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Program Evaluation of a Tutoring Program to Prepare Disenfranchised Students for College

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Rhonda Petrini

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2015

Abstract

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MA, University of San Diego, 2006

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Final Study Submitted in Partial Fulfilment

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Abstract

Since 2001, the San Colombano Project has provided the College-Bound Tutoring program for disenfranchised prospective first-generation college students in a southwestern community of the United States. However, an evaluation of the program had never been conducted. The purpose of the study was to conduct a qualitative, responsive program evaluation in a naturalistic setting using a case-study approach with a constructivist lens to create a narrative portrait of the program. Guided by critical race theory, Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, and Wlodkowski's motivational theory, the study explored the effectiveness of the program. Interviews were conducted and archival data were examined to understand the effectiveness of the program. Interview participants included 5 leaders, 4 alumni/staff members, and 2 adult volunteer tutors. Typological, inductive, and content analyses were applied to the contextualized data. The findings arising from data analyses were based on these themes: (a) authentic hope, (b) social and emotional learning, (c) organizational leadership, and (d) creation of a college completion culture. To promote social change, a program evaluation was provided to San Colombano Project based on these findings. Social change may be achieved through implementation of the program evaluation on behalf of these disenfranchised students by (a) embedding promising practices; (b) extending learning and growth opportunities; (c) leveraging data to improve, sustain, and embed processes; and (d) applying recommendations for enhancing an organizational learning culture.

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Dedication

This research project is dedicated to my grandmother. My inspiration. My role model. My anchor. The lover of education. Coming from an immigrant Italian family, she understood the doors that education can open for the disenfranchised. My grandmother did not bemoan a difficult hand but played the hand she was dealt with grace. She became the only trilingual deaf woman I have ever known. Although I miss her terribly, I will always love her for her wisdom, love, generous spirit, integrity, and genuine concern for her fellow sojourners. I wish I could have shared this research project and doctoral accomplishment with her. Mama Sue would have cheered me on, as this topic was near and dear to her heart as well. Because I cannot share this moment with her, I legally changed my last name to hers to honor her as I cross the graduation stage as Dr. Petrini. Her spirit lives on in this work. Her legacy continues.

Acknowledgments

As I complete my doctoral journey, I find that I have many people to thank for their kindness, care, consideration, and contributions along the way. There is neither space nor time to acknowledge each individually, so please know that while I mention a few, I am very aware that there were many, and each of you played an integral role in the process.

I thank my committee chair, Dr. Tom Cavanagh, who has become both a mentor and a friend. I think of Dr. Tom's influence when I read Luke 6:40, "A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher." Thank you, Dr. Cavanagh, for all your encouragement and support! My desire is to take what I have learned on the journey we took together and apply it in our wounded world, becoming an ambassador for authentic hope within a community of care.

I am forever grateful to the San Colombano Project team members for allowing me the enormous privilege of studying their organization. The founder of SCP and his team are living out the words of Harriet Tubman: "Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world." The fruits of your labor are evident in our local educational community.

I humbly thank and acknowledge my friends, family, and Walden colleagues for their unending love, encouragement, and support. Your feedback throughout this project helped me to sharpen my thinking and focus my attention on creating meaningful social change.

Those of us committed to social change have the privilege of practicing the words of Henry David Thoreau: "I learned this at least by my experiment; that if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live that life which he has imagined, he will meet with success unexpected in common hours. If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them." I trust that this labor of love will help strengthen the foundation and infrastructure of SCP.

I want to thank Steven, Ian, and Tallon for being such welcome additions to our family since I began my doctoral journey.

I want to thank my daughters for being the unending joys of my life. I cannot begin to express how much I love you both!

In closing, I thank God for providing real hope—a trustworthy hope that edifies and sustains me. After all, "Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love" (1 Corinthians 13:13).

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Section 1: The Problem

Introduction

Disenfranchised prospective first-generation college students need assistance in overcoming barriers in order to successfully navigate the road from the inner city to the college campus. Disenfranchised first-generation college students are underrepresented on U.S. college campuses (Brock, 2010). Many of these students are from ethnic minority groups and live in inner-city, lower socioeconomic status communities. Disenfranchised students are often at high risk for academic disengagement and underperformance (Bempechat, Li, Neier, Gillis, & Holloway, 2011). The education of all students, including disenfranchised ones, is critically important to the future of the United States (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). Disenfranchised prospective first-generation college students need viable, effective, pragmatic, and successful pathways to college.

The focus of this study was a nonprofit community organization serving disenfranchised prospective first-generation college students (PFGCS). This acronym is used as referenced by Gibbons and Borders (2010). The San Colombano Project (SCP) is a pseudonym for the organization to be studied. The SCP serves Latino/Hispanic students, particularly disenfranchised PFGCS of Mexican origin. Latino/Hispanic students attending college are often first-generation college students (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). Not all PFGCS are Latino/Hispanic; however, due to the demographics in the Southwest United States where this nonprofit organization was based, special attention was given to Latinos/Hispanics in this research project.

The U.S. Census Bureau (2012) provided important statistics on Latino/Hispanic students and the U.S. Latino/Hispanic population overall. For example, it was noted that 23% of K-12 students are Latino/Hispanic, yet 6% of college students are Latino/Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Although Latinos/Hispanics may have roots in different countries, the 2010 Census revealed that 63% of the Latinos/Hispanics in the United States are of Mexican origin. This fact is important for social change leaders, educators, and community leaders in the eight states with over 1 million Latino/Hispanic residents: Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, and Texas (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Educating disenfranchised students and preparing them for college should be a top priority for the states with a large Latino/Hispanic population. Educating disenfranchised students will help to avoid economic decline based on a significant drop in per-capita income for these states (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). Providing safe and effective pasSage from the inner city to the college campus has benefits for individual students, local communities, and the United States as a whole.

The SCP developed a College-Bound Tutoring (CBT) program to assist PFGCS in a city in the United States Southwest. This city has approximately 1 million Latino/Hispanic residents (Pew Research Center, 2014). As articulated on the SCP website, Luke Santos (a pseudonym) founded the SCP after he realized that the local youth knew more people who had been shot or killed than people seeking admission to college. Santos, a resident with two bachelor's degrees and two master's degrees, decided

it was time to act. Santos started the SCP in 2001 with four students and $300. According to the SCP website, there are now more than 750 CBT program graduates.

The focus of this study was an evaluation of the CBT program at the SCP. The SCP website includes the proclamation from Secretary of Education Arne Duncan that CBT is a model for the state and the country. However, a program evaluation has never been done on the CBT program at the SCP. The president of the SCP acknowledged the need and consented to a program evaluation:

> Thank you so much for your willingness to conduct a formal objective program evaluation of [the CBT program at the SCP]. While the program has experienced multiple successes in a variety of forms since it began in 2001, we have yet to have an external evaluation performed, and we would be sincerely grateful for your assistance. (L. Santos, personal communication, March 12, 2014)

Therefore, the underlying problem was a lack of understanding about the effectiveness of the CBT program.

Definition of the Problem

The demographics of the city where the SCP was located include minority families facing crime, poverty, hunger, discrimination, and even homelessness. Gangs and drugs are familiar sights on the streets. Some of the city's students have parents or other family members currently incarcerated. Parents who do not speak English and do not have a college education create additional challenges for these youth. Given the challenges identified above on the SCP website, Santos determined that the students were

in need of an intervention to break the cycle of poverty, crime, and academic underachievement. Therefore, the CBT program was created.

The SCP grant writer provided the following contextual information:

> The students of this community live in a crime-infested neighborhood. According to the FBI crime index, 78% of the city's gang-related homicides occurred in this neighborhood. According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Socioeconomic Mapping and Topography system, only half of the community adult residents hold a high school diploma as adults, and only 3% of the community adult residents hold a college degree. These alarming statistics are exacerbated by the fact that students from this community do not have any role models to guide them off the unsafe streets and on to paths that will lead to a college education.
>
> The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention also uncovered that 78% of all residents in this community speak a language other than English and that 50% of all community residents were born outside of the United States, suggesting that an extremely large proportion of parents and guardians may not possess adequate language skills or the cultural knowledge to effectively help their children succeed academically. (G. Langston, personal communication, March 13, 2014 and March 14, 2014)

Disenfranchised PFGCS in this city needed assistance to achieve their academic goals. The SCP provided three programs to serve these students: (a) the College-Bound program, (b) the College Applications and Scholarships program, and (c) the First-

Generation Support Network for SCP alumni on college campuses (all pseudonyms). The College-Bound program had seven components:

- the evening CBT program,
- SAT workshops,
- soft-skills training,
- community service projects,
- leadership workshops,
- summer school classes for college credit, and
- home-cooked meals.

According to the director of adult tutors, the CBT program served 232 students and had more than 300 students on a waiting list (E. Pei, personal communication, April 3, 2014). This program evaluation enabled SCP leaders to make informed decisions on behalf of the PFGCS in the CBT program and for the students on the waiting list. The program evaluation focused only on the first component of the college-bound program—the College Bound Tutoring program (CBT).

Table 1

San Colombano Project Programs

College-Bound program (8^{th}–12^{th} grades)	College Applications and Scholarships program	First-Generation Support Network
1. Evening College-Bound Tutoring program (CBT)* 2. SAT prep workshops 3. Soft-skills training and motivation 4. Required community service projects 5. Leadership workshops 6. Summer school classes for college credit 7. Home-cooked meals	A program for high school seniors to help students complete college applications and scholarship applications	A support network for SCP alumni who are living on college campuses across the United States

*The subject of the program evaluation for this project study.

The program evaluation was limited to the CBT program, which was offered free of charge to college-bound students on Monday through Thursday, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The program evaluation focused on exploring the strategies and measures of success used in the CBT program to help students become first-generation college students.

Rationale

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

Disenfranchised students in this city lived in a community replete with crime, violence, unemployment, vandalism, gangs, adult bookstores, and liquor stores. The grant writer at the SCP noted that approximately 40% of SCP students lived within a block of where a homicide had occurred, and 83% of SCP students lived within four blocks of where a homicide had occurred (G. Langston, personal communication, March 13, 2014). The parents and older siblings of SCP students had collectively been sentenced to approximately 500 years in jail (G. Langston, personal communication, March 13, 2014). Evidence of the problem at the local level was articulated at length on the SCP website.

It is concerning to educators and community members alike when students are subjected to ongoing community violence. In discussing the impaired cognition of students living in violent environments, Jackson (2011) said, "(t)he constant experience of violence actually distorts the brain, causing test scores to deflate dramatically" (p. 43). Gándara and Contreras (2009) emphasized the importance of providing safe environments and access to social services, community parks, youth activities, and local libraries for disenfranchised students. The students in this city were subjected to such community violence.

Educating disenfranchised students will be much more beneficial for the United States than allowing the current conditions of the inner city to prosper. Langston, the SCP grant writer, shared the following SCP research on this issue:

> According to the Violence Policy Center, the cost per homicide to society is $5 million. Each of the 6.7 million Americans who are unemployed, aged 16 to 24, and are not in school cost our nation $37,450 a year in lost wages, lost tax revenues, and higher public spending. According to the National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder at the United States Department of Veteran Affairs, families and communities who witness violence day in and day out are likely to develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. This may lead to learning deficiencies, performance problems, and problematic behavior. (G. Langston, personal communication, March 13, 2014)

The SCP focused on improving the conditions in their inner-city community by educating youth on the benefits and accessibility of higher education as an alternative to the crime, violence, drugs, and academic underachievement that plagued the community.

The challenging inner-city environment was reflected in the performance metrics of this city's middle schools. According to the State Department of Education's DataQuest Student Misconduct and Intervention, in the 2011 to 2012 school year,

- ABC Middle School had a 31.7% truancy rate, 120 suspensions, and 12 expulsions;
- XYZ Middle School had a 32% truancy rate, 67 suspensions, and two expulsions;

- 100% of ABC Middle School's student body was considered socioeconomically disadvantaged;
- 89% of XYZ Middle Schooll's student body was considered socioeconomically disadvantaged; it
- XYZ enrolls more 6th-graders than 8th-graders, suggesting that the dropout rate began in middle school.

As noted by SCP leaders, SCP recruited students beginning in the eighth grade. The SCP leaders hosted assemblies for disenfranchised students who had low academic performance. The SCP leaders provided information about the benefits of attending college and SCP strategies to help the students accomplish this goal. At the end of the middle-school assemblies, approximately 20 students who raised their GPA the most were invited to join the College-Bound program.

Despite inner-city challenges, CBT students found successful pathways to college. According to the SCP website, since the inception of the SCP in 2001, the student population of SCP spent less than one combined year in jail. It is also noted on the SCP website that all SCP students who met the program expectations were first-generation college students and received a high school diploma. As stated on the SCP website, 90% of CBT alumni graduated or were on track to graduate from college. The SCP students earned over $40,000,000 in scholarships to attend a variety of institutions that ranged from local colleges to prestigious universities such as Brown, Columbia, Dartmouth, Duke, Harvard, NYU, Princeton, Stanford, UC Berkeley, and UCLA (G. Langston, personal communication, March 13, 2014). According to the claims posted on

the organization's website, disenfranchised PFGCS appeared to be making progress on the road to college.

However, a program evaluation had not been completed for the CBT program. Pollard (1989) claimed that a research problem identifies the gap between what is known and what is not known about a situation. In this case, the known fact was that the SCP was serving disenfranchised PFGCS through the CBT program. However, a program evaluation of the CBT program was needed to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and to offer recommendations for improvement.

The research provided the SCP with external, timely, pragmatic, relevant, and actionable feedback based on a scholarly, responsive program evaluation of the CBT program. Internal and external stakeholders wanted data to gain increased understanding of the current value provided by the nonprofit organizations they supported and of how to increase effectiveness for customers (Wholey, Hatry, & Newcomer, 2010). Wholey et al. (2010) stated that the ultimate goal of program evaluation was to create positive organizational change and to contribute to significant organizational improvements based on the evidence cited and the conclusions drawn from the program evaluation process. Ultimately, the purpose of this research study was to address the gap in practice by providing a program evaluation of the CBT program.

Evidence of the Problem From the Professional Literature

There are multiple challenges faced by disenfranchised PFGCS. These challenges include overcoming the challenges of poverty, underfunded schools, inadequate school facilities, sparse academic resources, increased teacher turnover, low teacher

expectations, language barriers, parents' inability to assist with homework, distractions caused by crime and violence in schools and neighborhoods, limited access to counselors, overt and covert prejudice and discrimination, minimal information about college enrollment and financial aid, and lack of opportunities to participate in the sports and other activities often cited on college applications (Baum & Flores, 2011; Bell & Bautsch, 2011; Bempechat et al., 2011; Borrero, 2011; Cárdenas & Treuhaft, 2013; Kozol, 1991; Lindsey, 2012; Ochoa, 2013; Oldfield, 2012; Prange, 2013; Stiles, 2011; Vasquez, 2007). In addition to these challenges, the role of race with regard to these problems needs to be recognized.

In the Southwestern United States, the disenfranchised PFGCS are often Latino/Hispanic. Latino/Hispanic students are "the most undereducated major population group in the country … and never before has the economic structure been less forgiving to the undereducated" (Gándara & Contreras, 2009, p. 18). Therefore, race is a central issue in this discussion. In recognizing the role of race with regard to these problems, the importance of a college education needs to also be discussed.

The SCP was not the first organization to address the needs of PFGCS. One of the vital lessons learned from organizations that work with disenfranchised students is the importance of creating a college-focused culture to support the transition of PFGCS from the inner-city community to the college campus (Fujimoto, Garcia, Medina, & Perez, 2013). Smith (2011) agreed that a college-going mentality is necessary for disenfranchised PFGCS. Also essential for these students is the following: (a) a warm, safe, inviting learning environment; (b) required volunteerism as a tool for students to

mature socially and emotionally; and (c) a formal character education program to teach life skills and leadership development while preparing to attend college (Smith, 2011). Because the challenges faced by disenfranchised PFGCS are multifocal, effective solutions on behalf of PFGCS will need to be multifocal as well.

Addressing the challenges of disenfranchised students is necessary. Building successful pathways to college for PFGCS will enhance the future for students and local communities. Providing a program evaluation of the CBT program will provide potential benefits for students and organizational leaders.

Definitions

Archives/archival data: "Records that have been accumulated over the course of an individuals or organizations' lifetime. These are forms of secondary data" (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, p. 8).

Audit trails: "A chronological sequence of audit records, each of which contains evidence directly pertaining to, and resulting from, the execution of a business process, system function, or research study or investigation" (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, p. 9).

Beneficence: "A primary ethical concern of social research. It refers to both doing no harm to people you are studying and, at the same time, promoting a common good for individuals in the research community because of your study" (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, pp. 11-12).

Case study: "An in-depth investigation of an individual, group, or institution to determine the variables, and relationships among the variables, influencing the current behavior or status of the participants of the study" (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, p. 14).

Category scheme: "A way to organize information under topics" (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, p. 12).

Constructivist analysis: "(A)n epistemological position that maintains that the knower personally participates in all acts of knowing and understanding. Knowledge does not exist 'out there' in isolation from the knower" (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 162).

Credibility: "The quality of being believable or trustworthy" (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, p. 26).

Disenfranchised students: For the purposes of this study, *disenfranchised* is the umbrella term used to describe students who are underserved, are marginalized, attend underperforming or underfunded schools, are from a lower socioeconomic status family, or live in an inner-city community with high rates of crime, violence, and/or poverty (McCormick & McClenney, 2012; Redding, Murphy, & Sheley, 2011; Slotta & Fernandez, 2011; Smit, 2012; Tupper, 2011; Wermuth, 2014).

Emic: "(T)he language and categories used by people in the culture studied … Capturing and being true to the perspective of those studied … an insider's perspective" (Patton, 2002, pp. 84, 267).

Epistemology: "The study of the nature of knowledge. The aim of epistemology is the justification of knowledge claims" (Stake, 2004, p. 170).

Etic: The perspective of an outside researcher to describe findings (Patton, 2002).

Hegemony: A complex and often difficult concept to understand that describes "the way that people learn to accept as natural and in their own best interest an unjust social order … People learn to embrace as commonsense wisdom certain beliefs and

political conditions that work against their interest and serve those of the powerful … Instead of people opposing and fighting unjust structures and dominant beliefs, they learn to regard them as preordained, part of the cultural air they breathe … Hegemony describes a process by which one group convinces another that being subordinate is a desirable state of affairs. The subordinate group enthusiastically embraces beliefs and practices that are slowly killing them" (Brookfield, 2005, pp. 43, 98).

Hermeneutics: "Interpreting something of interest, traditionally a text or work of art, but in the larger context of qualitative inquiry, it has also come to include interpreting interviews and observed actions" (Patton, 2002, p. 497).

Holarchies: This scientific term used by Miller (2011) in a social science setting is used throughout the Section 3 literature review to denote the difference between a learning organization structured as an interconnected holarchy as opposed to a top-down hierarchy. A holarchical system is composed of individual *holons.* Holons are identified and function independently in addition to being interdependent components of a larger system. Therefore, holons are simultaneously and dualistically considered both a part and a whole. Individual holons influence the greater whole while simultaneously and bidirectionally being influenced by the greater whole. Examples of holarchies include organs and organ systems in the human body, planets and solar systems within the galaxy, and students and schools within the community (Ippolito, Plice, & Pisanich, 2003; Miller, 2011).

Holistic approach: "Seeking patterns that provide an overall understanding of the evaluation data, including and integrating the perspectives of different stakeholders. It is typically used in program evaluation studies" (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, p. 52).

Inductive reasoning: "The process of making inferences based on observed patterns or simple repetition" (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, p. 55).

Intrinsic case study: "The intrinsic case study is undertaken when the researcher is interested in the particular case itself—it is intrinsically interesting" (Merriam, 2009, p. 48).

Latino/Hispanic: For the purposes of this study, Latino/Hispanics are "Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race" (Reyes, Elias, Parker, & Rosenblatt, 2013, p. 349). "It should be noted that considerable variability exists among Latinos in terms of national origin, immigration, and migration histories, as well as different levels of education, socioeconomic status, acculturation, and immigration status" (Reyes et al., 2013, p. 350).

Member check: "A qualitative research technique in which the interpretation and report (or a portion of it) is given to the members of the sample (informants) to check the authenticity of the work. Their comments serve as a check of the viability of the interpretation" (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, p. 69).

Naturalistic inquiry: "Studying real-world situations as they unfold naturally; nonmanipulative and noncontrolling; openness to whatever emerges (lack of predetermined constraints on findings)" (Patton, 2002, p. 40).

Nonparticipant observations: "Observations in which the observer is not directly involved in the situation to be viewed or studied. The researcher tries to stay in the background to be relatively detached from the study" (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, p. 76).

Ontology: "The nature of reality and how one views and interprets that reality. This is often an assumption that underpins research study or methodological approach" (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, p. 81).

Peer review: "Offering research methods, studies, or scholarly work to scientific scrutiny and critique by selected other experts in a respective field of study" (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, p. 86). For the purposes of this study, a local doctor of education reviewed my work.

Perspicuity: "[A]n ability to discern the relevant features of a case at hand … this is often spoken of as *normative attention* or *situational appreciation*" (Greene & Abma, 2001, p. 77).

Portraiture: "A method of inquiry that shares some of the features of other qualitative research methods—such as ethnography, case study, and narrative—but is distinctive in its blending of aesthetics and empiricism in an effort to capture the complexity, dynamics, and subtlety of human experience and organizational life" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, dust jacket).

Pragmatism: "The belief that the significance of something is best understood in terms of its effects" (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, p. 90).

Prejudice: For the purpose of this study, prejudice is defined as "the negative prejudgment of individuals and groups on the basis of unrecognized, unsound, and

inadequate evidence. Because these negative attitudes occur so frequently, they take on a commonsense or ideological character that is often used to justify acts of discrimination" (McLaren, 1989, p. 180).

Promising practices: "This is a new strengths-based term applied to best practices" (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, p. 95).

Prospective first-generation college student (PFGCS)*:* For the purposes of this study, PFGCS are students between eighth and 12th grade with parents who did not attend college (as defined by SCP via personal communication with Carson, director of programs and operations, March 12, 2014).

Purposive sampling: "Cases for study (e.g. people, organizations, communities, cultures, events, critical incidences) are selected because they are 'information rich' and illuminative, that is, they offer useful manifestations of the phenomenon of interest; sampling, then is aimed at insight about the phenomenon, not empirical generalization from a sample to a population" (Patton, 2002, p. 40).

Resilience: "(T)he ability to withstand negative external stressors, resilience is determined by psychosocial and environmental factors, on the psychosocial level, resilience refers to how people respond to stress and is conceptualized as normal development under difficult conditions. On the environmental level, resilience entails adaption and accommodating change gracefully and without catastrophic failure" (Cohen & Schuchter, 2013, p. 189).

Responsiveness: “Responsiveness is first and foremost the virtue of being oriented or attentive to praxis (practice). It is to recognize that one is dealing with situations that are loved, embodied, experienced, and performed” (Greene & Abma, 2001, p. 76).

Rhizome: “(A)n alternative way of conceptualizing the world. Unlike a tree structure, with only one path from one particular point to any other point, rhizomes represent nonhierarchical structures where any point can connect to any other point, generating links across … issues or strategies” (Funke, 2014, p. 29).

Scaffolding: “The temporary use of instructional support that provides the learner ease of access to the targeted zones of subject matter until it becomes internalized” (Lake, 2012, p. 53).

Social capital: “(O)ne's social networks and relationships and sense of civic identity and belonging. Social capital involves trusting and respecting others in your networks and helping each other as relevant; social capital can be thought of as bridging (linking diverse populations) or bonding (deeper links within homogeneous populations). Community-level social capital is dependent on the demographic makeup of the community (e.g., race, poverty, adult educational level)” (Cohen & Schuchter, 2013, p. 190).

Tacit knowledge: In naturalistic inquiry, “the legitimation of tacit (intuitive, felt) knowledge in addition to propositional knowledge (knowledge expressible in language form)” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 40).

Transferability: “A process performed by readers of research in which they note the specifics of the research situation and compare them with the specifics of an

environment or situation with which they are familiar. If there are enough similarities between the two situations, readers may be able to infer that the results of the research would be the same or similar in their own situation. In other words, they transfer the results of a study to another context. This is related to generalizability but is a term more often used in qualitative research, which would have low generalizability but could have good transferability" (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, p. 128).

Zone of proximal development: "The developmental space between a learner's actual and potential levels of thinking, problem solving, acting and being" (Lake, 2012, p. 37).

Significance

It is important to understand the challenges of disenfranchised PFGCS and to create organizational strategies to address the needs of disenfranchised students as they strive to become first-generation college students. One such organization took on this challenge. However, the SCP organization had never undergone a program evaluation for the CBT program. This project provided a responsive program evaluation of the CBT program through a constructivist lens using a qualitative, intrinsic case-study approach based on the idea of naturalistic inquiry to ascertain the effectiveness of the College-Bound Tutoring program at the San Colombano Project.

Guiding/Research Questions

First-generation college students are underrepresented on college campuses. Although the SCP had been serving PFGCS since 2001, the SCP program had never undergone a program evaluation of the CBT program. This project study provided the

needed program evaluation. The research project evaluated the effectiveness of the CBT program. The research questions for the program evaluation were as follows:

RQ 1: How do the organizational leaders and adult volunteer tutors describe the effectiveness of the CBT program?

RQ 2: How is the effectiveness of the program described in the documentary evidence?

Literature Review

Conceptual Framework

The primary theory for this study was critical race theory (CRT). I read seminal works by CRT theorists including Bell, Duncan-Andrade, Giroux, hooks (*sic*), Kozol, Ladson-Billings, McLaren, Solorzano, Tate, West, and Yosso. As I prepared the literature review, I also studied contemporary CRT authors including Contreras, Darder, Delpit, Dixson, Gándara, Kezar, Kincheloe, and Ochoa. In addition to CRT, Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (ZPD) theory and Wlodkowski's motivational theory are addressed.

Critical race theory. CRT is not a cohesive, singular theory. Instead, it is a prism of related premises involving experienced disparities based on race (Closson, 2010). In the field of education, CRT is framed as a positive, empowering, transformative, and liberating pedagogy of change (Freire, 2007). In the educational setting, CRT seeks to articulate and change the educational practices that perpetuate continued discrimination, prejudice, oppression, hegemony, and disparities for disenfranchised students; the theory promotes equity, fairness, and excellence for students regardless of race, socioeconomic

class, or gender (Taylor, Gillborn, & Ladson-Billings, 2009). CRT theorists maintain that although racism is endemic in the United States, it is not normal, and a commitment to transformative social justice is required to empower minority groups (Taylor et al., 2009). These themes exist throughout CRT literature.

CRT acknowledges the inherent disparities faced by students of color who have historically faced inequitable access to college. The seminal CRT theorist Tate (1994) indicated that in education, there is *dysconscious racism* and cultural discontinuity with a monocultural curriculum that further alienates and challenges marginalized students. Tate maintained, "Eurocentrism is an ethnocentric view posing as a universal perspective" (p. 262). CRT authors such as Solorzano and Bernal (2001) denied the existence of "objectivity, meritocracy, color-blindness, race neutrality, and equal opportunity" within the educational system (p. 313). Therefore, CRT authors and activists are committed to empowering disenfranchised students of color in the students' pursuit of higher education (Solorzano & Bernal, 2001). For decades, CRT authors have sought to inform readers of the ongoing inequities faced by students of color and the need for responsive social action.

The concerns noted by seminal CRT writers continue to be addressed by present-day CRT authors. One seminal CRT author is Peter McLaren. McLaren (1989) correlated CRT with the Hebrew symbol of "*tikkun* which symbolizes healing, repair and transformation of the world" (p. 160). McLaren asserted that in education, the ultimate goal of CRT is healing, liberating, and providing transformative hope for the oppressed. McLaren described a new pedagogical narrative based on informed, critically aware, and

active educators committed to meaningful discourse to create a better world for disenfranchised students, despite the existing challenges. McLaren admitted that the fight is enormous but necessary to create opportunities for compassionate empowerment, transformative hope, and healing redemption of the human spirit for disenfranchised students. The hope of CRT in education is healing, repairing, and transforming those students heretofore oppressed and disenfranchised.

A more recent CRT author, Howard (2010), noted the continued discrimination against, and the marginalization, hegemony, underachievement, prejudice, and inequities experienced by students of color. Howard posed the question, "(h)ow has racism contributed to education disparities and how can it be dismantled?" (p. 99). Darder (2012) submitted that such change cannot occur without the following:

- communal commitment to a more empowered, participatory, and democratic educational system;
- deep and abiding faith in the capacity of people to successfully transform oppressive conditions;
- new, authentic, and creative strategies to increase opportunities for students of color in order to experience greater academic access and success;
- ongoing commitment to transform existing social inequities, educational policies, and unjust practices;
- steadfast commitment to empower the powerless and provide emancipatory hope to the hopeless;

- unwavering commitment to serve disenfranchised students and commit to advancing the liberation of those who are oppressed within the walls of the classroom; and
- willingness to endeavor together as critically aware citizens to experience a new narrative based on the potential beauty and life-affirming experience and power of communal love within education.

Identifying the challenges and noting viable solutions are important. However, the most significant work is accomplished when the challenges and solutions are addressed through the action of social change agents.

Educational leaders face significant challenges when working on behalf of disenfranchised students. A seminal CRT theorist, bell hooks (*sic*; 1994), noted that although "the academy is not paradise…learning is a place where paradise can be created" for disenfranchised students (p. 207). Education and society are fundamentally connected, complex systems that make strategic social change in education particularly challenging (McArthur, 2010). However, McArthur (2010) stressed that social justice does not occur because change is needed and right; instead, sustainable change requires capable, pragmatic, and visionary leaders. Likewise, Freire (2000) affirmed the need for hopeful, transformative, collaborative leaders committed to ethical, principled social justice. Freire repeatedly stressed the importance of affirming hope despite life's harsh obstacles (as cited in hooks, 2003). The process begins with an understanding of CRT.

Disenfranchised students deserve an equitable pathway from the inner city to the college campus. Kincheloe (2008) proposed the need for collaboration and synergy to

establish such pathways, to create consequential transformation in a liberatory, emancipatory educational culture, and to alleviate oppression, injustice, suffering, and inequality. Despite the challenges and complexities faced by social change leaders, action is required to decrease societal inequities of power, justice, and opportunity based upon race, and to increase the options for disenfranchised students. After all, for individuals to "unlearn racism is an affirmation of their essential goodness" (hooks, 2003, p. 81). Scholar-practitioners committed to social justice in education have the opportunity to draw attention to and fight for needed changes.

Social change leaders with CRT acumen are needed in education to address the gaps and challenges faced by PFGCS on the road to college. Freire (2007) affirmed that a need of social change leaders and education leaders is to find local, practical, realistic, viable, collaborative, and transformative solutions for disenfranchised students. The value of understanding CRT is to have informed discussions aimed at reducing disparities and increasing options for those encountering social injustice (Zamudio, Russell, Rios, & Bridgeman, 2011). Visionary CRT leaders are needed to identify injustice, discrimination, hegemony, and oppression and fight on behalf of marginalized students for hope and social change. Without hope and social change, students with low self-esteem may choose to self-sabotage (hooks, 2003). Therefore, understanding CRT can help social change educators better serve disenfranchised students. After all, CRT authors agree that although difficult, change is possible.

Zone of proximal development (ZPD). Lev Vygotsky's ZPD theory and the practice of *scaffolding* are helpful because disenfranchised students need support to

achieve academic growth and life-skills development. Disenfranchised students face multiple marginalizing hurdles, including socioeconomic, racial, social, emotional, cognitive, physical, cultural, and environmental obstacles (Conchas & Vigil, 2010). Conchas and Vigil (2010) concluded that marginalization begets disengagement because of feelings of powerlessness. Therefore, supportive strategies are needed to help students achieve greater persistence as they face multiple marginalizing effects. Conchas and Vigil discussed the value of life-skills development to assist marginalized students in developing the social skills necessary for academic success. Disenfranchised students need hope for a better future; they need to acquire life skills to break the dysfunctional cycle they have grown up with so that it is not repeated in the next generation (Conchas & Vigil, 2010). ZPD strategies can help bridge the gap to meet such needs.

ZPD involves assessing the current developmental level of the student and the next level of proximal development, as well as creating a support plan to help the student move from the current level of development to the next level of proximal development. Like scaffolding on the side of a building, the intent of ZPD is to eventually remove, as appropriate, the support system to enable students to maintain newly acquired skills (Wass, Harland, & Mercer, 2011). ZPD is an example of an effective and strategic practice with multiple applications. ZPD can be used to learn algebra; achieve new, effective study habits; or make a transition to a new lifestyle paradigm. Morrow and Torrez (2012) emphasized the importance of using college-going terminology while creating a scaffolded academic culture to help students set measurable short-term and long-term goals. Using scaffolding techniques to promote learning within a student's zone

of proximal development is a valuable strategy for educators working with disenfranchised PFGCS.

The effective use of scaffolding involves a three-step process. Van de Pol, Volman, and Beishuizen (2010) described the three sequenced steps of educational scaffolding strategies as follows: (a) providing individualized support based on a student's level of competence, (b) fading or decreasing the support over time, and (c) transferring autonomy and the locus of control to the student. Duncan-Andrade (2010) clarified that the student's current ZPD denotes the academic and life-skills development that the student can attain if instructed and supported by someone who has already attained that level of development. The instructor needs to (a) understand the skills required for mastery, (b) know the students' current level of mastery, and (c) provide authentic and challenging learning experiences to help students achieve mastery of the requisite academic or life skills (Duncan-Andrade, 2010). Educators working with disenfranchised PFGCS need to understand each step of the scaffolding process, how to employ the scaffolding strategies, as well as what the benefits of scaffolding practices are.

