



Supporting **Parents** of **First-Generation** Students

Engaging the Family in College Search

Enrollment
Management
Forum

Blueprint for Enrolling a Diverse
Student Body, Volume 3





Supporting Parents of First-Generation Students

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Enrollment Management Forum

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Blueprint for Enrolling a Diverse Student Body Overview

The Enrollment Management Forum presents the third installment in a four-part research series about how to identify, engage, and recruit students from underrepresented populations.

Enrollment Managers, Admissions Directors and Policy Committees, Presidents and senior administrators, and Chief Diversity Officers should use this research series to guide investments and strategies to achieve diversity goals.

1

Charting the Diversity Landscape:

Delineating Worsening Inequities in Underrepresented Student Access to Higher Education



- Understand the current state of diversity and the challenges in enrolling students from underrepresented populations
- Recognize three forces intensifying pressure and competition to enroll a diverse class

2

Evolving College Access Programs:

Scaling K-12 Interventions to Increase College Preparedness



- Expand beyond the traditional model for college access programs
- Prioritize interventions for school-wide and school-specific root cause problems
- Facilitate student self-correction with personalized progress reports

3

Supporting Parents of First-Generation Students:

Engaging the Family in College Search



- Harness the parents of first-generation students as key influencers to college participation
- Provide opportunities for families to assess institutional fit
- Engage parents and build institutional affinity throughout the application process

4

Delivering a Differentiated Application Process:

Redesigning Recruitment Interactions for the Needs of Underrepresented Applicants



- Address student concerns about affordability, ability, and fit
- Craft a process from pre-application to post-admittance that mitigates barriers
- Implement tailored interactions for underrepresented applicants

Key Takeaways

Parents Without College Experience Lack Social Capital to Build College-Going Culture and Ability to Support Students in Admissions Process

- This white paper focuses on recruiting students who are the first in their families to pursue higher education, commonly labeled first-generation. Students can be first-generation regardless of racial/ethnic and economic backgrounds. This white paper takes an expansive view of first-generation and does not define the level of parental educational attainment that qualifies students as first-generation.¹
- Despite their increased likelihood to graduate on time—and at all—if they enroll at four-year colleges and universities, the largest share of first-generation students enroll at community colleges.
- Parents are key influencers on college enrollment for all students, but the parents of first-generation students are less likely to expect their children to enroll in college than parents with postsecondary experience.
- Even when parents want to be involved, logistical barriers and gaps in social capital prevent the families of first-generation students from supporting students throughout the admission process.

Harness Parents as Key Influencers to College Participation

- Because parents influence college enrollment, Enrollment Managers (EMs) and college access program administrators should prioritize parental participation in K-12 college access programs. These programs should transform parents into college-going advocates so that first-generation students are encouraged and supported by their parents to pursue higher education.
 - **Practice 5: Parent-Focused College Access Programs**—Design K-12 interventions that foster and inculcate parental influence on the path to college.

Provide Tailored Opportunities for First-Generation Families to Assess Fit

- The families of first-generation students face logistical barriers that lead to their diminished attendance at key recruitment events. Even when they can attend events, parents without college experience may feel uncomfortable with campus environments and customs. EMs should recognize families' need for tailored campus events and facilitate their ability to attend key events so that families can assess institutional fit.
 - **Practice 6: After-Hours Campus Tours**—Calibrate campus recruitment events to parental professional circumstances.
 - **Practice 7: Community-Located Orientation Session**—Offer local orientation events for families who cannot travel to campus.
 - **Practice 8: Parent-Expert Networking Event**—Accelerate college affinity at yield events by connecting parents with staff who proactively address their distinct concerns.

1) Definitions for "first-generation" vary. Some definitions include only students whose parents have no college experience, while other definitions include students whose parents did not attain bachelor's degrees (counting parents with some college experience and/or holding associate degrees). The US Department of Education applies three definitions: no parent in the household has a bachelor's degree, parents have no education after high school, and parents hold no degree past high school.

Source: Sharpe R, "Are You First Gen? Depends on Who's Asking," *The New York Times*, November 3, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/03/education/edlife/first-generation-college-admissions.html?rref=collection%2Fsectioncollection%2Feducation-edlife>.

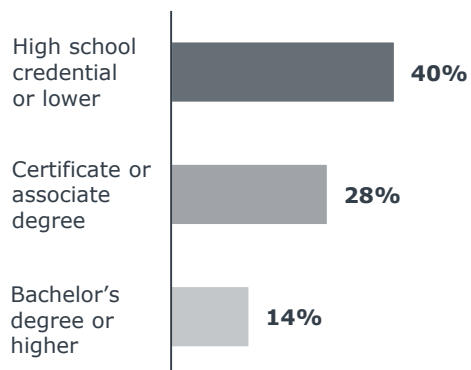
First-Gen Students Enroll in Higher Ed at Lower Rates

Community College the Likeliest Destination

For the many reasons discussed in the [first](#) and [second](#) installments of the **Blueprint for Enrolling a Diverse Student Body** research series, first-generation students enroll in college at lower rates than their peers. Like other underrepresented student populations, many first-generation students never enroll in college. Forty percent of first-generation students had not enrolled in postsecondary education, compared to only 14% of students whose parents hold at least a bachelor's degree, according to the NCES 2009 High School Longitudinal Study.

