**Need: Improve success, retention and completion rates for students who are new to college through student engagement and intentional community building.**

Student Life (Herschel Jackson) created the *Summer Success Institute* and collaborated with Student Success Programs/NSO (Daniel Meador & MElinda Sanchez) to provide intense workshops to encourage students to view their college experience as an opportunity to become a part of a community rather than undertaking the education journey alone. The *Summer Success Institute* provided first year students with a jumpstart to their college success through the energizing and dynamic experiences. Students learned how to navigate successfully the college environment. The institute consisted of four 3- hour workshops during the month of July. The Summer Success Institute was promoted during the New Student Orientation. Forty-nine students completed the program and given certificates of completion.

Some of the topics covered were:

* The Student Experience (Student Panel)
* Communication Skills
* Keys to College Success
* Staying Organized (Binder Review)
* The Significance of Understanding and Using the Syllabus
* Time Management Tools
* Using Google Calendar for Success
* Note-taking & Study Skills
* Financial Aid
* Team Building
* Importance of Engagement
* Mentoring
* Leadership & Networking (Connie Greenwell)
* Your Life, Your Success (Internal/External Factors)
* Wellness and Student Success
* Advisement (Choosing a pathway. How to use a Degree Checklist)

After each session, an assessment was given to evaluate student-learning outcomes. At the end of the Fall 2016 Semester, a survey was administered to evaluate student engagement, retention & persistence data. Each student received weekly emails regarding tips and events. A Success Coach (MElinda) provided one-on-one mentoring. During the semester, two Lunch & Learn sessions were conducted to allow the students to share their experiences and to learn additional successful techniques such as; “Preparing for Finals”. **Forty-seven of the forty-nine students (96%)** retained and persisted to the Spring 2017 Semester. A sampling of data also revealed:

**Students Used the Following Resources (based off of a sampling of the 49 students)**

* Clubs & Organizations 20%
* Honors 20%
* Service Learning 60%
* Student Employment 20%
* Advisement 40%
* Tutoring 80%
* Counseling 60%
* Mentoring 80%
* Financial Aid 60%
* Scholarships 40%
* Faculty Office Hours 20%
* CTC 40%
* Student Union 20%

**Participated in Campus Events for Fall 2016 Semester (based off of a sampling of the 49 students)**

* Welcome Week 50%
* Student Success Week 50%
* Hispanic Heritage 50%
* Honor’s Expo 25%
* 3-Day/Global Leadership 25%

80% of students who were surveyed “strongly agree” the information they learned during the SSI helped them during their first semester.

Comments from students:

* *Every resource on campus was talked about. I thoroughly knew what was available to me and if I ever had questions, I knew where to go. I really enjoyed my time in SSI and it helped me understand all that our campus has to offer!*
* *I really enjoyed going to the Summer Success Institute. I recommend it to the entire incoming freshman. It was a lot of help especially starting at a new school. Everyone was so nice and helpful and they really explained all the school resources and where everything was. It really did make my first semester at Estrella a lot easier than if I would have done it on my own.*