

Leveraging Career Center Collaborations to Build Student Success



The Council of
Independent Colleges

**ENGAGING
COMMUNITIES**

2025 Presidents Institute

January 4–7, 2025 ● JW Marriott San Antonio Hill Resort & Spa ● San Antonio, Texas



Thank you to our sponsor





Presenters

April Arnold, Executive Director, Associated Colleges of Illinois

Robert Barlett, President, Michigan Colleges Alliance

William Spiker, President, Ohio Foundation of Independent Colleges



im MICHIGAN
CAREER CONNECT



MICHIGAN
COLLEGES
ALLIANCE

Robert P. Bartlett, Ph.D.
President, Michigan Colleges Alliance

Market Realities:

Smaller privates under increasing market pressure



Shrinking traditional student population

Proliferation of education options

The ROI generation

Preparation and branding for student post grad outcomes are *the new mandates.*

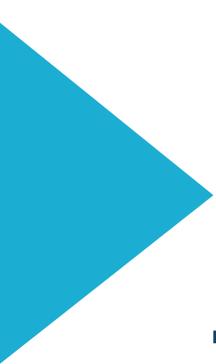
There are many benefits to higher learning. But... the #1 reason for enrollment is **career advancement.**

There is no close second.

Smaller independents are ideally positioned

- Smaller privates are uniquely positioned for new wave of learner expectations
- Compatibility of learning-work integration and broad education
- Strategy pivot rather than reinvention





The power of collective action in student outcomes

**Consortia approach –
*scale with
differentiation***

**Cost effective
value innovation**

**Collective work =
school brand
activation**



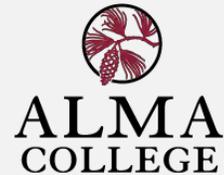
Sample MCA Student Outcome Initiatives

- Concierge Candidate Search
- Michigan Campus Community Challenge
- Cooperative Learning Collaborative
- Virtual Executive-in-Residence
- Professional Distinction Certifications
- Google Course Sharing Initiative
- Harvard Business School Blended Learning Collaboration
- Digital Badge in Critical Thinking
- Faculty Project Consulting

The Members of Michigan Colleges Alliance



**ADRIAN
COLLEGE**

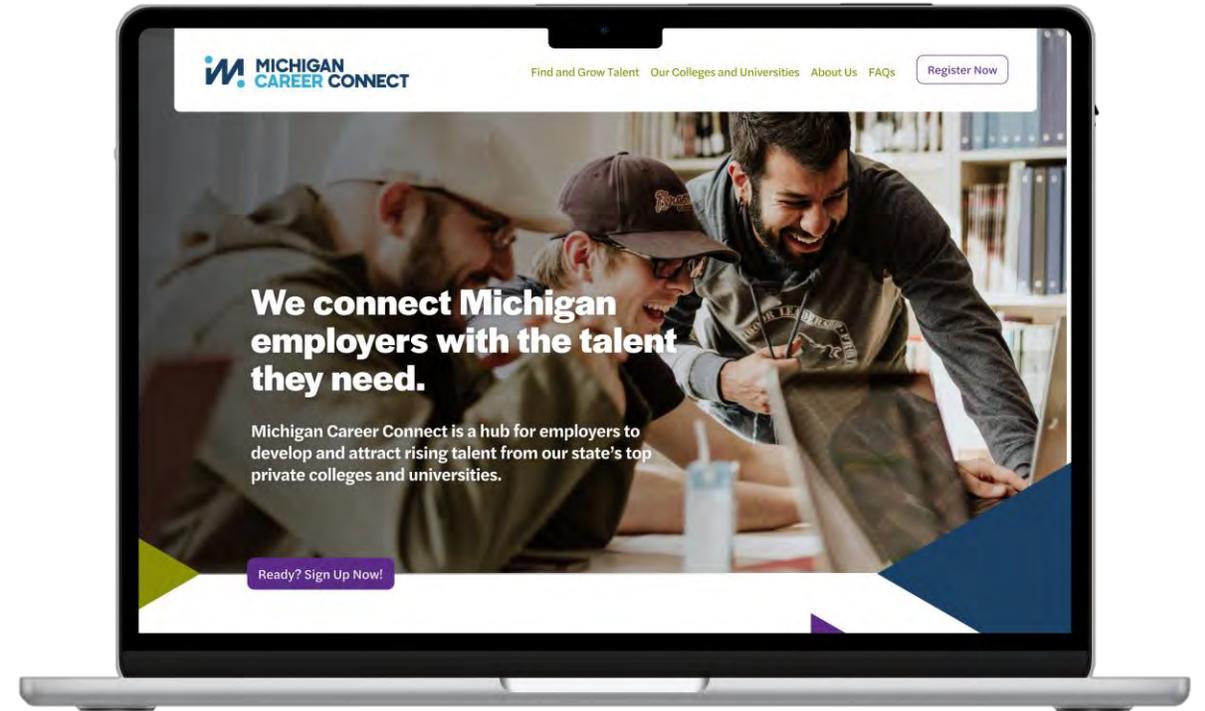


**AQUINAS
COLLEGE**



MICHIGAN CAREER CONNECT

- Brings it all together in one branded platform
- One-stop access for employers (relationship-driven)
- Career preparation and connectivity hub for students
- Engagement and career entrée for graduates



