

## **Bridge to the Baccalaureate - Abstract**

The Bridge to the Baccalaureate (B2B) track in the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) program provides support for alliances of community colleges (2-year institutions) to accelerate the transfer of students historically underrepresented in STEM to four-year institutions in pursuit of STEM baccalaureate degrees. It is expected that B2B alliances provide a bridge to the baccalaureate degree for STEM students from underrepresented populations who begin their instruction at a community college. The Northern New Jersey Bridges to the Baccalaureate (NNJ-B2B) Alliance is a partnership of five, public, associate-degree granting, Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) in northern New Jersey: Passaic County Community College (lead institution), Bergen Community College, Hudson County Community College, Middlesex County College, and Union County College. NNJ-B2B will work synergistically with the Garden State LSAMP (GS-LSAMP) Program to increase the number of students underrepresented in STEM who successfully transfer from the five partner community colleges to STEM programs at four-year institutions in New Jersey. By assisting more than 900 students from underrepresented populations transition into baccalaureate STEM degree programs at institutions in the GS-LSAMP, the partner colleges in NNJ-B2B will provide their students with access to more employment opportunities thereby resulting in a more diverse, globally competitive STEM workforce.

According to A Matter of Degrees, a recent study conducted by the Center for Community College Student Engagement, "community college students who participate in multiple high impact practices are more engaged in their learning and experience better outcomes than students who do not participate in these activities." In collaboration GS-LSAMP, NNJ-B2B partners will require that students participate in a powerful set of STEM learning experiences that will instill in them the motivation, skills, and experiences needed to succeed in their STEM coursework and transfer to the universities. The STEM learning experiences will include the following five high impact practices: undergraduate research, peer led team learning (PLTL), Math Bridge programs, peer mentoring, and career/transfer seminars. Each of the NNJ-B2B Alliance partners will serve as the lead in developing, refining, and sharing one of five best practices modules and will then commit to replicating all five high impact practices on their respective campuses. The activities of the NNJ-B2B Alliance will result in improved STEM education on the partner campuses and an increased transfer rate into STEM baccalaureate degree programs.