Beyond the Breakout Room

Engaging Underrepresented Students Through Virtual Campus Programming

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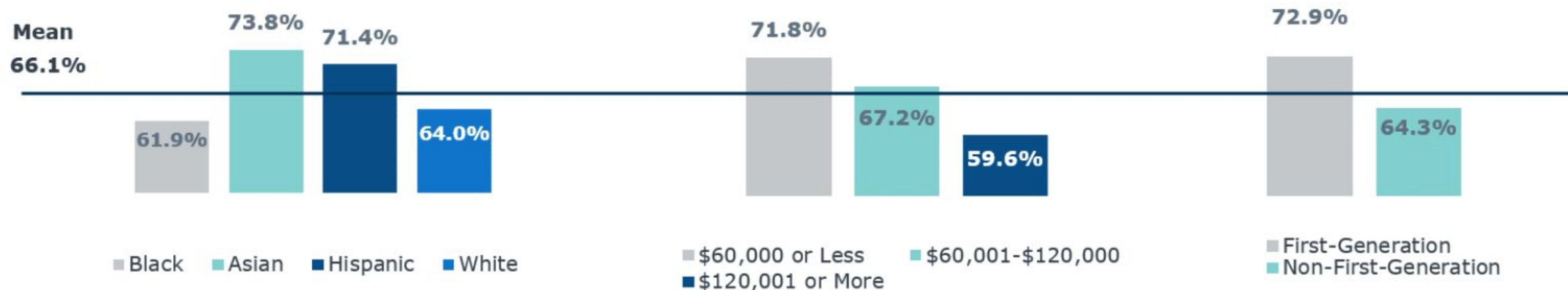SHARE, LEARN AND CONNECT

Agenda

- ## The Challenge
  - underrepresented student participation in virtual events

- ## Ground Work
  - establishing staff and campus buy-in

- ## Program Highlights
  - Perspectives on Pomona (Virtual Fly-In Program)
  - In Trust for Humankind (DEI & Activism Virtual Open House)

- ## Wrapping Up/Discussion

The Challenge

Underrepresented students are more likely to express concern about doing well in school amid COVID-19

The pandemic has increased concerns about doing well in college

Mean 66.1%

Black	61.9%
Asian	73.8%
Hispanic	71.4%
White	64.0%

- Black
- Asian
- Hispanic
- White

$60,000 or Less	71.8%
$60,001-$120,000	67.2%
$120,001 or More	59.6%

- $60,000 or Less
- $60,001-$120,000
- $120,001 or More

First-Generation	72.9%
Non-First-Generation	64.3%

- First-Generation
- Non-First-Generation

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The Challenge

Recommendation

Develop new and engaging resources that address the significant loss of services and support that these students are experiencing. You can't over communicate on this subject and employing multiple modalities and delivery mechanisms will broaden your appeal. These families are not best served by lengthy webinars full of technical language, policies, and rules. Take a "we really want to help you, and one of the ways we can do so is to receive your FAFSA so we may make you a financial aid offer. Help me help you." approach.

