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**FISCAL YEAR 2017**  
**ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM**  
**SELECTED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**  
**FOR**  
**UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS**

**FOCUS AREA:**  
**RECRUITMENT, ACADEMIC SUCCESS, AND COMPLETION**

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*December 2018*

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## INTRODUCTION

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Underrepresented college students have been traditionally excluded from full participation in our society and its institutions. Illinois statute defines underrepresented students in higher education as citizens or permanent resident aliens who are minorities, including African American, Hispanic, Asian American, Pacific Islander, American Indian, and Alaskan Native, women, and persons with disabilities. On January 1, 2012, the definition was expanded to include first-generation college students, described as the first in their immediate family to attend an institution of higher education ([Public Act 097-0588](#)). Through the Underrepresented Groups Report, community colleges have an opportunity to report on initiatives and strategies aimed at increasing participation and achievement among minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, and first generation students. Underrepresented Groups Report production is an important annual statutory responsibility ([Public Act 099-0143](#)) for community colleges and universities. Each community college provides a report detailing current activities and programs aimed at strengthening participation and progress among traditionally underrepresented student populations. Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) staff members summarize the information provided by the individual colleges and forward it to officials from the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) who combine it with responses from the public universities and forward it to the Governor and General Assembly.

This year's report begins with an overview of the demographic characteristics of community college students, completers, and faculty. External comparative information is referenced where available. The next portion of the report explores the current year's focus topic: *Recruitment, Academic Success, and Completion*.

Illinois community colleges are open-access and multi-purpose institutions that seek to prepare both traditional college-age students and nontraditional students for further education and the workforce. A number of student success measures can be applied to community college students. Graduation rates, for example, is a success measure that informs how colleges are performing in their efforts to graduate individuals who begin their studies pursuing a traditional full-time enrollment pattern. The consequence of using the federal formula of calculating graduation rates, which only includes first-time, full time students who graduate within 150 percent of catalog program time, is that many community college students are excluded from this calculation. As a result, students who continue their studies on a part-time basis, those who transfer to four-year colleges before receiving an associate degree, and those that received courses to directly compete in the workforce before graduation, are not included in the rate. Furthermore, many high school graduates who come from low-income families or are first-generation college goers may encounter life circumstances, such as financial constraints, transportation and child care needs, that can hinder their goal to graduate within a traditional timeframe. Therefore, incorporated are other student success measures, including retention rates and transfer rates that more accurately reflect the overall quality of student learning and intellectual involvement; how well integrated students are in campus life; and how effectively a campus delivers what students expect and need based on their specific education goals. Measures of success within this report reflect graduation, transfer, and retention.

Summaries of strategies for improving student recruitment, academic success, and completion through services, programs, or initiatives that positively impact student performance at selected community colleges are featured in the second half of this year's report.

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## DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

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Illinois Community College System demographic data on credit students are gathered through the Annual Enrollment and Completion (A1) submission. These data illustrate that Illinois community colleges serve a broad cross-section of the general population. Census data are provided when possible to offer an external reference point for reviewing the enrollment, completion, and staffing data. Additional analyses about the race/ethnicity distribution of community college credit students for selected broad program areas (PCS) are included.

### **Disability Status**

During fiscal year 2017, Illinois community colleges served 18,084 students with disabilities (3.3 percent of all credit enrollments). This figure represents the number of individuals (unduplicated) who self-identified their disability status through the Annual Enrollment and Completion (A1) Submission. The majority of students with disabilities (N = 16,173) used supportive services offered by colleges. About one out of ten students with disabilities (N = 1,911) did not use supportive services during fiscal year 2017.

Based on the unduplicated count of students with disabilities who self-reported and used supportive services, specific disabilities identified were learning including ADHD (56.4 percent of reported disabilities); auditory (2.9 percent); medical including acquired brain injury disability and systemic/chronic health problems (9.4 percent); mobility (3.4 percent); psychological (22.9 percent); visual (2.2 percent) and other including speech/language impairment, deaf-blind, and developmental disabilities (2.8 percent). There are also students with disabilities who self-identify, but do not actually use the extra services colleges can provide. Based on a duplicated count of student usage, services were provided for 89.8 percent of reported disabilities. Of those services used, based on unduplicated count, more than one-half (56.4 percent) were used by students with learning disabilities including ADHD. (2017 Student Disability Table)

Census figures show a substantial number of Illinoisans with disabilities. In the 2017 Illinois census estimate, among Illinois' civilian non-institutionalized population, 5.6 percent between 18 and 34 years of age and 10.7 percent between 35 and 64 years of age had a disability. Nearly one fourth (24.0 percent) of Illinois population age 16 and over with disabilities was employed. ([2017 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates](#) Table S1810 and S1811)

### **Gender**

The overall Male/Female distribution of students in the Illinois Community College System typically fluctuates little from year to year. Females comprised 53.4 percent of the student population in fiscal year 2017. The percentage of Male students has averaged 46.8 percent over the past five years. Census data show little change in the proportion of Females in Illinois with 50.8 percent estimated in 2017 versus 51.0 percent in 2010 and 2000. ([ICCB FY 2017 Annual Student Enrollment and Completion Report](#), [U.S. Census 2000 Illinois](#), and [2010 and 2017](#)

[American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates](#) Table S0102) From 2013 to 2017, the number of Female students completing degree programs decreased 7.2 percent while the number of Female students enrolled in Illinois community college degree courses decreased 20.6 percent. ([ICCB FY 2013 and FY 2017 Annual Student Enrollment and Completion Report](#))

### **Age**

The average age of Illinois community college credit students was 28.7 years in fiscal year 2017, which is a slight decrease from fiscal year 2016 (29.3). The median age was 23.4 years in fiscal year 2017, which is also lower than the previous year (24.0). According to the 2017 population estimates, the median age of all Illinoisans was estimated to be 38.0 years. The latest census estimates also show that over three-quarters (77.4 percent) of all Illinoisans were 18 years of age or above. ([ICCB FY 2017 Annual Student Enrollment and Completion Report](#) and ([2017 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates](#) Table S0101)

### **State of Illinois' Race/Ethnicity Distribution**

State census data show that Illinois' population was 12.80 million in 2017 compared to 12.83 million in 2010, and 12.42 million in 2000. ([U.S. Census 2000 Illinois](#), [U.S. Census 2010 Illinois](#), and [2018 Index of Need](#) Table 1) These detailed Illinois census data indicate that the state's population grew 3.1 percent between 2000 and 2017. The state population, however, decreased 0.2 percent between 2010 and 2017. Illinois' 2017 census estimate shows that Whites/Caucasians remained the largest race/ethnicity group. However, minority populations were responsible for Illinois' overall population growth from 2000 to 2017, as the percent of Caucasians decreased from 73.5 percent to 71.2 percent of the population. ([U.S. Census 2000 Illinois](#) and [2018 Index of Need](#) Table 1)

The race/ethnicity data collection methodology changed for the 2000 census and continued in the 2017 census data. The 2017 census data showed that 2.0 percent of all Illinoisans identified themselves as two or more races. These individuals are included in the "Some Other Race\*\*" column in Table 1. The question on Hispanic/Latino ethnicity was asked independently from an individual's race beginning in 2000 and is reflected in the 2017 data in the table. These duplicated Hispanic/Latino population counts show substantial growth, from 1,530,262 in 2000 to 2,209,323 in 2017. ([U.S. Census 2000 Illinois](#) and [2018 Index of Need](#) Table 1)

Illinois' largest minority group in 2000 was African American and in 2017 was Hispanic/Latino. Compared to 2000, African American counts in 2017 decreased from 15.1 percent to 14.6 percent, whereas Asian American counts increased from 3.4 percent to 5.8 percent, Native American from 0.2 percent to 0.6 percent, and Hispanic/Latino from 12.3 percent to 17.3 percent.

Table 1  
State of Illinois Race/Ethnicity Distribution (Census)

	<i>White/ Caucasian</i>	<i>African American</i>	<i>Asian* American</i>	<i>Native American</i>	<i>Some Other Race**</i>	<i>Hispanic/Latino*** (Duplicated)</i>
2000	73.5%	15.1%	3.4%	0.2%	7.7%	12.3%
2010	71.5%	14.5%	4.6%	0.3%	9.0%	15.8%
2017	71.2%	14.6%	5.8%	0.6%	7.8%	17.3%

\*Includes Pacific Islander

\*\*Includes two or more races

\*\*\* Respondents identify their race; they also identify themselves in terms of Latino/Hispanic ethnicity

SOURCE OF DATA: U. S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 & 2018 Index of Need, Table 1.

### Race/Ethnicity Distribution in Community College System Credit Programs

Overall in fiscal year 2017, minority students accounted for 44.1 percent of the individuals enrolled in credit coursework at Illinois community colleges whose ethnicity was known. Race/ethnicity classifications were aligned with U.S. Department of Education collection and reporting standards. Fiscal year 2017 data show

*Students identifying themselves as Hispanic/Latino—118,454 in fiscal year 2017—accounted for the largest number of minority enrollments in the Illinois Community College System this year.*

that minority representation was similar to the prior year (fiscal year 2016 = 43.1 percent). Fiscal year 2017 results are above the five-year average (41.9 percent). Students identifying themselves as Hispanic/Latino students—118,454 in fiscal year 2017—became the largest minority group in 2000, but became the second largest minority group in fiscal year 2012 behind African American students. In fiscal years 2013 through 2017, Hispanic/Latino students were again the largest minority group. African American students—72,143 in fiscal year 2017—constitute the second largest minority group in the latest data. The fiscal year 2017 proportionate representation by Hispanic/Latino students was higher by about one percentage point in comparison to the prior year (22.3 percent in fiscal year 2017 versus 21.2 percent in fiscal year 2017), while the proportional representation by African American students was lower in comparison to the prior year (13.6 percent in fiscal year 2017 versus 14.4 percent in fiscal year 2016). Over the longer term—over the past five years—a decrease in the Illinois Community College System’s minority enrollments was noted among students identifying themselves as Pacific Islander (-77.5 percent), Native American (-58.3 percent), African American (-35.3 percent), and Asian American (-15.5 percent), while an increase was noted among students identifying themselves as Nonresident Alien (186.6 percent), and Hispanic/Latino (1.6 percent).

Student race/ethnicity representation varies across broad program areas (PCS). For example, Table 2 contains information about the distribution of Adult Education [Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Adult Secondary Education (ASE)] and English as a Second Language (ESL) enrollments. Minority students accounted for nearly three-fourths (74.2 percent) of the individuals enrolled in community college Adult Education coursework. In fiscal year 2017, Hispanic/Latino students accounted for over forty percent of adult education enrollments and African American students for over one-fourth of those enrollments (42.1 percent and 26.3 percent, respectively). Additionally, minority students accounted for more than eight out of every ten (82.2 percent) individuals enrolled in community college ESL coursework during fiscal year 2017. Hispanic/Latino students accounted for nearly two-thirds (62.7 percent) of the community

college ESL students, followed by Asian American students (11.9 percent) and African American students (5.5 percent).

Table 2  
**Fiscal Year 2017 Minority Students Enrolled in Adult Education  
and English as a Second Language Programs**

<i>Program</i>	<i>African American</i>	<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	<i>Asian American</i>	<i>Nonresident Alien</i>	<i>Native American</i>	<i>Pacific Islander</i>	<i>Two or More Races</i>	<i>Minority Subtotal</i>
<b>ABE/ASE %</b>	<b>26.3%</b>	<b>42.1%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>74.2%</b>
Number	8,041	12,890	1,295	128	78	34	226	22,692
<b>ESL %</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>62.7%</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>82.2%</b>
Number	1,650	18,644	3,539	492	13	40	65	24,443

**SOURCE OF DATA:** ICCB Centralized Data System—Annual Enrollment and Completion (A1) Data

Table 3 provides the distribution of minority students enrolled in the two largest program areas, Transfer and Career and Technical Education (CTE). During fiscal year 2017, minorities comprised about four out of every ten (42.6 percent) Transfer enrollees. An examination of each minority group’s race/ethnicity representation across the Transfer program area indicates that Hispanic/Latino students accounted for the largest minority group enrollments (20.5 percent), followed by African American students (12.8 percent), Asian American students (5.2 percent), students of Two or More Races (2.9 percent), Nonresident Alien students (0.9 percent), Native American students (0.2 percent), and Pacific Islander students (0.1 percent). Table 3 also shows that about one-third of students enrolled in CTE programs were members of a minority group (34.4 percent). Hispanic/Latino students also had the highest representation among minorities in CTE programs and accounted for 15.7 percent of the population. African American students had the second largest CTE program enrollment (12.3 percent), followed by Asian American students (3.7 percent), students of Two or More Races (1.8 percent), Nonresident Alien students (0.5 percent), Native American students (0.3 percent), and Pacific Islander students (0.1 percent).

Table 3  
**Fiscal Year 2017 Minority Students Enrolled in Transfer  
and Career and Technical Education Programs**

<i>Program</i>	<i>African American</i>	<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	<i>Asian American</i>	<i>Nonresident Alien</i>	<i>Native American</i>	<i>Pacific Islander</i>	<i>Two or More Races</i>	<i>Minority Subtotal</i>
<b>Transfer %</b>	<b>12.8%</b>	<b>20.5%</b>	<b>5.2%</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>42.6%</b>
Number	34,394	55,122	14,038	2,312	614	274	7,675	114,429
<b>CTE %</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>15.7%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>34.4%</b>
Number	17,152	21,946	5,132	766	393	130	2,538	48,057

**SOURCE OF DATA:** ICCB Centralized Data System—Annual Enrollment and Completion (A1) Data

### **First-Generation College Students**

Students whose parents did not attend college are at a disadvantage when it comes to postsecondary access. First-generation college students who managed to overcome barriers to access and enroll in postsecondary education remain at a disadvantage with respect to

*Nearly four out of ten students in the Illinois Community College System are first-generation college students.*

staying enrolled and attaining a degree (Choy, 2001). In 2012, Illinois statute recognized the category of first-generation students as an underrepresented group needing inclusion in the Underrepresented Groups annual report. Table 4 contains comparative data (fiscal year 2013 through fiscal year 2017) on first-generation college student enrollments. Fiscal year 2017 first-generation college student enrollment increased by 2.2 percent compared to last year and decreased by 32.1 percent compared to fiscal year 2013. The overall enrollments continue to decline. Nearly four out of ten students (39.4 percent) in the Illinois Community College System are first-generation college students in fiscal year 2017.

Table 4  
**First-Generation College Student Enrollment in the Illinois Community College System  
Fiscal Years 2013-2017**

	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	One-Year % Change	Five-Year % Change
First-Generation College Student Enrollment	321,006	293,689	245,088	213,101	217,873	2.2%	-32.1%
Annual Enrollment	691,536	659,712	620,191	597,290	553,174	-7.4%	-20.0%
<b>Enrollment Rate of First-Gen. College Students</b>	<b>46.4%</b>	<b>44.5%</b>	<b>39.5%</b>	<b>35.7%</b>	<b>39.4%</b>		

SOURCE OF DATA: ICCB Centralized Data System—Annual Enrollment and Completion (A1) Data

### Credential Attainment

The following section of the report supplies information about the race/ethnicity characteristics of students who graduated in fiscal year 2017. Table 5 provides a point-in-time or cross-cutting count of the number of degrees and certificates awarded to minority students within the Illinois Community College System during fiscal year 2017. Table 6 provides a comparison of fiscal year 2013 through fiscal year 2017 completions in the Illinois Community College System by race/ethnicity.

Across all minority groups in 2017, CTE program graduates far outnumbered Transfer program graduates. Table 5 shows that during fiscal year 2017, nearly twice as many minorities completed CTE programs (N = 13,983) than Transfer programs (N = 8,212). Minority students accounted for 38.8 percent of all Transfer graduates, compared to 34.0 percent of CTE graduates. Hispanic/Latino students accounted for the largest minority group completions in CTE programs (15.6 percent), followed by African American students (12.0 percent), Asian American students (3.6 percent), students of Two or More Races (1.9 percent), Nonresident Alien students (0.6 percent), Native American students (0.3 percent), and Pacific Islander students (0.1 percent). The fiscal year 2017 proportional representation of the Hispanic/Latino CTE program graduates (15.6 percent) was higher by 1.2 percentage points from fiscal year 2016 (14.4 percent). Hispanic/Latino students also accounted for the largest group of Transfer minority graduates (20.7 percent), followed by African American students (10.3 percent), Asian

*During fiscal year 2017, nearly twice as many minority students completed Career and Technical Education (CTE) degrees and certificates than Transfer degrees.*

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American students (4.2 percent), students of Two or More Races (2.3 percent), Nonresident Alien students (0.9 percent), Native American students (0.2 percent), and Pacific Islander students (0.1 percent). The fiscal year 2017 proportional representation of the Hispanic/Latino Transfer graduates (20.7 percent) was higher by 1.9 percentage points from the prior year (18.8 percent).

