Section 3

STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND SUPPORT

"The program was fundamental to my growth as an engaged and informed citizen. Every class I took provided an integral opportunity to learn and reflect. And each piece has affected how I interact with my world today."

— A Community Change Studies student at Minneapolis College

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7.   Recruiting Students on Campus as well as from Communities

Especially with a worsening economy, one major challenge in creating a Community Change Studies program is developing an effective plan for recruiting sufficient numbers of students to convince the college that the program should be launched and then continued over time. Can the program justify the college's investment in it? Will it attract enough students to generate sufficient income to cover its cost and be financially viable?

Enrollments at virtually every college are currently shrinking significantly, and this trend will intensify over the next decade. The competition for students therefore is getting tougher. As a result, most institutions keep reducing the number of courses and areas of concentration they offer.

This presents a particularly great challenge for Community Change Studies or any other nontraditional course of study which few colleges now offer, and with which few college administrators or traditional academics are familiar.

However, there are three strong arguments why a college should incorporate a Certificate or Degree program in Community Change Studies into its curriculum. First, there is a **rapidly growing job market** for graduates with the skills, knowledge, and values which CCS students acquire and, unfortunately, these needs will grow as poverty and inequity deepen. CCS graduates gain skills and knowledge which are central to a wide range of family-supporting careers in community-based organizations, other nonprofits, and community-facing positions with public agencies and business firms.

Second, in this era of extraordinary social concern and activism among students and community leaders, CCS' courses on organizing, participatory action research, and lessons from their region's political, economic, social, and reform history have the potential to become very popular. They **can attract large numbers of current students who want to develop the skills, knowledge and credentials to make a real difference on the issues they care about most**. This will require growing visibility and serious marketing, but the potential is real.
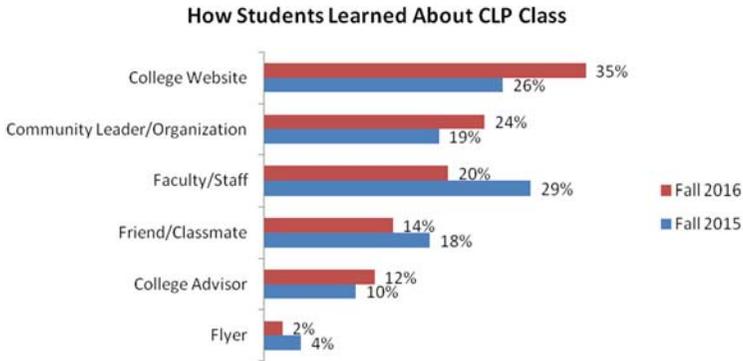
Third, CLP's sites are demonstrating that **a CCS program can attract new student**s **to a college from nearby communities** by offering emerging leaders and others opportunities to prepare for careers and leadership roles tackling the critical community, political, and social issues they care about most.

Therefore, as a key part of their strategy, advocates for creating a CCS program should equip themselves with a student recruitment plan which is designed to attract –

- Both current college students and potential future students, especially emerging community and youth leaders and others interested in impacting community issues, public policies or institutional reforms; potential off-campus recruits include graduating members of the VISTA, Public Allies, Youthbuild, and other Americorps programs as well as staff from local community organizing, development, and service organizations, and public agencies,
- A sufficient number of students to ensure the program becomes financially sustainable and is continued over the long-run so disenfranchised communities will have access to a continuing stream of knowledgeable, skilled leaders, organizers and allies,
- Increasing numbers of students from communities of color and the low-income and working-class neighborhoods which need strengthened leadership, organizations, voice, participation, power and influence,
- Growing numbers of students who are interested in career or leadership roles in community organizing, planning and development and who therefore seem likely to enroll in the full pathway – a Certificate, Minor and/or Major -- not just the one course which attracts them initially,
- Sufficient numbers of students each year so they can form cohorts learning and working together, benefitting from peer learning and support, and building lasting relationships which will help them in the future, and
- Neighborhood, union and civic leaders, and emerging leaders reached through youth organizations and movements and local high schools.

Each CLP site has developed its own strategies for recruiting students, with some including much more intensive off-campus recruiting efforts than others. In the course of this experimentation they have learned many important lessons.

Let's review the main points they have learned over the years, starting with on-campus recruitment of current students.

How Students Learned About CLP Class

College Website — Fall 2016: 35%, Fall 2015: 26%
Community Leader/Organization — Fall 2016: 24%, Fall 2015: 19%
Faculty/Staff — Fall 2016: 20%, Fall 2015: 29%
Friend/Classmate — Fall 2016: 14%, Fall 2015: 18%
College Advisor — Fall 2016: 12%, Fall 2015: 10%
Flyer — Fall 2016: 2%, Fall 2015: 4%

The principal challenges to recruiting currently enrolled students to CLP programs are –

- Competition with already widely recognized fields of study and career pathways.
- Helping students understand how this educational pathway can lead to good family-supporting careers and what those potential careers are.
- Clarifying what "Community Change Studies" is and why students should enroll in it.
- Gaining sufficient visibility and prominence for the program that students and others in the community know about the program and seriously consider enrolling in it.

Important elements in strategy for recruiting current college students to CCS

1. Offering CCS as a Minor, Major or Certificate program.
2. Maximizing support for the program within the college, ideally including top academic leaders, faculty from several departments, service learning and civic engagement programs within the college, academic counselors, and student organizations and clubs.
3. Strong positioning within the college, locating the program within the Department which, because of its goals, current courses, and leadership is most likely to actively support the CCS program, offer CCS courses as

electives counting toward completion of the Major, and steer students towards enrolling in the CCS program.

4. Building collaborative relationships with other Departments to help attract their students to taking CCS courses, if possible co-listing CCS with Departments focusing on such related fields as nonprofit management, social work, environmental studies, criminal justice and community health.

5. Seeking approval of one or more CCS courses as meeting a Gen Ed requirement to attract more students.

6. Linking CCS to Service Learning and community engagement programs and seeking priority for its students for jobs through the Community Work component of the Federal Work Study program.

Key selling points for students --

- Community Change education can lead to long-term professional careers with good pay and benefits, upward mobility, and job opportunities with many types of employers – CBOs, other nonprofits, churches, labor, political organizations, government, etc.

- Community Change work provides you with a chance to "give back" to communities like their own, to meet great needs, and to be paid for it.

- CCS enables you to develop cross-sector skills and knowledge which you can use to create change on whatever issue you care about most – climate change, creating green jobs, criminal justice reform, community health, gentrification, etc.

- CCS programs offer practical experience working on important issues through internships and other on-site learning; When feasible, offering paid internships, through Community Work Study or other funding.
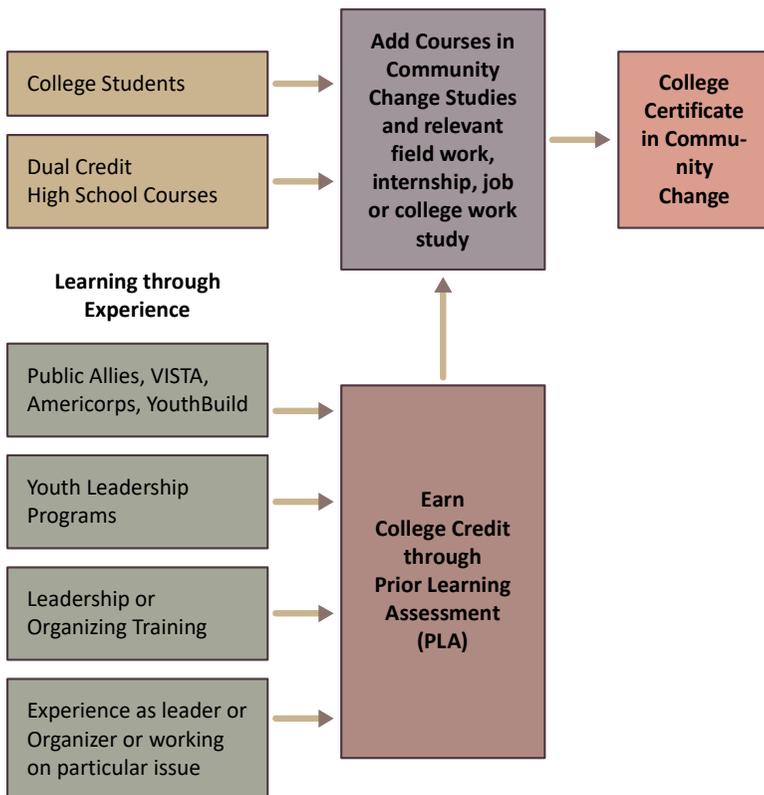
Recruiting students from nearby communities:

Chapters 5 and 6 describe how Prior Learning Assessment and high school dual enrollment or early college programs can create entry points onto the CCS pathway. They also discuss the possibility of earning college credit for service in Public Allies, VISTA, YouthBuild's leadership development program, and similar programs.

