



**TAKING STEPS TOWARDS DIVERSITY: K-12 OUTREACH AT  
SELECTIVE UNIVERSITIES**

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## || EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While the value of sustaining a diverse student body at universities is widely apparent, students in underserved communities experience significant barriers to access to higher education. These include a lack of financial resources, social capital, and academic preparedness. To address these challenges, pre-college outreach has emerged as a tool for universities to increase their minority enrollment by working with K-12 schools to improve the college-going rates of students in underserved communities.

Past higher education research illustrates the considerable ways that a diverse student body improves learning outcomes for all students, particularly by fostering a heightened ability to approach problems using multiple perspectives. Research also indicates that diversity creates a more supportive campus, alleviating underrepresented students' feelings of being tokenized and targeted on campus due to their race or background.

To support efforts to mitigate these challenges, I delved deeply into the pre-college outreach initiatives of five selective, public universities across the country with a history of anti-affirmative action policies through a series of interviews with university administrators and outreach directors. In my first study, I discovered common drivers and challenges to successful work. Through this analysis, it became evident that a university's institutional environment and strategic vision for diversity are integral to the success of K-12 outreach work. Thus, in my second study, I examined the institutional environment and strategic vision of each university by evaluating the existence of seven indicators for each concept.

The study revealed that the universities with institutional environments that prioritize diversity are more likely to integrate K-12 outreach into campus-wide strategic visions for diversity on campus, suggesting that these institutions value outreach initiatives as a successful tactic for directly increasing the diversity of the student body. This outcome, along with a loose correlation between these factors and minority enrollment trends, indicate that in order to successfully increase minority enrollment through K-12 outreach, university administrators should first explore the ways in which their institution is enabling or constraining the work, and where they have agency to create change even within an anti-affirmative action environment.

In particular, a vocal prioritization of diversity from university leadership is one factor that enables an integrated vision for diversity that supports students from pre-college outreach to on-campus academic services, evident in indicators such as better collaboration between university diversity offices. Furthermore, stronger clarification around the purpose of the outreach efforts – whether for recruitment of underserved communities or to mitigate educational disparities more generally – is important to the measured success of outreach initiatives on campus.

This study informs the process by which university administrators and outreach leaders can look critically at their institutions to better use K-12 outreach as an effective tool for increasing minority enrollment. This research is a product of and a service to this outreach work, and I hope that it will help provide insight to further these important efforts.

## || INTRODUCTION

In May 2008 – a year and a half after Michigan voters passed Proposal 2, a law that effectively banned affirmative action at state public universities – the University of Michigan created the Center for Educational Outreach (“U-M establishes,” [Michigan News](#)). The purpose of the Center is to increase participation of underrepresented minority students in higher education and maintain a diverse student body at the University of Michigan through community and school partnerships (“About CEO,” [Center for Educational Outreach](#)). Six years after the Center was founded, University of Michigan enrollment of African American students has dropped from 6.7% of the undergraduate population<sup>1</sup> in Fall 2009 to less than 4.7% today (“Fall 2009 Enrollment,” “Fall 2013 Enrollment,” [Office of the Registrar](#)). This is not to say that the Center for Educational Outreach has not impacted the lives of thousands of students in the State of Michigan through creative programs that effectively promote college participation at all levels. In fact, this past year the Center engaged over 6,000 students across the state in academic enrichment, campus visits, summer programming, and more. Nearly every reporting program had over a 90% success rate of effectively communicating to participants the importance of a college education and the steps that are required to attain one (“2013 Annual Report, [Center for Educational Outreach](#)).

If the Center for Educational Outreach is successfully increasing awareness and participation in the college process for underserved students in Michigan, why has minority enrollment at the University continued to decline so dramatically? If the Center for Educational Outreach was founded as a way to “maintain and expand diversity on campus” in the absence of affirmative action – why is that effort not being reflected in unrepresented minority enrollment at the University (“U-M establishes,” [Michigan News](#))? There are many possible answers to these

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<sup>1</sup> Excluding international students

questions that exist on micro and macro levels. The Center could be underfunded and thus unable to recruit a large enough pool of students to combat the negative impact of affirmative action; the mission of the organization could be more geared towards fostering a college-going culture in underserved communities, rather than recruiting specifically for the University of Michigan; the disparities in the K-12 education system might simply be too immense to overcome, or so many more.

The University of Michigan is not the only school seeking to address these challenges. Universities across the country have lower rates of enrollment, retention, and graduation for minority students than those of the general population, and many are also facing difficult regulatory environments and large achievement gaps in the K-12 system. These universities have engaged in a variety of methods to address this challenge: financial aid and scholarship increases, support for research on race and multicultural issues, and a strong focus on outreach in underserved communities through avenues such as the Center for Educational Outreach.

While similar in the overarching challenge that they face, universities have developed vastly different approaches to pre-college outreach as it relates to the recruitment and retention of underrepresented minority students. This paper seeks to inform the conversation around these pre-college programs by delving deeply into the outreach efforts of five selective, public universities across the country through a series of interviews with university administrators and program directors. I am specifically looking at pre-college programs in which universities are partnering with low-income, minority communities through academic preparatory programs, sharing of college planning resources, mentorship opportunities, and more. I identify the challenges and opportunities that these programs consistently face, as well as evaluate the strategies and structures that have emerged to support efforts to increase minority enrollment and

expand educational opportunities for underserved communities. Ultimately, I hope these outcomes will be used to support and advance the diversity work of selective universities across the country and particularly the University of Michigan as they seek to take an active role in addressing the educational disparities that exist within their institution and in the community.

With the information I gathered through interviewing twenty-nine individuals across five universities, I conducted a two-part qualitative study that explored the opportunities and challenges that exist around creating a meaningful link between pre-college outreach and minority enrollment at each university. Using a grounded theory approach, I collected and analyzed data in order to develop a framework with which to then reexamine the data and discover more in-depth results (Glaser and Strauss). In Study 1, I viewed the interview data holistically to discover commonly identified drivers and obstacles to successful outreach work at selective public universities. I then examined and coded these responses along four levels of analysis: interpersonal, programmatic, institutional, and structural, which allowed for a more critical look at the common trends and variance that exists between universities. Through this holistic review, two concepts emerged as important lenses through which to analyze the outreach work at each university as it relates to minority enrollment and retention: institutional environment and strategic vision. Based on the data collected, I developed seven indicators for each of these two concepts in order to identify when and to what extent these concepts exist at each school. In Study 2, I used these indicators to conduct a case comparison of the five universities I researched that explored the following hypothesis: an institutional environment that strongly prioritizes diversity and supports the capacity of outreach work on campus is more likely to enable the successful integration of K-12 outreach into a greater strategic vision for diversity and inclusion at the university; whereas an institutional environment that does not

actively prioritize diversity is more likely to constrain such a vision. I tested this by coding interviews, observations and archival data for the presence or lack of each indicator for institutional environment and strategic vision, and then compared the results across each university to discover collective trends and individual nuances. Lastly, I applied this information to a set of recommendations for how universities can think critically about structuring their pre-college and diversity initiatives to improve educational opportunities for all students.

## || Literature Review

### *Diversity on University Campuses*

Before discussing how universities are seeking to achieve a diverse student body, it is important to first examine why diversity is an important component of a worthwhile college education. As a University of Michigan student, I am invested in seeking solutions to the challenges of minority enrollment because diversity on campus so aptly shaped my experiences on campus and those of my peers. As a white Jewish student, I was lucky to stumble upon the intercultural experiences that sparked my passion for equity and inclusion, developed my intercultural competency, and initiated relationships with diverse students across campus. My experiences with diversity are not unique; diversity on college campuses has been proven to positively influence multiple educational outcomes. One set of learning outcomes – including perspective-taking, cognitive openness, and pluralistic orientation – revolves around students' abilities and willingness to engage in multiple perspectives (Antonio et al, Engberg & Hurtado, Gottfredson et al). A second set of diversity-driven educational outcomes is rooted in democratic values, in which racial and ethnic diversity on campus is correlated with higher citizenship engagement, multicultural understanding, and attitudes favoring equal opportunity (Gottfredson

et al., Gurin et al). In order to tap in to these educational benefits of diversity, simply increasing numbers is not sufficient; rather compositional diversity must be paired with opportunities for students to engage meaningfully with one another, such as in a classroom setting (Gottfredson et al., Marin). Furthermore, faculty and leaders play a crucial role in ‘activating’ diversity outcomes by facilitating an environment in which students can learn from one another (Haslerig). One example of this is an intergroup dialogue course I took that facilitated challenging conversations between equal numbers of students from minority and majority identities. This composition allowed for different points of view to be elevated and respected in the classroom in a way that often did not exist in other classes. Conversely, studies show that if diversity is missing in a classroom or exists only nominally, the underrepresented narrative can go unspoken or shut down, as has sometimes been the classroom experience of my peers from minority backgrounds at Michigan (Haslerig).

Similarly, it is not uncommon for students of color at Michigan to feel targeted or tokenized on campus in the absence of fellow classmates and peers that share their background (Torres). Recently, a significant amount of higher education research has emerged around the unique experiences of underrepresented minority and first generation college students, often providing personal accounts from students whose stories are typically “absent, oversimplified, or misrepresented” (Pyne and Means). Each student’s experience is nuanced – such as when my classmate was uncomfortable speaking up as the only black man in a course discussing American slavery, or when my friend was shut out of a party and was again left to wonder if this small experience was just coincidence or if it was because she is African American. These examples, as well as more overt racial micro-aggressions, may seem trivial to students who do not deal with them day-to-day, but they can have a strong impact on feelings of exclusion and anxiety on

college campuses and negatively impact individual educational outcomes (Hardwood). These patterns of exclusion fit within the “culture of power” that exists at institutions such as universities, which often cater to dominant identities and push underrepresented individuals to the margins (Kivel). These qualitative studies reiterate the argument that increased minority enrollment numbers must be paired with education and engagement around diversity in order to create a culture of inclusion.

The importance of multicultural educational outcomes and more inclusive campus communities situates pre-college outreach as an important tool within the greater work on campus to not only increase diversity, but also activate diversity outcomes. When paired with formal diversity learning opportunities and student support services, achieving a diverse student body is a crucial first step to enhance learning and support students on college campuses.

### *Barriers to Access*

In addition to maximizing educational benefits and inclusive spaces, increasing minority enrollment in higher education plays an important role in rectifying the educational and economic disparities that still exist today based on race, class, and other social identities. Even as tuition rises, a college degree continues to be a worthwhile investment as individuals with bachelor’s degrees will on average make \$1 million more in their lifetime than individuals with a high school diploma (Carnevale, Rose, and Cheah). Even so, there are disparities in access to this opportunity; low-income and minority students face significant social, cultural, and structural barriers to educational attainment.

At the heart of these barriers is sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of social and cultural capital, in which opportunities are stratified in the social world based on individuals’ access to



networks, knowledge, and surrounding institutions. Particularly with higher education, the college preparation and application process requires guidance and individual attention to explore options that are the best fit for students (Holland). If students have families in which no one has attended college, they likely will not have access to this college-planning knowledge at home. Furthermore, as the counselor-to-student ratio is considerably lower in low-income neighborhoods, these schools are also often lacking the necessary resources to create a college-going environment in their schools that provides students with a variety of college information, as well as individual support (Holland). In addition to this lack of access to social and cultural capital, families in such communities also have limited financial capital, which creates both literal and cognitive barriers to taking steps towards higher education (Kim & Nunez). These concepts are deeply intertwined with Holland and Farmer-Hinton's definition of college culture: one which "reflects environments that are accessible to all students and saturated with ever-present information and resources and ongoing formal and informal conversations" regarding every aspect of the college-going process. Many K-12 programs focus specifically on facilitating the creation of this culture in underserved schools as a tactic to increase college enrollment.

The last form of capital that impacts college enrollment is academic. In Kim and Nunez's study examining multiple influences on college enrollment in underserved communities, academic preparation was the single most important predictor for college enrollment, particularly at four-year institutions; yet schools in these communities are vastly underperforming in math and reading scores that are highly regarded in post-secondary education (Kim and Nunez).

These challenges are compounded for highly selective public universities seeking to increase their minority enrollment due to the academic rigor of their institution and the presence of regulatory limitations, such as anti-affirmative action laws that prohibit the use of race and

other factors as a consideration for admissions in public institutions. Through this research, I explore how these universities are employing pre-college outreach as a tool to supplement the academic preparation and college-going culture that is vastly lacking in low-income and minority communities, in hopes that more of these students will be encouraged and qualified to matriculate through admissions and attend their institutions.

## || Data and Methods

### *School Selection*

In order to explore outreach programs that have the potential to be replicated at my university and other similar schools across the country, I selected five public universities from different regions that were similar in size and standing. Focusing only on public schools allows me to identify the extent to which an institution's public mission is relevant to its diversity efforts, as well as mitigate outside factors such as funding. In addition, each university has over 15,000 undergraduate students, making a substantial increase in minority enrollment more challenging to achieve due to greater numbers. Furthermore, large universities are a part of a national pipeline for education, and changes in their structures can have a profound impact on college access as a whole. Each school selected is also considered to be one of the flagships of their state and ranks within the top 30 public universities in the nation. This level of selectivity exacerbates challenges to achieving a diverse student body because the highly competitive academic standards can be an obstacle to underserved students without the school support or resources to succeed at this level.

In order to gain a diverse and worthwhile pool of case studies, I selected universities based on region, availability of data, and public engagement around issues of minority enrollment. Varying schools by region uncovers varied perspectives and unique practices across

the country, as well as sheds light on how state regulations and demographics play a role in shaping outreach. In addition, each school exists in a state that has a history of engaging in affirmative action policy, whether through lawsuits or voter initiatives, making them prime universities to explore both challenges and innovation within such efforts. Lastly, I targeted universities with a large portfolio of initiatives to explore and people to interview in order to gain an in-depth picture of the university. To protect the anonymity of interviewees, the schools have been renamed. See table 1 for a basic profile on each university.

