

## **COLLEGE SUCCESS OFFICE (CSO)**

### **I. HISTORY**

College Success Office started as a program to ensure that HCZ students were adequately prepared for college entrance and graduation. Students must fulfill various college preparation requirements during high school to become part of the program. With high drop rates among high school youth, CSO works intensively with students to ensure that they complete all their high school requirements which also allow them gain entrance to college.

### **II. OVERVIEW**

#### **Non-HCZ Statistics**

- Only 43% of Manhattan high school graduates in 2006 planned to attend college
- Nationally, only 40% of black students at 4-year schools earn a degree within 6 years. Only 27% of black students at 2-year schools earn an Associate's degree within 4 years.

#### **HCZ Statistics**

- 89% of CSO high school graduates are enrolled in college this fall
- 90% of active CSO students are enrolled in college this semester
- We have 423 active participants this semester
- Students are at CUNYs, SUNYs, HBCUs and other private colleges and universities.

The College Success Office works with all of the HCZ high school students from our six adolescent sites. The goal of the CSO is to ensure that Central Harlem youth graduate from college with at least an undergraduate degree.

The College Success Office has set high standards of best practices to ensure our students have the highest quality college education, career readiness and community support. Our goals are for our students to obtain their college degree and entry into the job market or graduate school to achieve their dreams of a successful life.

### **III. COMPONENTS**

The College Success Office has three overarching priorities to ensure students success.

College Achievement: CSO support students who are in high school upon college graduation. The program provides necessary supports and services that will allow Central Harlem students to achieve academic success and earn their degrees at better than national rates.

- **Academic Case Management**: Academic Advisors work closely with students to monitor their progress in all classes and to offer guidance academically, socially and emotionally. Advisors offer crisis intervention and support with transfers and college re-entry.
- **Academic Resource Support**: Provides NYC-based commuter students and students studying on college campuses nationwide with a number of academic resources, access to academic specialists and group study sessions.
- **Project EOS I (Education, Opportunity, and Success)**: Intensive week for rising seniors to focus on their college search, financial aid and scholarship planning. Students also write two drafts of their personal statements and begin their Common Applications.
- **EOS II: CSO Summer Institute**: An intensive pre-college academic preparation program focusing on college level reading, writing and mathematics.
- **Financial Advisement**: The staff works with many students to solve financial aid issues and to create sustainable personal financial management strategies for their college years and beyond.

Career Readiness: Create and provide concrete work experiences that for students introduces them the professional working environment and exposure to different areas that are unfamiliar to them. The program also helps students develop the life skills that are necessary as they prepare themselves for success in their chosen careers.

- Internships: During winter and summer breaks, the College Success Office helps to place students in internships within and outside of the HCZ. Internship opportunities help to expose students to new career options and help to broaden their academic and extracurricular interests.

This past summer, we placed over 100 students at

- Lehman Brothers
- American Express
- New York State Division of Human Rights
- Polo Ralph Lauren
- Diane Von Furstenberg
- The National Black Theater
- Montefiore Hospital
- HCZ and a wide variety of other organizations

Educational Workshops: All students in the internship program are required to attend a series of workshops that supplement their educational experience including:

- Professional communication
- Job searching
- Interviewing
- Resume-writing
- "Mocktail" party which emphasizes professional and social networking with professionals from all over New York City

Community Engagement: An essential part of the College Success Office is to connect students with college campus resources, community service initiatives and help strengthen positive connections among students and parents.

- Commuter Support Group: Provides a community for students who commute to school in NYC's five boroughs. Students share their common educational and life experiences and organize fun activities, including "Open Mic Nights."