Table 5  
**Fiscal Year 2017 Minority Student Completers in  
Transfer and Career and Technical Education Programs**

<i>Program</i>	<i>African American</i>	<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	<i>Asian American</i>	<i>Nonresident Alien</i>	<i>Native American</i>	<i>Pacific Islander</i>	<i>Two or More Races</i>	<i>Minority Subtotal</i>
<b>Transfer %</b>	<b>10.3%</b>	<b>20.7%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>38.8%</b>
Number	2,187	4,384	885	189	44	27	496	8,212
<b>CTE %</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>34.0%</b>
Number	4,922	6,411	1,488	250	103	42	767	13,983

**SOURCE OF DATA: ICCB Centralized Data System—Annual Enrollment and Completion (A1 & A2) Data**

The number of collegiate-level degrees and certificates awarded to Illinois community college students in fiscal year 2017 totaled 66,143. Over one-third (36.0 percent) of all degrees and certificates in fiscal year 2017 were awarded to minority students (nonwhite) whose race/ethnicity was known. Compared to last year, there was an increase in minority completions only among Nonresident Alien students (28.2 percent), students of Two or More Races (9.1 percent), and Hispanic/Latino students (2.6 percent). Decreases in completions were noted for Pacific Islander Students (-35.7 percent), African American students (-16.2 percent), Native American students (-16.0 percent), and Asian American students (-9.2 percent), since last year. Compared to fiscal year 2013, the total number of minority completers increased 11.2 percent.

Table 6  
**Student Completers in the Illinois Community College System by Race/Ethnicity  
Fiscal Years 2013-2017**

<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>FY 14</b>	<b>FY 15</b>	<b>FY 16</b>	<b>FY 17</b>	<b>One-Year % Change</b>	<b>Five-Year % Change</b>
<i>White</i>	45,010	44,337	44,554	42,852	40,472	-5.6%	-10.1%
<i>African American</i>	9,156	9,842	10,283	9,218	7,728	-16.2%	-15.6%
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	8,260	8,813	10,036	11,209	11,506	2.6%	39.3%
<i>Asian American</i>	3,378	3,481	3,278	2,795	2,538	-9.2%	-24.9%
<i>Nonresident Alien</i>	150	189	384	372	477	28.2%	218.0%
<i>Native American</i>	255	309	362	187	157	-16.0%	-38.4%
<i>Pacific Islander</i>	238	192	202	112	72	-35.7%	-69.7%
<i>Two or More Races*</i>	--	--	--	1,237	1,350	9.1%	--
<i>Unknown</i>	2,589	2,649	2,688	2,477	1,843	-25.6%	-28.8%
<b>Minority Subtotal</b>	<b>21,437</b>	<b>22,826</b>	<b>24,545</b>	<b>25,130</b>	<b>23,828</b>	<b>-5.2%</b>	<b>11.2%</b>

\*Race/ethnicity classifications align with U.S. Department of Education collection and reporting standards.

**SOURCE OF DATA: ICCB Centralized Data System—Annual Enrollment and Completion (A1 & A2) Data**

Table 7 contains trend data (fiscal year 2013 through fiscal year 2017) on student completers by gender. During fiscal year 2017, more than half of degrees and certificates were earned by females (53.8 percent). The number of male completers decreased 7.1 percent, and the number of female completers decreased 5.3 percent compared to the previous fiscal year. When compared to fiscal year 2013, the number of male completers decreased 0.4 percent, and the number of female completers decreased 7.2 percent.

Table 7  
**Student Completers in the Illinois Community College System by Gender  
Fiscal Years 2013-2017**

<i>Gender</i>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>FY 14</b>	<b>FY 15</b>	<b>FY 16</b>	<b>FY 17</b>	<b>One-Year % Change</b>	<b>Five-Year % Change</b>
<i>Male</i>	30,711	32,106	33,077	32,911	30,590	-7.1%	-0.4%
<i>Female</i>	38,325	37,706	38,710	37,548	35,553	-5.3%	-7.2%

**SOURCE OF DATA: ICCB Centralized Data System—Annual Enrollment and Completion (A1 & A2) Data**

### **Graduate or Transfer Out Metric**

Community colleges urge students to complete their associate degrees prior to transferring to a four-year institution. Nationally, research suggests a higher completion rate for those that receive their credential from a two-year college ([Baccalaureate Attainment: A National View of the Postsecondary Outcomes of Students Who Transfer from Two-Year to Four-Year Institutions](#)). Still a substantial number of community college students generate a considerable number of credit hours but then transfer to a four-year institution prior to receiving the associate degree. Federal metrics such as Graduation Rate do not count these transfer outs prior to credential attainment as a success, and thus negatively impact community college outcomes. Therefore, to demonstrate student success more accurately, it is important to track community college students that transfer to a four year-institution prior to earning their associate degrees.

The transfer out metric measures the annual number and percentage of students who transfer from a two-year campus to a four-year campus whether they receive a credential or not. The numerator is the number of students from the cohort (denominator) who enroll at a four-year public institution of higher education. The denominator is the number of entering undergraduate students in two-year public institutions of higher education in the fall semester of a specified year.

Table 8 and Table 9 demonstrate student success measured by retention, transfer, and/or graduations. ICCB generates the entire set of metrics for the state and each community college via ICCB's Centralized Data System.

Table 8  
**First-Time, Full-Time Students Enrolling in Fall and Graduating or Transferring within  
Four Years of Entry at Illinois Community Colleges  
Fiscal Years 2012-2016**

<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>	<b>Fall 2008 FY 12</b>	<b>Fall 2009 FY 13</b>	<b>Fall 2010 FY 14</b>	<b>Fall 2011 FY 15</b>	<b>Fall 2012 FY 16</b>
<i>Asian*</i>	503/ 1,195 42.1%	584/ 1,540 37.9%	508/ 1,105 46.0%	470/ 967 48.6%	482/ 952 50.6%
<i>Native American</i>	32/ 98 32.7%	30/ 117 25.6%	32/ 114 28.1%	26/ 80 32.5%	28/ 102 27.5%
<i>African American</i>	1,267/ 4,740 26.7%	1,393/ 5,904 23.6%	1,449/ 6,115 23.7%	1,277/ 5,708 22.4%	1,269/ 5,807 21.9%
<i>Hispanic/ Latino</i>	895/ 3,537 25.3%	968/ 4,191 23.1%	1,048/ 4,465 23.5%	1,143/ 4,935 23.2%	1,408/ 5,446 25.9%
<i>Nonresident Alien</i>	100/ 317 31.5%	25/ 88 28.4%	18/ 78 23.1%	43/ 163 26.4%	56/ 188 29.8%
<i>Pacific Islander</i>	N/A	N/A	37/ 89 41.6%	12/ 48 25.0%	30/ 81 37.0%
<i>Two or More Races**</i>	N/A	N/A	178/ 591 30.1%	190/ 612 31.0%	237/ 724 32.7%
<b><i>Minority Subtotal</i></b>	<b>2,797/ 9,887 28.3%</b>	<b>3,000/ 11,840 25.3%</b>	<b>3,270/ 12,557 26.0%</b>	<b>3,161/ 12,513 25.3%</b>	<b>3,510/ 13,300 26.4%</b>
<i>White</i>	6,200/ 17,673 35.1%	6,762/ 20,007 33.8%	6,332/ 18,548 34.1%	6,149/ 17,360 35.4%	6,570/ 17,241 38.1%

\*Fall 2008 and 2009 cohorts include Pacific Islander

\*\*Race/ethnicity classifications align with U.S. Department of Education collection and reporting standards.

SOURCE OF DATA: ICCB Centralized Data System—Annual Enrollment and Completion (A1) Data, Fall Enrollment (E1) Data, and National Student Clearinghouse (NSC)

Table 8 contains information on number and percent of full-time students at Illinois community colleges who transferred out within four years of entry or received a degree within four years of entry by race/ethnicity. About one in four minority students from Fall 2012 cohort transferred out or earned a degree within four years of entry (26.4 percent) compared to nearly two in five White students (38.1 percent). Asian American students accounted for the highest transfer out rate among minority students entering in Fall 2012 (50.6 percent), followed by Pacific Islander students (37.0 percent), students of Two or More Races (32.7 percent), Nonresident Alien students (29.8 percent), Native American students (27.5 percent), Hispanic/Latino students (25.9 percent), and African American students (21.9 percent).

### **Retention, Graduation, or Transfer (Fall-to-Fall)**

The Retention, Graduation, or Transfer measure tracks the number and percentage of entering degree or certificate seeking undergraduate students from fall to fall.

Table 9  
**First-Time, Full-Time Students Enrolling in Fall and Being Retained, Graduating, or Transferring within One Year of Entry at Illinois Community Colleges  
Fiscal Years 2009-2013**

<i>Race/ethnicity</i>	<b>Fall 2008 Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2009 Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2010 Fall 2011</b>	<b>Fall 2011 Fall 2012</b>	<b>Fall 2012 Fall 2013</b>
<i>Asian*</i>	883/ 1,195 73.9%	1,052/ 1,540 68.3%	874/ 1,105 79.1%	772/ 967 79.8%	753/ 952 79.1%
<i>Native American</i>	60/ 98 61.2%	63/ 117 53.8%	80/ 114 70.2%	46/ 80 57.5%	65/ 102 63.7%
<i>African American</i>	2,574/ 4,740 54.3%	2,441/ 5,904 41.3%	3,358/ 6,115 54.9%	2,980/ 5,708 52.2%	3,070/ 5,807 52.9%
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	2,391/ 3,537 67.6%	2,544/ 4,191 60.7%	3,051/ 4,465 68.3%	3,227/ 4,935 65.4%	3,661/ 5,446 67.2%
<i>Nonresident Alien</i>	205/ 317 64.7%	52/ 88 59.1%	49/ 78 62.8%	81/ 163 49.7%	103/ 188 54.8%
<i>Pacific Islander</i>	N/A	N/A	68/ 89 76.4%	38/ 48 79.2%	61/ 81 75.3%
<i>Two or More Races**</i>	N/A	N/A	375/ 591 63.5%	403/ 612 65.8%	500/ 724 69.1%
<b>Minority Subtotal</b>	6,113/ 9,887 <b>61.8%</b>	6,152/ 11,840 <b>52.0%</b>	7,855/ 12,557 <b>62.8%</b>	7,547/ 12,513 <b>60.3%</b>	8,213/ 13,300 <b>61.8%</b>
<i>White</i>	12,394/ 17,673 70.1%	12,709/ 20,007 63.5%	13,309/ 18,548 71.8%	12,708/ 17,360 73.2%	12,867/ 17,241 74.6%

\*Fall 2008 and 2009 cohorts include Pacific Islander

\*\*Race/ethnicity classifications align with U.S. Department of Education collection and reporting standards.

SOURCE OF DATA: ICCB Centralized Data System—Annual Enrollment and Completion (A1) Data, Fall Enrollment (E1) Data, and National Student Clearinghouse (NSC)

Table 9 shows retention rates at Illinois community colleges within one year of entry. The measure provides a holistic view of successes experienced by students from fall-to-fall in community colleges. The numerator is the number of first-time students from the cohort (denominator) who are retained or who enrolled at a four-year public institution of higher education or who graduated. About six out of ten minority first-time, full-time students enrolling in Fall 2012 were retained, transferred, or graduated in Fall 2013 (61.8 percent) compared to nearly three out of four White students (74.6 percent). Asian American students accounted for the highest fall-to-fall retention rate among minority students enrolling in Fall 2012 (79.1 percent), followed by Pacific Islander students (75.3 percent), students of Two or More Races (69.1 percent), Hispanic/Latino students (67.2 percent), Native American students (63.7 percent), Nonresident Alien students (54.8 percent), and African American students (52.9 percent).

### Employee Diversity

Faculty, staff, administrators, and board members at each community college accept the responsibility of meeting the needs and demands of the area community and their constituents. To thrive in the competitive higher education marketplace, community colleges adopt a strong customer and community focus. Hence, the colleges tend to reflect the communities in which

they are located. Interest in creating a diverse environment is common to all colleges across the system. Strengths and opportunities for improvement may differ by locality.

Alger & Carrasco/ American Association of University Professors (1997), Humphreys (1999), American Council on Education and American Association of University Professors (2000), Brown-Glaude (2009), and American Association of Community Colleges (2013) found that a diverse faculty promotes a positive learning environment for both minorities and Caucasians.

Table 10  
**Fiscal Year 2017 Minority Faculty and Staff in Illinois Community Colleges**

	<i>Tenured Faculty/ Officials and Managers</i>	<i>Non- tenured Faculty</i>	<i>Professional Staff/ Protective Service Workers</i>	<i>Office and Clerical/ Para- professionals</i>	<i>Service Maintenance</i>
<i>African American %</i>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>7.4%</b>	<b>15.0%</b>	<b>15.5%</b>	<b>25.4%</b>
Number	605	1,189	1,383	630	707
<i>Hispanic/Latino %</i>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>8.9%</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>14.7%</b>
Number	239	596	825	489	409
<i>Asian American %</i>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>3.5%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>
Number	240	633	327*	114	32
<i>Native American %</i>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>
Number	16	44	28	10	14
<i>Nonresident Alien %</i>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
Number	2	13	4	0	0
<i>Pacific Islander %</i>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>
Number	4	17	21	4	5
<b><i>Minority Subtotal %</i></b>	<b>18.2%</b>	<b>15.5%</b>	<b>28.1%</b>	<b>30.7%</b>	<b>42.0%</b>
Number	1,106	2,492	2,588*	1,247	1,167

\*Includes revised college figures

SOURCE OF DATA: ICCB Centralized Data System—Annual Faculty, Staff, and Salary (C3) Data

Table 10 shows that in fiscal year 2017, minority faculty and staff accounted for 18.2 percent of tenured faculty/officials and managers, 15.5 percent of non-tenured faculty, 28.1 percent of professional staff/protective service workers, 30.7 percent of office and clerical/para-professionals, and 42.0 percent of service maintenance employees. Compared to fiscal year 2016, the number of minority faculty and staff decreased by 3.5 percent in fiscal year 2017. The largest decrease in the minority employee count from the previous year was noted for professional staff/protective service workers (-5.1 percent), followed by non-tenured faculty (-4.7 percent), service maintenance employees (-2.4 percent), office and clerical/para-professionals (-1.0 percent), and tenured faculty/officials and managers (-0.7 percent).

Nationwide, community college faculty members are disproportionately White, and thus students of color are less likely to have the opportunity to engage with faculty members of their own race/ethnicity ([Aspirations to Achievement: Men of Color and Community Colleges](#)). In Illinois community colleges, Hispanic/Latino faculty members are the most underrepresented minority group in comparison to the student population of the same race/ethnicity (Table 11).

Table 11  
**Proportion of Minority Students and Faculty at Illinois Community Colleges  
Fiscal Year 2013 and 2017**

<b>2013</b>	Percentage of Student Representation	Percentage of Faculty Representation*	Percentage Point Difference
<i>African American</i>	16.9%	9.2%	-7.7
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	17.6%	3.5%	-14.2
<i>Asian American</i>	4.6%	3.7%	-1.0
<i>Native American</i>	0.5%	0.3%	-0.2
<i>Nonresident Alien</i>	0.2%	0.1%	-0.1
<i>Pacific Islander</i>	0.4%	0.1%	-0.3
<i>White</i>	59.8%	83.2%	23.4
<b>2017</b>	Percentage of Student Representation	Percentage of Faculty Representation*	Percentage Point Difference
<i>African American</i>	13.6%	8.7%	-4.9
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	22.3%	4.0%	-18.3
<i>Asian American</i>	4.9%	4.2%	-0.6
<i>Native American</i>	0.2%	0.3%	0.0
<i>Nonresident Alien</i>	0.8%	0.1%	-0.7
<i>Pacific Islander</i>	0.1%	0.1%	0.0
<i>White</i>	55.9%	82.6%	26.7

Includes only students and faculty whose ethnicity was known.

\*Includes Tenured Faculty/Officials and Managers and Non-tenured Faculty

SOURCE OF DATA: ICCB Centralized Data System—Annual Enrollment and Completion (A1) Data and Annual Faculty, Staff, and Salary (C3) Data

Across a five-year period, Hispanic/Latino faculty representation increased slightly (3.5 percent in fiscal year 2013 vs. 4.0 percent in fiscal year 2017), but did not increase enough in comparison to the increase in the Hispanic/Latino student representation (17.6 percent in fiscal year 2013 vs. 22.3 percent in fiscal year 2017). Across the same time frame, African American faculty representation decreased slightly (9.2 percent in fiscal year 2013 vs. 8.7 percent in fiscal year 2017), while the African American student representation experienced a sharper decrease (16.9 percent in fiscal year 2013 vs. 13.6 percent in fiscal year 2017). Asian American faculty and student representation both increased over the period of five years, but the increase was larger for Asian American faculty (3.7 percent in fiscal year 2013 vs. 4.2 percent in fiscal year 2017) than the increase for Asian American students (4.6 percent in fiscal year 2013 vs. 4.9 percent in fiscal year 2017).

