Kingsborough’s Treasure Project: College Success for Single Mothers

An ECMC sponsored and ATD supported project

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Why Single Mother Students: An Equity Issue

- 44.3% of births in US are to mothers between 15 and 44 years of age and 60% of births between the ages of 20-24 are to single women (CDC, 2017)
  - This number is even higher in women of color
  - With 44% of Black single mothers and 33% of Latina single mothers living below the poverty level (Census Bureau, 2016)
- Obtaining a Bachelor's Degree is the best chance for extraction from poverty (Goldrick-Rab & Sorensen, 2010)
- Community Colleges are the best starting points due to cost, course availability, academic access and academic support

Who’s involved? And who should be...

- Currently the Treasure Project team consists of representatives from:
  - Academic Affairs
  - ARC
  - Women’s Center
  - Institutional Research
  - Student Affairs

- Faculty and staff across the college have a role to play in supporting this large and growing student group
What we’re currently doing

- Working to identifying Single-mother students at KCC
- Conducting survey – currently open
- Planned focus groups for this summer
- Scholarship opportunity
- Referrals for support on and off campus
Planned next steps

- Evaluate data from survey and focus groups by August
- Evaluate, adjust, develop and implement family supportive policies, processes and spaces
- Provide professional development opportunities to provide more focused student supports
- Include this subgroup of students in success data
What we might find...

- **Personal Support Helps Single-Parent Students Maintain Balance**
  - Participants struggled with balancing multiple roles and time limitations. The various sources of personal supports were reflected on as essential counterbalance.
    - Hours spent at work, traveling between work, home and campus, and unreliable childcare created many of the challenges
    - Emotional (encouragement), financial (living arrangements) and time (providing childcare) support created balance

- **Sense of Belonging Helps Single-Parent Students Persist**
  - Feelings of belonging on campus, academically as well as socially, were voiced as supportive of not giving up.
    - Participants reported initial feels of not belonging but all expressed finding sources of support and understanding, often from sources they did not expect
    - Finding the one person who cared made significant differences in feeling included and belonging
What we might find... cont

- Single-Parent Students Motivated to Be Role Models and Break Socioeconomic Legacies
  - Goal oriented motivation is often the reason for entering, and persisting through, degree programs.
  - Primary reason noted, by participants, for pursuing a post-secondary degree is socioeconomic growth and mobility for self and children
    - Motivation to succeed was directly influenced by financial need
    - Participants felt they would have been less likely to attend college and persist if they did not have children dependent on them.
    - Need to present their children with role models that have attained a college degree, showing it’s possible, presented a strong motivator for persistence