micareerconnect.com

adrian.micareerconnect.com

The Value Add of Michigan Career Connect

Collective visibility and
branding

Enrollment marketing

Post graduate success

Alumni relations



THE OHIO FOUNDATION
of
INDEPENDENT COLLEGES



- > FOUNDED IN 1950**
- > 32 MEMBER CAMPUSES**
- > OVER 70,000 STUDENTS**
- > 300+ IN-DEMAND MAJORS**



Talented **U**



WHAT IS *Talented U*

- Free online career-readiness experience for OFIC member campus students including videos, articles, interactive elements

- Based on NACE 8 career competencies employers seek and value when filling open positions, including internships

- Designed to be taken at a self pace or as part of a course
- Participate in all 8 modules or select which one fits student or coursework



WHY *TalentedU*

Students

Faculty/Staff

- Use skills learned when interviewing
- Showcase badge on LinkedIn & resume

- Receive a digital Credly Badge for each module completed or one Pathways Badge for completing 8!

- Consistent career readiness materials available at the ready!

- Enhanced professional development for students





Talented **U**

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) has identified 8 skills or competencies employers seek and value when filling open positions, including internships:

**Career & Self
Development**

Communication

Critical Thinking

Equity & Inclusion

Leadership

Professionalism

Teamwork

Technology

This online learning experience has a module for each of the 8 NACE skills or competencies.



You've Earned Your TalentedU Badge!

Click the 'Accept your badge' button below to view, access and download your digital badge to showcase on professional materials such as your resume and LinkedIn profile.



TalentedU - Technology

Issuer: The Ohio Foundation of Independent Colleges

Accept your badge

or accept your badge by clicking:

<https://www.credly.com/go/LzhqXXfLMDwgBblo4Oye2g>



Talented U

Scan to learn more!



Bill Spiker
President, OFIC
spiker@ofic.org



Thoughtful Collaboration to Build Student Success





Charter member school Quincy University band students.

How and when was ACI founded?

- ACI, a not-for-profit membership organization, was **founded in 1952** by a group of Illinois private colleges, with the purpose of:

“...strengthening the state’s critical network of private liberal arts colleges by tapping new sources of support for independent higher education.”

- Our members include **21** independent higher education institutions in Illinois, **10 of which are founding members.**



Student Journey Support Programs 2024-2025

Program Roadmap

This program roadmap illustrates current and pilot ACI programs* that support student success.

*Does not include scholarships



PROGRAM	FRESHMEN	SOPHOMORES	JUNIORS	SENIORS	POST
ACI PEER MENTORING PROGRAM <i>Peer Mentees</i> (Up to 120 mentees each year) <i>Peer Mentors</i> (Up to 12 mentors each year)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
BRAVENX PILOT FALL, 2024 (Professional Development) 23 Student Fellows		✓ (Core)	✓	✓	✓
MICRO INTERNSHIPS (Parker Dewey) <i>Interns</i> (# based on internships available, requirements, and selection)		✓	✓	✓	

Updated Dec 17 2024



ACI Peer Mentoring Program 2024-2025

Goal

Increase persistence rates of underserved students to return as sophomores and, ultimately, earn a degree.

Need

In underserved first-year students, there is a significant decrease in college persistence between freshmen and sophomore years.

Description

Through student cohorts, underserved freshmen (mentees) are connected with students (mentors) who have faced similar challenges as freshmen. Mentors serve as role models and social-emotional anchors. The program launched in 2013 with three schools; in 2024, 11 schools participate in the program.

Execution

Peer Mentoring campus coordinators recruit cohorts of 10 freshmen mentees and two trained peer mentors. The campus coordinators work with the peer mentors to plan activities throughout the year. Each mentor works with five mentees.



Funding

There are 11 cohorts across our 21 schools. Each cohort is awarded \$9,300, which covers costs for peer mentor scholarships, mentor stipends, program activity funds, and a campus coordinator stipend.

Performance

Annual program assessment occurs through an independent evaluator who incorporates participant and campus coordinator feedback. The student retention rate is as high as 97% at participating schools with an overall average of 74% retention.

