



UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS REPORT 2021

ASSESSING ATTAINMENT AND EQUITY IN ILLINOIS HIGHER EDUCATION



Illinois Board of Higher Education
May 2023

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INTRODUCTION

Illinois Board of Higher Education's strategic plan, *A Thriving Illinois*, outlines three main goals: 1) close the equity gaps for students who have been left behind; 2) build a stronger financial future for individuals and institutions; and 3) increase talent and innovation to drive economic growth.

This report provides equity context by including statewide and national comparisons for postsecondary attainment by race and ethnicity. The report also includes measures and metrics for how the higher education system in Illinois and its various sectors serve African American and Latino students compared to White students, low-income students compared to non-low-income students, and students from rural locales compared to non-rural students.

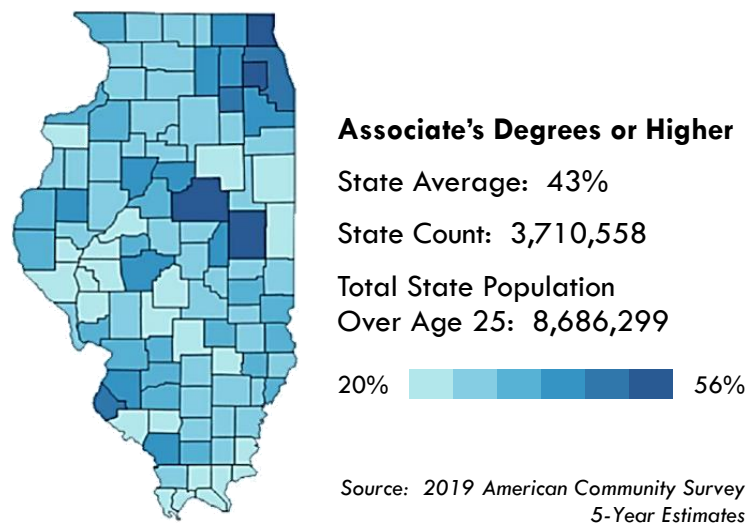
POSTSECONDARY ATTAINMENT IN ILLINOIS

Postsecondary education is key to ensuring individuals, families, and communities across Illinois can thrive. Individuals who hold a postsecondary credential have higher earnings, greater social mobility, improved health, and other positive life outcomes than their peers with less education. Ten years ago, Illinois adopted the 60 by 25 goal: that 60% of adults would have a postsecondary degree or credential by the year 2025 to meet projected workforce needs.

Today, the percentage of jobs requiring postsecondary education is even higher. In 2009, approximately 38% of adults in Illinois had an associate degree or higher. In 2019, over 43% do. As the map in Figure 1 shows, postsecondary attainment varies widely across the state, from a low of 21% of adults to a high of 57% of adults having an associate's degree or higher.

While this data only reflects degree attainment, credentials are also considered in the 60% target. According to the Lumina Foundation, Illinois' attainment is at 55% when certificates and short-term credentials are included.

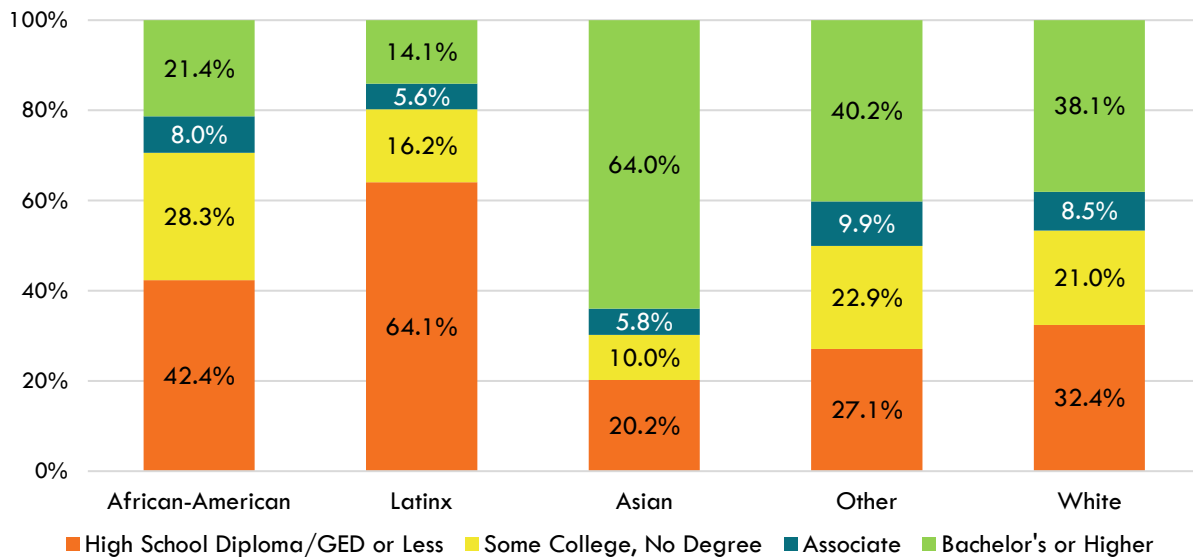
Figure 1: 2019 Postsecondary Attainment by Illinois County



As illustrated in Figure 2, the disparities in attainment outcomes are stark when the information is disaggregated by race/ethnicity. While 47% of white adults have a postsecondary degree, only 29% of African Americans and 20% of Latino adults do. For bachelor's degrees, Illinois has the 11th largest gap of any state in attainment between African American and white adults and the 7th largest gap between Latino and whites.¹

¹Illinois Board of Higher Education (August 2020). *Assessing Equity in Illinois Higher Education*. Springfield, IL. Retrieved from [PowerPoint Presentation \(ibhe.org\)](https://www.ibhe.org)

Figure 2: Educational Attainment in Illinois (Age 25+) by Race/Ethnicity

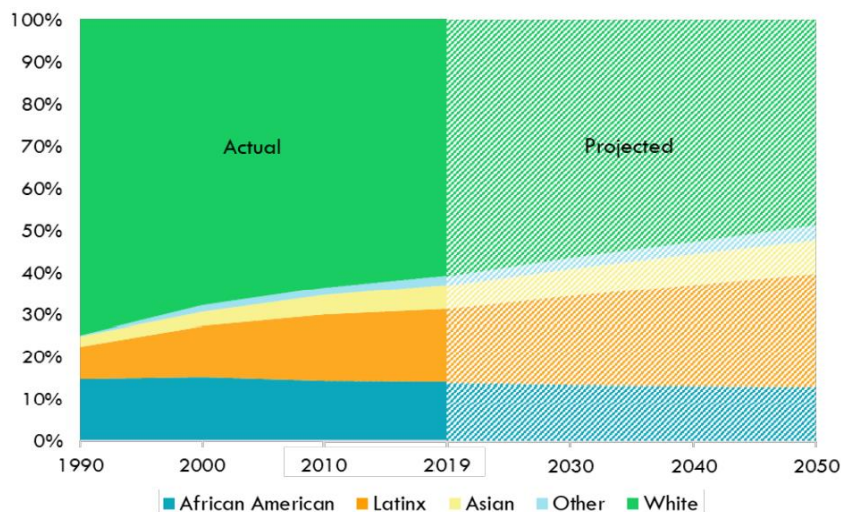


Source: 2018 American Community Survey IPUMS 5-Year Estimates

Equally significant is the percentage of adults with some college, but no degree, representing 324,000 African American, 195,000 Latino, and 1.2 million white adults who started college but never earned a degree. Because the data only show postsecondary degree attainment, it cannot be determined if some of these individuals earned a credential rather than a degree. And it is worth noting the very large percentage, especially of Latino adults, who have only a high school diploma, GED or less.

The challenge becomes even more clear when looking at the demographic projections out to 2050, as shown in Figure 3. The percent of the state's population that is white is projected to decline by 17.5%, while the Latino population is projected to grow by over 60%, and the African American population is projected to stay relatively steady.

Figure 3: Illinois Actual and Projected Population Distribution



Source: National Equity Atlas and American Community Survey 2019 1-Year Estimates

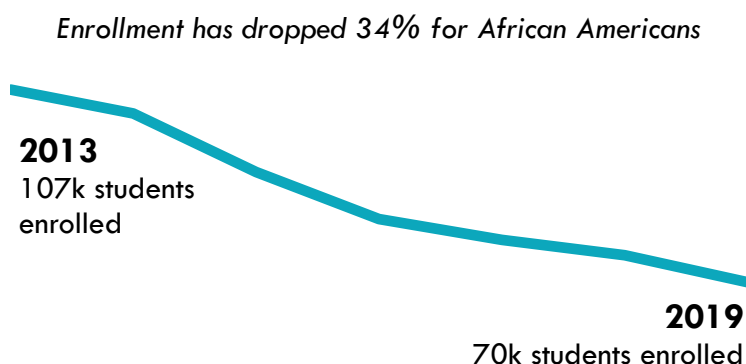
Illinois is also facing a projected decline in the number of high school graduates due to demographic shifts. According to recently released demographic projections by WICHE in *Knocking at the College Door*, the number of Illinois high school graduates each year is projected to decline, most precipitously starting in 2026, from just over 148,000 in 2025 to approximately 115,000 in 2037.²

² WICHE. (2020). *Knocking at the College Door: Projects of High School Graduates*. Boulder, CO. Retrieved from: [Knocking-pdf-for-website.pdf \(wiche.edu\)](https://www.wiche.edu/knocking-at-the-college-door/)

African American Students

As illustrated in Figure 4, undergraduate enrollment has dropped 34% for African Americans. Undergraduate enrollment in all sectors of higher education has declined by 19.4% between 2013 and 2019. Enrollment for white students has dropped by 25.9% overall, while it has dropped disproportionately for African Americans, even before the impact of COVID-19.³ In 2019 there were just over 70,000 African Americans enrolled in Illinois colleges and universities, down from 107,000 in 2013.

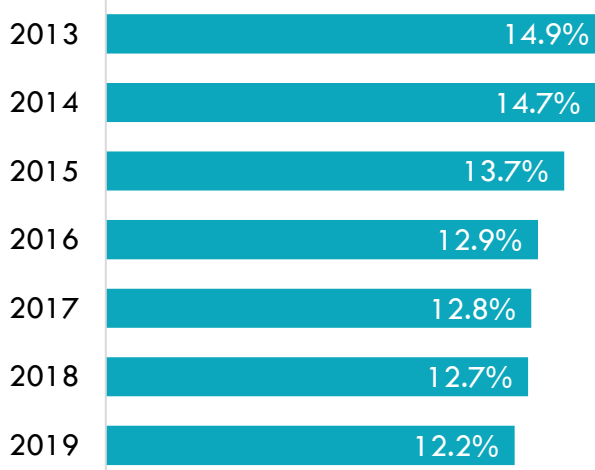
Figure 4: Overall Undergraduate Enrollment Trends for African Americans from 2013 to 2019



Source: IPEDS Fall Enrollment Survey from 2013 to 2019

As illustrated in Figure 5, the proportion of the student population that is African American has declined every year over that same timeframe from 14.9% to 12.2%, even though the percent of the state population that is African American has stayed mostly steady.

Figure 5: African American undergraduates as a % of all undergraduates



Source: IPEDS Fall Enrollment Survey from 2013 to 2019

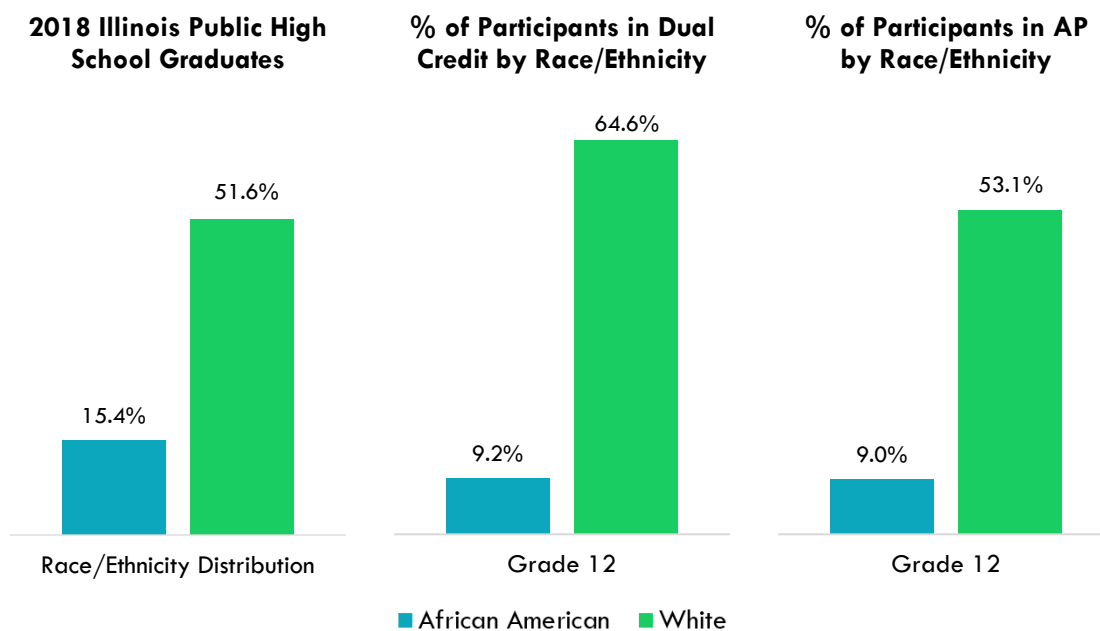
African American first-year students are placed in developmental education at higher rates than white students. At public universities, 15% of African Americans are placed in non-credit developmental education compared to 5% of whites, while in community colleges, 65% of African Americans and 40% of white students are. There is even a gap in the number of credit hours African American and white students accumulate when placed in math developmental education at public universities, with African American full-time freshmen accumulating only 8.4

³ Illinois Board of Higher Education (2021). *A Thriving Illinois. Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth*. Springfield, IL. Retrieved from: [A Thriving Illinois 06-15-21.pdf \(ibhe.org\)](https://ibhe.org/A-Thriving-Illinois-06-15-21.pdf)

credit hours in the first semester, while white students accumulate 10.6 on average. One would expect full-time students to accumulate at least 12 credit hours in a term, and 15 hours to stay on track to graduate in four years.⁴

Even earlier in their education career, African Americans have less access to Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Credit early college experiences. As a result, they miss out on the opportunity to earn credits or get exposure to college-level work while in high school. As shown in Figure 6, African Americans made up 15% of the Illinois public high school graduating class in 2018. Yet, of the seniors enrolled in dual credit, only 9% are African American, while 65% are white. A similar pattern holds for AP.

Figure 6: Early College Participation



Source: ISBE Report Card 2019

Public universities are less likely to retain and advance African American students from fall to fall. Public universities retained 85% of white students, but only 66% of African American first-time freshmen and advanced in class status (e.g., accumulated enough credits to move from freshman to sophomore status) 70% of white students and 33% of African American students.⁵

The experience of transfer students is better, but significant gaps remain. Public universities retained 74% of African American transfer students, while retaining 85% of whites and advanced 70% of whites, while advancing only 56% of African Americans.⁶

Non-Profit private universities have retention and advancement gaps. Non-profit private universities retained 82% of white freshmen while retaining only 63% of African Americans. Similarly, these institutions advanced 75% of white freshmen and 46% of African Americans. For transfer students, non-profit private institutions retained 77% of white students and 59% of African Americans, while advancing 65% of white and 45% of African American students.⁷

All this leads to dramatic and persistent gaps in the rates institutions graduate students. When examining the percent of first-time, full-time students who complete their degrees within 150% of expected time (e.g., six years

⁴ Illinois Board of Higher Education (August 2020). Assessing Equity in Illinois Higher Education. Springfield, IL. Retrieved from [PowerPoint Presentation \(ibhe.org\)](#)

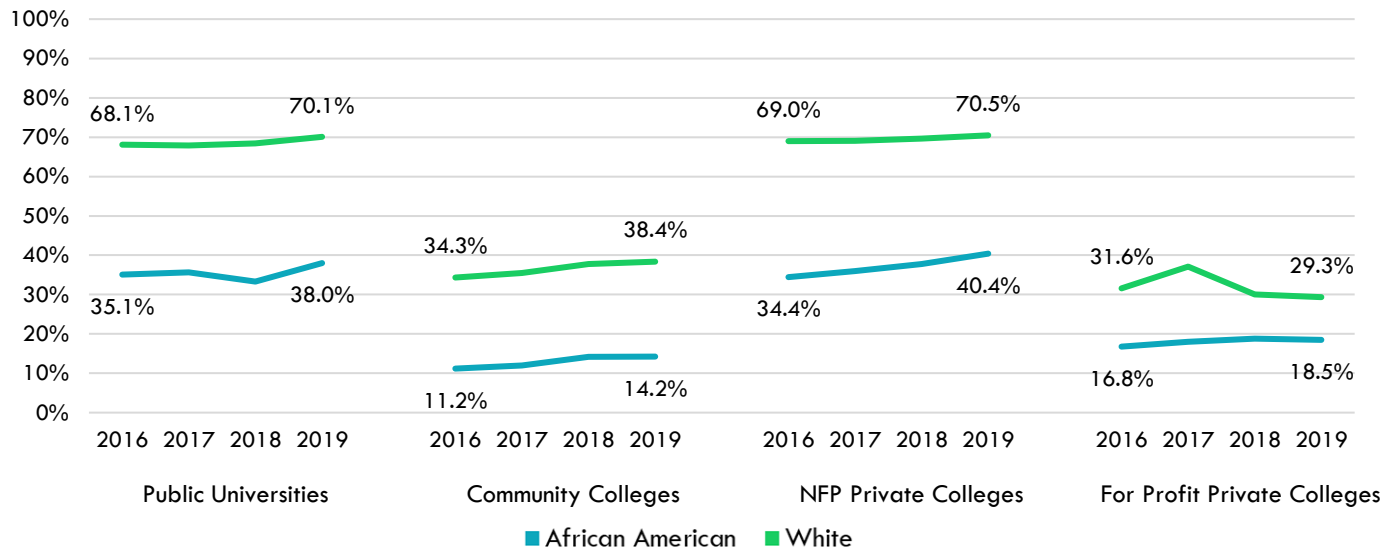
⁵ Illinois Board of Higher Education (2021). A Thriving Illinois. Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth. Springfield, IL. Retrieved from: [A Thriving Illinois 06-15-21.pdf \(ibhe.org\)](#)

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

for a bachelor's degree) at the same institution they started, there were significant and persistent gaps in the rates at which institutions in all sectors graduate white compared to African Americans students (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Graduation Rates at 150% of Normal Time by Illinois Higher Education Sector



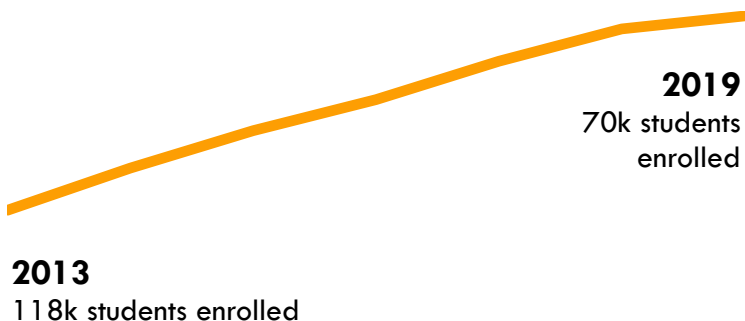
Source: 2016, 2017, and 2018 IPEDS Graduation Rates at 150% of Normal Time for students who first enrolled full time. The percentage of full-time undergraduate students varies by sector: 88.4% for Public Universities; 35.4% for Community Colleges; 91.3% for NFP Private Colleges; and 41.1% for For-Profit Private Colleges.

Latino Students

Enrollment for Latino undergraduates has increased. As illustrated in Figure 8, enrollment for Latino undergraduate students has increased by over 8% between 2013 and 2019.

Figure 8: Overall Undergraduate Enrollment Trends for Latino Students from 2013 to 2019

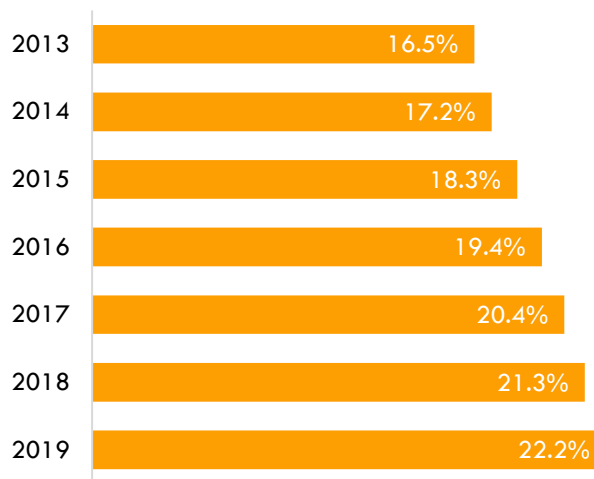
Enrollment has increased by over 8% for Latino students.



Source: IPEDS Fall Enrollment Survey from 2013 to 2019

Given the declines in enrollment for white and African American students discussed above, it is not surprising that Latino students are increasing as a proportion of undergraduate enrollment (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Latino undergraduates as a % of all undergraduates

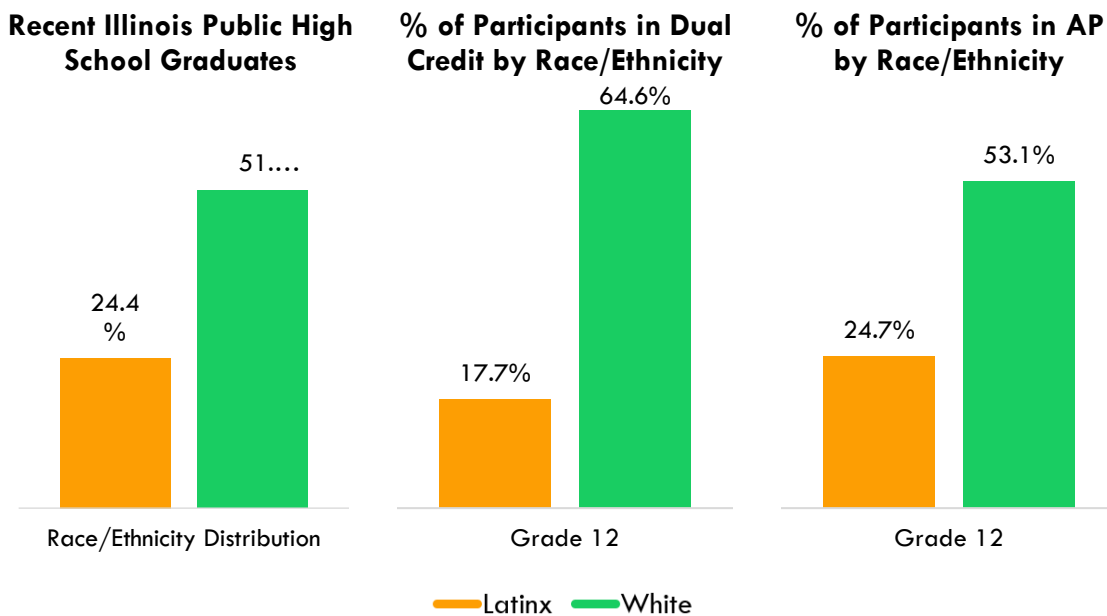


Source: IPEDS Fall Enrollment Survey from 2013 to 2019

Latino students are also more likely to be placed in developmental education. Public universities place 12% of Latino freshman in developmental education while placing only 5% of white students. For community colleges, the rates are 58% of Latino and 40% of whites. And the gaps continue in credits gained in the first semester. For students placed in developmental math, as one example, Latino students accumulated only 8.7 credits, while white students accumulated 10.6 on average in the first semester, compared to a needed 12-15 credit hours to stay on track for timely graduation.⁸

Latino students have less access to dual credit but proportional access to AP coursework in high school. Latino were 24% of the high school graduates, but only 18% of those enrolled in dual credit courses were Latino high school seniors. However, of high school seniors enrolled in AP, 25% were Latino.

Figure 10: Early College Participation



Source: ISBE Report Card 2019

⁸ Illinois Board of Higher Education (August 2020). Assessing Equity in Illinois Higher Education. Springfield, IL. Retrieved from [PowerPoint Presentation \(ibhe.org\)](https://www.ibhe.org/)

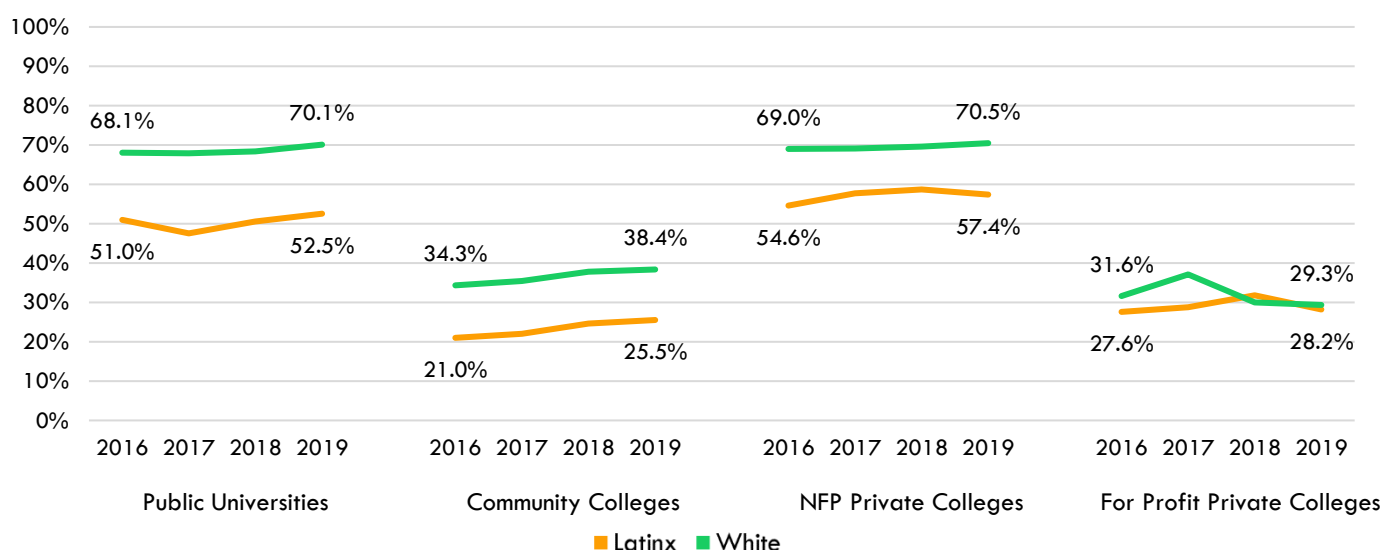
Gaps persist in public university retention and advancement of Latino freshmen. Public universities retain 85% of white full-time freshmen but only 76% of their Latino peers. Similarly, nearly 70% of white freshmen will be advanced, while only 53% of Latino will.⁹

However, public universities retain Latino and white transfer students at nearly the same rates. Over 83% of Latino transfer students are retained, while 85% of white transfer students are. Gaps in advancement rates are evident, with just over 64% of Latino transfer students advancing to the next class status, while 70% of white students do (IBHE, 2020).¹⁰

Gaps exist at non-profit private university retention and advancement rates. Non-profit private institutions retained 82% of white and 78% of Latino freshmen, while advancing 74% of white and 65% of Latino freshmen. For transfer students, these institutions retained 77% of white students and 76% of Latino students. Private institutions advanced 65% of white transfer students and 61% of Latino students.¹¹

Still, institution completion gaps persist over time. As the charts in Figure 11 illustrate, there are gaps in the rates at which institutions complete white and Latino freshmen and these gaps have persisted over time.

Figure 11: Graduation Rates at 150% of Normal Time by Illinois Higher Education Sector



Source: 2016, 2017, and 2018 IPEDS Graduation Rates at 150% of Normal Time for students who first enrolled full time. The percentage of full-time undergraduate students varies by sector: 88.4% for Public Universities; 35.4% for Community Colleges; 91.3% for NFP Private Colleges; and 41.1% for For-Profit Private Colleges.

⁹ Illinois Board of Higher Education (2021). A Thriving Illinois. Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth. Springfield, IL. Retrieved from: [A Thriving Illinois 06-15-21.pdf \(ibhe.org\)](https://www.ibhe.org/Assets/06-15-21.pdf)

¹⁰ Ibid

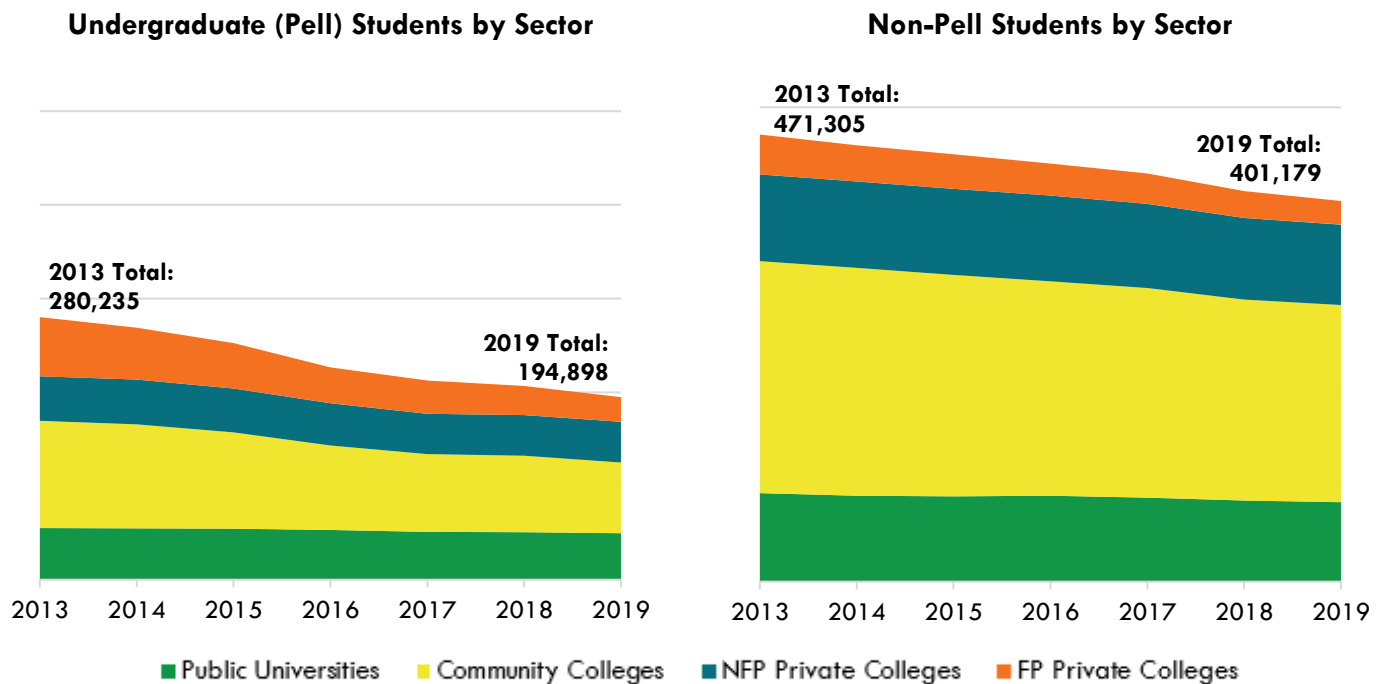
¹¹ Ibid

EQUITY GAPS: LOW-INCOME STUDENTS

The same patterns of inequity exist for low-income students. About half of the students in the K-12 system come from low-income families and low-income students are less likely to go to college: only 53% of low-income Illinois high school graduates go to college within 6 months of graduating, while 74% of non-low-income students do.¹²

As shown in Figure 12, between 2013 and 2019, Illinois enrolled over 85,000 fewer low-income undergraduate students, a 32.7% decrease, compared to a 14.9% decrease for non-low-income students.

Figure 12: Undergraduate Enrollment Trends in Illinois by Sector: Pell and Non-Pell



Source: 2013 to 2019 IPEDS Student Financial Aid Survey

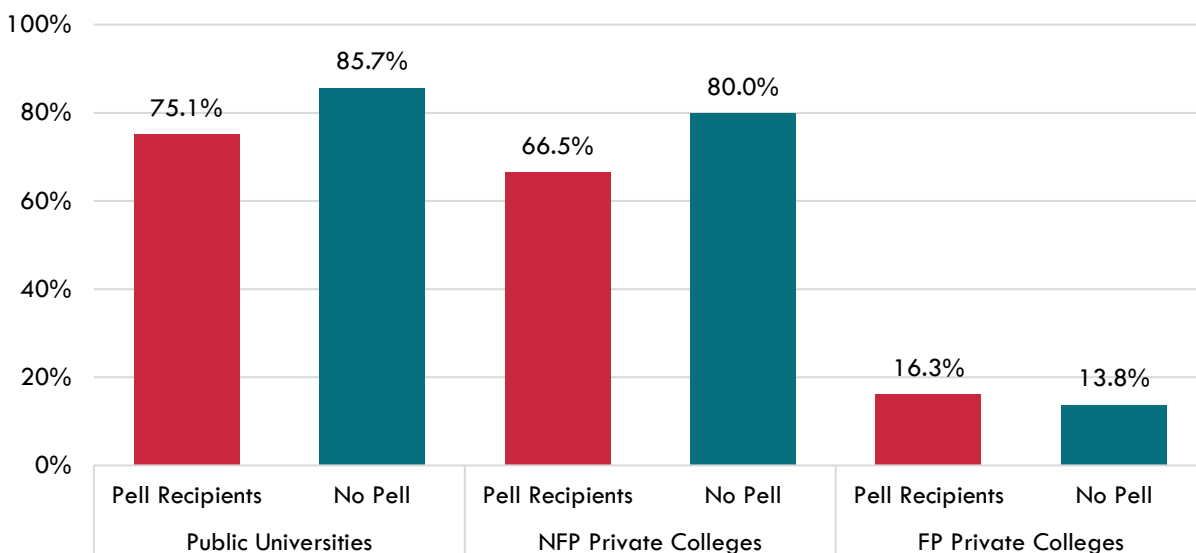
Low-income students are less likely to have had access to AP and Dual Credit and more likely to be placed in developmental education. Of recent high school graduates, 41% are from low-income families. However, only 30% of those enrolled in either AP or dual credit were low-income (IBHE, Sept. 2020).

Low-income students were placed in developmental education at higher rates, with 15% at public universities compared to 5% of non-low-income students, 59% percent compared to 42% at community colleges, 10% compared to 3% at not-for-profit private institutions, and 11.5% compared to 7% at for-profit institutions (IBHE, Sept. 2020).

Institutions are less successful in serving low-income students, with fewer being retained and advanced in their programs. As the chart on the next page shows, there is a 10 percentage-point gap in the rate public universities retain low-income and non-low-income students, a nearly 14 percentage point gap at not-for-profit private colleges, and a smaller gap, but much lower retention overall, for for-profit colleges (See Figure). Rates of advancement are much lower and the gaps much wider with public universities advancing 71% of non-low-income students and 49% of low-income and the not-for-profit private institutions showing rates of 73% compared to 54% for low-income students (IBHE, Sept. 20).

¹² Illinois Board of Higher Education (September 2020). Assessing Equity in Illinois Higher Education: Part II. Springfield, IL. Retrieved from [PowerPoint Presentation \(ibhe.org\)](#)

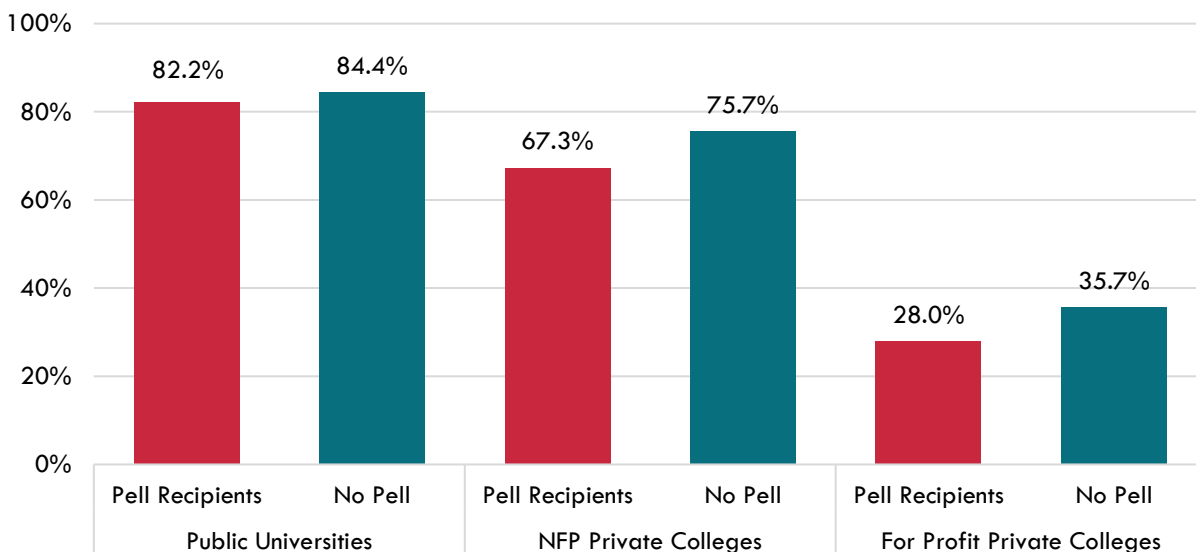
Figure 13: Retention of Pell and Non-Pell Full-Time Freshmen by Institution Type



Source: IHEIS Fall Enrollment Collections from 2018-19 and 2019-20

As illustrated in Figure 14, the results are better for transfer students, with the overall retention rate higher and gaps smaller: two percentage points at public universities, but still eight percentage points at non-profit private colleges.