CD Tech and others offer courses to the community, sometimes teaching in the community rather than on campus. Some stress systematic outreach and recruitment to --

- Community-based organizations of all types, including organizing groups, community development corporations and community-based services programs.
- Neighborhood leadership groups.
- Churches, mosques, temples and faith-based organizations.
- Unions and neighborhood businesses.

Recruiting from Colleges and the Community

College Students → **Add Courses in Community Change Studies and relevant field work, internship, job or college work study** → **College Certificate in Community Change**

Dual Credit High School Courses →

Learning through Experience

Public Allies, VISTA, Americorps, YouthBuild →

Youth Leadership Programs → **Earn College Credit through Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)**

Leadership or Organizing Training →

Experience as leader or Organizer or working on particular issue →

Recruiting from Youth and Community Organizations

Many youth-led and youth-serving organizations have leadership development programs or other initiatives which may surface promising candidates for recruitment into CCS courses or more extensive pathways. Among the organizations which may have local chapters with this emphasis are the following

- Churches.
- Opportunity Youth United.
- Student Action's members.
- Black Lives Matter.
- Youth organizing groups, etc.
- Organizations working on DACA issues/Dreamers.
- Magnet schools featuring leadership studies.
- Job Corps.
- YouthBuild, VISTA, Public Allies, Americorps, CityYear.
- Boys and Girls Clubs.
- YM and YWCAs.
- Other youth centers.
- Mentoring programs.
- Church youth groups in low-income neighborhoods.
- Organizations working on reentry issues, in-prison education programs and ministries.
- High school student governments.
- Reentry organizations.
- Youth rights organizations.
- Coalitions.
- LGBTQ organizations.

Examples of Strong Recruitment Efforts --DeAnza College

The CCS program at DeAnza College's Certificate in Leadership and Social Change is housed in an on-campus center called the Vasconcellos Institute for Democracy in Action (VIDA), which is directed by a faculty member who teaches several core classes in the program and is a progressive leader within the College. Much of the program outreach is done through VIDA, the social justice activist community on campus and a few community partners.

"Setting out clear weekly goals and milestones for both recruitment and enrollment has energized both efforts. Recognize that recruitment is an entire job in itself. If you don't have dedicated staff for recruitment, please consider hiring a couple of folks, or at the very least leveraging any internship/student worker resources you have to help get the word out."

DeAnza also informs prospective students about the program through two high school outreach efforts:

- Youth Voices United for Change Conference: An annual conference that brings high school students to De Anza from under-resourced and underserved areas.
- Mentors for Youth Empowerment: This program exposes high school students to De Anza student mentors as they prepare for graduation and college.

VIDA is also getting current CCS students and alums still on campus more involved in promoting the program on campus by wearing CCS tee shirts and going to talk to students in classes and clubs. A CCS program graduate now serves as Coordinator for Student Outreach and Support, and is an enormous help in building the program, and who also serves as Treasurer of CLP's National Board.

There's also great potential in having CCS students identify already existing student groups and reaching out to inform their members about how CCS relates to their concerns and how they can gain from enrolling in a CCS course and, hopefully, the entire Certificate or Degree program.

Other examples of outreach and recruitment efforts include the following:

- **CD Tech** staff have developed a Student Ambassador Program to enlist students in being "hands on about spreading the word" about the program through tabling and flyering.
- For their first cohort of students, the program in **Phoenix** focused on recruiting students through community partners which also provided modest contributions to help students pay tuition. Their strategies included reaching out to specific departments and classes – such as liberal arts, political science, social work, and nursing – and connecting to the student life director to reach student organizations that had community minded students.

- The CLP program at **Minneapolis College** has primarily used internal recruitment strategies, including informing college advisors about the program, using an on-campus Community Development Club, and making sure faculty who teach the core CLP classes tell students in their class about the multi-course Certificate program.

Recruitment for NYC's **Center for Community Leadership is built into its structure.** CNL was created by a citywide coalition of over 120 housing and tenant groups, and they help recruit people in their communities and then help train, mentor, and place the students.

See the following interview with CLP Co-Chair Shelia Balque for a description of the creative recruitment efforts in Los Angeles.

STUDENT STORIES

CLP Co-Chair Shelia Balque on Recruiting Students for CD Tech's program in Los Angeles

Shelia Balque is a proud resident of South Los Angeles. Shelia graduated from a special high school which was located on a community college campus and designed to be equally accessible to students with and without disabilities. When LA Public Schools decided to yield to the college's pressure to tear down the school, Shelia and another student organized a campaign involving students, their parents and powerful allies which resulted in the School System reversing course and committing $4 million to renovating the school rather than leveling it.

After earning her Bachelor's Degree, Shelia joined Public Allies, an Americorps program operated in LA by CD Tech, a CLP affiliate. Shelia began taking courses in community planning and organizing through Tech's Community Planning Certificate and Degree program at a nearby community college. As a second year Ally, Shelia helped run and eventually direct the program for Los Angeles. She continued to take courses one by one, earning her Certificate in Community Planning and Economic Development. CD Tech then hired Shelia as their Program Manager of Education and Career Pathways with responsibilities including co-managing Public Allies Los Angeles.

Shelia also serves as Co-Chair of national CLP's Board.

CLP's Newsletter Editor David Dodge recently interviewed Shelia about the very active student recruitment efforts for the ComPlan program. The interview was included in a recent CLP Newsletter.

"We caught up with Shelia Balque for a Q&A about recruitment. Shelia supports the students in Community Planning & Economic Development (ComPlan), the CLP program offered at Los Angeles Trade Technical College. She is also a graduate of the Los Angeles program.

In fall, 2019, 158 students enrolled across 6 CLP-affiliated courses. "It's been a matter of trial and error to get to our recruitment numbers to where they are now," Shelia told us — which has involved shifting timing, increasing outreach, and employing a variety of methods to reach students.

Can you explain what some of your recruitment strategies have been over the years and how you've adjusted them?

One of the most dramatic shifts we've made in our recruitment efforts was shifting our program into a cohort/Academy model every semester. The ComPlan program has an array of different courses and focuses (i.e. organizing, non-profit management, urban planning, etc.) so re-marketing our courses on a thematic basis made it much easier to communicate to community members what they could learn in our program. For example, last fall we decided to offer courses that primarily focused on skills needed to work in the non-profit sector, which birthed our very first Non-Profit Management Academy. Students who participated in the Academy could choose whichever courses they wanted but were encouraged to take at least 3 which would qualify them to receive a small skills certificate from the organization.

We also made our academy model stackable, meaning if a student decided to continue to participate in the following semester's academy (i,e. the Community Organizing Academy in spring) as a full time student they would be setting themselves up to be able to earn the full Community

Planning certificate (21 units) by the end of the school year. Along with shifting our program to a more cohort model, we have also increased our staffing and employed other tactics such as hosting info sessions, more frequent phone banking, community flyer drops, email blasts and promoting at local community events.

What type of in-person outreach you do? And how do you decide where to target?

A big part of our team's recruitment efforts are our 'Community flyer drops' which we try to do at least 2-3 times/week during recruitment season. It's pretty simple; depending on the theme of that semesters' academy, we will focus dropping of flyers in locations that have a high concentration of residents (i.e. local libraries, direct service organizations, health centers, schools, churches, etc.) and places where certain target populations frequent or work (e.g. the Workforce Development Department for the Economic Development Academy, or local parent organizing groups for our Organizing Academy).

Overall though, we try to hit up between 75-100 locations during a season to ensure the word is really getting out to the immediate community. I'll typically drive and have my coordinator drop stacks of flyers at the locations to be efficient with our time and will usually hit up about 10-15 locations per week over the course of 8-10 weeks.

We have also held open info sessions at our office and enrollment labs on campus for local residents and returning students. Partner organizations are also encouraged to request an on-site info session/enrollment lab so their staff/members can get one-on-one support during a time that is feasible for them.