- Campus Connector Program: Campus Connectors are CSO students who are enrolled in college and have been selected to check in periodically with fellow CSO students on campus. Connectors are responsible for connecting students with on-campus resources, and plan monthly events in order to maintain a supportive College Success Office community.
- CSO Parent Group: Parents meet monthly to discuss concern and to help strengthen relationships with CSO staff. Parents also learn ways to support their college enrolled child, share common experiences and participate in workshops. Topics include financial literacy, empty nest syndrome, advancing their own education and improving credit.
- Community Service Projects: CSO create opportunities for students to give back to their Harlem community as well as expose them to other communities through the annual Community Service Spring Break trip. Youth have collaborated with:
  - Habitat for Humanity in Post-Katrina New Orleans
  - Work with children, doing an Anacostia River clean-up and prepare meals for HIV-AIDs patients in Washington DC
  - Collect clothes for low-income families and a park clean-up in Philadelphia and Harlem

#### **IV. STAFFING**

Recruitment: CSO recruits staff for vacant positions through job advertisements that are posted on the HCZ website, or on other external websites. HCZ staff who have demonstrated capacity to advance within the organization is encouraged to apply to vacant positions.

Hiring: CSO hires candidates who are sincere, active and have vested interest in students and success. Candidates are required to effectively communicate with students while remaining professionalism. Because students require variety of supports and services while they are away on college campuses, staff are required to provide

motivation and encouragement to students whenever the need arise. Since the goal of the College Success Office to ensure that students earn and degree and graduate college, CSO staff are also required to have at least an undergraduate degree.

Orientation and Training: Orientation and familiarization with policies and protocols takes place on-site by the Assistant Director. Ongoing training for professional development is also provided to staff. Employees are required to participate in HCZ's annual agency-wide staff orientation which introduces to the core values, culture and mission of the organization. Middle and senior management staff also participates in an annual retreat.

Retention: Staff is provided all the necessary supports and encouragement to grow within the organization. On-going staff development benefits not only the quality of service to clients but a sense of connection to the agency too. Additional incentives are provided to staff that have demonstrated a commitment to the organization. An annual review for all staff and merit increases for staff is an additional way that staff is retained.

## HISTORY



- College Success Office (CSO) started as a program to ensure that HCZ students were adequately prepared for college entrance and graduation
- Students must fulfill various college preparation requirements during high school to become part of CSO
- CSO works intensively with students to ensure that they complete all their high school requirements which also allow them gain entrance to college

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## OVERVIEW



- **Non-HCZ Statistics**
  - 43% of Manhattan high school graduates in 2006 planned to attend college
  - Nationally, 40% of black students at 4-year colleges earn a BA in 6 years
  - 27% of black students at 2-year schools earn an AA degree in 4 years
- **HCZ Statistics**
  - CSO has 423 active participants this semester
  - 89% of CSO high school graduates are currently enrolled in college
  - 90% of CSO students are currently enrolled in college
  - Students attend CUNYs, SUNYs, HBCUs and other schools

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## OVERVIEW CONT...



- College Success Office is a pioneering program that works with all HCZ high school students in six adolescent sites, year-round from 9:30AM-7:00PM
- College Degrees is our Goal
- CSO has high standards of best practice to ensure students have the highest quality college education, career readiness and community support
- CSO goals are for students to obtain college degrees, enter the job market or graduate school and achieve their dreams of a successful life

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## COMPONENTS

- **Academic Case Management**
  - Academic Advisors monitor students' progress in all classes
  - Offers guidance academically, socially and emotionally
  - Offer crisis intervention and support with transfers and re-entry
- **Academic Resource Support**
  - Offer NYC-based students who are attending colleges away with access to academic resources, academic specialists and group study sessions

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION  
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## COMPONENTS CONT...

- **Project EOS I (Education, Opportunity, Success)**
  - Intensive week for rising seniors to focus on their college search, financial aid and scholarship planning.
  - Students also write two drafts of their personal statements and begin their Common Applications
- **Project EOS II: CSO Summer Institute**
  - Intensive pre-college academic preparation program that focus on college level reading, writing and mathematics

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## COMPONENTS CONT...

- **Financial Advisement**
  - Staff works with students to solve financial aid issues
  - Help students to create sustainable personal financial management strategies for their college years and beyond

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### COMPONENTS CONT...



- **Summer and Winter Internships:** Students receive professional experiences by working with:
  - Lehman Brothers
  - Montefiore Hospital
  - American Express
  - Polo Ralph Lauren
  - Diane Von Furstenberg
  - New York State Division of Human Rights
  - The National Black Theater
  - HCZ
  - Other organizations

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### COMPONENTS CONT...



