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Postsecondary Access for Rural Youth: Multiple Connections Strengthen Community Engagement

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Postsecondary Access for Rural Youth: Multiple Connections Strengthen Community Engagement

Travis West, OSU Extension – Vinton County

National Youth At-Risk Conference

March 8, 2021





Objectives

- Learn how to develop a university level partnership with local university faculty
- Explore options for providing postsecondary education programming efforts in the county
- Understand the structure and logistics for replicating the postsecondary programs





Background

- Vinton County
- Rural county
 - 13,228 residents
 - 80% forested
 - One school district
 - 6% adults with Bachelors
 - 5.3% adults with Associates
 - 78% of youth being raised as "economically disadvantaged"





Context

 Not unlike youths living in urban areas, youth living in rural areas are attending resource strapped schools, growing up in households with low adult educational attainment, and lacking access to supports for pursuing postsecondary education options.

• Bates, Anderson-Butcher, Niewoehner-Green, & Provenzano, 2019

- Exposing youth to pursue higher education is important, as often low-income students view their ability to pursue postsecondary education as limited because of social context and family expectations.
 - Tzenis, 2018





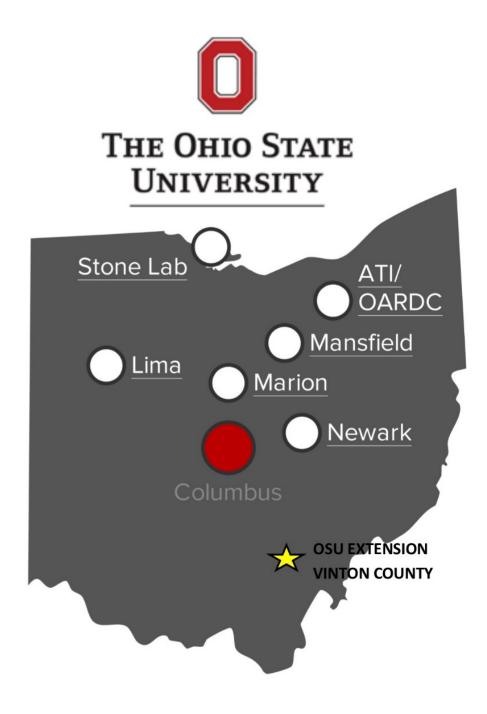
The Beginning

- Emphasis from The Ohio State University to engage in college access for Ohio counties
 - ✓ Economic Access
- Meeting with guidance counselors and school administrators









Design

College students are working in the county over Spring Break

- ✓ serve grades 3-8, 10, 11
- ✓ Over 1400 youth/ year
- ✓ in-school time
- ✓ each grade looks different on how students interact with college students







Grades 3 - 5

- Science classrooms
- 4 Steps to Get to College
- Science inquiry-based activity





Be a pain! Tell everyone you know that you want to go to college. Tell your parents, teachers, counselors, coaches and family members. Don't stop until you find an adult who will help you. This step is essential. The next three steps become easier with a supportive adult, so get yours!

Push yourself. Colleges look for students who've taken classes that have challenged them. Study, complete your homework, participate in activities outside of the normal school day (sports, 4-H, church, scouts)

Find the right fit. There are more than 6,500 two and four - year colleges, universities and trade schools in the country, ranging in size from fewer than 100 to more than 50,000 students and offering thousands of courses, subjects, degrees and certificates. You have an extraordinary range of options. Find a school that matches your career interests and reflects your goals and personality.

Get your hands on some cash! There is money available to help you pay for college or trade school. Each year, Federal Student Aid gives eligible students over \$80 billion through grants, work- study programs and loans. You can also start saving your money from birthdays, Christmas, or doing household chores to plan for your education!

KnowHow2GO.org



Grades 6 - 8

- Social Studies classrooms
- Class selections/ planning now to prepare yourself for college
- People and resources
- Small group discussions





Grades 10

- Social studies classes
- What can you do now to get ready?
- What things should you do to prepare for college applications and scholarships





Grades 11

- English classes
- How is my life going to be different as a senior?
- ACT Testing
- Tips for not getting overwhelmed with classes and this "college and graduation stuff"?





Design (part 2)

College students get to learn about local culture and have some fun

- ✓ What is OSU Extension?
- ✓ Tourist attractions
- ✓ Local committees
- ✓ School Board
- ✓ Local college options







Leveraging Resources

- 1. Extension Advisory Committee
- 2. 4-H Committees
- 3. Chamber of Commerce
- 4. Industry groups
- 5. School District

It takes some work to manage all the logistics and nurture all the relationships, but it is all worth it to see youth who NOW BELIEVE college/ trade school are possibilities





Buckeye for a Day

- ✓ Coordinated by OSU Social Change program
 - Juniors/ Seniors
 - 30 students spend a day on campus
 - Shadow students that have similar major interests





Senior Breakfast

- Panel of college students
- Meet with high school seniors
- College challenges from peers





Viking Career Success Plan

- Monthly career touch point
- Assessments and further exploration at High School level
- Challenge to provide content for all teachers





STEM Career Exploration

- Afterschool program
 - Highlight Careers
 - 3rd 5th grade students





Program Success

- 2020 10th year in county
- 100% of the teachers and administrators indicate that students were excited following the ASB students' trip
- 86% of youth served had an increase in knowledge about postsecondary options
- 91% know someone that attended college and can answer their questions about college
- School District has adopted a Viking Career Success Plan for all students

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES



Questions?

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