

The Educational Policy Institute's

student success

April 2010

The Newsletter for Higher Education Professionals

Freeman Hrabowski, UMBC President

An EPI Interview

EPI's 2009 Retention Award Winners

The 2009 EPI National Capitol Summit

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student success

APRIL 2010

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THE EDUCATIONAL POLICY INSTITUTE



The **Educational Policy Institute (EPI)** is a non-profit, non-partisan, and non-governmental organization dedicated to policy-based research on educational opportunity for all students. EPI is a collective association of researchers and policy analysts from around the world dedicated to the mission of enhancing our knowledge of critical barriers facing students and families throughout the educational pipeline.

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Opening Shots

This issue of *Student Success* comes during our move to Arlington, Virginia, across the Potomac River from Washington, DC. We were based here when I started EPI back in 2002, but after five years in Virginia Beach, we thought it time to head back to wonkville.

This past week we hosted our Third Annual National Capitol Summit on Education in DC, co-sponsored by USAFunds, Kaplan Higher Education, The Council of State Governments (CSG), the National Action Council on Minorities in Engineering (NACME), The George Washington University Graduate School of Education and Human Development, the University of Southern California, the Professional Master's Program, and the National Education Association.

Our event was diverse in nature. We began exploring school reform and turnaround programs, longitudinal data systems, and spent the first afternoon focused on STEM issues and why it is important to develop more STEM professionals for the nation to remain competitive in the global economy.

We also raised the issues of services for students with disabilities in college and university, as well as affordability issues. We will provide a summary in the next issue of *Student Success*. In this issue, we provide a summary of our 2009 event and will provide a summary of the 2010 event in our next *Student Success*.

We are pleased to provide an interview in this edition of *Student Success* with Freeman Hrabowski, the President of the University of Maryland Baltimore County. Dr. Hrabowski is well known in STEM fields as well as in the area of minority access and achievement. One of his greatest accomplishments, arguably, is the development of the Meyerhoff Scholarship Program, which, for the past 22 years, has provided funds to students at UMBC to help improve access and achievement of students. Dr. Hrabowski is an outstanding leader, education, and speaker, who will be featured at **RETENTION 2010** this June in Chicago.

In this issue, we also provide background on two of our three Retention Award winners from 2009, Seneca College in Toronto and Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). We will feature our third winner, Robert Morris University, in the next *Student Success*.

At this time of year, we are ramping up for our Annual Conference on Student Success, or RETENTION 2010, being held at the Palmer House in Chicago June 9-11. We hope you can come, listen, learn, and share on the issues of student success. The conference is always fun and interesting, and the backdrop of Chicago will provide a vivid experience for all.

We look forward to seeing you in Chicago!





The Educational Policy Institute's
Retention
2010
An International Conference on Student Success
June 9-11, 2010, Chicago, Illinois

June 9-11, 2010 , Chicago, IL

The Educational Policy Institute cordially invites you to attend RETENTION 2010, our annual conference dedicated to exploring contemporary issues related to student success. Hosted by The Hilton Palmer House, June 9-11, 2010, this year's event will bring together teachers, administrators, researchers and policymakers from around the world who are dedicated to promoting student persistence in secondary and postsecondary education.

THERE WILL BE TWO PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS:

Workshop 1: An Introduction to Student Retention
June 9, 9:00 am - 12:00 noon; Dr. Watson Scott Swail,
Educational Policy Institute

This session will outline a retention framework and discuss issues related to defining retention on campus, data usage, student tracking systems, campus buy-in, and proven practices.

Workshop 2: Building a Roadmap for Meeting Institutional Regional Goals
June 9, 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm; Jay Goff & Harvest Collier, Missouri University of Science & Technology

This session provides an opportunity for institutional leaders to discuss how coordination between offices in data collection can be useful in analyzing institution-specific retention issues.

F E A T U R E D S P E A K E R



Freeman A. Hrabowski, III, has served as President of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County since May, 1992. His research and publications focus on science and math education, with special emphasis on minority participation. He currently chairs the National Academies' Committee on Underrepresented Groups and the Science & Engineering Workforce Pipeline.

He serves as consultant to the National Science Foundation, the National Institute of Health, the National Academies, and university and school systems nationally. He also served on the board of the Maryland Humanities Council as both a member and Chair.

Other speakers include: Watson Scott Swail, President & CEO, The Educational Policy Institute; Reginald Wilkinson, Ohio College Access Network; Jay Goff, Missouri University of Science & Technology

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Tyrone Gadson

Student Success: An Interview with Freeman Hrabowski



Many fine students throughout the country come to the nation's capital for education. One school that stands out in performance has been the University of Maryland, led by its president, Freeman Hrabowski. Since 1992, he has led the university and pioneered study in science and mathematics. With the recent emphasis in STEM education, it is noteworthy that Hrabowski has maintained resolute dedication to this cause. He currently chairs the National Academies' Committee on Underrepresented Groups and the Science & Engineering Workforce Pipeline. In addition, Hrabowski serves as a consultant and board member to many of the nation's largest education organizations.

