

Programs to Watch: Supporting Young/Innovative Programs

Excelencia in Education (Excelencia) is dedicated to bringing attention to practices that work for Latino students through [Examples of Excelencia](#); the only national effort to recognize evidence based-practices increasing Latino student success in higher education. [Examples of Excelencia](#) feeds our [Growing What Works Database](#) – a national database that serves as a resource for educators, practitioners, policy makers, and institutions looking to learn from evidence-based practices that serve Latino students. Excelencia’s intent is to inform policy and compel action by sharing models and trends of what works for Latinos in higher education.

Why Focus on Young/Innovative Programs?

Since 2005, *Excelencia in Education* has formally recognized programs that use evidence-based practices proven to increase success for Latino students in higher education. Through *Examples of Excelencia*, 1,688 programs have been nominated and over 280 programs in four categories (Associate, Baccalaureate, Graduate, and Community Based Organization) from 29 states, DC and Puerto Rico have been recognized nationally. These programs make up the body of *Excelencia’s* *Growing What Works Database*, an online searchable database with evidence-based programs serving Latino students. The database is a tool informing institutional leaders, funders, policymakers and others of evidence-based practices to accelerate Latino student success.

During the 2017 *Examples of Excelencia* review and selection process, staff determined several program profiles submitted were innovative and/or use research-based practices tailored for Latino student success, but were either relatively new (generally 1-3 years) or had limited evidence of effectiveness. *Excelencia* has identified them as “Programs to Watch” in hopes of bringing attention to the positive steps these programs are taking to increase Latino student success. *Excelencia* intends to follow the progress these programs make as they grow and mature. The identified “Programs to Watch:” (a) use practices that can be replicated at other institutions, (b) have implemented practices that are proven to work for Latino students, and/or (c) have proven effectiveness in non-quantitative measures. *Excelencia* hopes that by bringing attention to these programs, we can encourage institutions, practitioners, funders, policy makers, and other stakeholders to take note, and keep an eye out as these programs continue to improve Latino student success.

Continuing to Build Momentum

Excelencia’s effort to recognize programs that may be young in nature but show promise stems from *Excelencia’s* commitment to accelerate Latino student success and from its continued commitment towards raising awareness and igniting motivation within educators, practitioners, policy makers, and funders.

The need to continue to build on the momentum created by Examples of *Excelencia* is seen in the present-day status of Latino college students. Currently, Latinos represent 25 percent of the K-12 student body but only 17 percent of students enrolled in postsecondary institutions.¹ A high percentage of Latino students enrolled in a postsecondary institution enter not as traditional college students, but as post-traditional students where they are more likely to enroll in community college, attend part time or change enrollment intensity, take remedial courses, work while attending college, transfer between institutions, live off campus, and take more than two or four years to complete their college degree.² While Latinos are the fastest growing population with a large representation in the K-12 pipeline, overall degree attainment is lower among Latino adults than other adults, 23 percent of Latino adults obtained an Associate's degree or higher, compared to 42 percent of all adults.¹ *Excelencia* believes that understanding the current profile of Latino students translates to appropriate and thoughtful institutional, public policy, and programing strategies that will lead to changes in college completion, degree attainment, and workforce representation.

In order to build off of the spotlight Examples of *Excelencia* has placed on effective practices, *Excelencia* seeks to broaden the scope of knowledge surrounding effective practices for Latino students and bring attention to the noteworthy work demonstrated by the Programs to Watch that might otherwise be overlooked. By recognizing the strategies described in the 19 programs, *Excelencia* continues to provide opportunities to learn how to better serve Latino students. *Excelencia* believes in the value of shared knowledge and chooses to display practices that work with other practitioners committed to serving Latino students.

With such complex and nuanced issues surrounding Latino students, the need for a collective and collaborative effort towards finding effective solutions is imperative.

Good Policy defined by Good Practice

Excelencia is steadfast in its belief that good policy is defined by good practice, and good practice is often only determined by allowing adequate time to see the evidence of effectiveness. In line with other influential organizations, such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, *Excelencia* understands the importance of investing in young and promising programs extends beyond sustainability and towards developing the evidence necessary to inform other programs and ultimately develop policy that is successful in helping Latino students succeed.

