

Peer • Relations •In •Degree • Earning

Hispanic Austin Leadership Class of 2016

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We were given the task to develop a project that would make an impact in the Central Texas community in Education. We agreed that it would need to be a project that we could be introduced at a defining point in Education. We all felt that reaching out to high school students would allow us to create something that was both impactful and sustainable.

When we first met with LBJ High School, the Early College High School (ECHS) program's director Ms. Natalie King impressed and inspired us. Her energy and commitment to the students currently enrolled in LBJ's Early College High School program was overwhelming. We all felt we could help.

The Early College High School program provides students an opportunity to attend Austin Community College while in high school and earn a 60-hour general associate's degree at no cost to the families. The issue we encountered was that the surrounding community did not fully understand the benefits or was unaware of this program. The lack of understanding, miscommunication due to language barriers, and maybe a little mistrust from the community has obstructed the growth of this program.

We saw an opportunity to develop ways to provide awareness to the students, families, and to the community. We created a brochure, a video, a mentoring program handbook, and an opportunity for students to shadow professionals. In addition, we met with the students and high school staff in order to learn and become familiar with their experience. Finally, we scheduled a parent's town hall meeting. We agree that students are more likely to succeed if they have the support of their families and those around them.

We feel that awareness and understanding of the Early College High School program, together with added tools to succeed that we provide, will be both impactful and sustainable to the future of the students at LBJ High School.

MEET THE TEAM



ADRIAN RODRIGUEZ

Dell



ADRIAN ROSAS
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ESTEFANIA DIAZ
Univision



MYRNA GUEVARA-CONTRERAS
Seton



VERA SANDOVAL
Applied Materials

P.R.I.D.E.



P.R.I.D.E. stands for Peer Relations in Degree Earning. The word PRIDE, in this case has a double meaning. It is the sense of satisfaction derived from one's own achievements and/or achievements of those who one is closely associated with and as the name of our team and of the peer-to-peer mentorship program that we created. Our logo represents the different stages of students within the Early College High School program. From lion cubs that are being mentored to the matured lions that are the peer to peer mentors.

PROJECT DETAILS

It is not a secret that education is one of the most powerful tools that we have to enhance the advancement of individuals and societies. Education provides knowledge, shapes cultures and solidifies values; it provides for a better way of life for everyone in our community. For these (and many more) reasons our PRIDE team is passionate about education.

We began our efforts by assessing current issues in the Austin area in regards to education. Our team took a holistic view of the various challenges that our society has in this matter. We explored the various stages of development that individuals go through, from early childhood education to advance degrees, and we evaluated these stages of development with the economic impact they produce on the individual and therefore, our community.

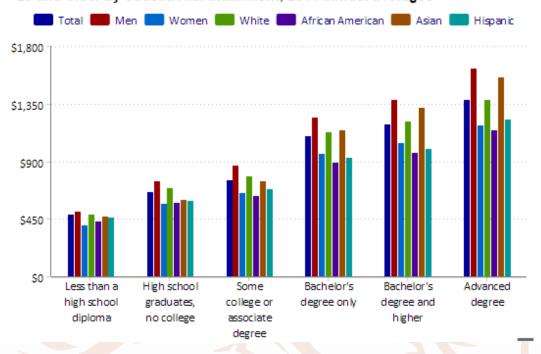
Given that our interest focused on the economic impact that education has in the households of our community, we researched and analyzed data from the United States Department of Labor reporting through their Bureau of Labor Statistics of the median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers age 25 and older by educational attainment.

Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers age 25 and older by educational attainment, 2014 annual averages

Education level	Total	Men	Women	White	Black or African American	Asian	Hispanic or Latino
Total, all education levels	\$839	\$922	\$752	\$864	\$674	\$991	\$619
Less than a high school diploma	488	517	409	493	440	477	466
High school graduates, no college	668	751	578	696	579	604	595
Some college or associate degree	761	872	661	791	637	748	689
Bachelor's degree only	1,101	1,249	965	1,132	895	1,149	937
Bachelor's degree and higher	1,193	1,385	1,049	1,219	970	1,328	1,007
Advanced degree	1,386	1,630	1,185	1,390	1,149	1,562	1,235

With this data we are able to establish a direct correlation between the level of education and the earning potential and economic impact of individuals.

Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers age 25 and older by educational attainment, 2014 annual averages



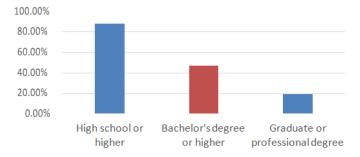
It was evident for us that the income gap between a high school graduate and a college graduate was something we wanted to address. For our team it was important to address an issue that directly impacted the livelihood and the capacity of a family to thrive in society, thus the data was suggesting a focus on higher education as the area we needed to explore.

