The Kaplan Leadership Program: An Approach to Preparing Community College Students for Successful Transfer and Beyond

June 1, 2012
Preparate: Educating Latinos for the Future of America
The College Board
Miami, Florida
Kaplan Leadership Program Background

• Kaplan Educational Foundation (KEF) is a 501(c)3 Private Foundation

• In 2006, KEF launched the Kaplan Leadership Program (KLP)

• KLP Mission: to help talented community college students from underrepresented communities and low-income backgrounds graduate from top four-year colleges, and assume leadership roles in their fields and communities

• KLP Approach: To help a small group of students in a big way
Why Community College Students?

- Community Colleges are the gateway to higher education

U.S. College Student Enrollment

- 56% 4-Yr College
- 44% Community College

U.S. Hispanic College Students Enrollment

- 48% 4-Yr College
- 52% Community College

U.S. African-American College Students Enrollment

- 56% 4-Yr College
- 44% Community College
Community Colleges Serve the Traditionally Underserved

First Generation U.S. College Students

- 58% 4-Yr College
- 42% Community College

U.S. College Students from Families Earning Under $20,000

- 33% 4-Yr College
- 66% Community College
Sobering Statistics

For Community College Students there is a disconnect between the desire to continue with their undergraduate educations and doing so:

- **Degree Intent**: 47% BA or Higher
- **Actual Transfers to 4-Yr College**: 25%
Sobering Statistics

Degree completion for Community College students is low, including among KLP’s target populations.

Overall AA Degree Completion

<20% Within 4 Yrs

AA Degree or Certificate Completion among African-Americans and Hispanics

<11% Within 3 Yrs

AA Degree or Certificate Completion among Low Income Students

<12% Within 3 Yrs
Kaplan Leadership Program Overview

• Scholars receive comprehensive support through bachelor’s degree completion

• Scholars remain in Program 3-4 years

• Kaplan Scholars complete associate’s degree in NYC

• Recently selected 7th Cohort of Scholars

• Rigorous application process, includes interviews

• KLP acceptance rate is about 5%
More Than Just a Scholarship Program

The Kaplan Leadership Program is a cohort-based, year-round program providing comprehensive, multi-year support:

- Financial Support
- Academic Advising
- Leadership Development
Kaplan Leadership Program – A Model for Community College Success

• 86% of all Scholars earn bachelor’s degrees

• 93% bachelor’s completion among Scholars who transfer

• Over 30% of Alumni have applied to graduate school
  - 100% have been accepted

• Graduates are currently employed by:
  - Colgate-Palmolive
  - JPMorgan Chase
  - non-profit organizations
  - early childhood education schools/programs
Kaplan Leadership Program

• Colleges and Universities where Kaplan Scholars have been accepted include:

- American**
- Amherst*
- Bard**
- Brown
- Clark*
- Cornell**
- Emerson**
- GWU**
- Georgetown
- Goucher**
- Hampshire
- Morehouse***
- Mount
- Holyoke***
- NYU***
- Occidental*
- Pitzer
- Reed
- Smith***
- Spelman*
- Stanford*
- Swarthmore
- Syracuse***
- Tulane
- Tufts*
- University of Rochester*
- Vassar

*Enrolled
**Graduated
***Both
Kaplan Leadership Program – Graduate Programs Acceptances

• Carnegie Mellon
• Johns Hopkins
• Columbia, Teachers College
• Columbia, School of Social Work
• NYU
• Harvard, Kennedy School*
• Syracuse
• Hunter*
• Tufts
• University of Connecticut

*Graduates
Kaplan Leadership Program – A Model for Community College Success

• Scholars’ achievements include:
  - Valedictorian
  - Salutatorian
  - Graduate fellowships
  - Phi Theta Kappa
  - Phi Beta Kappa
  - National Science Foundation scholarships
  - Significant 4-yr school grants
  - Research opportunities
  - Coca-Cola All Academic Team scholarships
KLP Video
Profile of Kaplan Scholars & Alumni

