

## Structured Interviews on Educational Success

At the beginning of the grant, we wanted to see the extent to which students cared about the measures of success that researchers tend to focus on, including timely graduation, grades, and credits completed. We conducted 3 semi-structured interviews with students from CESP and PES; 19 total students participated, 13 of whom were part of underrepresented populations (first generation status, Pell eligibility, race/ethnicity)

We first asked students to map their journeys to educational success, including strategies, barriers, and facilitators. Then, we asked students to describe their maps and define educational success. Four coders used the constant comparison method and resolved any disagreements through discussion until everyone agreed upon the codes and themes. We organized the themes into the buckets from community engagement: career, academic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, civic and moral

## Major Findings

*I would be a successful college student if I.....* (Defining educational success)

[Intrapersonal] Preparation for the future, Well-being, Effort and dedication, Exploration and decision making

*"..realize my own potentials from the hard work I have done" (P8)*

*"..define what I want to do with myself." (C1)*

*"..was happy." (P6)*

[Academic] Academic focus, Graduation, Academic skills, and Preparation for the future

*"..earn the degree I want" (P3)*

*"..defined my major" (P4)*

[Interpersonal] Camaraderie, Networking

*"..built long lasting friendships" (P2)*

*"..find the right people to push me towards my goals and .. inspire me to inspire others" (P7)*

## Summary

- Students appeared to define educational success intrapersonally as much as they defined it academically.
- Students described academic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal facilitators and supports as all relatively important
- Students described mostly intrapersonal barriers but many also mentioned financial and structural barriers.

## Facilitators and Supports

[Academic] Structures in place, Quality interactions, Quality academic opportunities

*“the space to be” (C3)*

[Interpersonal] Family and friend support, Sense of community

[Intrapersonal] Self-identity, Facing and dealing with balance

**Barriers**

[Intrapersonal] Struggling to find balance, Mindset/attitudes, Mental/emotional health

[Academic] Advising system, Grading system

[Other] Money/Finances