- **Educational Workshops**
  - All internship program students must attend workshops that supplement their educational experience such as:
    - Professional communication
    - Job searching
    - Interviewing
    - Resume-writing
    - "Mocktail" party with other NYC professionals

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### COMPONENTS CONT...



- **Commuter Support Group:** Group for students who commute to school in NYC's five boroughs
  - Students share common education and life experiences
  - Students organize activities, including "Open Mic Nights"
- **Campus Connector Program:** CSO students who have been selected to check in periodically with fellow CSO students on campus
- Connect students with on-campus resources, plan monthly events and help maintain a supportive CSO community

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## COMPONENTS CONT...



### CSO Parent Group

- Parents meet monthly to discuss concerns and to help strengthen their relationships with CSO staff
- Learn ways to support their college student and share common experiences
- Participate in workshops that cover financial literacy, empty nest syndrome, advancing their own education, improving credit

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## COMPONENTS CONT...



### Community Service Projects

- Students give back to their Harlem community and receive exposed to other communities through the annual Community Service Spring Break trip. Students have worked with:
- Habitat for Humanity in Post-Katrina New Orleans
- Anacostia River clean-up and preparing meals for HIV-AIDs patients in Washington DC
- Collect clothes for low-income families
- Park clean-up in Philadelphia and Harlem

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## STAFFING



### Recruitment

- Job postings on the HCZ website
- University and Colleges
- Other external websites
- Within the organization
- Referrals

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## STAFFING



### Hiring

- Candidates who are hired are expected to:
  - Have a sincere, active and appropriate interest in students well being
  - Communicate effectively with students while remaining professional
  - Motivate and maintain the interest of the students
  - Must have at least a BA and youth development experience

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## STAFFING



### Orientation and Training

- Assistant Director and key staff conducts orientation
- Ongoing professional development trainings
- Mandatory HCZ's annual agency-wide orientation
- Middle and senior management staff retreat

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## STAFFING



### Retention

- Staff receive necessary supports and encouragement to grow within the organization
- On-going staff development
- Additional incentives are provided to staff who have demonstrated a commitment to the organization
- Annual review for staff and merit increases

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# College Success Research

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## Introduction & Goal

This summer, the Office of Workforce Development (under the Department of Human Service programs), hired two CRLS graduates to research existing college success programs and collect data from their peers regarding their experience transitioning to college. We hope to ascertain the most helpful aspects of college preparatory support programs.

## Background Research

See attached chart.

The following chart showcases different programs gearing students towards college success. There are three essential aspects in most of these programs; however some are focus on one aspect specifically. The three main components are academic support, financial resources, and social support. The table below presents each program and its offerings.

These programs range in target population from summer prep for students going into college to freshmen supports to sophomore students already in college. Some of the programs specialize in services to low income families and first generation students. Each program aims to help students to improve skills, utilize opportunities and resources and ultimately to succeed.

## Methods

The College Success Program utilized three data collection methods: interviews, focus groups, and surveys. Each was designed to gather information from students with at least one semester's experience in college. Researchers used their own personal networks including alumni of the Cambridge Housing Authority's Work Force Program and Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program Counselors for interviews and focus groups. Surveys were distributed and collected at the Gately Youth Center's Night Court (tournament basketball) and around the neighborhood in North Cambridge.

First, researchers designed a ten-question interview tool and interviewed seven college sophomores. Interviews were held at the Office of Workforce Development and lasted about 20 minutes each. The interviews were conducted by one of two research assistants with the lead researcher sitting in on every interview. Secondly, researchers conducted two focus groups with a total of eight participants. Each focus group had two to six people and occurred at the respondent's site (i.e. at the War Memorial for the MSYEP Counselors and at Jefferson Park's WorkForce office). Each focus group was 45 minutes long. The lead researcher led the MSYEP Counselor's focus group with research assistants in attendance, taking notes, while the WorkForce focus group was conducted by a research assistant with the lead researcher and other research assistant in attendance. Lastly, researchers created a 13-question survey tool and distributed and collected total of 43 surveys. Everyone

# College Success Research



who attended a focus group or interview completed a survey. The additional survey respondents were identified in the North Cambridge neighborhood and at the Gately Youth Center.

