



HIP to COLLEGE 2012-2015

Creating Strong Funding
and Nonprofit Networks for
Latino Student Success

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Hispanics in Philanthropy would like to deeply thank its foundation partners in its efforts to improve Latino student success through the educational and postsecondary pipeline:

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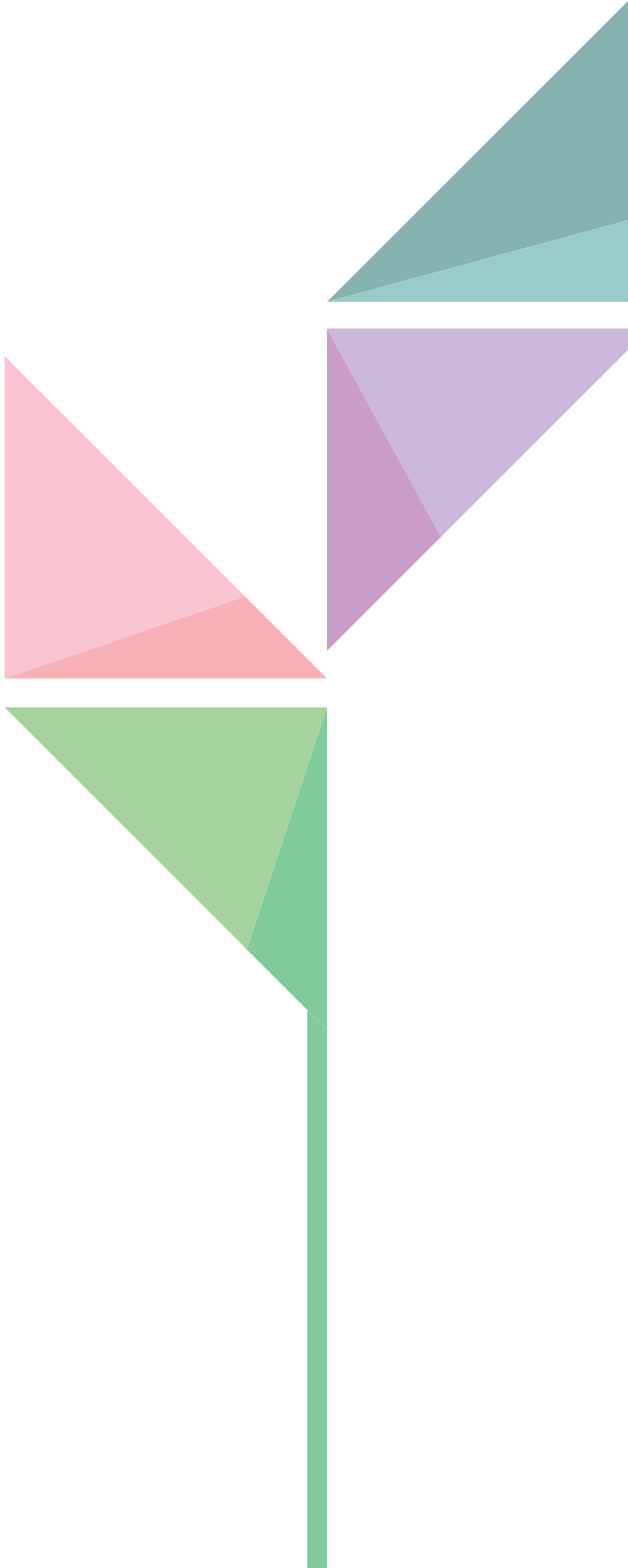
About Hispanics in Philanthropy

HIP's mission is to strengthen Latino leadership, voice, and equity. HIP brings together grantmakers to find solutions to the structural underfunding of one of the nation's greatest resources: the growing U.S. Latino community. In doing so, HIP provides information, referrals and advice to foundations seeking to support Latino leadership and capacity building; supports Latino leaders in philanthropy, from the newest to those already in the top tier; seeds capacity building for Latino nonprofits at the local level; and promotes philanthropic collaboration and investment in areas of critical need, including aging, LGBTQ, Latino men and boys, education and other issues.

For more information, please visit www.hiponline.org.

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Letter from the President

Dear Partners and Friends,

For the past three-and-a-half years, through the HIP to College initiative, Hispanics in Philanthropy has worked diligently to strengthen the academic success of Latino students and the long-term community advancement that results from their earning postsecondary degrees.

As the United States heads towards becoming a minority-majority country, by their economic and social footprint, Latino youth are the leaders and workforce innovators who power the U.S. into the future. HIP is proud to invest in diverse strategies that improve outcomes for these students and allow them to reach their full potential.

With the support of generous partners, such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the HIP to College initiative in North Carolina and Colorado worked to develop networks that support Latino students through high school and into college. Improving outcomes for Latino students is the priority of the HIP Education Focused Initiative.

We know that the next generation of Latino leaders will make positive, substantive changes at every institutional level. HIP's new mission focus on leadership, voice, and equity reflects this reality.

Strengthening Latino *leadership* will allow structural priorities, such as postsecondary attainment and completion, to be implemented more effectively within Latino communities.

Strengthening Latino *voice* will allow a virtuous cycle of feedback to adjust programmatic implementation in a way that is aligned with the educational needs and realities of the Latino community in the United States.

Strengthening Latino *equity* in education means that more U.S. Latinos will graduate from high school college-ready and go on to achieve a postsecondary credential.

The success of this initiative has been remarkable. HIP is optimistic about the future of this work and its role in cultivating an educational landscape and partnerships in the United States that help Latino students thrive.

Diana



Executive Summary

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Hispanics currently account for nearly one in four school-age children in the United States. In the coming decades, Latinos will make up an increasingly large segment of the U.S. student population. Yet, there are still numerous social, cultural, and economic factors that prevent large proportions of Latino students from excelling academically.

In October 2012, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation awarded Hispanics in Philanthropy (HIP) a grant of \$500,000 for HIP to College, an education initiative designed to build networks of funders to strengthen the education pipeline for Latino students in the United States. Building on HIP's expertise as a philanthropic catalyst, HIP to College proposed to develop and utilize local networks of funders to promote Latino students' success in high school and at the postsecondary level.