Can you talk about the timeline of outreach — when you start for each semester?

We typically give yourself a 3-4-month recruitment season before the start of each semester. How we use that time typically looks like this:

- *4 months before the start of semester: Strategic planning phase, research, finalizing recruitment work plans and outreach targets.*
- *3 months before the start of semester: finalize marketing materials, begin emailing out materials and making in-class announcement to current students.*
- *3-2 months before semesters: Begin flyer drops, early enrollment for returning students, scheduling future info sessions with organizations, weekly postings to social media.*
- *1 month before semester: host enrollment labs, continue flyer drops, phonebank returning and new prospective students about upcoming deadlines, start individual enrollment troubleshooting with student ready to start adding courses.*
- *2 weeks before semester: continue troubleshooting enrollment issues with individual students, continue to email, call and post reminders of upcoming start of semester.*
- *1 week before-2 weeks during semester: continue to work with students with enrollment needs, table on-campus to capture any active students needing courses, support in-class new adds and communicating with department about any pending enrollment issues, finalize student roster at the end of the 2nd week of class.*

You've mentioned that "Nonprofit Management" is the most popular course, but that might be because students don't understand what other courses, like "economic development," entail as readily. Any strategies you're considering to tackle that problem?

… one thing I would do differently though is better highlight our individual courses more and reframing or renaming certain courses them in a way that is more accessible. For example, one of our classes this term is called "Market Research Tools for the Economic Development Tools (super vague right?) but in reality the course really is just teaching students how small struggling businesses can better market themselves and engage residents using skills and local resources from organizations and the city. If we take a little more time to finetune our messaging for each of our

courses and communicate it in a way that is meaningful to our students, more folks will feel more confident joining the program.

What have been the biggest lessons learned in recruitment that you think could help other programs?

I have a few:

Be clear of who your target audience is/who you would like in your classroom. I know it can be easy to say "well, our program is open to everyone" but in reality you really do want to make the effort to do targeted outreach so you get a good blend of students with different experiences and backgrounds to enrich your program. Think in terms of geography, racial/ethnic background, age/experience, religion, economic status, current or aspiring profession etc, and then build a plan on how to meet and outreach to those folks where there are. It can also be helpful to become well acquainted with any campus groups or programs that work with students who have similar interests as your program. For example, become acquainted with your on-campus AB540/Dreamers Center if you're trying to attract already civically engaged undocumented students to your program

Create a plan with clear goals and milestones: I've found that by setting out clear weekly goals and milestones for both recruitment and enrollment had made our recruitment much energizing. Since my program is at a community college which takes open enrollment, I have much a much bigger student pool than say a Minor program at 4 year, so it's important to be mindful of how much time and effort will be needed to accomplish your recruitment in timely fashion. 🙂

Recognize that recruitment is an entire job in of itself. If you don't have dedicated staff for recruitment, please consider hiring a couple of folks, or at the very least leveraging any internship/student worker resources to ensure you have enough hands to help get the word out. If that's not possible, then you will need to get really creative and perhaps focus on developing formal partnerships with local organizations, programs,

groups, etc. to help pipeline students into your program during your recruitment season.

Lastly, develop materials that are eye catching, clear and unique to other competing programs.

8. Student Peer Support

Several CLP programs have organized creative systems of peer support to help their students build relationships and learn together, including doing joint projects, socializing and sharing personal issues with each other. These formal and informal peer support systems are especially important for community college and other commuter students: they don't have the advantages of living together in dorms or having meals together, and their time with other students is reduced because they have part- or full-time jobs and often must take off a full term to make ends meet.

The goals of these peer support strategies are to –

- Increase student retention and graduation rates which are quite low at most American community colleges and other commuter colleges.
- Reinforce the students' learning by helping them support and learn from each other.
- Strengthen the identity and visibility of Community Change Studies in order to encourage more students to enroll in a full Certificate or Degree program rather than take only scattered courses, and
- Build ties among students which encourage them to stay together for the entire Certificate or Degree program

Strategies for Increasing Peer Support:

CLP sites have developed several creative ways of facilitating interaction among students, creating ways of helping them get to know each other, build relationships, and eventually reinforce each other.

First, CCS instructors and guest speakers use interactive teaching techniques to reinforce relationships among students -- stimulating p**eer-to-peer discussion and learning,** using Socratic methods to question students and foster dialogue, and creating small pop-up discussion and learning groups during class.

Second, faculty develop projects for **joint work** by small groups, including experiential learning opportunities on and off campus. Courses in Community Organizing and Participatory Action Research are geared to teach active listening, sharing personal stories, building relationships, and working with others to

develop a shared analysis of an issue and the best strategies for addressing it. What's more, CCS courses and modules focusing on issues of identity, race, power and privilege are particularly effective in deepening the dialogue and sharing among students, and often have a transformative effect in enabling students to cross cultural and other boundaries. Furthermore, Capstone activities and projects often are developed by teams of students.

Third, some CLP sites have developed *familias* modelled on a remarkable approach pioneered by a DeAnza English professor. This chapter concludes with a lengthy section on the DeAnza program which, in short, creates families of 4 or 5 students as a course begins. They then work and learn together throughout that course and subsequent ones.

Fourth, Salt Lake City Community College and DeAnza have developed **Student Centers on civic engagement and organizing**. These provide places for students with common interests in community and social change to hang out, get helpful advice from other students, study, go on-line, learn about upcoming events and campaigns, get assistance on financial aid, housing, food pantry, internships, etc. These centers help create a sense of identity which can be fortified with CCS tee shirts, hats and other swag. They greatly benefit from being staffed, and are ideal spots for Work Study students to work and help their peers.

Fifth, faculty at several colleges, including Minneapolis College, have developed **student CCS clubs** which not only attract new students to Community Change Studies but also build relationships between them, current CCS students, and alumni who share their common interest in community development, organizing, and social justice. These sometimes focus on such shared issues as climate change, DACA and immigrant rights, Student Government elections or the need for student housing.

CCS programs have had difficulty creating **cohorts** of students who enroll in the full Degree or Certificate program at the same time and then are able to stay together through the full sequence of courses. This would maximize peer support and learning, while also enabling the faculty to schedule courses in the most logical sequence for preparing for developing the students' knowledge, skills and vision.

There are two reasons this is seldom practical for our programs. Most importantly, low-income and working-class students find it extremely difficult to stay in school consistently because they have to work full- or part-time, and often must take off an entire term to handle their financial needs. Secondly, it is difficult to convince a student to enroll in a multi-course Certificate or Degree program until they have tested one or more courses in that discipline.

In Paying the Price, Professor Sara Goldrick-Rab points out **"Full-time enrollment promotes degree completion not only because of the pace of progress it allows but also because of the academic focus it facilitates."**

"Familias" for peer learning and support:

Several years ago, Marc Coronado, an instructor in English, Women's Studies and Chicana/o Studies at DeAnza College, created an imaginative strategy of leadership and group development as an integral part of learning and student support. At the beginning of each quarter, faculty create "familias" or small, consistent groups of 4 or 5 students who learn from and support each other as they learn from the class as a whole.

The familias approach emerged out of experience with LEAD (Latina/o Empowerment at De Anza), a program which was presented to President Brian Murphy and approved in 2005. The first summer, a group of 16 students and two instructors created the program. Half the initial students were Latino, half not, and Marc worked with them to "figure it out". Some students had done some organizing or seen organizing in action, and all students found it meaningful to work with real issues as they learned. Their first course became very intensive, meeting 4 hours a day every day, including field trips and food events as a way of building a supportive community. The idea of creating familias emerged from the students' desire to break the class into smaller groups to accomplish meaningful work. The smaller groups work together so intensively that they begin to know each other intimately, to share in lots of ways both personal and academic, and to refer to themselves as family. Knowing that many students had difficult experiences with their biological families and that the term "familia" therefore wasn't necessarily a positive one, Marc took the students through a process of discussing that fact, saying to the students that as adults they have an opportunity

to choose their own family, to recreate what the word means. The discussion stressed the students' sense of responsibility for each other, person to person.

Dr. Coronado made it a rule to avoid interfering if difficulties emerge in one of the familias, because then it "would no longer be a family. It would be just a group." Familias typically resolve their own difficulties with the help of their LEAD Mentors.

The route into a LEAD familia is through one of the LEAD classes, which include Economics, Ethnic Studies, Chicana/o Studies, Women's Studies, Composition and Reading. Two classes are taught online incorporating the familia structure. In most classes, students are assigned to familias based on their choice of social justice projects and civic engagement opportunities.