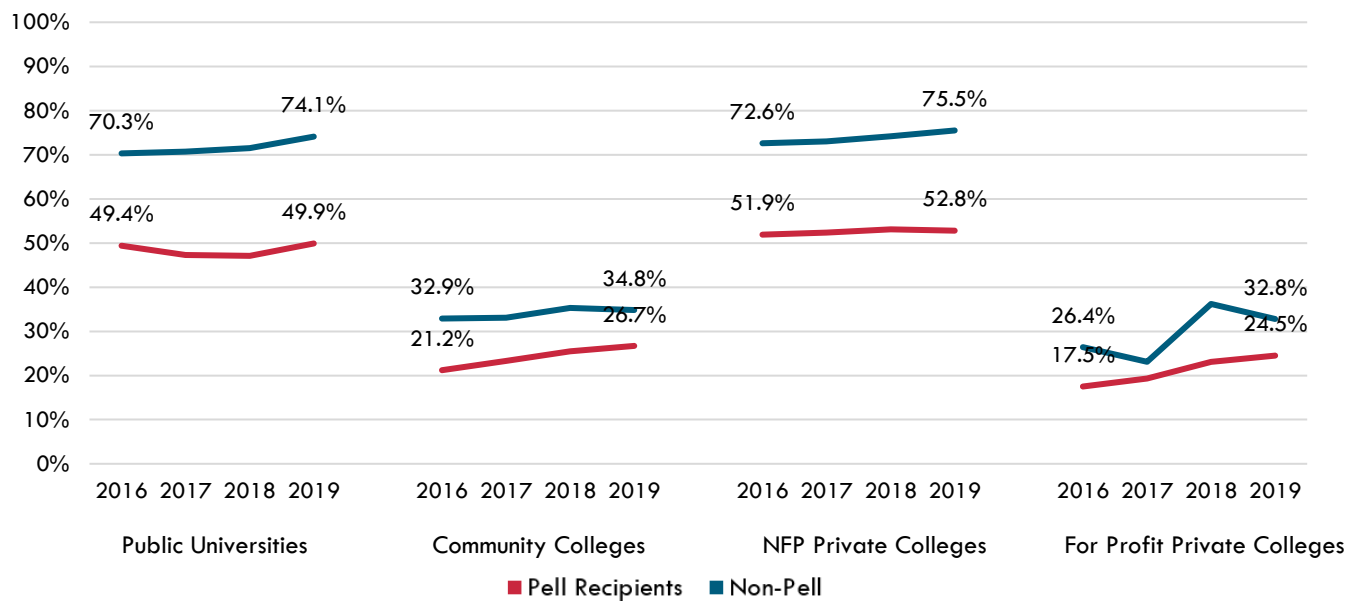
Figure 14: Retention of Pell and Non-Pell Transfer Students by Institution Type



Source: IHEIS Fall Enrollment Collections from 2018-19 and 2019-20

As shown in Figure 15, completion rate gaps between low-income and non-low-income students are stark.

Figure 15: Completion Rate Trends in Illinois by Sector: Pell and Non-Pell Students

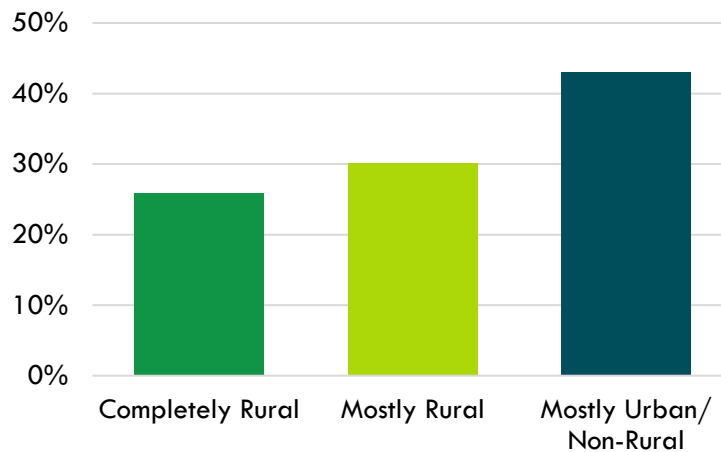


Source: 2016, 2017, and 2018 IPEDS Graduation Rates at 150% of Normal Time for students who first enrolled full time.

EQUITY GAPS: STUDENTS FROM RURAL COMMUNITIES

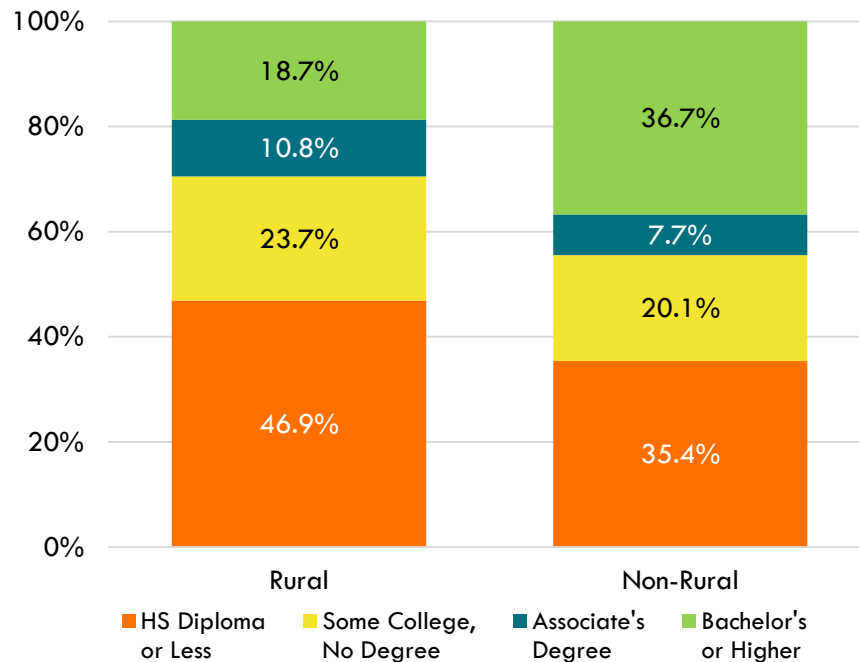
Rural counties generally have smaller proportions of their working-age population with an associate degree or higher, as illustrated in the [interactive maps](#) on the IBHE website. Conversely, as shown in Figures 16 and 17, rural counties have higher proportions with a high school diploma or less and slightly higher proportions with some college, but no degree.

Figure 16: Percent of Adult Population in Illinois with an Associate Degree or Higher by Rurality



Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

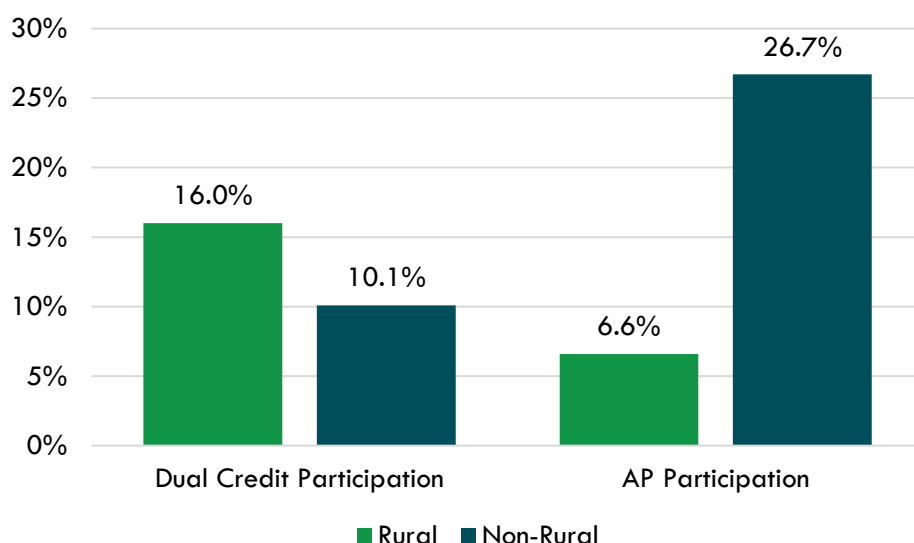
Figure 17: Educational Attainment in Illinois (Age 25+) by Rurality



Source: 2019 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

As shown in Figure 18, rural students have greater access to dual credit, but significantly lower proportions have access to AP compared to students in non-rural high schools. Sixteen percent of rural students (based on high school location) had access to dual credit programs, while only 10% of non-rural students did. However, only 7% of rural students had access to AP programs, while 27% of non-rural students did.

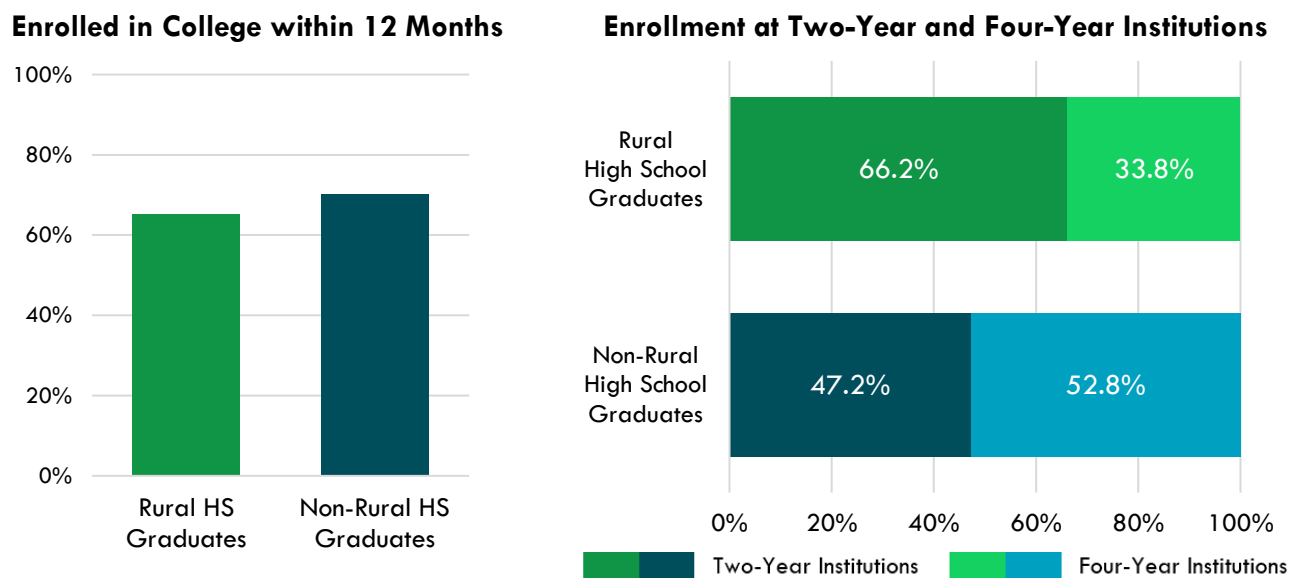
Figure 18: Early College Access by High School Rural Designation



Source: Illinois State Board of Education Report Card File 2019

Rural high school students are less likely to go to college right after high school, and when they do, they are more likely to go to community colleges (see Figure 19). The average college enrollment rate within 12-months of graduation for rural high schools was 65.0%, compared to 70.2% for high schools located in non-rural areas. For those that do enroll, 66% will go to a community college, compared to 47% of students from non-rural areas. The rate of enrollment at four-year institutions was lower among students from rural high schools (34% to 53%).

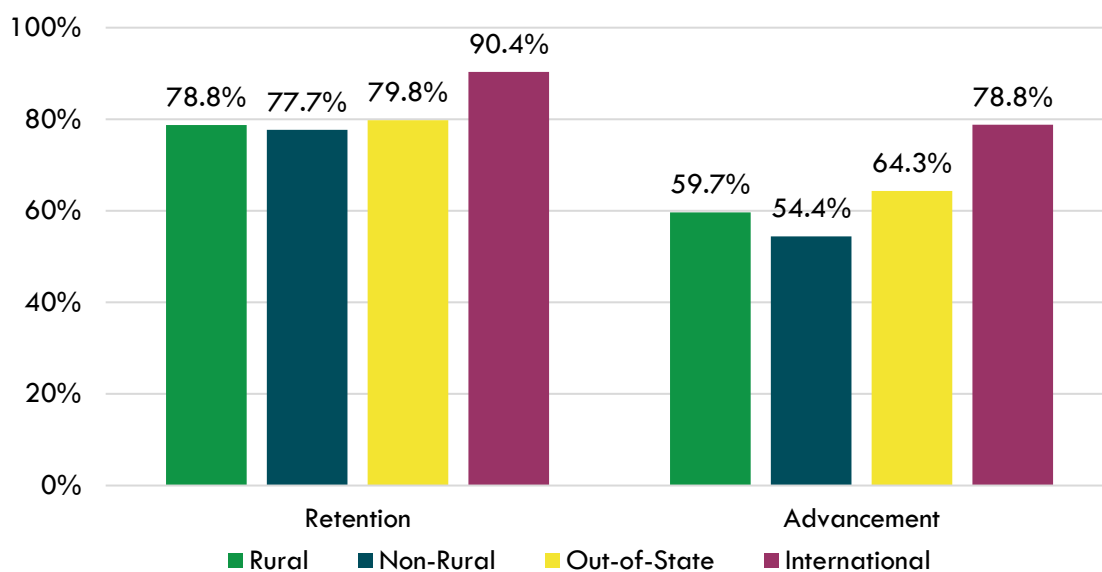
Figure 19: College Enrollment Patterns for Illinois High School Graduates: Rural and Non-Rural Students



Source: Illinois State Board of Education Report Card File 2019

Although rural students are underrepresented among freshmen at Illinois public universities, institutions retain rural and non-rural freshmen at similar rates. In fall of 2019- 20, rural students represented approximately 7% of the freshmen at public universities and about 14% of transfer students. Institutions retained just under 80% of rural and non-rural freshmen and advanced rural freshmen at a greater rate than urban (see Figure 20).

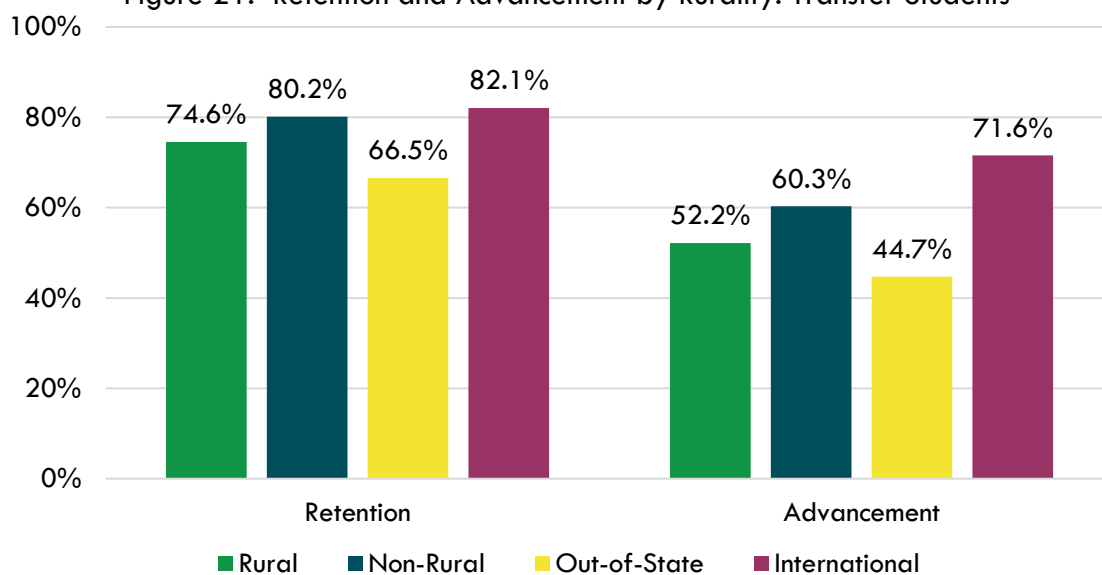
Figure 20: Retention and Advancement by Rurality: Full-Time Freshmen



Source: IHEIS Fall Enrollment Collections from 2018-19 and 2019-20

However, as illustrated in Figure 21, rural transfer students are retained and advanced at lower rates than their non-rural counterparts.

Figure 21: Retention and Advancement by Rurality: Transfer Students



Source: IHEIS Fall Enrollment Collections from 2018-19 and 2019-20



Click here for the Illinois Community College Board's
[*Fiscal Year 2020 Illinois Community College System Selected Programs
and Services for Underrepresented Groups.*](#)



CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY



EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY



Governors State
UNIVERSITY



ILLINOIS STATE
UNIVERSITY
Illinois' first public university.



Northern Illinois University



Southern Illinois University

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
EDWARDSVILLE



SIU SCHOOL of MEDICINE



UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS CHICAGO

UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS
SPRINGFIELD



UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



Western Illinois
University

In March 2020, each of the public state universities in Illinois shifted to remote instruction plans due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At Chicago State University (CSU), we were able to continue to conduct some of our courses in person; however, approximately 80% of our courses were offered virtually for the duration of the Spring 2021 semester. Staff and students returned in full force to campus for in-person instruction in Fall 2021, with new COVID protocols in place, as the pandemic continues.



Most of our student support services continued to function during AY2020-21 in remote or hybrid capacities. We are including an overview of the support services which provided support to underrepresented students. Also, we are providing a more detailed description of three measures in particular that are either new or expanded during 2020-21, which we have identified as essential to success for underrepresented students: RISE, the Learning Assistant program, and directors of data analytics and student success.

Data Analytics and Student Success Overview

CSU hired a data analyst lead who has developed a team to generate a framework to measure (a) student retention and persistence; and (b) academic shortcomings. This framework also provides a benchmark during the 2020 academic year against which we can assess student success progress over time. We are sending out regular communications with updated information on retention, enrollment, and DFWs. We are still working on necessary software to create dashboards.

We have analyzed exit data and identified the top three reasons for stop-outs. Financial issues, work conflict, and health emerged as the top three obstacles. We have initiated a debt-relief program for graduating seniors and juniors, deploying CARES funding. Assessment measures have been established for each program and strategy. We are working on a consistent way to disseminate information from each program.

The Executive Director of Student Success is a newly created role which will provide oversight and leadership to integrate advising, financial, and career support programs within Cougar Commitment to create an integrated web of support for all students enrolled in CSU's undergraduate programs, for both first-time full-time freshmen and transfer students. One of the takeaways from the past year has been the value of integrating our student support initiatives across the spectrum of academic, financial, and holistic areas since challenges in any one of these areas affects students' persistence, retention, and graduation rates. The Director also will work together with Enrollment Management, Program Chairs, College Deans, Financial Aid, Student Financial Services, Institutional Research, and the Director of Data Analytics to capture and communicate important student success data and lead initiatives to continually improve the student success rate at the University.

Rise Program Overview Rise Academy is a first-year experience program that starts in the summer or fall with an introductory five-week college course, support workshops, and targeted advising, and continues with holistic student support throughout the academic year. In the Rise Academy, students participate in workshops, build relationships with classmates, explore career options, and learn the “ins and outs” of college life. All incoming full-time freshmen students, including transfer students with less than 24 credit hours, who apply and are admitted to Chicago State University and complete the Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) are eligible. Students must successfully complete the first five-weeks of the Rise Academy program in order to be eligible to receive the tuition scholarship.

Learning Assistant Program Overview Learning Assistants (LAs) are undergraduate students who facilitate discussions among groups of students in a variety of classroom settings that encourage active engagement. LAs are guided in this practice through weekly preparation sessions and a pedagogy course.

KPIs During the Spring 2021 semester as CSU engaged in remote instruction, Learning Assistants played a crucial role in supporting students and fostering community and connection.

In May 2021, we surveyed faculty who had LA support in their classes. Below are some of their comments on how the LAs supported their classes.

- Chemistry instructor: “[Students] didn’t have to wait as long when they got stuck. I also suspect they were more comfortable asking her questions in breakout rooms than they were asking me. Also, she could remind me where students got stuck as we moved forward. She was also good about monitoring the chat and making sure I didn’t lose any student comments.”
- Computer Science Instructor: “I can’t be everywhere for every student during hands-on labs. Having the LAs in our virtual classroom is like having 3 of me. We were able to put students in breakout rooms and work with them individually.”
- Computer Science Instructor: “...I really appreciate the support from the coordinators in making sure the students are given this opportunity and the follow up throughout the semester to make sure all of our concerns/issues are resolved, if any. Having the LAs is a big help for me as a professor and gives the students the ability to learn more through teaching.”

LAs developed excellent leadership and communication skills. Here are some statements from new LAs enrolled in the LA Pedagogy course. Learn more in the LA Pedagogy Newsletter.

- LAs considered the “whole student” looking at their cognitive and socioemotional needs in the classroom. One LA said, “As an LA, I feel the need to grasp the student’s mindset when they ask a question and present the students with an answer that assesses their question or problem.... In my LA course, I have developed analogies in which I compare many parts of the lesson taught to real-world activities. I feel as if it indeed helped some students ... I am striving to help push the students in my class with understanding and letting the student know that I am completely there for them.”
- LAs mentioned the importance of silence in communication after reading an article about Wait time: one LA commented “I appreciate this article for discussing how important silence is within teaching students. Because of these moments of silence: students have increased responses, appropriate questions, increased interactions with the teacher and students, speculative thinking, more student-comparing, and inferences supported by evidence.”

We are continuing our Rise and Learning Assistant programs for 2021-22 and seeking to scale each program as resources permit. The Rise program demonstrated meaningful impact in the areas of retention and persistence, and some impact in GPA. This impact was remarkable, given the unprecedented challenges faced by our students during Spring 2021. The Learning Assistant program also demonstrated meaningful impact by enabling students and teachers to preserve connectedness and a sense of learning in community in the sudden and unexpected virtual learning environment that we found ourselves in last spring.

URG-focused Student Support Services:

- **Abilities Office of Disabled Student Services** *Primary service area: Student support. Provides services for students with learning and/or physical disabilities.*
- **African American Male Resource Center** *Primary service areas: wraparound support. Free academic printing, copying, textbook rental and internet access; training in professional development, youth mentoring.*
- **Campus Food Pantry** *Primary service area: supports access to healthy nutritional options and personal hygiene staples for students and staff.*
- **Career Development Center** *Primary service area: career exploration, career readiness, and support in all aspects of experiential education, internships and externships, full-time employment, or admission to graduate/professional schools. Supports development of soft and hard skills for students, and provides resources for professional development.*
- **Counseling Services** *Primary service area: One-on-one counseling in all aspects of student support.*

- **Latino Resource Center** Primary service area: wraparound support. Mentoring, cultural outreach and service opportunities, networking events, financial aid workshops, and peer support groups.
- **Learning Assistance Center** Primary service area: tutoring support and resources, including individual tutoring, academic workshops and study skill development, supplemental learning materials, study groups, and one-on-one research support.
- **TRiO – Student Support Services** Primary service areas: Comprehensive academic support. Academic, career and personal counseling; tutoring, mentoring, leadership seminars; financial aid research and application assistance; computer lab, and textbook lending library.
- **Wellness Center** Primary service areas: health and wellness. Increases health care access to students by providing primary healthcare and wellness programs for all students. Serves as health consultant and referral source for medical issues. Partners in outreach health programs with the surrounding community.

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RETAINING AND GRADUATING UNDER-REPRESENTED STUDENTS AT EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY



1. Retention and Graduation Rates

Eastern Illinois University (Eastern or EIU) offers many of the best practices associated with good retention rates: mandatory advising, a freshman seminar course, tutoring and support services for at-risk and academically struggling students, a small faculty-to-student ratio, few large lecture classes, on-campus housing, many opportunities for student involvement, scholarships, and grants to supplement federal financial aid, and on-campus employment for students. As a result, it historically has retained and graduated students at higher-than-average rates. EIU's overall freshman-to-sophomore retention rate of 73% was near the national average of approximately 74%. Though they are lower than for the overall student body, retention and graduation rates for under-represented students remain consistent. The university consistently reviews best practices and maintains a commitment to remain steadfast in providing resources to assist our students in being successful.

Table 1: EIU Retention and Graduation Rates

Freshmen to Sophomore Retention Rates				Six-Year Graduation Rate Cohort			
	2017	2018	2019		2011	2012	2015
Overall	70%	73%	73%	Overall	56%	58%	51%
Minority	69%	64%	-	Minority	45%	45%	41%

2. Graduation Data for Students Identified with Disabilities

Seventy-two (72) students who registered with the Office of Student Disability Services graduated during the 2020-2021 academic year.

3. Retention and Graduation Services for Under-represented Students

Ensuring that under-represented students are retained through graduation requires a commitment to providing them with appropriate support services. Eastern has made that commitment, as this summary of key programs shows:

- **Access Granted.** Through the Access Granted program, EIU brings approximately 60-70 students of color to campus for a three-day event during their senior year. For FA20/FA21 due to COVID, students were unable to come to campus, however a different type of programming was done for those students who had been admitted to EIU. Students could have attended one or more of our Zoom workshops: Financial Aid, Orientation 101 and "How to Survive your First-Year." The workshops were open to all students of color and we are happy that there were several students that took advantage of the programming designed to prepare incoming freshmen for their first year of college.
- **Gateway Program.** The Gateway Program is a provisional admission program for incoming freshmen who do not meet regular admission requirements. Admission is considered for beginning freshmen for the Fall Semester of each academic year. The University will consider applications from candidates who have a high school cumulative GPA of at least 2.74 or below. Students may be considered for admission to the Gateway Program if they are a first-generation student, a member of an underrepresented ethnic group, and/or receive free or reduced lunch programs. Since its inception (1990), Gateway students have a 40-48% graduation rate.

- **TRIO.** The federally funded TRIO Student Support Services program is designed to increase the college retention and graduation rates, foster an institutional climate supportive of college students' success, and to improve the financial and economic literacy of eligible students and assist them in applying for admission to graduate and professional degree programs. TRIO SSS services are provided to students who are low-income, are first-generation, or have a documented disability. TRIO offers free tutoring, assistance with course selection, scholarships, counseling, leadership development, career and motivational workshops, graduate school visits, internship assistance, faculty mentors, cultural enrichment activities, leadership conferences, and a private computer lab with limited free printing. The program can serve up to 175 students, who are selected on a first-come, first-served basis. On average, 80% of TRIO participants are retained; their average six-year graduation rate of 50-55%.
- **STRONG (Successful Teaching Relative to Overcoming Negative Generalities) Mentoring Program.** This program works to improve the retention and graduation rate of men of color; provide mentorship opportunities, develop their leadership skills; increase the number of minority males in graduate programs; and foster long-term relationships between students, faculty, staff, and alumni. STRONG Mentoring offers programming aimed at academic, professional, and personal development for men of color led by staff and faculty members who also are men of color. Students receive one-on-one mentoring, access to programs on test-taking, conflict resolution, self-efficacy, financial literacy, career/internship opportunities, etc. as well as weekly updates on available resources, scholarships, jobs, and leadership opportunities. In Fall 2020, 40 men participated in virtual events. Over 35% of the STRONG MEN graduated.
- **Latino Recruiter and Latino Retention Coordinator.** The university has two staff members, a Latino Recruiter and a Latino Retention Coordinator, dedicated to Latino student recruitment and retention efforts, respectively.

Many other support services at EIU assist but are not limited to under-represented students:

- **Freshman Connection.** This program pairs incoming freshman with a peer mentor for their first year. Student mentoring groups meet once a week. The mentors provide support regarding the academic, social, and financial aspects of life on a college campus. Students are required to live in 1 of 3 designated residence halls and enroll in the EIU Foundations course.
- **Disability Services (OSDS).** The OSDS is committed to facilitating the provision of equal access and opportunity to all campus programs and services for students with disabilities. In FY 2021, the OSDS served 369 students and had one or more contacts with an additional 107 prospective students. OSDS had 72 students to graduate during the 2020-2021 academic year.
- **Early Alert.** Eastern's Early Alert System (EAS) is a collaboration between the Academic Success Center and University Housing. EAS identifies at-risk students early in their academic careers and directs them to needed support services. Built by Eastern's Information Technology Service (ITS) unit, the EAS is connected to faculty course rosters in Banner. Faculty members whose students are performing poorly on tests or assignments or failing to attend class can submit the students' name to the EAS, which triggers automated emails that let students know of their faculty's concerns and result in follow-up emails, phone calls, or visits from EIU staff members. The EAS reinforces the fact that faculty members are concerned about students' academic performance and provides opportunities for students to learn about resources to aid in their success. On average, about 29% of students submitted to the EAS earn a D or F, while the remainder earn an A, B, or C for the course or decide to take the course at another time.
- **EIU 2919.** *EIU 2919, Strategies for Academic Success*, was initially offered in Fall 2007. It is a mandatory one credit hour intervention course for students who reach Academic Warning status (cumulative GPA below 2.00). Prior to its existence, only 34% of students who went on warning regained good academic standing. Now, two semesters after taking EIU 2919, on average, 82% of students are in good standing.

- **New Student and Family Programs (NSFP).** Committed to helping new students, both freshman and transfer, and their families connect and engage with the campus community, NSFP helps students develop a solid foundation for subsequent academic and personal success. In addition to Orientation, NSFP also hosts Prowl, a program offered during the week prior to the start of the fall semester through the first six weeks, which focuses on helping students make a smooth transition to their new lives as Eastern students
- **Panther Athletic Support Services (PASS).** PASS provides specialized support to student-athletes in light of the unique time demands, responsibilities, and rules governing participation in intercollegiate athletics. Services are provided in a safe, personal environment where academic growth is a priority, personal development and independence are enhanced, and long-term success is nurtured by a staff which models these same commitments. PASS services include academic study hours, academic monitoring, tutoring services, priority registration, study hall, counseling, mentoring, and travel notification.
- **Writing Center.** The EIU Writing Center provides individual consultations in both face-to-face and online formats. Online and off-campus students are able to access the Center using Microsoft Teams. During AY 2020–2021, the Writing Center offered sessions exclusively online due to the pandemic. During that time period the center conducted 716 individual student sessions. Feedback from these sessions was strong, with 95.6% of students surveyed describing their consulting session as either “very helpful” or “helpful.”
- **Retention Predictor.** In 2016 a new retention model was created with data from the 2012, 2013, and 2014 freshman cohorts. The top risk factors were a financial need gap of \$7000 or more; meeting the financial need at 60% or less; financial aid verification; the lower two levels of the academic index, a high school gpa of 2.9 or lower; students admitted after March for the following fall semester; ethnicity—Hispanic, African American, international, and multiple ethnicity students. New strategies were put into place at orientation to aid with the financial risk factors, and CORE shared information with advisors and University Foundations instructors on their students with these risk factors.
- **Student Success Center (SSC).** The SSC focuses on improving the performance of at-risk students by offering programs and services to aid in student success and retention. More than 12,000 students have received services from the SSC since fall 2007, including more than 250 workshops and classroom presentations.
- **Military Student Assistance Center.** Assists all student veterans, reservists, active duty personnel, spouses of veterans, and dependents of veterans at Eastern Illinois University. The Center acts as a point of contact for student veterans and dependents of veterans during their time at EIU. There is a Student Veterans Lounge located in the student union that allows student veterans to connect with one another. In the fall semester, a Welcome Social for new student veterans is held so they can meet current student veterans. The Center also serves as the lead planners in the 9/11 Ceremony and the Veterans Day Ceremony held on campus.

4. Conclusion

Eastern’s under-represented students persist and graduate at rates that have remained stable and typically higher than national averages. However, the university seeks to improve both rates and has worked diligently to implement new initiatives and to enhance current initiatives to help students persist and to identify those students earlier in their college careers. Increasingly, attrition has become intertwined with financial difficulties and students’ and families’ abilities to pay for college. Eastern has recognized this and has sought to keep costs as low as possible.

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At Governors State University (GSU), Goal One of the Illinois Public Agenda for Career and College Success to “Increase educational attainment to match best-performing states” is reflected in our University’s Strategic Plan. The core values that underpin this plan include:



- Invest in Student Success through a commitment to mentoring and a deliberate university focus on student achievement of academic, professional, and personal goals.
- Provide Opportunity and Access to a first-class public education to residents of our surrounding communities and all of the traditionally underserved by higher education.
- Serve as an Economic Catalyst for the citizens of the State of Illinois and our larger Midwest region, so that our communities grow and flourish.
- Prepare Stewards of our Future to thrive in the global economy, to contribute to ongoing innovative research and to serve as stewards of the environment.
- Demonstrate Inclusiveness and Diversity to encourage acceptance of wide-ranging perspectives among students, staff, faculty, and members of the broader community.
- Promote Quality of Life, which encompasses civic, personal, professional, and cultural growth.

To address our core values, and ultimately meet the challenges set forth in the Illinois Public Agenda for Career and College Success, GSU has applied the strategies identified in Goal One to engage our students in activities that support student development of Underrepresented Groups. Goal One attempts to increase educational attainment to match best-performing states. Some of the recommendations to increase educational attainment are to increase success of students at each stage of the P-20 education pipeline to eliminate achievement gaps by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, and disability; increase the number of adults, including GED recipients, reentering education, and completing a postsecondary credential; and reduce geographic disparities in educational attainment.

Governors State University attempts to address this goal by providing services and activities to its underrepresented groups of students. Some of the ways in which underrepresented groups are addressed are by providing services and programs to support and promote successful outcomes. Services and programs implemented to increase the success of students by eliminating achievement gaps by race/ethnicity, gender and veteran, socioeconomic and disability status include: Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs, Male Success Initiative, Academic Resource Center, Student Disability Services, Academic Recovery Program, Veterans Resource Center, Dual Degree Program, Family Development Center and Preschool, and the AIM HIGH grant and other financial aid programs. Services and programs implemented to increase the number of adults, including GED recipients, reentering education and completing a postsecondary credential include: continuing education courses, testing center and tutoring services, FASFA workshops, CLEP/DSST exams, distance learning and online courses and programs. Services and programs implemented to reduce geographic disparities in education attainment include: the Dual Degree Program, Blackboard and Starfish (online learning platforms), continuing education courses, distance learning and online courses and programs.

GSU identifies underrepresented groups for its students and faculty through self reporting measures. Student data is collected on the application form when students apply to Governors State University and through self-disclosure at the discretion of the student. Governors State University’s overall student population is 57% minority and 65% are female. Minority students consist of 36% Black/African American, 3% Asian, 15% Hispanic and 3% identifying as two or more races. The average age of GSU undergraduates is 28 years old.

1. Increase success of students at each stage of the P-20 education pipeline to eliminate achievement gaps by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, and disability:

- A. Implementing a comprehensive enrollment management strategy that focuses on increasing the enrollment of a diverse freshmen, transfer, and international student body;

RESULT 1: In academic year (AY) 20-21, 60% percent of Governors State University undergraduate student population came from a racial or ethnic minority, part of a continuing trajectory for the institution of increasing students of color at all degree levels.

RESULT 2: In AY 20-21, 77% of Governors State University entering freshmen class came from a racial or ethnic minority.

RESULT 3: Analysis by race/ethnicity of persistence and retention rates has resulted in the identification of notable achievement gaps. In partnership with the Illinois Equity in Attainment, Governors State University uses scorecards that provide analysis on a variety of dynamics and success rates.

For example, Governors State University has taken steps to increase the retention rate among minority groups for our freshman class. As part of the Illinois Equity in Attainment (ILEA) Governors State University has set a target of 65% for first year retention. Currently, average retention (across cohorts) for White and Hispanic Students is above 65%, but average retention for Black students has remained steady around 50%.

- B. Demonstrated through university sponsored initiatives and academic programs, a commitment to ethics, inclusiveness and diversity; we are focused on addressing diversity issues in Governors State University and in the communities we serve:

RESULT 1: In Fall 2021, 65% of our students are female, the majority of undergraduates were over the age of 22, and almost 40% of undergraduates were first generation students (an increase over the last year).

RESULT 2: 49% of all degrees conferred over a three-year period were earned by minorities and 68% were earned by women. For the prior three-year period the percentages were 43% and 64%, respectively.

RESULT 3: The mission of the Division of Student Affairs is to provide a seamless and supportive pathway from the prospective student to alumni, focused on personal and academic success and ensure that students are career ready and positioned to be leaders and active citizens in the community. Within Governors State University Division of Student Affairs and Support Services, the Office of Intercultural Student Affairs is another integral component.

RESULT 4: Students who need additional assistance to improve their learning environment can access services through the Academic Resource Center. The Academic Resource Center provides tutoring, mentoring and study groups. The Office of Disabilities Services provides academic and technical assistance for students with disabilities that are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Those students who self-report as having a disability need accommodation and use the disabilities services provided from the office of Disabilities. Governors State University works with faculty to facilitate a better learning environment for students with disabilities such as providing faculty resources to assist students.

2. Increase the number of adults, including GED recipients, reentering education and completing a postsecondary credential.

- A. Implemented a comprehensive undergraduate and graduate enrollment strategy that focuses on increasing the enrollment of a diverse and well-prepared student body;

RESULT 1: Successful implementation of the Dual Degree Program (DDP) partnership with 17 regional community colleges which guarantees admission to Governors State University for qualifying students. Over the seven years of its existence more than 70% of the DDP students have either graduated or are on track to graduate with a bachelor's degree.