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## BEST PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING RECRUITMENT

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The following section provides information about best practices for improving student recruitment, academic success, and completion from the Illinois Community College System in fiscal year 2017. Best practices address factors woven into students' experiences which may impact their success and completion, such as being a member of an underrepresented student population or being a low-income, first-generation, or disabled college student, and provide helpful information about project components and outcomes.

### **Building Strong High School Pipelines to College and Careers**

The Middle College program began in Fall 2009 as a partnership of **Danville Area Community College** (DACC) and participating high schools with the support of the Vermilion Healthcare Foundation, High School Administrators, the Regional Superintendent, and Vermilion Advantage,

*The Middle College program at Danville Area Community College is designed for high school juniors and seniors, with a history of academic success, who may have run into barriers to high school completion.*

and has continued thereafter. Middle College is designed for high school juniors and seniors with a history of academic success, who may have run into barriers to high school completion. The majority of the Middle College participants fall under one or more of the underrepresented groups' categories: minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, and first-generation students. Students accepted into Middle College take classes at DACC instead of the high school. Classes may be a combined mix of developmental, online, credit recovery and/or college level classes. Students are required to be involved in a minimum of five hours of learning each school day. Additionally, each Middle College student is assigned a Case Manager, who works side-by-side with the student to overcome barriers. Once Middle College students complete requirements for graduation per their home high school, they will become a graduate of that school. If students complete college-level coursework as part of Middle College, the credit counts as both high school and college credit and is part of the students' academic transcripts at DACC. As of fiscal year 2017, 216 students have participated in the program. One hundred sixty-two (162) of those students have completed high school graduation requirements (149 high school graduates and 13 GED<sup>®</sup> [high school equivalency test] completers). Eighty-two percent of the students have either completed or are currently still engaged in education rather than dropping out of high school. Many of the students successfully continued into a DACC program of study after their high school/ GED<sup>®</sup> completion.

In fall 2016, **Lincoln Trail College** (LTC) implemented a communications campaign using MailChimp software to communicate college enrollment processes to potential students. In doing so, LTC educated students about entrance processes, engaged high school juniors and seniors in learning about higher education and career opportunities, and provided information about funding opportunities (financial aid and scholarships) to students with financial needs. Students registered for MailChimp during visits with the LTC Recruitment and Special Events Coordinator (RSEC). LTC registered additional students in the software from demographic

information collected from College Board, a nonprofit organization that serves to expand access to higher education for students and offers entrance testing. In the MailChimp process, students provided the RSEC with their areas of academic interest and also indicated if they planned to transfer their credits after graduating from LTC or if they preferred a program in which they would begin their careers immediately after graduation. After enrolling in the database, students received a welcome email from LTC's President as well as emails tailored to their areas of interest. The emails featured stories about alumni, faculty, excellence, financial aid, and their indicated fields of interest. During the 2016-2017 academic year, 1,171 students subscribed to LTC's MailChimp listserv and 1,014 (87 percent) of these students remained subscribed to MailChimp to receive enrollment process information. Of the students who remained subscribed to MailChimp, 111 (11 percent) enrolled at LTC in fall 2017.

The Running Start program, which began as a pilot program in fall 2012, is an opportunity for highly qualified high school juniors and seniors to attend classes at **Southwestern Illinois College** (SWIC) on a full-time basis (16 hours or more each semester). Students who enter the program as juniors may simultaneously earn a high school diplomas from their home high schools or homeschool and Associate in Arts or Associate in Science degrees from SWIC. Currently, there are 17 partner high school districts who have students participating in the Running Start program. The Running Start program has established a minimum grade point average (GPA) requirement (3.0/4.0) and minimum course completions in math (one year of geometry and one year of high school algebra) for participation. Each partner high school has the opportunity to customize additional program requirements at the high school. All students must take SWIC's placement test and score at college level English and math to qualify. Some high schools allow students to take a summer developmental English or math class to qualify prior to the fall semester start date. All students must enroll in ED 101, College Success Strategies, before enrolling full-time in the fall semester. ED 101 is designed to introduce students to the college experience and help develop the needed attitudes, strategies, habits, relationships, and knowledge necessary for success. In fiscal year 2017, 227 students began the Running Start program and 216 completed the program (95 percent completion rate).

The overarching purpose of the Dual Credit Career Education Planning Course at **Kaskaskia College** was to increase the likelihood that students would choose to attend college after high school graduation. Kaskaskia College collaborated with two high schools, Centralia and Vandalia, to develop a dual credit course for Career Education Planning (GUID 110) and approved the course to be offered for the 2017-2018 school year. One teacher from each high school was identified based on courses already taught at the high school which matched the purpose of this activity. Centralia High School built GUID 110 into their Career Exploration class and Vandalia High School integrated the GUID 110 content into their Consumer Education class. Starting with the fall 2017 semester, the Student Engagement Specialist (SES) worked with each high school instructor to develop topics to be presented by the SES including use of College Central Network/Resume Building, financial aid information and resources, applying to college/career selection questionnaire/degree evaluation and career program opportunities. GUID 110 was designed to

*The overarching purpose of Dual Credit Career Education Planning Course at Kaskaskia College was to increase the likelihood that students would choose to attend college after high school graduation.*

assist students in making career choices. The course information focused on self-assessment in terms of educational and career opportunities and reasonable possibilities in the world of work. Students in the selected classes at the two participating high schools were typically first-generation and low-income. Forty-three students completed the GUID 110 course (14 from Vandalia and 29 from Centralia). Of the 43 students, 37 identified as being first-generation college students. Fall 2018 registrations will be reviewed to determine if the students who participated in the GUID 110 course matriculate to college.

The goal of the Information Technology (IT) career path project at **Prairie State College (PSC)** is to offer high school students the opportunity to earn portable, industry-recognized credentials, college credits, and workplace experience in a high-demand, high-wage industry, all by the time they finish high school. IT was selected as the career path because there is a lack of diversity in race/ethnicity and gender. A secondary goal was to introduce female and minority students to IT career options. The idea was submitted as a grant proposal to the Department of Commerce and

*The goal of the Information Technology career path project at Prairie State College is to offer high school students the opportunity to earn portable, industry-recognized credentials, college credits, and workplace experience in a high-demand, high-wage industry, all by the time they finish high school.*

Economic Opportunity. The grant was selected and PSC was awarded \$276,000 to implement the plan in the fall of 2017. Two high school townships, Bloom and Rich, were selected based on poverty levels, low high school completion rates, and TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) eligibility. Twenty-three participants, 8 females and 15 males, were recruited from five high schools and will complete a total of 22 transferable IT college credits over the course of two semesters (14 credit hours the first semester and 8 credit hours the second semester). Fewer credit hours during the second semester allow the students to participate in an internship with local business partners. Students are placed with local businesses for forty-eight hours of hands on experience under the guidance of professional IT employees. All students spend one internship day at McDonald's USA, LLC. Tuition, transportation to the internship sites, books, and certification test fees are covered by the grant. All but one student is Hispanic or African American. Upon completion, the students will obtain two industry-recognized, stackable, and portable workplace credentials and national certifications—Computer Support Associate and Cisco Network Associate Certificate—through an Early College Initiative (ECI) model. So far students have completed the first 14 credit hours and have received the Computer Support Associate certificate.

**Lake Land College's** Presidential Scholarship recognizes academically talented district high school graduates including those who are minority, female, have a disability, or first-generation college students, and ensures that they have the ability to pursue higher education regardless of their ability to pay. To be eligible, students must reside in or graduate from a district high school, rank within the top 15 percent of their senior class, or have an ACT composite of 26 or higher or an SAT total score of 1240 or higher. Students must enroll full-time at Lake Land beginning the Fall semester following high school graduation, successfully complete at least 12 credit hours each semester and earn a semester or cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher their first semester, and 3.15 or higher every semester thereafter. Students are recognized as Presidential Scholars at their high school awards ceremonies by the Lake Land College President and other college staff

through media releases and at a Presidential Scholarship Luncheon during the fall semester. All Presidential Scholars are immediately recognized as part of the college's Honors Experience which provides opportunities for engagement in honors coursework and Phi Theta Kappa. Students who fall below the minimum requirements one semester, may earn the scholarship back through their successful performance the next semester. The Presidential Scholarship was first implemented in fall 2015 to replace a previous Academically Talented Student Award Program. During its first three years of implementation, the Presidential Scholarship has been met with overwhelming support from high schools, students and parents throughout the district. There were 142 participants from the class of 2015; 158 from the class of 2016; and 143 from the class of 2017. For the class of 2015 scholars, 101 (71 percent) maintained eligibility to continue the scholarship throughout their enrollment, and 89 percent graduated or are still enrolled after two years.

**Highland Community College (HCC)** set out to reinvigorate the agriculture program and build its enrollment in fiscal year 2015. While agriculture has always been part of the fabric of the communities served by the institution, recognition was blossoming that agri-business is also a key economic engine impacting the region. After hiring a new instructor in August 2014, new efforts began to enhance the extracurricular and internship opportunities for students. The faculty began recruiting students in area high schools where Future Farmers of America is a popular extracurricular activity. While recruitment visits to the high schools were not developed to engage only female students, many of the visuals used in presentations showed Highland's female agriculture students actively involved. Recently HCC started hosting a regional Women Changing the Face of Agriculture conference on campus, which allows HCC to connect students with women involved in agricultural careers in the local community. Every pathway in the HCC agriculture curriculum was highlighted at the conference with at least one female working in that area of agriculture in HCC community. 2018 was the HCC's second year hosting this conference locally in partnership with Illinois Agri-Women. There were 78 females from 11 area high schools in attendance and over two dozen female agriculture professionals on campus discussing the opportunities available in the region. This year HCC also welcomed a second faculty member, a female, to the program. In 2013 HCC had 14 female students in agriculture majors. Moving ahead to fall 2018, HCC had 21 female students enrolled. In that six-year span, the program has had up to 29 females enrolled, more than doubling the female enrollment from 2013. There have been 131 female students in total in the past six-years, and HCC anticipates the number will continue to grow.

*Highland Community College started hosting a regional Women Changing the Face of Agriculture conference on campus in order to recruit female high school students into the agriculture program.*

While recruitment visits to the high schools were not developed to engage only female students, many of the visuals used in presentations showed Highland's female agriculture students actively involved. Recently HCC started hosting a regional Women Changing the Face of Agriculture conference on campus, which allows HCC to connect students with women involved in agricultural careers in the local community. Every pathway in the HCC agriculture curriculum was highlighted at the conference with at least one female working in that area of agriculture in HCC community. 2018 was the HCC's second year hosting this conference locally in partnership with Illinois Agri-Women. There were 78 females from 11 area high schools in attendance and over two dozen female agriculture professionals on campus discussing the opportunities available in the region. This year HCC also welcomed a second faculty member, a female, to the program. In 2013 HCC had 14 female students in agriculture majors. Moving ahead to fall 2018, HCC had 21 female students enrolled. In that six-year span, the program has had up to 29 females enrolled, more than doubling the female enrollment from 2013. There have been 131 female students in total in the past six-years, and HCC anticipates the number will continue to grow.

In the fall of 2013, **Rend Lake College** began a First Year Experience (FYE) program for full-time degree-seeking students. The goal was to assist students as they transition from high school/home life into the life of a college student, and to help them to achieve their academic goals. In fall 2017, through data evaluation, it was discovered that part-time students, who are often nontraditional students, would also benefit from the services and information that students obtained in the FYE classes, where students are involved in various community interaction events, service learning events, and leadership workshops. Since the FYE classes are taught by a variety of academic advisors, faculty, staff, and outside speakers, students are able to connect

and overcome challenges they face during those critical first classes. The initiative has helped to foster a feeling of being included.

The Intercultural Student Services (ISS) department at **Rock Valley College (RVC)** is committed to carrying out educationally purposeful initiatives that enhance academic and personal success and student engagement and embrace diversity and global and community awareness. Sister-to-Sister and Minority Male Leadership Conference (MMLC) are two successful ISS initiatives due to various funding sources, such as external donations and grant dollars. The MMLC has been in existence since 2010. This conference has grown from 50 to 180 young men from Rockford-area schools. Presenters who volunteer at the conference include the Rockford Police Department, RVC educators, business owners, high school and RVC deans, RVC college students, and a banking officer. The intent of the conference is to encourage young men to be positive leaders in the RVC district and also inspire them to have an open mind when learning the importance of a college education and that there may be obstacles in life, however, there are ways to go around those obstacles and still accomplish their goals.

The Sister-to-Sister Conference has been in existence at **Rock Valley College** since 2012. This conference has grown from 100 to 200 young females from local area high schools. Twelve presenters including Rockford attorneys, a bilingual community liaison, a banking officer, RVC surgical technology program coordinator, and RVC students and alumni, volunteer their time because they believe in the purpose and goal of the Sister-to-Sister conference. Also, there are 20 Rock Valley College females, who are a part of the Multicultural, Black Student Union, Campus Activity Board and Association of Latin American Students student organizations on campus, and who volunteer their time and serve as group leaders while escorting the high school students to their sessions. The intent of the conference sessions, which include sessions on health careers, self-respect, bullying, life skills, and domestic violence, is to encourage young females to be positive leaders in the RVC district.

Fall 2017 was the first year that the Office of Admissions and Outreach at **College of DuPage (COD)** hosted Hispanic Visit Day to increase the recruitment of new Hispanic students to attend COD directly out of high school, as this program was historically hosted by the Latino Outreach Office. This event aligns with the strategy to increase the application and yield of Hispanic students from the high schools with the largest percentage of Hispanic students in order to foster a culture of inclusiveness for students, employees and the community through programs, activities, policies and procedures. The Office of Admissions and Outreach hosted 142 high school sophomore, junior, and senior students on the main campus for the Hispanic Visit Day. The program consisted of an admissions and outreach presentation, as well as presentations by the Latino Outreach Office and the members of the counseling and advising team. The highlight of the program was the motivational and inspirational speaker, Ernesto Mejia, from CoolSpeak, the Youth Engagement Company. His message touched the hearts of the students in attendance, detailing his personal journey as a young Hispanic male chasing the American dream, and how he overcame educational obstacles to become the champion for Hispanic youths in the pursuit of higher education. Of the 142 student attendees, 60 of those students applied to

*In order to increase the recruitment of new Hispanic students directly out of high school, College of DuPage hosted Hispanic Visit Day for the first time in fall 2017.*

the college. Streamlined communications to all seniors in attendance were sent out with specific messaging to keep students engaged with enrollment information pertaining to the college.

A Junior and Senior Night event was created at **College of DuPage** to increase the application and yield of Hispanic students from the high schools with the largest percentage of Hispanic students. On October 24, 2017, the Office of Admissions and Outreach hosted a Junior and Senior Night on the main campus for these students and parents to learn about the enrollment process for new students. The admissions presentation was conducted in Spanish, and focused on how parents could help their students navigate through the enrollment process, discuss the myths and misconceptions about financial aid and scholarships, work and life balance, DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), and how to utilize the resources at the college to be academically successful. There were 35 students and parents in attendance at this information session. The event aligns with the college's Strategic Long Range Plan for Equality and Inclusiveness: to foster a culture of inclusiveness for students, employees and the community through programs, activities, policies and procedures. Because of the Spanish information session at the fall Junior and Senior Night event, beginning in the spring semester of 2018, monthly Spanish information sessions and Spanish tours have been scheduled throughout the year. The first session and tour were conducted on January 29, 2018, where ten students attended.

*The TRIUMPH program at Triton College, which supports minority male students, has recently expanded its outreach by providing mentorship and tutoring services to minority male high school students.*

The Triton Undergraduate Men Pursuing Higher education (TRIUMPH) program, a minority male retention initiative designed to increase the number of men of color graduating from **Triton College**, continues to demonstrate great gains. TRIUMPH has successfully graduated more than 40 scholars since its inception in spring 2014 and has a 90 percent retention rate. The program has expanded its outreach

to high school students through the West 40 Regional Safe School, Oak Park High School, and the Oak Park Public Library by offering mentorship and tutoring services on a weekly basis impacting over 130 high school minority male students. TRIUMPH addresses the significant opportunity gap for minority males who are the first in their family, and often first in their community, to pursue higher education. The TRIUMPH program ensures postsecondary persistence through intensive mentoring and targeted workshops designed to increase social, emotional and non-cognitive barriers to success. TRIUMPH members, who are referred to as scholars, attend required trainings in emotional management, conflict resolution, time management, financial literacy (i.e. Free Application for Federal Student Aid [FAFSA] preparation, basic budgeting, etc.), etiquette, life skills and goal setting.