Future Goals Under Consideration

1. Increase or maintain the number of cohorts at participating schools.
2. For schools struggling with staffing, offer BravenX to students.

Updated Oct 22 2024





BRAVEN

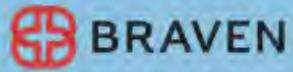
ACI & BravenX Pilot Overview



HORACE BERNABE
BRAVEN FELLOW SPRING '22

© 2024 Braven, Inc. All Rights Reserved





The BA: No longer a guarantee

Each year, 1.4 million low-income and first generation students go to college.
Only 30% graduate and emerge with strong jobs.

66¢

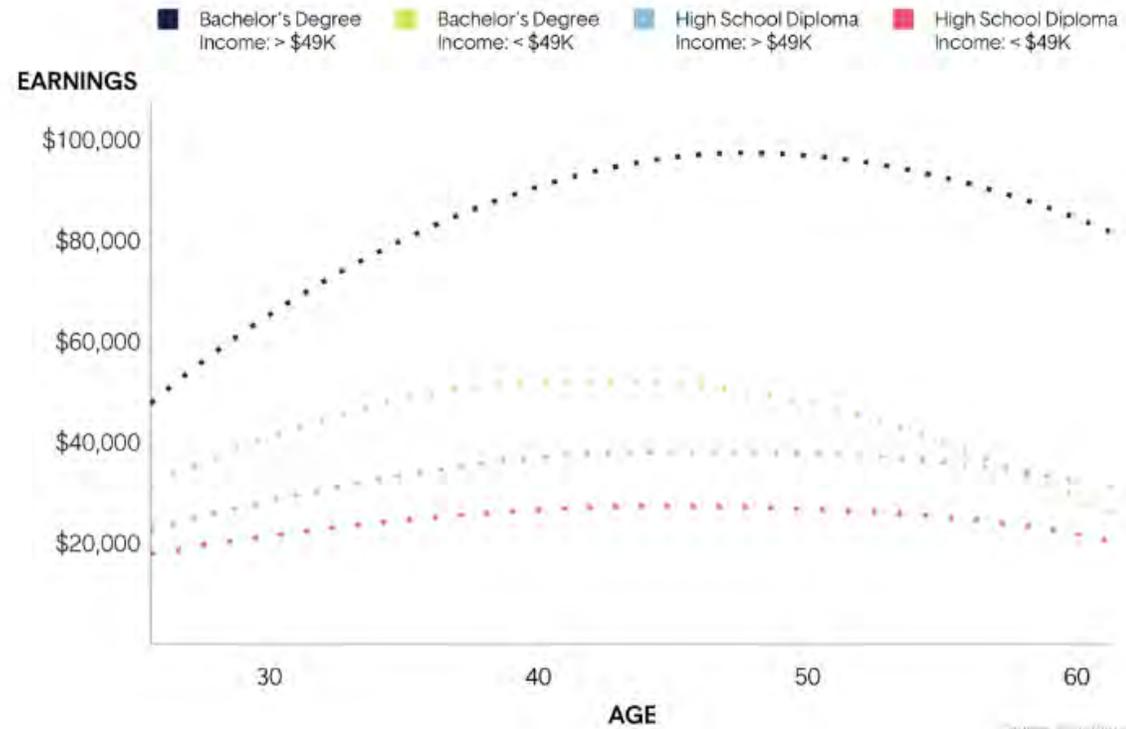
Early Career:
Low-income BA holders **earn only 66¢ on the dollar** compared to high-income peers

50¢

Mid Career:
Low-income BA holders **earn only 50¢ on the dollar** compared to high-income peers