RESULT 2: Continue to offer scholarships and tuition waivers that target underrepresented groups such as, to name a few: the Latino Achievement Scholarship, which provides a tuition waiver for up to six semesters to students of Latino ancestry, and the Ralph and Delores Turner Scholarship, which targets returning African American Students at least 30 years of age seeking Elementary or Early Childhood Education degrees.

3. Reduce geographic disparities in educational attainment.

- A. Governors State University recognizes that students may face significant challenges when they begin to pursue their academic goals. To address those we have implemented a number of tutoring and mentoring initiatives to address the needs of our students.

RESULT 1: For freshman students who are identified as needing additional academic support, Governors State University offers support prior to and during the first year of study imbedded within the program and available to all students without cost. These supports are not remedial and are based on the best practice leadership on what students need to improve student success. When freshmen choose a major or transfer students enter the university, they are connected with the Center for the Junior Year which was designed to address transfer disparities for students coming in from across the country and rising juniors who are overwhelming coming from local communities and the Chicagoland area.

RESULT 2: The English and mathematics programs are designed to provide essential academic preparation in support of coursework that will begin in the first year at Governors State University. All freshmen are assigned an academic advisor who will serve as their permanent guide during their first year at Governors State University providing direction on course selection, academic success, and progress toward college goals. Supplemental Instruction is also provided to students throughout the academic year in English and mathematics.

RESULT 3: For all students who may need additional support to succeed academically, the Academic Resource Center and the Health and Student Counseling Center provide tutoring, mental health counseling, and student success workshops. The Writing Center provides support to all students, undergraduate and graduate. The Office of Disability Services provides academic and technical assistance to students and work closely with faculty to facilitate access in the learning environment in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

RESULT 4: Students who are veterans also have access to a strong support network on campus. The Veterans Resource Center, established in 2011, provides special services to veterans by certifying veterans' education benefits and by helping student veterans and dependents connect with available resources. This is done through peer-to-peer support both inside and outside of the classroom for all military personnel. Information on VA benefits, education support, employment opportunities and other resources are provided through the Veterans Resource Center. The Veterans Resource Center also provides on-campus employment for Veterans in the university testing center and across campus.

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Illinois State University continues to be committed to supporting the *Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success*. The University puts forth consistent efforts to reduce the achievement gaps noted among underrepresented groups. The University's approach focuses on aggressive recruitment and outreach while providing strong support to those students who choose to matriculate in order to ensure a quality experience at the institution. The data included in this report suggest that the institution's efforts are successful. Those efforts are outlined below.



ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY
Illinois' first public university.

ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES SUPPORTING STUDENT DEVELOPMENT – DIVISION OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Office of Admissions

Chicago STAR Program: Illinois State continues its partnership with City Colleges of Chicago on their Chicago STAR program. STAR students, who graduate with an Associate degree from City Colleges with a GPA of 3.0 or higher, are eligible to follow a pathway to admission and scholarship at Illinois State. Thirty-one other universities, many of which are in the Chicago area, participate in this program to bring high-achieving, underrepresented students to their campuses. As a STAR Scholar partner school, Illinois State offers guaranteed admission as well as up to twenty \$5,000 renewable scholarships to qualified applicants.

College of Education's Chicago Teacher Education Pipeline Programs and Partnerships: The Office of Admissions works collaboratively with the College of Education's Chicago Teacher Education Pipeline Programs and Partnerships (CTEPPP) and participates in CTEPPP's on-campus visits. CTEPP has established relationships with community-based organizations in Chicago that support students in enrolling in higher education. Information related to student applications, admissions, and enrollment is shared to help with recruitment of underrepresented students. Due to COVID-19, Illinois State University's Office of Admissions was unable to coordinate high school visits with their staff in the fall or co-host parent programs with affiliated high schools in the spring. Virtual student engagement opportunities have been shared with students through CTEPP's community liaisons. A virtual session for admitted students CTEPP and community liaisons was held in spring 2021 and had five participants.

Chicago Public School (CPS) College Compact: The Office of Admissions is part of the CPS College Compact, an established compact between CPS and institutes of higher education within the state of Illinois. The goal of this compact is to increase the CPS four-year college graduation rate to 60% by 2025. To increase access to higher education and provide greater support for CPS students, higher education participants engage in an open dialogue with CPS representatives. The Office of Admissions provides support for various programming and educational initiatives through our participation in team meetings. This year, members of our staff participated in a CPS College Application Completion Day, and we participated in the CPS College Compact Enrollment Symposium in March, a multiple-day virtual event for postsecondary leadership teams.

Community-based Organization Recruitment and Outreach: The Office of Admissions continues to build relationships with community-based organizations (CBOs) and campus partners who specialize in preparing first-generation/low-income students for college. This year we were able to automatically waive the application fee for our partner CBOs, which include Bottom Line, Chicago Scholars, College Bound Opportunities, OneGoal and Phoenix Pact. We also hosted a virtual information session for CBOs in the fall to provide updates about the upcoming admissions process. Staff has strengthened existing partnerships with CBOs to ensure students are receiving the necessary information to support the application, visit, and enrollment processes at Illinois State. Staff from University College, Financial Aid, Dean of Students, University Housing, and Admissions have typically traveled to off-site meetings and conferences to discuss institutional supports for these CBOs' students. As a result of COVID, these meetings have either been disrupted or moved to a virtual setting. In addition, University College Student Support Services also collaborates with various statewide student support services (SSS) program directors and high school Upward Bound coordinators to assist in making program participants' transition to campus as seamless as possible.

- **Bottom Line:** The Office of Admissions also maintains its partnership with Bottom Line, an organization that helps low-income and first-generation students apply to, enroll in, and persist through college. They provide individual support and guidance to assist students with their college decision and transition. The Office of Admissions assists Bottom Line by maintaining regular communication, share reports, and properly track students of where they are in the admissions cycle.
- **Chicago Scholars:** Chicago Scholars works with academically talented, first-generation college students from under-resourced communities in Chicago. Through their seven-year model, Chicago Scholars helps students navigate the application process, transition into college, and persist through graduation. The Office of Admissions held a virtual On-Site Admissions Event in October. Our Admissions Counselors interviewed 39 students who were first-generation, under-resourced students.
- **College Bound Opportunities:** The Office of Admissions maintains a strong relationship with College Bound Opportunities (CBO), a community-based organization that works with students at Lake Forest, Highland Park, Buffalo Grove, Deerfield High Schools and Cristo Rey in Waukegan. CBO is a six-year program that mentors, empowers, and inspires low-income, first-generation high school and transfer students to attend and graduate from college. Every year, CBO brings a group of admitted students to visit campus. Due to COVID, visits have been moved to a virtual setting and a virtual admitted student visit has been scheduled specifically for CBO Scholars this spring.
- **OneGoal:** The Office of Admissions and University College collaborate with OneGoal, a community-based organization in Chicago and other locations across the United States. OneGoal serves hundreds of first-generation and low-income college-bound students from public and charter schools, providing support to these students through the first day of their second year of college. There were 143 OneGoal applicants for fall 2020. Specifically, the Office of Admissions works with OneGoal to assist their students with the college application and selection process by sharing reports related to where students are in the admissions cycle and scheduling virtual visits with OneGoal cohorts. University College meets regularly with OneGoal staff to provide updates on current students as permissible, share campus information, and assist in directing students to appropriate campus resources.
- **The Phoenix Pact:** The Office of Admissions continues to partner with North Lawndale College Preparatory Schools (NLCP) to support the Phoenix Pact. The Pact serves to match high-achieving NLCP students with “success colleges” and to eliminate financial barriers to their enrollment. Through the Pact, students receive financial and other types of support to increase the likelihood of their success at Illinois State. There were 18 Phoenix Pact eligible participants added to Slate for summer/fall 2020. University College staff regularly meets with Phoenix Pact staff and students to facilitate student retention needs. Maintaining a strong relationship with the Pact has assisted in creating positive outcomes for these students at Illinois State.
- **College Greenlight:** Illinois State University and the Katie School of Insurance recently enhanced our College Greenlight contract with Cappex, a platform that connects first-generation and traditionally underrepresented students to colleges of potential interest. The addition of community-based organizations participation to the platform has provided the opportunity to expand our work with CBOs. College Greenlight allows staff to follow up with students who inquire, adding a personal touch to our outreach. Since July 1, 2020, we have added information on Cappex Greenlight inquiries for more than 342 students. This information is uploaded into Slate on a weekly basis. This year we automatically waived the application fee for College Greenlight inquiries applying for summer/fall 2021 and utilized their platform to help promote virtual events.
- **Campus Tours:** The Office of Admissions continued to host special tours of campus each week for student groups from targeted high schools and other organizations/agencies that specialize in preparing low-income students for college. Virtual presentations are now offered weekly for groups and offer a presentation and a question-and-answer format with current students.

Application Workshops: During FY21, staff from the Office of Admissions completed application workshops at 18 high schools with large numbers of low-income and racially diverse student populations. COVID-19 impacted our ability to engage with the same number of high schools and students as in previous years. Our Slate application format has enabled most students to complete the application without assistance, therefore we have found more appropriate ways to reach and assist students through text messaging, personal notes, emails and phone calls. The Office of Admissions remains committed to serving traditionally underrepresented students and will continue to help with application completion as needed. Participants in application workshops as well as all Chicago Public School students receive application fee waivers. Admitted students who are socioeconomically disadvantaged may also request a waiver for their enrollment deposit based on financial need (FAFSA EFC). Approved waivers allow first time in college students to progress in the enrollment process by removing the financial burden of the \$150 enrollment deposit.

Redbird Ready: Redbird Ready is an annual program serving admitted students from populations traditionally underrepresented on college campuses. Admitted students and their guests visit campus for a one-day experience that includes lunch with faculty and staff, seminars regarding campus involvement, financial aid and student services, a campus tour, and a social event. The University also offers free busing for a limited number of students and their guests from two locations in the Chicagoland area, making campus more accessible to them. This event took place virtually on March 30, 2021.

You Can Do ISU: You Can Do ISU is an open house-style program bringing high school students and family members from both traditionally underrepresented groups and first-generation families to the campus to learn about making college an affordable reality. Attendees receive a tour of campus, participate in various breakout sessions, eat lunch in a campus dining center, attend an application workshop, and have an opportunity to ask questions of current students. This annual event had to be restructured into a virtual format for 2020 due to COVID-19. In the virtual format, prospective students attended a live webinar presentation about becoming a Redbird, support services on campus, a student panel discussion, and an application workshop where a staff member walked through the application live and the application fee was waived. Additional virtual sessions were offered throughout the week on financial aid, the Honors Program, a guided virtual tour, and an information session with academic departments. Our staff also worked with our contacts at College Greenlight to spread the word across CBOs in Chicago about You Can Do ISU. Advisors and counselors at CBOs encouraged qualified students to register for and attend this important event.

Your Redbird Community: During Open Houses, we offer a session called *Your Redbird Community*, formerly known as *A Focus on Diversity*, for prospective students and parents. Participants learn more about our campus community, diversity-related initiatives, and student engagement opportunities. A staff member from the Dean of Students Office facilitates the discussion and is able to share more with the audience regarding the various opportunities available at Illinois State. Spring 2020 Open House dates had to be cancelled due to COVID-19, but a virtual Open House was held on July 20, 2020, including this breakout session via Zoom.

Alumni Services and Black Colleagues Association Meet and Greet: The Office of Admissions continues to partner with Alumni Services and the Black Colleagues Association to facilitate meet and greet programs for admitted African American freshman students residing in the Chicago area. This past year an admissions counselor presented next steps information at the Chicago Teacher Pipeline offices to admitted fall 2021 African American freshman students and their families. Rapport established with students and parents at this event allowed for stronger yield during the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, this year's meet and greet had to be canceled due to COVID restrictions, but we intend to conduct these again in the future as we are able.

Committee Assisting Undocumented Student Achievement: The Committee Assisting Undocumented Student Achievement (CAUSA), consisting of faculty, staff, and students from across campus, continues its work to support undocumented students on the Illinois State campus. With the notarization requirement removed last fall for the in-state tuition affidavit, we decided to move the questions, from the affidavit to the online admission application. This removed the need for requesting this supporting document after admission. The Office of Admissions provides support for various programming and educational initiatives, and members of the Admissions team are active in CAUSA's work. The Office of Admissions maintains and periodically enhances its website for undocumented students

containing admissions information, scholarship resources, and student support points of contact within our campus community.

National Hispanic College Fair: Two staff members from the Office of Admissions were scheduled to attend the National Hispanic College Fair in suburban Chicago during the spring of 2020, but it was cancelled due to COVID. This annual program typically connects us with approximately 200 prospective students and their families. We attended a virtual version of this program in spring 2021 and will continue to have a presence at these virtual fairs until they return to an in-person format.

100 Black Men College Fair: The Office of Admissions continues to participate in this annual event that targets predominately African American students in the Chicago area. Usually held in October, this event is used not only to inform students and parents of the admissions process, but to promote registration for You Can Do ISU. This year's fair was held virtually, and counselors were able to connect with students in virtual booths.

Addressing Diversity and Inclusion within the application: This past fall we updated the Diversity and Inclusion statement that appears on the first page of the online admissions application. The prior statement had not been revised in the last 10 years. With the edits made to this statement, we are able to better emphasize that diversity and inclusion are among the core values of the University, while also notifying students of the requirement to meet the University Code of Student Conduct.

Rural Outreach: The Office of Admissions continues its membership in the National Association of College Admissions Counseling's Rural & Small-Town Small Interest Group, receiving updates from across the country on rural scholarships, outreach strategies, and college access issues impacting rural students. Before COVID-19, an admissions representative began conducting virtual visits with select rural high schools that we did not physically visit. With the increase in virtual visit options due to COVID-19, we were able to provide high schools the opportunity to register for virtual group visit sessions or a one-on-one virtual appointment with an admission counselor. Select rural high schools were targeted by the counselor to promote these virtual visits and virtual application workshops. A few rural schools reached out to our office requesting admissions information that was mailed to them and sent electronically.

Recruitment of bilingual students and families:

- The Office of Admissions continued its practice of printing the Freshman Guide in Spanish with information on cost, scholarship, applying, events, and points of institutional pride. The Spanish guide is available for on-campus visitors and was mailed to 600 students who indicated an interest in receiving materials in Spanish.
- In the spring, the Office of Admissions hosts an on-campus presentation in Spanish that is marketed to those students and their families who indicated on the application for admission an interest in Spanish-language information. The office provided virtual and in-person Admitted Student Visits in Spanish this spring.
- Illinois State further enhanced its relationship with Univision in FY21. Radio spots in Spanish continued to air in the Chicagoland area with a high Latino/a population, and a Spanish-speaking graduate student on campus created a series of videos that were then distributed with the help of Univision. Scripts were created with the help of a first-generation, Latino graduate assistant in the Office of Admissions to ensure our messaging was hitting the right notes for the audience. In fall 2020, a bilingual staff member and student worker participated in a Facebook Live interview as part of Univision's first-ever Education Week, and the video has received more than 2k views. Additionally, we served digital ads to Spanish-speaking households within the college bound demographic.
- In FY21, the Office of Admissions entered into an agreement with Telemundo and NBC Universal on a digital marketing campaign for the Spanish-speaking population in the Chicagoland area. We served digital ads about the earning potential of our graduates, visit opportunities, and the Create Your Legacy

tagline. Much of the messaging was like that used in our ads through Univision, but this new contract allowed Admissions to reach another large segment of the population not captured by Univision alone.

- The Office of Admissions continued its collaboration with District 87 to host a program targeted at college preparation for local Latino high school students. The program was cancelled in spring 2021 due to COVID, but this spring we laid the groundwork for a 2022 event when we can hopefully host in person again.
- This year, the Office started offering virtual appointments in Spanish on a weekly basis in the late afternoon/early evenings to help meet student and family availability.
- The Office currently has one Regional Senior Admission Counselor and one on-campus Admission Counselor able to converse fluently in Spanish with prospective students and parents.

Strive for College: The Office of Admissions has collaborated for several years with Strive for College, a non-profit organization that aims to eliminate inequality in access to higher education. Because of this partnership, the University shares a forum with like-minded peers from across the country, sharing best practices in serving low-income and first-generation students. The University also receives exposure in a national publication distributed by Strive that lists institutions striving for equality. This platform affords the University greater exposure with this important population of students. This year, Strive for College provided an opportunity for first-generation students on partner campuses to blog about their experiences. The Office of Admissions and University College collaborated to identify our first representative to blog about life as a first-generation student at Illinois State.

Stay 4 Project: The planned twelfth year of the Successful Student Seminar for high school students in the Stay 4 Project through the Great Plains Life Foundation was cancelled due to COVID-19. The foundation works with low-income high school students annually who demonstrate the ability to succeed yet are at risk for dropping out. More than 400 students have been a part of the Stay 4 Project, and 97% of them have graduated from high school. Most of these graduates are the first in their families to do so, and nearly all are first-generation college students. Stay 4 schools include Central Illinois schools and all of Rockford's public high schools. This year we conducted a virtual Successful Student Seminar and sent admissions materials to students whose contact information was provided by the foundation.

First Star Academy: A representative from the Office of Admissions has presented to Illinois State University's First Star Academy, a college preparation program for students in foster care the last few summers on campus. Illinois State is one of only two participating schools in Illinois. The program allows for students to spend several weeks on campus, however 2021's summer immersion was cancelled due to COVID-19. We will partner with First Star going forward for future presentations.

Midwest High School Scholars Analytics Academy for Underrepresented Groups: This one-week summer program through the Katie School of Insurance and Risk Management is designed especially for academically talented Black, Hispanic, and Native American high school students who excel in mathematics and enjoy solving business problems using data. An admissions counselor has presented to this group on the admissions process for several years. This past year's academy was cancelled due to COVID-19, but Office of Admissions will work with the Katie School for future MHSSAA programs.

Operation Calculus at MacArthur High School Virtual College Fair: An admissions representative presented virtually to the Operation Calculus program students at MacArthur High School in Decatur, IL. Operation Calculus is designed to ensure that college-bound minority honors students continue to be successful in higher level mathematics and pursue their highest academic potential.

Focus on Diversity Handout: The Office of Admissions printed the *A Focus on Diversity* handout featuring information on the percentage of underrepresented students on campus, academic support services such as TRIO and Success 101, and registered student organizations. This handout is available in the lobbies of both Hovey Hall and the Atrium and is also distributed at events like You Can Do ISU and Redbird Ready.

Professional Development of Staff: The Office continues to invest in the education and development of staff in areas of diversity, inclusion and access. In addition to the many opportunities offered on-campus, members of the Admissions staff attended the following conferences and workshops this past year, returning with valuable insights and resources to share with staff.

- **Sharing the Dream:** A statewide conference offered through the Illinois Association for College Admission Counseling (IACAC) that brings together educators and allies working to support undocumented students and families.
- **A Dream Deferred: The Future of African American Education:** Promotes equity and access in education, serving educators and underrepresented students and their families. The conference is focused on addressing the most critical education issues facing African American students today.
- **Strategies for Rural Postsecondary Attainment in Illinois:** A representative from the Office of Admissions attended three webinars sponsored by The Hunt Institute on building a pipeline of higher education students, the rural digital divide, and how community partnerships and higher learning institutions can help rural students succeed.
- **2021 NACAC's Virtual Guiding the Way to Inclusion Conference:** An admissions representative attended this annual conference aimed at secondary, postsecondary, and CBO college admission professionals who are dedicated to addressing the needs of diverse students within the college admission process. The conference provided opportunities for higher education professionals to reflect on current issues and share best practices related to equity in higher education. Post-conference the Office of Admissions staff were then given access to the educational sessions regarding multicultural recruitment and where it's going, recruiting and communicating with students of color during COVID-19, advocating for LGBTQ+ students, and campus equity among others. Recruitment staff members discussed several sessions in various staff meetings and how best to incorporate certain components into recruitment strategies.
- **The Culturally Responsive Campus Community (CRCC) Conference at Illinois State University:** Several Office of Admissions staff members attended this annual conference virtually this past year. CRCC's goal is to raise awareness across campus on issues related to intersectionality, marginalization, and oppression so a more just and inclusive campus environment can be created. Under the theme "Equity with a Mirror," the conference explored the personal and systematic impact and implications of anti-Blackness and racism on students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community members. The conference included a one-day deep dive institute in which participants were asked to find ways to challenge anti-Blackness and racism. The one-day CRCC Spring 2021 Institute picked up where the fall conference left off, building on themes of inclusion and intersectionality. The Office of Admissions again had several staff members attend.

Scholarships:

- In FY21, the Office of Admissions continued the practice of interviewing students for the University Scholarship during an event specifically designed for high achieving underrepresented and first-generation candidates. In FY21 we received 837 applications from qualified students for this prestigious award and ultimately awarded 100 University Scholarships.
- The Office of Admissions continued with the International Baccalaureate (IB) Scholarship for new freshmen who complete either the IB Diploma Programme or IB Career-Related Certificate Program. Awards are valued at \$1,000. In fall 2021, 80 awards were offered.
- The Office of Admissions continues to offer the Achievement Scholarship which is a one-time award of \$2,000 for National Merit Finalists.
- The Scholarship Adjustment Committee, which includes staff from Enrollment Management, the Office of Admissions, and Financial Aid, continues to formally process requests for consideration of merit-based aid. This can be a helpful resource for students who do not meet scholarship eligibility requirements and need

additional financial assistance to attend Illinois State. For fall 2021, we reviewed 548 appeals and ultimately enrolled 420 of these students.

- The Office of Admissions collaborates with the Financial Aid Office as well as several academic departments to award foundation scholarships that are specifically intended for recruitment of college students from traditionally underrepresented populations.

Enrollment Management and Academic Services

Enrollment Management and Academic Services Growth Change Team: Ongoing professional development for staff in Academic Affairs is being delivered with the emphasis on diversity, inclusion and equity in support of student success. The goal is to provide high-quality, high-impact experiences and processes that are accessible to and inclusive of all students in their journey from recruitment through graduation and beyond. Topics have included Inclusivity and Supporting Students in Unsettling Times, Student Mental Health, Assisting Our Students with Disabilities, and Lifting Up Student Voices.

Enrollment Management and Academic Services Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee: This newly created committee is responsible for ensuring that equity, diversity, and inclusion are imbedded in unit goals, for looking at procedures and guidelines that may be barriers to student success, and for breaking the cycle of “because we have always done it this way”.

Financial Aid Office

Minority Teacher Recruitment Project Committee: The Financial Aid Office serves on the Minority Teacher Recruitment Project Committee. The Committee’s membership is comprised of members from local schools. It was established in response to the shortage of minorities entering the teaching profession within our local public-school systems.

America Reads/America Counts (ARAC) Program: In 2020-21 and during the world-wide pandemic, the America Reads/America Counts (ARAC) program employed approximately 40 undergraduate and graduate Illinois State students each semester, including the Summer session, to tutor a diverse population of local students in approximately 10 hybrid classrooms in the Bloomington-Normal community. Approximately one-third of the tutors are bilingual and are fluent in Spanish or have strong Spanish-speaking and comprehension skills.

The ARAC program provided academic support for one bilingual classroom in the Bloomington-Normal community and served four diverse supervised after-school programs, for students from pre-school through the 12th grade. In 2020-21, supervised after-school programs included:

1. The Boys and Girls Club of Bloomington-Normal (3 locations). 1) The Clubhouse is the main location with over 100 Kindergarten through 5th grade students, 2) The Teens Club accommodates Junior High School students mostly from the Unit 5 School District and all area High Schools; and 3) the Junior High School location at Bloomington Junior High School.
2. The Jule Foundation, that serves junior and senior high school students. ISU ARAC tutors provide homework help with a concentration in math. In addition, tutors are engaged in preparing junior high school students for college by assisting with writing skills.
3. Thomas Metcalf School Wildcat After School program. This program includes a homework center and accommodates students from Pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade.
4. The YMCA (an emergency childcare center). In the spring of 2020, ISU ARAC tutors began providing support in hybrid classrooms throughout the Bloomington-Normal community.

5. The YWCA (an emergency childcare center). ISU ARAC tutors provide academic support in classrooms from pre-school through the 12th grade.

The Illinois State ARAC After-School program places tutors who provide individual attention (30- to 45-minute sessions) at local libraries for students entering Kindergarten through the 9th grade. This program has experienced a growing demand for bilingual (Spanish and French speaking) tutors. Over 100 students were served during the 2020-2021 academic year. During the Summer sessions of 2020-21, ARAC tutors provided academic support at day camps throughout the community, serving approximately 150 youth. Tutors provided individualized remote support to approximately 75 youth during the Summer 2020 session and both remote and in-person support in Summer 2021 to a population of over 100 youths.

Other Initiatives:

- The Financial Aid Office continues to work closely with organizations such as Bottom Line and Phoenix Pact to provide assistance with the financial aid process for prospective, as well as, returning students. These organizations help low-income and first-generation students get to, and through, college.
- The Financial Aid office is committed to employing bilingual financial aid counselors and currently have staff available to converse fluently in Spanish with students and parents.
- The Financial Aid Office offers money management/financial presentations to TRIO/SSS students and other groups of first-generation students, including those participating in Success 101 and Thrive classes.
- FAFSA completion workshops were held weekly during October and November to assist students who may have limited resources available to complete the application.

Scholarships: The Financial Aid Office administers scholarships supporting the recruitment and retention of underrepresented students. These scholarships include:

- **The Country Financial Diversity and Inclusion Scholarship:** These scholarships provide support for full-time undergraduate or graduate students from historically underrepresented groups studying marketing, insurance, accounting, finance, sales, human resources, communication, actuarial science, cyber security, or information technology.
- **The Lopez & Navarro Scholarship:** These scholarships provide financial assistance to support undocumented students in their dream of receiving a college degree.
- **State Farm Scholarships:** The State Farm scholarships are awarded in the recruitment of academically talented underrepresented students.

The Graduate School

Diversity Tuition Waivers: Graduate student Diversity Tuition Waivers are used in an effort to provide support to individuals from traditionally underrepresented groups who have been admitted to an Illinois State graduate degree program. Waivers for all or part of a student's tuition are awarded competitively on a case-by-case basis to U.S. citizens. Awards are not based solely on membership in one or more traditionally underrepresented groups, but rather on a holistic evaluation that includes financial need and the students' articulation of how their experiences and perspectives as a member of an underrepresented group has resulted in and/or is expected to result in unique contributions to their respective graduate program, academic discipline, and overall campus community.

Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA): The BGSA is dedicated to the personal, professional, and scholarly advancement of black graduate students at Illinois State through the union of students, faculty, and staff on campus, and the Bloomington-Normal community at large. The Graduate School provides funding for programs and workshops.

Graduate Student Scholarships for Underrepresented Students include:

- **McNair Scholars Program:** Illinois State does not have a McNair Program but is committed to helping those scholars with expenses through the McNair book scholarship.
- **Ada Belle Clark Welsh Scholarship:** Provides a one-time award of \$2,500 to women admitted for graduate study who have prior involvement in community or civic activities and who plan to pursue a career in liberal arts, humanities, teaching, or the improvement of teaching. Awards are based on financial need, career goals, and academic excellence.
- **Diversifying Higher Education Faculty in Illinois (DFI):** The purpose of DFI is to provide Fellowships to students pursuing post-baccalaureate degrees as part of the state's effort to diversity the faculties and professional staffs at Illinois higher education institutions. Students are awarded between \$11,000 and \$15,000 per academic year which is renewable during the length of their program. The program started in FY18 with Illinois State awarding four DFI fellows. In FY21, we received funding for three new and six returning fellows.

Graduate Student Virtual Affinity Groups:

- **Latina/o/x:** In October 2020, the Latina/o/x virtual affinity group was started to provide support, space, and community for graduate students in a virtual space. Led by a student and faculty mentor, approximately 20 students have engaged in virtual gatherings and social hours.
- **LGBTQAI+:** Beginning in February 2021, The Queer Alliance provided space for graduate students to receive mentorship, support, and professional development.
- **Black:** Beginning in February 2021, BGSA provided space for graduate students to receive mentorship, support, and professional development in a virtual environment.
- **International:** Beginning in February 2021, international students will be provided a space for graduate students to receive mentorship, support, and professional development.

Graduate Student Writing Support: Beginning in January 2021, the responsibilities of the graduate assistant in the Graduate School were expanded to include writing support for fall graduate students on more than thesis/dissertation assignments. Writing boot camps, workshops, and a landing page for resources are currently being developed.

University College

Retention initiatives have historically been developed and managed by University College. Underrepresented, first-generation students and students from low socioeconomic brackets overlap considerably given campus demographics. Illinois State serves as a model of collaboration among units in developing and continuing programming for students from all of these student populations to improve the academic and personal success of our students from underrepresented populations. Collaborative efforts exist between units in organizational divisions across divisional lines. Examples of those collaborative efforts are as follows:

Communication and Marketing Coordinator: A new, specialized role in University College, hired in spring 2021, whose duties include improving resources for diverse populations, increasing accessibility to all tools, removing deficit language, promoting social media with special efforts for students of color, and messaging to demonstrate cultural humility.

MASAI (Mentoring, Academics, Scholarship and Achievement Initiative): A peer-to-peer mentoring program for underrepresented students which is jointly funded by University College and the Dean of Students Office. In FY19, MASAI mentoring focused on students at Illinois State who participated in one of the select high school-to-college transition networks, including Chicago Noble Charter Schools, Bottom Line, One Goal, and Phoenix Pact.

Historically, the retention rate of these students is significantly lower than comparable students and the transition from Noble Charter schools to Illinois State presents some additional challenges. With advanced knowledge and experience, an academic advisor in University College created the Pursuing Higher Education and Outstanding Moments (P.H.E.N.O.M.) group. Most of these challenges are attributed to the highly structured environment of the Noble Charter schools.

- Fall 2020 University College hired seven peer mentors to connect first-year students with campus resources that will assist students in creating an optimal academic and social experience at Illinois State.
- MASAI students receive an earlier move-in date and have a tailored day-and-a-half pre-orientation led by Illinois State staff and MASAI mentors.
- First-year students were monitored and had grade checks at various points during the fall and spring semesters. Academic encouragement and recommendations for improvement emails were sent to students who had more than two grades of D or F.
- Collaboration and coordination with the high school-to-college transition partners including the facilitation and scheduling of campus visits for the partners to meet with students. As of fall 2019, all students from the Noble Network of charter schools are assigned to a specific advisor in University College who is familiar with the unique nature of this school system.

Presidential Persistence Funds: In FY17, President Dietz demonstrated his commitment to improving the retention of underrepresented students from underrepresented backgrounds by dedicating \$250,000 to develop programming to serve the same populations as the TRIO/SSS program: first-generation, low-income, and educationally disadvantaged students. Since the investment of these funds, Illinois State has seen an increase in the overall first-year retention rates and a slight improvement in the retention rates of Black/African American students. This continued financial commitment has been utilized by University College in the following ways:

- Enhanced a current Senior Coordinator position to add case manager duties to better intervene with highly at-risk students individually while guiding the collective process for campus.
- **Persistence Committee:** Consists of representation from the Dean of Students Office, Financial Aid, University Housing, Student Accounts, University College, Enterprise Data Analytics, International Studies, and the Graduate School. The Committee takes a case management approach to address issues affecting the ability of students to persist at the University. In particular, the Persistence Committee has focused on awarding micro-grants of typically less than \$5,000 to support students' path to persistence. The Committee uses predictive analytics, as well as other reports to attempt to get ahead of financial issues that students may face.

As part of the Persistence Committee's efforts, UC staff have worked with CAST, COE, and the Lauby Center (Secondary Education and area K-12 special programs) to proactively identify students who could benefit from additional funding to complete their degree. UC works to identify criteria for awards, identify students who meet criteria, and facilitate the distribution of those awards.

- **Peer Academic Success Coaching:** University College has utilized an increased portion of the new funding to provide one-on-one Peer Academic Success Coaching for students who need a more intrusive style of academic support to be successful. Students are referred to Peer Academic Coaches through the work of the Persistence Committee, through referrals from advisors, other campus professionals, or students seeking assistance on their own. In FY20, University College hired and trained over a dozen Peer Academic Coaches and added 8-10 Peer Academic Coaches for spring 2021.

Project Success: a required academic support program for students on academic probation, serving approximately 1,300 students each academic year, has demonstrated success in helping students turn their academic careers around and has increased retention. In 2015, University College began a version of Project Success called Project Rebound. Project Rebound specifically targets students on repeat probation. Both programs

underwent significant review to eliminate deficit language and provide a new approach to supporting students on probation. Through Project Success, first-time probation students reflect on the behaviors that lead to their probation status, develop a plan to return to good academic standing, identify services to improve their grades, and learn about academic policies related to academic probation and dismissal. Building upon Project Success, Project Rebound participants meet bi-weekly in individual meetings with a *success facilitator*. The facilitator tailors meetings to address the unique needs of the group. Topics typically include developing and refining academic goals, major options for undeclared students, and strategies to overcome common challenges faced by students.

Preview Partners: Preview is the required summer orientation program for all new FTICs. Incoming FTICs who received an Admission fee waiver and indicated they would not be bringing a parent or guest with them to Preview were paired with a trained ISU faculty/staff member who met with them during Preview to provide guidance and answer questions. Initial feedback from students was positive and University College will continue to expand this program in summer 2021 but in a hybrid format. Due to COVID, Preview 2020 was offered in a virtual-only format.

- Preview Guides are an integral part of the orientation process. To welcome all students, Preview Guide training was changed to include deliberative dialogues about privilege, oppression, diversity/inclusion, and how to navigate difficult conversations with support and poise. The training was well received by the Preview guides and Orientation & Training staff and students responded that they enjoyed the sessions specifically focused on “What it means to be a Redbird.”
- After consulting with the Association of Latino American Students (ALAS), Preview materials were translated and made available in Spanish, which included print, video, and online resources. Preview Guides offered sessions in Spanish to promote the understanding and inclusion of all participants.

Professional Development: University College continues to provide professional development opportunities to staff.

- The launch of the Training & Learning Committee (TLC) is aimed at the consistent pursuit of learning and improving knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to provide excellent support for college students. The TLC plans as a small group, with key members involved in campus-wide DEI efforts and involves University College leadership in planning and execution. For example, after a topic is covered in a large session, individual follow-up conversations or written self-reflections are submitted to the professional’s direct supervisor so learning can become instituted into the work environment as an expectation of practice.
- Staff attended the Culturally Responsive Campus Community conference in November 2020. After the conference, multiple follow-up sessions were held to discuss how staff, both at the individual level and within University College, can be more inclusive.
- The staff held common readings. Two of the options discussed were [Why Diversity Initiatives Fail – Symbolic gestures and millions of dollars can’t overcome apathy](#) and ["A Change Is Gonna Come": Paradigm Shifts to Dismantle Oppressive Structures](#). In spring 2021, University College held the book group using “The New Jim Crow” by Michelle Alexander.
- Following microaggression training with Dr. Tina Thompson, staff held additional discussion sessions to unpack what was learned.
- The University College retreat held in May 2021 focused on better serving underrepresented groups and other inclusivity topics.
- **Hallway Pantry:** After attending a professional development session related to food insecurity, University College staff members organized and supplied a small hallway pantry that allows for open access with anonymity. Any student can stop by for a variety of healthy snacks including pretzels, chips, granola and protein bars, canned goods, or fresh fruit. The pantry is also stocked with personal care items such as soap, feminine care items, shaving cream, shampoo, toothbrush kits, and cleansing towelettes. Additionally, there

is information posted to connect students who may need additional items to other support systems on campus, as well as the offer to meet with an academic advisor to discuss longer-term needs.

PROUD Grant Program: University College continues to support the Mennonite College of Nursing's PROUD grant program to support the development of diversity in the nursing workforce. University College provides grade tracking, workshop, and tutoring support to PROUD.

Pre-Health Advising: Illinois State offers a comprehensive preparatory plan of study for admission to graduate-level programs in the health professions. The Pre-Health advising team explored ways to augment preparation and support for professional schools and aimed to increase the number of students of color who participated and pursued professional schools. In addition, to provide equity regarding access to materials, the Pre-Health advisor created a "lending library" with multiple copies of expensive textbooks and manuals that any student may check out for use.

STEM Alliance: In order to fully utilize the services, STEM Alliance provided resources for students from underrepresented groups who are pursuing careers in the fields of mathematics, science, engineering, technology, and teacher education. University College provides programming for these students including faculty mentoring, support for research, and travel to conferences. University College and CeMAST have committed using general revenue funds, to continue the support and enrichment programs established through LS-AMP which was renamed by student vote to STEM Alliance.

Predictive Analytics: University College continues to shepherd the campus effort in the deployment of predictive analytics to improve the first-to-second-year retention rate, with significant campus collaboration. The Office of Enterprise Data Analytics (EDA) continues to refine the model to predict the likelihood of fall-to-spring, as well as fall-to-fall retention of First Time-in-College (FTIC) students. Also, EDA is working to develop a model to predict first semester GPA for FTIC students. Continued outreach by University College includes:

- Merged analytics data with midterm grades data and called students who were in the high/highest risk categories of retention. These students were also offered tutoring support. Several other units were added to the Predictive Model such as University Dining Services, Student Conduct and Community Responsibilities (SCCR), student involvement, technology access and usage of email and course management systems, and details for each student's success team.
- Called/contacted students in the high/highest risk categories with registration blocks.
- Merged analytics data with information from appointment scheduling software Achieve, to determine who had not been in to see a University College advisor. University College academic advisors intentionally contacted these students.
- Merged data with the Success 101 recruitment list and contacted those students regarding spring options. Success 101 is a support program for first-year students that revolves around a first-year seminar and two "linked" courses, which are typically a General Education Science and Communication & Critical Inquiry. Predictive analytics data is used to determine which of the first-year seminar is the best fit for each student.
- Notified University Housing staff of all students in the high/highest risk categories who resided in residence halls and received all Fs at midterms. Housing staff contacted these students in addition to University College professionals.
- Data collected continues to be used in Preview presentations to outline the behaviors and traits of successful college students.

