

12-2020

MPC Resource Webinar

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“MPC Resource Webinar”

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GEAR UP

The University Corporation of Monterey Bay

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Collaborative Health & Human Services

Department of Health Human Services and Public Policy

California State University Monterey Bay

Friday, October 23, 2020

Author Note

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Abstract

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) at the University Corporation of Monterey Bay mission statement aims to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. The educational issue for low-income students is the lack of accessibility to resources that assists with preparedness and success in post-secondary education. Students aren't able to attend college due to poverty, lack of academic preparation and familial factors. Consequences consist of post-secondary dropout, financial debt and unpreparedness for college life. The barriers students and their families face include language barriers, structural barriers and low economic status. My Capstone project is to host a webinar for Seaside High School Juniors and their parents. My goal for this project is to provide a prevention program such as the webinar with resources to improve low-income family's knowledge about academic options. Many Seaside High students attend their local community college, Monterey Peninsula College (MPC) after graduation. I thought it would be beneficial for students to know what resources are available to them. I am inviting various speakers from MPC to be a part of the panel to share this information via zoom. Nine participants attended and four of them filled out a survey, out of the four responses three of the

participants rated the webinar a five, the other participant rated the webinar a four which shows the students benefited from the prevention program.

Key terms: college, low-income students, preparedness, postsecondary education, resources

Agency & Communities Served

I am interning for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) at the University Corporation of Monterey Bay. GEAR UP is a discretionary grant program under the U.S. Department of Education that aims to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education by providing funding to States and local community-educational partnerships via six-to-seven year grants to offer support services to high-poverty, middle and high schools. Currently, GEAR UP serves over 560,000 students enrolled in over 3,525 secondary schools across 45 states. In order to be eligible for GEAR UP, a minimum of 50% of a school's student body must be enrolled in the Federal Free and Reduced-Price Lunch (FRL) program (About Gear Up). The University Corporation of Monterey Bay qualified for the grant because participating schools carry a 76% federal free/reduced lunch plan rate. CSUMB was awarded a seven-year partnership grant in 2014 that will conclude this upcoming year in 2021 (GEAR UP- CSUMB). Cal State Monterey Bay utilized funding to offer a GEAR-UP grant to 2,543 seventh and eighth graders. GEAR UP provides services to seventh and eighth graders and follows the same students all the way to their 1st year of college.

GEAR UP's goals are to increase the numbers of students who are prepared to pursue higher education, improve high school graduation and postsecondary enrollment rates, and raise the knowledge of postsecondary options, preparation, and financing among students and

families. In order to achieve these goals, GEAR UP provides bilingual workshops, field trips, open labs and 1 on 1s to help educate financially, and prepare academically. Support services would also include tutoring and mentoring to ensure the readiness of postsecondary education.

Problem Description

Although there has been progress in our education system, we lack in various areas. The educational issue would be the lack of accessibility to resources that assists students to achieve post-secondary education. In 2014, 66.3% of students in Monterey County enrolled in college. GEAR UP nationally in 2014 had a Post-Secondary Enrollment rate of 77.3% (2014-15 College-Going Rate). Students and parents aren't aware of deadlines for FAFSA/DACA, UC/CSU college apps, and the various postsecondary options. Some parents believe they wouldn't get financial aid because they didn't make enough money. They also come in worried because they don't know what comes next for their student after graduating. Parents want to help but might not know how to. GEAR UP attempts to overcome these concerns by marketing workshops and reaching out to families to start that conversation with their high school students.

As for the students, GEAR UP looks over student transcripts to ensure they are on the right track to graduate, for any concerns 1 on 1s are available with my mentor. Field trips are also available to expose students to 2-year community colleges, 4-year universities, and trade schools. When students are exposed to the different resources and support that college has to offer they become engaged and interested to pursue postsecondary education.

Contributing Factors

Familial factors take into effect when thinking about postsecondary options. Being first-generation could take a toll on a student because they could be hearing about attending and/or being eligible to attend college. Parents are the greatest support system for their children. Although the education system provides students with professionals such as teachers, counselors and school social workers, students rely on the guidance from parents regardless of their education level. While interning for GEAR UP we provide services to all students that wish to obtain our services. The only requirement is that the school meets the federal free or reduced lunch percentage of 76%. My mentor oversees anywhere between 1 to 6 high school campuses. I noticed that schools such as El Puente and Everett Alvarez High School have fewer parents involved with their academic pathway and are unaware of the necessary steps needed to enroll in postsecondary education. The few students who had parent involvement needed less encouragement because they have the motivational support necessary. Students with parent involvement simply need follow-ups and reminders of important deadlines. As for students with no parent involvement they require the knowledge of what college entails and the academic requirements needed such as standardized testing. GEAR UP has brought inspiration and motivation to students with their workshops, open labs, and one-on-one opportunities.