Beating the Odds and *Overcoming the Odds* (Oxford University Press) are two books co-authored by Hrabowski that delve into the topics of parenting, high-achievement growth in African American males, and females in the sciences.

The incredible success with the Meyerhoff Scholars program has been generating attention, and is a topic that Hrabowski loved to discuss. Having served with so many organizations, Hrabowski's experience and depth brings wisdom and passion to his audience that is not to be missed!

Freeman Hrabowski will speak at EPI's RETENTION 2010 in Chicago, Illinois from June 9-11. For more information on RETENTION 2010, visit educationalpolicy.org.

What does student success mean to you?

When I think of student success, I immediately think about academic success; that we want to know that students are able to do well academically, in their coursework, and that they have the type of experience that leads them to want to continue studying and complete their goals.

Can you tell me about the Meyerhoff Scholars Program?

The Meyerhoff Scholars Program began over 20 years ago in 1989, with the goal of increasing the number of students of color, particularly African Americans, who excelled in sciences and went on to pursue and complete a Doctorates in science and engineering and professional degrees in related areas. Since that time, we now educate students of all races in science and engineering. The one criterion is an interest in broadening participation in science and engineering. So we have not only African American and Hispanic students, but Whites and Asians, with strength in science and engineering as well as an interest in helping other groups to do well in those disciplines.

What strategies does this program utilize to build student success?

What's exciting is the strategies we are using to build success in the Meyerhoff program are strategies we are using to develop the university in general. To put the Meyerhoff Scholars in perspective, keep in mind that UMBC is a research campus that has students from 150 countries, so students of color who are underrepresented are learning how to work with and compete against and excel in a community of students from all over the world. That's a challenge because often, students who have been educated in other countries

are more disciplined than American students. So one of the strategies we are using is a focus on group study, teaching students to build community among themselves, teaching them how to give support to each other and creating a climate that encourages interaction and cooperation, rather than simple competition or cutthroat approaches. Unfortunately, people tend to do tutoring, reflecting on the experiences and most important, encouraging and supporting faculty researchers in working carefully with these students, giving students hands-on experiences in real life science problems, getting involved in chemistry labs, having them involved in sustained research experiences leading to publications and presentations, and then putting a lot of emphasis in dreaming about the future and possibilities. Those are the strategies that we have been using to insure success.

What role do faculty members play in the success of Meyerhoff Scholars?

First and foremost, faculty expect a lot from the students, they expect them to do well. Secondly they give support to our students, not only in creative approaches to teaching, our Chemistry Discovery Center for example, but also in inviting students to be in their labs and work on real life problems, and getting students involved in some of the companies on campus. We have over 50 tech and IT companies involved and a number of our students of all types work in those companies and get real life experience. And the hands on experience in faculty labs and in companies and national agencies lead to students connecting their internships with coursework, and quite frankly the work becomes far more interesting as a result of the real life experience. So faculty help them connect to the science and then faculty serve as advisors and counselors to students. Faculty get to know students.



What are your expectations of Meyerhoff Scholars?

My expectation is that one of the Meyerhoff Scholars will be the first African American to win the Nobel Prize in Science or Medicine. That's the vision. And the vision is important not so much because of that one event, but what I'm saying is that Meyerhoff Scholars represent some of the best prepared students in the world. These are students who are having opportunities to publish in Journal of Electro Biology, students who are winning competitions, students who go on to the best PhD programs in the country. And what's exciting about this, is we in America are not accustomed to students of color, in large numbers, excelling in this discipline, we are just not. What the Meyerhoff program says is that students of all races can be the best if given support. I will tell you, what's exciting about Meyerhoff is that many of the strategies that have proven effective for those students are now used for our students, white students and others across the campus – so we have large numbers who go immediately to grad school – between 40 and 45% of our students go immediately to grad school.

What role do parents play in the Success of the Scholars?

Very important. Actually my colleagues and I wrote 2 books on raising high achieving African Americans, one called Beating the Odds and one called Overcoming the Odds one focused on males, one on females, and we look at the role of parents and other mentors in supporting students. Parents, again, expect the most from students, parents are some of the closest advisors to students. Parents are top experts on their children. They know more about their children than anyone else. We have a Parent Association – so whether they are from California or Maryland, parents are involved in the support network for the students. And quite frankly, parents can help other parents. Parents of older students can help parents of younger students understand how to deal with different challenges and problems that may arise.