© 2024 Braven, Inc. All Rights Reserved

FOR FAMILY OF FOUR



Source: Brookings



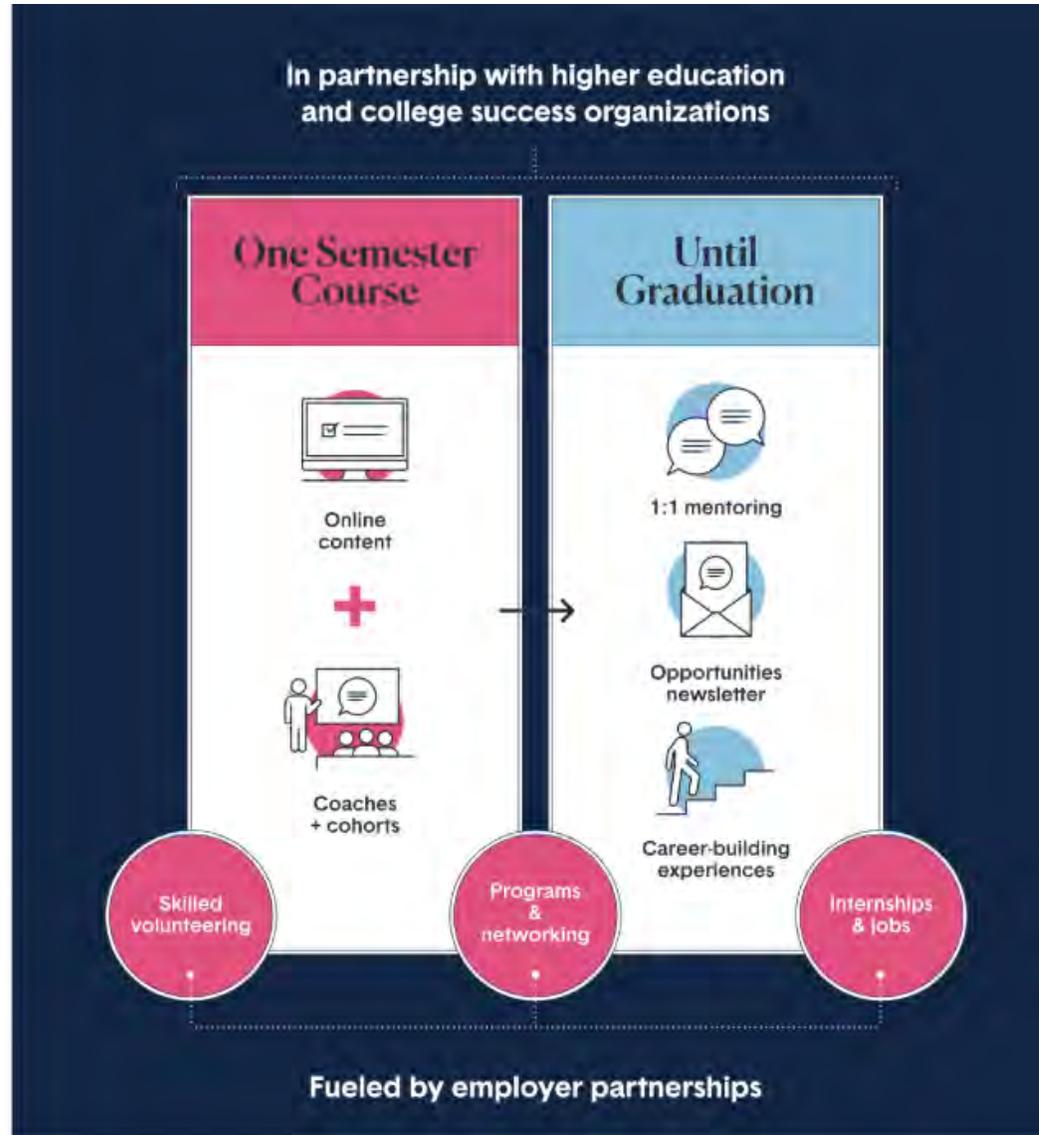


The Braven Model

Braven empowers promising, underrepresented young people on their paths to quality economic opportunities through a semester-long, cohort-based course, which was designed with significant input from our higher education partners and their faculty, and a post-course experience that lasts through college graduation.

In our core higher education model, students take the course for credit both in-person and virtually. Students who come through BravenX via college success organizations receive a financial stipend in lieu of credit.

© 2024 Braven, Inc. All Rights Reserved





Encouraging Levels of College Completion

Braven Fellows are persisting and graduating at encouraging rates. By comparison, about **8 in 10 of their peers nationally** graduate college on time.¹⁶

Braven Fellows have achieved a **91%** six-year graduation rate.¹⁷



16 Implied six-year graduation rate for students of color at four-year public institutions, after accounting for students who persisted from freshman to sophomore year and those who persisted from sophomore to junior year. Sources: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics, 2021 release of Tables 325.10, 325.30, and 306.50, American Institutes for Research "More to the Retention Story: Exploring Second- to Third-Year Retention at 4-Year Colleges and Universities, July 2023.

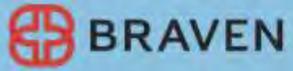
17 Six-year graduation data of Braven Fellows who enrolled as first-time freshmen at San José State University, Rutgers University-Newark, and Lehman College, not including those who took Braven as seniors. Braven reports graduation rates for core partner schools who have had at least 200 Braven Fellow graduates.