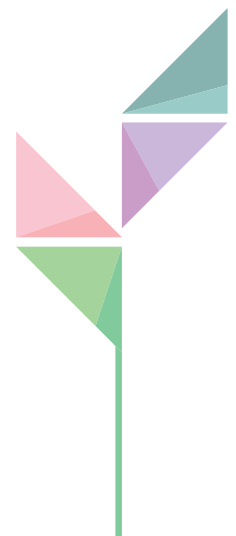
By partnering with local funders and institutions in two sites, HIP sought to increase the organizational capacity of nonprofit organizations in North Carolina and Colorado to build and sustain academic and structural support systems that motivate and engage Latino students. The three-year pilot initiative was a success.

In total, across both sites, the HIP to College initiative served 1,986 students. The strategies for supporting Latino students varied slightly from site to site but shared the same four core approaches:

1. Personalized outreach
2. Community engagement
3. Parental involvement
4. Appropriate pedagogy

In North Carolina, specific strategies were built around a multiyear program that focused most heavily on higher education preparation and attainment, as well as retention and persistence. A core team of partners was established early on that functioned to develop a unified, evidence-based system to support Latino students, Latino families, and educational institutions. This multipronged approach resulted in an aligned curriculum that provided structure to the partners as well as the students. It is a sustainable tool that can be refined and shared.

In Colorado, specific strategies were designed to address "summer melt," which is the phenomenon that occurs when seemingly college intending students fail to matriculate at an institution for higher learning at the end of summer. These strategies relied heavily on higher education preparation as a means of educating and engaging students in the summer between high school graduation and college. Students received a great deal of personalized mentorship, suggestions and insights from peers, information about scholarships, and academic support as needed. Partners worked collaboratively whenever possible to share successes and resources.



The HIP to College initiative strengthened the systems for supporting Latino students. In both North Carolina and Colorado, program participants achieved a better sense of what is required of them when applying for college and how best to navigate the college application process. As a result, more Latino students are enrolling in and attending college.

Highlights of the programs include:

North Carolina

- 100 percent of the college-attending Latino student leaders involved with the program persisted.
- "It [the structure of the program in North Carolina] has given the community a space for higher education and different sectors to come together which would not have happened if we didn't do this project." - North Carolina Grantee
- "[The program] provided an opportunity for me to think deeper about issues of higher education that affect the students I was working with. This opportunity was the experience I needed to gain clarity and make a decision about applying to graduate school and continue to explore ways to make higher education more accessible and equitable for all students." - North Carolina Grantee Program Participant

- "If it were not for [the program] and all of the support I got from everyone, I would not be in college today, because of [the program] I feel prepared to take on college, I mean I'm still nervous but I got this. Thank you. I wouldn't be here without you." - Colorado Grantee Program Participant

Due to the commitment of local funders and partners, these projects will continue beyond the initial HIP to College funding. In North Carolina, a Latino Student Success Leadership Council, with statewide representation from public and private funders and practitioners, meets quarterly to determine ways to collaborate their efforts. HIP to College grantees continue to receive funding together and individually to continue the work. In Colorado, the funders' network, housed at the Latino Community Foundation of Colorado, has extended HIP to College grantmaking through 2017 and is discussing continued medium- and long-term efforts.

HIP and its partners' fundamental understanding of the needs and challenges that grassroots nonprofits face, and access to resources in the philanthropic and educational sectors throughout the nation, contributed to the pilot's success. It has laid the groundwork in both sites to continue strengthening systems that support and engage Latino students.

Colorado

- 65 percent average decrease in summer melt (compared with the rates in each catchment area) among those youth served by the grantees.
- "This grant has revived the high school and college program . . . This grant has allowed us to welcome families to the discussion of higher education in a safe environment and has beacons future programming." - Colorado Grantee

Furthermore, Hispanics in Philanthropy's new mission statement is to strengthen Latino leadership, voice, and equity – three critical components in the context of student success, for HIP and its partners.

Introduction

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According to the U.S. Department of Education, “Latinos have the lowest educational attainment of any group in the U.S.”¹ Only about 50 percent of Latino students graduate high school on time, and those who graduate are half as likely as their peers to be ready for college. Poverty, immigration status, and cultural differences between Latino students and their teachers have been identified as key barriers. They make it more difficult for Latino students to progress successfully through the higher education pipeline.

A look at the numbers tells us that long-term educational outcomes and postsecondary credential attainment for Latino students consistently fall short of national averages:

- 14 percent of Latinos between the ages of 18 and 24 reported having dropped out of high school, compared with eight percent of Blacks and five percent of Whites.²
- The 2013 U.S. Census estimated that, between 2008 and 2012, Hispanic college enrollment rates increased more than 50 percent, but Hispanic students were half as likely to be prepared for college compared to their peers.³
- In 2013, only 15 percent of Hispanics between the ages of 25 and 29 had a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared with 60 of Asians.⁴

HIP has provided over \$45 million in capacity building grants to Latino-led, Latino-serving grassroots organizations across the Americas, including many working to address educational disparities in Latino communities. HIP’s programs include the award-winning Funders’ Collaborative for Strong Latino Communities and Aging, Health and Gender Equity Focused Initiatives, in addition to Education.

HIP’s mission is to strengthen Latino leadership, voice, and equity. This driving purpose is based on a vision of Latino equity that is rooted in the notion that participation and inclusion are essential components for widely shared democracy and prosperity in the United States and the Americas. For HIP, the values of empowerment, inclusion, and social justice within a transnational mindset serve as the bedrock for its programmatic work.

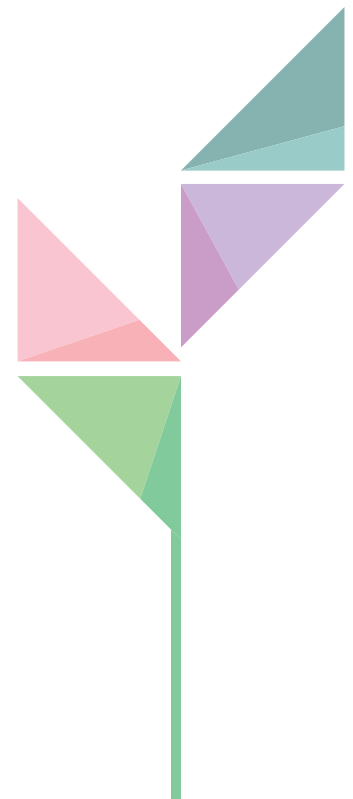
HIP believes that creating pathways for minority students, who are underrepresented in higher education, will not only level the playing field for them, but strengthen and expand the United States workforce for the 21st century.