What were some challenges you faced as you first implemented this program? How did you overcome them?

We had to identify strategies that would help students do better in the coursework. In the first years of the program, we had never had in the history of the University, African Americans earning an A in any upper level science course. So the first goal was to see how we could help students become not only well-prepared, but be successful in the upper level science coursework, and that meant analyzing their performance over the first year, first two years, first couple of years, and seeing where kids had done well and if not how they were working in a group or not, and getting them to think carefully about lessons learned from their first experiences. So the emphasis was on reflecting on the experience, asking questions about their performance, and/or discussing with

faculty different strategies that might be used to help students performed. And after several years, we had the first A in genetics, and that set the bar. That was in 1989 and 90 and 91. And since that time we now have large numbers of students of color earning A's in organic chemistry and chemical engineering courses and computer science, but it was like breaking a barrier in race. We had to show that it could be done and learn from the successful experiences. Success breeds success. What we learned was you can never take anything for granted. That the group-work was important, the tutoring was important, the faculty interaction was important, setting high expectations, having regular discussion groups about their experiences, the importance of focus groups to talk about the issues, building community. What you should know is, that every group feels responsibility for the group one year younger.

What causes this sense of responsibility among Scholars?

We talk about it. That's one of the values of the program. I mean our theme is, "To those who much is given, much is expected." They [Meyerhoff Scholars] also serve as tutors and mentors to children in the community. We use the same approach with all the other scholars programs on campus. We have scholars programs for women, we have a center for Women in Information Technology, for women of all races to get more involved in computer science, we have a humanities scholars program, called the Dresher Humanities Scholar Program, and all of these programs have similar approaches to building community among students so that they are not alone helps tremendously. My colleagues and I published an article about a year ago titled "Social Transformation Theory of Change." It's actually a chapter in a book titled *Toward Positive Youth Development* published by Oxford. And it documents the different approaches we have used to making

What should higher education institutions do to increase performance, participation, and retention in STEM fields this year, 2010?

I think the emphasis should be on helping students what is required of them: hard work, discipline, working with other people, listening to advice, getting to know faculty well, being willing to be criticized, developing thick skin, asking good questions, understanding that sometimes failure in a lab can be as important as succeeding because you can learn so much even when things don't go well. And similarly, on the other hand, it's really important for institutions to look in the mirror and ask are we doing all we can do to give students support? Have we thought through creative approaches to teaching, particularly in the first two years? Are we making sure that students are having hands-on experiences? Are they getting to know researchers and scientists? Are they learning how to help each other, in the classroom, in the labs, in the study sessions? And most important, are we using data analysis to determine what is working and what is not. And data analysis can involve both the quantitative side of things but also the qualitative side in terms of listening to students. It's very important to listen to the voices of students, to understand their perceptions, their reactions to what we are trying, and to take their suggestions and ways to improve the way we do things.



Freeman Hrabowski points to the future of education

What lessons from UMBC can be applied to other institutions to help meet growing demand for STEM graduates in the US?

Number 1: encouraging the best faculty to be involved with undergraduate education, particularly in the first two years, and to think critically about how best to deliver instruction and to connect research and teaching. And also, taking the time to have faculty and staff listening to what students think and observing how they study and learn, and creating an environment of empowerment, one in which students have a feeling they can control their destiny and can make suggestions about how things can be better. I'll give you a great example of the UMBC spirit, student government, a couple of years ago, took some of its money to help us renovate additional space for group work. They took their money, that could have been used for recreation, and used it to create additional study space in which students could work together in groups. This is a residential campus where most freshmen live on campus and well over half of the undergrads do too, and people always want places to study together. What's great about UMBC's campus is that when you're walking around around, it looks like the place of nations at the UN because you have students from so many countries. You've got both international and domestic diversity, and it is a place where it's cool to be smart. We just won the National Chess Championship and we are very proud of that. So success is about academic success first, but in the larger context, it's about helping students to feel special, helping them to dream about the possibilities, teaching them to think effectively with other people, making sure that they're grasping the concepts in the coursework, but teaching them how to use what they learn in the larger world.

People love stories. People won't remember the theory, but they'll remember the story. I teach students to know their own story. I want them to know their stories. Because our stories inspire us.

2009 EPI National Capitol Summit

Education and the New Administration

Washington, DC, January 27-28, 2009

In January 2009, the Educational Policy Institute held its second annual National Capitol Summit. This Summit focused on the Administration of newly-coined President Barack Obama and his stances on education. Given that a little over a year has passed since his inauguration, it is interesting to look back at a brief summary of the 2009 National Capitol Summit. In our next issue we will provide a summary of the 2010 NCS, held on April 12-13, 2010.

