

The Personal and Academic Impact of Pre-College Mentoring on Middle and High School Students

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Objective

To determine the overall personal and academic impact of pre-college mentoring on middle and high-school students in the greater Eau Claire area

Abstract

Blugold Beginnings is a pre-college access program designed to help inspire and educate underrepresented youth, specifically students of color, low-income students and first-generation college students, on the idea that post-secondary education is a viable option for them in their future. This program provides mentoring opportunities by pairing college role models with participating students, enhancing their ability to achieve by supplying them with the tools and resources needed for admission to a post-secondary institution. A pre-intervention survey was distributed to each participating student during a “college knowledge” session at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire campus. Following the session participants were asked to complete a post-intervention survey to determine the extent to which access to information about college impacted has on each middle and high-school student’s knowledge and attitude about college. This research has been developed to determine the personal and academic impact of pre-college mentoring on middle and high-school students within Eau Claire and its surrounding areas, including Altoona and Arcadia, Wisconsin.

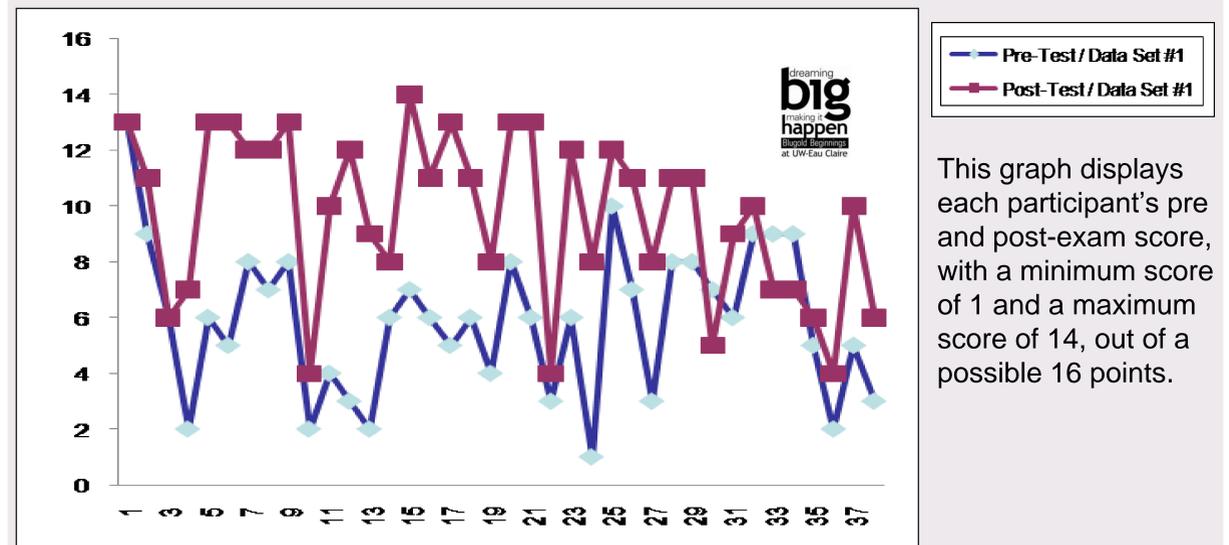
Methods

- There was a total of 37 middle and high-school student participants between the ages of 11 and 17.
- The majority of student participants were of Latino background.
- Each participant completed a pre-test to determine the extent of their “college knowledge”, their personal access to post-secondary institutions and their confidence levels in attaining a college education before the educational intervention.
- Each student then participated in a two-hour informational seminar regarding post-secondary education. The workshop included hands-on experience with the KnowHow2Go website with one-on-one guidance from the Blugold Beginnings mentors. Students were then exposed to various “college knowledge” activities, providing information on admissions requirements, and scholarship resources.
- Participants then completed a post-test following the intervention in order to determine each student’s individual change in knowledge about post-secondary education, as well as the change in their confidence levels in regard to obtaining a college education.
- Each student’s decision to participate in the study was completely voluntary.



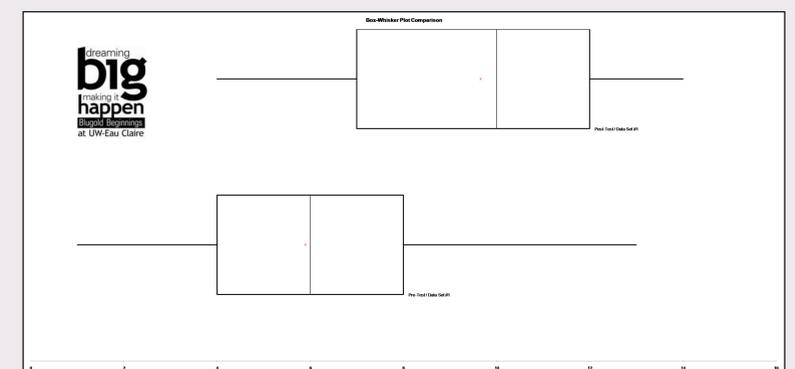
Results

Our data indicates that 34 out of 37 participants regardless of age, gender or ethnicity had an increase in college knowledge. Out of the total 37 participants, 21.6% showed an increase in confidence level following the intervention when asked the question, “How confident are you that you could get into college?”



This graph displays each participant’s pre and post-exam score, with a minimum score of 1 and a maximum score of 14, out of a possible 16 points.

This graph demonstrates the mean “college knowledge” score rising by 23.5% after the educational intervention. The minimum assessment score increased by 3 points.



Discussion

- Limitations of this study are related but not limited to the number of students that participated and the language barriers encountered that may have restricted students from participating. The students who voluntarily chose to participate in this intervention at the UW-Eau Claire campus were already likely to be relatively open-minded and seeking to learn more post-secondary education as well.
- Implications of this research may demonstrate that post-secondary educational intervention and exposure to mentoring is increases a student’s knowledge, confidence, and success, even at a very early age. Further assessment of this invention should be considered.
- A follow up study to track student achievement throughout program should be considered.
- Future research may also include a longitudinal study. There is also potential for future studies on fifth-grade students and the impact mentoring and intervention has on their academic success in post-secondary institutions.



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