer program) annually to determine effectiveness of services provided.

Collaboration
The CSTEP program reports to the Office of the Provost and is fully integrated into the academic mainstream of the University. By working closely with university faculty, CSTEP is able to provide academic support and monitor the progress of program students.

The program also works closely with non-academic departments in the university such as the Office of Career Services whereby students are provided with opportunities for internships, employment and professional development. Collaboration with the Dorothy Day Center for Service and Justice has been helpful in developing and facilitating service-learning curriculum for pre-health incoming freshmen.

The CSTEP director is a member of the University’s pre-health committee. This has helped to ensure CSTEP students are fully aware of all pre-health requirements and services provided by that department. Collaboration with the Albert Einstein College of Medicine allows for CSTEP students interested in pursuing health careers to participate in summer and academic year clinical and research programs and activities.

Additional Comments
CSTEP serves students on both the Rose Hill and Lincoln Center campuses of Fordham University.

For Further Information
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CSTEP had a Fulbright scholar in 2012. Juan Duran secured a research scholarship at the Cajal Institute in Madrid, one of the oldest and most prestigious neurobiological research centers in Spain.

Fordham is a charter member of CSTEP. The program has been continuously operated since 1987.

CSTEP provides students with a unique college experience that combines academic services and activities with a variety of networking and career-advancement opportunities.
BEST PRACTICE: General Studies Program

Institution: Polytechnic Institute of New York University

Students Served: College 1st Yr

Focus: Academic At-Risk

Goals

The General Studies Program (GS) was created to provide proactive academic support in mathematics and the sciences for underprepared students. GS provides weekly tutoring and advising sessions while students maintain a full-time course load. The primary goal of the program is to provide an academically supportive environment for underprepared first-year students.

Description of Best Practice

NYU-Poly's General Studies program begins in the summer before the first year and ends at the end of the Spring or Summer following the first year. Students are placed in the GS Program by Admissions and are mandated to spend the summer before their first year in either the GS Summer Online or On-Campus Program. Overall, the GS Summer Program lasts six weeks and serves to support students both academically and socially. By spending the summer in the program, students are introduced to academic concepts designed to improve their quantitative and scientific literacy in an engineering context that will benefit them in the fall. Students are also introduced to other students who will become a part of their support systems once the fall semester begins. In addition to the academic and social elements, the Summer Program is also structured to provide support in the forms of weekly advising and tutoring. These support systems are a constant in the Fall and Spring semesters as well, thus allowing the student a stabilizing amount of structure in what can often be a confusing and sometimes difficult adjustment from high school to college. Trips and other social activities are also planned throughout the year, sometimes in conjunction with the HEOP and TRIO programs, to promote student interaction and peer support.

Why is it Successful?

The transition from high school to college, as stated above, can sometimes be a difficult one for students, especially those who are underprepared. The GS program strives to provide an effective summer program that assists underprepared admitted students to become aware of and equipped for the academic challenges they might expect in the fall. Students report on post-summer evaluations that they are surprised by how much they both enjoyed and benefitted from the summer program. Tutoring and weekly advising continues throughout the fall and spring semesters. Tutoring is beneficial for every student, not just underprepared ones, and weekly advising is as well. Peer tutors serve as role models for the students and, whenever possible, tutors are former GS students who have shared some of the same experiences as the first year students. Weekly tutoring also gives students an opportunity for extra academic assistance that can help them adjust to and keep up with the speed at which subjects are covered in college versus high school.

Professional Advisors meet weekly with the students to listen to the students and ask how they are doing academically and how they are adjusting to college. Weekly advising meetings are also opportunities to assist students with their academic adjustment where necessary, ask for the student’s opinion of how they are adjusting to college, and offer advice and referrals to resources that promote success and allow the student to self-correct if s/he is veering too far off-track. The weekly, personalized attention during that first year is a benefit that students often report that they valued once they’ve finished the GS Program.
NYU-Poly’s General Studies Program provides proactive support in mathematics and the sciences for underprepared students.

When most students start college, one of the things they have in common is that they really don’t know many people. When GS students start NYU-Poly, they come in knowing many people, having already formed budding friendships during the Summer Program. They are also encouraged to continue to study together as they did in the summer and to utilize other Institute resources, such as the Polytechnic Tutoring Center and Math Department, so they have a chance at being better equipped for college level study. Trips and social activities are offered with the intention of solidifying the group and introducing them to non-GS students such as those participating in both HEOP and TRIO Programs.

**Evaluation**

Likert scale evaluations, both paper and pencil and electronic, are used to collect student feedback on all that the program offers at the end of the Summer Program, the end of the year-long program, and at the end of each social activity. Tutoring evaluations are administered at the end of each semester. Documented academic performance at the end of each semester, semester-to-semester enrollment, and program completion rates round out the ways the GS Program measures its effectiveness and the data are used to make improvements to the program.

**Collaboration**

During the student’s first summer on campus, GS and HEOP students have the most interaction because they are the two primary pre-college groups on campus. During the fall and spring semesters, GS students are invited by the TRIO program to join if eligible. TRIO also provides invitations to activities for those students who are not TRIO eligible. GS also collaborates with Residence Life starting in the summer when students from out-of-state or country stay on campus. Programming is planned for them so they can bond and adjust to their new surroundings. These students often dorm together from summer onward, hence adding to their bonding experience with each other, the program, and the school. Collaboration with each program makes students feel more a part of the larger community, which helps them to deepen their connection to the institution. Research demonstrates that students who feel that they are a part of the larger Institution are retained at a higher rate.

**For Further Information**

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BEST PRACTICE:  
Presidential Referral Program  

Institution: Marist College  
Students Served: Freshmen – Seniors  
Focus:  
Ethnic Minority  
Economic Hardship  
Single Parents  
Comprehensive Support  

Goals  
The primary goal of the program is to eliminate any barriers to success and to ensure that students graduate within five years.

Description of Best Practice  
The Presidential Referral Program gives underrepresented (which include geographic, ethnic, racial) students from challenging backgrounds the opportunity to attend Marist College. The program provides financial, social, academic, and career development resources to create an environment in which students are able to graduate within five years. They also develop skills that prepare them for life post-graduation. The program began in 2005 with only one student, and within a few years, it has grown to approximately 25 students ranging from freshmen to seniors. Our students are primarily from cities in the southern part of California. In certain instances, however, we do bring in a student from the New York City area that does not meet the standards of the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP), but does meet internal Marist academic and financial standards.

The first stage of the process is the recommendation of the students by our California Admission Counselor. Our Admission Office works very closely with the President’s Office to review those students who are academically and economically disadvantaged. Once accepted, each student is required to read and sign a document defining the program’s requirements and expectations. This document is produced by the Center for Multicultural Affairs (CMA), which works with the students on academic advising, career counseling, financial management, networking connections, self-development, and cultural empowerment. All students are required to meet with their assigned counselor from the CMA office on a bi-weekly basis and to attend four developmental/informational meetings each semester. In addition to their meetings with CMA counselors, students will also be in frequent contact with the Presidential Fellow for updates and assistance as needed.

Why is it Successful?  
- One-on-one student and staff interaction  
- Bi-weekly meetings & development workshops  
- Progress assessment and recommendations each semester  
- Individualized plans for success, which are revisited each semester

Evaluation  
We evaluate each student individually through their involvement in campus life, GPA, and meeting attendance. With all of the resources available, we track their progression through performance in the classroom and involvement in the college community. We also track graduation rates and post-graduate outcomes.

Collaboration  
This program is a collaboration of the President’s Office, The Office of Enrollment Management, and the Center for Multicultural Affairs.

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BEST PRACTICE: Project Access

Institution: St. Francis College

Students Served: Enrolled College Students
The program begins with newly enrolled freshmen and extends through graduation

Focus: Academic At-Risk
Students coming to the college who are underprepared as determined by incoming SAT and placement exam scores

Goals
The goal of Project Access is to help students develop basic competencies in writing, reading, and study skills in order to succeed and thrive in college courses and in the community.

Description of Best Practice
Once students enter the Project Access program, they are part of it until they graduate. The program begins with three weeks of summer workshops for enrolled freshmen that provide a bridge to college. These workshops expose students to the fundamentals of learning: how to study, how to read, how to think. The workshops also cover what it takes to succeed in college. There is also an experiential learning component that features field trips to culturally and socially significant sites in New York City. Students write about their experiences on these trips and participate in group discussions to refine their communication and critical thinking skills.

The year begins with a kick-off event that enables participants to meet while reinforcing a sense of purpose for their collegiate career. During the first Fall semester, students take a non-credit bearing writing and study skills workshop along with a three-credit basic writing course. They also attend individual and group tutoring sessions throughout the academic year. All students participate in ongoing advisement sessions with instructors and program staff to ensure they are making satisfactory progress. A year-end event recognizes the student’s accomplishments in the program.

Why is it Successful?
Project Access lays out a path for academically underprepared students, showing them a way to reach their goal of becoming college graduates. By bringing students together in a cohort, they are able to support one another, rather than struggle in isolation. The bridge-to-college summer component allows students to feel more at ease in the college setting prior to the Fall semester. The course in the Fall in which all Access students enroll helps them find their “voice” in both written and oral form.

Students in the Project Access program are also equipped with individualized tutoring plans with designated tutors in Mathematics, the Sciences, and the Liberal Arts. The continuing support Access students receive from counselors and advisors shows them that there will always be people there to help them. Access students are tracked to ensure academic success. At midterm and final grades, Access students who earned GPAs below 2.0 are flagged. Outreach includes individual counseling and workshops focusing on success strategies.

Some of our best students have come up through the Project Access program.

Evaluation
The Project Access program has shown significant success in assisting academically underprepared students to succeed in college. Project Access’s effectiveness in preparing young men and women to succeed in college is underscored by their strong GPAs, retention and graduation rates of its participants. The average GPA of Project Access graduates is 2.84, which is relatively close to St. Francis College’s non-Access graduates who complete their studies with an average GPA of 3.25. Nearly 40 percent of Project Access students graduate from St. Francis College within six years, as compared to 50 percent of the non-Access students. Considering that the Project Access students enter college at a relative academic disadvantage to their non-Access peers, their ability to succeed and graduate demonstrates that this program is changing lives.
Collaboration
Project Access is part of the larger Freshman Year Experience Program run by the Freshman Studies department, which provides the advisors who work with Access students. The department supports Project Access students by providing academic advisement and assistance in defining career goals. We are proud to say that more than 89 percent of the 340 currently enrolled Access students have declared a major area of study. Furthermore, the Academic Enhancement Center conducts individual and group tutoring sessions and study workshops. In addition, professors from numerous disciplines take an active interest in Project Access by teaching courses and leading tours and special events aimed specifically at students in the program. The feeling that Project Access students are a part of the entire community and not a stand-alone group of students is another reinforcer that sustains a nurturing environment and supports these at-risk students.

Additional Comments
Project Access students are individually tracked to ensure academic success. At midterm and final grades, students who have a GPA below 2.0 receive personal counseling. Additionally, students who do not register for classes during the registration period are contacted by their advisors to ensure they are on track academically.

In order to further support Project Access students’ development and increase their chances of graduation, students have the opportunity to take the “StrengthQuest” inventory, which helps them identify their personal strengths. Students then write essays that focus on their strengths, how they display them, and how they can utilize them to achieve success. Every fall a Project Access Welcome reception is held for new Access students and their parents. The event highlights the program’s mission and features current Access students and recent alumni who speak about their experiences and of their subsequent academic success. Each Project Access student receives the book “Eats, Shoots, and Leaves” which celebrates the importance of grammar in proper writing.

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The Project Access program helps build a strong academic foundation for incoming at-risk freshmen that allows them to succeed academically as they persist toward graduation.
BEST PRACTICE:
Removing Obstacles to Success (ROS)

Institution: St. Francis College
Students Served: Enrolled College Students
Focus: Academic At-Risk

Goals
St. Francis College developed a program called Removing Obstacles to Success (ROS), which provides students with a comprehensive support system of workshops, one-on-one advisement, and peer counseling, and aims at reaching students struggling academically or on academic probation.

Description of Best Practice
Every semester students who achieve a GPA of below 2.0 are contacted to participate in the Removing Obstacles to Success (ROS) program. Students are asked to attend at least three workshops offered by the program, which cover a variety of topics such as time management, success strategies, major and career decisions, impacts of stress on academics, knowing and using your strengths, and preparation for effective writing. We have found that incorporating peers has been helpful to students in the ROS cohort as they feel the peers were once “in their shoes.”

Additionally, students are asked to meet with an academic advisor in Freshman Studies to discuss the obstacles that came in the way of their success. Each student has an academic hold placed on their registration, which is removed once the student meets with his/her advisor. Every semester the students in the Removing Obstacles to Success cohort are also given an intake questionnaire, which helps us better understand the unique needs of the group. We use this to tailor our interventions each year based on student needs.

Our analysis has consistently shown that students report problems that include poor time management, general procrastination, test anxiety, and emotional stress. Interns and student volunteers also serve as peer mentors in the workshops and offer students in the program insights on how they managed to tackle obstacles and provide students with techniques and strategies to ensure success.

Why is it Successful?
The program is unique in that it captures all students who are on academic probation as well as students who achieve a GPA above the College’s academic probation GPA range (1.5 for freshmen and 1.75 for sophomores) but who are still in academic jeopardy (below 2.0 GPA). Students who fall into this vulnerable category are targeted to participate in the program in an effort to help build their academic skills and use a strength-based approach to improve their GPA. Using a multifaceted approach that combines proactive outreach, strength-based intrusive advisement, the StrengthsQuest Inventory, targeted workshops, collaboration with campus resources, and peer counselors has proven successful in helping students achieve stronger academic progress.

Evaluation
Since the program’s creation, it has been significantly successful in assisting students to improve their academic performance.

On average, we have approximately 180 students in the program in the fall, and 280 in the spring. The program has seen slightly fewer students in each semester who are struggling academically. Currently for the fall 2012 cohort we have 157 students in the program, which is a marked decrease from the 210 who were in the program during the fall 2011 semester.
St. Francis College’sRemoving Obstacles to Success program was developed to assist students struggling to succeed in college with a comprehensive support system. The program’s strength-based advisement approach, coupled with creative workshops on common issues, individual counseling and peer mentoring, has significantly assisted students in recognizing obstacles and developing strategies that ensure success.

Collaboration
The Removing Obstacles to Success program collaborates with several departments on campus, namely the College’s Academic Enhancement or tutoring center, the Career Center, and the Counseling Center. All of the departments have assisted in collaborating on developing workshop topics such as research paper writing, career choices, and stress reduction. Faculty has also been instrumental in referring students to the program and highlighting its benefits to the students.

Additional Comments
The ROS program has also been successful in expanding the number of students attending workshops through the usage of a free online event invitation site, which allows students to reserve their seat for workshops and sends students reminders of the sessions they signed up for.

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At the end of every semester we measure the success of the students in our program. The program has consistently seen a 45 percent increase in student grade point averages by the end of each semester. Of the students in the fall program, 28 percent are able to achieve a GPA of 2.0 or higher, while in the spring the percentage is 25 percent. Those students who participated in the program but who did not achieve a GPA of 2.0 or above still improved their term GPA but require more semesters of improvement before the cumulative GPA is positively impacted. Our analysis also includes qualitative data of students reporting satisfaction with the program; some students reported attending tutoring sessions as a result of attending the workshops.
**BEST PRACTICE:**
**Summer Institute**

**Institution:** Utica College  
**Students Served:** College 1st Yr  
**Focus:**  
- Academic At-Risk  
- Ethnic Minority  
- Economic Hardship  
- Homeless Minors  
- Wards of the Court

**Goals**
The Utica College Summer Institute was created to aid first year at-risk students in making the transition from high school to college, to prepare students for college level coursework, and to establish important connections with college faculty and staff who often serve as student resources. The focus of Utica College’s Summer Institute is to assist students in developing critical college skills and strategies essential to student success. Finally, the Utica College Summer Institute was designed to increase second year return and student retention overall.

**Description of Best Practice**
Based on the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) summer program model, the Utica College Summer Institute targeted a population of conditionally admitted students designated as Pioneer Scholars to participate in the summer program. Utica College Summer Institute, a highly structured five-week residential summer program, was designed to prepare at risk pre-freshman students for the academic and social rigors of college. The Institute runs from July 1 to August 2. Pioneer Scholars are enrolled in a combination of developmental and college level courses that meet daily for 5 weeks and students may earn 3-5 credits for the summer. In addition to academic courses, students participate in daily workshops presented by a cross section of Utica College faculty and staff (i.e. Plagiarism, Wellness—Staying Healthy, Career Planning, Cultural & Diversity Awareness, Language & Culture, Strategies for Academic Success, Personal Development, Life Skills, Meeting the Academic Deans). Cultural events – visits to the local museum and other local sites within the community – and student-led evening review/study groups round out the program.

**Why is it Successful?**
Summer Institute is successful due to its holistic approach to academic support services for pre-freshman students. It provides a structured yet supportive, nurturing environment that encourages student success. A team of faculty, staff and upper-class students employed as peer tutor counselors meet weekly with students throughout the summer. They serve as mentors and advisors to the Pioneer Scholars as these students make the transition from high school to college, academically and socially. A preliminary review of Pioneer Scholars’ cumulative grade point averages showed approximately 63 percent of Pioneer Scholars who completed the following fall semester were in good academic standing (2.0 or better). A complete outcomes assessment is scheduled for Fall 2013.