**Richard J. Daley College's** Early College partnership with Sarah E. Goode STEM Academy connects high school, college, and work force partners to prepare students for the science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) jobs of the future. Partnerships with industry and colleges provide opportunities for students to work with professionals, acquire industry certifications, and earn a postsecondary degree, putting them on a path towards ongoing study and/or employment. The college provides college-credit instruction, advising, educational planning, and student support services to high school students, conducts program orientation, and

communicates student performance with the high school. Goode STEM Academy delivers dual credit courses, supports student development of non-cognitive skills, communicates with parents regarding student performance, and provides books, supplies, and other resources for student success. IBM offers career exploration and work-based opportunities, provides industry mentors, and prioritizes employment opportunities for completers. Early on the program roles and responsibilities were established among partnering institutions. Monthly communication via a steering committee and on-site program managers are two key strategies that have helped monitor and ensure the success of the program. Program managers are a valuable resource and provide essential support and advising for students, lead programming and curriculum development, and are responsible for fostering relationships with teachers and staff at Goode STEM Academy. In Goode STEM Academy's graduating Class of 2017, 79 out of 172 graduates earned college credit, and six students completed their associate degrees from Richard J. Daley College within 4 years.

### **Workforce Development Initiatives**

**Kaskaskia College** is partnering with the South Central Illinois Growth Alliance (SCIGA) and area businesses and industries to address the growing shortage of skilled workers in South Central Illinois. The gap could result in more than two million vacant manufacturing jobs during the next decade ([Manufacturing Industry Faces Unprecedented Employment Shortfall: 2.4 Million Skilled Jobs Projected to Go Unfilled According to Deloitte and the Manufacturing Institute](#)). The purpose of the *Critical Skills Gap Initiative*, which was launched in July 2017, with an area-wide summit and has continued with a series of business and industry tours during the Manufacturing Month in October and a SCIGA luncheon in November, is to increase awareness of the local availability of good-paying jobs, the attractiveness of employment in modern manufacturing plants, and programs the college offers to prepare students, some of whom are first-generation college students or members of other underrepresented groups, for successful employment in manufacturing. There are plans to offer additional events on an ongoing basis, with an open house at the college's Crisp Technology Center during CTE Month in February and other activities throughout the year. Periodic summits spotlighting area manufacturers and their needs have engaged representatives of labor organizations, city and county government, K-12 school districts, and college officials in presentations and discussions about the skills gap. Business and industry tours have been conducted to provide junior high and high school students with a taste of the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace and the good employment opportunities in manufacturing close to home. The initiative has been featured in the Illinois Community College Board's [CTE College Spotlights](#) as well as other media outlets.

The Office of Business and Professional Services at **Harold Washington College** has worked with Aon, a major corporation in downtown Chicago, to create learning and career opportunities for students. The *Apprenticeship Program* supports students in business programs by engaging them simultaneously with a 12-credit hour course load, a 28-hour per week job, a professional salary with benefits (greater than \$32,000 per year), and, upon completion of their Associate of Applied Science degree, the opportunity of continued education toward a bachelor's

*Harold Washington College has partnered with Aon, a major corporation in downtown Chicago, to create learning and career opportunities for students.*

degree and a career with Aon. These students are considered full-time employees at Aon, and their tuition is paid. The curriculum is designed to complement work experience in Human Resources, Information Technology, or Insurance. The program, which was developed and launched during the 2016-2017 academic year, has already served as a model for other corporations. The *Apprenticeship Program* is part of the City Colleges of Chicago's *College to Careers* initiative, which is aimed at moving students from redesigned academic programs into well-paying jobs in demand in Chicago. The program is also partnering with One Million Degrees, a non-profit student support organization, to ensure student success through mentoring and coaching. The initial cohort of 21 apprentices was selected from over 300 applicants. The eleven male and ten female students vary in age and backgrounds, creating a diverse talent pool for Aon. All apprentices from the initial cohort are currently employed at Aon.

**Lincoln Trail College (LTC)** offered an exploratory section of one of its welding courses—Special Topics in Welding (WEL 1206) during summer 2016—to increase interest in its certificate welding program. LTC promoted the course to all students, with some emphasis on nontraditional, female, and low-income students. The course increased interest in this technical program, introduced the students to the benefits of a one-year certificate program, and provided current welding students with additional hours to increase their skills. The LTC welding certificate is 20 total credits and can be completed in two semesters. The program provides industry skills to prepare graduates for employment in the fields of welding and manufacturing. Upon successful completion of the program, students may enter directly into the workforce or matriculate into an Associate in Applied Science degree program in welding at Olney Central College, an LTC sister college in the Illinois Eastern Community College District. Students may apply WEL 1206 to the LTC certificate program. The Illinois labor market indicates a projected 4 percent increase in positions for welders, cutters, and solders within the state by 2020. Twelve students enrolled in the summer exploratory course. Three enrollees were females. Three enrollees continued their education with LTC, working towards certificates or degrees. Nine students were community members who attended for general interest.

### **Financial Aid/Scholarships/Grants**

The Perkins Postsecondary Grant awarded in fiscal year 2017 at **Kankakee Community College (KCC)** has a variety of purposes, including recruiting and supporting students on their paths to technical skill attainment. A portion of the grant was allocated for matching special population students (as defined by the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act) with continuously diversified internship opportunities to complete their degrees with advanced

*The Perkins Postsecondary Grant serves a variety of purposes including recruiting and supporting students in career and technical education programs, serving special populations, and supporting nontraditional students.*

on-the-job training, as well as offering workshops and classes to prepare students for a successful job search. KCC first launched its own internship informational site in March 2016. Since the launching of the website, eight internship sites have been added, with a goal of securing five additional internship sites each year to offer varied experiences relevant to current job market needs. Since award year 2016, the Job Search Preparation workshop availability has expanded to 19 sessions throughout the school year, and 313 students had enrolled in Job Search courses,

increasing from 221 participants from the previous fiscal year. In addition, the number of mock interview sessions doubled from the previous fiscal year for a total of 30 sessions. Students also have access to five additional internship sites than the previous fiscal year, offering more varied technical experiences. The continued development and availability of resources supporting education and successful job placement for special population students represents KCC's ongoing mission in recruiting and supporting prospective students who will enter the workforce experienced and able to navigate the needs of the current job market.

My Future is a program at **Joliet Junior College (JJC)** that offers career scholarships, covering tuition, fees, and books, for an associate degree or training programs to eligible, low-income youth (ages 16-24). The program also offers continuous support through career guidance, employment, and internship opportunities, GED® support and vocational training. While students are working toward their GED® or in college, the grant pays their wages, providing the opportunity to apply what is being learned. Formerly the initiative was called Career Seekers, transitioned to a new name of Connect2Employment in 2013, and was renamed My Future in July 2015. The program's goals are to keep local youth in the workforce, promote higher education, create skilled workers for in-demand jobs, and to retain those workers. More than 700 youth enrolled in the program since 2004, and many go on to receive bachelor's degrees and/or are working in jobs that have given them the opportunity to be gainfully employed.

The objective of federal work study (FWS) is to offer students an opportunity to focus on their academics while maintaining a part-time job on campus. Students are required to have a completed financial aid application (FAFSA) on file before being considered for a work-study position. Each student worker must complete and have on file an I-9 and a Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) form. All student workers are required to attend a student worker orientation and are trained by specific departmental/ divisional supervisors. Student workers provide timesheets on a bi-monthly schedule. Students on Financial Aid Suspension are not be eligible to work FWS. The primary criterion by which this goal is measured is by their eligibility to continue, including keeping their financial aid in good standing, which involves keeping above a 2.0 grade point average (GPA), completing more than 67 percent of credits attempted, and completing a degree in a timely fashion. Of the student workers who have recently participated in the work study program at **Southeastern Illinois College**, 61 percent maintained a GPA of 3.0 or higher. While there is not a direct link between federal student work and a high GPA, this specific student population benefits from work on campus due to maintaining a job that is flexible with supervisors that understand the importance of a higher education.

*Southwestern Illinois College offers the STEM Scholar Program to promote the educational pursuits of academically talented and financially needy students in STEM disciplines.*

**Southwestern Illinois College (SWIC)** offers the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Scholar Program, funded through a National Science Foundation Grant and designed to promote the educational pursuits of academically talented and financially needy students in STEM disciplines. The program provides financial aid support to help

students pursue completion of an associate degree or the goal of transferring to a university to complete a Bachelor of Science degree in their chosen STEM major. The STEM Scholar

Program welcomed its first cohort of fourteen students in fall 2016. All students received scholarship money to cover the difference between their cost of attendance and what was paid by federal and state grants. Students were enrolled in two special topic courses (MATH 299 Bits and Bytes; BIO 299 Tools of the Trade). They attended required weekly study sessions with other cohort members in the college's Success Center and met with an assigned faculty mentor three times per semester and submitted meeting summaries in an online journal. The STEM Scholar Program documented a 78.5 percent success rate (71.4 percent students continued in the program and 7.1 percent transferred to a 4-year STEM program) at the end of the 2016-2017 academic year. The original cohort of 14 members included 50 percent female, 43 percent minority, and 64 percent first-generation college students. The program data from the 2017-2018 academic year show an increase in the number of participants from 14 to 21 students, a 14.3 percent increase in Black Non-Hispanic students, and a 22 percent increase in first-generation college students.

*The purpose of the Chicago STAR Scholarship, a merit-based scholarship that covers tuition, books, and class materials not already covered by financial aid, is to recruit and retain students at City Colleges of Chicago.*

The Chicago STAR Scholarship is a merit-based scholarship at City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) that covers tuition, books, and class materials not already covered by financial aid for CCC courses on an approved academic pathway. Any Chicago public or charter high school graduate who applies within one year of graduating from high school, who has an ACT score of 17 or higher in math and English or an SAT score of 460 in writing and 440

in math (if SAT is taken before March 1, 2016, 410 in writing and 400 in math), and a 3.0 GPA or greater at high school graduation, and who enrolls in one of CCC's pathways is eligible for the STAR Scholarship for up to three years after CPS graduation or until completion of a CCC associate degree, whichever comes first. This includes undocumented and international students. Home schooled and GED® students are ineligible for the STAR scholarship. The Chicago Star Scholarship has been a successful tool for recruiting and retaining students at **Wilbur Wright College**. The fall 2016 cohort consisted of 304 students (149 female and 155 male students; 62.8 percent Hispanic). Through summer 2017, five students from the cohort had completed a certificate or associate degree. Fall-to-fall retention among this group of students was 90.8 percent, which was double the college's overall rate of 45.3 percent.

The key elements of the Chicago STAR Scholarship include targeted outreach to ensure these students have access to advising services, special early registration events, and special transfer activities to ensure a seamless transition to a four-year university. At **Richard J. Daley College** the advisors worked closely with 2016 STAR students to develop meaningful educational plans that align the students' academic, personal and professional goals. Students flagged "at risk" received targeted outreach to schedule advising appointments to discuss available resources to help them succeed in their classes. Special registration initiatives include VIP registration events to encourage STAR students register early for the following term. A new onboarding experience was created for new STAR scholar students including a Welcome Ceremony and STAR Scholar Meet and Greet. The success of the program is demonstrated by higher term-to-term retention among this group of students: 97 percent of the 2016 STAR student cohort were retained compared to 55 percent for the non-STAR students.

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**BEST PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND COMPLETION**

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### **Student Support Initiatives**

The Rita and John Canning Women’s Program at **Harper College** provides educational and personal support to women who meet low-income guidelines and qualify as single parents, displaced homemakers, nontraditional career seekers, ESL students, or women who have experienced intimate partner abuse. The Women’s Program has a history within Harper College and the community and has been offering assistance to its participants for over 45 years. The program has established relationships with many social service agencies within the community, who refer potential participants. The Women’s Program provides advising and financial assistance for educational expenses. On average, the Women’s Program awards \$16,617 in private scholarships and \$239,911 in grants for participant tuition, fees and books. Since its inception, the Women’s Program has served over 32,000 individuals. The Women’s Program provides support to approximately 500 students each year. Over the past three years, the completion rate for Women’s Program participants enrolled in credit courses was 81 percent. In the current academic year the Women’s Program expanded its support to participants by facilitating a laptop loaner program and has loaned out 14 laptops, further assisting their participants in meeting their academic goals.

*The Rita and John Canning Women’s Program at Harper College provides educational and personal support to women who meet low-income guidelines and qualify as single parents, displaced homemakers, nontraditional career seekers, ESL students, or women who have experienced intimate partner abuse.*

The Office of Instruction has worked closely with faculty at **Harold Washington College** (HWC) to develop programming with a focus on affective (non-cognitive) competency development and mentorship that will increase retention and success rates for students. The *Discover* initiative supports students in knowing themselves, their personal and professional resources, and the relationship of their path and goals to the nature of higher education. Through the vehicle of a one-credit hour course, *Discover* empowers students to recognize their agency in an increasingly challenging society. The curriculum continues to evolve as it is contextualized and adapted to various learning groups at the college. A total of 10 sections of *Discover* ran between the spring 2017 semester and the fall 2017 semester, serving a total of 179 students with a class success rate of 73.18 percent and a retention rate of 82.68 percent, which are above HWC’s institutional averages from the same terms (65.08 percent and 81.93 percent, respectively).

The Writing Center at **Wilbur Wright College** was established in fall 2006 with the goal to develop students’ writing skills at any stage—brainstorming, research, analysis, integration of sources, critical thinking, and editing. The results for students are not only stronger writing abilities but also increased confidence, both of which are important indicators for success in college, and especially in the first year. When utilizing the Writing Center, students receive one-on-one tutoring sessions led by adjunct and full-time faculty members recruited by the center director and the college’s administration. In spring 2016, 839 students visited the Writing Center, with a total of 2,266 visits. Students achieved an average retention rate of 95.2 percent in the

courses for which they utilized the Writing Center, in comparison to the overall college retention rate of 86.3 percent. During the fall 2016 semester, the Writing Center had 836 visitors with a total of 2,185 visits. Students visiting the Writing Center had an average retention rate of 95.2 percent in the courses in which they sought writing assistance, compared to the college retention rate of 83.9 percent. Students also had a higher success rate for the courses in which they sought help from the Writing Center. Hispanic students visiting the Writing Center achieved comparable success and retention rates.

The Student Success Center at **John A. Logan College** is made up of three separate programs that provide support services for students. These include Disability Support Services, TRIO Student Support Services, and the Tutoring Center which includes the Math Help Room and the Biology Help Room. Students can receive services from just one program, choose to participate in two, or be involved with all three programs. All staff in the Student Success Center are involved with TRIO, but also work with students in one of the other programs. Approximately 200 John A. Logan College students receive tutoring assistance each semester in the Tutoring Center, and over 2,000 tutoring sessions are conducted each semester. Between 180 and 220 students receive disability support services through the Student Success Center each semester. During some semesters this number has been even higher. Supports range from note taker services; extended time testing; reader and/or scribe services; electronic textbook conversion; specialized equipment for low hearing, vision, or other disabilities; and individualized services based on the needs of the student.

The mission of the Writing Center at **Harry S. Truman College** is to supplement classroom instruction by giving each student individual writing support for any credit class with a writing component. Before the creation of Truman's Writing Center, which launched in spring 2012, the only place for students to receive writing support was the Tutoring Center. However, the Tutoring Center did not have the capacity to serve student demand. The Writing Center contributes directly to student success by helping students to improve class assignments and develop writing skills that will serve them in all of their future coursework. In fiscal year 2017, the Writing Center had 4,016 student visits during the fall semester and 3,779 visits during spring. Data from fiscal year 2017 demonstrate that students who visit the Writing Center are more likely to be retained and more successful in credit classes.

**Olive-Harvey College** has generated opportunities for students to create success on the baccalaureate level through activities and partnerships with four-year higher education institutions. In 2012, the Transfer Center became a department within Student Services that operates as a resource bridge for students needing support to continue to the next educational goal. The goal of the Transfer Center is to assist students in transferring to universities with ease. The Transfer Center supports all students but recognizes that students that earn 30 credits hours or more and are completing an associate degree desire more support and direction on their next steps. The center plans varied programs and engages the students in multiple methods to create a transfer conversation that concludes with present degree completion and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely) goal-setting. The Transfer Center offers services that include college application fee waivers; personal statement reviews; mentoring programs of alumni, staff, and students; and instant admissions days on campus to encourage students to apply and receive same-day acceptance. The instant admissions days have been successful for

the two top schools of transfer for Olive-Harvey College students: Governors State University and Chicago State University. To determine the impact of the Transfer Center, in 2014 Olive-Harvey began to track the degree completers' transfer rate. The goal was to give students twenty-four months to make the transition. In fiscal year 2016 the percentage of students that transferred from the 2014 completers was 52 percent.

**Frontier Community College** implemented a Study Tables initiative in fall 2016 to maintain or increase GPA and completion for students including students identified as English as a second language. It has a set time every week for students to study either alone or in a group setting. Initially, Study Tables set aside 1.5 hours a week and has evolved to 6-8 hours a week. Supervision is provided by the Retention Coordinator to assist with homework and provide tutoring services. Study Tables sessions are held in a computer lab with technology to observe each computer monitor to ensure that students are working on their studies. Study Tables served 40 students and included student athletes. One section was dedicated entirely towards female athletes and consisted of 15 students. Many of the student athletes included in Study Tables identified as English as a second language. Study Tables provides a certified English as a second language instructor who assesses students' capabilities with verbal and written tests. The ESL Instructor then provides appropriate assistance with speaking and writing to help students achieve academic success in their speech and composition classes. All but one student involved with Study Tables in fall 2016 semester received passing grades. All students involved with the initiative in spring 2017 semester received passing grades.

