

Using a Comprehensive Strategy to Retain Hispanic Students

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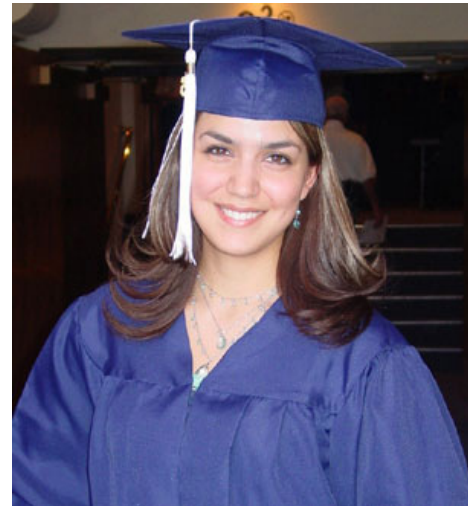
A 2005 study by the Higher Education Research Institute demonstrates that degree completion rates vary substantially by academic preparation, ethnicity, gender, and the type of institution attended (Engle, 2005). Asian students have the highest four-year completion rates (38.8%) and Hispanic students the lowest (21.3%). More than 90% of the student growth over the next 10 years is predicted to be among Hispanics. These statistics indicate a need for specialized programs that address the specific issues of Hispanic students. This fact has a significant impact on how University of Arizona (UA) prepares students for matriculation and success at this research-intensive university of 37,000 students. UA has been engaged in significant program development for its growing population of Hispanic students, now at 14%.

Seidman (2005) found three significant contributing factors for the attrition of Hispanic students: (a) being unprepared academically, (b) being away from family and community support, and (c) having inadequate information about how to apply for financial aid. In addition, Hispanic students may not perceive the long-term benefits of higher education and may

have fears about incurring debt to complete their degree (Seidman). The UA study (Stern, 2005) identified several other critical issues for Hispanic students that include difficulty in financing their education, complex immigration policies, and underrepresentation of Latinos among faculty and staff. As a result, the UA has developed a comprehensive strategy to address these needs of Hispanic students, resulting in a graduation rate that is twice the national average (Stern).

Part of the comprehensive strategy is addressing academic preparedness from a family point of view. The College Academy for Parents is housed in the office of Minority Student Recruitment and Early Academic Outreach and serves parents of elementary students in the Sunnyside Unified School District. This institutional initiative is designed to reach parents as early as possible in understanding current and future academic expectations, improving parental communication with schools, and increasing parental involvement in order to prepare students for higher education.

The program, offered in Spanish and English, consists of 12 two-hour workshops and two campus visits. In



UA's outreach programs increase graduation rates among Hispanics.

the three years since the beginning of the program, 213 families have participated, resulting in service to 334 students from preschool age to high school seniors. These parents are informed about other programs as well, such as MESA (Math, Engineering,

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Science Achievement), which is a middle and high school college preparation program. Workshops and a parent-out-reach newsletter have been developed to keep program graduates informed about the college-going process.

Another part of the strategy is to bridge the gap between high school and college. The New Start Summer Program is a seven-week summer program designed to acclimate students to the UA's academic and social cultures. On average, 60% of students served by New Start are Hispanic. Students enroll in a three- to five-unit university-level course (math, English, or a general education course), and tutors provide additional academic support. Peer advisors facilitate daily one-hour workshops on academic success strategies, introduction to areas of study, and university resources. In addition, peer advisors conduct one-on-one sessions to provide individual student support. Students engage in a living-learning community by staying in residence halls where additional educational and social programs are offered.

The Rising Sun Leadership Program is part of the New Start Summer Program and focuses on the development of leadership skills through service to the community and is an important part of socialization for the first year of college. Students participate in two or three community service events per week such as Barrio Anita Mural Project, The Giving Tree, Boys and Girls Club, and YWCA. In 2004, the first-year retention rate for New Start participants was 75.2%, and the average first-year retention rate for participants based

on a 10-year study from 1993-2002 was 71.4%. The average six-year graduation rate for participants based on seven-year study from 1993-1999 was 46.3%.