**Evaluation**
We plan to evaluate the program’s effectiveness by tracking and comparing Pioneer Scholars’ retention rates from Fall 2012 to Fall 2013. We will monitor Pioneer Scholars’ number of academic early warnings received during each semester along with students’ semester and academic year grade point averages. Utica College Summer Institute Pioneer Scholars’ data will be compared to students with similar academic profiles who did not attend Summer Institute. Finally, student surveys will be administered to provide feedback regarding Pioneer Scholars’ overall Summer Institute experience to be utilized for future program planning.

**Collaboration**
The success of Utica College’s Summer Institute is due in part to the collaborative efforts of staff from the following offices who serve as student advisors: HEOP, Learning Services, and Student Success-Academic Coaching Experts; workshop presenters: Utica College faculty, Career Services, Student Health Center, Dean of Students, Learning Services, Residence Life, Orientation, Student Financial Services, Campus Safety, the Library, Office of the Registrar; and the Academic School Deans. As is often the case with a campus-wide effort of the magnitude of the Utica College Summer Institute, the efforts and support of the campus community was and continues to be essential.

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Approximately 63% of Utica College Summer Institute Pioneer Scholars were in good academic standing.
BEST PRACTICE:
Urban Leadership Learning Community

Institution: Canisius College

Students Served: Late HS
College 1st Yr
College 2nd Yr

Focus: Ethnic Minority
Economic Hardship

Goals
The Urban Leadership Learning Community (ULLC) Program is a four-year residential scholarship program offering up to 100% tuition, room, and board to academically qualified, financially eligible, traditionally under-enrolled graduates of Greater Buffalo high schools who demonstrate significant leadership potential. The Program allows those students access to a first-rate educational opportunity at Canisius in order to prepare them for the Western New York leadership roles of the future.

Description of Best Practice
Students must demonstrate a potential for leadership in high school and that potential is fostered and developed through an integrated program involving a first-year Leadership “Boot Camp,” periodic off-campus Leadership Workshops, and on-campus service and co-curricular activities. Central to the Program is the collaborative learning model of instruction which forms the core of the “Gateway” courses in English, Philosophy, and Religious Studies students take during their first two years. Students are also encouraged and expected to be engaged in campus student activities – and, as often as possible, in leadership roles.

Why is it Successful?
Our “learning community” becomes – for students and faculty alike – a “learning family.” In this close, connected environment, students develop the communication and critical thinking skills – in their team-learning classes and various on/off-campus activities – that will allow them to develop their leadership skills.

Evaluation
We engage in the institutional assessments initiatives mandated by Canisius College – establishing learning goals and objectives, developing rubrics to employ in controlled capstone activities, and collecting data on student activity demonstrating the development of learning skills. The results of these initiatives are available on the Canisius College website.

Collaboration
We work closely with various constituencies at Canisius (e.g., Residence Life, Campus Ministry, Leadership Development Office) to make sure that ULLC students have access to the various campus initiatives that foster leadership skills and behaviors. We also collaborate with the Canisius Tutoring Center as well as the College library to make sure our students develop the literacy skills needed to succeed.

Additional Comments
The ULLC is a very visible, very tangible representation of the commitment on the part of Canisius College to the future well-being of Greater Buffalo and its people. As such, it demonstrates how seriously Canisius – as a Jesuit institution of higher education – takes its duty to serve.

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Our “learning community” becomes – for students and faculty alike – a “learning family.”
BEST PRACTICE:
Back to the Future: A Diversity Workshop for Education Student Teachers

Institution: St. Bonaventure University

Students Served: School of Education Student Teacher Candidates, 4th year

Focus:
Student Teachers
Student Teachers’ Supervisors
Childhood Studies Senior Interns

Goals

Training teacher candidates to serve an increasingly diverse student body, particularly in our rural community and in our predominantly white institution, presents challenges. The overall goal of this back-to-the-future education workshop draws from past experiences of same-aged students of color and differing sexual orientation to help our predominantly white teacher candidates move to a high awareness and level of respect and understanding of the essential uniqueness of every individual. We do not resort to simply ‘talking’ about diversity. Our diversity students share school experiences and act out skits requiring participation. This workshop is geared to “keeping it real” and genuinely engaging peers in discussion of diversity.

Description of Best Practice

Every fall and spring semester student teacher candidates participate in diversity training to help prepare them for the rigors and challenges of their student teacher experience. In order to prepare culturally competent teachers St. Bonaventure University developed this unique training for students in the midst of their student teaching and draws upon the expertise of same-aged students of color and differing sexual orientation to help predominantly white and female teacher candidates gain a deeper understanding of diversity and education. The goal is to carefully engage each other in activities with the purpose of “jolting” teacher candidates into grasping the urgency of cultural responsiveness practices in education. Much research points to students’ resistance to understanding white privilege in schools and society at large. According to Sleeter (2008) this belief system becomes manifest through four inter-related dimensions of white pre-service teacher consciousness that limit their effectiveness when addressing matters of multiculturalism in their work. These include: a) the failure to recognize the extent of racial inequality, b) the extent to which white teachers hold deficit views about students of color, c) the desire to adopt a color-blind approach to teaching, thereby denying the importance of race in the learning process and d) the limited realization of what it means to be a cultural being. To counter such resistance faculty, staff, and students of difference (African American, Latino, and openly Gay) come together borrowing from theology and hagiography to create a new kind of diversity workshop. The university is geographically situated in a very rural and predominantly white environment. Student teachers strongly reflect the national ethnic and SES makeup of the teaching body, i.e.; predominantly white, female and middle-class. The Damietta Center at the university is the home to many diverse clubs within the university such as the Asian Students in Action (ASIA), the Black Student Union (BSU), Latino American Student Organization (LASO), Muslim Student Association (MSA), SPECTRUM (LGBT-Alliance ), VOICES (Women’s and Gender issues), and the Step Team (diverse percussion-dance team), to name but a few. In the fall semester of 2011, the director of the Damietta Center, a faculty member, and the director of field placement met to brainstorm ideas on how to make the diversity workshop more credible in the eyes of student teachers and

Tiffany Nunez, SBU Class of 2013, School of Arts and Sciences, BA Sociology will be the first in her family to graduate from college. As a young Hispanic woman she is so proud of this achievement and, could hardly believe she was a presenter at an international educational conference!
not resort to simply talking “about” diversity. Students from diverse groups under the direction of the Damietta Center were contacted; five responded and persisted in the effort. Students met with adults and ideas flowed from their own personal experiences of public school. The students themselves created skits that showed the value of student teachers using role play to explore situations with which they had little experience. A gay student presenter described his experience of being in elementary school, feeling marginalized and experiencing thoughts of suicide. Student teachers listened, participated, and learned. Many positive outcomes were recorded from this experience.

References cited

Why is it Successful?
The uniquely important aspect of this program is that students engage in real dialogue and learn from one another. Together they recount experiences and expand on the essential uniqueness of each individual.

Evaluation
The structure of this interactive workshop pursues the dynamic questions, answers and reflections of the participants. Because of this, the quality of discussion factors highly into the acknowledged success of the workshop and the student responses at the conclusion of the workshop discussion. Responses are recorded. A sample of responses received to the question: What do you want to say about this workshop? included:
“Keep it real!”
“Embrace and teach the differences.”
“Don’t be colorblind. Acknowledge.”
“Embracing your uniqueness helps others realize theirs.”
“Respect everyone’s differences and individualities.”
“Don’t stop, keep doing this.”

Collaboration
The SBU Student Life Department, Damietta Center Coordinator works closely with the School of Education Director of Field Placements, faculty and staff. This collaborative partnership has served to substantiate the academic credibility and positive outcomes of this continuing student teacher workshop. It is the intent of the diversity program to expand similar collaborations campus-wide as we prepare our students for leadership in a growing diverse global community.

Additional Comments
In the spring of 2012, this unique student-developed and facilitated workshop was submitted as a proposal to the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) 22nd Annual NAME International Conference “Realizing the Power of Movements thru Multicultural Education,” in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 28 – December 1, 2012. In the fall of 2012, the proposal was selected for the highly competitive “Interactive Workshop” level, providing an opportunity to engage participants in active, collaborative, and/or experiential learning during the 50-minute session. These sessions model a lesson or curriculum and then engage participating scholars, teacher educators, teachers and students in reflection and inquiry.

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This workshop is geared to “keeping it real” and genuinely engaging peers in discussion on diversity.

Students of “difference” educate their predominantly white peers and dialogue ensues.
BEST PRACTICE:
Community Involvement/Summer Program

Institution: The College of Saint Rose
Students Served: HEOP/AOE Summer Program Students
Focus:
- Academic At-Risk
- Ethnic Minority
- Economic Hardship
- Wards of the Court

Goals
The required HEOP/AOE Summer Program experience has included a community involvement component for many years. It introduces our new students to the College’s commitment to its community and supports the mission of the College and our Program as we develop active, engaged citizens.

Description of Best Practice
Every summer, our HEOP/AOE students participate in one or more community-based projects in the city of Albany. Our Program students have assisted the City gardeners in Washington Park, planted community gardens in the South End, volunteered at the Ronald McDonald House, and attended builds for Habitat for Humanity in North Albany. Each summer’s placement may differ, but the goals remain the same: Saint Rose students helping their larger campus, their new home, and their city. We also invite community-based speakers to describe and introduce their projects, providing a context for the students’ contributions.

Why is it Successful?
This activity is effective as an opportunity to connect students with Albany and its neighborhoods. It is a successful introduction to the College’s commitment to community concerns and service.

Evaluation
All enrolled Summer Program students participate in this activity. Students provide many positive reflections on this experience on their Summer Program evaluation. Students often request other opportunities to engage in community service projects. HEOP/AOE students become participants and leaders for College-sponsored, service learning programs, including trips to Washington, D.C. and New Orleans, Louisiana.

Collaboration
The College’s commitment to community service is promoted and supported throughout our campus. We engage our Program and its students with many opportunities that are campus-based. Examples include: Reach Out Saint Rose, a campus-wide service day organized for the College community, alumni and parents; Relay for Life, a nationally-recognized American Cancer Society event hosted on campus for our entire College community.

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“I went to Community Gardens during the summer. I had a great experience and felt that I was helping the Albany community.”

“It was very positive. I felt good about myself after doing it.”

“It was an awesome program! I am so happy I came here.”
BEST PRACTICE: Life After Bonas

Institution: St. Bonaventure University

Students Served: HEOP Students
               College Juniors and Seniors

Focus: Academic At-Risk
       Economic Hardship

Goals
“Life After Bonas” was designed to better equip graduating Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) students to face the challenges of life after college. Many of our HEOP students do not, and perhaps will not, have professional mentors or immediate family members who can help them through the bumpy waters of the first professional position or who can provide guidance on graduate school selection and admission processes.

Description of Best Practice
The program includes two components: the first is intended for both juniors and seniors while the second is exclusively for students at the end of their undergraduate degree programs. In the first component, students are invited to a workshop that includes a professional dinner and presentations about graduate school selection and the admissions process, and another on effective job searches. The second component is held just a week after the first at an off-campus location. The two-day event provides valuable information to graduating students on networking, mock interviews, coping with challenges in a first professional position, living apart from family and friends, financial management techniques and strategies, job etiquette and success tips, and personal wellness. Recent alumni of the program are invited back as participants; their experiences and successes are well-received and very practical. A professional in the field of personal money management is also invited to provide expert advice.

Why is it Successful?
Students in their final year of college are often very nervous about what comes after the college experience and this fall semester program helps to both relieve some of the anxieties and raise the level of excitement about possibilities.

Evaluation
Students are able to provide feedback after the events and while student responses are generally very positive, the program is always tweaked from one year to the next to better address current economic issues. Additionally, word of mouth, passed along to freshmen and sophomores, is very positive and these younger students look forward to the program.

Collaboration
We work closely with the University’s Career and Professional Readiness Center. This is a resource we want our students to utilize as much as possible.

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“Life After Bonas” was designed to better equip graduating HEOP students to face the challenges of life after college.
BEST PRACTICE:
A Play on Words

Institution: Daemen College

Students Served:
- Late HS
- College 1st Yr
- College 2nd Yr
- Pre-freshman HEOP and appropriate for faculty/staff development

Focus:
- Academic At-Risk
- Ethnic Minority
- Economic Hardship
- Undocumented Students
- Wards of the Court
- Single Parents

Goals
The program was created to assist students in realizing their potential, raise self-esteem, introduce encouraging words, increase memorization and public speaking skills, impress upon students the importance of time management, teamwork and collaboration and to prepare students for the rigors of college using theater as the nucleus of the activity. A student said, “I liked that I was able to be creative and learn to memorize what I had to say. The play helped me prepare for public speaking and it allowed me to face my fears of speaking in front of a large group of people. I learned that when I am nervous I tend to rush what I am doing and I learned that we do public speaking a lot; therefore, being on stage helped me be more comfortable with speaking in front of a classroom when having to present.”

Description of Best Practice
“A Play on Words” was introduced to pre-freshman Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) Summer students at Canisius College under the direction of Mrs. Lilly Adams-Dudley with approximately 30-35 students and at Daemen College with Beverly Weeks with 18-20 students. It takes about five weeks to pull this activity together. The project begins with students drawing a word of encouragement, such as COURAGE or DREAM, from a hat. They are told to write an essay (it is the first writing assignment for the Summer programs) about what that word means to them. The Director/Teacher corrects the essays and hands them back to the students. The words they have written now become their performance. They are told that their time on stage is to demonstrate, to a live audience, what the word means to them. They can “sing the word, dance the word, rework it into a monologue or scene.” The activity is done on a stage where they learn rudiments of theater performance.

The students perform the play at the end of the Summer program. Students begin the exercise skeptically, but, at the end, they are proud of their work. They see a creative project from inception to completion. The performance is embedded in a larger summer experience and the rehearsals are as important as the academic work in the program. The exercise is meant to be creative and thought-provoking.

Why is it Successful?
Prior to this exercise, students have little experience with presenting before a live audience, public speaking, organizing their thoughts to convey a verbal message or working collectively as a team to produce a performance piece. The students must work together as a team to perform the show. It is a shared experience and students are often surprised that they can perform. It gets them to do something that they cannot imagine doing in the time allotted. It is important to note that although some students have stage experience, many of them do not. Others have never seen a live performance so this activity seems daunting. Each performance has ended with the students feeling a sense of accomplishment.

“A Play on Words” was created to assist students in realizing their potential, raise self-esteem, introduce encouraging words, increase memorization and public speaking skills, impress upon the students the importance of time management, teamwork and collaboration and to prepare students for the rigors of college using theater as the nucleus of the activity.
Evaluation

Students are evaluated informally by student reflection and testimony during the academic year. We have found that assessing the program with that look back gives a clear view of what they have learned from the experience because they do so many new things during the Summer Program. The cooperativeness of the students (some are extremely reluctant) is evaluated based upon their willingness to just try unfamiliar territory. It is important to note that from year to year students from past shows come to the current show to lend support, often setting up a rivalry over whose show was better. One student remarked, “The summer play was somewhat different from what I would have expected; however, it was AMAZING! The best part about the play was that we did not know what we were performing until you told us that we already wrote it … I feel that by having the assignment based off a word we tend to make ourselves relate more to that word.”

Collaboration

The activity is done on the campuses of Canisius College where the theater and tech people are at our disposal. At Daemen College, the event is held in the Wick Social Room on campus and there is equal cooperation with the Student Affairs offices, Conferences and Events, and the Classroom Technology Office.

Additional Comments

The activity has been going on for several years and has evolved from a performance of Shakespeare to the more recent incarnation described above. Also, as a result of this activity, we have developed a Reading Circle which began as a way for students to learn about Shakespeare’s work. We still use the Reading Circle as an activity during our Summer Program, selecting a relevant piece of literature.

For Further Information

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“The summer play was somewhat different from what I would have expected; however, it was AMAZING! The best part about the play was that we did not know what we were performing until you told us that we already wrote it … I feel that by having the assignment based off a word we tend to make ourselves relate more to that word.”

– A HEOP student participating in the “A Play on Words” project
**BEST PRACTICE:**
**Routine for Learning**

**Institution:** Hamilton College  
**Students Served:** College 1st Yr  
**Focus:** Academic At-Risk  
Ethnic Minority  
Economic Hardship  
Wards of the Court  
Single Parents  
HEOP Students

**Goals**
The goal of Routine for Learning is to help first-year college students transition to the academic rigor that colleges and universities demand of them, as well as helping them identify how they learn best.

**Description of Best Practice**
Routine for Learning is composed of three elements:
- Wake up at the same time every day
- Review all academic subjects every day
- Go to bed at the same time every day

First year HEOP students are introduced to Routine for Learning while attending the five-week Summer Program. During that time, students meet four times a week and focus on the acquisition and application of knowledge, according to how they learn. Routine continues into the fall semester, when students meet with HEOP staff every morning for six weeks, in order to develop their academic goals, time management skills, and share tips for success with their classmates.