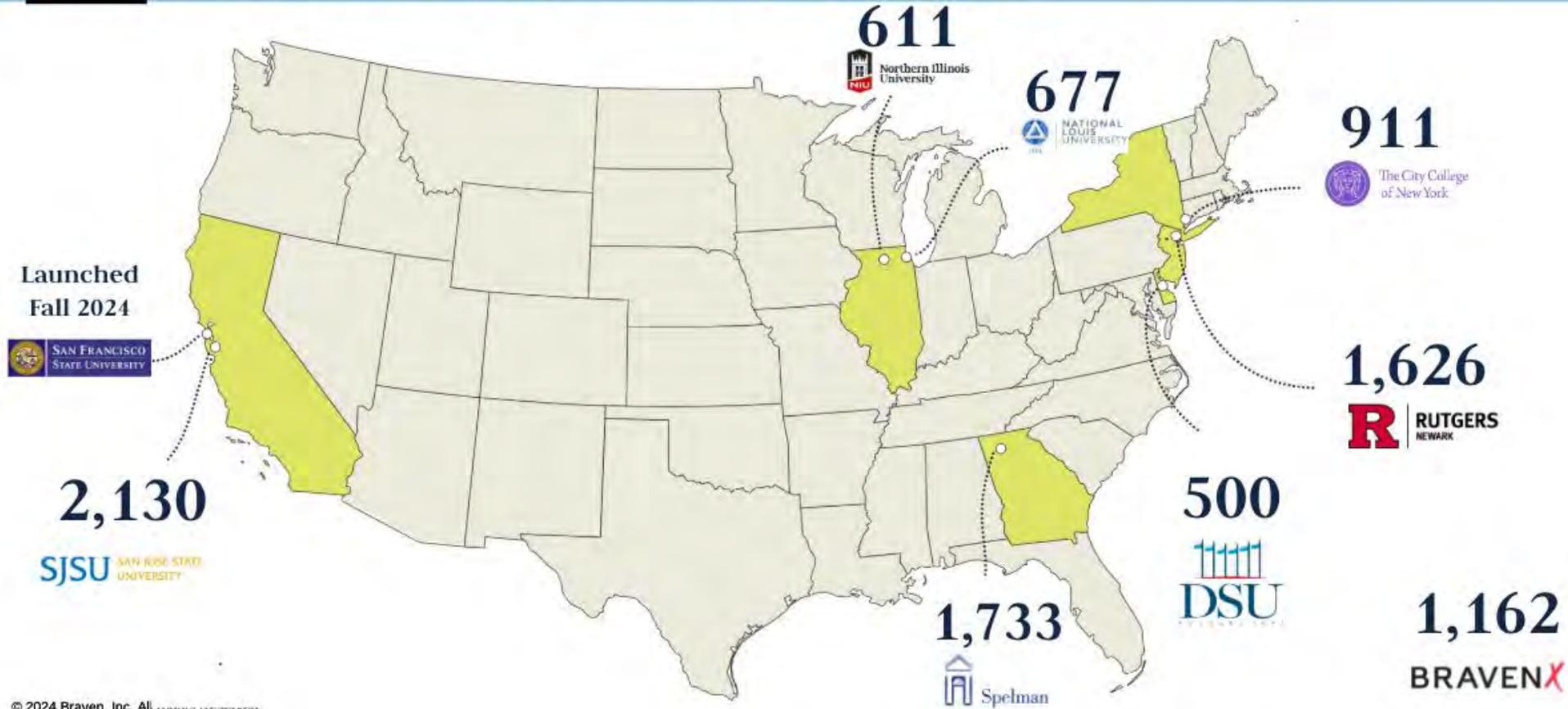
NATALIA VEGA KRUTZFELDT
BRAVEN SJSU SPRING 2023 FELLOW

© 2024 Braven, Inc. All Rights Reserved





12,000+ Fellows & growing quickly



© 2024 Braven, Inc. All rights reserved.





Accelerator Course: **Overview**

Our mission is to ensure all students who have climbed the mountain to college or grad school graduate, secure a strong first job, and are on a pathway to a meaningful career. We measure this by the % of our Fellows who secure a **strong job or grad school admission** within 6 months of graduation.





Accelerator Course: **Weekly Commitment**

2 Hours 

+

3 Hours 

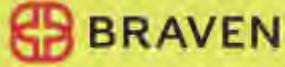
Learning Lab (Synchronous Virtual - Zoom)

- Wednesday (6-8PM EST) OR Thursday section (5-7PM EST)
- Small cohort of 6-8 peers, facilitated by Leadership Coach
- Peer learning, interactive experience & group reflection on the week's theme

Modules & Projects (Asynchronous - Braven Portal)

- Self-paced modules to prepare for Learning Lab
- Weekly micro-projects (Career Plan & Career Portfolio)
- One group project (Capstone Challenge)





Braven Priority Skills fits into NACE Competencies

<p>Career & Self-Development</p> <p>Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization.</p>	<p>Communication</p> <p>Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.</p>	<p>Critical Thinking</p> <p>Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.</p>	<p>Equity & Inclusion</p> <p>Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-racist practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism.</p>
<p>Leadership</p> <p>Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.</p>	<p>Professionalism</p> <p>Knowing work environments differ greatly, demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.</p>	<p>Teamwork</p> <p>Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.</p>	<p>Technology</p> <p>Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.</p>