Chicano/Hispanic Student Affairs (C/HAS) is a cultural center and creates a safe and welcoming environment that supports academic success, develops leadership, and embraces Chicano/Hispanic students' cultural identities. Key to the center's programming is its relationship with the University of Arizona Hispanic Alumni (UAHA) organization. Each year, UAHA awards scholarships to more than 100 local students and requires students to participate in C/HSA programs and events. Throughout their four or more years at college, students form mentoring relationships through *Entre Familia* activities, which include meeting targeted alumni, interacting with the Center's designated *abuelitos/as* (grandfathers or grandmothers) and a faculty fellow, taking leadership classes, and joining a Hispanic graduation convocation to which the entire Tucson community is invited.

Another academic C/HSA effort is the Success Express Program: Language, Reading, and Culture First-Year Experience, which is a three-unit, two-semester course to assist Hispanic students by focusing on academic and social skills, connecting students with university resources, and highlighting Hispanic issues such as immigration and second-language acquisition. The class uses peer mentors, who are upper-division students, to discuss study skills and other college adjustment issues with Hispanic students. In 2004, the first-year retention rate for C/HSA Success Express participants was 92.6%.

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The last component of the comprehensive strategy addresses graduate school and beyond. As students prepare to graduate with a bachelor's degree and express interest in graduate school, they are referred to the McNair Achievement Program (MAP), which is designed to increase the number of PhDs awarded to students from groups underrepresented in higher education. This program targets low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented students and provides them with academic and social opportunities and activities that develop the skills necessary to excel and gain admission into a top graduate program. This is accomplished through support from a faculty mentor, summer research experiences, and a learning community where knowledge about academic skills and the graduate school application process is communicated. Tutoring, advising, and financial support are also provided.

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Financial issues are addressed in all the programs offered, but most of the focus is in early outreach programs through the College Academy for Parents and the New Start Summer Program. UA tries to address these issues as early as possible since financial need is often a significant barrier to college attendance and retention.

Institutions of higher education face a growing population of Hispanic students who are underprepared academically, who lack family or community support, and who have inadequate information about financial aid. UA has started addressing some of these challenges by instituting programs that include parents, bridge the gap between high school and college, provide cultural resources, introduce academic success skills, and support students through graduate school and beyond.

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Changes in Orientation Increases Student Matriculation

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The Clarion *Transitions* Team, Clarion University of Pennsylvania, Clarion, PA

In 2003, a Clarion *Transitions* team of faculty, staff, and administrators used the research on student retention and the results of university-wide roundtables, focus groups, and local research to revise the university's new student orientation program. Matriculation rates increased from 92.1% in 2002, the year before orientation was revised, to 99.7% in 2005, after three years of continuing modifications to the orientation program.

Although student satisfaction surveys from new student orientation consistently reflected a high degree of satisfaction from students and family members, the *Transitions* team decided to make a number of changes to increase the matriculation rate. The focus of orientation was changed from an input-oriented provision of information (i.e., imparting information) for students and families to an outcomes-oriented approach (i.e., expecting students to learn critical information and complete critical tasks) that concentrates on (a) encouraging student and family commitment to the university; (b) building relationships among prospective students, and between students and faculty members; and (c) providing information for family members regarding student

matriculation to the university. A primary theme, to help students accept personal responsibility for their education, was threaded throughout the new student orientation sessions, including the president's address, introductory remarks, and the scripts provided for orientation leaders.

Clarion's *Transitions* Team did both summative and formative assessment of the new orientation program using both direct and indirect measures. Summative assessment of the newly revised orientation was determined by increasing matriculation rates of students. The *Transitions* Team set a goal of increasing matriculation to over 99%. Formative assessment was determined by student evaluation surveys that included direct and indirect measures of learning and satisfaction. Specifically, student evaluation surveys were tallied immediately after each orientation session, and a team of faculty, staff, and administrators made adjustments for subsequent orientation sessions based on the results of these surveys. Direct measures of student learning included questions such as asking students where they would go to get a parking pass or asking students to name a faculty member whom they met during the orientation

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session. Indirect measures of student learning included satisfaction questions such as asking students if they understood the university's general education program following its explanation during the orientation session.