TRIO/Student Support Services: TRIO is a highly successful, federally funded program serving the needs of first-generation and low-income college students. Of the 232 program participants, 93% persist to their second year of college. New initiatives include:

- ISU hosted TRIO Day Central at Illinois State. Over 250 students and TRIO professionals from around the state participated in a day of workshops and educational sessions.
- University College TRIO staff also organized and implemented the third year of the First-Generation Celebration which consisted of activities for first generation students and professionals throughout the week. The activities included a motivational speaker, an evening gala, and several days of educational sessions. These efforts included the First Gen Redbirds registered student organization and the First-Generation Professionals affinity group created by TRIO.
- In 2021, TRIO added an interactive tour with a local businessman who runs a specialty, farm to fork restaurant and farm. Fifty TRIO students were treated to a luxury meal at the Ballroom in downtown Bloomington at no cost to the students.
- University College also contributes \$3,000 in matching funds to provide direct financial support to students participating in the TRiO/Student Support Services program.
- 30 TRIO students went to Atlanta during spring break for an Education and Career Exploration trip. The trip included such things as touring the CDC and CNN as well as two grad school visits (Morehouse and Clark). Later, an additional group of 14 TRIO students attended a McNair Graduate School preparation camp over the weekend in Wisconsin.
- TRIO hired four student interns to mentor students who are on probation, students repeating a class, or students who need to re-enroll at Illinois state to finish their degree.
- Students have gone on several trips and conferences including a grad school conference in Wisconsin and graduate school visits.

Honors Program

One of the goals of the Honors Program is to attract, challenge, and inspire academically and culturally diverse students. The percentage of students of color enrolled in our program has continued to grow, and we reflect the university's diversity. Given that most Honors Programs and Colleges across the U.S. struggle with reflecting the diversity of their institutions, this is quite a feat. We work hard to build an equitable and inclusive program for all our students and utilize a holistic admissions process to develop a well-rounded and diverse student body. In spring 2020, we created the [Honors Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion \(DEI\) Council](#). The purpose of this group is to identify, create, and/or highlight DEI-related events in the Honors Program and the University at large. In fall 2020, we received support to hire and train mentors within the DEI Council who will serve the Honors Program, with a particular focus on students of color, in an effort to increase student success, retention, and belonging in Honors and the University. The Honors DEI Mentor Program will officially launch in fall 2021. We recently created and added a diversity statement to our [About](#) page to explicitly state who we are, what we believe, and what we do.

Dimensions of Honors Learning: Intercultural competence is the newest Dimension of Honors Learning (the learning outcomes for our program). The goal of this dimension is to prepare students to understand the role of culture and stereotypes on individuals' worldviews and to gain skills to be able to collaborate with people from various social groups. Intercultural competence highlights the Honors Program's appreciation of inclusion and global citizenry. This year we revised our admissions application to include an essay question on diversity, equity, and inclusion as a way to communicate the importance that we place on these issues. We also updated the content in the Honors Mindset Seminar, which is required for all incoming Honors students, to incorporate more content on diversity and more content from diverse authors and experts.

Honors Seminars/Honors Explorations: Four of eight Advanced Honors Seminars and two of 10 Honors Explorations focused on issues of diversity:

- "Using Photo-Elicitation to Explore and Reflect on Identity Development" taught by Dr. Michaelene Cox;
- "Psychological Basis of Cultural Empathy" taught by Dr. Suejung Han;

- “Project Management Leadership in a Diverse and International Work Environment” taught by Dr. Klaus Schmidt;
- “Diversity in Digital Platforms and Equitable Virtual Environments” taught by Dr. Sercan Sengun;
- “Voluntourism: The Good, the Bad, the Ugly” taught by Dr. Olivia Butts; and
- “Songs of Ourselves: Exploring Music in Multicultural America” taught by Dr. Anne Dervin.

Study Abroad: In spring 2021, the Honors Study Abroad program planned to go to Barbados, a culturally rich country whose population is 94% people of color. The trip was cancelled due to COVID. The course associated with the trip is IDS 121A68: Place as Text. Last year, the Honors Study Abroad program was in Barcelona.

University Scholars: University Scholars are students from underrepresented groups, first-generation, low-income, and other groups who are awarded a minimum of \$6,000 per year for four years. University Scholars participate in a comprehensive mentoring and enrichment program with a dedicated staff coordinator. Beginning in FY19, the Office of Admissions, University College, and the Honors Program collaborated on a successful scholarship interview day for potential University Scholars resulting in a much higher yield of University Scholars than in past years. As of spring 2021, there are 110 University Scholars.

Professional Development: Staff continues to seek opportunities to develop professionally on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Staff frequented the International Seminar Series provided by Diversity Advocacy, and they attended the Culturally Responsive Campus Community Conference. In fall 2020, the staff also attended the Microaggression workshop offered to Academic Affairs by the Provost Office. The Director also facilitated several Microaggression workshops for other departments and units across campus. We will continue that training in spring 2021 by attending workshops on Implicit Bias and Privilege and Power (scheduled for February 15 and 22, respectively). After attending these three workshops, the entire staff will have earned the Foundations of Diversity and Inclusion Certificate offered by the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology. Overall, the Honors staff recognizes the importance of diversity and works to develop their skillset to work effectively with our student population.

Office of the University Registrar

Military Friendly School Designation: Illinois State was named a Silver Award winner designated as Military Friendly in the 2020-2021 Military Friendly Schools list published by Victory Media. College Factual also has listed Illinois State in its 2020 rankings as a top 100 Best School for Veterans in the U.S. It listed Illinois State as In the Top 5% for Best for Veterans for 2020.

Got Your 6 Pledge: The University has signed the “Got Your 6” pledge, which focuses on the six key pillars of Veterans’ reintegration: jobs, education, health, housing, family, and leadership. We are a member of Illinois Joining Forces and Illinois State participates in the McLean County Veteran’s Assistance Commission information meetings. The University is also a member of the Illinois Farmer Veteran Alliance Advisory Board.

Veterans and Military Advisory Council: Established in 2017, the Veterans and Military Advisory Council is a group of campus stakeholders that work together to both provide a campus community that helps military-connected students find success, and to help the greater campus community understand the needs of our military-connected students. Comprised of both civilian and Veteran staff members, the Council’s purpose is to be a “force multiplier” for Illinois State in supporting the many campus needs of our military and Veteran student population. The Council meets periodically to collaborate and discuss current topics and issues affecting all represented areas of campus so as to best work together in a seamless manner with both official programs and unofficial mentoring support. Membership on the council includes staff from the Office of Admissions, Financial Aid Office, University College, Milner Library, Department of Military Science/ROTC, Dean of Students Office, Student Counseling Services, Student Access and Accommodations, and the Career Center, as well as student representation.

Omega Delta Sigma: Formed in January 2015, Omega Delta Sigma is a collegiate fraternity for United States military personnel and Veterans, both men and women, and is a hybrid between a service and social fraternity. The student group, along with the University ROTC program, hosted the first ever Veterans Day 5K on November

9, 2019, in honor of Sgt. Josh Rodgers, a Bloomington, Illinois native. Sgt. Rodgers was 22 when he was killed in combat in 2017 during a joint operation with Afghan forces in Nangarhar Province. His parents and sisters are members of the Illinois State University Alumni. Funds from the event went to the Sgt. Josh Rodgers Memorial Fund, the local Veterans Fraternity Omega Delta Sigma and ISU ROTC.

Veteran Study Center: The Office of the University Registrar continues to provide a Veteran Study Center in support of the military and our Veterans. This Center, which opened in 2012, is available to our students, to those currently serving on active duty, and those who are part of our military science program. The space provides a place for the students to gather and study, as well as a place to offer programs designed for our Veteran and military students. Each semester, the Career Center provides Walk-In Resume Critiques in Center. In addition to these programs, the Career Center hosted a free Networking Dinner for Veteran and ROTC students in the fall so that they could meet with employers and learn how to market military experience and skills.

Events/Workshops:

- **Veterans Day Ceremony:** Veterans and Military Services and Military Sciences/ROTC work together each year to provide a Veterans Day Ceremony for the campus and local community. The 2020 ceremony was cancelled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- **Veteran and Military Orientation:** Connected Welcome is provided as part of the Welcome Week for all new and returning students. It is designed to provide an opportunity for newly returning military-connected students to connect with each other, as well as local and campus resources.
- **Commencement Recognition:** In December 2016, a Commencement tradition began at Illinois State. Recognition for military service was expanded beyond acknowledging our recently commissioned army officers. Those that have served, or are currently serving, are eligible to receive a red, white and blue cord to wear in his/her Commencement ceremony and are recognized in the Commencement book. In addition to their name and degree being announced as they cross the stage, the student's service is also announced. While the format for Commencement changed due to COVID-19, students were still able to receive their cords.
- **National Farmer Veteran Coalition:** In November 2019, Illinois became the 10th formal state chapter of the National Farmer Veteran Coalition. The Director of Veteran and Military Services at Illinois State University is a member of the Advisory Board.

Student Success

As of July 1, 2020, the new position of Assistant Vice President for Student Success has addressed and implemented a number of programs and initiatives that impact underrepresented students:

GEER Grant: Illinois State University was awarded \$1.9 million in Governor's Emergency Educational Relief (GEER) grant funding. The grant specifies that the funds "must be used to support efforts to enroll and retain low income, underrepresented, and first generation, students, that might otherwise not enroll or return due to the pandemic, including by closing digital equity gaps." Illinois State is utilizing these funds in a number of different areas:

- **Loaner laptops and other technology:** At the time of this report, nearly 300 laptops and multiple webcams and MiFi units have been distributed to students who meet the grant criteria.
- **Recruiting:** The Office of Admissions has utilized a portion of the funds for recruiting efforts in geographic areas that encompass larger populations of Black and Latino prospective students. Additional funds have been used for recruiting materials to be produced in Spanish.
- **Micro-grants:** A portion of the fund are being utilized to provide micro-grants to eligible students.

- **RSO funding:** A portion of the funds have been dedicated to funding for identity based RSOs in Coordination with the Dean of Students Office. Grants have been provided to assist RSOs with purchasing such things as branded apparel or marketing supplies.
- **Multicultural Center:** A portion of the funds are dedicated to outfitting the podcasting room in the new Multicultural Center
- **Internship grants:** In collaboration with Career Services, Student Success is awarding grants to give students the financial ability to accept unpaid internships by providing them a grant to cover living costs during internship period.

ReggieCon: In coordination with Dr. Scott Jordan, Chair of the Department of Psychology, ReggieCon 2020-2021 was a series of six panels focusing on depictions of race, gender, and ethnicity in comics, graphic novels, movies and other popular media. The panels coordinated with heritage months including Black History Month, Diversity Month, Asian Pacific Heritage Month, Women's History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month and LGBTQ History Month.

Guideline and Procedures Analysis: Student Success is collaborating on the analyses of Illinois State guidelines and procedures with specific attention to how they impact underrepresented, first generation and low-income students. In coordination with Enrollment Management, Financial Aid, and the Office of Student Accounts, the first guideline addressed was the threshold dollar amount a student must owe in past due to the University for a block to be placed on their registration. The threshold for past due has increased from \$250 to \$1,000 and initial data indicates the amount of money being sent to collections has decreased.

Student Success Dashboard: A number of units across campus came together to develop a Student Success Dashboard. Enterprise Data Analytics took the technological lead on this project, with the support of various office from both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. The Student Success Dashboard is the vehicle to merge data from disparate databases housed in variety of departments/units. This leveraging of information provides a more comprehensive snapshot of a student's behaviors and details and allows form line staff (such as advisors and staff in the Dean of Students Office) to be able to see a full picture of a student's engagement with various offices on campus. To date, data is being pulled from Campus Solutions, ReggieNet, Outlook/Office 365, Career Services, Aspire (Appointment Manager), and Advocate. This team will continue to refine the use of the data based on user feedback, will add additional data points, and has also started the development of a graduate student version of the dashboard.

Success Team in Myllinois State: Throughout the fall and early spring, work has been done to develop an individual student's success team in MyllinoisState. Already, academic advisors' pictures and contact information are being displayed in My. Shortly, the remainder of the Success Team will be displayed. This will include Career Services advisors, subject area librarians, residence hall coordinators, international student advisors, and Financial Aid counselors.

Student Success Planning: FY21 began the formal process of student success planning at Illinois State University. With the goal of developing a student success framework by summer 2022, this work will be done in complete coordination with the development of an equity plan for Illinois State University.

Professional Development: Student Success has capitalized on professional development opportunities that are directly related to underrepresented students with the goal of improving staff awareness about the issues facing students from underrepresented populations. These professional development opportunities are shared with colleagues in Student Affairs as well as Academic Affairs. Professional development primarily includes webinars on topics such as "Black Student and Mental Health" and "Black Student Persistence & Success: Create Long-Term, Institution-Wide & Systemic Change."

Division of Student Affairs

Professional Development: The Division of Student Affairs has a strong commitment to the professional development of staff, as it is vital to the success of its mission. Staff members were provided with numerous opportunities to participate in various division-wide programs throughout the year from webinars and workshops to team-building exercises and nationally recognized speakers. Professional development programs fall within the following knowledge areas:

1. Student advising and support;
2. Teamwork, mentorship, and interpersonal skills;
3. Leadership competencies;
4. Personal and career development;
5. Productivity and problem solving;
6. Global perspective and worldviews; and
7. Digital fluency and assessment.

Examples of workshops included:

- The Power of Empathy and its Connection to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Let's Talk Lovcraft Country
- Negotiation: Working to Narrow the Wage Gap for Women
- How to Be a Trans Advocate: Let's Talk Pronouns!
- Community Support During a Racial Pandemic
- Stereotypes, Myths, and Misconceptions: What You Believe Matters!
- Are Our Students Depressed or Lonely? The Role of Loneliness in Mental Health and How We Can Address It
- White Fragility Book Discussion
- Reimagining Higher Education: How Radical Imagination Can Lead to Structural Change
- Recovery is Spoken Here: Recovery Ally Training
- Cultivating the Disruptive Power of Love and Healing: Educating for Wholeness, Justice, and Liberation
- The Online Campus Experience: Creating Access and Equity Education in a Virtual World
- Kognito: Some Conversations Can Save Lives
- Freedom of Speech: Understanding the Protections and Limits of the First Amendment
- Disrupting Whiteness: From White Immunity to Radical Empathy
- What's Your Green Dot? Graduate Student Overview (The Green Dot Interpersonal Violence Prevention Program)
- What's Your Green Dot? Staff, Faculty, and Administrator Overview (The Green Dot Interpersonal Violence Prevention Program)
- Stereotypes, Myths, and Misconceptions: What You Believe Matters!
- Choir, Ally, Oblivious, Resisters, and the Defiant: Who is in the Room?
- QPR: Ask a Question, Save a Life
- Just Mercy Watch Party & Discussion
- Freedom of Speech: Understanding the Protections and Limits of the First Amendment
- The Truth About Microaggressions
- Special Guests Cole & Charisma: Intersectionality on Campus
- Special Guests Cole & Charisma: Contributing to an Inclusive Student Body
- Dialogue between Cole & Charisma and the Inclusion Change Team (ICT) and Student Affairs Council (SAC)
- Deliberative Dialogue – How Should Higher Education Help Us Create the Society We Want?
- Deliberative Dialogue – Free Speech & The Inclusive Campus: How Do We Foster the Campus Community We Want?
- Redbird Community/What it Means to be a Redbird Campaign

Environmental Scans: Each department within the Division completes a three-part environmental scan every two years. The three phases consist of an external, hybrid, and internal scan.

1. The external scan includes physical space and décor, website and social media, print materials, and culture.
2. The hybrid scan includes policies and procedures, mission statement and key documents, programs and services, conversations and interactions with others, and presentations.
3. The internal scan includes leadership and advocacy, expectations and training, goals, strategic planning, and assessment.

The scans utilize various categories of difference, audiences, and time frames to gather the best information possible. Environmental scan findings and recommendations are used to advance our equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts.

New Staff Orientation: The Division of Student Affairs included a cultural competency component to staff orientation. Newly hired Student Affairs staff attended a half-day orientation through the Division. One hour of the program included an introduction to cultural competency covering common terms, social identities, and competency expectations. The outcomes included the ability to: (1) demonstrate understanding of the importance of cultural competency in Student Affairs work; (2) apply acquired knowledge of diversity terms to create an inclusive environment; (3) apply knowledge of individual social identities to relate to individuals from diverse backgrounds; and (4) identify areas of personal cultural competency development and seek opportunities for further development.

Inclusion Change Team: The Inclusion Change Team within the Division of Student Affairs consisted of 16 Inclusion Practitioners from all 13 departments. The team functioned like a learning community and received extensive cultural competency training. Outcomes of the change team included: (1) department staff are more culturally competent due to Inclusion Practitioners supporting their development; (2) practitioners create inclusive environments by using an inclusion lens in various roles on campus such as during meetings, on committees, and as members of search committees; and (3) Inclusion Practitioners and division leadership improve policies, programs, and services through consultation and collaboration.

Redbirds Keep Thriving: The Health and Wellness Community of Practice in the Division of Student Affairs expanded the Redbirds Keep Thriving initiative in response to the global pandemic. This landing page of well-being resources offers students, faculty, and staff a variety of virtual programs and services, and digital resources to help them manage the eight dimensions of wellness throughout the pandemic and beyond. Specific programs and resources for students from underrepresented backgrounds have been included on Redbirds Keep Thriving in order to provide additional support. Through blogs, podcasts, articles, and videos, students can learn about self-care practices and coping skills to help them manage relationships, loneliness, trauma, and grief, among other topics.

Student Success and Excellence Fund: The Student Success and Excellence Fund supports students in their ability to thrive and excel in their academic and co-curricular experiences. Scholarships are provided to aid participation in co-curricular experiences that offer them a competitive advantage in achieving their goals and aspirations. The spirit of the award embodies Illinois State's commitment to diversity. The following categories are options for students to seek support in achieving their academic and personal educational goals:

- **Textbooks:** Students who are involved on-campus in opportunities offered by Illinois State can apply for a book scholarship to support their academic goals of graduation. The scholarship is \$300 per year, with a lifetime limit of \$600.
- **Co-Curricular Scholarship:** Individual students may receive support to attend or participate in co-curricular and curricular experiences provided by Illinois State such as study abroad, Alternative Breaks, or professional conferences. The maximum award is \$1,000 per student.

Susan T. Kern Special Opportunity Scholarship Fund: The vision for the Susan T. Kern Special Opportunity Scholarship Fund is to provide financial support to Illinois State University students in support of one-time special academic or co-curricular opportunities. It is Dr. Kern's wish to provide financial assistance to a student for an opportunity they otherwise wouldn't be able to fund. The Selection Committee consists of representatives from the Offices of the Provost, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program, Dean of Students, and Development (University Advancement).

Campus Recreation

Programs/Events:

- Campus Recreation Adventure Program opened up activity offerings to include three free activities available to students. The intent of these offerings was to minimize financial and/or transportation barriers to engagement in outdoor recreation. These activities included: two group bike rides on the constitution trail that started at the Student Fitness Center and utilized the free Reggie Ride bikes; and a free paddle trip to Comlara Park.
- The Adventure Program launched the Regional Passport Challenge, which utilized Instagram posts to educate students on diverse ways to recreate in Central Illinois and encouraged student engagement in local outdoor recreation by highlighting a variety of outdoor areas in the region. Students could participate through use of the hashtag #ISURegionalPassport and the Goosechase app.
- Redbird Gaming partnered with Women in Technology to host a three-day event. The first day was focused on technology usage including Zoom, Discord, and Twitch. The second day was a presentation on professional development surrounding LinkedIn and deploying empathy in the workplace. The final day featured a panel made up of people from Women in Technology and Redbird Gaming, whom were primarily women, to talk about their lived experiences as a person engaging in gaming and technology. The second half of this day featured several rounds of the game Among Us. Outcomes for the participants included learning how to effectively use Zoom, Discord, and Twitch, learning how to build a robust LinkedIn profile and increasing awareness of empathy and how to use it in a professional environment.

Staff Training:

- As a part of New Team Member Orientation, all Campus Recreation student team members complete a condensed *OUCH! That Stereotype Hurts* and *OUCH! Your Silence Hurts* training curriculum including both experiential activities and group discussion. This training helps to better understand the impact of language and silence while providing techniques and methods on how to address this behavior and language in a positive and productive manner to promote respect in both Campus Recreation and the Illinois State Community as a whole.

Esports Training:

- All members of Campus Recreation's varsity esports teams participated in a lecture on topics ranging from diversity, inclusion, and equity to social justice and toxicity in gaming. Outcomes from this lecture included increased knowledge of specific terms related to DEI and social justice, increased awareness of DEI and how toxicity shows up in gaming and steps one can take to overcome negative behavior while gaming.
- Campus Recreation Esports engaged in several discussions with Redbird Gaming members over voice chat about women in gaming and racial bias. Outcomes of these discussions are to provide a platform for students to discuss their feelings and thoughts on these particular subjects.

Career Services

Career Services provides opportunities to connect students of diverse backgrounds with programs and services to assist with their career development. Through its Cultural Career Network Program, Career Services provides students with unique opportunities to learn about careers, resources, and available internship and career opportunities.

Cultural Center Network Program (CCNP): The Cultural Career Network Program (CCNP) serves to prepare students for the workplace in areas of networking and career awareness. CCNP encourages students of diverse backgrounds to participate in a variety of events designed to assist their career development and career readiness, to connect students with employers, and to provide resources about available internship and career opportunities.

CCNP events are open to all Illinois State majors at all college levels. CCNP embraces all Career Center services and programming and works collaboratively with other campus units. Local and statewide employers play an important and effective role as they participate and co-sponsor Cultural Career Network activities and events. Assisting businesses and organizations with their diversity recruitment initiatives are included in CCNP goals. Unique career networking connections and opportunities for students in today's global society are the program goals.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Programming

Through the Career Services Cultural Career Network, a variety of virtual programs on global career readiness contributed to the University's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Areas of focus included international students, LGBTQ+, and women.

During the 20-21 Academic Year, Career Services hosted the following virtual and in-person programs promoting career development and career readiness for ISU Redbirds.

Success Looks Like Me

Students were able to connect (virtually) with alumni from various industries and discover how they transitioned from college to career and were provided tips and advice on accomplishing career goals. Students participated in professional and interactive group discussions with these alumni and discover the success and challenges they experienced:

- Claudia Chavez '05 – Midwest deputy director appointed by United States President Joe Biden;
- Nicolette Hampton '20 – Diversity and communications coordinator for Chapman and Cutler LLP in Chicago;
- Jaylon Joyner '18 – Health and wellness teacher/athletic trainer at Christ the King Jesuit College Prep School in Chicago;
- Ashley Shannon '18 – Juris doctorate candidate at University of Illinois at Chicago John Marshall Law School; and
- Gabriella Trevino '18 – Community management and development manager at Pathlight HOME, a non-profit organization in Florida.

Equal Identities

Students connected virtually with Redbird alum Isaac Hollis '20, former Black Student Union President and member of the LGBTQ+ community. Students learned about his career journey, the challenges he faced, and what he successfully achieved in his career.

She Leads

Students were provided an opportunity to explore how identity can impact a woman's job attainment, salary and benefits negotiation, leadership roles and career advancement, the benefits to developing mentors, how to advocate for gender equality and much more.

Students connected virtually with Redbird alum and Growmark Diversity and Inclusion Manager Raychel McBride'07, who is also the CEO and Founder of Corporate KIN Diversity Strategies. Students discovered how she overcame the hurdles of sexism and racism to become a successful Black woman, business owner, and diversity leader.

Asset-based/Anti-racist/Trauma-informed Care Workshop: Center staff participated in a workshop led by Dr. Dakesa Piña to help the department integrate an asset-based, anti-racist, trauma-informed/healing centered framework into civic engagement programs. The knowledge was used to update the Alternative Breaks trip leader materials and other program materials to use asset-based language that affirms students' multiple identities. Trauma-informed statements were also created for programs and staff developed plans to refer students to additional resources when needed.

Deliberative Dialogues: Analysis of data from the Framework for Inclusive Teaching Excellence Growth team surveys indicated that students and faculty seek more opportunities to practice respectful dialogues in the classroom about controversial topics. Curricula from the National Issues Forum Institute was used to create a Deliberative Dialogues program and train faculty, staff, and students to facilitate conversations in classes and in the community. The following data represents the program's reach in fall 2020. Additional dialogues and training sessions are being held throughout spring 2021.

- **Number of facilitators trained:** 37
- **Number of participants:** 450 students in 25 classes, 40 people in out-of-class settings
- **Number of participants by topic:**
 - A House Divided: What Would We Have to Give Up to Get the Political System We Want? 70
 - Coming To America: Who Should We Welcome, What Should We Do? 60
 - Infectious Disease Outbreak: How Should We Keep Our Communities Safe? 70
 - Mental Illness: How Do We Address a Growing Problem? 170
 - Safety & Justice: How Should Communities Reduce Violence? 120

Alternative Break Access: Alternative Breaks continued to offer financial assistance to students via a new fee structure, based on EFC, and through Fee Waivers.

Voter Education and Engagement: The Center helped facilitate several Voter Engagement Coalition programs to highlight the voices of students from minoritized backgrounds. A focus on equity, inclusion, and access was at the forefront of voter engagement events and an education campaign that included the following events and initiatives:

- The [Voter Restoration Initiative](#) highlighted the histories and resilience of minoritized communities who have resisted oppression and worked for voting rights.
- The [Every Voice Counts](#) page in our Redbird Voter Guide provided resources for political participation for students who are not eligible to vote.
- The [Your Voice Matters](#) event elevated voices of individuals of color with a virtual panel of local elected officials of color and student leaders of Illinois State University's Diversity Advocacy Organizations.
- Two #VotingIsYourVoice events with Student Affairs and the Multicultural Center helped to educate students, faculty, and staff. These sessions were facilitated by the group Building Strong Millennials.
- Faculty, staff, and student volunteers were stationed at several locations within the Bone Student Center on Election Day to direct students to their correct polling place (an important function to make sure students were able to vote this year as the Bone Student Center was not a designated universal polling place as in previous years).

Dean of Students Office

Absence Notification for Military Active Duty: When students receive orders for active military duty, the Dean of Students Office liaises with Veterans and Military Services in order to provide absence notification to the

students' instructors, and to help instructors and the student understand how the absence impacts their academic work.

LGBTQIA Support Fund: The Dean of Students Office facilitates the LGBTQIA Support Fund, which provides support for educational programming related to LGBTQ+ topics. In addition, student scholarships and emergency financial assistance are provided for students who are not receiving sufficient financial support based on life circumstances and/or a member of a group that supports LGBTQ+ issues. The Dean of Students Office cultivates donors to this Fund and responds quickly to student applicants through care, support, and/or referrals to other funding opportunities.

Black Greek Leadership Council (BGLC) and United Greek Council (UGC): Advising and support is provided to historically African American and Latina/o social Greek letter student organizations. BGLC is the umbrella organization for seven single-sex national organizations and UGC is the umbrella organization for five single-sex and one co-ed national organization. Both BGLC and UGC strive to create strong bonds among underrepresented students, promote inclusion, and enhance the quality of the underrepresented student collegiate experience.

Leadership Education and Development programs: The immersive programs offered by this unit of the Dean of Students Office allow students to examine the concept of leadership at the intersection of power, oppression, justice, and social change.

Event Management, Dining and Hospitality

Dietary Needs Survey

EMDH's Dietetics and Nutrition team worked collaboratively with the Meal Plans team to develop and implement a dietary needs survey to be part of the online meal plan selection process. This initiative allows EMDH to better identify students with dietary concerns, preferences, and restrictions and support the students more effectively by providing nutritional education and dietary consultations. In addition to the new survey, EMDH staff members also work closely with the Vegetarian Advisory Board and INTO students to ensure continued satisfaction with varied food selection offered at residential dining centers and retail dining venues.

International Flags Display

The dynamic digital display was deployed during the 2020-2021 academic year and features a variety of motion graphics utilizing the flags representing the home countries of past and present students, faculty, and staff at Illinois State University. The display carries on the tradition of the physical flags previously displayed in the Bone Student Center and serves as a visual expression of the University's strong commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Registered Student Organization (RSO) Support

EMDH manages the Bone Student Center, which serves as a key resource for the entire campus community, especially students. RSOs often utilize spaces in the Bone Student Center for meetings, programs, and events, and throughout the 2020-2021 academic year, the Bone Student Center was a critical meeting place for students when many other campus buildings were closed.

Student Employment

As the largest employer on campus, EMDH offers as many as 1,000 student positions, which allows the department to help with the University's overall recruitment and retention efforts. In addition, EMDH's professional staff helps to engage, educate, and foster the development of a significant number of students on campus, including students from underrepresented groups.

Website Accessibility

EMDH's marketing team completed an initial audit of PDFs published on the department's four websites and converted the standard PDFs to accessible PDFs when possible. In addition, most menus previously displayed in a PDF format were converted to web pages for catering and retail dining venues, improving access for individuals with disabilities and following the University's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

Health Promotion and Wellness

Redbird Respect: Addressing Interpersonal Violence:

Not Anymore – Online Prevention Course for Students: Health Promotion and Wellness offers the Not Anymore course annually in August for new and incoming students and September for returning students and all Graduate Students. Not Anymore addresses the crucial issues related to sexual assault and other forms of Interpersonal Violence on college campuses. The course also meets requirements for State and Federal compliance under Title IX and State of IL Prevention of Sexual Assault in Higher Education Act. The Not Anymore program can be viewed in several languages and provides training modules specific to International Student and Graduate Student populations.

Redbird Respect Bystander Empowerment Initiative: The primary goal of Redbird Respect Bystander Empowerment Programs is to equip the Redbird community with the tools and confidence to challenge and interrupt harmful behaviors, and to foster a culture of respect and care. The sessions are interactive and include discussions that explore a variety of scenarios where students can apply the skills they are learning. Bias is directly discussed when exploring the reasons for helping or not helping when faced with risky situations. Redbird Respect Bystander Empowerment Programs teach strategies to safely intervene, either directly or indirectly, in both emergency and non-emergency situations. Specific outcomes of bystander empowerment programs are heightened awareness of helping behaviors and knowledge about campus and community resources, thereby increasing the motivation to act, which ultimately helps ensure the safety and well-being of self and others.

Students Ending Rape Culture (SERC)

SERC is one of two Health Promotion and Wellness sponsored student organizations. SERC seeks to raise visibility of rape culture and empower survivors of Interpersonal Violence. A staff member advises the organization and co-develops programs that are culturally competent. SERC members lead the **Dismantling Rape Culture** presentation to student groups and academic classrooms. SERC students also have ongoing meetings with the Title IX Office.

Student Wellness Ambassador Team (SWAT)

SWAT is a Health Promotion and Wellness sponsored student organization. A staff member advises the organization and co-develops programs that are culturally competent. SWAT members lead two workshops; **Under the Covers** discusses consent, sexuality, and safer sex practices and **On the Rocks**, addresses knowledge and behaviors around college alcohol use, bystander empowerment behaviors, and consent.

Multicultural Center

The Multicultural Center facilitates critical programs, services, and scholarship that promotes antiracism, equity, and justice to contribute to Illinois State University's core values. These programs include lectures/speakers, leadership and antiracism institutes, and the some of the following highlighted below:

Healing Justice Circles: The Justice Circle: Election Edition, in collaboration with the Center for Civic Engagement hosted, "Show Me Democracy's" Karina Arango, and The Hip Hop Stage Play, 'Surviving the Election' with Bert and Det. The event provided space for students to engage with information in preparation for the November 2020

election and understand the role of demonstration and advocacy in a democratic society. The discussion also included ways to identify and disrupt voter suppression.

The Healing Circle: Election Edition was a collaboration between the Multicultural Center and The Counseling Center. A guest Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Sharea Farmer, facilitated this session to support post-election healing, with both self and community healing as inextricably linked focal points. This healing circle also included a focus on healing from racial trauma.

Safeish: “Safe-ish”, a rebrand of SafeZone, where Dr. [Jon Paul](#) led 90-minute interactive programs around the personal narratives and experiences of gender expansive and LGBTQ+ individuals. These sessions were offered throughout the academic year to provide sustainable ways and inclusive strategies for those who seek to serve as allies for the LGBTQ+ community. There were 125 participants.

The Culturally Responsive Campus Community Conference: The CRCC conference actively worked to recognize and rectify inequitable experience in order to create a more just campus and safe experiences for students, staff, and faculty from marginalized backgrounds. Continuing the work from the previous five years, the CRCC facilitated dialogue and provided educational resources towards the goal of creating meaningful action against anti-Black racism at Illinois State University. There were 700 participants.

The Cultural Graduate Recognition Ceremonies: The following three Graduate Recognition events were held: Nuestros Logros for students of Latin descent, MAPS for students of Middle Eastern and Asian descent, and Lavender for students who identify as queer, trans, or same gender loving. Each of these had a stage crossing specific to their cultural identities and their families, mentors, and peers surrounded them during their respective celebrations. There were 125 participants.

A central focus of the Multicultural Center is to foster an affirming campus environment where students can flourish in their intersecting identities and historically minoritized/marginalized communities have their voices and experiences amplified. The leaders of the Black Student Union, Association of Latin American Students, Asian Pacific American Coalition, and Pride operate as partners in retention as they create weekly programming and critical spaces for students from identity-based groups to build antiracist communities of solidarity and belonging. The Multicultural Center staff provides oversight, curriculum development, leadership development, and cultural and social justice programming planning guidance for the leadership of these organizations.

Student Access and Accommodation Services

Student Access and Accommodation Services (SAAS) accommodates students with disabilities and/or medical/mental health conditions, as well as religious and pregnancy/parenting accommodations.

SAAS provides accommodations, modifications, or auxiliary aids as appropriate. Students are introduced to new technologies (apps) that may benefit their educational experience. The office also provides advice to faculty and staff on how best to communicate with people with disabilities and/or medical/mental health conditions. As classes and meetings have changed in modality, faculty and staff have a variety of options to assure accessibility in captioning videos. Microsoft Stream automatically captions videos when they are uploaded, CTLT offers courses for faculty on accessible course materials and SAAS is a resource. SAAS offers scholarships each fall for students with disabilities and/or medical/mental health conditions. Scholarships are given to graduate and undergraduate students for at least \$1,000 each.

Figure 1
Graduates Identified with Disabilities and/or Medical/Mental Health Conditions

	FY20	FY21
Undergraduate Degrees	199	193
Graduate Degrees	9	8

Student Counseling Services

Student Counseling Services develops, evaluates, and plans both clinical services and targeted outreach and consultation services with attention paid to social justice and multicultural diversity as well as with an emphasis on supporting the retention of all students at the university. The examples below highlight various ways that these emphases were lived out within the past year.

Student of Color Process Group (SOCPG): The Student of Color Process Group is a psychotherapy group provided by Student Counseling Services. SOCPG provides a safe and supportive space for students of color to make sense of and give voice to a wide range of feelings. It is designed to provide space for students to openly engage in dialogue around issues and concerns related to what it means to be a student of color in an academically rigorous and predominantly white environment. Central themes discussed may include but are not limited to academic concerns, family and romantic relationships, sexism, racism, micro-aggressions, imposter syndrome, stereotype threat, self-awareness, self-esteem, emotional health issues and other stressors related to being a person of color in this environment.

Suicide Prevention – QPR/Kognito: Members from the ISU community are encouraged to go through QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) or Kognito trainings to learn to recognize signs of distress and suicide risk in others and help them connect to services. Though there is no way of measuring how many referrals have come from people who have participated from any of these trainings, general data – including from the National College Health Assessment 2019 – suggest that depression and anxiety, typically associated with suicide, are 2 of the 4 most common causes for lower grades, incompletes, and class dropouts. This year Student Counseling Services presented Kognito to staff from the Division of Student Affairs, Graduate Assistants/Teaching Assistants, Student Veterans, Sorority/Fraternity life and to ISU advisors from the College of Arts and Sciences. QPR training has been offered to Resident Assistants, graduate students from the CSPA program, staff from Campus Recreation, and faculty/staff in the Division of Student Affairs.

Body Project & Body Project: More Than Muscles: Dieting, body dissatisfaction, and disordered eating and exercise behaviors are well documented among male (Drummond, 2002; O'Dea & Abraham, 2002) and female (Kenardy et al., 2001; Hill, 2002) university students worldwide. Eating and body image concerns occur across all identity groups, regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, nationality, or socioeconomic status, though members of marginalized groups are less likely to receive treatment.

Given these statistics, many universities, including Illinois State University, implement prevention programs such as the Body Project (BP) and Body Project: More Than Muscles (MTM), to prevent and remediate these issues before more intensive therapy and treatment is required. Since treatment for eating disorders is often long-term, costly, and because higher levels of care beyond outpatient often require students to take a leave of absence from their education, prevention programs such as the BP and MTM help ensure that students can be as healthy as possible while successfully maintaining progress toward degree completion.