A review of the literature indicated repetitive references to benefits of a ZPD approach for students and educators. ZPD and the practice of scaffolding provide the following:

- strategic techniques to help students learn new academic concepts;
- effective tools for life-skills development;

- increased motivation vis-à-vis maintaining students' interest, increasing engagement, and reducing frustration;
- useful tools as students learn study skills, develop strategies for overcoming obstacles, and understand what it takes to be successful inside and outside the classroom; and
- meaningful benefit to students as they acquire (a) self-mastery, (b) an internal locus of control, (c) the skills to be more independent learners, (d) the ability to own their learning journey, and (e) the skills to overcome personal life challenges (Belland, Kim, & Hannafin, 2013; De León, 2012; Duncan-Andrade, 2010; Gonzalez, 2013; Lake, 2012).

Vygotsky is the seminal author for the ZPD; however, current writers continue to address the benefits of ZPD and scaffolding. Harland (2003) noted that Vygotsky's ZPD is a social constructivist learning theory steeped in the belief that learning is collaborative—with the goal of problem solving—and is most effective when achieved through authentic and relevant learning practices. In Vygotsky's ZPD theory, learning is not seen as linear or systematic because students gain knowledge in uneven ways, complete with setbacks, gaps, leaps, and epiphanies (Kincheloe, 2008). Kincheloe is also an advocate of culturally relevant and socially contextualized learning. Kincheloe noted the benefit of students interacting with other learners, people who enjoy reading, individuals who also value learning and have set academic goals, as well as peers and mentors who can provide encouragement, scaffolding assistance, and ongoing

motivation. Thus, collaboration has been noted as a valuable strategy for learning by both CRT and ZPD authors.

Motivational theory. Wlodkowski's motivational theory is essential for scholar-practitioners working with disenfranchised PFGCS, because the last thing disenfranchised students need is a demotivating academic experience. Wlodkowski (2008) stressed the importance of five essential qualities when motivating students: expertise, empathy, enthusiasm, clarity, and cultural responsiveness. Wlodkowski also articulated that competence is the antecedent to confidence. Disenfranchised PFGCS need a safe, motivating environment at the SCP to experience newfound competence and confidence. This will help them successfully transition from the inner-city streets to the college campus.

An instructor's words and actions can be motivating or demotivating. Therefore, it is important for instructors to be cognizant of the need to communicate encouragement both verbally and nonverbally to learners. Wlodkowski (2008) underscored the importance of consciously communicating respect, affirmation, confidence, trust, and belief in the student's ability to learn. Wlodkowski also noted that in order to remain motivated when challenges inside and outside the classroom mount, learners need (a) challenging yet realistic goals; (b) recognition for both effort and accomplishments; (c) instructors who can strategically employ scaffolding techniques to decrease frustration during challenging lessons; (d) encouragement to learn from mistakes; and (e) encouragement to accept that learning inside and outside the classroom is not a linear

experience. CRT, ZPD, and motivational theory are important theories for scholar-practitioners serving disenfranchised PFGCS.

Review of the Broader Problem

I achieved saturation in this review of the literature by using various search terms, combinations of search terms, and multiple databases in the Walden Library. I read more than 200 articles and books for this literature review. To locate current, peer-reviewed journal articles, I used ERIC, Education Research Complete, Education from SAGE, Psych Info, ProQuest, Academic Search Complete, and Google Scholar. I also reviewed the reference lists at the back of books and articles, and I used Google Scholar to chain references forward to find more current material.

When using the various databases, I used search terms such as the following: *academic achievement, academic identity, access, achievement, achievement gap, alliance, apprenticeship, at-risk, attainment, barriers college enrollment, bias, collaboration, college readiness program, critical consciousness, critical race theory, cultural capital, cultural equity, disadvantaged, disenfranchised, efficacy, equity, excellence, familial capital, funds of knowledge, Hispanic, hope, individual agency, inner-city, justice, Latino, locus of control, marginalized, mentor, minority, motivation, opportunity gap, oppression, parents, pedagogy of caring, poverty, prejudice, prospective first-generation college student, race, resilience, scaffolding, self-efficacy, social equity, social justice, socio-cultural, strategies, the education trust, under-performing, understanding, urban, youth,* and *zone of proximal development.*

Critical Review of the Literature

Four themes emerged from the literature review including (a) economic issues for disenfranchised PFGCS; (b) educational issues for disenfranchised PFGCS; (c) understanding disenfranchised PFGCS; and (d) collaboration for disenfranchised PFGCS.

Economic issues for disenfranchised PFGCS. The problems of disenfranchised students and the challenges faced by minority PFGCS are not unique to SCP students. Gándara and Contreras (2009) emphasized that the United States is in danger of creating a permanent underclass of undereducated Latino/Hispanic students without hope of reaching their personal potential or contributing to U.S. growth and prosperity. Gándara and Contreras confirmed that Latino/Hispanic students are likely to live at increasingly lower levels of the socioeconomic community without improved access to higher education. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between educational access and economic mobility for disenfranchised PFGCS.

The most effective road out of poverty is the road to college. Becerra (2010) asserted that Latinos/Hispanics will continue to live in a lower socioeconomic status (SES) unless significant advancements are made to increase college preparation, access, enrollment, persistence, and completion. Gándara and Contreras (2009) stressed that academic success is highly correlated with affluence. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 26.6% of Latinos/Hispanics live in poverty (2012). Lower socioeconomic families have been trapped in neighborhoods generation after generation with substandard schools that limit future economic growth and mobility because the disenfranchised students are not adequately prepared for college. A college degree

provides the most effective pathway out of poverty for lower-socioeconomic students; therefore, providing avenues for disenfranchised PFGCS serves to break this vicious cycle (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). The cycle of reiterative intergenerational poverty must be broken in order to enhance economic conditions for lower SES families and society at large.

Without changes to the current trajectory, another generation will be caught in the cycle of reiterative poverty. In fact, if today's society does not adequately educate disenfranchised, first-generation college students, the next generation will not be able to meet the future economic demands of the United States (Baum & Flores, 2011). Reiterative poverty is not a crisis only for Latinos/Hispanics, but for the entire U.S. population who cannot afford to have so many people marginalized and disenfranchised in society; without an intervening solution, "the very democracy is at peril" (Gándara & Contreras, 2009, p. 304). If educators implement effective solutions on behalf of disenfranchised PFGCS, the future can be enhanced for students, local communities, and the United States (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). As noted previously by CRT authors, students of color have faced disenfranchisement and marginalization for decades.

In the Southwestern United States, the Latino/Hispanic community has been impacted by marginalization and disenfranchisement. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Latinos/Hispanics are the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. population. This is important information for educators because in 25 states, the Latino/Hispanic population is the largest minority group (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). These numbers are expected to increase, because projections for 2050 state that Latinos/Hispanics will comprise 30% of

the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). There has been a 43% increase in the Latino/Hispanic population between the 2000 census and the 2010 census. This increase represents more than half the growth in the U.S. population during this 10-year period (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Ignoring the issues faced by disenfranchised Latino/Hispanics will, therefore, exacerbate the overall economic issues for the United States.

As the largest ethnic minority group in the United States, Latinos/Hispanics require access to higher education to work in professional fields that provide opportunities for greater economic mobility. For the first time in U.S. history, the younger generation is less educated than the previous generation (Bell & Bautsch, 2011). This means that today's youth are not prepared to assume the jobs vacated by the retiring Baby Boomer generation (Vasquez, 2007). By 2018, an estimated 63% of jobs will require a college degree (Bell & Bautsch, 2011). It is important to provide improved access to college for disenfranchised PFGCS to fill the gap left by aging baby boomers.

There is an opportunity gap in the United States for Latino/Hispanic students. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, only 6.2% of college students are Latino/Hispanic despite the fact that Latinos/Hispanics currently comprise 16.7 % of the U.S. population. The U.S. population percentage of Latinos and Hispanics is expected increase to 30% by 2050 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). The Hispanic Scholarship Fund hired the RAND Corporation to determine the economic costs and benefits to society of doubling the number of Latinos/Hispanics who graduate from college. The results were that despite the significant cost, the benefits outweighed the costs via increased tax revenues,

decreased utilization of social services, and the ability to engage graduates in meaningful community economic growth and improvement (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). Identifying and implementing viable solutions can provide economic and educational benefits.

Educational issues for disenfranchised PFGCS. The ongoing economic issues for PFGCS are closely related to the complex education issues confronting PFGCS. Disenfranchised students are underrepresented on college campuses throughout the country (Brock, 2010). In fact, for the last 35 years, students of lower SES and minority students have continued to enroll in college in significantly lower rates than nonminority students (Ward, Strambler, & Linke, 2013). Achieving the requisite academic standards for college admission is difficult for PFGCS because the current educational institutions are not adequately reaching, teaching, and equipping students of color and students of lower SES (Ochoa, 2013). Some of the issues noted in the literature for the low rates of college enrollments for disenfranchised students included the following:

1. Parents have lower rates of college attainment (Ochoa, 2013; Sondergeld, Fischer, Samel, & Knaggs, 2013; Ward et al., 2013). Gándara and Contreras (2009) found that the mother's level of education is especially important. Latino/Hispanic mothers have the lowest level of educational achievement compared to other ethnicities (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). This is significant because mothers provide valuable spontaneous and informal learning opportunities for children (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). Gándara and Contreras also noted that lower SES mothers do not provide as many learning opportunities for their children as their higher SES counterparts.

2. Teachers are the single most-critical resource in school (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). Moreover, the quality and effectiveness of teachers is one of the strongest precursors to student success; however, disenfranchised communities face a higher teacher turnover and inexperienced teachers who are neither trained nor prepared to work with students of color or students from a lower SES (Gándara & Contreras, 2009; Valenzuela, Garcia, Romo, & Perez, 2012). Additionally, teachers in disenfranchised communities do not provide deep, rich, or challenging educational experiences that push students to excel (Darder, 2012; Gándara & Contreras, 2009; Ochoa, 2013; Ward et al., 2013).
3. Schools are not safe, (Watson, 2012) clean, and attractive (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). Furthermore, schools in disenfranchised communities are often populated with students who do not feel a sense of belonging (Watson, 2012) and have resigned themselves to lower academic motivation (Umaña-Taylor, Wong, Gonzales, & Dumka, 2012) and performance due to the discrimination and marginalization they experience (Ochoa, 2013; Watson, 2012).
4. Meritocracy is an inequitable educational system based on unfair and nonobjective criteria (Darder, 2012; Gándara & Contreras, 2009; Ochoa, 2013). An allegiance to true merit-based system would proclaim that disenfranchised students should be able to compete with their white, higher-income peers despite reduced access to resources (Gándara & Contreras, 2009; Kozol, 1991; Ochoa, 2013; Valenzuela et al., 2012). Fewer tools to succeed

(Gándara & Contreras, 2009; Sondergeld et al., 2013; Watson, 2012), lower expectations, lower quality teachers, and violence within the schools (Watson, 2012) all hinder disenfranchised students' ability to succeed (Ochoa, 2013). These students must also deal with decreased social capital, an irrelevant curriculum, as well as fewer learning opportunities, experiences, and privileges (Gándara & Contreras, 2009, Ochoa, 2013; Valenzuela et al., 2012; Watson, 2012).

These challenges developed over time and will require time to solve. However, Ladson-Billings argued the urgency to act escalates as the gap faced by disenfranchised students widens. Ladson-Billings (2006) discussed that the United States has a bifurcated society created, in part, by inequitable school funding and unequal educational opportunities. Ladson-Billings argued that the United States has a big picture education debt, not just an immediate achievement gap for minority students and students of lower SES. Ladson-Billings likened the immediate educational achievement gap to the immediate economic income gap in the United States and the big picture wealth disparity in the United States to the big picture education debt. The education debt and wealth disparity in the United States has accumulated over time, whereas the immediate issues of educational achievement gap and economic income gap are but a symptom of the larger issue of the education debt and wealth disparity. The achievement gap experienced by students based on race and class is simply a logical consequence of the education debt that has been perpetuated over time. To leave these issues unaddressed is to guarantee the debt and the gap will continue to grow.

The educational issues facing PFGCS are deeply entrenched, and they are affecting a wide number of students. The educational needs of minority students are a significant issue affecting a large segment of the American population (Fujimoto, 2013). Latino/Hispanic students have a 63% high school graduation rate and a 32% college enrollment rate; however, white students have an 87% high school graduation rate and a 47% college enrollment rate (Fleming, 2012). Since Latino/Hispanics are the largest and fastest growing ethnic group, Fujimoto, Garcia, Medina, and Perez (2013) emphasized the national imperative for finding solutions and creating viable pathways to college for disenfranchised Latino/Hispanic students. The country cannot afford to have an undereducated majority in the near future. Social change educators and scholar-practitioners have a unique opportunity to address the needs of disenfranchised PFGCS.

A college education has multiple benefits. Oldfield (2012) noted that (a) college-educated students have more academic, career, and economic opportunities; (b) higher education can provide opportunities for personal growth, increased self-actualization, and the opportunity to love learning for learning's sake; and (c) college students report enhanced self-image, greater self-confidence, increased opportunities, and the skills required to make more informed life decisions. Addressing the needs of disenfranchised PFGCS has two significant benefits. The first benefit is protecting disenfranchised PFGCS from further marginalization and gaps. The second benefit is raising the levels of educational achievement and economic attainment for disenfranchised PFGCS seeking such opportunities.

Children dream of attending college. Latino/Hispanic students are no different. Although Latino/Hispanic students have early aspirations for college attainment, students need assistance from caring and competent adults who understand effective strategies to overcome barriers to college and who are committed to assisting students experience the benefits of a college degree (Ward et al., 2013). Therefore, Ward, Strambler, and Linke (2013) articulated that disenfranchised students need (a) adults who communicate their belief that students are capable of learning and attaining a college degree, (b) consistent mentors and teachers who will encourage student persistence, (c) access to requisite college preparatory resources, (d) educators who understand different learning styles, (e) educators who understand various cultural mores, and (e) assistance with financial literacy and access to financial resources. Incorporating such strategies allows educators to connect early aspirations for college attendance with future college attainment for disenfranchised PFGCS.

Such strategies begin with rejecting a deficit mentality for disenfranchised PFGCS. Fujimoto (2013) discussed the importance of focusing on positive examples of academic success and the rising college enrollments for Latino/Hispanics, not the dominant narrative of their academic failure. Likewise, Ladson-Billings (2012) asserted the importance of not focusing on failures, but rather looking to role models of success and focusing on student's strengths and accomplishments. Positive belief systems help reinforce an achievement mindset for mentors and students alike.

Social change leaders, educational leaders, and the community leaders can address the challenges faced by disenfranchised PFGCS. Various community-based

leaders have addressed the issues of co-morbidity (Berkel et al., 2010) and multiple marginalizing (Valenzuela et al., 2012) as challenges faced by disenfranchised students. The success of these organizations is encouraging, given the street violence to which inner-city students encounter on a daily basis. Bempechat and Shernoff (2012) noted the importance of peer role models for disenfranchised students so students can emulate other resilient students who overcame barriers and persisted to achieve academic success. *Near peers* who can effectively relate to the challenges of disenfranchised PFGCS while simultaneously providing a positive role model can provide significant encouragement to their younger peers.

The needs of disenfranchised PFGCS are vast. For social change agents committed to serving disenfranchised students, Fleming (2012) asserted that the following must be provided: an unwavering allegiance to effective tutoring strategies; teaching enhanced study habits; and providing a healthy organizational climate, a positive culture, a commitment to high standards of academic performance, effective leadership practices, healthy relationship building and emotional intelligence skills, peer support, and motivating attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. West (2008) asserted that what is ultimately required is *paideia,* which is, “a deep education that informs and transforms" (p. 221). Educators committed to the success of disenfranchised PFGCS have the opportunity to extend paideia.

Understanding disenfranchised PFGCS. Understanding is the antecedent to success. Thompson (2010) stated that until a situation is understood, it cannot be changed. Understanding is a bifocal strategy that includes both the authentic desire to

understand and the actual attainment of understanding (Smith, 2011). Freire (1998b) proclaimed that social change educators need to understand the communities the students live in as well as the depth, height, and breadth of their dreams. Consequently, it is important for social change educators to pause before acting in order to better understand the economic, educational, and social terrain faced by disenfranchised PFGCS.

Understanding the challenges faced by disenfranchised PFGCS does not include communicating pity. Disenfranchised students do not need to be told they are marginalized because this destructive and disrespectful approach focused on a person's lack of power discounts the truth of innate internal strength, talent, and potential (as cited in Merriam, Courtenay, & Cervero, 2006). Watson, an Australian Aboriginal educator and elder, noted, "[i]f you have come to help me, you are wasting your time; but if you've come here because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together" (as cited in O'Sullivan, 2011). Educators committed to making a social change contribution on behalf of disenfranchised PFGCS are most effective when this gap is understood as a challenge affecting the greater community. It is not a case of *us* and *them*; nor of the *haves* and the *have-nots*. Society as a whole loses when disenfranchised PFGCS lose.

The five themes that require understanding from social change educators dedicated to serving disenfranchised PFGCS include (a) understanding the challenges of disenfranchised students and the context of the communities in which they live, (b) understanding the need disenfranchised students have for mentors with cultural competence, (c) understanding the need disenfranchised students have for significant relationships with positive mentors and role models, (d) understanding the need

disenfranchised students have for warm empowering demanders who can simultaneously provide compassion and high expectations, and (e) understanding the need disenfranchised students have for mentors who will promote resiliency and enhance emotional intelligence (EQ) in mentees.

***Challenges*.** The challenges faced by disenfranchised students are important to understand, particularly as related to maintaining high expectations for them to successfully overcome those challenges. The obstacles for students from underfunded schools competing with students from well-funded schools for college enrollments is analogous to requiring losing sports teams to compete with fewer players (Kozol, 1991). Aspelmeier, Love, McGill, Elliott, and Pierce (2012) noted that PFGCS often experience lower self-esteem, lower expectations for academic success, and lower levels of self-efficacy. Gibbons and Borders (2010) noted that disenfranchised students face more barriers, less support, and lower expectations for academic success. An empathetic understanding of these challenges requires more than simply an acknowledgment of the situation by social change educators serving disenfranchised PFGCS.

Such challenges are ingrained in the social fabric of the disenfranchised communities. The perceived barriers and decreased self-efficacy begin as early as the seventh grade (Gibbons & Borders, 2010). Mehta, Newbold, and O'Rourke (2011) identified challenges of disenfranchised PFGCS as financial limitations, available constructive coping skills, persistence, impostership, and decreased social capital. It is important for adults working with disenfranchised PFGCS to reflect upon these gaps, challenges, and barriers.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) has become a familiar term in our current-day lexicon. Watson (2012) suggested that disenfranchised students' suffering reflects that of PTSD patients except the trauma is in the present tense. In order to break this cycle, social change educators must first understand the stressors students face on a daily basis in urban neighborhoods (Watson, 2012). Educators can drive through the streets where students live to gain a deeper understanding of the present-day stressors faced by disenfranchised PFGCS.

The stressors come from various directions and manifest in different ways. Cavazos and Cavazos (2010) emphasized how important it is for educators to understand that disenfranchised students are often exposed to low performance expectations, an unjust tracking system that makes it unlikely they will be prepared for college, limited information about college-going strategies and tools, and overcrowded schools with substandard resources. Consequently, disenfranchised students often resign themselves to low internal expectations, often do not consider college to be a viable option, and fulfill a negative self-fulfilling prophecy (Cavazos & Cavazos, 2010). Empathetic understanding is required if educators expect to connect with disenfranchised PFGCS and help students obtain a new reality.

Cultural competence. Cultural competence requires a commitment to a reiterative, ongoing understanding of students and their needs. Valenzuela, Garcia, Romo, and Perez (2012) affirmed the need for culturally-competent educators who are genuinely caring and can partner with the students in an empathetic way to achieve success. Cultural competence includes (a) knowledge about students and their unique

needs based on the complexity of their cultural setting, (b) adaptive behaviors from the educator that allow for effective communication with diverse students, and (c) an appreciation of how culture affects learning, teaching, motivation, communication patterns, and behavior (Howard, 2010). Cultural competence is obtained and deepened with time.

On the road to college, disenfranchised PFGCS benefit from the assistance of educators with cultural competence. Culturally-competent educators promote a healthy sense of self for disenfranchised students along with a sense of belonging, as well as success-oriented, problem-solving skills to face educational and life-skills challenges (Moreno & Gaytán, 2013). Regardless of culture, people have an innate desire to feel competent, to effectively achieve their dreams, and live a life of significance (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009). Social change educators have the privilege to participate in this process with their students.

Educators working with Latino/Hispanic students may find that disenfranchised PFGCS from Latino/Hispanic cultures often pay this debt forward. Borrero (2011) noted the frequency with which Latino/Hispanic first-generation college students return to their community to share their success and give back by helping others successfully navigate the tumultuous journey. The students in Borrero's 2011 grounded study reported great pride in beating the odds, felt honored by the support they received, and felt responsible to give back to the community that supported them. The concept of giving back to one's community is consistent with the collectivist cultural mores as found in Latino/Hispanic cultures.

Mentors and role models. The road out of the inner city and on to the college campus is rarely traversed alone. Disenfranchised students need mentors who believe students have the potential to achieve higher education goals successfully and who can provide the effective strategies for student success (Cavazos & Cavazos 2010). Gibbons, Pelchar, and Cochran (2012) identified the importance of college-educated role models to encourage persistence in PFGCS. After all, PFGCS do not have the benefit of parental knowledge of college enrollment and financial aid protocols. To overcome challenges and deficits, an internal locus of control and a strong sense in their ability to succeed are needed (Gibbons, Pelchar, & Cochran, 2012). Although it is good to have role models or peers from similar social or ethnic backgrounds as the student, Prange (2013) noted that understanding, acceptance, support, and compassion for at-risk minority students overcame the issues of cultural differences. Therefore, whether the SES, race, or ethnicity of mentor and student are the same or not, mentors can still be effective when serving disenfranchised PFGCS.

Disenfranchised PFGCS need supportive relationships with experienced mentors and peers. Mentors and peers can explain the requirements of qualifying for college and provide encouragement and support for applying to college (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). Duncan-Andrade (2010) noted the importance of providing disenfranchised PFGCS with encouragement to own their journey, set their own academic goals, and achieve a positive self-fulfilling prophecy. Mentors and role models who extended the benefits of community and cultural capital to disenfranchised student provided critical support to students; in fact, Syed, Azmitia, and Cooper (2011) noted, "(a)cademic achievement and

educational advancement does not rest on the shoulders of the disenfranchised and under-resourced students alone" (p. 450). Mentors are needed to partner with disenfranchised PFGCS to navigate the road to college.

Latino/Hispanic students from lower SES need mentors and role models. Gonzalez (2013) maintained that Latino/Hispanics of lower SES are underrepresented in all levels of academia when compared to white students of higher SES. Gonzalez also noted that Latino/Hispanics from Mexico have the lowest levels of academic achievement among all Latino/Hispanic students. In the Mexican culture, students are motivated by a collective sense of belonging, meaningful relationships, motivating social connections, and emotional, caring, supportive relationships with mentors and other academically motivated peers (Trumbull & Rothstein-Fisch, 2011). Also, Latino/Hispanic students were more successful when participating in smaller settings which provided easier access to mentors (Gonzalez, 2013). The common denominator for Latino/Hispanic students who have achieved success in higher education is that they had a supportive mentor or a network of caring adults in their life who believed in them, confidently communicated this belief, and provided assistance in helping them develop resilience to meet their goals (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). The road to college is more easily traveled with the assistance of others.

Disenfranchised PFGCS face unfamiliar territory on the road to college. Boden (2011) noted that because Latino/Hispanic PFGCS often lack financial acumen, face some level of language barriers, live in lower socioeconomic status, lack familial college-going expertise, mentors have the opportunity to provide social capital to help students

overcome these challenges. Gándara and Contreras (2009) confirmed that disenfranchised students need community role models and peers who are supportive of students' achievements and can model academic, social, and professional success. In fact, Gándara & Contreras declared that the most important precursor to success for disenfranchised prospective college students was a strong mentoring relationship with an authentic and empathetic adult. This characteristic of mentorship was present in every successful program studied by Gándara and Contreras (pp. 292-293). Therefore, social change educators are wise to incorporate mentorship as a strategy to assist disenfranchised PFGCS.

***Warm, empowering demanders*.** The literature supports a particular style of mentorship: one that includes warm, empowering demanders. Delpit (2012) asserted the importance of coupling high expectations with authentic caring; this is a concept Delpit refers to as "warm demander" (p. 82). The best results with disenfranchised students occurred between the synergistic combination of both qualities. Watson (2012) agreed, noting that disenfranchised students will not receive an equitable education until low expectations are dismantled in inner-city schools. R. Reyes (2012) underscored the importance of providing disenfranchised students the opportunity to find their voice, reach their heretofore untapped inner potential, and become great. Understanding students' need to reach their potential and communicating support that this is achievable is the role of warm, empowering demanders.

The need for high expectations is often repeated in the literature. Howard (2010) noted that effective educators of disenfranchised students (a) hold students to high

academic expectations and behavioral standards despite their difficulties; (b) believe in the potential of students and communicate this confidently; (c) identify, communicate, and build upon student's strengths; (d) partner with students to be proactive problem-solvers, (e) deliver complex learning experiences requiring critical thinking; and (f) value students, listen to them, and learn from them. R.A. Reyes (2012) noted that the first step is to raise expectations for clear communication, authentic learning, and critical thinking. Warm, empowering demanders can help students set meaningful stretch goals.

Disenfranchised students need both academic and nonacademic goals. To achieve social change via greater understanding, Hytten and Bettez (2011) stressed the importance of positive, encouraging communications to remind students that in order to reach their potential, high expectations must be ingrained in any effective program. Smith (2011) stressed that the high expectations must include both academic excellence and behavioral standards. Brock (2010) likewise posited that the first step on the road to college is a structured plan embedded with high expectations because only then can students take advantage of the opportunities for academic, personal, professional, and economic growth afforded by a college education. Warm, empowering demanders can promote excellence in all aspects of the students' lives.

Students are empowered when others believe in them. Sustainable change efforts for disenfranchised PFGCS are most effective when they are not focused on the deficiencies of underserved students, but rather the power and innate strength of students. Renée and McAlister (2011) encourage the employment of innovating solutions that engage students, parents, educational leaders, community leaders, and volunteer sponsors

to create sustainable, empowering transformative solutions to empower students. As theorized throughout this literature review, this requires strategies of self-efficacy, internalized motivation, and the acquisition of an internal locus of control.

The literature stresses that warm, empowering demanders are needed for PFGCS. Disenfranchised students need transformative, courageous mentors who believe in their students, support students' dreams, model the way for students, and take responsibility to empower the disenfranchised students (Freire, 2000; Freire 2007). Warm, empowering demanders have an opportunity to help disenfranchised PFGCS realize their dreams.

Resilience and EQ. Warm, empowering demanders care for the student beyond their academic needs. Delpit noted that this care is extended to emotional intelligence and the display of "character, honesty, responsibility, respect, creativity, and kindness" (2012, p. 85). Arafeh, Fopiano, Risisky, and Haynes (2012) emphasized the importance of social and emotional learning skills for disenfranchised PFGCS. These skills include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making (Arafeh, Fopiano, Risisky, & Haynes, 2012). In addition to academic mentoring, disenfranchised PFGCS need coaching for life skill development, soft skills attainment, resiliency, and emotional intelligence.

Understanding and supporting Latino/Hispanic students has led to their academic success (Cavazos et al., 2010). Additionally, mentors need to assist students in developing resiliency despite the challenges of life (Cavazos et al., 2010). Resiliency involves a developing intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, willingness to connect with others in healthy relationships, determination to cope with adversity, and learn from

mistakes and achieve an internalized locus of control committed to a meaningful goals, and belief in a positive self-fulfilling prophecy for a successful life laced with high expectations (Cavazos et al., 2010). When warm, empowering mentors with high expectations truly understand the needs of disenfranchised PFGCS and develop enhanced cultural competence, the road to college becomes a more likely reality.

Collaboration for disenfranchised PFGCS. The successful journey from the inner city to the college campus is not isolation solitary journey. Grasping this concept is important for both PFGCS and social change agents. Conchas, Oseguera, and Vigil (2012) noted the multifaceted challenges for disenfranchised students—including social, cultural, economic, and psychological components—require multifaceted, collaborative solutions. Yamamura, Martinez, and Saenz (2010) acknowledged that a proactive, collaborative approach is needed from various vested community stakeholders to address the academic inequities faced by disenfranchised Latino/Hispanic students. Disenfranchised PFGCS need support. Social change leaders in education need an expanded resource base to effect sustainable change.

The themes that emerged from the literature were (a) the need for bonding and bridging collaboration based on trust, (b) the value of community capital, (c) the importance of familial capital, (d) the need for leadership and aspirational capital, and (e) the benefits of collaboration.

Bonding and bridging collaboration built on trust. Given the complexity of the gaps and challenges faced by disenfranchised PFGCS, the literature review supported scholar-practitioners entering into trusting, collaborative relationships to access the

wealth of bonding and bridging social capital within the local community. Riley (2013) submitted that social change cannot occur without synergistic social capital built upon a solid foundation of trust. Quiñones, Ares, Padela, Hopper, and Webster (2011) referred to this complex collaborative process as "coalition building" with the expressed purpose of leveraging social capital to transform and improve black-brown communities (p. 109). Leveraging social capital depends upon relational resources in a network that can be mobilized for the creation of value and action and to promote the common good (Kezar, 2011). This endeavor is not undertaken in isolation.

Collaboratively-articulated goals and strategies are needed to affect change on behalf of disenfranchised PFGCS. Freire (1998a) challenged educators to dream dreams of improved futures for disenfranchised students and work collaboratively to develop a roadmap for the students to reach the desired goals. Watson (2012) proclaimed that collaborative, community-based bridges and educational partnerships are required for disenfranchised students to achieve academic success. Such partnerships depend on trust.

Trust is the cornerstone of effective collaboration that can ultimately sustain social change. Campbell (2003) explained the need for both bonding and bridging social capital. *Bonding social capital* refers to horizontal connections with homogeneous groups or peers to share resources and reciprocate support (Campbell, 2003). *Bridging social capital* refers to vertical connections between diverse groups (Campbell, 2003). Bridging social capital provides resources, support, and benefits from others who are not peers but share the same goal for social justice (Campbell, 2003). Sustainable, social change requires bonding and bridging social capital steeped in trust.

Community capital. Meaningful, sustainable social change requires community involvement. There is not enough research on the effectiveness of local organizations that leverage community capital to implement educational enrichment programs on behalf of disenfranchised PFGCS (Ward et al., 2013). Yosso noted the importance of tapping into available community wealth to leverage available community assets to build a pathway to college for disenfranchised PFGCS (as cited by Fujimoto et al., 2013). Smith (2011) emphasized the need build authentic partnerships in the community with parents, schools, churches, higher education institutions, donors, and other nonprofit organizations to find real social change solutions. Gibbons and Borders (2010) stressed the importance of challenging naysayers and involving parents for increased support. After all, it takes a village to implement social change for disenfranchised PFGCS.

A deep commitment from community leaders and social change educational leaders can create meaningful change for disenfranchised PFGCS. The disenfranchisement of students will continue until all community stakeholders get involved and work collaboratively to minimize the inequities and offset the risks and barriers in the urban communities (Smith, 2011). Smith (2011) called for authentic community partnerships to provide equity and excellence for disenfranchised students via (a) high student expectations for students, including required volunteerism, (b) providing character-based education, (c) maintaining safety, (d) involving parents, (e) collaborating regularly with social change agents in the community, and (f) using data-driven metrics to measure the success of the collaborative partnerships. Dansby and Dansby-Giles (2011) urged courageous leaders to implement positive, creative, bold, and

comprehensive solutions for the diverse, serious, and urgent needs of disenfranchised PFGCS. Solutions must be anchored in community collaboration sustain results.

Familial capital. Family support is also very beneficial for disenfranchised PFGCS. Arafeh et al. (2012) noted the importance of parental support and their cooperation with organizational expectations of disenfranchised PFGCS. The social capital within the family is also valuable as disenfranchised PFGCS need family support to help them reach their goals (Kirk, Lewis-Moss, Nilsen, & Colvin, 2011). Leveraging the support of family members increases the likelihood of success.

It is especially important to leverage family support in Hispanic/Latino communities. Darder (2012) affirmed that Latino/Hispanic parents are important contributors to the education of their children. Parents need opportunities to participate actively in the learning community and to support culturally relevant education for their children (Darder, 2012). Interestingly, Gándara and Contreras (2009) found the common thread that ran through the academic success stories of disenfranchised Latino/Hispanic students was that "they had mothers that dreamed out loud of extraordinary futures for the children" (p. 207). Social change leaders can help the mothers' dreams come true for their children.

Leadership and aspirational capital. Effective organizational leadership is necessary to accomplish meaningful, sustainable social change for disenfranchised PFGCS. Disenfranchised communities need visionary leaders who can build strong collaborative teams to create achievable, sustainable pathways to college for local students (Legters and Balfanz, 2010). Yosso (2005) refers to aspirational capital as “the

ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers" (p. 77). Aspirational capital is a critical asset for leaders and disenfranchised students (Yosso, 2005). Delpit (2012) affirmed the need for visionary, courageous leaders who can create a culture of achievement for students in disenfranchised communities. In order for disenfranchised PFGCS to achieve significant advancements in academic success, committed leaders are needed who can inspire intense, persistent student effort, a relentless sense of urgency, and safe, caring communities where significant improvements to educational performance can prosper (Howard, 2010). Awakening a sense of possibility in students, sparking hope for future academic success, and connecting networks of leaders capable of making changes are all needed to assist disenfranchised students become first-generation college students.