Since our founding in 2004, *Excelencia* has recognized that increasing awareness of effective practices can help a program and inform others to consider replicating or scaling. A poignant example of this can be seen through the institutionalization of a program. Review of *Excelencia*'s Growing What Works database has revealed patterns seen in a programs lifecycle. While some programs end due to a number of reasons and circumstances unique to an institution, such as turnover in leadership or a lack of diversified funding, other programs gain support and become integral parts of the institution. This support can lead to programs becoming institutionalized to serve all students. To contextualize this further we share how *Excelencia*'s recognition of a program through Examples helped spread awareness and gain support:

When the program started we were surviving off of grants for some time. As the program grew and we built more components we began to receive recognition off of campus. Being recognized by organizations like Excelencia was

Around the world, institutions are maximizing their impact by becoming increasingly transparent. This follows a fundamental truth: that access to information and data fosters effective collaboration...By focusing on the common goal of improving education through innovation—and by building on and sharing effective tools, strategies, and standards—educators, school leaders, and nonprofit partners across the country can transform U.S. public education.

*-Bill & Melinda Gates
Foundation*

¹ Santiago, D., Taylor, M., Calderón Galdeano, E. (May 2016). *From Selectivity to Success: Latinos at Selective Institutions*. Washington, D.C.: *Excelencia* in Education.









² Santiago, D., Taylor, M., Calderón Galdeano, E. (May 2016). *From Capacity to Success: HSIs, Title V, and Latino Students*. Washington, D.C.: *Excelencia* in Education.

important to help the college understand that we are part of a larger community. We were committed to making sure our college understood the value they would get in investing in our program.

-Brock Klein, Director of Pasadena City College (PCC) Pathways

Programs to Watch Evaluation Criteria

In the 2017 cycle, *Excelencia* in Education received submissions from over 160 programs with evidence of improving Latino student success. Of these, 19 programs were selected as finalists for Examples of *Excelencia*. Our criteria for recognition of any program under consideration for Examples of *Excelencia* focuses on a program's success supported by evidence that shows its effectiveness in increasing Latino student success in higher education. Paired with icons for visual representation, *Excelencia* in Education considers the following:

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

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

The 2017 Programs to Watch highlight the good work being done by scholars and practitioners across the country to increase Latino student success. While the evidence of effectiveness is not yet present, our hope in sharing these programs is to bring attention to the important efforts that might otherwise go unnoticed. Programs to Watch do not meet all of the above-mentioned criteria used to evaluate our Examples of *Excelencia* programs, however, they demonstrate potential success with practices targeted for Latino students, and have clear metrics for future data tracking. This year, 19 programs from 12 states, are recognized. This

includes states that typically receive little attention when discussing Latino students, such as Wisconsin, Tennessee, Maryland, and Oklahoma.

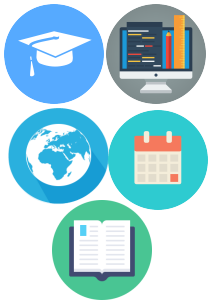
The icon(s) found next to each program description highlight which of the eight aspects we felt stood out in the program profile. Below is a short description of this year's 19 programs to watch.

Associate Category

Ambiciones

Howard Community College – MD

Website: www.howardcc.edu/services-support/academic-support/academic-support-programs/ambiciones/

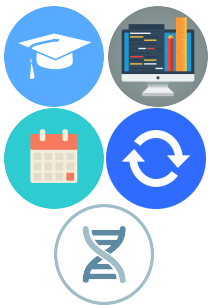


Ambiciones emerged in 2015 to provide a pathway to college completion for prospective Latino college students and their families by providing support on how to navigate Howard Community College's (HCC) entrance process. Ambiciones engages students and their families as early as their senior year of high school by providing college preparation workshops in both English and Spanish. Once at HCC the program supports Latino students by providing academic advising, tutoring, coaching, financial aid, scholarship and work study opportunities, career counseling and internships, personal counseling, and a network of Latino students, faculty, staff, and professionals in the community. Ambiciones enables students to engage in academic and co-curricular activities, and to participate in workshops with Latino students and campus organizations. In the fall of 2016, 88% of Ambiciones participants maintained a GPA above 2.00 compared to 60% of the general Latino HCC population.