**Why is it Successful?**
Routine for Learning teaches students the foundation they need to transition successfully into college. By developing a strong routine, students are able to take the tools given to them and make a Routine that is based on their own academic and personal needs. Since this program has three simple elements, students are able to continue Routine for Learning beyond their first year and incorporate it into their lives.

**Evaluation**
Students who consistently attend Routine for Learning have higher GPAs than those who do not attend on a regular basis. We also see a more positive attitude in the way they approach their coursework as well as in how they handle any challenges that may come up. This in turn helps students to graduate within four years. Students also develop strong and meaningful relationships with their peers, faculty, and college staff; all of which are crucial to their college success.

**Collaboration**
Since Routine for Learning is a holistic approach to college, we collaborate with all departments and offices on campus.

**For Further Information**
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“Routine for Learning is a reminder that even after the summer, I still have a group that supports me and helps guide me during my first semester in Hamilton.”

– Hamilton College HEOP student, Class of 2016
III. Campus Support Programs and Services for Student Persistence and Academic Success

In this section:

Focus on First Year
- Challenge to Achievement at Pace (CAP) Academic Coaching Program
- Challenge to Achievement at Pace (CAP) Summer Mathematics Bridge Program
- Collegiate Opportunities to Reach Excellence (CORE)
- Divisional Support Program (DSP)
- Early Warning System
- First Year Programs
- Retention Activity
- Start Out Academics Right (SOAR)
- Writing Center Workshops

Mentoring and Other Support Programs
- Diversity Internship & Career Preparation Program (D.I.C.P.)
- First Generation Scholars Program
- The Harriet Tubman Mentoring Project
- Haudenosaunee Promise
- NACME Scholars Support Initiatives
- Native American Future Stewards Program
- Pluralism Associates League for Students (PALS)
- The Society of Sisters/Brothers United (SOSU/BU)
- Undergraduate Student-Faculty Research Program
- Undergraduate Summer Research Program
BEST PRACTICE: Challenge to Achievement at Pace (CAP) Academic Coaching Program

Institution: Pace University
Students Served: College 1st Yr
Focus: Academic At-Risk

Goals

Students often need academic support to make the transition to college. Many students who need tutoring support do not use this resource. The goal of the CAP Academic Coaching Program is to ensure that first year students who need academic support use the services offered.

Description of Best Practice

For the most at-risk students and for students in athletic programs a careful assessment is made using entering characteristics, placement scores, writing samples and advisor observations. The students with the most need are mandated to attend academic coaching sessions. These sessions begin with an interview at which a tutoring professional makes a further assessment. After the initial interview, students are assigned content tutoring and have follow-up meetings with the tutoring professional, who works with the student to establish priorities, develop good work habits and monitor progress. The amount of time the tutoring professional devotes to particular students depends on the initial assessment and on evaluation of student progress toward developing self-monitoring skills and learning independence.

Why is it Successful?

The program is successful due to the management of the tutoring session topics by the academic professional who talks to the student about their coursework and helps set priorities. These discussions help the student learn how to correctly manage priorities.

Students thrive when given detailed and timely advice by someone who engages them in an extended conversation about their particular academic challenges.

Evaluation

The GPAs of students exiting the program are compared to the GPAs of students from previous years with similar entering characteristics. The number of students on academic probation within the CAP Program has decreased from 20 percent to less than 10 percent over the last two years.

Collaboration

We collaborate extensively with the Athletics Department. This collaboration improves student compliance with mandated tutoring.

For Further Information

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The percentage of students in the Challenge to Achievement Program at Pace Pleasantville with a less than a 2.2 GPA in their first semester has gone down from 20% to less than 10% since these programs were implemented.
BEST PRACTICE:
Challenge to Achievement at Pace (CAP) Summer Mathematics Bridge Program

Institution: Pace University
Students Served: Accepted first year students in the summer between high school graduation and the start of their first college term

Focus: Academic At-Risk

Goals
This program was designed by the Challenge to Achievement at Pace (CAP) program, a first year developmental program, and the Tutoring Center. The program aims to give students admitted to the university through CAP, individual attention and diagnosis of their problems with mathematics, good study skills, and the habit of doing homework carefully. The program strives to set an academic tone that will be sustained during the subsequent fall semester. The program offers intense support, individual assessment and tailored instruction by maintaining a ratio of 4 to 1 between students and instructors.

Description of Best Practice
Students in the program were given an Accuplacer pretest and an entrance interview the week before instruction began. During the first two weeks of the program students had three hours of instruction each day. In the afternoon, they received tutoring and homework was handed in and graded every day. The lecture portion of the course was given in 20-minute sections followed by group work where the instructors could discuss the problems with the students in small groups. This format was repeated several times during each three-hour day. Depending on students’ knowledge and progress, students were separated and regrouped on subsequent days so students with similar issues would be instructed together. After the first week, the students completed a take-home exam over the weekend. After the second week, students took the Accuplacer exam again.

Accuplacer scores increased by 32% when averaged across all categories.

Why is it Successful?
The program is effective due to the close cooperation of the instructional staff that works together to give timely interventions to keep students on track and on task. The students in the program are tracked carefully and assessments are made for each student mainly from direct observation.

Evaluation
The Accuplacer exam was the main quantitative assessment of the program. Scores went up by 32% when averaged across all categories.

Collaboration
The Mathematics Summer Bridge program is mainly the work of the CAP and Tutoring Centers. The work done by the Tutoring Center staff with the CAP students has helped us improve our knowledge of the academic challenges facing these students.

Additional Comments
Program Assessment by the Director of CAP:
Since I advise all the CAP students interested in qualifying for admission to Nursing, I see them now regularly in my two sections of UNV 101C. All of them are doing well – motivated, diligent hard-working students. The Summer Bridge program has given them an edge in terms of preparation and confidence in the difficult classes and, furthermore, they are familiar and comfortable with the academic support services at Pace. Best of all, perhaps, has been their effect on the general culture of my UNV 101C classes. I have a few Summer Program alumni in each class, and I asked them on the first day (I did warn them in advance) to say something to their classmates about their experiences in the Tutoring Center and what they learned there. Just a few students who had participated in the Summer Math Program scattered among the other students profoundly impacted the culture in favor of a focus on academics. I’m sure the presence of these students has played a significant role in getting a higher percentage of CAP Nursing students to the Tutoring Center earlier and more often than last semester.

For Further Information
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We are using the CAP Mathematics Summer Bridge program to create a culture of “academics comes first” at Pace University.
BEST PRACTICE:
Collegiate Opportunities to Reach Excellence (CORE)

Institution: St. Bonaventure University
Students Served: College 1st Yr
Focus: Academic At-Risk

Goals
Collegiate Opportunities to Reach Excellence (CORE) is a program designed for academically at-risk freshmen during students’ first semester at St. Bonaventure University. The program aims to provide appropriate services to ensure success at the college level. The program strives to help students develop college-necessary habits such as time management, test-taking techniques, study skills, and other important skills essential to making a successful transition into the St. Bonaventure University community.

Description of Best Practice
Students are admitted to the CORE program if their admissions profile reveals indicators that are typical of academically at-risk students. Such indicators may include a large gap between high school GPA and SAT scores or a history of lower academic performance. All students in the CORE program have met basic admissions criteria indicating their potential to be successful, but have a profile that suggests that focused support during the first semester would be beneficial.

All students in the CORE program are required to take FRES 100, a non-credit bearing course that meets once a week for 50 minutes. This course is graded pass/fail and is included on a student’s college transcript. The course is taught by highly trained graduate students who understand the trials and tribulations that accompany transition. Our graduate instructors, under the supervision of the director of the First-Year Experience program, are educated on the best techniques to enhance academic success. Having recently completed their own college education, they are prepared to help others thrive as college students. The course focuses heavily on integrating successful academic practices into the students’ daily lives.

We recognize that academic achievement can often hinge on non-academic factors. Therefore, instructors do not ignore the implications that procrastination, partying, and poor emotional health can have on a student’s success. By confronting and openly discussing these barriers to academic achievement, students are able to learn techniques to balance social life and academics.

CORE students who successfully passed FRES 100 had an average GPA of 2.54. Students who failed the course had an average GPA of 1.07.

Academic advisors of CORE students are informed that their advisees are required to participate. Being aware of those in the program allows advisors to make necessary modifications to ensure they are providing the most effective and appropriate advisement. One of the components of the CORE program is that students are required to meet with their advisor during the first 3 weeks of classes. It has been found that encouraging early contact with academic advisors establishes a positive working relationship. CORE students need a strong support system and the advisor is often able to serve as the foundation.
**Why is it Successful?**

The success of the CORE program is attributed to the early identification of students who are academically at-risk. Early detection allows for intervention and instruction before students struggle with academics. At the inception of their transition to higher education, CORE students are encouraged and given the confidence needed to take ownership of their academics, identify the barriers to academic success and learn techniques to overcome the challenges they face. Through a team of supportive and highly trained educational professionals, each CORE student has a network of support that advocates for their success.

**Evaluation**

The CORE program was created in the fall of 2007 as an optional program. Students were encouraged to enroll in the program, but it was not mandatory. After three years of data collection, it became clear how important the course had become. Students who completed FRES 100 had a GPA that was 3 to 5 higher than those who did not take FRES 100. Students who were participants in FRES 100 maintained a higher GPA in the spring semester as well. Campus professionals recognized the significance of this GPA gap and mandated all CORE students to enroll in the program. In the fall of 2010, CORE became a required program.

**Collaboration**

Central to the success of the CORE program is the collaborative effort that spans across multiple campus offices. The graduate instructors of the FRES 100 class serve as the main point of contact for the students. Any additional support services that are beneficial to the students are utilized through such vital resources as the Teaching and Learning Center, the Career and Professional Readiness Center, the Residential Education Office, the First-Year Experience program, and academic advisors. This network of support greatly increases the outcomes of the program because it provides the students with access to the tools necessary to overcome the barriers to academic success. This integrated approach heightens a student’s chance at academic success by holistically addressing all of the factors that can impinge upon their educational achievement.

**For Further Information**

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When provided the necessary skill set, those who were once considered academically at-risk are able to prove themselves as fully capable to achieve at the collegiate level. 78.5% of St. Bonaventure University’s CORE students had a GPA over 2.0 and were considered to be in good academic standing.

“This class helped me out a lot and made me into a better student. It’s only once a week and it can really help get your grades up and keep them up. The study and note-taking skills you learn can help you throughout your whole college career.”

– Mary Schwartz, Class of 2012
BEST PRACTICE:
Divisional Support Program (DSP)

Institution: Niagara University
Students Served: College 1st Yr
Focus: Academic At-Risk

Goals
Through individualized progress conferencing, the Divisional Support Program (DSP) provides its students with information and strategies to equip them to manage the academic transition to Niagara University.

Description of Best Practice
Students, enrolled by the Admissions Office into the Divisional Support Program (DSP), are provided a coordinated approach to academic success. The program is designed to foster skills that will support students’ academic independence and achievement. Participants work with a professional advisor who gets to know their needs and can arrange the appropriate academic counseling and tutorial services. Students accepted into Niagara University through the DSP program are required to participate in the program. During their first semester, students work closely with a professional advisor to assess the academic skills needed for success at Niagara. Advisors meet with students in the Office of Academic Support on a weekly basis to support their academic success, set goals, and plan course schedules. Topics discussed include campus resources and support services, academic policies and procedures, course selection and time management, study skills and test taking strategies.

Why is it Successful?
DSP provides weekly one-on-one progress conferencing for its students. The focus of these meetings is on the development of academic skills and of an individual support network to help program students succeed at Niagara.

Evaluation
At the end of the first semester, participants in the Divisional Support Program complete a survey evaluating their experience in the program. These results are compared to results compiled by the DSP advisors. Based on these findings, there is a strong correlation between a student’s grade point average and participation in the program.

Collaboration
DSP advisors are continually assessing student needs and referring them to appropriate campus resources for support. Students are provided with assistance in navigating various campus resources such as the services available in the Office of Academic Support, including peer tutoring, the Writing Center, study skills workshops and video tapes, as well as other resources on campus: Counseling, Career Services, Health Services, Campus Activities, and Financial Aid.

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Based on our findings, there is a strong correlation between a student’s grade point average and participation in the DSP program.
BEST PRACTICE:  
Early Warning System

Institution: Polytechnic Institute of New York University

Students Served: College 1st Yr

Focus: Academic At-Risk

Goals
The early warning system for first year courses is designed to provide proactive feedback to students demonstrating signs of academic distress (poor attendance, low grades on course exams and assignments, failure to submit assignments, and behavioral issues), both before and during the midterm period. Administered by the Assistant Dean for First-year Students and Academic Initiatives, outreach efforts conducted during the targeted period are aimed at increasing the students’ awareness of their course performance and the academic support services available to help improve their outcomes.

Description of Best Practice
The early warning process is executed each semester, typically beginning during the fourth week of the semester and lasting until the course withdrawal deadline (i.e. approximately 5-6 weeks in length). Courses targeted for this process include biology, chemistry, math, and physics, to name a few, and are emphasized because of their foundational positioning in the institutional curriculum. The course schedule, as defined by the instructor, determines if the course will follow a single (midterm only) or dual (immediate and midterm) alert process.

Feedback is requested from the faculty (via course rosters) on the students’ performance, using a coding system to denote the nature of the concern. Upon receipt of the completed documents, students are emailed about their status, highlighting the course instructors’ concerns and possible remediation options available to address the issue(s). Completed rosters are also shared with the academic advisors, as well as the academic support and opportunity programs offices, in an effort to increase the students’ response rate to the initial message. Students who receive more than one alert and/or have reported attendance issues are called at home or in the residence hall; those in student housing may be escorted over to their advisor’s office if they fail to respond to any of the outreach overtures.

Why is it Successful?
The success of this program is heavily reliant on the active and consistent participation of the faculty, as it is their feedback that instigates contact with the students. Subsequent to the receipt of the alert data is the contact with the students, another critical component of the program. Each alert message needs to be clear and concise, using language that makes the situation accessible to the students and, ideally, spurs them into action. For students in their first semester of enrollment and/or from an underrepresented or first-generation background, academic prompts of this nature feel familiar to the feedback they might have received from teachers at the elementary and secondary level of education, reminding them of the dedicated faculty and staff members available to assist them. Ultimately, the tone and texture of each alert affects the student response rate, which, in turn, affects the effectiveness of the early warning process.

In addition to the above variables, intrusive follow-up contact, initiated by academic advisors, residence life staff and support offices, enhances the potential outcomes resulting from this process, providing students with a space to both explore their current standing and possible avenues for remediation. The absence of this component could lead the students to feeling lost and dejected as they try to devise a viable academic recovery plan, perhaps even delay their pursuit of returning to good standing. Providing ways for students to address their situation head on in a safe environment helps them to gain clarity on, and take ownership of their circumstances, thereby adding to the success of the alert process.

Evaluation
Measures used to assess the effectiveness of the program include: 1) instructor compliance rate for requested performance data, 2) student response rate to alert messages, 3) frequency and focus of contact between students and administrators, 4) observed behavioral changes (e.g., improved attendance, timely submission of assignments, etc., and 5) performance outcomes for alerted students.

Collaboration
The execution of the early alert process requires collaboration between faculty and the designated administrator, and is supported by the outreach efforts made by academic advisors, residence life staff, and academic support and opportunity programs administrators. As an inherently collaborative process, the early alert system relies on sustained synergies between the aforementioned entities—success would not be possible in the absence of the described partnerships.

For Further Information
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**BEST PRACTICE:**

**First Year Programs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution:</th>
<th>LIU Brooklyn</th>
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| Students Served: | College 1st Yr  
Veterans  
Adults |
| Focus: | Academic At-Risk  
Ethnic Minority  
Economic Hardship |

**Goals**

First Year Programs was developed to provide all new students with a solid foundation for academic, professional and social success. Through credit-bearing courses, special events, workshops and publications, The chief goal of the First Year Programs is to offer new students personal support and guidance in developing skills, identifying talents, exploring academic and professional opportunities and forming meaningful relationships.

**Description of Best Practice**

LIU Brooklyn’s First Year Programs approaches the persistence of first-year students by targeting support at three critical points of student progression: the enrollment period, the crucial first weeks of a student’s academic development, and the second, and often forgotten, semester. Because LIU offers rolling admissions, the fall enrollment period begins in early April and stretches until the start of classes. Students are required to attend a one-day New Student Orientation (overnight Orientations are offered to out-of-city populations) and may choose between 17 different dates. With a largely commuter population, First Year Programs focuses on connecting incoming students to the campus community, introducing students to critical student services offices on campus, and easing the academic and administrative transition for first year students. During orientation, students proceed through an administrative “triage” where they interact with representatives from key administrative offices. Throughout the day, students also interact with orientation leaders and orientation volunteers and participate in a variety of academic and social activities.

The involvement of student leaders is critical to our support model, and much of the look and feel of Orientation reflects the personality of our student leaders. As the day progresses, students learn about various support offices (tutoring and psychological services, for example), academic opportunities (such as the LIU Brooklyn Learning Communities), and meet a variety of campus representatives. Students also meet their assigned first year advisors who specialize in the support of first year students.