Before settling on how we could narrow this gap, we took a look at the demographics of the City of Austin. We learned that, according to www.city-data.com, more than 50% of Austin's population (25 years and over) do not have a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Population age 25+ years in Austin:

High School or Higher: 87.5% Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 46.7% Graduate or Professional Degree: 16.9%

Less than 50% of Austin Population over 25 has a College degree



In addition, our team met with Austin's mayor Chief of Staff John-Michael Cortez, who provided a unique view of the City of Austin's needs in regards to higher education. Mr. Cortez explained that our city's great opportunity resides with our ability to push high school students to achieve college readiness while in high school. Mr. Cortez mentioned the growing need for middle skill jobs to sustain the middle class in our Austin community.

With this information we began to realize that an associate's degree could be one of the bridges that our city needs in order to close the income gap between high school and college graduates. An associate's degree becomes a stepping-stone between high school and college providing students with "college readiness" that students need and arming them with the knowledge and skills needed within the community and local workforce.

Our team met various ACC leaders including, Hector Aguilar, Dr. Richard Armenta and Dr. Stephanie Hawley to learn about current programs that can help the Austin community obtain an associate's degree. During this research our team learned about a relatively new Early College High School program, between ACC and AISD, designed to help students obtain an associate's degree while in high school.

As our team investigated the Early College High School program we realized its tremendous potential and the great benefits it provides for the students and our community. Our team recognized that this program was the stepping-stone that would help high school students make the leap between high school and college.

To summarize, this 4 year-old program offers <u>free</u> ACC tuition, <u>free</u> books and <u>free</u> transportation to and from ACC campuses for enrolled students. With such a great offering we were puzzled to learn that in the last 4 years; only a handful of students in LBJ and Reagan High School had been able to successfully complete the program. Our team interviewed multiple high school students along with two program coordinators at LBJ and Reagan High School.

From those conversations we found the following opportunities and issues with the program:

1. <u>Lack of Awareness</u>: Early awareness is paramount for the student's success through this program. Students should begin ACC classes in their freshman year to ensure equal workload distribution across their

high school years. We noted that many students were not aware of the program until late in their sophomore years, which intensified the burden and stress on students to complete the program.

- 2. <u>Lack of Mentor Support</u>: While students enjoyed free tuition, books and transportation support, a 160:1 student to teacher ratio hinders the student's ability to voice out concerns and challenges. This disparity also makes it really difficult for program coordinators and teachers to identify problems with students early on in the LBJ Early College High School program.
- 3. <u>Program Network and Social Media</u>: An opportunity to create a live forum where students and teachers may be able to utilize social media venues to interact, communicate and support each other to increase the organization, effectiveness, and efficiency of the program.

Recognizing the identified issues and reconciling them with the great potential of this program, we decided to concentrate our efforts in support of this program and to help LBJ High School students narrow the gap between high school and college graduation. We initially wanted to assist both Early College High School campuses, but realized that each campus ran the program differently when it came to admission, workload, etc. If we wanted to make an impact and fully connect with the students we needed to concentrate on one school and then present fully thought out ideas to the other campus.

PRIDE

PROJECT ACTION AND IMPACT

Pursuant to our meetings and discussions with the LBJ Early College High School (ECHS) program director, and the students, it became clear to us that the program was in dire need of a rejuvenated promotional campaign. Our team created two brochures, one focused solely on the LBJ ECHS program and one that included information on all of the ECHS programs within AISD. We also created Spanish versions of each of these brochures. The brochures include information on what the ECHS program is all about, how it works, the requirements for enrollment, and the benefits in obtaining an associate's degree while in high school. In conjunction with the brochures, and with the assistance of Natalie King at LBJ, the students, and recent graduates, we also produced a video highlighting the benefits of the ECHS program and testimonials showing the positive impact this program has made in the lives of these young adults.

Our team also took action by holding three town hall style meetings with the students and their parents to emphasize the importance and benefits of taking advantage of this program. During these town hall meetings, we presented data showing how a college degree could positively impact the financial well-being of the student later in life, and held question and answer sessions to assist us in addressing the needs of students and parents. In all, over 200 students and parents participated in our town hall meetings and discussions.