EXCEL

Maricopa County Community College District—AZ

Website: asa.maricopa.edu/departments/office-of-student-affairs/programs/about-excel



Launched in the fall of 2015 with a cohort of 200 students, EXCEL provides persistence and completion services and support to ensure students are successful in obtaining their associate's degree and transferring to a 4-year university. To aide in student success, EXCEL works to remove or minimize barriers faced by first generation and/or low-income students by providing resources and support to help improve their educational outcomes. EXCEL coordinators, peer mentors, and success coaches provide intrusive and case management advising throughout this process. Additionally, EXCEL believes that educating a student's family/support system is critical to the web of support needed for a student's success, thus family advocacy workshops are held to orient families/support systems on how they can be supportive of their student throughout their college career. In implementing such practices, EXCEL has been able to see a fall to spring retention rate for EXCEL students of 95.3% compared to 72% of all other Maricopa Community College students. Community agencies, state universities, school districts, and businesses, support EXCEL and provide resources, and services in ensuring students are successful in their persistence, completion, and transfer. EXCEL expanded in the summer of 2017 with funds from the Arizona Community Foundation for a three-year initiative at Gateway Community College.

Dreamer Resource Center (DRC)

San Bernardino Valley College (SBVC)—CA

Website: www.valleycollege.edu

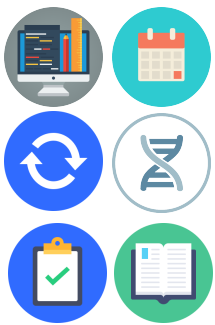


Established in the spring of 2015, the Dreamer Resource Center (DRC) welcomes undocumented students and provides them with a friendly environment where they can connect with one another and receive assistance with transitioning into college and completing their educational and career goals. Program practices include academic advising, counseling and referrals to student service programs, peer-to-peer advising to improve retention and graduation rate, workshops on Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), Health & Mental Wellness, and 'Know Your Rights' in various circumstances. Established partnerships with consulates and community organizations also allows the program to inform families of their rights in the United States and ways in which they can help their student(s). San Bernardino Valley College works directly with DREAMers in their Career Technical Education (CTE) program. In the CTE program, there are at least 75 undocumented students served.

Early Alert

El Paso Community College—Texas

Website: www.epcc.edu/Counseling/Pages/default.aspx



Implemented at El Paso Community College (EPCC) in the fall of 2015 to address the poor retention rates of First Time In College (FTIC) students, Early Alert provides wrap-around support services and integrates faculty, advisors, and tutors in a collaborative online system to close student achievement gaps. Administered by a full time Program Coordinator, Early Alert uses a case management approach where advisors provide a safety net for their students; most of whom are the first in their families to attend college. Additionally, faculty record students' absences and other at-risk behaviors, contact students, create academic improvement plans, and provide interventions for students to adopt positive behaviors, such as attending tutoring and visiting faculty during office hours. Advisors follow up with faculty and support services, like tutoring or counseling, to monitor students' progress and keep all essential stakeholders informed. In the fall of 2013, 4,712 FTIC students entered EPCC but only 56% were retained for fall 2014. In an academic year over 6,000 (4,700 in the fall and 1,500 in the spring) FTIC enrolled at EPCC. After the first year of the Early Alert implementation in the fall of 2015, data shows retention improved by 2%.

EPCC Puente Program

El Paso Community College (EPCC)—Texas

Website: www.epcc.edu/OfficeofStudentSuccess/Pages/default.aspx



The Texas Puente Program at EPCC has adapted to model and celebrate the unique U.S.-Mexico border community. Using the three main areas of Puente: writing, counseling, and mentoring, they seek to increase the number of students who complete their Associate degrees, enroll in four-year universities, earn college degrees, and return to their communities as leaders and mentors. Puente is intentional in providing faculty training that features culturally relevant literature and diverse writing assignments. In doing so, Puente brings award-winning Latino authors into the classroom to interact and inspire students. Puente is also intentional in including *Familia* and community engagement in student success strategies. Using these methods as tools, the program's goals are to accelerate exit from developmental education (DE) into gateway courses, and for students to acquire skills for college success and graduation. Given these goals, EPCC Puente students successfully completed their DE Integrated Reading and Writing (INRW) course with a "C" or better, 12% more often than non-Puente students at a rate of 73% compared to 85% among Puente

students. While the Program Directory leads the Puente Program, it has evolved to be faculty-led.