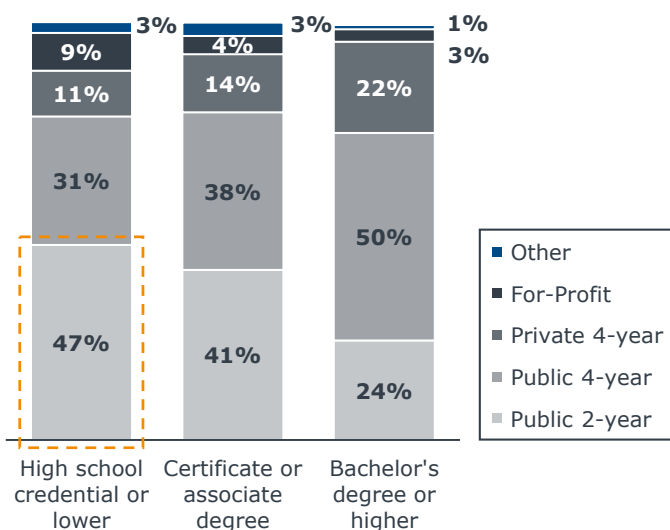
First-Generation Students Are More Likely to Opt Out

Share of Fall 2009 Ninth Graders Who Had Not Enrolled in Postsecondary Education by February 2016, by Parental Educational Attainment



High First-Generation Enrollment at Community Colleges

Sector of Enrolled Institution in 2016 of Fall 2009 Ninth Graders, by Parental Educational Attainment



When first-generation students do enroll, they are more likely to do so at community colleges and for-profit institutions. Forty-seven percent of first-generation students enrolled in community college, compared to only 24% of students whose parents hold at least a bachelor's degree. Nine percent of first-generation students enrolled at for-profits, compared to 3% of students whose parents hold at least a bachelor's degree. First-generation students are most likely to persist and graduate when they enroll immediately at public and private four-year institutions. The Pell Institute finds that first-generation students who enroll initially at public and private four-year schools are seven times more likely to complete their degrees than those who enroll first at community colleges.

Sources: Redford J and Hoyer K, "First-Generation and Continuing-Generation College Students: A Comparison of High School and Postsecondary Experiences," National Center for Education Statistics, September 2017, <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2018/2018009.pdf>; Engle J and Tinto V, "Moving Beyond Access: College Success For Low-Income, First-Generation Students," Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education, http://www.pellinstitute.org/downloads/publications-Moving_Beyond_Access_2008.pdf; EAB interviews and analysis.

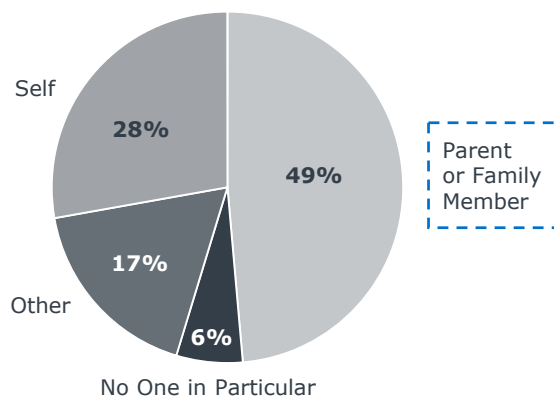
Parental Expectations Lower for First-Gen Students

Parental Influence Is Powerful—but Missing for Many First-Generation Students

While parents are key influencers for all students, parents with little to no experience with higher education are less likely to expect their children to enroll in postsecondary education. Nearly half of the 3.8 million students in the NCES 2009 High School Longitudinal Study report that parents were their top influencers on higher education. However, only 39% of parents with high school degrees expect their children to earn a bachelor's degree, compared to 88% of parents who hold bachelor's degrees or higher. Lacking the parental expectation that they will enroll in college, first-generation students may also fail to see college as their future destination.

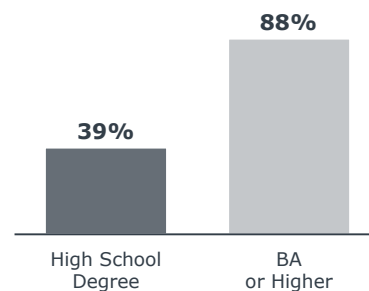
Parents and Family Members Are at the Top of Students' Influencer List...

Distribution of Individuals Who Most Influenced Students' Perspective on Higher Education¹



...But Parents Without College Experience Are Unlikely to Expect Their Children to Attain Degrees

Percentage of Parents Expecting Their Child to Attain a BA or Higher, by Parental Educational Attainment



1) 2012 follow-up to the NCES High School Longitudinal Study of 2009.

Sources: Redford J and Hoyer K, "First-Generation and Continuing-Generation College Students: A Comparison of High School and Postsecondary Experiences," National Center for Education Statistics, September 2017, <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2018/2018009.pdf>; https://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/115_Parental_Expectations.pdf; EAB interviews and analysis.

Limited Social Capital Meets Logistical Barriers




For First-Generation Families, Two Key Barriers to Supporting Students

Two root cause barriers make it difficult for the parents of first-generation students to support their children's college enrollment. First, parents without college experience lack the social capital¹ to advise their children on how to increase their preparedness and how to navigate the admission process. Lacking personal experience with higher education, parents of first-generation students may be skeptical of—and unreceptive to—their children's college aspirations. Even after the point of admission, parents of first-generation students may feel apprehensive about their children attending school in a distant or unfamiliar environment.

Impediments to Navigating the Road to College for Families of First-Generation Students

1




Social Capital Gaps

-  No personal experience with higher education
-  Lack of familiarity with college environment
-  Distrust and misunderstanding of value of higher education



2

Logistical Barriers

-  Work responsibilities restrict ability to visit campus
-  Campus location too far to travel
-  Confusing admission process

”

“I think all those things that pertain to being the first anyone who's doing something...That can be exhilarating, but **it can be a little unnerving.**”

*Michael V. Drake,
President of The Ohio State University*

”

“Many parents of first-generation students are deeply committed to getting their children into higher ed, **but they don't know how the system works.**”

Tom Green, ACCRAO

Second, even when parents of first-generation students try to support their children's college enrollment, they find themselves unfamiliar with key process steps. The timing and location of recruitment events, such as campus tours and orientation sessions, do not accommodate families who may be unable to miss work or travel long distances. While most colleges and universities offer foreign language translations throughout the admissions process, translations are often available in only one language, typically Spanish, which may not accommodate all families. Furthermore, language accommodation is only a first step in building an admission process that works for the families of first-generation students. Beyond secondary language options, families require tailored campus events that allow them to attend key process steps and comfortably assess institutional fit.

1) In this white paper, “social capital” refers to social networks, connections, and experiences specifically with higher education.