Bold transformative leaders are needed to overcome the critical challenges of the disenfranchised on the road to becoming first-generation college students. Given the complexity of the challenges faced by disenfranchised PFGCS, Dansby and Dansby-Giles (2011) urged courageous leaders to implement bold, focused, attainable, creative, positive, courageous, engaging, and comprehensive solutions for the diverse, serious, and urgent needs of disenfranchised PFGCS. Leaders of unconventional, community nonprofit organizations are well-positioned to meet the needs of disenfranchised PFGCS if such organizations

- encourage creative, innovative, out-of-the box thinking;
- value altruism and community service;
- have an ingrained values-driven, caring culture;

- are structured to be less bureaucratic, more nimble, flatter organic organizations with disturbed leadership and informal governance; and
- utilize volunteers (Gándara & Contreras, 2009; Kezar, 2011).

Leaders with aspirational capital are vital to the success of such innovative organizations focused on serving disenfranchised PFGCS.

Benefits of collaboration. Collaborative, community-based tutoring programs that can assist disenfranchised PFGCS are important. After all, good grades are one of the strongest predictors of academic success and university retention (Rheinheimer, Grace-Odeleye, Franchois, & Kusorgbor, 2010). Additionally, tutoring increases academic performance and retention of at-risk university students by 13.5 times (Rheinheimer et al., 2010). Ward et al. (2013) likewise noted that such collaborative settings provide a promising approach to help disenfranchised students build educational aspirations, increase academic achievement, and attain their college-going dreams. Community-based tutoring programs have the potential to provide much-needed assistance to disenfranchised PFGCS.

Leveraging collaborative community action is a powerful strategy for social change agents serving disenfranchised PFGCS. Conversely, disengagement, lack of authentic mentoring relationships, decreased acculturation, and subsequent underachievement are accentuated for immigrant students living in poverty (Bempechat & Shernoff, 2012). Noguera, Hurtado, and Fergus (2012) agreed that students are more vulnerable when students are isolated, disconnected, and living in single parent families than students who are have extended multiple forms of positive social capital, family

support, positive adult mentors, connected to various forms of social support. Therefore, it is important to provide such opportunities for collaborative partnerships; disenfranchised students cannot accomplish their goals and reach their potential without a true opportunity to succeed in higher education (Watson, 2012). Hope and opportunity supplemented by supportive, collaborative stakeholders outside the classroom can assist disenfranchised PFGCS in reaching the college campus (Fusco, 2012). The benefits of collaboration extend to both the students and social change agents who can leverage synergistic effective of teamwork. The literature review supports the need for educators, mentors, and social change leaders to understand the economic, educational, social, and personal challenges of disenfranchised PFGCS. These leaders must meet these needs through building trusting collaborative relationships and leveraging synergetic resources with community, familial, and leadership capital.

Implications

The problem presented in this research study was the lack of evaluation of the CBT program at SCP. Therefore, the final deliverable was a program evaluation of the CBT program. The program evaluation was delivered as White Paper for SCP leaders that outlined the key findings of the program evaluation. The program evaluation was pragmatic to increase utility, value, and applicability for the SCP leadership team (Thomas & Stevens, 2004). The summary of the program evaluation included (a) promising practices identified in the program evaluation; (b) areas for opportunities and organizational growth identified in the program evaluation; (c) a description of how these data could be used to improve, sustain, and embed processes within the organization; and

(d) the benefits of developing or enhancing a learning culture through ongoing organizational program evaluations.

This strategy was aligned with the suggested approach articulated by Freire. Freire (1998b) submitted that when faced with an issue, first decide whether it is, in fact, a legitimate need. If so, ascertain the available options for dealing with the issue. If the obstacle cannot be successful addressed at this time, determine what actions can be taken later after assembling the needed resources tomorrow (Freire, 1998b). Therefore, based on the material in Section 1, I ascertained there was a legitimate social and educational need. In the next chapter, I developed a methodological plan to address the options for dealing with this issue. At the conclusion of my data collection and analysis, I determined what resources needed to be adopted to address this issue successfully. Although the naturalistic inquiry was emic-focused; the deliverable had an etic-focus to increase the likelihood that the SCP will use the findings (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993). Thus, the implication of this study was aligned to the issues discussed and conceptual frameworks noted within Section 1.

Summary

Section 1 addressed the local issue of disenfranchised PFGCS who faced various challenges based upon race and a lower SES as they aspired to move from the inner-city and onto the college campus. One nonprofit organization in the Southwestern United States was attempting to address the needs of local disenfranchised PFGCS. This local, nonprofit organization was referred to by the pseudonym, the San Colombano Project

(SCP). The SCP has never undergone a program evaluation of the College-Bound Tutoring (CBT) program.

Due to the demographics of the local community, the challenges of disenfranchised Latino/Hispanic students were discussed. Evidence of the local problem was described and included a description of the conditions of the urban community and the challenges faced by the students living in such conditions. Evidence of the problem from the professional literature included a further description of the challenges of Latino/Hispanics striving to become first-generation college students. The underrepresentation of disenfranchised PFGCS on the college campus was discussed as well and the implications this gap may have economically and educationally on individuals and the United States.

Section 1 addressed three conceptual frameworks applicable to disenfranchised PFGCS: (a) critical race theory, (b) Vygotsky's zone of proximal development and scaffolding, and (c) Wlodkowski's motivational theory. A critical review of the literature addressed four topics: (a) the economic issues facing PFGCS, (b) the educational issues facing PFGCS, (c) the need to understand disenfranchised PFGCS, and (d) the importance of collaborating on behalf of disenfranchised PFGCS.

Within the literature review, the five themes that require understanding from social change educators dedicated to serving disenfranchised PFGCS included (a) understanding the challenges of disenfranchised students and the context of the communities in which they live; (b) understanding the need disenfranchised students have for mentors with cultural competence; (c) understanding the need disenfranchised

students have for significant relationships with positive mentors and role models; (d) understanding the need disenfranchised students have for warm empowering demanders who can simultaneously provide compassion, empowerment, and high expectations; and (e) understanding the need disenfranchised students have for mentors who will promote resiliency and enhance emotional intelligence (EQ) in mentees.

The themes that emerged from the literature regarding collaboration were (a) the need for bonding and bridging collaboration based on trust, (b) the value of community capital, (c) the importance of familial capital, (d) the need for leadership and aspirational capital, and (e) the benefits of collaboration. Based on the material addressed in Section 1, I conducted a program evaluation of the College-Bound Tutoring (CBT) program at the San Colombano Project (SCP) in my local community based in the southwest region of the United States.

Section 2 addresses the responsive program evaluation of the CBT program through a constructivist lens using a qualitative, intrinsic case-study approach based on the idea of naturalistic inquiry. Using this method, I ascertained the effectiveness of the College-Bound Tutoring program at the San Colombano Project. Data collection protocols and data analysis strategies are addressed as well.

Section 2: The Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of the project study was to address a gap in practice by evaluating the College Bound Tutoring (CBT) program at the San Colombano Project (SCP), which served disenfranchised prospective first-generation college students (PFGCS). The program evaluation will enable SCP leaders to make more informed decisions about the current condition of the CBT program. The research provided SCP with external, pragmatic, timely, relevant, and actionable feedback based on a scholarly, responsive program evaluation of the CBT program. Wholey et al. (2010) noted that the ultimate goal of program evaluation is to create positive organizational change and contribute to significant organizational improvements based on the evidence cited and conclusions drawn from the program evaluation process. Ultimately, the goal of this research study is to address the gap in practice by providing a program evaluation of the CBT program.

Section 2 addresses the following topics: (a) the methodological design and approach for this research study, (b) the research participants, (c) data collection protocols, (d) data analysis procedures, and (e) the limitations of the study. The research design was a responsive program evaluation using a naturalistic, qualitative intrinsic case study research design as described by Patton (2002) and Stake (1975). The goal was to produce a portrait of the CBT program as it exists at the site (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). A case study approach to the qualitative program evaluation was deemed more appropriate than such approaches as ethnography, grounded theory, or action research because I was not trying to describe the cultural sharing patterns of a group of

people, create a new theory, or respond to a social problem through collaboration with stakeholders. This program evaluation design was an appropriate methodology that was aligned with the problem and research questions discussed in Section 1.

The research study was responsive, and the approach was exploratory. The research was focused more on depth than breadth. The unit of analysis for this case was the adults participating in the CBT program at one particular location, defining this as a bounded case study. A purposeful sampling strategy was employed for this naturalistic, qualitative study. Data collection included semistructured interviews and archival data. Nonparticipant observations were originally planned. However, due to the IRB requirements for consent forms, I elected to drop observations of the tutoring sessions as a data collection method. To have moved forward with the observations, I would have needed consent forms from all potential tutors and parents of the first-generation college students. These additional requirements could have resulted in hundreds of required consent forms and would have significantly delayed completion of this research. The analytical approach for interviews was inductive and typological as described by Hatch (2002). Content analysis was used to analyze archival documents. I ensured quality and trustworthiness through triangulation of multiple data sources and various rhizomatic perspectives. I coordinated the needed logistics with the participating institution's director of programs and operations, who served as the gatekeeper at the research site. I maintained ethical standards by following the IRB requirements prescribed by Walden University.

Program Evaluation

A program evaluation begins with a definition of a program. A program is a group of collective, purposeful, and systematic activities intended to achieve simple or complex results (McDavid & Hawthorn, 2006; Wholey et al., 2010). Simply put, programs are a means to an end. As Kushner (2005) pointed out, programs must be evaluated to depict inherent qualities of the program and decide if the program should be changed, expanded, or canceled. Kaufman and Guerra-López (2013) noted that conducting a program evaluation is similar to evaluating the vital signs of a program or organization. However, Kaufman and Guerra-López (2013) emphasized that once the vital signs have been documented, useful solutions, or an improvement plan, must be forthcoming. Consequently, completing a program evaluation requires both an assessment phase and a problem-solving proposition to address the issues raised during the assessment phase.

A program evaluation involves systematically conducting a data-based inquiry into particular programmatic issues. Qualitative methods are an effective methodological design for program evaluation because stories can be captured directly from program participants to draw conclusions that will ultimately enhance program effectiveness (Patton, 2002). For this study, it is important to note that a responsive program evaluation is a formative evaluation. As a result, there are no formal outcomes or discreet performance measures because this is an evaluation of a program in progress.

Responsive evaluations are focused on issues, themes, and concerns; they are not focused on outcomes. Therefore, as noted by Denzin and Lincoln (2005), I sought to understand the unique, complex, and contextualized issues as they exist in the CBT

program at SCP. I presented these findings as assertions. Although program evaluations can also be goals-based or outcomes-based, an issues-based program evaluation was better aligned with the research questions in this study. Posavac (2011) noted that the value of issues-based program evaluations is to illuminate programmatic processes and understand participant experiences. For such program evaluations, Posavac made the subsequent recommendations, which I followed:

- Utilize in-depth, qualitative research methods to determine what is happening at the site as well as what the program means to research participants.
- Interview participants who have completed the program. Learn from the alumni what aspects of the program they found to be most and least effective.
- Ask research participants what is working well in this program and what specific ingredients of the *secret sauce* allow this program to be effective.
- Ask what creative ideas the research participants have for improving the program. Find out if any research participants have *caught a vision* for a better programmatic tomorrow.
- In the findings, make recommendations based on programmatic strengths. Build upon what is working well in addition to what is contributing to the program's effectiveness.

While conducting the evaluation, I synthesized the various perspectives from participants to create an image or portrait based on thick, rich descriptions (Merriam, 2009). A portrait emerged from the hermeneutics of the research findings. Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) explained that portraitists collect, analyze, and interpret

qualitative data. Portraitists use first-hand dialogue from authoritative, authentic, knowledgeable, and compelling first-hand accounts in the field to create a socially and culturally contextual narrative or image (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). I incorporated the strategies identified above into this research project.

Overall Evaluation Goals

The internal and external stakeholders did not have the benefit of a program evaluation. However, stakeholders were devoting time, money, and resources for CBT students. Internal stakeholders included approximately 150 volunteer adult tutors, as well as SCP staff, directors, advisory board members, the board of directors, parents, alumni, and current and future students. External stakeholders included financial donors, political leaders, local junior high and high school leaders, local college leaders, business leaders, and various other community leaders. Addressing the gap in practice via a program evaluation has potential benefits for both internal and external stakeholders.

Methodological Design

I conducted a qualitative, naturalistic, and responsive program evaluation via a case study approach through a constructivist lens. I addressed the methodological design concepts in the proposal in the following sequence: (a) qualitative research, (b) naturalistic inquiry, (c) responsive evaluation, (d) case-study approach, and (e) constructivist perspective. The research designs are all supported by literature as articulated below.

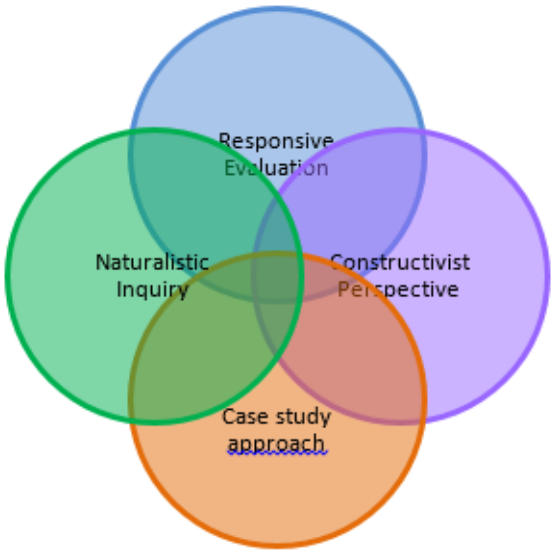

Figure 1. The integrated research frameworks for this qualitative project study.

Qualitative research. Respected qualitative researchers Robert Stake and Michael Patton discussed qualitative research as follows. Qualitative researchers go into the field to make holistic discoveries from emic and etic perspectives (Stake, 1995). Qualitative research requires inductive logic, intentionality, interpretation, empathy, and intuition grounded in the phenomena of a context-specific research study (Patton, 1987; Stake, 1995). The purpose of qualitative research is to explore participants' understanding and to report findings via thick, rich narrative descriptions (Patton, 1987; Stake, 1995). Qualitative research is, therefore, noninterventional, observation driven, subjective, and values oriented (Stake, 1995). The subjective aspect of qualitative research is an essential asset, not a compromised failing of qualitative research methodology (Stake, 1995). Unlike quantitative research, which begins with a hypothesis and is focused on explaining cause-and-effect relationships, qualitative research is focused on gaining a

practical understanding of a situation by searching for happenings and issues without imposing modifications or preexisting hypotheses. Qualitative researchers use observations, interviews, and the examination of archival data to understand what research participants do, think, experience, and feel in order to offer practical, useful, and actionable feedback to decision makers to improve praxis (Patton, 2002). Therefore, a qualitative approach was deemed appropriate to answer the research questions in this study.

Naturalistic inquiry. Naturalistic inquiry was used to gain a deeper understanding of the program, how the tutoring program functions, and how the program was experienced by the research participants. Naturalistic inquiry is carried out in the natural setting in order to understand the value-bound phenomenon that was created, developed, and is currently being practiced at the research site (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Naturalistic inquiry depends on the researcher being the primary instrument of data collection through the integration of tacit and nonverbal communication, purposeful sampling, inductive analysis, and idiographic interpretation in a case-study approach (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Patton (1987) submitted, however, that naturalistic inquiry can be used for qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods data collection, as naturalistic inquiry is a design issue, not a methodology. Naturalistic inquiry is a good choice for an inductive program evaluation, as programs are dynamic and complex and can be understood by detailed observation and documenting the participants' experienced realities (Patton, 2002). Patton (1987) asserted the importance of carefully documenting

the contextualized program activities observed in the field and the meaning that the participants attach to the program activities via interviews.

The focus of naturalistic inquiry is answering the following questions: (a) what is happening here, (b) why are things the way they are, and (c) how do you make sense of things around here (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 18). Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, and Allen (1993) stated that naturalistic researchers use divergent, mosaic-like data sources to develop a holistic picture of what is happening at the context-specific site and draw convergent, meaningful conclusions for relevant and meaningful action. This requires observation, dialogue, analysis of records, and reflection.

Naturalistic inquiry is specific to the unique context and is not intended to be generalized to other sites (Erlandson et al., 1993). Erlandson et al. (1993) also claimed that true objectivity is an illusion in human research. The researcher must have human interactions, which raises issues of bias. However, distancing the researcher from the relevant data will not provide the richness required of tacit and dialectic knowledge of naturalistic inquiry. After all, Patton (2002) asserted, "(d)istance does not guarantee objectivity; it merely guarantees distance" (p. 575). Given the information provided by the authors cited above, naturalistic inquiry was chosen as an appropriate design framework to meet the goals of this research study.

Responsive evaluation. Responsive evaluators seek to determine whether a particular program is currently effective. Such research does not focus on what would happen in the absence of this program, how it compares to other programs, or if the program has the potential to succeed. The evaluation focuses on the quality,

effectiveness, usefulness, and benefits of the program as it currently exists (Stake, 1975, 2004).

Responsive evaluation is focused on the current state of a program and the understanding of a program through the lens of the program participants and their value structure. Responsive evaluation is oriented toward precise issues, specific problems, current concerns, and lived experiences of research participants (Stake, 1975, 2004). Responsive evaluators seek to understand with confidence the unique demonstrated praxis of the program and the cultural plurality of the research participants (Stake, 1975, 2004). In a responsive evaluation, researchers are required to understand the concerns of stakeholders as well as the complexities of the program. To obtain the requisite understanding of the program, responsive researchers inquire about the lived experiences and unintended consequences of participants' current program activities (Stake, 1975, 2004).

The findings from responsive evaluations are delivered to stakeholders after documenting the usefulness and goodness of the program by integrating and valuing various perspectives from participants (Stake, 1975, 2004). Responsive evaluators deliver findings that demonstrate an understanding of the effectiveness of the program and thoughtful resolution of the identified issues, no matter how complex (Stake, 1975, 2004).

Patton (2002) emphasized that responsive researchers humanize the evaluation by listening to various rhizomatic perspectives, including the personal stories of participants whose voices are not always heard. Responsive research requires a commitment to

understanding the particular case by being responsive to and perceptive of naturally occurring onsite issues and unique phenomena. Inductive analysis protocols are used to deliver detailed, descriptive data (Patton, 2002).

Abma (2006) noted that responsive evaluations are conducted respectfully through engagement with stakeholders regarding the value and meaning of the program. Such evaluations are dialectic, require active listening, and focus on the participants' perceptions of program effectiveness. The goal is to obtain an honest, sensitive understanding of praxis and improvements through inclusive interactions with participants that will lead to meaningful hermeneutics (Abma, 2006). A responsive, issues-based evaluation was, therefore, well aligned to the purpose of this research study.

Case study approach. According to Stake (1995), the purpose of an individual case study is to obtain intimate knowledge of a particular bounded case. The purpose is not to compare one case to another, but to fully understand the unique, complex nature of an individual case. Unlike quantitative studies, case studies are focused on the particularization of a specific bounded case. An individual case study is not undertaken to understand cases in general. Patton (2002) encouraged case study researchers to focus on a relatively small population that is successful at something and, therefore, a good source of lessons learned.

Stake (1995) stressed that case study researchers are to approach participants with sincerity, integrity, personal engagement, and an authentic, intrinsic interest in learning about the contextualized issues, unique problems, and complex concerns at the site. The obligation of the researcher is to hear the stories of participants and to understand the

case. Case study researchers are not seeking to generalize findings to a larger population. Much can be learned from in-depth analysis of an intrinsic case study. By providing thick, rich narrative descriptions, researchers allow the reader to come to his or her own conclusions about any portion of transferable learning that may apply to another site. With these principles in mind, a case-study approach was well aligned with the purposes of this program evaluation.

Constructivist perspective. Lincoln and Guba (1985) discussed the importance of a hermeneutic and dialectic approach to constructivist research (as cited by Patton, 2002). Constructivists believe that reality is socially constructed whereby researchers are then responsible for clarifying the participants' constructed knowledge and delivering narrative-style descriptive data for readers (Stake, 1995). Socially-constructed knowledge is commonly accepted by researchers working in the ontologically relativist, socially hegemonic, and epistemologically subjective world, such as with street gangs and cults (Patton, 2002). Specifically, Patton (2002) suggested that constructivist researchers use open-ended interview questions and observations to understand the following issues: (a) how have the people in this setting constructed reality; (b) what are their reported perceptions, truths, explanations, beliefs, and worldviews; and (c) what are the consequences of their constructions for their behaviors and for those with whom they interact. Consequently, the constructivist perspective was appropriate for this study. Additionally, I made my biases transparent, particularly in the way this study was conceptually framed.

San Colombano Project Participants

Purposeful Sampling

Purposeful sampling is used in qualitative research to obtain information-rich data to answer the research questions. The focus of purposeful sampling is to glean in-depth understanding instead of broad generalizations from research participants. Therefore, research participants are carefully chosen based on their unique perspective and experience to answer the interview questions and provide meaningful insight about the specific on-site phenomenon (Patton, 2002).

With this in mind, I created the following interview schedule (see Table 2). All interview participants are referred to by pseudonyms. In order to glean perspectives from various interview participants, I obtained the consent of 11 interview participants. I interviewed two adult volunteer tutors, four program alumni who have returned after graduating from college to work at SCP, four members of the SCP leadership team, and an interview with the president and founder of SCP. I worked with the gatekeeper to obtain interviews with two parents. However, there were no parents of disenfranchised prospective first-generation college students who consented to a voluntary interview.

Table 2

Interview Participants (Pseudonyms)

Participants (15 requests)	Interview guide	Pseudonyms for participants
Leaders (4)	L form 3 questions	Mr. Celestino Villalobos, director of parent opportunities
		Ms. Emily Pei, director of adult volunteers
		Mr. Mateo Lewis, chief inspiration officer
		Ms. Yolanda Carson, director of programs and operations
Leaders/Alumni (4)	L-A form 4 questions	Mr. Adrian Yamamoto, director of alumni service opportunities & 2007 SCP graduate
		Mr. Gabriel Langston, Grant writer & 2006 SCP graduate
		Mr. Lincoln Valenzuela, academy instructor & 2008 SCP graduate
		Ms. Teodora Morales, academy instructor & 2008 SCP graduate
Adult volunteer tutors (2)	L-AVT form 4 questions	Ms. Tallulah Andrade
		Mr. Sherman Balboa
President & Founder (1)	L-PF form 4 questions	Mr. Luke Santos

Justification for the Number of Participants: Saturation and Redundancy

One of the common issues in qualitative research is deciding how many participants to include in the study. The common measure for a sufficient sample in qualitative research is saturation, which is defined as, "A mode of research immersion in which a researcher completely surrounds himself or herself with the participant and subject matter. This is one of the main qualitative techniques used. It also refers to the stage in data collection where new information merely replicated previously obtained data" (Holosko & Thyer, 2011, p. 111). The other measure is redundancy, which means that no new information is forthcoming from data collection (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). My decisions to interview 11 participants (alumni/leaders, leaders, founder/president, tutors) and collect archival data were conceived to address both saturation and redundancy.

In qualitative research, there are no hard and fast rules for sample size. Instead, to balance depth and breadth and to achieve credibility while being cognizant of available time and resources, the researcher must (a) reflect on the purpose of the study, (b) decide what it will take to answer the research questions, and (c) determine how the findings will be utilized (Patton, 2002). After all, Patton (2002) reminded readers that the sample size for Piaget's research was his own two children. In trying to balance depth and breadth, Creswell (2012) underscored the fact that too many participants can result in unmanageable, superficial data. To adequately address the research questions and manage the research project, I conducted 11 semistructured interviews and collected various archival data.

Access to Participants

Access to participants was coordinated through the SCP director of programs and operations, who served as the formal gatekeeper for this research study. The informal gatekeepers are the participants themselves, as they ultimately determine the scope of the information that will be shared in order to answer the research questions (Hatch, 2002). Lincoln and Guba (1985) underscored the fact that meaningful, qualitative research depends upon participants cooperating and being honest in order for the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena. I, therefore, endeavored to build a relationship of trust and authenticity with all participants I worked with at the research site.

Researcher and Participant Relationship

In order to build a relationship with participants, I approached them with sincere respect, genuine appreciation, and transparent authenticity. I wanted participants to understand my goals of beneficence (contributing to the organization), mutual reciprocity, cultural sensitivity, and phronesis. Greene and Abma (2001) described phronesis as the wise judgment researchers need to interact with research participants. One of the immediate benefits for the interview participants is the experience of being listened to, understood, and appreciated for contributing to the findings of the research project (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). I was confident that I could and did build rapport with participants. I have years of experience in leadership roles and I have conducted observations and interviews throughout my career. I have worked with disenfranchised student populations and hundreds of volunteers. I was confident that I

could present a warm, nonconfrontational, and nonthreatening manner when working with research participants.

Ethics

In 2014, I completed the National Institutes of Health (NIH) course, *Protecting Human Research Participants*. My certification number issued by NIH is 1145164. Additionally, all IRB protocols established at Walden University (Protection of Human Subjects, 2009; Walden University, n.d.) were followed. These include, but are not limited to:

- Providing beneficence, justice, and respect for persons.
- Recruiting, contacting, and procuring consent form signatures from participants only after IRB approval has been obtained.
- Giving participants time to review the informed consent form before deciding whether or not to participate.
- Acquiring Data Use Agreements, Letters of Cooperation, and Confidentiality Agreements before receiving IRB approval (#12-09-14-0199488); disseminating findings to stakeholders in a responsible, professional, and ethical manner and to collaborate with the gatekeeper regarding who receives the findings and when.
- Maintaining the raw data in a locked, secure location at my home for a minimum of five years.
- Granting privacy and confidentiality to all research participants.

- Realizing that offering payment in exchange for participation in the research study is forbidden.

Other ethical issues were addressed as well. No vulnerable populations were included in the research study. Specifically, no CBT students were included in the research study, as they are minors and, therefore, a protected population. The participants' names were changed to pseudonyms; the real names are kept in a locked file in my home. Participants' names and contact information are not included in my research journal. The transcriptionist signed a confidentiality agreement. Data were analyzed and the findings are saved in a file on my personal computer located in my home. This computer was password protected, and I was the only person who knew the password to access this computer. The SCP does not have an IRB; therefore, I was responsible for following all directives of the IRB at Walden University. However, the president and founder of SCP signed a letter of cooperation to provide the requisite data access, access to participants, facility use, and personnel time for research participants.

Christians (2005) affirmed the importance of the following ethical considerations that are also required of Walden students, which included the following:

- Participants must be provided with full and open information regarding the nature and purpose of the research. Participants must choose to participate freely without any coercion. The researcher must obtain signed, informed consent from each participant.
- Participants must not be deceived at any time during the research study.

- The researcher must secure personal identifiable information, provide confidentiality, limit embarrassment, and protect participants from harm.
- Researchers must demonstrate integrity via accurate and valid data. Data must not be fabricated, fraudulent, or contrived.

After obtaining IRB approval (#12-09-14-0199488), I coordinated with the gatekeeper to solicit research participants via email. An informed consent form was attached to the letters of invitation that were emailed to potential participants. Respondents willing to voluntarily participate in the research study after carefully considering the informed consent form were asked to sign and return the consent form via email. The research participants were then offered various interview times to accommodate their busy schedules.

Qualitative Data Collection

Patton (1987) confirmed that qualitative data collection is conducted through direct interactions and observations in the field in order to understand the unique programmatic issues and the specific experiences of participants. In qualitative studies, this often includes observations to understand the depth, detail, and nuances of the program and report these findings through highly descriptive, factual, detailed, accurate, and complete narratives. Data collection methods for this research project included semistructured interviews and artifacts. I maintained a journal throughout this process and frequently referred to my notes. My plan was to gather data in the following sequence; however, I remained flexible to the needs and available schedules of the participants.

Table 3

Data Collection Sequence and Purpose

Data collection sequence	Purpose: To answer the research question:
1. Semistructured interviews	How do the organizational leaders, adult volunteer tutors, and parents describe the effectiveness of the CBT program?
2. Archival data	What documentary evidence helps explain the effectiveness of the CBT program?

Semistructured Interviews

I used semistructured interviews to answer the research question, "How do the organizational leaders, adult volunteer tutors, and parents describe the effectiveness of the CBT program?" I scheduled each of the 11 face-to-face interviews for 30-60 minutes in a quiet, private, on-site location during noninstructional time. In addition to asking the interview questions listed in Appendix B, I utilized probes suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (2007) as needed to accomplish the goal of understanding how the research participants describe the effectiveness of the College Bound tutoring program.

For the interviews, I obtained the requisite signed consent forms from participants prior to data collection, found a quiet place for the private interviews, followed the interview protocol sheet, audio recorded the interviews, and wrote brief notes during the

interviews. All notes were transcribed in the first person to preserve the accuracy of the narrative.

Interviewing is both an art and a science. According to Seidman (2013), successful interviewing is facilitated by a genuine interest in understanding the perspective of each research participant. While interviewing, there is no substitute for authentic, active listening. Seidman confirmed the importance of patience during times of silence to allow the participant to reflect upon the question and formulate thoughts (2013). After all, the participant is not a means to an end, and each participant has innate dignity and deserves respect (Seidman 2013). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) referred to this approach as understanding the "living knowledge…embedded in the communities of practice" (p. 196). As I was intrinsically interested in the effectiveness of the CRT program and the lived experiences of the participants, I conducted respectful interviews based on active listening.

The art and science of interviewing includes (a) how to articulate the interview questions, (b) how many questions to ask, and (c) how to ensure participants are heard. Through a constructivist lens, Josselson (2013) noted that knowledge is constructed and understood in a social and cultural context that is expressed through language. Therefore, researchers who can probe with thoughtful questions and listen actively and responsively can obtain personal accounts that reveal the depth and complexity of the participant's experiences. Josselson stressed the importance of asking as few questions as possible to minimize the researchers' speaking and maximize his or her listening. To encourage meaningful, in-depth responses from participants, I created a positive, nonthreatening

environment and interacted with sensitivity, empathy, integrity, respect, tact, and dignity (Josselson, 2013). Josselson upheld that participants appreciate the validation that accompanies focused, genuine, and highly-attuned listening; it is a gift to give someone the experience of being authentically and actively heard. Josselson encouraged novice researchers to allow for pauses and silence. Participants often require time to reflect on the questions. As instructed by Josselson, I stayed present in the moment, allowed the participant to reflect, and did not consider what I might say next. Josselson reminded researchers that although active listening is a difficult skill to achieve, empathetic and authentic understanding is even more difficult. Therefore, my plan was to ask few questions and listen intently and empathetically.

To create a mosaic image of the CBT program, I integrated the findings of 11 semistructured interviews with archival data. Interviewing participants allows them to share what the researcher cannot or was not able to observe (Stake, 1995). With genuine appreciation, I allowed others to share their descriptive stories and their interpretations of events that I was not present to observe (Stake, 1995). Stake also encouraged qualitative researchers to become comfortable hearing multiple and various accounts of the same program activities. Constructivist researchers remember that different people view the same experience through their own lens (Stake, 1995). I learned to aggregate the various responses obtained through interviews to create a mosaic, or portraiture, of the program activities and issues.

Thick, Rich Description of the Interviews

I was able to complete my 11 interviews over the course of eight days. Interviews were held before tutoring sessions commenced and after tutoring sessions were completed. The 11 research interviews were held in various rooms as they became available. Two interviews were held in the lunchroom/dining room before it was utilized as tutoring room. This room was used to feed the students before tutoring begins. It was usually packed with energetic, hungry teenagers. During the interviews, it was strangely quiet. However, the sounds of a busy inner city neighborhood were still audible. Without all the students present, I noticed that the room was quite functional but it was equipped with minimalist features. There were tables, but no décor. From where I sat, I could oversee the parking lot and the nearby inner-city apartments.

Two interviews were held in the primary meeting area where all the students assembled for their inspiration and vocabulary words every evening. In the middle of the afternoon, this room was filled with light. It struck me how much SCP staff accomplished with so little square footage. Again, the room was strangely quiet as the boisterous teenagers had not yet arrived. We were seated side-by-side in simple, stacking chairs. There was no table between us. There was a whiteboard on the wall. I noticed a projector mounted to the ceiling. Food was out on a nearby table from an earlier staff meeting. Five big, old couches that would soon be occupied by boisterous teenagers looked strangely barren as they sat empty. There were pictures on the wall of many of the SCP graduates as well as 28 stockings on the wall with each staff members name written on it. There were balloons in the room that denoted the celebration of the 600th congress on Tuesday

nights. Every meeting was referred to as a congress; since the program began on a Tuesday night, the Tuesday night congress reached this milestone first. A large SCP banner hung the length of the room from floor-to-ceiling to separate the room from the staff cubicles located behind the banner. A Christmas tree was decorated, yet the room remained simply appointed. There were stacking chairs against the wall waiting to be set up before the students arrived. The simple, pressed wood desk was placed at the entrance where someone would soon be sitting to welcome students and answer questions. The area rug was tan, brown, and green. Blackout drapes were ready to be utilized for any future PowerPoint presentation.

One interview was held in the only enclosed office where the founder and president worked. From his small office, a view of the inner city community was visible for many blocks. An arrest had just been made across the street at the convenience store. Even before the interview began, a glance out the window reminded me of the context in which this organization existed. The inner city culture was sobering. It was hard to imagine living in this neighborhood day in and day out for years. One's future would seem so tenuous on these streets. How ironic that just a few miles away were some of the wealthiest zip codes and palatial homes in the city. I glanced away from the window as I was overwhelmed with the juxtaposition of communities miles away and yet worlds apart. There was a picture posted of one of SCP's recent college graduates. The furnishings were simple. The small bookcase was home to a few books and some memorabilia. The president's desk was small, and we each took a seat on one of the small, soft couches that were adjacent to one another.