## Data

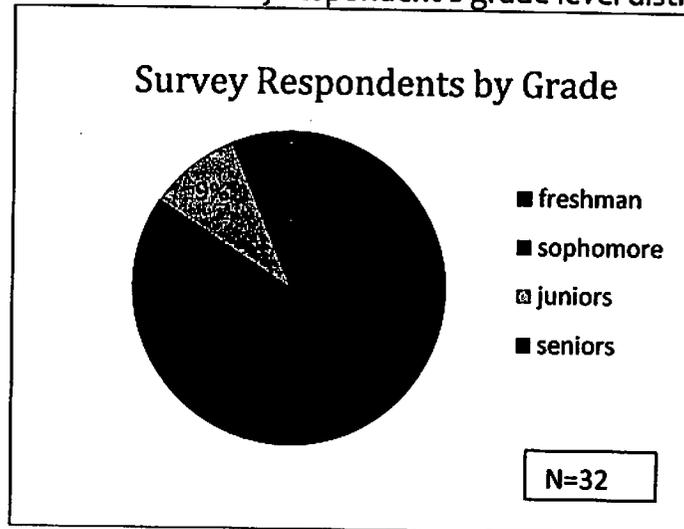
*Average age of respondents: 20 years old*

*Percentage currently going to summer school: 14%*

*Percentage enrolled in the fall: 75%*

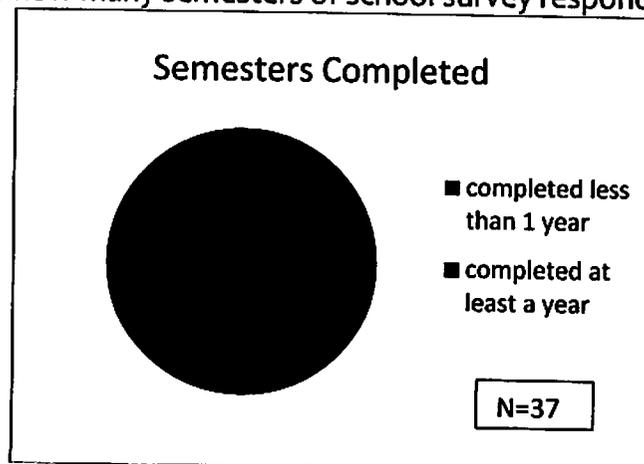
*Percentage enrolled as a fulltime students in the fall: 69%*

Graph A shows the survey respondent's grade level distribution.



Graph A

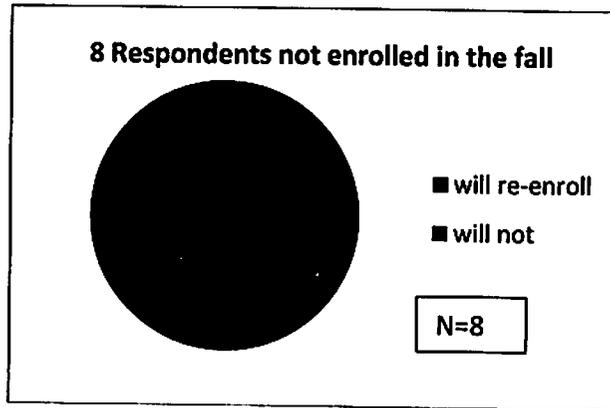
Graph B shows how many semesters of school survey respondents completed.