The students expressed the need for mentoring in our town-hall meetings, so we developed a peer-to-peer mentoring program at the LBJ ECHS. We named our peer-to-peer mentoring program, P.R.I.D.E., which stands for, "Peer Relations In Degree Earning". P.R.I.D.E. is designed for the older and experienced students at the ECHS to mentor the students just starting the program. We saw this as an opportunity to provide mentorship, guidance, and support on a peer level while also providing sustainability of the mentorship program through student participation. Our team provided a handbook to Ms. King detailing the P.R.I.D.E. program.

To further address the student need for career guidance and support, we also organized a "shadow day" for students to visit with professionals at their workplace. Students were given the opportunity to shadow healthcare, finance, engineering, marketing, sales, architecture, and media production professionals.

We feel that the action taken by our team to bring awareness and understanding of the ECHS Program, in conjunction with the added materials we provided, will be both impactful and sustainable to the future of the students at LBJ Early College High School.









STUDENT SURVEY

HISPANIC 48 AUSTIN LEADERSHIP	
Early College High School - HAL	
Student Survey	
1. What grade are you in? Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Set Grade 2. How did you hear about the Early College High School (ECHS) Program?	
3. What is your stress level associated with being in the ECHS program? None at all Some stress Manageable stress Feeling overwhelmed Stress overload! Other (please specify) I would need to know more before deciding know more Sign me up for a mentor now! Other (please specify) Other (please specify) 5. Which of the following would hinder obtaining your associates degree the most? Time managment Lack of moral support	
Lack of interest Curriculum too difficult Peer pressure All the above Other (please specify) 6. What would you like to see added to the ECHS program that would assist you in obtaining your associates degree? 7. What is your level of interest in completing the ECHS program? I will get my associates begree!	
Numer Somewhat interested interested Very interested degree!	

MEASURABLE IMPACT

P.R.I.D.E. collaborated with the LBJ Early College High School program to improve awareness, create a Peer-to-Peer Mentoring environment, and increase parent participation. Our primary focus was to address the issues that came about from the first town hall meeting with the students: lack of awareness, lack of mentor support, and program network and social media.

Together with the LBJ ECHS program, we reached the milestones below:

- 106% Increase in Program Enrollment
- 1st Parent Meeting
- 1st Shadow Day



TESTIMONIALS

"Early College High School is a breath of fresh air"-Natalie King

"I love it! The freedom of it is very appealing to a teenage student. We aren't stuck in one school. We are going to another school and getting experiences with older adults and it's just a very good program." -Student

"Challenging, beneficial, life changing..." -Students

"Wasn't easy, but so worth it..." -Student

"I feel like people take me more seriously. They see me as an adult and not a random teenager." – Student

"It opened my eyes to something new" – Student

"All of you have done such an outstanding job for me, the kids, and this program this year! I really feel like we kind of all grew together with this! Y'all were there from almost the beginning of my quote-unquote tenure. Haha! I'm really and truly going to miss you after this is over! Thanks for EVERYTHING!" – Natalie King





SHADOW DAY

P.R.I.D.E. and the Early College High School program (ECHS) held the first Shadow Day experience for LBJ High School students on Friday, April 8th. More than 35 students took advantage of the opportunity and had hands on experience in the professional fields of healthcare, finance, marketing, architecture, sales and more.

Once more, we thank Seton, the Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Spring Architects, Austin Resource Recovery, Carollo Engineers Inc., Dell, AT&T, Univision Communications and those who donated their time and knowledge.

<u>Shadow Day Mission</u>: To educate ECHS students on career paths that are available, teach them skills needed to excel in those professions and let them ask questions that will help guide them to what they aspire to be in the near future.

Students answered a survey to help us understand their experiences and the effectiveness of Shadow Day. Below is a summary of the answers that were received.

My job shadowing experience helped me to think about my career options. More than 85% of the students agreed that shadow day helped them to think about their career options.

I learned what skills are needed to perform at my Connector's job.

79% of the students agreed that they learned the skills needed for the job they shadowed.

What did you like best about your Job Shadowing Experience?

"Meeting the whole crew" "The people"

"He explained a lot on what I should do in college" "I got to see the business side of the company"

"The fact that we got to see what everyone did and how every job was useful in making the company run smoothly"

"Getting to help out"

What did you like least about your Job Shadowing experience?

"I loved everything about it" "Nothing, it was fun"

"It was great"

What surprised you the most about what you observed, heard, did and/or learned?

"What surprised me the most was that most of the people I met today, were not completely sure of what career they wanted to pursue when they were in high school"

"That a lot of people there weren't originally set on that job"

If you wanted to work in the career you shadowed, what might you do to prepare in your remaining years within the ECHS program?

"Go to a four year college"

"Take classes that will prepare me for that career"

I would recommend Job Shadowing to other students.