- 29 Scholars
- 14 Alumni
- 19-36 years old
- 22 Women / 21 Men
- 24 Black / 19 Hispanic
- All are Pell eligible
- 8 have children
- ESL and non-ESL students
- 77% are first generation college students
Barriers to Leadership

• Insufficient financial and non-financial resources

• Need for skills development (academic and life skills)

• Personal/family obligations

• Lack of knowledge about senior colleges and transfer application process

• Limited knowledge of career options and appropriate majors

• Stuck in survival mode
The KLP Leadership Model

**LEADERSHIP**
Self, family, community

**ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL**
- Grades
- Academic Rigor
- Consistency

**FINANCIAL**
- Family
- Personal Budget
- Planner

**Personal Social & Emotional**
- Self Reliant
- Resourceful
- Balanced
Program Services – Financial Support

- Scholarships toward associate’s degrees
- Scholarships toward bachelor’s degrees
- Funding for books and materials
- Living stipends (includes school-to-career transition support)
- Laptops
- Home internet access
- Transportation to/from school
- Scholarships/stipends for summer experiences
Program Services – Academic Support

• Academic advising
• TOEFL and SAT/ACT prep
• Incremental academic tutoring
• Subject matter tutoring
• Transfer admissions advising
• Preparation for transfer
Program Services – Leadership Development

- Career counseling
- Life skills development
- Peer support/Cohort-building
- Leadership training
- Financial education/literacy
- Cultural enrichment
- Reading circles
The KLP Approach to Transfer Admissions

The main goal of the KLP Transfer Admissions support is to have each Scholar attend a four-year school that will best prepare and propel them to leadership by supporting their overall development….

1. Personally

2. Academically

3. Professionally
KEF Transfer Resources

Kaplan Leadership Scholar
Community College

Academic Advisor
Transfer Advisor
Writing Tutor

Prospective Four-Year Schools
Steps to Finding Your Transfer School

Step 1: Assessment -

Working with your Academic Advisor to evaluate your current level of performance and the steps you need to take to achieve your goals

Step 2: Learning the Language of Transfer

Step 3: Identifying the features of a school that will -

- Nurture your strengths
- Address your weaknesses
- Challenge you to grow
- Meet them where they are as CC Transfers
Steps to Finding Your Transfer School

Step 4: Identifying your Schools –

• Research, research, visits, interviews, more research…

Step 5: Financial Aid

Step 6: Decision Time (Evaluation/Compromise)

• Match
• Credits
• Financial Implications
• Social Fit
• Personal Implications
Recommendations for Transfer Advising

• Focus on language as a navigation tool for transfer
  - Invest time in developing thorough understanding of two and four year terminology to empower students to assess their strengths, needs, experiences, and transfer college.
  - Explain how each term will impact the student (academically, financially, socially/emotionally)

• Ensure that all information is presented in context needed for the diverse 2-year student population
  - Illustrate various types of 4-year school experiences
  - Layout resources available at the 4-years for non-traditional students
  - Explain how on-campus resources are utilized and by whom
  - Delineate academic and social expectations of 4-year schools
Recommendations for Transfer Advising (cont’d)

• Build formal, required introduction/orientation
  - Must be designed for those with transfer and employment goals post-Community College experience
    - Clear direction on how best to prepare for 4-year programs
    - Provide facts on benefits of continuing undergraduate education
    - Describe residential college experience

• Facilitate communication
  - Provide roadmap on effective communication with 4-year schools
  - List key transfer student contacts at 4-year schools

• Teach students to advocate for themselves
Recommendations to 4-year Schools for Successful Integration of Transfers

• Recognize that Community College Transfers have Specific Needs and Provide Necessary Supports
  - Have designated transfer admissions staff
  - Make college grants available to transfers
  - Offer the opportunity to live on campus, with upperclassmen
  - Establish streamlined and timely credit evaluation process
  - Include transfers in Summer bridge programs
  - Offer transfer-specific student orientations
  - Designate Transfer student administrator/”go to”
  - Facilitate the creation of a transfer student community
Recommendations to 4-year Schools for Successful Integration of Transfers

• Use transfers already on campus as resources
  - Formal and/or informal focus groups
  - Help set policies and procedures for transfers
  - Lead transfer club/community
  - Utilize transfers or other non-traditional students as tour guides and hosts
Contact Us!

