

# College Access Mapping: Activity Guide

## (Originally developed to be completed by students)

Developed by Massachusetts Campus Compact and outlined in their publication, *Emerging Themes in the Fields of College Access and Civic Engagement: College Access Fellows Mapping Report*.

<http://ase.tufts.edu/macc>

### Activity I: Who's Around?

#### Step I. Mapping Stakeholders

The first step is to identify key stakeholders. The following questions will help inform the mapping process. During this mapping activity, you may want to complete the mapping tool (see page 10) to draw the map of your campus and community. In this process, you may wish to start with the general (i.e. Service Learning Center/Admissions Office, Boys and Girls Club), but then get *specific*, including names and contact information of people (i.e. Sam Grant, Director, 555-555-5555). The more specific you can get, the better, especially as you go out to talk with people.

**A “stakeholder” is any person or group that has a real interest (or “stake”) in something.**

- Who are key “stakeholders” (on campus and in the community) for creating, developing, and managing college access programs?
- Who has a real interest in providing local youth with opportunities to attain their goal of a college education? Here you might think of student organizations, key community partners, faculty, student affairs, administrators, etc.
- What programs target college access (including volunteering, service-learning, or institutional and community work)?
- Which offices support college access programs?
- What college student groups are organizing or involved in college access programs?
- What community-based organizations are organizing or involved in college access programs?
- What community and neighborhood organizations can/does the college partner work with in regards to college access?
- What state and regional elected officials have supported progress toward addressing higher education access barriers?

#### Step II. Interviews

Conducting interviews is important for building relationships with key people on campus and in the community to understand where the leverage points for change and collaboration are; but it requires much more time. Due to the amount of time that interviewing takes in scheduling and performing, interviews should not be seen as a stopping point, but rather as a constant activity that you participate in and return to as schedules permit. You may want to continue doing interviews after your mapping project is complete to further your understanding. After the initial mapping, the next step is to do one-on-one interviews with some of the people you identified. This can seem intimidating, but the stakeholders you identified are most often excited to talk with people about their work, especially students. It is also an essential aspect of understanding power on campus and in the community, building allies, and seeing how to accomplish your goal (which could range from hosting a dialogue, to recruiting more students to join your cause, to increased collaboration between university and community partners on the issue of college access).

The following are questions to ask your identified stakeholders:

- How did you first become involved in your work? (depending on how the person is identified as a stakeholder, this can be made more specific to the organization or college access work this person is doing)
- What drives you to be involved?
- How can we increase student and institutional involvement in addressing college access with the local community? (to ask both campus and community stakeholders)
- What changes would you like to see on campus or in the broader community? Do you think change is possible?
- Who else do you know on campus or in the community that is working on these issues?

Be sure to follow-up on interesting answers and observations. Build on what your interviewee has already said, rather than following a set script of questions. An interviewee who feels listened to is likely to talk more than someone who feels ignored. So this activity, while sometimes daunting, should be fun and meaningful. Try to get to know what motivates this person to be involved and how this person might be enlisted as an ally in your efforts on campus.

## **Activity II: Helping and Hindering College Access Programs**

As you look at the people and places you identified (and potentially interviewed) above, think about the “strengths” and “gaps” on your campus and in your community in addressing the academic, financial, and cultural barriers that hinder local youth from attending college. Use the following questions to guide your discussion in determining the strengths and the gaps on your campus and in your community.

### **STRENGTHS—SUPPORTING COLLEGE ACCESS PROGRAMS**

- In what areas are your campus and community strong in addressing college access barriers?
- How does your campus help support these programs?

### **GAPS—HINDERING COLLEGE ACCESS PROGRAMS**

- What areas of college access does your campus and community need more support in addressing?
- What on your campus and in your community prevents greater collaboration?

## **Activity III: Recommendations for Change - Action Steps**

- Ideally, how could your campus best address college access barriers in the local community?
- What are some concrete ways that your campus and community can work together in addressing college access for local youth?

Follow up question:

- What steps need to be taken in order for your recommendations to be realized?

### Activity IV: Next Steps: Action Plan

1. Devise a strategy for implementing the action steps from Activity III.
2. Share your assessment with the people you interviewed on campus and in the community.
3. Make your assessment of the campus public:
  - Meet with faculty to present your assessment and recommendations
  - Meet with administrators to present your assessment and recommendations
  - Meet with representatives from other schools and compare notes
  - Meet with student government
  - Meet with community members to present your assessment
4. Gather feedback from the various constituents to revise action steps as necessary

### College Access Mapping Tool

