



Innovative Strategies to Support Equitable College and Career Readiness for Rural Students

Dr. Matthew Ohlson

Presentation Focus

1. Research Evidence
2. Barriers and Promising Practices
3. Example Innovations
4. Group Discussion

Poll Question

What is greatest barrier to postsecondary enrollment of rural students?

- a. School factors
- b. Student factors
- c. Economic need
- d. Competing commitments to family and community

Barriers to Postsecondary Enrollment

1. Economic need (strongest barrier)
2. Competing commitments to family and community
3. School factors
4. Student factors

Promising Practices to Postsecondary Enrollment, Persistence and Completion



Dual Enrollment



Postsecondary campus visits/visits from IHE representatives



High school guidance counseling



School policies to promote postsecondary readiness

Promising Practices to Postsecondary Enrollment, Persistence and Completion



Preparatory courses for college entrance exams



Preparatory courses for academic and social adjustment



Mentoring programs



Positive school climate

Community engagement/community and parent support

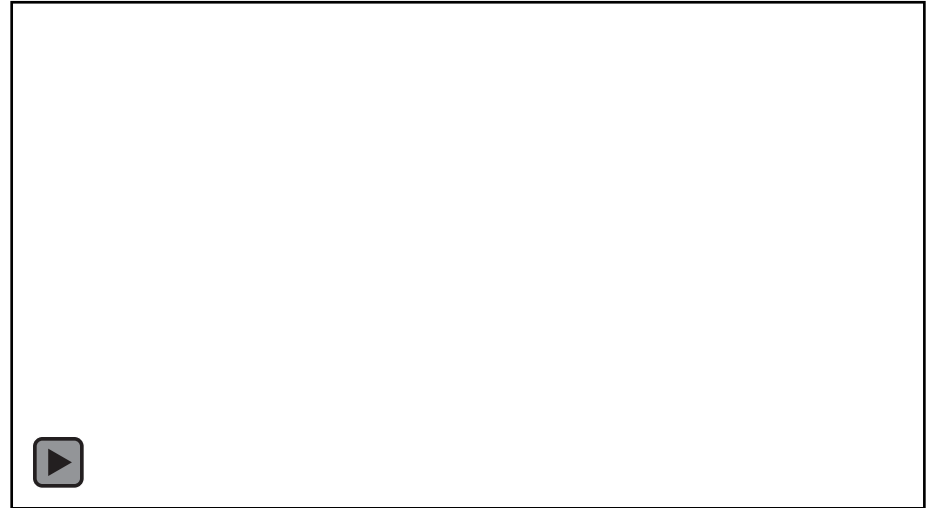
Framework

CAMP (Collegiate Achievement Mentoring Program) Osprey is a leadership-mentoring program partnering collegiate student leaders from across the University of North Florida with students from high-poverty schools throughout the Southeast.

To overcome geographic and financial barriers, CAMP Osprey uses "virtual leadership mentoring" to conduct virtual campus tours, interactive learning demonstrations and life-skills training sessions to help our leadership "coaches" and K12 "apprentices" become college and career ready.

Phase 1- Virtual Leadership Mentoring in Action: Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

- Example:
 - Put First Things First
 - UNF Alumni & Elementary students from Crescent City



Phase 2: The College Campus Visits



Students from urban and rural schools partaking in a class in the Department of Fine Arts & a tennis clinic with NCAA athletes. Over the past 3 years, 96% of all students visiting the campus said they now want to attend college and 88% said they want to attend UNF.



Phase 2: The Mentors in the Community



Immerses college students in the surrounding communities...creating a greater mutual connection and understanding for both mentor and mentee. Pictured: UNF Women's Tennis Team at Lake Shore Middle in Jax & Mentors taking students to JC Penny in Palatka for "Dressed for Success."



The Impact

Schools participating in the virtual leadership mentoring program experienced gains in student attendance AND student academic achievement

*Beyond the numbers... “They are learning skills that will help them overcome obstacles as they progress toward a future of college and careers,”
Elementary School Principal*



Advantages

By developing **low-cost** initiatives that benefit K12 students at all levels from a variety of backgrounds, virtual mentoring may serve as an exemplar for those searching for ways to forge learning community partnerships to enhance academic excellence, student engagement and equity in a K-20 setting.



Overcoming Obstacles

- Cost effective
 - Reduction in mentor/mentee travel costs
- Virtual Field Trips and supplemental resources to augment learning
 - College and school campus visits
- Timely and user friendly
 - Mobile apps
 - Adaptable to meet the needs of K-12 school schedules

High-Needs School graduate giving back to a rural community in Texas

@CoachKennen speaking to students from Putnam County (FL) & Milford ISD (TX) on the power of relationships and leadership
@UNF_CAMP_OSPREY



Click photo to access news video clip

Best Practices

- Use an established curriculum:
 - Manual to Manhood, Girls Guide to Conquering Life
 - 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens
 - C.A.M.P. Program Guide
- 30-45 minutes per weekly session
- Hands-on, engaging activities
- Consistent support from both mentor and mentee locations (staff, teachers, faculty)

Your Turn as Leadership Coach

- Turn to a partner and “Coach” each other using the following prompts (select one):
 - 1. What are 3 strategies you can offer your partner on how to overcome challenges?**
 - What did you do? How did this help you? What would you have done differently? Who did you collaborate with to overcome these obstacles?
 - 2. What have you done recently to align your habits with your goals?**
 - What % of your day is spent doing what you are good at or enjoy?
 - 3. What are 3 successes you’ve had recently?**
 - What are some strategies that helped you reach those successes? What’s next for you in terms of goals/future celebrations?
 - Who knows about your successes