The orientation model provides a consistent orientation experience for all incoming students, regardless of their date of admission. Once they have attended Orientation, students are connected via social media where they continue to form valuable friendships necessary to their personal development. During the first several weeks of their first semester, students participate in a variety of programs and events designed to increase student motivation and provide the support necessary to thrive during what can be a confusing and alienating time. Convocation, a campus-wide event, officially welcomes students to the university and asks students to recite a first year pledge. Members from First Year Programs sit on the Convocation planning committee and assure a connection between themes for both Orientation and Convocation. Students who attend Convocation wear their Orientation shirts to display their unity. Convocation is held the day before classes begin and offers our students an opportunity to meet faculty and student club members. After the start of classes, Welcome Week provides students with direct access to support offices, academic majors, and social outlets during the second week of the semester.

**Why is it Successful?**

We intentionally target first year students at points of need and focus on their progression to the next stage of their development: college readiness, academic survival skills during the first weeks of their academic careers, and long-term personal and academic development. Additionally, First Year Programs offers students the opportunity to shape our programming by relying heavily on their leadership. Students participate in advisory boards and leadership teams, and outgoing leaders select the following year’s Orientation.

First Year Programs offers students the opportunity to shape our programming by relying heavily on their leadership. Students participate in advisory boards and leadership teams, and outgoing leaders select the following year’s Orientation.
Evaluation
We created home-grown surveys administered during Orientation, Welcome Week and the Orientation Seminar. We also developed a survey of the first year experience that is offered every other year and tracks the long-term impact of our programming across the first year experience. In addition, we collect data to measure the success rate of new students who attended orientation versus those who do not attend. And, to enhance our Freshman Advising area, we track our referral system and measure the length of time a referral is provided and when an appointment is made.

Collaboration
First Year Programs collaborates with many departments throughout the year. Our partnerships begin at Orientation with the representation of departments that offer services and resources to our students. Departments, such as Sophomore Year Programs, University Health and Medical Services, Honors, Scholarship Assistance Program, Career Services, Integrated Student Financial Services, Student Life and Leadership Development, join us in meeting the students and sharing how they can assist students with their transition and development. This partnership continues through Welcome Week when many of the same departments offer workshops to expand on information provided at Orientation. Finally, within the Orientation Seminar textbook and during instructor training, student support services are highlighted to ensure a broad range of knowledge is shared. Instructors of the seminar are also chosen to be representative of the wide range of departments and support offices available on campus.

For Further Information
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The First Year Programs' orientation model provides a consistent orientation experience for all incoming students, regardless of their date of admissions. Once they’ve attended Orientation, students are connected via social media where they continue to form valuable friendships necessary to their personal development.
BEST PRACTICE:
Retention Activity

Institution: St. Thomas Aquinas College

Students Served:
- College 1st Yr
- College 2nd Yr

Focus:
- Academic At-Risk
- Ethnic Minority
- Economic Hardship

Goals
Our main goal for this activity is to increase retention from semester to semester for 1st and 2nd year students.

Description of Best Practice
This Retention Activity is offered every semester and has increased our retention to 94.4% for each of the last two semesters for all returning students. The retention committee involves faculty advisors as well as a subcommittee of staff and administrators. We identify all students who have not registered during the early registration period and begin contacting them through their faculty advisors. Students are engaged in conversations about the reasons that they did not register for classes for the following semester. Issues that students have found to impede their success include financial aid, residence life, dissatisfaction with their role on an athletic team, indecision about their major, personal issues, health issues, etc. The faculty advisor refers the student to our persistence subcommittee and they determine the best course of action – financial aid is investigated, resident assistants are contacted, athletic coaches are brought into the conversation, career counseling or psychological counseling services are discussed among committee members. The student is then contacted with a plan of action and comes to understand just how much the St. Thomas Aquinas College community cares about their continued enrollment at the college. In many cases, students are surprised that we would care that much about them. This specific activity helps us identify individuals and help them continue with their enrollment. After early registration we typically have been in the 80% range for registered students eligible to return. We have brought that number into the 93-94% range for Spring to Fall 2011 and Fall to Spring 2012.

From the secretary of each of our three schools – Business, Education and the Arts and Sciences – to the librarian, to the faculty and administrators involved, this Retention Activity is a team effort that brings the full force of our college community to the aid of each individual student.

Why is it Successful?
The Retention Activity program is successful because of the involvement of the entire college community as led by our Retention Committee Chair, Michael McManus, the Director of Academic Services at the College.

Evaluation
The success is measured with the retention rate described.

Collaboration
From the secretary of each of our three schools – Business, Education and the Arts and Sciences – to the librarian, to the faculty and administrators involved, this is a team effort that brings the full force of our college community to the aid of each individual student.

For Further Information
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This Retention Activity has increased our retention to 93% for each of the last two semesters for all returning students.
BEST PRACTICE:
Start Out Academics Right (SOAR)

Institution: Hartwick College

Students Served: College 1st Yr
Transfer
Students must successfully complete the five-week summer program and achieve a cumulative 2.0 GPA to be able to matriculate in the fall term

Focus: Academic At-Risk
Ethnic Minority

Goals
The residential summer Start Out Academics Right (SOAR) program was created two years ago (2011) as a partnership among Hartwick’s Center for Student Success (CSS), faculty, staff and upper-class students to give students academic support, preparing them to do college-level work, and to learn about college life.

The students admitted to the program do not meet all of the standard admissions academic criteria, but demonstrate great academic, personal and leadership potential to succeed in college. SOAR is designed with one purpose in mind: student success.

Description of Best Practice
SOAR is a five-week summer program featuring credit-bearing college coursework. The SOAR program provides a structured schedule that includes: academic coursework [e.g., Introduction to Sociology (3 credits), Introduction to Composition/Reading Comprehension (2 credits), Wellness/Physical Education (1 credit), SOAR 101 (0 credits)], along with morning and evening required study sessions.

There are additional activities offered during SOAR such as workshops on college life, peer tutoring classes, one-on-one meetings with staff, and social events on weekends.

SOAR is a collaborative partnership between faculty, staff and upper-class tutors and mentors. Following the summer session students continue to work directly with the Director of the SOAR program during the fall and spring term. Support includes: one-on-one academic and transitional coaching, tutoring, structured study sessions and progressive instruction workshops.

Successful SOAR students receive a minimum of $55,000 in aid over four years. The all-inclusive cost for the program is $4,000. All SOAR students automatically receive at least $5,000 in financial aid. Students who perform at a very high level in the summer program receive an additional $5,000 for a total of at least $10,000 in aid the first year. If a student gets at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA in the first year, aid increases to at least $15,000 for each of the last three years.

Why is it Successful?
The success of the SOAR program is demonstrated by:
- Tracking the persistence, academic achievement, and leadership of our SOAR students from term to term.
- Enhancing and/or changing our program through quantitative and qualitative assessment results.
- The number of students in the cohort who graduate in 4 years.

Evaluation
- Student focus group
- Family and student assessment (two separate)
- Faculty and staff assessment; and
- Center for Student Success staff assessment

The program’s effectiveness is measured by coursework objectives and learning outcomes, program satisfaction (co-curricular, staff support, etc.), and academic support services (tutoring, workshops, etc.). All evaluative data is compiled and reviewed with an executive summary. This information is shared with the Center for Student Success staff, President and Provost for Academic Affairs. The following year’s program is enhanced and/or changed based on the data collected.

“I would recommend SOAR to everybody. It was very supportive, which is what I needed. I got a taste of the college workload, I got familiar with the campus, I learned how to handle stress, and I formed great relationships with the other students in SOAR. We stick together even now. I was set up to succeed because of SOAR.”

– Julie Moore, ’15, SOAR 2011, Major: English, 3.57 GPA
Collaboration

The SOAR program is a signature college-wide program with collaboration among the divisions of Enrollment Management, Finance, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. Faculty, staff and upper-class students work in partnership, meeting during the academic year to develop the program marketing campaign, admission selection process, course selection, program structure, residential and co-curricular focus. This type of collaboration from the campus community increases short and long-term support for student persistence. The collective approach to developing, executing and assessing the program has led to a campus culture of access and success. The goal of the SOAR program is to increase the enrollment to 40 students in the next few years. In just two years, we have found that increasing students’ early commitment to the campus not only reduces risk for subsequent student attrition; it also has proven to increase student involvement and effort. Research suggests that if students perceive their institution as being committed to them by providing facilitative experiences (SOAR summer and academic year program), they expend more effort at becoming academically and socially immersed in the college experience. Our two cohorts of students are continuing to SOAR at Hartwick College.

Additional Comments

Many highly successful, intelligent men and women have struggled through high school. Some understand the material, but freeze when it comes time for a test. Others know what they want to say, but have trouble putting the words on that blank sheet of paper. If you are one of these students, you’re not alone. Some of our greatest thinkers and most successful people have experienced similar struggles: John F. Kennedy, Albert Einstein, and Agatha Christie, to name a few. They were all smart and highly motivated; they just needed some extra support – and a plan. That’s where SOAR or Start Out Academics Right comes in.

For Further Information

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“Nothing is impossible, the word itself says I’m possible.”
– Victor Aguirre
BEST PRACTICE: Writing Center Workshops

Institution: Polytechnic Institute of New York University

Students Served: Enrolled College Students
Focus: Ethnic Minority, African American, Latino, Economic Hardship

Goals

The Polytechnic Tutoring Center holds four writing workshops per year for TRIO students to support them academically in every step of the writing process, from brainstorming to proofreading.

Description of Best Practice

Four one-hour writing workshops are offered, two in each of the fall and spring semesters. Writing Consultants present materials on different aspects of college-level writing, such as professional writing, defending a thesis, and proofreading methods, often designing these workshops to “build off” of material/skills covered in previous workshops as well as work independently with students who are new to the program.

Why is it Successful?

TRIO students obtain specific writing support and practice, focusing on the steps they can take to craft their papers.

Collaboration

The Polytechnic Tutoring Center plans these workshops in conjunction with TRIO’s Academic Counselor to provide these workshops for the program’s students.

For Further Information

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Both the PTC and TRIO have worked together on this program through curricular changes—such as the introduction of the Expository Writing Program (EWP)—to provide writing support that addresses the changing demands on NYU–Poly’s incoming freshmen.
BEST PRACTICE:
Diversity Internship & Career Preparation Program (D.I.C.P.)

Institution: Polytechnic Institute of New York University

Students Served: College 2nd Year
College 3rd Year

Focus: Ethnic Minority

Goals
This program is designed to prepare and promote NYU’s historically underrepresented sophomores and juniors. The comprehensive nature of the career development program is designed to develop job searching and networking skills, improve resume and cover letter writing skills, and empower students to find summer internships.

Description of Best Practice
Applications are accepted for D.I.C.P. beginning in September, and the program spans October to February. Due to the many components of the program, students must first attend an orientation. In order to successfully complete D.I.C.P., students are required to fulfill multiple components by the conclusion of the program including:

- Resumé Critique
- Two career development programs (options include resumé and cover letter writing, interviewing and job search seminars, career panels, career fairs, and other specialized programs identified at the start of the semester)
- One employer activity organized by the Career Center (e.g., mock interview, site visit to an organization, informational interview, diversity breakfast)
- Networking Night (a large scale activity involving many employers from various industries)
- Congratulations Celebration

Students are given a calendar and assigned a staff member to assist them throughout the program. Students are encouraged to mix and match activities that not only work with their schedules but also address their individual career goals. Employers, alumni, and other offices participate in D.I.C.P. either through direct sponsorship of an event, hosting an event that is included on the calendar, or general attendance at the larger networking functions.

“I thoroughly enjoyed my experience with D.I.C.P. and I truly feel that it has made me more comfortable in a professional environment.”
– Past D.I.C.P. program participant

Why is it Successful?
This program is successful, in part, because of the direct feedback that is obtained from employers. D.I.C.P. is tailored every year to meet the changing global economy. New programs are implemented and we employ the resources of faculty, alumni, and university stakeholders. We have also asked D.I.C.P. alumni to speak at the orientations and promote the program to their colleagues. The continued involvement of these alumni aids the administrators in determining what elements to keep, change, or remove altogether.
Evaluation
Students are formally surveyed upon completion of the program. They are asked about individual programs as well as for their overall impressions. Responses are based on the Likert scale and short answer questions.

Collaboration
While this is a career development program, it is co-sponsored by the Center for Multicultural Education and Programs (CMEP). Their involvement emphasizes the importance of diversity and inclusion in the workplace and incorporates events that allow students to explore their identity. Students are directly connected with this office and exposed to additional resources on campus. The support of CMEP also gives us access to students who may not have come into contact with the career development office.

Additional Comments
D.I.C.P. aims to prepare students for the work environment and engage students before they are far into their undergraduate career. The programs within D.I.C.P. expose students to employers and careers that they may have never considered before. It also creates a supportive environment in which to interact with professionals and obtain feedback on how to improve a job search and networking skills. Students are not graded or ranked so as not to discourage any individual’s growth. We are proud of this program and look to expand it every year to meet the needs of our diverse population.

For Further Information
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“Networking Night put me directly in touch with a lot of interesting employers and let me talk to them professionally, but in a casual manner that really helped me gain knowledge as to what ‘it’ was all about.”
– Past D.I.C.P. program participant
BEST PRACTICE:
First Generation Scholars Program
Institution: St. John Fisher College
Students Served: First Generation College Students
Focus: Ethnic Minority
Economic Hardship
First Generation College Students

Goals
Created in 1999, this program recognizes that first generation college students who are not HEOP-eligible often do not have the financial resources or social preparation to attend a private college, so this program provides financial and social support for first generation college students who meet the regular admission criteria for the College. The program goals include reducing the financial impediments to college completion, encouraging civic engagement through community service, as well as creating a cohort of students who can serve as peer support for each other, thereby encouraging each other to persist to graduation.

Description of Best Practice
The First Generation Scholars Program brings in a cohort of 24 students each fall, and, based on financial need, each Scholar receives aid up to half of the total cost of attending the College. The program begins with a fall semester Learning Community, “Leadership Through Self-Development,” composed of a three-credit course on leadership (FGEN 120-C), paired with a three-credit English 101 section. This Learning Community meets a College Core requirement and provides students with a basic understanding of:

- The Relational Leadership Model presented by Komives, Lucas & McMahon
- Erikson’s theory of identity development, focusing on exploration, choice and commitment
- How leadership and identity development may be reflected in the real-life experiences examined in selected case studies.

The structure of FGEN 120C:

- Freshmen First Generation Scholars are organized into small groups called “October Sky Groups” within their FGEN 120-C class. Each October Sky Group is made up of 4 or 5 freshmen paired with one upper-class First Generation Scholar, who is called a Class Assistant.
- The October Sky Group and Class Assistant meet outside of class time for 7 to 12 hours during the first semester. During their meetings the students review and prepare assignments for their Learning Community classes as well as discuss their general adjustment to college with the Class Assistant.

- In-class, the October Sky Group serves as the small discussion group when broad questions requiring reflection are presented to the class.
- October Sky Groups are assigned specific topics for class presentations based on reading assignments; each group plans presentations during October Sky Group meetings with their Class Assistant.

Through key ideas presented via the Relational Leadership Model and the supplementary reading and case studies, this Learning Community provides students with an opportunity to develop a more nuanced understanding of leadership. Key learning goals related to leadership include:

- Ordinary people are capable of leadership
- Active participation as a member of a group is as vital as the formal leadership role any one person or group of persons may have within the group
- Leadership often involves a process rather than just an individual role
- Both leadership and active participation require constant learning; every group should become a learning organization as described by Peter Senge.

The First Generation Scholars Program offers students opportunities to practice things learned about leadership through their community service, including:

- After school homework options – weekly tutor/mentor sessions serving students enrolled in local inner-city schools for the entire academic year
- On-going relationships and projects with outside non-profits; for example, Fisher Jefferson Partnership Program, Hillside Children’s Center, Special Olympics, American Cancer Society, etc.
First Generation Scholars engage in significant learning and service, completing a four-year academic and service program in which they provide approximately 6,000 hours of service hours each year. They are selected through an application and interview process, which helps them better understand the purposes of the program.

First Generation Scholars complete a minimum of 30 hours of community service per semester (approximately 2 hours per week) with at least 10 hours devoted to tutoring and mentoring younger students, along with at least one group service project (involving at least 10 First Generation Scholars on the project).

The Learning Community is followed in each subsequent semester by a half-credit seminar that:
- Keeps the class cohort together
- Builds on the information presented in the Learning Community
- Provides opportunities for further reflection about leadership and self-development as service projects are developed and implemented.

For the senior First Generation Scholars Seminar, the seminar instructor focuses on:
- Facilitating students’ reflection on their growth as First Generation Scholars and college students
- Supervising the planning and implementation of a community service project with expectations regarding cooperation, group decision-making, and project impact that recognize that the students are seniors.

The seminar incorporates information to address students’ post-graduation goals, opportunities, challenges, and concerns such as job search strategies, constructing effective job or graduate school applications, financial literacy, and management of student debt.

Why is it Successful?