*Frontier Community College implemented a Study Tables initiative in fall 2016 to maintain or increase GPA and completion for students including students identified as English as a second language.*

The Diversity and Inclusion (D & I) Program at **John A. Logan College** provides academic and non-academic diversity and inclusion resources and programs. The mission is to serve, encourage and guide individuals of every race, ethnicity, gender and other unique backgrounds in the appreciation of diverse perspectives, experiences and cultures that make up the college's student body, faculty, staff and community. The program sponsors organizations, programs, meetings and events that encourage the academic success, cultural awareness and understanding, as well as advocacy of the members of the diverse campus community. The D & I program includes a Diversity Advisory Committee, Multicultural Perspective Series, International Program Week, Act of Kindness Project, Diversity Spotlight, National Society of Leadership and Success, and the Gathering of Men and Women initiatives.

**Morton College** began planning for a prominent new Student Success Center (SSC) in fall 2016, with the goal of creating new space with centralized academic support services, which included tutoring, academic advising, and skills assessment (testing). While the SSC plan is still in development, Morton College has improved and increased services. Morton College began offering behavioral health assistance for students facing challenging times in their lives. Services include assisting students with mental health and other social service needs in order to support personal well-being and academic success. The addition of the Behavioral Health Services at Morton College has allowed the department to support students dealing with mental health issues, which can include but are not limited to depression, anxiety, sexual assault/abuse,

domestic violence, homelessness, grief/loss, LGBTQQ and divorce. All services are free of charge to students and confidential. Morton College's counseling services, under the direct supervision of a licensed clinical social worker, have allowed the behavioral health specialist to provide students with much needed access to mental health and other social services to support their personal well-being and academic success. During the initial implementation for Behavioral Health Services, 24 students were served from the period of October 2016 through May 2017. Twenty percent of the students served identified themselves as students with special needs.

The Student Success Center (SSC) at **Shawnee Community College** is available to all students currently enrolled in programs at the college or its extension centers. The SSC offers word processing facilities and tutorial services to supplement a wide variety of classes offered by the college. The SSC supports the Shawnee Community College mission by providing academic support to prospective students, current students, and the diverse community. The SSC Tutoring Program is a free to all Shawnee Community College students. The SSC employs one part-time professional English/writing tutor and two part-time professional math tutors. With the newly implemented student information system, Colleague, student success will be easier to track from semester to semester to show effectiveness of the Tutoring Program and for targeted populations, such as first-generation college students. The SSC also offers online tutoring services. The SSC Writing Lab is available to students to work with word processing software and to do Internet research. The SSC Testing Lab offers a wide variety of testing services, including ACCUPLACER, the Psychological Services Bureau, Pearson Vue, TEAS, the TABE test, distance learning tests, and make-up testing services. On average, the Testing Center administers 4,302 exams annually. The Testing Center has a full-time testing technician which allows the college to continue to fulfill its goal of being a reliable and secure testing facility. The Testing Center became a member of the National College Testing Association (NCTA) in March, 2017.

Identifying nontraditional students presents the first hurdle in supporting these students. Support services, such as learning centers and retention coordinators often meet the students only after an intervention becomes necessary. **Olney Central College** remodeled the orientation of students to the college in fall 2016, to begin the process of identifying nontraditional and underrepresented students on the day of entry. Olney Central College's Learning Resource Center has taken the lead in working with students to complete an entry-level requirement so that the center becomes familiar to the student long before an intervention is needed, and to alleviate stress from being unfamiliar with services designed to assist students. The Learning Resource Center provides a 30-minute presentation and demonstration regarding resources and methods for remediation to these identified students.

### **TRIO Student Support Services**

The goal of the TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) Program is to "increase the number of disadvantaged low-income college students, first-generation college students, and college students with disabilities in the United States who successfully complete a program of study at the postsecondary level." ([Student Support Services Program](#)). TRIO is not an acronym—it refers

*The goal of the TRIO Student Support Services Program funded by the U.S. Department of Education is to increase the persistence, academic standing, and graduation or transfer of students from disadvantaged backgrounds.*

to an original number of U.S. federal programs (three programs: Upward Bound, Talent Search, and SSS). Today there are eight U.S. federal programs to increase access to postsecondary education for disadvantaged students ([History of the Federal TRIO Programs](#)). SSS provides a wide array of services including, supplemental instruction in math, English and the sciences; peer tutoring; academic advising; transfer assistance; transfer campus visits; cultural trips; financial aid and scholarship assistance; FAFSA completion assistance; career exploration; academic and personal enrichment workshops; financial literacy workshops; technology assistance; and a textbook lending library. All services are provided to the student at no cost after acceptance to the program. At **Frontier Community College**, one of the services provided by TRIO is free tutoring. Previously, tutoring would be face-to-face with an instructor or qualified student. In addition to face-to-face tutoring, TRIO is now providing free tutoring through NetTutor. Tutoring units are purchased by TRIO and made accessible to students. Access to NetTutor is available to TRIO students as an online class. Each TRIO student is registered for a specific online class at the beginning of the semester that provides an access link to NetTutor. Students select the desired subject to receive tutoring and can communicate via chat or even video. Services are available 24 hours a day and include an online writing center where students can submit a paper for review. Overall, students that used the free services through NetTutor during fiscal year 2017 gave positive feedback on the services and their experiences. Math was the most requested subject to receive tutoring. One hundred percent of the students that used NetTutor passed the class for which they requested tutoring.

The TRIO program at **Black Hawk College (BHC)** has transitioned into a more proactive model, in lieu of a more reactive model that attempted to solve problems and crises as they occurred. The processes for this more proactive model entailed individual and group-based interventions that engaged in more intentional outreach to students in order to help them learn how to identify, anticipate, and work through academic and life obstacles that may prevent them from achieving their goals. BHC has been supporting low-income, first-generation, and students with documented disabilities with the TRIO SSS Grant since 1992. To qualify, applicants must be enrolled, degree-seeking BHC students who intend to transfer to a four-year institution, and they must also be either first-generation students, low-income students (as defined by federal regulations), and/or students with a documented disability. BHC is funded to serve 225 students each year, and from that number, two-thirds must be first-generation and low-income and/or students with disabilities. Of the students with disabilities served, one-third must be low-income students. Specific services provided to students in the program include holistic academic advising and in-depth transfer planning, major and career exploration, academic success coaching and mentoring, help navigating financial obstacles, financial aid and scholarship guidance, and academic tutoring, among others. Admitted participants are also entitled to select textbook access, TRIO Grant Aid, the TRIO Foundation Scholarship, academic and financial skill-building workshops, campus visits, and cultural events. In the most recently submitted Annual Performance Report (for the 16-17 academic year), BHC reported an 88 percent persistence rate, a 95 percent good academic standing rate, a 52 percent degree completion rate (a 21 percent increase from the previous year), and a 38 percent completion and transfer rate (a 20 percent increase from the previous year).

At **College of Lake County**, of the 94 students who were enrolled in college-level courses and received TRIO SSS in spring 2017, 20 (21 percent) were awarded a degree or certificate in

spring 2017 or summer 2017, and 64 (68 percent) were retained to fall 2017. This compares favorably with the retention rate for the overall college-level population enrolled in spring 2017 (49 percent). As further evidence of success, TRIO students participated in the spring 2017 college assessment of information literacy and scored higher than the overall college score on three of the four rubrics categories. Strengths identified included the finding that the most frequent score on all four of the rubrics for TRIO students was either 'proficient' or 'advanced.' These findings highlight the ability of the students to find relevant and reliable scholarly and data sources, to analyze and evaluate source material, to use new information, and to cite the source of quotes, paraphrases, and summaries in research situations.

The TRIO SSS program began at **Shawnee Community College** (SCC) in 1991 and currently serves 160 students each year. The population SCC serves must meet at least one of these criteria: first-generation, income eligible or have a documented physical or learning disability. The program is able to provide more intensive services since SCC serves a smaller number of students. SSS also assists students with their entire transfer process no matter what university they are considering. There are activities both on and off campus to help the students improve their academic skills, establish goals and eventually earn a college degree. During the 2016-2017 academic year, 122 students were served by SSS. The persistence rate for these students (Returned + Graduated/Served) was 70.49 percent, which is an improvement from the previous academic year when the persistence rate was 63.77 percent.

TRIO SSS was initially implemented at **Illinois Central College** during the 1990-1991 academic year and has served over 3,300 students. The most recent program year began September 1, 2015. The program serves 250 students per year and, throughout its history, has met or exceeded its retention, graduation and transfer goals. The program provides wrap-around support (tutoring, expanded advisement, academic skills and career workshops, cultural enrichment activities, personal development workshops, technology support, achievement recognition activities) to low-income students, first-generation college students, and students with disabilities. The program has proven to be an effective model for increasing the number of college graduates, particularly among underrepresented groups.

The TRIO SSS program at **Kishwaukee College** offers a variety of resources and services to help students, who are economically deficient, first-generation students and/or students with disabilities, overcome barriers and to motivate them towards a successful completion of their postsecondary education. During the 2016-17 academic year, new or enhanced services were implemented by the TRIO SSS to improve college retention and graduation rates among program participants, including increasing the number of tutors from one to three, offering online tutoring services, adding a new career intern position, purchasing Virtual Job Shadow software for career exploration, and providing mentorship and student leadership development opportunities. In addition to these new or enhanced services, the program has improved and maintained services implemented in the first year including assisting students in postsecondary course selection, counseling to improve financial and economic literacy, assisting in applying for federal student aid admission to four-year institutions, and providing SSS Grant Aid Scholarship and student success workshops. In its second year of service, TRIO SSS has persisted in meeting program goals to support and improve student academic success. TRIO SSS has evolved from a start-up

to an established program on campus. Student engagement in SSS has intensified due to new or increased services introduced to the program.

At **Lincoln Land Community College (LLCC)**

TRIO services include academic assistance, career exploration, financial aid information, financial aid form completion, and financial literacy education. There were 176 participants in the LLCC TRIO Program during the 2016-2017 academic year including 24 students with

*TRIO Student Ambassadors are active TRIO participants who maintain a GPA of 2.5 or higher and who serve as peer mentors or talk to new students during new student orientation.*

disabilities and 67 low-income and first-generation college students. TRIO staff meet with participants to identify the barriers to degree completion that they have faced or anticipate dealing with in the course of their college careers. Then TRIO staff and participants problem-solve to address or prevent those issues from inhibiting the students' ability and drive to complete their college degrees. Individualized attention and a relational approach to academic support is one of the key strategies that makes the program successful. TRIO Student Ambassadors (TSAs) are responsible for talking with new LLCC students during new student orientation. TSAs are active TRIO participants who maintain a GPA of 2.5 or higher. They serve as peer mentors by encouraging students to persevere and utilize the resources available to them throughout LLCC campus. Also, TSAs model academic success to their peers and the varying routes to achieve it. In the 2016-2017 academic year, 25 program participants graduated from LLCC and/or transferred to a two-year college or four-year college or university. Also, TRIO hosted the first annual 3.0 club recognizing the academic achievement of 37 students who earned a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

At **Parkland College** TRIO SSS helps 180 students retain, persist, and graduate within four years of entry into the program. The TRIO SSS grant originated at Parkland College in 1997. Services offered TRIO SSS participants include intrusive academic advising, graduation audits and plans, tutoring, assistance with completing the FAFSA, midterm grade checks and implementing intervention service based on that information, goal setting, and workshops to enhance academic skills. In the most recent data submitted to the federal government for services dated from September 2015 to August 2016, the objectives of the grant were accomplished, including meeting the performance level required to stay in good academic standing at the college (88 percent of all enrolled participants serviced by the TRIO SSS project met the performance level required to stay in good academic standing at Parkland College with the target set to 75 percent).

The TRIO SSS program at **Spoon River College** was initially funded and implemented in September of 2010. The program is currently in its third year in the five-year grant funding cycle (2015-2020). The program serves 140 first-generation, low-income, and students with disabilities annually. After a student is accepted into the program, each student meets with the director to complete a Student Success Plan (SSP). The SSP sets a graduation date goal, a transfer school plan, and three other goals related to the individual student (i.e., setting a major, selecting a transfer school, and paying for college). Each year the TRIO SSS program submits an Annual Performance Report (APR) to the Department of Education to track outcomes of the program. One objective is that 60 percent of all participants served by the project will persist from one

academic year to the beginning of the next academic year or graduate and/or transfer from the institution to a four-year institution during the academic year. During the 2016-17 academic year, the TRIO program had 79 percent of its students persisting from fall 2016 to fall 2017, surpassing the initial goal of 60 percent persistence. The 2016-17 persistence rate also showed an increase from the 2015-16 academic year persistence rate of 72 percent. Another objective of the program is that 78 percent of all enrolled participants served by the project will be in good academic standing at the close of the project year. During the 2016-17 academic year, 91 percent of TRIO students were in good academic standing at the close of the project year, which exceeded the initial goal of 78 percent. In comparison, the 2016-17 rate of 91 percent was an increase over the 2015-16 rate of 86 percent of students in good academic standing at the close of the project year.

TRIO Upward Bound is a federally funded program that **Moraine Valley Community College** offers to high school students who are in 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grades. The program targets potential first-generation college students from low-income households and provides the support and motivation necessary to earn a postsecondary degree. For fiscal year 2017, Upward Bound had continuous funding, staffed with a full-time director, a part-time educational specialist, three to five contract instructors, two tutors, and one student employee. Departmental funds served 65 students, and the department was recently funded for an additional five-year grant that will last from September 1, 2017, to August 31, 2022. Consistent program services provided within the academic and summer components included: academic advising, tutoring/instruction in core/college preparation classes, ACT/SAT preparation, career development and college planning, financial aid/scholarship resources, college and cultural awareness activities and trips, social development and wellness, community service/leadership development, Saturday academic academy workshops, six-week summer enrichment program, mentoring, parent support group, and student stipends. All project participants served during the 2017 fiscal year continued in school for the next academic year and at the next grade level.

### Academic Advising

The number of students attending **Morton College** directly after high school has grown in recent years. Over 85 percent of the student population is Latino/Hispanic, and continues to grow. To meet the demands of students, the college has taken significant steps to improve the services in academic advising. Recognizing that advisors play a critical role in not only helping students persist but

*Morton College, where over 85 percent of the student population is Hispanic/Latino, has recently improved the services in academic advising.*

also informing students of valuable educational opportunities that lead to learning and development, the college invested widely in human resources and technology. The Academic Advising Department moved to a caseload model in the spring of 2017, increasing full-time advisors from six to eleven. The student-to-advisor ratio is currently 315, similar to other institutions Morton's size. Each student is assigned an academic advisor based on categories [first-year, transfer with 30+ hours, CTE (Career and Technical Education), CTE with 30+ hours, and veterans]. Academic advising saw positive results from investment in additional staff. Beginning April 2017, student appointments and walk-ins increased, with more noticeable increases between May through August 2017, in comparison to the same period during the prior

year. During this time frame, advising appointments increased by 25 percent compared to the previous year. The quality of advising appointments also increased based on the feedback of students via surveys. In addition to additional staff, technology improvements have facilitated outreach and communication to students. The text-messaging feature in SARS (scheduling system) allows advisors to set up text message reminders to students, reducing no-shows and cancelations. The chat feature in SARS allows students to chat with advisors and have their questions answered in real time. SARS has also been leveraged for other communication to notify students about class cancelations, new student orientation sessions, reminders about non-payment, and payment/non-payment deadlines, helping students to plan accordingly.

A substantial population at **Southeastern Illinois College** falls under an underrepresented group category, specifically those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged and qualify for financial aid. Students receiving federal, state, and veteran's educational benefits are required to meet the Financial Aid Standards of Academic Progress Policy. When the Southeastern Financial Aid Office makes students aware of academic issues that affect their grant awards, they can appeal to exercise the right to complete a progress form that details circumstances and an academic plan for success. This conversation with advisers during the appeal process may be the first time in a long period in which students must meet with someone in academic advisement. These meetings involve a discussion of how to improve current standing as a student (i.e., GPA, completion rate, and timeline toward completion). Most important, this process shows students that Southeastern is serious about their progress and lets them know that Southeastern heavily monitors their efforts in the classroom. After a formal academic plan is established and the appeal form is complete, the financial aid director then reviews the appeal. It is there that communication between all three parties involved (financial aid office, student, and advisement) can take place, offering all involved a better understanding of the students' situations and what must happen for success to take place and aid to continue. By adhering to the financial aid policy Southeastern helps students stay in good standing to receive aid and complete a degree. There has been an 11.8 percent decrease in appeals issued to Southeastern students from the 2015-2016 academic year to the 2016-2017 academic year. While additional factors may contribute to the decline, the trend suggests that the work between advisement, financial aid and the students may help decrease the amount of appeals processed each semester.