Instructors are aided by LEAD mentors -- students who have taken other LEAD courses, who are committed to social justice, and do not need much handholding. The course includes an introduction to leadership skills, civic engagement "to get their hands dirty", field trips to understand their history in depth, and regular mentoring by faculty.

The familia structure stresses responsibility to each other, and the familias help teach the course content (after demonstrations by the instructor and LEAD mentors). That lightens the load for the teacher, and helps familia members develop a sense of being able to rely on themselves and each other. For example, if a familia member doesn't show up for class, another calls them, checks in on them and fills them in on what happened that day. When they prepare for tests or essays, they do research together. When they make class presentations, they divide the work up and rely on the talents of each familia member. This philosophy and practice helps students move beyond individualism to experiencing the value of collaboration.

Community college students sometimes must take off a quarter to earn money or help their families as primary caregivers. When this happens, they remain members of the larger LEAD familia, with someone checking in with them from time to time. They are also invited to two fixed annual events in which all LEAD students, alumni, and friends participate. These are the Annual Familia Reunion in January and an end of the year celebratory event in June. People bring food, there's no agenda, they just hang out. These events **reach people who are not in**

school currently, people who may have been oddballs in their own familia and do not keep in regular contact, and people who may have graduated, moved, or transferred to a school out of the area. These measures help with student retention. People bring their children, parents and partners to the events to introduce them to other LEAD familia members. Many younger brothers and sisters have come through the LEAD program as a result of the familia structure.

For the familias to succeed, they must have something important to do together – a specific project. They also spend time on the collective "work of the family". They start with relatively easy, low risk activities that have high reward – applause, a quick positive grade and written feedback, etc. They wind up leading at least three 1-hour discussions in class during each quarter. Marc stresses how this makes life easier and her teaching more gratifying as "they do the teaching". They do short reflections and follow a simple reporting style – what I thought before I started the project, how the project went, what I learned by doing the project (both in terms of course content and human interaction), and what I want to improve the next time I do this.

The winter quarter culminates in a major joint event with lots of preparation -- the day-long LEAD Global Issues Conference. One year focused on immigration and began in booths in a large conference area with several booths featuring interactive student presentations focusing on myths surrounding immigration. A major guest speaker is the keynoter. For this event it was a labor organizer and photojournalist who works on issues of labor and immigration. The students who had been in familias for longer periods of time designed and conducted afternoon workshops on issues like the E-Visa, health and migration, and the environmental impacts of NAFTA. A Fair Trade Marketplace was incorporated as part of the day-long conference. The newer LEAD students and members of the campus community attended these and learned from their example. A recent conference hosted 30 workshops, all conducted by students, and welcomed more than 500 students from across campus.

In the Spring class (EWRT2) students read Paolo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed and "teach the ideas to each other." Here, familias work on social justice projects like working with farmworker families to create oral histories, presenting workshops on environmental injustices, raising funds for an award for undocumented students, creating films on the intersections of same sex marriage

rights and immigrant rights. All these were presented publicly to the campus community throughout that quarter.

The LEAD familias have also been an incubator for larger projects. For example, TOUCCh (Tutor Outreach Uniting Communities for Change) emerged from this process and became a nonprofit directed by a former De Anza student. For several years, through TOUCCh, students taught basic English skills to farmworkers in Watsonville about 45 minutes away. They used Freireian approaches, with a social justice emphasis, and ask their "students" what they need to learn. Topics that they worked on included: What to do in an ICE raid, how to ask questions in a parent/teacher meeting, whom to go to if you don't receive fair pay from your employer, how to make a banking transaction, etc. Unfortunately, budget cuts made it impossible for the program to continue.

The familias also created a program of **scholarships for undocumented students,** with the scholarships awarded on the basis of community service. A support group for undocumented students and a campus-wide working group on undocumented student issues was established at De Anza as a result of LEAD familias.

The familias support these activities, helping to publicize the programs, recruiting students, inviting guest speakers, conducting workshops, and connecting with community partners. Over the program's first nine years, more than 3000 students became part of the LEAD community. In any given year there are about 1000 students and 30 mentors (students who head familias in LEAD classes, some of them on a paid basis, and some as returning alumni volunteers).

Dr. Coronado handed over leadership several years ago, but other LEAD faculty teach a multiplicity of courses, all of which include an emphasis on issues in the Latina/o community. All LEAD courses integrate civic engagement and a meaningful field trip. For instance, many classes visit farmworker families in Watsonville nearby, or travel to Angel Island to understand historic immigration detention. Current issues have included contemporary slavery, queer migrations, farmworker youth, leadership development, environmental injustices, and creating a Women/Gender/Sexualities center on campus.

Because branding matters to this generation, the bright red T-shirts with the yellow LEAD logo have been important for recruiting new students and faculty,

and helping the campus community know who LEAD students are and what work they are doing. Members of the community celebrate each accomplishment to build morale, and maintain an active Facebook site to congratulate LEAD alumni who have moved on to graduate school or received major scholarships, and excellent jobs in the community.

There is no direct tie between the LEAD program and DeAnza's Certificate in Leadership and Social Justice, but some students participate in both programs as both focus on building their experience on social justice issues and collaborative work done through small groups. Both are programs of DeAnza's VIDA Institute for Civic and Community Engagement.

An Experiment – Developing a "Microcampus" to Maximize Peer Support and Learning:

For several years, Houghton College, a private liberal arts college in New York State, experimented with an entirely unique approach to education which – while it would be difficult to replicate – included several highly innovative approaches which may spark new strategies elsewhere.

The background: Houghton College leaders and faculty became increasingly concerned that they weren't able to recruit many students of color or Pell-eligible students because of their high tuition and distance from major cities.

Having always concentrated solely on its four-year Bachelor's program, Houghton examined ways it could extend its reach to low-income and minority students its BA program couldn't serve. In exploring alternatives, a faculty team discovered that the College had the untapped capacity to grant two-year Associate Degrees as well as BAs. They then examined cost, outreach, and academic questions as well as community needs, and were authorized to experiment with ways of offering AA Degrees to students who would benefit from that credential and a pathway to a Bachelor's program.

Houghton created three "microcampuses", two in Buffalo, and one in Utica. They are in effect very small alternatives to community college, each of which is **designed to meet the needs of a particular population**. Houghton's first initiative in Buffalo was designed to serve new immigrants and refugees living on the city's

West Side. It offered an AA program which combines liberal arts courses with an emphasis on workplace readiness to prepare new Americans for both active civic life and the 21st century workplace.

The key elements in the design of all three microcampus programs were as follows

- Creation of a small neighborhood campus located near where their students live, not at a hard-to-reach and somewhat intimidating campus.
- Linked to a small private College which is responsible for ensuring the education meets state standards for an Associate Degree, develops articulation agreements, and issues Degrees to graduates.
- Located in a neighborhood, church or community school with free space or very low rent.
- Set up physically to be welcoming, friendly and comfortable for students.
- With each microcampus's setting, values, teaching, mentoring, and student support respecting and responding strongly to the students' backgrounds, cultures and concerns.
- Courses scheduled after surveying students to determine what hours would be most convenient for them, considering their work schedules and other obligations.
- Students organized into **cohorts** of 20-25 students each year, in school full-time taking all courses together, and **graduating on time** in two years.
- Selecting faculty, counselors and mentors from backgrounds similar to those of the students.
- Courses meeting all Community College requirements but **modified to be as relevant, interesting and useful as possible to the particular microcampus' students** (e.g. immigrants and refugees, previously incarcerated men).
- Providing substantially more time than is typical for extra services from counselors and mentors.
- Budgeted to be as economical as possible
  - Very low rent.
  - Part-time administrative staff.
  - Adjunct faculty with backgrounds like their students.
  - Providing reconditioned computers and open shelf books.

The program became financially self-sustaining with the budget being balanced with the program being completely financed with federal Pell grants and state scholarships, enabling students to graduate debt-free.

By coming into the community where the students live, Houghton College Buffalo and the Utica microcampus were able to provide a high quality education at low cost, while allowing students to remain embedded in their local community. Knowing that ancillary college costs can force poor students to drop out of college, Houghton College Buffalo provided its students with textbooks, bus passes and laptop computers. The program is debt-free for students, and graduated 80% of its students in its first two years. Most graduates went on to the State University for further study. The Utica program continues but, unfortunately, the Buffalo programs were dropped because of personnel changes within Houghton College.