Research on the Body Project consistently shows that students who participate in the program experience significant reductions in body dissatisfaction, restricted eating, and endorsement of the thin body ideal, as well as enjoy improvement in overall affect. Similarly, the Body Project: More Than Muscles significantly reduces the internalized lean/muscular body ideal and decreases body dissatisfaction among participants. Given these reductions in eating disorder risk factors, these programs help improve students' well-being and reduce new onset eating disorders, thus decreasing the likelihood of students needing to leave the university to pursue treatment.

Further, these programs create a sense of community and healthier, more inclusive campus environment that values and respects individual diversity in shape, size, and color. These campus climate shifts that emphasize diversity and inclusion may also improve students' lived experiences and assist in overall student retention.

Project Rebound: This year Student Counseling Services interns partnered with Project Rebound to offer support for ISU students who return to the University after being academically dismissed. These are students who are often trying to navigate multiple challenges in their lives while trying to be academically successful. Many of the students

are first generation college students, have limited sources of support, may be non-traditional students, and/or come from economically disadvantaged or marginalized backgrounds.

Student Counseling Services assisted students in recognizing their resiliency in returning to campus and developing the necessary skills for stress management, self-care, and/or mindfulness skills to help them be successful. Furthermore, staff worked with them to develop their own academic safety plan (e.g., potential barriers, how to manage them, how to identify warning signs).

Multicultural Outreach Team (MCOT):

- **Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Workshop Series:** The Multicultural Outreach Team is offering a series of three workshops to students. Through these workshops, students engage in dialogue about identity, empathy, stereotypes, bias, privilege, power, white supremacy, and systemic racism. This workshop series is promoting community as well as building a community that is devoted to creating a campus environment that enables all to thrive. These workshops are designed as a three-step series:
 - Step 1: Voices of Discovery: Understanding our Identities: This program promotes awareness of diversity by providing an opportunity for cross-cultural interactions among students. This program fosters meaningful interaction between students from different backgrounds, helping students better understand themselves and others.
 - Step 2: Disarming Racial Microaggressions: Racial microaggressions are subtle verbal slights that can make people of color feel insulted or invalidated. Even well-intentioned people can commit microaggressions and might be unaware when they commit a microaggression. This 3-hour workshop helps participants recognize the different forms of racial microaggressions and identify safe and effective ways to intervene as a bystander.
 - Step 3: Anti-Racism Workshop: The Living Anti-Racism Workshop invites participants to develop committed action to anti-racism in service of ending racial discrimination on campus.

Specific Outreach to International Students: Student Counseling Services staff presents regular workshops and programs to international students in response to requests from the International Student Office and/or INTO program. Examples of programs offered in the past year include: Coping with Seasonal Depression and Coping with Social Isolation due to Global Pandemic.

Multicultural Therapist: In Spring 2021, the department partnered with the Multicultural Center to create a “shared” Multicultural Therapist position at Student Counseling Services. The Multicultural Therapist prioritizes working with students from marginalized communities and identities including LGBTQIA+, Black/African American, Latino, Indigenous/First Nations, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Multi-racial, and other students of color. The Multicultural therapist provides culturally affirming mental health services including triage, individual counseling, psychotherapy groups, and crisis appointments. The Multicultural Therapist builds liaison relationships across campus and student groups/organizations, as well as develops and implements outreach and programming.

WellConnect: In spring 2021, Student Counseling Services brought on a third-party vendor contract to serve as an extension of the department’s services. WellConnect has a national presence of seasoned licensed counselors and is able to scale up services in accordance with demand for students with focal concerns. Doing so served multiple purposes including increasing access to students living out of state, the ability to offer services outside of the university’s business hours, to provide greater access to counselors with greater diversity of identity variables than Student Counseling Services currently employs, and access to translation services in over 100 languages.

Staff Training:

- **The Ceceilyn Miller Institute for Leadership & Diversity in America:** Provided training and facilitated sessions on the topic of Implicit Bias and the book “How to be an Antiracist” by Ibram X. Kendi. The training curriculum provided participants with the necessary awareness, content knowledge, and skills to help foster staff development and mutual respect when exploring issues of diversity. Participants engaged in activities and discussions that enhanced their own understanding of identity and diversity and, in turn, helped them work more effectively with a diverse population.
- **“How to be an Anti-Racist” Book Club:** Provided a copy of the book referenced above for all residential life team members (full-time and Resident/Community Assistants). Will continue to facilitate dialogue on topics connected to the previous training by the Miller Institute and which continue to be expanded upon within the book.
- **Implicit Bias and the Campus Community:** The training curriculum provides student participants (Resident/Community Assistants) with the necessary awareness, content knowledge, and skills to help foster staff development and mutual respect when exploring issues of diversity.
- **Resident/Community Learning Teams (New Inservice Structure):** The Student Staff Leadership and Development Committee has adjusted the monthly in-service model to a new small group dialogue format that is led by professional staff and focused on discussing social justice, diversity, and equity in a deeper context.

Projects/Initiatives:

- **“So you wanna talk about race?” Book Club:** Provided books to Resident Assistants and Professional Hall staff members and facilitated dialogue regarding race and current events. The training was convened to provide a platform for necessary awareness and space to explore these themes while acknowledging the various impacts these issues have on individuals and society.
- **Cultural Dinner Series:** Each year, approximately three cultural dinner opportunities are provided for students, staff, faculty, and community members to learn about a new culture and enjoy authentic food during the event. This series provides diversity knowledge for the campus community as a whole. NOTE: Due to COVID-19, only one dinner was held last year, the MLK Cultural Dinner featured Angela Rye in January 2020.
- **Watterson Renaming:** House names were changed to their level and tower, for example A North. They had previously been named after government officials and some were found to have been slave owners.
- **Inclusive Language Bulletin Board:** In September, every community/floor in the residence halls and apartments featured a bulletin board that focused on inclusive language.
- **Intentional Conversations (Bird Calls):** Each semester, Resident/Community Assistants engage one-on-one with residents to talk through identity development and cultural competence.
- **Professional Development Library:** Added several new additions to our departmental professional development library with all titles relating back to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).
- **Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Action (I.D.E.A.) Committee:** The department implemented a new DEI committee in our department tasked with reviewing and providing suggestions to adjust University Housing

policies and procedures from an equity lens, develop educational programs, and collaborate with other departments and organizations to facilitate learning.

- **How Diverse is your Universe?:** Developmental program hosted in Hewett-Manchester for students to look at the environment around them through a diversity lens.
- **Rhythm of the Night – A Latin Twist:** Students learned about different styles of Latin music. Students discussed the cultural influences that shaped Salsa, Tango, and Reggaeton.
- **Diversity Coalitions:** Diversity Coalitions focus on serving the needs of the underrepresented students in the residence halls, promoting cultural awareness and diversity through programming, and encourage unity among students and organizations on campus. Each diversity group elects an executive board to hold meetings, plan programs around diversity-related topics, and to serve as liaisons to the areas that they govern. There are three Diversity Coalition organizations on campus. These groups are advised by at least one Residence Hall Coordinator in the area. Meeting times and location are determined by the students.

University Police Department

Staffing Training:

- **Racial Intelligence Training and Engagement (R.I.T.E.):** This training is nationally recognized in encouraging a bias-free workplace, that includes racial equity inside and outside the agency. The training includes a combination of emotional and social intelligence skill-building with unique accountability tools. Years of research along with hands-on training, gave attendees a sole-source experience that is unforgettable, and valuable in creating awareness of implicit bias and building Racial Intelligence.

Projects/Initiatives:

- **Community Engagement Unit:** Illinois State University Police's Community Engagement Unit began in 2019 with a primary focus to engage and educate the campus community. Consisting of one sergeant, two officers, and Pawfficer Sage, this unit is available to deliver a variety of [free programs](#).
 - Bird Watch
 - Campus Violence: Prevention and Preparation
 - Cyber and Electronic Safety
 - Drugs of Abuse and Misuse
 - Emergency Response Unit and Crisis Negotiation Team
 - Illinois Cannabis Laws and DUI procedures
 - Lights in the Mirror
 - Verbal Judo
- Pawfficer Sage is the department's Outreach K9. After completing over 1200 hours of training with [SIT Service Dogs](#) in Ava, Illinois, Sage arrived at Illinois State in the summer of 2019 thanks to a successful Hatch fundraising campaign. When she's not snuggling a blanket in the Deputy Chief's office or chasing a ball down the hallway to the squad room, Sage is roaming with our Community Engagement Unit building relationships. Her only talent is affection; Pawfficer Sage does not detect any substances, nor does she work in apprehension.
- **S.A.F.E.:** Self-defense Awareness & Familiarization Exchange is an unparalleled 2-hour educational awareness, crime-victim prevention program – encompassing Strategies, Techniques, Options, and Prevention – that provides women with information that may reduce their risk of exposure to violence and introduces them to the physical aspects of self-defense. The program has a dual purpose:
 - To prevent crimes of sexual violence in our communities through programs of education and training, focusing primarily on awareness and prevention.
 - To educate women about realistic options that will help them avoid, escape, and survive assaults if they do occur.

- R.A.D.: Rape Aggression Defense: The basis of the R.A.D. system is realistic self-defense for Women (not a martial arts program). It provides women and young girls with an environment to nurture and develop positive skills, attitudes, belief in self and physical fitness. It is structured as a WOMEN ONLY course and taught by certified R.A.D. instructors. The three focuses are: Risk Reduction, Physical Defense and Dynamic Simulation. Students are provided with a course booklet for practice and reference. The booklet outlines the entire course and remains with the student upon course completion for growth and development. Each student, upon successful completion of the R.A.D. course, is a lifetime member and may return FREE to courses offered around the country (with their student manual signed by the R.A.D. instructor). Students *must attend all 12 hours* of the program, but no other costs or equipment are required.

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INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1867, Northeastern Illinois University (Northeastern or the University) has a rich tradition of educational innovation and prides itself on its diverse student population. Northeastern is consistently ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* as one of the most diverse universities in the Midwest, and the University is a federally designated Hispanic-serving institution. Diversity is embedded in the core mission of the University in practice and policy over the past decades. In June 2018, Northeastern proudly hired its first African-American female President, Dr. Gloria J. Gibson. In July 2021, Northeastern hired its first Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Executive Director, Dr. Shireen Roshanravan. President Gibson, her leadership team, and all University employees are dedicated to a diverse and inclusive approach to student success.



Supporting student development is a top priority at Northeastern, as evidenced by the University's recruitment, enrollment, and student-centered preparation programs. The diversity of students continues to grow as we provide increasingly more opportunities for underrepresented groups. Specifically, Northeastern continues to develop, implement, and evaluate admission recruitment plans, outreach initiatives and programmatic strategies that build on our growing ethnically diverse student population. That is merely the starting point for the University. Our efforts are then redoubled to ensure that students have every opportunity to succeed and earn a degree from Northeastern.

The following report responds to the Illinois Board of Higher Education's request to describe activities and services supporting student development for Underrepresented Groups on campus this past academic year (2020-2021).

UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS: PROGRAMS

Northeastern is committed to serving underrepresented students and providing them with an array of targeted educational opportunities. The following highlights programs at Northeastern that assist and support underrepresented students:

Angelina Pedroso Center for Diversity and Intercultural Affairs

The Angelina Pedroso Center for Diversity and Intercultural Affairs (Pedroso Center) develops and provides programming and initiatives in a welcoming environment designed to support students from socially and culturally diverse backgrounds. The Pedroso Center aims to create an environment that honors all differences, supports the holistic needs of students, and empowers them to be agents of social change. This is achieved by adhering to the values to which the Pedroso Center ascribes:

- **Student Success** Foster a learning environment by providing support, thought-provoking educational experiences, and interactive learning opportunities that increase student engagement, retention and graduation.
- **Social Justice** Promote intercultural awareness, equity and inclusivity through educational and co-curricular initiatives that empower students to be agents of social change.
- **Advocacy** Represent the needs and concerns of historically underserved student identities in order to ensure access to opportunity throughout all aspects of campus life while eradicating structural barriers.
- **Leadership Development** Engage students in the development of critical thinking and cultural competence to encourage life-long learning and global citizenship.

Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies

The Jacob H. Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies, located on the south side in Chicago's historic Bronzeville neighborhood, has been a leading center of scholarship and activism in Chicago and in the country, supporting the forward progression of African- American culture and life. For over fifty years, the Carruthers Center has been home to the Inner City Studies Programs (BA, MA), which have focused on the intersection of the social, political, and cultural aspects of inner city life, and specifically the African American experience, within it. One of Northeastern Illinois University's campuses, the Carruthers Center offers an array of courses in other programs and hosts a variety of community and cultural events for students and for the surrounding Bronzeville community. Student support is a core value at the Carruthers Center. For instance, since Fall 2019, the Carruthers Center has hosted a freshman cohort, along with additional degree programs in social work, community health, gerontology, school leadership, and a certificate in couple and family counseling.

In addition, the Carruthers Center houses the Department of Educational Inquiry and Curriculum Studies Inner City Studies Education program, an academic program within the College of Education. Through its interdisciplinary curricula, Inner City Studies Education examines the major social, political, economic, and cultural forces that impact inner city communities in Chicago, in the United States, and throughout the world. The program is committed to training and retraining persons who desire to live and/or work in the inner city. The Carruthers Center also makes its facilities available to not-for-profit organizations that promote the growth and development of the individual, community, and services, including The Great Black Music Project. The Carruthers Center's degrees and programs have prepared thousands of students to work as professionals in a multiplicity of inner city agencies, institutions, and organizations, both public and private.

Center for College Access and Success

The Center for College Access and Success (CCAS) is the largest school improvement organization in Chicago. Founded in 1978 as the Chicago Teachers' Center, CCAS develops collaborative partnerships that engage the entire community to help students succeed academically and socially. CCAS is dedicated to an educational mission that empowers and supports students, families, educators, and the community. The impactful work at CCAS is funded by State of Illinois appropriation, federal, state, and private grants and contracts. The following is a list of Initiatives and Programs at the Center.

Initiatives

- Adventure/Challenge
- Education After School Programs
- Arts in Education
- College Access and Readiness Curriculum
- Development Family and Community Engagement
- Language and Culture Motivational Interviewing
- STEM Programs for Students and Teachers
- Teacher Professional Development
- Tutoring and Mentoring

Programs

- 21st Century Community of Learners
- Spaces for Possibility
- Talent Search Upward Bound
- Upward Bound Math and Science

El Centro

El Centro is one of Northeastern Illinois University's locations. It is a focal point for the Latino community and provides educational opportunities within a culturally comfortable and easily accessible setting. El Centro offers the general education program of the University to students who are interested in taking classes primarily during the evening hours and/or weekends. The El Centro location provides an important opportunity to expand the University's rich history as a center of learning, where our students become leaders in their fields and communities. Steeped in an

important history of providing quality educational experiences for the Latino community, the El Centro remains connected to its past, while creating a new future of opportunities for all students. This new learning environment will become a hub for the acquisition of knowledge through its excellent academic programs and its community-based programming. El Centro represents the University's commitment to its students and to the broader community.

In collaboration with community-based organizations, El Centro serves the community through outreach programs in the areas of citizenship, education, health, housing and technology. Additionally, non-credit workshops in English as a Second Language (ESL) are offered for community members at no cost. The El Centro Community Education Program seeks to improve the lives of people living in the Avondale, Hermosa and Logan Square communities and surrounding Chicago neighborhoods. El Centro is poised to continue to provide access and educational opportunities to diverse communities in the Chicago area and serve as a resource and a bridge for students and community members to develop their human capital, nurture self-esteem, and prepare for the professions in the multicultural world of the 21st century.

English Language Program

The English Language Program (ELP) provides Northeastern students with an opportunity to develop the level of English language speaking, reading and written communication skills students need in order to succeed in higher education. The writing skills portion of ELP offers classes in basic academic writing for both native (ELP) and non-native (ESL) speakers of English. The reading skills part of the program is comprised of READ courses that have been designed to offer opportunities for the native and non-native English speaker to acquire the prerequisite reading skills and strategies necessary to comprehend college level material. The speaking skills part of the program consists of a single course in ESL speaking and listening. The majority of students who participate in ELP are from underrepresented groups. The ELP program serves a vital role at Northeastern.

ENLACE Fellowship

ENLACE provides grant support to students. In Spanish, it stands for ENgaging Latina/o Communities for Education. ENLACE began in 2000 with an initial \$1.5 million grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation as part of the national ENLACE Initiative. The grants were awarded to increase opportunities for LatinX students to enter and complete college. The Northeastern Illinois University grant for ENLACE was one of thirteen sites selected across the United States and was the only one funded in the Midwest. Additional financial and in-kind support has supported the program's continued success along with the ongoing commitment of Northeastern Illinois University. The program was recognized in 2016 as a finalist for the national Examples of Excelencia award, which recognizes evidence-based practices that increase LatinX student success in higher education.

The mission of the ENLACE Higher Education Master's Program is to invest in the preparation of leadership in higher education that will create change responsive to the educational needs of LatinX students and an increasingly diverse college student population. The program aims to support promising students to work as culturally competent and critical staff and administrators at institutions of higher education immediately after they graduate, aiding first-generation college students, economically challenged students, immigrants, and students from underrepresented groups. The program emphasizes on the LatinX experience and provides knowledge & skills related to the history and development of colleges, universities, and community colleges, and to effective administrative practices at that level. It stresses an understanding of administrative and supervisory skills for the development and support of instructional systems at the collegiate level. The program also prepares highly qualified students for further graduate study and research in doctoral programs so they may pursue a path to tenured faculty and senior administrator positions at colleges and universities across the nation.

The program also offers the ENLACE scholarship on a limited basis to students with a demonstrated commitment to careers working at Hispanic Serving Institutions, with LatinX communities, first-generation college students, immigrant students, and/or other members of under-represented groups.

First-Year Experience Program

The First-Year Experience (FYE) Program is a university-wide initiative that engages students in activities designed

to ensure their success in higher education. The FYE Program is designed to support first-year students in the transition into the intellectual, cultural, and social community of Northeastern through FYE classes and co-curricular opportunities. Notably, the FYE Program places special emphasis on students' first year because research and experience demonstrates that building a strong foundation during students' first year is the key to their future success. Program staff, course faculty and peer mentors all help first-year students through this program.

Grow Your Own

Grow Your Own Teachers (GYO) is an innovative partnership of community organizations, higher education institutions, and school districts with the mission of building a more diverse teacher workforce. More specifically, this statewide initiative aims to improve teaching and learning in high-needs schools by recruiting and preparing community-based prospective teachers of color and returning them to their neighborhood schools to teach. Through the GYO program, state appropriated funds are made available to cover students' tuition and fees, as well as to provide other wrap around services such as academic tutoring and Illinois state licensure test preparation (e.g., content exams). Beyond the financial and academic resources, GYO also provides a comprehensive network of social and emotional support as another mechanism for retaining students of color and helping them successfully complete their degree. In other words, GYO aims to provide aspiring teachers of color (many of whom are parents, community leaders, and/or school paraprofessionals) a "no barrier" access to higher education and a career in teaching. The Daniel L. Goodwin College of Education at NEIU has been in partnership with GYO for over ten years, working to prepare a diverse, culturally responsive, stable, and effective teaching force for Chicago schools.

NEIU has graduated over 70 GYO candidates to date; the majority of whom are now teaching in high-needs schools within Chicago and the surrounding area. Currently, there are 33 GYO teacher candidates in the pipeline at NEIU. Twenty-seven have been accepted to an initial teacher licensure program within either the Daniel L. Goodwin College of Education (GCOE) or the College of Graduate Studies and Research. Two GYO candidates are currently completing their student teaching and will graduate in December 2021. Eight candidates will student teach and graduate in spring 2022. The average GPA of a GYO teacher candidate at NEIU over the last three semesters is 3.54. Moreover, among NEIU's GYO teacher candidates, roughly 65% speak a second language.

GYO is currently in a 3-year contract with Chicago Public Schools to recruit, train, and retain diverse teachers. As a long-time partner to GYO, NEIU's GCOE will play a key role in addressing the current teacher shortage, and helping to provide a pipeline of highly effective teachers of color ready to serve in Chicago Public Schools. The state of Illinois also recently passed legislation to allow state appropriated funds to be used to support dual credit high school programs for students interested in earning a degree in teaching. Again, as a key higher education partner to GYO, NEIU will play an important role in this expansion of the pipeline of future teachers of color.

Throughout the duration of this partnership, there has been much recognition of NEIU's collaborative efforts with GYO. The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), which is among the nation's largest and oldest organizations dedicated to quality professional development of teachers and school leaders, recognized NEIU's Goodwin College of Education with its 2012 Best Practice Award in Support of Global Diversity. This honor was given in acknowledgement of a clear commitment to equity and diversity demonstrated through curricula, clinical placements, direct community involvement, and reflective evaluations. The GYO program at NEIU was also awarded the 2012 National Association of Multicultural Education (NAME) Program Award and was a 2011 Excellencia Award finalist for Best Practices in Latino Student Success.

The Goodwin College of Education's ongoing collaboration with GYO is indicative of its enduring commitment to supporting student by recruiting, retaining, and graduating teachers of color capable of making a difference in the lives of Chicago's youth.

Learning Success Center

The Learning Success Center provides peer-based tutoring to undergraduate students completing General Education courses, Math Development courses, and offers assistance with writing assignments for all disciplines. The Center supports students by helping them to become active participants in the learning process and assisting them in understanding the skills, strategies and techniques needed to achieve academic success. The students are

provided with informed cooperative assistance through collaboration with the other academic support offices. The Learning Success Center affords students the opportunity to interact with faculty, staff and tutors in a supportive environment, as they become active and independent learners. This program helps as a continuous resource for Northeastern's underrepresented students.

Math, Science and Technology for Quality Education

The Math, Science and Technology for Quality Education (MSTQE) program is a “Bridge” program with City Colleges of Chicago in which faculty and students from the City Colleges and Northeastern teach and study together. Students at each of the City Colleges of Chicago are eligible for the program. The goal of the Consortium is to reduce cost and speed time to graduation for City College students while creating a pipeline to increase the diversity of individuals who become effective teachers of math, science and technology at the elementary and middle school level and/or in special education, and bilingual education. There is no formal application for the MSTQE program, which increases eligibility for underrepresented students.

McNair Scholars Program

The McNair Scholars Program (McNair Program) is a federal TRIO program funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Higher Education Programs. The goal of the McNair Program is to increase the attainment of doctoral degrees by students from underrepresented segments of society. It is designed to prepare undergraduate students for doctoral studies through involvement in research and other scholarly activities. Program participants are from underrepresented backgrounds and have demonstrated strong academic potential. Program staff and university faculty members work closely with McNair Scholars through completion of undergraduate requirements, encourage their entrance into graduate programs, and track their progress to successful completion of advanced degrees.

The program generally serves 14 new students and has been successful in enrolling a high number of underrepresented statuses, low income and underrepresented students in higher education.

Eligibility Requirements	Actual	Percentage	Required
Low income status	177	78%	66%
First generation status	200	88%	66%
First generation and low income	163	72%	66%
From underrepresented status	186	88%	33%

Source: NEIU McNair Program Internal Database 2020

Most of the NEIU McNair scholars are from Latino and African American background mostly coming from the field of social sciences and humanities.

NEIU Scholars by Race/Ethnicity	
Latino	47%
African-American	38%
White	12%
Native American	1%
Asian	1%
Two or More	1%
Total	100%

Source: NEIU McNair Program Internal Database 2019

The McNair Program has been successful in training its scholars with research activities and enrolling them in graduate studies.

Project Success

Project Success is an academic support program that has historically and continues to serve African-American and first generation college students who demonstrate academic potential and may not meet general university admissions requirements. The program supports students during the first two years at Northeastern. Established in 1968 as an educational access and equity program, the main focus is to recruit and retain African American students. Today, Project Success remains dedicated to access and equity by serving students of all races, ethnicities, nationalities, and backgrounds, making it one of the most diverse programs on campus. Project Success also continues its tradition of creating innovative student support services that help retain students by providing support services that help students build a strong academic and social foundation while they are transitioning into the collegiate environment.

Project Success provides support services that help students build a strong academic and social foundation and transition into the collegiate environment. Each student receives attentive academic advising, enrollment in a three-credit skills building and transition seminar course, access to academic peer mentors and tutoring programs in the Learning Success Center and the Math Development Program, as well as academic skill building workshops and priority consideration for all Northeastern summer bridge programs.

Project Success offers:

- A merit-based scholarship
- Attentive academic advising
- A three-credit academic skills building and transition course
- Access to Academic Peer Mentors
- Access to exclusive tutoring programs in the Learning Success Center and the Math Development Program
- Access to academic skills building workshops
- Priority consideration for all Northeastern Summer Transition Programs
- Social and Northeastern school spirit programs and events
- Multicultural and performing arts activities for Project Success students
- Caring, supportive and enthusiastic staff members

Proyecto Pa'Lante

- Proyecto Pa'Lante is an academic support program that has historically and continues to serve Latina/Latino/Latinx college students who demonstrate academic potential and may not meet general university admissions requirements. In September 1972, Proyecto Pa'Lante was established as an educational outreach program for the Latino community, providing academic support services on campus. The program was created by the Division of Student Affairs for Latino students with input from Puerto Rican and Chicano/Mexicano students who comprised the Union for Puerto Rican Students.
- Proyecto Pa'Lante provides a holistic approach to enhance student learning, intercultural competencies, and leadership development through excellent programs and services that have traditionally and continue to create a strong University support network for Latino students transitioning to, and within, Northeastern. The program supports students during the first two years at Northeastern.

Student Center for Science Engagement

- The mission of the Student Center for Science Engagement (SCSE) is to foster an environment at Northeastern that increases recruitment, engagement, and advancement of all students, especially underrepresented students (minorities, first generation college students, and women) in the STEM disciplines. The SCSE provides students with a holistic professional development experience that includes analytical and research training as well as important skills that prepare for graduate and professional schools and career. Northeastern launched the SCSE in 2009 using funds from the College Cost Reduction and Access Act Title V "Science Engagement@NEIU" grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

- The SCSE was institutionalized in 2011 and has become well-known for its strong programming, including one-on-one advising, highly successful workshops, student tours to outside partners, tutoring in upper division courses, free GRE preparation for the ever-increasing number of students considering graduate school, and a highly successful summer research program, now in its twelfth year. Individual holistic professional and academic advising, focusing on proactive approaches, is the cornerstone of the SCSE's success in recruitment and retention.
- The SCSE has designed, organized, and implemented a number of key signature workshops that focus on professional development including, among others, a CV/Resume Workshop, and Graduate School 101. In addition, the SCSE's summer research program is specifically designed to provide Northeastern students with opportunities for participating in undergraduate research. Supported through a variety of funding sources including a long-term partnership with the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation, in 2020 the SCSE provided research opportunities to 32 students. The SCSE also supports student attendance at national conferences to present the results of their research. In the fall of 2020, 28 students attended the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) National Diversity in STEM Conference to present their work on a national stage.
- Over the years, the Center has intensified its off-campus outreach as well, initiating collaborations with government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and industry partners. The SCSE actively seeks external funding opportunities from a wide variety of sources to augment the services and opportunities it offers to students. The SCSE also maintains a strong social media presence through regular postings on the Center's Instagram and Facebook pages, and it announcements addressed to a student mailing list of approximately 1,000 students in order to highlight current SCSE events, new internships, scholarships, and volunteer opportunities.

Student Leadership Development

- The Office of Student Leadership Development (SLD) strives to enhance students' college experience through student engagement. SLD is committed to providing meaningful opportunities that assist in challenging and fostering student development through co-curricular activities. SLD facilitates forums for nurturing leadership skills, student empowerment, civic engagement, and the development of the student as a whole. Commitment will be further expressed by cultivating opportunities for experiential learning, development of interpersonal relationships, appreciation for diversity and opportunities for community development. Ultimately, the SLD Office provides engaging opportunities that complement the University mission and enhance the Northeastern experience.

TRIO SSS Project Accomplishments (2010 to 2020)

- Northeastern was awarded its first three TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) grants in 2010. In the ten-year performance period, the project has demonstrated that comprehensive, structured student support has a profound impact on the outcomes of participating low-income, first-generation, and students with disabilities. In 2015, the three TRIO SSS grants were awarded for a second five year grant cycle. The grants were awarded for a third five year grant cycle in 2020.
- TRIO SSS's mission is to help students earn a college degree by promoting their academic achievement. TRIO contributes in preparing a diverse group of students to lead and serve by nurturing and guiding them through graduation. TRIO SSS bridges the achievement gap by fostering a commitment to learning and promoting opportunities that ensure post-graduate success. This support aims to keep the promise to NEIU students that their investment in higher education will yield returns. It is the goal of the TRIO SSS programs to help students learn how to navigate the university structure along with the "soft skills" necessary for self-advocacy and effective networking. By providing students with the skills they need in their academic life and workforce, they will be better prepared to help others in their community.
- The following tables summarize participant academic achievement levels of each TRIO program (Access, Achieve, and Teacher Prep) as reported by the U.S. Department of Education. The TRIO SSS programs

received their first graduation rates at the end of the 2016 academic year.

TRIO SSS ACCESS (serves 100 students with disabilities only)

Percentage of participants who persisted from one academic year to the beginning of the next academic year or graduate with a bachelor's degree during the academic year

Academic Year	Percentage
2010-11	N/A (1st year start up)
2011-12	89%
2012-13	87%
2013-14	93%
2014-15	76%
2015-16	93%
2016-17	83%
2017-18	84%
2018-19	86%
2019-20	93%

Percentage of enrolled participants served by the project who met the performance level required to stay in good academic standing at Northeastern

Academic Year	Percentage
2010-11	N/A (1st year start up)
2011-12	89%
2012-13	87%
2013-14	85%
2014-15	85%
2015-16	95%
2016-17	85%
2017-18	88%
2018-19	93%
2019-20	99%

*Percentage of participants in a cohort year who graduated with a bachelor's degree in 6-years
First Cohort grad*

Cohort	Percentage
1st Cohort (2010)	67%
2nd Cohort (2011)	42%
3rd Cohort (2012)	55%
4th Cohort (2013)	64%
5th Cohort (2014)	50%

TRIO SSS ACHIEVE (serves 140 first generation and low income students)

Percentage of participants who persisted from one academic year to the beginning of the next academic year or graduate with a bachelor's degree during the academic year

Academic Year	Percentage
2010-11	N/A (1st year start up)
2011-12	89%
2012-13	87%
2013-14	93%
2014-15	76%
2015-16	93%
2016-17	83%
2017-18	84%
2018-19	86%
2019-20	93%

Percentage of enrolled participants served by the project who met the performance level required to stay in good academic standing at Northeastern

Academic Year	Percentage
2010-11	N/A (1st year start up)
2011-12	94%
2012-13	97%
2013-14	93%
2014-15	94%
2015-16	91%
2016-17	89%
2017-18	94%
2018-19	88%
2019-20	99%

Percentage of participants in a cohort year who graduated with a bachelor's degree in 6-years

Cohort	Percentage
1st Cohort (2010)	63%
2nd Cohort (2011)	58%
3rd Cohort (2012)	65%
4th Cohort (2013)	84%
5th Cohort (2014)	89%

TRIO SSS TEACHER PREP (serves 140 first generation and low income students majoring or intending to major in Teacher Education)

Percentage of participants who persisted from one academic year to the beginning of the next academic year or graduate with a bachelor's degree during the academic year

Academic Year	Percentage
2010-11	N/A (1st year start up)
2011-12	93%
2012-13	92%
2013-14	93%
2014-15	*
2015-16	89%
2016-17	86%
2017-18	*
2018-19	86%
2019-20	86%

Percentage of enrolled participants served by the project who met the performance level required to stay in good academic standing at Northeastern

Academic Year	Percentage
2010-11	N/A (1st year start up)
2011-12	93%
2012-13	90%
2013-14	90%
2014-15	*
2015-16	93%
2016-17	89%
2017-18	*
2018-19	90%
2019-20	91%

Percentage of participants in a cohort year who graduated with a bachelor's degree in 6-years

Cohort	Percentage
1st Cohort (2010)	69%
2nd Cohort (2011)	70%
3rd Cohort (2012)	*
4th Cohort (2013)	68%
5th Cohort (2014)	58%

* Data unavailable. U.S. Department of Education failed to provide NEIU with data.

Undocumented Students Resources

- Northeastern welcomes all students, regardless of immigration status. Undocumented students constitute a group the University strives to accommodate and provide educational opportunities. Accordingly, the Division of Student Affairs at Northeastern has created the Undocumented Students Resources to ensure that Northeastern provides our undocumented students with the tools and resources they need to successfully pursue their education and to provide faculty and staff with information and resources to better assist undocumented students and their families.
- Undocumented Students Resources addresses the concerns, needs and development of our undocumented students and the faculty and staff who work with them on a daily basis. Students are provided one-on-one life advising, students are connected with University and external resources, students are provided purposeful programming, students receive training by faculty and staff, students connect with community based organizations and immigration experts, the University students establishes connections with undocumented students at high schools and community colleges, and the University shares best practices with other institutions of higher education.
- Goals of the Undocumented Students Resources include:
 - Improving awareness of the issues and concerns of Northeastern's undocumented students;
 - Gaining knowledge of Northeastern's policies and practices that affect undocumented students;
 - Increasing understanding of immigration laws that impact undocumented families;
 - Cultivating an open and supportive campus environment; and
 - Increasing community awareness of Northeastern's open, supportive practices towards undocumented families.
- These goals are implemented in various ways, including:
 - Conducting regular Undocumented Student Ally trainings for faculty and staff;
 - Open-door logos on display stickers, lapel pins and buttons around the University. Faculty and staff displaying the logo are allies who are informed and ready to address questions and concerns. Our message: "I am an Undocumented student Ally. You are always welcome here.";
 - Providing a comprehensive resource guide for faculty and staff accessible on the University's website;
 - Providing up-to-date information and materials available to students, families and community members via the University's website and via email communications;
 - Working with community legal aid partners to provide legal advice, screening, and assessment;
 - Investigating and reviewing Northeastern's policies and practices that negatively impact undocumented students;
 - Developing recommendations to modify or improve upon Northeastern's policies and practices; and
 - Offering extensive programming and support.
- In addition, the University's Financial Aid Office offers another important resource for undocumented students - namely a process to qualify for state financial aid under the Retention of Illinois Students Act (Rise Act).

USDA Agricultural Research Services and Northeastern Partnership

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) established a cooperative partnership with the University in August 2009 based on Northeastern's Hispanic Serving Institution status. The collaboration seeks to foster workplace diversity and increase opportunities for Latinos. Specifically, the USDA provides Northeastern with professional development opportunities for faculty and staff, engages in ongoing dialogue on the educational challenges of Latinos, and increases awareness of the current demands of the federal workplace.
- In Fall 2020, the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA) awarded Northeastern a \$275,000 grant to support its agriculture science engagement at Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI). Northeastern is one of 26 institutions in the United States – and the only institution

in Illinois – to receive this grant. It is Northeastern’s fourth USDA-NIFA grant and its fifth USDA grant overall. The USDA-NIFA program awarded a total of \$10.7 million in grants nationwide. The goal of the program is to promote and strengthen the ability of HSIs to conduct programs in the food and agricultural sciences that will lead graduates to enhance the country’s food and agricultural scientific and professional workforce.

- This grant will fund a new four-year research initiative, “A Bridge to USDA Research for H.S.I. STEM Undergraduates,” through summer 2024. The proposal was led by Laura Sanders, former professor of Earth Science and Environmental Science at Northeastern. Dr. Sanders was a key faculty member of Northeastern’s Student Center for Science Engagement (SCSE), helping to initiate its founding through grant proposals and serving as a member of SCSE’s Executive Board. Associate Professor of Biology and Environmental Science Pamela Geddes will be the lead investigator with co-principal investigators Associate Professor of Earth Science Kenneth Voglesonger and Associate Professor and Department Chair of Chemistry Ken Nicholson.
- The Bridge program is expected to prepare 20 undergraduate science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) students over the four-year grant period and help prepare them for graduate programs or careers in or related to one of NIFA’s priority areas: water for agriculture.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- Northeastern’s Student Disability Services Office (SDS) is committed to fostering inclusion and full participation of students with disabilities in all aspects of their University experience. SDS provides an array of services and support to students with disabilities. SDS provides academic and technical assistance to students and works closely with faculty to facilitate student access. SDS supports students by facilitating the provisions of reasonable accommodations as determined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. SDS goes beyond compliance through education, advocacy, and strong partnerships with NEIU faculty and staff.
- SDS services provided include alternative exam accommodations (i.e., extended time, readers, scribes), alternative text formats (i.e., Braille, electronic, enlarged), and note-taking assistance. SDS’s services are aimed at removing barriers for students with blind/visual impairments, deaf/hard-of-hearing impairments, learning disabilities, physical disabilities, psychological conditions, psychiatric conditions and other types of disabilities. A primary goal of these services is to improve retention and completion of students with disabilities at Northeastern.

CONCLUSION

- Northeastern Illinois University makes every effort to support students from underrepresented groups. The University provides substantial institutional support and resources to advance this mission. Efforts range from conducting outreach to diverse populations across the fifty states and Puerto Rico to producing support services at every step of the educational process. These efforts are intended to increase the success of students at each stage of the education pipeline to eliminate achievement gaps by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, and disability. This report highlights many of these steps. Northeastern will gladly provide any additional information related to this report to the Illinois Board of Higher Education.