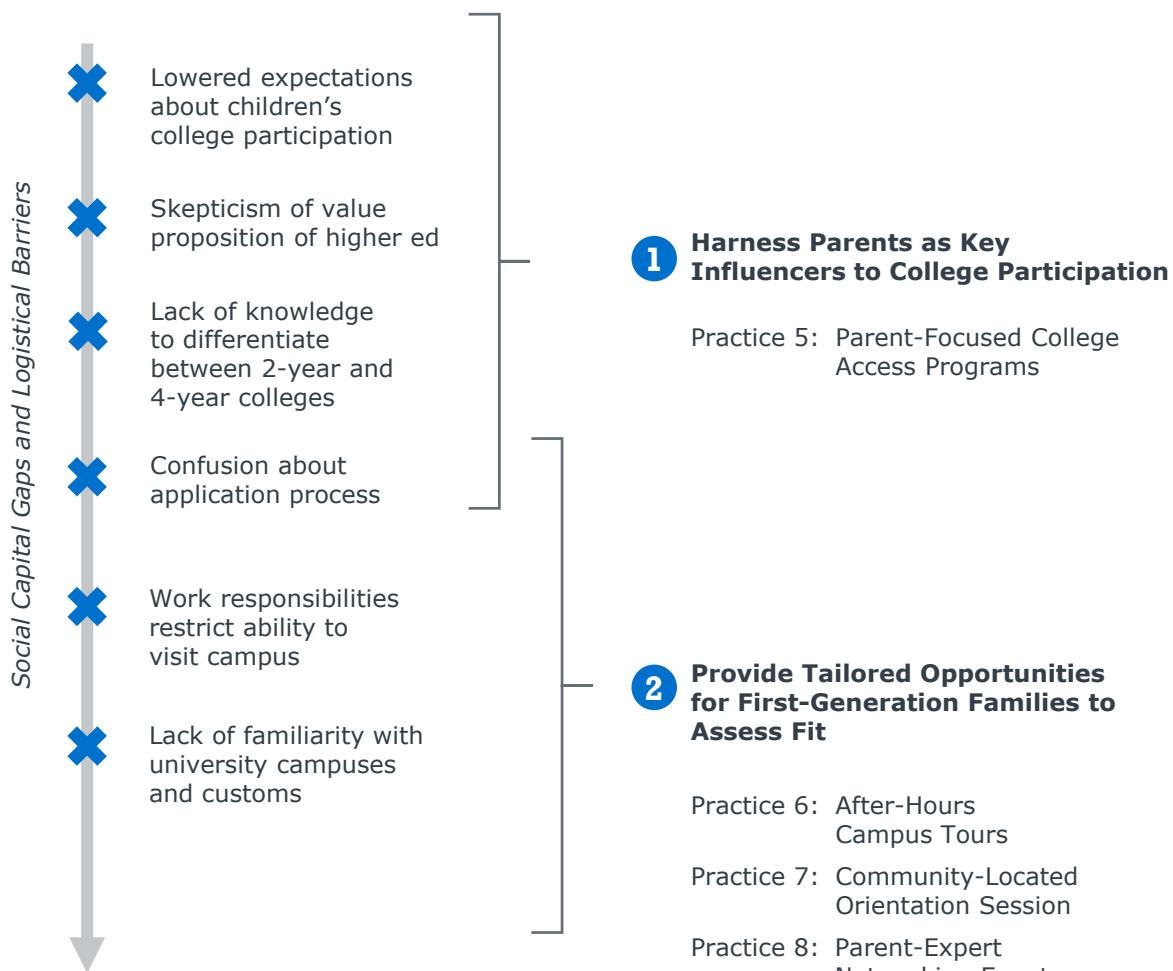
Sources: Redford J and Hoyer K, “First-Generation and Continuing-Generation College Students: A Comparison of High School and Postsecondary Experiences,” National Center for Education Statistics, September 2017, <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2018/2018009.pdf>; Harris E, “‘I Won’t Give Up’: How First-Generation Students See College,” *The New York Times*, May 30, 2017; <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/05/30/us/07firstgen-listv.html>; Zalaznick M, “Bucking tradition: Recruiting an adult or first generation college student,” *University Business*, July 19, 2017, <https://www.universitybusiness.com/article/recruiting-adult-first-generation-college-student>; EAB interviews and analysis.

Supporting Parents of First-Generation Students

Engaging the Family in College Search

Social capital gaps and logistical barriers prevent many families from helping first-generation students through the admission process. To address these barriers in order to increase first-generation student enrollment, EMs and college access program administrators should follow two imperatives:

1. Involve parents in K-12 college access programs to create a college-going culture for first-generation students and demystify the application process for families.
2. Offer tailored campus events for the families of first-generation students to evaluate institutional fit.



Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Engage Parents Through Community Organizations

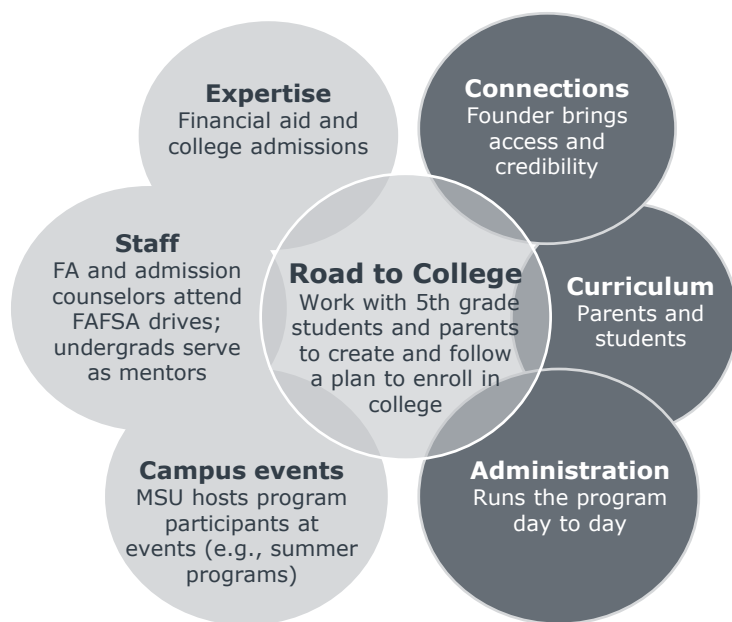
Secure Nonprofit Partnerships to Complement Institutional Resources

As explained in previous installments of the **Blueprint for Enrolling a Diverse Student Body** series, local population growth in underrepresented populations does not translate to four-year enrollment. **Midwestern State University (MSU)** wanted to grow the pipeline of students from its diverse, but underserved, local community in Texas. Lacking a sizable budget and other resources, MSU turned to a local nonprofit, Café Con Leche, which offers a college access program called Road to College for students and parents. Partnering with Café Con Leche provided MSU with immediate access to the nonprofit's credibility, community relationships, and resources.