Three interviews were held in what became my favorite location. It was originally described to me as the *storeroom.* More appropriately, it was the workroom. It had the classic layout for the traditional school workroom. Cabinets lined the walls, and there was a counter with drawers below and an island countertop in the middle. However, it was so full of boxes and overflowing with various supplies that I understood why it was called the "storeroom." I liked this location because it reeked of academia, school supplies, and the mission of the organization. It was a nice place to meet away from the hustle and bustle of activity to focus on a private, meaningful interview experience.

I interviewed two staff members in their office cubicles on two separate evenings. These two research participants were willing to stay late at night and meet with me after evening tutoring. It was interesting to see how many desks can be squeezed into so few square feet of office space. Everything was minimalist in the décor, accommodations, and space. The mesSage seemed to be that the staff was there to work, not to be made comfortable. They were in the trenches fighting for the lives of their students in a hostile inner city community.

One interview was held in a classroom by night and a local business by day. SCP managed to work with the other tenants on their floor to open their space to SCP in the evening after these other tenants closed down for the day. This enables SCP to have the additional square footage they needed to operate more study rooms to accommodate the growing student population. Because this room belonged to another organization, the office chairs were more comfortable than the stacking chairs I saw in the SCP rooms. The tables were arranged in a U-shape, typical of business meetings.

Archival Data

I collected archival data to answer the following research question: what documentary evidence helps explain the effectiveness of the CBT program? By working cooperatively with the gatekeeper, I negotiated access to various organizational documents. Patton (1987) indicated that archival data can provide rich insights and understanding of program issues. I reviewed the archival data for content analysis. Examples of archival data are included in Appendix C.

Qualitative content data analysis is a systematic strategy of describing a phenomenon in an understandable manner by developing codes and themes to make sense of various archival data (Elo et al., 2014). Elo et al. (2014) noted the three phases of content analysis: (a) collecting archival data; (b) organizing, coding, and creating themes from the data; and (c) reporting results.

I collected publications produced by the organization, organizational charts, blank student applications, and student code of conduct policies. I also downloaded material from the organization's website. Next, I identified the codes that emerged from the content analysis of archival data including: academic optimism, belonging needs for students, building a whole student, change, classroom relationships/storytelling, college going and college completion culture, community, dinner provided by SCP parents, faith, family, high expectations, hope, leadership, motivation/inspiration/celebration, organizational growth, resilience, respect, safety, self-efficacy, staffing needs, strategic planning, student accountability, success, transformative impact of SCP, and summer

programs. Lastly, I reported the final themes that arose from typological, inductive, and content analysis in Table 4 on page 98.

Gathering and Recording Data

I audio recorded the semistructured interviews. As an additional precaution, I made some hand-written notes during the interview. Immediately after the interviews were over, I made some reflective notes before commencing the next interview (Patton, 1987). I obtained the services of a transcriptionist. Before providing any audio recordings for transcription, I obtained a confidentiality agreement from the transcriptionist.

I followed the research journal guidelines for interview and observational protocols proffered by Denzin and Lincoln (2005). The notes taken on-site were brief. I made complete field notes later. I created the following four types of field notes (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005):

1. Observation Notes (ON). I wrote concrete and detailed notes that included date, time, and duration of observation. I recorded sensory data including what I saw and heard during the interviews.
2. Methodological Notes (MN). I wrote mesSages to myself. I jotted down questions that occurred to me during and immediately after the interviews.
3. Theoretical Notes (TN). I recorded relationships, themes, hunches, hypotheses, and connections in the data. I looked for meaning in the perspectives of the participants of the study.
4. Personal Notes (PN). I recorded uncensored feeling statements about the research, the people, the organization, my doubts, and my anxieties.

Keeping Track of Data and Emerging Understandings

To keep track of data and emerging understandings, I maintained reflective notes. Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle (2010) stressed the importance of using both descriptive and reflective field notes. Descriptive field notes objectively noted date, time, location, start time, end time, as well as description of people, activities, setting, and dialogue. On the other hand, reflective notes captured the observer's thoughts, feelings, musings, and reflections.

Procedures for Gaining Access to Participants

I purposefully selected 11 SCP leaders, based on their job titles listed on the organization's website, to participate in the interviews (see Table 2). Nine of the 11 leaders were in town and volunteered to participate in this research study. I coordinated with the SCP director of programs and operations to identify two adult volunteer tutors and two SCP parents who were associated with the organization for a minimum of one school year. Although I was able to interview two adult volunteer tutors, no SCP parents (of the first-generation college students in the SCP program) consented to be interviewed. I emailed the potential participants, explained the research study, and let participants know about the confidential and voluntary nature of the study. If participants chose to be interviewed, they were asked to sign the consent form and return it to me. The 11 interviews were completed over the course of 8 days. Additional information regarding gaining access to participants was covered earlier in the ethics section.

Role of Researcher

As an external program evaluator, I had a number of important roles to ensure reciprocity, beneficence, and phronesis. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) affirmed the researcher's role as a critical observer, a meaningful interviewer, a descriptive note-taker, and a reflective researcher who can interpret and weave the multiplicity of data and rhizomatic perspectives into a thick, rich, authentic, reconstructive narrative. The literature also provided the following protocols for researchers which I followed:

- Enter the site as quietly as possible. Blend in. Be inconspicuous, unassuming, discreet, and "as interesting as wallpaper" (Stake, 1995, p. 59).
- Exhibit humility, a willingness to learn, and an appreciation for the participants who are willing to teach you about the depth and complexity of their program. Honor the participants. Treat them with respect and dignity (Erlandson et al., 1993).
- Demonstrate professionalism, competency, and perspicuity as you seek to understand and evaluate the multifaceted, complex, and intricate program at the research site (Greene & Abma, 2001).
- Maintain an external locus of control, and do not go native or yield authority for the research study to the participants (Greene & Abma, 2001).

Furthermore, I have made my biases transparent, particularly in the way this study is conceptually framed. Additional roles and responsibilities of the researcher were addressed in the section on quality and trustworthiness.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research is not focused on accepting or rejecting a hypothesis. Instead, qualitative researchers collect detailed data and begin identifying patterns, categories, relationships, and themes within the data (Hatch 2002). Patton (1987) explained that these patterns spring from the data through inductive data analysis and are not chosen a priori. Patton articulated the two categories of data that may emerge as emic and etic. Emic categories are the indigenous categories articulated by research participants from the participants' perspective, whereas etic categories are those articulated by the researcher from the researcher's perspective.

Data analysis is a time-consuming task; therefore, as data are collected, I began the coding and analysis process. Stake (1995) affirmed that this comprehensive and tedious process is important in order to find patterns that help us understand the case, identify programmatic issues, and answer the research questions. Trustworthy conclusions and assertions depend upon focused attention to detail during the coding and analysis phase (Stake, 1995). Patton (2002) noted the importance of using thick, rich descriptive data to achieve quality analysis and hermeneutics. Stake (1995) also emphasized the importance of reflecting on the data, triangulating multiple sources, and being wary of simplistic first impressions regarding the data. I adhered to these recommendations from Stake and Patton during data analysis.

Coding

Content analysis was used to analyze archival documents. The coding processes for interviews were typological and inductive as described by Hatch (2002). The nine steps of typological analysis are as follows:

1. Identify typologies to be analyzed.
2. Read the data, and mark entries related to your typologies.
3. Read entries by typology, and record the main ideas in entries on a summary sheet.
4. Look for patterns, relationships, and themes within typologies.
5. Read data and code entries according to patterns identified; keep a record of what entries go with which elements of your patterns.
6. Decide if patterns are supported by the data, and search the data for nonexamples *(sic)* of your patterns.
7. Look for relationships among the identified patterns.
8. Write your patterns as one-sentence generalizations.
9. Select data excerpts that support generalization. (p. 153)

Using this model, I re-read my literature looking for possible categories, themes, or data groupings that might be used in typological analysis. I also created a Wordle™ (www.wordle.net) from the Section 1 literature review to find other typologies I may have overlooked. Ultimately, I came up with these typologies from the literature review in Section 1. As Hatch (2002) noted, these tentative typologies are created prior to data collection and analysis. Typological analysis is simply a starting point to begin

considering what themes may or may not come up during data collection and analysis. Based upon the literature review in Section 1, the list of typologies for the research study included the following:

- Change (Darder, 2012; Freire, 2007; hooks, 2003; McArthur, 2010; Riley, 2013; Taylor et al., 2009)
- Community (Borrero, 2011; Cohen & Schuchter, 2013; Gándara & Contreras, 2009; Quiñones, Ares, Padela, Hopper, & Webster, 2011; Smith, 2011; Syed, Azmitia, & Cooper, 2011; Trumbull & Rothstein-Fisch, 2011; Valenzuela et al., 2012; Ward et al., 2013; Watson, 2012)
- Empathy (Gándara & Contreras, 2009; Valenzuela et al., 2012; Wlodkowski, 2008)
- Empowerment (Darder, 2012; Freire, 2000, 2007; McLaren, 1989; Solorzano & Bernal, 2001; Taylor et al., 2009)
- Family (Arafeh et al., 2012; Darder, 2012; Kirk et al., 2011)
- High expectations (Aspelmeier, Love, McGill, Elliott, & Pierce, 2012; Brock, 2010; Cavazos & Cavazos, 2010; Cavazos et al., 2010; Delpit, 2012; Gibbons & Borders, 2010; Howard, 2010; Hytten & Bettez, 2011; R.A. Reyes, 2012; Smith, 2011; Watson, 2012)
- Hope (Conchas & Vigil, 2010; Darder, 2012; Freire, 2000; Fusco, 2012; hooks, 2003; McLaren, 1989)
- Leadership (Dansby & Dansby-Giles, 2011; Delpit, 2012; Freire, 2000, 2007; Howard, 2010; Legters & Balfanz, 2010; McArthur, 2010)

- Peers (Bempechat & Shernoff, 2012; Fleming, 2012; Gándara & Contreras, 2009; Kincheloe, 2008; Trumbull & Rothstein-Fisch, 2011)
- Safety (Gándara & Contreras, 2009; Smith, 2011)
- Success (Bempechat & Shernoff, 2012; Cavanzos & Cavazos, 2010; Cavazos et al., 2010; Darder, 2012; Gándara & Contreras, 2009; Gonzalez, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2012; Rheinheimer et al., 2010; Valenzuela et al., 2012)
- Trust (Riley, 2013; Wlodkowski, 2008)

Although typological analysis was conducted prior to data collection to determine potential themes, inductive analysis was conducted after data collection to determine themes based on analysis of data not included in the typological analysis. In analyzing the data collection, I conducted inductive analysis of the interview data. Hatch (2002) enumerated the nine steps of inductive analysis thusly:

1. Read the data and identify frames of analysis.
2. Create domains based on semantic relationships discovered within frames of analysis.
3. Identify salient domains, assign them a code, and put others aside.
4. Reread data while refining salient domains and keeping a record of where relationships are found in the data.
5. Decide if your domains are supported by the data and search data for examples that do not fit with or run counter to the relationships in your domains.
6. Complete an analysis within domains.

7. Search for themes across domains.
8. Create a master outline expressing relationships within and among domains.
9. Select data excerpts to support the elements of your outline (p. 162).

Inductive analysis is well-aligned with this qualitative, constructivist research study. As explained by Hatch (2002), inductive analysis involves the identification of patterns to obtain a contextualized, meaningful understanding of a complex phenomenon at the site. By utilizing the typological and inductive analyses proposed by Hatch (2002), I framed the data analysis based on the specificity of the data collected. I continued the iterative, flexible, and creative process until the complexity and interrelatedness of the data revealed itself.

The 29 inductive codes that emerged from the data were:

- Alumni needs and challenges
- Belonging needs for students
- Building a whole student
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities
- Classroom relationships
- College-going and college completion culture
- Communication
- Diversity (the value of)
- Faith (the role of)
- Food (the importance of the nightly hot dinner that are provided to students)
- Fun (the importance of)

- Gratitude for the life-changing gift of SCP
- Immigration/Dreamers/AB 540
- Mission clarification (What business are we in?)
- Motivation and inspiration for students
- Needs of financial stakeholders
- Organizational growth (including the challenges)
- Passion (Staff passion for the organizational mission)
- Resilience (students)
- Respect (students for leadership)
- Self-efficacy
- Social justice torch carried on by students
- Staff relationships with students (the value of)
- Staffing needs
- Strategic planning
- Student accountability (lack of; the need for)
- Summer programs (summer school and summer camp)
- Transformative impact (Driving social change impact at SCP)
- Tutors

Software

A review of the literature provided pros and the cons of using software to code qualitative data. Saldaña (2013) emphasized seven requirements to code qualitative data: (a) organization, (b) perseverance, (c) the ability to deal with ambiguity, (d) flexibility,

(e) creativity, (f) scrupulous ethics, and (g) a broad vocabulary (p. 36-37). Saldaña did not require a software component for coding (2013).

I chose not to use coding software. Hatch (2002) noted that the nonproductive time required by researchers before effectively benefiting from coding software is great. There are also many software programs on the market; new researchers may not fully understand how to match their specific need to the various specifications of each product. Additionally, Hatch warned new researchers about the possibility of missing the contextual intricacies and complexities in the data when analyzing it with software (Hatch, 2002). For these reasons, and my own personal philosophy about automation, I have decided to forgo coding software.

I have always taught my allied health students to learn on manual equipment before moving onto automated equipment (e.g. blood pressure cuffs, EKG machines, lab equipment). I believe there is great value in doing methods by hand and understanding the hands-on process before moving on to computerized or automated methods. Therefore, in order to stay more intimately connected to my data, I analyzed the data by hand for this study.

Quality and Trustworthiness

To provide evidence of research quality and trustworthiness, I (a) triangulated data; (b) created an audit trail (including a research journal); (c) delivered a thick, rich descriptive narrative; (d) employed member checking; (e) utilized the services of a peer reviewer; and (f) clarified potential research bias. Creswell (2012) identified triangulation as a method whereby various types of data are collected from assorted individuals

utilizing diverse data collection methods to create many data points, which are then triangulated to support a valid conclusion. Patton (1987) likewise acknowledged that data source triangulation (e.g. interviewing participants from various positions within the organization) and methodological triangulation (e.g. collecting interviews and archival data) strengthens the quality and trustworthiness of research. I used both data source triangulation and methodological triangulation.

Member checking and peer review were an important part of the research quality. After all, research needs to be accurate, logical, and hermeneutically sound (Stake, 1995). Therefore, member checking allowed me the opportunity to check back with research participants to validate the accuracy, completeness, and fairness of the draft version of the findings (Stake, 2010). Additionally, I have retained the services of a peer reviewer to help me debrief the logic, appropriateness, justification, quality, and trustworthiness of the data collection, coding, analysis, and assertions. The peer reviewer earned his Ed.D., served as an executive director of an inner city college campus, served on the board of the local boys and girls club, and was serving as a university chief academic officer. The peer reviewer was a published African American academician who grew up in a local, disadvantaged neighborhood and subsequently earned two bachelor's degrees, two master's degrees, and a doctorate. Finally, discrepant cases were analyzed and shared with my committee chair and peer-reviewer after member checking was complete.

Complete research objectivity cannot be attained. As Stake (2004) noted, some level of bias is endemic to research. Therefore, researchers must learn how to decrease,

not eliminate, bias. Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) asserted that bias can be reduced by avoiding these four mistakes (p. 294):

- Holistic fallacy: Presenting the data as more congruent and integrated than it really is. Finding the codes and patterns that fit easily together and omitting the discrepant data to present clearer findings than truly exist.
- Elite bias: Deferring to the participants of higher social, economic, or political persuasion within the research study and marginalizing the voices of the disenfranchised participants when analyzing and presenting research findings.
- Personal bias: Skewing the research data to fit the researcher's preconceived notions or personal agenda and in the process compromising the value and trustworthiness of the findings.
- Going native: Becoming enmeshed in the culture, assumptions, perspectives, and experiences of the research participants and completely losing one's objectivity and perspective in reporting the issues and findings of the research study.

The conclusions from the qualitative, naturalistic, and responsive nature of this research study designed with a case-study approach and constructivist perspective are not intended to be generalized to a larger population. However, Erlandson et al. (1993) noted that some transferability may be appropriate. It is possible that some aspects of this contextualized study may be relevant in another setting (Erlandson et al., 1993). However, it is for the reader to determine if the thick, rich descriptive data presented has any relevance in another, similar setting. To assist the reader, I have included examples

of quotes from the interview participants on pages 101-127. I have also included 18 artifacts in Appendix C for readers to use to evaluate any transferability and relevance to their setting.

Although I did not work at this site at any time, I was tangentially aware of this nonprofit organization because I am a member of the community where this nonprofit organization is located. This organization is periodically highlighted in local newspaper articles and local news broadcasts. This organization was also cited in a PBS special which I viewed. The informal and spontaneous comments I heard from others in this community were generally favorable. I heard positive comments about this organization from those interested in community-based social initiatives and those interested in education within the community. The positive community dialogue brought this particular organization to my attention. I visited this organization on several occasions in order to make an acquaintance with the organization and obtain permission to complete my research project at this site.

With that said, I was acutely aware that organizations that have a positive community presence are not always healthy organizations with sustainable systems and processes and successful leadership teams. It is entirely possible to receive good, local media coverage that is inaccurate, biased, or incomplete. It is through this lens that I chose the research site, outlined the prospectus for the research study, and began structuring quality and trustworthiness into the ethical components of the research.

There are also soft skills associated with research ethics. Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) noted that the following steps enhance ethical behavior: (a) undertake a

worthy, meaningful project that is congruent with the researchers values, (b) exhibit a history of professional competence and personal integrity, and (c) value reciprocity when working with others. The desire to conduct a program evaluation based on an intrinsic case study model was prompted by my interest in the organizational mission and the belief that there is something I can learn from this organization that will be contribute to the field of education. I also wanted to make contributions that would be beneficial be beneficial to the local community and the nonprofit organization itself.

By following protocols, I believe naturalistic inquiries through interviews, document reviews, and data analysis were professional, thoughtful, and trustworthy. The goal was to provide a valid, constructivist, responsive program evaluation to the organization. I had years of experience preparing organizations for outside accreditation visits. Whether in a hospital, college, or university setting, I was very familiar with the rigor and thoroughness required to evaluate the health and effectiveness of an organization.

Through my work with lower SES vocational education and GED students, I discovered a natural inclination, personal interest, and inner satisfaction from working with disenfranchised students. As a lifelong learner and educator, I innately believed that increased learning and education can improve a number of human conditions, particularly for those who do not feel empowered or who have experienced disenfranchisement.

Themes Identified in Data

Using the typologies and inductive codes, the data collected from the 11 semistructured interviews and the content analysis of artifacts gave rise to the following

themes: (a) authentic hope, (b) social and emotional learning, (c) organizational leadership, and (d) creation of a college completion agenda. The typological, inductive, and content codes associated with the themes are as follows:

Table 4

Themes and Codes

Themes	Codes (typological, inductive, and content)
Authentic hope	Community Faith (the role of) Family Gratitude for the life-changing gift of SCP Hope Motivation, inspiration, celebration Passion Social justice torch carried on by students Transformative impact of SCP
Social and emotional learning	Academic optimism Belonging needs for students Building a whole student Classroom relationships/storytelling Dinner provided by SCP parents Diversity (value of) Empathy Empowerment Fun (the importance of) Peers Resilience Respect Safety Self-efficacy Staff relationships with students (the value of) Success Trust
Organizational leadership	Change Clarifying roles and responsibilities Communication High expectations Leadership Mission clarification Needs of financial stakeholders Organizational growth Staffing needs Strategic planning Student accountability
Creation of a college completion culture	Alumni needs and challenges College going and college completion culture Immigration/Dreamers/AB 540 Summer programs Tutors

Discrepant Data

The only code that originally did not fit in a theme, and was therefore considered discrepant data, was the inductive code for serving students dinner before the tutoring sessions begin. These dinners were provided every evening by the SCP parents on a rotating basis. The dinners were mentioned by a four of the 11 interview participants. Participant 10 noted, "The students have dinner, which is really important, because people are focused when they have a belly full of food, so that's good." Interview participant 9 also noted, "dinner comes from the families…families are from disadvantaged backgrounds. For them to provide dinner for 50 people, that's already asking for a lot…it is what keeps the kids coming; it's what keeps the tutors coming. Some of them don't even know that the tutors are here to eat, for the amazing dinner that they don't get at home, because they're in college and their parents are so far away from home."

I later realized that this is not discrepant data because feeding the students food is not only about the physiological need for food, but the social, cultural, and familial capital of gathering around the table to eat together before the tutoring begins. Serving dinner every night, involving the parents in this component of the program, and carving out time for the students to build relationships with one another, the staff, and the tutors around the dinner table fits with the idea of taking care of the whole student. With this new realization, there are no discrepant data to report.

Research Findings

In this section, I have included responses from the organizational leaders and adult volunteer tutors to answer the first research question of how they described the effectiveness of the CBT program. I have also included examples of the archival data to answer the second research question on how the effectiveness of the program was described in the documentary evidence.

The answers to these two research questions were sorted and reported by the themes that arose from data analysis. I noted patterns and conclusions drawn from typological, inductive, and content analysis. These patterns and conclusions were then used to frame the research for the literature review in section 3. The learnings from the literature review were then applied to create the program evaluation findings and recommendations found in Appendix A.

To answer research question one, quotes from interview participants are referenced below and are abbreviated thusly: interview participant 1 (IP-1) to interview participant 11 (IP-11). To protect the privacy of the 11 research participants, the numbers were randomly assigned and do not denote the order of the interviews or an alphabetical listing of the participants.

To answer research question two, I (a) collected archival data; (b) organized, coded, and created themes from the data; and (c) reported results (Elo et al., 2014). Excerpts from archival data are included below to support the research findings. Additional examples of archival data are included in Appendix C. Archival data were not

found for theme four, the creation of a college completion culture. However, RQ-1 and RQ-2 were both addressed in themes one, two, and three as noted below.

Theme 1: Authentic Hope

Based on the analysis, I concluded that hope was articulated in the data in a variety of ways including: (a) hope and gratitude for the life-changing transformational gift of SCP; (b) hope manifested through motivation, inspiration, and a sense of community; and (c) the practical praxis associated with hope. Examples of these three subthemes are noted below. After identifying the authentic hope theme, I completed a literature to obtain a more expansive understanding of authentic hope. The literature review is located in section 3.

Hope and gratitude for the life-changing transformational gift of SCP. Examples of data to support the subtheme of hope and gratitude for the life-changing transformational gift of SCP included the following interview quotes and archival data excerpts. These data were used to answer research question one and two.

IP-9: People need hope to live. That's definitely something that I feel that they find – hope. They find something, a belief, or they find their wishes coming true, their prayers, for many of them.

IP-9: I have parents who have teared up doing parent meetings just because they've never had the same opportunity, never had the same resources at hand. A lot of them come from different countries where education is just not the same as in the United States. They just feel blessed…They say during the parent meetings, they give thanks to the Lord and to God first of all…they feel that it's a blessing from up above…they feel

like definitely somebody is looking after them, or somebody has, given them a…how can I say…a wish in a box.

IP-9: I think that they just feel…how can I say it, man…they just surrender to the program. The same way that some people surrender their kids to church and stuff like that, some of them surrender them to the program; “Here, I am sure that you guys will lead them because I don’t know any more of this.” There’s parents that say, “I got stuck with my child with eighth grade homework and I didn’t know what to do. I started looking for places. I starting knocking at doors and I couldn’t find nothing. Then finally, boom, to be here, to change the steps of my son. Now I could let him go. Now I could feel free. Now I have a less of a worry…this is a hope.

IP-4: I got to meet a lot of tutors especially from the local universities. A lot of them were predominately Hispanic or Latino tutors. That gave me, I want to say, the hope. Not only hope but it also showed me that there's a way that people like me, that people that look like me, despite knowing that most people that look like me don't go to college. I have met people who look like me that have been to college and on their way to graduate. That gave me hope and motivated…it fueled my drive to try harder. Go to class actually go to class and sit through whole class and take notes.

IP-2: That's kind of what keeps the staff here. That's what keeps the volunteers coming back because they have the ability to help the students change the trajectory of their own lives and their families' lives.

Artifact 18: Examples were given of eight disenfranchised SCP students who received scholarships worth $68,000 to over $300,000.

Hope manifested through motivation, inspiration, and a sense of community. Examples of data to support the subtheme of hope manifested through motivation, inspiration, and a sense of community included the following interview quotes and archival data excerpts. These data were used to answer research question one and two.

IP-7: We do Congress [before starting the tutoring session]. Congress is like one student leads it and they read SCP statement of purpose (See Appendix C). "We are SCP students, agents of positive change in our environment"…They read that and we do high's and low's for the whole group…The ones leading it go around and shake each person's hand. What is your high and low and hope for the week? (Everyone answers explaining their high point of the week, their low point of the week, and their hope for the upcoming week.)

IP-9: Just to see the kids walk in, sometimes they come and they're down and out. By the end of the night, they go home with a smile. Or you could see how they walk in mad, or they've been having a bad day and so on and so on, and after speaking to them or just seeing them in the room with other people, or sometimes a tutor, sometimes a mentor, you just see the changes in their attitude. You just see that they actually got something off of their chest or something off of their back, like heavy load off their back.

IP-7: I think SCP like what you're doing is really cool because there needs to be an awareness of what little things can be done to make a huge difference, and that what I was amazed, coming to SCP and seeing that (program) changes a student's GPA from 0.0 to in the 3.0s or even 4.0 and they're motivated to work hard in school.

IP-7: We [tutors] all come because they want to see the kids succeed and go to college. It's really cool. Being here for 4 years, I've seen a lot of kids and students go to college, and it's awesome. I miss them. I don't see them anymore, but they're in college now and they have a huge scholarship to go to whatever school.

IP-7: I think that's part of the reason SCP is super successful is that the people who are teaching the kids aren't a thousand steps ahead of them, they're a few steps ahead of them and that's a huge part.

IP-6: I would describe the CB tutoring program to be more of an inspiration and motivation for the students to do well in school, to inspire them to do what they need to do to get those grades…they do get the academic support that they are looking for here with our tutors, but it's more so and also from the lesson and also from the community that they get support and inspiration too…to know that I'm a SCP student. I've got to get my grades up. I've got to take care of my responsibilities.

IP-8: The environment that we create—the environment of belief, the environment of resilience, and environment of acknowledging the fact that we all come to face different things. We all have different obstacles…it's not an issue of just focusing on the obstacles. It's looking back at it, like glancing at it, and then moving forward. Really challenging each other or holding each other as family Bringing victory, understanding losses, and leaders moving forward as a whole….we close up the nights by saying, "Tough times never lasts, but tough people always do."

Artifact 1: We are the SCP Agents of Change. We are agents of POSITIVE change in the world that surrounds us. We get good grades because we are going to college.

Artifact 2: Despite living in such constant danger, I earned a 4.3 GPA, became the only person to work at the local swap meet from before sunrise until after sunset, and helped run my stepfather's business by taking care of his deli's advertisements and regularly advising him on how to administer the family's expenses. Instead of my life being shaped by gangs, drugs, or dropping out of school, I want to become a businesswoman so that I can provide further and newfound stability for my family.

Artifact 3: I joined SCP, a group which helped me learn to value my education. Instead of experiencing a similar fate as my cousin, the program motivated me to take AP courses, give back to the community, and perhaps most importantly, seek out positive role models as mentors."

Artifact 4: However, as a sophomore in high school, I was swept away from my black-and-white world of low expectations and introduced to a brand new Technicolor experience of hopes and dreams by being accepted to SCP.

Artifact 5: They call us "at-risk" youth and with each generation the "risk" becomes even greater. But where does the risk stop? It stops with me.

Artifact 6: I was doing terrible back in middle school and getting a 0.0 GPA, but I put all my focus on studying during freshman year of high school and achieved my very first 4.0 GPA, proving to myself the importance of finishing strong. As my wrestling coach says, "It is not how you start a wrestling match; it all depends on how you end it."

Artifact 8: [B]y aspiring to be a surgeon, I can prevent further killings and sew back together the communities that have been torn apart by gang violence.

Artifact 9: The shadows lurking outside use spray cans and bullets to make their mark to be noticed by others. Although I, too, wish to be recognized for my actions, I have also been taught that performing positive deeds in life are more powerful than succumbing to negative ones. Indeed, my neighborhood has inspired me to give troubled teenagers the motivation to become headline news for their accomplishments, rather than for their mistakes.

Artifact 10: Growing up in southern Mexico, the first house in which I remember living had four walls made of cardboard. Each morning, I would get out of my bed, which consisted of just two buckets propping up a wooden board to shield me from the cold ground.

After moving to the United States, one can imagine my excitement when I raised my grades to a 4.0 GPA during my freshman year and qualified to attend University XYZ's summer college residential program where I was able to sleep in my own bed for the very first time. Stepping into an empty dorm room with my own bed made me feel very accomplished.

But nothing made me more proud that showing my dad my first college scholarship check for $3500. Tears filled his eyes when he sad, "I never imagined that I would hold this much money with my own two hands." Then I made everyone else in the entire house hold onto the check…I even made the babies touch the check because I wanted them to truly feel what it was like to go to college. And even through they aren’t

old enough to communicate yet, I told them, "Work hard and this can happen to you, too."

Artifact 14: Today, I am no longer illiterate, but fluent in three cultures from three different corners of the world. I have experienced physical and emotional pain, hard work, perseverance, honor, and respect before I learned the ABC's. No, I am not a child solider; instead I graduated from high school in just three years and am a soldier for education.

Artifact 15: Although on that day I could not afford a ticket for the bus, I am now a step closer to obtaining a ticket to college, searching for the school that will give me the best education instead of looking for the job that would have given me the quickest paycheck. The following years of my life are going to be spent walking on the grounds of a university surrounded by serious students instead of foolish street youths and acquiring a degree will allow my mother to exchange her stained work uniform for her own attractive business suit as she sits proudly in the passenger seat of my Mercedes Benz.

Artifact 17: Why do some people call us "At-Risk" students? Is it because of where we were born? Or where we live? What did I do to get such a label? Perhaps better words to describe me and my fellow SCP students are resilient, filled with inspiration, and college-bound.

Artifact 17: Some people view gangs, poverty, violence, homelessness, and refugee camps as obstacles. SCP students use such circumstances as the inspiration to become first generation college students.

Practical praxis associated with hope. Examples of data to support the subtheme of a practical praxis associated with hope included the following interview quotes and archival data excerpts. This data were used to answer research question one and two.

IP-7: What's huge is the hope, just knowing, because sometimes they don't know they have the ability to do it. That's why the program works, because people show them. The people who will listen to you are there to show them and to help them along.

IP-2: We want to be able to give these students the tools and resources to go out and do what they need to do in terms of their educational goals and then come back to the community and help transform the community. It's interesting reading their call to mission essays because a lot of them talk about that. They're like, "I want to start a nonprofit," or I want to help people." A lot of those, a lot of their essays and a lot of their career goals or professional goals are centered on this idea of social philanthropy, I guess, in community service. Helping those that are maybe in difficult situations.

IP-4: I was just kind of like give the hope, resources, and the example that, "You know what? You can do it. You can make it."

IP-1: I don't know what I don't know. Luckily for me, SCP was actually the program for me that helped me with the questions to ask…what the answers are as well. I didn't know about the SATs. I didn't know about the ACTs, or college application.

Artifact 17: Gates Millennium Scholarships is awarded each year to an average of 20 students per state and pays for their bachelor's degree, master's degree and Ph.D. at

any university of the student's choice. The following SCP students have received this prestigious award…

Artifact 17: SCP students work twice as hard! Instructional hours needed to graduate from high school: 3209. 50-minute classes x 87.5 days x 44 classes (Based on classroom time set forth by the Department of Education and a school year with 175 days). Total program hours offered to SCP students (8^{th} – 12^{th} grade): 3431.

Artifact 18: The number of hours required by CBT students include 738 hours of tutoring and leadership programs; 1020 hours of summer classes at University XYZ; 440 hours of summer camp; 555 hours of bonus night study halls; 237 hours of community service 200 hours of college essay writing; 100 hours of special events; 80 hours of college forums with admissions representatives; 46 hours of Princeton review for SAP; and 15 hours of speech tournament experience.

Theme 2: Social and Emotional Learning

Based on the analysis, I concluded that social and emotional learning (SEL) was articulated in the data in a number of ways including (a) the importance of a safe learning environment; (b) the need for trust, connection, and a sense of familial belonging; and (c) the importance of speech nights, self-efficacy skills, and a strengths-based success perspective. Examples of these three subthemes are noted below. After identifying the SEL theme, I completed a literature to obtain a more expansive understanding of SEL. The literature review is located in section 3.

Safe learning environment. Examples of data to support the subtheme of a safe learning environment included the following interview quotes to answer research question one. I did not find evidence of this subtheme in the archival data.

IP-5: Often a lot of the times, you see some of the kids that are having trouble at home or something like that. They will often come to what we call "bonus night." Basically, it's a night out of the assigned night for them. There are those who are common faces around SCP that you see all the time. This is their safe haven. This is a safe place for them. Not only from drugs, gangs, and violence, the terrible things about the neighborhood, but also internal like when people are going through family problems. Things like that. Trouble. Everyone has their different story.

IP-2: A 12-year old, as an 8th grader, who is in the program already had more life experience and some experiences that I will never have. Seeing those students grow into functioning and behaving adults, which are things that weren't really possible when they came here. We're not only preparing these students to go to college but how to function in a world that's not the inner city, where they're not having to look out for who's walking right behind them and not always preparing for those kind of negative influences in their life.

IP-5: One of the things that I think makes the tutoring program work is it's a communal approach. Giving the students a safe place to be just safe. To be able to focus on things like their schoolwork. A lot of the times, often the home isn't one of those safe places for them to accomplish those tasks. A lot of the kids, they really get a vibe off of that family aspect. I think that's really one of the main things.