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Northern Illinois University is excelling both in the state and nationally in removing barriers to college education for underrepresented students. As a regional research institution, NIU has a long and proud history of serving students from all backgrounds and providing broad educational and career opportunities. The work outlined in this report highlights the institutions legacy of offering access and opportunity for low income, first-generation students as well as racially diverse and transfer students from regional community colleges.



SUPPORT FOR RACIALLY DIVERSE STUDENTS

For the past five years, NIU has developed a Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan and Illinois Equity in Attainment (ILEA) Plan that has reenforced our commitment to being an institution that prioritizes student success through a lens of equity, inclusion and belonging. Through this lens we provide access and opportunity for students from underserved populations (e.g., Pell-eligible students, students of color and first-generation students) who come to college seeking to achieve their personal and professional goals, and to make a difference in their families, communities, states and nations. The 2019 SEM and 2020 ILEA plans provided intentional strategies to support racially diverse students. Despite the pandemic and racial unrest experienced during the 2020-2021 academic year, we remained focused on our mission to provide equity-minded policies, procedures and practices that support the growing and evolving needs of our diverse student populations. COVID highlighted and reinforced the need for us to continue to develop affordable, accessible and equitable approaches to admissions, enrollment, retention, and completion.

Admission and Enrollment Strategies:

- The elimination of out-of-state tuition. In addition to the domestic tuition rate.
 - We also offer a flat-rate tuition and practice Truth-in-Tuition.
- NIU also implemented the Huskie Pledge, which covers the cost of tuition and general fees for qualified students, including undocumented students and students from mixed status families, who are low-income and have GPAs of 3.0 or higher.
- The university no longer consider ACT or SAT scores for general admission or merit scholarships. Students who have a cumulative high school GPA of 3.0 or higher are guaranteed general admission; our merit scholarships also start at the 3.0 GPA for automatic awards.
- Beginning in Fall 2021, NIU implemented a Huskie First Survey to help us assess individual needs and interests of incoming students so that we can set them up for success from the beginning.

In addition to changes to admission, our SEM and ILEA plans emphasize the commitment to increasing the retention and completion rates for underrepresented students. We continue to utilize the ILEA equity plan developed in collaboration with the Partnership for College Completion to eliminate disparities in degree completion rates for minoritized and low-income students in comparison to White, Asian and higher income students (as indicated by Pell receipt). NIU will augment the SEM plan to focus on the retention and co-curricular programs and resources to support students outside the classroom including continual investment in faculty and staff professional development that will provide strategies for inclusive and trauma informed teaching and learning.

Institutional Strategies for Reducing Academic Equity Gaps to Increase Student Success:

1. Focused academic support inside and outside the classroom;
2. Building capacity in mentoring programs for students of color;
3. Leverage financial aid to support affordability;
4. Remove bias processes that hinder access to financial aid and influence admission decisions; and
5. Invest in an inclusive teaching and learning model that promotes curricular redesign, culturally responsive teaching strategies and innovative professional development.

To ensure that we remain focused on retention and completion, we made intentional efforts to ensure student success is the focus of our Higher Learning Commissions Qualitative Initiative project in which we are committed to achieving the following equity outcomes:

1. Colleges are responsible for graduating all their degree-seeking students as quickly and efficiently as possible;
2. All students can graduate with college degrees if they have the right information, tools and supports; and
3. Achievement gaps between low-income, Black, and Latino students and their higher income and white peers are unacceptable and should be eliminated.

These efforts will be undertaken without sacrificing institutional quality or excellence or increasing admission standards. NIU's equity strategies also include:

- Changing our bursar hold policy to ensure students with small balances can re-enroll;
- The launch of a student emergency fund;
- Numerous tutoring resources for students ranging from generalized tutoring to academic-specific tutoring;
- Supplemental Instruction sessions are led by students who are leaders in courses with high equity gaps; and
- Each of the colleges within the university offer discipline-specific tutoring, and the cultural diversity centers have peer mentors to assist incoming first-year students with adjusting to the academic and social environment of the NIU campus.

NIU is committed to doing the hard work necessary to address systemic inequities and foster a more inclusive campus culture, knowing that achieving some goals and outcomes will require sustained, long-term effort, while other actions can lead to rapid, positive change. The ultimate outcome of these goals is to create experiences and resources for underrepresented students where they can thrive and grow to their fullest potential.

Supports for Students with Disabilities

During FY20 and FY21, the Disability Resource Center (DRC) pivoted service delivery in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. This included changing meeting platforms and procedures to virtual and phone appointments. This allowed students with disabilities who are distance learners or those who have difficulty with transportation to more easily connect with the DRC to explore and establish reasonable accommodations. We have experienced a decline in the amount of “no-show” appointments while experiencing an approximately 30% increase in students registering with our office. We have continued this forward momentum to expand the ease of use of processes by developing an online portal. This will be launched during FY22 with online access of paperwork and forms, access to note-taker notes, and access to already converted accessible textbooks. The DRC has also experienced a 200% increase in requests for creation of accessible videos with captions as the university transitioned to remote instruction. At an institutional level, NIU has partnered with Blackboard Ally which provides real-time information and suggestions to professors regarding the accessibility of materials that are shared through the Blackboard Learning Management System. Additionally, Blackboard Ally allows students the ability to easily convert materials posted on Blackboard into accessible formats including electronic braille files, accessible Optical Character Recognition (OCR'd) documents, and audio versions. This program was piloted during the fall 2021 semester and feedback will be collected at the end of the semester.

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SIU Carbondale embraces a unique tradition of access and opportunity, inclusive excellence, innovation in research and creativity, and outstanding teaching focused on nurturing student success. As a nationally ranked public research university and regional economic catalyst, we create and exchange knowledge to shape future leaders, improve our communities, and transform lives.



CARBONDALE

Diversity is an integral part of our legacy which began with the 1869 inaugural class of 143 that included two African American students. Today, minority students make up 28.4 percent of our total enrollment, and SIU Carbondale continues to rank among the nation's top colleges and universities in the number of degrees awarded to students in ethnic and racial minority groups.

The following summary provides a snapshot of the programs, activities and services that SIU provides in support of underrepresented student development.

STUDENT MULTICULTURAL RESOURCE CENTER

The Student Multicultural Resource Center (SMRC) serves as a catalyst for inclusion, diversity and innovation. SMRC looks to foster an environment where all campus members are respected and welcomed and provide support through the Black Resource Center; Hispanic/Latino Resource Center; LGBTQ Resource Center; and Women's Resource Center.

Black Resource Center

The Black Resource Center serves to enhance opportunities for African American students by providing comprehensive programming activities and resources (academic, educational, social, and cultural) to fulfill the vision of student success (retention and graduation). The center also provides a safe space for students to engage in powerful local movements and strengthen unity in the African American community.

Educational programming and activities include: Black Heritage Month; guest speakers series; life skills and advocacy workshops; mentoring programs; film and documentary series; networking opportunities; computer lab; scholarship information and referral; collaborative partnerships with national and local organizations; volunteerism; and community food and winter care drive.

Hispanic/Latino Resource Center

The Hispanic/Latino Resource Center (HLRC) focuses on student success and engagement, diversity, equity and inclusion, and community involvement and leadership. The success and holistic development of Hispanic/Latino students is a priority. HLRC offers a place where student belong and are encouraged to engage and participate in Registered Student Organizations (RSO) such as: Hispanic Student Council (HSC); Latino Cultural Association (LCA); Multi-Greek Council (MGC); and other RSOs that help students grow into culturally competent leaders.

Student success workshops include: self-advocacy and self-efficacy; time management; financial wellness; stress management and stress relief; career development and decision making.

Throughout the year, HLRC sponsors a variety of cultural events including: National Hispanic Heritage Month, Day of the Dead, La Posada, Mock Quinceañera; Cinco de Mayo; Hispanic/Latino Recognition Ceremony; Pre-commencement Recognition ceremony (December and May).

Women's Resource Center

Through empowerment, health and wellness, leadership, community engagement, and academic success, the Women's Resource Center (WRC) offers resources and programming to provide a dedicated support system for

individuals who identify as women at SIU. Acknowledging the intersectionality within womanhood, WRC partners throughout the academic calendar with Black Resource Center, Hispanic/Latino Resource Center, LGBTQ+ Resource Center, and Center for International Education to supply holistic programming for our students. WRC's programming includes workshops with topics such as diversity, gender equity, organizational skills, leadership, women's health, and networking. Services available to students include: mentoring, professional preparation series, internship opportunities, free use of computers, and free printing.

WRC develops comprehensive programming for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Women's History Month, and Sexual Assault Awareness Month. WRC collaborates with the Start Seeing Pink committee to create programming for Breast Cancer Awareness Month. WRC encourages people of all backgrounds to speak out against violence against women and is committed to educating our community on the effects of violence against women. Through these efforts, the WRC strives to create a strong support system for the community of women it serves.

LGBTQ Resource Center

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans*, Queer (LGBTQ) Resource Center serves as a centrally located, safe campus space that provides educational outreach, referral information and advocacy services, which will add to an inclusive and diverse environment for LGBTQ students, faculty, staff, families, friends, alumni, and the greater community of Southern Illinois.

Events and programs focusing on LGBTQ issues and identities are held all year on campus. These include: LGBTQ History Month; World AIDS Day events; April Awareness Week; and Lavender Graduation, a pre-commencement spring celebration and ceremony for SIU LGBTQ graduates.

FIRST SALUKI CENTER

The First Saluki Center provides access, opportunity, and support services for first-generation students in the following areas: peer, faculty and staff mentoring; scholarship opportunities; first & proud living learning community; volunteerism; internship opportunities; math and science tutoring; life skills and academic success workshops.

The First Saluki Center, in collaboration with colleges and other departments, aims to increase the success of first-generation students. The center is designed to promote transition, persistence, and progress to graduation for first-generation students. The First Saluki Center earned the 2021 Silver Excellence Award in the First-generation Student Success category from the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators/Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. The center also was named a First-Gen Forward campus by the Center for First-Generation Student Success in 2020 and was recognized in the nonprofit Strive for College's 2021 "I'm First! Guide to College," a guidebook to help low-income, first-generation college students.

Programming and services provided in spring 2021 include: first-gen connection, job search strategies, networking opportunities, career development, financial literacy, book and tuition scholarships, peer math and science tutoring, and a lending textbook library.

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Disability Support Services continues to lead the campus community in adopting a culture of access through student engagement, a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, and campus partnerships. Through a variety of activities, DSS ensures equal, effective, and meaningful access for disabled students.

Student Engagement

Though accommodations are required by law and do not guarantee success, in most instances disabled students would not be able to fully participate without their accommodations. To remove procedural barriers for students, DSS recently adopted an information system which streamlines the steps students must follow to implement certain accommodations. The system (DSS Student Portal) allows students to notify faculty of accommodations, request alternative format textbooks, schedule alternative testing accommodations, retrieve peer notes, and request an appointment with their accommodation coordinator. The portal allows students to initiate nearly all procedures with DSS at any time through a mobile friendly interface. This eliminates the extra time which was previously spent in picking-up and delivering paperwork regarding accommodations.

Accommodations Snapshot

In the fall of 2021, DSS has served 645 disabled students with academic accommodations thus far. Over 58% of DSS students have two or more disabilities, so it is rare that a student utilizes just one type of accommodation. The most typical accommodations are listed below:

- Alternative Testing: 539
- Note taking Services or Technology: 264
- Alternative Formats: 141
- Academic adjustments: 134
- Classroom accommodations: 106
- Housing Modifications: 57
- Communication Access: 30

Pandemic Accommodations

Due to chronic health conditions, 17 students are approved for remote class accommodations. This accommodation involves engaging faculty in an interactive process about their course pedagogy and essential requirements to determine if remote attendance is reasonable and readily achievable. Without this accommodation these students would not be enrolled and continuing toward graduation. In addition, DSS is able to provide effective communication access to deaf students in their online classes.

VETERAN SERVICES

Veteran Services provides processing and advice to students using state and federal veteran educational benefits (GI Bill, Illinois Veterans Grant, Illinois National Guard Grant, Illinois MIA/POW Scholarship). It supports recruiting, transition, engagement and academic success for veteran and military family members. Veterans Services has a student group which is affiliated with Student Veterans of America and relationships with veteran service organizations and the VA medical center.

Other resources sponsored by the Veterans Services include: conference room, lounge, game room and quiet room for use by veterans and military family members during breaks between classes.

Events sponsored or supported include: Military Appreciation Sporting Events; Suicide Awareness/Intervention (“Out of the Darkness” walk, and “Fresh Check Day”); mental health seminar hosted by Marion, IL VA Medical Center; orientation and integration seminars for incoming students; participation in Illinois Department of Veteran Affairs Leadership Summit and Student Veterans of America – Illinois “Fall-in” leadership training events; and Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies on campus.

Veterans Services also works in conjunction with other university offices to host job fairs for veterans and an annual family carnival for veterans with dependents to identify resources for student family members.

Military Culture 101 training is offered annually for faculty/staff and students to improve awareness of veteran specific transition challenges. Veterans Services also provides a constituency group within the alumni organization made up of veteran graduates to provide mentorship and raise funds to support scholarships.

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

The faculty in the College of Liberal Arts (CoLA) continue to serve underrepresented groups on campus through the curriculum, research, leadership in registered student organizations, advisement, mentoring, scholarship opportunities, and the priority given to diversity in hiring. In addition to regular course offerings concerning diversity in race, class, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality in the programs in English, Communication Studies, Sociology, History, Languages, Linguistics, Political Science, and Philosophy, CoLA is home to the Africana Studies program, the Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies program, a minor in Latino and Latin American Studies, and a minor in Native American Studies. The latter four programs, their course offerings, and their faculty in their roles as instructors, advisors, and mentors serve the campus community and underrepresented groups in particular.

The Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies program holds a conference every spring, hosting student presenters from across the country. Although not for undergraduate students, CoLA houses a graduate certificate in Africana Studies. Moreover, in Spring 2021 the Africana Studies program successfully completed the hiring of three new faculty members. As teachers, advisors, and mentors these new faculty in Africana Studies will serve all our students, especially our underrepresented students.

In Communication Studies, faculty hold workshops and trainings toward the ends of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Students in Communication Studies are also supported to attend the Plank Center Summit on Diversity and Inclusion in Public Relations (Chicago). CoLA is also active in bringing guest lecturers to campus, speakers who address issues of diversity and contribute to the enhancement of instruction for undergraduate students from underrepresented groups.

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ANALYTICS

The College of Business and Analytics (CoBA) provides an array of services and activities for students such as tutoring, career development workshops, personal development workshops, and in-person or virtual events covering topics that provide unique perspectives regarding internship opportunities, career opportunities, major specific information, and diversity, equity, and inclusion in business. We try to bring speakers of diverse backgrounds, experiences, and abilities to speak to our students because we are committed to showcasing what inclusive excellence looks like in the world of business. When possible, our schools subscribe to professional journals and professional associations/societies that are geared toward Hispanic/Latino students and professionals or Black students and professionals. While all of our services and activities are open to all CoBA students, we are very mindful of access, participation, and opportunities for our students from underrepresented groups. It is important for all our students to have the tools to successfully complete their educational objectives, especially those from historically underrepresented groups.

Taking into consideration access, we want to ensure our students have access to the technological resources needed to succeed. To that end, CoBA provides computer labs/stations, free printing, and a Career Closet where students can borrow professional clothing to wear to interviews or for situations that require professional attire.

CoBA has many RSOs to encourage student participation and engagement including the Women's Business Association, the National Association for Black Accountants, and ASCEND | Pan-Asian Leaders.

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, COMPUTING, TECHNOLOGY, AND MATHEMATICS DIVERSITY INITIATIVES

Success in Engineering through Excellence and Diversity Program (SEED) is an academic support program in the College of Engineering, Computing, Technology, and Mathematics (CoECTM) designed to improve the enrollment, retention and graduation rate of our engineering students, with a focus on students from underserved groups. The program enhances student success through a wide variety of activities including educational support, interaction with faculty and support from peers who share a similar experience. The SEED office is staffed with safe zone trained staff to ensure a safe space for students to work and study. There is a computer lab open to all students and offers free printing to College of Engineering Students. The SEED program has collaborated with the Center for Learning Support Services to offer tutoring in the engineering building, which supports the entire college of engineering student population but serves as a great retention tool for diverse populations.

Additional Programming and Activities

Engineering Multicultural Registered Student Organizations (RSO) were created to support and unite students from engineering underrepresented populations. They include: National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE); Society of Women Engineers (SWE); and Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE).

The Women's Leadership Retreat brings students together to network with each other. Participants will have the opportunity to hone their leadership skills, engage in interactive discussions and networking sessions, and reflect on their own leadership qualities and what they have to offer in their respective roles at SIU and beyond.

The SEED office grants financial support to approximately 15 students a semester from underserved populations in the College of Engineering.

The SEED office hosts the mentoring community meetings called Women of Excellence in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (WeSTEM). This community was created to inspire and connect current and aspiring STEM leaders. The cornerstones of this group are community, empowerment, careers, and outreach. WeSTEM was designed to be a brave space created by women in STEM for women in STEM free of judgement and full of trust.

TRIO PROGRAMS

Student Support Services (SSS) at SIU Carbondale assists a select group of students in adjusting to college life and successfully pursuing an undergraduate degree. SSS utilizes a holistic approach in providing support services for students by focusing on academic, social, and cultural aspects of the college experience.

The strategies used to improve retention and graduation rates include: academic counseling, advice with course selection, individualized tutoring, workshops, career exploration, and social and cultural activities. SSS helps students build a solid foundation for success and connects students to other university programs and support services that expose students to educational opportunities, as well as cultural involvement, to promote a well-rounded college experience.

McNair Scholars

The Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program is a comprehensive graduate preparation program that prepares undergraduates for successful careers as graduate students, professors, and professional researchers. The McNair Scholars Program is a TRIO funded by the U.S. Department of Education and provides services to low-income/first-generation college students or students who are members of a group which is underrepresented in graduate education with effective preparation for doctoral study. Southern Illinois University Carbondale accommodates 29 students each year. This year students engaged in educational and professional development activities including: individualized academic and personal support, staff and faculty mentoring, preparation for GRE, academic coaching and tutoring, access to workshops focusing on graduate school admissions and funding.

SALUKI SUMMER BRIDGE

The Saluki Summer Bridge first year program continues the work started in the summer. During their first year, the Saluki Summer Bridge students participate in academic support services, continuing the process of academic and social adjustment and enhancing skills that will build a solid foundation for future success. These support services include peer mentoring, academic counseling, and workshops.

AVIATION

Activities to support underrepresented students in Aviation include: OBAP (Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals) that we support monetarily as we do the Registered Student Organizations NGPA (National Gay Pilot Association) and WIA (Women in Aviation). We have provided funding for OBAP to attend their national conference and go on field trips. OBAP also hosts an annual Diversity Luncheon that we support as well.

CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

International Friends Club

Many of the community programs fall under the umbrella of the International Friends Club (IFC), a large group of US-American campus and community volunteers. The IFC offers a variety of programs for international students, scholars, and families. These programs include: Hosts Family; English in Action; Language Exchange; Loan Closet; International Women's Friendship Group; International Women's Support Group; Mother Care; Emergency Response Team; Conversation Groups; and Global Scholars Network.

Programs available for community members as well as for SIU students, staff, and faculty include: Speakers Bureau; In Gear Program: I Want to Tell You My Story; An International Dialogue on Faith: A Woman's Perspective; Translation Incorporated.

Special Events include: Newcomers Welcome Coffee Hour; International Coffee Hour; Family Game Night; International Education Week, International Festival; and International Picnics and Sports Activities

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To truly realize its values of diversity, inclusion and citizenship, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE) must continue to take on the difficult, yet necessary challenge to bring awareness to and address inequity on campus and lead the way in the region and community to a more just society. This effort will not only include increasing the demographic diversity of the university but ensuring that necessary supports are in place and resources available to position every member of the campus community for success. This is especially important as we consider current and future students. As we reduce barriers and continue to expand opportunities for access to an SIUE education, especially to those from historically underserved communities, it is critical that we are just as committed to cultivating an inclusive and equity minded campus environment and to addressing equity gaps in student outcomes.



Below is a list of primarily URG-based Student Support Services at SIUE.

Student Opportunities for Academic Results (SOAR)

SIUE's existing efforts to support students from underrepresented groups, including racially minoritized students, are best represented by the Student Opportunities for Academic Results (SOAR) program. SOAR serves many underrepresented student populations and is free to all students. Within SOAR, there are specific programs to support African American students, including a near-peer mentoring program and first year courses to bolster student success: FAME (Females of African descent Modeling Excellence) and GAME (Goal-oriented African American Males Excel). The FAME and GAME programs serve 40 first-semester students (20 new students each year in each program) at SIUE to help them succeed academically, professionally, and personally.

CORE (College Readiness: Transition, Engage, Achieve and Mentor) Team

CORE is home to SIUE's Pre-Collegiate and Summer Success Programs. Both programs target primarily first-generation and low-income students. The Pre-Collegiate Program includes activities to introduce high school students to the college experience, SIUE and aid with FAFSA and college application completion. The Summer Success Program is a five-week program open to a select cohort of newly admitted first-year students. Participants have the potential to earn up to 4 college credit hours and are connected with campus services and resources to support student success and thriving. CORE programming also includes a mentoring program, e-Plugs, for pre-collegiate and first year students at SIUE who participated in the Summer Success program.

The Inclusive Excellence Education and Development Hub

The Inclusive Excellence Education and Development Hub (The Hub) is dedicated to achieving and supporting SIUE's institutional goal of inclusion which is central to the learning, development, and success of our campus community through educational opportunities that encourage dialogue and critical reflection. The Hub aims to ensure the SIUE community is welcoming, supportive, and a place where all may find a sense of belonging which honors each person's unique story and experiences. To achieve these objectives, The Hub engages with students and the greater campus community through a variety of programs and initiatives, offering opportunities for participation on multiple levels.

Student Engagement in High Impact Practices

High-Impact Practices (HIPs) are recognized for their positive impact on retention and learning outcomes for students across many backgrounds. SIUE has been nationally recognized for its capstone experience that is required of all undergraduates, the Senior Assignment. To increase access and participation in high-impact practices, particularly for historically underserved students, in fall 2019, the Office of the Provost in partnership with SOAR launched Scholarly Connections and Rewarding Engagements (SCoRE), a program to provide students, especially during their first two years at SIUE, with broad access to high-impact, experiential learning activities outside the classroom. During the program's pilot year, there were approximately 120 first-year student participants. All participants were from an underrepresented group. Students participated in workshops and other activities to

support with transition to college. SCoRE will now be housed in the new Office for Strategic Partnerships, Student Pathways and Engagement that is part of the recently created Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Division. The office will be responsible for aligning and coordinating an array of programs, services and initiatives using best practices to promote retention, completion, and post-graduation success for historically marginalized students. We are carefully examining participation in HIPs across groups, programs, etc. and working to ensure equitable and inclusive access.

Student Success Coaches

SIUE's Office of Retention and Student Success now includes Student Success Coaches, professional staff members who support students through academic challenges. Success Coaches introduce students to campus resources and support students with skill development critical to their success and persistence toward graduation.

SIUE Cougar Connector Program

The Cougar Connector Program currently serves all first-year students at SIUE by providing them with upper-level students who act as ambassadors to the campus and its resources. This program was originally created by and for honors students, who then scaled up the program to accommodate all first-year students. During the program's launch in fall 2020, 150 upper-class students volunteered to provide help and guidance to 1,500 first-year students.

Collegiate 100

Collegiate 100 is a student organization that facilitates and supports the personal, professional, and civic development of African American males at SIUE. As an auxiliary program of 100 Black Men of America, collegiate members coordinate, lead, and support on-campus and off-campus community service programming in the areas of Leadership, Education, Health & Wellness, and Economic Empowerment.

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Mission: To optimize the health of the people of central and southern Illinois through education, patient care, research and service to the community

Vision: Better health for all

VALUES OF THE SIU SCHOOL OF MEDICINE



Discovery: We are committed to an environment of discovery in which innovation, scientific inquiry, application of knowledge and creative professional achievement flourish. Our innovation, research and science aim to improve health and well-being.

Excellence: We are committed to excellence and continuous improvement in all we do. We value rigorous assessment of outcomes and performance. We seek positions of leadership and influence to fulfill our mission and achieve our strategic goals.

Collaboration: We collaborate and partner with the community. We partner with health systems, teaching hospitals, healthcare professionals, educational institutions, public health agencies, governmental agencies, private industry and others who seek to improve the health, healthcare and healthcare education.

Equity: We strive to be a just, fair, unbiased, and anti-racist organization. We are committed to diversity in all elements of our workforce, and to an environment of inclusion for all. We will continuously evaluate our policies, procedures and practices to minimize all forms of overt, implicit and historically propagated systemic bias. We strive for equity in our relationships, hiring practices, teaching, research, access to care, delivery of care and partnerships.

Compassion: We create compassionate and healing environments for all. Love for our communities and respect for the individual are reflected in our programs and patient care. Our compassion will be driven by honesty, integrity and equity in our actions.

In order to support students, our strategic plan has specific elements that outline our commitment and action to antiracism, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

SIU Medicine will:

- 1.3f - Develop a leading-edge training center that is mindful of diversity and equity in learner recruitment and retention, curricula, assessment and program evaluation.
- 2.5 - Systematically attract and retain diverse learners, faculty members, and staff members.
- 4.11 - Assure diversity and an environment of inclusion in all elements of the clinical enterprise.
- 5.2 - Develop a diverse and inclusive workforce, promote equitable treatment, and revise governance structures and policies to support equity across the organization.
- 5.3 - Become an organization that fully embraces and promotes equity and inclusion in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.
- 5.4 - Identify, address and minimize overt and implicit bias.
- 5.5 - Become an anti-racist organization.

SIU School of Medicine (SIUSOM) is a state-supported medical school established in 1970. The School's mission is "to assist the people of central and southern Illinois in meeting their health care needs through education, patient care, research, and service to the community." This mission drives the School's development as the focus of a university medical center for downstate Illinois. Equity is one of the core values of SIU School of Medicine; therefore, our mission reflects the region's socio-economic, ethnic and cultural diversity as a means of maintaining the vitality and relevance of the School's academic and service programs.

Unlike the University, or other public medical schools in Illinois, SIU School of Medicine accepts only Illinois residents into its undergraduate medical education program. Furthermore, the SIUSOM's mission emphasizes the health care needs of the central and southern Illinois region, and programs must reflect the region's population, both as a comparison and as a characteristic of its diversity in the composition of its student, staff and faculty populations. Overall, SIU School of Medicine endeavors to reflect a diverse mix of students, faculty and staff that will mirror the population for the central and southern Illinois counties served by the School.

In 2019, Dean Jerry Kruse, MD, MSPH, declared that SIU School of Medicine would become an anti-racist institution. The Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion has been at the forefront of implementing this commitment across the entire organization. Implementation has included expanding the staff and services that the office provides, examining policies and practices, included but not limited to the development of the Anti-Bias Curriculum Committee that is strategically designing a curriculum to reflect a culturally responsive clinical practice that we want our students to learn in order to provide to communities and one that our patients deserve. In leading an antiracist institution, SIUSOM is cognizant of the multiplicity of the ways in which being race conscious and race aware allows us to pay attention to the race-based medicine that has been practiced for far too long.

Like most institutions of higher learning, SIUSOM's goal is to graduate all students who enter the program. We utilize a holistic review in our admissions process to select medical students. In 2019, SIUSOM adopted a programmatic assessment model which approaches each student as an individual, conducting a detailed assessment of the student's problems and jointly designing enhancement and remediation strategies narrowly tailored to his or her needs. Specially-structured team activities are utilized when students show a need that can be best addressed in a small-group setting. The innovative programmatic assessment model provides increased monitoring of students' development and strategic supportive intervention. Programmatic assessment identifies students at risk, mentors them early, and provides support for them to succeed academically. We also support students in planning financially for medical school since approximately 85% of the students at SIU School of Medicine rely upon financial assistance to meet their educational costs.

While academic issues are most often the final pathway for students who must leave the SIUSOM, various social, economic, medical, and/or psychological factors may influence that result. Therefore, a holistic approach is utilized when supporting such students. A multidisciplinary team assesses and assists in implementing remediation strategies. The school's departments of Medical Education and Student Affairs usually lead the way when a medical student is experiencing challenges that are impacting their success. The Student Progress Committee serves as a monitoring body to ensure student's adherence to established standards of academic conduct. The Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion provides additional support where needed. An academic strategist meets regularly and separately with students who proactively seek guidance through the curriculum and with those who have displayed some deficit in academic performance or progress.

The student centered, supportive environment of SIUSOM and its commitment to bringing its students to graduation, whenever possible, help keep our completion/retention rates high, thereby delivering quality physicians who will address the health-care needs of central and southern Illinois. In this context, the School of Medicine has supported the development of its underrepresented students primarily through two major initiatives – its MEDPREP program and its Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

Medical/Dental Education Preparatory Program (MEDPREP)

The Medical/Dental Education Preparatory Program (MEDPREP) was established in 1972 by the SIUSOM and has helped over 1100 students successfully matriculate into medical or dental school nationally. MEDPREP graduates have played a critical role in creating diversity at the school of medicine. MEDPREP provides assistance to educationally and/or economically disadvantaged students in particular. The program operates on a year-round basis, beginning in June of each year. Students complete the program in five semesters (summer, fall and spring in their first year; fall and spring in their second year). MEDPREP is located on the campus of SIU Carbondale.

The program currently accepts up to 36 students per year for each two-year cohort, providing an environment in which students can hone their test-taking skills and enhance their academic record. With the assistance of their academic advisor, students tailor their academic program to maximize their profile for the medical/dental school

application process. Most students enroll in MCAT/DAT preparation courses during the first academic year and in upper-level science enrichment courses during the second year. Over 1,100 students have entered medical or dental school after attending our MEDPREP program. Medprep has also worked with SIU Physician Assistant (PA) Program so that graduates will be eligible to apply and be accepted into SIU PA program starting next academic year.

Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The staff of the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) is also committed to devising strategies and overseeing initiatives within the School of Medicine that will foster an inclusive environment for all students to thrive. The goal of the Office of EDI is to assure diversity in the students, faculty and staff that mirrors the census demographics for central and southern Illinois. Several initiatives provide support to the diverse faculty and staff who make up our workforce. Initiatives that incorporate cultural competency into the curriculum have also been implemented.

In addition, several members of the SIU School of Medicine's administration, faculty and students have attended training sponsored by the organization Crossroads Antiracism Organizing and Training, which uses a Theory of Change model to shape sustainable, resilient, and diverse communities and institutions and addresses implicit bias and systemic racism.

The Office of EDI in its expansion was able to hire an equity strategist who formerly worked at Crossroads Antiracism Organizing and Training for 50% FTE to help build training specific to the culture and needs of SIUSOM. The office also hired a trauma specialist 20%FTE to work with students, residents, and faculty to ensure that they have support and skills to properly process traumatic experiences that occur in classroom and clinical settings. This year we have focused on cultivating a more inclusive climate on the campus by developing departmental Equity Ambassadors. Furthermore, an Equity Support Team was created to cultivate a supportive safe space by providing services to those impacted by bias, and those proactively seeking assistance on how to minimize bias from occurring. Diversity and inclusion are necessary strategies for the continuing success of the SIU School of Medicine in meeting its mission.

Below is a list outlining all of the activities that the Office of EDI is involved in.

- Direct Services:
 - Trauma Mitigation by a Trauma Specialist
 - Antiracism trainings by Equity Strategist with background in Theory of Change model
 - Community Health Events with medical student involvement by Health Equity Fellow
 - Community Programs and Health Partnerships by Culturally Responsive Health Initiative Programs Coordinator
 - Tutoring
- Research Opportunities
 - Scholarships to attend conferences and professional development opportunities on EDI topics • Programs overseen include:
 - Antiracism Task Force-35 members across SIUSOM at various levels divided into 4 subcommittees to promote SIUSOM progress on the Antiracist Continuum
 - Metrics Committee
 - Organizational Analysis
 - Training o Policy and Procedure
- Equity Ambassadors
- Kenniebrew Forum
 - Annual 2-day conference and discussion of health disparities and other factors that impact population health.

- McNeese Scholars/P4 Physician Pipeline Preparatory Program
 - 4-year afterschool program offered to high school students at Springfield Public Schools to provide exposure, mentorship, and skill development to students interested in pursuing medical careers. • Equity Support Team
 - Created to cultivate a supportive safe space by providing services to those impacted by bias, and those proactively seeking assistance on how to minimize bias from occurring,
- Collaborative Partnerships Various clinical departments:
 - Grand Rounds: we have been invited by many departments to speak to faculty and residents on various topics, examples include antiracism, race-based medicine, trauma responsive practices.
 - cHOP – Center for Human and Organizational Potential We have collaborated with cHOP on wellness initiatives, leadership programs, and professional development initiatives for SIUSOM students.
 - Education Policy Committee
- Anti-Bias Curriculum Now formerly a part of the EPC has led to the development of a more culturally responsive curriculum.
 - Department of Population Science and Policy and Department of Medical Humanities collaboration
 - Engagement with students in their professional identity formation and cultural competency • AWIMS - Alliance of Women in Medicine
 - The Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion partners on mentoring programs for students. AWIMS also support professional development of early and mid-career women, as well as research opportunities for female faculty
- Student Affinity Groups – The Associate Dean of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion provides advising to the student affinity groups. Financial support is provided to the organizations through the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.
 - Marginalized Student Network
 - SNMA Student National Medical Association
 - Supporting and addressing the needs of the under-served surrounding communities in the Southern Illinois Area both rural and urban via community service, advocacy and health literacy. Student National Medical Association (SNMA). SNMA is the oldest and largest medical student organization dedicated to people of color and underserved communities. Community service is a pillar of the SNMA, and eliminating disparities in health-care delivery, disease morbidity, and disease mortality are among its highest priorities. The SIUSOM SNMA chapter is composed of underrepresented, minority students committed to their education and the local community. Goals include medical education, health screenings, school tutorials, liberal arts competitions and participation in community programs that reinforce self-awareness and self-empowerment.
- LMSA - Latino Medical Student Association
 - Uniting and empowering medical students through service, mentorship and education to advocate for the health of the Latino community. This organization provides a voice for underrepresented medical students and actively promotes recruitment and retention of Latino students. • GLMA - Gay and Lesbian Medical Association
 - Expanding visibility, rights, and awareness of LGBTQIA+ individuals in health care and health professions through discourse, action, and policy.
- AMWA - American Medical Women's Association
 - Advancing women in medicine, advocating for equity, and ensuring excellence in health care.
- S2S - Sister to Sister
- Supporting minority women in medicine

Physician Pipeline Program or P4

This year the medical school graduated its thirteenth year of students from the Physician Pipeline Program (P4). P4 gives 9th through 12th graders a head-start in medical careers and provides them with early mentors within the Springfield medical community. The afterschool program is sponsored by SIU School of Medicine in partnership with Springfield Public Schools. Students enter P4 when they are high school freshmen and continue through their senior year. This four-year experience familiarizes them with medical school coursework, admissions processes, test taking skills, critical thinking and special training. The curriculum, developed by faculty and staff from the School of Medicine and Springfield Public Schools District 186 includes: special lectures, physical-skills training, problem-based learning (PBL), laboratory aptitude, research, college-planning seminars, supplemental instruction in college-level science, technology, engineering and math courses, and mentoring activities modeled after medical school educational programs. Some P4 students who have graduated are presently matriculating at SIUSOM and other health allied schools.

Students with Disabilities

The SIU School of Medicine does not discriminate against any current or potential student on the basis of physical or mental disability. Students may self-identify with the school as having a disability. All students self-identifying will have reasonable accommodations made available to them based on the nature of their disability. Since self-identification is strictly voluntary, the actual number of students with disabilities attending the school could potentially be higher than what has been reported in the tables. The AAMC report on Accessibility, Inclusion, and Action in Medical Education (March 2018) is being utilized as a guide at the SIUSOM.

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The University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) continued its tradition of offering a large inventory of courses while fostering an outstanding research environment in the health and social sciences, arts, and humanities to one of the most diverse student populations in the country. UIC is only one of 16 institutions across the country that is both a Carnegie I research university and a Minority Serving Institution (MSI). UIC is both an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution and a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) as designated by the U.S. Department of Education. With one of the most comprehensive academic healthcare systems in the country, much of the research is focused on improving the health of individuals, and especially the health disparities of the underserved. UIC students are engaged at all levels with the faculty and staff to carry out this research.



New Law School

Acquired through a merger with the John Marshall Law School, the UIC Law School is now the most diverse public law school in Chicago and the Midwest. The law school has a long history of providing access to students from underserved populations, and of serving the Chicago communities by providing pro bono legal services through nine community legal clinics focusing on broad issues that include fair housing and family law.

Awards

Over a decade ago, UIC recognized the importance of diversity and inclusion at all levels across the campus and embarked on an ambitious plan to develop an integrated network that identifies and resolves access, diversity, equity, and inclusion issues. As a result, UIC recently received several awards in 2020-2021.

HEED Award. In 2020 and 2021, UIC received the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) award from INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine, the oldest and largest diversity-focused publication in higher education that recognizes U.S. colleges and universities with an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion. UIC has earned this honor for the sixth time in 2021.