- **Background:** Public institution that enrolls 6,000 students. Located in Wichita Falls, TX.
- **Goal:** Grow local pipeline of underserved populations.
- **Challenge:** Limited resources to engage these communities

Synergy in Action



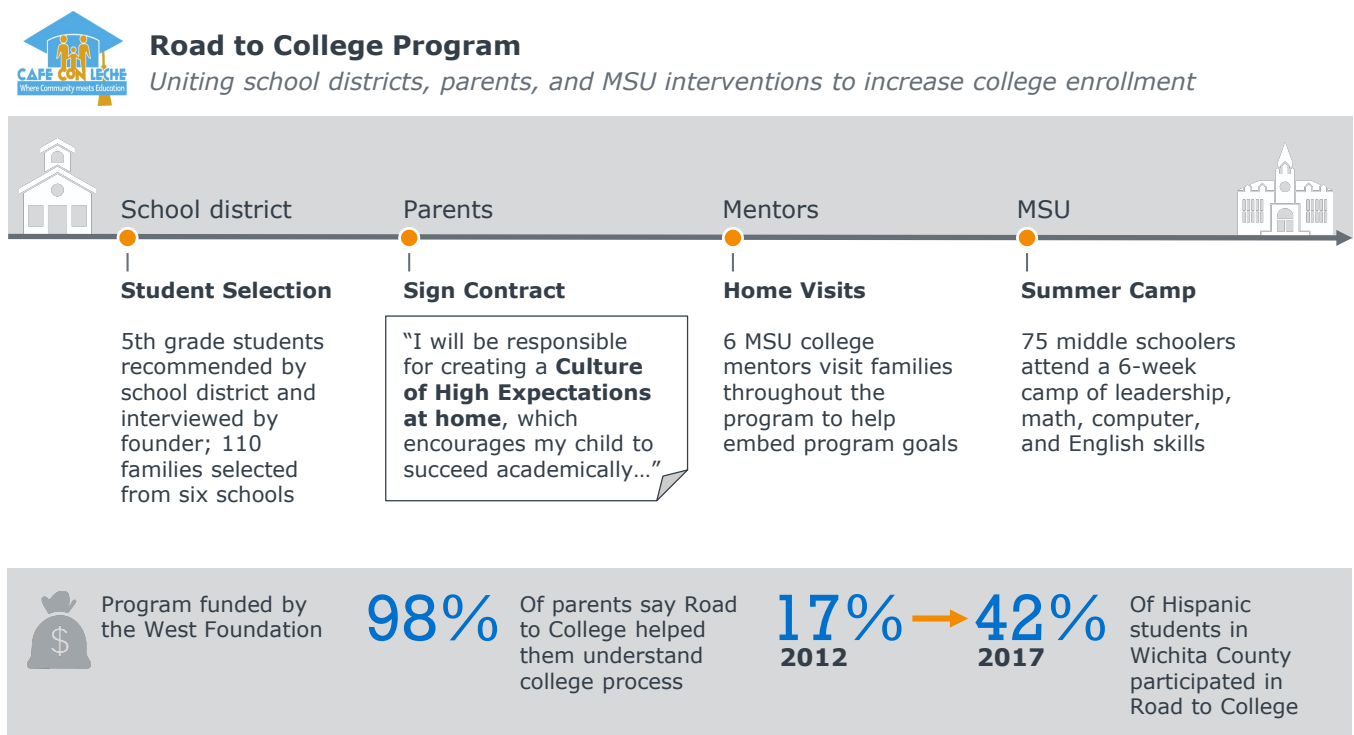
- **Background:** Nonprofit based in Wichita Falls, TX. Founded in 2012.
- **Mission:** To get underserved kids college-ready through early engagement and parental involvement. Helped 1,200 families.
- **Founder:** Gonzalo Robles has spent 20+ years in college access programming, most recently with the UT system.

MSU and Café Con Leche have a synergistic relationship in which each partner complements the needs of the other. MSU benefits from access to Café Con Leche's existing connections and credibility with the local Hispanic community. Café Con Leche provides the preestablished Road to College curriculum for both students and parents. Café Con Leche also handles the bulk of daily program operations and administration. In turn, MSU provides Café Con Leche with support from MSU staff and access to campus space for events.

Involve Parents Early to Build a College-Going Culture

Support Students with Higher Expectations from Multiple Influencers

Café Con Leche's Road to College program secures early commitments from students and families to build their college-going mindset. Because middle school is a pivotal time for inflecting students' preparedness, Café Con Leche solicits student nominations from local school districts for a program beginning in 5th grade. Rather than focusing on the most promising students, Café Con Leche aims to serve middle-performing students to expand the number of prepared students. Parents sign contracts that commit themselves to building a culture of high expectations for their children, and students attend an intensive academic preparedness camp in the summer.



While many college access programs rely solely on after-school programs to inculcate students' college-going mindsets, Café Con Leche leadership realized they needed parents to build and reinforce this mindset at home. Therefore, university mentors visit families in their homes throughout the program.

Nearly 100% of parent participants report that Road to College increased their understanding of the college admissions process. From 2012 to 2017, the number of Hispanic students in Wichita County who completed Café Con Leche's Road to College program increased by 25 percentage points. University leadership believe the deeper understanding and family commitment to the college process contribute to increasing Hispanic enrollment at MSU.

