Overpowering the Achievement Gap: A Targeted Approach to Moving the Needle

Judy Hogan, Dean of Business, Education and Public Service
Matthew Olson, Dean Humanities and Social Sciences
Kate Sweeney, Dean of Health and STEM
Middlesex Community College has targeted the achievement gap as a key initiative. Our strategic plan calls for “focusing on research, pedagogies, and initiatives that assist in identifying and closing achievement gaps for diverse student populations and effectively support student success for all.” Join the three academic deans from MCC as they discuss a variety of initiatives from across the college designed to impact the achievement gap on their campus. The discussion will include the use of Achievement Coaches, Pathways Centers, Institutional Research, Grant Funding and campus wide professional development.
Presentation Overview

• Partnering with Intuitional Research to identify and define achievement gaps (Judy)

• Designing & Implementing Targeted Interventions
  – All College Professional Day (Matthew)
  – Strategic Planning Working Group (Matthew)
  – Pathways Center (Kate)
  – Achievement Coaches (Matthew)

• Scaling Promising Practices
  – English Comp 2 using Latin American Literature
  – Latino Leadership Institute
  – High Impact Practices
How do you define the Achievement Gap at your institution?
Defining Achievement Gaps

- Community College Formula Funding defines as Pell Eligible
- Local Data Latino Males
- African American Males
- Asian
Partnering with Institutional Research: Data Sources

• CCSSE Data
• Vision Project Data
• Local Data
• Focus Groups with Students
• Data set created spring 2014
What the Data Tells Us

- Success Rates By Income
- 3 Year Graduation Rates By Pell Eligibility
- Graduation and Transfer Rates
- Grad Rates By Gender
- MCC and Service Area
- Demographic Shift
# Achievement Gap Data

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### All-College Spring 2014 Professional Day

**Program**

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<th>Time</th>
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| 8:00 – 8:30 a.m. | Registration, Coffee and Conversation  
                 | On display: PPT presentation highlighting and celebrating how  
                 | “Everyone teaches, everyone learns” via current student success |
| 8:30 – 9:00 a.m. | Welcome  
                 | - Peter Shea, Director & Paulo Barrio, Assistant Director  
                 | Office of Professional Development |
| 9:00 a.m.      | Opening Remarks  
                 | - Carole A. Cowan, President  
                 | - “The MCC Data Story” - Paula Pitcher, Vice President, Enrollment Services Research Planning & Jennifer Luddy, Assistant Dean, Institutional Research |
| 9:05 - 9:15 a.m. | Introduction of Keynote Speaker  
                  | - Philip J. Sisson, Provost & VP of Academic & Student Affairs |
| 9:15 - 9:25 a.m. | Keynote Address: “What Each and Every One of Us Can Do: the Power of Mentoring in Closing the Achievement Gap,” Dr. Becky Wai-Ling Packard, Associate Dean of Faculty, Professor of Psychology and Director of the Harriet L. and Paul M. Weissman Center for Leadership at Holyoke College |
| 9:25 – 9:30 a.m. | Workshops – Concurrent Session I  
                  | (Expected from first session to second session) |
| 9:30 – 10:15 a.m. | Workshops – Concurrent Session II  
                    | (Expected from second session to third session) |
All College Professional Day

• April 2014
• Theme: *Our Inner Resources: Closing the Achievement Gap*
• Keynote: Dr. Becky Wai-Ling Packard, “What Each and Every One of Us Can Do: the Power of Mentoring in Closing the Achievement Gap”
• 26 Faculty and Staff-led Workshops
• Random Acts Improv Group: *(Un)Intended Impact: Everyday Micro Inequalities*
• Departmental Review of Achievement Gap Data
Dr. Becky Wai-Ling Packard

• Mentoring moments
• What each person can do:
  – I. Act as a resourceful point person
  – II. Coordinate and Align
  – III. Use Data, Notice and Ask Out Loud
  – IV. Keep learning and practicing (so you are closer to “getting it”)
Inner Resources

COMMUNITY BUILDING
• Understanding Culture and Diversity in Building Communities
• Campus Racial Climate

INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGIES
• Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy and Curricula
• Strategies for Inclusive Teaching

POWER OF STORIES
• Student Voices from MCC's Latino Outreach Summit (January 2013)
• MCC Inner Resources: Conversations with Staff about their Personal Stories

INTERCULTURAL CONVERSATIONS
• Transforming Conflicts in Diverse Communities
• Educational Benefits of Inter- and Interracial Curricular Dialogues

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
• Engaging Today’s Diverse Workforce: Leading with Best Practices
• Engaging Adjunct and Full-Time Faculty in Student Success Innovation

Workshop titles are examples. The full program of over 26 presentations can be found at: https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/professionaldevelopment/mccprofday.aspx
Random Acts Improv Troupe

- Student-created improv skits based on “I, too, am Harvard”

#itooamharvard
Strategic Plan Working Group: Closing the Achievement Gap

- Survey college initiatives that address the achievement gap
- Assess the effectiveness of initiatives
- Bridge groups and initiatives across the college to address the achievement gap

Closing the Achievement Gap Working Group

- Latino Institute
- Pathways Center
- Achievement Coaches
- Data Analysis: Identify roadblocks
- Create Awareness of initiatives across the college that address CAG
- Mapped out initiatives
Strategic Plan Working Group: Closing the Achievement Gap

- Established as part of Academic and Student Affairs Retreat, June 2012
- Cross-college representation
- Goals
  - Map Resources – Identify resources, overlaps & gaps
  - Information Sharing/Collaboration
    - Invite internal/external experts
    - Promote sharing/collaboration, cooperation
  - Data Analysis
  - Faculty/Staff Development
Health and STEM Pathways Center