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Ground Work

- Training within your staff
  - *The Privileged Poor* (Anthony "Tony" Jack)
  - DEI Training as professional development
- Recognizing the state of society
  - Double pandemic of Covid-19 and BLM
  - What we were seeing amongst ourselves and our colleagues and peers
- What are student concerns and how can we address them?
  - Addressing the FAQs in our info sessions and tours
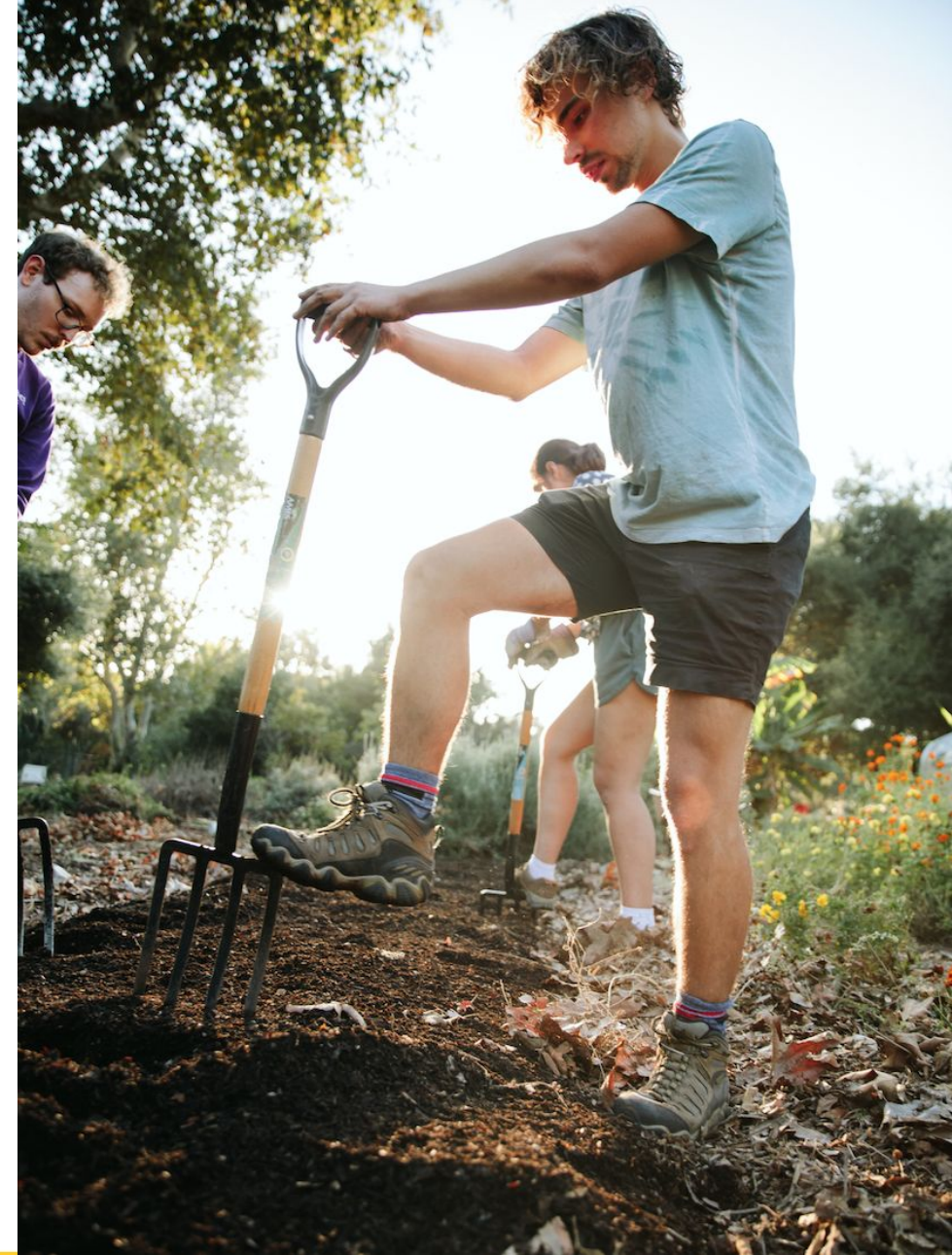
Perspectives on Pomona Virtual Fly-In Program

- Application-based program exclusively for underrepresented students

  - *including low-income, first-generation, rural, and those from underrepresented ethnic or racial groups, undocumented and DACAmented students, military veterans, active-duty military and community college students*

- Provides a needed space for solidarity

- Programming included:

  - Zoom panels, virtual tours, professor conversations, small group conversations with admissions officers, recreational activities, unstructured time

Perspectives on Pomona Virtual Fly-In Program

What worked:

- Full transparency in sessions
- Having current students recommend their favorite faculty/staff to participate in the program
- Participant only sessions

What didn't work:

- Long days
- Multiple speakers in succession that didn't have an interactive component

In Trust for Humankind
DEI & Activism Virtual Open House

- Public program advertised to all prospects and inquiries
  - *Additional advertising through higher ed partners, such as QuestBridge, to reach more students and families*

- Forward-facing commitment to DEI and growth

- Programming included:
  - panels with professors and students, conversations around activism journeys/growth in college, student-led affinity group breakouts, social justice and admissions

In Trust for Humankind
DEI & Activism Virtual Open House

What worked:

- A "past, present, future" look at what the College has done when it comes to access and equity; **growth mindset**

- Parent and guardian invitation

- Students of color participation increase
  - *72% of attendees; our virtual programming average is about 60%*

What didn't work:

- Doing it on a Saturday late in the semester

- Having professors talk about what they are doing in their classrooms (felt far-removed)

Program Feedback

"I enjoyed learning about how social justice is central to the mission of Pomona, but for where I am in the college process, the panel regarding admissions was most helpful as it provided concrete strategies for discussions of social justice in application aspects such as supplements."

From ████████ to Everyone: 2:32 PM
I love the transparency

From ██████████ (she/her) to Everyone: 2:32 PM
^^definitely!

From ████████████ (he/him) to Everyone: 2:32 PM
^ straight to the point

From ██████████ (He/Him) to Everyone: 2:32 PM
Yess

Feedback cont'd

"How the administration is actively trying to recruit not just students of color, but also faculty of color so that their **commitment to diversity is not superficial."**

"I was glad to learn about Pomona's inclusive culture at the ways in which it's achieved. It seems like Pomona has truly cared about activism and social justice for a long time, **not just in the midst of this year's tragedies."**

a few seconds ago

Thanks for your honest answer about imposter syndrome and making friends!

Wrapping Up and Discussion

- Conversations around DEI and activism should not be relegated to a breakout room, or an exclusive subset of the admissions process

- Leverage key engagement tools (i.e. interactive tools, like AhaSlides)

- Core themes of programming should center around:
  - belonging
  - support
  - transparency

- Start having conversations with your VP and key college administrators now to create buy-in

- High school and CBO counselors:
  - What are you noticing with your students? How can we serve these students better?