



Building Hispanic Talent InitiativeSM



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U N I V E R S I T I E S

Annual Report 2023

Executive Summary

Through a partnership with the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), Dominion Energy launched the Building Hispanic Talent Initiative[®]. This \$2 million-dollar three-year initiative aims to increase the number of Hispanic undergraduate students who are interested in pursuing careers in clean energy and more specifically, career opportunities at Dominion Energy. The Building Hispanic Talent Initiative[®] provides funding to seven participating post-secondary institutions, which are charged with implementing Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) summer bridge programs to help high school students build a college-going identity and eventually become a STEM/Energy professional.

Participating post-secondary institutions include Utah Valley University (UVU), Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA), George Mason University (GMU), Sampson Community College, University of Connecticut at Stamford (UConn), University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez (UPRM), and University of North Carolina at Pembroke (UNCP).

This summary reports the key findings from year one and two of the Building Hispanic Talent Initiative[®]:

- A total of 770 summer bridge students from 133 different high schools have been served since the initiation of the Building Hispanic Talent Initiative[®].
 - Year one: 295 students
 - Year two: 556 students with 81 returning students.
- Of the 770 students served, 55% identified as Hispanic/Latino.
- Summer bridge programs had a 63% increase in Hispanic/Latino headcount from 179 students in 2022 to 292 in 2023.
- Since the launch of this initiative, 79% of summer bridge students were from minority groups underrepresented in higher education (i.e., Hispanic, Black/African American, and Indigenous).
- Cumulatively, 63% of summer bridge students served through the initiative will be first-generation college students.
 - Year one: 201 prospective first-generation students
 - Year two: 336 prospective first-generation students
- Summer bridge programs exceeded their corresponding institutional Hispanic enrollment by an average of +29% and their local municipality Hispanic population by an average of +31%.
- A total of 3088 college credits have been awarded to summer bridge students through this initiative with a success rate of over 92%.
 - Year one: 1035 awarded credits.
 - Year two: 2053 awarded credits.
- In year two, 3 in every 4 summer bridge student indicated interest in entering a STEM related career field.

HACU supports Dominion Energy's goal to increase the number of Hispanic employees in the energy sector workforce through this initiative and will continue to leverage data to inform programming and practice. HACU and all participating post-secondary institutions extend their sincere appreciation to Dominion Energy for their commitment to providing college and career access to the Hispanic community.

Building Hispanic Talent Initiative

Background

As part of their commitment to increase diversity in the energy sector, Dominion Energy partnered with the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) to create the Building Hispanic Talent Initiative[®]. The initiative aims to increase the number of Hispanic undergraduate students who are interested in pursuing careers in clean energy and more specifically, career opportunities at Dominion Energy. This is accomplished through partnerships with seven post-secondary institutions to build a pipeline from high school to clean energy careers. The seven institutions chosen to pilot this initiative were Utah Valley University (UVU), Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA), George Mason University (GMU), Sampson Community College, University of Connecticut at Stamford (UConn), University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez (UPRM), and University of North Carolina at Pembroke (UNCP).

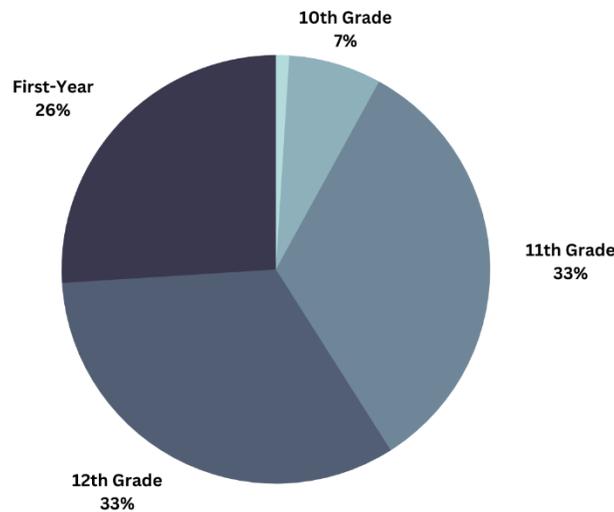
This report outlines data collected via end-of-summer reports and student surveys for year two of the Building Hispanic Talent Initiative[®]. Below is a profile summary of students who participated in summer bridge programs, followed by information regarding college and career access, support services provided, and student testimonials.

Profile of Summer Bridge Students

Grade Classification of Summer Bridge Students

Grade classification for 2023 summer bridge students was defined as the “rising grade-level” or the grade level students will be in Fall 2023. Of the 556 who participated in year two summer bridge programs, six were 9th graders, 37 10th graders, 184 11th graders, 181 12th graders, and 145 first-year college students. Figure 1 below shows the percentage of each grade classification based on total summer bridge enrollment.

Figure 1: Grade Classification of Summer Bridge Students, 2023



Student Enrollment Per Institution

Through 2023, the Building Hispanic Talent Initiative® served 770 summer bridge students from 133 different high schools. In year one (2022), 295 students in comparison to 556 students in year two (2023) with 81 returning students from 2022. See Figure 2 and Table 1 for a breakdown of summer bridge enrollment per institution.