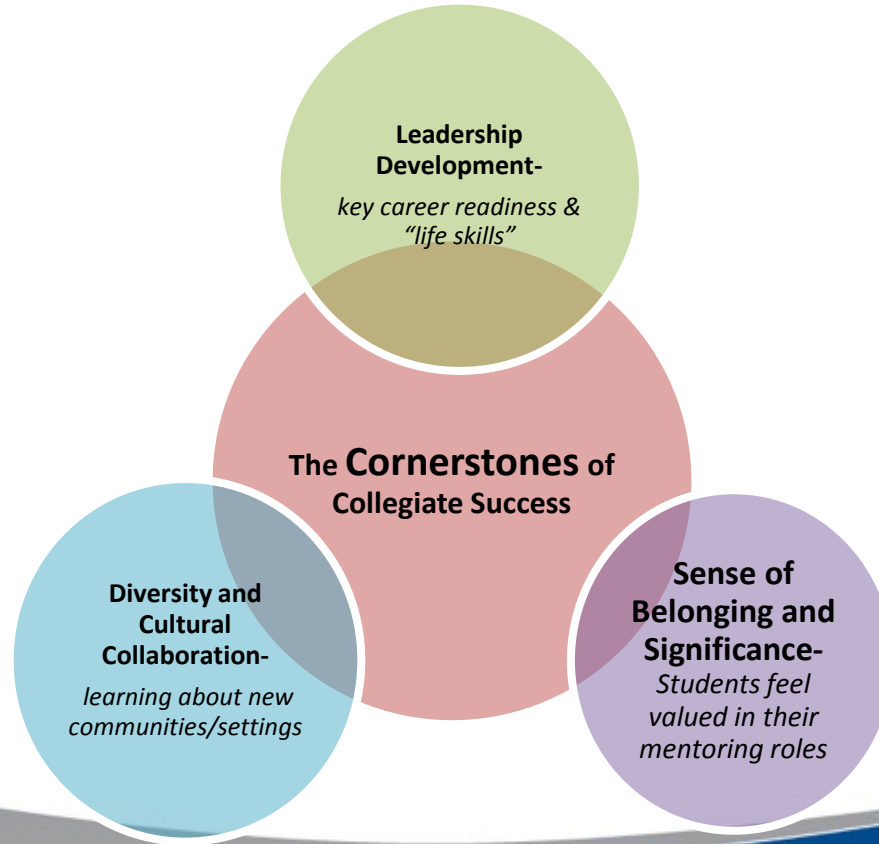
The Impact on our Leadership Mentors



CAMP Achievement

- Collegiate participants demonstrated the following gains:
 - Collegiate mentors have shown increases in their GPA (67% of participants)
 - Increased leadership efficacy (83%)
 - Increased enrollment in the Leadership Minor (15%)
 - Also, each athletic team that collectively participated in the program experienced significant collective success:
 - Women's Tennis (ASUN Championship)
 - Women's Soccer (Highest win total in program history)
 - *Program is now heralded as a college retention tool to combat the 36-38% graduation rate*

Helping College Students *Persist, Graduate AND get Hired!*



The significance of providing opportunities for personal growth

- *“I learned SO many leadership techniques that I will have the rest of my life. This was a once in a lifetime experience that I am so thankful for being a part of the this mentoring program. It was such an honor working with the students at Milford ISD and this has taught me confidence, adaptability, and many other skills. This experience further encouraged me to minor in leadership.”*
- *“Getting the opportunity to mentor other young students and also learning how to be a leader everyday helped me to become a better version of myself.”*
- *“This partnership is very important for me to keep me on track of my dreams. Young girls help me remember where I am coming from and that I have a long path to fulfill. In addition, it gives me power to positively influence someone's life. The girls let me connect to them in a way that is both beneficial for us and I am grateful for this experience.”*

Next Steps

- Continued research to examine mutually beneficial outcomes
- College and Career Readiness Network
 - *K-12 & beginning college students mentored by collegiate student leaders to become college ready*
 - *Collegiate students mentored by alumni and business community to become career ready (Piloting Spring 2019)*



UNF mentor with his:

- mentee from the UNF ARC Program
 - <https://www.jacksonville.com/article/20120417/NEWS/801254681>
- Mentor, Lt. Gen Rick Tryon, USMC

Articles/Publications/Presentations

- The Impact of Virtual Mentoring
 - The Journal of Interactive Learning Research
 - <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1166361>
 - EdTech Digest
 - <https://edtechdigest.wordpress.com/2017/04/05/virtual-mentoring/>
- Partnership with (FL) Schools
 - The AMLE Journal
 - <https://www.amle.org/BrowsebyTopic/WhatsNew/WNDet/TabId/270/ArtMID/888/ArticleID/890/CAMP-Osprey.aspx>
 - The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida
 - <https://www.jaxcf.org/file/2017/TCF-Newsletter-Spring2017.pdf>
 - The Journal of Community Engagement & Scholarship
 - http://jces.ua.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/07_JCES11.1_Leadership-Education-for-College-and-Career-Readiness.pdf (University of Alabama)

Contact Information

✓ *Matthew Ohlson, Ph.D.*

matthew.ohlson@unf.edu

University of North Florida

Twitter: MatthewOhlson1