We believe the First Generation Scholars Program is successful because of several program components:
- **Application Process**: Students apply to become members of the program, fostering a greater commitment to the program and its goals by those who enroll.
- **Cohort Structure**: Students enter and progress through the program as a cohort, building mutually supportive relationships with many other members of their cohort.
- **October Sky Groups**: These small groups provide venues for group dialogue and discussion, which in turn prepares students for participation in larger class-wide discussions.

**Class Assistants**: These First Generation Scholars are selected based on their success as students and are trained by the Academic Director and the Assistant Director of Campus Life to coach freshmen. The Class Assistants serve as role models for success in college and provide answers to questions that the students may have but may not feel comfortable asking their instructors.

**Follow-up Seminars**: The seminars insure that students stay connected with the First Generation Scholars Program and provide for further exploration of leadership and self-development as the students plan a service project for the class that goes beyond their expected 30 hours of service per semester.

**Scholarship Assistance**: This financial aid reduces the financial pressures and anxieties that the students experience during their time at the college.

**Community Service**: This provides students an opportunity to feel valued and capable of contributing to others rather than experiencing themselves as students who are just “receiving” and who have little or nothing to contribute.

**Evaluation**

For cohorts that entered beginning in the fall of 2002, the following data tracking the progress to degree completion by students in the First Generation Scholars Program support our belief that the program is successful because, on average:
- 71 percent of the students for cohorts entering from 2002 until 2009 have earned their bachelor’s degrees within four years.
- 84 percent of the students for cohorts entering from 2002 until 2008 have earned their bachelor’s degrees within six years.
- The GPA of those First Generation Scholars who have graduated is 3.3 on a 4.0 scale.
- The freshman to sophomore year retention for cohorts entering from 2002 until 2011 is 89 percent.
- The Pell Grant award for cohorts entering from 2002 until 2012 is $3,130 and the TAP award is $2,444, indicating that the program serves students who have financial need.

(n.b.: First Generation Scholars are not HEOP-eligible based on income and academic achievement.)

**Collaboration**

The First Generation Scholars Program involves collaboration between the divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs & Diversity Initiatives at the college. The Vice President for Student Affairs & Diversity Initiatives serves as the Academic Director for the program and is the instructor for the FGEN 120C class as well as the first seminar, FGEN 130C. A member of the English Department serves as the English 101 instructor for the Learning Community. In this way, the First Generation Scholars Program is automatically
incorporated into the college’s wider Learning Community program for first year students.
Other faculty who teach the half-credit seminars include members of the Psychology Department as well as professional staff from the Offices of Campus Life and Community Service. The Office of Community Service coordinates and supervises the community service activities of the First Generation Scholars.
The Office of Freshman Admissions coordinates the recruitment, selection and enrollment of First Generation Scholars, while the Office of Financial Aid prepares the aid packages for the First Generation Scholars.

Additional Comments
The First Generation Scholars Program is led and staffed primarily by faculty and professional staff who themselves were first generation college students. The First Generation Scholars Program is rooted in the Relational Leadership Model as described by Susan Komives, Nance Lucas and Timothy McMahon in their textbook: Exploring Leadership: For College Students Who Want to Make a Difference.
During their first year, students view the following movies and examine them as case studies related to leadership and self-development:

- October Sky
- A Thousand Heroes
- Something the Lord Made
- The Great Debaters
- Iron-Jawed Angels

In addition, the students study the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Lunch Counter Sit-In Movement as case studies that illustrate leadership and self-development. The freshmen also read two autobiographies during the fall semester:

- The Long Haul by Myles Horton
- The Other Wes Moore by Wes Moore

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“This program is a true collaborative effort among various departments across the College, particularly the Divisions of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs.”
– Rick DeJesús-Rueff, VP for Student Affairs & Diversity Initiatives

Students learn that ordinary persons like themselves are capable of taking on leadership responsibilities, and that they can contribute to the community in meaningful ways.
BEST PRACTICE:
The Harriet Tubman Mentoring Project

Institution: Hartwick College
Students Served: Enrolled College Students
Focus: Mentoring

Goals
The Harriet Tubman Mentoring Project is a faculty-endorsed student research experience in local history, family research, USCT Civil War Studies, Underground Railroad, Anti-Slavery Movement and related topics. This program is part of the U.S. Pluralism Center at Hartwick College, which provides transitional support for non-traditional students in need of mentoring from the point of entry to graduation.

Description of Best Practice
The Harriet Tubman Mentoring Program enrolls a maximum of 25 students per academic year, with the opportunity for a student to complete the project over multiple years. Through the program, students will be introduced to the heroic figure Harriet Tubman through a unique experience. They explore self-awareness of personal histories, values, and beliefs; the impact of heritage on one’s leadership style; the process by which individuals of similar and different backgrounds forge a common identity, and; the organization of strategies for progressive change. Students learn research skills by shadowing the Associate Dean, following a set experiential syllabus, traveling to a professional conference, and engaging in primary research about the United States Colored Troops of the Civil War, Anti-Slavery Movement and the Underground Railroad. Students help organize mini-conferences for United States Colored Troops members and Harriet Tubman Mentoring Program members that are primarily held at Hartwick College.

To complete the project a student must pass a quiz that identifies 27 personalities of the Freedom Journey, attend six (6) two-hour dinner meetings, one (1) six-hour Pluralism Associates League for Students (PALS) Leadership Seminar, and four (4) one-hour cultural programs. Students who participate receive a membership in the United States Colored Troops Institute for Local History and Family Research, which is a nationally-recognized membership body founded in 1998 and designated in 2011 by the National Park Service as a program of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom. Students are also provided with Harriet Tubman Mentoring Project garments to wear primarily at off-campus affairs, such as during their annual pilgrimage to the Harriet Tubman Home, Underground Railroad Conference and United States Colored Troops events.

Why is it Successful?
The Harriet Tubman Mentoring Project has a structured curriculum with clear objectives. This allows the student to work through the curriculum and complete all parts of the program. Another important aspect of this program is that students teach and mentor new students coming into the program.

Evaluation
Students in the program take quizzes and complete a final project. The enrollment in this program is consistent. The program has been so successful that in 2011, the program was recognized by the National Park Service as a program of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom.

Collaboration
This program works with the U.S. Pluralism Center, The Society of Sisters/Brothers United, and the Pluralism Associates League for Students, all located at Hartwick College. The program is also recognized by the American Historical Society as a model program to introduce students to history and is a nationally-recognized program that provides research assistance to other individuals and programs across the country.

For Further Information
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The Harriet Tubman Mentoring Project has been so successful that in 2011, the program was recognized by the National Park Service as a program of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom.
BEST PRACTICE: Haudenosaunee Promise

Institution: Syracuse University

Students Served: College 1st Yr
Transfer
The eligible student must be a certified citizen of one of the historic Haudenosaunee nations (Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, or Tuscarora)

Focus: Ethnic Minority
American Indian students

Goals
The Haudenosaunee Promise Scholarship Program seeks to make the rich educational experiences of Syracuse University available to admitted, qualified, first-year, and transfer American Indian students. The Promise expresses Syracuse University’s gratitude and appreciation for the historical, political, and cultural legacies of the Haudenosaunee and honors the continually growing relationship between the university and the Haudenosaunee community.

Description of Best Practice
Under the scholarship program, qualified students receive financial assistance equal to the cost of tuition, housing and meals (on-campus, up to the amount allotted through our Cost of Attendance) and mandatory fees for each year of full-time undergraduate study.

Why is it Successful?
It targets those individuals of Haudenosaunee background who have historically been underrepresented at institutions of higher education.

The Haudenosaunee Promise Scholarship continues to create change not only in Native community perceptions of education, but also in what our Indigenous students are capable of. Syracuse University’s Haudenosaunee Promise and commitment to increasing our Indigenous student population are examples of Scholarship in Action and the University’s dedication to access and opportunity.

Evaluation
The first cohort of Promise students began in the fall of 2006 with 32 Haudenosaunee applicants and we have maintained approximately 15 new eligible Haudenosaunee students per academic year. We are working on creating consistent measures to track all our Promise eligible and Haudenosaunee students on campus across programs and departments.

Syracuse University currently has a Haudenosaunee student population of 62 students and an overall indigenous student population of over 300, the largest Haudenosaunee student population of any American college campus. This scholarship is changing the way Haudenosaunee students see their futures. Before the scholarship, most never considered college, let alone attending Syracuse University. By providing the access and opportunity to eligible Haudenosaunee students, our Haudenosaunee students are working harder to raise their academics and are becoming more involved in their schools and communities to increase their competitiveness, thereby setting examples for future generations of successful, competitive Haudenosaunee applicants.

Collaboration
The Haudenosaunee Promise Scholarship is managed through the Office of Admissions and administered through Financial Aid. The position of Native American Liaison was created in the Office of Admissions to raise awareness of the Haudenosaunee Promise Scholarship and increase our Indigenous student population. As the Native Liaison, Tammy Bluewolf-Kennedy, Oneida, works closely with the Native programming on campus to provide assistance, development and improvement of support services and resources on campus to best benefit the Indigenous student population.

To support not only the scholarship’s candidates, but also the other Indigenous student populations, the Native Student Program was developed through the Office of Multicultural Affairs. The Native Student Program is headed by Regina Jones, Oneida, Assistant Director, and Neal Powless, Onondaga, Assistant Director. We work closely with the Native American Studies Learning Community through the Office of Residence Life headed by Dan Cutler, Director of Learning Communities/Associate Director of Residence Life.

Other programs that the Native Student Program and the Native Liaison works closely with are: Native American Students at Syracuse/NASAS; Native Studies Program with interim Director, Phil Arnold; Center for Indigenous Law and Research, Center for Indigenous Peoples currently headed by Carrie Garrow, Mohawk; Center for Indigenous Peoples and the Environment headed by Robin Kimmerer, Potawatomi; Native Student Early Orientation Program; and our new...
The Native Student Program was created as a resource for all Native students to support their transition to college. Students gather weekly to attend workshops that will promote their academic success, including academic counseling. It is critically important that students remain connected with their heritage. The Native Student Program provides students the necessary engagement for growth and success beyond the walls of college through faculty, staff, and peer interaction. The physical space committed to the Native Student Program at 113 Euclid Avenue serves as an extension to the home-away-from-home theme that is central to the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

**Additional Comments**

The Haudenosaunee Promise Scholarship Program seeks to make the rich educational experiences of Syracuse University available to admitted, qualified, first-year, and transfer American Indian students. The Promise expresses Syracuse University’s gratitude and appreciation for the historical, political, and cultural legacies of the Haudenosaunee and honors the continually growing relationship between us. Qualified students receive financial assistance equal to the cost of tuition, housing and meals (on-campus, up to the amount allotted through our Cost of Attendance), and mandatory fees for each year of full-time undergraduate study. The Promise Scholarship also covers the University’s Study Abroad Program as well as 80 percent of the tuition of our SUPA/Syracuse University Project Advance program for high school students and part-time college for our Haudenosaunee non-traditional students.

**For Further Information**

Name: Tammy Bluewolf-Kennedy
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“As a Native Student I didn’t have worries about social awkwardness, making the transition into college a lot less stressful.”

~ Rachel Benedict, ‘14

Certificate of Iroquois Linguistics program headed by Percy Abrams, Onondaga, through the College of Arts and Sciences; the Ongwehonwe Alumni Association (Native alumni) headed by Maija McLaughlin, Oneida, President. All of these programs, resources, faculty and staff work together to support all our Indigenous students academically and socially, helping to create and maintain visibility of our Indigenous students on campus as well as their access to opportunity and success on campus and in their communities.
BEST PRACTICE: 
NACME Scholars Support Initiatives

Institution: Polytechnic Institute of New York University

Students Served: Students receiving scholarships from the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering (NACME)

Focus: Ethnic Minority

Goals
NACME Scholars are selected on a yearly basis to receive scholarship funding. Part of being accepted as a NACME Scholar includes being assigned a staff liaison as well as inclusion in programming specifically targeted to NACME Scholars. These programs, focused around career preparation and connection to campus resources, work to supplement those resources provided by the NACME National Office in an effort to retain students through graduation and support students in maintaining strong academic records.

Description of Best Practice
NACME Scholars are selected through an application process before the start of each academic semester, with those who have not graduated and who meet the GPA requirement continuing on from the previous semester. All new Scholars are required to attend an orientation session, provided by NACME Nationals. Students are then able to opt into various programs as provided by the NYU-Poly NACME Liaison and the NACME Ambassadors (student leaders). Programs change from year to year, as wanted and needed by the Scholars, and have included:

- Guaranteed 4.0: A day-long series of workshops and sessions focused on providing Scholars with the tools and resources needed to achieve a 4.0 semester
- Scholar Coffee Chats: Monthly informal networking hours, for students to connect amongst themselves and with staff at NYU-Poly
- Alumni Talks: Previous NACME Scholars come back to campus to provide information and answer questions about various topics
- Collaborative programming with the Wasserman Center for Career Development at NYU-Poly: Utilizing existing programs, NACME Scholars have been encouraged to attend and an additional component has been added specific to them before or after the program

Why is it Successful?
This program is successful because it capitalizes on programs that the current NACME Scholars want to participate in and are interested in attending. Through the NACME Ambassadors and NACME Scholars who have been selected to serve as student leaders for NACME, feedback and ideas are generated which lead to the development of the semester’s programming.

Evaluation
Current evaluation happens through one-on-one conversation.

Collaboration
This program would not exist without the NACME National Office since they provide the funding for the student scholarships. NYU-Poly’s resources and programs for the NACME Scholars are a next step in what NACME Nationals already provides its Scholars. The NYU-Poly Liaison works closely with other offices and departments at NYU-Poly in providing the programs and resources for Scholars, including Student Financial Services and the Wasserman Center for Career Development at NYU-Poly.

For Further Information
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The NACME Scholars Program seeks to provide resources and programs to best support our Scholars’ journey through NYU-Poly.
BEST PRACTICE:
Native American Future Stewards Program

Institution: Rochester Institute of Technology
Students Served: Enrolled College Students
Focus: Ethnic Minority
Native American
Alaskan Native

Goals
The Future Stewards Program (FSP) was established as a result of RIT’s commitment to increasing the success rate and number of Native scholars (Native American, Alaska Native, and First Nations) in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM), along with other areas of need in Indian country. FSP’s mission is to recruit Native scholars to RIT, easing their transition to a campus environment; retain Native scholars at RIT, ensuring their academic, social and professional success; and return Native scholars to the Tribal community when they graduate.

Description of Best Practice
FSP partners with students and Tribal nations, organizations and corporations to create opportunities for Native scholars to develop professionally, personally and culturally. FSP is dedicated to helping Native scholars succeed. FSP supports Native student professional growth through hosting conferences such as RIT’s Native Innovation Day and connecting students to scholarship, research, co-op, and job opportunities. FSP administers ongoing grants that include the Seneca Language Revitalization Project and the Collegiate Science Technology Entry Program (CSTEP), which provide research placement and academic support services for students. Further, FSP advises the RT American Indian Science Engineering Society chapter (AISES), which works to substantially increase the representation of American Indian and Alaskan Natives in STEM disciplines. AISES meets bi-monthly and FSP supports their attendance to the annual national conference. FSP supports Native student personal and cultural growth by providing cultural enrichment activities such as an annual overnight and service event at Ganondagan State Historic Site, Native American Heritage Month celebration events, a “Native American Cultural Celebration” exhibit at Imagine RIT, as well as advising the Native American Student Association.

Why is it Successful?
FSP is a program made up of Native American faculty and staff who work to support the whole student. FSP’s foremost focus is on connecting students to academic and professional opportunities, but also provides personal and cultural development.

Evaluation
We evaluate the program’s effectiveness through Native student academic data, which includes cumulative GPA, retention and graduation rates, and job placement/continuing education. We also conduct annual surveys that allow students the opportunity to provide feedback on what FSP strengths and areas of growth are. Some examples are provided:

Graduation:
- Spring 2012: 20 graduates
- Spring 2011: 29 graduates
- Spring 2010: 14 graduates
- Spring 2009: 7 graduates

Enrollment:
- Fall 2012: 137 students
- Fall 2011: 119 students
- Fall 2010: 71 students
- Fall 2009: 65 students

Academic:
- Overall cumulative GPA, Fall 2012: 3.11
- Cumulative Undergraduate GPA, Fall 2012: 3.08
- Cumulative Graduate GPA, Fall 2012: 3.71

Retention:
- 90% incoming freshmen 2011-12 retained to 2012-13
- 100% incoming freshmen 2011-12 retained to 2012-13
- 91% graduate students 2011-12 retained to 2012-13
- 100% graduate students 2012 retained to 2012-13
“Through FSP I have had so many opportunities that I could never have dreamed of otherwise. My freshman year I was put into contact with a Native faculty member who was looking for a student to assist with research that summer. Not only did I have a chance to gain more experience in my field, but to expand my connections within the Native community.”

