

Horizon Fellows Progress Report (Fall 2017)

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How Much Did We Do? – This past August the Horizon Fellows program inducted 42 junior participants and reconfirmed 21 senior participants for the 2017-2018 academic year. Representing 20 counties from our service region, these 63 students are assigned a Berea College student who serves as a mentor within their campus labor position to assist with the participants’ college application process.

Horizon Fellows Demographic Information (2017-2018)

Grant	%	Counties/Number of Students:
GEAR UP APP	43% N=27	Pulaski (12), Laurel (4), Madison (5), Rockcastle (2), Lee (1), Estill (3)
GEAR UP PN	38% N=24	Bell (6), Jackson (6), Breathitt (2), Owsley (1), Knott (4), Perry (3), Knox (1), Leslie (1)
GEAR UP PZ**	19% N=12	Letcher (4), Whitley (2), McCreary (2), Wayne (1), Casey (2), Clinton (1)
**Students nominated by grant, however, are not within GEAR UP class being served.		

The Horizon Fellows student labor team has produced six lessons and five check-ins concentrated on creating conversation and skill development for the college application process. The lessons generated throughout the semester focus on the following topics:

Junior Horizon Fellows:

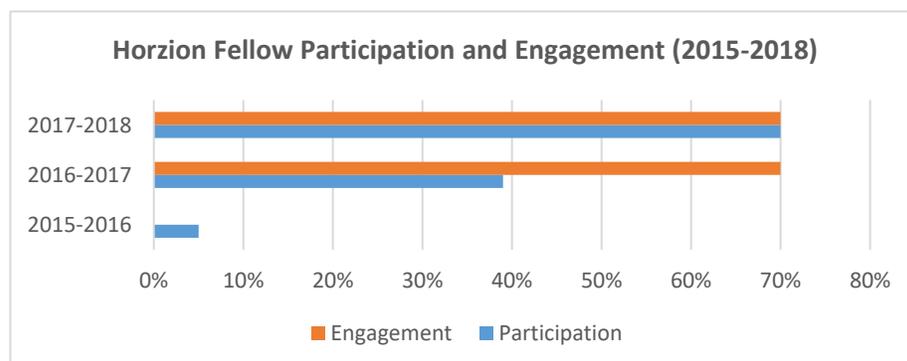
- Get to Know You
- Opportunities
- Value Based Decision Making
- Professional Communication
- Networking for Recommendations
- Reflection

Senior Horizon Fellows:

- Determining Colleges of Interest
- Application Completion Process
- Admittance Essay Writing
- Application Deadlines/Accountability
- Value Based Decision Making
- Reflection

These lessons were sent virtually as videos to our students via Signal Vine and included a question that students are required to respond to in order to receive participation credit. The check-in messages were simple and quick questions regarding the college preparatory process. These were tracked for response rate purposes, however, are not weighed against the individual.

How Well Did We Do It? – In looking at the previous three years of the Horizon Fellows Program, we notice an upward trend regarding participation (lesson completion) of our students.



Additionally, following an anonymous survey sent out to the Horizon Fellows students from our mentor team, out of 38 response and on a scale of 1-10 with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent, Horizon Participants rated our communication with them an 8.2 and our lessons a 7.7. Horizon Fellows had this to say about our lessons/communications:

- “The lessons have been the most help because they make me think about things I need to know in the future and about who I am.”
- “My mentor has been great about answering questions and I have learned a lot.”
- “I would like more check-ins, and keeping on us about completing lessons. I know I tend to get busy and doing the lessons slip my mind.”

Some comments request college visits or local meet ups for Horizon Fellows for them to get to know each other and their mentors better. Others request more activities and information within lessons and fun sections within the monthly newsletter to make the program more engaging. While some of these are not possible, others are seen as area of improvement moving the program forward.

Is Anyone Better Off? – Through the use of Student Clearing House, we have been able to determine where Horizon Fellows from our pilot year (Class of 2017) ended up attending school. Overall, it appears that this year of fellows had 21 of 29 students (72%) attend college with a retention of 90% (19 of 21 college attendees) for the spring semester.

Horizon Fellow Pilot-Year College Attendance (2017)

College/University	Number Attending in 2017	% Attending in 2017
Eastern Kentucky University	10*	33%*
Somerset Community College	3	10%
Berea College	2	7%
University of Kentucky	2	7%
University of Louisville	1	4%
University of the Cumberland	1	4%
Murray State University	1*	4%*
University of Pikeville	1*	4%*
No Records of Postsecondary	8	27%
Depicts colleges/universities where one fellow has withdrawn in 2017 (N=29)		

Qualitative means of determining who is better off can be identified in survey responses from our 2017-2018 cohort. This survey was administered at the conclusion of the fall semester.

- “The conversations made me less nervous and less stressed about college.”
- “The most helpful part is the videos because they give an insight into things such as communication tips and choosing colleges that we may not always learn much about at school.”
- “The suggestions with college and advice on what to do [was most helpful], because I am the first to go in my family, no one knows the process. I’m kind of alone.”

Next Steps – The following are action steps being utilized in the spring semester to strengthen the program.

- Continual improvement of communication methods both internal and external.
- Utilizing more college preparatory resources from various organizations including KHEAA.
- Improved video quality and content for the deliverance of curriculum.