MATC Driving Dream Early College Program

Milwaukee Area Technical College—Wisconsin

Website: www.MATC.Edu



The Driving Dream Early College (DD) program was launched in 2011 in collaboration with two Milwaukee Public Schools to address disparities seen among Hispanic students in Milwaukee Public Schools with higher high school dropout rates compared to Wisconsin's statewide rates. The program provides a co-requisite program model that dual enrolls students in a college English and Math course, supported by a companion course, while students are still completing their high school classes. This program prepares students with the math and English skills necessary to pursue a college pathway upon graduating from high school and decreases the students need to enroll in college level remedial developmental courses. Students earn up to six transferable credits that can be applied to any four-year postsecondary institution. In 2016 the college piloted five programs aimed at increasing its course completion rate for underprepared students. The DD program outperformed all programs with a 90% completion rate, while the overall college completion rate was 59.5%. In 2017 the first Cohort of 20 DD students who took the Math 200 level college course had a 99% completion rate, outperforming the general school population that had a 59.5% completion rate. By the end of the spring 2016 semester, the DD cohort earned a total of 270 credits, combined. This attributes to a college saving cost of \$135,000. A key success of the program was the percent of students who enrolled in college after high school graduation. The program surpassed their goal of 55% college enrollment with a 57.3% college enrollment. This percent was higher than the 2015-16 Milwaukee Public School rate of 42.6% and higher than the Wisconsin state-wide 2015-16 college enrollment rate of 56.3%.

Partners Advancing Completion through Transfer Opportunities (PACTO)

Arizona Western College and Northern Arizona University—Arizona

Website: <https://www.azwestern.edu/institutional-research/title-v-pacto>



Arizona Western College (AWC) and Northern Arizona University (NAU) –Yuma are both Hispanic-Serving Institutions serving the U.S-Mexico border populations of southwest Arizona. These two institutions share a campus in the city of Yuma adjacent to the Mexican border, where 62.4% are Hispanic and 22% live in poverty. Established in 2012-2013, Partners Advancing Completion through Transfer Opportunities (PACTO) was created to address deficiencies at both institutions by expanding and improving student support systems in order to help college persistence and four-year degree completion for low-income Hispanic students. PACTO supports students from their starting point at the community college through a seamless transition to a NAU-Yuma bachelor's degree. Under the NAU joint admission program, community college students receive an NAU ID and eligibility to receive NAU services. A customized case-management approach tracks and retains students based on individual student success plans that address each student's motivational goals, academic and language background, academic and language challenges and growth, and services received. As of 2015-2016 there has been a 36% increase in Education associate's degree completion and a 58% increase in students transitioning into the NAU-Yuma Elementary Education bachelor's degree, a key pilot degree program under PACTO. Due to early intervention, NAU-Y also has a 98% success rate in students passing the National Evaluation Series (national teacher certification) exam. Students report a high level of satisfaction with PACTO services and many credit their persistence in college to the individualized attention and ongoing academic support they received.

Baccalaureate Category

Pathways to Graduation

California State University, Los Angeles—California

Website: www.calstatela.edu/hhs/cfs

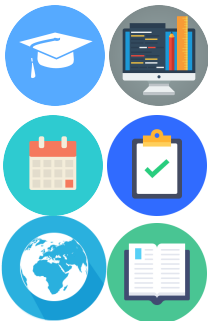


The Pathways to Graduation program was established in 2011 as a strength-based, culturally informed, and student-focused intervention designed for students majoring in child development as well as those interested in the major. Pathways provides entering and continuing students with individual peer mentoring services, a menu of academic and professional development workshops (designed to enhance academic skills and disciplinary knowledge), and community building experiences. The overall goals of the program are to enhance retention and graduation rates by offering experiences that contribute to academic success and achievement. The attention to cultural nuances, strengths of students and community, and focus on relational experiences fosters “Attachment” and “Healthy Bonds” and elaboration of trust and a heightened sense of “belongingness” for their students. Since the program’s inception, first-year retention rates for Latino freshman and transfer students steadily increased and ranged from 82% to 87%. In the two years prior, retention rates were 75% and 71%. Among Latino transfer students, 4-year graduation rates for cohorts prior to Pathways were 54% (2011) and 61% (2010); for the inaugural cohort, transfer rate increased to 65%. Similarly, among Latino freshman, the 4-year-graduation rate increased from 4% (cohort that started in 2011) to 6% (cohort who started in 2012).

