

**NOA-AGEP Summer Bridge Program
Report of End-of-Session Survey Results**

**H&H Strategies, Ltd.
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Introduction

On August 20 – 21, 2016, NOA-AGEP held its first-ever NOA-AGEP Summer Bridge Program in Perrysburg, Ohio to bring together participating students and faculty across the program's institutional alliance partners. Hosted by the NOA-AGEP administration and faculty of Bowling Green State University, 14 students and 20 faculty mentors, administrators, and presenters participated in a series of community-building activities and workshops designed to build a networked community across participating institutions to support the growth and development of the NOA-AGEP scholars {See attached schedule of events for the NOA-AGEP Summer Bridge Program in appendix}.

As the external evaluators for NOA-AGEP, H&H Strategies attended the Summer Bridge Program and administered an online end-of-session survey to be completed by all participants (students and faculty/staff/administration) to assess their satisfaction with the program. The purpose of this report is to present these end-of-session survey results as part of ongoing evaluation activities that will inform future evaluation design, planning, reporting, and programming as deemed appropriate by NOA-AGEP and its institutional alliance partners.

Findings

The NOA-AGEP Summer Bridge Program End-of-Session Survey was designed and administered by H&H Strategies from August 21 – 29, 2016. This electronic Google Form survey consisted of 20 questions (15 multiple choice, 2 binary, and 3 open-ended), requiring approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Participants were assured of complete confidentiality. As such, results are presented in the aggregate.

Participants

Of the 34 possible respondents, 21 participants completed the survey. Ten were NOA-AGEP scholars, 10 were faculty/staff members at AGEP alliance institutions, and one identified as “other.”

Of the 21 respondents, six (28.6%) reported that they are of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin. Nine (42.9%) reported Black or African American as at least one their race categories while one (4.8%) participant selected American Indian or Alaskan Native as at least one of his/her races. It is important to note that some participants indicated multiple races. Of the total participants, 12 (57.1%) are male and nine (42.9%) are female. Six of the scholars are male and four are female, all URMs. While 100% of the scholars are URMs, none of the faculty/staff or the other respondent self-identified as being of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin while two faculty/staff respondents selected Black of African American as their race.

Scholars responding to the survey represented Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland State University, The University of Akron and The University of Toledo. See Table 1 for a detailed list of scholar representation per NOA-AGEP institution and STEM area(s).

Table 1. NOA-AGEP Scholar Representation

Institution	Number of Scholars	STEM Areas
1. Bowling Green State University	0	---
2. Case Western Reserve University	2	Biomedical Science (n = 1) Biology (n = 1)
3. Cleveland State University	1	Biology (n = 1)
4. Kent State University	0	---
5. University of Akron	4	Engineering (n =3) Engineering & Chemistry (n = 1)
6. University of Toledo	3	Biology (n = 2) Chemistry (n=1)
7. Youngstown State University	0	---

Alliance faculty/staff members responding to the survey represented five NOA-AGEP institutions: Bowling Green State University, Case Western Reserve University, Kent State University, The University of Toledo and Youngstown State University. Six (60%) of these respondents selected (Co-) Principal/Investigator as their role. See Table 2 for a detailed list of faculty/staff representation per NOA-AGEP institution and STEM area(s).

Table 2. NOA-AGEP Faculty/Staff Representation

Institution	Number of Faculty/Staff	STEM (and other primary disciplinary) Areas
1. Bowling Green State University	1	Biology & Chemistry (n = 1)
2. Case Western Reserve University	2	Biology (n = 1) Diversity & Inclusion (n = 1)
3. Cleveland State University	---	---
4. Kent State University	1	Geosciences (n = 1)
5. University of Akron	---	---
6. University of Toledo	5	Biology (n = 1) Chemistry (n=1) Biology & Chemistry (n = 2) Writing, English & Literature (n = 1)
7. Youngstown State University	1	Energy Science (n = 1)

Summary of Experiences and Suggestions for Improvement

Overall, all respondents are satisfied with the peer and institutional support through the professional, academic and social activities of NOA-AGEP and its 2016 Summer Bridge Program. 100% of the respondents are *somewhat, very, or extremely satisfied* with the experiences of the NOA-AGEP program thus far although there was one *a little satisfied* response for each of the following items:

- Diversity of NOA-AGEP faculty and staff;
- Explanation of NOA-AGEP goals, objectives, resources, and activities; and
- Mentoring Circles presentation @ Summer Bridge.

See Table 3 and Table 4 for detailed scholar and faculty/staff experience responses (not including the one “other” respondent) related to NOA-AGEP overall and 2016 Summer Bridge Program specific survey questions.

Table 3. NOA-AGEP Scholars' Experiences

Survey Question	Not satisfied	A little satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied	Extremely satisfied	N/A
Peer support through professional, academic and social activities.	--	--	n = 1	n = 2	n = 7	--
Institutional support through professional, academic and social activities.	--	--	n = 2	n = 2	n = 6	--
Diversity of NOA-AGEP Scholars.	--	--	--	n = 4	n = 6	--
Diversity of NOA-AGEP faculty and staff.	--	--	n = 2	n = 1	n = 7	--
Explanation of NOA-AGEP goals, objectives, resources and activities.	--	--	--	n = 4	n = 6	--
Planning and communication of AGEP Summer Bridge activities.	--	--	n = 1	n = 6	n = 3	--
Diversity 360 Debriefing & Academic Coaching presentation @ Summer Bridge.	--	--	--	n = 4	n = 6	--
Graduate Student Success Discussion Panel @ Summer Bridge.	--	--	--	n = 2	n = 8	--
Keynote Speaker @ Summer Bridge.	--	--	--	--	n = 10	--
Mentoring Circles presentation @ Summer Bridge.	--	--	n = 1	n = 4	n = 5	--