Graph B

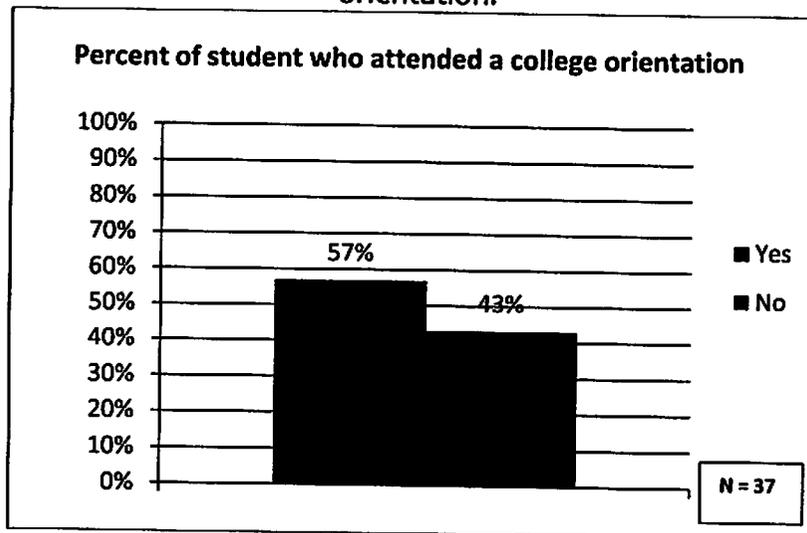
# College Success Research

Of the 8 respondent's not enrolled in school in the fall, Graph C shows how many respondents plan to re-enroll.



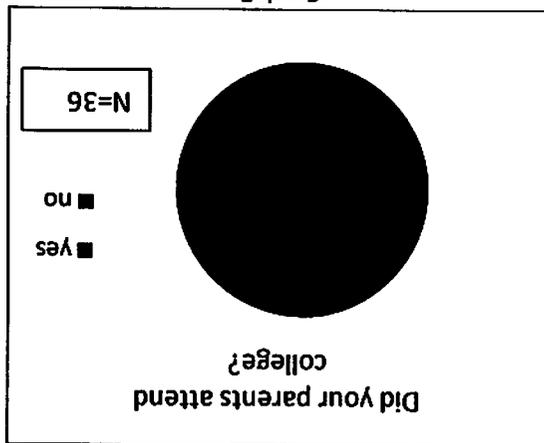
Graph C

Graph D shows the amount of respondents who have participated in college orientation.

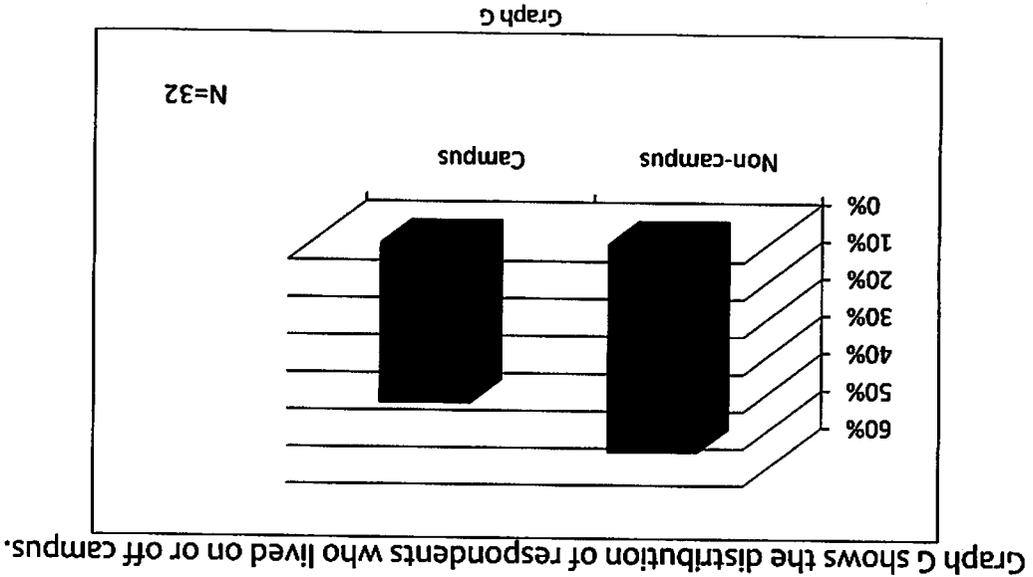
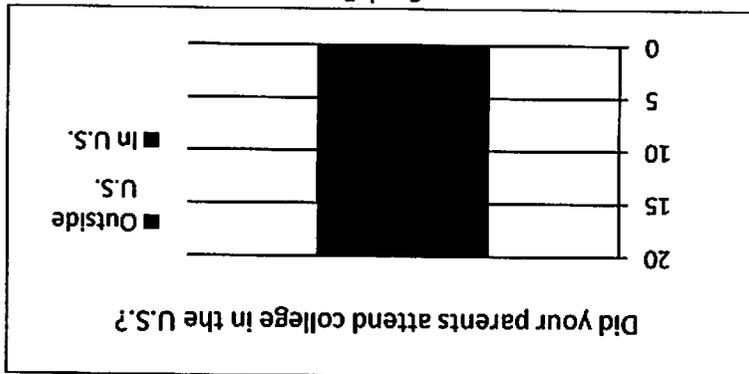