Trust, connection, and a sense of familial belonging. Examples of data to support the subtheme of trust, connection, and a sense of familial belonging included the following interview quotes and archival data. These data were used to answer research question one and two.

IP-6: I feel like our tutoring program also encompasses the mentoring piece as well. Our tutors often go above and beyond to take care of their students in their study rooms that night. I've heard examples where tutors would take time out of their weekends to take students to the libraries and go study for extra hours or go take them to see a play or go play basketball or do other things…its more than just the academics and I think that very much though affects the academics as well as the mentoring piece and feeling cared for and taken care of, and also not wanting to let those role models down.

IP-2: This is a place of support and encouragement and resource – where they may not get somewhere else. We try to replicate a familial feeling and not such a sterile one where you might find in school…we want to inspire the students to be here and we want them to want to be here…we have to make sure that we're calling them all the time making them feel wanted here…we need to be accessible to them. That's the purpose to be accessible to the inner city challenging students.

IP-2: Then you feel like, "Wow, I'm one of many here, and I can talk about my issues to any of these people here because they are going through similar things, and we are really part of this community of support."

IP-3: They enjoy being here with a staff that cares about them.

IP-8: Most have friends and family here. They just love it.

IP-4: The tutors provided a lot of that social capital that was missing at home. That was also very helpful. When I needed help with my Biology, with my Chemistry, with my Pre-Calculus, I always had a tutor that I could ask and then they could help me to get the homework.

IP-9: It's a place like home so that I guess they want to come.

IP-9: That's why we have other parents, and that's why we have mentor and we have tutors. We somehow become part of their family. The kids have my cell phone number where they'll call me like, "My grandma died" and they're crying hysterically. This just happened a couple of weeks ago and he's losing it, don't know what to do. I'm just like, "Relax dude. You could curse as much as you want. You could get it all out on the phone, but don't go out and lose yourself. Just chill man." Just hear him out…I don't judge him.

IP-9: I just become the person to contact, immediate contact instead of their friends in the streets being their immediate contact, or a lot of the things that they can't really explain to their dads or to the parents. I become that immediate contact with that person that they could just reach out to without feeling like, man, he's going to go tell this. They just feel like, man, I need to tell somebody, something that's going on in my head and that's the person I could trust. I'm going to let him know because I feel that he's not going to judge me, he's not going to think of me any worse, any better, he's just going to listen to me.

IP-10: The amount to which tutors are mentors is really dependent upon the students. If the student wishes to confide in you about different things, or starts asking

you questions outside of normal, "How do I do this problem?" Or, "How do I solve this essay question?" That's when you really can act as a resource, and that's when you really can have the different hats. I think a lot of the students do open up, but it definitely takes time.

IP-10: The speeches, along with other lessons where students share their experiences-- I think are really beneficial in building a sense of community. Which I think is also helpful in making sure the students are here every night, because they have friends here. They have a family here. I think that's really important in how SCP is successful as well.

IP-10: I think having tutors who are here every week with the same students every week helps to facilitate that [continuity with students] a little bit more. When you sign up to be a tutor, you're supposed to be here on a certain night every week for the school year…having the same faces every week is really important.

IP-11: The schools are looking for as much support as they can. These students don't have their parents coming on campus, asking questions. We're sort of an unofficial replacement of the parental involvement that's missing from so many students' lives. For a variety of reasons, some good, some bad.

IP-11: We are very strategic. One of the strategies is we bring students [into our CBT program] from about 50 different high schools now. [This is] definitely one of the key strategies. We don’t focus on one particular school where students have a preestablished group dynamics. You know, when they come from all these different playgrounds [schools], they can't bring their playground mentality because they come

from so many different schools. This [strategy also] allows them to meet new people with similar high, or I guess, lofty goals. We create [an environment to encourage students'] willingness to live up to the program's expectations, so that they can maintain their connectivity with their new friends from across the city. We are strategically working to have older students influencing the eighth graders. We have a saying that if you want an eighth grader to buy something, whether it's drugs or education, just have an eleventh grader sell it to them, and they'll buy it.

IP-11: For our hope to do well in our program, you'll get three more weeks of school at University XXX over your summer vacation. That's crazy. They don't do it because we tell them to go, because college is great. They go because all of their older cooler friends are going. The eighth and ninth graders just don't want to be left behind.

Artifact 1. Bring dinner at 5:45 PM on your assigned dates. Ensure that family members attend the Parent Meeting each month. Attend the SCP graduation event each May. Attend University Academic Connections Summer Residential Program for three weeks each July (after grades 8, 9, 10, and 11). Attend a leadership camp for one week each August.

Artifact 16. When SCP 9th-11th graders raise their GPA to a 3.5, they earn a $3,500 scholarship to attend a three-week college residential program every summer at University XYZ.

Speech nights, self-efficacy skills, and success orientation. Examples of data to support the subtheme of a safe learning environment included the following interview

quotes and excerpts from archival data. These data were used to answer research question one and two.

IP-1: What they currently do well is get the students used to speaking to others, so the speech tournaments. I know for me that was my biggest changes when I joined the program. I was always the shy kid that sat in the back, never volunteered in class but with SCP, they told me I have to make a speech in front of 20 people and then in front of 50 people. Back then, we used to go to churches every weekend to speak our stories. We kind of just got used to speaking to others and started getting out of our shells, in my communication and just being able to go up to somebody and speak to them, it's pretty valuable.

IP-10: I think one of the things I really learned in college was the importance of using your resources, and talking to your professors, and talking to the different people who are there to open opportunities for you. I think getting a head start on learning how to use people in your life for resources is really great for the students.

IP-10: I think in helping students understand that this program, it's really about school, but it's also about how you can overcome a lot of barriers that are involved in the students' lives.

IP-10: It's not just a tutoring program, it's supposed to be building a whole student. It's supposed to be involving what the student's life is like outside of the program, and serving different examples of people who have overcome different barriers. I think that's really important in making sure that the program is successful, along with the tutoring. Understanding that's really important. Understanding that we also have

speech night, which is an important night too, where the students share their individual stories.

IP-10: I think that's really good not just for the public speaking skill, because it's nervous to share your personal information in front of a big group of people, but I think that also fosters a sense of community and a sense of we're here to support you, we understand where you are, where you're coming from, and that there's other people who are in your situation who are successful. I think just sharing those kind of examples is really important.

IP-7: That's an important part of being in school, even in high school and in college. Knowing that you can find the answer if you don't have it and that struggle is okay and you don't just quit. I think it's really important to be resourceful.

IP-7: I think it's a big thing that SCP teaches the kids and the students that you can do it. Your homework is hard, yeah, you're getting bad grades now, but you can change that and it's a struggle, it's hard, but you can do that. I think that's why I've been successful, that's the one thing the kids need to learn. They have the ability to find the answers and got to college, get a good GPA.

IP-3: I think from a student perspective, students are scared to ask for help. We won't ask for help and even if tutors offer it, we're not very receptive…I think a lot of them, like me, were scared to ask for help and they don't because it's awkward to talk to an adult when you're a young teenager and you don't want to feel like you need the help because you got to where you are by yourself…we have to do a better job at training our students that it's okay to ask for help.

IP-4: It's not only education, right? It's completely developing an adolescent, a youth. Not only do we receive help academically, but we also receive other things like, for example...we have to learn how to shake hands and how to greet people. Even if it's something as little as looking into somebody's eyes when you greet them…speech, speech practice, learning how to write speeches, learning how to give speeches and public speaking.

IP-8: Everyone here from the staff has really that "you can do it" attitude and really, "keep on going." Even too, even when some students fall back and get into some things, making sure we're there picking them up was like, "all right, you might have messed up, but let's get up. Let's keep on going."

IP-11: You've heard this a million times I'm sure, but the philosophy of the tightrope theory? That single-handedly changed the trajectory of the entire program. We focus on what the student should do, not what they shouldn't do. Like walking on a tightrope, we don't say don't look down because then the first thing they will do is to look down. We talk about going to college. We don't talk about all the things we don't want them doing in the inner city.

IP-4: I felt like that is why college can be so effective because it's not like a DARE program where they tell you don't do drugs, don't join gangs. They just tell you want not to do, but they don't show you want to do.

IP-11: We don't talk about the students' future necessarily, because, I mean, that's just a long ways away. I show them what they can do right now, so they can impact next

summer. Everybody can start imagining what they can do next summer. That's much more tangible of an idea than the nebulous future.

Artifact 1: We are polite, courageous, and above all, honest. If we are not, please tell us so and we will correct our behavior the first time that we are told. We seek to always inspire others with our words and be positive influences at all times. We do not pull people down, but instead, we lift each other up. So remember, tough times never last, but tough people always do. That’s why others may choose to accept reality, but we choose to transform it. We show up, work hard, and tell the truth.

- Article I. All members must maintain a 3.0 GPA or above. All members who maintain a 3.5 GPA or above attend the UCSD Academic Connections program to receive college credit. Only the best of the best will go.
- Article II. All members must attend the weekly SCP College Bound program and turn in all progress reports and final grades.
- Article III. All members must have no involvement with alcohol, drugs, gangs, or sex. These are all problems that teens bring upon themselves. Who needs more problems? We have way too many other things to be concerned about.
- Article IV. All members must pass a random drug test given at least once every year.
- Article V. All members must show up with an open mind, work hard, and tell the truth.

- Article VI. All members must participate with active membership in at least one school activity, such as a club or a sport.
- Article VII. All members must be role models in their community for 25 hours per year. All members must contribute 25 hours of service to the SCP program each year, as well.

BILL OF DO RIGHTS

1. Attend the weekly SCP College Bound program on time every time. In an extreme emergency, call ahead of time to alert the program of your absence.
2. Bring dinner at 5:45 PM on your assigned dates.
3. Ensure that family members attend the Parent Meeting each month.
4. Bring your grades after you receive every single progress report and report card.
5. Attend the SCP graduation event each May.
6. Attend University Academic Connections Summer Residential Program for three weeks each July (after grades 8, 9, 10, and 11).
7. Attend a leadership camp for one week each August.
8. Attend Princeton Review SAT Preparation class for eight weeks as a Junior.
9. Keep electronic distractions at home if you desire to keep them.
10. Attend a four-year university after high school. Upon your admittance to the university, your move out of your family's home, and your signature

on the Laptop Agreement, you will receive a laptop free of charge to assist you at your new school.

Theme 3: Organizational Leadership

Based on the analysis, I concluded that organizational leadership was described in the data in terms of organizational growth, organizational learning, and setting clear expectations. Examples of interview and archival data are noted below. After identifying the organizational leadership theme, I completed a literature to obtain a more expansive understanding of organizational leadership. The literature review is located in section 3. The data below were used to answer research question one and two.

IP-7: Luke I think is the reason...one of the big reasons SCP is so successful is because of Luke. He's a super awesome advocate for students. He gets the support, the funding for SCP to keep growing, to keep moving forward and getting kids into college.

IP-3: I've seen the program expand and accept more students and we have an overwhelming waiting list. I see that it's more important to have a cap because if we just keep enrolling and filling spots, it's harder to provide quality service…we could use more staff with the amount of students we have now to have a better quality service. It's a lot of students to deal with, especially if we're talking about mentorship and psychological counseling in addition to teaching.

IP-1: Nowadays, I just feel we're getting more students than we can actually help. Their relationship between students are not as adhesive, in a word, as it used to be.

IP-2: With growth, we want to maintain the quality and the authenticity of the program which are two things that don't always mix well with growth.

IP-2: Now we have an enormous amount of students, and we're just trying to figure out, how do we maintain or go back to that familial feel and that intimate feel that the students used to have.

IP-8: The staff in CB, we don't have a training program. We don't have any training for, "How do you deal if you see a student cutting himself or a student who got in a fight or a student who has failing grades and their whole life is going down? How do you approach them? What are the correct things to ask? What are the correct things you don't ask?"

IP-5: When I graduated, it was the graduating class of 12. We've gotten so big…it was like everyone knew each other. It's like it isn't necessary gelled because all these people don't know each other.

IP-3: If we better train our staff, we can be stronger providers for our students. The profile of students is not going to change. I think what can change is how we prepare and how we can help the students.

IP-3: We're aware of our flaws. We have a really good team, a really strong team of staff members that are willing to recognize flaws and move forward.

IP-3: There should be no special privileges. There should be no blurred lines between requirements. I think it's hard for leadership to not do that because you do build relationships with students and you do meet their parents. Sometimes you go above and beyond to help them out. You feel like you have this special relationship with them so maybe you do want to blur lines, just give them a little break every once in a while.

Artifact 16: Organizational leadership timeline:

- 2001-2008: Create a program that successfully builds first generation college students.
- 2009-2012: Establish an organization that is recognized as a model for the nation.
- 2013-2018: Build a sustainable infrastructure that reaches thousands of students per year.

Theme 4: Creation of a College Completion Culture

Based on the analysis, I concluded that interview participants noted the success the organization in getting first-generation students excited about going to college. However, the interview participants acknowledged the challenges associated with and the need to develop a college completion culture. I did not find evidence of this theme in the archival data. After identifying the theme for the creation of a college completion culture, I completed a literature to obtain a more expansive understanding of the creation of a college completion culture. The literature review is located in section 3. The data below were used to answer research question one.

IP-1: Prepare inner city students for culture shock when they get to college…once I got over there, the culture shock was just no one really looked like me. At my university in particular, it was 10% Latino. I couldn't really relate to anybody. Luckily for me, back then, we had a Latino-based fraternity that would come into SCP. I was already familiar with that group and so that kind of helped me to be around them. The culture shock was there but I know it took initiative by myself to find somewhere where I would feel comfortable within the university.

IP-3: We decided it was too hard. It was too expensive. We didn't want to ask for help. SCP wasn't there holding our hand and we didn't know where to go or what to do. We were told our whole lives to go to college, but once we got there, it was hard. We missed our mom. We were broke. How is that the good life?

IP-4: I wasn't prepared for the culture shock. For example, my very first year, it only two Hispanics or Latinos students in our floor. It was me and a Salvadorian girl….I think that was the hardest thing. With that, it kind of brought it up this nostalgia of homesickness like, man, I wish I was back at home. I wish I was back with my family, back with my friends, and back at SCP. It kind of takes you out of your comfort zone. That would be the biggest thing I would say.

IP-4: Just to put it in perspective, in my freshman year, I was in the 3-person dorm. Their idea of fun was going to the mall, blowing $300 in one night, and buying things. I have $300 for the whole quarter…they couldn't understand like, "How are you so broke? How can you not have fun with us? How can you not do things with us?" A lot of it was because I didn't have money. I just probably had enough to pay my tuition, my books, and the rest that I had was for food. Those are the biggest culture shocks, which is why I ended up joining up in Latino-based fraternity while I was in college and kind of help me find a home away from home pretty much…it was about being understood and also not being economically stable enough to do those type of expensive activities that they were used to.

IP-5: Juan (pseudonym) was telling me it just wasn't going well for him at AAA University. He just didn't feel like he really fit in. I think that was a big issue that we have

to address. When you're taking a kid that is so accustomed to his inner city life...the city life. There's so many things about the different cultures. Then, the majority of a white majority there. We're just throwing him in the pot. I think it's great that we're able to send him there but there could have been more that I think AAA University could have done too to make his transition easier in that sense. One of the programs that I suggest and urge a lot, which I've noticed that a lot of our students are taking, is the Summer Bridge program.

IP-3: I think in the past couple years, we have noticed that we do a great job of promoting college and a great job of sending them there. What we don't do a great job of is keeping them there or reminding them that "You stay there and you're supposed to look for help elsewhere, besides SCP" which puts a lot of pressure on us to work on that…you have to look. SCP has been here for you for one, two, three, four, five years. Now when you get to the undergraduate level, there are programs like SCP for you at college. You got to go find them. The same way you found us in high school is the same way you got to go find them in undergraduate college. We talk about EOP. We talk about different multicultural recruitment centers. We talk about all these clubs and organizations and institutions at their university that will help first-generation college students.

IP-5: Everything's so structured in high school to where to transition to college and everything's so loose and open ended more. I went from performing really well in high school and then not so well in college.

IP-2: I can't think of anything that we wouldn't do for students who are in college, because that's our mission. At first, it's like, OK, we're building first generation college students, but we need to see them through college.

IP-2: I think we'll do anything to help them get there. If that means helping them with tuition, with housing, with homework, with support, social, familial support, getting them internships, jobs, we're going to do what we can because we've already invested so much into them. What's a little bit more?

IP-1: I was a first generation, what they call a dreamer, undocumented student. In my case, I didn't know what questions to ask. A lot of people is like, "How come you didn't ask people how you go to college or what was the process." I was, "I didn't know the questions to ask in order to succeed."

IP-1: We try to get their parents involved as well and well informed about everything because they don't know what they don't know. We try to help them know them and become familiar with the education system.

IP-2: They don't have the resources, they don't have…they wouldn't know how to start. We give them that ability and hopefully we'll give them the study skills and the resources they need to stay in school.

IP-2: We want to be able to give these students the tools and resources to go out and do what they need to do in terms of their educational goals.

IP-2: When the student's don't have anyone else in their family that has ever done it, they don't know where to start.

IP-3: When it comes to administration, evaluating transcripts because the tutoring part is great but making sure students are no longer struggling and making connections with other people. In terms of preparing them for their senior year and preparing them for the four-year university, we have a long way to go because that's something we don't do yet.

IP-4: All my friends on the street and my neighborhood, it was the opposite. They were just interested in street cred like I want to be the tough guy in the neighborhood. I want to go out. I want to prove myself. How? By beating up people, by doing crimes, stealing cars, selling drugs, making money, having the nice car at sixteen. To me, I'm not going to lie, it appealed to me. Once I got introduced to the idea of going to college and the benefits [of graduating from college and how] I could make money, be well-off, and not have to look over my shoulder for the rest of my life, to me, that was more appealing than street life.

IP-4: What sealed the deal was getting a scholarship to attend University Summer School, which is a program that we still offer. In this program, you go and pretty much live at University XYZ for 3 weeks. You live like a real college student, live in a real college dorm, eat at the dining halls, and you're taught by world-class professors and Ph.D. candidates. Being in that environment and succeeding in that environment my 9th, 10th, 11th grade [summers] it kind of convinced me, "You know what? Maybe I will be able to do it." Not only that prepared me psychologically for college, but it also provided an incentive for me to keep my grades up every year.

IP-7: I think a lot of them not caring is they didn't know that college is important. Most of them I think don't even think they have the ability or the chance to go to college and they don't even know what that means.

Overview

In review, the two research questions were the following:

- RQ-1: How do organizational leaders and adult volunteer tutors describe the effectiveness of the CBT program?
- RQ-2 How is the effectiveness of the program described in the documentary evidence?

Research Question 1

Based on the typological and inductive analysis performed and representative data shared previously, I concluded that leaders and adult volunteer tutors described the effectiveness of the CBT program via:

1. Authentic hope provided to students through (a) the life-changing and transformational gift of SCP; (b) motivation, inspiration, and a sense of community; and (c) practical praxis.
2. Social and emotional learning opportunities for the students including (a) a safe learning environment; (b) trust, connection, and a sense of familial belonging; and (c) speech nights, self-efficacy skills, and a success orientation.
3. Organizational leadership practices focused on organizational growth, organizational learning, and setting clear expectations.

4. A college going culture, but not yet a college completion culture. In fact, interview participants acknowledged the need to develop a college completion culture when asked “What ideas do you have to increase the effectiveness of the CBT program?”

Research Question 2

Based the content analysis performed and the representative data shared previously, I concluded that the effectiveness of the program described in the documentary evidence included:

1. Authentic hope provided to students through (a) the life-changing and transformational gift of SCP; (b) motivation, inspiration, and a sense of community; and (c) practical praxis.
2. Social and emotional learning opportunities for the students including (a) trust, connection, and a sense of familial belonging; and (b) speech nights, self-efficacy skills, and a success orientation.
3. Organizational leadership practices focused on organizational growth, (inferred) organizational learning, and setting clear expectations.

Ideas to Increase Effectiveness

In addition to the quotes provided earlier regarding the need for a college completion culture, other suggestions were made to increase the effectiveness of the CBT program. It is noteworthy that when asked, “What ideas do you have to increase the effectiveness of the CBT program?” I received the following data that addressed a current organizational practice (theme 3): “I think it's very important to have tutors that are

young and people of color, but I also think it's important for them to have interaction with older people of color or older people in general because the older people are the ones with a lot of experience and a lot of wisdom. They have a lot of degrees too…I think both are very important. The young perspective is, I think it's easier to relate to them, and it might be easier for them to talk to. Again, I think the older perspective has a lot more wisdom than I could ever provide to a young knucklehead student."

"I think it should be an older person so the students can feel like, just like they're in school. When somebody's up there instructing you, you give them the respect. I think that's hard to do when you're 21 or 22 to demand a sense of respect from students."

"I think a lot of the older tutors who have been around since early 2000's, they have that relationship with students that is effective. They give stories about their grandchildren or their children. In a way it gives the students somebody they can relate to too because they also have grandparents, and some of their parents are the same ages as our tutors. It gives them that parent perspective or grandparent perspective that they might not hear at home or might not listen to at home if they hear it at home."

Archival Data

Additionally, I found it interesting when I read in the archival data "[O]ur program's greatest strength is the students themselves; we strive to have at least 50% of our employees be SCP graduates. These young adults provide incomparable organizational knowledge, unsurpassed expertise on becoming first generation college students, and undeniable proof that SCP produces community-minded leaders ready to change the world."

I agree that young, culturally diverse staff are effective at relating to the students served. However, perhaps it would benefit the organization to include more experienced professionals with additional years of maturity, life experience, life wisdom, and professional business experience. Perhaps these data are linked with the college completion theme. In order to complete college, disenfranchised prospective first-generation college students may need to be adept at building relationships with those in and out of their specific demographic.

Limitations

Research studies are limited by methodological factors and researcher qualifications. Methodologically, it is important to note that conclusions from this program evaluation are not intended to be predictive or generalizable to a larger population. The research is bounded by the specific population and sample size chosen for the study located in one local community. However, care was taken to share multiple examples of data from the interviews in Section 2 as well as archival data in Appendix C so readers have access to thick, rich data from this qualitative study. Research is also limited by assumptions consciously or unconsciously made about the research project. This research project was limited by (a) the decision not to include any students as research participants because minors are a protected population, (b) the fact that parents of disenfranchised PFGCS did not choose to participate in the doctoral research project, and (c) the decision not to include observations due to time constraints. Finally, the research was limited by time. A longer ethnographic or grounded theory study would

have likely produced more in-depth findings given the extensive time involved in such studies.

Limitations of the researcher include the fact that human researchers conducting research on human participants cannot be free from bias. Although efforts were taken to reduce research bias, it could not be completely eliminated. True research objectivity is a myth as discussed earlier in Section 2. The research is further limited by the existence of only one novice researcher. An experienced evaluation team may have produced some findings that were not included in this study. Finally, culture may have limited the research as I am not a disenfranchised, first-generation college student from an ethnic minority group.

Summary

Section 2 addressed the alignment of a program evaluation methodology to the problem identified in Section 1 as well as the rationale, significance, research questions, literature review, and implications noted in Section 1. A qualitative, responsive program evaluation was justified to best address the research problem and answer the research questions regarding the effectiveness of the CBT program. Specifically, justification was provided for a naturalistic inquiry, a case-study approach, and an underlying constructivist perspective. The overall goals for this evaluation were also covered.

Section 2 also addressed the appropriateness of purposeful sampling for this research project, the access to participants through the organizational gatekeeper, building the researcher and participant relationship, and research ethics specific to this project. The qualitative data collection methods for this study are semistructured

interviews and archival data. These were discussed as were the steps to be taken to gather and record data. The role of the researcher as evidenced in the literature was also included.

Qualitative data analysis and typological, inductive, and content coding methods as described by Hatch were discussed. The reasons for opting out of computerized software for coding purposes were addressed. The steps taken to ensure quality and trustworthiness, including dealing with discrepant cases, were included in Section 2. The themes that arose from the data and explained the underlying meaning of the data were included. The four themes are (a) authentic hope, (b) social and emotional learning, (c) organizational leadership, and (d) creation of a college-completion culture. Finally, the limitations of this study were articulated at the end of Section 2. Section 3 will include the literature review for the four themes noted and will explain the project itself.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

Section 1 addressed the local issue of disenfranchised PFGCS who face various challenges involving race and lower SES as they aspire to move from the inner city to college. In this section, I discussed a local nonprofit organization in the southwestern United States, referred to by the pseudonym *the San Colombano Project (SCP),* which attempted to address the needs of local disenfranchised PFGCS. The SCP had never undertaken a program evaluation of its College-Bound Tutoring (CBT) program.

Section 2 presented a responsive program evaluation of the CBT program that I conducted using a constructivist lens and a qualitative intrinsic case-study approach based on the concept of naturalistic inquiry. In this section, a qualitative responsive program evaluation was justified as the best option to address the research problem and answer the research questions about the effectiveness of the CBT program. Specifically, justification was provided for naturalistic inquiry, a case-study approach, and an underlying constructivist perspective.

In Section 3, I present the results of the program evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the SCP's CBT program. Section 3 also includes a literature review based on the themes that emerged from the analysis of semistructured interviews and archival data presented in Section 2. These overarching themes are (a) authentic hope, (b) social and emotional learning, (c) organizational leadership, and (d) the creation of a college completion culture.

Description and Goals

As noted in Section 1, disenfranchised PFGCS in the southwestern U.S. city where the SCP operates need assistance to achieve their academic goals. The demographics of this city include minority families facing crime, poverty, hunger, discrimination, and even homelessness. Gangs and drugs are familiar sights on the streets. Some students have parents or other family members who are incarcerated. Parents who do not speak English or have a college education pose additional challenges for these youth. The SCP had not undertaken a program evaluation of the CBT program since its inception in 2001. Therefore, I conducted a responsive program evaluation of CBT and delivered an executive summary to the SCP leadership team (see Appendix A) that answered two research questions: (a) how do organizational leaders and adult volunteer tutors describe the effectiveness of the CBT program, and (b) how is the effectiveness of the program described in the documentary evidence.

Rationale

As discussed in Section 1, educating disenfranchised students is much more beneficial for the United States than allowing the current inner-city conditions to continue. Through the CBT program, the SCP aimed to improve conditions in inner-city communities by educating youth about the benefits and accessibility of higher education as an alternative to the crime, violence, drugs, and academic underachievement that plague the community. Despite the inner-city challenges, CBT participants found successful pathways to college.

As in any nonprofit organization, internal and external stakeholders in SCP wanted data to increase their understanding of the value provided by the nonprofit organization they supported, in addition to ways to increase the effectiveness of service for clients (Wholey et al., 2010). The ultimate goal of the program evaluation was to effect positive organizational change and to contribute to significant organizational improvements based on the evidence collected and the conclusions drawn (Wholey et al., 2010). The purpose of this research study was to address the SCP's gap in practice by performing a scholarly program evaluation of the CBT program. Based on the literature, I explained and justified a responsive program evaluation of the CBT program using a constructivist lens and a qualitative intrinsic case-study approach based on the concept of naturalistic inquiry (see pp. 64-65).

This evaluation provided the SCP with thick, rich qualitative data and external, timely, pragmatic, relevant, and actionable feedback about the CBT program. Analyzing 41 codes and creating four overarching themes facilitated understanding of the underlying meaning of the data, as discussed in detail in this section. The four overarching themes that emerged from the data are discussed in the literature review: (a) authentic hope, (b) social and emotional learning, (c) organizational leadership, and (d) the creation of a college completion culture. These four themes are presented in a holarchical structure, as each influences and is influenced by the others. Authentic hope is central to the discussion of all the codes and themes.

Literature Review

The purpose of this review was to synthesize the literature on the four themes that emerged from the findings. This literature review was undertaken in accordance with the constructivist approach of the study to gain a better understanding of the underlying meaning of the themes. I sought to answer these questions regarding authentic hope, social and emotional learning, organizational leadership, and creation of a college completion culture:

1. What is the current thinking in the education field?
2. Who are the major scholars writing on this theme?
3. How does the literature help explain the underlying meaning of this theme?
4. How does this literature synthesis support program evaluation?

I achieved saturation in this literature review by searching for various terms and combinations of terms in multiple databases in the Walden Library. I read more than 200 articles and books for this literature review. To find current, peer-reviewed journal articles, I used ERIC, Education Research Complete, Education from SAGE, PsycINFO, ProQuest, Academic Search Complete, and Google Scholar databases. I also reviewed the reference lists in books and articles and used Google Scholar to trace citations to find more current material.

In the various databases, I used the following search terms: *AB 540, academic optimism, academic persistence, academic press, accountability, achieving excellence, advocacy, affective factors, affiliations, affinity groups, appreciative inquiry, aspirational capital, authenticity, Bandura, belonging, building whole student, Cavanagh, coherence,*

collaboration, collaborative, college completion, college going, communication, completion agenda, culture of care, diversity, Dreamers, educational leadership, efficacy, emotional intelligence, empowerment, equipping ethical leadership, faculty, Freire, goal setting, goals, Goleman, high expectations, hope, impact, inspiration, intrinsic motivation, leadership, learning community, learning environment, learning organizations, locus of control, Maslow, mentors, motivation, opportunity gap, optimism, organizational change, organizational growth, Parker Palmer, passion, peer support network, praxes, praxis, problem-solving skills, professional learning communities, program sustainability, race, racism, resilience, respect, restorative justice, school climate, self-confidence, self-efficacy, self-esteem, self-management, Senge, sense of belonging, Shirley Hord, social capital, social change, social connection, social emotional learning, social justice education, sociocultural theory, strategic thinking, strengths-based narrative, strengths-based orientation, student advocacy, student challenges, student needs, student relational needs, student relationships, student strength, student stress, student success, student transformation, sustainable infrastructure, systems thinking, team efficacy, transformation, transformative, transformative leadership, and *trust.*

Theme 1: Authentic Hope

In the context of this study, *hope* meant neither optimistic, wishful thinking, nor spiritual faith in the afterlife. Rather, hope referred to the pedagogical context of Freire (1994, 1998a, 2007) and hooks (1994, 2003), who advocated communal, shared responsibility and collective, participatory social action to create a better future (Jacobs,

2005). Hope is not a dream or a fantasy of a world free of all social injustice. Rather, hope is focused, attainable, and local (Le Grange, 2011). Duncan-Andrade (2009) frequently used the term *authentic hope*. For the purposes of this paper, the term *authentic hope* is used interchangeably with *hope* and *critical hope*.

Authentic hope was presented in the literature as a prism of ideas. The literature included discussions of authentic hope as (a) hope anchored in praxis, (b) hope imbued with collaboration and transformation, and (c) hope steeped in wisdom and truth. In the literature review, hope was presented as a holon within a larger holarchical framework. The concept of hope influenced and was influenced by themes of social and emotional learning, organizational leadership, and the creation of a college completion culture.

Anchored in praxis. The literature contained numerous statements that authentic hope does not refer to naïve, fanciful, wishful thinking or well-intentioned reveries. In contrast, authentic hope refers to strong, determined action to fulfill audacious goals. Jacobs (2005) viewed authentic hope as grounded in tenacious action, and Duncan-Andrade (2009) viewed it as an iterative commitment to an active participatory action. Jacobs emphasized the importance of contextualizing the object of hope not as what one wants but as how one will get there. Webb (2013) noted that although authentic hope might look toward a major goal, hope requires a concrete plan to achieve a specific, meaningful, attainable, and future-oriented goal. Similarly, Marques, Lopez, and Pais-Ribeiro (2011) posited that the attainment of hope requires (a) targeted goal setting; (b) practical, flexible strategies to meet goals; and (c) determined, sustained, and empowered motivation to see goals through to completion. In the literature, hope is not presented as an

emotion, but as a concrete plan to achieve the goal(s). Without the ability to achieve the intended goal(s), there can be no authentic hope.

Freire, who wrote prolifically on the subject of hope, believed that hope resides in the human heart and is an essential component of the human journey. Embedded in the soul, authentic hope provides the liberating strength and power to overcome life's obstacles in pursuit of one's goals (Freire 1997, 1998a). Individuals are not passive spectators of preordained lives but bold authors and drivers of desired futures seeking completion and wholeness (Freire, 1998a). However, wholeness is not synonymous with perfection, because embracing one's brokenness is an essential aspect of the human journey (Palmer, 2009). Acknowledging brokenness allows for new personal growth and hopeful plans (Palmer, 2009).

Social-justice education literature refers to authentic hope. Freire (2007) believed that authentic hope in education requires audacious dreams for a better tomorrow that are deeply rooted in concrete, creative plans to bring such goals to fruition. The theme of authentic hope as it relates to disenfranchised students, educators, and social justice change agents is threaded throughout the literature review.

Imbued with collaboration and transformation. Freire, described as an ambassador for hope (Darder, 2002), commented extensively on the topic of critical hope. Freire (1994, 1997) urged social change agents in education to collaboratively, earnestly, and empathically pursue authentic hope and to transform conditions for students, regardless of any setbacks or challenges. Freire (2004) thought it tragic if social justice educators felt pain, injustice, or oppression without embracing and transforming it

into a hopeful dream worth fighting for. Similarly, Palmer (2009) urged educators to strive to become healers in a hurting world and to use life's pain and suffering to discover human's "hidden wholeness" (p. 2). Authentic hope relies on relationships, genuine caring, collaboration, and interdependency to achieve collective healing (Duncan-Andrade, 2009). It is often repeated throughout the literature that the social justice journey is not made in a vacuum. Meaningful social change on behalf of disenfranchised students requires persistent, dedicated social justice educators committed to collaborative, empathetic relationship building.