Panel I, No Child Left Behind: Next Steps

Henry Fernandez (MODERATOR)	USA Funds
Dan Dominech	AASA
Gary Huggins	Commission on NCLB
Joel Packer	National Education Association
Eric Smith	Florida Department of Education
Linda Valli	University of Maryland

Henry Fernandez of USAFunds acted as moderator for the opening Panel, and posed the following question: "What are some of the issues that Congress should consider and what recommendations would you make." Experts in this panel expanded the important and contentious issues debated throughout NCLB's reauthorization process in the 111th Congress and addressed some of the promises made by President Barack Obama during his campaign. Major areas of interest to this panel included

standardized testing and student poverty, quality standards and accountability, and student preparation for competitiveness in a global market.

Following Panel I discussions, former Secretary of Education Rod Paige elaborated on the gap between educational policy and practice, explaining that when school administrators and educators are left out of the educational policy making process, they feel disconnected from the policy and are reluctant to advocate for its success.

Day One concluded with a special reception held in honor of Senator Claiborne Pell, who passed away January 1, 2009. EPI Advisory Board Member Carrie Besnette gave a passionate speech about the impact of Senator Pell on opportunity for those students who otherwise would have been able to afford college. Senator Mike Enzi was also present to receive the 2009 EPI Leadership in Education Award from Dr. Watson Scott Swail, President & CEO of EPI.

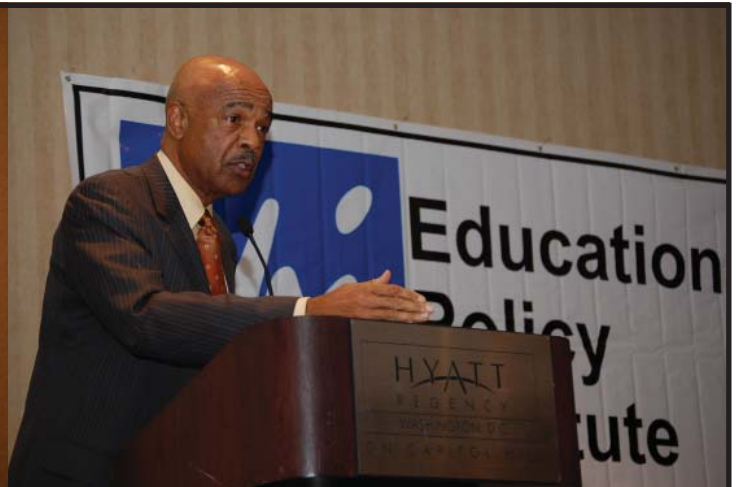
Day two opened with guest speaker, David Cleary, an advisor to Senator and former Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander (R-TN) on the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. Cleary also advised the Senator on elementary and secondary education issues and served for a short time with the Aspen Institute's Commission on NCLB as the Director of Policy and Research. He discussed "the gorilla in the room," being the stimulus package and the nervousness associated with increases to Title I, IDEA, and school construction funding.

2009 EPI National Capitol Summit Sponsors





Pat Callan of the National Center for Public Policy & Higher Education



Lumina Foundation for Education's Jim Applegate and Tina Milano of the Cleveland Scholarship Program



Florida Secretary of Education Eric Smith with Gary Huggins (Commission on NCLB), Joel Packer (NEA), and Linda Vallie (University of Maryland)



Patrick Shields of SRI International



Henry Fernandez of USAFunds



Senator Mike Enzi receiving the EPI Leadership Award



EPI President & CEO Watson Scott Swail



Former NEA President and Dean of the Graduate School of Education and Human Development at GWU, Mary Hatwood Futrell



Carrie Besnette of the Metropolitan State College of Denver

Panel II, Early Childhood Education

David Lopez (MODERATOR)	Educational Policy Institute
Christy Tirrell-Corbin	University of Maryland
Libby Doggett	Pre-K Now
Kathy Glazer	VA Department of Education
Laura Westberg	Nat'l Center for Family Literacy

EPI's David Lopez opened by discussing the need to have a consistent definition of "high quality." He was also concerned with building state and local capacity before expanding educational services so that when "soft" government grants run out programs would still have sustainability. Main topics of interest to this panel included assessment standards and the quality of early childhood components (head start, etc.), stimulus, parent involvement and the changing needs of the American family, and finally, poverty and the collaboration of early childhood resources.