Graph D

Graph E shows that almost half of the survey respondents are 1<sup>st</sup> generation college students.

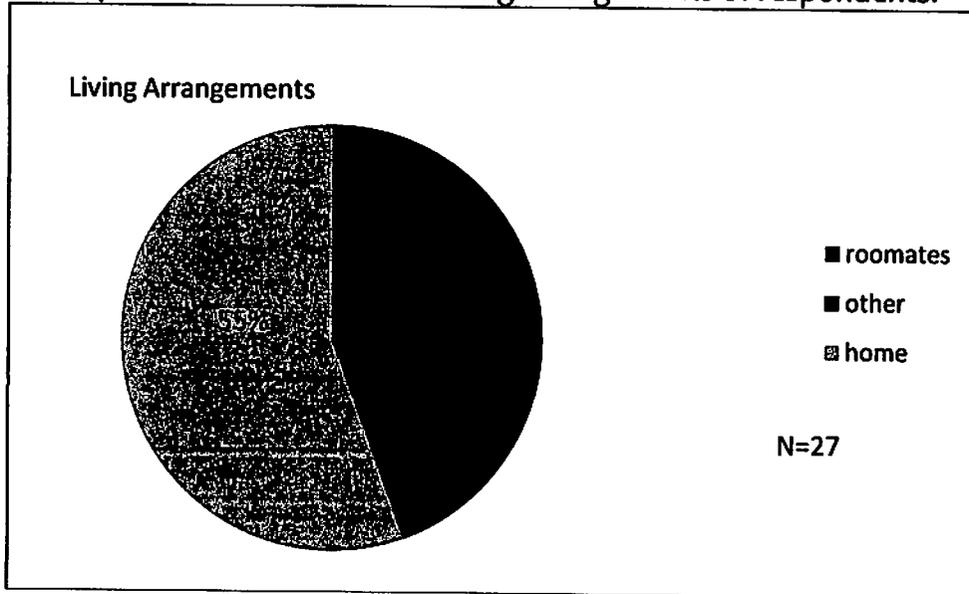


Graph F shows that of the 56% of respondents who are not 1<sup>st</sup> generation college students, 25% have parents who attended college outside the U.S.



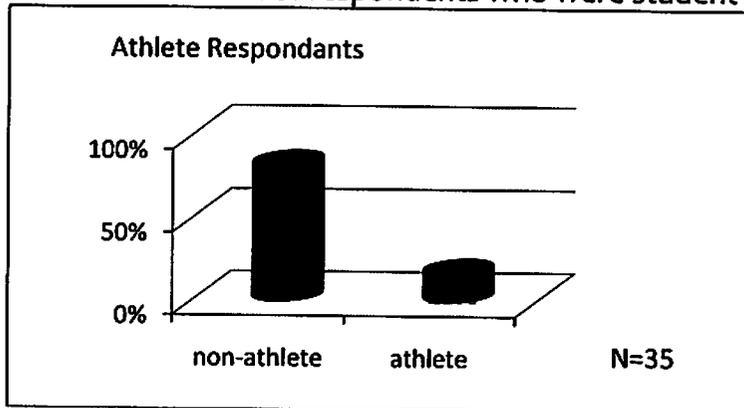
# College Success Research

Graph H shows the different living arrangements of respondents.