- Disciplinary based Center for student support

- Support services include:
  - Tutoring
  - Supplemental instruction
  - Academic and career advising
  - Study groups
  - Peer mentoring
  - Group coaching
  - Career-related field trips
  - Industry-specific workshops
  - Networking events
  - Job search skills

“I only intended to study for one year and then go get a job, but the support that I got from the people at the center has made me want to study further and get my associate's [degree]"
Leading for Change Conference  June 11, 2014

Health & STEM Pathways Center

Achievement Coach

Job Placement Specialist

STEM Starter Academy Coordinator

Peer Mentors

Connects students to college resources

Advising, Financial Aid, Career Services
Achievement Coach

• Provides a structure for referrals
• Focus on Liberal Studies for handoffs
• Mentoring moments (Packard)
Achievement Coaches

- Achievement Coaches work with administrators, faculty, advisors and admissions staff to provide targeted services to ethnically and racially diverse students enrolled in division programs to enhance students’ success from admissions to completion of their academic program.
- Responsibilities include recruitment, mentoring, coordination, program development and assessment to enhance student success from admissions to completion of their academic program.
- The Achievement Coach serves the direct student contact for the division so students are informed about relevant, academic and co-curricular opportunities.

You can find the full text of this intimidating job description here
Review of Achievement Gap Data

• Humanities and Social Sciences
• Business, Education and Public Services
• Health and STEM
Achievement Coach Plan

*Draft: May 20, 2014*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1 – Assess Environment</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Collaborators</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meet with stakeholder groups (students, service providers, academic programs)</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Lonnie, Melissa</td>
<td>• Agreed upon specific population for Achievement Coach work</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Determine and agree upon specific population demographics for Achievement Coaches</td>
<td>Before end of SP 14 semester</td>
<td>Clea, Judy, Matthew, Melissa, Lonnie</td>
<td>• Identified caseload for Achievement Coach</td>
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<td>Gather statistical data on target population achievement within HSO programs</td>
<td>Before start FA 2014</td>
<td>Lonnie, Melissa, IR</td>
<td>• Identification of gaps in services</td>
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<td>Hold student focus groups within academic programs to determine barriers to successful completion</td>
<td>By Oct 2014</td>
<td>Closing the Achievement Gap (CAG) Strat Plan Committee Multicultural Center Willy Ramirez Genevieve Green IR</td>
<td>• Identification of program barriers</td>
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<td>Create map of services</td>
<td>By Dec 2014</td>
<td>CAG Strat Plan Committee</td>
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<td>Identify caseload of 35 students in target demographic</td>
<td>Before start of fall 2014</td>
<td>Clea, Jennifer Luddy, Lonnie, Matthew, Judy, Melissa</td>
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<th>Phase 2 – Implement Interventions</th>
<th>Achieve success individually and in collaboration with other stakeholders</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Collaborators</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
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<td>A.</td>
<td>Initiate five (5) contacts with students in cohort including three (3) face to face meetings</td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>Lonnie, Melissa</td>
<td>• Developed mentor/coach relationships between Achievement Coach and students in target demographic</td>
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<td>B.</td>
<td>Provide 1 workshop per month (3 per semester) designed to improve success that fill in gaps or increase access to effective practices. See sample list (Melissa)?</td>
<td>Fall 2014, Spring 2015</td>
<td>Lonnie, Melissa, Advising, ACE, Multicultural Center, Career Counseling, Financial Aid, FTE</td>
<td>• Offer collaborative workshops with related support service providers on campus (e.g. Advising, Multicultural Students Office, etc.)</td>
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<td>C.</td>
<td>Meet with Assistant Deans and Department Chairs to help develop projects to promote success with target population</td>
<td>Fall 2014, Spring 2015</td>
<td>Lonnie, Melissa, Deans, Assistant Deans, Dept. Chairs</td>
<td>• Workshops and services that meet identified need for student success</td>
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<td>D.</td>
<td>Add Achievement Coaches to Academic Alert process if viable</td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>Lonnie, Melissa, Pat Bruno</td>
<td>• Proposed curriculum changes, and/or mini-grant projects to promote students success and address Achievement Gaps</td>
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<th>Phase 3 – Evaluate Progress</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
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<th>Outcomes</th>
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<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Gather data on persistence, retention, program completion (only persistence between FA and SP will be available)</td>
<td>Spring 2015</td>
<td>Lonnie, Melissa, IR</td>
<td>• Increased student success (persistence, retention, graduation, other measures)</td>
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<td>Track completion of ‘milestones’</td>
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<td>Mini-grant projects, curriculum changes to support success</td>
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Promising Practices

• Latino Student Institute

Funded by MCC Foundation Grant
• 25 Latino students placed into at least one ELL or dev English course
• Semester-long program to do career exploration, intensive English communication skills practice, leadership development, and a variety of professionalism activities
• Latino guest speakers representing industries such as health, STEM, business, criminal justice and education
• Students matched with Middlesex Latino faculty and/or staff mentors
• English language instruction will be targeted on communication skills and contextualized toward the students’ areas of career interest
• Students will be required to
  – Develop of a professional resume and sample cover letter
  – Build an personal ePortfolio illustrating their developing career goal
  – Attend career awareness and community building events
Resources

• **Achieving the Dream**
• **CCA Guided Pathways to Success**
• **California MESA**
• **MESA USA**
• **Massachusetts Transformation Agenda**
• **Scaling Up Effective Community College Initiatives**
Resources

- CBD Framework Supporting Student Success
- Cutting Edge Series; Scaling Community College Interventions
- Capital Community College; Leader in National Student Completion Movement