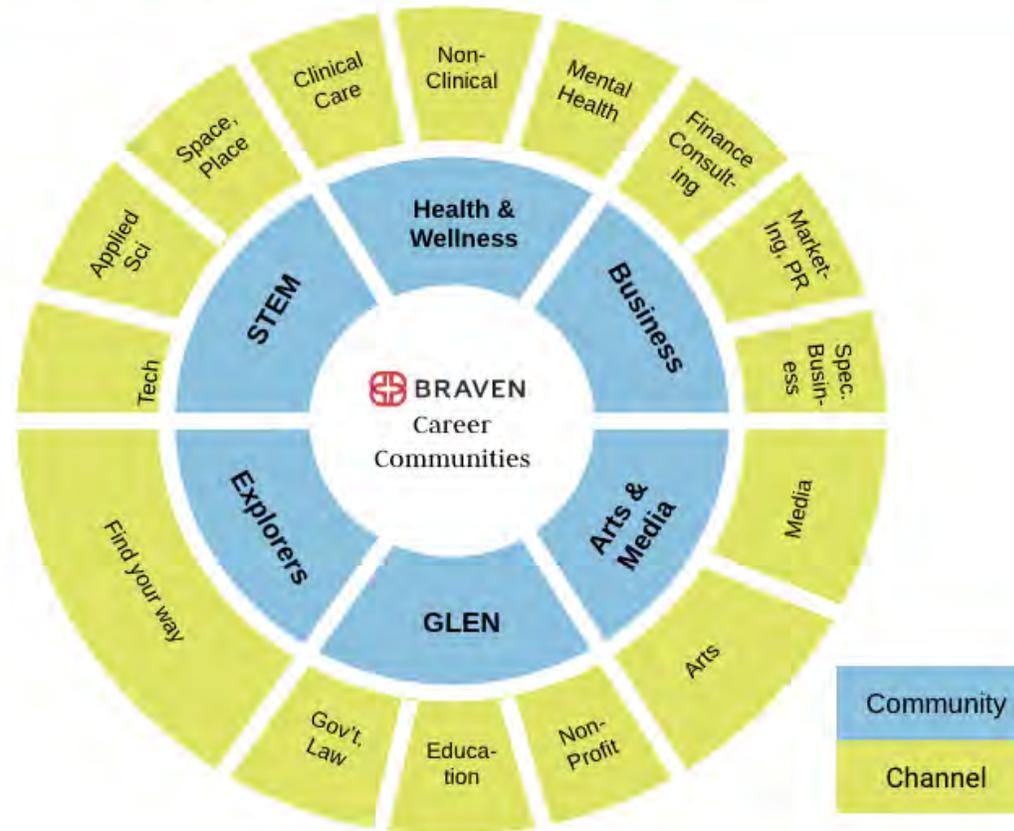
- Working in Teams
- Networking & Communicating
- Leadership
- Operating & Managing
- Problem Solving





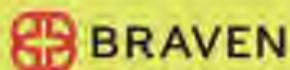
Post-Course Support: Career Communities

- Designed to further personalize and increase student engagement and career success
- Tailored content for every career path
 - Resources
 - Tools
 - Learning experiences
 - Networks
 - Opportunities
- Connected to labor market insights and employer engagements