Panel III, Teacher Preparation, Induction, & Professional Development

Patrick Shields (MODERATOR)	SRI International
Joe Aguerrebere	Nat'l Board Prof. Teaching Standards
Jim Cibulka	Nat'l Council for Accreditation and Teacher Education
David Imig	University of Maryland
Sharon Robinson	AACTE

A central finding of educational research over the past 15 years has been the centrality of teacher quality in influencing student learning. In fact, teacher quality is the single most influential factor in determining achievement beyond family background. The Obama Administration promised to focus on teacher quality, and more specifically, initiatives to recruit, prepare, retain, and to reward teachers. Patrick Shields (Moderator) kicked off Panel III by asking members what needs to be done in terms of our teacher workforce to insure that teachers are preparing our students for the workforce of the 21st Century. Panel members were majorly focused on defining quality and teacher assessments, re-inventing teacher preparation to meet 21st Century demands, and the Federal, state, and school districts' expectations and responsibilities.

Panel IV, College Access & Success

Chris Rasmussen (MODERATOR)	MHEC
Jim Applegate	Lumina Foundation
Margarita Benitez	The Educaiton Trust
Christina Milano	Cleveland Scholarship Program
Susan Sclafani	Chartwell Education Group

As President Obama stated during the campaign, much progress has been made over the past few decades in expanding opportunity to people who have historically been prevented from pursuing their educational and professional dreams. However, "access" involves much more than fair, equitable, and broad opportunity for enrollment. Access means nothing if individuals do not have the appropriate encouragement and support to enroll, persist, and complete their degrees once in college. Panel 4 focuses on "access and success" because too often our policy focus is on getting individuals into college, with much less attention on their success once enrolled. Partly as a result, the United States has one of the worst college completion rates in the developed world. The high attrition seen at many of our institutions is a disservice not only to students and families, but also to state and federal governments that help subsidize the cost of higher education.

Chris Rasmussen (Mediator) opened by posing the question, "What can be done from a policy perspective to boost college access." Panel members focused on the role of higher education, teacher investment, and changing student populations.

Panel V, College Affordability & Student Aid

Alex Usher (MODERATOR)	Formerly, Educational Policy Institute
Andrew Flagel	George Mason University
Bill Hansen	US Department of Education
Art Hauptman	Consultant
Jane Wellman	Delta Project

Financial aid is this nation's most significant policy investment to improve college affordability and broaden access to higher education. Prior to the financial crisis, financial aid for U.S. undergraduate and graduate students had grown to more than \$122 Billion as of 2003-4, with federal guaranteed loans accounting for about half of that total. Other federal support made up another 20 percent, with Pell grants constituting about three-quarters of that percentage. State and institutional support made up the remaining 30 percent (Haveman & Smeeding, 2006). Policy debates surrounding financial aid have focused on which tools (grants, loans, tax credits), actors (federal govern-

2009 Outstanding Student Retention Award

Congratulations to Last Year's Award Winners

Upcoming issues of Student Success will be highlighting the 2009 Outstanding Student Retention Award winners

Indiana University- Purdue University Indianapolis

Where Impact Is Made—Every Day

IUPUI has more than 30,000 full and part-time students that represent all 50 states and 122 different countries. The University offers more than 200 academic programs from associate degrees to doctoral and professional degrees and has been ranked among the top 20 in the country for the number of first professional and health-related degrees conferred. IUPUI has been producing leaders since 1969, and has educated half of Indiana's physicians, eighty-five percent of its dentists, and similar percentages of health professionals. For the retention impacts they make with each passing year, the Educational Policy Institute would like to award Indiana University- Purdue University Indianapolis with our 2009 Outstanding Student Retention Award.

As a large, urban commuter university, IUPUI serves a high percentage of incoming freshmen, where 58 percent are first-generation college students and over seventy-five percent commute to campus. To address these challenges and provide a comprehensive introduction to higher education, IUPUI created a joint initiative with their Themed Learning Communities and Summer Academy Bridge Program. Many colleges offer a summer bridge program and even more offer learning communities for first-year students but few link these two initiatives. This unique network of faculty, advisors, mentors, and fellow students are intact throughout the school year, and utilize tools such as financial and time management skills and an academically focused curriculum to set students on the path to success. These two programs, operating on base funding provided by the State of Indiana, were linked after independent success and increased participation of each.

continued from page 10

ment, states, and institutions), as well as target populations (low-income and middle-class) are most appropriately engaged by financial aid policy strategies to meet the twin policy goals of affordability and accessibility.

On January 21, 2009, the Department of Education approved a funding program with The Bank of New York Mellon for student loans, the first of its kind, to help boost student loan volume as the credit crunch lingers. Under this program, the government agrees to be a buyer of last resort for asset-backed commercial paper funded "conduits" created to purchase student loans made under the Federal Family Education Loan Program. The panelists discussed how the financial crisis contributes to the national discussion of student loan policies and the urgency for major policy change in this area. Main areas of importance included tuition, Pell grants, student loans, and financial transparency.