Illinois College of Business Latino Student Graduation and Job Placement Initiative

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign College of Business—Illinois

Website: business.illinois.edu/undergraduate-affairs



The Illinois College of Business Latino Student Graduation and Job Placement Initiative began in 2015 and focuses on ensuring academic success and job placement for their students. The program’s success requires the coordinated efforts of alumni, a Latino student group, corporate partners, and College leadership and structure. The overall purpose is to ensure that Latino students develop the academic analytical skills, networking, resume writing, interviewing, internship opportunities, and other skills and experience necessary to ensure a successful academic performance while at the College of Business, and job placement following graduation. The program has set a goal of 96% job placement for their Latino students within 3 months of graduation, and seeks to have 100% of graduating seniors complete one or more internships with Fortune 1000 or equivalent companies during their undergraduate careers. Additionally, the organization aims to grow its membership by 20% per year for the next three years, and have a Latino Alumni Association, which aims to grow its membership by 50% per year over the next 3 years. The program has achieved success in a short period, with 100% job placement for their 2016 graduating Latino students compared to an overall undergraduate Business placement rate of 96.5%. The six-year graduation rate of Latino students entering the College of Business in 2010 was 81.8%, the highest rate for Latinos in any college at the University.

Latino Theatre Initiatives

University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley—Texas

Website: www.utrgv.edu/theatre/latino-theatre-initiative/index.htm



Due to the historic marginalization of Latino theatre and the Spanish language, Latino students have had reduced opportunities to perform in plays and to see their culture reflected in productions. In light of this, the student organization, Latino Theatre Initiatives (LTI), was created in 2010 to improve educational experiences for Latino college students in theatre arts at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley and thereby boost retention rates and student persistence in pursuing baccalaureate completion. LTI has since tapped the distinctive cultural capital of bilingual, bicultural South Texas to create theatre that resonates with partners in the community. LTI's work combines innovative staging with creative, undergraduate research to entertain and to challenge audiences and critics, providing valuable learning opportunities along the way. They create community-engaged performance opportunities at which students witness the ability of Latino theatre to move, delight, educate and transform other people and oneself. GPAs indicate that involvement in LTI may improve student success among theatre majors. The most recent cohort of 12 LTI students have an average GPA of 3.19, while all other theatre majors have a lower average GPA of 2.70.

Latino Student Success

Christian Brothers University—Tennessee

Website: www.cbu.edu/latino-student-success



Christian Brothers University's (CBU) Latino Student Success (LSS) program provides scholarships to Latino students with a strong academic track record but uncertain residency status. The scholarships are designed to replace the state and federal aid for which these students are ineligible. The LSS program also includes an optional zero-interest loan, further reducing the immediate out-of-pocket tuition cost. In addition to addressing financial need, HOLA, established in 2014 as an outgrowth of the LSS program, addresses academic and social support. HOLA is a student-led organization that focuses on cultivating a robust community for Hispanic students on CBU's campus through service, education, outreach, support, and partnerships. The program has seen some promising retention rates with Freshman to Sophomore LSS students at 85.35% and General CBU students at 79.4%. The Freshman to Junior LSS student retention rate is 85.7% and the general CBU student rate is 64.1%. As of fall 2016, the average cumulative GPA for all LSS students is 2.78, compared to a 2.84 GPA for the larger CBU student body.

Washington MESA

University of Washington—Washington

Website: www.washingtonmesa.org



The MESA Community College program's goal is to increase the number of historically underrepresented (African American, Native American, Latino/Hispanic, and Pacific Islander/Hawaiian) community college students who transfer to universities and earn STEM bachelor's degrees. Students receive 6 key components of support: (1) A dedicated Study Center, (2) STEM Orientation course (academic development, industry know-how), (3) Academic Excellence Workshops (AEW's) in "gatekeeper" courses, (4) On-Site MESA Director for direct support, (5) Academic advising tailored for university transfer in STEM degrees, and (6) Career & professional development (leadership, industry mentors, university visits, internships, workshops, & research opportunities). This support helps underrepresented STEM students excel academically, thus addressing the urgent need to increase the pool of technical talent in Washington State and the country. A recent National Science Foundation INCLUDES study found that MESA students take 7.5 more total college credits than the control group of other STEM degree-seeking students, MESA students take 25.1 more STEM

credits than the control group, and MESA students are 2.2 times more likely to be awarded a transfer associate's degree than the control group. Preliminary research results of MESA show 52% of students entering the MESA program between 2011 and 2013 went on to earn a two-year degree by 2016; nearly half earned a STEM degree. After the pilot ended and 100% of the initial MESA Community College cohort graduated with a STEM degree, the State of Washington continued its funding and made the program permanent in 2016. In 2017, the State of Washington expanded the program from six to twelve community colleges, and the State Board of Community & Technical Colleges hopes to see the program expand to all 34 community colleges across the state of Washington.