86% of the students would recommend job shadowing to other students.









SUSTAINABILITY: LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

Since our project does not require monetary funding or fundraising, but rather volunteer hours, we envision this project to successfully continue for years to come.

Our sustainability plan consists of integrating the P.R.I.D.E. peer-to-peer mentoring program at the start of this summer with a continuation throughout the following years. This entails having the LBJ ECHS Program Director pair up students with incoming program participants, having the upperclassmen guide their mentees throughout the summer classes and continue with them for the rest of the school year.

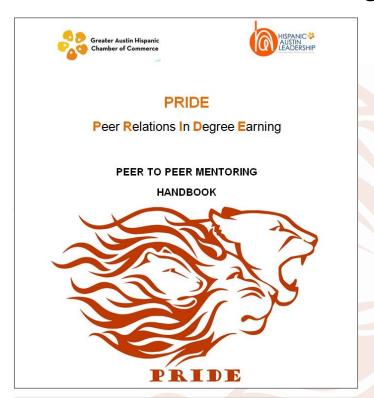
In order to continue creating awareness within the community we plan on reaching out to the feeder schools (Sadler Means and Garcia Middle Schools) as well as supply the fellow ECHS programs (Reagan and Travis High School) our deliverables (ECHS Brochures, Peer-to-Peer Handbook, Shadow Day Guide, etc.) in hopes of having them incorporate within their programs.

We plan to continue to help organize Shadow Days at the program director's discretion. To aid with organizing future shadow days, we will continue to reach out to our fellow HAL classmates, HALA and the GAHCC.



EXHIBITS

Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Program Handbook



What is Peer to Peer Mentoring?

A mentor is an experienced and trusted adviser.

A Peer Mentor is another student who can serve as a resource, a helping hand, a sounding board, and a referral service.

The responsibility of a ${\it peer mentor}$ is to provide support, encouragement, and information to students who are at an earlier stage in the program.

A Peer Mentor Is A.

- Friend
- Coach
- Supporter
- Advisor Role model
- Resource
- Person to talk to

A Peer Mentor Is Not A.

- Social worker
- Parent
- Super hero
- Source of money
 - Therapist
- Solution to all problems

Why Peer to Peer Mentoring?

A positive peer to peer mentoring relationship can create a comfortable space where students can share concerns and address problems. This will increase access to appropriate support and resources.

Benefits of Peer to Peer Mentoring

For Mentors

For Mentees

Improved reasoning skills	Increased academic achievement; greater self-efficacy
Better ability to relate to parents; improved communication skills	Improved social skills
Greater feeling of connection to school; increased self-esteem, increased empathy	Greater feeling of connection to school and peers;
Improved conflict resolution skills; greater patience; improved organizational skills	Decreased behavioral problems; lower rate of engaging in risky behaviors
Increased "cultural capital," which helps mentors to understand their own challenges and experiences	Increased school attendance; greater rate of continuing education

Research in Action, Issue 7: Cross-Age Peer Mentoring; Michael Karcher, Ed.D., Ph.D., University of Texas at San Antonio

The H.O.P.E. Model



Hello / Objective / Participation / Encouragement

Stage One: Hello

Introduce yourself with confidence and a smile!

At this first stage, it is important to learn each other's name and how to pronounce them properly. Also, share a little about each other's background and ask questions.

During this stage, make sure to set expectations from both parts. What do you expect from your mentee? What does your mentee expect from you?

Be patient, nonjudgmental, and open. End on a good note.

Stage Two: Objective

Set goals!

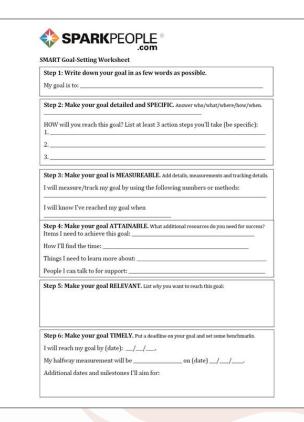
The goals you set can be career-oriented or academics-focused. This is a time to talk about your ambitions.

Stage Three: Participation

Implement your goals!

In the third stage of the peer to peer mentoring relationship, trust has been established and conversation is more comfortable and open.

