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## Introductory Pages

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# About the Journal



An Overview

The *Journal of College Access* (JCA) focuses on the current trends, research, practices, and development of all types of programs, policies, and activities related to the access of and success in postsecondary education. Issues of college aspiration, qualification, application, enrollment, and persistence are the primary emphases.

The Journal was co-founded by Dr. Patrick O'Connor and Dr. Christopher Tremblay. O'Connor is Associate Dean for College Counseling at Kingswood Cranbrook School in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan and is a board member for the Michigan College Access Network (MCAN). Tremblay is a Research and Marketing Consultant for Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) at Michigan State University.

JCA is affiliated with the Michigan College Access Network, a statewide non-profit organization with a mission to increase college readiness, participation, and completion in Michigan, particularly among low-income students, first-generation college going students, and students of color.



Launched in March 2014, JCA is a part of Western Michigan University's ScholarWorks, a digital showcase of research, scholarly and creative output.

## Guest Editors

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## Co-Editors

Patrick O'Connor, Ph.D.  
Christopher W. Tremblay, Ed.D.

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# Table of Contents



Introduction by the Guest Editors.....4-7

Laura Owen, Ph.D. (American University) and Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy, Ph.D. (American University)

---

School Counseling Intervention Research on College Readiness, College Access, and Postsecondary Success: A 10-Year Content Analysis of Peer-Reviewed Research.....8-27

H. George McMahon, Ph.D. (University of Georgia), Catherine Griffith, Ph.D. (University of Massachusetts, Amherst),  
Melissa Mariani, Ph.D. (Florida Atlantic University), and Brett Zyromski, Ph.D. (The Ohio State University)

---

Increasing College Access Through the Implementation of Naviance:  
An Exploratory Study.....28-44

David D. Christian (University of Arkansas), Amy B. Lawrence (Denton Independent School District), and Nicole M. Dampman  
(Denton Independent School District)

---

English Language Learners' (ELLs) Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) Course-Taking,  
Achievement and Attainment in College.....45-61

Qi Shi (Loyola University Maryland)

---

Career Decision-Making and College and Career Access Among Recent African Immigrant  
Students.....62-77

Grace W. Wambu (New Jersey City University), Brian Hutchison (University of Missouri, St. Louis), Zachary Pietrantonio  
(New Jersey City University)

---

The Relationship Between Perceived Career barriers and Career Decision Self-Efficacy on Initial  
Career Choice Among Low-Income, First-Generation, Pre-Freshman, College-Bound  
Students.....78-97

Nicole Pulliam (Monmouth University), Kara P. Ieva (Rowan University), Larry D. Burlew  
(The Chicago School of Professional Psychology)

---

The Effects of Purpose Orientations on Recent High School Graduates' College Application  
Decisions.....98-117

Gitima Sharma (California State University, Fresno), Jungnam Kim (Ball State University), Julia Bryan  
(The Pennsylvania State University)



# Introduction by the Guest Editors



Authored by  
Laura Owen, Ph.D.  
Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy, Ph.D.

In a newly released report, *The State of School Counseling: Revisiting the Path Forward* (Brown, Hatch, Holcomb-McCoy, Martin, Mcleod, Owen & Savitz-Romer, 2017), the National Consortium for School Counseling and Postsecondary Success (NCSCPS) laid out the critical need for research that shows how school counselors uniquely impact postsecondary outcomes.

“While the research on school counseling and college readiness counseling is growing, it still lacks the robust scholarship necessary to guide effective practice. More empirical research is needed, most notably in the areas of technology use, early college awareness, family engagement, evaluation systems, and professional development” (Brown et al., p. 17).

The report culminates with a list of recommendations for school counseling credentialing and licensing, practice, research and policy needed to ensure that all students graduate high school college and career ready. This special edition journal, “School Counseling and Postsecondary Success,” focuses on robust research studies that can guide school counseling practice and improve student postsecondary success.

We feature six scholarly articles that offer new and innovative



perspectives related to school counseling in the context of college and career readiness. The first article provides an overview of 10-years of peer-reviewed research on school counseling interventions aimed to improve college readiness, college access and postsecondary success. Similar to the findings shared in the *Revisiting the Path Forward* (Brown et al., 2017) report, these authors discuss gaps in the literature and share much needed recommendations to strengthen future research related to school counseling and college and career readiness. The remaining articles look at the effect of purpose orientations on high school graduate’s college application decisions, the use of technology in college and career counseling and college and career outcomes related to specific student populations (English Language Learners (ELL), African Immigrant, and low income, first generation).



**NCSCPS**  
The National Consortium for School Counseling  
and Postsecondary Success



## Introduction by the Guest Editors

### FEATURED ARTICLES

#### **School Counseling Intervention Research on College Readiness, College Access, and Postsecondary Success: A 10-year Content Analysis of Peer-Reviewed Research**

In this 10-year content analysis of peer-reviewed research, the authors review and describe the available intervention research designed to improve post-secondary success. The authors identified 10 intervention studies that were implemented in high school settings. Five of the ten studies were large-scale, multi-modal collaborative interventions. The authors report that none of the articles were published in counseling journals, and various levels of rigor were represented across the studies. Implications for researchers and school counselors are discussed.