Figure 2: Summer Bridge Student Enrollment Per Institution, 2022-2023

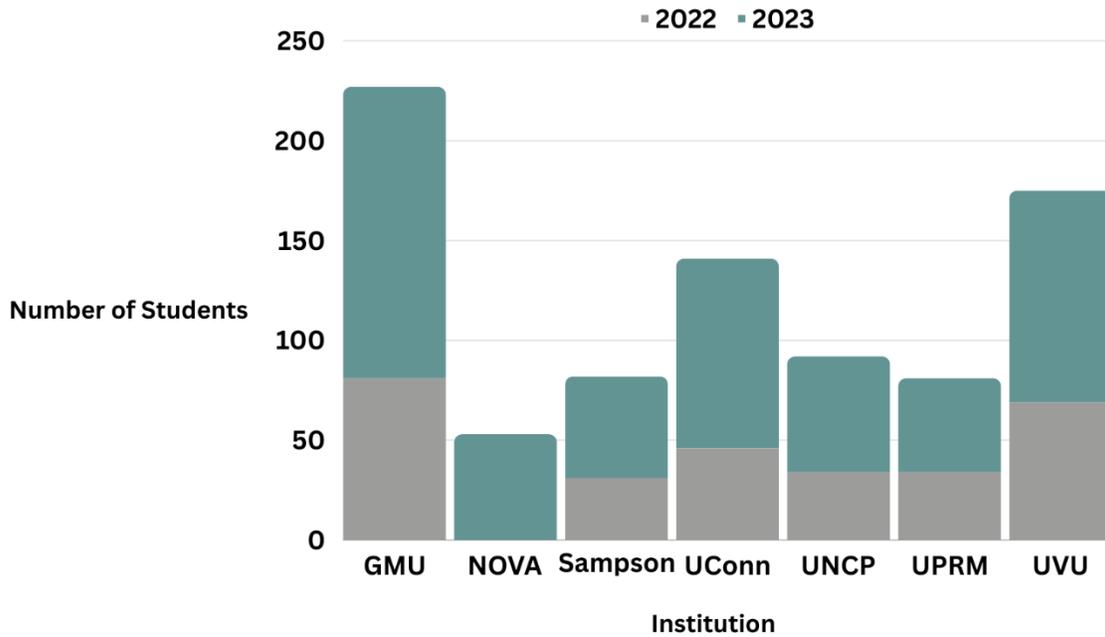


Table 1: Summer Bridge Student Enrollment Per Institution, 2022-2023

Institution	Year 1	Year 2	Year 2 (Returning)	Cumulative*
George Mason University	81	146	30	197
Northern Virginia Community College	0	53	0	53
Sampson Community College	31	51	11	71
University of Connecticut - Stamford	46	95	36	105
University of North Carolina at Pembroke	34	58	0	92
University of Puerto Rico - Mayaguez	34	47	1	80
Utah Valley University	69	106	3	172
Total	295	556	81	770

*Cumulative does not include returning students for year 2.

Demographics

Since the launch of the Building Hispanic Talent Initiative®, 55% of all summer bridge participants identify as Hispanic/Latino and 79% of all participants identify as belonging to an underrepresented racial/ethnic group in higher education (i.e., Hispanic, Black/African American, and Indigenous) (Figure 3). Summer bridge programs had a 63% increase in Hispanic/Latino headcount from 179 students in 2022 to 292 in 2023 (Table 2).

Figure 3: Cumulative Summer Bridge Demographics, 2022-2023

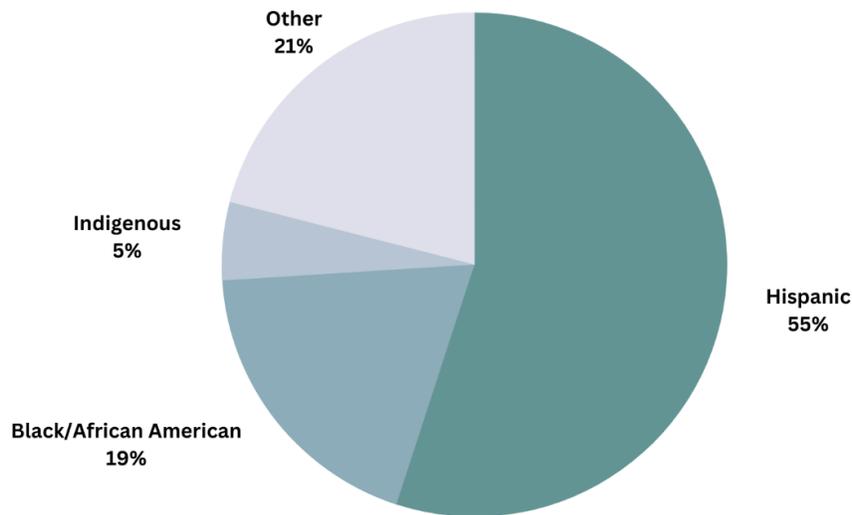


Table 2: Summer Bridge Hispanic Student Enrollment, 2022-2023

Institution	2022 Hisp Total	2023 Hisp Total	% Cumulative SB Hisp. Enrollment
George Mason University	42	45	38%
Northern Virginia Community College	0	29	55%
Sampson Community College	28	47	91%
University of Connecticut - Stamford	35	57	65%
University of North Carolina at Pembroke	5	7	13%
University of Puerto Rico - Mayaguez	34	47	100%
Utah Valley University	35	60	54%
Total	179	292	55%

Across all institutions, apart from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke, Hispanic students were consistently the majority ethnic group represented in each summer bridge program. The University of North Carolina at Pembroke was allowed to prioritize Indigenous students as well as Hispanic populations when recruiting for their summer bridge program due to their proximity to tribal lands. When the percentages of summer bridge enrollment for Hispanic (13%) and Indigenous (39%) student groups at University of North Carolina at Pembroke are combined, their targeted enrollment percentage rises to 52%.

First-Generation Enrollment

For the purposes of this initiative, a first-generation student was defined as a student whose parent(s) or legal guardian(s) did not complete a four-year bachelor’s degree from a university in the United States. Summer bridge programs served 201 first-generation students in 2022 and 336 first-generation students in 2023. Since 2022, approximately 2 in every 3 summer bridge students identified as a prospective first-generation college student amounting to 63% of all summer bridge students (Table 3).

Table 3: Summer Bridge Prospective First-Generation Student Enrollment, 2022-2023.