Table 1  
Basic Profile of Five Universities

	<b>Johnson University</b>	<b>Heaney University</b>	<b>Mizruchi University</b>	<b>Soderstrom University</b>	<b>Garcia University</b>
Type of Institution	Public, Research, Flagship	Public, Research, Flagship, Land-grant	Public, Research, Flagship	Public, Research, Flagship	Public, Research, Flagship
Rural or urban	Urban	Rural	Urban	Urban	Urban
Size of Undergraduate Population <sup>a</sup>	30,000	40,000	25,000	30,000	40,000
Percentage of In-State Undergraduate Students <sup>b</sup>	60%	80%	80%	60%	80%
Percentage of undergraduate students receiving Pell grants <sup>c</sup>	< 20%	< 30%	< 40%	< 40%	< 30%
Acceptance Rate Range <sup>d</sup>	25% – 50%	50% - 75%	0 - 25%	50% - 75%	25% – 50%
Average ACT/GPA of admitted students	29-33, 3.85	23-28, 3.4-3.9	29-34, 3.9	25-30, 3.64-3.93	25-31, GPA not listed

<sup>a</sup>Rounded to nearest 5,000 to preserve anonymity

<sup>b</sup>Rounded to nearest 5% to preserve anonymity

<sup>c</sup>Difficult to secure university data around income diversity – Pell grants are the best available indicator of representation of lowest income students at university (“Economic Diversity”, U.S. News & World Report)

<sup>d</sup>Placed within range to preserve anonymity

As seen in table 1, in-state students make up more than 60% of the student body at every university researched. To understand the state demographics that impact each school’s pool of in-state applicants, tables 2 and 3 show enrollment by race/ethnicity as compared to the state and national population.

Table 2  
Side-by-Side Comparison of Undergraduate Enrollment by Race at Select Schools and State Racial Demographics

	State of Johnson/Heaney	Johnson U	Heaney U <sup>a</sup>	Mizruchi State	Mizruchi U	Soderstrom State	Soderstrom U <sup>a</sup>	Garcia State	Garcia U	USA
White (not Hispanic)	76.2%	62.5%	67.4%	39.4%	27.6%	71.6%	48.0%	44.5%	47.7%	63.0%
African American	14.3%	4.3%	6.3%	6.6%	3.4%	3.9%	3.2%	12.3%	4.3%	13.1%
Native American	.07%	0.2%	0.3%	1.7%	0.6%	1.8%	1.3%	1.0%	0.2%	1.2%
Asian	2.6%	12.2%	4.4%	13.9%	38.5% <sup>b</sup>	7.7%	22.5%	4.2%	17.8%	5.1%
Pacific Islander	<.05%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.2%	0.7%	0.8%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
Multi-Racial	2.2%	3.1%	2.2%	3.6%	-	4.3%	-	1.7%	3.1%	2.4%
Hispanic	4.6%	4.1%	3.5%	38.2%	12.9%	11.7%	6.4%	38.2%	21.7%	16.9%
Unreported	-	6.7%	1.5%	-	4.0%	-	3.5%	-	0.3%	-
Inter-national	-	6.9%	14.5%	-	12.9%	-	14.3%	-	4.7%	-

<sup>a</sup>Total enrollment – could not isolate undergraduate population

<sup>b</sup>Mizruchi University segments Asian enrollment by national origin to better report underrepresented minority Asian populations. For equal comparison, I totaled these enrollment numbers.

Note: Johnson University and Heaney University are in the same state

Source for statewide data: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 3  
Portion of African American and Hispanic State Population Captured in Enrollment at Each University

	Johnson University	Heaney University	Mizruchi University	Soderstrom University	Garcia University
African American	0.30	0.44	0.52	0.82	0.35
Hispanic	0.89	0.76	0.34	0.55	0.57

Note. The portion of state population captured in enrollment indicates the percentage of students of a particular race at the university, as a function of that racial group’s percentage of the state population. So, Johnson University is only enrolling African Americans at a rate that is less than a third of the percentage of African Americans in the state. Many suggest that in order for equality of access to exist in higher education, state universities’ enrollment should reflect the population of the state that the school is in.

Source for statewide data: U.S. Census Bureau

Based on these numbers, every university researched is currently under-enrolling African American, Latino, and other minority students as compared to their state populations. This is not to suggest that no progress has been made at each school. To explore enrollment over time, table 4 illustrates percentages for underserved populations at each school over the last five fall terms.

Table 4  
Five-Year Undergraduate Minority Enrollment Trends

		Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Percent Change Over 5 Years
<b>Johnson University</b>	African American	5.8%	4.5%	4.4%	4.4%	4.3%	-1.5%
	Latino	4.1%	4.3%	4.1%	4.0%	4.1%	0%
<b>Heaney University<sup>a</sup></b>	African American	7.3%	6.7%	6.5%	6.2%	6.3%	-1.0%
	Latino	2.8%	3.1%	3.3%	3.4%	3.5%	+0.7%
<b>Mizruchi University</b>	African American	3.6%	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%	-0.2%
	Latino	11.9%	11.6%	12.1%	12.6%	12.9%	+1.0%
<b>Soderstrom University<sup>a</sup></b>	African American	Data not available	3.1%	3.1%	3.1%	3.2%	+0.1%
	Latino		5.5%	5.8%	6.2%	6.4%	+1.1%
<b>Garcia University</b>	African American	4.9%	4.7%	4.6%	4.4%	4.3%	-0.6%
	Latino	18.5%	19.4%	20.0%	20.9%	21.7%	+3.2%

<sup>a</sup>Total enrollment – could not isolate undergraduate population

As seen above, most schools have made strides in their Latino enrollment over time, while African American enrollment at each school remains minimally improved, stagnant, or on the decline. Soderstrom University is the only school with any improvement in their African American enrollment numbers, and Johnson and Heaney universities (which are in the same state) have made the least progress for the enrollment of either race. While increases could be attributed to demographic shifts and other factors, pre-college outreach programs could also be playing an important role in impacting these numbers. To explore how minority students are

successfully matriculating through each university as compared to their peers, table 5 shows graduation rates based on race for each university.

Table 5  
Six-Year University Graduation Rates Based on Race and Comparative Ratio

	Johnson		Heaney		Mizruchi		Soderstrom		Garcia		U.S. Public Institutions	
Graduation Rate	91%	1.00	79%	1.00	91%	1.00	80%	1.00	80%	1.00	56%	1.00
White	92%	1.01	83%	1.05	92%	1.01	83%	1.04	82%	1.03	38%	1.04
Asian	93%	1.02	80%	1.01	94%	1.03	84%	1.05	83%	1.04	59%	1.05
African American	79%	0.86	60%	0.76	77%	0.85	66%	0.83	70%	0.88	38%	0.83
Latino	87%	0.95	55%	0.70	81%	0.89	71%	0.89	74%	0.93	48%	0.89

African American and Latino students are also not graduating at the same rates as White and Asian students at the five universities, although to varying degrees. Although all five schools are failing to recruit and retain minority students at the same level as of the general population, there is variation within these numbers that might be attributed to university efforts – which is what this study will seek to inform. Furthermore, it is possible that the existence of such programs is preventing the disparities from being larger or growing more rapidly than they currently are. Regardless, what is most clearly illustrated from this data is that universities still have long strides to make in terms of recruiting and retaining underserved communities – elevating the importance of effective pre-college outreach initiatives.

### *State Profiles*

In order to understand the structural environment in which these universities are working to partner with K-12 schools, it is important to note the statewide demographics and regulatory environment for each school. State statistics, such as high school graduation and unemployment rates, are sometimes used to project college enrollment within each state and the hurdles that

universities face when working to increase the number of underrepresented students attending their universities (Kim and Nunez). Table 6 lists high-school graduation rates by race, per capita income, unemployment rate, and state spending on elementary and secondary education for each institution’s home state. Refer back to table 2 for demographics by race/ethnicity.

Table 6  
State-by-State Education Indicators

		<b>Johnson/ Heaney State</b>		<b>Mizruchi State</b>		<b>Soderstrom State</b>		<b>Garcia State</b>		<b>USA</b>	
4-Year High School Graduation Rates & Ratio	All	72.8%	1.00	78.5%	1.00	76.0%	1.00	87.7%	1.00	78.2%	1.00
	White	78.6%	1.08	86.4%	1.10	79.4%	1.04	93.0%	1.06	83.0%	1.06
	Asian	86.7%	1.19	91%	1.16	84.1%	1.11	94.4%	1.08	93.5%	1.20
	Black	53.5%	0.73	65.7%	0.84	65.4%	0.86	83.5%	0.95	66.1%	0.85
	Latino	62.6%	0.86	73.2%	0.93	65.6%	0.86	84.3%	0.96	71.4%	0.91
State Per Capita Income		\$25,547		\$29,551		\$30,661		\$25,809		\$28,051	
State Unemployment Rate		8.3%		8.3%		6.7%		6.0%		6.7%	
State funding to elementary/ secondary public education per student <sup>a</sup>		\$6,762		\$6,077		\$6,480		\$4,088		\$5,509	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

This data illustrates that there are many nuanced aspects of the K-12 system within each state that can impact a university’s ability to recruit underrepresented students at a fair, equitable, and proportional rate. As race and income are tightly linked, state economic factors play a large role in shaping the capacity of elementary and secondary institutions in underserved communities to prepare students to succeed at a highly selective university.

*State Regulatory Environment*

In addition to economic and education systems, the regulatory environment in each state regarding affirmative action policy is highly relevant to pre-college outreach to underserved

communities, dictating the extent to which universities can recruit and admit students based on race and other factors. In the last two decades, a number of states across the country have prohibited their “state and local agencies from granting preferential treatment to any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in public education, public employment, or public contracting.” (Proposition 209, State of California) This limitation has had severe and immediate negative impacts on the rates of minority enrollment at many such institutions – cutting African American enrollment numbers at some selective universities in half in just a few short years.

The regulatory environment is fairly controlled across the five universities, although with some nuance regarding policies responses to anti-affirmative action measures. Every university I researched is either currently constrained by affirmative action or has been in the past for a number of years. In addition, most of the universities I studied have engaged in legal action to combat these policies. At least one of the schools studies participates in a statewide ‘percent plan’ policy for college admissions, or an attempt to make public universities more accessible to underrepresented students through the automatic acceptance of a certain percentage of the highest ranked students by GPA at every high school in the state. Implementation of the policy varies mostly along two key dimensions: the elasticity of the percentage scale (whether fixed or a sliding scale) or the number of state schools applicants that are automatically admitted. As there is often an information gap in underserved communities regarding policy and education information, pre-college outreach in these schools will often work to make more students aware of these state-wide college access opportunities.

The interpretation of such anti-affirmative action mandates by lawyers, university administrators, and the general public likely helped to shape how each university chose to



conduct such efforts, based on what they believed to be acceptable behavior within the bounds of the law. This study will consider how this variation in perception of the constraints that exist within each state regulatory environment can impact university outreach efforts, rather than on distinctions between the laws themselves. This approach allows the research to remain focused on the university institution's role in shaping outreach, as well as maintains the anonymity of schools and interviewees by avoiding identifiable laws, policies, and historical events. These variations across each university will allow me to explore how the flexibility (or perceived flexibility) of a state regulatory environment can impact strategic decision-making regarding diversity and outreach on university campuses.

### *Interview Selection*

Within each university, I reached out to a multitude of people on various levels of the university hierarchy in order to gain a variety of perspectives within the institution. These roles include: Chief Diversity Officer, Executive Director of Outreach, Program Coordinator, College Advisor, Engineering Diversity Programs Officer, Director of Strategic Planning, Student Government Representative, and Director of Federal TRIO Programs. In order to protect the anonymity of the interview participants, their titles will be changed to fit general titles, offices, and department names. The Chief Diversity Officer, while often going by a different title, is the university administrator that manages or represents a portfolio of diversity-related offices on campus, including outreach, student support, and others, and communicates goals to administration. Although I was not able to interview everyone at each school, across and within the five universities, I gained a comprehensive view of outreach and diversity services through a varied set of interviews. Table 7 provides a detailed spread of interviewees across universities, departments, and roles.

Table 7  
Spread of Interviews Over Five Schools

	<b>Johnson University</b>	<b>Heaney University</b>	<b>Mizruchi University</b>	<b>Soderstrom University</b>	<b>Garcia University</b>
Top Leadership		Chief Diversity Officer	Chief Diversity Officer	Chief Diversity Officer	
Outreach	Director		Assistant Director	Assistant Director	Director
					Program Coordinator
			Program Coordinator		
			Program Coordinator		
	Program Coordinator		Director of Recruitment Programs	Program Coordinator	
Student Services			Program Director	Director	Director
Business Diversity		Program Coordinator			
Engineering Diversity	Director	Director			
Federal and State Wide Programs	Student Employee (informal)		Director of Federal Programs		
			Director of State program		
Students	Student Diversity Researcher		Student Government Representative	Student Ambassador (informal)	Student Secretary in Diversity Office (informal)
Other	Director of Financial Aid Outreach	Director of Diversity in Science initiative	Student Advisor		
	Director of Diversity Research Office	Pre-College Committee Meeting (informal)			
	Pre-College Committee Meeting (informal)				
<b>Total Formal Interviews</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>

### *Interview Process*

The purpose of the interviews was to gain insight into the outreach and diversity officers' understanding of the purpose, challenges, successes, and impact of their outreach programs both on and off campus. Every interview had a framework of questions that was used to keep responses consistent; however depending on the role of the interviewee, the length of their question responses, and other factors, I used discretion in asking follow-up questions to gain knowledge on a particular experience or related subject. Every interview was conducted in-person as to observe nuance, intention, and suggestion that may not have been portrayed via phone or written response, as well as to gain trust and prompt interviewees to be open with their responses. A full list of questions can be found in appendix 1.

### *Informal Observations*

While traveling to each university, I took every opportunity to speak with students I came across during my trip and observe public campus spaces. This allowed me to gain a better understanding of how diversity is prioritized on campus. While a majority of the universities were on Winter Break during my trip, I was able to speak with students at these schools who were working in the diversity offices I visited as secretaries or peer mentors, all of whom were knowledgeable and forthright regarding diversity on campus. I also took note of the placements of the diversity offices on each campus, observing whether they were centrally located or more physically removed, as well as the resources that seemed to be invested in these spaces on campus.

### *Archival Data*

I used information on university websites regarding diversity programming and strategic plans to supplement the information I gathered during interviews. This information was helpful in understanding particular overarching goals that universities were focusing on, as well as gave descriptions of many of the programs available to pre-college and college students. I also used enrollment and graduation numbers to gain an understanding of the institutional environment in which outreach offices were conducting this work. Lastly, I explored university and independent resources that helped to explain the affirmative action rules of each state and the implementation of such policies at each university.