The Communications Department at **Malcolm X College** (MXC) has actively used faculty-student conferencing for a number of semesters. After the successful piloting by the Communications Department, academic department chairs agreed that implementing faculty-student conferencing in fall 2017 would be ideal to institute across all disciplines. The activity occurs in advance of midterm exams and prior to the deadline date to drop a course for the term. Conferencing actively invests students in their own learning. Often times, students are aware of the grade that they are earning but they may be unclear about what they need to do to improve their current standing. Conferencing is a proactive and very intentional activity that begins to break down the barriers (both actual and perceived). All MXC faculty and students are encouraged to participate. Each student schedules time to meet with their respective faculty member during office hours. Faculty members provide a progress update that prescribes what the student needs to do to be successful in the course. The college recognizes that some students may not be successful due to a number of factors. As such, recommending a student withdraw from a course(s) in some instances may be the best solution for a student.

### **Mentoring/Counseling/Coaching/Tutoring**

Sisterhood of Undergraduates Representing Great Excellence (SURGE) is a mentoring program for women of color in Career and Technical Education programs. This initiative provides academic support, one-on-one mentoring and coaching, career exploration and development, community service projects and assistance in transitioning to a four-year institution or into the workforce. The program, which creates awareness of and addresses issues that impact women from diverse cultural backgrounds, was implemented at **Triton College** in fall 2016. Scholars are selected through an application and interview process. SURGE staff then identify points of correlation between the new scholar and a potential faculty/staff/or alumni mentor. The program began with a cohort of ten students. Today, more than 50 students are enrolled in the program.

The Health Career Success Coach Program at **Kankakee Community College** (KCC) was developed to provide academic support by coaching students to progress through a health career program and succeed beyond graduation. Students are paired with a success coach for group study sessions, and individual appointments are scheduled for students considered at-risk. The focus of each session is to explore learning needs and barriers to success. Students also work on time management and study and testing skills with the goal of improved academic success throughout their academic careers. The Health Career Success Coach Program was first implemented in 2010 under the name of the Retention Facilitator Program. Since its origination, the program has had several modifications to better serve the needs of students. The current adaptation was first written into the Assessment Plan for the Perkins Grant as the Success Coach Program in 2015. Since the previous fiscal year, attendance for success coach sessions has increased by 38 percent. Additionally, 30 students from four career programs also attended individual sessions at least twice. Of those 30 students, 25 advanced to the next semester, six failed but did show improvement in exam scores in the last six weeks of the semester, and four dropped the course. In future semesters, more time will be devoted to group study and individual sessions, including meeting with students who are considered at-risk or those who have previously failed a class within the first two weeks of the next semester in order to create a support system. The continued academic support for at-risk students in health career programs at KCC shows promise in developing confident, successful students who will be taking valuable time management skills with them into the workforce.

Connect4Success (C4S) is a federally-funded Title V grant program providing one-on-one success coaching for eligible students at **Waubonsee Community College** since September of 2015. Students are paired with a Student Success Coach (SSC) who supports them during their time at the college. SSCs call and email all eligible students to

*Connect4Success (C4S) is a federally-funded Title V grant program providing one-on-one success coaching for eligible students at Waubonsee Community College.*

inform them about the program and opt the student into participation. The SSC becomes their “point person” for their entire time at WCC, even if they stop out and return to the college in later semesters. Students are identified as C4S-eligible if they are in their first or second semester at Waubonsee with 18 or less credit hours and if they meet at least one of the following “high need” qualifiers: tested into two or more developmental courses, is Pell-eligible, or is non-White/non-Asian. The program goal is a 250:1 student to SSC ratio, with the goal of serving 700-1,000 students over the course of the five-year grant. In the first year of implementation, the

fall-to-fall retention for participating students was 13.0 percent above the retention rate for comparable high-need students.

The objective of the peer mentoring program at **Carl Sandburg College** is two-fold. For the upperclassmen, it is an opportunity to learn to teach their skills and be able to verbalize their thoughts in a practical way. For the new students, it is a chance to learn from their peers and gain insight from those who have recently had similar experiences. This initiative, implemented in August 2016, comes from the College of Nursing and Health Professions. The mentors are selected from second-year associate degree and Licensed Practice Nurse to Registered Nurse transition students, based on instructor recommendations and a 3.0 cumulative GPA. All first-year associate degree students and all practical nursing students are assigned a mentor at the fall orientation. At orientation, the students are paired up, and relevant information is exchanged. The mentors meet with their new peers and are advised to intervene when their peers score below an 80 percent on any exam. The goal is to have them interact throughout the semester and not just when an intervention is necessary.

Several female faculty members became student mentors when **Waubensee Community College** was awarded the STEM Scholars Grant from the National Science Foundation in 2011. These faculty members were to guide and mentor the STEM scholarship awardees through their scientific work at the college. Because Waubensee then mirrored the national average, with only 25 percent of female STEM students successfully completing a STEM class compared to 75 percent of males, they created the Women in STEM Fest initiative to find ways to encourage females in STEM and to increase the numbers of females going into STEM careers. The first Women in STEM Fest was held April 2013. It started as one day, but now the event has grown into two days. Each year, a committee of female STEM faculty meet to plan the spring event and to line up guest speakers. Guest speakers not only include the traditional scientists but also women such as chemists from make-up companies, pilots, agricultural scientists, vice presidents at electrical companies, computer programmers, actuaries, and civil engineers. Each day, four or five women talk to groups of students, faculty, staff, and community members about how they achieved their jobs and what their jobs are like. Approximately 180 students attended in spring 2017. The number of females successfully finishing a STEM class over the past two years has increased by 3 percent.

Peer tutoring began as a pilot in the fall of 2017 at **Malcolm X College (MXC)**. Peer tutoring in three Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs (Mortuary Science, Radiography Technology and Respiratory Care Technician) were funded by the Carl D. Perkins grant, a federal grant designed to improve CTE programs with the goal of students earning workforce credentials with economic value. During fiscal year 2017, Perkins funds were allocated for the hiring and training of second-year students in two-year associate degree programs to tutor first-year students within their respective career programs. MXC measured the success of the program by the number of students who attended tutoring and by the improvement in the processes of the program through full implementation. In fiscal year 2015 the program did not exist and a need for additional tutoring was evident for first-year career students. The pilot year of 2016 allowed for internal strategies to be streamlined, which included the recommended use of GradesFirst by the tutors. Data for fiscal year 2017 shows an increase in tutoring from the pilot year to the implementation year. In addition, the radiography program reported an increase in the American

Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) Radiography examination pass rate from 88 percent for the class of 2015 to 100 percent for the class of 2016. The Radiography Program Director attributed the improved exam pass rate to peer tutoring.

The Math and Science Solutions (MASS) tutoring center at **Danville Area Community College (DACC)** is dedicated to students' educational success by providing quality learning support relevant to their individual needs. The services provided and methods utilized are selected to help students become independent learners and function successfully in an academic environment and foster an interest in becoming lifelong learners. This endeavor is accomplished through peer tutoring and expert tutoring. Tutors share their knowledge of the subjects with students, explaining difficult concepts, steps and methods, giving examples and being a sounding board to illuminate time management, test taking and study skill problems. Tutors impart encouragement, inspiration, motivation and confidence to students enabling them to keep a positive attitude and succeed in their courses. At the MASS Center, students can receive tutoring for most math and science courses taught at DACC, including algebra, statistics, calculus, biology, anatomy and physiology, chemistry, physics and nursing. After moving the college-level math and science tutoring to the MASS Tutoring Center in fiscal year 2013, the student participation rate increased dramatically in the first year and continues to grow at a staggering rate. Compared to general tutoring services provided by peer tutors in the Testing and Academic Services Center (which is located in a central building), MASS numbers are 222 percent higher. In fiscal year 2017, 1,836 tutoring sessions were recorded, compared to 1,419 in fiscal year 2016, and 1,036 in fiscal year 2015.

### **Support Services and Initiatives for Minority Students**

**South Suburban College's** newly implemented Reading Center seeks to be a central resource for improving reading comprehension on campus and in the community. The Center's primary objective, via a Predominantly Black Institution (PBI) grant, is to provide reading and comprehension strategies along with skill-building techniques to African American male students as well as the student body at large and community members, if desired. The Reading Center officially opened on February 22, 2017. Reading specialists work diligently to evaluate, develop, and implement a variety of techniques and instructions for individual students. The Center staff is currently comprised of college reading faculty and Reading Center coordinators that are reading specialists with advanced degrees and knowledge to assess and diagnose the reading needs of students. Additionally, their backgrounds provide a pattern of working with African American male students, developmental students, and a diverse student body so that the needs of the students are met. The Reading Center services nearly 400 students each semester.

*One of the goals of the new Reading Center at South Suburban College is to assist African American males with reading skills.*

**Elgin Community College (ECC)** created a position of the student outreach coordinator in August 2013. The student outreach coordinator serves as a "concierge" and advocate for students identified through data as candidates for additional triage. Currently the focus is on improving success among African American students. Funding for this position began in fiscal year 2016, and hiring was completed in fall 2016 with a part-time coordinator. In fall 2017, the position was

upgraded to full-time. The duties of the student outreach coordinator are multifaceted and vary in response to student need. Among the activities the coordinator engages in are in-person meetings with students, welcome receptions for African American students, a speaker series, a student peer mentoring program, and a reinvigorated Black Student Achievers (BSA) club. In fact, enrollment in the BSA organization expanded from six students the year before the coordinator was hired to over 26 students currently. The coordinator also refers students for tutoring, TRIO services, and wellness counseling. Mainstay events organized by the coordinator each semester include welcome receptions for new and continuing students. Receptions allow students a chance to meet key ECC staff, understand essential services, and importantly, get to know to each other. Sessions include brief introductions of key services, paper and web resources, and opportunities to ask questions and receive answers.

The mission of the Open Door Mentoring Program is to positively impact African American male persistence, retention and completion at **Lincoln Land Community College**. Through the application of academic, career and social/emotional enrichment, Open Door mentored men will successfully take the first step on their educational journey while being groomed for the next level. They will become peer mentors and volunteer in their community. During the 2016-17 academic year, 25 students participated in the program. They met regularly with the program facilitator and attended Open Door meetings and financial and economic literacy workshops. Out of 25 participating students, three students graduated and transferred to four year schools, eleven students returned for fall 2017, six students placed in internships in spring 2016, and four students took paid summer internships in their field of study.

The purpose of Club Latino, a student organization at **Parkland College**, is to offer a comprehensive support for present Latino students and recruit the local Latino population. The Latino students who participate in Club Latino have greater student success and are more prone to completing a career program or successfully transferring to a 4-year institution. Club Latino accomplishes this by creating an atmosphere where the students support one another by creating study groups, as well as by having peers they can count on. Furthermore, a focus of the student group is to invite or go to local Latino high school, middle school, and elementary students to talk to them about the importance of education. Club Latino members talk about the benefits that they see from higher education, how hard they work, what their schedules look like, the obstacles they have overcome, and also highlight their majors. During the 2016-2017 academic year, 40 different Latino students participated in Club Latino. About 35 out of the 40 students who participated in the student group have graduated, transferred, or continue to attend Parkland College. Another important support system for the Latino students at Parkland is the ability to work for the Parkland College Migrant Education Program, PCMEP. Last year, 39 out of 85 employees of the program were Latinos who had attended Parkland or were concurrently attending. The students held various positions including recruiter, parent liaison, clerical, data management, and paraprofessional. The positions allow some to reinforce skills that completely match up with their majors, or future professions.

**Prairie State College (PSC)** is located within Chicago Heights, Illinois, where the Latino population has a visibly thriving and expanding community. The Latino population is the fastest growing population in Chicago Heights. Historically at PSC, the enrollment growth of Latino students has not matched the population growth of the Latinos in the service areas. Yet in recent

years, since the creation of the Office of Latino Outreach at the college, there has been a corresponding significant increase in the enrollment and retention of PSC's Latino students. PSC expanded the Office of Latino Outreach in 2013 in order to broaden the outreach and to enhance Latino student enrollment, retention, and completion. Through community outreach and visibility at on and off campus events, the Latino outreach specialist or enrollment advisor identifies and assists Latino students with college enrollment, academic/career planning, academic advising, and the financial aid process. In addition, the Latino outreach specialist connects the students to resources on and off campus that will support them in succeeding academically and foster social engagement. College data demonstrates that the Latino population at the college consist of mostly first-generation, low-income students, who are often in need of support with understanding and completing the enrollment and/or financial aid process at the college. PSC recognized the need for this underrepresented population to have a bilingual Latino outreach specialist, who could specifically enhance Latino student retention and completion.

*Joliet Junior College officials are working toward the college becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). HSIs are accredited and degree-granting public or private nonprofit higher education institutions with 25 percent or more total undergraduate Hispanic-equivalent enrollment.*

As a component of its Diversity and Inclusion Plan, **Joliet Junior College** (JJC) established the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) committee in the first quarter of 2018 to review, develop, and introduce new and innovative initiatives for the JJC Hispanic population with a strategic

focus on strengthening enrollment, retention and completion. The group leads the charge in engagement with the intent of expanding recruitment and retention efforts to Hispanic students while working toward the college becoming a designated HSI. Intentional academic advising and appropriate student support referral services are part of the comprehensive guided pathway model tailored to the unique needs of Hispanic/Latino students. The committee will work on the development and execution of a Hispanic/Latino strategic enrollment and retention plan in partnership with the Joliet Junior College Communication Center, Communications and External Relations, Multicultural Student Affairs, Workforce Education, Institutional Effectiveness, Resource Development, Enrollment Management, multicultural student groups, and the Student Success Leadership Team.

**Lewis and Clark Community College** (L&C) has recently identified an African American male student cohort based upon the fall-to-fall retention rates for this cohort (41.3 percent) being below the overall 2016 retention rate of 54.5 percent for all degree-seeking students at the college and subsequently implemented a targeted student support service outreach for African American male students in January 2018. The impetus for this initiative was a suggestion by the Higher Learning Commission for L&C to create a process for clearly defined goals for student retention. In terms of targeted interventions for African American males, there are several new strategies being planned. One partnership that is being developed is integrating the retention efforts of L&C's Student Success Team with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. An early effort in this partnership has been the introduction of a minority student study group. Another partnership that is being developed is between the Student Success Team and the faculty-led Diversity Council. It is hoped that the Diversity Council can play an instrumental role in promoting student support services such as academic tutoring, advising, and other academic

services to African American males through classroom instruction and various campus events hosted by L&C's Diversity Council.

The ¡ANDALE! (Association to Nurture and Develop the Advancement of Latinos in Education) program provides a support network for Latino students at **Oakton Community College** in order to increase their retention, persistence, and success. The program, which commenced in fall 2012, includes workshops, academic support, study groups, mentoring, leadership skill development, multicultural events, and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) assistance. As part of Oakton's access, equity, and diversity initiative, ¡ANDALE! has several elements including educational workshops, parent/family engagement, and coaching/mentorship. Furthermore, each year, ¡ANDALE! students attend the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute (USHLI) Conference free of charge. Twenty-five students attended the conference in February of 2018 to network, interact with important Latino role models, and attend leadership development seminars in downtown Chicago. ¡ANDALE! students are led by college faculty and staff and build their leadership skills by exploring existing college resources, discussing and analyzing Latino identities in current affairs, and engaging with the Oakton community. The participation of Latino students in ¡ANDALE! has increased significantly. Out of the 49 students identified as active participants in fall 2016, 40 students registered for spring 2017, which translates to an 80 percent fall-to-spring persistence rate. Of these students, four students completed their education at Oakton and plan to transfer to a 4-year university. Ten ¡ANDALE! students are on target to complete and graduate in the spring of 2018.

In order to meet the demands of the increasing Latino population in its district and increase enrollment, retention and completion for Latinos, **South Suburban College** (SSC) implemented Latino Center in spring 2017, which seeks to be a central resource for Latinos on campus and in the community. Its primary objective is to provide information, interpretation services and support. The Latino Center is committed to help build an informed vibrant Latino community at SSC where Latinos feel valued and supported. The strategies of the center include hiring student workers to serve as Latino liaisons, providing informational workshops for Spanish-speaking parent/students, creating partnerships with area high school administrators serving Spanish-speaking students, working closely with Dean of Students to identify funding sources to maintain and expand current Latino outreach services and initiatives, and collaborating with Dean of Students and faculty/staff development committees to plan for and implement cultural and sensitivity training for faculty and staff throughout the academic year.