1 Department of Education

2 <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/10/02/u-s-high-school-dropout-rate-reaches-record-low-driven-by-improvements-among-hispanics-blacks/>

3 <http://sites.ed.gov/hispanic-initiative/k-12-and-college-access/>

4 <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/05/26/5-facts-about-latinos-and-education/>



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Initiative Overview

The HIP to College initiative was borne of the understanding, and the reality, that in the modern U.S. economy, a useful postsecondary credential is a prerequisite to compete in the workforce in a meaningful way. This reality, coupled with a growing need for programs that support Latino students from historic and recent U.S. Latino communities, propelled the HIP to College initiative, with the following overarching objectives:

1. **Assess and map** the policy landscape for Latino students in four sites: Colorado, Philadelphia, North Carolina, and South Florida
2. **Establish sustainable networks** of funders to co-invest in College-Ready and Post-Secondary Success strategies in two sites.
3. **Engage Latino funders** in the process and raise 10 percent of the matching funds from Latino funders or individual donors.
4. **Conduct grantmaking** in two sites to support the College-Ready and Post-Secondary Success of Latino students.
5. **Publish and disseminate** a report detailing the state of education policy and Latino students' education outcomes.

HIP commissioned a report by *Excelencia* in Education,⁵ to map the local policy landscape for Latino students, identify funders and Latino nonprofits working in education, and outline opportunities and challenges

for aligning with local funders to invest in college-ready education and postsecondary success strategies for Latino students in strategic states and regions. They included Colorado and North Carolina; the metropolitan areas of Philadelphia and New Orleans, and the region of South Florida.

Based on this report, the states of Colorado and North Carolina were selected as the optimal sites in which to pilot HIP to College. As determined in the landscape mapping, both states contain significant Latino communities, who are – importantly for long-term postsecondary and workforce outcomes – very young, with a median age of 26 in Colorado and 25 in North Carolina. However, at a macro state level, policies regarding education can be very different, such as those around in-state tuition for undocumented youth, or for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) program participants.

It is also notable that educational achievement rates for these young populations in both sites lag significantly behind their White non-Latino peers. They also lag in the proportion of Latino students who take exams, such as the SAT or ACT, which would allow them to matriculate at four-year colleges and universities, or the Advance Placement exams, which would allow them to enter college with course credit. When Latino students do take the SAT or ACT, they score lower on average than their White non-Hispanic and Asian American/Pacific Islander peers. This underscores a

⁵ The full report is available at: <https://www.hiponline.org/storage/documents/HIPtoCollegeExcelenciaReport.pdf>

need for targeted programs to ensure that Latino youths succeed.

Based on knowledge of college-ready and postsecondary success strategies, coupled with a foundational understanding of the particular needs of Latino students, each state-level project, designed and developed by local funding networks, took a distinct approach to moving the needle on education outcomes for Latino students.

HIP to College North Carolina was an integrated project to support Latino Student Success through college access and postsecondary matriculation/persistence in central North Carolina's Johnston, Wake, and Durham counties. This first-of-its-kind initiative was designed to provide academic, logistical, and sociocultural support to students and their families to ensure college readiness. The initiative, furthermore, supported local and statewide education leadership networks that advocated with policymakers for increased Latino postsecondary student opportunities.

HIP to College Colorado was designed to lower the rate of failures of "college-intending" students to enroll at all in the fall after their high school graduation, a phenomenon known as "summer melt." "College-intending" students are those who have either completed key college-going steps, such as applying and being accepted to college, and applying for financial aid when their families qualify, or who have concretely signaled their intention to enroll in

college on a high school senior exit survey. A student "melts" if, despite being college-intending, she or he fails to attend college the following fall. This phenomenon is not unique to Latino students. However, in the Colorado context, funders recognized summer melt as a key drop-off point in the P-16 (pre-school through to a four-year degree) pipeline for Latino students.

The success and sustainability of this work depends on the strength, commitment, and cooperation of local, regional, and national partnerships. The HIP to College initiative's local funding networks and local cohorts of grantees are critical to supporting Latino students.

The initiative demonstrated how the creation of collaborative networks that include funders, educators and policy advocates is critical, given the scope and depth of the systemic fissures that hinder Latino student success. In both sites, groups of local funders have decided to continue to provide support for these partnerships beyond the initial 2016 project end date.

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Education Funders and Latino Donors

Education Funding in the United States for Latino Students

While there has been increased attention to equity in the philanthropic and grantmaking landscape, Latino communities remain largely underfunded. A Foundation Center report commissioned by HIP found that only two percent of philanthropic funding goes directly and deliberately to Latino communities in the United States.⁶ This is also true in the education philanthropy landscape.

According to a 2012 benchmarking report from Grantmakers for Education (GFE), **92 percent of education grantmakers in the United States prioritize achievement gaps for low income and minority students.**⁷ Ninety-two percent may seem like substantial

support. It represents a shift toward equity in the philanthropic community, but it is only a piece of the picture. As GFE states:

“Many funders are focused on the issue of inequitable access to quality education resources, which translates into uneven educational outcomes for low-income students and children of color. As the economic crisis pushes more families below the poverty line, while simultaneously reducing funding for compensatory programs, funders are responding across different areas of the education continuum and across different student populations . . . Even as grantmakers acknowledge the urgency and importance of addressing

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Table 1:
A Snapshot of the Types of Programs and Funders that Support Latino Students

Program/Funder	Target Beneficiaries	Primary Strategies
Elev8 <i>Supported nationally by the Atlantic Philanthropies</i> http://www.atlanticphilanthropies.org/subtheme/community-schools	Low-income children and youth	Integrate academics and related supports with services that address the health and social needs of students within a community schools model.
Hispanic Scholarship Fund https://hsf.net/en/resources/	College bound Hispanic students and their families	Provide scholarships and support services to Hispanic students and families.
Cañada College’s Math Jam http://www.canadacollege.edu/news/index	Associate degree level Latino students	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) program with a math focus that prepares students for placement tests and math courses at four-year institutions.

⁶ http://foundationcenter.org/gainknowledge/research/pdf/fc_hip2011.pdf

⁷ http://www.edfunders.org/sites/default/files/Benchmarking_2012.pdf

the widening opportunity gap, many also acknowledge that the field's efforts fall short . . ."⁸

This discrepancy between funding and results, GFE posits, has a great deal to do with outside threats (such as the economic crisis from which many low-income communities have not yet fully recovered) as well as, "internal divisions regarding reform strategies. The growing polarization in education policy debates has produced more highly pitched disagreements in government, education and advocacy circles." Given this, there is a critical need for better quality data regarding Latino student achievement and which approaches are most effective in improving their outcomes. Below is a chart that offers a small sample of national funding for Latino student success.