## **|| Analysis and Results**

With the data collected, I sought to understand the opportunities and challenges that universities face in using K-12 outreach as a tool for increasing minority enrollment at their institution, and where there are opportunities for improvement. Using a two-part iterative process, I reviewed the data along two qualitative dimensions – holistically and individually – in order to discover trends and nuances across and within the five universities. I first honed in on the obstacles and drivers of success identified by each interviewee and categorized these responses along four tiers of analysis: interpersonal, programmatic, institutional, and structural. This approach allowed me to understand common factors in outreach work across the country, as well as to recognize where the greatest variance exists between responses. Searching for patterns in the data holistically illuminated two key frameworks that were integral to the outreach work at each university: institutional environment and strategic vision. I discovered seven indicators for each of these concepts based on the information shared in interviews and used this framework to

reexamine each university individually. In this second study, I sought to understand how the extent to which these factors impact pre-college outreach and diversity at each school, and how universities might be able to capitalize on existing resources to better translate pre-college work into substantial improvements regarding minority enrollment on campus in the future.

## **STUDY 1: Challenges and Successes of K-12 Outreach**

### **Analysis**

In the first part of the study, I used interview data to understand the most notable drivers and challenges to the success of campus outreach initiatives. I then organized this information along four tiers of analysis in order to determine the most commonly identified successes and obstacles in pre-college work. Through this information, I discovered key concepts that were integral many of the interview observations, and developed indicators for each concept based on the information shared by staff and students. First, I examined responses to two of the questions I asked every interviewee:

1. What are the pillars of your program that drive its success?
2. What are your biggest challenges and constraints in this work?

While these responses are based on each person's own definition of success for their program, they can still be amalgamated to gain a comprehensive picture of the factors that promote or stifle efforts to increase the rates of underrepresented students attending college and the university administering the outreach. To count as a response, concepts were either stated as a direct answer to the questions above or were mentioned as a challenge, frustration, or important aspect of one's work at another point throughout the interview. In order to differentiate and organize responses, I categorized each answer across four levels of analysis, based on micro and macro-level dimensions. Explanations of each tier of analysis can be found in table 8.

Table 8  
Levels of Analysis and Definition

<b>Interpersonal</b>	Employee motivation, leadership style, personal relationships, and other person-to-person variables that could impact success
<b>Programmatic</b>	Aspects of the program model such as tactics, partnerships, and volunteers, as well as limitations to program's reach, other competing programs, etc.
<b>Institutional</b>	Factors within the particular campus environment that constrain or propel diversity efforts forward; could include: administrative leadership, level of centralization, resource dispersion, building capacity, and more
<b>Structural</b>	State demographics, historical trends or public opinion, industry and public partners, funding overtime, and regulations at the state level

In examining drivers and obstacles of success along these levels of analysis, two important concepts emerged in the relationship between K-12 outreach and minority enrollment at each institution. In Study 2, I use these concepts to delve deeper into how pre-college outreach is situated within each university institution to impact minority enrollment. The first concept, the university's institutional environment, arose because the drivers and challenges along the institutional level of analysis were identified by interviewees as extremely relevant to their work on campus; thus, the institutional environment as a whole is a worthwhile lens through which to look deeper at the data. By organizing the identified institutional successes and challenges into thematic buckets, I developed seven core characteristics that combine to create an institutional environment that prioritizes diversity and supports the capacity of outreach programs on campus.

The second concept that emerged through analysis of the data is the strategic vision for diversity on campus. This is defined as a campus-wide diversity plan that creates bridges between pre-college outreach and other elements that promote diversity and inclusion on campus, such as student services. This was decided upon as a core concept because it incorporates the aspects of pre-college outreach that varied the most between the universities. To illustrate, each school's outreach efforts varied in their level of communication and collaboration with other diversity efforts on campus. In addition, outreach officers at each school interpreted

the purposes of their outreach and their relationship with the university in different ways. Coding for these variations, I developed seven indicators that can be used to measure the extent to which an integrated, strategic vision for diversity and outreach exists at each school. I posit that the institutional environment characteristics described are collectively correlated with the indicators for strategic vision and will further test this theory in Study 2 by evaluating each university across each dimension of the institutional environment and strategic vision. Ultimately, this will allow me to understand how pre-college outreach is situated within highly selective public universities and identify areas for improvement within these efforts.

## **STUDY 1: Challenges and Successes of K-12 Outreach**

### **Results**

After analyzing challenges and successes across four levels of analysis, I discovered shared drivers and challenges to success across all five schools. First, interpersonal factors (which include motivation, leadership, and other micro-level factors) were almost always identified as drivers of success. Conversely, structural factors – factors that exist outside the university, such as state demographics and trends – were almost entirely considered obstacles to progress. In other words, interviewees view the structural landscape within their state as restricting and frustrating, but they feel that despite these setbacks, the personal motivation and hard work of their peers continue to propel their programs forward. Programmatic and institutional elements show more variance across positive and negative responses, as well as have shared factors across universities. See table 9 to view the most commonly identified factors in each category, with accompanying quotes that represent the similar responses given. Responses had to be mentioned by people at least two universities in order to be listed.

Table 9  
Most Commonly Identified Drivers and Obstacles to Success

	Drivers of Success	Obstacles to Success
Interpersonal	<p><b>1. Passionate, talented, innovative program leaders</b> (9 people, 4 schools)</p> <p><i>“There are a lot of great people on this campus who are genuinely intrinsically passionate about watching students come to [Heaney] and having a positive experience.”</i></p> <p><b>2. Charismatic leader who built networks and shaped vision</b> (5 people, 4 schools)</p> <p><i>“[Past President] fervently and independently articulated diversity agenda, so there was no question in anyone’s mind that [the past President] was completely behind this.”</i></p>	None identified
Programmatic	<p><b>1. On-campus, residential component</b> (5 people, 4 schools)</p> <p><i>“We have had a number of K-12 programs that [...] bring [students] to campus so they can experience what it’s like to go to school here. We’ve learned that the more we can actually give people experiences, the more likely they are to come.”</i></p> <p><b>2. Research-based practices</b> (4 people, 4 schools)</p> <p><i>“The second pillar to hold up the bridge’ [is] the kind of training we provide. We use best practices for underserved populations as the way that we train our folks. We use a researched-based approach that’s experiential so the teachers and counselors that are working with the students are</i></p>	<p><b>1. Limited staff and time</b> (6 people, 2 schools)</p> <p><i>“I don’t think you’ll find another organization, I’ve never even worked in a school that is staffed that slimly as far as support. [...] Even [Our Deputy Director] is still managing two programs.”</i></p> <p><b>2. Competition with other credit programs</b> (2 people, 2 schools)</p> <p><i>“One of the challenges I can think of is competing dual-credit programs around the community, so community colleges that also offer those same courses for maybe a cheaper rate, but there’s a different mission to our program versus their program.”</i></p>



	<p><i>not left to guess what it is that they need to do.”</i></p>	
<p><b>Institutional</b></p>	<p><b>1. Centralized university structure with leader and shared resources</b> (6 people, 3 schools)</p> <p><i>“We have a central office that’s well funded and comprehensive to do this work.”</i></p> <p><b>2. Education pipeline from recruitment to graduation – includes pre-college and academic support services</b> (4 people, 2 schools)</p> <p><i>“I’m very encouraged by the work that we’re doing. I serve on the strategic planning team for our Pipeline Committee, and that pipeline includes students from elementary and some pre-school, through graduate school.”</i></p>	<p><b>1. Lack of funding</b> (14 people, 5 schools)</p> <p><i>“The funding piece is definitely the most challenging and stressful part just because of the uncertainty of it every year, and the more we have, the more advisors we could employ, the more students we could serve, the greater impact we could have.”</i></p> <p><b>2. Competition with private schools for high achieving, underrepresented students</b> (6 people, 3 schools)</p> <p><i>“Here in [our] state, we’re handicapped because of [anti-affirmative action policy]. We have private schools like MIT and Stanford that can go out and find the best students and give them full-ride scholarships. We can’t do that.”</i></p> <p><b>3. Decentralization and lack of campus prioritization of diversity</b> (5 people, 2 schools)</p> <p><i>“The levels of bureaucracy that we have to go through in order to even reach the decision-maker [...] So we’re relying on [Director], who also resides over several other programs, and the further away you are from what’s happening on the ground, the harder it is for you to talk about how important it is. So that’s been frustrating as well.”</i></p>

<p><b>Structural</b></p>	<p><b>1. Grants and funding support from corporations</b> (2 people, 2 schools)</p> <p><i>“We have a strong incentive in the college of business from our key stakeholders, who are corporations that hire our students and give us a lot of money to get underrepresented students into the college and into career paths.”</i></p>	<p><b>1. Severity of academic need at underserved K-12 schools</b> (8 people, 5 schools)</p> <p><i>“The other challenge that really impacts what I’m able to do in terms of student recruitment is that we in the state have a huge academic achievement gap between white students and students of color. [...] When you think about being ready for college, students taking the SAT, students taking the right math, it’s hard for me to recruit students who are not college ready.”</i></p> <p><b>2. Students’ misconceptions about college, financial aid, admissions, and more</b> (7 people, 2 schools)</p> <p><i>“It’s a huge myth out there about [Johnson University] overall that [...] if you’re lucky enough to get in, you won’t be able to afford it, and that’s actually not true. [...] One of the biggest challenges that we face is actually counselors or any other third party that’s speaking to the student and giving them inaccurate information.”</i></p> <p><b>3. Power structures and racial/economic inequality</b> (4 people, 3 schools)</p> <p><i>“It’s a problem that has its roots in a very systemic place so [Mizruchi University] is not able to fix that exactly, but we can make progress with our outreach efforts.”</i></p> <p><b>4. State-wide Anti-Affirmative Action Policy</b> (4 people, 2 schools)</p>
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		<p><i>"I realized different policies that exist that prevent black students from getting to higher education, particularly [state-wide proposition], which repealed affirmative action. [...] And it's not really only black students, because students of color across the board are not represented at here at the university or at top universities."</i></p>
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***Interpersonal Drivers*** The interpersonal drivers of success identified were focused on the characteristics and abilities of the staff and students engaged in the outreach efforts on each campus. Most often, interviewees mentioned the intrinsic motivation of their colleagues – their passion and connection to the work they do every day. Interviewees also attributed success to their ability and their colleagues’ abilities to be innovative and resourceful with limited funding and in challenging situations. This motivation is also likely fueled by many of the outreach staff’s direct connection to the culture and communities they are working within, and even to the programs themselves. It is not uncommon to have college students or staff working for an outreach program that they participated in when they were in high school, allowing them to connect better with participants and have a deep-rooted understanding of the importance and impact of their work on each child.

In addition to intrinsic motivation, interviewees identified the tactical and long-lasting benefits of a charismatic and well-connected leader as an irreplaceable tool that propelled their outreach efforts forward. In multiple situations, a past director’s connections to the cultural communities or particular schools being served play a critical role in building and sustaining important partnerships. At one school in particular, staff referenced the important role of a past University President, whose own experiences as a first-generation college student from a

minority racial and ethnic background fueled his progressive and visible leadership around outreach and diversity efforts on campus.

These examples illustrate the impact that motivational leaders and motivated staff members can have on the progress of outreach efforts, as identified by interviewees across schools and positions. There were no explicit mentions of interpersonal factors that were barriers to success, such as burnout or disagreement on vision or tactics, although frustrations with a lack of progress were clearly evident in interviews and may have an impact on worker productivity or forward-thinking vision.

***Programmatic Drivers*** In addition to interpersonal factors, there are many pieces of each program that interviewees believed to be the pillars of success for the initiative. These are specific tactics that leaders believe to be crucial in improving the academic preparedness of student participants and/or increasing their aspirations to attend college or their particular university. The most commonly identified programmatic pillar of success was the residential component that accompanies many of the outreach efforts administered by the universities. Whether a week or a weekend long, programs that offer participants an opportunity to visit campus and visualize themselves attending the university were identified as highly effective at increasing matriculation not only to college in general, but to the specific university hosting the program. At one school, their two-week engineering summer youth program results in three-quarters of attendees applying to the university, 80% of those students getting accepted, and approximately two-thirds of those students matriculating to the university. Additional success factors that focused on the experience of participants include: cohort/team building activities, fun and relevant academic learning, and opportunities for leadership growth.

Other major aspects that were identified as drivers of success in outreach programs revolved around the identity of staff members and their relationship to participants. Most mentioned was the ‘near-peer model,’ in which current college students who can relate closely in age and experience to participants assist with the programming. Particularly for first-generation college students who may not have siblings or friends attending college, an example set by someone similar to them to pave the path to college can be crucial to their likelihood to attend university (Kim and Nunez). In addition to this, consistent coordinators and advisors are helpful in creating an accessible pipeline to a particular university because they help to build trust and connection to the institution. For instance, often times students meet the same staff leader in multiple programs throughout their high school experiences, then attend the university and meet academic support staff who can relate to the student through their colleague in the outreach office, whom the student trusts. These relationships were identified as being important in increasing students’ comfort and motivation to attend the university and continue through to graduation.

***Programmatic Challenges*** The most constraining aspect of outreach programming is the limited staff and time each department has to successfully implement and expand upon their work. One particular outreach center administers 11 programs that serve over 60,000 students with just seven central staff, who double as directors of particular programs. While this is a limitation on the program side, it is a reflection of institutional constraints, particularly funding to hire more staff members.

***Institutional Drivers*** Trends towards centralization were cited as the largest institutional drivers of success. Some examples are physical: one Chief Diversity Officer discussed the major impact that physically moving her offices to the center of campus had, both symbolically and

programmatically, in allowing for more partnership across the university and increasing accessibility to students. Interviewees also mentioned the ability to share overhead services, such as fundraising, with the university and other outreach programs (particularly in outreach centers that act as an umbrella for multiple programs, such as at Mizruchi University and Johnson University). The ability to partner with other departments and programs across campus to “break down silos” is greatly valued across universities – both by those who have strong and active partnerships across the school and by those who are just beginning to build such relationships. Leaders also mentioned how helpful it is to have diversity integrated into the mission of the university or statements signed by regents and top administration. These claims, which occurred across universities, highlight the exceptional value of a vocal prioritization of diversity from university leaders. These institutional factors and others were consistently referenced throughout the interviews, and thus became a primary focus of Study 2.

***Institutional Challenges*** Funding was unequivocally the most identified institutional constraint to outreach success, mentioned by almost all of the 19 people interviewed and by multiple people at each school. Even the school that boasted the most support from top leadership, both vocal and financial backing, named funding as their top constraint. With more funding, interviewees feel that they could reach more students and expand the scope of their impact. Furthermore, many interviewees expressed a deep-seeded frustration or anxiety around budget cuts or limited funding. At Mizruchi University, directors explained that immediately following the state-wide anti-affirmative action policy, the state government allocated new funding to implement outreach efforts administered through the universities; yet just two years later, this funding was slashed in half and programs struggled to maintain their impact on students with significantly fewer resources. Others intimated that they were unsure if their

program budgets would even be continued for the following year, which poses significant barriers to planning, development, and the consistent relationships that were recognized to be important interpersonal drivers of success.