Institution	1st Generation SB Enrollment - 2022	1st Generation SB Enrollment - 2023	Cumulative % of SB Enrollment
George Mason University	80	84	72%
Northern Virginia Community College	0	32	60%
Sampson Community College	28	27	67%
University of Connecticut - Stamford	26	92	84%
University of North Carolina at Pembroke	32	43	82%
University of Puerto Rico - Mayaguez	13	4	21%
Utah Valley University	22	54	43%
Total	201	336	63%

Hispanic Enrollment: Summer Bridge Programs Compared to Institutions and Municipalities

A secondary, but notably important goal of the Building Hispanic Talent Initiative® is to assist partnering post-secondary institutions to over time become or stay Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). HSIs are defined in Title V of the Higher Education Act as not-for-profit institutions of higher learning with a full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate student enrollment that is at least 25% Hispanic. At the time of this report, four institutions met the federal HSI designation:

Sampson Community College (27%), the University of Connecticut - Stamford (31%), the University of Puerto Rico – Mayaguez (93%), and Northern Virginia Community College (25%). George Mason University (17%) is an emerging HSI (i.e., institutions with full-time equivalent Hispanic enrollment between 15 and 24.9 percent). Becoming an HSI qualifies institutions for certain federal grants and other monies that they would otherwise not be able to obtain, further ensuring they are able to support, retain, and graduate underrepresented populations in higher education.

The Building Hispanic Talent Initiative® aims to increase the amount of Hispanic enrollment at each institution over time. As such, comparisons were made between summer bridge Hispanic enrollment and institution Hispanic enrollment for each campus. With a goal of every partnering institution becoming an HSI over time, it is encouraging for summer bridge Hispanic enrollment to exceed corresponding institution Hispanic enrollment. The Hispanic student enrollment at all participating summer bridge programs exceeded the Hispanic enrollment at partnering institutions with an average differential of +29%.

Since students attending these summer bridge programs are recruited regionally, comparisons were also drawn between the Hispanic population in the local municipality to measure the efficacy of institutions in recruiting students in their local area. The Hispanic student enrollment at all participating summer bridge programs exceeded the Hispanic population of their local municipality institution with an average differential of +31%.

Figure 4 and Table 4 illustrates a full comparison of Hispanic students enrolled at summer bridge programs to institutions and local municipalities.

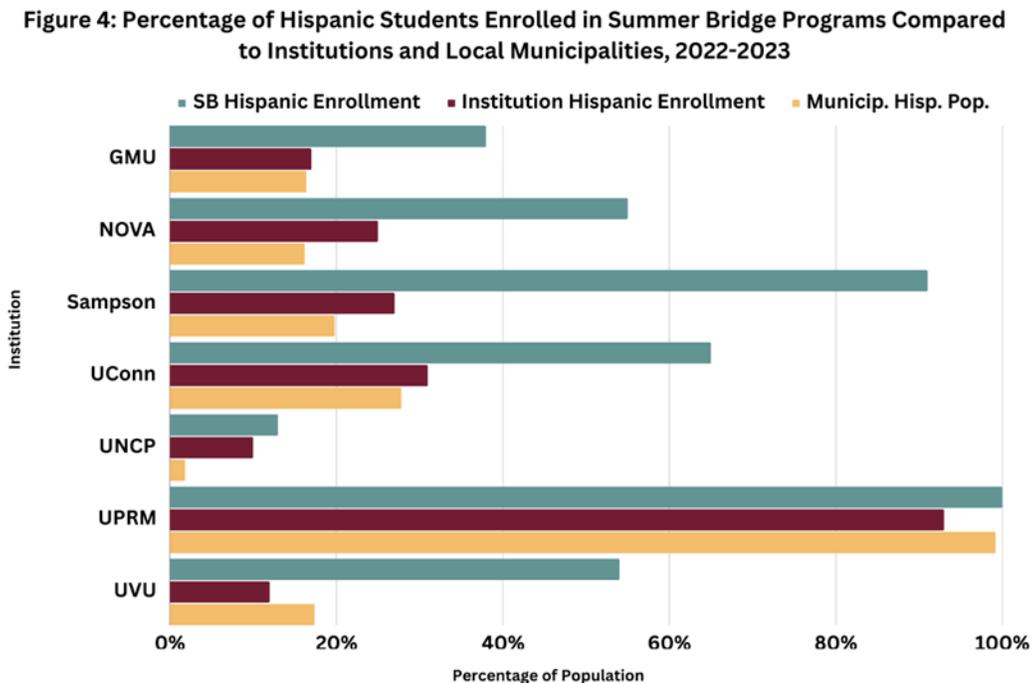


Table 4: Percentage of Hispanic Students Enrolled in Summer Bridge Programs Compared to Institutions and Local Municipalities, 2022 -2023

Institution	% SB Hispanic Enrollment	% Institution Hispanic Enrollment	% Hispanic Municipality Population
George Mason University	38%	17%	16%
Northern Virginia Community College	55%	25%	16%
Sampson Community College	91%	27%	20%
University of Connecticut - Stamford	65%	31%	28%
University of North Carolina at Pembroke	13%	10%	2%
University of Puerto Rico - Mayaguez	100%	93%	99%
Utah Valley University	54%	12%	17%

College and Career Access

Faculty and Staff Information

In 2023, 111 faculty/staff members from participating institutions propelled the Building Hispanic Talent Initiative®. This created a student to staff ratio of approximately 5:1. On average, institutions had personnel teams of approximately 16 people operating their summer bridge programs. See Table 5 for a full breakdown of faculty/staff amounts by institutions.