The Diversity Committee was implemented at **Richland Community College** in fiscal years 2016 and 2017 with the overall charge to oversee initiatives that support the college's core value of diversity, such as to assist human resources with revising diversity-in-hiring training with search committees, monitor findings and implement recommendations of the ICCB Civil Rights Self-Assessment Report, assist and review ICCB Underrepresented Groups Report, and assist in coordination of needed diversity trainings. The Diversity Committee has broad institutional representation including faculty, staff, students, vice presidents, the Title IX Coordinator, and the Section 504 Coordinator. In fiscal year 2017 the committee created and distributed a Climate of the Richland Campus Culture Survey based on current research of best practices. The Diversity Committee used the survey feedback to determine key training opportunities. Diversity forums

including “Diversity at Richland (1971-Now): Embrace it. Share it. Celebrate it.” were offered starting fall 2017.

### **Support Services and Initiatives for Students with Disabilities**

College for Life began in the fall 2017 semester at **John Wood Community College**. It provides a post-high school educational experience for students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities who want to go to college. Students will take at least three noncredit courses that are designed to prepare them for a fulfilling adult life. All students take a self-advocacy course and may choose from other courses covering healthy relationships, cooking, sports/fitness, and career exploration topics. All courses include a learning coach who provides classroom support to ensure everyone’s success. The learning coaches include a wide variety of professionals. Students are allowed to enroll as long as they like and can build their skills to move on to college credit-bearing classes to earn certificates or degrees. Students also have the opportunity to take part in all aspects of JWCC student life, including social and extracurricular activities to help them benefit from increased independence. The pilot program of College for Life in the fall 2017 was built for ten students; seven students participated. In the spring of 2018, eleven students participated. The seven who participated in the fall continued into the spring.

*College for Life is a new initiative at John Wood Community College that provides a post-high school educational experience for students with intellectual/developmental disabilities.*

The Center for Disability Services (CDS) works with local high schools to recruit prospective students with disabilities to **Moraine Valley Community College**. This has been an ongoing collaboration between the CDS staff and the in-district high schools. The CDS office informs high school counselors of dates and times that are available for visits. Each high school coordinates a group of 10-30 juniors and seniors to attend the visit so they can become more informed about the transition from high school to college. The CDS uses a sign-in sheet to track the students’ names, high school and date of visit. The program assistant creates a spreadsheet with each student’s name, address, Student Information System ID number, email address, and high school. This data is used to invite students to attend the CDS orientation and as a tool to track all students that attend orientation. Once a student completes new student orientation, the CDS will complete approval of the student’s requested accommodations for the upcoming semester. CDS staff then designate an eligibility code into the Student Information System based on the ICCB coding guidelines. After this process is completed, a letter is mailed to all students identifying their specific approved accommodations. CDS met with 288 high school juniors and seniors in 2017, and 174 of these students (60.4 percent) had completed the application for admission and registered for the fall semester.

### **Support Services for Veteran Students**

The Veteran Student Services office at **College of Lake County (CLC)** provides many services and options for education to active military service members, veterans, and their family members and assists them through a variety of aid programs offered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission. In addition, the college seeks to host

activities of interest to veterans such as the annual Veterans Creative Arts Festival and programs such as veteran memorial ceremonies. With a number of military facilities located in Lake County, including the Great Lakes Naval Base, the college is in a position to provide educational opportunities and other services to assist these personnel and their families. The College of Lake County Student Veterans Club and an official chapter of the Student Veterans of America are an important part of student life for veterans and active duty military members on campus. There is also a veterans group on Facebook. The Veteran Student Services coordinator is available to assist students with financial aid and other services. Active duty military, Army Reserve and National Guard members, and veterans of the fall 2013 IPEDS cohort were tracked through the summer of 2016. About 18 percent of the military and veteran students had graduated from CLC, and about 21 percent had transferred to another institution by the end of the tracking period. Furthermore, about 31 percent of spouses and dependent family members had graduated, and about 31 percent had transferred.

During fiscal year 2017, **Kennedy-King College (KKC)** served 328 military-affiliated students, including active duty, veterans and spouses and dependents of veterans. Additionally, the college served 223 students with a registered disability. In the spring of 2017, the Disability Access Center (DAC) and Veterans Center partnered to host the third annual Disability and Veterans Resource Fair, in which they connected students and community members at KKC with community vendors who provide employment, advocacy, legal, educational, counseling, and mobility resources. These organizations, chosen based on their specific relevance to veteran students, and students with disabilities, provide resources and services that can increase the quality of life of students outside of school, which will make it easier for them to do well in school. Additionally, sharing information and training with students about disability rights supports KKC's greater goal of a completely inclusive campus in which disability is valued as an important part of diversity. The DAC and Veterans Resource Fair featured representatives from the following organizations: KKC Wellness Center, Blind Services Association, Chicago Lighthouse, Equip for Equality, Department of Human Services/Department of Rehabilitation Services, Mount Sinai, Access Living, Ability Links, City of Chicago Dept. of Vet Resources, Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, PACE Bus, DOL-Vets, Inner Voice, and CEDA of Cook County. During the fair, over 200 students made contact with represented organizations and collected information about services supporting veteran students and students with disabilities. Surveys were collected from vendors and students attending the event, and 100 percent of vendors and students surveyed considered the event beneficial and indicated that they would attend another similar event in future.

*In the spring of 2017, the Disability Access Center and Veterans Center partnered to host the third annual Disability and Veterans Resource Fair.*

### **Support Services for Underrepresented Student Athletes**

The athletics program at **Harry S. Truman College** serves as a recruitment tool as well as fosters academic success among student athletes. The program includes men's basketball and men's soccer that existed prior to fiscal year 2017; the women's soccer team transitioned from a club team to an official NJCAA-sanctioned team in fall 2016. Truman's athletics program is successful because the coaching and support staff who work with the team consistently create a

culture of academic accountability and success. Truman's student athletes have a dedicated academic advisor who closely monitors the students' academic performance and ensures that they receive early interventions when needed. Truman's athletics program served 60 student athletes in fiscal year 2017, an 18 percent increase from the previous fiscal year. The retention rates and academic performance of the athletes demonstrate that the program has been successful at recruiting, retaining, and supporting the students who participate. Overall, 90 percent of the student athletes who attended Truman in fall 2016 were retained in the spring 2017 semester. The retention rate for women's soccer was especially high—100 percent of team members returned in the spring.

In order to increase the educational attainment of underrepresented student athletes, **McHenry County College** (MCC) centralized student success functions within the Department of Athletics in 2012, by designating a point person, the Coordinator of Student Athlete Success, to lead, facilitate, and strategically implement a system to help student athletes seamlessly matriculate and persist to completing a credential at MCC. Other Student Athlete Success program elements include a designated academic advisor, two sections of MCC 101 freshman experience classes, a retention report, a *Dropout Detective* academic progress early intervention system, and a study hall/tutoring component. With the department's philosophical framework being rooted in the concepts of total student development and support where the department strives to help student athletes reach their full potential intellectually, athletically and personally, MCC student athletes, as a collective group, performed well academically. Department and team GPAs continue to rise through these early intervention systems. The fall 2013 Athletic Department GPA was 2.80 with two of the eight teams at a 3.00 or higher. Fall 2016 saw the highest department GPA of 3.03 with five of the eight teams at a 3.00 or higher. Persistence data charts provided by MCC's Office of Institutional Research, confirm the retention of student athletes, which, in some cases, has exceeded that of the general student population from fall-to-fall. For example, the average men's athlete and women's athlete course persistence rate was 90 percent for fall 2011 to spring 2012 semesters. Fall 2016 to spring 2017 persistence rates rose to 96 percent; Fall 2017 to spring 2018 persistence rates were at 93 percent.

In order to increase the educational attainment of underrepresented student athletes, **Oakton Community College** implemented the Wildly Important Goal (WIG) Project in fall 2015. The WIG Project is a proactive student athlete support program with the goal of 40 percent of all participating student athletes completing a degree or certificate within four semesters from their initial enrollment at the college. The program is comprised of several initiatives including intentional academic advising, completion progress reports, academic monitoring, tutoring, and retention/completion support. Of 136 student athletes enrolled in the fall 2016 semester, 121, or 88.97 percent, persisted from fall to spring. Moreover, at the end of the fall 2016 semester, 15.96 percent of student athletes enrolled in fall 2015 had completed a degree or certificate. The efforts in support of Oakton's student athlete's success and completion is on-going as the Athletic Department continues to strive to meet its 40 percent goal.

*The WIG Project is a proactive student athlete support program with the goal of 40 percent of all participating student athletes completing a degree or certificate within four semesters from their initial enrollment at Oakton Community College.*

## Initiatives in Developmental Education and Co-requisite Remediation

Academic unpreparedness for college is a major challenge facing **Olive-Harvey College (OHC)**. Historically, over 90 percent of new-to-college students need remedial education, with few students moving into college-level coursework in a timely manner. In fiscal year 2010, only 28 percent of new students needing remediation advanced to college-ready status within one year. To address this challenge, OHC began offering innovative programs beginning in fall 2012, and as a result of these college-wide efforts, OHC increased the percentage of students moving from remediation to college-ready status to 50 percent for fiscal year 2017, while also lowering the percentage of incoming students needing remediation at the start of the semester from 93 percent in fall 2014 to near 85 percent in fall 2016. OHC's innovative programs to assist students become college-ready include Level UP, Boot Camps, and Accelerated Learning. They have helped more students begin their first semester without remediation, and those students that do need remediation have been able to transition to credit-level courses at a significantly higher rate, in a quicker timeframe. The Level UP Program is a free five-week quick-start program comprised of refresher courses in math and English. The Boot Camp Program is similar to Level UP; however, it is more accelerated and designed for students who are slightly below college-ready. Another option available to OHC students to hasten remediation time is Accelerated Learning, which is designed for students who test just below college-level math or English courses. Students are placed into a college-level math or English course and a co-requisite course to obtain supplemental assistance where needed. One of the most ambitious new efforts at OHC in remedial education has been the Math Emporium implemented in the fall of 2013. The Emporium is a "flipped-classroom" adaptive learning model where students own the learning process by viewing instructional materials online prior to class as the starting point in the learning process.

The lab-based developmental mathematics courses at **Olney Central College (OCC)** have a two-fold goal. First, students who test into remediation levels are given full-time support as they enter into developmental courses for their mathematics requirements. Second, they are then aware of tutoring hours and locations for mathematics courses within their program of study. This developmental math program is available for all students placing in remedial courses, many of which are nontraditional or come from underrepresented student groups. This newly designed approach (implemented in fall 2016) offers customized coursework for the student as well as an accelerated course. Tutoring for future mathematics courses is provided by the math lab, which is staffed ten hours a week by teacher-licensed and certified mathematic instructors.

*College Readiness Math at Richland Community College is a summer bridge program with an individualized plan of study for students who placed into developmental math.*

The purpose of College Readiness Math (CRM) at **Richland Community College** is to help students who placed into developmental math develop the skills needed to advance to higher-level courses more quickly through the math course sequence. CRM is a summer bridge program from June 5 through July 6 for four hours per day, four days per week, in partnership with a local social service agency, the Education Coalition. CRM is offered to traditional-aged students who placed into developmental math, thus demonstrating the need for remediation in order to be ready for college-level, credit-bearing courses. Participants were given access to MyFoundationsLab, a software program that develops an individualized plan of study. The

program was held in the Mathematics Enrichment Center utilizing its unique flagging system that allows students to request help when needed and receive just-in-time assistance. At the completion of the program, students were given the opportunity to retake the ACCUPLACER placement test. Seven out of fourteen students were eligible to advance to a higher math course. Four of the students advanced based on increased cut scores on the ACCUPLACER. Three students were given a waiver by the Dean of Mathematics and Sciences because of making large cut score gains that were only a few points from the next course level. These outcomes were achieved in four weeks versus the four months that would be required in a typical semester long course.

EMEDret (short for English, Mathematics, Education, and retention) was an academic success initiative piloted at **Illinois Valley Community College (IVCC)** during fiscal year 2017. The EMEDret pilot paired developmental English, math, and reading courses with student services with the purpose of increasing student success, completion, and retention rates for the developmental student population. At the very beginning of each term in fiscal year 2017, IVCC's counselors were each assigned a section of a developmental English, math, or reading course for the duration of the semester. At three critical points during the semester (10th day, midterm, and withdrawal deadline), the instructors would track the students' performance and share that information with the counselor assigned to the respective section via a password protected excel spreadsheet on a private network drive. At those critical checkpoints, the counselor then would review the shared spreadsheet and contact the students directly for scheduling an appointment to discuss any deficiencies or areas of concern as indicated by the instructor. At the meeting with the students, the counselor would privately discuss the concerns with the students and work with them to develop action plans to address or mitigate the concerns. Then, if the students were flagged as a concern at a subsequent checkpoint such as midterm or the withdrawal deadline, the cycle would repeat itself. In comparing the pilot group with a similar non-pilot group from the previous year, the results of the EMEDret initiative were generally positive. The withdrawal rate for the pilot group was 6 percent less than that of the non-pilot group.

To better assist the 75 percent of new college students placing below college-level in mathematics, the Developmental Education Committee at **Lake Land College** conducted research to identify successful approaches to remediation and selected co-requisite remediation as the desired approach. Beginning in spring 2013, math faculty began piloting accelerated math options that allowed students to enroll in college-level math courses while completing needed remediation. The pilots became more formalized during the 2016-2017 academic year. During the 2017-2018 year, 92 percent of the students participating in co-requisite remediation received a C or better in the general education math course, compared to 82 percent of the students enrolled in the course but not in the co-requisite. For statistics, 83 percent of the co-requisite students earned a C or better compared to 78 percent of the students not enrolled in the co-requisite. Based on the success of the co-requisite model, the college developed, and submitted to ICCB for approval, two five-credit-hour math courses

*Co-requisite remedial education places students into remedial and college-level courses in the same subject at the same time, which allows students to receive targeted support to help boost their understanding and learning of the college-level course material.*

which each integrate the content of both the college-level math class and the remedial/tutorial class into one class, with all credit hours to be degree-eligible. With ICCB approval, the courses will be offered in fall 2018.

The purpose of co-requisite support as described by Complete College America is to, “increase gateway course completion within the first year by enrolling entering students into the college-level math and English courses, providing those who need additional help a concurrent course or lab that offers just-in-time academic support” ([Corequisite Support](#)). In August of 2016, **Lewis and Clark Community College** began enrolling students who would have otherwise been placed in a developmental English course into a First-Year English 1 course with a built-in co-requisite support course (CCA). A total of 79 female students enrolled in CCA sections of First-Year English 1 in academic year 2017, with 79.7 percent receiving a grade of A, B, or C for both fall and spring semesters. When factoring the need under the previous developmental English model of having to complete two courses to attain college-level English credit, it is estimated—using historical success rates for both courses—that only 25 of these 79 female students would have completed a college-level English course in academic year 2017. The ability through CCA to complete First-Year English 1 in one semester accelerated the college-level completion rate for female, developmentally placed English students by an estimated 216 percent at Lewis and Clark.

In an effort to move students through the developmental English series more quickly, **Spoon River College** has recently implemented an Accelerated Learning Program (ALP). Students who test into Developmental Writing are now placed into two courses concurrently: Composition I Companion and Composition I. Up to twelve students who require remediation are enrolled in a section of Composition I Companion and a specially-designated section of Composition I, which is taught by the same instructor. Enrollment in this section of Composition I is limited to twenty-four students, thereby assuming a ratio of one remedial student to one non-remedial student. Because of the smaller class size, students also receive more individual attention. Instructors are able to devote more time for grammar review and teaching basic writing strategies, including critical thinking, research, and documentation of sources. Because Composition I Companion and Composition I both utilize the same textbooks, students also save money. Prior to the curriculum change, only 48 percent of students enrolled in Developmental Writing enrolled in and successfully completed Composition I (defined as a C or better). After the curriculum change, 100 percent of students enrolled in Composition I Companion were enrolled in Composition I, with an 80 percent successful completion rate.

In order to increase the academic success of students enrolled in developmental English courses, the English and Academic Development departments at **McHenry County College** piloted a course structure change in the fall semester of 2016. Beginning in the spring semester of 2017, the course structure change was implemented fully with all ENG 095 (developmental English) courses operating concurrently or linked with ENG 151 (Composition I) courses. All students who place into ENG 095 are required to register for ENG 151 with a linked ENG 095. These classes are taught by the same instructor and offered either as a three-hour block, or on alternating days of the week. The ENG 151 course has a maximum of 24 students enrolled, half of which have placed in ENG 151 and half of which have placed in ENG 095. The ENG 095 section is made up of these 12 students (maximum) to insure an even distribution of ENG

151/ENG 095 students. The co-requisite model allows for the instructor to utilize highly interactive writing exercises and lectures that focus on scaffolding the college-level writing skills of the students. Also, students are learning how to overcome non-cognitive obstacles by participating in in-class tutoring and study skills support and increased relationship building connections with peers and the instructor. During 2016 fall semester and 2017 spring semester, seven co-requisite course sections were offered with 74 participating students. In the analysis comparing the success rate of students participating in the co-requisite model with the success rate of students needing to take ENG 095 before or as a pre-requisite to ENG 151, the co-requisite group demonstrated a 76 percent success rate in ENG 095, while the other group was lower at 57 percent.