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Appendix
Program Eligibility

Candidates for the Kaplan Leadership Program should:

• Be enrolled in an accredited associate’s degree program in the NYC area
• Have a 3.5 GPA
• Have completed 12-30 non-remedial college credits by application deadline
• Recipient of federal or state financial aid
• Be a member of an underrepresented/underserved population
• Be a U.S. Citizen or permanent resident
• Desire to begin a bachelor’s program immediately following completion of associate’s degree
• Have exceptional maturity and focus
• Be dedicated to educational and career success
The Selection Process

- Scholars 7/10
- Group Activity/Interview (~20)
- Committee Interview (~40)
- Initial Interview (~55)
- Application Review (~100)
- Assessment of Transcripts (~120)
- Identification of Applicants (Self and School) (150+)

KAPLAN EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION
Student Questions/Concerns

• Pre-application/acceptance
  - What’s the catch?
  - Essays?!
  - Too good to be true?
Attributes of a Kaplan Scholar

- Strong Academics/Proficiency/Aptitude
- Integrity
- Disciplined/Consistent/Persistent/Ability to Sacrifice
- Determined/High Aspirations
- Open to Advising/Wants Support, Not Just Scholarship Funds
- Developed Social Skills/Support Network
- Extracurricular Participation
- Hardy/Resilient/Demonstrated Coping Skills
- Commitment to Long-Term Goals
- Self-Efficacy
- Flexible/Humble/Coachable
- Sense of community/desire to give back/appreciation of support received to date
The “It” Factor: Achieving Big vs. Dreaming Big

- Committed to academic preparation and academic rigor.

- Looking to make an impact on their personal lives, family, community and profession.

- Recognizes and is willing to work on strengths weaknesses.

- Considers “networks” and resources as pivotal in his/her progress.
## Virtues of a Kaplan Scholar

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<th>Virtue</th>
<th>Academic &amp; Professional</th>
<th>Financial</th>
<th>Personal, Social &amp; Emotional</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integrity &amp; Honesty</td>
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<td>Humility</td>
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<td>Discipline &amp; Consistency</td>
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<td>Problem Solving &amp; Self-Efficacy</td>
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<td>Support Network</td>
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KEF Concerns – Years 1 & 2

• Understanding Program’s Goals and Philosophy

• Openness and honesty/ Establishing trust in Foundation

• Bonding and building trust among Scholars

• Minimum established skill levels

• Willingness to take on change/lack of fear of change

• Ability to make hard decisions

• Ability to focus on long versus short term
Scholar Concerns – Years 1 & 2

• Letting go of survival mode

• Trusting KEF

• Being open to changing major/career goal

• Allowing him/herself to dream big

• Leaving family and friends behind to transfer
Programmatic Calendar

Year 1 (enrolled in CCs)
- Orientation
- Individual assessments
  - Academic
  - Financial
  - Career
  - Personal
  - Transfer
- Academic “boot camps”
- SAT & TOEFL prep & testing
- Transfer process
- Workshops begin
- Individual career & leadership plans established
- Summer activity identification
- Financial aid application support

Year 2 (begin 4-yr programs)
- Transfer
- Post-transfer evaluations
- Individual progress evaluations
Programmatic Calendar (cont’d)

Year 3 (enrolled in 4-yr programs)

- Graduation confirmation
- Post-graduation leadership plan
- Grad school admission support
- Graduation

Year 4 & Beyond (Seniors and Alumni)

- Post-graduation/ alumni tracking & engagement
Kaplan Leadership Program