Razor C.O.A.C.H.
Creating Opportunities for Arkansans’ Career Hopes

2014 OFFICE FOR EDUCATION POLICY CONFERENCE
May 15, 2014
PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- Collaboration between University of Arkansas, Northwest Arkansas Regional Council, Northwest Arkansas Education Services Cooperative, Walton Family Foundation and local public school districts.

- Housed in Counselor Education program at U of A.
  - Coaches are MS/PHD counseling students.

- Mission: The Razor COACH program aims to Create Opportunities for young Arkansan’s Career Hopes. The mission of the Razor COACH program is to motivate and support NWA students in grades 10-12, in order to increase their knowledge of and access to career and educational opportunities beyond high school. Razor COACH interventions are focused on facilitating development of pro-academic behaviors, increasing self-awareness, exploring career and/or college options, and establishing future goals. All interventions are aimed to increase graduation rates, increase post-secondary enrollment, and improve the quality of the NWÅ workforce.
FACULTY & STAFF

- Dr. Kristin Higgins - Principle Investigator
- Dr. Dan Kissinger – Co-Investigator
- Josh Raney – Director
- 15 Razor Coaches:
  - Taylor Scott*, Heather Spickard, Kiersten Prochnow, Jena Anderson, Jason Blankenship, Whitney Farrar, Kylie Roblyer, Ashley Streber, Kaitlyn Moritz, Erika Perez, Lauren Jones, Carolyn Kelch, Kandace Cross, Bethany Mitchell, Megan Little
Partnering with 13 districts in NWA (15 schools)

- Enrollment ranges from 200 – 3900
  - FRL – 53%; Drop out rate - 21%
- Schools are involved in implementation
- Program benefits all involved
PARTICIPATION

- Total targeted: 3,300
- Total applicants: 1,300
- 715 total participants
- Current year - serving 520 students
  - Cohort 2 – 353, weekly contact
  - Cohort 1 - 167 returning students, monthly contact
STUDENT POPULATION

- Majority Juniors – 60%
- 52% Minority (31% being Hispanic)

Cohort 2

- Parental Education
  - 35% w/ only high school
  - 32% did not finish HS

- Student Aspirations
  - 75% want to go to college (60% to a 4-year)
CURRICULUM

- Worked with staff, colleagues and other programs.
  - Social Cognitive Career Theory: Intake/Outtake
  - Areas of focus: Career Exploration, Post-Secondary Education Exploration, Financial Aid/FAFSA, College Entrance Exams, Pro-Academic behaviors
  - Timelines
  - Outside resources
  - Not a cookie cutter program
Typical day of a Razor Coach

- Goal setting
- Assisting students with interpreting their grades
- Reviewing students progress toward promotion and graduation
- Discussing academic goals
- Work with students on college applications/admissions
- Providing assistance with FAFSA and the financial aid process
- Exploring career paths
- Identifying resources
PROGRAM EVENTS

- FAFSA Night
  - Financial Aid info
  - FAFSA info
  - Assistance in applying for PIN, applying for FAFSA, or doing FAFSA 4Caster
PROGRAM EVENTS

- Campus Visits
  - University of Arkansas: Around 150 students from NWA high schools
  - Presentations from Admissions Office, Advisors, Look at college Syllabus, Tour of campus, Lunch on campus, Tour of Residence Hall
2012-2013 Highlights

- Higher ACT score: 1.5 pts (individual sites +3pts)
- Non-cognitive
  - More accountable; Increased self-awareness
- Increased knowledge and access to options other than college
- Student Testimonials
  - 98% would recommend applying to a friend
### STUDENT STORIES

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<th>GPA Success:</th>
<th>Y: Was failing 5 classes when we started, senior year has passed all classes</th>
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<td>- Some students increased GPAs by 0.3, 0.4, or 0.5 in a year and a half.</td>
<td>R: Reclassified junior this year and passed all classes and is finishing up her credit recovery</td>
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<td>- 9 of my seniors who started with below a 2.5 had over a 3.0 for the first semester of senior year.</td>
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<th>Goal setting:</th>
<th>C: Applied to a safety school and two reach schools in AR and she got in to all three schools this year.</th>
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<td>- All of my juniors have identified a safety and reach school to apply to next year</td>
<td>L: Scored her ultimate goal the first time she took it, now setting it higher</td>
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<td>- Goals for ACT test scores in relation to desired schools</td>
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<th>Self Awareness:</th>
<th>What did you get out of the program:</th>
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<td>- Students strongly disagree that people with money are the only ones who can go to college. Money was a concern and barrier for almost every single one of my students. Now using language about grants, scholarships, and the FAFSA to help pay for college.</td>
<td>“A lot of information, definitely support from my coach, and just knowing that I wasn't the only one worrying about college... seeing the other students when we went to the field trip was a big help. I wouldn't have goals or know who to ask or where to start on info on colleges or scholarships if I hadn't been in this program” - H</td>
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LOOKING AHEAD

- Year 2 evaluation & outcomes
- Securing future funding opportunities
- Training
- Recruitment
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