Authentic hope is collaborative. Hope is not extended by the *haves* to the *have-nots* in society. Instead, hope springs from collaborative relationships and authentic conversations anchored in the realities of today and plans for a better tomorrow (Le Grange, 2011). Social justice education, in particular, is rooted in commitment to, and love for, disenfranchised students and a strong ability to hope collaboratively for a more just tomorrow (Darder, 2002). Social injustice dehumanizes people (Darder, 2002); hope restores people (Freire, 1997). In this context, hope is a pedagogy anchored in steadfast, collaborative practice to actively, purposefully, intentionally, and authentically create a better tomorrow for disenfranchised PFGCS.

Freire (2004) also emphasized the transformative value of hope. Social justice transformation requires dreaming and a vision for tomorrow that is worth striving to achieve (Freire, 2004). A transformative social-justice dream requires dedicated effort undertaken in the name of collective ethics to defeat dehumanizing inequality and discrimination (Freire, 2004). Freire and other likeminded social justice educators saw

the fight for equity and excellence in education on behalf of disenfranchised student as a hopeful vision that demanded realization. Authentic hope requires a mutual struggle to co-create a better tomorrow without giving in to fear, pessimism, and disenchantment (Freire, 1998a, 2004). Tschannen-Moran, Dipaola, and Forsyth (2011) emphasized the importance of parents' trust in educators based upon parents' belief that educators have the best interests of the child at heart. This collaboration between parents and educators is key to creating a better tomorrow for culturally diverse students with lower SES.

In works on critical, authentic hope, Freire (1997) stressed the need for educators to labor in love to provide disenfranchised students with improved educational opportunities. This labor must be rooted in self-determination and authentic hope instead of a hope that is nostalgic, baseless, naïve, or anesthetized. Freire (1996, 1997, 2000) warned educators that achieving transformative change for disenfranchised students is an ongoing campaign that simultaneously requires *patience* to undertake the long-term struggle and *impatience* to meet students' urgent needs. This struggle requires hopeful, stubborn, persistent, patient, skilled, and competent educators with steadfast conviction who are willing to work collaboratively for social justice (Freire, 1996). In social justice education, hope is a precious bond and an ontological need between teachers and learners in their journey of learning and creating as they strive together to anchor hope in practice (Freire, 1994, 1998a).

Steeped in wisdom and truth. As previously noted, authentic hope is not wishful thinking, because it does not exist without a pathway to attainment. Hope is steeped not only in praxis and collaboration, but also in wisdom and truth. Freire (1994) contended

that experiencing authentic hope is critical to human existence; therefore, knowing what is and is not authentic hope is essential to survival.

Authentic hope is honest, wise, and life-giving. Duncan-Andrade (2009) explained that false or inauthentic hope appears in various forms. Inauthentic hope might be hyperbolic claims despite evidence to the contrary. Delusional hope might whitewash the historical pain, suffering, injustice, and oppression of disenfranchised students. Inauthentic hope creates a narrative of individual victimization and powerlessness to name and achieve meaningful goals. If hope is so distant as to be unattainable, then it is inauthentic hope (Duncan-Andrade, 2009). Martin Luther King and an ancient proverb noted that hope continually deferred is hope denied, which makes the human heart sick (Duncan-Andrade, 2009).

However, goals cannot always be realized immediately. Bovens (1999) discussed the frustrating dilemma of hoping for something that does not come to pass quickly and noted that a delay or setback can prompt one to consider creative alternative strategies for goal attainment. Authentic hope recognizes that although life may not be fair, carefully considered risk coupled with self-understanding and meaningful, actionable zeal is conducive to goal attainment (Bovens, 1999). Life imbued with authentic hope provides inner strength, anticipation, and a respite from despair, even in the face of adversity. Dreams can be fluid, and midcourse corrections can be made so that hope is not lost in the face of obstacles and frustration (Bovens, 1999). Therefore, it is essential to possess the wisdom to differentiate between authentic and inauthentic hope and hope temporarily delayed and hope denied.

Theme 2: Social and Emotional Learning

In the holarchical structure of this literature review, the theme and subthemes of social and emotional learning by disenfranchised PFGCS were presented as concepts influencing and influenced by the other themes. The subthemes for this theme are the importance of (a) resilience, high hope, and academic optimism; (b) trust, belonging, and a culture of care; and (c) self-efficacy and agency. Truebridge (2014) argued that, for students, hope is associated with resilience and positive messaging, resilience requires caring, compassionate, trusting relationships and a sense of belonging. The conditions for resilience include (a) high expectations for academic performance, (be) the abilities to find one's voice, and (c) the ability to build personal power through self-efficacy and agency. Hord, Roussin, and Sommers (2009) observed that to experience hopeful academic optimism, students need to develop trusting relationships, gain self-efficacy, and prioritize learning. Similar to the theme of hope, social and emotional learning was presented in the literature as a prism of ideas as it relates to disenfranchised students.

Scioli, Rici, Nyugen, and Scioli (2011) conceptualized hope as a multidimensional, rhizomatic construct encompassing collaborative action, relational trust, care recruitment, resiliency, self-regulation, fear management, mastery motivation, beliefs of empowerment, and feelings of being supported. In particular, the participants found to be most hopeful were not rugged individualists, but those who were collaborated and relationally connected with others (Scioli, Rici, Nyugen, & Scioli, 2011). Similarly, Miller (2011) observed that teachers are most effective when interactions with students take place within a holarchical and dialogical, not hierarchical, classroom structure.

Through conversations steeped in genuine respect, empathy, and humble understanding, teachers can reach, influence, and encourage disenfranchised students and support them in their academic, social, and emotional learning (Miller, 2011). Cammarota, Moll, Gonzalez, and Cannella (2012) found that respect is essential for educators committed to students' growth and development. Social and emotional learning are examined through this lens developed by Truebridge (2014), Hord, Roussin, and Sommers (2009), Miller (2011), and Cammarota et al. (2012).

Resilience, high hope, and academic optimism. Hope, the first theme of the literature review, is also a key component of social and emotional learning. It acts as a holon in the holarchical structure. Students exhibiting high levels of hope achieve higher grades, GPAs, and academic optimism than students exhibiting low levels of hope (Davidson, Feldman, & Margalit, 2012). In a study of college freshman, Snyder (as cited by Goleman, 2006) concluded that students with high levels of hope or academic optimism tended to earn higher grades than students with equivalent academic aptitude but lower levels of hope and academic optimism. College students with high levels of hope identified a wide range of strategies to increase grades and exhibited the necessary resiliency to enact strategies (Goleman, 2006). Students with moderate levels of hope named fewer actionable strategies and had less resiliency to attain goals, while students with low levels of hope exhibited little resiliency and a demoralized state and could not develop strategies to improve their GPA (Goleman, 2006). Serving as a positive, actionable adaptation skill, authentic hope alleviates paralyzing anxiety, despair, depression, and despondency amid setbacks (Goleman, 2006). Therefore, Davidson,

Feldman, and Margalit (2012) urged educators to establish communities for incoming college freshman that promote and reinforce hopeful thinking skills through personal goal setting, self-efficacy pathways, problem-solving skills, strengths-based resilience beliefs, a sense of coherence (SOC), and academic adjustment, persistence, and optimism.

Davidson et al. (2012) contended that hopeful thinking is a learned skill that synthesizes two synergistic cognitive functions: (a) agentic thinking, which believes that one can set, pursue, and accomplish goals; and (b) pathways thinking, which acknowledges one's ability to implement the strategies necessary to meet those goals. According to hope theory, authentic hope cannot be realized without the sustained motivation that comes from agentic and pathways thinking.

On the college campus, academic optimism requires authentic hope, trusting relationships, academic press, and a sense of identification and connection with the college (Tschannen-Moran, Dipaola, & Forsyth, 2011). College academic optimism is exhibited by students with high levels of hope who realize that earning good grades results from careful planning, hard work, resiliency, initiative, and a SOC (Davidson et al., 2012). A SOC is critical for students to cope with adversity and stress. A student with a high SOC is resilient and views the world as (a) comprehensible because there are understandable explanations for events, (b) manageable because some strategies can affect favorable change, and (c) meaningful because challenges are worth overcoming (Davidson et al., 2012). SOC theoreticians have posited a positive correlation between increased SOC, strategic thinking, and self-efficacy (Davidson et al., 2012).

Resilience was a key component of social and emotional learning. Fletcher and Sarkar (2013) viewed resilience as founded upon experienced adversity and positive adaptation to experienced adversity. Wright, Masten, and Narayan (2013), though, stressed that resilience should be seen as a contextualized continuum of inner fortitude because resilience can be mediated by different people in different ways in different settings. Resilience is synergistically affected by dynamic physiological, psychological, relational, and cultural factors (Wright, Masten, & Narayan, 2013).

A college education involves more than academics. During college, students are expected to navigate adversity, increase their social and emotions skills, develop belief systems to increase resiliency, and acquire additional tools to overcome challenges beyond the college campus (Truebridge, 2014). Reframing the narrative from a deceit-based narrative to a strengths-based narrative is essential to promote resilience, increase hope, and promote academic optimism (Truebridge, 2014). Disenfranchised first-generation college students have already demonstrated resiliency, persistence, and strength during the journey to the college campus (Truebridge, 2014). When they arrive at college, disenfranchised first-generation college students have already beaten the odds, leveraged available resources, and proven that they are hopeful survivors. Resilient students acknowledge that humans are relational beings wired to make connections; consequently, they have the social and emotional intelligence to find appropriate on-campus communities with meaningful connectivity, social cohesion, and reciprocal support systems (Kent, Davis, & Reich, 2014).

Trust, belonging, and culture of care. Tschannen-Moran et al. (2011) defined trust as the willingness to be vulnerable with others based on the belief that the recipients of trust are genuinely caring, competent, capable, honest, truthful, and dependable. Trust is essential to positive, safe learning environments which can offset the effects of low SES and promote higher academic achievement as caring teachers provide disenfranchised, marginalized students with such antecedents to trust as respect, integrity, honesty, benevolence, openness, competence, and reliability (Tschannen-Moran et al., 2011). Disenfranchised students who do not feel safe or who perceive their instructors as not genuinely caring protect themselves by limiting their vulnerability and withdrawing relationally, emotionally, and academically (Tschannen-Moran et al., 2011).

Truebridge (2014) also noted the importance of consistently communicating high expectations to students in an authentically caring, high-trust environment, empowering them by providing the needed resources, and communicating that students are resilient and can meet their goals. Bowman (2012) added that teachers also create trust when they communicate with students in a spirit of humble inquiry, instead of from a stance of omniscience. Other trust-breaking practices include damaging surprises, a sagacious demeanor, bad character, communication of inaccurate information, attempts to make changes outside the context of an authentic relationship, dismissal of the common welfare of the group, and a lack of character, empathy, integrity, and respect (Bowman, 2012). Any form of betrayal diminishes trust and negates the narrative that teachers are authentically caring (Cammarota et al., 2012).

School membership theory posits that when teachers demonstrate authentic respect and care for students, students become more engaged in learning and more committed to academic success (Tschannen-Moran et al., 2011). Conversely, when students feel alienated and excluded from the circle of belonging, they withdraw academically and experience "powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, cultural estrangement, self-estrangement, and social isolation" (Tschannen-Moran et al., 2011, p, 155). Therefore, academic success increases when students engage in learning after experiencing a sense of belonging in a trusting, caring environment (Tschannen-Moran et al., 2011). Tschannen-Moran et al. (2011) operationalized student engagement to include (a) behavioral participation in learning; (b) emotional and social feelings about the value of school, schoolwork, and social relationships in school; and (c) cognitive motivation, persistence, and academic effort. Cammarota et al. (2012) emphasized that educators must exercise effort and intentionality to develop meaningful relationships that increase trust and belonging for disenfranchised students, especially marginalized students from Latino/Hispanic cultures that emphasize strong social ties. The importance of strong, authentic, and respectful interpersonal relationships cannot be overstated for disenfranchised Latino/Hispanic students navigating the unfamiliar and sometimes intolerant terrain of higher education (Cammarota et al., 2012). Therefore, Cammarota et al. pointed to the necessity for students to find communities of support where they are surrounded by peers striving to achieve academic success.

The culture of care theory was developed by Cavanagh (2009). Culture of care characterizes a culturally responsive pedagogy as (a) grounded in reciprocal, healthy,

genuine, aesthetic caring relationships between teachers and learners; (b) committed to students' achievement of academic success and their highest potential; (c) structured around a student-centric learning model with expected positive outcomes both inside and outside the classroom; and (d) framed by restorative justice that increases positive school experiences and repairs harm in relationships (Cavanagh, Macfarlane, Glynn, & Macfarlane, 2012). Culture-of-care educators are committed to restoring relationships in the classroom and are opposed to enforcing a crime-and-punishment-based, zero-tolerance discipline policy (Cavanagh, 2012; Cavanagh, Vigil, & Garcia, 2014). Holistic caring consists of the bifurcated approach of connected, kind *soft caring* and *hard caring* demonstrated in accountability, academic pressure, and consistent high expectations (Cavanagh et al., 2012).

Culture-of-care educators advocate for social justice on behalf of students from ethnically, culturally, and socioeconomically marginalized communities (Cavanagh et al., 2012). To create a culture of care, educators listen intensely and reflectively to students' stories and empathetically engage with members of culturally diverse cultures to understand how to create safe, respectful, trusting, and engaged learning communities for students which honor their cultural identity and holistic sense of being (Cavanagh, 2009; Cavanagh et al., 2012). A culture of care is well aligned with peace education, conflict resolution, nonviolence, reciprocal understanding, safe and peaceful classrooms, holistic caring, care before censure, freedom from harm, achievement of one's potential, and honoring of students' right to be true to themselves and their culture (Cavanagh et al., 2012). Similarly, Bintliff (2011) noted that restorative approaches address students'

feelings of alienation and disconnection by providing alternatives that build trust, emotional safety, and a sense of belonging to help increase academic engagement and close achievement gaps.

Self-efficacy and agency. Davidson et al. (2012) defined self-efficacy as the ability to set goals and persist in accomplishing them despite obstacles. Self-efficacy and personal agency are predictive of academic success and require the ability to leverage the requisite tools to meet goals, sustain self-motivation, and promote hope and SOC (Davidson et al., 2012). Truebridge (2014) noted that high-efficacy students link internal personal strengths and past personal victories with available external resources of social and community capital to increase success. Likewise, agency is correlated with increased classroom engagement and improved academic performance (Kang, Chang, Chen, & Greenberger, 2015). Bandura (2012) clarified that self-efficacy is more than the belief that one can meet academic goals; self-efficacy also requires the tools to manage the steps to achieve the final goal. Bandura found that self-efficacy is best developed within a community of peer support. Self-efficacy is also closely tied to hope. Snyder (1994) noted that high hope, self-efficacy, and personal agency are associated with optimism, positive affect, self-esteem, perception of control over events in life, and belief in one's problem-solving skills. Goleman (2006) observed that self-efficacy, personal agency, hope, and optimism are learned competencies and can be more important than IQ in achieving goals. As discussed, authentic hope and social and emotional learning exist in a holarchical structure. Hope influences and is influenced by social and emotional learning, while social and emotional learning influence and are influenced by hope.

Theme 3: Organizational Leadership

Organizational leadership was also part of the holarchical structure informing social justice for disenfranchised PFGCS. Effective trust-based leadership requires a balance between performance-based expectations and a high value on healthy relationships (Tschannen-Moran et al., 2011). Tschannen-Moran et al. (2011) argued that leadership trust is earned through repeated acts of benevolent caring and authentic goodwill and through predictable, helpful, and competent leadership behaviors to assist students in practical ways. Culture-of-care educators practice aesthetic caring, which requires a commitment to effective practices that produce positive educational outcomes and genuine caring for students (Cavanagh et al., 2014). Leadership, therefore, fits nicely in the holarchical structure outlined so far.

Senge (1994) encouraged leaders of learning organizations to commit to achieving sustainable organizational growth and impact over time by growing better, not necessarily bigger. Although researching all critical aspects of managing organizational growth is beyond the scope of this project, I reviewed the lessons learned by Teach for America because SCP is partnered with this organization to deliver training for SCP tutors and staff. Teach for America leaders felt a moral imperative to grow the organization and increase their social justice impact (Mead, Chuong, & Goodson, 2015). The Teach for America leader shared the lessons learned during organizational growth in a 2015 document intended for other social-justice educational organizations. The fundamental lesson expressed was that a strong leadership team, organizational efficacy, a deep talent pipeline, and broad bench strength are necessary for scaling and maturing an

organization. Some organizational leaders voiced concern that quality might be sacrificed for growth, which would inevitably lead to the ineffective implementation of policies and procedures. Other leaders, though, argued that growth would force the organization to mature and establish best practices for procedures so far performed ad hoc. These growth proponents suggested that quality could be embedded, not lost, by identifying the best performers in the organization and replicating their best practices throughout the organization. Teach for American chose to grow and to share the following lessons for other organizational leaders. They believe social-education organizations should hire and retain leaders who can:

- Address concerns to limit disruptions caused by employee turnover;
- Build a collaborative team that operates in a safe environment to ask and answer hard questions;
- Clarify the differences between requisite and aspirational organizational goals;
- Articulate clearly the organizational mission and core competencies;
- Commit to organizing ongoing team training, team building, and team celebrations;
- Communicate constantly, and maintain a deep commitment to the organizational mission;
- Complete formative and summative evaluations;
- Construct a broad, ongoing talent pipeline;
- Create structures to maintain quality during growth;
- Cultivate and develop a diverse, high-performing team;

- Develop systems to collect and analyze data for ongoing organizational improvement;
- Draft and share a clear growth strategy;
- Drive intentional social justice impact in the larger educational context;
- Ensure financial stability and sustainable fundraising practices;
- Identify and promote qualities needed to demonstrate ongoing organizational health;
- Invent organizational models to address the greater communications needs of higher numbers of internal and external customers;
- Meet the ongoing training and coaching needs of all team members;
- Name and share short-term and long-term strategic goals ;
- Nurture political and community will to support the organization's social justice mission;
- Prepare progressively sophisticated operational systems;
- Track staff engagement levels and employee satisfaction scores; and
- Understand how organization growth influences the internal organizational culture.

Additionally, the literature contains numerous references to the importance of commitment to organizational learning as a key component of organizational growth and health strategies. Jones, Stall, and Yarbrough (2013) noted that professional learning organizations (PLC) in education are based upon (a) shared visions, values, and goals; (b) context-specific organizational learning; (c) productive, synergistic, collaborative,

respectful, and collegial relationships among participants; (d) the integration of reflective thinking and data to inform decisions and improve educational outcomes for all students; and (e) a commitment to increased teacher efficacy and continuous organization improvement. Kennedy (2013) noted the importance of alignment, sustainability, scaffolded learning, and integrated student learning to PLCs' professional learning initiatives. Simply stated, professional learning should increase student learning (Mizell, Hord, Killion, & Hirsch, 2011). Educational leaders must commit to both individual knowledge building and safe, shared organizational learning to build the team capacity necessary to meet students' academic needs, because team knowledge and trust in a safe learning journey are predictive of organizational performance and collective efficacy (Lee, Gillespie, Mann, & Wearing, 2010). Lee, Gillespie, Mann, and Wearing (2010) viewed organizational trust and distributed leadership practices as critical components of effective PLCs. Easton (2012) added that learning organizations should have a foundation of passion, purpose, and respect for others and value creativity, energized problem-solving, and the generation of a variety of solutions.

Theme 4: Creation of a College Completion Culture

Disenfranchised first-generation college students need assistance navigating the road from college acceptance to graduation (Fujimoto et al., 2013; Smith, 2011). Although college access and a college-going mindset are the first steps, O'Banion (2011) argued that college access is not enough; social justice educators must create successful, integrated, systematic, effective pathways to build a college completion culture. First-generation college students do not have access to the same social and familial capital as

their non-first-generation peers. Therefore, they need tools to navigate the unfamiliar environment of a college campus (Soria & Stebleton, 2012) and thereby increase graduation rates (Stephens, Brannon, Markus, & Nelson, 2015). Dyce, Albold, and Long (2013) emphasized that good behavior and good grades are not enough to succeed in college. Disenfranchised first-generation college students need to understand the complex college structure, professors' expectations, and the methods to access available college resources using the available social, aspirational, cultural, familial, and educational capital (Dyce, Albold, & Long, 2013).

Disenfranchised students who want to attend college and graduate first need assistance to arrive at the college campus and to understand the steps required for graduation (Freire, 2004; Oyserman, Johnson, & James, 2011). One of the first steps is to visit college campuses during high school. However, Stephens, Brannon, Markus, and Nelson (2015) noted that disenfranchised students often cannot afford such visits and first come to the college campus when the semester begins. Nearly 50% of working-class college students do not visit any college, observe a campus climate, or evaluate their cultural fit at any campus before submitting college applications (Stephens et al., 2015).

However, many disenfranchised first-generation college students do arrive at college with inner fortitude and resilience. Morales, Herrera, and Murry (2011) contended that the synergistic strengths that serve students well on the college campus include the internal strengths of problem solving, autonomy, and a sense of purpose, as well as the external strengths of supportive relationships, hope, and opportunities to connect and serve with others. Gonzalez, Stein, and Huq (2013) observed that college

persistence and completion require consistent motivation combined with self-efficacy skills. Smith (2011) found that successful educators working with first-generation college students create effective programs in a safe learning environment to teach life skills, leadership development, and volunteerism.

Trevino and DeFreitas (2014) suggested that culturally diverse first-generation college students choose colleges that offer them well-established programs, courses, and support. Stephens et al. (2015) noted the importance of sharing success stories of graduates assisted by supportive student services, such as *I'm First*. Additionally, O'Banion (2011) urged educational leaders to equip all persons working with first-generation college students with the skills necessary to support these students on the journey from college acceptance to college completion. O'Banion suggested utilizing student-success-plan software (http://www.studentsuccessplan.org/) designed to increase success, persistence, and completion among first-generation college students. Markle and O'Banion (2014) also recommended SuccessNavigator™ (https://www.ets.org/successnavigator/about/how) to increase students' academic aptitude, college-going commitment, social connectedness, self-management skills, and self-efficacy tools.

The literature review for the creation of a college completion culture revealed three subthemes: (a) the affective domain: hopeful, transformative, strengths-based beliefs; (b) caring, collaborative, supportive on-campus relationships; and (c) self-efficacy.

The affective domain: Hopeful, transformative, strengths-based beliefs. First-generation college students often arrive at college amidst congratulations and well-

wishers who expect a happily-ever-after future (Rios-Aguilar & Deil-Amen, 2012). These expectations are not realistic. First-generation college students need guidance as they traverse the unfamiliar *shape of the river* known as the college campus (Cabrera, Lopez, & Saenz, 2012). The creation of a college completion culture involves increasing academic success and persistence by providing the necessary institutional support and guidance for students to improve their academic skills and supporting the affective domain through encouragement and trusting relationships (Markle & O'Banion, 2014). Markle and O'Banion (2014) found that malleable, noncognitive affective factors (e.g., hopefulness, motivation, commitment, character, self-confidence, goal setting, self-efficacy, social support, connectedness) are predictive of student persistence and academic success, even after controlling for standardized test scores, GPA, and SES. First-generation college students require a sense of belonging and connection to their new identity and their "school-relevant self" (Stephens et al., 2015, p.1). Connecting to the school-relevant self requires aligning self-beliefs, personal relationships, and college-based activities to enable behaviors congruent with in the new environment of a college campus (Stephens et al., 2015).

A hopeful attitude toward a transformative future is essential. Aspirational capital involves dreaming for a better future while believing that challenges on the road to educational success can be overcome (Dyce et al., 2013; Yosso, 2005). Freire (2004) reminded readers that an education, by its very nature, offers the hope of a new future for the learner and the community. Webb (2013) stressed that education awakens, but does not create, hope in students. Cockell, McArthur-Blair, and Schiller (2012) noted that

higher education is a force for creating social change, economic opportunities, and personal transformation.

Caring, collaborative, supportive on-campus relationships. Students need to find on-campus mentors who believe in them and offer support. Important aspects of building a college completion culture – promoting positive self-beliefs, unwavering persistence, increased self-efficacy, and a commitment to the value of education – are best developed within a supportive on-campus mentoring program (Bordes-Edgar, Arredondo, Kurpius, & Rund, 2011). Cerezo and McWhirter (2012) reported that ethnic mentor undergraduate programs and the Latino Educational Equity Project increased college retention, persistence, personal and social adjustment to college, self-efficacy, effective goal setting, cultural congruity, and student satisfaction among Latino/Hispanic college students.

Arana, Castaneda-Sound, Blanchard, and Aguilar (2011) observed that collaborative learning environments have important roles in increasing student engagement, enhancing relationships to increase cultural congruity, and growing social capital to improve persistence and completion. First-generation college students need available, passionate, quality faculty in a supportive climate as well as fellow students with whom they share familiarity and cultural experiences to help increase learning and persistence (Arana, Castaneda-Sound, Blanchard, & Aguilar, 2011). These results were especially strong for Latino/Hispanic students when they connected with a Bridge program or similar support group and had mentors who intentionally connected them

with help to access the social capital, guidance, support, and assistance needed to complete college (Rios-Aguilar & Deil-Amen, 2012).

Latino/Hispanic students are often the first in their families to attend college, and learning how to chart a course from college acceptance to graduation has been described as trying to navigate all the twists and turns of a river without knowing its shape (Cabrera et al., 2012). Evidence shows that feelings of isolation while navigating the road from college acceptance to graduation resulted in significant drop-out or push-out rates and the inability to reach the goal of college graduation among Latino/Hispanic students (Irizarry, 2012). Jehangir (2013) described disenfranchised college students as isolated, marginalized "strangers without codebooks," trying to navigate an alien landscape without an understanding of tacit collegiate expectations, implicit rules, and explicit regulations (p. 29).

Among first-generation college students, social isolation and the development of few positive relationships were correlated with decreased self-efficacy, increased frustration, negative classroom and on-campus experiences, and higher college drop-out rates (Bordes-Edgar et al., 2011). First-generation college students rarely seek assistance from instructors during their high school and college years. Disenfranchised students are unlikely to ask questions of teachers, seek assistance from counselors, or speak up in the classroom unless they feel welcome, safe, accepted, connected, and competent (Nieto, Rivera, Quiñones, & Irizzary, 2013).

However, for disenfranchised students, personal, on-campus relationships decreased their feelings of invisibility and discrimination and helped them integrate into

college and experience increased feelings of connection, belonging, and confidence (Baker, 2013). Stephens et al. (2015) found that minority students were more empowered and successful when they connected with other students with similar backgrounds and cultures. Similarly, students reported higher levels of engagement when they were taught to find and insert their voice within the college community (Cabrera et al., 2012). First-generation students who had mentoring relationships upon arrival at college had higher rates of persistence and academic success than those without mentoring relationships.

Social justice educators must show disenfranchised students the wisdom of building relationships with mentors, instructors, counselors, and alumni to increase their resources and social capital (Stephens et al., 2015). On-campus, ethnic-student peer-support organizations have been found to successfully help Latino/Hispanic college students connect, integrate, and increase their social capital, cultural congruency and validation, retention, and academic performance (Cerezo & Chang, 2013; Cerezo & McWhirter, 2012). Significant contact with faculty also has significant roles in increasing academic perseverance, self-efficacy, goal setting, and the utilization of available campus resources to meet challenges (Cerezo & Chang, 2013). First-generation college students' self-efficacy and motivation increased when they built relationships with warm, caring faculty members (Trevino & DeFreitas, 2014). Soria and Stebleton (2012) found that such students were less likely to ask for assistance and enjoyed the following:

- A sense of belonging and community.
- High levels of college adjustment.
- High levels of academic engagement.

- Reduced feelings of alienation.

These students saw faculty as real people and found faculty who were themselves first-generation students to provide encouragement (Soria & Stebleton, 2012). These student–faculty interactions had positive correlations with academic performance, increased social capital, and persistence toward graduation (Soria & Stebleton, 2012).

Stephens et al. (2015) encouraged students to believe they deserve to be at college, and they can be successful, valued, recognized, and welcomed in a college community. No single strategy is a panacea. Instead, the creation of a college completion culture takes the multiprong approach of several components including:

- a warm college culture;
- positive relationships with students, peers, professors, and teaching assistants;
- increased cultural capital;
- the presence of similar people;
- feeling part of a community;
- taking advantage of resources;
- locating role models;
- experiencing diversity;
- learning to have a visible presence on campus and a vocal presence in the classroom;
- extracurricular activities;
- mentors;
- peer networks;

- interactions with faculty and staff;
- college transition programs;
- safe, trusted communities of support;
- familial support;
- a SOC;
- tutoring;
- research opportunities;
- volunteerism;
- mentors who teach strategies to increase self-efficacy;
- a desire to make the most of the college experience;
- determination to avoid isolation;
- participation in workshops; and
- counselors to help students choose a major and understand possible career paths.

Learning becomes most effective and transformative with the integration of culturally conscious teaching, deep, caring authentic learning communities, open-mindedness, giving hearts, and genuine respect (Nieto, 2012). In a culture of care, students can find their voice and safely share their stories. For instance, R. Reyes (2012) stressed the importance of helping disenfranchised students use the power of storytelling, and McLaren (1989) confirmed the importance of all students' stories and their meaning in defining students and their reality. Through storytelling, disenfranchised students can leverage the power of their individual and collective voices (McLaren, 1989). It is

important for students to share their stories in a safe, affirming and caring environment. The transformative experience of sharing one's story promotes bonding as well as the development of resilience with a strengths-based orientation (Bintliff, 2011; Truebridge, 2014).

Self-efficacy on campus. The skills needed to persist from college acceptance to college completion include: academic competence, intrinsic motivation, familial capital, good study habits, adaptive cognitive strategies, resilience, positive feedback, encouragement, academic optimism, school engagement, self-confidence, class participation, and belief in the abilities to succeed and direct one's course of action to graduation (Trevino & DeFreitas, 2014).

- Academic engagement, interaction with faculty inside and outside the classroom, and classroom participation (Soria & Stebleton, 2012)
- Academic self-confidence (Crisp, Taggart, & Nora, 2014)
- Awareness of external resources, such as that developed through a college preparation program designed to increase self-efficacy skills, including how to talk with faculty, participate in the classroom, find tutors and mentors, learn college strategies, and identify job shadowing opportunities (Stephens et al., 2015)
- Development of a school-relevant self, belief that one can graduate and that a college education opens doors to a better future, empowerment, a sense of fitting in, engagement, resilience, social and culture capital, not succumbing to

impostership, and academic, extracurricular, and social engagement (Stephens et al., 2015)

- Intentionality, goal setting, college preparation, and aspirational capital needed to graduate (Dyce et al., 2013)
- Self-confidence, resilience, and the college-going self-efficacy needed to realize college graduation (Gonzalez, Stein, & Huq, 2013)
- Self-efficacy, valuing of education, and the skills and resilience that determine the likelihood of persisting through graduation (Bordes-Edgar et al., 2011)
- Collaboration, high expectations, academic engagement, writing-intensive courses, capstone projects, study abroad, use of social capital, commitment to social and emotional learning and social engagement on campus, participation in learning communities and in high-impact opportunities offered on campus, knowledge of faculty office hours, collaboration, high expectations, academic engagement, maintenance of academic motivation, and relationships with student advisors, counselors, residence hall leaders (Soria & Stebleton, 2012)
- Collaboration with faculty, school leaders, counselors, parents, and students (Trevino & DeFreitas, 2014)

Implementation

In this section, I discuss various aspects of program evaluation, including (a) potential resources and existing supports, (b) potential barriers to completion, (c) implementation and timetable, (d) and the roles and responsibilities of students and others. Upon completion, I (a) delivered the written program evaluation to the SCP

president, (b) offered to present the findings in person to staff and/or the board of directors, and (c) offered to work with the SCP leadership team to answer further questions or provide consultation services over time.

Potential Resources and Existing Supports

The greatest resources for the implementation of this program evaluation were the cooperation and willingness to participate exhibited by the president, gatekeeper, and research participants at SCP. The SCP team members were gracious and generous with their time and provided substantive, transparent responses. A palpably warm and trusting organizational environment greatly contributed to the success of this evaluation. Research participants' willingness to be candid and honest ensured the capture of valuable data and the validity of the program evaluation. Although the interviews were held during an extremely busy time of the year, staff members carved time out from their schedules to fully participate in the research process. Additionally, the gatekeeper ensured that we had adequate physical space to conduct the interviews despite the small size of the facility. Finally, the gatekeeper generously provided archival data which contributed significantly to the success of the program evaluation.

As noted in the program evaluation (Appendix A), the organization had the willingness to conduct an honest self-examination and accept constructive feedback to improve their service to their students and the local community.

Potential Barriers to Completion

This program evaluation was time intensive. The data collection yielded thick, rich data that took weeks to code and analyze. Digesting and reflecting on the

significance of the data took weeks. Some data were sobering, and I could not gloss over their deeper meanings and significance without deep reflection on the data, the gravity of inner-city students' plight, the injustices faces by disenfranchised students, and the potential for social change.

In addition, the literature reviews presented in sections 1 and 3 had to be exhaustive because of the depth and breadth of the topics and the urgency to understand these challenges and give meaningful answers. Completing this study required months of intensive study, careful planning, and deep reflection. It could be undertaken only by researchers willing to invest the time required and to reflect upon the deeper meanings and experiences, as described by Freire (1994, 1996, 1997, 1998b, 2000, 2004, 2007).

The potential barriers to implementing recommendations noted in the program evaluation will be time and resources. The staff is fairly young, which works well for connecting with the students they serve. However, one barrier to implementation may be young and inexperienced staff members. As noted in Section 2, as the organization grows and matures, it might be beneficial to hire experienced professionals with additional years of maturity, life experience, life wisdom, and professional business experience to join the SCP team.