Transform Mothers into College-Going Advocates

Enhance College Affinities Through Mother-Daughter Relationships

Another option for universities with limited resources is to create smaller-scale college access programs in-house with parental engagement as a key component. Like MSU, the **University of Texas, Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV)** recognized a need to increase the preparedness and college-going rate of the growing Hispanic population. Specifically, UTRGV sought to expand the pipeline of Hispanic women in STEM fields. To do so, UTRGV launched the Mother-Daughter Program, which increases daughters' college preparedness and empowers mothers to advocate for their daughters' education.

University of Texas, Rio Grande Valley



Public research university
with ~30K students in Texas

- 90% Hispanic student population
- Rio Grande Valley is 90% Hispanic; experienced a 40% population increase from 2000 to 2013

Goals

Increase college-bound population in the region

Diversify STEM workforce through the inclusion of Hispanic women:

- School districts help fund
- Companies/foundations provide grants

Two-Year Mother-Daughter Program

Objectives

- 1 Improve readiness for higher education and STEM careers
- 2 Build mothers' involvement in middle school and commitment to educational success
- 3 Boost college placement and completion

Target middle school

7th and 8th grade are tipping points for academic achievement; 30 mom-daughter teams from 12 middle schools.

Personal and college knowledge

7 UTRGV campus workshops for teams to develop college readiness plans and build rapport.

Commitment to college

Mothers pledge to support daughters' educational success.

UTRGV—Making College Real

- ▶ UTRGV juniors/seniors run 7 workshops in middle schools
- ▶ One-week residential summer camp for top 50 students
- ▶ 7 campus events emphasize ROI on college and STEM

UTRGV recruits 30 Hispanic middle school girls and their mothers for the Mother-Daughter Program. UTRGV finds that middle school is the ideal time to inflect change both in students' college-going mindsets and in the mother-daughter relationships. Participating mothers take a pledge of commitment to supporting their daughters' college enrollment goals. Mothers attend personal coaching sessions and monthly workshops on campus with their daughters. UTRGV undergraduates lead monthly school-based sessions with the daughters and serve as their mentors.

Nearly all participants graduate from high school, and the vast majority enroll in college. UTRGV is the preferred destination for enrolling students. The Mother-Daughter Program has been so successful that UTRGV is piloting a similar program for fathers and sons.

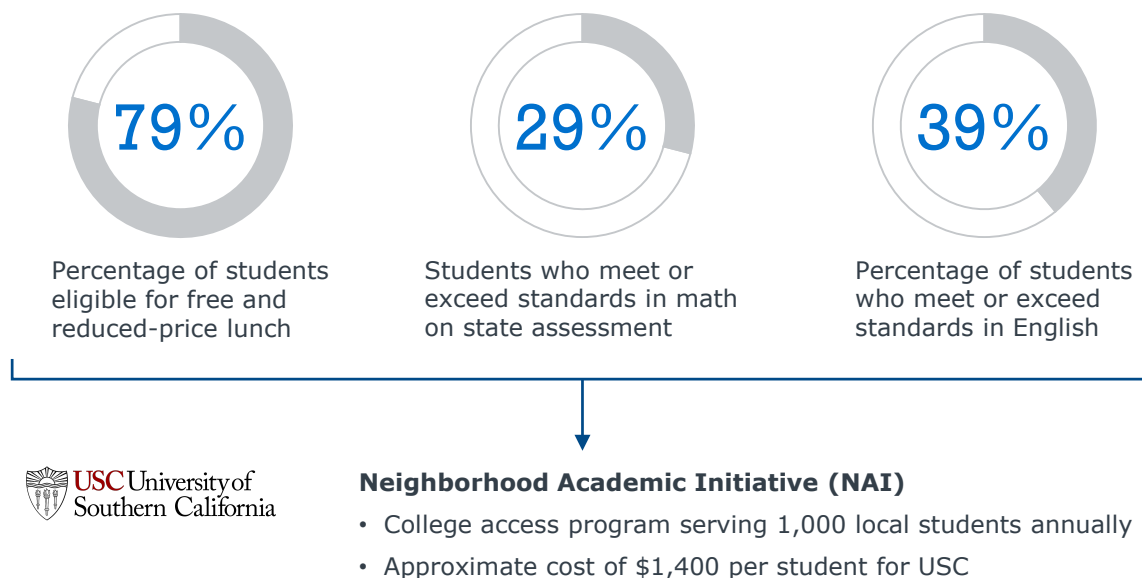
Local Ineligibility Spurs College Access Efforts

USC's Longstanding Program Tackles Preparedness Gaps

Like many selective universities, few local public school students qualify for admission to the **University of Southern California (USC)**. The public schools surrounding USC primarily enroll low-income students of color from families with limited college attainment. As explained in the two previous installments of the **Blueprint for Enrolling a Diverse Student Body** research series, these populations are more likely to face preparedness gaps. For example, the majority of students from Los Angeles public schools fail to meet state standards for preparedness in math and English. Due to these preparedness gaps, few local students are college-ready.

Majority of Local Students Are Low-Income and Fail to Meet State Standards

Los Angeles Unified School District, 2016-2017 Academic Year



Overview of USC's Neighborhood Academic Initiative (NAI)

USC operates the Neighborhood Academic Initiative (NAI) to grow the local pipeline of students eligible for USC admission and to demonstrate commitment to the university's neighborhood in an underserved region of Los Angeles. NAI serves about 1,000 local middle and high school students annually in a seven-year program that runs from 6th to 12th grade. Six schools located in neighborhoods bordering USC campuses in East LA and South LA participate.

Sources: "Los Angeles Unified," Ed-Data, <https://www.ed-data.org/district/Los-Angeles/Los-Angeles-Unified>; Gazzar B and Wall S, "LAUSD students make gains on state test scores, but 71% fall short on math," *Los Angeles Daily News*, August 28, 2017. <http://www.dailynews.com/social-affairs/20160824/lausd-students-make-gains-on-state-test-scores-but-71-fall-short-on-math>; EAB interviews and analysis.