9. Helping Students with Finances

The Crisis and the Trap:

In her brilliant book <u>Paying the Price: College Costs, Financial Aid, and the Betrayal of the American Dream,</u> Professor Sara Goldrick-Rab of Temple University's Center on College, Community and Justice vividly describes the financial problems which plague most low-income and working-class students in community colleges and universities –

"Millions enroll in higher education with plans to work, borrow, and save, only to find that their funds still fall short. Even living on ramen, doubling up with roommates, and working a part-time job isn't enough to make ends meet. Many who start college can't afford to complete their degrees. Others take on huge debt that they either cannot repay or limits their future opportunities. And this is occurring at a time when diplomas matter more than ever."

"It is no longer the case that, if students from low-income families work hard, college will be affordable (recall that the average net price at a community college equals 40% of their annual family income). … Nearly 75% of American families find college unaffordable."

National statistics show that over 70% of undergraduates are working and that fully 46% work either full-time or over 20 hours a week. 15% of all college students are homeless at least part of the year. Many student groups and colleges have had to create food pantries to help students avoid becoming malnourished. The vast majority of students have no health insurance.

In short, **the US simply has <u>no system</u> of student financial support** for college students from families with modest incomes. This crisis of affordability forces

even many middle-class students either to leave college and give up their career aspirations, or to build up dangerously high debts. Students are often drawn into a financial trap, first enticed by the promise of college credentials and better jobs, and quickly finding themselves trapped with mounting debts and the burden of working long-hours while studying. The enormous stress levels all too often result in a destructive sense of failure at having to quit college altogether.

There are many reasons why this problem has become so daunting –

1. **Higher education has become less and less affordable even in public community colleges and universities** --

   - Tuition costs have increased by 1640% since 1963.
   - 46 of the 50 states have reduced state aid for college education, with 33 of them reducing support by 15-55% in the last decade.
   - State aid for college education has dropped from 77% to 53% of the total cost.

2. **At the same time, the federal government's student financial aid programs have not kept up with increasing costs** -

   - The number of students receiving federal Pell grants for education has fallen by 20% over the last decade.
   - The value of Pell grants has fallen 50 % in real dollars.
   - When the Pell program began, it was intended to shield low-income recipients from having to take loans. Today 90% of Pell recipients graduate with substantial debt.
   - Interest rates on federal student loans have skyrocketed because of privatization of student lending -- Federal loans with reasonable terms have been largely replaced by private loans with variable interest rates ranging up to 13%.
   - There is a tremendous shortage of College Work Study funds, and the number and value of federally funded Work Study jobs have decreased steadily. There are very low limits on the total each student can earn annually under the WS program.

Figure 3: Declines in the purchasing power of the Pell, 1973-2013
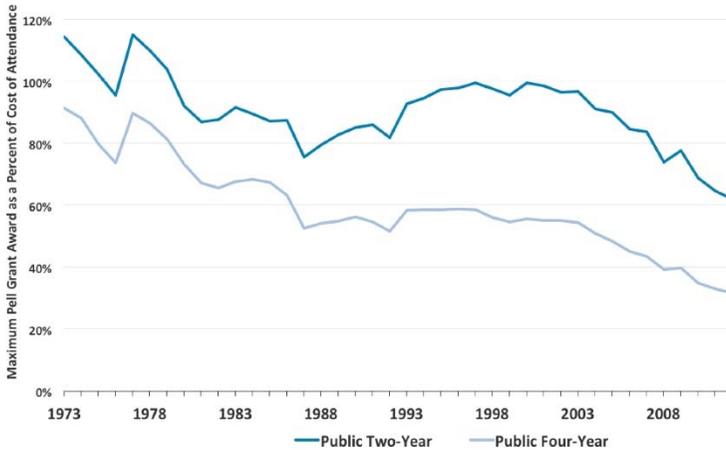
Source: Costs: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS). 2013. "Institutional Characteristics of Colleges and Universities," Table 330.10. Average undergraduate tuition and fees and room and board rates charged for full-time students in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by level and control of institution: 1969-70 through 2012-13. Pell Grant Info: "Trends in Student Aid 2013," Table 8: Federal Pell Grant Awards in Current and 2012 Dollars, 1973-74 to 2012-13.

3. **There is no effective support system for students with financial limitations. And the list of obstacles is daunting.**

- High school graduates and incoming college students have never been given financial literacy training or expert personal financial counselling on how to:
  - o Develop budgets, realistically projecting income, expenses and cash flow,
  - o Understand and analyze loan agreements and other contracts, or
  - o Do contingency planning for financial emergencies.
- College financial aid offices seldom have enough expert staff to provide the in-depth analysis and counseling which students need to fully understand their financial situations and develop realistic plans for making ends meet and succeeding in college.
- A new study by uAspire, a nonprofit group that promotes college affordability, focused on the very significant "indirect costs" college students incur after all federal loans and grants are applied. They calculated that the average student faces a shortfall of $12,000. What's more, in reviewing 820 college websites, they found that more than a third did not mention those costs at all despite the fact that they include books, laptops, transportation, food, health care, and other living expenses.

- When students project their income on financial aid forms, they cannot know whether they will receive one of the relatively few College Work Study jobs; and, even if they do, they cannot know whether it will be renewed after the first three months,
- While most students must work to cover expenses, there are virtually no jobs -- other than those subsidized by the Work Study program -- which offer more than minimum wage, any health or other benefits, or reasonable hours, let alone any experience which is relevant to their career pathway.
- Few students know that their second year costs are likely to increase and their financial aid will probably drop, substantially worsening their financial challenge.
- Students whose grade point average falls are likely to lose vital financial aid.
- Rather than receiving any financial help from their families, a recent study showed that 24% of community college students had to provide an average of $10,600 per year for family support.
- Few community colleges and universities have sufficient staff to provide crisis counselling, including counselling on financial emergencies, housing, food, health, mental health, personal and family crises.

Many students therefore face rapidly growing psychological burdens, daily worries about loans and debts, food security, health costs, family obligations, housing costs, and perhaps being forced to "couch surf" or become literally homeless   These conditions lead to intense feelings of failure, inability to concentrate on studies, and severe anxiety and depression.

In her study of students at public colleges and universities in Wisconsin, Professor Goldrick-Rab found that –

"43 percent of the students surveyed felt that they could use support for mental health. Thirty-seven percent had been diagnosed with a specific disorder such as depression or anxiety….12 percent said that they had thought about suicide in the last twelve months…. Up to 84 percent do not receive (mental health) services."

One crushing effect is the acute contrast between the high hopes and career aspirations the students brought to college, and the shattering impact of their failure to complete their Degrees – or ever to achieve their career goals. Needless to say, this has a permanent negative impact on the lives and psyches of hundreds of thousands of students.

These failures perpetuate intergenerational poverty, converting the American dream into a mirage. The failure to graduate makes it far more difficult to earn a family-supporting income, buy a house, build equity or savings, help children in the next generation to afford college or prepare adequately for a job with good pay and upward mobility.

As Dr. Goldrick-Rab points out in her book, **"Alleviating those constraints should help students focus on school rather than work, reduce stress, and make it more likely they will be well rested and well fed when they are trying to learn."**

The Need for Both Modest and Major Reforms:

Already a massive crisis for most college-age students, college affordability has finally emerged as a central issue within philanthropy, in state and federal policy, and in national politics. Recognizing the issue at last, the press publicizes stories ranging from the $80,000 price tag on a single year of Ivy League education to rapid rises in student hunger and homelessness. Meanwhile, anti-tax advocates are fighting efforts to increase state support for state universities and community colleges so public colleges become affordable again.

Since **even most progressives are failing to propose the <u>fundamental </u>rethinking, reforms and funding levels which are needed to eliminate financial barriers to higher education and achieving the American dream**, we have divided potential reforms into three levels – modest, middle-range, and fundamental ---

1. <u>Modest improvements</u> which can be achieved without major federal or state policy changes,
2. <u>Middle-range reforms</u> including major increases in federal and state support, and
3. A <u>fundamental rethinking</u> of how to make college accessible to everyone.

