

COLLEGE HORIZONS

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Who We Are & Our College Success Impact: The mission of College Horizons is to encourage and facilitate the higher education of Native American young people by providing college access, college retention, and pre-graduate programs. College Horizons was founded over 20 years ago because Native American students were not receiving sufficient and quality college advising, academic advising and financial aid counseling in their high schools resulting in Native students either being undermatched or not accessing 4-year degree programs at all.

College Horizons started as a school based program serving a small cohort of students and today we have served over 3,400 Native students, 85% have graduated college within 4-6 years attending over 700 colleges and universities nationwide. Of those completing their bachelor's degree, 715 alumni (21%) continued on to earn a masters, professional, or doctoral degree with another 140 alumni currently enrolled in graduate or professional school. Additionally, we partner with 75 colleges nation-wide, including highly selective institutions, where 35% of our students enroll.

The Problem: Addressing the college readiness, attainment, completion and opportunity gaps

While CH has been extremely successful in empowering Native students to access and graduate from college, our work continues because despite the growth of college enrollment across the United States, fewer than half of Native American students graduate from high school and only about one in 20 will attend a four-year college or university. When a Native student makes it to college, one in three will earn a degree within six years.¹

This holds true for New Mexico, where only 19% of Native students have earned a 2 year or 4 year degree. However, when New Mexico students attend College Horizons (55% of whom are first generation to college and 70% are Pell Eligible), they complete college at a rate of 85%!



What We Do: Evidence Based, Individualized & Culturally Responsive Programs

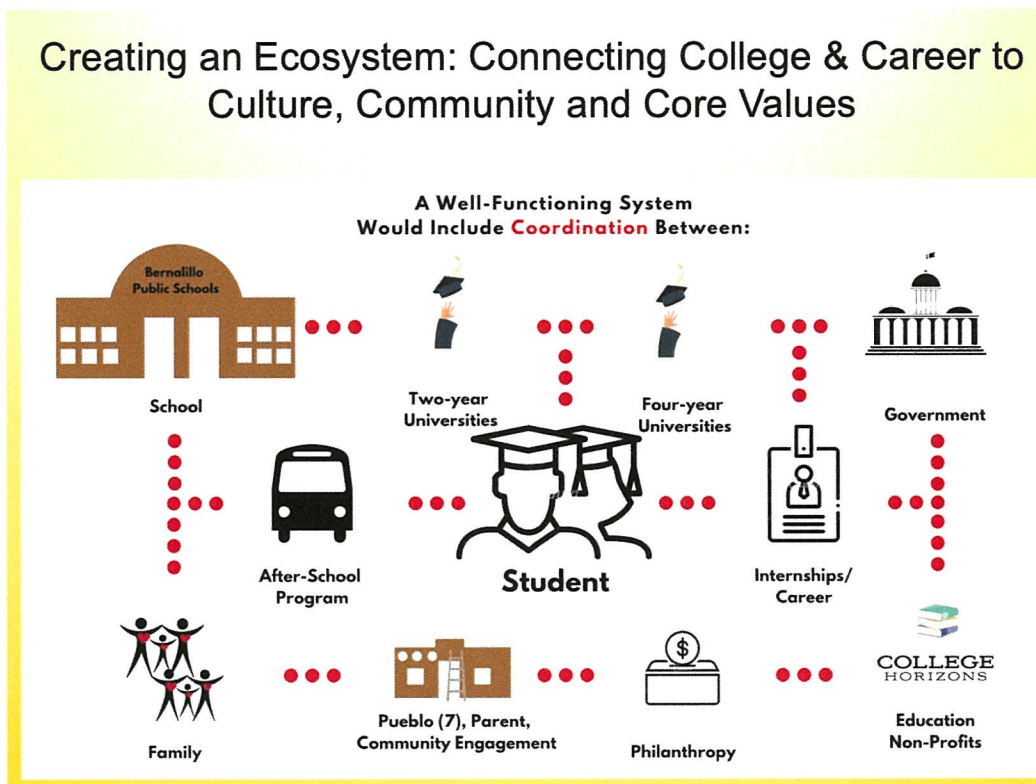
In national conversations college and career readiness is typically framed with the goal to prepare a future workforce that is ready to compete in the global economy. As educators we grapple with the question, "what does it mean to be college and career ready?" When thinking of college and career readiness from an indigenous framework the question is deepened to ask, "what does it mean to be college/career ready *and* what does it mean to be community and culture ready?" In other words, what does connecting college and career readiness to community and culture look like?