The programs listed in table 1 are archetypal in the education landscape. The majority of resource allocation and programs available for Latino students address a piece of the challenge (like needing outside academic support, or increased access to scholarship funds), but not all of it.

It is rare that national U.S. funders invest in holistic, culturally appropriate, grassroots, educational pipeline activities for Latino students.

HIPGive and Education Funding

In addition to its key role in the HIP to College initiative, HIP has also engaged Latino donors in other intentional ways around education and strengthening the pipeline to college. In February 2015, through its HIPGive crowdfunding platform, HIP launched a HIPGive2EDU campaign designed to support Latino-led and Latino-serving grassroots nonprofits that are working to improve education outcomes and expand opportunities for Latino students. HIPGive is the first

giving platform that merges technology with traditional philanthropy to provide Latino-serving nonprofits with tools to raise funds online. Among other tools geared to increase investments in local communities, it uses: matching funds incentives, if fundraising goals are met; social media and traditional marketing in empowering nonprofits to build partnerships and expand their donor networks.

Twenty-two nonprofits participated in the HIPGive2EDU campaign, which ran from February 24 through March 20, 2015, and collectively raised over \$154,000 that was funneled into grassroots education programs for Latino communities. Participating nonprofits launched projects with goals that varied widely: empowering disadvantaged Latino youth to overcome barriers through entrepreneurship; providing nourishing food every day for 100+ students; unlocking teachers' potential to be catalysts of social change, and empowering communities to work collaboratively for social change.

The HIPGive model offers a unique method for supporting Latino students that directly engages donors, nonprofits, and their beneficiaries. In post campaign surveys, participating nonprofits have consistently provided examples of increased community engagement and a greater sense of internal commitment to the work as a result of the momentum around a particular HIPGive campaign.

One example of the success that can result from these crowdfunded projects comes from HIPGive2EDU participant 12 Plus, which reported that through the campaign:

"By building college-going cultures within high schools, this project has helped in the post-secondary educational journeys for 71 high school seniors. In this senior class, 32 Latino/Hispanic students earned their high school diplomas this past month, and 26 of these students are currently enrolled

⁸ http://www.edfunders.org/sites/default/files/GFE_Benchmarking2011_FINAL_12.13.11_1.pdf

Data from Latino/a Donor Survey Respondents

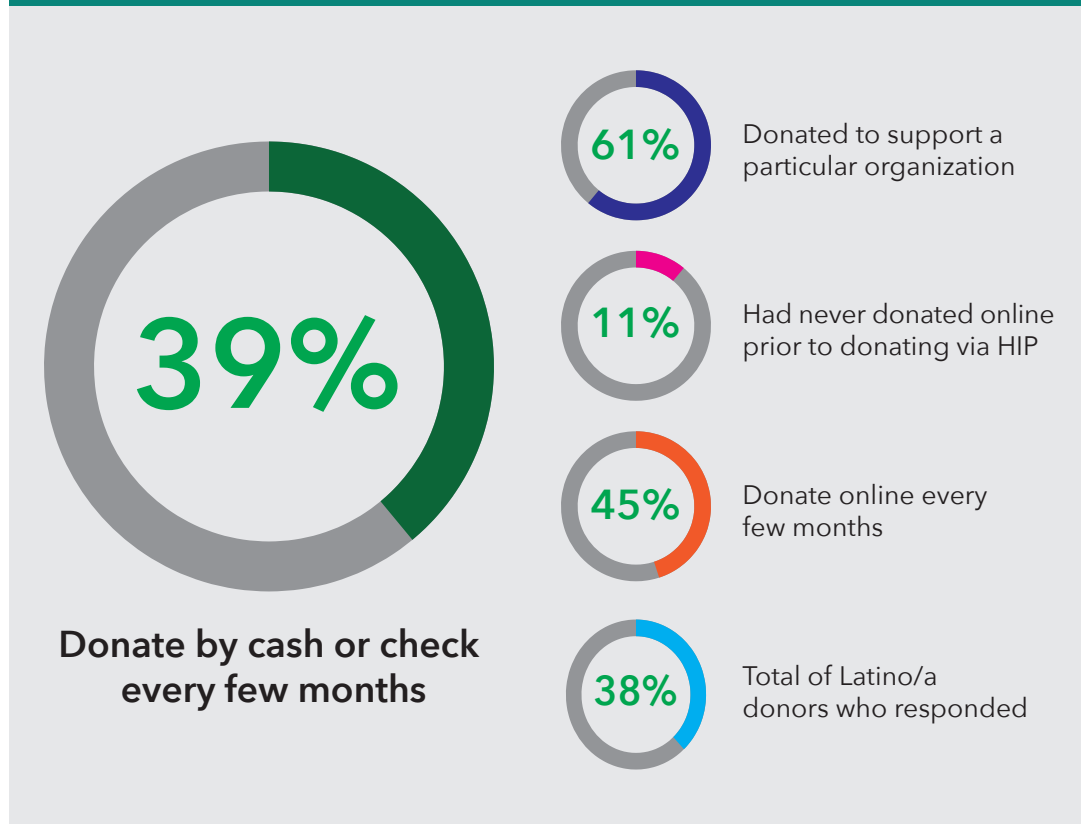


Table 2: Data from Latino/a Donors

Data gathered from HIPGive surveys. HIPGive is a first of its kind crowdfunding platform designed to facilitate smart investments in innovation and Latino communities across the U.S. and the Americas.

in a post-secondary educational option. These post-secondary pathways will impact each student's future career options and financial opportunities, but this project impacts students and the community beyond simply access to a degree."

HIPGive is an innovative response to supporting the issues that impact Latino communities, like student success, and it can provide much needed resources in a swift and meaningful way.

Latino Donors

To fully understand the most effective and direct ways to strengthen the structure of the education pipeline for Latino students, it is important to consider both philanthropic dollars, and individual donations. **In 2014, 15 percent of all individual charitable**

donations in the United States went to education, and online giving grew by 15.3 percent.⁹ These statistics are particularly relevant to HIP's own commitment to, and understanding of, Latino giving.

There is a dearth of data on Latino giving in the United States. What is known is that culture plays a large role when it comes to where Latino donors choose to give. Across its projects and initiatives, HIP is consistently pursuing and cultivating an understanding of which factors motivate Latino donors. Over the past year, HIP has distributed two donor surveys designed to capture specific motivations and giving habits. The following chart demonstrates key findings on Latino giving based on those surveys.

