

# NACADA FIRST GENERATION ADVISING COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

September 2019



**WELCOME First-Generation College Advisors!** My name is **Brittany Hoover** and I am the Chair for the First-Gen Advising Community. We are a community of volunteers who are using our interests and talents to support First-Gen students across the country and globally. We are creating and maintaining an active steering committee who are working on projects in research, community building, best practices and communications as a group.

## FGAC SPOTLIGHT

**Quentin Alexander**, from Longwood University and **Kathi Sindt**, from Johns Hopkins University, are conducting a sequential exploratory mixed-methods research study titled: **“First-Generation Students of Color Perceptions of Academic Advising while**

**Attending a Predominantly White Institution of Higher Education.”** A NACADA Research Grant supports the study.



Currently, they have interviewed over 40 participants attending a medium-sized rural liberal arts public university and a medium-sized private research urban-situated university. Below are some of the prompts/questions highlighted in the participant interviews:

1. Tell me about any challenges you have experienced as a student of color attending a predominantly White university.
2. How has your experience been with academic advising at your university?
3. Tell me about your relationship with your academic advisor. What sort of things do you discuss during advising sessions?
4. Share with me some positive aspects of your relationship with your advisor.
5. If you could suggest ways of improving your relationship with your advisor, what would you tell them?
6. What would you like your advisor to know about you that is currently not part of what you discuss in advising sessions?

**Current Phase:** Alexander and Sindt are in phase one (qualitative) of the study. They are currently in the beginning analysis phase of the research and will present preliminary findings at the 2019 NACADA Annual Conference in Louisville, KY in October.

**Audience:** The findings of this study will provide valuable information about students of color perception of academic advising on predominantly White campuses. This will serve to inform advising professionals about current effective advising practices with this student population. In addition, findings will provide suggestions from participants about ways advisors might be more effective advising students with multiple minority intersections such as race/ethnicity, low-income, and first-generation status.

**Next Steps:** Next steps in the research plan include presenting qualitative findings,

creating a national survey based on these findings and conducting the quantitative portion of the study utilizing the survey instrument, and eventually disseminate comprehensive findings at future conferences and in publications.

## 2019 NASPA First Generation Student Success Conference

**Jill Putnam**, Academic Advisor, from Colorado University, was one of several NASPA presenters at the June 2019 conference in Orlando, Florida, and one of five **FGAC members (including Quentin Alexander, Shannon Sousa, Tevin Byers, and Whitley Johnson)** attending to learn more about best practices, research and initiatives to support and empower first-generation college students.

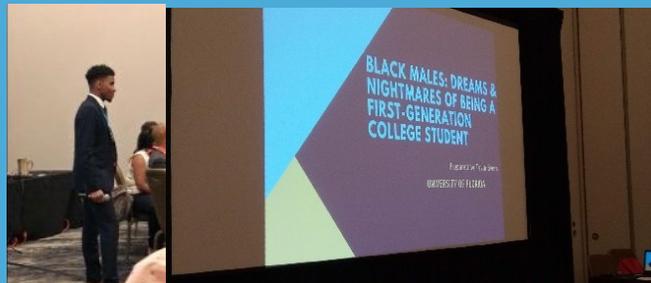


The purpose of **Putnam's** presentation titled: ***Transforming First-Generation Student Support: Shifting to an Asset Based Framework*** was to introduce frameworks that support the shift from deficit to asset-based approaches in serving first-generation college students and encourage higher education practitioners to consider applications of these theories related to their work with first-gen students.

This session introduced components of intersectionality theory, Yosso's Community Cultural Wealth model, and the student-ready campus as frameworks that can help higher education professionals shift practices. While a common narrative around first-generation students typically reflects deficit language and places responsibility to assimilate on the part of the student, the purpose of this presentation was to challenge the dominant narrative and examine the responsibility that institutions and professionals have to disrupt systems of oppression and honor the assets that first-generation students bring with them to higher education. The presenters discussed how dynamics of oppression, power, and privilege influence interactions and practices on an individual, programmatic, institutional, and systemic level and introduced examples of paradigm shifts that attendees could utilize in their practices.