Although there are sources that suggest that universities are even under-enrolling the high-achieving, academically qualified pool of underrepresented students (Haveman and Smeeding), many interviewees mentioned the challenge of competing with other selective universities to capture this population. In particular, interviewees juxtaposed their university with that of private schools that are able to offer scholarships based on a race and may have more funding to support yield-based outreach.

Moreover, interviewees identified lack of campus support as a whole, whether from administrative leadership, department heads, or faculty, as another bucket of key challenges. This need for support was articulated in different ways, from desiring a greater prioritization of diversity from the top-down to a frustration with the lack of interest or awareness of the continued prevalence of diversity issues on college campuses.

***Structural Drivers*** Structural factors include demographics, state regulation, and partners outside the university. There was only one driver of success mentioned that could be attributed to structural factors. Identified only by the engineering diversity programs, corporate partners were mentioned as crucial outside institutions that propel programs forward through funding, resources, and a demand for diverse students prepared to enter the knowledge-based workforce.

***Structural Challenges*** In addition to institutional barriers and strengths, the institutions themselves are often constrained by state regulations or macro-level trends that limit the university's ability to take the needed steps to achieve a diverse student body. The largest identified challenge of this kind is the severity of the academic need and structural barriers of

success for low-income, minority students. As some of the most selective universities in the country, each college has very academically rigorous qualifications for acceptance, from GPA and ACT score to other factors that are often easier to access in well-resourced environments with a strong college-going culture. In a post-affirmative action world, it is often difficult to overcome these challenges to prepare participants academically and provide them with the information and support they need to matriculate to a highly selective university. One major barrier is the state of K-12 schools in underserved communities. In one state, some of the high schools do not offer the classes that are required to be eligible to apply to the state universities – one detriment that outreach programs at these universities are working to alleviate. Also mentioned, particularly in pre-college credit programs, was the lack of teacher retention in underserved communities. Many of the interviewees characterized these issues by discussing the differential power structures that exist based on race, class, immigrant status, and more. The identification of these widespread injustices motivate many of the directors to continue the work they do, and inform their understanding that “the work is never done” when it comes to seeking equal opportunity for underserved communities. Other structural constraints relate to greater state and national trends, including the economic downturn, rising cost of higher education, and statewide cuts to education funding.

In addition to the economic and social environment within each state, many directors recognized the confusing process of applying to college, and the misperceptions that exist in communities around it, as a major roadblock in their efforts to increase college-going rates. One director aptly described his job as consistently combating the “101 reasons not to apply to college.” In addition to the process itself, there are many myths and miscommunications about college as well, often regarding tuition and accessibility. Many times students do not have older



siblings or other students from which to learn the college process, and thus there can be a lot of misinformation. Perceptions of unwelcoming campus environments were also cited as a frustrating narrative in some of the partner communities, illustrating the importance of pairing recruitment efforts with on-campus support systems, diversity education, and other efforts that improve campus climate.

*Key Concepts: Institutional Environment and Strategic Vision*

In my holistic review of this data, I also discovered two important concepts that play a role in shaping and responding to the successes and challenges of outreach work at highly selective universities. Institutional factors, as defined in table 7, include top-down leadership support for diversity, a perception of flexible affirmative action policies that allow for race-based outreach, and more. These factors impact the way in which university outreach directors view and conduct their pre-college efforts: how they target underserved communities, how they partner with admissions and other university departments, and more. The coded data included university characteristics that were mentioned in the interviews or observed informally, such as in open spaces during campus visits or via personal inferences during interviews (not every observable frustration of the interviewees was stated on the record or even vocalized). Seven distinct factors emerged through this coding process and are listed in table 10. Although environments are typically seen as the catalyst that drives behavior, in this case, these institutional factors are ones that the university has agency in changing, as university leadership has the capacity to set priorities and dedicate resources to particular initiatives on campus.

Table 10  
Factors of Institutional Environment

Characteristic	Definition	Examples
<b>Vocal and Active Support from Top Administration</b>	Statements, strategic frameworks, or structural changes made by top current university leadership – Presidents, Provosts, Regents – regarding diversity and outreach efforts on campus	<p>"After the passing of [anti-affirmative action policy], the President and the Regents made a commitment to make sure that diversity was an institutional core value, so I think that sent the message to everyone on campus that we have to value diversity and act as a collective rather than just one office." (Student Support Director)</p> <p>"One of the challenges that has come into play in the last year has been turnover at the higher level. We used to have some really big champions and they've left or are on their way out the door. New administrators come in with different priorities [...]. We're not sure what this new Provost is going to say." (Outreach Program Coordinator)</p>
<b>Critical Considerations</b>	Concerted effort from leadership to examine university practices surrounding diversity – evident in the formation of committees, hosting of meetings, push for research around diversity, and attempts to develop strategic vision for future	<p>"I have seen since I've been here more critical dialogue at the presidents, provosts level, engaging in why are we doing what we're doing; what is our mission; we are a public university, are we serving the public as we say we are, those kind of difficult and critical conversations." (Student Support Director)</p>
<b>Institutional Foundations</b>	Diversity embedded in university history, mission, tradition, or current campus-wide initiatives or visions; could also include statements or plans that university leadership and/or department heads have signed on to	<p>"It's easier for us perhaps, when you think about land grant and what that means. This notion of broad access for Michigan studies. [...] That's part of the tradition, that's who we are. So I don't see us walking away from that commitment: from reaching out to as broad a student base as possible and saying this is an attainable goal for you – our commitment to our state schools and public education." (Chief Diversity Officer)</p>

<p><b>Support from Mid-Level Departments</b></p>	<p>Vocal engagement or interest from department heads, other programmatic units – driven by a sense from diversity leaders that diversity is prioritized by other campus units outside of their own</p>	<p>"Because our students are transient and because there's turnover between faculty and staff, to sustain work and keep it fresh; [it's a challenge to] maintain people's enthusiasm for the value and importance of diversity." (Chief Diversity Officer)</p> <p>"I've seen an improvement since I've been here in the number of offices that are looking at their diversity initiatives within their colleges and schools; are we recruiting students from URM; are we providing scholarships for top notch students who normally would not choose this university..." (Student Support Director)</p>
<p><b>University Funding</b></p>	<p>University has made tangible commitments to outreach and diversity work, leaders do not feel consistently constrained by the lack of funding or certainty of continued programming; funding on campus in general and sense of opportunity for program growth</p>	<p>"The Provost had to pay nearly \$2 million to renovate the building to move these units in. It sent a message to the rest of campus that the Provost valued this so much - to move people out of this building, to move functions out, to make room for diversity." (Chief Diversity Officer)</p> <p>"The entire campus is in dire straits; even if we were to allocate what campus has available, it wouldn't move the needle." (Chief Diversity Officer)</p>
<p><b>Centralized Programming and Administrative Body for Diversity</b></p>	<p>Infrastructure and leadership that exists for the sole purpose of connecting and elevating the diversity offices across campus, particularly from outreach to student support services, or throughout the educational pipeline; leader that is able to champion and articulate diversity efforts at higher level</p>	<p>"We have what I consider to be a very comprehensive infrastructure - we have programs starting the day the students step onto campus...all the way into the 4th or 5th year. That comprehensive infrastructure is really well-positioned to influence the students and their academic trajectory." (Student Support Director)</p> <p>"The levels of bureaucracy we have to go to to even reach the decision-maker [...] The further away you are from what's happening on the ground, the harder it is for you to talk about how important it is." (Outreach Program Coordinator)</p>
<p><b>Perception of State Regulatory and Funding Environment</b></p>	<p>Extent to which diversity leaders feel that they are not constrained their structural environment: affirmative action policy, funding for education on a state level, education policy, etc.</p>	<p>"Just by giving them that fact of information [about 10% rule] you are able to motivate these students and show them that its possible." (Outreach Program Coordinator)</p> <p>"Funding was cut in half from what once was a robust outreach program [...] Tax cuts in [the state] plummeted our education system [...] We're operating in a [anti-affirmative action law] regime." (Chief Diversity Officer)</p>

The strong presence of these indicators combines to create an institutional environment that prioritizes diversity and enables the implementation and expansion of outreach programs on campus. I posit that strong university institutional environments will be correlated with a more strategic approach to diversity on campus that leverages K-12 outreach efforts as an important tool for increasing minority enrollment on campus. For the purposes of this research, a more strategic vision for diversity is one in which the K-12 outreach program does not exist in its own separate sphere on campus, but is included in a campus-wide diversity strategy that breaks down silos between pre-college outreach, student support services, and other elements that promote diversity and inclusion on campus. Indicators of a holistic, integrated vision for diversity were derived from interviews, observations, and archival data. They are listed in table 11.

Table 11  
Strategic Vision

Indicator	Definition	Examples
<b>Language and vision from diversity leadership for K-12 integration</b>	Language from top leadership indicating that K-12 outreach is a priority within diversity plan, that it is a pillar of success and integral part of vision for future	“One of [Heaney University’s] 6 recent strategic visions is advancing a culture of high performance. My view, and I know others share this view, is that you can’t advance a culture of high performance when there are students who are not allowed to participate or choose not to participate in this culture.” (Chief Diversity Officer)
<b>Talk and practice of educational pipeline</b>	Practices and rhetoric surrounding a pipeline from pre-college, to undergrad, to post grad, to careers	<p>“I work the Pre-College programs, then as soon as I’m done with that, as the students are being admitted, they’re being connected to our retention programs. Their focus is to personalize the educational experience for students and their parents.” (Assistant Director for Outreach)</p> <p>“Important to see students graduate, but it’s tough - Being at [Mizruchi] and being a first-gen, low-income student, and student of color on a campus where being African American is like an endangered species, it’s not easy.” (Outreach Director)</p>

<b>Information sharing between outreach and student support offices</b>	Regular communication regarding incoming students between outreach programs and student support services (perhaps with admissions too)	<p>“Those who work at the university level and those who work at the high school level are constantly partnering. There’s a lot of meetings that happen behind the scenes. [...] We have many K-12 and college people working together.” (Student Support Director)</p> <p>“It’s a challenge because most students go to other schools – it’s difficult to follow their path or support them in transition.” (Federal Programs Director)</p>
<b>Visible collaboration across departments</b>	Collaboration between departments that recruit and support students on particular programs, campus-wide initiatives, etc.	<p>“Countless partnerships [on campus] - professors, admissions, financial aid, multicultural center - so when our students come, they can be exposed to these.” (Outreach Program Coordinator)</p>
<b>Recruitment component to outreach efforts</b>	Outreach with a significant component that works to connect students to their particular university	<p>“At the end of the day, my hope is that they’ll have enjoyed their time here so much that they’ll want to come back as a student.” (Engineering Director)</p> <p>“It’s about higher education and getting you into that power structure – not about getting you into Berkeley”; “We see our mission as serving the students of California - it’s not about serving the university, it’s about our kids.” (Strategy Director)</p>
<b>Positive attitude regarding program’s impact on campus</b>	Belief that the work one is doing is serving the university’s best interest and making an impact on campus; sense of optimism and forward-thinking attitude regarding the impact of one’s program on campus	<p>“I’m very encouraged by the work we’re doing.” (Student Services Director)</p> <p>“We’ve tried this and we try that and nothing seems to really move the numbers.” (Chief Diversity Officer)</p>
<b>Systematic school partnerships</b>	Strategic thinking and action around how to leverage limited resources for partnerships that will make the most impact; could include: data driven approach, identifying schools with greatest need, segmenting programs by region or fit, etc.	<p>“We work with every school in the [Garcia] area then [tailor approach] to figure out ‘what exactly do they need?’” (Outreach Program Coordinator)</p>

These identifiers, when strongly represented at a highly selective public university, would create an environment that integrates K-12 outreach work into the strategic vision for diversity and inclusion. In other words, pre-college outreach is viewed from the top-down as an important

tool to increase minority enrollment at the university, rather than a disconnected aspect of community engagement. In the next study, I analyzed each of my focus universities for these individual indicators to generate a holistic score for institutional environment and strategic vision at each school and determined the extent to which the two variables are correlated. I also used this framework to more deeply analyze each school's structural and strategic environment to discover trends and recommendations for progress in these areas.

## **STUDY 2: University Institutional Environments and Strategic Visions for Outreach Analysis**

Using the data gathered in Study 1, I next focused on the variation that exists across each university in order to determine how different outreach models and institutional environments impact a university's ability to recruit and retain underrepresented minority students. I expect that the capacity for outreach and prioritization of diversity within a university will impact the institution's tendency to form an integrated approach to outreach and diversity initiatives. I analyzed interview, observational, and archival data in order to understand the institutional environment and strategic vision that exists at each school. To start, I developed a qualitative overview of each University's approach to recruitment and outreach efforts to gain a basic understanding of the organizational structure and tactics of each university's pre-college initiatives. Next, I examined each university on the basis of each of the indicators I developed in Study 1. I conducted these analyses through the following process to ensure a holistic and accurate analysis.

First, I reviewed my notes from during and after each interview to identify first-glance overarching messages, and delved into those parts of the interview to clarify meaning and

discover nuance. I also listened to interviews grouped by school and sought trends that were mentioned by multiple individuals within the same university in order to ensure that I gained a comprehensive picture of each university. I paid particular deference to interviews with Chief Diversity Officers, or the administrative leaders responsible for all diversity efforts on campus, because of their ability and responsibility to look at the larger picture of diversity within the institution. To do so, I transcribed the interviews for these top leaders and reviewed each response as it relates to the framework of institutional characteristics and strategic vision.

Through this process, I isolated particular quotes and observations from each interview that related to each indicator of institutional environment and strategic vision. After analyzing each individual interview, I looked holistically across the university and rated each institution for the existence of each indicator along a scale of **LOW**, **LOW/MEDIUM**, **MEDIUM**, **MEDIUM/HIGH**, and **HIGH**. This scale allowed me to gain an overarching sense of how each university scoring along each of the indicators for both variables. To set clear boundaries for each ranking, I defined parameters that can be viewed in table 12. I then compared the universities' scores for each indicator to one another in order to ensure that variations were fairly represented in the rating system. I also used archival data like website listings and program materials, as well as the informal observations I gathered during my school visits, to supplement interview data and assist with indicators that were unclear from the interviews alone.

The indicators I used to analyze the data combine to create a broader picture for the institutional environment and level of strategic vision that exists at each university around diversity efforts. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of both variables at each school, I assigned a numerical value to each indicator and calculated an average of the scores for

institutional environment and strategic vision for each university. I awarded numerical values according to the following delineated in table 12.