⁹ <http://www.nptrust.org/philanthropic-resources/charitable-giving-statistics/>

Through these surveys, HIP found that the primary motivating factor for most Latino donors was a connection to a particular organization. Unlike institutional philanthropic or governmental funders, individual Latino donors tend to give based on a personal connection, rather than general interest in an issue or cause. At the same time, when it comes to supporting multi-issue organizations (like many of the HIP to College grantees), Latino donors tend to focus less on the programmatic portfolio of the organizations. This provides a unique opportunity to examine and harness donations to broad general operating support for culturally competent, high impact organizations.

Recently, HIP launched latinosgive.org, a website designed exclusively to encourage Latino donors to share their giving stories. The site provides another way to promote Latino giving, and to cultivate relationships with new, young Latino donors. The website works by interfacing with Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to cull quotes and photos so that when the #LatinosGive is used, the post is directly uploaded to the latinosgive.org story feed. This strategy serves not only to encourage and acknowledge Latino giving, but it also works in concert with HIP's goal to counter the stereotype of Latinos

as takers in this country and instead change the narrative to showcase Latinos as the generous givers that they are and always have been.

Based on the current, and longstanding need for more directed philanthropic funding for the particular needs of Latino students and the rising popularity of individual online giving, it makes sense that new, innovative approaches to addressing funding mechanisms to support Latino student success would arise. Online giving models are not substitutes for deliberate investment by foundations and government in education pipeline funding, but rather supplements that have the potential to generate a great deal of momentum and provide useful insights into how best to mobilize and engage specific communities, such as the Latino community. Given the necessity for cross-collaboration and local, regional, and national partnerships, focusing on and capturing data about how individual donors, – Latino donors in particular – are giving, provides a unique opportunity to harness the power of collective action. The more interest there is on a community level around a certain issue, like Latino student and postsecondary success, the more resources are likely to be invested in it.

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Strategies for Success

Increased college readiness and postsecondary success are the overarching objectives of HIP to College. In 2011, United Way identified four universally accepted methods for strengthening education systems by providing funders with the foundation required to bridge harmful divides that adversely affect low-income students of color.¹⁰

1. Engage students in learning while in school
2. Support families to improve academic achievement
3. Connect students to resources they need outside of school
4. Build a stronger system to support children and youth

These four pillars are often reflected in the methods employed by education funders, regardless of the specificities of programmatic intervention - whether they come in preschool, elementary school, high school, or beyond. Based on years of intentional funding and careful research, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has incorporated and expanded these methods by outlining clear strategies for successfully addressing systemic issues and improving outcomes for students. The HIP to College initiative was designed around these strategies.

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Strategies for Postsecondary Success:¹¹

- **Personalized Learning:** Students learn best when education is targeted to their needs and goals.
- **Financial Aid:** Research shows that when financial barriers are removed for high achieving low-income students, they succeed at the same or higher rates than their peers.
- **Pathways to College Completion:** Navigating the path to a degree or credential can be challenging, especially for working adults and students who are the first in their family to attend college.
- **Data and Information:** There is a growing demand for better information about student achievement and institutional performance.
- **Partnerships:** [Specifically] a network of partners (institutions and other organizations) that integrate multiple solutions that tie improved student outcomes and affordability, with an eye toward expansion to additional institutions and systems.
- **Incentives** that drive widespread adoption of solutions and institutional strategies across higher education.
- **Policy and Advocacy:** [Advocating] for evidence-based federal and state policies that promote access to and completion of certificates and degrees for all students, as well as reward institutional efficiency and effectiveness.

¹⁰ <http://www.uwaystan.org/blog-entry/06-03-2013/4-key-strategies-improve-education>

¹¹ <http://postsecondary.gatesfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Postsecondary-Success-Strategy-Overview.pdf>

When it comes to addressing the specific issues that affect Latino students, inclusive attention becomes especially important. "Research suggests that utilizing best practices connected to culture, abilities, resilience, and effort . . . can close the achievement gaps."¹² The National Education Association's (NEA) C.A.R.E. model highlights the need for, and effectiveness of, education systems that consider, on a specific and meaningful level, "the sum total of one's experiences, knowledge, skills, beliefs, values, language, and interests."

Furthermore, cultural proficiency is a significant factor when it comes to improving education outcomes for Latino students. This includes components, such as language, awareness of cultural traditions, and understanding of beliefs. A lack of recognition when it comes to these areas has a substantial impact on how Latino students engage in formal schooling, and ultimately how far they proceed through the education pipeline.

"Helping Young Hispanic Learners," an Educational Leadership article published in 2011 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), put it this way:

"Programs and curriculums often do not take into consideration the fact that the children speak a language other than English; that they need to acquire high levels of academic vocabulary, discourse, and inquiry in English to succeed in content areas; and that their own cultural and linguistic contexts are crucial ingredients in developing

understanding of academic concepts."¹³ Learning models for Latino students that take these factors into consideration are far more useful and effective than those that do not.

The most critical practices for addressing student achievement gaps in Hispanic communities, as outlined by the National Education Association, are:¹⁴

1. Cultural awareness and understanding
2. Community outreach and advocacy (access to services)
3. Parental involvement
4. Appropriate pedagogy including summer learning

These four primary strategies offer a foundational approach to supporting Latino students through the education pipeline where specificity of need and substantive cultural understanding are the essential priorities. In terms of addressing the specific issues facing Latino students, such as summer melt, there are additional, particular practices (outlined below in the initiative results section) that have proven to be highly effective.

At the core of all of these strategies is the notion that, in order to successfully support Latino students, in school and out of school programs must be tailored and streamlined. The success of the HIP to College initiative provides significant insight into the ways in which an aligned, culturally proficient program can begin to significantly improve education outcomes for Latino students.

¹² <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/CAREguide2011.pdf>

¹³ <http://www.ascd.org/publications/newsletters/education-update/dec11/vol53/num12/Bridging-the-Hispanic-Achievement-Gap.aspx>

¹⁴ <http://www.nea.org/home/HispanicsEducation%20Issues.htm>

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Initiative Results

The HIP to College initiative was a success in its pilot phase from 2012 through 2015. The results from both state-level implementation sites demonstrated improved outcomes for Latino students, as well as a strengthened network of funders, institutions, and organizations in place to continue the work. Table 3 below provides a breakdown of the program participants by site. In North Carolina, a multiyear program designed to help Latino students and families navigate through the education system and

through college, was the primary focus. Numbers of students and parents served also have been highlighted for North Carolina. In Colorado, where the primary focus was on preparing students for college and helping high school seniors to navigate the academic, administrative, and social aspects of attending a two- or four-year university, the number of seniors served is highlighted.