– Caitlin Kavanaugh, Kahnawake Mohawk, Turtle Clan, and 4th year mechanical engineering with aerospace option student

**Collaboration**

FSP was awarded the Seneca Language Revitalization Program (SLRP) grant with the Seneca Nation of Indians. SLRP provides opportunities to connect students to paid research and culturally invaluable opportunities. FSP was also awarded the NYSED Collegiate Science Technology Program (CSTEP) grant, which provides a wealth of academic support services to underrepresented students. FSP outreaches to eligible Native students to apply to the program so that they can have access to free one-on-one tutoring, a textbook fund, graduate school application and test fee support, research placement, and faculty mentoring. Through these collaborations, FSP is better able to provide academic support services to Native American students.

**For Further Information**

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Enrollment Fall 2012: 137 Native students
Overall cumulative GPA for Fall 2012: 3.11
Retention Rate for Freshmen: Over 90%

RIT FSP was featured in an article titled “Creating Communities for Native Scholars” — *Winds of Change*, 2012-2013 College Issue, pp. 18-20
BEST PRACTICE:
Pluralism Associates League for Students (PALS)

Institution: Hartwick College
Students Served: College 1st Yr
Open to any student
Focus: Mentoring

Goals
Pluralism Associates League for Students (PALS) is a Leadership Seminar that provides affective self-reflection and transitional support as well as cultural programming in dance, music and other heritage experiences. This program is part of the U.S. Pluralism Center at Hartwick College, which provides transitional support for non-traditional students in need of mentoring from the point of entry to graduation.

Description of Best Practice
Pluralism Associates League for Students (PALS) is closely aligned with the Society of Sisters United/Brothers United, an organization of the U.S. Pluralism Center at Hartwick College, which is committed to student voluntary service and social programming. Members have the primary charge of assisting the U.S. Pluralism Center with cultural programming. It is the parent-body for the M’Bumbala African Dance Group, Daniel A. Payne Gospel Choir and a newsletter called Voices Magazine. The group has also sponsored the annual PALS Leadership Training Seminar.

Why is it Successful?
This program is a very personalized program that helps students self-reflect. The program provides an introduction to students’ cultural influences and how those influences shape their leadership style and guide the decisions that they make. The limited number admitted into the program provides an opportunity for personalized instruction and mentoring. There is peer support.

Evaluation
The program’s enrollment is always full and student satisfaction surveys reflect the meaningful nature of the program.

Collaboration
This program collaborates with the U.S. Pluralism Center, The Harriet Tubman Mentoring Project, and the Society of Sisters and Brothers United, all located at Hartwick College.

For Further Information
Name: Dr. Harry Matthews
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The Pluralism Associates League for Students (PALS) program provides an introduction to students’ cultural influences and how those influences shape their leadership style and guide the decisions that they make.
**BEST PRACTICE:**
The Society of Sisters/Brothers United (SOSU/BU)

**Institution:** Hartwick College

**Students Served:**
- College 1st Yr
- Alumni
- Any student

**Focus:**
- Ethnic Minority
- ALANA

**Goals**
The Society of Sisters United/Brothers United (SOSU/BU) provides community service opportunities, leadership opportunities and social bonding experiences. This program is part of the U.S. Pluralism Center at Hartwick College which provides transitional support for non-traditional students in need of mentoring from the point of entry to graduation.

**Description of Best Practice**

The Society of Sisters United/Brothers United (SOSU/BU) is one of the largest student groups at Hartwick College with the mission of community service and peer support for the transition of primarily ALANA (African-American, Latino, Asian-American, Native American) students attending the college. Founded in 2000, SOSU/BU now has an alumnae/alumni group that maintains contact with current students. Testimonials from alumni identify this group as a primary reason for remaining at Hartwick College, as well as express the view that the leadership skills learned via SOSU/BU have aided them during the transition to employment and graduate school. The group’s annual weekend at the college brings alumni into contact with current members for career advising and mentoring.

**Why is it Successful?**

The program, although open to any student, provides an important social outlet for ALANA students. The program focuses on community service, communication and research. Students work together and form long-lasting friendships.

**Evaluation**
This is the largest student group at Hartwick College. Students who complete the leadership training are more likely to attend graduate school. The program has more than 100 alumni, holds an annual gathering, and offers an annual scholarship.

**Collaboration**
This program collaborates with the U.S. Pluralism Center, The Harriet Tubman Mentoring Project, and the Pluralism Associates League for Students, all located at Hartwick College.

**For Further Information**

Name: Dr. Harry Matthews
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Testimonials from alumni identify The Society of Sisters/Brothers United (SOSU/BU) as a primary reason for remaining at Hartwick College, as well as express the view that the leadership skills learned via SOSU/BU have aided them during the transition to employment and graduate school.
BEST PRACTICE:
Undergraduate Student-Faculty Research Program

Institution: 
Pace University

Students Served: 
Undergraduates

Focus: 
Economic Hardship
Ethnic Minority
First Generation
Students With Disabilities

Goals
Pace University’s Undergraduate Student-Faculty Research Program allows faculty and undergraduate students with similar interests to work together on a research project throughout the academic year. The program enables students to form meaningful and lasting relationships with faculty while also receiving faculty mentoring. It also engages students in research and academics, supporting them as they become more fully immersed and involved at Pace, all while increasing retention.

Description of Best Practice
The Undergraduate Student-Faculty Research Program is a year-long program that takes place on both the NYC and Westchester campuses at Pace University. Students and faculty who are interested in participating submit an application in the spring semester prior to the academic year they are applying for. Faculty and students may apply individually, but joint applications are also accepted for those faculty-student teams who have already determined they would like to work together. A committee of faculty and staff members reviews the applications to choose the grant winners. The committee is also responsible for pairing faculty and students who apply individually and are awarded the grant. (Most apply as pairs.) Faculty-student pairs conduct their research through the academic year, but specific meeting times, hours, etc. are determined within each pair. A small stipend is granted to each pair, and enrichment seminars are offered throughout the year in order to build a foundation for success, which includes goal planning, scholarly research and design, prestigious scholarships and fellowships, ePortfolios, and professional presentations. The program culminates with an end-of-year showcase on each campus that recognizes all research initiatives through formal presentations and poster sessions. Two overall winning pairs are awarded funding to attend a national or international conference.

Why is it Successful?
The hands-on nature of the program and the faculty mentoring built into the program have largely contributed to the success of the Undergraduate Student-Faculty Research Program. Students and faculty from all schools, departments/disciplines, and majors are eligible to participate and propose any research topic they are interested in pursuing. Students value the opportunity to conduct real-world, hands-on research and both students and faculty prize the relationships they form with one another. Additionally, faculty enjoy the experience of working one-on-one with their student and treasure the opportunity to guide, mentor and be a part of the positive transformation students experience in the program.

The program’s enrichment seminars make the experience successful by stimulating student interaction and creating a sense of community that values collaborative learning and appreciates multiple perspectives. The seminars also teach the importance and value of engaging in reflective practices for research purposes, while helping students gain a better understanding of themselves and other disciplines, research approaches, and peoples.

Evaluation
Pace University had 100 percent retention of those students who participated in the program last year, and all of those who graduated went on to graduate school. The students and faculty who participated in the program described it as a “transformative” experience, and the program has grown significantly in its second year. For the 2012-2013 academic year, there were more than 130 applicants for 27-paired spots in the program as opposed to 80 applications for 16-paired slots last year.

Collaboration
The program is open to students and faculty from all schools, departments/disciplines, and majors. The support and collaboration among all the different schools at Pace showcases the dynamic and diverse student and faculty body while creating a supportive and nurturing community at the same time.

This cross-disciplinary undergraduate student-faculty research program has had a transformative impact on both the students and faculty mentors.
Faculty quote from last year's assessment: "The opportunity to work with a student on a topic of mutual interest proved to be a rewarding and even transformative experience for both of us. We were able to recognize and optimize each other’s specific skills, which culminated in a final product that was a true blend of our efforts.”

Pace University had 100 percent retention of the students who participated in the program last year, and those who graduated all went on to graduate school.

Additional Comments
This program is highly competitive and has the full support of the President, Provost and Deans. It is used as a recruiting, retention, and student success tool. It is important to emphasize that this program is open to ALL disciplines, not just the STEM fields, and many of the research pairs are cross-disciplinary.

For Further Information
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BEST PRACTICE:
Undergraduate Summer Research Program
Institution: Polytechnic Institute of New York University
Students Served: Undergraduates
Focus: Mentoring

Goals
The Undergraduate Summer Research Program aims to enhance and broaden participants’ knowledge base, apply classroom learning to practical and contemporary problems, and better prepare students for lifelong learning.

Description of Best Practice
The Undergraduate Summer Research Program consists of 10 weeks of hands-on research under faculty mentorship. Students work full-time in labs with faculty mentors and participate in weekly seminars presented by distinguished NYU-Poly faculty. In addition, inter-disciplinary lunches are held as well as special presentations on graduate school applications and entrepreneurship. At the end of the program, student researchers are expected to publish abstracts on the research they have completed.

Why is it Successful?
The program encourages intellectual curiosity, increases students’ confidence and self-efficacy, and improves participants’ oral communications and professional writing skills.

Evaluation
The Program’s success is measured by student engagement, faculty feedback, and participants’ successful completion of an abstract.

Collaboration
This program would not be possible without faculty members eager to collaborate with the undergraduate students. In addition, the program receives meaningful support from the Wasserman Center for Career Development at NYU-Poly and the Office of Admissions.

Additional Comments
The Summer Research Program was initiated in 2007 by the Office of the Provost. Its success has been made possible by the financial support from the Institute’s most loyal and generous donors as well as supplements from the research grants of the mentoring faculty.

For Further Information
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NYU-Poly’s Undergraduate Summer Research Program provides a unique opportunity for students to work alongside faculty mentors on cutting-edge research projects. Close interaction with faculty and research staff provides students with an education experience that promotes the i2e model of invention, innovation and entrepreneurship.
IV. Supporting Veterans and Military Students

In this section:
- Institute for Veterans and Military Families
- Support for Our Veterans
BEST PRACTICE:
Institute for Veterans and Military Families

Institution: Syracuse University

Students Served: Veterans with disabilities
Military Family Members

Focus: Veterans

Goals
The Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University (IVMF) was created to leverage the intellectual, programmatic and human capital resources of higher education in support of the post-service life course of the nation’s veterans and military families. The IVMF focuses on developing effective programming, cultivating actionable research, conducting policy analysis and providing technical assistance positioned to address the social, economic and public policy challenges facing the veterans’ community.

Description of Best Practice
IVMF provides a number of resources for the veteran community. There are five employment-focused programs that IVMF administers: Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities (EBV), the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans’ Families (EBV-F), Operation Endure and Grow (E&G), Operation Boots to Business, and Veteran Women Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship (V-WISE). All five programs are designed to prepare veterans with the tools and resources they will need to secure a post-service civilian career.

EBV is held at different campuses around the country, including Texas A&M, Purdue University, UCLA, the University of Connecticut, Louisiana State University, Florida State University and Cornell University – with Syracuse University serving as national host. Nearly 500 veterans have graduated from EBV universities since 2007. Currently, the cohort of EBV graduates is responsible for the creation of more than 180 new small businesses. EBV-F is also hosted at Florida State University, and provides an economic or vocational path for family members of veterans.

V-WISE, offered in cooperation with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), provides the tools women veterans, active duty and female family members need to become successful entrepreneurs. V-WISE enables women veterans to find their passion and learn business-savvy skills to turn ideas or businesses into growth ventures. A three-phase program, V-WISE is offered to 200 participants per session, and includes two tracks of training; a growth track for participants already in business, and a start-up track focused on potential entrepreneurs. Courses include business planning, marketing, accounting/finance, operations/production, human resources and work-life balance. Ongoing support and mentorship is delivered online and through a robust, comprehensive network of mentors and partners.

E&G is an eight-week online training experience focused on the fundamentals of launching and/or growing a small business, offered in cooperation with the SBA. The program is open to National Guard and Reserve members (those serving and who have served) and their first degree family members, and includes start-up and growth tracks for training in the core components required to develop a business or nonprofit organizational plan; and the interrelationship/interdependency of marketing, accounting and finance, operations and production, and human resources required to formulate that plan. The program also provides the analytical tools, methodologies and frameworks useful in creating business plans, and teaches participants how to present to prospective investors, lenders and financial backers.

Operation Boots to Business is offered by the Whitman School of Management at Syracuse University (SU) in cooperation with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). A three-phase training program developed to introduce and train transitioning service members to business ownership, Boots to Business begins during the service member’s transition from the service (TAP or TAMP) and can continue if the service member decides to self-select into Phase II and III.

The IVMF is the first national center in higher education focused on the social, economic, education and policy issues impacting veterans and their families post-service.

In 2011, Inc. Magazine named the EBV program as one of the “10-Best” entrepreneurship programs in the United States.
Why is it Successful?
IVMF is successful because, each year, more than 1,000 veterans and their family members receive training through IVMF’s five education programs, at no cost to them. Graduates of the program have gone on to become successful business owners—in fields ranging from security consulting to film to the restaurant industry.

Evaluation
The program’s effectiveness is measured by the number of graduates who, once they have completed the program, feel equipped to successfully enter the civilian workforce, either as employees or small business owners. As mentioned above, currently, EBV graduates have created more than 180 new small businesses.

Collaboration
VetNet is a collaboration between IVMF and leading organizations such as Hire Heroes USA, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s Hiring Our Heroes initiative. VetNet provides a place to start for veterans seeking post-service employment. Each partner organization brings its own expertise through a unique channel that leverages Google technology. The VetNet Entrepreneur Track, powered by IVMF, helps turn ideas of self-employment into reality. VetNet launched November 2012 and is hosted on Google+ and at VetNetHQ.com. IVMF has partnered with General Electric to create the online veteran employment toolkit, “Veteran Employment Leading Practices: Tools for Engaging Talent.” The toolkit is a one-stop shop for employers committed to hiring veterans. It is continually updated with practical tools and online resources to empower the nation’s employers to hire veterans. IVMF also has many other partnerships with private business and foundations throughout the country.

For Further Information
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IVMF partnered with the Institute for National Security and Counterterrorism to produce National Veterans’ Strategy, a publication that aims to cultivate meaningful and substantive discourse related to national policy affecting the post-service life course of the men and women who have worn the cloth of this nation in military service. Specifically, this publication develops the case and foundational logic to support action toward crafting a National Veterans’ Strategy. The central premise and finding of this publication is that developing, articulating, and institutionalizing a National Veterans’ Strategy is necessary to serve important social, economic and security objectives, and is also consistent with the inherent social contract that defines the relationship between the nation and its veterans.
BEST PRACTICE: Support for Our Veterans

Institution: Metropolitan College of New York
Students Served: Veterans
Focus: Economic Hardship
Veteran Students

Goals
To support veterans by helping them obtain credit for coursework completed while in service and receive the benefits and aid that they are eligible for to continue their education.

Description of Best Practice
Many veteran students have obtained military credit and we feel that it is important that this is not ignored. We do everything possible to give veteran students credit for coursework they have completed while in service. Although some veterans have GI Bill benefits under new guidelines, there are capped amounts. In order to help veteran students, Metropolitan College of New York (MCNY) has been a part of the Yellow Ribbon Program for several years now and under special circumstances also offers additional funding for veteran students. Veteran students are informed about these services during their first meeting with an admissions counselor. Throughout the year information sessions are held specifically for veteran students in order to reiterate services offered. Students are always made aware of services offered at the school that can help them succeed while matriculated and even upon graduation, with access to a career services office. Also, academic advisors meet with students throughout the year in order to find out what concerns students.

For the purpose of informing veteran students specifically and addressing their needs, we are beginning to conduct information sessions for this particular group of students. Our goal is to have one at least twice a year and eventually every semester (spring, summer, and fall).

We do everything possible in order to give veteran students credit for coursework they have completed while in service.

Why is it Successful?
Our information sessions for veteran students are successful because they serve as feedback sessions and also as a way for MCNY to understand what is effective in serving our veteran student population, which makes up a significant percentage of our student enrollment. Feedback allows us to implement other programs and strategies that may benefit this group.

Evaluation
Follow-up is essential in evaluating how effective our programs are for veteran students. Empirical evidence also serves as a means of evaluation. Participating in the Yellow Ribbon Program, providing career services, and accepting military credit are all factors that have contributed to a steady increase in veteran student enrollment over the years.

Collaboration
Other departments are working on creating publications that specifically focus on veteran students and services offered. We also have plans on enhancing our website to elaborate more on how MCNY addresses the needs of veteran students.

Additional Comments
Metropolitan College of New York has always been very much involved in addressing the needs of veteran students and making our college military friendly. However, we are now implementing more structured programs so that veteran students, whether currently enrolled or not, understand all that we have to offer them.

For Further Information
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MCNY has allowed many servicemen and women to complete a graduate degree due to our accelerated programs, acceptance of military credit, and flexible schedules.