© 2024 Braven, Inc. All Rights Reserved



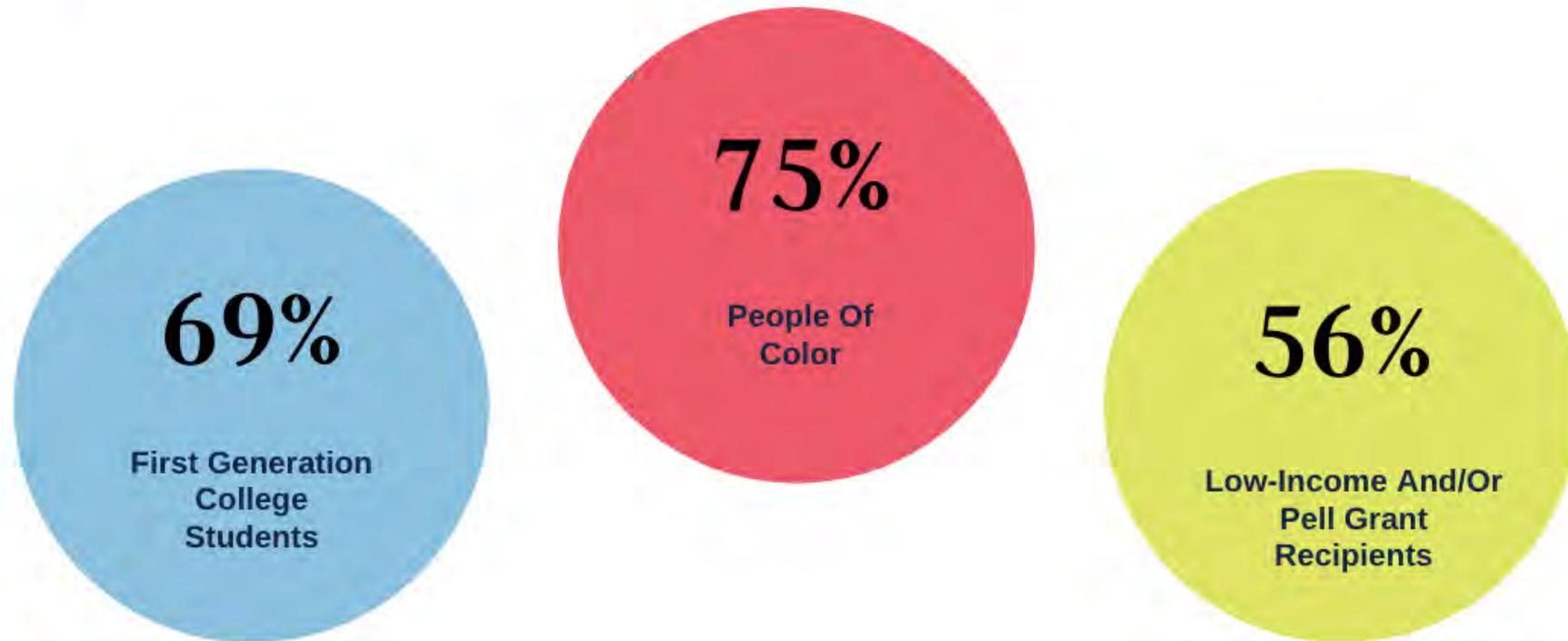


Pilot Timeline ACI & BravenX (Fall 2024)

- **January 2024:** BravenX hosts information session for ACI Presidents and Provosts to learn more about BravenX and ACI pilot
- **March 2024:** Four colleges and universities commit to pilot (Augustana College, Judson University, North Central College & Rockford University)
- **April-July 2024:** BravenX supports four partners with Fellow recruitment (email and social media outreach, strategic collaboration with programs on-campus dedicated to underrepresented students)
- **September-December-2024:** 23 students from 4 ACI member schools enroll in the Accelerator course
- **December 2024:** Pilot extended to Spring 2025 semester, with 21 students currently enrolled in the Accelerator course



ACI Fellow Demographic Breakdown



© 2024 Braven, Inc. All Rights Reserved

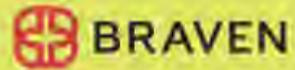


Preliminary Pilot Results: ACI & BravenX (Fall 2024)

	ACI BravenX Fellows	ALL BravenX Fellows (Average)
Course Enrollees	23	422
Retention Rate*	89% (+15%)	74%
Avg. Course Grade	84% (+2%)	82%
Avg. Attendance Rate	90% (+1%)	89%
Avg. Assignment Score	77% (+1%)	76%

*BravenX retention rate is measure between Learning Lab 3 and Learning Lab 14 (after add-drop period.)





Next Steps in Pilot Evaluation

- **January 2025:** Measure student satisfaction and other short-term outcomes (skills, confidence, experience & networks)
- **January-May 2025:** Enroll additional 21+ students in Spring 2025 Accelerator
- **Spring 2025:** Present pilot outcomes to ACI board & member schools to determine extension of partnership into FY26
- **September 2025:** Evaluate medium-term outcomes (career-accelerating opportunities & post-course engagement)





BRAVEN

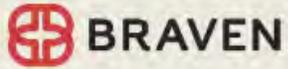
More on Braven's Impact



LAILA LACY
SPELMAN FELLOW SPRING '22

© 2024 Braven, Inc. All Rights Reserved.





Leading Indicators of Jobs Success

Our mission is to ensure all students who have climbed the mountain to college **secure a strong first job** and are on a **pathway to a meaningful career**. There are several key leading indicators of success on this path:



1. Implied 6-year graduation rate for Black, Latinx/a, and Asian students who persisted from freshman to sophomore year at four-year public institutions. Sources: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics 2021 release, Tables 326.10, 326.30, and 306.50; six-year graduation data of Braven Fellows who enrolled as first-time freshmen at San José State University, Rutgers University-Newark, and Lehman College, not including those who took Braven as seniors.

2. Braven Fellows compared to seniors nationally in 2022. Source: Strada Viewpoint: From College to Career: Students' Internship Expectations and Experiences.

