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First-Generation Symposium

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Positing Strength: Shifting Perspective & Focus on Low-Income, First-Generation Students' Experiences

Ricky Uργο

University of Michigan, rickurgo@umich.edu

Richard Jones

Rowan University, jonesri@rowan.edu

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Positing Strength:

Shifting perspective and focus on low income, first generation student experiences



Hello!

**Hall Director - Ricky Uργο, MS
(he/him/his) Rowan 16'**

**Vice President of Student
Engagement - Richard Jones
(he/him/his)**



Outcomes

Participants will:

Build a new approach & skill-set in their relationships to/with these students.

2



3

Participants will:

Apply these techniques with their students using a case study example.

Participants will:

Examine ways they've contributed to the rhetoric around first generation and low income/working class students.

1



Inspiration

Why are you here presenting about this?



How did we get here?

Let's start with some background →





Conceiving College



American Colleges:

- X **religious & affluent white men**
- X Started in 1636 with Harvard
- X 9 colonial colleges

Rowan serves:

- X **4,000 first generation students****
- X **876 students in bottom 20% income level*****

* Cohen, A. M., & Kisker, C. B. (2010). *The shaping of american higher education: Emergence and growth of the contemporary system*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

** Hopper, C. (2017, November). Division supports first generation students with new program. *Our Voice, Student Affairs Employee Blog*.

Retrieved from: <https://sites.rowan.edu/ourvoice/2017/11/first-gen.html>

*** <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/college-mobility/rowan-university>





Narrative Inquiry

Gathering of data via storytelling

Activity!



📄 When poll is active, respond at PollEv.com/rickyurgo143
📄 Text **RICKYURGO143** to **22333** once to join



**Why might framing
matter here**



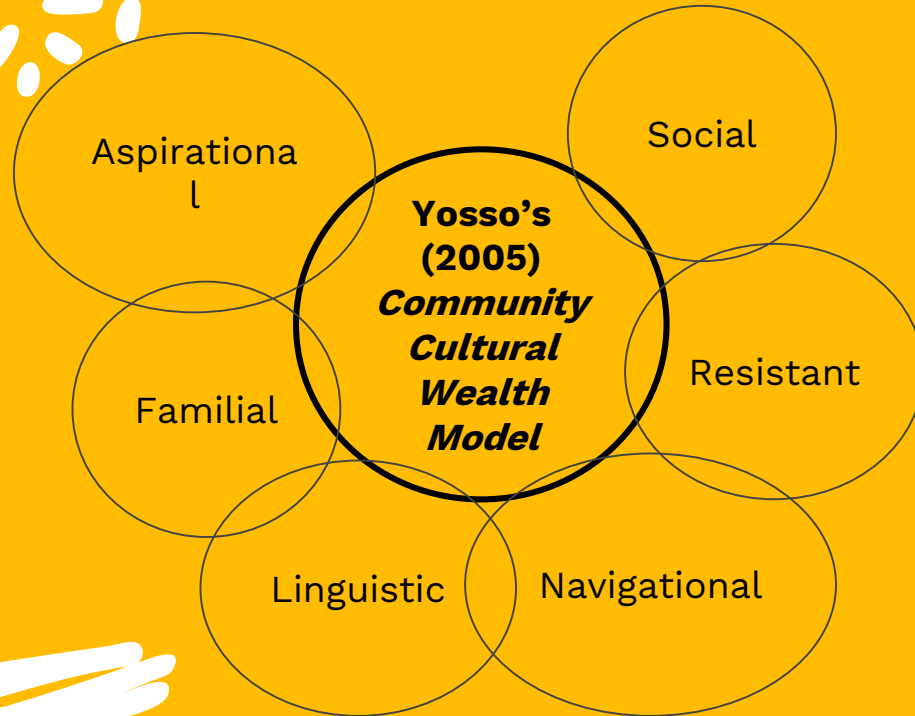


“

However, the deficit framework on which many of our efforts are built hardly seems an appropriate foundation for strategies aimed at success. As long as being a person of color, or of modest economic means, or the child of parent/s who did not go to college, is deemed **an indicator of potential failure**, the integrity of our proclaimed expectation of success is undermined.

- Byron P. White, VP University Engagement & Chief Diversity Officer, Cleveland State University

Shifting the narrative





What if we said -



X Hopeful

X Determined

X Courageous

X Hard-working

X Focused

X Resilient

X Resourceful



To what effect?

Affirmation

Framing matters. Feeling seen and heard by others for your strengths impacts how you interpret your experiences and reflect on those experiences. If you're constantly hearing about what help you need, you'll feel that too. Work on affirming what students are already bringing to the table.



Sense of belonging

When people feel affirmed in who they are and what they bring to the table, they're more likely to report a positive experience and this helps contribute to their sense of belonging. Having staff at the university that "get it" goes a long way too. Your tone setting & accessibility is paramount, especially to students in environments not created for them.

Outside H.E.

These lessons leave our doors - you never know who could use this lesson as a tool moving on.



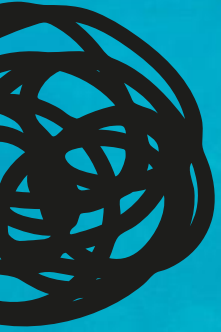
Matriculation

When we have the other two, regardless of it being in the office, classroom, or residence hall, more students matriculate and graduate.



Case Study: Ricky's story





**What will you
commit to
change?**





Thanks!

Any questions?

You can find me at
rickurgo@gmail.com or
Rickurgo@umich.edu