Student commitment to the university was fostered in various new ways. For example, students received their university photo identification cards at the end of the day, and students activated their Clarion e-mail accounts as they learned how to use the Clarion i-portal to locate the names of their academic advisors. Students also received personal business cards imprinted with their university e-mail address, and they were encouraged to share their Clarion business cards with other students so that communications could continue during the summer.

Research has demonstrated that a key factor in student retention is building relationships with faculty (Astin, 1997; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Tinto, 1994). Clarion University faculty are often somewhat reticent with students at orientation and do not sufficiently introduce themselves to each incoming student. In order to encourage faculty to help students remember them, an informal competition among the colleges was initiated to encourage each college to reach the highest rates of faculty identification by students after each orientation session. The result was that student identification of faculty members increased from less than 30% after the first orientation session in 2003, to more than 60% after the last orientation session in 2005.



Clarion's orientation leaders.

After each orientation session, the percentage of students in each college who correctly identified a faculty member and the dean of their college was tabulated. The results were sent in an e-mail to the deans, with some competitive comment like "Arts and Sciences is leading with 56% followed by Business with 52% and trailed by Education with 30%." A humorous comment was also generally included. The deans and faculty encouraged students to remember their names by singing their names to students, giving the students mnemonics to remember their names, comparing themselves to cartoon characters who had names similar to theirs, and even telling the students that they wanted to win the name competition during this particular session. On the serious side, the students were told how important it was to make

contact with a faculty member so that they would know someone whom they could contact if they had a question. The president's speech reinforced this, as did the talks to parents during separate sessions during orientation.

The university's Clarion *Transitions* team believes that changing the focus of new student orientation from inputs to outputs has made the difference in student retention after orientation.

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Stereotype Threat

Its Implications for Working With At-Risk Students

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Students are affected by other people's attitudes and behaviors. One way students can be negatively affected is by being stereotyped. Stereotype threat is best understood as a pervasive, distorted belief maintained by a significant number of individuals in US society regarding the academic and/or intellectual ability of different subgroups within the US population (e.g., African Americans/Latino/as are less intelligent than Caucasian Americans, men are better at math/sciences than women, or Asians outperform Caucasians in math/sciences). This belief, when activated, acts much like a self-fulfilling prophecy. Students coming from families with limited resources, underfunded schools, and distressed neighborhoods face the extra burden of stereotype threat. Faculty and

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staff working with at-risk students need to be aware of (a) the effects of stereotype threat, (b) the situations in which it is most likely to occur, and (c) the interventions that are effective in lessening its effects.

Stereotype threat is strongest in situations where the students' behavior runs the risk of confirming the negative belief that their group lacks a valued academic ability and the situation is relevant to the individual's definition of self (Steele, 1997). This effect has been shown to lower the academic performance of African American students (Steele & Aronson, 1995), Latino/a students (Good, Aronson, & Inzlicht, 2003), students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (Croizet & Claire, 1998), female students studying mathematics and/or science (Good et al.), and even Caucasian male students studying mathematics (Aronson, Lustina, Good, & Keough, 1999). In each case, negative stereotyped beliefs influenced students to underperform intellectually on academic tasks compared to their recorded academic ability.

This stereotyping may take the form of conscious or unconscious beliefs and assumptions on the part of faculty, staff, administrators, and students of students' academic abilities, appropriateness for

college/university study, chosen major, and even whether it was appropriate for the student to be admitted to the institution. These conscious and unconscious beliefs include assumptions about the students' verbal and socialization skills, their need for remedial programs, the need to lower expectations to meet student needs, and the assumption that at-risk students are the cause of lowered academic rigor at the institution. These assumptions place at-risk students in situations where a stereotype threat response can be activated.