Table 5: Summer Bridge Student to Staff Ratios, 2023

Institution	Total Students	# of Faculty/Staff	Student : Staff Ratio
George Mason University	146	27	5.41
Northern Virginia Community College	53	11	4.82
Sampson Community College	51	15	3.40
University of Connecticut - Stamford	95	17	5.59
University of North Carolina at Pembroke	58	22	2.64
University of Puerto Rico - Mayaguez	47	7	6.71
Utah Valley University	106	12	8.83
Total	556	111	5.01
Average	79.4	15.9	5.34

Success Rate of College Courses

A required aspect of each partner institution’s summer bridge program is that every student be enrolled into classes for college credit. This is meant to help students build a college-going identity and to realize a college education is attainable. In the amount of college credits awarded There were 1035 college credits awarded in 2022 and 2053 college credits awarded in the second year. Since launch, 3088 credits have been awarded through the Building Hispanic Talent Initiative® at a 92% pass rate (Table 6). See Appendix A for the college courses offered per institution.

Table 6: Summer Bridge College Credit Success Rates, 2022 - 2023

Institution	2022 Credits Awarded	2023 Credits Awarded	Cumulative Credits Awarded	Cumulative Success Rate
George Mason University	121	420	541	94%
Northern Virginia Community College	0	237	237	100%
Sampson Community College	88	153	241	76%
University of Connecticut - Stamford	184	301	485	100%
University of North Carolina at Pembroke	186	321	507	92%
University of Puerto Rico - Mayaguez	102	141	243	100%
Utah Valley University	354	480	834	89%
Total	1035	2053	3088	92%

Interest and Awareness in STEM Related Careers

For 2023, interest in related careers and awareness of opportunities within the STEM and energy areas were measured through student pre- and post-surveys created and disseminated by HACU with the help of partnering institutions. 58% of students completed the pre-survey and 50% of students completed the post-survey. Table 7 located in Appendix B includes a breakdown of response percentages.

Students were asked to rate their familiarity with the STEM and energy fields as well as career opportunities within the corresponding fields using a Likert scale with the options of Not Familiar, Slightly Familiar, Somewhat Familiar, Familiar, and Very Familiar.

Survey results for student familiarity of the STEM field jumped from 72.5% to 84.1% between the pre-surveys and post-surveys (+12%). In regard to the STEM and energy field, student

familiarity (somewhat familiar and up) of career opportunities jumped from 61.9% to 80.5% between pre-surveys and post-surveys (+18.6%).

There was a larger leap made between surveys as it pertained to the energy field. Student familiarity with the energy field increased from 27.6% to 49.6% between the pre-survey and post-survey (+22%). Regarding career opportunities within the energy field, student familiarity increased from 24.2% to 48.2% (+24%).

Table 8 includes a comparison of pre- and post-survey results pertaining to familiarity with the STEM and energy fields and their corresponding career opportunities.

Table 8: Student Familiarity with Career Fields and Related Opportunities, 2023

% Somewhat Familiar and Above		
Survey Question	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey
How familiar are you with the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) field?	72.5%	84.1%
How familiar are you with career opportunities in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) field?	61.9%	80.5%
How familiar are you with the energy field?	27.6%	49.6%
How familiar are you with career opportunities in the energy field?	24.6%	48.2%

Using a Likert scale (not at all interested, slightly interested, somewhat interested, interested, very interested) students were able to select their interest in various STEM related career paths. For the purposes of the Building Hispanic Talent Initiative® and considering the students’ level of interest on pre-surveys, “percent interested” is defined as the percentage of students ranking their interest as slightly interested and above.

With engineering having the highest level of student interest amongst career paths on the post-survey at 79.6%, approximately 3 in every 4 students demonstrated some interest in pursuing a STEM related career path after attending a summer bridge program. Energy had the greatest increase of interest amongst career paths from pre- to post-surveys with an increase of 60.7% to 70.8% (+10.1%). Table 9 includes the complete breakdown of student interest per career paths on pre- and post-surveys.

Table 9: Student Interest to Enter Various STEM Career Paths, 2023

% Interested			
Career Path	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	Diff
Physics	64.83%	71.90%	7.07%
Environmental Work	74.48%	77.37%	2.89%
Biology and Zoology	73.79%	77.74%	3.94%
Veterinary Work	63.45%	65.69%	2.25%
Mathematics	68.97%	74.09%	5.12%
Medicine	76.90%	76.28%	-0.62%
Earth Science	69.66%	69.71%	0.05%
Computer Science	70.34%	74.09%	3.74%
Medical Science	72.76%	72.99%	0.23%
Chemistry	65.86%	71.17%	5.31%
Energy	60.69%	70.80%	10.11%
Engineering	73.79%	79.56%	5.77%

Support Services

Overview

To expand the number of supportive relationships for summer bridge students and to solidify students’ college-going identity, partnering institutions were expected to provide various resources and support for students. The support services included exploration seminars to take place at least once a week and access to quality academic tutoring to be provided on a regular basis (more on this below). Institutions had full discretion on topics for exploration seminars and how they would use tutors in their summer bridge programs.

In addition to the required support services of exploration seminars and academic tutoring, a trend of institutions chose to implement extension services to their summer bridge students. Extension services include tracking students to offer counseling and advising when summer bridge programming is complete.

Exploration Seminars

The exploration seminars/activities in summer bridge programs consisted of career oriented and college readiness seminars. These college and career readiness seminars give students a full understanding of what to expect in the future to make appropriate preparations and considerations. Exploration seminars and associated activities are meant to be a holistic approach to summer bridge students’ education, addressing all their needs as future college students and professionals. A full list of exploration seminars by institutions can be [found here](#).

Tutoring and Other Support Services

A trend seen at many partnering institutions that was not part of anticipated programming is extension services. Extension services include tracking students to offer counseling and advising when summer bridge programming is complete. Institutions like the University of Puerto Rico – Mayaguez have hired a counselor to track students and offer support services through students' first year of college, ensuring that they make it successfully through the pipeline the initiative aims to create. Similarly, Sampson Community College worked closely with their campus-based organization, “Juntos,” to engage families and students in exploration seminars throughout the calendar year so the whole family is college ready. An increase in schools creating avenues for students to receive support during the traditional academic year was captured this year.