Poverty is another contributing factor as to why some high school students don't pursue higher education past 12th grade. Byrd (2019) found that low-income families have different career and education goals for their children. One of the goals consists of the student obtaining a high school diploma and nothing further since some parents didn't even make it that far in school. As for careers, parents are satisfied with a minimum wage job with 40 hour weeks since that proves a hard worker in some households. Low-income students struggle attaining their own goals without the guidance or support from their household. The cost of attendance continues to increase which forces low-income students to seek programs on campus. Unfortunately, not everyone is aware of the financial assistance that is provided for students and their families. Financial aid would be able to cover expenses if applicable. If that isn't an option, there are also scholarship applications that students could apply for. The lack of academic preparation is a contributing factor as to why low-income students are not able to achieve postsecondary education. While interning for GEAR UP, one of my tasks is to look over student's transcripts to ensure students are on track to graduate with their coursework and community service hours. We contact parents if their students are failing courses or have hours left to complete, and schedule in-person meetings between my mentor, parents, and myself to come up with a plan for success. While looking over these transcripts I noticed a lot of students who were in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes had failing grades in their science and history courses. Science and history courses are not being structured to fit the needs of English Language Learners, (ELL). The transcripts also indicated that ELL students were enrolled in advanced placement courses setting them up once again for failure. As Byrd (2019) pointed out in his study, students from the lowest income quartile are less scholastically prepared than their high-income peers who are provided with guidance and support from their college-educated parents.

Consequences

When students are unaware or unprepared for postsecondary education it could lead them to failure. The first consequence of being unprepared for postsecondary education would be giving up and dropping out. Students find it easier to give up than to ask for help because of the lack of familial factors. It is hard to reach out to people and resources that they are unfamiliar with. High school students that don't pursue higher education will qualify for minimum wage jobs or constantly have to compete with higher pay jobs that do not require postsecondary education. High School students that end their education after graduating from the K-12 system could end up unemployed or homelessness.

Secondly, a student could get into debt or even kicked out if they aren't aware of deadlines. Oftentimes students fail to meet requirements that would allow for academic funding. With filing FAFSA, Free Application for Federal Student Aid, a student could qualify for more academic funding depending on the number of units enrolled in.

Lastly, Byrd (2019) explains social integration in which low-income students lack because they are in a college environment for the first time. They are unprepared socially for college which affects them making new friends, networking, social interactions, joining clubs/organizations, attending professor's office hours and other important life skills that are needed for everyday life at a college institution to feel a sense of belonging.

