

Developing an Academic and Personal Vision

Sara Gamez and Amber Stroman, Student Support and Equity Programs

Making a Difference

- The mission of **Student Support and Equity Programs (SSEP)** is to make a positive difference in the lives of non-traditional and undecided students through a broad range of high quality programs and services that promote access and equity, transition, and educational opportunities in support of student learning and success; thus empowering them to become educated and engaged citizens who go on to lead productive and meaningful lives.
- The **Renaissance Scholars** program was launched in 2002 with the purpose of empowering former foster youth through higher education. As one of four major programs under SSEP, Renaissance Scholars provides support services to help students achieve their educational goals at Cal Poly Pomona.
- The Renaissance Scholars Student/Staff Retreat provides an opportunity for students and staff to engage in activities that support the students' academic goals and personal development.
- The focus of this year's retreat was to provide students an opportunity to gain a firm understanding of the importance of developing skills to set realistic goals that will positively impact their lives and help them build strong foundations for their future.

Learning Outcomes

- As a result of participating in the Renaissance Scholars Annual Retreat (2009), students will learn to:
 - Identify key academic, career, financial, and personal factors that are critical in developing a Five Year Vision Plan
 - Utilize their individualized Five Year Vision Plan to set realistic and attainable educational goals



Methodology

- Two assessment instruments were used to measure student learning outcomes of the retreat participants.
 1. Students completed a Five Year Vision Plan at the conclusion of the 1day retreat and submitted the worksheet to a Renaissance Scholars staff.
 2. Students completed an on-line learning outcomes based survey using StudentVoice several days after the conclusion of the retreat. This survey also included gathering student satisfaction information.



Excerpts from 5 Year Vision Plans

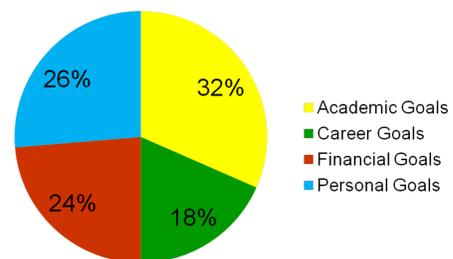
- "Within 5 years I would like to be well established as a social worker, saving money for a down payment on a house."
 - Goals for 2009-2010: "Boost up GPA and begin researching graduate school programs and internships"
 - Goals for 2010 – 2011: "...begin budgeting money for food, rent, bills and begin saving money for a down payment on a house"
- "In 5 years I will be nearly 30 with a BS in Animal Health Science working as a Licensed Vet Technician. I will begin starting up my social work business (working with the social welfare of animals) and become a home owner."
 - Goals for 2009-2010: "Manage all accounts and set up scheduled fee payments and begin researching and investing in stock."
 - Goals for 2009-2011: "Maintain a good GPA by following curriculum sheet and continue doing well in my internships to help insure a paying position upon graduation. Graduate."
- "In 5 years I will either be working a computer related job here in the United States or in Japan while learning Japanese. I will be working toward a Master's while working full time. I will have the necessities such as a car and my credit will be in good standing for emergency use."
 - Goals for 2009-2010: "Take and pass the GWT and make the Dean's List at least twice a year."
 - Goals for 2009-2010: "Create a resume and acquire a small job to begin saving and get experience. Begin an internship that is computer science related."

Conclusion

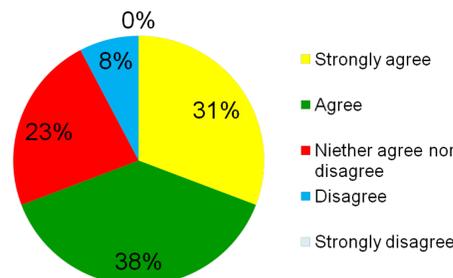
- The Five Year Vision Plan and StudentVoice survey data show us that students have begun to understand the importance of mapping out their life goals as college students and identify at least one realistic and attainable goal.
- We have also learned that students currently do not have the ability to clearly identify the steps required to meet their goals.

Survey Results

Which of the four key factors did you learn is the most valuable to you ?



As a result of the RS retreat, I am able to develop my own 5 Year Vision Plan.



Implications for Practice

- Providing students the opportunity to learn about the importance of developing an academic /personal vision plan at this year's retreat was a critical first step towards helping them build a foundation for their future.
- Students will use the Five Year Vision Plan to help guide their overall educational plan. The Renaissance Scholars educational counselor will refer to their vision plans when she meets with the students for their regular advising sessions.