Table 12  
Parameters for LOW/MEDIUM/HIGH Scale for Each Indicator

<b>Score</b>	<b>Parameter</b>	<b>Numerical Score</b>
<b>LOW</b>	Explicit lack of existence of indicator, or little to no mention of characteristic at all	<b>1</b>
<b>LOW/MEDIUM</b>	Mostly negative or not mentioned, one example of existence of characteristic	<b>1.5</b>
<b>MEDIUM</b>	Mixed reviews regarding existence of characteristic, or limited presence of characteristic/not identified as a driving force	<b>2</b>
<b>MEDIUM/HIGH</b>	Mostly positive accounts of existence of characteristic, one example of lack of existence or not mentioned	<b>2.5</b>
<b>HIGH</b>	Existence and identification of characteristic is agreed upon by almost to all interviewees	<b>3</b>

To further clarify, take the following hypothetical example. After analyzing the interview data, three of the university's indicators for institutional environment were ranked as medium, two were ranked as medium/high, and two received a high score. In order to average these scores, I would add the numerical values of each ranking: three medium scores (3 x 2), plus two medium/high scores (2 x 2.5), and two high scores (2 X 3), and divide by the number of characteristics (7), getting 2.42. This is to suggest that with a low numerical ranking of one and high of three, this university received a 2.42 (closest to a medium/high ranking) for its institutional environment, which measures the university's prioritization of diversity on a scale of 1 to 3, or low to high.

I compared the scores for institutional environment and strategic vision to explore whether or not higher scores on institutional characteristics will correlate with higher scores on indicators of a strategic and integrated vision for diversity on campus. This would suggest that a



more flexible and supportive institutional environment for diversity and inclusion is more conducive to a campus diversity plan that integrates K-12 outreach into the fabric of diversity initiatives and goals of the university. I also explored how this information relates to minority enrollment at each university, as well as to state-level data, to see if any trends emerged that would be useful for universities to consider when approach this work.

## **STUDY 2: University Institutional Environments and Strategic Visions for Outreach**

### **Results**

Though there were similarities in the successes and challenges across the focus universities, each institution approached outreach work in a different way, including their stated mission and their practicing mission, their organizational structure and program tactics, their methods of evaluation, and most notably, their strategies for increasing diversity on their particular campus. On a programmatic level, many, if not all, of the pre-college programs at these universities are succeeding at increasing awareness and interest in college, as well as actively increasing the college-going rates of participants within these programs as compared to state demographics. The challenge for these universities, as mentioned in the question responses, is for these programs to overcome the incredible structural barriers and K-12 challenges in their particular states in order to prepare students to not just attend university, but to attend their highly competitive university. While succeeding at reaching students from underserved communities and encouraging them to attend college, highly selective universities continue to be challenged by how to achieve a critical mass of students at their institution in particular.

The five universities each approach this challenge in different ways, often focusing university resources into different parts of the educational pipeline, from high school presence to

community college to on-campus student support services. In particular, some universities actively integrate their pre-college outreach programs into a strategic vision for diversity at the institution – while others maintain an organizational structure that exists in silos, with differing purposes and little communication between the outreach office and other diversity offices on campus. The following is a brief overview of the structures and tactics of each university, followed by an in-depth view of the factors of institutional environment and strategic vision that vary at each institution.

***Soderstrom University: Top-Down Prioritization of Diversity*** From the Chief Diversity Officer to the Student Ambassadors, everyone interviewed at Soderstrom University is proud of and confident in the University’s prioritization of diversity and inclusion. The CDO claims to have “the best of all worlds,” including committed senior leadership (both Presidents and Regents), diversity embedded into the mission of the University, and a well-funded and expansive central office. It has a variety of pre-college programs that serve underrepresented communities, as most universities do, such as its highly successful robotics and engineering programs in low-income schools and its federally-funded programs; yet Soderstrom University’s most unique outreach efforts are its Recruitment and Outreach coordinators. In its outreach office, the University has recruitment coordinators who each identify with and target particular racial and ethnic identities through outreach prior to the race-blind application process. They also partake in yield efforts after admission, or initiatives to increase the number of accepted underrepresented minority students who matriculate to the University.

In addition to pre-college efforts, student support services for underrepresented minority students at the University are in a central location on campus (recently moved with a hefty investment from the Provost’s office – another demonstration of upper-level university support

for diversity) and well integrated into campus-wide academic support offices. The student support and diversity offices offer Alternative Spring Breaks, study abroad, scholarships, and other opportunities for first-generation and underrepresented minority students to fully engage in the campus community and mitigate the social and cultural barriers within higher education.

***Garcia University: The Pipeline Approach*** Garcia University also has a unique structure for pre-college outreach: the University funds multiple satellite offices in cities across the state that partner with high schools to increase students' academic preparedness and college enrollment rates. Depending on location, each office is able to support programming for various numbers of students and build relationships with high schools and community organizations to administer such outreach. Of the first-generation and low-income students who enroll in a four-year university after participating in these outreach programs (which is significantly higher than the state average), students who attend Garcia University are then referred directly to the student support services for first-generation and other underrepresented students on campus. This communication and transition between offices, referred to as the education pipeline, provides wrap-around academic and social support for underrepresented students both before they get to university and once they are on campus. These support services are well funded and centrally located, and maintain a positive reputation among students. At Garcia University, the education pipeline starts at their elementary school and continues through their outreach programs, into their yield efforts and student support services. The pipeline is sustained and being strengthened through critical thought by top leaders as a part of a Pipeline Committee. One Outreach Program Coordinator explained that Garcia University's entire diversity division was created with a strong pipeline model in mind, in an attempt to make students more prepared to enter and succeed at the university due to changes in state regulations regarding race-based admissions.

***Heaney University: College-Based Support Systems*** Heaney University has a similarly smooth transition for students in outreach programs that matriculate to the university and need academic support. Rather than being in one central location, however, Heaney University conducts outreach and academic support for minority students through each individual college, such as engineering and business. The University does have a central diversity office, however the Chief Diversity Officer does not have jurisdiction over the outreach and diversity offices across the university; this is to say that the CDO is responsible for advocating for diversity of all kinds on the administrative level, but the CDO does not directly oversee the operations of each outreach and diversity initiative at the University. This office was originally responsible for affirmative action compliance, but was repurposed when the state passed anti-affirmative action measures. A consistent message that permeated from Chief Diversity Officer to the Outreach Directors was the strong focus on retention and graduation of underrepresented minority students. This translates to pre-college outreach work that is paired with an on-campus support system for underrepresented minority students and other students with academic need.

***Johnson University: Umbrella Outreach Center*** Unlike its counterpart, Johnson University outreach efforts are in a separate department from academic support services, and these offices are not connected by a centralized diversity office or administrative leader who is chiefly in charge of diversity (although recent restructuring within the Provost's office might lead to the creation of such a position). The outreach office, like most others, collocates many different outreach programs in one space, not including the one federal Trio program that Johnson University administers (GEAR UP). These programs range in focus from academic enrichment to information sharing, and more. Some programs are explicitly focused on creating college-going culture in underserved high schools and matching students with their best fit for

higher education and do not promote the University in particular. Others, such as the Johnson Express are university-specific and provide high school students with an opportunity to visit campus, learn about the academic and social opportunities, and hear from current students. The office was created in response to anti-affirmative action policies on a state-level as an effort to retain a diverse student body through outreach and support. The office also hosts a council for outreach initiatives housed in the various schools and colleges across the country.

***Mizruchi University: Independent Outreach Mission*** Similar to Johnson University, Mizruchi University also has an outreach center that houses eleven programs that partner with high schools in a variety of ways. This outreach center is located in the newly created university-wide division for diversity, along with offices for institutional equity, students with disabilities, academic achievement, and more. While each other office in the unit directly serves Mizruchi University's campus, leaders at the outreach center see their mission as serving low-income and minority students in the entire state in which Mizruchi University resides. Serving mostly in underperforming and under-resourced schools, their goal is to increase the number of students going to college – whether to community college, a four-year university, or Mizruchi University specifically. As such, the outreach officers spends much of their time working intensively with schools to help grow their capacity to support students, build a college-going culture through wrap-around services, and more. The one program that expressly and successful recruits students to attend Mizruchi University is their community college outreach initiative, in which participating students are more likely to be academically prepared for admittance to the University. Even with these efforts, Mizruchi University is heavily under performing in enrollment numbers of African American and Latino students as compared to their state population.

In order to compare each school’s level of strategic vision and institutional prioritization of diversity, I assigned scores based on the extent to which each of the indicators generated in Study 1 exist at each university as measured by interview, archival, and observational data. The following tables list the scores for each school and each indicator, and show each university’s average score across the indicators for each of the two variables. A full matrix with accompanying quotes for each score can be found in appendixes 2 and 3.

The final numbers in table 13 and 14 illustrate the extent to which each university has an institutional environment that prioritizes diversity and enables pre-college outreach work on a scale of one to three, as well as where they stand on furthering a strategic vision for diversity that elevates and integrates K-12 outreach.

Table 13  
Institutional Environment Scores By School and Characteristic

	Johnson University	Heaney University	Mizruchi University	Soderstrom University	Garcia University
<b>Institutional Environment</b> Vocal and Active Support from Top Administration	<b>LOW</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>
Institutional Foundations	<b>MID</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>LOW</b>
University Funding	<b>LOW</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>MID</b>
Support from Mid-Level Departments	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>MID</b>
Centralized Programming & Administrative Body for Diversity	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>HIGH</b>
Critical Considerations	<b>MID</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>HIGH</b>
Perception of Regulatory & State-Wide Environment	<b>LOW</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>
<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	<b>1.43</b>	<b>1.79</b>	<b>1.43</b>	<b>2.36</b>	<b>2.29</b>
<b>AVERAGE RANK</b> (rounded to nearest score)	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>	<b>MID</b>

Note. LOW = 1, LOW/MID = 1.5, MID = 2, MID/HIGH = 2.5, HIGH = 3. Average score is an average of the scores of each indicator; average rank is a qualitative representation of average score.

Table 14  
Strategic Vision Scores By School and Characteristic

	Johnson University	Heaney University	Mizruchi University	Soderstrom University	Garcia University	
<b>Strategic Vision</b>	Language and vision from diversity leadership for K-12 integration	<b>LOW</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>
	Talk and practice of 'pipeline' - particularly around hand off to students services on campus	<b>MID</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>HIGH</b>
	Information sharing between outreach and student support and/or admissions	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>HIGH</b>
	Visible Collaboration between school-wide departments	<b>MID</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>
	Recruitment Component to outreach	<b>MID</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>
	Positive attitude regarding impact on campus	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>HIGH</b>
	Systematic School Partnerships	<b>LOW</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>
	<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	<b>1.57</b>	<b>2.14</b>	<b>1.36</b>	<b>2.64</b>	<b>2.57</b>
	<b>AVERAGE RANK</b> (rounded to nearest score)	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>

Note. LOW = 1, LOW/MID = 1.5, MID = 2, MID/HIGH = 2.5, HIGH = 3. Average score is an average of the scores of each indicator; average rank is a qualitative representation of average score.

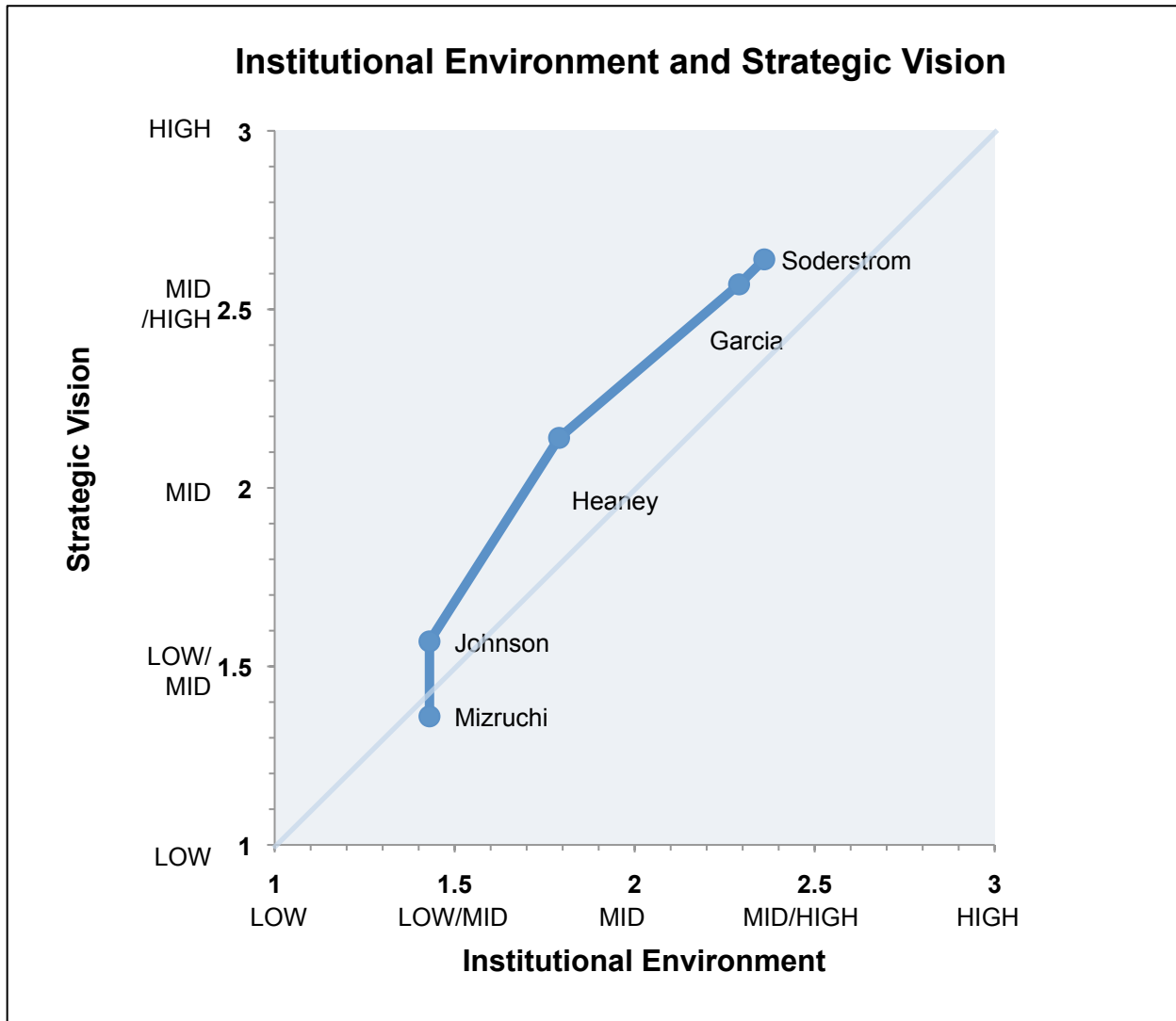
Also depicted in table 15 and figure 1, institutional environment and strategic vision are highly correlated, which suggests that the universities that prioritize diversity and support the capacity of pre-college outreach are more likely to sustain the successful integration of K-12 outreach into a holistic strategic vision for diversity at the university.