Table 3: HIP to College Participants by Site

North Carolina	
980 Number of Student and Parent Program Participants	
890 Number of Students	90 Number of Parents
Colorado	
1006 Number of Summer Melt Participants	220 Number of Seniors <i>This number excludes figures for Adams 14.</i>

Successful Strategies for Improving Education Outcomes for Latino Students

	NC Strategies	CO Strategies
Cultural awareness and understanding	■	■
Community engagement	■	■
Parental involvement	■	■
Appropriate pedagogy	■	■
Personalized outreach with students	■	■
Peer mentorship	■	■
High school counseling	■	■
Digital outreach (text message campaigns)	■	■

Table 4: HIP to College Aligned Strategies



Strategies and Methodologies

In both North Carolina and Colorado, program strategies were tailored to fit the particular needs of each of the state-level Latino communities served. Many of the specific components of the programs differed by site, but the overarching approaches were similar and adhered to national best practices for nonprofits and other education service providers.

Here’s how the strategies put forth by the HIP to College grantees aligned with the strategies outlined in the VI. Strategies for Success section (Page 14):

North Carolina

In North Carolina, program strategies centered heavily on the collective actions of the “core team” of leaders, which was made up of members from each of the initiative’s institutional partners:

- Adelante Education Coalition
- El Centro Hispano

- North Carolina Society for Hispanic Professionals
- North Carolina State University’s Juntos Program
- Student Action with Farmworkers

To begin, the core team developed an aligned curriculum. This unified system was applied as a result of the understanding that many local high school and college administrators in the local counties served by the initiative¹⁵ were unaware of the particular issues facing Latino families, or lacked the support required to appropriately coordinate findings and resources. The Core Team and aligned curriculum were introduced as a vehicle for collaboration, shared learning, and strengthening Latino student support in three North Carolina counties.

A key component of this aligned methodology was Success Coaching. The idea behind Success Coaching was to provide students with coaches who

¹⁵ Johnston, Wake, and Durham counties, in central North Carolina

could provide guidance in navigating the school system as well as getting academic support. This type of direct connection engaged students and parents in lasting and meaningful ways. The Success Coaching model has three key components:

1. Appropriate staff delivering services and meeting with students on a regular basis in order to develop respected/reliable relationships with students.
2. Students gaining a sense of belonging to the program, to their peers, and to the school in order to persist in reaching academic success.
3. Engaging parents through frequent and consistent communication and opportunities for involvement that strengthened their connection to the program and the school, as well as reinforced their support of the child's academic efforts.

The North Carolina program was the subject of an external, school-level evaluation that examined the benefits and challenges associated with the aligned curriculum, and relied on the tracking of various aspects of student success.

In April 2014, based on a series of focus groups with grantees and local evaluators, the units of analysis for understanding progress in North Carolina were amended to account for contextual variation. Given this, the tools used to evaluate progress vary slightly based on the particular project focus at each site. Sample indicators and survey questions included:

- Transfer rate from two-year to four-year colleges
- Number of postsecondary awards and degrees completed in an academic year
- Measured using a Likert scale: "My parents (or guardians) talk with me about my school grade reports," and, "I feel motivated to get good grades in school."

Colorado

In Colorado, funders identified the specific goal of decreasing summer melt among Latino students as the programmatic focus. Program strategies were informed by a collective understanding of summer melt best practices, as well as by the distinguishing community needs of each of the following five nonprofits:

- Adams 14 Education Foundation
- Girls Incorporated of Metro Denver
- Latin American Education Foundation
- Mapleton Education Foundation
- Mi Casa Resource Center

In a handbook released in 2011, The Strategic Data Project Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University outlined the most effective strategies for improving summer melt.¹⁶The Colorado grantees modeled the common strategies after those of the Strategic Data Project. The grantees also relied heavily on higher education preparation as a means of instructing and engaging students in the summer between high school and college. The program strategies in Colorado included:

1. Mentoring and transition coaching
2. Social support and follow-up that emphasized enrollment, attendance, and the completion of the first year of college coursework
3. Parent engagement through information nights
4. Digital communication, through text messaging, as a means of keeping up with students in their preferred medium

The evaluation methodology in this site was based on an internal, program-level evaluation with an emphasis on direct impact. All five Colorado grantees (listed above) incorporated data collection and monitoring

¹⁶ <http://cepr.harvard.edu/publications/summer-melt-handbook>

Table 5: Aligned Strategies: Highlights of Results

Strategy	North Carolina	Colorado
<p>Personalized Outreach with Students</p>	<p>64% of students met with a success coach at least once. Success coaches model for the students how to communicate with teachers, counselors, and other school personnel. Coaching provides the students with communications tools that work for them, and that they can take with them through the education pipeline.</p>	<p>75% more students in Northern Colorado demonstrated significant interest in the participating in the program. In this catchment area, program participation has increased exponentially and geographically as a result of tailored methods for engaging students, most commonly via text message that resonated specifically with their lifestyles.</p>
<p>Community Engagement</p>	<p>Educators, administrators, and local organizers are more well versed in the challenges and opportunities of Latino students, based on community presentations conducted by members (and students, whenever possible) of the Adelante Education Coalition*. Attendees of these presentations included: members of the Greensboro Chapter of the NC Society of Hispanic Professionals; America Reads and Counts; Teach for America's community engagement summit; the World View Conference for middle school, high school and community college teachers, and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.</p> <p><i>*Adelante is, "a collaboration among nonprofit organizations that focus on advocacy and public policy, community organizing, and grassroots support." community college teachers, and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.</i></p>	<p>Denver Metro area educators and local nonprofits are more informed regarding the issues surrounding summer melt and the programs available to combat it. Collective impact strategies on summer melt were discussed at local networking events, and lessons learned were shared among the HIP to College grantees through a partnership with the Denver College Attainment Network (DenverCAN), which includes two grantees, Mi Casa Resource Center and Girls Incorporated of Metro Denver.</p>
<p>Parental Involvement</p>	<p>61.8% of Juntos participants reported that their parents participated in Juntos Family workshops. These workshops brought together students, their parents and other relatives to discuss goals and to identify how to accomplish them for each student's success.</p>	<p>100% of parents of participants at Denver North High School and North High School Engagement Center reported feeling that they could talk about the "college-going process" and that they understood the financial structure of college.</p>
<p>Appropriate Pedagogy</p>	<p>100% of participants benefitted from an aligned curriculum that encouraged cross-collaboration. It resulted in an expanded organizational scope of work (tailored to fit the needs of Latino students). It also increased partners' engagement with college outcomes for Latino youth.</p>	<p>An average 87% of participants throughout the program received formal coaching or mentoring that was tailored to their background and context as Latino students.</p>

procedures into their implementation plans in order to track the results of their programs. Sample indicators and sample survey questions included:

- Participation in extracurricular activities
- Number of hours spent meeting with a high school college and career counselor
- “Do you plan to attend college, and if so, which of the following scenarios might prevent you from attending in the fall?”

