Supporting Immigrant Students in Universities
Bold Idea Webinar Notes
9/27/18

Yurilka Hernandez – Psychotherapist, Clinical Supervisor, and Intern Supervisor at the Acacia Network

- The Impact of Deportation among Children and Young Adults in New York City
  - Immigrants and South American communities in Queens, NY have experienced ICE arrests and raids around and near the schools, churches, and super markets where the majority of the community works and lives.

- Work and School
  - College undergrad students who are protected under DACA are unable to apply for a master’s degree unless they obtain scholarships because they cannot apply for personal loans.
  - Parents are afraid to go to work and go outside for fear that their children will be taken away from them, often isolating their children over fear of ICE.

- Committee for Internship, and Child Care – Provides undocumented students internship experiences, created a daycare center where parents can drop kids off during the day without having to give any information if they do not want to.

- Mental Health Impact
  - Extensive research on the community looking into mental health and suicide showed increased hospitalization in 2018 due to new symptoms of anxiety, panic disorders and depression.
  - Children having adjustment disorders due to their parents trying to educate them about being prepared to leave home and move in fear of ICE. Students stop communicating with their peers because of isolation.

Mariana Sarmiento Hernández – MSW Grad Student at UNLV; Founder of the UndocuNetwork

- Community Building for Change: Process of Institutionalizing Resources for Undocumented Students in Higher Education
  - Grassroots organizing of creating change for undocumented students.

- Immigration Policy is Ambiguous
  - Changes state by state – In Nevada there is an absence of policy for in-state tuition equity, there is no law that allows or restricts undocumented students from paying instate tuition compared to students with citizenship or some form of legal residency.
  - Nevada is a “swing state”, which can make change difficult with conservative views

- State & Institutional Climates: University of Nevada, Las Vegas as a Case Study
  - UNLV tied for #1 Most Diverse Campus – Younger schools have more opportunity for growth.
  - Process: 2015 – Student demonstrations, administrators creating a townhall for students with marginalized identities to talk about hardships they were facing and how the university can support them. 2016 – Community building and negotiations. 2017 – Creating institutional resources and task force.
  - Outcomes and Successes at UNLV
    - Dream Zone training for faculty and Staff
    - Alternate Need Determination Form: Used by undocumented students who can’t apply for FAFSA which helps the university know what kind of support the student needs
- Webpage for Undocumented / DACAmented Students to serve as reservoir of centralized information specific to the university
- Undocuweek and event programming
- Hiring a resource coordinator for undocumented students

Ariana Mora Mero – Program Coordinator, Services for Undocumented Students at UC, Merced

- UC, Merced’s KEY Program – “Knowledge Empowers You”
  - Two-day student staffed orientation program for undocumented students before starting fall semester covering relevant topics.
  - Purpose to build a community for students prior to coming on campus – Provides more opportunities for success, students will know their resources, and have at least one connection with a student, alumni, and staff prior to first semester.
  - Program provides: workshops and information, collaborations with the university’s health center, UC ILSC or local attorney, financial aid, academic advising units, free housing and free dining costs.

- UndocuScholars Academy
  - Six-week, small-group, interactive seminar focused on career development intended to empower students’ self-advocacy and spark motivation
  - Partnership with the Center for Career & Professional Advancement – Career center on campus, helps with career development and support for undocumented students: building a resume, cover letter and interview skills.