Table 4. NOA-AGEP Faculty/Staff Experiences

Survey Question	Not satisfied	A little satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied	Extremely satisfied	N/A
Peer support through professional, academic and social activities.	--	--	n = 1	n = 5	n = 4	--
Institutional support through professional, academic and social activities.	--	--	n = 3	n = 4	n = 3	--
Diversity of NOA-AGEP Scholars.	--	--	--	n = 3	n = 7	--
Diversity of NOA-AGEP faculty and staff.	--	n = 1	n = 3	n = 4	n = 2	--
Explanation of NOA-AGEP goals, objectives, resources and activities.	--	n = 1	n = 1	n = 4	n = 4	--
Planning and communication of AGEP Summer Bridge activities.	--	--	n = 3	n = 4	n = 3	--
Diversity 360 Debriefing & Academic Coaching presentation @ Summer Bridge.	--	--	n = 1	n = 3	n = 5	n = 1
Graduate Student Success Discussion Panel @ Summer Bridge.	--	--	n = 1	n = 2	n = 5	n = 2
Keynote Speaker @ Summer Bridge.	--	--	--	n = 1	n = 6	n = 4
Mentoring Circles presentation @ Summer Bridge.	--	n = 1	n = 2	n = 2	--	n = 5

The survey concluded with two open-ended questions providing respondents the opportunity to identify (a) beneficial activities and/or opportunities and (b) suggestions for improvement.

Beneficial Activities and Opportunities

Respondents to the survey identified three areas of most benefit of the NOA-AGEP program thus far: financial support, mentoring support, and the peer support through the network of scholars.

In terms of financial support, as one scholar put it, “the stipend is the number one most beneficial aspect. [Having] the option to be an RA and be able to focus on my research and classes is wonderful.” A faculty/mentor noted how the stipend made it possible to provide “a late offer to a minority student because of the existence of this program.”

Mentoring support through the opportunity to develop a network and through mentoring circles was also identified as a beneficial aspect of the program. As one scholar noted, “Mentoring

circles that are aimed at guiding us through the most critical aspects of a PhD program. Being able to find a network of support of students on the same position as I am.”

Additionally, the peer support network of scholars has been an additional benefit of the program thus far. Faculty and students alike identified the peer support network as an essential ingredient in the benefit of NOA-AGEP. As one scholar wrote, these “opportunities for networking with other NOA-AGEP scholars, mentors, and support staff...greatly increased my confidence in the support systems available to us as NOA-AGEP scholars.”

The unique nature of the program and its support is recognized as an important feature of the STEM programs across collaborative schools. From one faculty/mentor, this program “[acts] as an instrument for minority Ph.D. candidates in STEM to connect with one another. These students may not have ever met each other without this program. Having these colleagues will be extremely beneficial as a support system whilst pursuing their degree.”

Regarding the other activities of the bridge program, respondents noted the benefit of the Diversity 360 discussion and training received at the session.

Suggestions for Improvement

Respondents to the end of session survey identified two major areas or suggestions for improvement. They include: *i) the need for advance scheduling, coordinating, and communication* pertaining to program events and *ii) to provide additional professional development, especially for faculty/mentors.*

Concerns were raised about communication and scheduling throughout the open-ended responses, such as regarding clarity about the program and stipend payment schedule, and the need to communicate earlier in the logistics of program events and scholar recruitment. Suggestions were provided that aid in the delivery of program content such as development of directory, website, and other opportunities for informing program participants. The following responses illustrate the nature of the concerns and opportunities regarding program scheduling, coordinating, and communication:

Communication can be improved – faculty do not know much about several aspects of the program (e.g., mentoring circle discussion was scheduled at a time when faculty were no longer present; many other components are also still somewhat vague). Similarly, future events will hopefully be scheduled/communicated earlier than this first event!

We could have a private Facebook group that has a directory of the faculty mentors, the staff, and the scholars and includes email and phone numbers for ease of access. Through this group it could be possible to live stream certain events to members of NOA AGEP that are unable to attend.

First year efforts might be improved by the creation of a directory which lists the contact information of all NOA-AGEP scholars and personnel, as well as a tentative schedule of the dates for the remainder of the first year's events and activities.

It would be nice to have a website with a Roster of all program participants (including site coordinators, faculty, and students involved in the program [including pictures and brief bios of all]). This would allow everyone to feel like they know each other before even meeting, and would also serve as a memory refresher prior to subsequent meetings.

The second suggestion for improvement identified the need to prepare additional support and professional development for faculty/mentors around mentoring circles, their roles, and other additional information specifically for them. These areas of improvement are captured in the statements below:

I'd really like to see a preparation session for mentors...not just nuts and bolts about the program, but more along the lines of how they can sometimes contribute micro-aggressions without realizing it. I found myself constantly checking everyone at our table (all mentors or program coordinators).

Include the mentors, PIs and site coordinators on more activities so that what is being shared with the scholars is also being shared with the rest of us, in order that we can all be on the same page and field questions after the program appropriately.

There were some activities that were geared more toward the Scholars and some that were more for the faculty and mentors. Perhaps there should be parallel sessions that would serve each group and not consume as much of the weekend.