A. Modest reforms without major state or federal policy changes:

In recent years, several wealthy foundations and families have made major financial contributions to create new **private scholarship and college affordability programs** for low-and middle-income students. Some of these like Say Yes to Education guarantee that dozens or even hundreds of students will be debt-free when they graduate, or that their debt will be kept to a reasonable level.   These programs are very rare and are likely to remain so. What's more, it is clear they cannot achieve great scale or be replicated widely without infusions of major public funding.

Since very few students enter college knowing little about the financial issues they are about to face, let alone any financial planning skills, new funds are needed to **expand expert financial training and counseling help**. This should include developing materials and financial literacy programs to educate students on the financial issues they are likely to encounter, and how to project their incomes, costs and budgets for the 2-4 plus college years. The central goal should be to maximize the students' financial realism, warning them of dangers they may face, advising them on wise borrowing, interpreting loan agreements and other legal documents, and helping them with financial planning.

The financial counseling help should include assigning a regular counselor to each Pell-eligible student and scheduling periodic appointments to discuss any changes in their financial prospects and review their financial planning to ensure it's consistent with their course load and work situation.

Because of the growing financial desperation among students, a growing number of campuses have started food pantries and some help finding very low-cost housing solutions. There is little help on health and mental health needs, and it seems that few public colleges can provide comprehensive programs of emergency services and crisis counseling.

Queens Community House in New York City created a very helpful College Access and Success Program at LaGuardia and Queensborough Community Colleges. **Student graduation rates went up to nearly 80 percent** for the limited number of students in the program. QCH provided a mentor to help with individual issues, extra support during registration, financial aid to cover delays in receiving it from CUNY, and even Metro Cards. They found that cutting through the bureaucracy,

and supporting individual needs was all that was needed. QCH wanted to expand the program to other community colleges but was unable to raise the funds from foundation or government sources.

B. Middle-Range Improvements -- Policy Changes Currently Under Consideration

There are rapidly growing pressures on state and federal politicians to act on this crisis. Some states are reversing course and beginning to increase spending on public universities and community colleges again. National political leaders are advocating several alternative approaches to increasing college affordability, including –

- **Forgiving student loans,** starting with complying with current law mandating forgiveness for graduates pursuing public service careers; the most ambitious proposals would forgive all student loan debt,
- **Free tuition** at community colleges and public universities either for all students or for those whose income is below a certain threshold,
- Various plans to also cover a **student's living expenses**, sometimes combined with tuition assistance, all calibrated on a sliding scale based on a particular student's financial needs,
- **Employment** – expanding Federal Work Study and part-time AmeriCorps service through the Wofford Program to cover many more students and to provide students with assurance of steady streams of work and income throughout their years in college.
- **Work Study reform** – CLP has taken the lead in recommending reforms in the Work Study program, including greater funding for Community Service Work Study, and steps to ensure those assignments provide career-related experiential learning and college credit.
- **Crisis assistance** -- Going farther to address the immediate crises students face
    - Food – make students eligible for SNAP benefits and other food aid.
    - Health and mental health care – extend public support to provide health and mental health insurance coverage to students.
    - Housing – expand and subsidize student housing (e.g. Georgia State).

C. Fundamental Reforms:

It is tragic that so many students are blocked from going to college and preparing for promising careers because of America's failure to create a comprehensive system to make community college and public universities affordable and enable students to graduate debt-free.

It is equally tragic that this failure blocks so many people of color and people from low-income and working-class backgrounds from preparing for careers of community and public service. The CLP Network and its partners are particularly committed to advocating that highest priority be given to a system which supports development of the leaders and change agents who are desperately needed in rural and urban communities, nonprofit and public agencies, politics, unions, businesses and faith communities, as we all struggle to overcome the incredible challenges facing our nation and our world.

It is therefore time to give serious thought to the level of fundamental change which the times require, going beyond incrementalism to fully cope with these challenges.

How can this be done? It can begin by acknowledging two facts. First, the US desperately needs to increase the number of young people who are prepared for family-supporting careers of various types, and this will require that the United States provide new pathways so everyone can fully develop the skills and knowledge they need to prepare for those careers. For many this means that community colleges and universities must become truly affordable again.

The second step is to **create an integrated system of financial support** which meets the students' financial needs completely. That requires a complete redesign to replace the crazy-quilt of scattered grants, loans, jobs, and other income students must somehow piece together, hoping it will cover their tuition, books, other education costs, housing, food, other living expenses and emergencies. That crazy-quilt should be replaced by a system which is based on systems like those created by the Bonner Foundation and Chicago's Grow Your Own Program for teachers.

Examples of holistic support:

The **Bonner Program** at over 60 colleges provides a small, but excellent example of what's really needed. The Bonner Foundation started the program with the central goal of enabling a cohort of low-income students in each college to graduate debt-free. The students in turn agree to commit 10 hours each week to providing community service.   The colleges have extra staff paid from the college's Bonner endowment funds who help Bonner Fellows arrange all the elements of the scheme, including grant support, Federal Community Service Work-Study and community service arrangements, and counseling and career guidance.   Chapter 10 describes the program's great set of counseling, peer groups and other supports which are built into the Bonner programs, and which lead to excellent retention and graduation rates among their thousands of Bonner Fellows.

In response to a community organizing drive by parents concerned about the, critical shortage of teachers, especially Latino teachers, Chicago pioneered a remarkably effective teacher recruitment program which provides another excellent example of the kind of approach needed for CCS students. The **Grow Your Own Program** for many years covered the full educational expenses for students preparing for teaching careers in Chicago public schools. The students received a forgivable loan to cover their costs in exchange for which they promised to teach for five years. 20% of the loan was forgiven each year the student taught in public schools until the graduates became debt-free. Several other school systems also adopted this approach but most were eliminated because of state budget crises.

The California Youth Leadership Corps as a national prototype:

CLP is proposing creation of state and federal funding for a similar program for students preparing for Community Building careers. This could be done through a multiyear Fellowship guaranteeing students at least $30,000 per year (40 hours per week at $15 per hour) in exchange for a commitment to devote at least five years to careers in community planning, organizing, community development, and similar fields. This is based on the conviction that **it is in the national self-interest to make it possible for anyone – regardless of income – to prepare for careers which bring marginalized people together to build democratic**

organizations and tackle the country's most serious domestic issues. *(See Chapter 23 on policy reforms.)*

One major step in this direction is the planned creation of a pilot "earn while you learn program" with a combination of foundation and State Department of Labor funding for students in 5 community colleges in California. The Community Learning Partnership will plan and operate this California Youth Leadership Corps program with local college+community partners. It will be launched in 2021 with at least 200 students who are preparing for community change work and leadership roles receiving a minimum of $10,000 as they learn on the job and through related classes at the 5 colleges.

10. Other Counseling and Mentoring Support

In addition to the lack of financial counseling, there is a very damaging lack of adequate academic and career counselling support in the community colleges and public universities where CLP has worked. This severely handicaps students from the time they begin college until they leave. Students very seldom have access to expert advice or assistance on any of the tough decisions they face including –

- **Academic advising and guidance**, including counselling on developing an educational plan geared toward degree/certificate completion, transfer, and/or career preparation as well as advice on academic skills and disciplines, study skills, time management, student success, accessing mentoring and peer networks, and helping students cope and manage everyday pressures of work, family, and school,
- **Crisis counselling** with personal issues, health and mental health, food and shelter crises,
- **Job placement help** including help finding internships and part-time jobs which are linked to preparing them careers in their field of interest,
- **Financial planning** including help projecting their financial needs, their likely income and expenses, and how to maximize their chances for graduating; and coaching as they face financial difficulties and crises. *(See Chapter 9 for a discussion of financial literacy, counseling and training.)*

Some private colleges provide many of these services but – after decades of budget cuts – public community colleges and universities seldom can provide adequate services, and their student retention and graduation rates undoubtedly suffer as a result. Research studies point to student support services as playing a major role in promoting successful outcomes. They also stress the importance of early intervention and proactive counselling and advising.

Occasionally, a private foundation or government agency funds a "model" program to meet these needs, and they show measurable success. However, they very seldom receive continuing funding or are replicated at scale at other institutions. A current example is the foundation-supported pilot program of "student navigators" linked to the Detroit Promise Program and similar programs offering free tuition and services to low-income students which is described in the Appendix.

Westchester Community College in New York and Skyline College in San Bruno, California, had great success in recent pilot project providing "intrusive advising" staff who help students enroll in the right courses and stay on track. They also helped students with extra costs for books and transit. This resulted in a **doubling** of their graduation rates.