When students are at the receiving end of stereotype threat, they often learn to care less about the situations or activities that cause stress. This is called "disidentification" (Steele, 1999). Pain is muted when students stop identifying with the part of life in which pain occurs. By not caring, students become less motivated, which in turn impacts negatively on school performance.

Steele and Aronson (1995) have found that when a difficult verbal test was presented as a test of ability, Black students performed dramatically less well than White students. When they presented the same test as a laboratory quiz on how to solve problems, stressing that it was not a measure of their level of intellectual ability, the Black students' performance matched that of White students. Another test showed that when Black students felt trust, they performed well regardless of whether their self-confidence had been shaken beforehand. And when they felt no trust, no amount of bolstering of self-confidence mattered. Another interesting test

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was performed in a racially integrated 250-student wing of a residence hall which had a weekly rap session. Black students from that residence hall had better first-year grades than other first-year Black students on campus. Steele believes that participation in these rap sessions reduced students' feeling of stereotype threat and improved grades.

Other interventions that have been found effective in offsetting the negative effects of stereotype threat include:

- Forming positive teacher-student relationships, which are characterized by a strong faith in the student's ability to be successful; a strong belief that the student is able to contribute in unique, valuable, and meaningful ways to the academic and social atmospheres on campus; and mutual respect, value, and acceptance.
- Being aware of one's own biases, attitudes, and level of cultural sensitivity. These affect our views of the academic abilities of and our interactions with stereotyped students.
- Offering challenging course work, because this conveys respect for the student's potential, allows them to demonstrate their skills, and gives them interesting but not overwhelming work. Remedial work reinforces the belief in students that their academic ability is being viewed stereotypically.
- Valuing multiple perspectives. By acknowledging multiple perspectives, faculty and staff explicitly value a variety of approaches to academic skills. Students can engage in academic activities without feeling there is a right or wrong method.
- Being a role model. Role models demonstrate that barriers to success in higher education are not insurmountable.
- Building self-efficacy by helping students acknowledge and view their successes as stemming from their own hard work.
- Modifying attribution beliefs. Students need to learn to modify how they attribute their academic difficulties from global, stable, internal causes to specific, temporary, external causes. For example, students need to realize that performing poorly on an academic assessment is specific to the assessment in question and not to every academic activity in class (global vs. specific), that poor academic performance is not going to occur all the time with all academic tasks (stable vs. temporary), and does not have to do solely with their overall academic ability/intelligence (internal vs. global).
- Helping students realize that their abilities can grow. Oftentimes, students react to stereotype threat because they feel that their intelligence is fixed and that they have no ability to do better. Helping students realize that their abilities can adapt and change with time helps students resist stereotype threat reactions.

The more faculty, administrators, and staff become cognizant of stereotype threat, its implications for the success of stereotyped students, and the methods to ameliorate its effects, the greater our successes can be with at-risk students. Stereotyped students need assistance working through and dealing with the effects of stereotype threat. Helping students deal with this phenomenon creates more resistant students with greater

strengths who are better able to deal with adversity in their higher education experience.

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∞ Spotlight ∞

M. Lee Upcraft

Asheley Bice

This is the third article in a series from luminaries in the field who share insights regarding their campuses and higher education in general.



M. Lee Upcraft, Research Associate at the Center for the Study of Higher Education, Affiliate Professor of Higher Education, and Assistant Vice President Emeritus of Student Affairs at Pennsylvania State University, has been a voice in the first-year experience movement for more than 35 years. He has researched everything from assessment to services for women students and veterans, and has authored countless chapters, journal articles, and books, including *The Freshman Year Experience: Helping Students Survive and Succeed in College* (1989) with John Gardner, *Assessment Practice in Student Affairs: A Guide for Practitioners* (1996) with John Schuh, and *Challenging*

and Supporting the First-Year Student: A Handbook for Improving the First Year of College (2004) with John Gardner and Betsy Barefoot. Upcraft was interviewed in October 2005 for the 25th Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience. He shared his thoughts on why the first year matters, the importance of integrating curricular and co-curricular activities, and the current technological impact affecting postsecondary institutions.

