



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
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What we're currently doing

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- ▶ 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

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- ▶ Goldrick-Rab, S., & Sorensen, K. (2010). Unmarried parents in college. *Future of Children*, 20(2), 179-203.