A full list of end of summer report responses regarding tutoring and other support service [can be found here](#).

Student and Staff Testimonials

Overview

Student and staff testimonials were collected via transcription of testimony provided at the 2023 Virtual Celebration, the educational application “Padlet,” End of Summer Reports, and email. The complete set of student and staff testimony can be [found here](#). Common themes from student testimonials include interest and confidence in college and career paths, introspection and personal awareness, building soft skills, appreciation of representation, and appreciation of program structure. Themes consistent amongst staff testimonials include creating viable college and career paths and the impact on first-generation students' families and communities. These themes are discussed below.

Interest and Confidence in College and Career Paths (Students)

Students stated their summer bridge programs helped them to explore their future college and career paths in a way that left them feeling more confident about their futures.

- “There were so many options. After taking the science courses, I feel more confident in STEM and the idea that it is a promising direction I want to go into as a career field.”
-Anonymous (Utah Valley University)
- “This program debunked the fear of college for me and made it more friendly than I anticipated it to be. Coming into the program I feared that it would be a waste of my summer and be overwhelming, but this program showed me how fun and inclusive college is.”
-Jason Meza (University of Connecticut – Stamford)
- “This summer bridge program equipped me with viable knowledge about college like how to budget my time/money, how the first few years of college is going to be like [...] all these concepts that I learned and acquired can also be applied to real situations that will help me prepare for college and my future life.”
-Kevin Velasquez (George Mason University)

- “...as I started going more and hearing others like our guest speakers’ experiences and hearing different career paths that they were taking; it just completely changed the way that I thought about college, and it made me way more interested in college than I was before.”

-Shanae Ramirez (Utah Valley University)

Introspection and Personal Confidence (Students)

Many students mentioned what they learned about themselves through their summer bridge program. These personal findings ranged from learning styles to general confidence in their ability to obtain college and career success.

- “I discovered how I best learn and gained so much from professors who really wanted to help me learn. I want to come back each summer and come to UVU when I graduate.”
-Anonymous (Utah Valley University)
- “The most important lesson that I've learned in this program is the importance of self-confidence. I don't have much of it but being at University of North Carolina at Pembroke and leading to become a leader has helped me come out of my shell.”
- Felicity Jackson (University of North Carolina at Pembroke)
- “I’ve learned that the transitioning part of college is hard and being able to get all the help and resources through this program is genuinely awesome. I will remember the habits I have learned and the lessons I had to learn. The program has had such a huge impact on my life. It has allowed me to build skills and endure things that I didn’t think I could before.”
- Kinsey Chavis (University of North Carolina at Pembroke)

Building Soft Skills (Students)

Just as in year one, summer bridge students stated they were able to gain valuable soft skills through summer bridge programs that they will take with them as they pursue their college and career goals. These soft skills included skills such as networking and communication to find opportunities, seek mentorship, and access support.

- “The most important lessons I learned were to make connections with people in the field and how to locate internships. It was very valuable for my future and helped me learn professional communication skills.”
-Sumaiya Shaily (George Mason University)
- “This program has helped me in many ways in a short period of time. I’ve learned different communication skills, verbal and non-verbal, that I can use in future scenarios. Not only was I taught new skills, but I was shown how to properly write a resume and other documents for future jobs/opportunities that may come my way.”
-Melanie Saravia (George Mason University)

Appreciation of Representation (Students)

Students expressed appreciation for feeling represented by speakers and leaders within summer bridge programs. Students expressed not only gratitude but encouragement that someone like them could accomplish their goals.

- “I’m very grateful for the program. [...] it was great to be part of the program because we also got to see the industry speakers who are people who look like us. People who went through the same experiences of being, for example, first generation and going through the challenge. It was great seeing people who got through those challenges. And now that we have been given the opportunity, it’s great!”
- Keiry Larios (Northern Virginia Community College)
- “I’m first generation, Latino/Hispanic. I am very thankful to have learned everything from HVAC to financing to marketing. [...] it is finally nice to see people of our color representing us. So, thank you for everything!”
-David Mora-Juanchi (Sampson Community College)

Appreciation of Program Structure (Students)

Students indicated an appreciation for the structure given during their summer bridge programs. Many noted some initial apprehensions that were subsided by structures of time and support that made the transition to college level coursework easier.

- “My favorite part of the program was meeting my peer mentor and how I got comfortable allowing the mentor to guide me throughout the summer program. At first, I felt stressed because of the structure but very grateful because it helped me be organized.”
-Samia Lily (University of Connecticut – Stamford)
- “The program went beyond what I had anticipated by providing us with the necessary resources and a structured framework. We had labs, we had tutors, we had lots of help, so we were always prepared for what came on the test.”
-Fernando Ramirez Gonzalez (University of Puerto Rico - Mayagüez)

Creating College and Career Paths (Staff)

Staff members who provided testimony highlighted that they felt like they were creating viable college and career pathways for students. This sentiment was amplified when staff considered the underrepresented groups in higher education they serve.

- “Watching students from BIPOC communities and intersectionalities that are often underrepresented in STEM fields learn about the central concepts associated with the degrees that lead to in-demand and high paying career paths is exactly what this summer bridge program was built for. What a success!”
-Dr. Nathan Carter (Northern Virginia Community College)
- BHTI has propelled our institution to think of new and innovative ways to serve our students and local industry. By equipping our students with free courses, tutoring, and additional educational opportunities, they are excelling and seeing college as a space for them. We look forward to seeing what they achieve in the future.
- Emily Brown (Sampson Community College)

Impact on First-Generation Students, Families and Communities (Staff)

Staff members demonstrated pride of the impact made on prospective first-generation college students who participated in their summer bridge programs. They also considered the ripple-effect on families and communities.