### **Adult Education/ESL Initiatives**

The Experience IVCC event was initiated in spring 2015 at **Illinois Valley Community College**. It reaches out to high school equivalency, English language acquisition, and bridge to careers students from the Adult Education office. Students are introduced to CTE programs and nontraditional career choices highlighting short-term degree and certificate programs. Different support services are presented such as admissions, financial aid, Project Success, foundation, and career services. Tours are given of the CTE labs and Learning Commons. Each student is given the opportunity to complete a career interest survey to determine the types of careers for which they would like more information. These are used to follow-up with those students by Adult Education staff and a CTE recruiter. A total of 31 students were in attendance at the October 14, 2017, Experience IVCC with 27 (87 percent) indicating at least one program of study of interest. Six students completed the manufacturing bridge course held from October 17 through December 7, 2017.

The ESL (English as a Second Language) program is an academic program designed to assist non-native speakers and international students, who need to acquire English skills to participate in American society, to enroll in vocational or academic programs at the college-level or to enter or advance in the workplace. Students attain and refine language and study skills as well as deepen their knowledge of U.S. culture through a series of specially designed courses in grammar, reading, writing, speaking, listening, pronunciation, and conversation. The ESL program was implemented at **Black Hawk College (BHC)** in 1991. For 2016-2017, of the 37 students who graduated from the Academic ESL program, 21 are still pursuing Associate of Arts degrees or certificates at BHC. Plus, two graduates are pursuing a bachelor's or master's degree at Western Illinois University. In 2016, the ESL program hosted 27 students from a local high school to attend the ESL Open House, and six of them were enrolled. In 2017, BHC hosted two local high schools, and 40 students participated in the ESL Open House.

### **Initiatives Targeting At-Risk Students**

The Academic Standing Program (ASP), which was implemented at **Heartland Community College** in January 2014, is a mandatory program for all students finding themselves on any level below good academic standing (academic probation, continued probation,

*The Academic Standing Program at Heartland Community College is a mandatory program for all students finding themselves on any level below good academic standing.*

and returning from academic dismissal) and currently registered for classes in the upcoming semester. All students within ASP are assigned to work with one academic advisor, who is responsible for the coordination of the ASP program. Students are required to review the college's policy regarding academic standing, how to get back in good standing, and repeating classes as well as to review tips for academic success, time management, and study skills. They also have to complete a short writing assignment within Blackboard during the ASP semester. Finally, prior to registering for the next semester, students are required to meet with their academic advisor, review completion of assignments (if they have not already done so), set a plan for success moving forward, select courses, and be released to register. The results of the information collected about the ASP participants, indicate that students who completed their required appointment and Blackboard assignments ended the semester on a much more successful academic standing than those who did not.

The College of Nursing and Health Professions at **Carl Sandburg College** created an early intervention plan to decrease the number of students who fall behind in their coursework and, subsequently, leave the program. In August 2016 Sandburg introduced a student study assessment form, a progression plan, and a remediation form. The plan is available to students in all levels of the nursing programs, as well as other health professions programs, such as medical assisting and home health. The plan takes students through areas of concern, as well as resources such as the Tutoring Center. With an emphasis on study skills, time management and personal wellness, the intent is to provide a support system for those who may require the extra assistance to improve retention and GPA results.

The goal of the CSS 100 Student Success Skills course at **Sauk Valley Community College** (SVCC) is to improve student success and credit completion. Prior to the fall of 2016, only students placed on academic supervision were required to complete CSS 100. Students on academic probation are those who do not maintain a cumulative 2.0 GPA or higher after completing 24 GPA credit hours. In order to provide earlier intervention to students who are not completing, this policy was changed to require CSS 100 of students on academic alert. Students on academic alert are students who, after attempting 12 credit hours at SVCC, have not maintained a cumulative 2.0 GPA or higher and/or do not complete 67 percent of term credit. The CSS 100 course helps students develop and refine successful college-learning strategies. The course provides an in-depth review of how students learn and interface with the faculty and the institution as a whole. Key elements of the course include educational goal development, effective use of college textbooks, note taking, and test preparation skills. This course may be repeated two times for students requiring additional development of learning strategies. Students on academic alert who completed CSS 100 show minor improvements in course completion rates in the spring and summer of 2017. SVCC has continued to adjust CSS 100 curriculum and teaching strategies to improve student success; consequently, in fall 2017 CSS student success rates were much improved.

Supporting student success, as well as increasing college completion, is an ongoing goal at **Rend Lake College** (RLC). To commit to this goal, RLC joined the Higher Learning Commission's Persistence and Completion Academy in January 2016 and, consequently, has received a structured, mentor-facilitated approach at evaluating and improving persistence and completion rates. It was decided that the data of at-risk students would be collected and analyzed. Many of

RLC's at-risk students were those that came to the college with a low GPA at their high schools. While GPA information on these students was available, much of that information had not been entered into RLC's enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. The ERP system was therefore updated with all information available on current enrolled students. Additionally, the ERP system was modified to track and flag students who do not submit their high school transcripts at the time they filled out the new student enrollment form. Furthermore, student attendance has been monitored. If the students with low GPA begin to miss classes, an outreach effort has been developed to contact and offer support services such as tutoring, peer mentoring, or additional services based on the specific need.

Over 90 percent of incoming students at **Kennedy-King College** (KKC) begin at the developmental education level of instruction. KKC math faculty and Academic Support Services collaborated in spring 2017 through a Midterm Intervention Initiative, using the college's early alert system—GradesFirst—to target at-risk populations, deploy resources, and provide comprehensive support to students in KKC math courses. Instructors of remedial and college-level math courses were required to submit grades for all of their students at midterms. A list of students receiving a C or lower was compiled and then tagged in GradesFirst. Academic Support Services compiled lists of students based on their math instructors, communicated with all instructors, and then contacted all students who were referred for math tutoring and provided tutoring to those who responded. As a result, students taking advantage of these services have experienced higher course success and retention rates. In addition, students are progressing through the math development education sequence at a faster rate.

For the past ten years, **John Wood Community College** deployed and worked to improve an in-house developed program for an early alert system that allowed faculty and staff to respond to possible student problems that deterred students from completing their certificates or degrees. While there was success with the program, it left a gap between tracking students from term-to-term, and it was felt improvements could be made with Starfish Retention Software that integrated with other in-school software. Starfish is a more robust program and allows quicker and more effective communication. When a flag is raised, not only do advisors get the alert, but also other participating faculty and staff and the students' support network who have privileges to the student information. Starfish is expected to lead to higher retention and completion rates. A pilot program of Starfish began at John Wood in the fall 2017 semester. The early alert program will be implemented throughout the college in spring 2018. For Starfish classes in the pilot, when compared to similar classes not participating in the Starfish pilot, Starfish courses had a 3 percent lower rate of negative student outcomes (withdraws, or D or F grades).

### **Initiatives Targeting First-year/First-Generation College Students**

In order to support student success of all degree-seeking students, **Sauk Valley Community College** (SVCC) requires all new degree-seeking students to enroll in the mandatory First-Year Experience (FYE) class. Contemporary education literature indicates that credit completion during the first year is an important factor in building momentum towards degree completion. The learning objectives of the FYE course are designed to ensure

*Sauk Valley Community College requires all new degree-seeking students to enroll in the mandatory First-Year Experience class.*

students have the key knowledge and skills they need to successfully complete their first semester of college. This course is also designed to aid minority, students with disabilities, and female students to succeed in college and graduate at higher rates. With 60 percent of SVCC's current students being female, 17 percent being Hispanic or African American, and 2.5 percent of students reporting disabilities, this course will dramatically affect those underrepresented groups. The first FYE classes were taught in August 2013. The pre- and post-test results of the spring 2017 data shows that the class is successful at teaching students to meet the course objectives. One of the main objectives of the course is to ensure students have an understanding of the academic planning process. The results indicate that students are generally gaining in this competency; however, for some other outcomes students show a decrease in knowledge. This data is regularly evaluated by an FYE evaluation team to examine the utility of assessment questions and the academic content of the lessons. Improvements to the assessment questions and to lesson plans are made after each semester in order to improve the FYE class.

**Highland Community College** has offered a two-credit model First-Year Experience Seminar (FYES) course for over 20 years. A common core curriculum and student-centered approach guides the delivery through multiple formats, including online, accelerated, face-to-face, hybrid and integrated, into a couple of introductory courses. Highland has not charged tuition for this course and strongly encouraged students to take it; however, only 20 percent of Highland's students enrolled in an FYES course in fiscal year 2016. Data has consistently shown that Highland students are often first-generation (73 percent), and many take remedial coursework. Consequently, the college initiated a requirement that first-time students enrolling in a degree program would be required to take the course in fall 2017. The FYES course goals and components include increasing student persistence by providing resources, teaching college navigation skills, and making connections in the college; increasing retention from fall to spring and fall to fall; helping students clarify educational and employment goals; providing resources to help students achieve their goals; building positive relationships and sense of community; and increasing student satisfaction. For fall 2017, 285 of the 331 (86 percent) incoming, degree-seeking students enrolled in the course; with 209, or about 73 percent, successfully completed the course; and 207 (98 percent) returned the next term. The college plans to continue evaluating the course and the requirement by hosting student focus groups in spring 2018 and continuing to analyze the relationship between the FYES course and student retention.

Through discussion of high dropout rates and low grades of first-year nursing students, who are often female, single parents, low-income and first-generation students, **Wabash Valley College** (WVC) staff assessed that many students lacked preparation for the rigor of the program, the necessary study skills, and a connection to a future track within the field of nursing. Consequently, the Pathways to Success pre-nursing program was implemented during the fall 2016 semester to better support pre-nursing students. This nursing specific first-year experience course is taught by nursing faculty, and follows the core curriculum of the general course, but is accented with nursing specific activities and engagement. The instructor is able to address individual student needs and create a cohort of support between the students and the instructor to encourage their academic success. In the first year, 91.3 percent of the students that participated in this nursing specific first-year experience course persisted from fall 2016 to spring 2017, and 78.3 percent of those students continued to the next year. Forty-four percent of the fall 2016 cohort entered into the first year of nursing in fall 2017.

The Aspire 1G organization supports first-generation (1G) students by helping them navigate college, acquire academic and job-related self-advocacy, and form closer relationships with faculty, staff, and each other. In any given year, approximately 35 percent to 40 percent of **Elgin Community College** (ECC) students are first-generation students who hail from families or currently live in communities where education beyond high school is (or was not) commonly discussed. Many 1G students are not familiar with college-going terminology or the roles played by campus offices. In terms of demography, 1G students, as compared to the wider student body, are much more likely to be Latino, Pell grant recipients, and are slightly more likely to be female. They also tend to be slightly older and enroll part-time (70 percent vs. 65 percent). One of the ECC strategic priorities for 2018 to 2022 is to support student self-advocacy, and Aspire aligns directly to this strategy. Aspire, which formed in 2013, is self-sustaining through donations. Staff support is provided by TRIO funds, ECC Student Life, Career Development Services, Financial Aid, and Workforce Transitions. The main aim of Aspire is to bring 1G students up to the level of all students, even though they start from a less advantageous position.

The Start Smart program was implemented at **Harper College** in its current form in 2015; however, a first-year seminar course with similar outcomes was piloted in 2013. The program is designed for all first-time-in-college students to provide them with an experience that will help them persist, earn more credits, and complete. Faculty who teach courses that are part of the Start Smart program are provided with professional development that supports their work with first-year students. Sections of the program have been offered for first-generation students, students of color, and students with disabilities. These sections have allowed specialized supports and topics to be covered. Students who are a part of the Start Smart course actively engage in academic and career planning. Students are introduced to the academic and career planning process through a workshop conducted by an advisor, and are subsequently required to meet individually with an advisor to complete an educational plan. Students are also required to complete a personal development plan, which documents the educational and career exploration of the student. Students can choose a course that is tailored to their area of interest and engage in a more focused exploration of college and career. There is also a course offered for undecided students that more deeply explores individual interests and strengths. All students who participate in Start Smart courses are retained at a slightly higher rate than students in a control group, which consisted of all first-time-in-college students who did not enroll in a Start Smart course. The fall 2015 to spring 2016 retention rate for Hispanic/Latino students in the Start Smart cohort was 85 percent in comparison to the retention rate of 77 percent for the control group of Hispanic/Latino students not enrolled in Start Smart.

**Heartland Community College** (HCC) redesigned the student orientation program in April 2015, and implemented mandatory advising to ensure that students are taking the right classes toward the correct program of study and are provided with the support they need in order to be successful throughout their educational journey. The Initial New Student Day (NSD1) and the Second New Student Day (NSD2) provide advisors the opportunity to meet with each new degree-seeking student to HCC. Advisors meet with each student for 30 minutes, providing each student a thorough overview of what support advisement can provide them, as well as an academic plan in line with their education and career goals. Advisement spent a great deal of time developing a benchmark system of information to cover during these critical 30 minutes,

guaranteeing that each student receives consistent messaging and the information necessary for their individual needs. This benchmarking system has also been infused into an intentional advising design, where all students will be required to meet with their academic advisor twice prior to their second semester registration. This system will ensure that each student is fully prepared to make course selections, navigate and utilize campus support services, and know when critical dates and times are for decision making as part of their plan while at HCC. Based on a review of data from the fall 2015 cohort of first-time undergraduates, 96.3 percent of students who attended an NSD1 appointment, selected and enrolled in classes. Furthermore, 90 percent of students who attended an NSD1 appointment, returned for an NSD2 appointment. These numbers have remained the same or similar for all subsequent semesters.

### **Degree Audit, Instruction, Curriculum, and Course Placement Initiatives**

The role of the Completion Concierge project at **Illinois Central College (ICC)** is to evaluate students who may have completed, communicate the value of graduation, and assist with the identification of options for completion. The Completion Concierge, which was modeled after a successful program instituted by Harper College, was developed in late summer 2016, and the first pilot was conducted in fall 2016 at ICC. The pilot groups focused on transfer students who would qualify for an Associate in Arts or Associate in Science degree. The pilot evaluated students who were last enrolled in Spring 2016 with 48+ hours in the Business, Hospitality and Information Systems (BHIS) department and the English, Humanities and Language Studies (EHLS) department. For spring 2017, ICC set the target for fifty students and expanded the program to the other academic departments for Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degrees in the area of Arts and Communication (ACOMM). ICC wants to intentionally target underrepresented groups, including students with disabilities.

*Wabash Valley College has recently improved the stackability of certificates and degrees offered in the early childhood education program.*

**Wabash Valley College (WVC)** has recently aligned early childhood program curriculum with the Gateways Early Childhood Education (ECE) Credential Levels and improved the stackability of certificates and degrees offered. The purpose of the Gateways Credential Attainment project is to provide exit points (certificates) for ECE students after successfully completing semester one, semester two, and the full A.A.S. curriculum. Work began in early 2015 with the ICCB, in partnership with the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD), the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA), the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), and the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) to align early childhood programs with the Gateways ECE Credential Levels. WVC has identified an enrollment trend of first-generation degree seekers entering CTE programs. Many students look to start their careers as soon as possible because of their dire financial situation, creating the need for stackable credentials. Financial burdens on students create an additional roadblock for success and increase the likelihood of failure or withdrawal from the coursework. By placing logical exit points into the curriculum and aligning industry-recognized competencies to those credentials, WVC will increase student success and enrollment. The two new certificates were submitted to ICCB for approval fiscal year 2017 to accomplish the Gateways Credential Attainment project. Evidence of success will ultimately come from the growing synergy of CTE

programs with measurable increases in enrollment and completion. Improved transferability of coursework to other institutions aligned to Gateways credentials will allow students to follow the Gateways to Opportunity career ladder to their highest educational potential.

In fiscal year 2017, **Kishwaukee College** created and implemented a comprehensive assessment and placement policy which utilized multiple ways for first-time and dual credit students to demonstrate their college readiness for entry-level English and/or mathematics courses. The objective of placing more students into college-level English and mathematics is to accelerate the time-to-degree by reducing the need for developmental English and mathematics courses. Prior to summer 2017, all first-time students without earned college credit in English and/or mathematics had a single method of demonstrating readiness for college-level work in these two areas. The college determined readiness and beginning course placement by student scores on the COMPASS English and Algebra tests. In spring 2017, Kishwaukee College discontinued placement using Compass and adopted Accuplacer as the result of an extensive literature review of current research on placement practices. According to the new guiding framework, there is no difference between the skills of students placing one standard deviation below and above a college-level cut score; it is better to over-place students than to under-place students; and there are multiple indicators of readiness in multiple ways as students can demonstrate their readiness in multiple ways. Literature identified ACT, SAT, IB, PARC, and high school GPA as credible indicators of readiness. Overall, developmental composition placement decreased from 37.5 percent in fall 2016 to 28.8 percent in fall 2017.

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