

Citi Postsecondary Success Program

The Problem: In the United States, only 34% of students nationally leave high school prepared for success in college. The likelihood of success is even more limited for low-income and first-generation students. Although these students aspire to go to college, several factors align to their disadvantage: inadequate academic preparation and access to college information and financial aid options, and lack of alignment and coordination among college access programs that aim to serve them.

A Place-Based, Cross-Sector Solution: The focus of the **Citi Postsecondary Success Program (CPSP)**, a five-year initiative (2008-2013) also supported by local matching funds, is to improve postsecondary access and success for low-income and first-generation students in **three major cities—Miami, San Francisco, and Philadelphia**. CPSP's main strategy is to **build local partnerships** in each of these cities that will coordinate the provision of college access and success supports and, importantly, seek system-level changes to support and sustain their efforts.

The CPSP initiative is structured as a partnership between **FHI 360** and the **Public Education Network (PEN)**; these two organizations serve as intermediaries for the initiative, provide technical assistance to the sites, oversee the evaluation being conducted by **OMG Center for Collaborative Learning**, and disseminate findings to the field. To implement the work locally, CPSP is partnering with the **Local Education Funds (LEF)** in Miami, Philadelphia, and San Francisco, believing that—as independent community-based public education reform organizations—LEFs are well positioned to lead the **collective impact** work of the local partnerships.

CPSP Key Goals:

- **Build sustainable CPSP partnerships to improve college access and success programs and supports.** CPSP brings together the **cross-sector organizations** addressing college access and success issues including, direct service providers, K-12 and postsecondary stakeholders, and representatives from the business, funding, and civic sectors, to better coordinate their work to address the multiple obstacles to college access and retention facing underserved students.
- **Increase student access to and success in postsecondary education.** CPSP is *NOT* about creating new programs, but rather about improving coordination of what already exists. **Improving the alignment and quality of existing services** will increase student use of college access and success supports that will in turn lead to increased college readiness, application, and acceptance.
- **Enhance the post-secondary access and success field.** CPSP is helping to create the *fundamental changes* that take schools and cities *from* the current patchwork of college programs *to* a coordinated system linking students to comprehensive services within a supportive policy environment. Disseminating lessons learned from CPSP will help increase the capacity of field to take on similar systems change efforts.

CPSP Interim Outcomes (after 3 years of implementation) include:

- High school **graduation, college enrollment, and persistence rates for the 10 CPSP target high schools are trending in the positive direction** (compared against comparison schools and the district as a whole, according to quantitative data analyzed by OMG).
- In addition, two of the cities are succeeding specifically with **Latino, Black & English Language Learners**—in Miami, **college enrollment rose sharply** over the course of three years in the CPSP target schools on average outpacing comparison schools. In San Francisco, **Black students' college enrollment exceeded district and comparison school rates**. **Latino students** enjoyed modest five percentage point increase to 41% outpacing district college enrollment trends.

For More Information Contact

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