Implementation and Timetable

This responsive evaluation of the CBT program conducted using a constructivist lens and a qualitative, intrinsic case-study approach based on the concept of naturalistic inquiry could have been completed at any time during the year. The SCP staff worked 12 months a year, which made it feasible to complete a program evaluation at any time.

Considering the rapid growth the organization was experiencing, it was not logical to postpone the program evaluation until an ideal season since time is critical when organizations experience significant growth. The benefit of a timely program evaluation cannot be overstated. The people in the organization were extremely receptive to feedback and took time out of their busy schedules to conduct staff advances. They did not refer to these off-campus gatherings as staff retreats because they felt that, given the enormity of the challenges and battles they encounter, they can never retreat.

The recommendations in the program evaluation (Appendix A) can be started immediately. Other recommendations may require a new semester or school year to begin before implementing structural changes.

Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others

To achieve maximum potential, the organization chosen and the research participants involved needed to be committed to organizational transparency, learning, and growth. With frank, honest answers, genuine research can be conducted, and a meaningful program evaluation can be constructed.

The evaluator needed to be well prepared, humble, and grateful for the learning opportunity and to act as a compassionate, trustworthy listener, proficient note taker, reflective thinker, passionate social-justice advocate, and articulate communicator. Studies such as this cannot be completed satisfactorily unless the evaluator is truly challenged and transformed by the experience of conducting responsive, naturalistic, case study research on a topic with such social change significance. Finally, a novice student researcher cannot undertake such a study without the wisdom and support of an engaged,

qualified committee chairperson genuinely committed to the student's success and to the delivery of a quality product.

In order to implement recommendations from the program evaluation (Appendix A), the decisions regarding any future changes will need to come from senior leaders. Some of the task-related recommendations can be assigned to staff. It will be the responsibility of every one to embrace, practice, and embed each new recommendation.

Social Change Implications

Potential Social Change in the Local Community

The material provided in this dissertation can help SCP leaders, students, alumni, and other internal and external SCP stakeholders. Internal stakeholders include approximately 150 volunteer adult tutors, SCP staff, directors, advisory board, board of directors, parents, alumni, and current and future students. External stakeholders include financial donors, political leaders, local junior high and high school leaders, college leaders, business leaders, and various other community leaders.

The findings from responsive evaluations are delivered to stakeholders after documenting the usefulness and goodness of the program by integrating and valuing perspectives from various participants (Stake, 1975, 2004). Responsive evaluators share findings that demonstrate understanding of the effectiveness of the program and the thoughtful resolution of the identified issues (Stake, 1975, 2004). In this case, the program evaluation resulted in the presentation of an executive summary to SCP leaders which outlined the key findings. The program evaluation was pragmatic and intended to

provide utility, value, and applicability to the SCP leadership team (Thomas & Stevens, 2004).

The benefits of the program evaluation included the identification of (a) promising practices; (b) learning and growth opportunities; (c) ways in which the data can be used to improve, sustain, and embed processes within the organization; and (d) suggestions for enhancing an organizational learning culture. The program evaluation enabled SCP leaders to make informed decisions on behalf of the PFGCS in the CBT program as well as students on the waiting list. According to the SCP director of adult tutors, the CBT program serves 232 students and has more than 300 students on a waiting list (E. Pei, personal communication, April 3, 2014). The program evaluation was focused only on the first component of the College-Bound program, the CBT program.

The education of all students, including those who are disenfranchised, is critically important to the future of the United States (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). Disenfranchised PFGCS need viable, effective, pragmatic, and successful pathways to college. If our society does not adequately educate disenfranchised PFGCS, the next generation will not be able to meet the future economic needs of the United States (Baum & Flores, 2011). Reiterative poverty is not a crisis only for Latinos/Hispanics, but for the entire U.S. population which cannot afford to marginalize and disenfranchise such a large population. Without a solution, “the very democracy is at peril” (Gándara & Contreras, 2009, p. 304).

Disenfranchised PFGCS, who are underrepresented on U.S. college campuses, need assistance to overcome barriers and successfully navigate the path from the inner

city to college campuses (Brock, 2010). These students are often from ethnic minority groups and live in inner-city, lower-socioeconomic communities. Disenfranchised students are often at high risk for academic disengagement and underperformance (Bempechat et al., 2011). By participating in this research study and considering the recommendations noted in Appendix A, the SCP has the opportunity to expand its impact on disenfranchised PFGCS in its local community.

Potential Far-Reaching Social Change

The research and lessons from this project are not limited to the SCP's local community. The material shared in the literature review provides valuable resources for all educators and community leaders committed to serving disenfranchised first-generation college students. Enabling the safe, effective transition from the inner city to college has benefits for individual students, local communities, and the nation as a whole. Fujimoto et al. (2013) emphasized the national imperative to find solutions and create viable pathways to college for disenfranchised Latino/Hispanic students, who come from the United States' largest and fastest-growing ethnic group. The country cannot afford to have an undereducated majority in the near future. Social change educators and scholar-practitioners have a unique opportunity to address the needs of these disenfranchised PFGCS.

A college education has numerous benefits. Oldfield (2012) found that (a) college-educated students have more academic, career, and economic opportunities; (b) higher education can provide opportunities for personal growth, increased self-actualization, and love of learning for learning's sake; and (c) college students report

enhanced self-image, greater self-confidence, increased opportunities, and possession of the skills required to make better informed life decisions. Addressing the needs of disenfranchised PFGCS has two significant benefits. Firstly, it protects these students from further marginalization and gaps. Secondly, it increases the levels of educational achievement and economic attainment among disenfranchised PFGCS seeking such opportunities.

Although Latino/Hispanic students have early aspirations for college attainment, they need assistance from caring, competent adults who know effective strategies to overcome the barriers to college success. These competent adults must also be committed to helping students gain the benefits of a college degree (Ward et al., 2013). Such disenfranchised students need (a) adults who communicate the belief that students are capable of learning and attaining a college degree, (b) consistent mentors and teachers who encourage student persistence, (c) access to necessary college preparatory resources, (d) educators who understand different learning styles, (e) various cultural mores, and (e) assistance with financial literacy and access to financial resources (Ward et al., 2013). Implementing such strategies allows educators to connect early aspirations to college graduation by disenfranchised PFGCS.

Deep commitment from community leaders and social-change educational leaders can create meaningful change for disenfranchised PFGCS. The disenfranchisement of students will continue until all community stakeholders become involved and work collaboratively to minimize the inequities and offset the risks and barriers inherent in urban communities (Smith, 2011). College is the most effective road out of poverty.

However, Latinos/Hispanics will continue to have lower SES unless significant progress is made in increasing college preparation, access, enrollment, persistence, and college completion in this population (Becerra, 2010). Society as a whole loses when disenfranchised PFGCS lose. Therefore, addressing and meeting the needs of disenfranchised PFGCS have local and far-reaching implications.

Conclusion

Section 3 presented a literature review on the themes that emerged from the data collection and analysis discussed in Section 2. These themes were (a) authentic hope, (b) social and emotional learning, (c) organizational leadership, and (d) the creation of a college completion culture. Section 3 also addressed the implications of the literature review for SCP leaders. Section 4 presented the reflections and conclusions of this research project, including directions for further research.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

In the concluding section of this research project, I highlight various topics including (a) the project's strengths; (b) recommendations for remediation of limitations; (c) implications, applications, and directions for future research; and (d) reflections on my experience as a scholar, practitioner, project developer and leader, and researcher.

Project Strengths

The strengths of this research study and accompanying program evaluation were as follows:

1. An extensive literature review in Sections 1 and 3.
2. A narrow yet focused evaluation of a college readiness program for disenfranchised prospective first-generation college students in the southwestern United States.
3. A unique opportunity for internal and external stakeholders to discuss and reflect on an external evaluator's findings and recommendations. Even if the stakeholders do not adopt my recommendations, reviewing the program evaluation will provide them with an opportunity to suggest new and creative solutions.
4. An opportunity to provide college graduates/alumni of the SCP program, not-for-profit leaders who work with disenfranchised PFGCS, and adult volunteer tutors who provide community capital to the CBT program at SCP with a voice. People want and need to be heard.

5. A timely research topic given the government's, education's, and community leaders' current emphasis on a college completion agenda.
6. A timely research topic given the population growth of culturally diverse students in the local and national community.

Recommendations for Remediation of Limitations

This project was limited to one case study of a local nonprofit organization in the southwestern United States. Therefore, the program evaluation is not generalizable to a larger population. The program evaluation is only as good as the data that were collected. Students were not included in the study, as they were minors and, therefore, a protected population. Parents did not participate in this study, although they were invited. Perhaps the fact that they chose not to volunteer in this research study was due to (a) their concerns about their education level, (b) their concerns about their immigration status, or (c) the fact that the interviews were held in December during the busy holiday season. Observations were not included in the study due to IRB requirements that were deemed too cumbersome to be met in a timely manner by a student researcher. An ethnographic research project based upon a priori trust and existing relationships with parents and students might ameliorate the program evaluation's limitations.

Reflections

Scholar

The scholarship behind this program evaluation was strong due to the participants' significant contribution during the interview process, the generosity of the

organization in sharing artifacts, and the exhaustive literature review addressing the themes from the data collection and analysis.

I learned how much I love research and scholarly learning aimed at obtaining a *higher education for a higher purpose*, as noted in the Walden University motto. I became deeply immersed in the literature review and eventually had to stop researching and reading for the sake of time. I found a plethora of new authors I want to read after graduation. In fact, I amassed a large collection of journal articles and books that were deemed just outside the scope of my project but were extremely interesting nonetheless. I have set all these books and journals aside in a pile labeled "PG" for *postgraduation*. I look forward to reading these after graduation. I am very inquisitive and have an insatiable thirst for learning.

I realized the importance of immersing myself in continual reading, research, and learning, both independently and as a member of a learning organization. Metaphorically, I was like a scholarly *holon* who thrives when I can influence and be influenced by others who have a thirst for learning, growth, and development.

I also learned the value of reflection. Initially, I budgeted time for reading, writing, and researching; however, I neglected to factor in the critically important stage of reflection. The reading was so dense and powerful that I could not write about it until I had reflected and processed the significance of the reading. I could not analyze the data until I had immersed myself in it. This was especially true of the concept of authentic hope. For years, I have understood the value of faith and love. Over the course of

working on this research project, I spent hours reflecting on the importance of hope: what it is, what it is not, what it means to embrace hope, and what it means to live without it.

I found Wolcott's (2009) Sage advice to be very appropriate. Wolcott recommended that instead of amassing as much data as they can, researchers should try to get rid of as much material as possible. By whittling down the data, the true essence of the findings will be revealed. I found that I had to collect a great deal of data and then sit and reflect upon the data before the pearls of wisdom became apparent and the gold in the data could be mined.

Finally, I learned that in this journey, there is nothing like an experienced, wise, and compassionate river guide. I began my research project without a full understanding of the *shape of the river* (Cabrera et al., 2012). However, I was blessed to be assigned a committee chair who is wise, learned, patient, competent, caring, and benevolent. Having a river guide of this caliber assured safe pasSage through the prospectus, proposal, research, and approval stages of this journey. The most valuable aspects of this journey were the privilege of gaining a much deeper understanding of the needs of disenfranchised, first-generation college students and of discussing this topic every week with a professor for whom I have such respect and admiration. Collaborative efforts for scholar-practitioners are only as good as the collaborative partners involved. I am grateful to have had the best.

Practitioner

As much as I enjoy the scholarly component of being a scholar-practitioner, I am only fulfilled if am I am afforded the opportunity to be a practitioner as well. Learning is

wonderful and nourishes my soul; however, I am not satisfied if I cannot apply this knowledge to serve the students in my community and make a measurable contribution to social justice. One of my mentors often reminds me of the value of applying head knowledge with a heart of compassion and hands that touch the needs of those around me, while applying the habits of good character, honesty, integrity, and dependability (Blanchard, personal conversation, 2006). Similarly, Freire (2004) thought it tragic if social justice educators felt pain, injustice, and oppression without embracing these feelings and transforming the negativity into a hopeful dream worth pursuing. I believe that through this scholarly doctoral journey, I have deepened the compassion I feel for disenfranchised students and strengthened my resolve as a practitioner to make a measurable impact on their lives.

Project Developer and Leader

I was reminded once again how much I enjoy projects aimed at social change and social justice. In my professional life, I have often been responsible for managing complex projects with many moving parts. I was not overwhelmed by the scope of the project study. As I complete my doctoral degree in adult education, I am more resolved to work on projects that have the potential to encourage equity and excellence in education. It has also become abundantly clear that equity and excellence in education for disenfranchised PFGCS are a journey, not a final destination. There is a great deal of work to be done in the name of social justice.

I also enjoyed the collaboration experienced with my beloved group of fellow Waldenites. We reviewed one another's work, encouraged each other when feeling

discouraged, and celebrated with one another as we reached various milestones. We found each other during the didactic portion of the journey and are still in contact as we each cross the finish line in our own time. Being in the trenches together, albeit virtually, was a key component of this successful journey.

I hope that the evaluation is helpful and has a positive impact on the CBT team and students. I hope that others in the educational field who are committed to social justice, first-generation college students, and advancing the college completion agenda find practical tools in this research project to apply to their work. After graduation, I may apply the material from the project study by (a) submitting aspects of the project as articles for peer-reviewed journals, (b) using material in presentations when speaking at seminars, (c) referencing the material for consultation purposes with potential clients, and/or (d) using the findings as a springboard for additional research.

I saw once again that the combination of organizational leadership and change management is both an art and a science. Building bridging and bonding relationships, creating organizational trust, hiring the right people for the right positions, building bench strength based on a genuine passion for the calling, and acquiring the requisite skills to do the work are but some of the critical aspects of creating an organization capable of providing hope to disenfranchised PFGCS.

I was also reminded of the value of approaching an evaluation from an appreciative inquiry, or strengths-based perspective. The assumptions surrounding appreciative inquiry (AI) include the belief that (a) strengths are embedded within every organization; (b) what participants choose to focus on informs the individual's reality

within the group, which leads to multiple realities within a given organization; (c) individual differences and multiple realities should be valued; (d) asking questions, stimulating reflection, and the way in which language is used all change group dynamics and influence organizational culture; and (e) the realities of today are built upon what was learned yesterday (Hammond, 2013).

Researcher

I knew I would love the literature review portion of the research study. What I didn't realize was how powerfully moved I would be by the research participants' answers. Some of their answers pierced my soul and left me a changed and better person for the experience. A few of my favorites are included below:

IP-9 People need hope to live. That's definitely something that I feel that they find, hope.

IP-9 I have parents who have teared up doing parent meetings just because they've never had the same opportunity, never had the same resources at hand. A lot of them come from different countries where education is just not the same as it is in the United States. They just feel blessed.

IP-9 "Here, I am sure that you guys will lead them because I don't know any more of this." There's parents that say, "I got stuck with my child with eighth grade homework and I didn't know what to do. I started looking for places. I starting knocking on doors and I couldn't find anything. Then finally, boom, to be here, to change the steps of my son. Now I could let him go. Now I could feel free. Now I have less worry . . . this is a hope.

IP-7 What's huge is the hope, just knowing, because sometimes they don't know they have the ability to do it. That's why the program works, because people show them. The people who will listen to you are there to show them and to help them along.

IP-2 We want to be able to give these students the tools and resources to go out and do what they need to do in terms of their educational goals and then come back to the community and help transform the community. It's interesting reading their call to mission essays because a lot of them talk about that. They're like, "I want to start a nonprofit," or "I want to help people." A lot of those, a lot of their essays and a lot of their career goals or professional goals are centered on this idea of social philanthropy, I guess, in community service. Helping those that are maybe in difficult situations.

IP-2 This is a place of support and encouragement and resources where they may not get somewhere else. We try to replicate a familial feeling and not such a sterile one where you might find in school ...We want to inspire the students to be here and we want them to want to be here ...We have to make sure that we're calling them all the time making them feel wanted here ... We need to be accessible to them. That's the purpose: to be accessible to the inner city challenging students.

IP-4 It's not only education, right? It's completely developing an adolescent, a youth. Not only do we receive help academically, but we also receive other things like, for example ... we have to learn how to shake hands and how to greet people. Even if it's something as little as looking into somebody's eyes when you greet them … Speech, speech practice, learning how to write speeches, learning how to give speeches and public speaking.

IP-10 I think that's really good not just for the public speaking skill, because it's nerve-racking to share your personal information in front of a big group of people, but I think that also fosters a sense of community and a sense of we're here to support you, we understand where you are, where you're coming from, and that there are other people who are in your situation who are successful. I think just sharing those kinds of examples is really important.

IP-4: All my friends on the street and my neighborhood, it was the opposite. They were just interested in street cred like I want to be the tough guy in the neighborhood. I want to go out. I want to prove myself. How? By beating up people, by doing crimes, stealing cars, selling drugs, making money, having the nice car at sixteen. To me, I'm not going to lie, it appealed to me. Once I got introduced to the idea of going to college and the benefits (of graduating from college and how) I could make money, be well-off, and not have to look over my shoulder for the rest of my life, to me, that was more appealing than street life.

IP-7 I think a lot of them not caring is they didn't know that college is important. Most of them I think don't even think they have the ability or the chance to go to college and they don't even know what that means.

IP-10 It's not just a tutoring program, it's supposed to be building a whole student.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

I learned a great deal about the challenges and plight of disenfranchised prospective first-generation college students and the importance of hope, social and

emotional well-being, organizational leadership principles, and creating a college-going culture. I also learned that my contribution to this scholarly conversation is but one voice among many who desire to advance the cause of social justice for disenfranchised, first-generation college students. This program evaluation gave me an opportunity to find my voice on this issue and advocate on behalf of the students and stakeholders at SCP. I hope that I was successful in encouraging SCP to both continue their best practices with the CBT program and consider recommendations for improvement.

Although the program evaluation was site-specific, the literature review can illuminate some issues faced by disenfranchised PFGCS across the country. Moreover, the data can advance the cause of social justice for other nonprofit organizations, high-school staff, college educators, and policy makers who wish to understand the needs of first-generation college students.

Possible directions for future research include the following: (a) an in-depth research project on best practices for the creation of a college completion culture for disenfranchised, first-generation college students, (b) an ethnography on the disenfranchised PFGCS at SCP that follows CBT students from junior high through college, and/or (c) a regression analysis of the CBT program at SCP to discover the determining factors and profile of a student most likely to graduate from both SCP and college. It would be interesting to determine the profile of a successful CBT student based upon a culture of evidence. This evidence could include the following:

- Where the student went to high school.
- The student's GPA upon entering CBT.

- The student's GPA upon leaving CBT.
- The student's grade level when entering the CBT program.
- The number of summers the student participated in the Summer College program.
- The number of summers the student attended the Summer Camp program.
- Whether or not the student enrolled in college.
- Whether or not the student completed his or her freshman year.
- Whether or not the student completed his or her sophomore year.
- Whether or not the student completed his or her junior year.
- Whether or not the student completed his or her senior year.
- Whether or not the student attended vocational school.
- Whether or not the student attended community college.
- Whether or not the student attended a 4 year college.
- Whether or not the student attended a university.
- Whether or not the student lived on campus.
- Whether or not the student lived off-campus, not at home.
- Whether or not the student attended an out-of-state school.
- Whether or not the student visited the college campus prior to enrollment.
- Whether or not the student connected with other SCP alumni while on the college campus.
- The size of the college the student attended.
- The on-campus support resources with which the student became involved.

- The extracurricular activities in which the student participated on the college campus.
- The student's college GPA.
- The student's major.

There was also little qualitative research on organizations working with disenfranchised students. Therefore, program evaluations of other organizations are recommended (e.g. Advancement Via Individual Determination [AVID], America's Promise Alliance, Andre Agassi College Preparatory Academy, Carson Scholars Fund, Gear Up, Grad Nation, Guardian Scholars, Juma Ventures, National College Access Network, Promise 2 Kids, Teach for America, The Learning Project, The New Teacher Project, and/or Upward Bound). Finally, it would be useful to see research on the relationship between disenfranchised youth living in violent communities in the United States and how the constant exposure to violence physiologically affects the brain and cognitive development. For instance, a research question might be, "How does exposure to violence affect test scores for students living in inner-city communities?"

Concluding Thoughts

I learned that assisting disenfranchised PFGCS in a tutoring program is about so much more than the tutoring. Mentoring, role modeling, and helping these students meet the personal and socioeconomic challenges are just as much a part of the journey as the academic tutoring. Relationships are key. The adage applies here that, "people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

It became clear in the data that providing hope to disenfranchised PFGCS was about (a) providing authentic hope, (b) building a culture of care where students could grow in social and emotional learning (c) providing leadership capable of meeting a growing need without sacrificing quality, and (d) providing a plan to get students to college and see them through to graduation.

Thoreau (2004) wrote, “I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life. And see if I could not learn what it had to teach and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived” (p. 67). In the spirit of Thoreau’s writing, I have adopted his quote and personalized it thusly: “I went to Walden University because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life concerning disenfranchised prospective first-generation college students. And see if I could affect social change and learn what it had to teach and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.”

By embarking on this journey to research the challenges of disenfranchised PFGCS; completing a qualitative study of the CBT program through a responsive, constructivist, case-study approach in a naturalistic setting; reflecting on the data until the four overarching themes emerged (authentic hope, social and emotional learning, organizational leadership, and creation of a college completion culture); and producing a responsive program evaluation for SCP stakeholders regarding their CBT program, I have achieved my goal. I lived deliberately over the last five semesters to front the essential facts of life concerning disenfranchised PFGCS in order to affect social change. I came to

learn what the journey had to teach so that when I graduate, I will discover that I have truly lived and grown through this experience.

Social justice, academic equity, educational excellence, and economic opportunities are complementary, not mutually exclusive. Education is not an expense, it is an investment with a dual return. The first return on investment is monetary. As numerous studies have documented, college education literally pays off. This monetary return accrues not just to the benefit of the individuals, it is a benefit to the family, community, and nation, which incurs fewer social support costs and gains a more robust pool of people whose economic participation strengths individuals, families, businesses, and institutions.

The second benefit is social. If we are to be the society we claim to be, then we must fulfill the promise of equal economic and social opportunity that we make to every person. It is society's obligation to create access to education; it is the individual's choice on whether to use that access to improve his or her personal, economic, or social existence.

This study addressed how SCP has created access to education for those who are disenfranchised and underserved in the local community. There are many barriers, and there must ultimately be many such programs if we are to one day stand and say that education and success is available on an equal basis to all who are willing to seek it.

As long as economic and educational disparity exists, there will be a need for programs that empower those who have been poorly served, not because of their lack of will, but because of their lack of access. CBT is one such program, and this study is but

one link in what must ultimately become a long, strong chain of efforts. In creating, sustaining, and continuously improving programs such as CBT, educators and those interested in education are investing in social change, academic equity, educational excellence, economic opportunities, and offering hope to disenfranchised PFGCS. There is no investment with a greater or more important return.

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Appendix A: Program Evaluation

Executive Summary

The purpose of the executive summary is to provide an overview to the leaders and stakeholders at The San Colombano Project of the completed program evaluation. Since the San Colombano Project (SCP) has not had a program evaluation since its inception in 2001, this evaluation will provide the SCP with external, timely, pragmatic, relevant, and actionable feedback based on a scholarly responsive program evaluation of the College-Bound Tutoring (CBT) program.

In addition to examining organizational documents, eleven interviews were completed including staff, staff/alumni, and tutors. After coding and analyzing the data, using typological, inductive, and content coding, the four themes that arose from the data included (a) authentic hope, (b) social and emotional learning, (c) organizational leadership, and (d) the creation of a college completion culture. The recommendations in the program evaluation are based upon the data collection, subsequent data analysis, and an extensive review of the current research and literature.

Research Findings

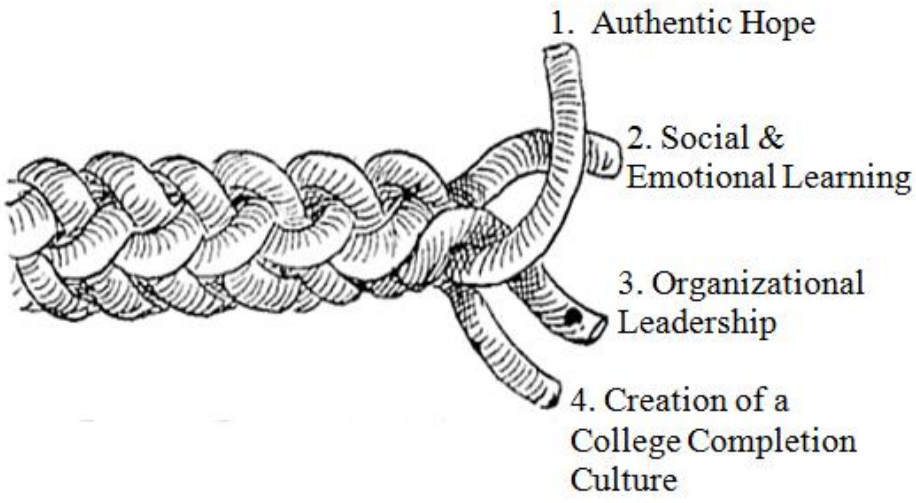

Figure A1. Tightrope analogy.

The founder and president of SCP has formulated a tightrope analogy that is central to their goals for CBT students. The tightrope theory, as defined by Santos, states that disenfranchised students need to get across the chasm between their youth in the inner city to their young adult years on the college campus. As the students walk across the tightrope, the CBT leaders refrain from chanting, "Don't look down" (where the gangs, drugs, and crime persist); instead, they preach the benefits of getting safely across the chasm on the tightrope to benefit from a college education as a young adult.

Following this analogy, I metaphorically examined the strands of the CBT tightrope to see what the cords represent that allow CBT students to safely transition from

the inner city to the college campus. Based on the data collection and data analysis, I discovered four critical cords/strands, each with two substrands (or subthemes).

1. Authentic hope
    a) Agentic thinking (casting the vision for a better future)
    b) Pathways thinking (providing the pathway to reach the goal for a better future)
2. Social and Emotional Learning
    a) Building a whole student
    b) Cultivating a culture of care
3. Organizational Leadership
    a) Scaffolding practices for organizational growth
    b) Scaffolding practices for organizational excellence
4. Creation of a College Completion Culture
    a) Strategies during high school years
    b) Strategies during college

Recommendations

The outline for this section of the program evaluation includes the following topics in order to promote a sustainable infrastructure: (a) promising practices; (b) learning and growth opportunities; (c) learning how the data can be used to improve, sustain, and embed processes; and (d) suggestions for enhancing an organizational

learning culture. The recommendations are linked back to the corresponding theme(s) that arose from the research.

The recommendations are also presented in the spirit of the strengths–based concept of *Appreciative Inquiry*. The assumptions surrounding *Appreciative Inquiry* (AI) include the belief that (a) within every organization are embedded strengths; (b) what participants choose to focus on informs the individual's reality within the group which leads to multiple realities within a given organization; (c) individual differences and multiple realities should be valued; (d) the act of asking questions, stimulating reflection, and how language is used changes group dynamics and influences organizational culture; and (d) along with constructivist theorist, AI proponents believe that the realities of today are built upon the knowledge from yesterday (Hammond, 2013).

Promising Practices

a) Sharing the dream of being a college student with disenfranchised youth and grounding this hope by providing the tools to help make this dream a reality. (Theme 1a, 1b)

b) Providing hope by continually sharing success stories of current CBT students and CBT alumni; and creating such a spectacular end of the year celebration for the graduating high school seniors before they go off to college. (Theme 1a, 1b, 2b)

c) The speech tournaments were mentioned throughout the interviews and were supported in the literature as one of your promising practices. Speech nights are invaluable in building a sense of community and giving disenfranchised students a voice. (Themes 2a, 2b, 4a)

d) The unwavering commitment of staff and tutors to building trusting warm relationships (Themes 2a, 2b)

e) A commitment to and practice of providing a culture of care and building a whole student (Theme 2a, 2b)

f) Celebrating resilience and a strengths based perspective through speech nights and college essays (Themes 2a, 2b, 4a).

g) Feeding the students dinner every night (Themes 2a, 2b).

h) Involving the parents in the journey (Theme 1a, 2a, 2b, 4a).

i) Providing bonus nights where students can come in addition to their regularly scheduled nights (Themes 1b, 2a, 2b, 4a).

j) Summer camp program to build relationships before commencing the new school year (Themes 2a, 2b, 4a).

k) The commitment to ongoing inspiration, motivation, hope, academic optimism, and care (Theme 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 4a).

l) Visionary aspirational leadership (Themes 3a, 3b)

m) The ability to raise the money necessary to fund this program while saving money by utilizing willing committed adult volunteer tutors to support the mission (Themes 3a, 3b).

n) The social and emotional growth opportunities afforded students through community service projects (Themes 1b, 2a, 2b, 4a)

o) Using the verbiage “staff advances” instead of staff retreats to reaffirm the importance of the organizational mission when you meet as an entire team (Themes 3a, 3b).

p) Willingness to learn and reflect (Themes 3a, 3b)

q) Promoting the Summer Bridge program to your students to help ease the transition into college (Theme 3b).

r) Summer classes at local university to provide real world college campus experience (Theme 1b, 2a, 2b, 4a)

s) The ability to collaboratively leverage social and cultural capital on behalf of the students (Theme 1b, 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b, 4a).

t) The national exposure the organization has had via Secretary of education, Arne Duncan and Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor (Themes 2a, 3a, 3b).

Learning and Growth Opportunities

a) Leading organizational growth while maintaining high expectations of students, staff, and volunteers (Themes 3a, 3b)

b) Increased organizational learning opportunities for students, staff, volunteers, and parents perhaps via professional learning communities (PLCs) (Themes 3a, 3b)

c) Extending the current college-going culture to include a college-completion culture (Theme 4a, 4b).

d) Using a small group model to provide a greater sense of intimacy, belonging and being known while participating in a large and growing organization (Theme 2b).

e) Using the names of CBT college graduates as team names in the small groups model to provide vision of the next step along the path. See illustration in the following section (Theme 1b, 2b).

f) Advocate for and teach students how to advocate for themselves using scaffolding practices to ensure they get registered for the classes they need in order to meet the requirements for college admission (Themes 1b, 2s, 4a, 4b).

g) Make a commitment to follow CBT students closely during their freshman year at college. Especially during the critical first semester. Like the scaffolding model, remove some of the support the second semester, and more during sophomore year. Just as in a relay race, the baton must be securely place in the next hand, before the first runner lets go. As in a relay race, the goal is not to drop the baton during the critical transitional stage (Theme 4b).

h) Locate funding (perhaps a grant) so students can visit college campuses during the college application or college acceptance stage of their journey (Theme 4a).

i) If funding is not available for students to tour the college campuses they are considering, provide a documentary road trip. Have SCP leaders visit the college campuses where CBT students are currently attending. In the documentary, show the prospective students around the campus, the nearby community, and have the current CBT alumni discuss their experiences and their transition from the inner city to this particular college campus. If possible interview instructors, mentors, counselors, and/or resident hall leaders. If the students cannot visit the colleges

they are considering attending, at least provide the students with a video tour through the eyes of someone they know and trust (Theme 4a).

j) During their senior year, have students create a personalized college completion plan (include extracurricular activities, volunteerism, possible research opportunities, how they will build relationship and find on campus support systems, who they will call when they feel discouraged, etc.) Help students to mental model the challenges they may face and the resources they will utilize to meet challenges. If it would help the students, role play how to ask for help on the college campus (Theme 4a).

k) Teach the concepts of organizational growth and the normal S-shaped growth curve so team members are aware of realistic expectations and equipped for the next stage of organizational maturation (Theme 3a, 3b).

How the Data Can Be Used to Improve, Sustain and Embed Processes

a) Create an exhaustive list of resources that are available on the college campuses for first-generation college students. Locate resources and relationship-building opportunities on the college campus where your students are attending or considering attending. Export data from the database so students can see which resources are available at the specific colleges they are considering. Also, track the success of other CBT students at that particular campus (Themes 4a, 4b).

Table A1

Sample Database Report for Students Considering Various Colleges

Fictitious school name	Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)?	Summer Bridge Program?	Road Trip video clip available?	Number of CBT students currently on campus?	# of CBT alumni who have earned a college diploma?
Brooks Community College (local)	No	No	No	25	15
Rainier 4 year college (local)	Yes	Yes	No	32	23
Sherman University (local)	Yes	No	Yes	40	31
Balmoral College (out of state)	No	Yes	Yes	5	2
Meriwether University (out of state)	Yes	Yes	No	9	5

b) Hire one coach to oversee the same classroom every night of the week. Name that classroom for a CBT alumni who has earned a college diploma. Create small groups (tribes or teams) named for that alumni (e.g. Team Valentino, Team Mia, Team Simon). Continue the practice of having students and tutors scheduled on consistent nights in a consistent room. By following through on a plan to hire a staff member to assist in each room, you have an opportunity to create a sense of cohesiveness between the hired coach, the tutors, and the students. By naming the team in honor of a college graduate, you have the opportunity to reinforce the belief that these students can do what others have done before them. By asking

students to sit in their small groups during the opening session, sign up for community service projects together, and by housing students together in their small groups during camp, you have the opportunity to make a big organization seem small and intimate where each person can be known (Theme 1a, 2b, 4a).