Table 15  
Holistic University Scores for Institutional Environment and Strategic Vision

	Johnson University	Heaney University	Mizruchi University	Soderstrom University	Garcia University
<b>Institutional Environment</b>	<b>1.43</b>	<b>1.79</b>	<b>1.43</b>	<b>2.36</b>	<b>2.29</b>
<b>Strategic Vision</b>	<b>1.57</b>	<b>2.14</b>	<b>1.36</b>	<b>2.64</b>	<b>2.57</b>
<b>Ranking (Same for Both Variables)</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>

Note. LOW = 1, LOW/MID = 1.5, MID = 2, MID/HIGH = 2.5, HIGH = 3. Average score is an average of the scores of each indicator; average rank is a qualitative representation of average score.

Figure 1  
 Institutional Environment and Strategic Vision at Each School



As shown in the graphs and tables, the universities researched are more likely to integrate K-12 outreach into a strategic vision for diversity on campus when the institutional environment of the university prioritizes diversity and supports the capacity of outreach efforts. As universities seek to create educational access for underserved communities and improve the diversity of their student body, they can use this framework to look critically at the institutional drivers and barriers that exist to achieving these goals within their university, and what agency university leaders have to change this environment.



The data shows that with an institutional environment that is more conducive to diversity and outreach work, Soderstrom University and Garcia University have made impactful strides at integrating pre-college outreach efforts into the strategic vision for diversity on their campus. Conversely, due to constraints such as a lack of university funding or support from top leadership, Mizruchi University and Johnson University are lacking in cohesion between the outreach and inclusion initiatives that exist within their institutions. Heaney University has made impressive progress given a challenging institutional environment, and lies squarely between the two poles created by the other universities in the rankings. As all of these highly selective schools are working to increase their minority enrollment and provide a inclusive educational experience for every student, it is worthwhile to consider the capacity that university leaders have to capitalize on factors within their existing institutional environment that could support an integrated and elevated vision for diversity and outreach – as well as the opportunities that may exist to adapt this institutional environment to better stimulate such work. Through the analysis, the following relevant observations emerged regarding these applications.

### *Institutional Environment*

Throughout the interview process, seven indicators emerged as institutional factors that combine to create an environment that prioritizes diversity and sustains the success of outreach efforts. The two characteristics that most closely parallel the order in which the universities ranked for institutional environment as a whole are: vocal and active support from top leadership, and perception of regulatory and statewide environment. In other words, if standing alone, these two characteristics are most indicative of the institutional environment that exists at each school. This also stands to reason that if the given universities were to invest in improving

these factors of their institutional environment, they would likely see an increase in prioritization of diversity and outreach on their campus.

Conversely, institutional foundations and critical considerations both have starkly different scores at the two highest-ranking universities, Soderstrom and Garcia, suggesting that these elements are not imperative to the creation of an institutional environment that supports diversity and outreach. In addition to this, universities across the board were rated low on university funding and support from mid-level departments within their institutions – indicating that even at the highest-ranking schools, interviewees felt that these factors were lacking or had an inconsistent presence. At the lowest-ranking schools, lack of funding and mid-level support were referred to often as significant barriers to success.

The characteristic that was scored highest across all of the schools is a centralized programming and administrative body for diversity, reflecting that every university is trending towards a more centralized and connected approach to diversity initiatives, although they are at varying stages in the process. This progression is especially clear at Mizuchi University, where a seasoned outreach director recognized the improvements that a new central administrative body for diversity has made, saying, “We struggle to put ourselves front and center to get support. Being a part of [central diversity division] has been helpful in that regard; having [first CDO] has been helpful.” This trend is also supported by research, which suggests that changes in organizational structure and centralization can have large impacts on outcomes (Andrews et al).

### *Strategic Vision*

A high strategic vision ranking indicates that the university has a well-articulated and implemented strategic vision for diversity in which pre-college outreach is an integral

component. Exploring strategic vision further, the indicators that most closely represent the outcomes by school are: information sharing between outreach and student support offices, positive attitude regarding impact on campus, and talk and practice of pipeline. As expected, talk and practice of building an educational pipeline from elementary school to post-graduate or career work is fairly connected with information sharing across outreach and student support offices; yet for three of the five universities, their language around an educational pipeline is more present than the action of information sharing to strengthen this pipeline at their university. As such, this would be a place that universities could work to improve their strategic vision for an integrated approach to diversity and success at moving outreach initiatives forward.

### *Institutional Environment and Strategic Vision*

The rankings assert that there is in fact a strong association between the two variables for this set of schools, evident in the parallel scores between a strategic vision and institutional environment. Although each set of indicators combine to create an environment and vision, exploring how particular indicators relate to one another can shed light on potential opportunities for improvement within university structures. For example, one takeaway from these rankings exists within the interplay between administrative leadership on the institutional environment side, and diversity leadership on the strategic vision side. While mostly correlated, Heaney University data indicates that it has minimal vocal and active support from top leadership, yet its Chief Diversity Officer has managed to put forth a vision for diversity on campus that closely integrates pre-college outreach with on-campus diversity efforts – and has successfully disseminated this vision to the decentralized outreach offices under the Chief Diversity Officer’s umbrella. This perhaps suggests that while vocal support from administrative leaders such as

Presidents and Regents can be extremely beneficial at opening doors for comprehensive diversity work at a university, Chief Diversity Officers still have agency within their division to guide outreach initiatives in a strategic way – even without a foundation of top administrative support.

Heaney University's ability to establish aspects of a strategic vision, even in a constraining institutional environment, highlights an important dynamic evident in the data. As seen in figure 1, the scores for each university's institutional environment and strategic vision are not equal, nor are the differences between scores the same across the five universities. Since it is a unique combination of factors that make up the institutional environment and strategic vision at each school, I would not expect these numbers to be equal; however in looking at the differences between the scores of each variable at each school, one can make inferences about the extent to which these diversity and outreach leaders have capitalized on the foundation that has been set by their university's institutional environment. For example, Johnson and Mizruchi University earned the same numerical score for institutional environment (1.43); yet when analyzing strategic vision, Johnson University received a higher score (1.57, as compared to Mizruchi University's 1.36), thus asserting that Johnson's strategic vision for diversity does a better job of integrating K-12 outreach than that of Mizruchi University. While there are other factors not measured that likely contributed to this difference, when isolating these two variables, Mizruchi University is not taking full advantage of the institutional environment that exists as a foundation for its outreach and diversity efforts. For example, while it has a fairly centralized programming body for diversity with the capacity to connect campus diversity offices through shared resources and leadership, there is very little talk of pipeline efforts or information sharing that occurs between offices, as indicated in the scores. This pipeline focus and information sharing has been identified by interviewees as important driver of success, and would likely expand the impact of

Mizruchi University's outreach work on campus. While one might argue that this inability to do so could be attributed to Mizruchi University's low levels of funding or other factors, the case comparison illustrates that even with similar funding constraints, Johnson University has been able to conduct this collaboration in a way that has been relatively impactful for their outreach efforts, and it possible that Mizruchi University could do the same.

Another discrepancy lies in the variance between Johnson University and Heaney University's perception of their regulatory and statewide environment – even though they are located in the same state. As perception of state environment was one of the highly correlated indicators of institutional environment, the way in which these university leaders perceive their structural environment can have tangible implications on how they structure their diversity and outreach efforts on campus. While the President and Provost of Johnson University have repeatedly stated that their options are limited due to state laws, the Chief Diversity Officer at Heaney University instead views the situation with the mentality of, “[Affirmative Action] an important tool that we use – but it's just one tool. It is not the end all, be all to this work.” This disparity in outlook could result in differences levels of action, prioritization of funding, and administrative rhetoric and approach to diversity efforts.

### *University and State-Wide Structures*

In addition to understanding how university institutional environments and strategic visions relate to one another, it is also useful to compare them both to university and statewide factors that might be catalyzing or constraining to the presence of each indicator at the universities. Table 16 compares the final scores for institutional environment and strategic vision with demographics and other statistics on the university and state level.

Table 16  
Comparisons Along University and State-Wide Variables

		Johnson University	Heaney University	Mizruchi University	Soderstrom University	Garcia University	
<b>Research Outcomes</b>							
<b>Institutional Environment</b>		<b>1.43</b>	<b>1.79</b>	<b>1.43</b>	<b>2.36</b>	<b>2.29</b>	
<b>Strategic Environment</b>		<b>1.57</b>	<b>2.21</b>	<b>1.36</b>	<b>2.64</b>	<b>2.57</b>	
University Level Data	Size of Undergraduate Population <sup>a</sup>	30,000	40,000	25,000	30,000	40,000	
	Percentage of undergraduate students receiving Pell grants <sup>b</sup>	< 20%	< 30%	< 40%	< 40%	< 30%	
	Acceptance Rate Range <sup>c</sup>	25% – 50%	50% - 75%	0 - 25%	50% - 75%	25% – 50%	
	<b>Portion of State Population Captured in Enrollment<sup>d</sup></b>	African American	0.30	0.44	0.52	0.82	0.35
		Hispanic	0.89	0.76	0.34	0.55	0.57
	<b>Percent Change in Enrollment Over 5 Years</b>	African American	-1.5%	-1.0%	-0.2%	+0.1%	-0.6%
		Hispanic	0%	+0.7%	+1.0%	+1.1%	+3.2%
	<b>Minority Student Graduation Rates, As Function of University 6-Year Graduation Rate</b>	African American	0.86	0.76	0.85	0.83	0.88
		Hispanic	0.95	0.70	0.89	0.89	0.93
		All Students	91%	79%	91%	80%	80%
State-Level Data	<b>4-Year High School Graduation Rates</b>	African American	53.5%		65.7%	65.4%	83.5%
		Hispanic	62.6%		73.2%	65.6%	84.3%
		All Students	72.8%		78.5%	76.0%	87.7%
	State Per Capita Income	\$25,547		\$29,551	\$30,661	\$25,809	
	State Unemployment Rate	8.3%		8.3%	6.7%	6.0%	
	State funding to public education per student	\$6,762		\$6,077	\$6,480	\$4,088	

<sup>a</sup> Rounded to nearest 5,000 to preserve anonymity

<sup>b</sup> Rounded to nearest 5% to preserve anonymity

<sup>c</sup> Placed within range to preserve anonymity

<sup>d</sup> See table 3 for clarification

First, although all of the universities are fairly competitive as this was a criterion in my school selection, Johnson and Mizruchi University have the lowest acceptance rate and highest

graduation rates – and also have the lowest scores for institutional and strategic support for diversity and outreach. While this trend does not follow through into the schools that ranked higher along the framework, it does suggest that Johnson and Mizruchi University have more constraints in their admissions and thus it is harder (or perceived to be harder) to make strides when working with heavily underprepared populations.

There were no real correlations between statewide data and the university indicators – suggesting that none of the statewide factors examined in this research are particularly constraining or supportive of a university’s institutional environment or strategic vision. One state statistic that stands out is the unparalleled graduation rate in Garcia University’s state, and the minimal disparity between the average high school graduation rate and that of African American and Latino communities. This suggests that the state’s K-12 school system is relatively successful at engaging and preparing underrepresented students, and it might play a role in why Garcia University’s outreach and diversity effort on campus are relatively more successful according to the framework I developed. Further research on this subject would need to be conducted in order to better understand the associations between state and university data, outreach efforts, and minority enrollment outcomes.

### *University Impact*

With regard to the relationship between minority enrollment and strategic vision, at first glance there does not seem to be a correlation between a more integrated vision for diversity and minority enrollment trends. Yet when looking at the larger of the two minority populations in the state, each university’s portion of state population captured in enrollment is closely aligned with the ranking from my research outcomes, with Mizruchi and Johnson University on the low end,

Soderstrom and Garcia University at the top, and Heaney University squarely in the middle. This means that the schools in my sample that have a strong institutional environment and strategic vision for diversity are relatively more successful at recruiting students from the largest racial minority in their state. Furthermore, when looking at enrollment trends over five years, Soderstrom University is the only school that has not declined in African American enrollment – although their increase is incredibly minimal. Also, while Garcia University has roughly the same state population percentage of Latinos as the state of Mizruchi University, Garcia University has made three times the strides in increased enrollment over time and had nearly twice the percentage of enrollment of Latino students in Fall 2013. While there are other factors that impact enrollment such as nation and statewide demographic shifts, these numbers suggest that a strong institutional environment that enables strategic efforts to partner with K-12 schools may be resulting in greater minority enrollment at such universities.

### *Limitations*

It is important to recall that this is an inductive, qualitative study intended to shed light on how large, public, highly selective universities may be able to successfully partner with K-12 schools to increase minority enrollment at their institution. As such, the case comparisons can provide insight for similar peer institutions, but the outcomes do not claim to be applicable to every higher education institution. With more time and resources, one could expand this study to include other selective, public universities across the country to test the generalizability of this study's results. It would also be useful to expand this research to other universities in order to analyze the applicability of the framework and indicators used to describe the interplay between institutional environment and strategic vision. Researchers could begin to look at which



indicators of strategic vision are most crucial to successful outreach efforts, and perhaps question the directionality of some of the indicators developed. For example, perhaps one of the strategic vision indicators is a catalyst to an aspect of institutional environment that represent prioritization of diversity, rather than the other way around. Furthermore, this model could be extrapolated to other policy efforts within a university, such as sustainability, to examine the interplay between institutional environment, strategic vision, and program success in a different context.

In addition to these considerations, other limitations include the inability to interview some of the university diversity leaders and outreach coordinators due to time and access, and the biases that can come with self-reporting. Much of this was mitigated by ensuring that I interviewed multiple people at each school in various departments and levels of leadership and supplemented this information with archival data. This allowed me to gain a comprehensive view of the outreach efforts and their drivers for success (see table 6 for reference).