G.I. Jobs Magazine named Metropolitan College of New York a Military Friendly School for both 2010 and 2011.
V. Alternative and Accelerated Degree Programs for Adults, Non-Traditional Students, Students with Exceptional Needs

In this section:

Accelerated/Alternative Degree Programs
- Accelerated 18-Month Baccalaureate in Nursing Program
- Center for Continuing Education
- Graduate Management Studies
- Online Learning/Compressed Semesters
- RN Mobility Program
- School of Professional and Continuing Studies

Students with Exceptional Needs
- The Achieve Degree
- Center for Accommodative Services
- Office of Learning Services
- The Taishoff Center for Inclusive Higher Education
BEST PRACTICE: Accelerated 18-Month Baccalaureate in Nursing Program

Institution: Hartwick College

Students Served: Adults
Focus: Returning Students with an Interest in Nursing

Goals
Hartwick College’s 18-month Accelerated Baccalaureate in Nursing Program opens doors to an exciting career in nursing. The mission of the Hartwick Nursing Program is to educate a highly qualified, self-directed nurse who will competently function today, as well as in the rapidly changing health care system of the future. Graduates of our program will possess the personal, intellectual, and social skills necessary to meet the challenges of an ever-changing, interdependent, and diverse world.

Description of Best Practice
The Accelerated Baccalaureate in Nursing Program is an 18-month program of study designed for students who have completed all prerequisite and general education requirements necessary for a bachelor of science degree with a major in nursing. Students with baccalaureate degrees in other disciplines, or those with significant college credits, can also apply. Hartwick’s 18-month Program begins the first week of June and is flexible and tailored to meet the needs of the student. Courses are taught sequentially in three-to-six week blocks using a blend of face-to-face and distance, web-enhanced teaching, classes, and clinical/learning lab experiences, scheduled on the weekends and in the evenings. Over the course of the program, our students gain more than 1,000 hours of supervised clinical experience and work hand-in-hand as members of the health care team with faculty, physicians, therapists, pharmacists, dietitians, staff nurses, and advanced practice nurses, including certified nurse-midwives, nurse practitioners, certified registered nurse anesthetists, clinical nurse specialists, and nurse researchers. Hartwick’s Department of Nursing maintains partnerships with: A.O. Fox Memorial Hospital, Oneonta; At Home Care, Oneonta; Albany Medical Center, Albany; Bassett Healthcare Network, Cobleskill; Bassett Medical Center, Cooperstown; Bassett Healthcare Network, Oneonta; Catskill Area Hospice and Palliative Care, Oneonta; Lauren’s Central School, Laurens; St. Margaret’s Center, Albany; Oneonta City Schools, Oneonta; Oneonta Housing Authority, Oneonta; Oneonta Specialty Services, Oneonta; Otsego Manor, Cooperstown; Otsego County Mental Health Clinic, Oneonta; Otsego County Public Health Nursing Service, Oneonta; SUCO Children’s Center, Oneonta; Delaware County Public Health, Delhi; and NYCAMH (New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health), Fly Creek.

Why is it Successful?
Hartwick College’s 18-month Accelerated Baccalaureate in Nursing Program is successful because it allows participants to earn their BSN in 18 months through a structure that meets the needs of those who are working and attending school at the same time. We have more applicants than we can accommodate in the program.

Evaluation
The program uses quantitative and qualitative measures of assessment through academic progress, program completion and student satisfaction.

Collaboration
The collaboration and partnerships with various health centers/hospitals allows students to complete their clinical requirements and is one of the significant aspects of the success of the program.

For Further Information
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The 18-month Accelerated Baccalaureate in Nursing Program is successful because it is flexible and fits students’ schedules, allowing participants to earn their BSN in 18 months.
BEST PRACTICE:
Center for Continuing Education

Institution:  Sarah Lawrence College
Students Served:  Adults
Focus:  Ethnic Minority
          Returning college students

Goals
The Center for Continuing Education (CCE) was established 50 years ago to help adults complete their college degrees. We also work with adults who possess their bachelor’s degrees through our post-B.A. program, often helping to prepare them for graduate studies or exploration of new career paths.

Description of Best Practice
Men and women who want to earn a Sarah Lawrence degree through the Center for Continuing Education begin by registering for one of the Center’s classes. The Center’s four course offerings range across the academic disciplines and change each semester. All classes are seminars with no more than 12 students. Seminar students, like all students at the College, augment their class time with individual bi-weekly conferences with teachers. As Center students rediscover and sharpen their study skills and find out how best to fit their schoolwork into the rest of their day, they begin forming the relationships with other adult students that will grow and stay with them throughout their time at Sarah Lawrence, and often beyond. They meet frequently with their advisors (called “dons” at Sarah Lawrence) and take advantage of the many social, cultural, academic and athletic opportunities the College offers including lectures, films, tutorial services, career counseling and the 48,000-square-foot Campbell Sports Center.

Customarily, adult students successfully complete about four courses at the Center and confer with their don before becoming part of the regular undergraduate student body and finishing their degree work on the main campus. Examples of courses offered include: Studies in 19th and 20th Century Fiction; Drawing: Seeing and Thinking; Hollywood History: Interpreting the U.S. Past in Film, and; Body Politics: A 20th Century Cultural History of the United States. Sarah Lawrence College also offers a Post-BA program through the Center for Continuing Education for college and university graduates who need specific college coursework to qualify for graduate school, who want to explore an area of interest in anticipation of entering graduate school, or who simply seek the enrichment of serious study in the liberal arts.

Why is it Successful?
The Center provides a smooth transition back into the college environment for adults. It provides our students with exposure to the Sarah Lawrence College educational model of seminars and conferences. The classes in the Center are taught by full-time Sarah Lawrence faculty and are all small seminar classes.

Evaluation
We monitor students’ success through the matriculation process, through graduation rates and through the post-college experience. We also utilize faculty evaluation of student progress.

Collaboration
The Center works closely with deans of the undergraduate college to ensure a smooth transition into the college environment and work with faculty dons to help students achieve academic success.

Additional Comments
CCE courses offered in Summer 2013 include: Studies in 19th Century and 20th Century Fiction; Jewish Mysticism: From Antiquity to the Present; Collage: A Format for Visual Expression, and; Five American Poets

For Further Information
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BEST PRACTICE:
Graduate Management Studies

Institution: St. Joseph’s College

Students Served: Adults
Veterans
Senior Undergraduate Students enrolled in the following majors: Accounting, Health Administration, and Organizational Management

Focus: Ethnic Minority
Single Parents

Goals
The Graduate Management Studies programs were designed in response to student demand and geared towards the working adult student. These programs have as their purpose the promotion of managerial effectiveness and the development of leadership abilities so as to enhance human performance in organizations.

Description of Best Practice
The 36-credit Graduate Management Studies degree programs include: MS in Management with a concentration in Human Resources Management, Organizational Management, or Health Care Management; Executive MBA (land-based and online); MBA in Health Care Management, also MBA in Health Care Management with a concentration in Health Information Systems, and; MBA in Accounting. The 15-credit Graduate Management Studies Advanced Certificate programs include: Human Resources Management (land-based and online); Health Care Management, and; Management of Health Information Systems. The dual degree or five-year combined bachelor’s and master’s degree programs include: BS/MBA in Accounting; BS in Organizational Management/Executive MBA (land-based and online), also with a concentration in Human Resources Management, and; BS in Health Administration/MBA in Healthcare Management.

The 36-credit degree programs are designed to be completed in two years of full-time study (9 credits per semester), but students also have the option to attend part-time (taking 3 or 6 credits per semester). Classes meet weekday evenings, weekend days or online. With the exception of upper-level accounting courses, which meet weekly, most land-based classes are scheduled on an every-other-week model meeting eight times per semester (spring and fall semesters) spread over 16 weeks. This approach has proven to serve full-time working adults well, providing both flexibility and sufficient time for graduate-level assignments. Limited graduate courses are also offered during the summer session, during which classes generally meet weekly.

Students who are accepted to a dual degree or five-year degree program are permitted to enroll in four graduate courses while an undergraduate student. This arrangement allows students to accelerate their studies, reduce the number of credits required for both degrees if pursued separately, and to complete the dual degree program in five years.

Courses in the Graduate Management Studies degree and advanced certificate programs are offered at each of the College campuses, Brooklyn and Patchogue, Long Island. All courses in the Executive MBA and Advanced Certificate in Human Resources programs and many courses in the other degree programs are offered online, which accommodates the schedules of working adult students.

Why is it Successful?
Courses in the Graduate Management Studies programs:
- Provide working adults opportunities to learn and apply advanced managerial theory and practices to real-world organizational issues
- Promote the business leadership competencies required for successful performance in the corporate, not-for-profit, healthcare, and public service sectors
- Emphasize ethical behavior and social responsibility, and
- Are taught by dedicated faculty with extensive professional experience in their field.

In addition, undergraduate students in the dual degree programs are regularly advised by undergraduate faculty, academic advisors, and Graduate Management Studies staff.

“This program has helped me identify and develop the skills I need to function effectively as a manager in the health field.”
Additional Comments

- The Graduate Management Studies Program has a number of distinguishing characteristics that, when taken together, make the program unique within the region and meets the needs of certain St. Joseph’s graduates.
- The St. Joseph’s Graduate Management Studies programs were designed around two interrelated concepts: the benefits accrued by focusing on developing specific abilities needed for success in the workplace and the importance of relating and applying theoretical knowledge to the real world.
- Consistent with the values embraced in the mission and goals of the college, the program supports the development of ethical behavior and social responsibility as a foundation of managerial practice. In addition, the program encourages a pro-active perspective relative to the challenges and opportunities inherent in promoting diversity in the workplace.

For Further Information
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“St. Joseph’s College offers master’s programs that are designed to fit around a student’s job and family responsibilities.”

Students’ papers produced for program courses are regularly published in journals, magazines and on websites. Examples include:

- “Maximizing the Cancer Registry Role and Data Utilization” published in the Winter 2011 issue of the Journal of Registry Management.
- “Cost of Hiring New Nurses: In this Tight Economy, Does it Pay for Hospitals to Invest in Graduate Nurses?” published in ADVANCE for Nurses.
BEST PRACTICE:
Online Learning/Compressed Semesters

Institution: St. Joseph’s College

Students Served: College 2nd Yr
Transfers
Veterans
Active-Duty Military
Adults
Learners Needing Flexibility

Focus: Ethnic Minority

Goals
The Organizational Management Online Program was created to offer flexibility and choice to the adult learner.

Description of Best Practice
The online program offers several options for the adult learner – a 14-day intersession semester, a 15-week semester, a 7.5 compressed cycle A semester and a second late start 7.5 compressed cycle B, and a 10-week summer session. The program is delivered through the Blackboard Learning Management System. Distance education students are supported by a dedicated academic advisor, 24/7 technology support, online access to the college’s Academic Center for writing support, and remote access to library resources.

Why is it Successful?
The quality of online instruction, dedicated faculty, and motivated students all make this program effective and successful.

Evaluation
The Organizational Management Online Program Assessment Committee meets each semester and collects artifacts from five required courses of the degree. Faculty who teach the same offering both on-campus and online use rubrics to access the comparable quality of submissions by modality.

Collaboration
The program collaborates and receives support from the college’s E-Learning Steering Committee, Faculty Technology Committee, Blackboard Learning Community, and instructional technology personnel.

Additional Comments
This program received commendation in a recent Middle States re-accreditation visit.

For Further Information
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The RN Mobility Program offers registered nurses from accredited associate degree and diploma programs in nursing the opportunity to obtain a bachelor of science degree with a major in nursing. The program is designed to meet the needs of those who are working to attend school at the same time.

Goals
Hartwick College offers registered nurses the opportunity to broaden their knowledge through study of the liberal arts while building on existing skills – a special opportunity that can help them move toward advanced professional nursing practice.

Description of Best Practice
The program accepts RNs from accredited associate degree and diploma programs in nursing as candidates for a bachelor of science degree with a major in nursing. RNs enter with advanced standing and they can take courses on a full-time or part-time basis. Hartwick’s Department of Nursing maintains partnerships with many facilities and organizations in the region where students can complete their clinical experience, including: A.O. Fox Memorial Hospital Oneonta; At Home Care, Oneonta; Albany Medical Center, Albany; Bassett Healthcare Network, Cobleskill; Bassett Medical Center, Cooperstown; Bassett Healthcare Network, Oneonta; Catskill Area Hospice and Palliative Care, Oneonta; Lauren’s Central School, Laurens; St. Margaret’s Center, Albany; Oneonta City Schools, Oneonta; Oneonta Housing Authority, Oneonta; Oneonta Specialty Services, Oneonta; Otsego Manor, Cooperstown; Otsego County Mental Health Clinic, Oneonta; Otsego County Public Health Nursing Service, Oneonta; SUCO Children’s Center, Oneonta; Delaware County Public Health, Delhi, and NYCAMH (New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health), Fly Creek.

Why is it Successful?
Hartwick College’s RN Mobility Program offers registered nurses the opportunity to earn a bachelor of science degree with a major in nursing on a full-time or part-time basis. The program is designed to meet the needs of those who are working and attending school at the same time. Through strong preceptor/mentor relationships, the Nurse Residency Program offers the unique opportunity to learn from nurse colleagues to develop professional talents.

Evaluation
The program uses quantitative and qualitative measures to assess academic progress, program completion and student satisfaction.

Collaboration
The collaboration and partnerships with various health centers/hospitals allow students to complete their clinical requirements and are significant reasons for the success of the program. Nurses employed full-time at Hartwick, SUNY Delhi, and Bassett Healthcare are offered the Partnership for Nursing Opportunities Program, a year-long Nurse Residency Program for graduate nurses or registered nurses with minimal hospital-based nursing background. The Nurse Residency Program offers the graduate a supportive transitional path from novice to advanced beginner to competent practitioner through a variety of nursing education experiences. Educational offerings focus on critical thinking skills, collaboration in an interdisciplinary environment, and conflict resolution skills. Career development in conjunction with Bassett’s professional nurse clinical ladder process is a central theme throughout the residency program. The residency program also includes clinically oriented classes, as well as individual bedside teaching and observational experiences off the unit.

For Further Information
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Best Practice: School of Professional and Continuing Studies

Institution: Fordham University

Students Served:
- College 1st Yr
- Adults
- Adult Transfers
- Veterans

Focus:
- Ethnic Minority
- Parents/Guardians
- Single Parents
- 1st Generation College

Goals
Fordham School of Professional and Continuing Studies (FSPCS) is designed to assist working adults to complete or begin a bachelor’s degree. Classes are offered evenings, weekends and online to provide the flexibility these students need in order to integrate college into an already crowded daily schedule.

Description of Best Practice
FSPCS provides degree program opportunities for adult learners on all three Fordham campuses (Manhattan, Bronx and Westchester) and select courses are also delivered online. Classes meet once per week in the evening, on Saturdays or in a hybrid format combining online and on-campus classes. New students are admitted for the fall and spring semesters with summer classes offered to continuing students. Because our program covers many different undergraduate majors, on three campuses, our students have a breadth of choice and flexibility that helps them succeed in studying while working mostly full-time.

Why is it Successful?
Success of this program is due to multiple factors:
- Assessment: In addition to reviewing prior records, as a part of the admissions process, each applicant receives a three-part assessment – reading comprehension, essay and interview – designed to gauge college readiness and fit.
- Advisement: Each new student meets with an advisor to complete a first semester schedule that is realistic and appropriate. Students are encouraged to continue to meet with their advisors each semester. In addition, students receive mid-semester evaluations.
- Faculty: FSPCS faculty are professional in their respective fields and attuned to the unique needs and expectations of adult learners.

Evaluation
We evaluate success by analyzing program completion, (graduation rate), percentage of students in honors programs, and specific assessments within specific majors or areas (core curriculum).

Collaboration
FSPCS students benefit from multiple services provided through Fordham University. On the academic side students benefit from advisors within the departments who are full-time faculty. They also participate in student groups established at each campus by the traditional students, as well as from their own through student affairs. Like traditional students, they receive financial aid assistance, tutoring and counseling services. The latter are important for our increasingly large population of veterans as these men and women move from an environment of extreme structure to one of flexibility and individual choice. They also benefit from the University’s continuing 100 percent commitment to the Yellow Ribbon Program.

Additional Comments
Because our program covers many different undergraduate majors over three campuses, our students have a breadth of choice and flexibility that helps them succeed in studying while working mostly full-time.

For Further Information
Name: Isabelle Frank
Title: Dean
Phone: 212-636-6372
Email: ifrank@fordham.edu

Fordham University is the only NYC Veteran-Friendly College listed in the top 50 ranked universities. It is currently ranked number 34 nationally within the top ranked 100.
BEST PRACTICE:
The Achieve Degree

Institution: The Sage Colleges

Students Served: Late HS
College 1st Yr

Focus: Parents/Guardians
Persons on the autism spectrum or with other learning disabilities, disabilities that make physically attending college problematic.

Goals

The Achieve Degree, which results in a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies degree, was created to serve the needs of persons who have a learning disability that makes physical attendance at a bricks-and-mortar institution problematic.

This program seeks to provide an academically rigorous, intellectually stimulating postsecondary experience delivered by specially-trained faculty and Applied Behavior Analysis-certified mentors for the population identified above that will prepare them for success in their careers and in lifelong learning. Not only does the program provide the broad background of a liberal arts degree – which is the stepping stone to a large number of careers and to advanced professional study – it also contains an academic focus on computer science/networking designed to provide the level of professional training that can lead to immediate employment upon completion of the degree.