Working on goals might be a central focus of the relationship. Document your progress using the following goal setting worksheet:





Setting Boundaries

Some good boundaries to set up with your mentee might include:

- · What conversation topics are off-limits
- Language/words that are off-limits
- What ways are appropriate to communicate with one another, at what times
 of day, and how frequently
- Types of behavior that are off-limits
- Defining your role what you can and cannot reasonably do with and for your mentee

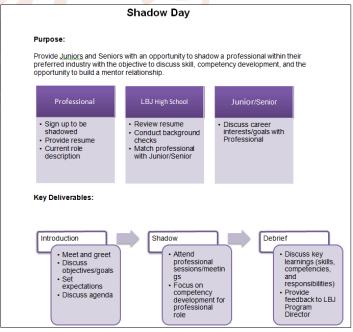
Obtaining Support

As a peer to peer mentor you do not need to have all of the answers. One of the most important skills you can learn from mentoring is how to ask for help. For some issues, you can find ways to respectfully and confidentially trouble-shoot with others you trust.

Remember - you can ask for help from:

- Teachers
- Program staff
- Other mentors
- Mentors in your life





Brochures

English









AUSTIN Independent School District

What is the ECHS Program?

ECHS Facts

- ♦ Free Textbooks



Program requirements

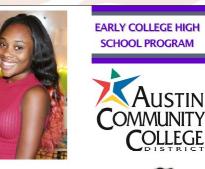
enefits provided by ACC

Spanish









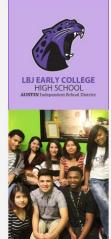


Programa ECHS

Detalles del Programma

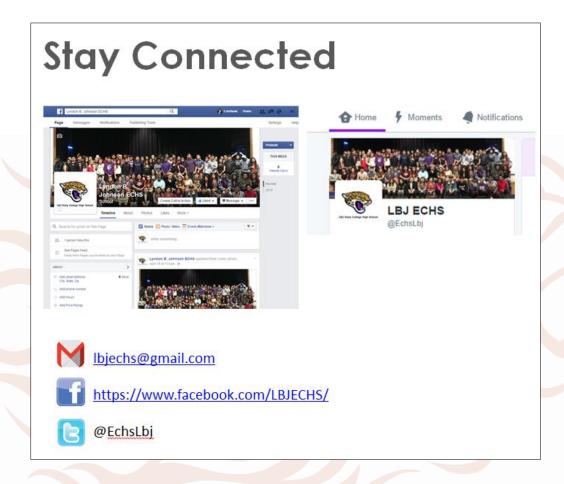
- Clases CRATIS
- . Libros CRATIS

¿Como funciona el programa?



Requisitos del Programa

Social Media



PRIDE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the following organizations and professionals for their support and participation.

Organizations

LBJ High School
Austin Community College
Univision Communications Inc.
Seton Healthcare Family
Dell

TRE & Associates, LLC Applied Materials
Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Professionals

Natalie King, LBJ High School Israel A. Franco, Dell Veronica H. Segura, Seton Foundations Kristin K. Smith, Seton Healthcare Family Lanna Domangue, Seton Healthcare Family Rachelle Stan, DCMC Foundation Agustin Contreras Jr., RPSGT, RST, Dell Children's Medical Center JoAnne K. Hendricks, Seton Foundations Jon Salinas, Spring Architects Casi Clarich, Director of Membership & Marketing, GAHCC CJ Sisco, Billing Manager, Austin Resource Recovery Claudia Talamantez, Univision Hugo Sanchez, Univision Joey Montez, AT&T Rene Aguilar, Carollo Engineers Alice McMillan, Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Adrian Rosas, TRE & Associates

A special THANK YOU to our families for their support and understanding throughout this process.

BUDGET

Donor	Purpose	Туре
DELL	Tablet Raffle at last meeting with students	Gift in Kind
Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	Early College High School Program Brochures and Peer to Peer	Seed Money
Seton Healthcare Family	Dell Children's Medical Center Tour on Shadow Day	Gift in Kind
Univision Communications Inc.	Early College High School Program Video	Gift in Kind

PRIDE

RESOURCES

"Austin Community College - Start Here. Get There." *Austin Community College* - Start Here. Get There. N.p., n.d.Oct. 2015.

"City-Data.com - Stats about All US Cities - Real Estate, Relocation Info, Crime, House Prices, Cost of Living, Races, Home Value Estimator, Recent Sales, Income, Photos, Schools, Maps, Weather, Neighborhoods, and More." *City-Data.com - Stats about All US Cities - Real Estate, Relocation Info, Crime, House Prices, Cost of Living, Races, Home Value Estimator, Recent Sales, Income, Photos, Schools, Maps, Weather, Neighborhoods, and More.* N.p., n.d. Jan. 2016.

"U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics." *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, n.d. Jan. 2016.

"We Believe in the Power of Mentoring". http://www/mentoringpittsburgh.org. Jan.2016.

PRIDE