FROM SELECTIVITY TO SUCCESS:

LATINOS AT SELECTIVE INSTITUTIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Data show Hispanics' graduation rates at the most selective institutions of higher education are significantly higher than their graduation rates at other institutions in the U.S. However, only 12 percent of Latino college students are enrolled at the most selective institutions. This brief provides a profile of Latinos in the most selective institutions and shares efforts at four of the most selective universities in California intentionally supporting Latino student success. Among the findings from the brief:

ENROLLMENT

- A small percentage of Latino students are enrolled in the most selective institutions. Of all Latino undergraduates, only 12 percent were enrolled in the most selective institutions in higher education; over 50 percent were enrolled at open access 2-year institutions in 2013-14.

- Latinos' representation at the most selective institutions is increasing. A larger number of qualified students, including Latinos, are applying to selective institutions. While institutional capacity to enroll more students has not grown and admittance has gotten more competitive, Latinos' representation is still increasing at many of the most selective institutions.

GRADUATION

- Latinos' are much more likely to graduate in a timely manner if they attend the most selective institutions. The graduation rate for Latinos at the most selective institutions (68 percent) is significantly higher than their graduation rate at less-selective four-year institutions (47 percent) or two-year institutions (17 percent) in 2013-14.

- Latinos' graduation rate at the most selective institutions is lower than the rate for all students. Within the most selective institutions, Latinos' graduation rate was 68 percent compared to the graduation rate for all students of 74 percent.

- The lower an institution's admittance rate, the higher the graduation rate for Latinos and all students. The most selective institutions had average admittance rates of 48 percent or less and graduation rates of 68 percent for Latinos and 74 percent for students overall for 2013-14. In comparison, less selective four-year institutions had admittance rates around 55 percent and graduation rates of 47 percent for Latinos and 58 percent overall.

RESOURCES

- The most selective institutions of higher education spend significantly greater resources on students than less selective institutions. The most selective institutions have average expenses per full-time equivalent student of about $36,600 compared to $28,500 at other four-year institutions and $13,300 at two-year institutions.

- Institutions, regardless of selectivity, spent similar proportions on core activities. Two-year, four-year, and the most selective institutions all had average expenses per full-time equivalent (FTE) as a similar proportion of total budget on instruction (around 40 percent), student services (12 percent), and academic support (about 10 percent).

INSTITUTIONAL REPRESENTATION

- The most selective institutions represent a small proportion of all higher education institutions. There were over 4,900 institutions of higher education, but only 10 percent were identified as the most selective (503) in 2013-14.

- Very few of the most selective institutions have a high concentration of Latino enrollment. Of the most selective institutions, only 17 have Latino enrollment that is 25 percent or higher and are also identified as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) in 2013-14.

INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIES

Excelencia in Education reached out to four of the most selective institutions in California to gain additional insight into institutional efforts to serve their Latino students. The institutions included the University of La Verne, Stanford University, University of California – Santa Barbara, and University of California – Berkeley. While the examination was not exhaustive, among the key insights from their efforts, were the following:

- Institutional efforts to support Latino students were generally diffused throughout the institution—within disciplines and through ethnic studies offices/centers—rather than centralized in a single office.

- Financial aid was used as a critical tool for students' retention to completion, not just access to the institution.

- Institutions increased their representation of Latino students by supporting community and alumni efforts targeting Latinos.

- Chicano/Latino offices played a significant role in support services and fostering a sense of community for Latino students to increase Latino student success.

- Undergraduate research opportunities allowed Latino students to develop research and professional skills, and to be more competitive for post-graduation opportunities.

- Connections with alumni created support networks for Latino students while enrolled and to find employment post-graduation.

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Excelencia in Education accelerates Latino student success in higher education by promoting Latino student achievement, conducting analysis to inform educational policies, and advancing institutional practices while collaborating with those committed and ready to meet the mission. Launched in 2004 in the nation's capital, Excelencia is building a network of results-oriented educators and policymakers to address the U.S. economy's need for a highly educated workforce and engaged civic leadership. For more information, visit: www.EdExcelencia.org.