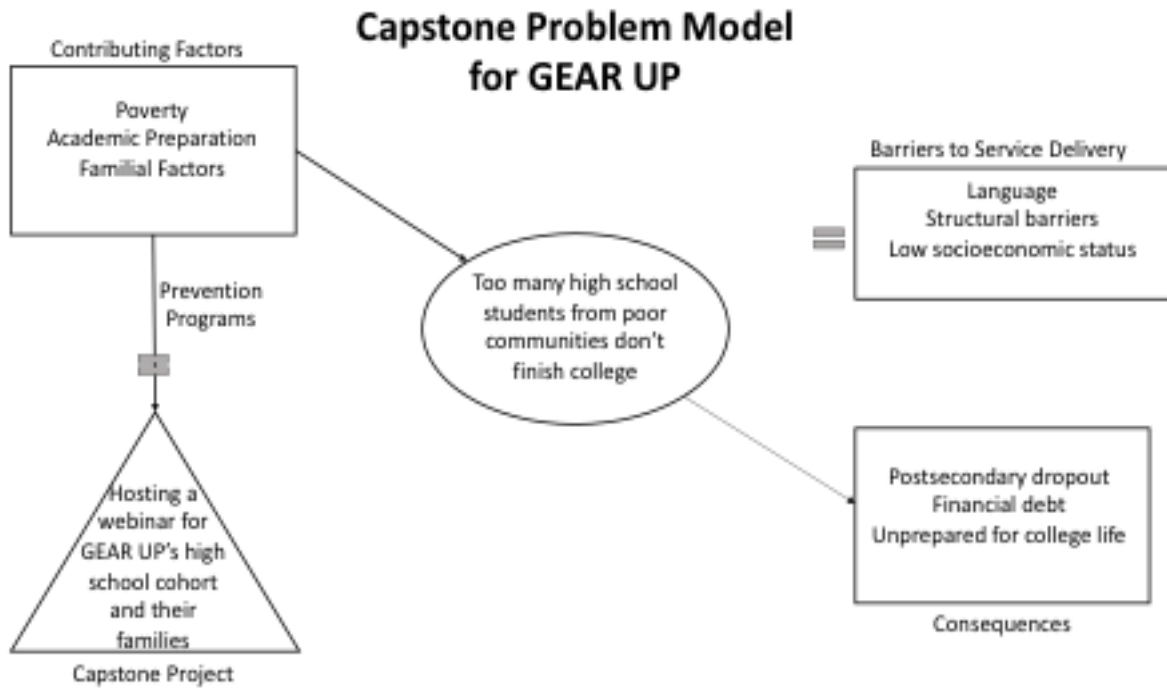
Barriers to Service Delivery

Language is a barrier this agency has to overcome. GEAR UP provides families and students opportunities to attend events and workshops in English and Spanish. The events are at the same time but in different classrooms so there aren't any delays in the presentation for translation. This provides a safe place for families who feel intimidated attending an event with mostly English language speakers. We want the community to feel secure when they are requesting services, so everything provided is bilingual. This creates confidence in hopes they return if they need more services.

There are structural barriers because not everyone is aware of what GEAR UP is. The lack of knowledge or understanding of services that are available is crucial to make a difference in a student and families' life. Corinne Nilsen (2014) submitted an education practice for the “High school Financial Literacy Curriculum” where she discusses how GEAR UP provides an online financial literacy program to Kansas students where they can learn how to become financially responsible early in life. This opportunity empowers students and could prevent any more financial hardship the student and family may have.

There is a financial barrier because it is difficult to get in contact or meet with parents/guardians because they are always working. Lower socioeconomic parents are not able to draw family connections when it comes to higher education or career goals for their child. Parents can't provide advice nor support since they don't have experience of what college entails. Most of these parents dropped out of high school to begin working at a young age. Students are expected to “look it up” themselves and rely on the school to provide students with the information they need to pursue higher education.

Problem Model



Project Description

Title: MPC Resource Webinar

For my capstone project I will be hosting a webinar for Seaside High School where I will be providing a panel of resources from Monterey Peninsula College. My audience will be juniors and their families since that is the cohort GEAR UP is working with this semester. I will be inviting multiple speakers from MPC to be a part of the panel to share this information via zoom.

Project Purpose

I am going to provide a prevention program for juniors and their families to improve their knowledge about academic options. This webinar will be a conversation starter between the students and parents to explore the appropriate plan needed to pursue post-secondary education with the resources provided. Too many high school students from poor communities don't finish college because they haven't been prepared in their academic journey. This is in hopes to have the Seaside High School class of 2022 informed of the various support available at MPC.

Project Implementation

The webinar will be a prevention program for low-income students who don't have a plan for post-secondary education but would like to pursue it. Attending the panel will allow students to realize how attainable pursuing higher education is. This webinar will be held via zoom and recorded to be posted on YouTube to provide access to students and families who are unable to attend.

The only materials needed for the event will be the physical donated items for the raffle giveaway which includes MPC and Spartan gear. In order to access the webinar students and families will need internet access and a device.

My role for the webinar is to invite panel participants, create a flyer, outreach calls, and ask for donations. As for my mentor, Ruth Harrison, she assisted with outreach, meeting with the principal of Seaside High to get approval, and referred me to MPC professionals. For advertising Seaside High will be scheduling an auto-dialer as an invitation to the event. They will also post the flyer on social media. At the beginning of the webinar I will introduce the presenters. Throughout the event I will be moderating any questions in the chat and read them out loud to so the professionals could answer them.