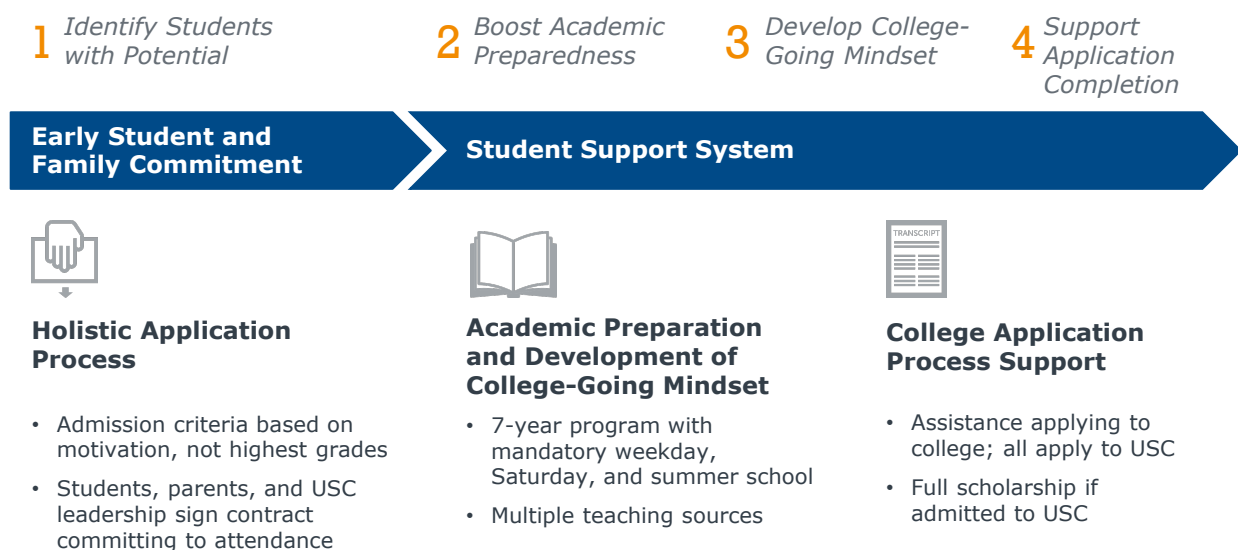
Provide Intensive, Multiyear Support to Expand Access

Four Key Objectives to Increase College Preparedness

As a robust college access program, NAI fulfills the four objectives of these programs.¹

- 1. Identify students with potential.** Students apply for the program. Rather than enrolling only students with the highest grades, USC looks for students who seem highly motivated but who are not already top students. This selection process ensures that USC does not allocate valuable resources for students who would likely be prepared for college without assistance.
- 2. Boost academic preparedness.** Participating students attend supplemental classes before and after school, on Saturdays, and over summer break for seven years.
- 3. Develop college-going mindset.** The multiyear commitment and comprehensive programming keep students motivated on their path to college.
- 4. Support application completion.** In high school, NAI participants receive help submitting college applications. All participants apply to USC, and if admitted, they qualify for full-tuition scholarships.

USC Neighborhood Academic Initiative (NAI) Fulfills Four College Access Objectives



¹) [Evolving College Access Programs](#), Volume 2 of the **Blueprint for Enrolling a Student Body** research series, outlines the four objectives of college access programs.

Sustain Parental Commitment to College Enrollment

Ongoing Engagement Keeps Parents Involved Across Multiyear Program

Distinguishing NAI from most college access programs, USC embeds parental involvement into the entirety of NAI. Through the Family Development Institute, USC secures parents' commitment and keeps them engaged in the program for seven years. Both students and their parents sign contracts committing to their attendance at NAI programming. Every other Saturday, parents attend seminars on topics related to supporting their children's college enrollment, such as financial literacy. Volunteer USC medical and social work students are on hand to provide basic preventive care and counseling, which are valuable incentives for families with limited access to quality health care.

Common Practice to Involve Parents Well-Intentioned but Insufficient

- ✗ Lack of commitment leads to inconsistent parent participation
- ✗ Lack of incentives means parents do not prioritize attendance
- ✗ Programs not designed around parental desires
- ✗ Parents not engaged in programming



USC's Family Development Institute Stimulates Parent Participation



Parents sign contract committing to attendance at 12 Saturday seminars



USC incentivizes participation by providing basic health and wellness services, as well as training on child development



Elected Parent Leadership Council serves as voice of parents to USC administrators

Formalizing "Voice of the Parents" in NAI

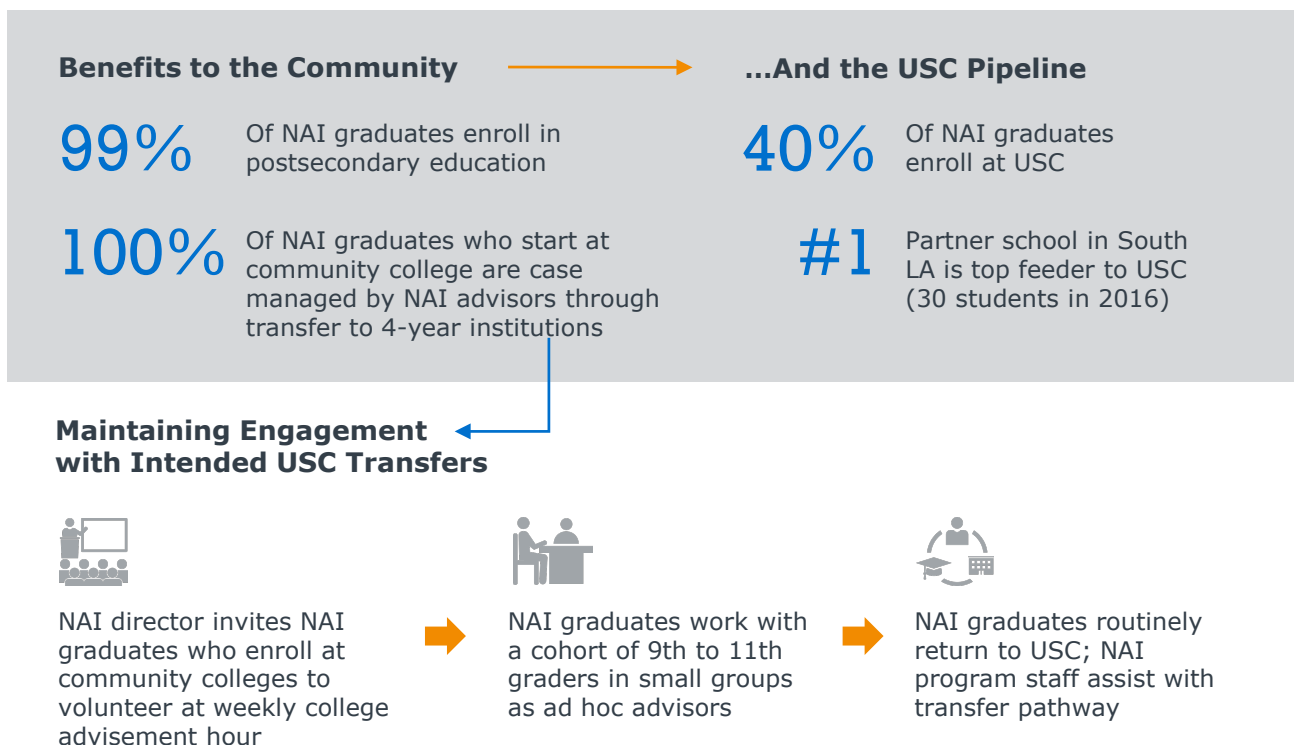
In addition to incentives for all parent participants, NAI empowers a selected group of parents to take ownership over programming. Parents elect 12-15 parents from their cohort to serve on a parent leadership council. The council assists USC staff with program operations, such as chaperoning field trips and fundraising. This council becomes the "voice of the parents" and provides feedback to NAI staff about how to adapt programming. Simultaneously, council membership is an opportunity for leadership development for the selected parents.