Putnam and co-presenter **Fabiola Mora**, from Colorado State University, will present under the title: *Building as Asset Based Toolkit to Advise First-Generation Students* at the pre-conference session and concurrent session during the 2019 NACADA Annual Conference in Louisville, KY in October.

#### **Tevin Byers, Academic Advisor, University of Florida**



Byers gave a presentation titled: ***Black Males' Dreams and Nightmares of Being a First-Generation College Student*** discussing the challenges first gen students often face concerning social identity, financial literacy, and educational standing. These obstacles compromise academic success when compared to non-first-generation college students. His presentation to a packed room included Byers personal narrative and discussion over an activity exploring these different challenges, and providing attendees with an awareness of the impact current events and culture has on first-generation Black male students.

## FGAC Resources/Best Practices

### NACADA Book Review

**Juanita C. Cross**, from Eastern Illinois University, has published a review of the book *The Privileged Poor: How Elite Colleges are Failing Disadvantaged Students*. Find this review on NACADA's Book Review web site [here](#). **Charlie Nut**, executive director of NACADA, said about Juanita's contribution that it indicates commitment to providing quality of advising for your students as well as demonstrates dedication to the profession of advising and the academic success of all students. He congratulated her on this work and hopes that other members will continue to support NACADA in its role as the premier higher education organization for academic advising.

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### Professional Development and Leadership Webinars

**Communications Across Barriers** offers the **Beegle Poverty Immersion Institute**, which is a two-day seminar that provides an opportunity for college staff to gain a deeper understanding of poverty, from a strengths-based perspective, and tools for effectively communicating, supporting and educating students from poverty. **The Coaching Institute** is another resource that provides a train-the-trainer opportunity for professionals to gain tools and materials for educating colleagues, providing leadership tools and developing system-wide approaches for improving outcomes. **Register at [www.combarriers.com/institute](http://www.combarriers.com/institute)**. **Contact Lynda Coates at [lcoates@combarriers.com](mailto:lcoates@combarriers.com) for more information.**



## FGAC Involvement/Benefits

### 2019 NACADA Annual Conference in Louisville KY in October

Come and join the First Gen A.C. Group during the 2019 NACADA Annual Conference in Louisville, KY in October. We will be hosting a table at the resource fair and holding a business meeting. Check out our [FGAC website](#) for more details.

## Plan Your 2019 First-Generation College Celebration Nov. 8th



The Center for First-Generation Student Success and the Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) encourage colleges and universities to celebrate the success of first generation college students, faculty and staff on your campus in any way possible. [Click here](#) to learn ways to plan events, build relationships with colleagues, involve leadership and even post your plans to the website. If sharing your event on social media platforms, tag **@COEtalk** and **@FirstgenCenter**, and use the hashtag **#CelebrateFirstGen!**

### Communication Survey Results

Thank you to all members who took the time to fill out the survey!! Results are in. Based on 20 participants, it looks like the group is interested in the following:

- Newsletter 3X per academic year – September, January and May
- Continuing to utilize the Facebook page for various interactive purposes, including resource sharing, networking and promoting professional development as well as specific first-gen initiatives and best practices.
- Strong member interest in Best Practices with Research being a second theme.
- Most popular picked communication forum is a Town Hall meeting.



Stay tuned for our **next newsletter in January** and more updates from **Communications Committee Chair Shannon Sousa**. The Committee will continue to develop ways to roll these ideas out over the course of the year.

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### Facebook Page

Join the [NACADA First Gen College Student Advising Community Facebook](#)

[page](#). Please contribute through discussions, videos, article and event posts, or feel free to create a Chat group and have conversations with other first-generation academic advisors and current students on a topic of interest.

### **Other First Gen Resources**

[NACADA First Gen College Student Advising Community website](#)

[Empowering First Gen College Students Facebook page](#)

[Center for First Generation Student Success \(NASPA\) Facebook page](#)

### **Share your Recommendations and Ideas with us!**

We encourage your responses to help share knowledge and grow awareness on first-gen topics. Send us content or ideas by emailing to [first.gen.advising@gmail.com](mailto:first.gen.advising@gmail.com) and we will do our best to include it in our next newsletter. We are also interested in your feedback on developing other communication forums to promote ways to connect members, share research projects, best practices, and other useful resources.