Findings

In both sites, North Carolina and Colorado, HIP documented increased postsecondary access, enrollment, and persistence, and in Colorado, **summer melt among those youth served by the grantees decreased by 65 percent in the catchment areas.**¹⁷

By considering and customizing the most effective strategies for improving outcomes for low-income students of color, HIP staff and the HIP to College partners have been able to successfully monitor and demonstrate the results of supporting Latino students in culturally competent ways.

In addition to monitoring the scope and strength of these strategies through grantee reports, HIP and its partners also tracked quantitative data that measure student postsecondary attainment and success. Enrollment, persistence and summer melt in the case of Colorado were tracked whenever possible.

The data findings in Table 6 demonstrate the effectiveness of culturally appropriate programs for Latino students.

In states like North Carolina, where the college going culture among Latino students is often nascent, just a handful of students attending two-year or four-year colleges can have a substantial impact on local Latino communities. Developing a culture that not only provides students with the information and resources they need to get to college, but that also meaningfully supports them in the process is critical. And momentum appears to be a significant element in increasing their ranks.

This momentum is influential not only at the institutional level, but among the students as well. Social motivation can be a major factor for young people. In a pre-program assessment survey, 82 percent of student participants reported that they talk about going to college with at least one of their friends.¹⁸ Additionally, data suggest that students tend to surround themselves with friends who possess similar work habits and expectations for attending college. Over the course of this program, partners in North Carolina experienced from 83 to 300 percent increases in the number of students served through direct after-school programming or success coaching. Such support and motivation programs have far-reaching implications when student participants are likely to discuss the program and encourage their friends to join.

¹⁷ This percentage excludes baseline numbers from Denver Metro Public Schools, which were not available at the time.

¹⁸ 60 students completed the pre-assessment survey.

Table 6: Enrollment, Persistence, and Summer Melt Highlights

North Carolina	2012-15 Highlights
Enrollment	88% of the high school seniors surveyed reported having explored various options for going to college.
Persistence	100% of the college attending Latino student leaders (39 students) persisted through their sophomore year of college.

Colorado	2012-15 Highlights
Enrollment	93% of participants enrolled in college.
Persistence	<p>Grantees reported an average 60% persistence across all programs.</p> <p><i>This does not include numbers from the Latin American Education Fund.</i></p>
Summer Melt	Decrease from an average of 54% in the grantees' catchment areas to an average of 19% across all programs.

Table 7: Summer Melt Comparison

Program/Source	College Enrollment	Summer Melt	Persistence
Strategic Data Project, Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University and preeminent Summer Melt researchers Ben Castleman and Lindsay Page	National Average (among low-income students): 51%	National Average 10-40% (40% for low-income students)	National Average 62% persist to second year of college
College Bound St. Louis (member of the National College Access Network, and supported by the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation)	95%	3%	92% persist to second year of college
HIP to College	CO: An average of 93%	An average of 19%, which is a 65% decrease in catchment area	CO: An average 60% persisted to spring semester

The issue of summer melt has been increasingly prioritized by funders and institutions, particularly in Colorado, in recent years. The results of the HIP to College program, in comparison with national Summer Melt programs (Table 7), paint an optimistic portrait of the role and potential of such an initiative for low-income students.

Given the success of the HIP to College initiative in Colorado, the results of the grantees' programs provide a unique glimpse into what is possible when it comes to addressing summer melt moving forward. On the whole, summer melt rates tend to be lower with smaller and more personalized programs, compared with rates for other programs in each catchment area. This may not only be the may be most effective in

Colorado, but potentially in other sites as well. It is the sort of analysis that HIP hopes to continue tracking and further understanding with future initiatives.

The success of HIP to College in both sites provides insight into the effective potential of streamlined institutional funding in low-income, minority, and Latino communities, as well as into HIP's role as the backbone organization.

Lessons Learned and Opportunities

8

As an expert on donor networks and Latino-led, Latino-serving community based nonprofits, HIP went into the HIP to College initiative understanding both the structural challenges faced by Latino students, and the fundamental need for programs that cater to the Latino communities HIP serves.

In North Carolina, HIP is confident that it has created a new backbone structure and significant muscle to support Latino Student Success in the state. In Colorado, the Summer Melt project continues to bridge programming gaps in underserved areas. In both sites, HIP provided personnel and/or structural support based on partnerships with community and state-level funders to aid the work on a day-to-day level. This, coupled with the grantees' hard work and understanding of their communities, has resulted in an improved landscape for Latino student success in North Carolina and Colorado.

One of the most important takeaways from this pilot has been the understanding that **local and community-based nonprofits are particularly well-positioned to recruit and help high-risk participants**, who might otherwise fall out of the education pipeline. Being community-based provides these nonprofits with a level of trust that local schools or colleges do not typically see. The flip side to this deep engagement with their community means that **these organizations do not currently have**

the resources to track large groups of students all the way through the postsecondary pipeline. Given this, understanding the mid- and long-term results of a multi-faceted initiative, such as HIP to College, remains challenging. HIP's future education programming will work to directly and broadly address this challenge.

Education work in North Carolina involves a younger, emerging, more rural Latino population. To reflect this nascent community, the program methodology was broad and holistic. Tracking students through a multi-year initiative required a great deal of unanticipated flexibility. Additionally, it required skillful persistence in diligently building alliances among nonprofits with different capacity levels, which are used to competing for grants rather than aligning their priorities in a meaningful way to work in collaboration. **This alignment, and the subsequent tracking of results, requires more resources, and also more trust and communication among key actors.** Additionally, the North Carolina political climate turned out to be an external challenge that at times hampered the program's progress. In the words of one core team member,

“. . . The political climate is a barrier overall to the success of getting students engaged and interested in education,” one core team member said. “We have resistance in terms of policies at institutions and government!”

