

**Core Inquiry 5: The Team was impressed with the college’s mission, vision, and guiding principles. The Team would like to learn more about how the college carries out its mission, vision, and guiding principles with respect to supporting underserved and marginalized student populations, including Latine students .**

**Standards or Policies:** I.A.1, I.B.1, II.A.7

**Additional Information Requested from ACCJC Peer Review Team**

**Rainbow Café and Rainbow Resource Center**

In alignment with Oxnard College’s Educational Master Plan goals and objectives, our Rainbow Café and Rainbow Resource Center (RRC) take a proactive approach in supporting the well-being of LGBTQIA+ students and their allies, both on and off campus. These efforts involve addressing the challenges this population may face, promoting inclusivity and equity, advocating for their needs, and collaborating with local agencies to provide additional support and resources. Our primary aim is to create an environment that fosters feelings of safety, acceptance, and social engagement.

Our Rainbow Café and RRC staff are committed to helping students thrive academically by assisting them in managing various academic and social challenges. We provide early alerts, offering interventions and resources to keep students on their academic journey, ensuring their persistence and progress. The Rainbow Café’s weekly meetings typically have between 5 to 15 students present and include activities to encourage social interaction, problem-solving, enhanced coping and communication skills, and individual empowerment. Additionally, we maintain partnerships with numerous local LGBTQIA+ community agencies, which periodically visit our campus to engage our students in relaxed and informative discussions, sharing resources and support.

The Rainbow Café and RRC have helped implement a range of inclusive campus events including the LGBTQIA+ Progress Flag raising ceremony during Pride Month, featuring representatives from various community agencies. Throughout Pride Month, the LGBTQIA+ Progress Flag flies over the campus and various events are hosted on campus to support our students and educate others. In fact, Oxnard College was the first public institution to begin raising the Progress Flag above while hosting a community event – soon after, various local colleges, school, cities, and other public institutions in our county began implementing this tradition as well. This has created ripple effects. For example, our Rainbow Café, RRC, and outreach team have been invited to LGBTQIA+ events including the City of Oxnard’s first Pride Event, among others.

Additionally, in partnership with sister colleges, Oxnard College’s Rainbow Café played an integral role in organizing our District’s inaugural Lavender Graduation ceremony, recognizing and celebrating the academic achievements of LGBTQIA+ students. In Spring 2023 students also had the opportunity to participate in the annual Pride Prom, sponsored by the Diversity Collective.

These collaborations with the Rainbow Café have significantly boosted participation in the ACHA-NCHA student survey, which provides crucial insights into the underrepresented LGBTQIA+ community. Along those lines, Oxnard College hosted an LGBTQIA+ Safe Zone Training session in Spring 2023 for employees and student workers, conducted in collaboration with the College's Student Health Center and the Ventura County Diversity Collective. This initiative empowered employees to create safe and welcoming spaces on campus for LGBTQIA+ students.

Finally, Oxnard College, our Rainbow Café, and RRC remain steadfast in our joint commitment to advancing the college's Guiding Principles of Social Equity and Justice and embracing our Vision statement's call for advocating for a just and inclusive society, as well as fulfilling the College's Mission of providing equitable access to diverse educational and career pathways.

### **OC STEM**

OC STEM's Project Acabado was a federal Title III grant that provided \$6,000,000 over six years to Oxnard College and recently sunset in 2022. Each year, the program student outcome data climbed, demonstrating the alignment of the OC STEM grant and the College's Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles. OC STEM aligns with the College's Guiding Principles of excellence and a student-first approach, advances the College's Vision of providing a state-of-the-art education and training opportunities in the diverse communities we serve, and the College's Mission of transforming lives by providing equitable access to multiple educational and career pathways. Here is a snapshot from the very last year of Project Acabado and the first year of OC STEM GPS:

- Enrollment of Hispanic and low-income degree-seeking students increased from 29% in Fall 2020 to 35% (2021)
- We had originally aimed for a 5% increase in the enrollment of Hispanic and low-income STEM degree-seeking students by Fall 2025. The baseline of 29% in Fall 2020 is now 35% (2021), or 4,744 of our 13,364 students, which exceeds the five-year goal of 34%.
- We experienced a 139% increase in STEM certificates and degrees earned by Hispanic and low-income students. In 2019-2020, 267 STEM degrees and certificates were earned by Hispanic and low-income students. In 2020-2021, 639 STEM degrees and certificates (176 certificates, 463 degrees) were earned.
- We saw a 91% increase in the number of Hispanic and low-income students who transferred to a university, lifting the transfer rate from 30% to 34.4%.

### **Oxnard Male Educational Goal Achievement (OMEGA)**

The Oxnard Male Educational Goal Achievement (OMEGA) Initiative is one of the focuses of the Oxnard College Student Equity Plan (SEP). The OMEGA Initiative seeks to address equity gaps and improve male student success rates through intensive, directed, and, in some cases, mandatory academic and personal support services. Examples of the program's direct

academic and support services include: monthly meetings with program advisors which include faculty, staff, and administrators; quarterly workshops that include topics such as time management, mental health, and career and transfer planning; and quarterly or bi-annual social events both on and off campus to develop and strengthen community.