#### **Effects of Purpose Orientations on Recent High School Graduates' College Application Decisions**

The authors of this paper used the 2002 Educational Longitudinal Study to examine purpose orientations and how they impact student's college application decisions. The authors identified four types of purpose orientations: career, interpersonal, altruistic, and self-oriented purpose orientations. Career purpose orientation was found to be positively related to high school students' decisions to apply to college. Implications for school counselors and researchers are discussed.

#### **Increasing College Access Through the Implementation of Naviance: An Exploratory Study**

This study looked at how school counselors can use educational technology, specifically Naviance, to increase student exposure to college information and support postsecondary planning. The authors found that students who logged into Naviance more frequently had higher college application rates. Implications for school counselors are included.

#### **English Language Learners' (ELLs) Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) Course-Taking, Achievement and Attainment in College**

Using data from the Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002, this study looked at demographic variables, math course-taking and high school GPA to determine effect on English Language Learner (ELL) students' STEM course-taking, achievement and attainment in college. The authors found gender, GPA, and the number of advanced math courses were predictive of the number of STEM courses taken in college. Implications for practice and future research are discussed.

## Introduction by the Guest Editors

### **Career Decision-Making and College and Career Access Among Recent African Immigrant Students**

The number of African immigrant youth in American classrooms is on the rise. School counselors are uniquely positioned to help these students to be college and career ready. Using the Social Cognitive Career Theory framework, this article addresses the unique career development needs, as well as the college and career access challenges faced by African immigrant students. Implications for school counseling practice and research are addressed.

### **The Relationship Between Perceived Career Barriers and Career Decision Self-efficacy on Initial Career Choice Among Low Income, First Generation Pre-Freshman College-Bound Students**

This study surveyed 106 pre-freshman college students participating in a summer bridge program at a Northeastern university. Seventy percent of the participants were first generation college students. The authors found that perceived career barriers did not significantly predict certainty of initial career choice, but career decision self-efficacy did significantly predict certainty of initial career choice. School and college and career counselors may want to consider programs and services that include early career counseling initiatives, implementation of career service programming, and career related courses geared toward increasing career decision self-efficacy for minority student populations in particular.

## THANK YOU

We acknowledge the support of Dr. Christopher Tremblay and Dr. Patrick O'Connor who made it possible to launch this special edition and thank them for the opportunity to serve as co-editors. We also thank the authors whose research provides new understanding and guidance on school counseling practices that can improve postsecondary opportunities for all students.

## ABOUT THE GUEST EDITORS

### **Dr. Laura Owen**

Dr. Laura Owen, a research professor and Director of the Center for Postsecondary Readiness and Success at American University, focuses on evaluating the impact of interventions and initiatives designed to address the persistent equity and access issues that so many students across the country face. Previously, Dr. Owen was an assistant professor and director of the school counseling program at San Diego State University and held an appointment as assistant professor in counseling at Johns Hopkins University. A prior urban school counselor and district counseling supervisor, she is a passionate advocate for closing college opportunity gaps. Dr. Owen served as a consultant for the former First Lady Michelle Obama's Reach Higher Initiative and was a panelist at the Harvard White House Convening on School Counseling and College Advising where she discussed research-based approaches to college affordability, the college enrollment process, and the summer



## Introduction by the Guest Editors

transition between high school and college. She co-led the San Diego White House Convening and is one of seven cofounders of the National Consortium for School Counseling and Post-Secondary Success (NCSCPS). Dr. Owen believes that all children, regardless of gender, race, socioeconomic status, or disability, have the right to receive the highest quality education available.

### Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy

Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy is the Dean of the School of Education at American University. Previous to this role, Dr. Holcomb-McCoy served as the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Vice Dean of Academic Affairs and Chair in the School of Education at Johns Hopkins University. She has held appointments as Associate Professor of Counselor Education at the University of Maryland, College Park and Assistant Professor and Director of the School Counseling Program at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York. Professional colleagues have recognized her with many awards for outstanding multicultural/diversity research, excellence in teaching, and exemplar service. She served as a Faculty Lilly Fellow at the University of Maryland and in 2016, she was selected as an American Counseling Association (ACA) Fellow for her significant contributions in scientific achievement and teaching/training. Because of her expertise in college advising and counseling, Dr. Holcomb-McCoy was selected to participate as a consultant to the Obama Administration's Reach Higher Initiative and

is one of seven cofounders of the National Consortium for School Counseling and Post-Secondary Success (NCSCPS). In July 2014, she was one of the plenary speakers at the White House's Summit on Higher Education held at Harvard University. She Co-Led the American University White House Convening "Connecting the Dots: Cultural Competence, Counseling, and College and Career Readiness of Underserved Youth" in November 2016.

### REFERENCES

Brown, J., Hatch, T., Holcomb-McCoy, C., Martin, P., McLeod, J., Owen, L., & Savitz-Romer, M. (2017). *The State of School Counseling: Revisiting the Path Forward*. Washington, DC.