



National Association of Colleges and Employers - 2019 Inclusion Committee

Transcript: Educational Opportunities Program

My name is Janet Nishihara and I'm the director of the Educational Opportunities Program at Oregon State University. And what our program does is provide academic and personal support for students of color, first generation students, low income students, students with disabilities, a wide variety of students who have historically been denied equal access to higher education.

The program's been here since 1969 so we have a long track record and quite a few alumni who are out there, who have found success at Oregon State (University) because they found a sense of belonging as part of our program. We do a lot that helps build cohesion among the students. They also find academic support because we teach smaller sections of classes and we have tutoring for students. And we also try to make sure they have opportunities to try different things, what they call high impact practices or experiential learning in terms of going to do service projects. Or, we just took a group of students down to the Shakespearean festival in Ashland (Oregon) to see a play and talk with an artist and learn about her social justice work through art. So lots of different opportunities to reach out to lots of different kinds of students.

We have been fairly successful in getting grants funded. So, because of staff in our program, we've gotten a College Assistance Migrant Program at Oregon State University. We've gotten a TRiO student support services at Oregon State University. We've also written grant proposals to a local community funding agencies that have funded our bridge program or have funded opportunities for students. We also have several people who fund not just not just scholarships for our students; we've given about \$35,000 in scholarships out every year; but also we have an alum who is funding and is going to endow some money for us to help us help students participate in those experiential learning opportunities that usually that usually cost money and take time, and the students don't usually have the opportunity to access those. So it was important to him and he sees it as important for all students to be able to do that if they can.