- “[...] it makes it even more meaningful when you realize that you're not just helping the students to prepare for and transition to college, but we're really impacting whole families and whole communities, especially when it comes to our first-generation college students.”
- Dr. Tadarrayl Stark (University of Connecticut – Stamford)
- “[...] it's also inspiring to know that many students, even though they come from a variety of backgrounds, all of them had a passion to further their education and some of them were [...] the first in their family to go to college and further their career.”
- Andy Mendez (University of North Carolina at Pembroke)
- “Participating in the Latinos of Tomorrow Summer Bridge program changes the lives of our students and their families for generations to come and allows students the opportunity to pursue their educational dreams.”
- Amanda Diaz (Utah Valley University)

Lessons Learned

As participating institutions look to the continued development and improvement of their Building Hispanic Talent Initiative® summer bridge programs, they submitted lessons learned as part of their end of summer reports. The following is a summary of the lessons learned by institutions, and recommendations by HACU to facilitate programmatic implementation and address needed improvements. Lessons learned were categorized into three sections: 1) streamlining student opportunities; 2) recruitment and outreach; and 3) student and family engagement. Direct quotes of lessons learned from institutions can be found on Appendix C.

Streamlining Opportunities

- Dominion Energy and HACU student opportunities: Institutions see the benefit of utilizing the resources available to them through Dominion Energy and HACU. They want to be proactive in the future about accessing the speakers and site visits available through Dominion Energy and the internships, scholarships, and student development events available through HACU. They also expressed a desire to leverage their relationship with Dominion Energy to create experiential activities to engage students with the energy field.
 - *Recommendation*: Provide institutions with a list of all available Dominion Energy sites where field trips can take place. The process of requesting Dominion Energy speakers can also be adjusted to minimize the need for clarifying communication.

- *Recommendation:* Strategize with institutions on who is best on their campus to be the “HACU Contact” in charge of receiving and disseminating HACU opportunities. In addition, monthly technical trainings are a great space to highlight HACU opportunities as they become available.
- *Recommendation:* Utilize pre-established HACU monthly technical trainings as focus groups to inform engaging energy related activities that Dominion Energy can facilitate with students.
- Student autonomy: Many institutions worked to streamline processes to make it easier for students to navigate the program; however, this left students feeling like they had little autonomy to understand and complete tasks on their own. Consequently, staff and faculty noticed a decline in student autonomy, which affected students’ ability to complete routine processes needed to matriculate to college.
 - *Recommendation:* Encourage institutions to guide students through processes typical for a full-time college student (e.g., course selection, housing applications, meal plan selection) as opposed to doing it for them. Having students learn these processes can help keep them engaged, motivated, and empowered.

Recruitment and Outreach

- Student preparedness: Students need more time to prepare their summer schedules and commitments for summer bridge. Institutions are seeing students unable to commit to the workload of their summer bridge programs because they have not made proper arrangements.
 - *Recommendation:* Encourage schools to align their summer bridge programs and traditional institution recruitment schedules. This would cause summer bridge recruitment to start in the fall and to see waves of applications throughout the academic year.
- Engaging with community-based organizations: Institutions stated that having increased partnerships with community-based organizations could help to circumvent the politicization of equity-based programs designed to address opportunity gaps. One institution experienced this politicization with their largest school partner, and it impacted the students identified to participate in their bridge program.
 - *Recommendation:* Have institutions track where students are receiving services and/or building community (e.g., churches, community centers, libraries, Boys and Girls Clubs, Juntos, Trio, Upward Bound). Institutions can then create recruitment events and strategies around the community-based organizations.
 - *Recommendation:* Utilize HACU monthly technical trainings to highlight recruitment sources and partnerships with community-based organizations in real time.

Student and Family Engagement

- Engaging students during the academic year: Given the target population served through the Building Hispanic Talent Initiative® (i.e., Hispanic/Latinx and prospective first-

generation students), institutions are noting a need to rethink how they engage students beyond the summer bridge program. More specifically, because of work commitments and family obligations, students are often not able to take full advantage of the support services available to them in the summer. Other than college courses, institutions are seeing that students have much more availability for additional services during the traditional academic year.

- *Recommendation:* Utilize HACU monthly technical trainings as a space to share what services and events are being provided for students outside of summer. This way academic year support is captured in real time.
- *Recommendation:* Make clear to institutions that HACU and Dominion Energy are available to support their summer bridge students throughout their college and career paths. They should feel welcome to invite either organization to assist in any events throughout the year supporting summer bridge students.
- Summer bridge schedule: Some institutions are seeing a decline in student engagement over the course of summer bridge. They attribute this decline to student burnout from the rigorous schedules of programs combined with student work and family obligations.
 - *Recommendation:* Encourage institutions to analyze program schedules to efficiently serve students. Some institutions have been able to increase program days by a couple of hours in order to give students an additional day off from summer bridge.
 - *Recommendation:* When able, utilize hybrid models that allow students to have both the structure of in-person services, and the flexibility of some online classes.
- Engaging families and starting early: Institutions have come to realize the importance of engaging families when working with the Building Hispanic Talent® target population. They also note the benefit of cultivating family relationships as soon as possible.
 - *Recommendation:* Encourage institutions to conduct needs assessments with their service regions to bridge opportunity gaps for families. Reports on these assessments could be shared with HACU to find commonalities and improve overall grant programming.
 - *Recommendation:* In January 2024, conduct check-ins with institutions to see how the cultivation of family engagement is progressing to begin forming a recommended processes to form these community relationships.
- Student engagement is dependent on faculty/staff engagement: Institutions found that in addition to maintaining a high level of student engagement, having a committed and engaged staff makes a significant difference in being able to effectively implement summer bridge programs and serve students.
 - *Recommendation:* Encourage institutions to seek staff who are passionate about the work and committed to the students they serve.
 - *Recommendation:* Encourage institutions to provide initial and on-going training to ensure students are supported by professionals who can more effectively meet their academic, personal, and career developmental needs.