Table A2

One Paid Coach for the Same Classroom 4 Nights per Week

Fictitious name of new hire to lead each study room	Team names for each study room in honor of a CBT college graduate.	Monday room	Tuesday room	Wednesday room	Thursday room
Study Room 1. Hire Coach Abraham	Team Valentino	Coach Abraham Mon tutors Mon students	Coach Abraham Tues tutors Tues students	Coach Abraham Wed tutors Wed students	Coach Abraham Thurs tutors Thurs students
Study Room 2. Hire Coach Aliyah	Team Mia	Coach Aliyah Mon tutors Mon students	Coach Aliyah Tues tutors Tues students	Coach Aliyah Wed tutors Wed students	Coach Aliyah Thurs tutors Thurs students
Study Room 3. Hire Coach Elijah	Team Simon	Coach Elijah Mon tutors Mon students	Coach Elijah Tues tutors Tues students	Coach Elijah Wed tutors Wed students	Coach Elijah Thurs tutors Thurs students
Study Room 4. Hire Coach Josiah	Team Guadalupe	Coach Josiah Mon tutors Mon students	Coach Josiah Tues tutors Tues students	Coach Josiah Wed tutors Wed students	Coach Josiah Thurs tutors Thurs students
Study Room 5. Hire Coach Kiara	TeamValery	Coach Kiara Mon tutors Mon students	Coach Kiara Tues tutors Tues students	Coach Kiara Wed tutors Wed students	Coach Kiara Thurs tutors Thurs students
Study Room 6. Hire Coach Malik	Team Rafael	Coach Malik Mon coaches Mon tutors Mon students	Coach Malik Tues coaches Tues tutors Tues students	Coach Malik Wed coaches Wed tutors Wed students	Coach Malik Thurs coaches Thurs tutors Thurs students
Study Room 7 Coach Raziah	Team Dante	Coach Raziah Mon tutors Mon students	Coach Raziah Tues tutors Tues students	Coach Raziah Wed tutors Wed students	Coach Raziah Thurs tutors Thurs students
Study Room 8 Coach Sapphira	Team Lucia	Coach Sapphira Mon tutors Mon students	Coach Sapphira Tues tutors Tues students	Coach Sapphira Wed tutors Wed students	Coach Sapphira Thurs tutors Thurs students
Study Room 9 Coach Selah	Team Antonia	Coach Selah Mon tutors Mon students	Coach Selah Tues tutors Tues students	Coach Selah Wed tutors Wed students	Coach Selah Thurs tutors Thurs students
Study Room 10 Coach Xavier	Team Sebastian	Coach Xavier Mon tutors Mon students	Coach Xavier Tues tutors Tues students	Coach Xavier Wed tutors Wed students	Coach Xavier Thurs tutors Thurs students

Every coach would oversee four small groups (or tribes, or teams) per week. They would have a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday group. Hypothetically, if each group had 8 students, each coach would be responsible for 32 students (8 students x 4 nights/week) plus the tutors that are a part of each of these study groups. If you had 10 study areas, you could accommodate 320 students in the CBT program while keeping an intimate feeling since each student has a small group that they belong to. They could be asked to sit with their team during the inspirational mesSage and during speech tournaments. They could be housed together during summer camp. The intimate feeling associated with the bygone days of CBT can be somewhat reproduced by adhering to a small group model and practice, which include the following:

- Every small group would be composed of one paid staff member to serve as coach, two adult volunteer tutors, and eight students.
- The students would continue to come on their assigned night of the week.
- The tutors would continue come on their assigned night of the week.
- The newly hired coaches would work 4 nights a week, in the same physical classroom space each evening; thereby serving 8 students per night or 32 students per week.
- The coach would be assisted by two tutors per night, or 8 tutors per week.
- If 10 tribes (or teams or small groups) met each night, that would create 40 tribes per week which would make a very large organization feel small.
- Students would be encouraged to sit in their small groups (teams or tribes) during the opening session.

- Students would be encouraged to sign up for community service projects and room with their small groups during summer camp.

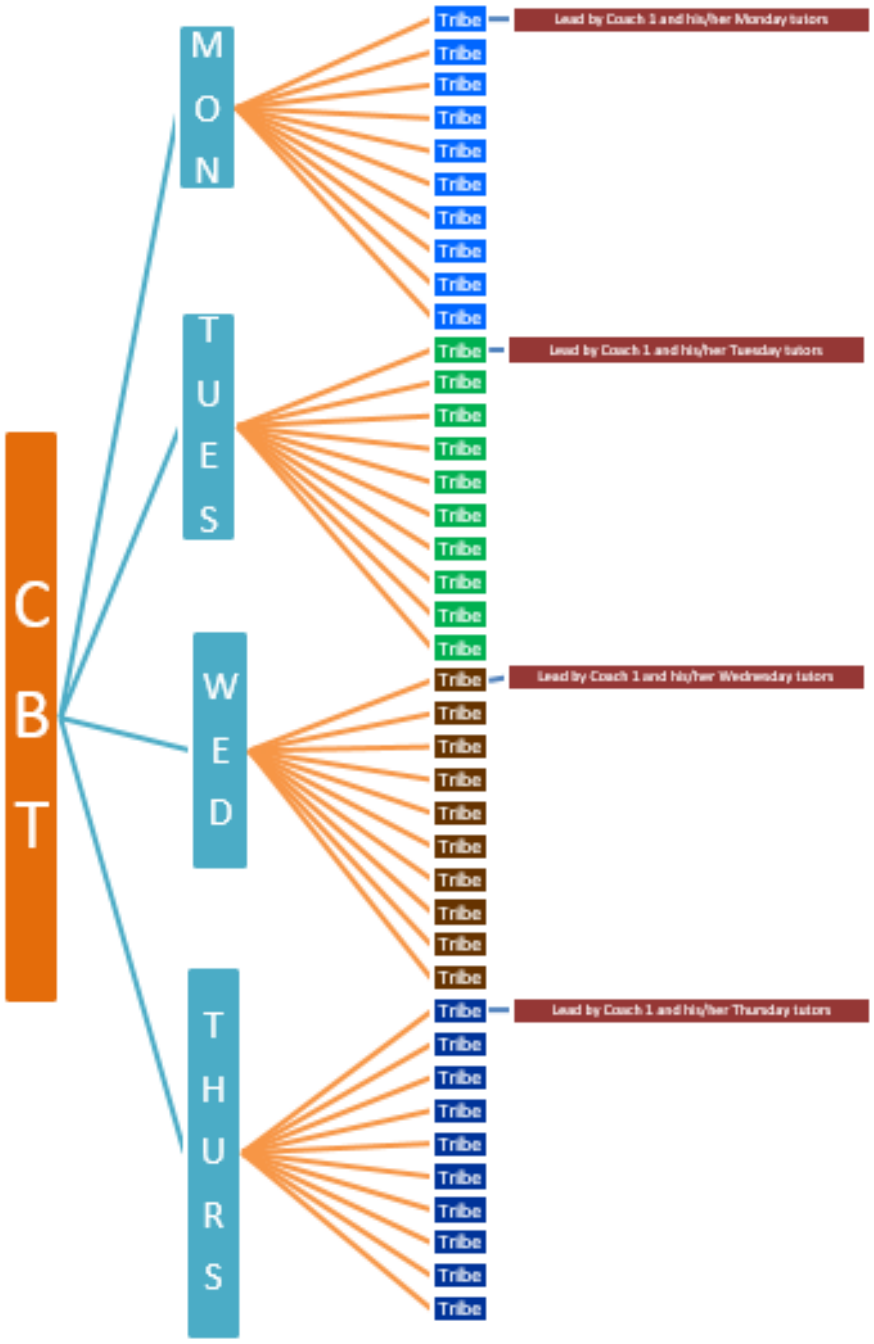

Figure A2. How to create small groups, teams, or tribes within a large organization to make it feel smaller to the students.

c) The last recommendation, based upon the literature, is to add more experienced professionals to the staff (Theme 3a, 3b). In the archival data, it was noted that:

"[O]ur program's greatest strength is the students themselves; we strive to have at least 50% of our employees be SCP graduates. These young adults provide incomparable organizational knowledge, unsurpassed expertise on becoming first generation college students, and undeniable proof that SCP produces community-minded leaders ready to change the world."

I agree that young, culturally diverse staff are effective at relating to the students served. However, I suggest considering hiring practices for the other 50% of your team to include experienced professionals with additional years of maturity, life experience, life wisdom, and professional business experience. Although it is good to have role models or peers from similar social or ethnic backgrounds as the student, Prange (2013) noted that understanding, acceptance, support, and compassion for at-risk, culturally diverse students overcame the issues of cultural differences. Therefore, whether the SES, race, age, or ethnicity of some members of the team are the same as the students served, it may be preferable to hire mature and experienced team members who are committed to the organization's mission and can assist in meeting future organizational goals.

The issue of age was raised during the interviews as follows:

"I think it's very important to have tutors that are young and people of color, but I also think it's important for them to have interaction with older people of color or older people in general because the older people are the ones with a lot of experience and a lot

of wisdom. They have a lot of degrees too…I think both are very important. The young perspective is, I think it's easier to relate to them, and it might be easier for them to talk to. Again, I think the older perspective has a lot more wisdom than I could ever provide to a young knucklehead student."

"I think it should be an older person so the students can feel like, just like they're in school. When somebody's up there instructing you, you give them the respect. I think that's hard to do when you're 21 or 22 to demand a sense of respect from students."

"I think a lot of the older tutors who have been around since early 2000's, they have that relationship with students that is effective. They give stories about their grandchildren or their children. In a way it gives the students somebody they can relate to too because they also have grandparents, and some of their parents are the same ages as our tutors. It gives them that parent perspective or grandparent perspective that they might not hear at home or might not listen to at home if they hear it at home."

Suggestions for Enhancing an Organizational Learning Culture

a) In order to embed the strengths you have worked hard to create, I encourage you to use the data provided in this report to strengthen your organizational learning and new employee on-boarding process by sharing the importance of (a) agentic and pathways thinking regarding hope, (b) social and emotional learning via building a whole student and providing a culture of care, (c) organizational leadership that balances the need for growth with the need for high expectations from both students and staff, and (d) the creation of a college completion culture to complement the college-going culture you have already established.

b) Commit to ongoing, unwavering commitment to organizational learning. Create professional learning plans for team members to ensure ongoing professional growth for the benefit of your students and mission. Include leadership development practices for all staff to enhance their influence, outreach, and effectiveness (Theme 3a, 3b).

c) Review Senge's material on learning organizations and consider creating professional learning communities for the benefit of all stakeholders (Theme 3a, 3b). Identify material that might be appropriate for individuals to read and discuss together within a PLC (e.g. Collins, 2005, Good to Great in the Social Sector)

d) Invite guest speakers who can provide further training on restorative justice and a culture of care (Theme 2a, 2b).

e) Teach both parents and students more about what it takes to persist and graduate from college (Theme 3a, 3b).

f) Invite guest speakers to discuss what it takes to graduate from college (Theme 1a, 1b, 4a, 4b).

g) Use scaffolding practices to teach students how to work with high school counselors to get the courses they need. This will prepare them for the important self-efficacy practices of advocating for themselves on the college campus (Theme 1b, 2a, 4a).

h) Role model exercises with students before they leave for college to practice connecting with instructors, mentors, counselors, and resident hall leaders (Theme 2a, 4a).

i) Continue to identify best practices from other organizations (Themes 3a, 3b).

j) Share your best practices with other organizations (Themes 3a, 3b).

k) Complete periodic program evaluations (Themes 3a, 3b).

l) Create a master list of organizational resources to use for the benefit of students and staff (Themes 3a, 3b). Through ongoing organizational learning, add to this list as you come across more resources to benefit students, alumni, tutors, staff, and leaders. For instance, you may want to include some organizations that I came across during my research; I am not endorsing any of these specific organizations. I am providing this list as a starting point for your consideration.

- Access College Foundation
- Achievingthedream.org
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation – College Ready Program
- ChristineSleeter.org
- Collegiate Directions, Inc. (CDI)
- CollegeFutures.org
- College Track, Oakland California
- CollegeTracks in Montgomery County
- CompletionbyDesign.org
- EdChange.org
- FirstGenerationStudent.com
- Futureofhighered.org
- Homeboy Industries

- Hope Global Forum
- I'm First
- In Time (http://www.intime.uni.edu/)
- League.org
- LuminaFoundation.org
- McNair Scholars Program
- National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems (NCCREST.org)
- National College Access Network (NCAN)
- National Council of Non Profits
- Neighborhood Academic Initiative (NAI)
- On Point for College, Inc.
- OneGoalGraduation.org
- Project Graduation Really Achieves Dreams (GRAD)
- Reach Higher Initiative (Michelle Obama)
- RestorativeJustice.com
- studentsuccessplan.org/
- SuccessNavigator™ program (www.ets.org/successnavigator/about/how)
- Teach for America
- Teaching Tolerance (tolerance.org)
- The Learning Project (http://www.thelearningproject.com/aboutus.html)
- The New Teacher Project (TNTP)

The current success and documented effectiveness of the CBT program provides a unique opportunity to extend learning and share best practices regionally, nationally, and internationally. In one of the organization's documents, it was written: "We're committed to expanding our programs locally and sharing our strategies globally…expanding our social enterprise will strengthen our ability to prepare more inner-city students for college."

Therefore, I recommend that Vygotsky's zone of proximal development theory be used to develop a formal training program for other community leaders to empower more social change agents with the tools and resources to assist students from inner city, disadvantaged backgrounds to become first-generation college students. The issues these students face are experienced by countless others; therefore, this organization may want to consider developing a learning institute based upon the current organizational model to affect greater social justice, academic equity, educational excellence, economic opportunities, and hope beyond the organization's current borders

Appendix B: Four Sets of Interview Questions

Interview Protocol Sheet: Leaders (L form)

1. How would you describe the effectiveness of the [College Bound] tutoring program?
2. What ideas do you have to increase the effectiveness of the [College Bound] tutoring program?
3. Is there anything else you would like me to know about the [College Bound] tutoring program that I have not asked?

Probes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 104)

- What do you mean?
- I'm not sure that I am following you.
- Would you please explain that?
- What did you say then?
- What were you thinking at that time?
- Give me an example.
- Tell me about it.
- Take me through the experience.

Interview Protocol Sheet: Leaders/Alumni (L-A form)

1. How would you describe the effectiveness of the [College Bound] tutoring program?
2. How has your perspective of the [College Bound] tutoring program changed from being a student to being an employee?
3. What ideas do you have to increase the effectiveness of the [College Bound] tutoring program?
4. Is there anything else you would like me to know about the [College Bound] tutoring program that I have not asked?

Probes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 104)

- What do you mean?
- I'm not sure that I am following you.
- Would you please explain that?
- What did you say then?
- What were you thinking at that time?
- Give me an example.
- Tell me about it.
- Take me through the experience.

Interview Protocol Sheet: Leaders Adult Volunteer Tutors (L-AVT)

1. What are your responsibilities as a tutor?
2. How would you describe the effectiveness of the [College Bound] tutoring program?
3. What ideas do you have to increase the effectiveness of the [College Bound] tutoring program?
4. Is there anything else you would like me to know about the [College Bound] tutoring program that I have not asked?

Probes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 104)

- What do you mean?
- I'm not sure that I am following you.
- Would you please explain that?
- What did you say then?
- What were you thinking at that time?
- Give me an example.
- Tell me about it.
- Take me through the experience.

Interview Protocol Sheet: President/Founder (L-PF form)

1. How has the [College Bound] tutoring program changed over the years and what prompted the changes?
2. How would you describe the effectiveness of the [College Bound] tutoring program?
3. What ideas do you have to increase the effectiveness of the [College Bound] tutoring program?
4. Is there anything else you would like me to know about the [College Bound] tutoring program that I have not asked?

Probes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 104)

- What do you mean?
- I'm not sure that I am following you.
- Would you please explain that?
- What did you say then?
- What were you thinking at that time?
- Give me an example.
- Tell me about it.
- Take me through the experience.

Appendix C: Examples of Archival Data

Artifact 1: SCP Declaration, Constitution, & Rights

DECLARATION OF PURPOSE

We are the SCP Agents of Change. We are agents of POSITIVE change in the world that surrounds us. We get good grades because we are going to college.

We are polite, courageous, and above all, honest. If we are not, please tell us so and we will correct our behavior the first time that we are told. We seek to always inspire others with our words and be positive influences at all times.

We do not pull people down, but instead, we lift each other up. So remember, tough times never last, but tough people always do. That's why others may choose to accept reality, but we choose to transform it. We show up, work hard, and tell the truth.

We are the SCP Agents of Change.

Constitution

Article I

All members must maintain a 3.0 GPA or above. All members who maintain a 3.5 GPA or above attend the UCSD Academic Connections program to receive college credit. Only the best of the best will go.

Article II

All members must attend the weekly SCP College Bound program and turn in all progress reports and final grades.

Article III

All members must have no involvement with alcohol, drugs, gangs, or sex. These are all problems that teens bring upon themselves. Who needs more problems? We have way too many other things to be concerned about.

Article IV

All members must pass a random drug test given at least once every year.

Article V

All members must show up with an open mind, work hard, and tell the truth.

Article VI

All members must participate with active membership in at least one school activity, such as a club or a sport.

Article VII

All members must be role models in their community for 25 hours per year. All members must contribute 25 hours of service to the SCP program each year, as well.

BILL OF DO RIGHTS

1. Attend the weekly SCP College Bound program on time every time. In an extreme emergency, call ahead of time to alert the program of your absence.

2. Bring dinner at 5:45 PM on your assigned dates.

3. Ensure that family members attend the Parent Meeting each month.

4. Bring your grades after you receive every single progress report and report card.

5. Attend the SCP graduation event each May.

6. Attend University Academic Connections Summer Residential Program for three weeks each July (after grades 8, 9, 10, and 11).

7. Attend a leadership camp for one week each August.

8. Attend Princeton Review SAT Preparation class for eight weeks as a Junior.

9. Keep electronic distractions at home if you desire to keep them.

10. Attend a four-year university after high school. Upon your admittance to the university, your move out of your family's home, and your signature on the Laptop Agreement, you will receive a laptop free of charge to assist you at your new school.

Artifact 2: SCP Graduate, 2010

"I see myself as a trailblazer in a neighborhood that seemingly has no roads out. When I was ten years old, my neighbor stuck a shiny silver pistol in my face. She placed the gun against my head and my eyes grew as big as the barrel. Despite living in such constant danger, I earned a 4.3 GPA, became the only person to work at the local swap meet from before sunrise until after sunset, and helped run my stepfather's business by taking care of his deli's advertisements and regularly advising him on how to administer the family's expenses. Instead of my life being shaped by gangs, drugs, or dropping out of school, I want to become a businesswoman so that I can provide further and newfound stability for my family.

Artifact 3: SCP Graduate, 2011

"The news quickly spread: three beheaded bodies were found, including a 17-year old teen named Alex (pseudonym), my cousin. When I heard the news, I began to remember how, as kids, my cousin and I used to always play soccer in the street or bet candy on our favorite soccer teams, but time passed and soon Alex wanted to only hang out with his back-alley friends. Looking back, I sometimes wonder how two similar kids turned out so differently, and it truly was in the eighth grade when our wildly different dreams and aspirations began to take shape. While Alex joined a group of gang members and drug dealers, I joined SCP, a group which helped me learn to value my education. Instead of experiencing a similar fate as my cousin, the program motivated me to take AP courses, give back to the community, and perhaps most importantly, seek out positive role models as mentors."

Artifact 4: SCP Graduate, 2010

"Toto, I have a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore!"

I was raised in a world where no one I knew had ever attended college. However, as a sophomore in high school, I was swept away from my black-and-white world of low expectations and introduced to a brand new Technicolor experience of hopes and dreams by being accepted to SCP. If getting my college diploma is like going down the Yellow Brick Road in the Wizard of Oz, then my scarecrow, tin man, and lion are my mother, my brother, and my father. Each of these three family members needs something that I can provide only if I earn a college education. My mother needs an operation that will improve her respiration, my younger brother needs a pacemaker to control his heartbeat, and my courageous father requires lumbar vertebrae surgery due to his permanent back disability. As I neared the end of my time in high school and drew closer to the end of the Yellow Brick Road to college, I overcame my own hardships in three different ways: I splashed the Wicked Witch with water by ending my relationship with gang-affiliated cousins, I subdued the poppy fields by working my way up to college-level calculus, and I controlled the Winged Monkeys by seeking every scholarship available to ease the financial burdens of my family. I know that when I receive my college diploma, it will be better than meeting the actual Wizard of Oz because that small piece of paper holds greater power than what the diminutive wizard ever exercised over the great Land of Oz. Furthermore, with this diploma, I will be assured of returning back to "Kansas" to ensure that my mother gets a fresh breath of life, my brother gets a renewed heart, and my father gets a rejuvenated spine to continue supporting our family. Dorothy might have thought

that there is no place like home, but as I pursue my educational dreams and aspirations, I believe that there is no place like the University.

Artifact 5: SCP Graduate, 2010 and Current SCP Staff Member

Ever since I can remember, I have been a slave of the world. I have been whipped and punished every time a glimmer of light shone through my horizons. Why? Because from June 1998 through July 2009, my family was oppressed by homelessness.

Before I was emancipated, I slept next to the people that you see aimlessly wandering the city and ate beside the same people you see sleeping on the sidewalk under the lonely night sky. Yet when I see those people now, I see myself. We were laughed at together. We were persecuted together. We cried together. Looking back, I have realized that these tears were my constrained ambition leaking through my eyes.

Mine eyes have seen freedom deprived as childhood friends have been gunned down. Both my father and my grandfather were sentenced to life in prison, and my great grandfather was violently murdered. They call us "at-risk" youth and with each generation the "risk" becomes even greater. But where does the risk stop? It stops with me.

In fact, as my family traveled across the United States along with our own underground railroad, I have discovered that seeking higher education has always been my Harriet Tubman. I have stayed at her side by always keeping my overall GPA above a 3.0 even while completing all of my homework from the backseat of a broken-down car.

Although I had to eat in that car, sleep in the car, and bathe in that car, these experiences (plus my internships at YYY school and the ZZZ) have been essential for me to learn how to become an entrepreneur and one day help the battle to abolish homelessness. And while it may be true that I was born "at risk" under extreme bondage

with homelessness as my oppressor, I am determined to march to college next year as a free man.

Artifact 6: SCP Graduate, 2011

I was doing terrible back in middle school and getting a 0.0 GPA, but I put all my focus on studying during freshman year of high school and achieved my very first 4.0 GPA, proving to myself the importance of finishing strong. As my wrestling coach says, "It is not how you start a wrestling match; it all depends on how you end it."

Artifact 7: SCP Graduate, 2011

Throughout my life, I have always had to find the ability to turn negative situations into positive solutions. I now understand that I am in control of my future and if I do not take it seriously then no one else will. My family has inspired my dreams and aspirations; because of them I am eager to go to college and pursue a career as a high school history teacher so I can give academic support and encouragement to teens that lack support at home. I am determined to venture out from the cycle that has haunted my family for generations.

Artifact 8: SCP Graduate, 2010

Only two weeks into my freshmen year, my family was notified of a tragedy. My older cousin had been confronted by authorities and killed a police officer. At seventeen years old, he faced a fifty-year sentence for a reckless act of violence. Furthermore, only one year after this incident, my younger cousin attained a similar fortune. Upon becoming seventeen as well, this cousin took part in a shootout against another gang and accidentally killed an innocent fifteen year old girl. In two ephemeral moments, both of my cousins threw away their futures just as expeditiously as they fired their guns. And now that I am seventeen years old myself, I know that I cannot bring that police officer back to life or give that young girl back her future, but by aspiring to be a surgeon, I can prevent further killings and sew back together the communities that have been torn apart by gang violence.

Artifact 9: SCP Graduate, 2008

I can hear some of the major influences in my life during the still of the night when helicopters, sirens and gunshots echo through the crackling darkness that surrounds my house. The shadows lurking outside use spray cans and bullets to make their mark to be noticed by others. Although I, too, wish to be recognized for my actions, I have also been taught that performing positive deeds in life are more powerful than succumbing to negative ones. Indeed, my neighborhood has inspired me to give troubled teenagers the motivation to become headline news for their accomplishments, rather than for their mistakes.

Artifact 10: SCP Graduate, 2011

Growing up in southern Mexico, the first house in which I remember living had four walls made of cardboard. Each morning, I would get out of my bed, which consisted of just two buckets propping up a wooden board to shield me from the cold ground.

After moving to the United States, one can imagine my excitement when I raised my grades to a 4.0 GPA during my freshman year and qualified to attend University XYZ's summer college residential program where I was able to sleep in my own bed for the very first time. Stepping into an empty dorm room with my own bed made me feel very accomplished.

But nothing made me more proud that showing my dad my first college scholarship check for $3500. Tears filled his eyes when he sad, "I never imagined that I would hold this much money with my own two hands." Then I made everyone else in the entire house hold onto the check…I even made the babies touch the check because I wanted them to truly feel what it was like to go to college. And even through they aren't old enough to communicate yet, I told them, "Work hard and this can happen to you, too."

Artifact 11: SCP Graduate, 2005

Every girl wants to be daddy's little girl and I'm no exception. But my dream was shattered when I was six years old and my dad went to prison. When this happened, I began to think of him and of myself differently. With each subsequent time that my father was incarcerated, I began to understand that I could not count on him to fulfill the traditional role of a father and now I have come to accept that I must take actions to take care of myself and create my own destiny. Although I lost my illusion of being daddy's little girl, I know that I have become a woman that would make any father proud.

Artifact 12: SCP Graduate, 2011

As long as I can remember, there were always gunshots knocking at my front door or policemen ringing the doorbell as the rumbling freeways near my home served as a constant reminder of the tumultuousness of my neighborhood. If my life were to be transposed into a piece of music, it would start in D-flat minor, but with God as my Louis Armstrong, it will resolve to the harmonious sound of my deserving mother smiling again and my hard-working father finally getting the rest he deserves. Just as jazz was born out of the slaves of New Orleans, I was born under the shadows of the highways, and I am determined to change these sorrowful blues into a soulful melody.

Artifact 13: SCP Graduate, 2010

I thought that my SCP story would be complete when I graduated from high school, but little did I know that my story was just beginning.

Back in the ninth grade, just a month after I joined SCP, I found myself in trouble with the law and was facing six years of juvenile incarceration. The judge told me, "I'll give you one month to prove to me that you are the man inside this SCP yearbook instead of the kid that the cops arrested." During that month, I doubled my GPA to a 3.8 and qualified for University XYZ summer school program. Furthermore, within that same year, I earned the top two design prizes in a mechanical engineering class at University XYZ and was honored on the floor of the United States Congress.

Before enrolling in college though, SCP made me an offer: would you like to become the site director of your own program? After accepting this opportunity to improve my neighborhood, I went to my old middle school and asked the principal if I could host an assembly for 8th graders who were struggling in school and just needed a little inspiration to transform their lives.

Sure enough, my students are now getting the best grades of their lives. Better yet, their confidence beams so brightly now that they are convinced that they, too, are bound for greatness. They make me realize that SC has evolved into a program where first generation college students are now building even more first generation college students.

Looking forward, the year that I graduate from college will be the same year that my students graduate from high school…and I can't wait for the day that my students are wearing college sweatshirts of their very own.

Artifact 14: SCP Graduate, 2011

I should be a child soldier right now.

After being born on an airplane overlooking the northeastern African Plains, my father and I lived peacefully in Aswan, Egypt. When I was six year old, however, my grandfather living in Somalia was diagnosed with a life-threatening illness and we traveled to see him. During our stay, my father and I were shopping in a nearby marketplace when an Al Qaeda-sponsored militia began shooting many people, including my father. Within the next three days, after a brave battle to heal from his five bullet wounds, my father passed away just a few hours after my grandfather succumbed to his illness. In an instant, I went from living in a beautiful fishing town to being lost and orphaned in a country overrun with poverty, famine, and terrorism.

Fatherless, my six-year old mind and body set out to achieve the unthinkable: travel 2,000 mile back home to Egypt by bus and on foot. During that journey, I was kidnapped by rebels to serve them as a child soldier, escaped, and eventually made it back to Egypt two years after I had originally departed.

I was overjoyed to return to my native country, but being home meant living all by myself in my deceased father's empty mud-block house at the age of eight. At age 10, I was reunited with my mother and we move do the United States, yet I soon found myself in a similar situation: homeless and on my own again at age 15. I could have easily broken down and dropped out of school, joined a gang, done drugs, or been thrown in jail. Instead, I chose the road not often taken and never desired: I started living in teen shelters and in the homes of close friends for weeks or months at a time. I also started to

work and buy food and a bus pass to go to school. Through this hardship, I stayed in school and maintained a 3.67 GPA.

Today, I am no longer illiterate, but fluent in three cultures from three different corners of the world. I have experienced physical and emotional pain, hard work, perseverance, honor, and respect before I learned the ABC's. No, I am not a child solider; instead I graduated from high school in just three years and am a soldier for education.

Looking forward, I am my own father, I am my own mother, and I am my own grandfather. I am no longer in the land of my forefathers that dictated what happened to me. Instead, I am in the United States of America where one day I will be able to shape the bright futures of my children and grandchildren.

Artifact 15: SCP Graduate, 2006 and Current Staff Member

As I began yet another long journey on foot to the public library, the sights and sounds of the city provided a temporary reprieve from my looming eight-page essay. The fact that I could not even afford a round-trip bus ticket placed my focus on my family's current economic status. My mother's meager annual income – less than $18,000 – was hardly enough money to keep food on the table, let alone grant me the access to the essential tools for academic success and, as school buses passed me by, I was reminded of how all through grade school I thought that my only purpose was to merely find a job as soon as possible to aid my family economically.

As I approached downtown, I observed middle-aged women dressed in attractive business suits and my thoughts shifted to my mother's working conditions. Every night she returned home in her white work uniform that was stained from an extensive workday of scrubbing restrooms and lifting colossal bags of waste. My mother rarely had enough time to become concerned with my whereabouts or with my academic performance when her minimum wage paycheck was all that ensured shelter for my three siblings and me in our one-bedroom apartment. However, I was not going to use my family's economic status or their lack of concern as an excuse for accepting failure.

As I waited at a stoplight, a silver Mercedes Benz pulled up next to me. This car reminded me that a good education often leads to economic stability, but how could I get one without the other? At the time, I did not have a computer, but even if I did, I did not even have a stapler to keep my assignments together. If I wanted my future family to

enjoy the tools that I lacked, I knew that my long walk to the library had a much greater purpose than just finishing an eight-page essay.

Heading deeper into downtown, I observed a group of street youths dressed in baggy clothes approaching me. These heavily-tattooed individuals reminded me of many of my old friends whose futures were now muddled by their series of bad decisions. While I never lost sight of my priorities, I had watched them fall into the evil traps of drugs and gangs and when they attempted to drag me into their practices, I decided to keep my distance from them, just as I responded to the street youths who were drawing nearer.

When I finally arrived at my destination, I realized that I had just a couple of hours to complete my assignment before the library closed. I worked on my essay until the librarian started to turn off the lights in the computer lab and just as my walk to the library had proven to be a reflection on my past, the walk home allowed me to envision what my future would entail. Although on that day I could not afford a ticket for the bus, I am now a step closer to obtaining a ticket to college, searching for the school that will give me the best education instead of looking for the job that would have given me the quickest paycheck. The following years of my life are going to be spent walking on the grounds of a university surrounded by serious students instead of foolish street youths and acquiring a degree will allow my mother to exchange her stained work uniform for her own attractive business suit as she sits proudly in the passenger seat of my Mercedes Benz.

Artifact 16: SCP Publication Quotes

When SCP 9th-11th graders raise their GPA to a 3.5, they earn a $3,500 scholarship to attend a three-week college residential program every summer at University XYZ.

2001-2008: Create a program that successfully builds first generation college students.

2009-2012: Establish an organization that is recognized as a model for the nation.

2013-2018: Build a sustainable infrastructure that reaches thousands of students per year.

Artifact 17: Quotes from SCP Publications

- Why do some people call us "At-Risk" students? Is it because of where we were born? Or where we live? What did I do to get such a label? Perhaps better words to describe me and my fellow SCP students are resilient, filled with inspiration, and college-bound.
- Good writers often say that the key to writing is putting the readers in your shoes. However, growing up in a small impoverished town in Ethiopia, I did not have any shoes in which to put the reader until I was eleven years old (SCP graduate, 2011).
- Some people view gangs, poverty, violence, homelessness, and refugee camps as obstacles. SCP students use such circumstances as the inspiration to become first generation college students.
- Gates Millennium Scholarships is awarded each year to an average of 20 students per state and pays for their bachelor's degree, master's degree and Ph.D. at any university of the student's choice. The following SCP students have received this prestigious award…
- SCP students work twice as hard! Instructional hours needed to graduate from high school: 3209. 50-minute classes x 87.5 days x 44 classes (Based on classroom time set forth by the Department of Education and a school year with 175 days). Total program hours offered to SCP students (8^{th} – 12^{th} grade): 3431

Artifact 18: Tables from SCP Publications

Table C1

Number of Hours Required by CBT Students for Each Event

Weekly tutoring and leadership programs	738 hours
University XYZ Summer Program	1020 hours
Summer Camp	440 hours
Bonus night study halls	555 hours
Community service	237 hours
College essay writing	200 hours
Special events	100 hours
College Forums with admissions reps	80 hours
Princeton review SAP prep	46 hours
Speech tournaments	15 hours

Table C2

Students' History and Accomplishments

Student 1	Male	Annual family income less than $10,000	Won a Gates scholarship worth over $300,000
Student 2	Female	Proud of her multi-ethnic heritage	Earned a $243,000 scholarship
Student 3	Female	Expelled in 7th grade, served as an intern in Congress in 11th grade	Earned a $120,000 scholarship.
Student 4	Male	Born in a camp for refugees escaping war	Earned at $245,000 scholarship
Student 5	Male	Lived in a motorhome with no water or electricity	Earned at 5.0 GPA and a $93,000 scholarship
Student 6	Male	Homeless from ages 7 to 17	Earned a $100,000 scholarship
Student 7	Female	Both parents work 12 hours a day	Earned a $68,000 scholarship
Student 8	Male	Used to stretch a bowl of rice into a week's worth of meals	Won a Gates Scholarship worth over $300,000