Description of Best Practice

This program was created with the guidance of the director of the College’s Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) graduate program, and delivers an online educational experience that, in addition to cutting-edge online courses prepared in partnership with Tata Interactive Systems, provides the student with guaranteed access to ABA-certified mentors (1-to-4 ratio), faculty specifically trained to teach not only online but also to the intellectual, social and learning-style needs of this population, real-time access to an ABA-certified, special-education teacher who is the program director, and a series of 12, for-credit “life labs” that provide the student with a range of practical skills from time management to personal finance to the preparation of academic research papers.

To best meet the needs of the students, courses are delivered in intensive 8-week blocks that allow students to focus on one, or at most, two topics at one time. The program is delivered in a year-round format, with short breaks between sessions so that students stay in constant “learning/study mode” and do not lose those skills during periods of inactivity. Students in the program complete 42 credit hours during the first two years of the four-year program (this includes one academic course each 8-week term and one, 8-week Life Lab course), and 78 credits during the final two years of this year-round curriculum. Students at the end of four years will graduate with a B.A. in Liberal Studies with an academic concentration in Computer Science/Networking. Material for each course is delivered in three formats, allowing students to select the method that best fits individual learning methods. Students may listen to the lecture and related discussions, which are delivered by a professional actor/voice-over specialist with modulation, speech speed and overall delivery determined by best practices as prescribed by the two ABA-certified program leaders; they may read the lecture and any accompanying information, and; they may listen and watch video depictions of the material that contain conversations among persons depicted on a screen. The voices for these persons come from students in the Russell Sage College Theatre Department and are age and gender appropriate to the person depicted on the screen.

In addition to working directly with students one-on-one, the ABA mentors work for a minimum of one hour per week with the faculty instructor to address individual student issues, help the instructor with best practices tailored to the individual student and to gain course content-based information that can be interpreted for the student by the mentor.

This program uses, in most cases, existing college courses, adapted and refined for online delivery to this population. The Life Lab courses were created specially for this program, and were subjected to the same institutional vetting process of college curriculum committees as any other credit offerings. The online delivery of the courses was created by Tata Interactive in a sub-vendor relationship based on The Sage Colleges’ partnership in this initiative with Excelsior College. Again, sensitive to the needs of the students in the program, the visual look and feel of the courses was developed based on best practices in the field and tested by ABA-certified instructors. Additionally, a full, 8-week trial course has been conducted with volunteer students who entered the program in fall 2012. Their feedback is being incorporated in a process of continuous quality improvement.
that serves as the foundation of the program. Students complete their academic experience using the College’s Learning Management Tool, Moodle, and are exposed to an array of technologic tools ranging from Skype to Adobe Connect to Screen-Cast-O-Matic that facilitate their learning and their interactions with other students, mentor and instructors. The director of the college’s Disabilities Services department works with students to meet other adaptive needs as identified.

Why is it Successful?

The key to the success of this program is its foundation in ABA best practices and its focus on providing a high-quality undergraduate education for a segment of the populace that is underserved, even as the number of persons on the autism spectrum and with other learning difficulties is exploding. While there are programs at other institutions designed to assist persons on the spectrum with integration into the traditional postsecondary experience, those who cannot survive, much less thrive, in that environment have at present no other academic options post-K-12.

Evaluation

Student-learning outcomes are stated at the “top” level of the program, and all courses are designed with measurable, accessible student learning outcomes that flow directly from top-level outcomes. The direct measures of student learning will come from regular evaluation of student achievement, which will be measured in a variety of ways but include evaluation of student’s written and oral skills using accepted AAC&U performance rubrics, student portfolios, and the required capstone academic experience for the program. The capstone experience will depend on student interest and may be demonstrated in a number of ways, but will be structured to provide a tool to evaluate the student’s achievements of the program’s outcomes. Student satisfaction over a broad range of measures will be measured through the same NSSE and Student Satisfaction surveys used by all Sage students. Each course will be evaluated by the students and peer-observation of the online courses by online-teaching experts will be conducted.

So far as the College can determine, this program is the first of its kind. It was born of a desire to provide options for persons who are cognitively capable of college-level work but have been unable to find success at the postsecondary level because they were unable to fit into existing academic models.

Collaboration

The impetus for this program came from collaboration; as such it has been a partnership both internally and externally. From converging ideas from the Office of the Provost and the director of the ABA program came a partnership inspired by two college presidents: Susan Scrimshaw from The Sage Colleges and John Ebersole from Excelsior College. Both have committed substantial institutional resources, both personnel and financial, to the success of this program. Internally, this program was inspired by a faculty member in the college’s Esteves School of Education and facilitated by the Office of the Provost, with an associate provost charged with ownership of this program and with working across the college’s schools and programs to facilitate the high level of collaboration necessary for a program of this scope. The associate provost also facilitates ongoing collaboration with Excelsior College and with other external supporters of the initiative. The program was placed in the Sage School of Professional and Continuing Education because of this school’s emphasis on underserved populations and its interest in serving distinct populations through non-traditional deliveries. Faculty assigned to the SPCE program and its Curriculum Committee were instrumental in the formation of this program and its academic component. The director of studies for the SPCE program became an integral part of the implementation of the Achieve Degree program, and has 50 percent of her workload devoted to this initiative. Additionally, the academic dean of SPCE joined the team and is responsible for the development of courses, the hiring of faculty and for ensuring the overall quality of the program. The program also maintains working relationships with national organizations such as Autism Speaks and with local and regional advocates for this population. Externally, the College partnered early on with the Educators Serving Educators initiative from Excelsior College. In fact, The Sage Colleges was the first collaboration born of the Excelsior initiative. This partnership leveraged the autism education expertise and the special education expertise at the Sage Colleges with the online development and marketing expertise of Excelsior College. Excelsior has provided material support, assigning a project manager to the Achieve Degree project and has provided invaluable pedagogic expertise. The development of the program and courses were and continue to be vetted by a professional advisory board that includes representatives from the autism community, the CEO of the Springbrook School and the director of programming at the Wildwood School, both recognized nationally for best practices in the education of persons with learning disabilities.
The Achieve Degree program is devoted entirely to meeting the learning-style needs of its target population. The online format best meets the needs of this target population, and all learning objectives are met through multiple delivery modalities and all assessment is conducted using multiple means of evidence.

Additional Comments
So far as the College can determine, this program is the first of its kind. It was born of a desire to provide options for persons who are cognitively capable of college-level work but have been unable to find success at the postsecondary level because they were unable to fit into existing academic models. By simultaneously constructing the program from the ground up with the guidance of a nationally-recognized expert in ABA and partnering with an institution internationally known for its expertise in distance education, the College has been able to build a best-practice, replicable model for extending higher education opportunities to underserved populations.

For Further Information
Name: Dr. Dana Reinecke
Title: Director, Graduate Programs in Applied Behavior Analysis
School: Esteves School of Education/The Sage Colleges
Phone: 518-512-0797
Email: reined@sage.edu

“Finally, a class that teaches me the way my brain works.”
− A student in the Achieve Degree program
BEST PRACTICE:  
Center for Accommodative Services

Institution: Paul Smith's College

Students Served: Late HS
Enrolled College Students
Transfers
Faculty/Staff

Focus: Students With Disabilities

Goals
The Center for Accommodative Services was established in 1986 to facilitate advocacy and accommodations to ensure equal access for students with documented disabilities in order for them to take control over their own education, increasing their independence and self-determination. Students with disabilities are encouraged to become actively engaged in their own learning experiences. Students learn to understand their disability needs and utilize their own learning style as these relate to the traditional and experiential models offered in their courses. We create a culture in which students with disabilities advocate for themselves and see their disabilities not as barriers to overcome but as a reason to find new pathways to success.

Description of Best Practice
The Center for Accommodative Services belongs on the academic side of the house in the Educational Resources Department along with the Library, Academic Success Center, and Higher Education Opportunity Program. This success network is located in the Joan Weil Adirondack Library where we are connected physically as well as philosophically. The Learning Specialist is full-time ranked faculty and reports to the Director of Educational Resources who reports to the Provost. The Assistant to the Learning Specialist is full-time staff who reports to the Learning Specialist.

The Center operates on a just-in-time basis. Students may drop in to address problems as soon as they arise in a friendly, relaxed environment. Class notes are available 24/7 on Moodle. Testing accommodations may be arranged 24 hours before the test. In addition, the Center lends Livescribe Pens to students on an as-needed basis and provides Dragon Naturally Speaking for speech-to-text.

Electronic textbooks are provided from a variety of sources. Students obtain memberships in Learning Ally and Bookshare to download books onto their computers; the Learning Specialist requests books from Access Text Network and directly from publishers. Kurzweil and Knowledge Information Center (KIC) are used to scan and read articles, handouts, and tests; TextAloud and E-Text Reader are also available to read electronic text, including tests.

Assistive technology is available to students whenever the library is open, including nights and weekends. Instruction in the use of assistive technology is provided.

Why is it Successful?
Students may identify themselves to the Learning Specialist once they are accepted by simply returning a self-addressed stamped card found in their acceptance package. The Learning Specialist then sends them an Application for Accommodations package. All services are completely voluntary, and it is the student’s responsibility to request them. The Center is open on a drop-in basis, so students may address problems as soon as they arise. The students know that they can count on us to actively advocate for them.

Faculty and staff are informed at President’s meetings and prospective students through mailings, email, admissions interviews, open houses, and orientation about campus policies, procedures, and emerging disability issues regarding equal access for students with disabilities.

Information on accommodative services is published in the new Faculty Survival Guide and distributed in faculty mailboxes.

The Center outreaches during the semester following early alerts submitted four weeks into the semester by faculty indicating low grades, attendance, and missing work. Faculty is very aware of our services, so when they come across a student who is struggling and will benefit from our support services they refer them to our Center.

The philosophy of the Center for Accommodative Services at Paul Smith’s College is that the individual is the expert about her or his own disability and is expected to take control over their own education, increasing independence and self-determination.

The Learning Specialist serves on PSC committees to foster a supportive institutional climate for students with disabilities.

Paul Smith's College student writing a paper.
“My test scores have improved with extended time, and I understand the readings best when I can listen and read at the same time – it would be a struggle without the Center.”

– S.D., Paul Smith’s College student

Evaluation

Evaluation of our services is ongoing and includes keeping retention, graduation, and completion rates for each fall cohort for 12 semesters; comparing graduation rates for students who use accommodations for declared disabilities and students with no declared disability; administrating Faculty and Student Satisfaction Surveys at end of each academic year, and; rating students each semester for progress toward the following outcomes:

- Articulates rationale for personal behavior
- Articulates personal skills and abilities
- Acknowledges personal strengths and weaknesses
- Exhibits self-reliant behaviors
- Exhibits effective listening skills
- Manages time effectively

In addition, a feedback link on Center for Accommodative Services website is available to let us know if visitors found what they were looking for [http://www.paulsmiths.edu/programs/cas/index.php?type=facstaff].

Collaboration

Achievement of academic success fosters a future of self-directed, engaged, life-long learning. The Paul Smith’s success network consists of the Academic Success Center (academic success counseling, tutoring, writing center, supplemental instruction, and study groups), TRIO, Higher Education Opportunity Program, and the Center for Accommodative Services. We collaborate on mutual students, do not duplicate services, and make sure each student is using the best option(s) for the services they need.

Faculty, staff, and students communicate problems (& kudos!) early in the semester through Starfish, software available at starfishsolutions.com, which automates student tracking, early alert, online appointment scheduling, and assessment. This is an extremely valuable tool to increase student success.

In addition, the Center for Accommodative Services along with the Student Development Center and Health Services meet regularly as the Medical, Academic, and Psychiatric Accommodations Committee (MAP) to address accommodation issues and requests for students with permanent and temporary disabilities.

“If it weren’t for the services [in the CAS] I wouldn’t even be here.”

– M.O., Paul Smith’s College student

“For Further Information

Name: Roxanne McCarty
Title: Learning Specialist
Phone: 518-327-6414
Email: rmccarty@paulsmiths.edu

“It’s a nice quiet place to go to take tests, study, and for support.”

– E.K., Paul Smith’s College student
BEST PRACTICE:
Office of Learning Services

Institution: Utica College

Students Served: Late HS
College 1st Yr
College 2nd Yr
Faculty/Staff

Focus: Prospective and enrolled college students with disabilities

Goals
Our mission is to support the success of all our students at Utica College. We do this by ensuring that students with disabilities have an equal educational opportunity with other students; mentoring students as they mature in their self-awareness, self-determination, and self-advocacy abilities; and by working with colleagues to promote access for learning in order to support student success and facilitate institutional change.

Description of Best Practice
Utica College has charged the Office of Learning Services (OLS) with providing leadership for the efforts to assure equal access for our students. The OLS staff meet with freshmen on a weekly basis in order to support their transition from high school to college, in particular with helping them to build self-awareness and self-advocacy skills. The staff continues to assist each student as advocates and advisors for as long as the student is enrolled at Utica College. The OLS provides outreach programs to high school students to prepare them and their families for the expectations that the College will have for documentation, accommodation, and provision of services for students with disabilities.

Why is it Successful?
The programs and services provided by the OLS are successful due to the staff’s ability to provide focused support and individualized accommodations for each student throughout his or her college career. Our programs and services are also successful due to the close working relationships that the OLS has with faculty, staff, and administrators on campus.

To ensure that students with disabilities have an equal educational opportunity with other students, we mentor students to develop their self-awareness, self-determination, and self-advocacy abilities and work collaboratively throughout the college to promote access for learning in order to support student success and facilitate institutional change.

Evaluation
The OLS conducts assessment surveys with current students, faculty and staff, and alumni on a regular three-year cycle. These surveys evaluate the effectiveness of the impact of the OLS programs and services on the success and achievement of our students with disabilities.

Collaboration
The OLS staff collaborates regularly with faculty and staff through meetings, committees, projects, and consultations. The staff members also serve on college-wide governance and strategic planning groups. These collaborations help build understanding in the campus community for supporting students with disabilities and for creating accessibility for learning.

Additional Comments
Over the past 10 years, the results of the OLS periodic Student Surveys consistently show that students become more confident that they will be academically successful at Utica College as a result of their interactions and experiences with the Office of Learning Services.

For Further Information
Name: Kateri Henkel
Title: Director of Learning Services
Phone: 315-792-3032
Email: khenkel@utica.edu

The graduation rate for our students with disabilities is on par with the graduation rate for our students in general.
**BEST PRACTICE:**

**The Taishoff Center for Inclusive Higher Education**

**Institution:** Syracuse University  
**Students Served:** Enrolled College Students  
**Focus:** Students with any kind of learning challenge or disability

**Goals**

The Taishoff Center for Inclusive Higher Education helps people with disabilities succeed in college, and by extension, in their careers.

**Description of Best Practice**

Partnered with Syracuse University, the Taishoff Center offers support, research, training, and resources to individuals, families, and college campus communities looking for strategies to foster and support college students with disabilities. The Center also provides information about parents’ rights in higher education, universal design for courses, accommodations for specific types of disabilities, and other disability-related resources.

**Why is it Successful?**

The Taishoff Center is especially committed to the inclusion of students with significant intellectual and developmental disabilities, who have traditionally been excluded from higher education. As students with disabilities, such as autism and Down syndrome, enter higher education, they are re-defining what it means to be a life-long learner.

**Evaluation**

The Taishoff Center is effective when it draws potential students to its campus. Syracuse University supports students with disabilities via two programs, OnCampus and ACCESS. Students ages 18 years and older participate in most aspects of university life, from academic courses to social and recreational opportunities.

**For Further Information**

Name: Wendy S. Harbour  
Title: Director of the Taishoff Center  
Phone: 315-443-1288/ Videophone 866-270-1281  
Email: wharbour@syr.edu

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If you are a person with any type of disability and you want to go to college, we want to support your dream.
## Appendix

### The Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Programs (HEOP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alfred University</td>
<td>607.871.2283</td>
<td>Molloy College</td>
<td>516.678.5000 ext. 6241</td>
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<td>Bard College</td>
<td>845.758.7605</td>
<td>Mount Saint Mary College</td>
<td>845.569.3245</td>
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<td>Barnard College</td>
<td>212.854.3583</td>
<td>Nazareth College</td>
<td>585.389.2513</td>
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<td>Boricua College</td>
<td>212.694.1000 ext. 646</td>
<td>The New School/Eugene Lang College</td>
<td>212.229.8996 ext. 3619</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canisius College</td>
<td>716.888.2575</td>
<td>The New School/Eugene Lang College</td>
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<td>The College of Saint Rose</td>
<td>518.454.5280</td>
<td>Niagara University</td>
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<td>212.854.5895</td>
<td>Nyack College</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Columbia College and Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science); 212.854.2766 (School of General Studies)</td>
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<td>Cornell University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fordham University</td>
<td>718.817.4205 (Rose Hill); 212.636.6235 (Lincoln Center)</td>
<td>The Sage Colleges</td>
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<td>Hamilton College</td>
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<td>Mercy College</td>
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<td>Utica College</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Vaughn College of Aeronautics and Technology</td>
<td>718.429.6600 ext. 160</td>
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<td>Adelphi University</td>
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<td>Paul Smith’s College of Arts and Sciences</td>
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**Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities**

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