Seal of Excelencia. In 2020, UIC was one of five higher education institutions awarded Excelencia in Education's "Seal of Excelencia," a national certification that recognizes institutions for "intentionally serving Latino students and for demonstrating positive student outcomes." Only nine institutions have earned the "Seal of Excelencia." Key examples of the programs and practices that helped earn UIC the award involved the Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services (LARES) program which assists in the recruitment of Latino students and provides academic support to increase their retention and graduation rates; the Latin@s Gaining Access to Networks for Advancement in Science (L@s GANAS) program which aims to increase enrollment and improve academic outcomes for Latino and low-income students in STEM fields; the Rafael Cintrón Ortiz Latino Cultural Center (LCC) which engages campus and local communities to deepen understanding of the diverse cultural heritages and identities within the Latino community; the Hispanic Center of Excellence (HCOE) which aims to improve the medical care of Latino communities while increasing the representation of Latino applicants pursuing health science careers; and the Urban Health Program (UHP) which coordinates efforts to attract and support students from traditionally underserved populations into degree programs across UIC's seven health sciences colleges (Applied Health Sciences, Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health, and Social Work).

Inspiring Programs in STEM. Also in 2020, UIC's L@s GANAS program was named a recipient of INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine's Inspiring Programs in STEM Award because of the dedication and leadership in fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion in the classroom, in research laboratories, and across campus, and by advancing the number of Latino students in STEM fields through mentoring and holistic support of program scholars.

Institutional Excellence Award. In 2021, the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE) awarded UIC its Institutional Excellence Award as a 4-year public institution. NADOHE presents this award to recognize an institution that has "demonstrated measurable progress in promoting and sustaining innovative diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts within their campus community." NADOHE President Paulette

Granberry Russell stated that “NADOHE extends its appreciation and congratulations to UIC for engaging in efforts that represent demonstrable change in advancing institutional excellence and the goal of full participation of the UIC campus community. To be acknowledged by its peers who understand the challenges associated with creating structural change and dismantling barriers to being a more inclusive campus community through active, engaged leadership, education and development, and valuing accountability is a tremendous testament to the strategic work UIC has embarked upon and provides a model for others to emulate going forward.”

Recruitment and Enrollment

UIC continued to increase the number of underrepresented students. In 2020, the number of Black students rose to a new high of 2708 or 8.1% (8.1% greater than the year before) of the total student population; the number of Latino students rose to 9014 or 26.9% (an increase of 6.1% from the previous year); the number of multi-racial students rose to 934 or 2.8% (an increase of 6.7%); and the number of Asian American students rose to 6042 or 18.0% (an increase of 2.6%); the total student population rose to a new high of 33,518 students (an increase of 3.7% from the previous year). For the undergraduate population in 2020 alone, the number of Black, Latino, Multi-racial, Native American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders, and Asian American students all rose to new highs to 65.7% of the total undergraduate student body of 21,921 students. In 2021, the undergraduate student population rose to a total of 22,279 students, and total student enrollment increased to 34,199, with increases of 1.6% and 2.0% over the previous year, respectively, and reflected a 7th year of consecutive growth. The number of first-year undergraduates increased by 18.0% to 4,177 in 2021. More than 60% of UIC's study abroad students identify as underrepresented minorities, more than 60% are the first in their families to attend colleges, and more than 75% receive federal financial aid.

Financial Aid. At the same time, UIC has remained accessible to those who need financial aid the most. Most of the students depend on financial aid, with more than 50% of all UIC undergraduates and more than 60% of new incoming first-year students receiving Pell grant support. Furthermore, nearly 60% of UIC's undergraduates receive MAP (Monetary Award Program) funding, making UIC the largest recipient of MAP funding in the state of Illinois. Scholarship Programs. UIC also implemented new scholarship programs to assist outstanding students from middle class economic backgrounds. The new Chancellor's Fellows and Provost's Fellows Programs utilize matching funds from the state AIM HIGH (Aspirational Institutional Match Helping Illinois Grow Higher Education) program. In the first year of the AIM HIGH program, 250 Chancellor's and Provost's Fellows enrolled at UIC as freshman. In addition, the “RISE Act” (Retention of Illinois Students and Equity Act) made undocumented students eligible for MAP grants and institutional aid at public Universities in Illinois. Additional scholarship programs funded high impact programs like UIC's “Call Me Mister” program through the College of Education. This program will train more male students of color to become licensed elementary school teachers who will not only teach but serve as role models in their communities for countless children in Chicago and across the state of Illinois.

New Programs

Monarchs and Milkweed. A new HSI enrichment program was launched in 2020 that linked culture and science and provided valuable research experiences and new curriculum offerings through UIC's Latino Cultural Center. The program, nicknamed CIM2AS! (Cultural Immersion in Monarchs and Milkweeds Advancing Science Education), offered students a unique perspective into both their scientific identity and their cultural identity. The word “cimas” is a Spanish word that translates to “top” or “peak” in English and reflects the high goals that we want our students to achieve in their education and careers as they aspire to address environmental and social change. The complex interplay between monarchs and milkweeds is a fascinating phenomenon that spans a broad range of scientific fields including ecology, evolution, biochemistry, and physiology, and provides rich opportunities to weave together scientific and cultural knowledge. Nearly 30% of the undergraduate students with STEM majors in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences finish with a degree in another discipline, and these types of programs enable faculty to develop and offer new courses that provide the cultural connections and academic support necessary to retain and increase underrepresented student participation in STEM and STEM careers. The program involves nearly a dozen UIC faculty as well as instructors from three Chicago area public high schools and Malcolm X and Oakton community colleges.

Community Engagement

Improving the Quality of Life. A number of faculty and students in UIC's School of Architecture embarked on a mission to improve the physical resources and social interactions of residents in the South and West sides of Chicago through funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. They viewed the vast inventory of vacant land on the south and west sides of Chicago and reimagined how that land could benefit entire communities, typically underserved communities. Instead of being vacant, these spaces can provide socio-ecosystems for people to meet. They fostered social, ecological, and economic development, increased opportunities for biodiversity, and promoted greater social interactions to employ change in vacant land use. These efforts resulted in greater community interactions, reduction in crime, and improvements in the quality of life for residents. This impacted UIC students involved in the program and improved recruitment of underrepresented students to UIC.

Neighborhood Centers. Neighborhood Centers is a collaborative community project designed to support local stakeholders with meeting their goals through strategic programs and services, equity-based interventions, and community-based research. These Centers are located in the southside and westside neighborhoods of Auburn Gresham and North Lawndale. Working in partnership with Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation and North Lawndale Community Coordinating Council, planning and implementation was developed collaboratively with community-based organizations, residents, educators, and other local stakeholders. Programming will occur both in the center's physical spaces (offices and community rooms) as well as in other neighborhood settings (schools or churches). The Auburn Gresham Center was acquired in 2021 and is situated within the Healthy Lifestyle Hub located at 839-45 W. 79th Street; it will open formally in early 2022. Details on the North Lawndale Center are yet to be finalized. The goals of the Centers are to increase African American enrollment and retention for traditional and non-traditional students at UIC or other post-secondary institutions, provide relevant and responsive services that address systemic education, economic, and health disparities, and catalyze continued community and economic development.

Black Student Resources

African American Academic Network (AAAN). This unit promotes success and high impact engagement for students of African descent through comprehensive advising, developmental programming, student advocacy, and structured learning experiences with an inclusive community. Students are offered extensive counseling for the transition from high school to college and the UIC campus, development of an academic success plan, exploration of career and college majors options, holistic mentoring, and professional development. AAAN also offers the UIC Black Tech Scholars Program that provides specific web and professional development opportunities to improve retention and graduation rates in the technology industry.

CHANCE. The CHANCE (Counseling, Help, and Assistance Necessary for a 21st Century College Education) program recruits and mentors academically qualified underrepresented candidates from Chicago and suburban communities in need of enrichment and learning skills for admission and success at UIC. CHANCE Scholars are mentored to acquire critical thinking skills, organizational leadership, career development, interpersonal competence, and other skills necessary to engage and compete in a global society after graduation. Over 50% of the CHANCE Scholars are first-generation college students, and over 60% are African American.

DuSable Scholars Program. The program was launched in the Summer of 2021 to create a learning community of underrepresented students in STEM. The inaugural cohort of 19 Scholars, half majoring in Engineering and the other half majoring in the Biological Sciences, Chemistry, or Mathematics, are housed together as a cohort in campus housing, provided stipends, and attend weekly workshops to improve their sense of belonging, develop their cultural identity and STEM identity, and prepare for advanced study (graduate or professional school) after graduation. This is a four-year program to help students achieve their academic goals, maintain high academic outcomes, and provide research opportunities. Scholars participate in both curricular and extracurricular activities.

Advancing Racial Equity (ARE)

UIC's commitment to equity and inclusion has been a strategic priority for well over the past decade. This past year ushered in a heightened urgency for underserved, underrepresented, marginalized communities due to the impact of health disparities associated with COVID-19 and targeted violence and racism against communities of color. The movement of "Black Lives Matter" fomented in ongoing protests highlighting racial injustice in Chicago. These protests resonated deeply at UIC and led to a renewed effort to engage the UIC community of students, faculty, and staff in a broad examination of social justice, structural racism, and implicit bias, and the development of new anti-racism and inclusive excellence initiatives. As a result, the Chancellor created a Racial Equity Taskforce to review the campus climate and promote racial equity on campus.

The "Advancing Racial Equity" (ARE) initiative is a response designed to address institutional and structural racism that impacts our campus and our neighboring communities. The Taskforce was guided by three external advisors, Nancy Cantor, Earl Lewis, and Claude Steele, with expertise in higher education and race, to review and make recommendations related to the recruitment and retention of Black faculty and students. In addition, the Taskforce met with the Chancellor's African American Advisory Council to review their recommendations. ARE aspires to ensure that UIC is a campus where Black students are supported to reach their full academic and social potential. ARE has five major goals: promoting student equity and inclusion, advancing faculty and staff inclusive excellence, collaborating with community, reimagining public safety, and ensuring accountability.

Centering Student Equity and Inclusion. A heightened awareness and elimination of barriers that impede or limit the access, achievement, equity, and inclusion of Black students and the support of a campus culture that is not only welcoming but generative in creating new spaces of belonging.

- UIC expanded recruitment and advising efforts by AAAN through a greater presence and networking in high schools, two-year community colleges, and community organizations, and development of new programs to provide holistic advising and mentoring of Black students to support their academic, career, and life goals.
- Expansion of mental health services and spaces to address pressing mental health needs of our Black, Latino, and other underrepresented students.
- Creation of an Assistant Vice Provost for Equity and Belonging in the Office of Diversity. This position will consult with members of the UIC community in the development of policy and practice interventions to ensure an inclusive and supportive environment for Black students, faculty, and staff.
- Expansion of programming resources for the African American Cultural Center to implement an annual student-designed and student-centered conference on issues of race, equity, social justice, and other programming central to the needs and interests of Black students, faculty, and staff.
- Greater support for scholarships for Black students. The Ida B. Wells Scholarship fund was established in early 2021 to provide some of this support.
- Increasing resources for anti-bias training for faculty and staff to create a more inclusive climate for students of color.
- Increasing the number of African American students admitted to UIC by dedicating 100 scholarships of the President's Award Program (PAP) to Black students. This program, PAP-Sukuma, was established in 2020. Sukuma Scholars were selected using the same rigorous criteria used for the selection of all PAP Scholars, with four-year awards of \$5000 per year to defray the cost of tuition and fees. The award is stackable with other need and merit-based financial aid. The Sukuma Scholars participate in programming that is designed to integrate them into the UIC campus experience and provide them additional opportunities outside of the classroom.

Advancing Faculty and Staff Inclusive Excellence. Recruiting and retaining BIPOC faculty and staff is not only central because they are role models and significant mentors for students, but because they provide a rich diversity in their own perspectives and contributions that promote UIC's mission. To achieve this goal, the processes that govern the recruitment and retention of faculty and staff are assessed and revised to achieve inclusive excellence and be representative of the communities that make up Chicago.

- The Bridge to the Faculty (B2F) program was established in 2020 to hire underrepresented postdoctoral scholars with the goal of their transition to tenure-track junior faculty positions after two years. In 2020, ten B2F Scholars were hired, and twenty were hired in 2021.
- New faculty will be recognized for the time and effort they put into diversity, equity, and inclusion as part of the promotion and tenure process. It was approved by the Faculty Senate in early 2021 and goes into effect for new faculty in fall 2021. This will help to support, in large part, minority faculty at UIC.
- A campus Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award was established in 2021 as another measure to recognize and reward exceptional efforts in this area. In 2021, the College of Pharmacy also established a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Impact Award for a faculty or staff member who has distinguished themselves in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the College.

Collaborating with Community. UIC has a long history of community engagement in its multiple research and service units and centers, and is committed to address key needs in health, education, and community empowerment.

- In 2021, UIC created an office of Community Collaboration to address structural racism and socioeconomic transformation in partner communities with an emphasis on health and education. Two neighborhood centers were targeted as community hubs staffed by UIC faculty, staff, and students. These centers improve the environment for future UIC students and provide opportunities for UIC students to engage in social justice advocacy that will support foundational, transformative work in partner communities and UIC.
- Community outreach grew in 2020-21 in response to the impact of COVID-19 and social justice issues. Alumni and industry partners were engaged to promote new apprenticeship programs for UIC students.

Reimagining Public Safety. A heightened awareness of public safety policies and the training of UIC police officers was assessed to develop alternative strategies for crisis response and a safer environment for UIC students and the campus community.

- UIC SAFE, a cell phone application, was promoted in 2020 to provide UIC students, faculty, and staff added safety on campus. The app's user-friendly interface allows users to easily connect with friends and family to share their location in real-time as they travel on campus. It also allows direct and easy contact with dispatchers and first responders in the event of an emergency and serves as a virtual escort as you travel to your destination.
- Additional resources were provided for safer traveling, walking, or riding throughout the UIC campus area including ride or shuttle requests or a student escort.
- Student internships, providing course credit, were established to get a sense of what a career in law enforcement would entail. The intern would rotate through a variety of shifts and specialty units to understand the numerous tasks that law enforcement officers deal with.

Achieving Transparency and Accountability. A strategic plan is effective when goals are achieved and routinely assessed for efficacy. Early in the process, the Taskforce implemented a website to track the implementation of goals and evaluate the impact of those goals.

- UIC established a tracking page in early 2021 to report on the progress on each action item.

- Each UIC academic and non-academic unit was asked in early 2021 to create their own Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategic plans with specific goals and metrics. These goals and metrics are reviewed on an annual basis and have become a component of the annual administrative evaluations. •As noted above, several goals have been achieved and the impact on campus climate, underrepresented student recruitment and retention, are being evaluated by the Taskforce.

Impact of COVID-19 in 2020-21

The COVID-19 pandemic had an enormous effect on the teaching and research missions of UIC. UIC expanded outreach to the campus community, especially students, so that they had access to the resources they needed for academic success. The Counseling Center provided remote access to help students cope with stress, anxiety, and fear related to COVID-19. The “U and I Care” Fund provided financial support for students with a one-time urgent need. In 2020, the Office of the Dean of Students provided greater outreach to undergraduate students experiencing housing or food instability, or inadequate access to computers and internet access for online learning.

As the campus shifted from in-person classroom instruction to remote or hybrid teaching modes, students and faculty were surveyed to evaluate the impact. 77% of those who taught online courses stated that the experience helped them develop pedagogical skills and practices that improved their teaching and think more critically about ways to engage students with content, 65% made better use of multimedia content, 63% were more likely to experiment and make changes to improve the learning experience, and 61% were able to make better use of Blackboard, the learning management system. The Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs supported development and sharing of new strategies and resources for remote teaching.

In early 2020, the UIC Office of Diversity asked students to share their thoughts and learn from each other by writing about how they have experienced life under quarantine. The name of the series, “Singing from Balconies,” was inspired by the videos of quarantined Italians who were singing together from their balconies even while experiencing fear and loss. Dozens of testimonials were posted online to share with the campus community. Relatedly, the Latino-STEM support program L@s GANAS shared podcasts, “Sciencing from Home,” to share their perspective on research as they shifted from classroom to home learning.

The Student Affairs Faculty Research Fellows Program provided support for research projects to address important questions concerning the impact of the pandemic on students.

- One study, headed by Dr. Alexios Rosario-Moore examined the impact on academic engagement and retention of undergraduate students. COVID-19 has a disproportionately negative economic and health-related impact on Cook County, and a disproportionately negative impact on Black and Latino communities. The study was undertaken so that UIC can better support students who were most affected by the pandemic.
- A second study, headed by Dr. Nic Weststrate, assessed the campus climate for LGBTQIA+ students. While UIC was recognized as Illinois’ best college for LGBTQIA+ students, little was known about student experiences and academic outcomes for this student community. The study would provide information to better inform the administration on the development of intentional policies, programs, and services that meet the emergent needs of LGBTQIA+ students in these unpredictable and uncharted times.

Rather than provide an exhaustive list of resources, programs, and services offered to underrepresented students at UIC, this narrative highlighted new or expanded programs in 2020-2021 that fostered greater student recruitment, retention, graduation rates, cultural support, or academic success.

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Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success

Goal 1: Increase educational attainment to match best-performing states

- Recommendation 1: Increase success of students at each stage of the P-20 education pipeline to eliminate achievement gaps by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, and disability.



Living-Learning Communities

Improved Transitions from High School to College

National studies have emphasized the unique potential for Living-Learning Communities to positively impact students' educational success. It is believed that students in these communities not only perform better in class, but feel more connected to their peers, the faculty and staff, and the University. These unique communities bring academics into the residence halls through on-site curricular and co-curricular activities, advising and referral services, tutoring, and special opportunities for students to interact with faculty and staff outside the classroom. Two examples of living-learning communities offered at UIS are Necessary Steps Mentoring Program and Students Transitioning for Academic Retention and Success (STARS).

Necessary Steps Mentoring Program

Description: The Necessary Steps Mentoring program is designed to help transition students to university life at UIS. This program is targeted at first-generation college students, defined as any student whose parent or guardian has not graduated with a baccalaureate degree from a four-year college or university. The Necessary Steps mentors help the students identify and overcome problems they may face throughout their first year in college. Students within Necessary Steps reside together on a single floor in campus housing and take a year-long educational sequence of courses as a cohort.

The Necessary Steps Mentoring Program exists to enhance students' skills and abilities in and outside the classroom. This program was first offered during AY 2009/2010. The Necessary Steps students are able to take full advantage of the career exploration and developmental opportunities the program coordinator and mentors offer throughout their matriculation process at UIS. The guidance of a mentor helps students to become more focused in their career goals and to develop skills they need as they begin their first year experience as a college student. Beyond the freshmen year, Necessary Steps students serve as Peer Mentors, working closely with at-risk students to support continued academic focus and success within the community. Peer Mentors also facilitate community and campus engagement in co-curricular clubs and organizations to positively impact retention and graduation rates for students in the program.

Outcomes Data: Necessary Steps is in its 13th academic year of operation. Since inception, the program has served 306 students. More than 80% self-reported as being a race/ethnicity minority (i.e., Black/Non-Hispanic, Hispanic, Multi-Race, American Indian/Alaskan Native, or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander). Females outnumbered males, 69% as compared to 31%, among program participants.

An analysis of the term-by-term retention patterns revealed that almost all of the students (i.e., 96.6%) were retained to their second semester. More than 80% were retained to their second year, and slightly less than two-thirds remained at UIS for the start of their 3rd year. Of students who participated in Necessary Steps during its first ten years of operation, 58.3% were retained to their fourth year. Since inception, 115 Necessary Steps participants have graduated from UIS. Among the first seven cohorts, 53.3% of the participants either graduated or remain enrolled six years after matriculation.

In order to determine whether these results differed from what would typically be expected, a comparison group was selected from the population of first-time general education freshmen. To the extent possible, students who

mirrored the Necessary Steps students with respect to race/ethnicity, gender, first-generation status, and ACT scores were selected. The final comparison group included only first-time, non-honors freshmen, with an average maximum ACT similar to the treatment group. However, the group included more male students and white students than did the group of Necessary Steps students. Care was taken to ensure that none of the students in the comparison group participated in other UIS Living-Learning Communities (i.e., STARS and Capital Scholar Honors Program).

An analysis of the term-by-term retention patterns of the comparison group students revealed lower percentages of students retained (see Table 1), as compared to students in Necessary Steps. These data indicate that the program has been successful in achieving its goal of assisting students transitioning into university life. Moreover, many of these students continue at UIS, resulting in similar 6-year graduation rates among Necessary Steps participants as compared to all UIS first time, first-year students.

Table 1: Term-to-Term Retention Rates

Time Period	Necessary Steps Group ¹	Comparison Group	Necessary Steps Group Gain or Loss
Retained to 2nd Semester or Graduated	95.5%	83.2%	+12.3%
Retained to 3rd Semester or Graduated	81.5%	65.7%	+15.8%
Retained to 4th Semester or Graduated	71.4%	55.3%	+16.1%
Retained to 5th Semester or Graduated	62.3%	44.4%	+17.9%
Retained to 6th Semester or Graduated	59.1%	45.0%	+14.1%
Retained to 7th Semester or Graduated	57.9%	43.4%	+14.6%
Retained to 8th Semester or Graduated	56.9%	44.0%	+12.9%
Retained to 9th Semester or Graduated	51.7%	41.3%	+10.4%
Retained to 10th Semester or Graduated	53.3%	40.5%	+12.8%
Retained to 11th Semester or Graduated	53.3%	38.5%	+14.8%
Retained to 12th Semester or Graduated	51.6%	38.9%	+12.7%

**Five students in the fall 2009 Necessary Steps cohort also were part of the Capital Scholars Honors Living-Learning Community. These students are removed from this analysis. Four of these five students graduated from UIS with a bachelor's degree, with one not graduating until their seventh year of enrollment).*

Students Transitioning for Academic Retention and Success (STARS)

Description: STARS is a selective, voluntary program intended to provide enhanced academic support services for students who may enter college underprepared for college-level coursework. Students are invited into the STARS program based on careful evaluation of their academic profiles. Students who meet the criteria for “academically underprepared,” including those with lower ACT scores and/or GPAs, are supported through an intricate network of UIS staff including student peer mentors, professional advising staff specifically assigned to work closely with STARS students, and faculty members who are involved in a variety of purposefully crafted educational programs intended to help students improve study skills. STARS students receive increased individual attention through regular appointments with academic advisors, peer mentors, and First Year Experience instructors, all of whom collaborate to develop innovative programming opportunities and topics. STARS students also meet with an Academic Success Coach multiple times each week to track progress and review success strategies. STARS students are enrolled in a unique section of First Year Seminar, specially tailored to their individual academic needs. While all UIS students have access to free tutoring services as well as social and educational programming, STARS students receive individualized and targeted support intended to enhance critical thinking, reading comprehension, communication, time management, test taking, note taking, and self-advocacy skills. These students benefit from a living-learning community in campus housing, where they experience a strong sense of community with other STARS students and learn to maximize the resources available through the program. Residence in the living-learning community is mandatory for the freshman year, but not for subsequent years. This program became operational in fall 2011.

In the summer of 2012, UIS began offering STARS students the opportunity to participate in a Summer Bridge program. The Summer Bridge program is intended to better prepare incoming STARS students for the transition to college and to succeed academically at UIS. The program offers incoming STARS students an extended summer

experience at UIS. Students and their families arrive on campus for an intensive one-day orientation, which is co-implemented by the Office of New Student Orientation and the STARS Coordinator. Following the completion of the one-day orientation, STARS students remain on campus for two weeks of preparatory work including placement testing, supplemental instruction in math, English, writing, and study skills, and a host of social and educational programs designed to help prepare students for a successful year at UIS. The Summer Bridge program involves the collaborative contributions of eleven offices across campus as well as speakers from outside the university and contributing faculty members.

In the 2015/2016 academic year, the STARS program added a Peer Mentoring component. This program enlists and trains sophomore, junior, and senior students to serve as Peer Mentors for freshmen STARS. These mentors are highly trained and are recruited and screened based on academic achievement and campus engagement. They work closely with freshmen STARS students, collaborating on academic programming, study hours, and social programming focusing on community and leadership.

New STARS program components for the 2017-2018 year included a Leadership Team to help facilitate collaborative programming with other campus living-learning groups and a unified Code of Conduct pledge, shared between all living-learning groups on campus, including Capital Scholars Honors. Students review and sign this pledge at the beginning of each academic year to renew their commitment to the program, their personal and academic goals, and the institution. Additionally, living-learning communities across campus, including pre-nursing and honors, collaborate with STARS and other cohorts to include a shared curriculum piece in the first-year seminar. This includes a shared programming event, a volunteer project, and assignments across all LLC groups on campus that are implemented and evaluated by LLC leaders and FYS faculty.

In 2021, the UIS Summer Bridge Program was expanded to include course credit earned over a 6- week period. Students still attended a two-week in-person event on campus, but continued via remote instruction for an additional 4 weeks, completing course work in Math, English, Science, and Academic Skills. The credits earned were free of charge to students – all tuition associated with the program was waived. This coursework also included developmental courses for some students, allowing them to complete developmental coursework in the summer and begin fall coursework at the 100-level. Online/remote tutoring for this new component was provided via CASA and The Learning Hub for the duration of the summer program.

Outcomes Data: Since fall 2011, 347 students have participated in the STARS program. Approximately three-fourths of the participants were female (74.1%), and approximately 86.5% self-reported as being a race/ethnic minority (i.e., Black, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, or Multi-Race). The average ACT composite score for these participants was 18 and the average SAT (new) was 942.

An analysis of the term-by-term retention patterns revealed that 86% of these students were retained to their second semester (see Table 2), and approximately 70% were retained to their second year. Although the numbers are quite small, roughly half (49.3%) of the STARS participants from the first nine STARS cohorts remained at UIS for the start of their junior year (138 of 280). Among the first eight entering cohorts, 41.8% were retained to their senior year. The average six-year graduation rate of these students is 38.5%, and it is expected to increase with future cohorts given the increased programming recently implemented.

Table 2: STARS Term Retention/Graduation Rates, by Class

	HC	Returned 2nd Semester	Returned Sophomore Year (3rd semester)	Returned Junior Year (5th semester)	Returned Senior Year/ Graduated (7th semester)	Still Enrolled or Graduated within Six Years (12th semester)
Fall 2011	12	83.3%	66.7%	41.7%	25.0%	25.0%
Fall 2012	26	96.2%	73.1%	61.5%	61.5%	57.7%
Fall 2013	31	93.5%	74.2%	61.3%	45.2%	32.3%
Fall 2014	28	85.7%	78.6%	53.6%	46.4%	46.4%
Fall 2015	38	89.5%	63.2%	39.5%	31.6%	28.9%
Fall 2016	31	77.4%	71.0%	45.2%	45.2%	--
Fall 2017	33	87.9%	72.7%	48.5%	42.4%	--
Fall 2018	40	90.0%	80.0%	57.5%	35.0%	--
Fall 2019	41	85.4%	68.3%	36.6%	--	--
Fall 2020	38	71.1%	50.0%	--	--	--
Fall 2021	29	--	--	--	--	--
Total	347	85.8%	69.5%	49.3%	41.8%	38.5%

In order to determine whether these results differed from what would typically be expected, a comparison group was selected from the population of first-time, general education freshmen. To the extent possible, students who mirrored the STARS students with respect to race/ethnicity, gender, and maximum ACT/SAT score were selected. The final comparison group included only first-time students. However, the group included more male students and race/ethnicity non-minority students than did the group of STARS students. The average ACT composite score was one point higher for the comparison group than that of the STARS participants; the average SAT composite score (new) was 15 points higher for the comparison group members.

When compared to a group of similarly “underprepared” students who did not participate in STARS, the data indicate the STARS participants initially are being retained at somewhat higher rates than their counterparts (see Table 3) although this levels out in subsequent years. Within six years, the STARS participants graduated/remained enrolled at a rate similar to the STARS comparison group.

Table 3: Overall STARS & Comparison Group Retention Rates

	HC	Returned 2nd Semester	Returned Sophomore Year (3rd semester)	Returned Junior Year (5th semester)	Returned Senior Year/ Graduated (7th semester)	Still Enrolled or Graduated within Six Years (12th semester)
STARS	318	85.8%	69.5%	49.3%	41.8%	38.5%
Comparison	272	79.0%	63.6%	47.0%	44.8%	37.6%

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INTRODUCTION

During the 2020-2021 academic year, the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign (Illinois) had to quickly adapt its day-to-day operation due to the unprecedented COVID-19 Pandemic. Units and departments had to address challenges and disruptions in order to deliver a world class education.



The current report provides a general overview of programs that were delivered to URM students, most of them virtually or hybrid during the 2020-2021 academic year. It is important to highlight that some programs that impact the incoming academic year outcome are conducted prior to the start of the year (i.e., Admission recruitment efforts).

GOAL 1. ILLINOIS PUBLIC AGENDA FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER SUCCESS

The goal requires that higher education institutions describe their efforts to increase educational attainment of students at each stage of the P-20 education pipeline to eliminate achievement gaps by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, and disability, to match best-performing states.

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign celebrated its 150 year anniversary during the 2017-2018 academic year. During this celebration, individuals across the state, the nation, and worldwide were able to witness the impact Illinois has made at every part of the globe during these past 150 years. As a land grant institution, we are committed and ready to renew our commitment to enhancing and sustaining diversity, inclusion, and equity for all.

As Chancellor, Dr. Robert J. Jones, has said, “creating a diverse and inclusive university community is not a challenge with a fixed ending point. There is no finish line to cross and no breaking ribbons to indicate victory. Instead, there is a path that requires vision to find it and a quiet courage to walk it.” (Office of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Report, 2017–2018).

A. Recruitment

The University of Illinois seeks to enroll a diverse student body in order to create an inclusive and pluralistic learning environment that respects the varied perspectives and lived experiences of a diverse community. The university executes a holistic approach and several factors are considered for admissions.

The ability to recruit and enroll talented Illinois residents continues to be factored into the increased cost of higher education. We are aware that competition for Illinois students continues to increase; however, our overall goal is to maintain the excellence and size of the undergraduate population. Our current first priority is to enroll in-state resident students and then supplement enrollment with high-achieving non-residents and international students.

A diverse set of initiatives are in place to recruit Illinois residents as well as to attract students from other states and countries. Some of these initiatives include:

High School Visits and College Fairs. Admissions staff attend high school visits and college fairs that allow us to speak to prospective students directly. We do not visit schools that only allow lunchroom visits. Approximately 80% of our overall recruitment travel is focused on the in-state recruitment. During summer 2020, Admissions office provided virtual tours to students.

Principal’s Scholars Program. A statewide mathematics and science initiative created by Illinois, the Principal’s Scholars Program works in conjunction with parents and teachers to prepare disadvantaged students for

college preparatory pathways. Programmatic operations focus on the development of higher order thinking skills, computational literacy, and character-based education methodology as a collaborative systemic education reform strategy. The Principal's Scholars Program operates in 66 elementary and high schools in the state of Illinois.

Peer Recruitment Program. Operating throughout the academic school year, the Peer Recruitment Program provides current U of I students with the opportunity to join our efforts in recruiting African American, Hispanic, and Native American students. Peer Recruiters volunteer for campus visits such as Orange and Blue Days, Admitted Student Days, and Experience Illinois. Additionally, Peer Recruiters visit high schools in the Chicagoland area over winter break with admissions staff. At all of these events, Peer Recruiters answer questions about their student experience and interact with prospective students in a manner that encourages the pursuit of higher education.

Experience Illinois. We have partnered with four Chicago Public Schools to invite high-achieving, low-income ninth and tenth grade underrepresented students to experience a day on campus. The Experience Illinois program emphasizes academic preparedness through a mock admissions exercise and career exploration through a session with The Career Center. Students are also exposed to a number of academic areas on campus and participate in mock college classes with volunteer professors. The program aims to build a long-term relationship with student participants, creating a pipeline to Illinois from the selected high schools.

StartSTRONG @ Illinois. This day-long campus program for prospective students includes a reception with the Chancellor, meetings with college deans, conversations with current students, a tour of the Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center, and productions by our performing arts groups. This program was partially delivered and it was conducted virtually.

Diversity and Inclusion at Admissions. We strive to foster an environment defined by diversity, inclusion, and openness. With new ideas, experiences, and perspectives constantly available, our campus provides a space in which all students can succeed on their terms. Admission office created a new website to provide a more inclusive environment to current and incoming students by highlighting diverse blogs, stories, and news (admissions.illinois.edu/Discover/Campus-Life/diversity).

Due to COVID19 Federal and State Guidelines, most program were delivered virtually. Programs are beginning to resume to a more traditional format.

Local Student Application Workshop. In conjunction with the Office of Minority Student Affairs, we host an application workshop for local underrepresented and first-generation students attending high schools in Champaign, Vermillion, and Macon counties and those participating in the local TRiO program. Students start filling out their application at a university computer lab with the guidance of our staff while their families learn more about campus, the Office of Minority Student Affairs, and the application process.

Next-Up Receptions. Admitted students from the Chicago area and their families are invited to attend one of four Next-Up receptions. Attendees learn about the dynamic opportunities offered at Illinois through detailed presentations and dinner conversations with staff, faculty, current students, and alumni. One of the receptions we offer is bilingual in nature (English and Spanish).

Chicago Public Schools Admitted Student Program. Admitted students from Chicago Public Schools as well as their families are invited to a special Saturday program to hear from a panel of current students, take a tour of campus, and visit with faculty and staff from our colleges. Financial Aid appointments can also be made.

Chillini Visit Day. Admitted students from Chicago Public Schools and their families are invited to campus for our Chillini Visit Day each year. Bus transportation from Chicago to campus is provided. During the program, families receive information about housing, summer registration, next steps, and more. The day also includes lunch in a university dining hall, a campus tour, and a visit to our Illini Union Bookstore.

President's Award Program Day. This day-long campus program is for our President's Award Scholarship recipients and their families. It includes a reception with the Chancellor, meetings with college deans, a current student panel, informational sessions on student resources, and a residence hall lunch and tour. Transportation is provided from Chicago.

President's Award Program Honors Dinner. This dinner is for our President's Award Honors Scholarship recipients and their families. During the evening, admissions and college representatives share the many opportunities available at Illinois and answer any questions students might have.

Figure 1: 2020 Incoming Freshmen Class by Race/Ethnicity (Self-Reported)

Race/Ethnicity	Number	Percent
African American	499	6.6%
Asian	1,727	22.9%
Hispanic	1,122	14.9%
Multi-Race	264	3.5%
Native American/Alaskan Native	1	0.0%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	2	0.0%
White	2,890	38.4%
Foreign	914	12.1%
Unknown	111	1.5%
Total	7,530	100.0%

All Students Reporting African American, Asian, Native American, or Native Hawaiian (including multiracial & Hispanic)		
African American	639	8.5%
Native American	79	1.0%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	33	0.4%
Asian	1,969	26.1%

B. Retention

As our current Strategic Plan indicates, our most powerful asset is our diverse community, and in order to continue impacting the state, the nation, and the world, we must strive to retain our outstanding students.

The University of Illinois has recently set a goal to close the achievement gap for students from diverse backgrounds. In order to do so, all units and departments are committed to providing leadership and working in collaboration and partnership to successfully graduate every individual who chooses to come here.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS (selected units & departments)

1. Division of General Studies. The Division of General Studies (DGS) Enrichment Experience Program (EEP) is an intensive support program for undeclared undergraduates who are exploring academic majors and career opportunities at Illinois. Participants benefit from a variety of curricular and co-curricular opportunities that position them well for success at Illinois and for transition into their major of choosing.

Intentional Advising. As participants select classes and prepare for entry into an intended major, they work closely with academic advisors who provide guidance and support during their time in DGS.

Mentorship. Participating students in the EEP are matched with an Office of Minority Student Affairs (OMSA) mentor who works specifically with undeclared students on-site in the Division of General Studies. Mentors encourage personal growth and campus involvement and serve as an additional sounding board

as students acclimate to life on campus. The OMSA mentor is an invaluable complement to the services provided by DGS Academic Advising.

GS 101. At summer registration, the Enrichment Experience advising team assists participants with registering for an Enrichment Experience section of GS 101, the required first-year experience course for all DGS students, where they have the chance to be in a classroom setting together with their peers. The curriculum for this section will include traditional components of the DGS first-year experience course but will also offer opportunities for participants to strengthen their relationship with their OMSA mentor and connect with other academic services provided by OMSA.

Unique Course Offering. Participants have access to Enrichment Experience sections of select classes so they may complete requirements and learn about topics of interest together with students from similar backgrounds. In the fall, there are Enrichment Experience Merit discussion sections for popular Math and Chemistry courses.

2. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Access and Achievement Program (AAP): Established in 1968, the Access and Achievement Program (AAP) is the flagship student academic service program within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) Student Academic Affairs. Only students admitted to U of I through either the Educational Opportunities Program or the President's Award Program are eligible for AAP.

LAS houses the Access and Achievement Program whose mission is centered on 1) providing access to low-income and underrepresented ethnic and racial minorities, and 2) mentoring those students to academic success through a high-touch point advising model. AAP's current retention rate for students is 90%.