Policies that impede the educational development of immigrant and undocumented Latino students significantly impact their morale, and require increased political advocacy and civic participation on the part of local institutions.

In Colorado, with a more direct approach, it was easier for the nonprofits to track and monitor the results of their programs. In general, Colorado grantees were able to track each participant from the beginning of the program, through its completion with relatively low turnover.

An unanticipated challenge in the Colorado site, however, was the influx of summer melt funding in the Denver metro area. In the words of a Mi Casa Resource Center official:

“During the early implementation of Mi Casa’s Summer Melt Program it became evident that the landscape had changed and there were increased opportunities for students...the environment felt competitive and the impact was most felt by students. Many students expressed discontent with being over-recruited into programs... [which] did not lead to engaged students and [did lead to] eventual withdrawal from the program.”

This unanticipated oversaturation did, for some grantees, impact participation and program retention specifically in the Denver metro area, but it also illuminates the fact that, **there is an opportunity for HIP to extend this model and these lessons learned to other underserved communities sites across the country, rather than major metro areas**, for example in rural communities that would have access to quality distance postsecondary degree granting programs. It also illustrates a need for more intentional openness, communication, and coordination among funders.

On the whole, grantees and program participants in both North Carolina and Colorado reflected favorably on their participation in HIP to College and pointed to a number of ways in which the initiative strengthened their programs, which is a key factor in long-term sustainability. On the opposite page, we can glimpse, straight from the grantees and their participants, into some of the most useful and appreciated aspects of HIP to College.

Both local funders and local nonprofits have a deep understanding of specific community context and can design unique and interesting programming to address Latino college readiness and postsecondary success challenges. HIP found that much of the need that remains involves **creating additional opportunities and support for community-based nonprofits to track, monitor, and communicate medium- and long-term educational outcomes for Latino students**, so they can advocate for their work at the community, state, regional and national levels in the United States.

HIP is dedicated to continuing its work to strengthen the Latino student pipeline by convening partners and investing in initiatives that support grassroots nonprofits that are working to increase high school graduation and college enrollment and retention in their communities. This has been formalized in HIP’s new strategic framework, HIP2020, which prioritizes educational equity as a major action pillar.

Grantee/Participant Testimonials

"It has [the structure of the program in North Carolina] given the community a space for higher education and different sectors to come together which would not have happened if we didn't do this project."

- North Carolina Core Team Member

"I did not know about the SAT, the ACT, or how important grades are. They helped me get my education straight and focused."

- El Centro Hispano participant

"This grant has revived the high school and college program. Through this grant we have been able to take girls on their first College Tour, assist with their application process as well as attend orientation with girls who may have had busy family members. This grant has allowed us to welcome families to the discussion of higher education in a safe environment and has beacons future programming."

- Girls Incorporated of Metro Denver

"If there is anything in this program for a student to learn, it is that your heritage does not define you or your future and college can always be a reality, not just a dream."

- Latin American Education Fund participant

9

Next Steps

Throughout its implementation, HIP to College raised many questions and discussions around the most effective types of support that need to be in place for both Latino students and their families. Through HIP to College, Hispanics in Philanthropy and its networks of local funders in two states have demonstrated that creative multi-stakeholder funding mechanisms that respect culturally and contextually appropriate programs can be successful in improving outcomes for Latino students.

Hispanics in Philanthropy is committed to amplifying the interrelated themes of Latino leadership, voice, and equity in the education sector. This occurs at both the funding and the implementation levels.

- Creating and sustaining local donor networks committed to a specific topic **increases local leadership and ownership of education issues, particularly postsecondary access and success, in their communities.** This creates a virtuous cycle, whereby the implementing nonprofits know that a group of local funders is investing in their work, and funders know and respect the deep ties nonprofits hold with the communities they serve.
- At the same time, these leadership ties are strengthened, funders and nonprofits are empowered to **raise their collective voice** around the importance of this work to the young men and women, and their families, whose lives and futures are changed because of a postsecondary degree.

- The belief that one's birth circumstances do not define his or her destiny is a key premise for the American Dream - a powerful dream, and one that is challenged in today's contentious political landscape. Postsecondary education has been perhaps the most important way to achieve this dream for many, and it is now an essential qualification to participate in the 21st century workforce. But the pathways to higher education grow more and more complex and expensive. **For many, both funders and implementers, who see these pathways tightened, the importance of equitable efforts to support students and their families achieve this dream cannot be overstated.**

A key way to sustain this work is to advocate for, and invest in, philanthropic ecosystems and communities of practice. It is not enough for one funder to support just one program or project at a time, in isolation. A successful and sustainable investment means creating and reinforcing networks that have the resources to communicate and advocate for the importance of the work and the clout to bring in new partners. This is important in places where past initiatives have been successful, and in areas where communities and stakeholders want to come together around issues like college access and postsecondary student success.

A greater focus on equity is clearly needed when it comes to education funding. HIP's role as a convener and

its fundamental understanding of these issues around cultural proficiency and equity, continue to make it a vital partner in this work. In a final report, the North Carolina core team highlighted HIP's leadership as a key component of what worked.

"HIP's reputation and integrity as a peer brought funders to the table that the core team would not have been able to [otherwise] access," the North Carolina report added.

The structure of the HIP to College initiative was a critical and highly beneficial component. By teaming up with local funders to match funds in each site and by distributing those awards to grassroots nonprofits working in collaborative contexts, each dollar invested extended far beyond its face value. **The outcomes from funds made available to grassroots nonprofits and the communities they serve offer an incentivizing glimpse into the potential of this type of funding. The philanthropic ecosystem could benefit from seeing growth of similarly structured and supported programs.**

In each site, challenge and matched funding provided a considerable

impetus to carry out this work meaningfully and sustainably. Almost immediately, funders and grassroots nonprofits were able to see the power and benefits of collective action and come together to improve outcomes for Latino students in clear and deliberate ways. **Local funders have committed to continuing the work in the medium term; while the HIP to College initiative focused specifically on low-income Latino students, there is the opportunity to interface with other high barrier communities that face similar challenges in their postsecondary attainment.**

Ultimately, an initiative like HIP to College is incentivizing participation and engagement on many levels. Nonprofits providing direct services to Latino students see the power of high-level collective influence, and the success of the initiative as a whole serves to generate interest from new funders and institutions thereby establishing greater networks of partners that are committed to and invested in new ways to reach and support Latino students. HIP is very interested in and committed to continuing its work with partners across silos to further develop equitable models for Latino student success throughout the United States.

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