Conclusion

The first two years of HACU facilitating the Dominion Energy Building Hispanic Talent Initiative® has been an overall success. Students who participated in intentional summer bridge programs left at the end of the summer motivated and excited about their future. They exude confidence about their ability to enter a STEM field that was foreign to navigate. HACU remains steadfast in increasing the number of Hispanics entering STEM/energy fields and will work more strategically with partnering institutions in the recruitment of students identifying as Hispanic/Latino. This will be a focal point in year three discussions with participating institutions as we aim to be more strategic in the recruitment of students identifying as Hispanic/Latino.

As outlined in this report, there is scaffolding of success for students attending the summer bridge programs of this initiative. Summer bridge programs were able to meet students' academic needs and contribute valuable stakeholders to the lives of students as evident through college credit success rates and student to staff ratios.

One thing is abundantly clear - the foundation of this pipeline is strong due to the hard work of staff and faculty at participating institutions and the generosity of our partners at Dominion Energy who have prioritized underrepresented communities to ensure the energy workforce looks like our country. HACU is eager to see what the next years of the Building Hispanic Talent Initiative® will bring as it has already witnessed an impactful first two years.

Appendix A: College Courses Offered

George Mason University

- BUS 103 - Dev Prof Skills I: Fundamental Elements
- CHSS 100 - First Year Experience
- CHSS 105 - Undergraduate Colloquium
- COS 120 - Introduction to Research
- EVPP 201 - Env and You: Issues of the 21st Century
- GLOA 101 - Intro to Global Affairs
- KINE 100 - Introduction to Kinesiology
- PHYS 131 - Intro Renewable Energy
- SPMT 201 - Introduction to Sport Management

Northern Virginia Community College

- CSC 221 - Introduction to Problem Solving and Programming
- SDV 100 - College Success Skills
- ITP 150 - Python Programming

Sampson Community College

- ELC 114 - Commercial Wiring
- CIS 110 - Intro to Computers
- CIS 115 - Intro to Programming/Logic
- CSC 134 - C++ Programming
- BIO 111 - General Biology I
- BIO 112 - General Biology II
- MAT 143 - Quantitative Literacy
- MAT 171 - Precalculus Algebra
- ACC 120 - Principles of Financial Accounting
- BUS 110 - Intro to Business
- BUS 115 - Business Law
- BUS 137 - Principles of Management
- ECO 251 - Principles of Microeconomics
- OST 137 - Office Applications I

University of Connecticut – Stamford

- ENGL 1004 - Introduction to Academic Writing
- MATH 1030Q - Element Discrete Mathematics
- NRE 1000E - Environmental Science
- PSYC 1100 - General Psychology
- PHIL 1104 - Philosophy and Social Ethnics
- SOCI 1001 - Introduction to Sociology

University of North Carolina at Pembroke

- ENG 1050 - Composition I
- ENG 2030 - Literary Genres
- MAT 1050 - Intro to College Math
- MAT 1070 - College Algebra
- MAT 2100 - Intro to Statistics

University of Puerto Rico – Mayaguez

- MATE 3171 - Precalculus I
- INGE 5996 - Special Topics: Sustainable Engineering

Utah Valley University

- Biology 1010 - General Biology
- Geology 1010 - Introduction to Geology
- Engineering 1000 - Introduction to Engineering
- Technology 1010 - Introduction to Technology

Appendix B: Survey Responses by Institution

Table 7: Student Pre-Survey and Post-Survey Responses by Institution, 2023

What is the name of the school campus that you are attending for the Building Hispanic Talent Initiative (BHTI) summer bridge program?					
Pre-Survey			Post-Survey		
Answer	%	Count	Answer	%	Count
University of Connecticut-Stamford	22.67%	73	University of Connecticut-Stamford	20.00%	56
George Mason University	31.99%	103	George Mason University	26.43%	74
University of North Carolina at Pembroke	15.22%	49	University of North Carolina at Pembroke	12.14%	34
Northern Virginia Community College	0.00%	0	Northern Virginia Community College	13.21%	37
University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez	0.00%	0	University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez	11.07%	31
Sampson Community College	5.90%	19	Sampson Community College	4.64%	13
Utah Valley University	24.22%	78	Utah Valley University	12.50%	35
Total	100%	322	Total	100%	280

Appendix C: Lessons Learned

- I have learned that our students have a lot of obligations outside of just attending school and that we need to be flexible in our expectations for my specific population. This is why we are extending our work into the school year as several of our students work in produce fields during the summer harvest season and are not able to leave a blueberry field to attend a workshop. I have also learned that we need to narrow our course offerings to courses that have a stronger passing rate in the summer delivery method.
- Students were very interested in in-person opportunities to explore careers and gain exposure to college credit. We learned we need to market the program earlier for student planning for the summer and we need to do a pre and post survey on our end to collect data and assess needs. In addition, we need to look at ways to involve more parents in the early stages. We realized that there is a large population of adult students that are often left out of these discussions.
- This year's implementation of the program was overall a success. We have had a wonderful time working with students and across campus to provide this opportunity. One change we would like to implement is within the registration process. Our students in the past, have accepted their offer with the program and our team works to enroll the student in the courses. We have discovered that this may be a disservice to students because we skip teaching them how to do this and many wish to learn so that they can enroll in future CE courses or enroll as a freshman once they graduate. We will work to create a streamlined way to help successfully teach our students these skills. Additionally, students struggled to attend 4 days a week while working and assisting family. We will be adjusting our schedule to hold a longer but more fulfilling daily schedule utilizing a three day a week schedule. This will help support our working students and families.
- Student engagement must be continuous and purposeful. Students who develop a sense of belonging have a greater potential for success and retention than those who are disconnected. This includes making connections prior to the start of summer programs, as the potential for losing accepted students prior to the first day of the program is significant for the population we are serving. In addition to maintaining a high level of student engagement, having a committed and engaged staff makes a significant difference in being able to effectively implement the program and serve our students. This is especially vital when implementing our dual model of programming that includes both pre-college and postsecondary student engagement. Failure to have faculty and staff who are dedicated to the purpose of the program can result in attrition. How do these lessons change what implementation will look like next year for your institution? We will continue to seek staff who are passionate about the work and committed to the students we serve. In addition, we will make sure to provide initial and on-going training to ensure students are supported by professionals who can more effectively meet their academic, personal, and career developmental needs.

