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Beyond Pell: Other Pieces to the Access Puzzle

Presented by

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Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA)

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NOVA is a community college with:

- Over 75,000 students from over 150 countries
- Six full campuses (Alexandria, Annandale, Loudoun, Manassas, Springfield [Medical Education], Woodbridge) numerous centers, and many on-line classes offered through our Extended Learning Center (ELI)
- Multiple partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs)
- An award-winning access program that bridges high school, NOVA, George Mason University (GMU) and other 4-year schools

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Student access to postsecondary education is not just about financial resources, though lack of funding can exclude low-income students and students without family support.

NOVA attempts to address student success from multiple directions.

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Communication is a priority:

- Hired an Assistant Director of Financial Aid for Communications
- Closely monitor our website, documents, forms
- Outsourced and trained a comprehensive support center and developed a self-help knowledge base of information to assist students 24/7/365
- Communicate with students through telephone, chat, Twitter, FaceBook, and place outbound calls to “meet” students wherever they are

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Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy is restorative rather than just punitive:

- Appeals require student to see a counselor/ advisor
- Appeals require an academic plan
- Warning period encourages use of student services to get student back on track
- Early alert is in development through Virginia Community College System to notify students approaching SAP limits, especially 150% of credits

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Quality Enhancement Program (QEP): GPS for Success
is a NOVA enhanced advising initiative to further promote retention and graduation.

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NOVA Financial Aid leads a financial literacy program being piloting with selected SDV (student development) classes, required of all students. Lending institutions in the area are partnering with NOVA to assist in instruction of a financial literacy component to encourage improved money management. Goals are to enable students toward sound financial practices that will help students stay in college and prepare for real life.

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NOVA is proactive in working with high-risk students by:

- Providing small-group and individual admissions, financial aid, academic advising, priority registration assistance to students in high-risk groups
- Making financial aid a priority and creating an Associate Director for Special Programs position to assist high-risk programs and students
- Coordinating special programs with financial aid
- Providing additional funding where possible

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Pathway to the Baccalaureate Program:

- Is a NOVA/GMU partnership with 48 high schools in all 8 local school systems in Northern Virginia
- Includes nearly 6500 students for 2011-2012, 93% of whom have historically met one or more of U.S. Dept of Education criteria adversely affecting college persistence (67% first-generation; 78% are ethnicities other than Caucasian and Middle Eastern; 28% are students with disabilities; 67% of families have $50,000 or less total income)

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Pathway (PW) students:

- 87% of PW students transition from high school to college
- 8-12% go directly from high school to a 4-year college/university
- Persist at a 90% rate from first to second year of college
- 70% proceed from NOVA to GMU; 30% go on to other 4-year schools

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Pathway (PW) Students:

- Can receive additional grant assistance at NOVA if they maintain full-time enrollment with minimum 2.0 GPAs (Goal is to cover tuition, fees, books, transportation with grant aid when possible.)
- Exceed college and national benchmarks in all measured outcomes
- Complete Associate-level degrees at nearly double NOVA's average

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Community-Based Organizations:

- Are non-profit organizations in Northern Virginia
- Work with individuals in need of training, better jobs, increased earnings
- Now offer college credit courses at 7 CBO sites through partnerships with NOVA
- Work with NOVA's CBO office and NOVA Financial Aid to provide students with advising, financial aid, and admissions/ registration assistance

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CBOs include:

- **Year Up** (technology programs)
- **Northern Virginia Family Service's Training Futures** (administrative support/medical terminology)
- **Community Business Partnership** (entrepreneurship/small business management)
- **Computer CORE** (administrative support)

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CBOs (continued):

- **Enterprise Development Group-EDG** (Entrepreneurship)
- **Early Childhood Learning Institute/ Hopkins House** (Early Childhood Development)
- **Goodwill Industries** (Administration of Justice: Security Management)

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Additional NOVA Initiatives:

- **Adult Career Pathways/Virtual Advising**

  - Meet adult non-completers within the community to provide admission/financial aid/ registration information

  - Work with students continuing in college after CBOs

  - Assist Workforce Development/Continuing Education students who wish to complete college credit programs

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Wings Scholarship (one year):

- New performance-based initiative to encourage success
- Available to low-income single parents with child less than age 15
- CFAO runs list of potential students and works with Pathway counselor who interviews, finalizes selection, provides same services as for Pathway students
- Recipients must maintain full-time status and 2.0 GPA

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Wings Scholarship Award:

- Student receives $250 at beginning of first term.
- If still full-time with minimum 2.0 GPA at mid-term, student receives another $250.
- If student finishes term full-time with 2.0 GPA, student receives $500;
- Process and amounts are repeated for a second term.
- Student can receive $2000 for that year.

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Fall 2012 results:

- 8 of 13 students maintained eligibility (full-time with 2.0 minimum GPA)
- One moved out of area; one decided could not be full-time student
- 4 recipients had above a 3.25 GPA
- 6 students were at or above 2.5 GPA

Will continue monitoring results and increase numbers if results continue to be strong.

NOVA continues to explore additional partnerships and methods for encouraging student success.

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