In addition to giving parents a stake in the program and their children's success, heightened parent engagement turns NAI parents into brand advocates for USC. Parents communicate the benefits of NAI in their communities and build local affinity for the university.

Improved Student Outcomes a Boon to USC

NAI Increases College Access in Los Angeles and Builds the Pipeline to USC

NAI delivers tangible benefits for parents, students, and USC. Comprehensive academic support and parental engagement allow students to be prepared for and supported in applying to college. Nearly all NAI graduates enroll in college, and about 40% enroll at USC. One NAI partner school has become the top feeder high school to USC, sending 30 students per year.



Re-Recruiting Students with Affinity from Community Colleges

Contributing to NAI's success is targeted follow-up with NAI graduates who enroll at community colleges. Recognizing that these students have built affinity with USC, NAI staff invite these students to volunteer as mentors for current NAI participants at the Saturday programming. While students are back on USC's campus, NAI staff assess and provide feedback on their progress to transferring. The weekly campus visit is also a tangible prompt to students to transfer to USC.

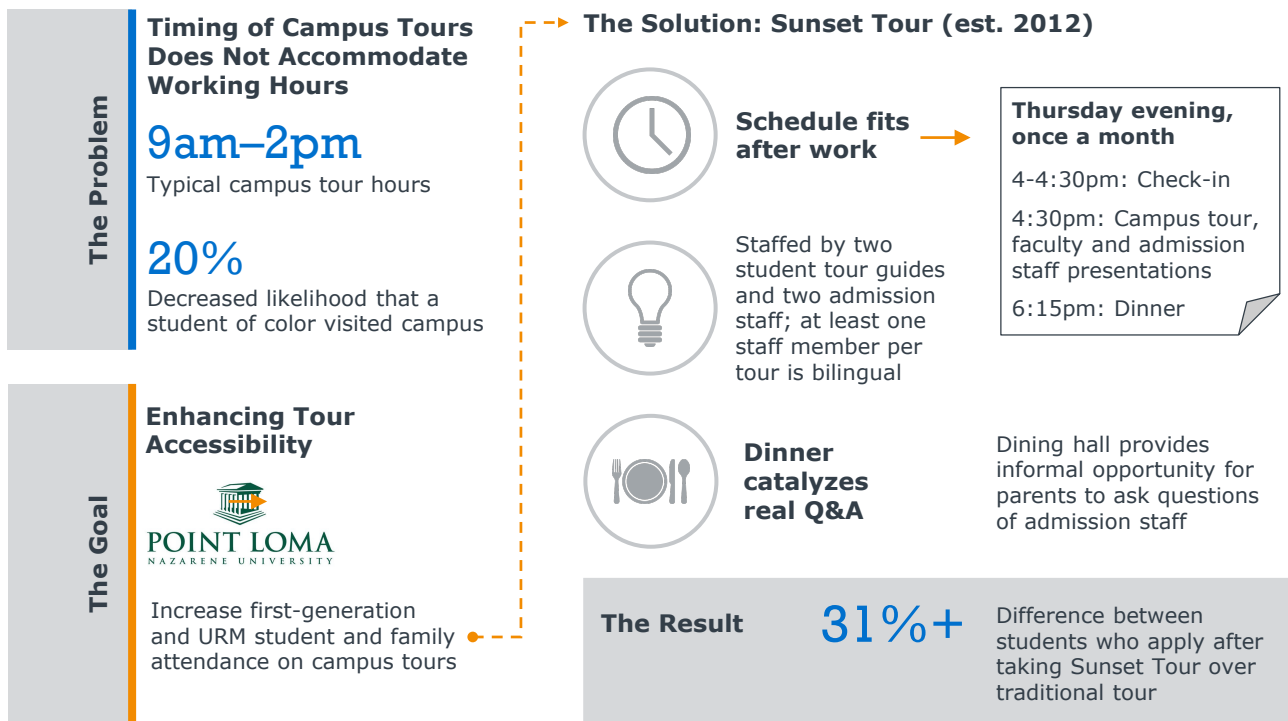
NAI has also grown USC's reputation and visibility as an institution committed to access. The program has made national headlines, including a [2017 profile in The New York Times](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/26/opinion/usc-neighborhood-academic-initiative-lifting-kids-to-college.html?_r=0).

