

Lessons from a Cohort-Based Program to Strengthen Retention of Underrepresented Community College Engineering Students

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Despite the growth of minority communities in America during the past few decades, trends in the underrepresentation of minorities in science and engineering have persisted. In partnership with the Silicon Valley Engineering Tech Pathways (SVETP), Skyline College developed and began piloting the Engineering & Tech Scholars Program (ETS) program in Fall 2016, a cohort-based learning community designed to address major attrition points and increase the retention and diversity of students pursuing careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). This poster details development, implementation, and initial outcomes of the program in order to contribute to the body of research of evidence-based program initiatives to increase the diversity and engagement of underrepresented communities in STEM. Quantitative data and qualitative focus group data that measure student success and engagement are reviewed along with student perceptions of the program to extract key insights that can inform future similar programs with best practices for maximum impact.