First introduced at IUPUI in 1995, Learning Communities (LCs) paired an introductory course with an integrated first-year seminar connected through an interdisciplinary theme. LCs used the instructional team model, in which a faculty member, an academic advisor, a librarian, and a student mentor collaborate in the course instruction. The faculty member serves as the lead of the instructional team, although all members meet to build the syllabus together. The instructional team attends and participates in class sessions, except the librarian, who comes as needed. These diverse viewpoints can be extremely beneficial to students. For example, it is more effective for the students if the student mentor discusses student resources on campus using student terminology, rather than the instructor trying to do the same. The instructional team works together to enhance teaching effectiveness, and this makes an impact—everyday. "[With this teaching method] you're modeling students to see collaboration," notes Assistant Dean, Gayle Williams (Photo, p.19).

research planning. And the good thing is, no TLC is the same, since their tailored differently by each instructional team. Williams notes “There’s no set program package to this.”

Built as partner to TLCs, the second aspect to the Joint Initiative is the Summer Academy Bridge Program. It began as a pilot program in 2001 with 19 students and was intended to help ease the transition of academically at-risk incoming freshmen to the university. The Program, which takes place a week prior to the beginning of the fall semester, succeeded when half of the pilot students maintained a GPA of 3.0 or higher, and half of those students had a 3.5 or higher. While in the Bridge Program, students are divided into groups of 25 based on their interest in pursuing a particular major or in exploring various major options. Students are given opportunities to make friends with other freshmen, learn to handle college-level expectations for reading and writing, become acquainted with the campus, and gain experience in using instructional technology. The Summer Academy Bridge Program went from serving 19 pilot students in 2001, to approximately 500 students participating this year. Until currently, the Bridge Program followed the same goals and objectives as TLCs, but IUPUI is in the process of creating separate goals for the program that will still complement TLCs. IUPUI moves to constantly diversify its offerings. This is how an impact is made—everyday.

In 2005, IUPUI decided to combine the Themed Learning Communities and the Summer Academy Bridge Program. In the process of assessing the two programs, Michelle Hansen, Director of Assessment for University College, noticed that students in the Bridge and TLC collectively show higher GPA improvements over students who participate solely in one or the other and students who don’t participate in either program. Having 108 first-year seminars and 19 Bridge sections can make it difficult to co-ordinate student participation however. For example, some of the academic schools only offer a limited number of first-year seminars, like the Schools of Nursing and Psychology that only offer a few first-year seminars, but a majority of students in these schools look to take TLCs too. To give these students the option of participating in the Bridge program and achieving the desired student impact, the TLCs and Summer Academy Bridge Program needed to be linked.

Almost twenty-five percent of IUPUI’s Themed Learning Communities began as Summer Academy Bridge sections, with the students from those sections continuing into the fall semester as Themed Learning Community cohorts. The themed curriculum of each participating TLC was introduced during the Bridge Program so students began their fall semester with a head-start on fall coursework and they were already familiar with their TLCs thematic focus. As stated before, the independent success of the Summer Bridge and TLCs prompted movement toward an

expanded linkage. In 2007, fifty-seven percent of the Bridge students enrolled in TLCs, and the remaining 43 percent enrolled in IUPUI’s traditional learning community courses.

Within the first year of the linkage in 2005, adjusted GPA for students who participated in only the TLC program was 2.70 while students who participated in the Bridge only had an adjusted GPA of 2.74. However, students participating in both programs had adjusted GPAs of 3.16 and 3.33 respectively. Those are GPA increases of .46 and .59. In 2006 the Bridge only participant GPA was .43 points lower than those students who participated in the combined Bridge and TLC. Since the linkage of the two programs, a trend of higher GPAs started with students in both programs as opposed to just one.



IUPUI’s Gayle Williams receiving the 2009 Outstanding Retention Program Award from EPI Vice President Patricia Moore Shaffer

As the program continued to expand, IUPUI realized that only a limited number of students would be willing to give up a week of their summer to participate in a university program. As a result of this, in 2006, IUPUI started to require recipients of the First-Generation Scholarship, a scholarship offered to low-income, first-generation students, to participate as a condition of their reward. Orientation helped to recruit others. But IUPUI was still looking for increased participation in the Bridge by low-income students.