Learning Assistant Program

Florida International University—Florida

Website: www.fiulearn.fiu.edu



Florida International University's (FIU) Learning Assistant (LA) program is an institutional change initiative dedicated to establishing a culture of evidence-based practices across STEM and Critical Gateway courses. LAs are undergraduates that facilitate learning for their peers in the classroom while experiencing the reward of teaching, developing effective instructional skills, and deepening their content understanding. Through this partnership with faculty and peers, LAs promote culturally responsive instruction that allows their diverse student body to become leaders of tomorrow. The mission of the LA Program is to advance evidence-based instructional practices, and research on those practices, across campus to establish a culture of student access and attainment for the highly diverse student population at FIU. A major success in the Gateway Course initiative was the comprehensive transformation of the College Algebra course, leading to a 40% increase in passing rates for all students and enabling graduation success, no longer making College Algebra a predictor of leaving the university. The majority of the LA funding is now provided by FIU, and external funding is typically used to provide impetus for expansion, targeted interventions and/or research for the LA program.

Graduate Category

Hispanic Summer Program

New York, NY

Website: www.hispanicsummerprogram.org/



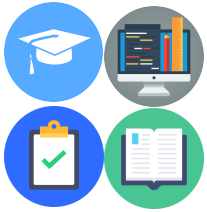
The Hispanic Summer Program (HSP) is a nationally recognized independent program that is also the oldest ecumenical program of theological education for Latinas/os in the United States. Every June the HSP offers an intensive two-week program of theological education for masters-level seminary students currently enrolled in accredited seminaries across the United States and Puerto Rico. The HSP strives to represent among its faculty and student body the variety of experiences found in the Latina/o community, nationally, regionally, racially, economically, and within cultural backgrounds. It is designed specifically so that those who attend deepen their understanding and commitment to the Latina/o community as they engage one another doing theology “en conjunto y latinamente.” The HSP seeks to be the place for a broader critical discussion about how to make theological education both welcoming and effective for Latinas/os through the work of a three-day workshop—non-Latino/a faculty and administrators called “Through Hispanic Eyes.” This has been offered every year since 2003 during the HSP session. Since 1989, HSP has helped create leaders for both church and the academy. Many of the HSP faculty were once HSP students and credit their experience at the HSP to pursue doctoral work after having participated in a class with a Latina/o professor, many for the first time. HSP is led by Dr. Daisy L. Machado, a part-time director and Union Theological Seminary faculty member, and supporting staff. The annual budget for 2016-2017 is \$261,455 from 39 sponsoring seminaries and schools of theology who pay an annual fee of \$4,500, as well as student fees, and donations.

Community-Based Organization Category

Aspiring Americans

Oklahoma City, OK

Website: www.aspiringamericans.org

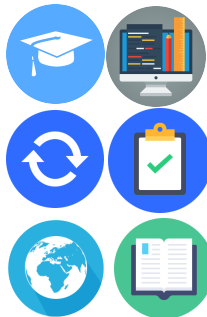


Aspiring Americans was launched in 2014 in response to the growing need for legal, educational, and financial resources for undocumented students. Since then, Aspiring Americans has aggressively and successfully worked to close resource gaps through our multifaceted training programs and community outreach with relevant partners, but one critical component remains—financial support. With multiple program areas that aid students, parents, and educators, Aspiring Americans also partner with Dream Act Oklahoma (DAOK) to host free legal clinics with pro bono attorneys to help DACA applicants, students and nonstudents, successfully apply. DAOK also assists us in hosting community forums in partnership with churches and schools to educate the community on updates regarding DACA, DAPA, and any other relevant relief. In an effort to close systematic knowledge gaps, we provide free professional development to educators and have trained over 2,500 teachers and administrators across Oklahoma about relevant resources for their undocumented students. Since their launch, they have provided 25 grants and scholarships to students, and served over 300 students and families with legal and educational resources. They have also helped leverage over \$180,000 in new and matching scholarships for 22 undocumented students. As of fall 2017, 175 of the 198 of students will still be in college.

Adelante Latina!