## **|| Conclusion and Implications**

Through a two-part qualitative analysis of interviews, archival data, and informal observations at five selective schools across the country, I have uncovered that an institutional prioritization of diversity can lead to a stronger integration of K-12 outreach into a strategic vision for diversity on campus. This research highlights important themes to engage around when shaping structure and strategy around outreach and diversity work on college campuses. Many nuances emerged particularly around the purpose of university outreach work – whether it is specifically for recruitment to the university or if it exists to mitigate educational disparities in higher education as a whole. On one hand, outreach offices exist to create opportunities within

educational attainment by providing underserved students with the information and academic preparation they need to succeed at a post-secondary level. On the other hand, it is often a stated goal for these offices to also be working towards increasing the recruitment and retention of underrepresented students at their home university. These two trajectories face different challenges that require specific tactics and structures to support their work; yet they also are not mutually exclusive and often overlap.

If an outreach office's goal in particular is recruitment, as a highly selective university, they face challenges regarding the severity of academic need in underserved communities. The pool of academically qualified applicants in underserved communities is considerably lower because they are less likely to have access to the academic preparation, resources, and social capital to succeed at that level. To illustrate, Mizruchi University's Chief Diversity Officer claimed, "By the time you get to the African American population who are even eligible [to apply], that group of 300,000 students now looks like about 3,000." Even then, university administrators expressed frustration about the competition from other selective schools that are also looking to recruit the same highly qualified underrepresented students. Nonetheless, as Soderstrom University has shown, it is possible to conduct successful outreach work that is highly recruitment-driven outreach. Soderstrom hosts race and ethnicity focused conferences on their campus for high school students at every stage of the relationship with the University: prospective students, students who have applied, and then again once they are admitted. Of the admitted students who attended the weekend program, over 90% of them confirmed their enrollment in 2013. While this is clearly a recruitment-driven model, there are still important aspects of this work that has the potential to grow the pool of qualified underrepresented students by engaging them in the college process, providing information and mentors, as well as

contributing to the college-going culture of the communities these students are in. To illustrate, one of the most important parts of the conference is the session for parents and families – some of whom did not go to college – to ask questions and learn about the process as well.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, university outreach initiatives that focus mainly on academic need rather than recruitment also manage a particular set of concerns. To illustrate, Mizruchi University outreach officers have made it clear that “we’re not here to serve [Mizruchi University], we’re here to serve the students of [the State of Mizruchi].” In expectation, rhetoric, and action, their programs do not focus on directing and supporting students to attend Mizruchi University; rather, their programs focus on fostering academic improvement and college-going culture in the underserved communities surrounding the university. This type of support is crucial to improving K-12 outcomes and creating attainable post-secondary opportunities for engaged students in these communities. As a large, incredibly selective university, Mizruchi University is not a best fit for underprepared students from these communities – yet at the same time, by having a presence, the university can plant the seed for highly motivated and bright students to apply and attend their university. While addressing the communities with greater need is an important goal, it is a difficult case to make for how the work directly enhances diversity at the university – and also does very little to move the needle on minority enrollment for their institution. With a limited budget and lack of diversity on campus, perhaps it would be a more strategic choice for Mizruchi University to invest more in initiatives that are recruitment-driven, such as their highly successful community transfer program. At the same time, however, it is also important to “lift the aspiration levels of all students,” as the Outreach Director of Johnson suggests, in order to make a larger impact and grow the pool of qualified students from

the ground up. These outcomes are long-term and indirect, but are important to the fabric of these communities and universities.

The ultimate goal in every context is to provide an accessible, inclusive, quality education for every student. Universities can play an important role in realizing this vision on and off their campus, and I hope that the examples and frameworks shared through this research will be helpful as these institutions consider structures and strategies for success.

## **|| Reflections & Recommendations for the Maize & Blue**

My experience at the University of Michigan has been integral in shaping the person I am today. At Michigan, I have discovered my passion, honed my skills, and built lifelong relationships – all of which have created an important foundation for me as I head into a professional career.

As I reflect on these last four years, I know that I am not alone. College is an incredibly formative experience for most students: we enter as freshmen, challenge ourselves to learn and grow within the environment around us and four short years later, we emerge transformed, degree in hand and dreams in head.

This sounds perfectly worthwhile, except for one important detail: what if our formative environment is flawed? What if the college environment in which we change and grow and impact one another is failing to truly prepare us to be engaging and well-equipped colleagues and citizens in the world after college?

Don't get me wrong – the University of Michigan is a phenomenal place to learn and grow and I could not be prouder to be a Michigan Wolverine. Yet part of my learning and growth here has been through recognizing and, for the first time, criticizing the major ways in which the

University is stagnant in their efforts to recruit and retain a diverse student body. Without the representation of diverse backgrounds and experiences, as well as the formal multicultural learning and support systems that allow this diversity to thrive, the University is failing to provide the best education for all of their students in two distinct ways.

Firstly, many minority students have felt isolated and frustrated in classrooms and other spaces due to lack of representation and both overt and covert expressions of racism on campus. Some of these challenging experiences for black students specifically were illustrated through the recent #BBUM Twitter campaign, bringing to national attention issues and voices on campus that had gone unnoticed in the past.

Secondly, as this University is likely to produce the next great leaders – in our political system and system of law, in our classrooms, businesses and health systems – it is crucial that we consider the ways in which we are (or are not) training such leaders to understand, prioritize, and create inclusive spaces in their workplaces and communities. Without the compositional diversity and resources to support cross-cultural learning on campus, the University is shortchanging their effort to empower the true ‘Leaders and Best.’

As we consider the ways in which the University of Michigan can expand their efforts to create a diverse and inclusive campus, this research brings to light a few distinct and accessible steps for action.

***Leadership Elevated by Leadership:*** With a newly created position within the Provost’s office beginning next year, Vice Provost for Educational Equity and Inclusion, the University has taken an important first step towards building a structure and strategy that supports diversity and inclusion on campus. Yet as seen in the research, diversity leaders can have varying levels of

effectiveness when it comes to engaging mid-level departments across the University, and even offices within their own sphere of influence. Thus in order to gain traction across the University, this new position should be paired with a vocal prioritization of this leader's strategic vision for diversity by the incoming President of the University, as well as by the Board of Regents.

***Outreach with a Purpose:*** In addition to expanding the capacity of the Center for Educational Outreach, the University should clarify and consider the purpose of each of their programs and determine the value added. To illustrate, some programs are increasing the academic preparedness in the highest-need schools through supplemental services that promote high school graduation and college-going culture, while others are focused more on providing access to college resources and active recruitment for the University of Michigan. An examination of these programs, as well as the schools in which they work, would be helpful in building a more targeted approach based on K-12 needs and University goals. Leaders can then consider how they want to prioritize these two missions, which programs can be better branded with a University of Michigan focus to improve enrollment outcomes, and where it can expand or efforts to fill specific purposes.

***Educational Pipeline of Support:*** As the new Vice Provost develops his or her strategic vision for diversity and inclusion on campus, it will be worthwhile to consider the opportunities to build formal and informal pathways for communication and collaboration between diversity offices to better facilitate the recruitment and retention of underrepresented students. With a renewed focus on outreach as a tool to increase minority enrollment, the University should supplement this work by building a pipeline of support from pre-college through graduation. The University already has the offices to sustain such efforts, and with a centralized leader to oversee it, it should be a natural progression to better connect offices serving similar populations. This will

also assist in improving the inclusion of minority students on campus through better support for and prioritization of underserved students' academic and personal needs.

***Hands Free and Ready for Action:*** While the University is in a tough regulatory situation with anti-affirmative action laws restricting the University's ability to target students based on race or background in their application process, this does not mean that effort cannot be made by the University to take ownership over the opportunities and campus climate they are creating for underrepresented students. Research showed that universities that have a negative perception of their regulatory environment are less likely to form an integrated vision for diversity on campus. This is not simply attributed to a difference in regulatory constraints, as every school selected has a history of statewide anti-affirmative action policies. University leadership's current fixation on what cannot be done to promote campus diversity only takes away from what can – and likely limits the level of prioritization and financial support these efforts receive from top and mid-level leadership on campus.

These considerations and others will help propel the University forward in their effort to recruit, support, and prepare students to be the Leaders and Best both on campus and beyond. As I exit the University of Michigan with a greater understanding of others' diverse experiences and a motivation to work for equal opportunity for all, I hope that the University will take seriously its responsibility and capacity to create a diverse and inclusive environment in which all students, regardless of background can have access and thrive – and one for which I can continue to be proud to say GO BLUE!

## Appendix 1. Interview Script

### **Introduction:**

Thank you so for taking time out of what I'm sure is a busy day to speak with me regarding the K-12 outreach initiatives at your university. I am a student at University of Michigan studying Organizational Studies, and I am writing a thesis on best practices across the nation's universities to increase minority enrollment through educational outreach. I ultimately hope the information I learn will provide insight on what steps Michigan should take to address their declining minority enrollment on campus.

First, I'm going to ask you some basic questions about your work – the initiative itself and your role – and what challenges and successes you've found within that. I'm also interested in the impetus behind the program: the program's primary purposes and stakeholders, as well as your personal motivations for taking part. Lastly, I'd like to hear about the measures your office uses to evaluate your progress. If you have any questions for me throughout – why I'm asking a certain question, whether or not I've considered something you believe is important, etc. – please don't hesitate to interrupt. You can also opt out of questions if they are issue-sensitive.

I also want to remind you that your identity and that of your school will be kept confidential throughout my research and in the final product. I will also send you the final product so you can compare your work to that of the other universities I am researching.

*Before interviewing, I will collect as much information on the basics of the program as I can in order to skip these less personal, more generic questions in the interview.*

### **Section A. Basics**

- 1) Let's start with the basics: Can you tell me a bit about what your role is in this office?
  - What initiatives or tasks are you in charge of?
  - Who else do you work with in the office on these tasks?
- 2) How many others work in this office with you?
  - What is the structure of leadership, tasks, and teamwork within the office?
  - Full-time or part-time staff? What are your areas of expertise? (Social work, finance, management, etc.)
- 3) My understanding is that this office administers (the following programs). Are there other roles that your office plays that I am missing?

### **Section B. Motivation**

- 4) What led you to this job?
  - What did you do before working here?
  - What are you passionate about that led you here?
  - What is your personal motivation for doing this work?
  - How has your personal motivation changed over time, if at all?
  - How does your motivation relate to that of your colleagues?



- 5) How do your personal motivations relate to the organization's goals?
- What is your understanding of why the initiative began?
  - What are the core values underlying the program?
  - What do you perceive to be the goal you are working towards on a day-to-day basis?

### **Section C. Drivers and Challenges**

- 6) What do you see as the most important drivers of the program?
- On the tail end, what do you see as the most important tangible and intangible outcomes of this effort?
- 7) What are constraints or limitations that you see to the program's success or growth?
- 8) How often do you think about resources for your programming? (i.e. are you constantly thinking about how you will sustain your program or are your funding sources and amounts stable?)
- What are all of your funding sources?
  - Have your funding allocations been trending upward or downward?
- 9) How able do you feel your organization is to adapt to change, implement new ideas, address challenges quickly, etc.? Give an example if possible.
- 10) Other than funding, what support do you receive University administration? Is your initiative visible within the University structure?
- 11) Please describe your office's relationship with admissions office.
- How often do you communicate?
  - Do you most often find yourselves working together or against one another?

### **Section D: Evaluation**

- 12) Thinking back to your organization's goals and values, what are your measures of success?
- What data do you collect to evaluate the program?
  - What challenges do you face in evaluating the success of the program?
  - What level of accuracy and totality do you have of the data?
- 13) What are the uses of evaluation? (Performance-based funding, changes in curriculum, etc.)
- What outcomes are crucial to the sustainability of the program? (If you're not reaching a certain outcome, will the program stop getting funded?)

### **Section E. Big Picture**

- 14) Where do you see this program in 1 year? 5 years? 10 years?
- 15) What is your perception of the impact of your work on your campus?
- What are the biggest diversity issues on your campus in your mind?
  - What is the campus climate like in terms of diversity awareness, race relations, etc.?
  - What programs on your campus are doing the most work to directly increase minority enrollment on campus? Where does your initiative fit within this goal?

- What are areas on your campus that have been improved because of this initiative and where is there still work to be done?

16) Are there any major parts of your work that didn't come up in this interview?

- If you were sitting in my chair, is there anything that you would ask yourself that I haven't thought to ask?
- What else can you share about yourself or this program that would be helpful to other universities looking to do good work in this area?

**Addendums** (Dependent on role and time with organization of interviewee – will ask only what can not be found through program materials and public records or if essential to understanding statements made during the interview)

**Initiative Background** (*For an interviewee who has been with the organization from the start of the initiative, if possible*)

- 1) When did the initiative begin?
- 2) What is your understanding of why the initiative began?
- 3) Who were the stakeholders in starting the initiative?
- 4) What were the core values underlying the program?
- 5) What was the initial plan, budget, structure, and tactics?
- 6) What assets or strengths did you see that were crucial to the implementation of the initiative? (i.e. charismatic leader, abundant financial resources, etc.)
- 7) What challenges did the program face initially?
- 8) What else can you tell me about this time period that might shed light on why the initiative was shaped as it was? Were there other programs happening concurrently or did it happen on its own? Was it modeled after a different schools' practice? Etc.

**Tactics and Implementation** (*For the program associate or on-the-ground program leader*)

- 1) Who is the subject of your initiative? What age group? How many students?
- 2) How do you recruit subjects?
- 3) Describe any partnerships you have with schools or community organizations. How structured or long-term is the relationship? Who do you work with most closely? Who is in charge of curriculum? How do you manage disagreements or challenges within this relationship?
- 4) How does your initiative utilize volunteers? Are they consistent? How do you show appreciation?
- 5) What is the turnover or retention of students and partnerships?
- 6) What is the time frame for the initiative? (Length of sessions, number of sessions, nature of sessions)
- 7) Explain the curriculum. How was it developed? How flexible is it?
- 8) What values and mantras are constant through the initiative? How do you address concepts of privilege or reconcile issues of trust?
- 9) What challenges and risks have you identified? How have you addressed these issues? What has been the outcome?
- 10) How do you wrap up the program? Is there a reward system? How do you maintain relationships and follow up with individuals?