In retrospect, he notes that no one could have known the impact the first-year experience would have today. Its timeless appeal is due to its continued relevance. As Upcraft explained, emphasis on the first year

“matters because in the first year is when you basically decide whether you’re going to continue your education or drop out. About 25% of students who start in the first year fail to complete it, or fail to return for their sophomore year.”

He also noted this does not mean that the other years do not matter, but the first year is a critical time and affects the college experience. Upcraft continued, “If institutions are interested in helping students succeed and go on to graduation, they have to get them early.”

Upcraft asserts that one way to reach students during that critical year is through integration of in- and out-of-class activities and communicating objectives to all involved in student success. According to Upcraft, it is important to make “faculty, staff, and administrators aware of what we know about the first year and how to better integrate that into first-year initiatives, both inside the classroom and outside the classroom.”

Research over the years has shown the impact out-of-class experience has on in-class experience. Upcraft said, “If it’s a supportive environment for academic work, [students will] succeed; if it’s not, they won’t. And there’re things happening outside the classroom like alcohol use and abuse, which can have a direct negative impact on their social lives and their academic lives as well.”

It is imperative that the campus culture is taken into consideration when implementing first-year programs. Not all programs will fit a campus culture. The only way to see if it is working is to assess the program. “All first-year student success is local. It’s up to every institution to do assessment to find out if what they are doing is working.”

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One aspect of today's college culture is the use of technology in our schools. Upcraft believes,

"Technology is such a part of students' lives today that it's got to be having an impact on the way they learn and the way they experience college. I don't think we've really caught up with what's really going on with them and technology."

In fact, Upcraft thinks that it is the duty of the institution to assimilate technology into programs and initiatives for students.

Upcraft sees several positive trends in the field including the integration of curricular and co-curricular activities through the cooperation of academic and student affairs personnel, and the increased implementation of technology in programming. He also said, "Continuing efforts like learning communities and first-year seminars, I think, are where the field and the movement are going now."

The first-year experience continues to resonate with institutions nationwide, and the voices within the profession, such as Lee Upcraft's, continue to propel us into the future.

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Activities for Parents at Orientation at Yavapai College

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Heightened parental involvement is one of the biggest challenges on college campuses today. In order to address the parents' concerns, the Academic Advising office at Yavapai College provides SOAR—Student Orientation / Assessment / Advisement / Registration—for all new students which includes a parent orientation session. After checking in at 9 A.M., parents and students attend an information session on college resources, degree programs, FERPA, campus safety, and success strategies. After a refreshment break, parents reconvene at the original meeting location. A special session is conducted by an academic advisor and the assistant dean of student development. Here, parents have an opportunity to express concerns (e.g., about safety, their child having an undecided major, or their only child getting along with a roommate) as well as joys (e.g., "This is our third and last child going to college, and we finally have the house to ourselves."). The presentation, which includes information about how we assist students through a variety of campus resources, responds to many of these concerns.

We praise parents and other relatives for participating with their new college students. We call ourselves their partners in support of their children's educational endeavors. We talk about the fine line between being helpful and being one of those hovering "helicopter parents."

They always laugh about this description, but many admit that they identify with the described behaviors. We discuss how college is a time for students to develop their identities and independence, how, sometimes, it takes a while for this to occur, and how parents can encourage that growing sense of responsibility.

One of the activities we use to help parents express their feelings and concerns about their children becoming college students is what we call the "pipe cleaner exercise." This is something I first saw at an orientation session at Northern Arizona University. Each parent is given a pipe cleaner—the ones we use are about 12 inches long and come in different colors. We ask them to create

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Pipe cleaners symbolizes parents' feelings about launching college students.

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a shape with their pipe cleaner that expresses how they feel about their son or daughter embarking on this new phase of their lives.