College Horizons addresses the college attainment gap with such significant success by providing a culturally responsive college and career readiness curriculum that aligns with community core values. Through both our evidenced based and established summer programs (see next page for descriptions) College Horizons has also begun to work directly with schools to provide college readiness support.

Bernalillo Student Success Partnership: In collaboration with Bernalillo Public Schools, the Pueblos of Cochiti, Santo Domingo, San Felipe, Santa Ana, Sandia, Zia and Jemez, and the Santa Fe Indian School's Leadership Institute, College Horizons helped write a \$3.2 million dollar, 4 year, federal grant to help the Bernalillo Public Schools establish a Student Success Program to create a culturally responsive college and career readiness program for 7th-12th grade students that is rooted and aligned with Pueblo core values, community, culture and career needs so that Pueblo graduates will be

¹ Brayboy, Bryan et. al. 2012, Postsecondary Education of American Indian and Alaska Natives: Higher Education for Nation Building and Self-Determination. ASHE, Volume 37, Number 5

prepared to enter the local work force or higher education. In this collaborative work b outcomes include: 1) providing a college/career/culture curriculum for counselors, students, parents, and Tribal Education Departments; 2) increasing parent engagement, 3) providing individualized advising through a 100:1 student/counselor ratio, and 4) providing summer internships for school students to gain workforce skills and explore jobs/careers.



College Access: College Horizons is a pre-college program for Native American high school students open to rising juniors and seniors from across the nation. The CH programs are delivered in person and are held on a college/university campus for one week over the summer. This intensive six-day “crash course” on the college admission process allows students to work one-on-one with college admissions officers, expert guidance counselors, and/or university professors and administrators on the admissions and financial aid process. The individualized program helps students select colleges suitable for them to apply to, be admitted to, and receive adequate financial aid. Students research their top 10 schools; complete college essays, resumes, the Common Application and a preliminary FAFSA; receive interviewing skills and test-taking strategies (on the ACT and SAT); receive financial aid/scholarship information and resources; and learn strategies on how to become resilient and successful Native students in college. Following the program, students receive e-counseling or individual counseling throughout the year to assist with final college/financial aid completion.

College Success: The Scholars Program is an academic success program designed for Native American college students to improve their transition to college, strengthen their academic accomplishment in college, and increase their preparedness to apply for competitive fellowships, internships, and selective graduate or professional schools. By targeting risk points not addressed by existing College Horizons programs, the Scholars Program aims to bolster the number of Native American students who enter and stay in the PhD pathway. Following the program, students receive “wrap around” support services throughout the year.

Pre-Graduate: Graduate Horizons is a four-day workshop assisting Native American college students, college graduates, and master's students in preparing for competitive graduate and professional school admissions (master's, doctoral, professional degrees). GH partners with 45 universities where admission officers, professors, and deans mentor and advise potential applicants on the admission process professional/career development, and the various fields of study, research, and graduate programs available. Participants of the program complete personal statements/statements of purpose, resume/CVs, and applications; receive test taking strategies from the Princeton Review Foundation on the GRE, GMAT, LSAT, MCAT; understand the financial aid process for graduate school and learn about graduate scholarships/fellowships; and attend seminars on the graduate admission process (letters of recommendation, academic/transcript/testing critique, how to determine the right match in a degree program; role of direct/relevant work experience, etc.). Cohorts consist of: Arts & Humanities, Business, Management & Entrepreneurship; Education; Law; Health Sciences; Public/Tribal Policy; STEM; Social Sciences.