As of now the following professionals will be presenting at the webinar:

Name:	Resource:
Daisy Chaidez & Carlos Ocampo	Early Opportunity Program (EOP)
Terri Murphy	Financial Aid (FAFSA)
Sudeshna Nand	Career Transfer Resource Center (CTRC)
Yadira Moreno	El Centro and First Year Experience (FYE)
Elroy Gardenhire	Umoja Program
Aldair Pimental	SEA Program

Assessment

I will copy the post-webinar survey in the chat feature on zoom at the beginning and end of the event survey responses will be used as raffle giveaway entries. When concluding the webinar I will be asking participants to use a “thumbs up” feature or comment in the chat of what they thought of the event. The webinar will also be recorded then posted on YouTube. I am able

to assess the effectiveness of my project by counting the number of participants that attended and how many people viewed and liked/disliked the video on YouTube.

The survey questions are the following:

Student Name:

Student Email:

Parent Name:

Parent Email:

Parent Phone Number:

Rate Panel: On a scale from 1-5 how helpful was the webinar?

What other topics would you like to learn about in order to help you prepare for college?

Comments/Suggestions:

Project Activities

I have invited presenters from MPC for my webinar and 5 presenters have confirmed thus far. The flyer I have created is complete, now I need approval from the Seaside High principal before posting. I also have donations for the raffle prize giveaway. There’s usually around 20 students in attendance for GEAR UP webinars. The anticipated outcome for my project is for the students and families to gain knowledge about the resources available to students when pursuing post-secondary education. I will be able to measure the outcome of my project from one of the survey questions “Rate Panel: On a scale from 1-5 how helpful was the webinar?” Another measure of outcome would be the number of questions asked by participants and then answered by the presenters throughout the webinar.

Preparation for Consultation

In planning my project, my mentor and I have created a timeline. The struggles I had with planning my project is waiting for responses from the presenters I have invited for this webinar. My mentor has created follow-up meetings with the principal to keep him informed about the event which has been great assistance.

Timeline	Deadline:	Staff:
Advertising		
Flyer Draft	10/8	Julie/Ruth
Final Flyer	10/16	Julie
Outreach calls	10/19-week of	Julie
Post on social media	10/26	Julie
Seaside HS page		SHS
Parent Square		SHS
Auto dialer		SHS
Invite presenters	10/9	Julie
Follow up	10/19	Julie
Send Thank you notes		
Format:		
6:00-6:03	Introduction of Event	
	Write name and parent's	
	What career are you interested in?	
	Copy survey to chat	
6:03-6:05	Introduce the Panelists	
6:05:00 PM-6:50PM	5-8 minutes per slide	2-3 mins for questions from the chat after each topic
6:05	Grace	
6:15	Kacey Giammanco	

6:25	Deanna Galdo	
6:35	Sudeshna Nand	
6:45	LaKisha Bradley	
6:55	Yadira Moreno	
6:55-7:00	Closing	
	Copy survey to chat	
	Announce raffle prize winner	
Follow up:		
Posting on Youtube	Day after event	Julie

Findings/Results

To measure the outcome I used I copied a post-survey to the chat via zoom when the webinar was coming to a close. I received 4 responses to the survey out of 9 participants that attended the webinar. In the survey I included a rating system from 1-5 to find how effective the project was for participants. Out of the 4 responses 3 of the participants rated the webinar a 5, the other participant rated the webinar a 4. The survey shows the participants benefited from the prevention program and gained knowledge about a postsecondary option which is Monterey Peninsula College.

Rate Panel
5
4
5
5

Along with the post-survey, I recorded the webinar and posted the recording on YouTube and received 8 views, on the video there weren't any “thumbs up” or “thumbs down”. I also added up

the questions asked in the chat that were answered by the presenters which counts as an effective way to gain knowledge of the resources being discussed. There were 5 questions asked and answered during the webinar.

Expected Outcome

The expected outcome for my project was 20 participants in attendance that I was going based off of the estimated number of participants GEAR UP had for their Athletic Scholar Webinars. Unfortunately, I did not achieve the expected outcome because I had 9 participants that attended. There are various factors why I didn't achieve the expected outcome. One of them is that students are on zoom all day for school so it would be another zoom session for them. Secondly, I didn't have the set date and time yet to inform students and their families during my advising calls which would have been a great opportunity to inform them. Lastly, the webinar was aimed for GEAR UP's cohort of Juniors which leaves out other students from attending. Although there were some downfalls I was very proud of the webinar because there was active participation from the audience and students were able to have all their questions answered which provided them with important information.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Out of the few that filled out the survey it proved to be a successful webinar. The webinar provided important information and inclusive resources that focuses on diversity to support low-income families. My research shows that this project provided knowledge to students so it should be continued. Many students from Seaside High School attend MPC after graduation that shows how vital this webinar is to the local community interested in pursuing postsecondary education.