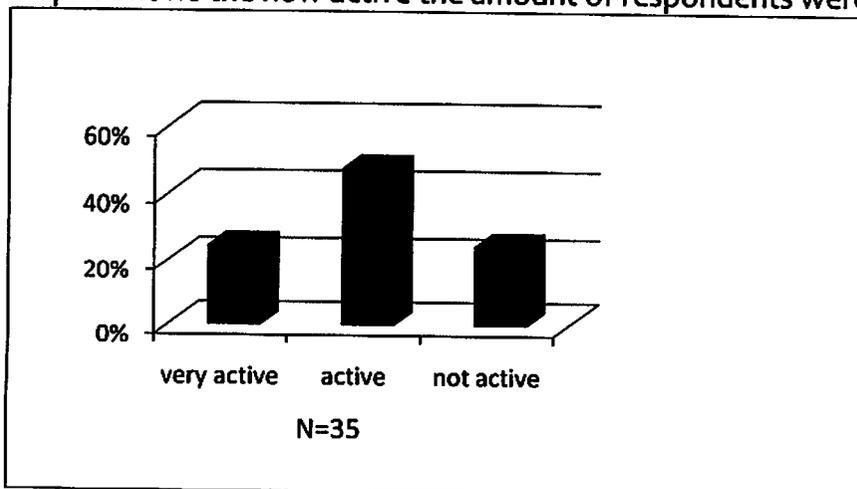
Graph H

Graph I shows the amount of respondents who were student athletes.



Graph I

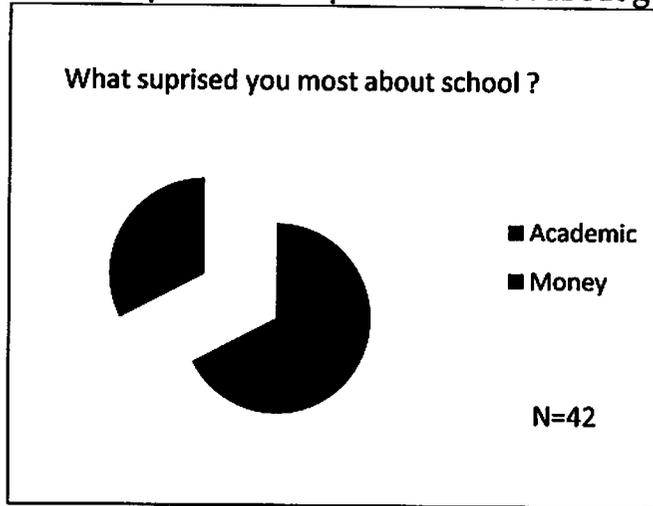
Graph J shows the how active the amount of respondents were.



Graph J

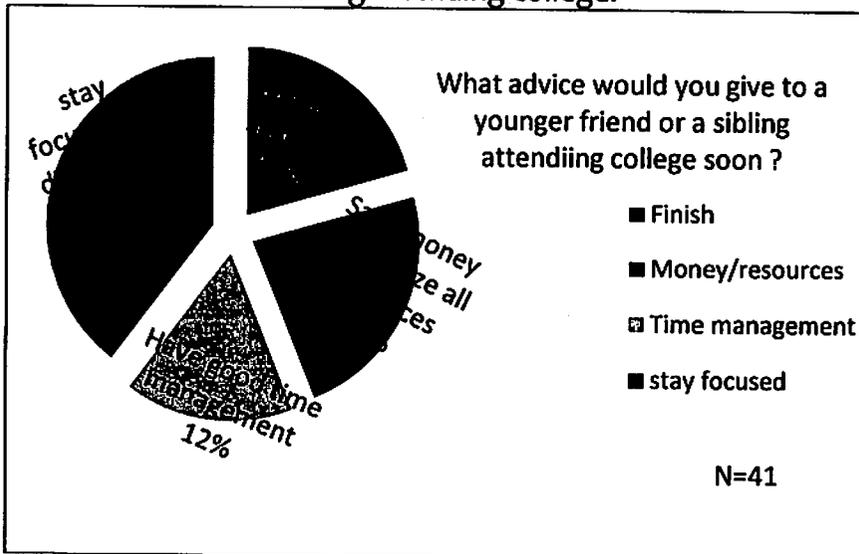
# College Success Research

Graph K shows what surprises the respondents most about going to college.