Then, they tell the group the meaning of the shape they have formed. We always get a few hearts, question marks, and exclamation points. One dad managed to form his pipe cleaner into an "OK," indicating that he felt confident that this would be a good experience for his daughter. One mom formed a flower and said she expected college to be a time for her daughter to blossom. We have also had pipe cleaners fashioned into dollar signs and even a noose (that dad expressed that his son better not flunk out!). There always seems to be at least one or two parents who get choked up when expressing their feelings about their child's pending transition.

This exercise more than anything else allows parents to see that they all

have common concerns. They are not the only parents worried about their child's safety, time management skills, or preparedness for college. They hear that others in the room have the same concerns, love, and pride. The exercise seems to release all their pent-up anxiety about their child taking the next step toward adulthood. They make a connection with the staff member doing the exercise as well and feel as though there is at least one person they can turn to if they have questions in the future. We know it was successful when they ask if they can take their symbols home with them!

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Evelyn Nicolosi

*A Model for Frontline Behavior
 With Students*

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"I met another person who inspired me," Randy Swing wrote in February 2006. "Her name is Evelyn." Evelyn Nicolosi is a cashier for the Sodexo Campus Services at Rollins College and works in the Cornell Campus Center. Swing continued,

Evelyn is incredible in her ability to connect with students and to greet them in a personal way. She remembers their injured knee and asks if it is doing okay a year later. She notes who she does not see for a while and asks where they have been. The students and campus administrators are aware of her care and concern and have honored her with awards. Perhaps one of the most important lessons is that Evelyn is not even an employee of the College. While she interacts with students every day, her supervision and pay all come from [the food vendor] a private contractor.

She joined the College in February 1978. During her many years at the

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college, Evelyn has been nominated for and received numerous awards for her outstanding customer service.

When Evelyn was asked how she remembers so many details about people, she said, “I don’t know.” Students, alumni, and staff, report otherwise.

Steve Miller (class of 2009) said, “Ms. Evelyn always takes such an interest in the lives of the students. She loves to know what’s going on, where we are going for the day, and always wishes us a fantastic day. Without Ms. Evelyn, the College would not be such a special place. People like her are what really give the campus a feeling of community.”

Daniel Mullery (class of 2009) added, “Ms. Evelyn really cares about each of us. If we are having a bad day, she can tell and wants to know how she can help. She treats us like members of her own family.” Erin Dickerson (class of 2009) remarked, “She is like my mom at Rollins. If I did not eat vegetables with lunch, she amazingly remembers at dinner and makes sure I eat a well-balanced diet.” Dave Dwyer (class of 2006) said, “I am from England. Being so far away from home can be difficult at times. Ms. Evelyn always reminds me to call home, and then asks me how my mom and other members of my family are getting along.”

Roger Busby, General Manager of the Cornell Campus Center (Sodexo Campus Services) says of Evelyn, “She is the epitome of what customer service is all about. With Evelyn, customer service is a natural part of who she is as a

person. She is one of the rare individuals who possess friendliness as part of their being. Having the honor and pleasure of knowing Evelyn has left an everlasting impression on me. Thinking about her always puts a smile on my face. She is so much more than an employee of Sodexo. Her legacy at Rollins goes far beyond a cashier.”

Swing suggests there are at least three lessons to be learned from her example:

1. Evelyn serves students and takes pride in her job and her willingness to go the extra mile is inspiring and infectious. College administrators should remember that when students are treated well by staff on a daily basis, they will feel more connected to campus and will more likely stay.

2. Evelyn, like many other faculty and staff, provide outstanding service to students just because it is the “way they treat everyone.” Certainly, Evelyn did not set out to win awards for her interaction with students at Rollins, but honoring outstanding employees is one way to acknowledge their contributions in establishing an environment that supports student success. Acknowledging those who model the behaviors we desire is a solid principle of faculty/staff development as well as a meaningful way to thank our best employees.