Early results from a recent MDRC study of the Detroit Promise program suggest that "**well-designed, well-implemented student support services in College Promise programs can enhance students' experience, improve their semester-to-semester persistence in college and potentially increase the percentage of them who graduate**," *(See Appendix for details on this program)*

Integrating Counselling and Student Support with Financial Aid:

One extraordinary foundation success story is the decades-old **Bonner Program** which is mentioned in the previous chapter. It started with a pilot program at Berea College in Kentucky and has expanded to 65 colleges and universities. Both Mr. and Mrs. Bonner grew up in very poor families, he in Detroit and she in Appalachia, and both nevertheless were able to complete college thanks to scholarship help. While they had no children of their own, they were acutely aware of the opportunities which college education opens up for poor kids, and they decided to give generously to expanding the availability of financial aid.

The Bonners also were church-goers with a strong commitment to community service. Their student support program at Berea and elsewhere combines financial help with a community service requirement. Their foundation gradually expanded the program to 10 other colleges in Appalachia and a dozen other institutions, including Historically Black Colleges. Remarkably **they endowed these institutions** with sufficient capital to create permanent programs with sufficient continuing income to provide a "full ride" to a cohort of 5, 10, 20 or 40 low-income students each year.

The students come together frequently and develop common bonds as Bonner Scholars, have regular access to mentoring and counselling, and devotes 8-10 hours a week to a community service job, usually financed through the Federal Community Service Work Study program (each Bonner college pledges to provide

at least 7% of its Work Study funds to Bonner Scholars.) The "Bonners" graduate debt-free.

A recent evaluation of the Bonner program documented how "being in the Bonner Program improves students' retention, persistence and graduation rates….   Students seek courses that improve their understanding of community issues and can improve their effectiveness in applying learning to real-world issues. A majority of (Bonner) students are now completing higher level capacity-building projects, including as academic capstones. Many are taking on research, program development, social action and other problem solving."

11. Linking Students to Jobs

CCS students need access to information on what kinds of jobs are currently available and likely future trends, especially in the fields they are most interested in. They also need leads on specific employers with current job openings so they can move quickly to explore those openings. This information is as important to current students who need relevant part-time jobs and internships as it is to graduates wanting permanent full-time jobs.
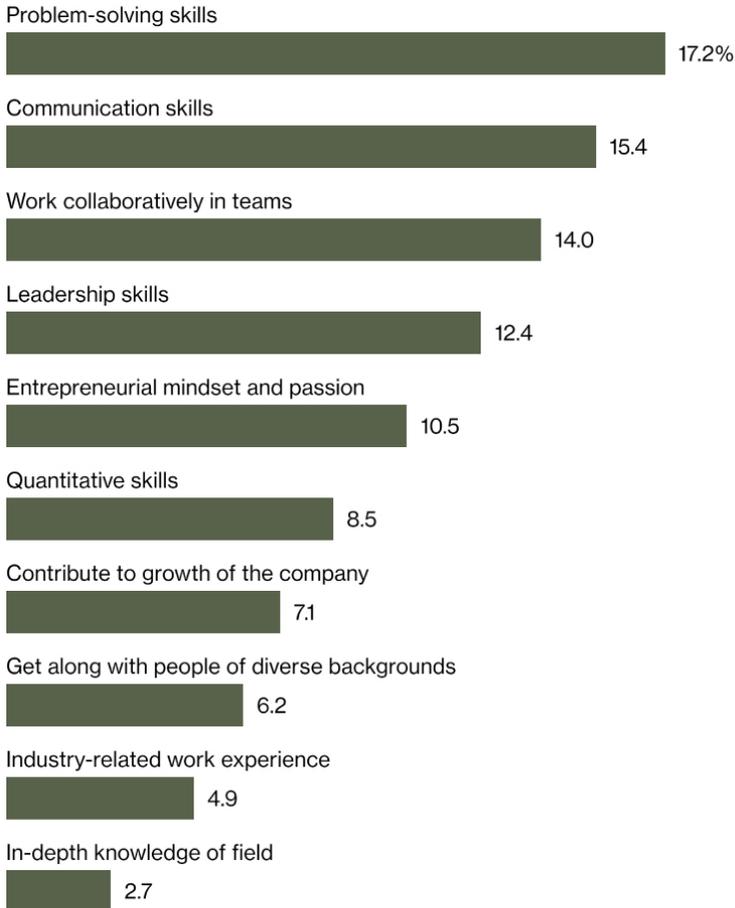
This labor market information can also be enormously helpful in recruiting students to enroll in CCS Certificate and Degree programs, as it can demonstrate that this field leads to good entry-level jobs as well as promising long-term careers. Furthermore, these data help college and community partners adapt their courses and experiential learning opportunities so they teach skills and knowledge which lead to available jobs.

Local employment and training organizations usually have access to sophisticated job search systems developed by Burning Glass Technologies or another firm. These provide invaluable information on current job openings, skill and other competency requirements, and employment trends in many fields. It is well worth asking for their help in searching for jobs for which CCS skills, knowledge and credentials would be helpful.

Unfortunately, it isn't easy to track local career opportunities in the extraordinarily wide variety of occupations for which our graduates are prepared. *(See Chapter 3 for Business Week listing of the cross-sector skills MBA recruiters seek.)* Because relevant jobs have many different job titles and use different terms to describe the same functions, a thorough search requires the use of dozens of key search words and phrases. It is therefore tremendously helpful if a college has its own license to a job search system, in-house capacity to develop a CCS-specific search program, and a commitment to provide the CCS program with constant access to the system.

Business Week, May 23, 2020
MBA Recruiters rank in order of their Priorities

Problem-solving skills

17.2%

Communication skills

15.4

Work collaboratively in teams

14.0

Leadership skills

12.4

Entrepreneurial mindset and passion

10.5

Quantitative skills

8.5

Contribute to growth of the company

7.1

Get along with people of diverse backgrounds

6.2

Industry-related work experience

4.9

In-depth knowledge of field

2.7

Source: Bloomberg Businessweek Best B-Schools 2019 Survey of Recruiters
Percentages show the number of times a quality is prioritized 1-5 in a survey

Another complication is that many intriguing jobs with small and medium-sized nonprofits are never posted in local papers or on major job boards and data bases. Therefore, it helps greatly to develop working relationships with potential employers for our students and graduates. The following measures are helpful:

- Developing a strong student **recruitment strategy** which focuses on **dramatizing the very large and promising job market for students with CCS skills, knowledge, and interpersonal strengths, including providing**

concrete illustrations of jobs now available for positions like those listed later in this chapter.

- Recruiting and screening students who are particularly likely to pursue careers in the field, including students recommended by local employer groups,
- Involving employers in defining the job and skill needs and designing the program, perhaps as members of an ongoing advisory committee;
- Recruiting mentors from potential employers to encourage and support students as they proceed along the pathway,
- Inviting potential employers to be guest speakers and discussion leaders,
- Allying with coalitions or trade associations with members who are potential employers and helping them expand job listings,
- Fostering the development or expansion of those associations so they link the college to more employers.
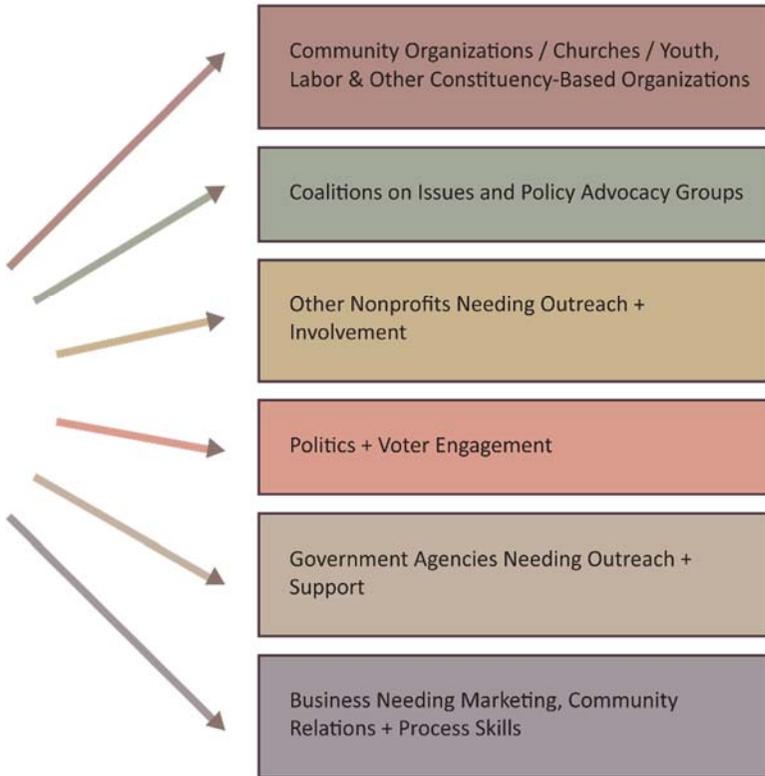
Another important strategy is to assist potential employers to create well-paid internships and relevant part-time jobs. Most of our students must earn income by working part-time and, for at least short periods, full-time, typically in jobs which offer neither relevant experience nor good pay and benefits. Our students need access to both good incomes and jobs or paid internships which help them develop their experience, knowledge and skills in change-related fields. Unfortunately, relevant paid internships are few and far between.