Graph K

Graph L shows the advice(s) from the respondents to express to a younger friend or a sibling attending college.



Graph L

# College Success Background Research

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<p><b>randeis University - Sophomore Year Experience program (SYE)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Academic guidance with competence, autonomy, identity and purpose</li> <li>✓ Helps with major selection</li> <li>✓ Works with other academic programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Student enrichment services and activities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Bridgewater State College The Second Year Program (SYS)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Specific academic help</li> <li>✓ Extensive writing and speaking</li> <li>✓ Academic enhancement</li> </ul>	
<p><b>al Poly University - The Sophomore Success Program (SSP)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Academic planning and achievement</li> <li>✓ Gives perspective to future opportunities by exposure to senior projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Brings forth community awareness and involvement</li> <li>✓ Autonomy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stony Brook University Sophomore Seminar Program</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Helps with major decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Activities and workshops</li> <li>✓ Topic discussions and seminar</li> </ul>
<p><b>Bridgewater State Virginia University - Personal Development Portfolio (PDP)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Required academic counseling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Helps with admission and financial aid</li> <li>✓ Activities to broaden personal and social growth</li> <li>✓ Summer orientation program for freshmen</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evergreen State College and Community Care - Coordinated Studies Program (CSP)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Innovated academics</li> <li>✓ Collaborative learning</li> <li>✓ Narrative style of evaluation</li> <li>✓ Interdisciplinary program for students best academic interests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Seminars followed by discussions and lectures</li> <li>✓ Workshops</li> </ul>
<p><b>orkforce Program</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Classes for career and college planning</li> <li>✓ Scholarship opportunities</li> <li>✓ Free tutoring</li> <li>✓ Computer access</li> <li>✓ College tours and visits</li> <li>✓ Helps write college essays and applying process</li> </ul>	

# College Success Background Research

Name of Organization	Target Population	Academic Support	Financial Resources	Social Support
<b>Forward Bound</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> generation students from low income families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Instruction in reading and writing skills</li> <li>✓ Academic counseling</li> <li>✓ Tutorial services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Assistance in completing financial aid</li> <li>✓ Work study options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Mentor services</li> <li>✓ Exposure to cultural events</li> </ul>
<b>The Rhode Island Children's Crusade</b>	Low-income families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Literacy activities</li> <li>✓ Tutorial services</li> <li>✓ College planning</li> <li>✓ Diagnostic testing and exam practice</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ College tours</li> </ul>
<b>University of Florida - New Student Program</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> generation students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Learning and discovery within and outside the program</li> <li>✓ Understanding education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ How to get financial support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Engages students in utilizing university resources</li> </ul>
<b>University of Texas - First Generation Student Mentoring Program</b>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Meetings with mentor</li> <li>✓ Understanding college life</li> <li>✓ How to become involved emotionally and socially</li> </ul>
<b>North Carolina State University - Freshman Seminar Program (FYS)</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Classes on study skills, time management</li> <li>✓ Community service assignment</li> <li>✓ Extensive academic support</li> <li>✓ Goal is for students to become sufficient independent learners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Classes on financial planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Students get to explore and adjust to the college</li> <li>✓ Plans school events</li> <li>✓ Extensive mentoring</li> </ul>
<b>Curry College - Program for Advancement of Learning (PAL)</b>				
<b>Burdig University - Horizon Program</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Skills development</li> <li>✓ Tutoring</li> <li>✓ Computer training</li> <li>✓ Assessment skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Financial aid assistance</li> <li>✓ Opportunity to receive financial aid for summer courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Freshmen have assigned mentors to meet with three times a semester</li> </ul>
<b>UMass Dartmouth - College Now Program (CNP)</b>	First generation college students from low-income families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Extensive academic counseling for students to work at college level</li> </ul>		
<b>Beloit College - Sophomore Year Initiative Program (SYI)</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Goal to utilize all the resources</li> <li>✓ Helps students transition from freshman to sophomore year</li> <li>✓ Helps with academics and personal planning</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Helps students get integrated into community</li> <li>✓ Builds relationships with faculty and peers</li> </ul>