



Case Study: Project GRAD Houston 2016 Alliance Management Institute

Organization: Project GRAD Houston

Mission/Purpose of Organization: *Project GRAD improves lives in low-income communities by helping students develop and achieve their educational aspirations.*

Physical Location of Organization:

Main Location: 3000 Richmond, Suite 400 Houston, Texas 77098

Case Study Site:

Contact Information for Person Responsible for Case Study Experience while on Site:

Ramiro Fonseca (cafecollege site supervisor)

College Access and Success Manager

CELL 713-502-5913

rfonseca@projectgradhouston.org

Melissa Y. Martinez

Director of College Access and Success

DIRECT 832.325.0410

CELL 713.480.0688

ProjectGRADHouston.org

Mode of transportation: bus

Which area of the community do you serve? Education

Which types of services do you provide?

1. HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PROGRAMS

- **GRAD Scholars**

GRAD recruits students to be GRAD Scholars during their 9th and 10th grade years. Scholars and their parents sign a commitment to make college and career readiness a priority and to achieve benchmarks along their journey toward high school graduation. GRAD Scholars are guided through the college process with a curriculum called CLASS ACT. Our staff, volunteer mentors, and community partners use the CLASS ACT to help students develop and achieve their educational goals. (The acronym stands for: College and Career Planning, Leadership and Community Service, Academic Excellence, Soft Skills, Stick to It, Attend, Coaching, Team.) CLASS ACT focuses on college and career planning, leadership development, academic excellence, and soft skills for success, and it includes specific milestones to be achieved.

- **College Institute Summer Programs**

Our award-winning College Institute programs equip students with college and career knowledge and develop students' motivation for college. College Institutes, which take place over one to two weeks, are held on college campuses and offer rigorous academics





connected to careers, giving students a true college experience. The program connects the following groups to develop meaningful and high-impact experiences for students:

- Community colleges and university partners host Institutes and help expose students to academic pathways for entry into high-demand careers at multiple levels: workforce certificate, associate's degree, and bachelor's degree.
 - Workforce Solutions provides information and curricula to introduce students to high-demand careers in the Houston area; GRAD embeds this information into every College Institute. Workforce Solutions staff also give career-focused presentations.
 - Industry partners communicate specific workforce needs directly to students. Shell, JPMorgan Chase, and Schlumberger are companies with which GRAD has collaborated to expose students to workforce needs in their companies.
- **Financial Aid Guidance**
An essential part of GRAD's commitment to students and families is ensuring they have the financial resources to help make college affordable. Prior to high school graduation and continuing through college, GRAD works with students and families to help them access all available public financial aid for which they are eligible, as well as connect them to other scholarship opportunities.

2. TRANSITION TO COLLEGE

- **College Transition Workshops**
Project GRAD Scholars who have been accepted into college participate in College Transition Conferences held on local college and university campuses, where they learn about the important shift from being a recent high school graduate to a college student. The workshops help students develop a network of peers attending the same college or university, learn about support systems available, and receive important information to successfully begin college.

3. COLLEGE STUDENT PROGRAMS

- **College Success Coaching**
GRAD Scholars receive mentoring through three programs:
 - PG at the U (Project GRAD at the University) benefits new and continuing GRAD Scholars attending local colleges and universities. GRAD representatives meet with students at their campus and provide support, connecting students to resources available at their college. Students receive guidance on balancing the demands of work, college, family, and life challenges.
 - i-MENTOR for College Success matches out-of-town, college-enrolled GRAD Scholars with volunteer mentors from Houston's business community. Mentors support a Scholar's success in college via weekly emails and text messages
 - GRAD Ambassadors are successful GRAD Scholars who serve as peer advisors to new freshmen at the University of Texas, Texas A&M, Stephen F. Austin University and Sam Houston State University. Ambassadors connect new students to campus resources. GRAD Ambassadors are paid a stipend and receive support to develop their own leadership skills.





Case Identification:

The Issue (Case): with the development of cafecollege Houston, GRAD is experiencing an expansion in the population served. GRAD is challenged with managing and collecting the influx of documentation needed from each cafecollege visitor. NLA students will develop a system for consistent document collection from clients and document processing for GRAD's data collection purposes.

Competency Identification: Program Development

Issue Background:

The Impact of Project GRAD Houston

- More than 6,750 have enrolled in college with Project GRAD's support.
- More than 1,900 GRAD Scholars have graduated college.
- More than 2,000 GRAD Scholars are currently enrolled in college and pursuing their degrees.
- GRAD Scholars are on track to achieve a 60% college completion rate – nearly 2.5 times the rate of their peers throughout Texas.

Organizational Goals and Objectives

- At least 80% of entering ninth graders served graduate from their high schools on-time
- At least 50% of students served attend college as GRAD Scholars
- At least 60% of GRAD Scholars graduate from college with a workforce certificate, associate's degree, or a bachelor's degree.

Form 990: <http://www.projectgradhouston.org/pdf/PGH-Form-990.pdf>

Outcomes of Case Study: Develop internal process to assist with the process of collecting documents, entering data, and transferring the documents; streamline system to make the process less cumbersome to visitors.

Remarks:

Attachments included in this document: (i.e. Organizational Chart, Organization Background Info, etc.) Organizational Chart and cafecollege Houston services