Sources: Bruni F, "Lifting Kids to College," *The New York Times*, April 26, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/26/opinion/usc-neighborhood-academic-initiative-lifting-kids-to-college.html?_r=0; EAB interviews and analysis.

A First-Generation Friendly Take on Campus Tours

Offer Evening Options to Accommodate Working Families' Schedules

Even when parents have committed to sending their children to college, they still lack personal experiences with higher education and face logistical barriers that complicate their ability to support students' applications and attend events to assess fit. For example, campus tours are both an important part of how families assess fit and a key way for EMs to predict yield. However, campus tours are often inconveniently scheduled for working-class families who may have unavoidable work commitments during the typical weekday timing of tours. Parents without college experience may also feel intimidated to ask questions in larger tour groups filled with college-aware parents.



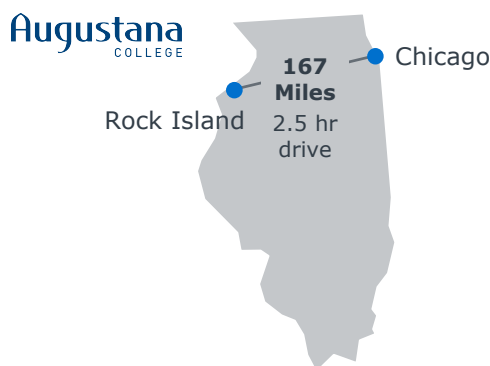
To ensure all families can attend a campus tour, **Point Loma Nazarene University** began offering a monthly evening tour, the Sunset Tour, in 2012. In addition to the after-hours timing of the tour, families are invited to an informal meal in a campus dining hall following the tour. Admission staff also attend this dinner and discovered that the campus meal is the most valuable component of the event. While parents may be reluctant to ask questions in the larger tour setting, the informal dining hall setting fosters an opportunity to voice concerns and questions one-on-one with admission staff. Ultimately, students who attend the evening tour are significantly more likely to apply than those who take the traditional tour.

Provide Local Orientations for Place-Bound Families

Accommodate First-Generation Families with a Close-to-Home Option

Like campus tours, new student orientations are often planned around expectations that students and parents can take time off, travel long distances to campus, speak English fluently, and be familiar with campus culture and customs. These assumptions do not align with the reality of work, transportation, and life experience for many parents of first-generation students. **Augustana College's** Enrollment Management team realized that most of their first-generation students were coming from Chicago, a considerable distance from the Rock Island campus. Because many parents were therefore unable to attend the traditional campus orientation, Augustana College launched a Chicago orientation option for these families.

A Long Way for First-Generation Families



Orientation Schedule Inhibiting

Gerber Center for Student Life,
Augustana Campus
Day: Monday
Time: 8am-2:30pm



Cost to travel;
time off work



Cannot bring
extended family

Add Local Session for Families of First-Generation Students

Enhanced Option

- Hosted in Chicagoland office
- Targeted invites for first-generation and URM families
- Takes place on Saturday

Achieve Three EM Goals

- 1 Remove distance barrier:** host orientation at Lombard office, which is easily accessible
- 2 Demystify college:** university 101 for parents and advice on navigating terminology, processes, and paperwork
- 3 Support families:** guidance on how to support student through freshman experience

The Chicago orientation occurs on a Saturday to not disrupt workweek commitments. Orientation content includes a “university 101” course introducing parents to higher education terminology and processes, as well as a session advising parents on how to contribute to their children’s success in their first year of college. Augustana College offers Spanish-language sessions to accommodate the primarily Hispanic attendees. Typically, about fifteen families attend the Chicago orientation.

In addition to the convenience of the local location, the orientation builds a sense of community for attending families, who connect with other families from similar backgrounds also enrolling at Augustana College. Admission staff tailor the orientation to the specific questions and concerns of families with limited higher education knowledge, demonstrating to parents how the college will support their children.

Build Affinity by Addressing Top Parental Concerns

Demonstrate Commitment to Parents of Admitted First-Generation Students

Even if the families of first-generation students move beyond logistical barriers and attend campus events, they may harbor feelings of apprehension, stemming from their lack of personal experience with higher education. While the **University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass)** had improved recruitment of underrepresented minority populations, including many first-generation students, the EM division observed that yield still lagged for these populations. UMass Amherst already offered a separate yield event for underrepresented students. To increase yield from these events, Leykia Nulan, Assistant Provost for Diversity in the EM division, redesigned this event to embed tailored parent-staff interactions.



Engage Parents with Multiple Touchpoints



Leykia Nulan

Assistant
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in EM

Overnight Visit

Goal: Boost yield
of URM admits

Attendees:
33 parents,
75 students

Deliver Core Parent Touchpoints

- Welcome dinner and breakfast
- Trolley ride into Amherst
- Workshops on resources

Select Key Moment for Parent-Staff Interaction

Leverage final meeting between parents and administrators to demonstrate institutional commitment at a time when parents invest a high amount of emotional energy in a decision.

Enable Staff to Address Each Family's Top Concerns

Compile Information: Gather data from parent survey and student file to identify pressing questions or concerns

Generate Insight: Use first day interactions to refine understanding of parents' interests and questions

Brief Staff: Match cross-functional staff to parental issues for parent-staff networking event



Inform, 10-11am

Office of Parent Services shares resources (e.g., Financial Aid, Learning Resource Center, Bursar) with parents to help navigate campus

Network, 11am-2pm

- Staff approach specific parents to address issues
- Staff offer to continue discussion over lunch or at their office
- Offices staffed in anticipation

3%

Increase in URM yield from
2015-16 to 2016-17

Nulan realized UMass Amherst needed to proactively address the distinct concerns of the parents of first-generation students about sending their children to college. To respond to these fears, Nulan matches parents with the UMass Amherst staff member who can best address their concerns at a key enrollment decision point. For example, the head of disability services might be matched with the parents of a student with a learning disability. At the yield event, staff members informally approach their assigned parents to discuss their specific concerns.

UMass Amherst saw a small, but not insignificant, increase in the yield of underrepresented minority students in the year following the redesigned events. They observed that even the parents of students with offers from more elite schools were swayed by UMass Amherst's personal touch at this event.



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