My recommendations for the agency that could be done differently would to not exclude any grades on the flyer and have it open to the community. Based on the survey students are interested in majors/minors, scholarships and financial assistance GEAR UP provides various workshops and these topics would make a great difference for students.

A great way for outreach would be asking English teachers to announce the event during their class time. Also, having the event during the month of October would allow students more time to apply to MPC if interested. I would love to see this event expand to two different dates to have all the resources MPC has to offer available for students. We were running out of time for the event, to improve this would be whatever questions the audience had they could ask at the end instead of after each topic since it becomes time consuming.

Personal Reflection

During the planning process of my project I learned there are too many contributing factors that lead to low-income families not being able to finish college. Students are not interested in postsecondary education if they aren't aware of the options available for them. Families can't support their children because they have zero knowledge of resources and support. Parents send their children to school to learn how to figure things out on their own. During outreach calls I get low numbers of parents who answer my phone calls because they are busy working which is understandable. But through all the work parents put in they aren't available to learn how to support their children. Parents aren't aware that their child is struggling with their classes until they're failing them. I witnessed Spanish speaking parents not feeling confident during advising calls because they don't know how to help their child succeed.

As an intern I wanted to help students and their families to realize they aren't alone during the student's academic journey. A parent doesn't need to know how to fill out a FAFSA application by memory, instead they need to know that the resources to assist them are available and where to be able to find them. The project contributed to informing students and families about the resources available to them.

The flyer I created for the webinar was amazing and provided all the information necessary for the event. I was able to get approval right away from the principal of SHS and GEAR UP since this is the first event that was collaborated with MPC via zoom. I invited various presenters from MPC and provided them with certain questions that I would like them to add to their presentation slide. The target audience was juniors and their families, I wanted to ensure the information given wouldn't be towards seniors. The slideshow presentation I created gave each resource a slide with different pictures that showed student engagement.

My project focused on low-income families who don't finish college because of familial factors, lack of academic preparation and poverty. My project addresses families who have no experience in postsecondary education so they don't know Financial Aid and scholarships help pay student's college tuition. The webinar provided information on resources that will help students succeed in college. It also exposed families to the support colleges offer students to help them grow professionally and personally.

The advice I have to offer the next student who interns is to share their experience with students and families. I was able to inform them that I attended community college and transferred to a 4-year university which helps motivate students and their families. Some families

have never been exposed to the idea of college but if you can communicate with them your struggles and achievements they will be able to see their child on the same path.

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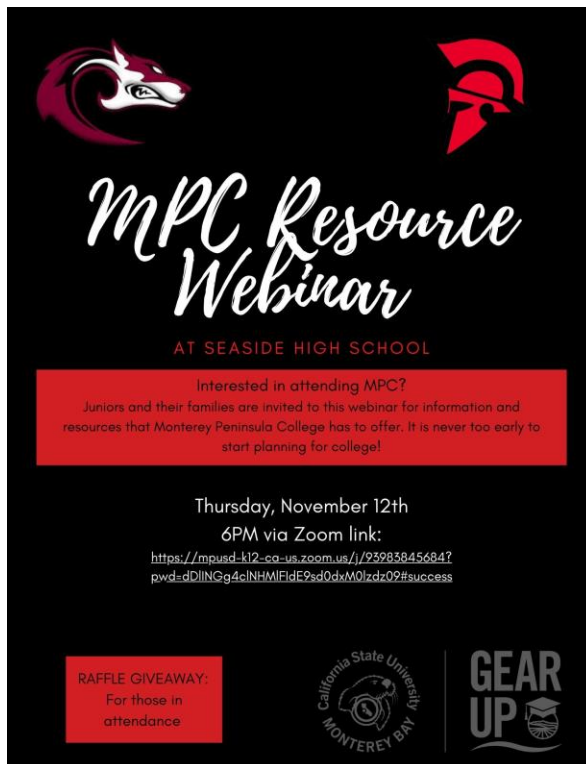
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Appendices

MPC Resource Webinar Flyer:



MPC Resource Webinar Presentation:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ZPFBZdINahb-Cl6jOW5ce7wECQVjYtQbyTWlnl06Vkw/edit?usp=sharing>

MPC Resource Webinar google form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfoc-RGv1SMi39fdpcYaCzone4wTCVLss2su33RJSRLdd6_Sw/viewform?usp=sf_link