Appendix 2  
 Institutional Environment School-By-School Ranking with Quotes

		Universities				
		Johnson University	Heaney University	Mizruchi University	Soderstrom University	Garcia University
Institutional Environment	Vocal and Active Support from Top Administration	“One of the challenges that has come into play in the last year has been turnover at the higher level. We used to have some really big champions and they’ve left or are on their way out the door. New administrators come in with different priorities [...]. We’re not sure what this new provost is going to say.” (Outreach Program Coordinator)	“IMAGINE: Closing the gaps in our students’ experience – make the neighborhood concept, the national model, student experience that addresses with greatest success the challenges of persistence, retention, and graduation rates.” (University President, Strategic Vision speech)	“We struggle to put ourselves front and center to get support. Being a part of [diversity office] has been helpful in that regard; having [New First CDO] has been helpful.” (Outreach Director)	“After the passing of [anti-affirmative action policy], the President and the Regents made a commitment to make sure that diversity was an institutional core value, so I think that sent the message to everyone on campus that we have to value diversity and act as a collective rather than just one office.” (Student Support Director)	“[Diversity] is an explicit goal that the President has said is an important mission of our university, so that’s been helpful, that gets things done.” (Outreach Program Coordinator)
	<b>SCORE</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>
	Institutional Foundations	“History of [this school] is one of education on all levels [...] we got away from that overtime.” (Chief Diversity Officer)	“It’s easier for us perhaps, when you think about land grant and what that means. This notion of broad access for [statewide] studies. [...] That’s part of the tradition, that’s who we are. So I don’t see us walking away from that commitment: from reaching out to as broad a student base as possible and saying this is an attainable goal for you – our commitment to our state schools and public education.” (Chief Diversity Officer)	“[Our] Statement of Principle on diversity - passed by system-wide academic [institution], including Presidents and Regent. [...] Having this statement has been incredibly useful [at garnering support from department heads and others]” (Chief Diversity Officer)	“The great thing I have going for me is that diversity is a part of the University’s mission. [...] We want to make sure that the graduates of our university are going out prepared to work and live in diverse workplaces and communities.” (Chief Diversity Officer)	“Access is one of the hallmarks of the university that I think is worth noting.” (Student Support Director)
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>LOW</b>	
	“The university does not provide that much financial support it’s 1/13th of our budget and we’ve had to really fight for it every year.” (Outreach Program Coordinator)	“Our budget, the money we get from the Dean’s office to fund our general operating budget’s been cut pretty much every year for the last three years [at least].” (Business Diversity Programs)	“The entire campus is in dire straits; even if we were to allocate what campus has available, it wouldn’t move the needle.” (Chief Diversity Officer)	“The Provost had to pay nearly \$2 million to renovate the building to move these units in. It sent a message to the rest of campus that the Provost valued this so much - to move people out of	“Funding is always a huge issue. If we had more we could hire more people and expand our programs, which would then become self-sufficient.” (Outreach Program Coordinator)	

University Funding

			Coordinator)		this building, to move functions out, to make room for diversity." (Chief Diversity Officer)  "Due to funding restraints we're not able to continue our [culturally-specific recruiter position] and of course the community is highly upset about it because there is definitely a need, so we're just trying to get creative to come up with more funding" (Director of Recruitment Program)	
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>MID</b>
Support from Mid-Level Departments	Existence of council of leaders from different schools and departments doing outreach work within own space; meets monthly (Informal observation)	"Because our students are transient and because there's turnover between faculty and staff, to sustain work and keep it fresh; [it's a challenge to] maintain people's enthusiasm for the value and importance of diversity." (Chief Diversity Officer)	"Part of what [other directors] and I are doing is constantly reminding people [on campus] that it's not solved yet, in fact it's far from being solved." (Strategic Planning Director)	"Challenge is that it does not always trickle down to mid-management. While I can point to the Regents and our Presidents and our Provost, sometimes the department chairs or program directors or faculty members are just not cooperative. And those are the folks who have the most influence on our current student experiences." (Chief Diversity Officer)	"I've seen an improvement since I've been here in the number of offices that are looking at their diversity initiatives within their colleges and schools; are we recruiting students from URM; are we providing scholarships for top notch students who normally would not choose this university..." (Student Support Director)	
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>MID</b>	
Centralized Programming & Administrative Body for Diversity	"The levels of bureaucracy we have to go to to even reach the decision-maker [...] and the further away you are from what's happening on the ground, the harder it is for you to talk about how important it is." (Outreach Program Coordinator)	"Part of my role, to the extent that one can, is to create partnerships across the various units that do this work...It's difficult when you don't have line authority." (Chief Diversity Officer)  "Even though we still have a lot of work to do to build the pipeline from pre-college to college, I think the fact that we're doing both in one office makes the	"The challenge with decentralization is that I don't have any real leverage to get [schools and departments] to do what I want [regarding diversity efforts]." (Chief Diversity Officer)	"We have what I consider to be a very comprehensive infrastructure - we have programs starting the day the students step onto campus...all the way into the 4th or 5th year. That comprehensive infrastructure is really well-positioned to influence the students and their academic trajectory." (Student Support Director)	"Students are already in that pipeline under our [diversity department], they already have a home that they're going into with other outreach students across the state from their city." (Outreach Center Director)	

		most sense.” (Business Diversity Programs Coordinator)			
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>HIGH</b>
Critical Considerations	“Michigan’s cultural heritage is one of decentralization – the units are very autonomous [...] and you still have to break through that in order to coalesce. If something big [such as current events] is happening, you know something has gone on behind the scenes to allow us to elevate beyond our natural tendencies to operate.” (Engineering Diversity Director)	Searching for research that illustrates non-cognitive factors for success to inform efforts to “screen in for diversity.” (Informal observation, pre-college council)	“We have a committee looking at how we literally hand off our students just to Berkeley in a way that really then supports them; then how do we do that in other institutions where our kids are. We have no resources to do this, but looking for investment of resources to work to make this happen.” (Outreach Center Director)	“Legacy groups [student groups that historically helped to create diversity department] have meetings with higher ups once a quarter to discuss student experience on campus.” (Director of Recruitment Program)	“I have seen since I’ve been here more critical dialogue at the presidents, provosts level, engaging in why are we doing what we’re doing; what is our mission; we are a public university, are we serving the public as we say we are, those kind of difficult and critical conversations.” (Student Support Director)
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>HIGH</b>
Perception of Regulatory & State-Wide Environment	“Here in the state of [Johnson], we’re handicapped because of [anti-affirmative action law]. We have private schools like MIT and Stanford that can go out and find the best students and give them full-ride scholarships. We can’t do that.” (Engineering Diversity Director)	“[Affirmative Action] is an important tool that we use – but it’s just one tool. It is not the end all to this work. Part of it is if we’re able to recruit, and show people how to recruit for diversity.” (Chief Diversity Officer)	“Funding was cut in half from what once was a robust outreach program; tax cuts in [state] plummeted the education system.” (Chief Diversity Officer)  “We’re operating in a [anti-affirmative action law] regime.” (Chief Diversity Officer)	“Sponsors of [anti-affirmative action law] assured the public that it was not their intent to prohibit recruitment and outreach activities intended to enlarge that pool.” (University document responding to new anti-affirmative action policy)	“Just by giving them that fact of information [about 10% rule] you are able to motivate these students and show them that it’s possible [...] When you put things into perspective and tell kids that their grades merit them acceptance into a wonderful university in Texas, it’s very motivating.” (College Advisor)
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>

Note: All quotes came from interviews conducted during research unless otherwise noted.

Appendix 3  
Strategic Vision School-By-School Ranking with Quotes

Universities						
	Johnson University	Heaney University	Mizruchi University	Soderstrom University	Garcia University	
Strategic Vision	Language and vision from diversity leadership for K-12 integration	No formal leader on diversity, nothing mentioned regarding influential leader or strategy set by leader or division (informal observation)	"One of [Heaney University's] 6 recent strategic visions is advancing a culture of high performance. My view, and I know others share this view, is that you can't advance a culture of high performance when there are students who are not allowed to participate or choose not to participate in this culture. It's about working hard to engage all through what I call a culture of inclusion and full participation [...] all of that requires efforts and alignment. (Chief Diversity Officer)	"We looked at the strategic plan that they had for equity and inclusion and what is was that they want to do as a goal, and we saw that it fit in quite nicely - they want to increase access and completion of underserved students and students of color." (Outreach Program Director)	"Shift to have diversity be everyone's responsibility - every dean and every Vice President's responsibility to enhance recruitment and retention of diverse populations to the school. It's a huge culture shift and we're still working on it." (Chief Diversity Officer)	"There are certainly a lot of opportunities that have been a part of the President's Strategic Plan to engage students in a diverse way." (Student Support Director)
	<b>SCORE</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>
	Talk and practice of 'pipeline' - particularly around hand off to students services on campus	"We run programs for 7th, 8th, and 9th graders to try to get them excited about science and math; by going out there and talking about what you can do with these things, you increase the likelihood that young students will persist in their educational development in STEM." (Engineering Diversity Director)	"We have a moral obligation to see students graduate; Our goal is to build that pipeline - it's about giving them a channel to admissions then once they're in the college, careers and graduation." (Business Diversity Program Coordinator)	"It's important to see students graduate, but it's tough - Being at [Mizruchi] and being a first-gen, low-income student, and student of color on a campus where being African American is like an endangered species, it's not easy." (Outreach Office Director)	"I work the Pre-College programs, then as soon as I'm done with that, as the students are being admitted, they're being connected to our retention programs. Their focus is to personalize the educational experience for students and their parents. [...] They're already connected to our retention programs and that's substantial." (Outreach Programs Director)	"Once they come here to the university [from the outreach programs] and realize that wow I still have that same level of support in college just like I had in high school? So we have worked very closely with the Vice Provost's office to create a pipeline where we are monitoring these students as they come up through these programs to the university, and when they get here, we have been very successful at getting 100% of those students engaged in our programming."

					(Student Support Director)
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>HIGH</b>
Information sharing between outreach and student support and/or admissions	"We meet as administrators of generally all of the academic units and admissions, and we meet to sit down and say 'what's the best way to reach out to these students.'" (Director of Financial Aid Outreach)	"Even though we still have a lot of work to do to build the pipeline from pre-college to college, I think the fact that we're doing both in one office makes the most sense." (Business Diversity Program Coordinator)	"It's a challenge because most students go to other schools – it's difficult to follow their path or support them in transition." (Strategic Planning Director)	"We work in partnership with admissions so all of our [outreach officers] are also admissions officers so they read application files. Our entire pre-college unit is housed on the same floor as admissions so we're very closely linked." (Chief Diversity Officer)	"Those who work at the university level and those who work at the high school level are constantly partnering. There's a lot of meetings that happen behind the scenes. [...] We have many K-12 and college people working together." (Student Support Director)
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>HIGH</b>
Visible Collaboration between school-wide departments	"I am familiar with these variety of offices, so when we go to the high schools, we bring these offices with us: advising, orientation, financial aid, [student support] - those kinds of things take place; we have collegial relationships with colleagues." (Outreach Center Director)	None mentioned	"We have a very successful community college program at getting students into [Mizruchi] – through that, we work closely with the transfer Center, with student affairs, etc." (Outreach Center Director)	"In partnership we're able to reach the broadest set of students possible in terms of delivering services and support [...]" (Student Support Director)	"A lot of partnerships on campus - professors, admissions, financial aid, [multicultural center], math departments, museum, housings - countless partnerships so when our students come, they can be exposed to these. (Outreach Program Coordinator)
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>
Recruitment Component to outreach	"Our role is not admissions, per say, but it is to get information to communities particularly who do not have a strong legacy of sending students to [Johnson]." (Outreach Center Director)  "We're not just working with students who are high achieving - it's meeting students who are at the very bottom academically and helping them realize that there	"At the end of the day, my hope is that they'll have enjoyed their time here so much that they'll want to come back as a student." (Engineering Diversity Director)	"It's about higher education and getting you into that power structure – not about getting you into [Mizruchi]. [...] We see our mission as serving the students of [the state] - it's not about serving the university, it's about our kids" (Strategic Planning Director)	"Most of outreach is to students who have an interest in coming to [Soderstrom] - typically at least a 3.0 because it's very difficult to get in with lower; We want them to come to [Soderstrom University] and we heavily brand them for [it] – we bring them to campus as much as possible - but if at the end of the day, they go to college somewhere, it's a success for us. (Chief Diversity Officer)	"We are maybe a little detached, our offices are physically off campus - so there's a strategic goal; not detached in a negative way, this is a good place to be." (Outreach Programs Coordinator)  "Most of the students who go through our programs do not end up at [Garcia University], and it's not necessarily a goal to get them there." (Outreach Programs)

Recruitment Component to outreach	<p>“Our role is not admissions, per say, but it is to get information to communities particularly who do not have a strong legacy of sending students to [Johnson].” (Outreach Center Director)</p> <p>“We’re not just working with students who are high achieving - it’s meeting students who are at the very bottom academically and helping them realize that there are options for them, whether its community college or [other options].” (Outreach Program Coordinator)</p>	<p>“At the end of the day, my hope is that they’ll have enjoyed their time here so much that they’ll want to come back as a student.” (Engineering Diversity Director)</p>	<p>“It’s about higher education and getting you into that power structure – not about getting you into [Mizruchi]. [...] We see our mission as serving the students of [the state] - it’s not about serving the university, it’s about our kids” (Strategic Planning Director)</p>	<p>“Most of outreach is to students who have an interest in coming to [Soderstrom] - typically at least a 3.0 because it’s very difficult to get in with lower; We want them to come to [Soderstrom University] and we heavily brand them for [it] – we bring them to campus as much as possible - but if at the end of the day, they go to college somewhere, it’s a success for us. (Chief Diversity Officer)</p>	<p>“We are maybe a little detached, our offices are physically off campus - so there’s a strategic goal; not detached in a negative way, this is a good place to be.” (Outreach Programs Coordinator)</p> <p>“Most of the students who go through our programs do not end up at [Garcia University], and it’s not necessarily a goal to get them there.” (Outreach Programs Coordinator)</p>
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>MID</b>	<b>MID/HIGH</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>LOW/MID</b>
Positive attitude regarding impact on campus	<p>“It is hand-to-hand combat, it is student by student by student, and that’s the nature of the work. And I’ll be honest, we haven’t been as successful as we could in the last 4-5 years.” (Engineering Diversity Director)</p>	<p>“[Science and business departments] have done significant work. And it’s partly because you have long-term commitment, or in [science department] it’s a direct result of the dean of that school, who has made it her mission to instill in students both when they get here and</p>	<p>“In the 30 years I’ve been trying, we haven’t really made much progress in overall demographics. [...] We try this and try that and nothing seems to really move the numbers.” (Chief Diversity Officer)</p>	<p>“The retention rate for URM students and low-income students is very similar to mainstream students- for us that’s a great sign that the interventions that we’re using, the work that we’re doing is making a difference.”</p>	<p>“I’m very encouraged by the work we’re doing.” (Student Support Director)</p>

Note: All quotes came from interviews conducted during research unless otherwise noted.



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