3. Findings from 2017 Harvard Graduate School of Education and 2019 Stanford Graduate School of Education studies on Braven non-cognitive outcomes.

© 2024 Braven, Inc. All Rights Reserved





Braven's Priority Skills

WORKING IN TEAMS

Add value toward team goals
Navigates difference and belonging
Gives and gets feedback



LEADERSHIP

Grounded in purpose, path, and assets
Leads from values
Learns from wins and failures



PROBLEM-SOLVING

Navigates complexity
Identifies root problem
Implements effective solutions



NETWORKING & COMMUNICATING

Presents self and ideas
Demonstrates polish and etiquette
Builds and strengthens network



OPERATING & MANAGING

Manages time and priorities
Manages projects
Gets things done





Spring 2024 Fellow Satisfaction



* Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a measurement of customer satisfaction. A score of 50+ is strong, and 70+ is considered world class.

**Based on Spring 2024 Post-Accelerator Survey (77% Knowledge Rate).

© 2024 Braven, Inc. All Rights Reserved.





Spring 2024 Fellow Satisfaction

As a result of participating in Braven...	
STATEMENT	AGREE + STRONGLY AGREE
I improved my professional artifacts (resume, cover letter, and LinkedIn profile)	95%
I improved my interviewing skills	79%
I improved my leadership abilities	72%
I explored my career options and defined my career goals	61%
I made new friends	57%

**Based on Spring 2024 Post-Accelerator Survey (77% Knowledge Rate).*



 **BRAVEN**
Fellow Testimonials

"I am profoundly grateful for the transformative experience I gained through Braven. The lessons learned in mock interviews, career planning sessions, and resume building workshops have instilled in me the skills and confidence to step into the real world with a clear vision and purpose. I am excited to leverage these newfound strengths and embark on a fulfilling career journey."

– Leah Gomez, Spring 2023 Fellow



"Before becoming a Braven Fellow, I struggled with imposter syndrome. My Braven experience taught me the importance of adopting a growth mindset and striving to learn more about myself and better understand my career goals and values."

– Nicholas Rios, Fall 2023 Fellow

© 2024 Braven, Inc. All Rights Reserved.



Thank you!

April Arnold, CFRE

Executive Director

Associated Colleges of Illinois

70 East Lake Street, Suite 1418

Chicago, Illinois 60601

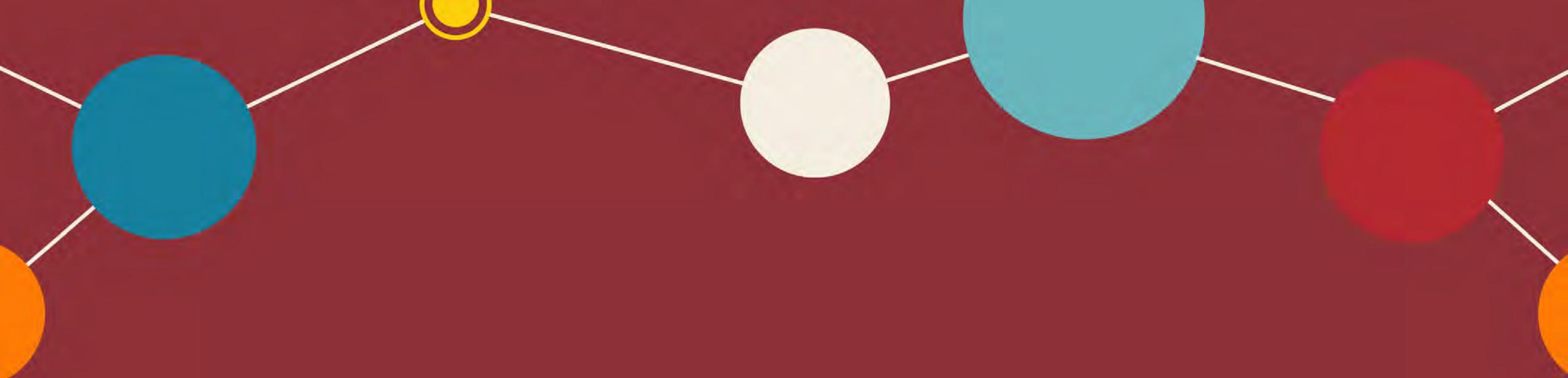
O: 312-263-2391, ext. 1

C: 312-246-7513

aarnold@acifund.org | <https://acifund.org>

Support ACI: www.acifund.org/giving





Q&A



The Council of
Independent Colleges

**ENGAGING
COMMUNITIES**

2025 Presidents Institute

January 4-7, 2025 ● JW Marriott San Antonio Hill Resort & Spa ● San Antonio, Texas



Thank you for attending this session!