3. College of Applied Health Sciences

The Mannie L. Jackson Illinois Academic Enrichment and Leadership Program (I-LEAP) provides academic support services, professional development, and community service opportunities for students from underrepresented populations, including minority students, first generation students, student athletes, and students from recognized **Educational Opportunities Program** schools who are enrolled in declared Applied Health Sciences (AHS) majors. The I-LEAP program just celebrated their 10th anniversary last year. A retention study was conducted that tracked incoming AHS freshman starting from Fall 2007 through Fall 2012 (allowing the last 2012 class up to 5 years to graduate). In this study, retention was defined as students starting in an AHS major and subsequently graduating with a degree in AHS. Overall results showed that I-LEAP students were retained at a rate of 85% versus 76% for all AHS students and 72% for their comparison group (students that qualified for I-LEAP but chose not to participate)

4. College of Engineering

The Morrill Engineering Program (MEP) is charged with the recruitment and retention of underrepresented minority students in engineering. "EMBARK" is an early move-in activity that brings students together to develop the socio-academic community that will be instrumental to their engineering studies. Underrepresented minority students admitted to Grainger Engineering, Chemical Engineering (LAS) and Agricultural Engineering (ACES) are invited to participate. During EMBARK students are introduced to a variety of key campus partners to emphasize relevance and guidance on topics such as academic engagement, professional development, and wellness. Other highlights of the program include an engineering design competition, lunch with department advisors and interaction with continuing students who serve as peer mentors of the EMBARK program.

5. **Gies College of Business (programs providing general support for underrepresented groups)**

Office of Access and Multicultural Engagement. To encourage and support academic success for all students, our Access and Multicultural Engagement (AME) programs were created in Fall 2018 to provide opportunities for mentorship, affinity groups, and community within Gies. The community groups nurture

students and provide safe environments for learning to engage in civil discussions around complex topics, such as diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism.

As a Gies student, AME will have a place for each one. The skills and knowledge that AME will help students acquire will last a lifetime. And more and more companies are looking for employees with knowledge in this area. Through AME, students can help themselves grow as a person and prepare themselves for a career that is purposeful and impactful.

AME External Engagement. As part of Gies Business' commitment to better support underserved populations, AME develops programs to reach first generation, low income, international, rural, and historically underrepresented students in Illinois. AME seeks to understand and address barriers faced by Illinois' promising and talented students.

The Emerging Business Leaders Program. The Emerging Business Leaders (EBL) program is a two-week summer program designed for high-achieving underrepresented minority students entering their senior year of high school. Participants live on campus and learn from world-renowned faculty, work on a capstone group project with other students, and connect with corporate executives to expand their knowledge on business-related careers.

Program Activities

- Interactive discussions featuring Gies Business staff, students, and alumni around career possibilities in business and the Gies student experience
- Learn about college admissions
- Have fun and make new friends

AME Internal Engagement. Through programming and community building, AME strives to:

- Develop strategies and initiatives to promote diversity and inclusion and support anti-racist programs
- Foster a campus environment that supports the exploration of varied identities and their intersections
- Increase knowledge and awareness of different worldviews to strengthen cultural competencies and application in a variety of contexts
- Create opportunities to engage in challenging conversations to advance a more equitable society

Business Diversity Exchange (target audience-current students)

Enrichment Academy (targets at risks students of any demographic in the business school). The Enrichment Academy was formed in 2012 to connect incoming and current College of Business students with the wide array of resources and opportunities available through the ILLINOIS College of Business and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Enrichment Academy students participate in the PwC Enrichment Academy Challenge Competition, which gives students the opportunity to hone in on core problem-solving skill sets, presentation skills, and communications skills, and also provides professional exposure with incoming and full-time PwC Staff. Students will conduct an industry analysis, client interviews, current state assessments, and present final recommendations to a panel of PwC partners and directors.

Student Organizations

- NABA-National Association of Black Accountants
- ALPFA-Association of Latino Professionals for America
- MBSA-Minority Business Students Association
- Society of Women in Business

STUDENT AFFAIRS DIVISION (selected units)

Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Relations (OIIR)

Programs were delivered virtually due to COVID-19 guidelines during the entire academic year.

A. Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center

The mission of the Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center is to provide a network of programs and support services promoting the individual, social, cultural and academic well-being of Illinois' African American students.

The 100 STRONG Program was initiated with the belief that students who engage in activities that support their personal and organizational growth in a culturally relevant way are more likely to persist and graduate. The program is designed to connect first year students to leadership opportunities, peer-to-peer programmatic outlets, campus resources, and more.

Black Geek Week: the Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center launched its inaugural “Black Geek Week” as part of Black History Month festivities in 2013. The week’s events highlighted the achievements of Africans Americans in academia, STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and arts that have pushed the boundaries of thought and technology. Moreover, the programs seek to expose the Illinois community to a demographic of “nerds” and “geeks” who are rarely highlighted in pop-culture and contemporary discussions on geek culture (e.g. comics, gadgets, science fiction, computers, etc.).

B. La Casa Cultural Latina (selected programs) – Held Virtually

Conéctate is an early move-in program designed for first generation Latino/a students to experience the fast-paced campus life that awaits at Illinois. This program is intended to create opportunities for Latinos/as to understand college life based on non-traditional narratives rather than framing one’s story on the experiences of the dominant group.

This two-day program will provide opportunities to Latino/a college students in a predominantly white institution (PWI) to embrace the concept of Latino/a – by empowering their sense of belonging and identity – to learn about academic rigor from current faculty; and to understand the importance of balancing all sorts of responsibilities. The program consists of three different modules: Sense of belonging, Developing student-faculty relationship, and Balancing responsibilities.

The Black and Latino Male Summit: The summit has been part of the University of Illinois since 2010. The summit is concentrated in the decolonization of concepts that have impacted and continue to negatively impact Black and Latino men. Our purpose is to deconstruct narratives, build consciousness as to who we are as men of color, and to continue our drive to serve as an agent of positive change in our communities. BLMS, as it has in the past, strives to provide a forum for Black and Latino men to discuss the role of history in today's Black and Latino experience. The summit aims to create an experience that sparks reflection and ignites action from its participants. Furthermore, the organizers and sponsors of this summit seek to promote camaraderie, coalition building, and community between Black and Latino men. This program was held virtually.

Black and Latina Womxn Summit: the purpose of the Summit is to provide an opportunity for Black and Latina Womxn in the campus community to build coalitions as well as discuss issues of womxnhood. The summit also provides a space to develop strategies to achieve academic success, professional, development, and wellness. Our goal is to provide an environment for undergraduates, graduates, and staff, to connect and develop a network. Furthermore, we aim to provide a safe space to have deep conversations as well as provide knowledge of the resources that campus provides. Program was held virtually.

The Resilience Network provides support for Latino students on campus, increases mental health wellness and awareness, and works as a space for students to share their campus climate experiences to build resilience.

Latino Resilience Network:

- Educates students and faculty about mental health awareness and resources
- Trains students to be peer coordinators, facilitators, and listeners
- Fosters Latino success on campus

The La Casa META Program is designed for all undergraduate students to forge paths and create networks to achieve academic success and personal growth. Through the META Program, La Casa Cultural Latina promotes retention, service, and achievement to turn today's students into tomorrow's leaders, professionals, and community organizers. The program encourages students to define and set goals and work together, develop strategies and timelines to achieve those goals, and direct students to campus resources.

C. Native American House

Native American House (NAH) serves as a support and resource center for Native American students, including all students and the campus. Specifically, Native American House provides events and programs throughout the year that allow students the opportunity to enrich their cultural and academic experiences at the University of Illinois. While fostering a university community that values and actively supports inclusiveness and diversity, the support provided for students ensures a rewarding educational experience.

D. Women's Resources Center

Women's Resources Center is a fun, active center on campus where students of all genders can come to learn a new skill, hear a great workshop, enjoy tasty food treats (including vegan options), explore an arts and crafts talent, or participate in a stimulating discussion on a variety of "hot" topics! Women's Resources Center provides students with CONFIDENTIAL support and advocacy services when they are faced with difficult or emotionally traumatic incidents such as harassment, stalking, sexual assault, or abuse within a relationship. Women's Resources Center is responsible for the First Year Campus Acquaintance Rape (FYCARE) program to ensure that all students are aware of issues related to sexual assault and other interpersonal crimes and the resources available to them.

Due to COVID19, the Women Resources Center provided services to students, staff, and faculty in different formats (virtually, in-person, and hybrid) to meet the needs of those seeking support.

E. Asian American Cultural Center

The University of Illinois has one of the largest and most vibrant Asian American university communities in the Midwest, where 37% of students are of Asian descent. Opened in Fall 2005, the Asian American Cultural Center provides the University of Illinois community with space to gather and share experiences of our diverse and rich cultures. As a unit of the Office of Inclusion & Intercultural Relations, the AACC promotes cross-cultural understanding that supports the academic and personal growth of students, along with learning experiences that help shape a lifetime commitment to ethical and engaged citizenship.

F. International Education Program

The University of Illinois has the largest international student community of any US public university, with over 10,000 international students (23% of the student population) from 115 countries. The Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Relations (OIIR) strives to improve campus climate by providing transformative learning experiences to the Illinois community that result in an appreciation for diversity and cross-cultural engagement. Programs and events are oriented primarily toward college students, but also serve faculty, staff, alumni, and community members.

Global Leaders: Orange and Blue Engagement (GLOBE). GLOBE connects Blue members (experienced domestic and international students) with Orange members (new international students) and teams them up in small groups to participate in various activities and events. The goal of GLOBE is to provide opportunities for

domestic and international students to network and develop leadership skills, and “help all students develop global awareness and cultural competency.”

G. Diversity & Social Justice Education

Provides a variety of workshops, trainings, and courses designed to create a transformative experience at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Explore our website to learn more about the exciting programs with DiversityEd!

H. Connect Diversity & Inclusion Workshop

Connect Diversity & Inclusion Workshop is an experiential training designed to help incoming students embrace differences and recognize shared experiences in order to build a welcoming and engaged campus community. Facilitated by fellow students, I-Connect uses collaborative exercises and engaging discussion to build participants’ communication skills and their ability to collaborate, learn, and work in diverse environments. All of us – regardless of our experiences or social group membership – must understand both our similarities and our differences in order to work and live with one another. I-Connect workshops provide students with an opportunity to begin these important discussions and learn from each other.

I. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) Resource Center

It is to foster an environment that is open, safe, and inclusive for people of all sexualities and gender identities. The Center is a resource not only for the LGBT community but for the entire University of Illinois community. The LGBT Resource Center seeks to help in the efforts to address homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and heterosexist attitudes and beliefs on the campus, and to work to make the environment safe and affirming for all students, faculty, staff, and LGBT students, faculty, and staff at the University of Illinois in particular.

Housing Division

Men of Impact is a student organization that is dedicated to serving the needs of Black men. We address the needs and concerns facing Black men in our community, via education and service activities. Our primary goal is to equip Black men with the necessary tools to overcome the social stigmas facing them in society today.

Central Black Student Union is to support African American students in the residence halls, serve and assist Black Student Unions in the residence halls, and meet the needs of supporting organizations and the campus-wide community.

Social Justice and Leadership Education team coordinates student groups, leadership opportunities, and social justice initiatives in the residence halls. Every hall has a multicultural advocate (MA) who promotes the advancement of multiculturalism and social justice within the residence halls through community and staff development, education, celebration, and dialogue.

Office of Minority Student Affairs (OMSA)

Description of Services. Poised at the crossroads of academic and student affairs, the Office of Minority Student Affairs (OMSA) is one of the oldest and most comprehensive student support programs in the nation. The OMSA has embodied Illinois’ land-grant mission by championing access for all students and providing a comprehensive array of college preparatory and support services to bolster students’ success since its inception. Currently, we administer four Federal TRiO programs including a classic Upward Bound program, a Student Support Service program, a McNair Post-Baccalaureate Scholar program, and a Talent Search program. Altogether, our TRiO grants provide more than one million dollars annually to serve approximately 900 low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented middle school, high school, and college-aged youth on the campus and in the community. The OMSA also works with partners across the campus to offer advocacy, mentoring, tutoring and academic enrichment services to nearly 3000 first-generation, low-income, and historically underrepresented students at Illinois each year.

Departmental Overview. The Office of Minority Student Affairs (OMSA) sits at the crossroads of Academic and Student Affairs providing advocacy, mentoring, and academic support service to first-generation, low-income, and other underrepresented students at Illinois. OMSA currently houses six departments. A brief summary of each program is included below.

TRiO Upward Bound (UB). UB is the oldest Federal TRiO program and funded to serve 102 pre-college students in Champaign, Urbana and Rantoul, Illinois. UB was created in 1964 by the Economic Opportunities Act to increase secondary graduation rates and prepare first generation, low-income for college success and graduation. The University has successfully administered the UB federal award for more than 50 consecutive years. And the program has been a part of OMSA since OMSA's inception.

TRiO Talent Search (TS). TS is a Federal TRiO program funded to serve 500 pre-college students in Champaign, Urbana and Decatur, Illinois. TS was created in 1965 by the Higher Education Act to increase the number for disadvantaged youth completing secondary education, enrolling in and completing post-secondary degrees.

TRiO Student Support Services (SSS). SSS is a Federal TRiO program funded to serve 250 undergraduate students at UIUC. SSS was created in 1968 by an amendment to the Higher Education Act to increase college retention and graduation rates for first generation and low-income students.

TRiO Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program (McNair). McNair is OMSA's fourth and final Federal TRiO program funded to serve 36 undergraduates at UIUC. McNair was created in 1986 by an amendment to the Higher Education Act to encourage underrepresented students to pursue doctoral studies and increase their attainment of a PhD.

Tutoring and Instructional Services (Tutoring). OMSA's Academic Services Center, assists students in developing the confidence, independence, and active learning skills necessary to meet the University's academic standards and students' individual educational goals. This skill development is facilitated via **tutoring, review sessions, supplemental instruction, study skills workshops, academic enrichment activities, and by helping students navigate the network of college and departmentally based academic resources on the campus.** OMSA's commitment to universal student success requires us to serve every student that requests our assistance. Unfortunately, limited resources sometimes confine our assistance to referral and advice for students not targeted for OMSA's services. **Students who are Targeted for OMSA's Academic Resources and Service (STARS)** include approximately 2,900 incoming students annually who are:

- 1st time freshmen
- 1st Generation
- Low-income
- Historically underrepresented U.S. minorities (i.e., African American, Latino/a, Native American, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander)
- Multi-racial (with at least one historically underrepresented racial identity)
- A student with one of the following banner attributes: Educational Opportunities Program (EOP), President's Awards Program (PAP), DGS Enrichment students, and LAS's AAP students (declared only), AHS's I-LEAP students, I-Promise students, and Chez Scholars.

OMSA's STARS are proactively encouraged to utilize the academic services offered in OMSA East and the excellent student support services offered by our colleagues in the Division of Student Affairs to build success at UIUC from the start.

Academic Mentoring, Programs, and Services (AMPS). Illinois students at all grade levels can take advantage of OMSA's general mentoring services by making an appointment or by simply walking-in. Staff members help with a range of personal, career, financial, and academic issues and refer students to valuable resources throughout the campus and community. OMSA reserves its **proactive**, mentoring services for a smaller subset of STARS students identified above. **The proactive mentoring service is called the Graduate Mentor**

(GM) program. The GM program in AMPS provides intensive, academic coaching and mentoring to approximately 1,300 of the most vulnerable STARS students who **meet the first** criteria **and either** the second **or** the third criteria below:

1. The student cannot qualify for duplicative mentoring services from other campus units (e.g., LAS's Access and Achievement Program; AHS's Mannie L. Jackson Academic Enrichment and Leadership Program, OMSA's Student Support Services program, or the Chez Family Scholars program, etc.).
2. The student must be a 1st time freshman AND from a historically underrepresented US minority group (multi-racial students are included).
3. The student must be a 1st time freshman from a non-US minority group who is a) 1st generation, b) an EOP or PAP student, and C) earned a composite ACT score between 17 and 24, inclusive.

STARS students who qualify for a mentor are assigned to a professional Academic Support Specialist or a trained Graduate Mentor before classes begin and encouraged to meeting with him or her regularly throughout their first year at Illinois.

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Illinois Scholars Program. The Illinois Scholars Program is designed to help guide undergraduate students' transition to the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign by providing historically underserved students a wide range of educational, personal, social, and cultural opportunities. ISP aims to combine opportunity and access, experiential learning, and support to position students for academic success and personal growth throughout their time at Illinois.

The Illinois Scholars Program for 2020-2021 is sponsored by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in partnership with the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences and the Division of General Studies.

The program provided four weeks of academic and non-academic experiences to 24 students. The program was held virtually with an early move-in component.

APPENDIX

Students are identified as [Educational Opportunities Program](#) recipients by the Office of Admissions and are eligible for academic services and counseling support. OMSA assigns a Graduate Counselor to EOP students and provides the students with these services. Students in EOP, along with many other students, receive financial support from federal loans and grants, other awards, and University tuition waivers. They also contribute toward their expenses through family contributions, summer and part-time employment and personal loans. Through the Educational Opportunities Program, the University is attempting to: admit students who otherwise might not be able to undertake a college-level program at a major educational institution and assist them in completing a baccalaureate degree; increase the number of students from ethnic minority groups underrepresented on campus; develop educational programs and policies, both academic and administrative, that will assist and support students in the program and that often benefit all students; provide students not in the program with the vital cultural and social experience of meeting, living with, and learning from students from other cultures; increase ethnic diversity on campus; provide and disseminate information to other educational institutions and agencies that will increase their ability to deal with educational and sociological issues of students from nontraditional backgrounds; and provide information on securing financial aid, student employment and postgraduate opportunities to program participants.

LAS AAP provides retention services to LAS declared and undeclared students affiliated with the [Educational Opportunities Program](#) and the President's Award Program at the University of Illinois. It is designed to provide a supportive learning environment, promote self-advocacy, and promote students' academic success. We strive to connect students with University resources that will complement their academic talents and will help shape their academic paths and ambitions. Our goal is to prepare students for academic success, graduation, and a life of impact.

<https://oiir.illinois.edu/>

The [Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Relations](#) (OIIR) seeks to improve campus climate by providing transformative learning experiences to the Illinois community that result in an appreciation for diversity and cross-cultural engagement. We offer a variety of programs, interactive classes, and workshops that provide tools that will allow students to develop the life skills needed to thrive in a diverse society.

For more information about the Illinois Scholars Program [please click here](#) or [here](#).

Table 2. 2014 First-Time, Full-Time Six-Year Graduation Rates by College, Race/Ethnicity, and Gender and by UIUC College

College	Total	Ethnicity									Gender	
		AIAN	Asian	Black/ African American	Hispanic	NHPI	White	Multi- Race	Non-Res Alien	Unknown	Male	Female
ACES	84.6%	100.0%	82.4%	73.3%	77.1%	n/a	86.5%	92.9%	87.0%	n/a	81.4%	86.7%
AHS	90.3%	n/a	100.0%	81.3%	85.7%	100.0%	92.2%	85.7%	66.7%	n/a	82.1%	93.6%
Business	92.8%	100.0%	92.4%	76.2%	75.0%	n/a	97.1%	100.0%	93.5%	100.0%	91.5%	94.5%
Education	93.1%	n/a	90.9%	50.0%	87.5%	n/a	94.4%	100.0%	100.0%	n/a	100.0%	92.9%
Engineering	87.7%	100.0%	91.4%	81.0%	82.2%	n/a	87.1%	82.5%	86.5%	94.7%	86.4%	92.4%
FAA	87.7%	n/a	82.1%	83.3%	72.7%	0.0%	91.9%	85.7%	90.4%	100.0%	81.7%	92.0%
LAS	85.7%	100.0%	85.5%	77.4%	83.7%	50.0%	88.7%	79.3%	85.5%	85.7%	83.0%	88.5%
Media	87.7%	n/a	82.4%	83.3%	100.0%	n/a	86.6%	75.0%	94.4%	100.0%	82.2%	90.0%
DGS	81.7%	n/a	82.8%	69.4%	71.9%	100.0%	84.0%	73.3%	88.2%	88.9%	78.9%	85.5%
Social Work	76.7%	n/a	100.0%	33.3%	100.0%	n/a	77.8%	100.0%	0.0%	n/a	50.0%	80.8%
Total	86.2%	100.0%	87.5%	75.8%	79.2%	60.0%	88.3%	81.4%	87.3%	91.3%	83.7%	89.3%

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A COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY



1. In keeping with the spirit of Higher Values in Higher Education, and our institutional values and mission, diversity is a priority at Western Illinois University. WIU's mission is to provide a community of individuals dedicated to learning that will have a profound and positive impact on our changing world through the unique interaction of instruction, research, and public service as we educate and prepare a diverse student population to thrive in and make positive contributions to our global society. The University celebrates, recognizes, values, and would like to further enhance the diversity of its campus community. As a public institution, our students, faculty, and staff should reflect the broad diversity of a global society. [WIU's Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy Statement](#) articulates the University's position with regard to equal opportunity and affirmative action.
2. The University has hired an Assistant to the President for Diversity and Inclusion. This position is responsible for assisting the President, Provost and senior leadership with the administration, management, and planning of the university's diversity and inclusion policies, programs and initiatives. The position will work with partners across the university and in the surrounding communities to develop programs and initiatives that promote a thriving diverse, multicultural, equitable, ethical, and inclusive university community focusing on student success, the advancement of knowledge and community engagement.
3. The President has designated funds to promote additional programming for faculty and staff to learn about inclusion on campus. These funds have covered a book club, where participants read books such as [How to be an Antiracist](#) by Ibram Kendi. Faculty and staff on both of our campuses participated in roundtable workshops discussing ideas for increasing awareness of the need for inclusion on campus.
4. The University Diversity Council fosters the progression and sustainability of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to embrace a culture of understanding, acceptance, and a sense of belonging.

Objectives of the Group:

- A. The UDC is a working group and serves in an advisory capacity to the president of Western Illinois University on issues regarding diversity, equity and inclusion.
- B. Working with Equal Opportunity and Access, Academic Personnel, Human Resources, Student Services and Admissions, the UDC ensures the University attracts and retains diverse faculty, staff, and students.
- C. The UDC ensures diversity, equity and inclusion best practices are upheld in a transparent manner and enhance University strategies, policies, guidelines, initiatives and programs.
- D. The UDC identifies barriers to, and solutions for, a diverse and inclusive University.
- E. Working across the University, the UDC provides resources, support and programs to ensure a diverse and inclusive University.
- F. The UDC increases cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills throughout the University.
- G. The UDC partners with the surrounding communities to promote a positive campus climate for all.
5. The Veterans Resource Center is committed to assisting those who have served or are currently serving in the U.S. military, and their family members. In collaboration with an array of University departments and community organizations, the center provides coordinated services and resources in a one-stop location to ensure that all veterans and service members are afforded the greatest opportunities for success.
6. The Office of Equal Opportunity and Access has begun rebranding its image and goals. The goals are to increase employment and educational opportunities for women, minorities and persons with disabilities. Strategies to achieve this goal include targeted recruitment designed to increase the diversity of the applicant pools for vacant positions, and professional development programs that provide training and experience to increase the participation and achievement of underrepresented groups.

7. Our new Student Development and Success Center has streamlined services for students with various needs. The role of Disability Resources in the SD&SC is to facilitate equal access to University classes, programs, and activities for students with disabilities. Because access is a shared University responsibility, the SD&SC serves as a resource for faculty, staff and administrators on creating accessible and inclusive environments. While WIU is committed to access and inclusion, it is not possible to anticipate all barriers that might exist for individuals with disabilities. Therefore, the SD&SC is the campus department designated by the University to work with students through an interactive process to determine disability and hear requests for reasonable accommodations. The SD&SC's core beliefs are as follows:
 - A. Human variation is natural and vital in the development of dynamic communities.
 - B. Disability is a social/political category that includes people with a variety of conditions who are bound together by common experiences.
 - C. Inclusion and full participation are a matter of social justice.
 - D. Design is powerful and profoundly influences our daily lives.
 - E. Good design is essential for achieving inclusion and full participation.
 - F. Creating usable, equitable, sustainable, and inclusive environments is a shared responsibility.
8. The Casa Latina Cultural Center is passionate about social justice, intersectionality and developing students through education, engagement and leadership. Casa provides a unique and empowering space for students to experience college life. Casa is a space on campus that offers a holistic learning experience through programs and initiatives that facilitate the exploration of ethnic identity development, social justice, community outreach, cultural expression, and social and professional networking so students can become the best version of themselves.
9. Gwendolyn Brooks Cultural Center is committed to helping the campus community adjust to a multicultural and multiracial society regardless of race, age or economic status. There is a variety of options for student groups under GBCC: African Student Association, Black Man
10. Achievement Network, Black Student Association, Black Student Summit, Cultural Expressions, Christian Faith Campus Ministries, GBCC Dance Troupe, and National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.
11. The LGBT*QA Resource Center was established in the Fall semester of 2011. Since its first year, the LGBT*QA Resource Center has made substantial progress in creating an inclusive environment for LGBT*QA individuals on the Western Illinois campus. Since its inception the LGBT*QA Resource Center has provided campus-wide programming, Safe Space Training, a cozy LGBT*QA Lounge, and spaces to engaging the Western Illinois University community in dialogue about LGBT*QA topics. Throughout the academic year, the LGBT*QA Resource Center will be sponsoring and co-sponsoring a variety of programs such as Trans* Week, Camp OUT, Pride Week, Lavender Graduation, and many more!
12. The Western Illinois University Women's Center supports a welcoming and gender-inclusive campus community. Student development is at the core of our work. We advocate for gender equity through examinations of feminism, sexism, patriarchy, and misogyny. We lead the campus community in explorations of how gender is a social construction that influences power dynamics, and intersects with all other identities, such as, but not limited to: ability, age, citizenship status, ethnicity, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic class. We promote opportunities to celebrate women, collaborate in programming and outreach, and seek unity and understanding.
13. Our Men's Outreach Program is designed to get more men involved in the life of the Women's Center, to encourage men to take responsibility for stopping violence against women, and to educate men about gender equity and human issues in general. Men's Outreach is not just about sexual assault and violence against women; it is about involving and educating more men about "women's issues" (which are really human issues.) By supporting anti-violence organizations, women's sporting events, and gender-equity programs and activities, you are promoting gender equality and helping to eliminate sexism and intolerance in our society. We encourage all men who feel strongly about issues of inequality for women and/or violence

against women to get involved with the Women's Center. Not sure how to do that? Here are some suggestions: Volunteer to be involved in the planning and implementation of events like Take Back the Night and the Vagina Monologues, join the Feminist Action Alliance student organization, work with staff to create discussion groups, or just come hang out in the Center. Everyone is welcome here!

14. The purpose of the President's Annual Excellence in Diversity Awards is to celebrate diversity efforts during the preceding year that have advanced our goals of Higher Values in Higher Education, increased diversity and created a campus climate that welcomes and supports all individuals. We wish to honor members of the university, Macomb and Quad Cities communities who have demonstrated excellence in diversity. The categories are leadership, service, education and other. The leadership award will be given to individuals in leadership roles that develop initiatives that enhance and further diversity goals. The service award will be given to individuals who have participated in or initiated diversity related committee work, community involvement, and/or community outreach. The education award will be given to those who offer teaching, programming or activities designed to foster or enhance diversity. The other award will be given to those who have promoted diversity in general.
15. The IACD has been part of Western Illinois University's Expanding Cultural Diversity Project and was founded in 1991 to further awareness and understanding of the value of cultural diversity, particularly among educators and students, through:
 - A. Networking and professional development opportunities.
 - B. Research and scholarship in cultural diversity.
 - C. Curriculum and instructional development.
 - D. Leadership in cultural diversity, social justice, and equity initiatives.
 - E. Help students, educators, and community members acquire the consciousness and competencies they need to communicate and interact effectively within a culturally diverse world and to work toward social justice and equity.
16. University Committee on Sexual Orientation Gender Identity and Expression (UCOSOGIE) UCOSOGIE is comprised of a diverse group of faculty, staff, and administrators, who are located on both the Macomb and Quad Cities Campus of Western Illinois University. Some members are appointed to represent their "constituency" in order to ensure that various parts of the WIU community are represented. While students are not formal members of the committee, they can attend meetings and serve in an informal capacity.

UCOSOGIE's mission is to design policies that promote the fair treatment and acceptance of all sexual orientations and gender identities and that reduce or eliminate acts of homophobia and heterosexism at WIU, to ensure that those policies are being implemented, and to assist the LGBTQ*A Resource Center and Unity in enhancing the WIU community's understanding of sexual identity and gender identity/expression.

The following is detailed reporting information from campus organizations working on equity, diversity, and inclusion:

17. The first meeting for the reinstated Black Faculty/Staff Council was held on Thursday, September 10, 2020. The **Black Faculty and Staff Council (BFSC)** of the Western Illinois University is dedicated to improving the quality of the Black experience at WIU by fostering a campus climate that is inviting, unified, encouraging, and that promotes upward mobility. We are committed to establishing a proactive environment that is sensitive to the issues and concerns that Black, faculty, staff and students face including mentoring, tutoring, recruitment, retention, and promotion.
 - Fostering a sense of unity and collegiality among the Black faculty and staff;
 - Encouraging and support efforts at upward mobility through effective mentoring;
 - Assisting with the WIU diversity initiative by encouraging the recruitment and retention of Black faculty, staff, and students;
 - Bringing issues of importance concerning Black faculty, staff, and students to the attention of senior administrators at WIU;
 - Providing WIU leaders with a comprehensive and representative Black perspective on institutional,

societal, and programmatic matters;

- Serving as a resource to connect WIU to Macomb and its surrounding communities.

Note: The Council has developed a statement in support of Western Illinois University black undergraduate and graduate students.

18. BLACK LIVES MATTER MARCH – “A CALL FOR ACTION”

Members from the Black Student Association (BSA) coordinated a peaceful protest march from campus to Chandler Park on Friday, September 4, 2020. The intent of the program was to bring attention to specific concerns Black students would like to see resolved. The march was supplemented by a written list of suggested changes that they felt would help Black students, faculty, and staff feel safer and more aligned with WIU.

19. REBUILDING OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES DEPARTMENT

An exploratory committee is being established to begin to outline groundwork for the return of African American Studies, Women's Studies and Queer Studies including curriculum offerings, staffing options and implementation.

20. ANTI-RACIST INQUIRY SERIES – Initiative for Social Justice Pedagogies (ISJP) fall 2020 - Looking Inward: White Educators Examining Race

The Initiative for Social Justice Pedagogies held the first of six discussion series on Wednesday September 9, 2020 from 12:00-12:50 via ZOOM. 45 faculty and staff members participated in the series event titled: Why We Need to Talk About Race. The facilitated discussion with small groups of 3-4 members went smoothly both pedagogically and technologically based on preliminary feedback from participants. A number of participants followed up, shared preliminary action plans, and continued with discussions via the series' Western Online site. The series' next event is titled: Identifying and Challenging Biases, will be held on Wednesday September 23, 2020.

21. LBGT+QA CELEBRATION

The 16th annual Big Picture Picnic was held Friday, Sept. 18 hosted by the LGBT*QA Resource Center. It is held each year as an opportunity for community building among the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, asexual and allies within the campus community. Facial coverings were required by all participants, and attendance limited to the first 50. The picnic featured "grab and go" items to ensure pandemic-related protocols were followed. The picnic began at 4:30 p.m. on the Multicultural Center lawn, with the formal picture taken promptly at 5 p.m. (individuals interested in taking part in the Big Picture had to be there no later than 4:50 p.m.). All members or allies of the LGBT*QA community, including family and friends, are invited to take part in the photograph.

22. ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

Monyae Williamson from the Athletic Department at WIU reported the following student athlete diversity initiatives:

Protest to Vote (Sept. 26)

Protest to Vote is a campaign created by DeShon Gavin (football) that encourages young adults to vote. It includes a march through campus (The Athletic department has a meeting with campus police to ensure all COVID-19 protocols are followed) as well as an informational page with links/tools on voter registration, mail-in voting, and absentee ballots.

Black Student-Athlete (BSA) Group

Student-athletes have voiced a need for an on-campus group primarily for black-identifying athletes, where

they can create programming and policy that will impact not only WIU but peer league institutions.

Social Media Content (Ongoing)

Social media content (primarily video, pictures, and graphics) related to equality (Black Lives Matter, LGBTQIA rights, women's rights, etc.)

LGBTQIA History Month (October)

Partnering with the LGBT*QA Resource Center to promote ally ship and provide education and awareness. They also hoping to schedule safe space training for student-athletes, coaches, and staff.

NCAA Diversity & Inclusion Social Media Campaign (Oct. 27-29)

Joining the NCAA to engage in discussions about diversity and inclusion. In-house, they also planned additional diversity and inclusion training for student-athletes, coaches, and staff. In June, they scheduled training with the Institute for Sport and Social Justice (Huddle Up) and had follow-up sessions afterwards.

23. STUDENT AFFAIRS INVOLVEMENT WITH DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Inclusion Report from the Residence Assistants (RA'S) and Community Coordinators (CC's). The Associate Vice President of Student Services, John Biernbaum, and his staff held the following events as related to the UHDS Inclusion:

- A virtual in-service session was held via zoom about 'Black Lives Matter & Bias' on 09/15/2020.
- The committee held "open" inclusion meeting **bi-weekly starting on Thursday, September 17th at 9AM (held virtually)**. These meetings will be open to any Housing staff member that wants to attend and get informed about what the committee is planning or provide feedback. Calendar invites for these meetings will be sent soon. For those that are unable to attend scheduled meetings, we will also begin sharing brief notes from the meetings so you can stay informed if you would like. Our goal in offering these open meetings and notes is to be transparent about the work that is being done to serve you as student staff members and provide a permanent avenue for you to participate in this department's inclusion work if you are interested.

24. LBGT*QA REPORT ON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY AND EXPRESSION (UCOSOGIE)

UCOGOGIE is working on multiple fronts to increase campus diversity, and not simply LGBT*QA diversity. For several years, we have been in conversation with WIU Admissions to raise the profile of the university for prospective queer students. We have advocated for a "diversity button" that would make it easy for prospective students to see the diversity of the campus (and not just gender and sex diversity).

In raising our profile for prospective queer students, we have purchased a place on the Campus Pride Index and are currently working to increase our score from 3.5 out of 5 to 5 out of 5. To do so, we will need to accomplish two things: gender neutral bathrooms somewhere in Housing and the hiring of one or more counselors specializing in treating LGBT*QA students.

For gender neutral bathrooms, I have been working with the Multicultural Center and the LGBT*QA Resource Center to plan a Living and Learning Community (LLC) that would feature them. The Zami LLC, if it receives sufficient enrollment, will be a gender-inclusive community of diverse backgrounds and ethnicities, all committed to celebrating difference and promoting acceptance. It will offer students a unique opportunity to develop their understanding and advocacy for intersecting identities. The LLC will focus on diversity in all forms, including race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, physical ability, religion, and more. Students in this community will live in an inclusive community dedicated to promoting the understanding of differences and celebrating diversity, while interrogating their own intersecting identities, as well as studying the broader history and cultural context of social categories, developing plans for intersectionality-based social justice, and hosting programs that will educate themselves and their peers. Through group discussions on multiculturalism, diversity, social justice, and exploration of identity, students will gain an expanded worldview, thus creating a safe, welcoming, and fun living space for all.

LLC residents will be able to explore any academic program and come from any major. The community encourages scholars to engage in and learn about social justice in an interdisciplinary manner through projects they collaborate on, monthly discussions, community service and programming designed for their success. The program will provide connections and skills to support students from their first year through graduation. All Living Learning Community members are expected to engage in at least the minimum criteria to reach these goals:

1. Students must enroll in at least two academic courses centered on social justice and diversity. These courses may be General Education courses with the Multicultural Designation, and/or courses in majors with a clear focus on social justice and diversity.
2. Every year, students in the LLC will be responsible for hosting an evening at the Multicultural Center. Students will work with their faculty advisors, as well as MCC staff, in developing the programs. In addition, students will be expected to attend other events at the MCC, as their schedules permit.

In tandem with Zami, Queer Studies minor also serves as a recruitment and retention tool for LGBT*QA students and prospective students. Established in 2015, the minor took a serious hit during the Illinois State budget crisis; and we lost many of the faculty teaching the courses. However, at present, we are working to restore the minor. Last semester, I successfully petitioned to get the General Education Multicultural designation for Queer Studies 100, Introduction to Queer Studies, so that now the course offers students something toward their graduation, even if they choose not to complete the Queer Studies minor. UCOGOGIE advocates for diversity hiring in WIU faculty and staff, including establishing a larger LGBT*QA presence in the non-student population.

25. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE “PRESIDENT’S COUNCIL ON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (PCOCE)”

Creation

The PCOCE was established to provide an effective venue through which WIU can engage with the City of Macomb to create positive and productive discourse focused on improving University-community relations, with a particular emphasis on issues of social justice and equity. We create an environment that fosters and promotes civic engagement. We serve as a resource for and stimulus to educational, cultural, environmental, community, and economic development in our region. Members of this body are selected as representative of their respective organizations, and are expected to create collaborative opportunities for mutual growth and support.

Mission

The PCOCE shall support the President by engaging community leaders to enhance the relationship between WIU and the City of Macomb. It shall provide for the continued support and development of WIU students, faculty, and staff as it relates to their impact as engaged citizens. It shall work towards the development and enhancement of programs, services and opportunities for members of underrepresented groups to enhance the quality of life for WIU students as they engage in the Macomb community.

The council will:

1. Identify strategies that support Macomb as a welcoming community for all WIU students, and in particular the special and unique issues and needs of underrepresented communities.
2. Make recommendations for appropriate community resources to support diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives that bring diverse viewpoints to the community and the university.
3. Seek opportunities and provide resources to promote the success of faculty, staff, and students in their integration as engaged citizens within the Macomb community.
4. Publicize, market, and advocate for the continued enhancement of programs and services for underrepresented administrators, faculty, staff, and students at WIU.

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