I-Promise Four-Year Retention

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<th>Year</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
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<td>83%</td>
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Research

In 2011, an I-Promise Research Team was formed to provide guidance on research – identifying questions and analyses that will help shape policy and operations in the I-Promise program. Currently, the team is looking at three types of data: 1) a longitudinal database (six cohorts of I-Promise students and three sets of matched control groups); 2) the annual I-Promise student survey, which was initiated in 2008; and 3) a competitively funded Campus Research Board project.

The Campus Research Board awarded funds to investigate educational outcomes of I-Promise students. In addition to continued analysis of the longitudinal database, questionnaire data will be collected online specifically designed to capture the experiences of I-Promise students. Interviews and focus groups also will be conducted to address questions such as: What are the academic and behavioral differences within/between the I-Promise cohorts? To what extent do I-Promise students’ perceptions of campus climate impact their educational outcomes? This research is conducted in partnership with Denice Ward Hood, Assistant Professor in the College of Education.

Student Ambassadors

Each year, I-Promise students volunteer to serve as student ambassadors. In this role, students speak out on behalf of the program. In academic year 2010-11, the speaking opportunities included engaging with high school students who visited campus, meeting with individual and corporate donors, presenting to alumni groups, addressing current I-Promise students, mentors, and the larger campus community, and presenting at a news conference. Many students serve in this role as a way of giving back to the I-Promise program.

I-Promise Graduates

In May, a total of 171 I-Promise students graduated with A.B., B.S., or B.F.A degrees. Combined with other cohorts of I-Promise graduates, there are now 474 I-Promise alumni. Results from a survey of 2011 graduates show 30% are continuing with graduate or professional studies.

The chart to the left shows the percentage of I-Promise students in different cohorts (2006-2011) who persisted and were retained going into their senior year of college. There is no statistical difference (p<.05, significance level) in four-year retention rates between I-Promise students when matched with other students on campus.

Mentoring

In 2010, the mentoring program for incoming freshman and transfer students expanded from 29% to 35% of voluntary student participation. The purpose of this program is to help ease the transition to college. In addition, a pilot mentoring program involving alumni mentors was begun for upperclassmen who wanted guidance and support from an alumnus who worked in a career or in an industry the students were interested in pursuing. To date, most alumni mentors have been based in the Chicago area and in various professions, including, teachers, accountants, lawyers, human resource professionals, psychologists, and physicians.

I have enjoyed and valued being an alumna mentor even more than I thought I would. I so appreciate connecting with my mentee, who is smart, compassionate, goal-directed, and sends me emails that make me laugh out loud. My mentee aspires to be in the same profession as me, and I am confident that I will count her among my colleagues in a few short years. I admire her and am grateful that I have this opportunity to accompany her on part of her life's journey.

-Sue Stock, Ph.D., ’88 Psychology, Director, Counseling Center, Roosevelt University

Participating in the alumni mentoring program has been of the utmost value to me. My mentor is always there to provide me with guidance, support, and excellent advice. I feel that if I am ever confused about anything, I have someone to help me. It is great having a mentor who is in the same field as my major. I am always interested in the stories she shares with me and it inspires me to work harder.

-Ranya Hasan, ’12 Psychology

Special Thanks

Partnerships exist with a number of campus units and community organizations to coordinate I-Promise enrichment opportunities. Special thanks to: the Career Center; the Counseling Center; cultural houses; the Financial Wellness Center; the Illini Union Bookstore; the Leadership Center; the Library; the McKinley Health Center; the Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Relations; the Office of Minority Student Affairs; TCF Bank, and University Housing.

Annual report 2010-2011

IlIlnois promise

Access to the Illinois experience

Office of Student Financial Aid
604 E. John St.
Champaign, IL 61820
studentaid@illinois.edu
217-333-1600

Susan Gershenfeld, Director
Illinois Promise Student Services
Office of the Provost
604 E. Wright St., Suite 330C
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217-333-7791

Visit Us Online:
a.osfa.illinois.edu/aid/promise.html
vcia.illinois.edu/giving/illinoispromise.html

Ranya Hasan, ’12 Psychology

Participating in the alumni mentoring program has been of the utmost value to me...
Illinois Promise is an access scholarship program begun in 2005 to provide high achieving, low-income students an opportunity to attend the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Educational expenses, including tuition, fees, room and board, and books and supplies, are covered. In addition, enrichment programs are offered to foster student success.

Students do not apply to become an Illinois Promise scholar. Rather, students gain admittance to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), and then the Office of Student Financial Aid determines eligibility based on the following criteria:

- Illinois residency
- Under the age of 24 and admitted as a freshman or transfer student
- Family income at or below the federal poverty level ($22,050 for a family of four)
- Family assets of less than $50,000 (does not include the home)

- The Expected Family Contribution (EFC) equal to 0
- Minimum enrollment of 12 credit hours during fall and spring semesters

Funding the program takes a team approach. Illinois Promise students receive federal, state, institutional and/or private grants and scholarships for which they qualify. The Illinois Promise award is based on the difference between the students’ cost of attendance and other financial aid received. Illinois Promise funding is provided from institutional resources as well as private funding from individuals and corporate donors. In academic year 10/11, Illinois Promise funding totaled $1,658,599, the average award was $6,007.

I-Promise has been a blessing in my life. I have met mentors who have become like family, and I have tried my best to always give back in any way I can.

- Silvia Gonzalez, Art Education and Photography

I want to make remarkable contributions to the knowledge of our world, to our intellectual tradition, and as far as interacting with people, I would want to be remembered for moving people to take a good look at what goes into who they are, and to regularly think about what matters to them – and I expect others will move to do the same.

- Robert Walker, Philosophy and Mathematics, Bronze Tablet Recipient

One of my first visits when I arrived on campus was at the Illinois Promise fall reception. I met the most amazing scholars. These engaging women and men exemplify the very best that the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has to offer. They are imaginative, idealistic, and ambitious.

After talking with them I am even more committed to maintaining access to the Illinois experience for the broadest demographic of bright young minds. Illinois Promise is a key component of that commitment.

When you finish reading this annual report I know you will agree that we need to do everything we can to make sure that we never deny educational opportunities to bright young adults who want to pursue a lifetime of learning.

Phyllis M. Wise
Vice President, University of Illinois
Chancellor, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

The State Farm Companies Foundation is pleased to provide support for scholarships that help students excel. The hard work and dedication of these students, coupled with the university’s foundation for achievement, enable the success of this program. It’s always rewarding to see students able to achieve their dreams.

- Ed Rust, CEO, State Farm Insurance

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