This is why beginning in 2007, students of the 21st Century Scholars program—which is aimed towards low-income Indiana students—were offered additional incentives to participate in the Bridge. The Scholars program, currently in its 11th year, is unique to Indiana State. During eighth grade, low income students sign an agreement requiring the student to maintain a C average or better in high school and to not be involved in crime. If they can hold to these terms through high school to graduation and successfully complete their FAFSA, then the students attend a recognition ceremony in which they're presented with a reward—full tuition coverage to any public state university of their choice. If students opt to attend a private university, then the award amount is adjusted to the amount of tuition at a public state university. Since this program is supported with state funding, however, institutions cannot legally put restrictions on the award. But IUPUI found a way to offer incentives to 21st Century Scholarship Recipients using separate grant funding. IUPUI was awarded \$30,000 a year to assist students with living costs. They used this \$30,000 to create Diversity Initiative scholarships, which include: fifteen \$1,500 scholarships, 28 \$250 bookstore awards, and ten \$50 parking passes. Program enrollment increased because Diversity Initiative recipients that participate in Bridge in the fall receive their full Diversity Initiative Scholarship in the spring; however, if students fail to successfully complete the bridge, then they forfeit 10 percent of their Initiative Scholarship.

In 2008, a section for international students was added to the program, further increasing the potential participants of the Bridge and TLC Joint Initiative to include: 21st Cent-

ury (low-income) Scholars, Diversity Initiative recipients, international students, and other incoming freshman recruited during orientation. Between 2005 and 2008, the number of students who participated in Themed Learning Communities grew from 376 to 675. In summer, 2008, 231 students were in TLCs linked with Summer Academy Bridge. This represented 34 percent of TLC enrolled students and 44 percent of total students who participated in Bridge. Each year there is growing enrollment in Bridge and TLC. And consistently, IUPUI moves to make an impact—everyday. Today, approximately 825 students are Themed Learning Communities, 475 participate in the bridge, and 275 are in the Joint Initiative. Ninety-one percent of all incoming freshmen are in a first-year seminar. This success continues through to graduation and even after graduation.

U.S News and World Report ranked IUPUI's Nursing and Public Graduate Schools third in the country and named them a school "Everyone Should Be Watching." One out of every ten Indianapolis residents either graduated from, or attended IUPUI, and 67 percent of the University's alumni stay, live, and work in Indiana. The Princeton Review listed IUPUI as a "College with a Conscience" for its outstanding commitment to community involvement. The University consistently improves itself, its programs, its offerings, its students, its community, and it has shown the ability to "Make an Impact—Everyday."

Congratulations to Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis for Outstanding Student Retention during 2009.

Seneca College of Applied Arts and Technology- Canada

A Leader in Polytechnic Education

Retention programs utilize a combination of academic and social factors to help students, especially those who are at-risk, to succeed at the two-year, four-year, and proprietary levels. Outstanding Student Retention Award recipients show excellence in the development and implementation of their student retention program. This year, we at The Educational Policy Institute present Seneca College of Applied Arts and Technology in Canada with the 2009 OSRA.

Over the years, Seneca has proved to be outstanding, transforming itself to a school of the students—where students' objectives come first, and always. "Seneca is leading the way for other institutions of higher education to focus on student success," said Watson Scott Swail, president of the Educational Policy Institute.

When Seneca College first opened their doors in September 1967, they had 852 full-time and 1,067 part-time students enrolled in 20 diploma and certificate programs. Since then, Seneca has held true to its mission "to contribute to Canadian society by being a transformational leader in providing students with career-related education and training."



Seneca College's Steve Fishman, also a three-time Retention Conference attendee, doing his Stanley Cup hoist as he celebrates Seneca's acknowledgement as a 2009 Outstanding Retention Program Awardee

Seneca exerts continuing efforts to expand its career opportunities, implementing the best resources to promote student success. As part of its strategic plan, Seneca writes that it strives "to provide multiple pathways and supports for students to achieve their educational goals," and since its conception, Seneca has done just that.

In 1968 Seneca's enrollment grew to 8,667 full-time and part time students; this number went up to 10,000 in 1996, with students enrolled in 230 programs of study. In 2002 the provincial government granted Seneca the ability to offer bachelor's degrees, and it became the **first** college in Ontario to offer a degree program. Forty years after Seneca first opened its doors, enrollment now stands at 18,000 full-time and 90,000 part-time students registered for more than 330 degrees, certificates, and programs. Now, Seneca offers more than 500 available career paths, from Fraud Examination and Forensic Accounting to Pharmaceutical Regulatory Affairs and Quality. "At Seneca, we're proud of our diploma, graduate certificate, and bachelor's degree programs. We're also proud of our faculty and staff," said president of Seneca College, David Agnew. "But we're even more proud of our students—and their success."

In Ontario, 40 per cent of college students never graduate, 47 per cent of incoming students score below the required English level, and 72 per cent of Ontario college applicants are concerned about having enough funds to complete their college education. These numbers are startling. Furthermore, college surveys indicate that the main reasons that students leave Seneca include financial struggles, a lack of career direction, difficulties with the transition to college life, and academic under-preparedness.