Additionally, the OMEGA Initiative has also experienced an increase in post-pandemic student participation. During the pandemic, in Fall of 2021, we had under 20 active participants, though that later increased during the 2022-2023 academic year when we had 54 students active in the group. Of those students, 14 graduated and/or transferred to a four-year institution.

The Oxnard College OMEGA Initiative also established a partnership with California Lutheran University (CLU) Project CHESSE Title V Grant Men's Initiative in Spring 2022. The collaboration began with a three-day residential Men's Summer Leadership Retreat at CLU. The retreat served as a foundation for mentors and mentees to engage in critical dialogue and reflection. Our 2022 cohort for the retreat included 9 OMEGA participants, followed by 11 students during the summer 2023 cohort. This has become an annual event that we look forward to continuing to offer our OMEGA students.

Finally, our OMEGA advisors have recently added CSU Channel Islands as a partner, connecting our OMEGA students with that university's Unidos Hermanos program. We have a planned retreat in October to Santa Rosa Island that will involve team building, leadership development, and other resources.

### **Dream Resource Center**

The mission of the Dream Resource Center (DRC) at Oxnard College is to support Undocumented/Immigrant Students and their families. The Center is a welcoming, safe place providing access to free immigration legal services, year-round workshops for high school and currently enrolled students, and warm handoffs to community and campus services. For example, Center staff connect students to our:

- OC Student Health Center, which is dedicated to supporting OC Undocumented Students by providing free mental health support and medical visits,
- Financial Aid office, which commits assigned staff for AB540 students, undocumented students and Dream Act Service Incentive Grant (DSIG) participants
- EOPS, TRIO Student Support Services, HSI First Year Experience, HSI STEM, MESA, the Basic Needs Program, and other programs and services

DRC staff collaborate with *Swap Meet Justice*, providing the community monthly, free immigration legal and other services. DRC provides technology, staffing, and, along with 25+ other organizations, also offers multilingual information to community members.

DRC services provide students with awareness to the possibilities, opportunities, and benefits available to through higher education, regardless of legal status. The DRC proudly celebrates

Undocumented Student Action Week the 3rd week of October every year alongside administrators, faculty, and staff. During the 2022-2023 Academic year, the DRC received 9 OC student volunteers through the CA Student Aid Commission's (CSAC) Dream Act Service Incentive Grant (DSIG) program, where 8 out of the 9 students successfully completed their service at the DRC. Students received direct mentorship, including professional, service, leadership, and communication development, as well as career-based support. The DRC continues to be a leader and pillar in its community and strives to expand and innovate services to fit continuous need and demand.

The DRC has been successful in bridging current undocumented high school students to Oxnard College, as well as prospective undocumented students over the age of 18. With the removal of new applications for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy, the DRC has seen an increase of students who receive DRC resources whose DACA process did not meet completion or did not meet DACA requirements prior to its termination. The DRC has seen an increase in invitations from local high schools and community organizations to bring awareness that legal status is not a requirement to attend community college, encouraging and helping complete the continuation and/or registration into higher education (inclusive to completion of AB540 forms). The DRC has presented to over 105 ESL students in 5 different local high schools within the last (2) academic years. In the 2022-2023 academic year, the DRC conducted over 58 presentations (including orientations) both on and off campus to a range of students, high school administrators/faculty/staff, and parents or legal guardians of student-minors, and tabled at over 22 events (including community events).

### **Basic Needs and Condor Care**

We believe that meeting our students' basic needs including housing stability, food security, and overall wellness is a vital component to academic and personal success.

The mission of the Basic Needs Program at Oxnard College is to directly support students' wellbeing and provide a positive academic environment, regardless of personal challenges. The program works to reduce and eliminate the burdens housing or food insecurity cause, and increase our students' access to food, housing, clothing, and personal care products through integrated services, direct contact with students, distribution initiatives, and deep collaboration with community organizations. The Program offers a free weekly farmer's market where students can access fresh food as well as Cory's Pantry, where students can access food staples and daily snacks. Cory's Closet also provides free access to gently used and new clothing and personal care products. The Program also provides housing vouchers and community referrals. The College has also created Condor Care, a webpage that serves as a hub for resources that helps our students overcome basic-needs insecurity so they can persist and meet their educational goals.

The College is actively engaged in the process of expanding and enhancing the campus food pantry. Our vision is to transform this space into a fully stocked convenience store, complete with refrigerated food items, beverages, fresh fruits and vegetables, and other essential food

products, all available free of charge to our students. In addition to food provisions, the area will also house cleaning supplies and personal hygiene items.

Furthermore, we are excited to announce that the revamped space will incorporate dedicated cabinets for Cory's Closet, which will continue offering complimentary clothing options, including suits for both men and women, as well as footwear. This comprehensive resource will be known as the "Condor Mercado" and will be conveniently situated within the Student Activities Building on campus. To bring this vision to life, the College is collaborating with an approved contractor from the district who will oversee the procurement of new furniture and facilitate the redesign of this important campus space. We are committed to creating a welcoming and supportive environment that addresses the diverse needs of our student community.