3. Evelyn, like many important staff who serve students, is an outsourced employee. Evelyn works for the food service vendor at Rollins College. It is the vendor who sets the work conditions, establishes compensation levels, and provides supervision. Outsourcing



Evelyn Nicolesi exemplifies the value of frontline staffers to student success.

functions that directly impact students are often controversial because the campus gives up a measure of direct control, but the practice appears to be an increasing trend. Many campuses have already outsourced food services, custodial

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services, the bookstore, and some are moving to outsource the security/policy function. Colleges and universities must encourage all staff who work on campuses to realize their behavior impacts students and must provide clear directions to the vendors about student-staff interactions and its importance to student retention.

Evelyn's story is a success on many levels and a reminder that staff employees make a real difference in the lives of students. This is also a reminder that successful engagement of staff is too important to be left to chance.

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Results From Survey of *E-Source* Readers

In March and April 2006, we asked readers of *E-Source for College Transitions* to provide feedback on the newsletter. Thank you to those who participated. Here are some selected findings. Participants responded that *E-Source*

- addresses relevant topics
- provides practical information, is well written, and is a valuable resource
- is visually appealing

When asked how the content of *E-Source* could be improved, some

- wanted more "back to basics" information
- wanted a section on best practices, especially everyday programmatic attempts that address varying populations
- wanted specific classroom strategies on aspects that are covered in first-year seminars, e.g. community service or library research paper

The topics that attracted a good deal of interest were:

- initiatives for first-year students and peer involvement
- assessment, evaluation, research and teaching strategies, and orientation
- curriculum and teaching
- initiatives for underprepared students
- learning communities
- technology
- service-learning initiatives
- community service initiatives
- initiatives for transfer students
- retention
- initiatives for students of color and students with disabilities
- funding information and residence life and residential learning
- initiatives for second-year students and library instruction

Please remember that, as a reader of *E-Source*, you can help shape its content by providing articles on the topics suggested here.

What's Happening at the Center?

Upcoming Conferences

**2006 Summer Institute on
First-Year Assessment**
June 25-27, 2006
Asheville, North Carolina

**19th International Conference on
The First-Year Experience**
July 24-27, 2006
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

**13th National Conference on
Students in Transition**
November 3-5, 2006
St. Louis, Missouri

2006 Paul P. Fidler Grant

The Center has received over 90 proposals for the 2006-07 Paul P. Fidler Grant. Proposals were due June 1 and reviewers will spend the next few months selecting the grant's recipient. The winning proposal will be publicly recognized at the 2006 National Conference on Students in Transition. Click here for more information about the Paul P. Fidler Research Grant.

The proposals came from all over the US; from two-year and four-year schools; from students, faculty, and

staff. Below is sample of the types proposals received.

Populations studied: at-risk students, students with learning disabilities, students from foster care, adults, Latinas, nursing students, African Americans, males, females, first-generation, students from rural areas, students in urban schools, art students, students in the STEM fields.

Topics addressed: retention, classroom boredom, leadership development, family/parents, academic integrity, faculty-student interaction, study

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abroad, developmental writing, effects of Hurricane Katrina, mental health, financial literacy, supplemental instruction, learning communities, writing/English, peer tutoring/mentoring, technology, emotional intelligence, library orientation, study skills, academic advising.

Transitions explored: High school to college, the sophomore year, two-year to four-year (transfer), into or through graduate school.

Submissions Sought for New Volume on *Civic Engagement in the First College Year*

The National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition and *The New York*

Times announce the development of a new monograph tentatively titled *Civic Engagement in the First College Year*. Part of The First-Year Experience Monograph Series, the volume will describe civic engagement initiatives and offer strategies for establishing, institutionalizing, and assessing such initiatives. It will showcase a variety of innovative campus-based programs that contribute to students' first-year learning in civic literacy and engagement. Cases will be embedded in larger chapters to illustrate themes and provide examples.

If you are interested in submitting a case study, please go to <http://sc.edu> for submission guidelines.

Please send your completed electronic submission to editor Martha LaBare at martha_labare@bloomfield.edu by **November 15, 2006**.



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