- The importance of engaging with Community Based Organizations. Having increased partnerships with community-based organizations will help to circumvent the politicization of equity-based programs designed to address opportunity gaps. We experienced this past summer with our largest school partner, and it impacted the students identified and who would eventually sign up to participate in this effort.
- Strengths: The Summer Bridge program provides high school students the opportunity to live the college experience over the summer at no cost, but their time and dedication. Opportunity to earn college credit and gain academic experience. Students receive an early start to understand living in dorms and can learn from that experience to prepare for future dorm opportunities or choosing to live near a university. They learn the layout of UNCP before they attend in the fall and create friendships that lead to a sense of belonging and a want to attend college. Students have the ability to interact with faculty and staff at the university. As well as create early connections with future employers for internship and job opportunities. Students can use this opportunity to take advantage of their success and failure during the summer and clean up their work ethic before entering the fall semester. The university can use this sample group of students from the surrounding area to run surveys or get a test of certain benchmarks. This type of program can help retain students to a college even if they do not continue their enrollment at the college that hosted them for summer bridge. Weaknesses: The program does not currently gauge interest levels or reasons students are interested in the program until the program begins. Students were not prepared for the initial experience of shared dorm living and wish they knew more about what to expect living on the campus before they attended. Transportation for groceries or to events was a situation that was mentioned as some students stayed on campus the whole program and had small access to the surrounding community. The program was intertwined with the class portion of the program as students used the program as a clutch for their classes and many students' emotions about the program affected their schooling and vice-versa. High School students are not aware of the self-discipline or time management requirement for classes until they are behind on work, or their grades suffer. Opportunities: Create an interview process or a writing portion of the application process to understand more about the student's reason or interest in joining such a program. Create forms or letters outlining the shared dorm living experience so students could understand what to expect. Advertising more of the closer stores, resources (CARE Resource Center) and creating a carpool system to get groceries or promote the university bus if it can run during the summer. Creating more events and opportunities for students to interact with the surrounding businesses and communities in Pembroke. Creating a stronger connection and understanding of the class portion of the program by speaking to teachers in advance to create study/assignment dates and help. Also receiving the professor's syllabus and schedule to see how the program can help be flexible with the needs of the professors. Need an earlier understanding of college to help students gauge the requirements or difficulties of college courses. Students should be given a talk from CSS earlier in the start of the program to show how their grades now will affect their GPA in the long run!

GPA Calculation and academic understanding. After Office Hour Family Engagement opportunities. If parents would like to come in for a dinner or a social event between the students and other families. Reduce homesickness.

- 1. The students are more interested in gateway courses (first-year classes). 2. Hybrid courses are more popular. 3. Recruitment from economically disadvantaged students is challenging; while they apply to the program, not all enroll.

Appendix D: 2023 Media Exposure

The following are links provided by participating institutions used to market and promote their Building Hispanic Talent Initiative™ summer bridge programs in 2023.

George Mason University

- <https://www.instagram.com/p/Cu-Q6FEuQ8M/?igshid=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==> (Social Media)
- https://www.instagram.com/p/Cu7FY_sL3tJ/?igshid=MzRIODBiNWFIZA== (Social Media)
- https://www.instagram.com/p/Cu2bjMnLiob/?igshid=MzRIODBiNWFIZA%3D%3D&img_index=1 (Social Media)
- https://www.instagram.com/p/Cu9nrtaOLAa/?igshid=MzRIODBiNWFIZA%3D%3D&img_index=1 (Social Media)
- https://www.instagram.com/p/Cuptg_vuDa_/?igshid=MzRIODBiNWFIZA%3D%3D (Social Media)
- <https://www.instagram.com/p/Ct9ge63rPtY/?igshid=MzRIODBiNWFIZA%3D%3D> (Social Media)
- https://www.linkedin.com/posts/khaseemdavis_firstgen-collegesuccess-workforcedevelopment-activity-7056724450028752897-oXla?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop (Social Media)
- https://www.linkedin.com/posts/khaseemdavis_what-you-see-is-a-full-lecture-hall-first-activity-7066960717991530496-kAzy?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop (Social Media)

Northern Virginia Community College

- <https://blogs.nvcc.edu/dailyflyer/2023/08/14/nova-dominion-energy-and-hacu-partner-to-supercharge-student-success/> (Blog Posting)

University of North Carolina at Pembroke

- <https://www.uncp.edu/news/summer-bridge-gives-uncp-students-jumpstart-college-career> (Article)

Utah Valley University

- <https://www.utahbusiness.com/uvu-expands-latino-program/> (Article)
- <https://hispanicengineer.com/manage-new/latino-scientists-of-tomorrow-summer-bridge-program-paves-a-new-path/> (Article)
- <https://www.hispanicoutlook.com/articles/uvu-summer-bridge-program> (Article)