Finances are obviously a major reason for poor college retention and graduation rates. For these reasons, CLP is giving high priority to expanding internships and relevant job opportunities by:

- Seeking federal policy changes to increase set-asides of College Work Study positions for students enrolled in our programs and needing income and experiential education through community work.
- Seeking substantial private resources for internships which are directly relevant in developing community change knowledge and skills.
- Exploring expanded collaboration with Americorps, including the possibility of arranging for part-time positions under Americorps' Wofford Program so our students can earn while learning.

As Chapter 3 describes, Community Change Studies education prepares graduates for jobs in six major sectors of the economy. These are illustrated in the following diagram –

Continuing the Pathway to Employers Needing Leadership and Organizing Skills and Knowledge

Community Organizations / Churches / Youth, Labor & Other Constituency-Based Organizations
Coalitions on Issues and Policy Advocacy Groups
Other Nonprofits Needing Outreach + Involvement
Politics + Voter Engagement
Government Agencies Needing Outreach + Support
Business Needing Marketing, Community Relations + Process Skills

As students look ahead, they should understand how their education in Community Change may relate to job possibilities tackling issues they care about most. The following listing provides background on careers on several key issues and illustrates the range and potential of job opportunities which experts in creating positive change helps open for graduates.

The following are examples of job titles in different issue areas and sectors of the economy which need the knowledge, skills and values CCS graduates develop.

Health and Mental Health - Implications of Current Trends for Community Health Careers:

- The Coronavirus Pandemic crisis illustrated the growing importance of having skilled outreach workers and community health educators, especially in communities with high levels of density, poverty, and preexisting conditions and limited access to health care.
- Costs are driving hospitals and insurers to worry more about whether communities are healthy places for their patients; this is increasing concern about the "social determinants of health", including poverty, inadequate services, opioid use; they need staff who are skilled in understanding and addressing the patients' community conditions, attitudes, concerns, patterns of behavior.
- A major example of this growing concern is the insurers' pressure on hospitals to reduce rehospitalization; this requires that they move back into healthy communities.
- Community residents know their health needs but don't have the proper jargon to influence providers; they need training so they can speak in terms which enable them to have an influence (e.g. Social determinants of health).
- Larger hospitals have the capacity to do more to create these conditions.
- At a minimum, this increases the need for community health workers, caseworkers, improved service.
- Major health institutions like Kaiser, teaching hospitals and educational institutions often see themselves as anchors in the community and begin to hire locally, help local businesses, build housing, improve neighborhoods on their perimeter.
- Under the Affordable Care Act, hospitals must develop "Community Benefits Agreements" detailing how they are benefitting nearby communities; these can either be limited to local marketing or they can involve extensive interaction with their neighbors; Massachusetts General, Trinity Health and Kaiser are leaders on this.
- There is growing concern with patient-reported outcomes so providers can increase their understanding of what's really happening to people; they need to increase feedback and may hire people with organizing skills to conduct neighborhood surveys, facilitate focus groups, or serve on community advisory panels.
- Community health workers are also needed for
    - Community health centers which are growing with Republican support because they reduce reliance on entitlements; they need staff whose understanding and skills prepare them to reach, educate and empower patients from different cultures.

- o Community mental health centers.
- o They are good at organizing an impact on an entire segment of the population and meeting their needs, e.g. Substance abuse recovery workers.
- o Lead paint and other environmental hazards.
- Planned Parenthood needs staff who excel in working with people and organizing them to advocate for their rights; especially needs people of color for these positions.
- Organizations working with AIDS/HIV patients often hire organizers and outreach workers to reach out to and provide services the patients.

Jobs Related to Climate and Environment:

The growing climate crisis and the need to great expansion in community-focused outreach education and the promotion of conservation, weatherization, and other measures indicates that this field will grow rapidly over the next decade. Passage of some version of the Green New Deal and other support for green jobs also seems quite likely. The following list is only the beginning of the career possibilities in this field.

- Community organizer/outreach workers/community educators.
- Campaign researcher.
- Environmental advocate.
- Community-based advocacy advisor.
- Project coordinator for environmental organization.
- Rural development director.
- Public interest attorney.
- Executive Director.
- Post-disaster workers.
- Community developers.

Criminal Justice and Reform Jobs:

The Trump Administration's law and order approach threatens funding for many of the activities for which our graduates would be especially well prepared. Nevertheless, the following trends are positive for the long-run because they are effective ways of addressing crime and violence.

- "Violence interrupters" or conflict mediators – who work with young people, here about pending problems, intervene when there's an explosive incident, possible gang violence, retaliation, etc.; they rechannel and redirect the energies in positive ways.
- Police/community relations staff.
- Staff for community organizations and youth development groups, helping them strengthen the community's social fabric and ability to deal with violence.
- Work for law firms which are searching for plaintiffs on cases involving mass incarceration and criminal justice issues; the Innocence Project supports those firms.
- Police Reform Organizing Project.
- Work with returning citizens/"justice involved" organizations; including programs designed to build on the frequently great desire by ex-prisoners to 'give back to their communities" and study criminal justice, the legal system, work with nonprofits and public agencies.; e.g. "Bronx Corridors" which is tied to a university professor and works with returning citizens, vets, immigrants and disaffected youth; they develop and work on issues.
- Paralegals working on community issues.
- Youth workers.

STUDENT STORIES

Abdirahman Muse

Minnesota Governor Tim Walz recently appointed Abdi Muse to serve as a member of the Metropolitan Council, the policy-making board that guides the strategic growth of the Minneapolis-St. Paul region and provides essential services, including the bus and rail systems, the regional park system, utilities, planning and affordable housing. A former student in CLP's Minneapolis program, Muse is Executive Director of Awood Center in Minneapolis, a community organization focused on advocating for and educating Minnesota's growing East African communities about their labor rights.

Born in Somalia, Abdi came to the United States with his family in 2004 when he was 22 years old. Family connections brought him to Minnesota. Mayor Betsy Hodges' 2013 campaign pledge to address the racial inequities in Minneapolis resonated strongly. "I knocked countless doors for her," Abdi says.

"I'd like to see the Somali community involved in local politics at the neighborhood level, where you can make an impact. If you're not at the table as an immigrant community, your issues will be left out."

Abdi's pathway illustrates the wide range of experiences and opportunities CLP's programs foster, and the extensive options that are available to change agents who are driven to make a difference.

Before entering Minneapolis Community and Technical College (now known as Minneapolis College), Muse was an organizer for the Service Employees International Union, focused on improving employment conditions for workers in the home care and health care facility field and immigrant workers in St. Cloud, Nashville and Seattle.

Abdi completed the Community Development program at MCTC including an internship in which he led a successful banking campaign to make it easier for Somalis to send money home to their families. His learning from the program and his relationships with faculty and students in the CLP program continue to influence him in his career and vision.

Muse then was appointed a Senior Policy Aide to Minneapolis Mayor Hodges, serving as a liaison with area labor unions and representing the influence of the growing Somali American community in local policymaking. The majority of Somali Americans in the United States—an estimated 60,000—live in Minnesota.

"No one should live in poverty in the richest nation on earth," Abdi says, explaining his passion for social and economic justice.

"I've worked outside the system as an advocate and I've worked on the inside with policymakers to help make sure government works for the people. That's where my passion lies. I have worked all my professional life for inclusive economic development and worker rights. So the policy areas I would like to focus on at the Metro Council are housing affordability and inclusion, specifically regional planning for inclusive housing, and inclusive economic development and engagement."