Baltimore, MD

Website: www.adelantelatinabaltimore.org



Adelante Latina! was initiated by an Argentinian born Professor Emerita at Notre Dame of Maryland in 2013. The program's purpose is to prepare Latinas for college through a free of charge, three-year after school, college preparatory program for Latinas enrolled in Baltimore City Public Schools. Adelante Latina! aims to improve school performance through intensive tutoring, offering enriching cultural experiences, summer internships and a weeklong sleep away camp. The program also helps with college entrance exams, applications, and scholarships. These efforts have improved high school retention rates from 25% for the class of 2016, to 80% for the class of 2017, and a projected 80% and 83% increase for the next two cohorts. High school GPA's are tracked throughout the three years of program participation and have exhibited a steady improvement. College GPA's and student persistence are also being tracked for the cohorts currently enrolled at an institution of higher education. Additionally, college acceptances have improved. Of the 10 students served in 2016, four students were accepted into six colleges. In 2017 another cohort of 10 students was served with 8 students accepted into 19 colleges. Funding for the programs \$110,000 budget comes primarily from the founder/director (30%) and individual fund raising (42%).

Chicago State Seal of Biliteracy

Chicago Public Schools—Illinois

Website: www.cps.edu/olce



The State Seal of Biliteracy was implemented in Chicago Public Schools out of the necessity to recognize graduating high school seniors for their bilingual and biliterate skills. The Seal is a recognition given to high school seniors who have studied and can exhibit the ability to communicate in two languages (including English) by the spring of their senior year of high school and is a statement of accomplishment for college admissions and for future employers. For the current school year, the program has created a pathway towards the Seal of Biliteracy initiative by working with 5th and 8th graders in recognizing their bilingual skills at that stage of

the process. The overall goal is, within the next 5 years, to have at least 25% of our district seniors to achieve the Seal of Biliteracy by testing proficient in a secondary language. By exposing students to careers available to those who've demonstrated knowledge of a second language and by having students receive college credit (up to 12 hours) at state schools in Illinois, The State Seal of Biliteracy will help increase the school district's college enrollment for Latino students, which has seen an increase from 46% to 56% in the last 7 years.

Éxito! Latino Cancer Research Leadership Training

UT Health San Antonio, Institute for Health Promotion Research—Texas

Website: www.exitotraining.org



The Exito! Latino Cancer Research Leadership Training program (Éxito!) expects Latinos to suffer a 142% increase in cancer diagnoses, coupled with the continued rise of this large population, they found that a more culturally representative cancer health disparities research workforce was needed. Latinos do not pursue doctoral degrees in public health and health sciences at the same rate as their White peers. In response, Éxito! was launched in 2010 at the Institute for Health Promotion Research at UT Health San Antonio. Éxito! seeks to encourage Latino master-level students and master-trained health professionals to pursue doctoral degrees and careers in cancer control research. The program annually recruits 25 master-level students and professionals for a five-day summer institute and internship opportunities to encourage, motivate, and offer tools and networking for participants to continue their education. The Éxito! program has recruited a total of 125 participants for their summer institute and awarded 28 internships between 2010 and 2016. Results from the summer institute experience demonstrated a significant improvement in academic self-efficacy in attendees, as well as improvements in confidence towards applying to a doctoral program in the next five years. Survey findings for internships demonstrated significant improvements in students' research skills. Thirty (24%) of their alumni are currently enrolled in a doctoral program. Of those students, 69% indicated they would pursue a career directly related to cancer after obtaining a degree.

Escalera Program: Steps to Success

Centro Hispano Daniel Torres, Inc.—Pennsylvania

Website: www.centrohispano.org



In 2001, Unidos.US (then the National Council of La Raza) created the Escalera Program: Taking Steps to Success to promote economic mobility for Latino youth by increasing educational attainment, career planning, and access to information about professional careers. The program aligns with Unidos.US' goals to eliminate barriers to employment and economic mobility while increasing the capacity of Centro Hispano Daniel Torres, Inc. to provide effective workforce development, education, and leadership services for Latino youth. Escalera is a 15-month program for in-school juniors and seniors. During the second semester of junior year, a cohort of participants is enrolled as an after-school program. The cohort meets twice a week during the school year and for a week over the summer. Escalera also provides individual-based activities, such as tutoring and case management. Successful completion of the program requires the students to complete an internship of at least 80 hours, earn a high school diploma, and enrolling in a postsecondary institution. In 2015, 12 students graduated Escalera from Muhlenberg High School, and 11 students got accepted to and started attending four-year higher education institutions in the fall semester as a direct result from the support received through the Escalera program. Ten students were the first in their households to attend college, and most of them were not sure how to tackle the college search, application process, or financial aid process.