Seneca was determined to target these at-risk students and to help them adequately prepare for success with their educational goals—The college has done this by providing programs that have traditionally been unavailable, like the twenty-four week "Work on Track" program, in which adult students with mental health issues receive career planning and job coaching with the last 12 weeks being spent in an unpaid work placement. Seneca has adopted a culture of change in which the student, and their success, is always top priority.

In September 2007, Seneca implemented a program called Foundations for Success. The purpose of the program is to test whether a combination of academic tutoring,

peer mentoring, career exploration support and financial incentives will reduce the attrition rate of at-risk students at Seneca College. Each of the four semesters during the program, more than 2,000 at-risk students participate. Foundations for Success is the first research project in Canada to measure the impact of interventions for at-risk students who are likely to not complete their college education. As always, Seneca has a transformative mindset, and continued working to develop even more effective programs. In Fall 2005 Seneca introduced its newest retention program, "SUCCESS@Seneca."

At Seneca College, 4,000 students receive need-based government aid. Minority students and students with disabilities make up 44 percent of the entire student population; only 53 percent of all undergraduate students receive a diploma in 2 years; and only 34 percent of minority undergraduate students get their diploma in 2 years. That is, 66 percent of minority undergraduate student do not receive their degree within the two-year timeframe. Seneca wanted to target these students and initiate drastic changes with these numbers. A comprehensive, extensive and holistic approach was needed to guide students toward a successful academic journey, with little hassle. Enter, SUCCESS@Seneca.

SUCCESS@Seneca is connected with three specific college programs: General Arts and Sciences, Applied Science and Technology, and Business fundamentals. The program reaches out to college students who are deemed to be 'at-risk' such as minority students, low-income students, first generation students, students with disabilities, and under prepared students from a wide range of college programs. This truly collaborative approach serves more than 350 students annually, with active participation from students, faculty, support staff, and administration. Four main components comprise the SUCCESS@Seneca program to help steer students toward success: extensive and extended orientation, interactive and informative online 'success' portal, 'success' workshops and social networking opportunities, and The College Coach Approach.

For the extensive and extended orientation, a series of skill-learning workshops provide students with specific strategies for academic and personal success; for example, mock lectures allow these students to experience the classroom environment and obtain classroom strategies from a learning specialist. Students get to meet several key staff from vital college services and interact with their instructors and classmates, helping them develop relationships and become an integral part of the college community, even before they are officially a part of the college community.

With Seneca's online 'success' portal, students can access practical and useful information relating to learning strategies, career exploration, and development. It is utilized by staff as a means to communicate with students and promote year round critical dates, success workshops, and soc-

ial events. The portal serves students as a support and connection network to the college. Seneca realizes that there is no replacement for one on one extensive consultation with peer staff; therefore, students are also strongly encouraged to contact the appropriate college or community resources for individual assistance.

The third component of SUCCESS@Seneca is 'Success' workshops and social networking opportunities—where Learning Strategists facilitate a series of study skills workshops such as Time Management, Listening, Note-taking, Textbook reading, and Exam preparation. Other workshops include Stress Management and Career Exploration. Social activities vary from sports and recreation to coffee house events. This network for success helps students associate with peers moving in the same direction. If students need further, more personal assistance, the final component of SUCCESS@Seneca, The College Coach Approach, can provide the necessary individual guidance.

With The College Coach Approach (CCA) students are connected with a College Coach prior to the beginning of the school year. The main responsibility of the College Coach is to stay connected with the students, meeting with each one for up to 20 minutes, every two weeks. A brief tracking form follows each session. The College Coach takes active interest in the student's college progress and motivates them to successfully complete their college journey. The Coach can help students establish goals, anticipate and troubleshoot problems, encourage them to explore and connect with the appropriate college resources and people, and promote self sufficiency. CCA is unique in the fact that all college employees (staff, faculty, and administrators) are encouraged to become a college coach and although the coaches are not compensated for coaching, many participate in the program and are recognized at a year-end event, "College Coach Week," followed by a program luncheon with President and Vice President of the College.

Seneca is deserving of the 2009 Outstanding Student Retention Award because when it comes to the students' success, they make sure to involve everyone—students, parents, staff, faculty. Everyone. When Seneca first opened its doors, it strove to be a transformative leader in student success—it hasn't showed anything less. SUCCESS@Seneca Program Director, Steven Fishman notices, "Students become more effective. Not only here at college, but also with their personal development, and with that comes success."

Since the implementation of SUCCESS@Seneca four years ago, students involved are 28.6 percent less likely to withdraw from their academic program, 22.6 percent more likely to successfully attain academic promotion, and are more likely to see an increase in their GPA of 1.25 points. These big steps toward student success are why we at EPI deem Seneca College of Applied Arts and Technology deserving of the 2009 Outstanding Retention Award. Congratulations to Seneca College for outstanding retention during 2009.

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