

You Belong Here: A Collaborative Recruitment Initiative for Future Engineers

Mr. Enrique Dominguez, University of Texas at Austin

Mr. Enrique Dominguez is the Director of the Equal Opportunity in Engineering Program at the Cockrell School of Engineering at the University of Texas at Austin. He has been Director for over 7 years and is currently the Membership Chair for the National Association for Multicultural Engineering Program Advocates (NAMEPA). Enrique graduated from the Cockrell School of Engineering with a Civil Engineering degree and pursued industry experience for seven years where he held positions such as Project Engineer, Lead University Recruiter, Logistics Engineer, Cost Engineer and Project Manager.

Amy Marie Beebe, Women in Engineering Program

Amy Beebe is the student program coordinator for the Women in Engineering Program (WEP) in the Cockrell School of Engineering at The University of Texas at Austin whose mission is to recruit, retain and graduate more women to advance gender equity in engineering. As a program coordinator, Amy assists in coordinating programming for current students which includes the WEP Leadership Collaborative student organizations, WEP's Peer Assistance Leaders and WEP Kinsolving Living Learning Community.

In addition to current student programming, she coordinates recruitment initiatives for WEP with collaboration from their sibling program, Equal Opportunity in Engineering, and other departments within Cockrell School of Engineering.

Amy is also an active member or officer in several campus wide committees: Cultural Awareness Committee, Academic Counselors Association, Hispanic Faculty and Staff Association, Bias Busting Team and Association of Professionals in Student Affairs.

YOU BELONG HERE

A Collaborative Recruitment Initiative for Future Engineers

PRESENTERS:

Amy Beebe & Enrique Dominguez

  
@UTEOE @UTWEP

Introductions

Enrique Dominguez, Director of the Equal Opportunity in Engineering, he/him/his
Amy Beebe, Student Program Coordinator, Women in Engineering Program, she/her/hers

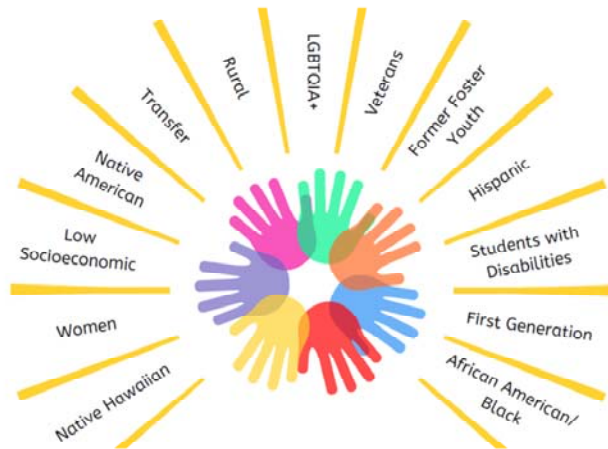
Overview of Presentation:

You Belong Here: A Collaborative Recruitment Initiative for Future Engineers is a presentation that showcases a strategy used by our engineering college's diversity programs in an effort to increase the matriculation of high school admitted students from underrepresented backgrounds into the engineering college. The presentation will explore the initiative's evolution, provide an overview of the programming and impact. We will also cover lessons learned and future plans.

What we really hope is that attendees will be able to walk away with some actionable items and ideas that they could implement at their institutions as well as a reference when working to engage all members of the engineering community to show the value and preliminary data of collaborative recruitment initiatives for our underrepresented communities. We also welcome feedback, questions and suggestions from our fellow peers – we are working to create a diverse, supportive and inclusive community across all areas of engineering regardless of which institution students ultimately decide to attend.

Overview/Agenda

- History
- Event Details
- Impact Data & Comparison
- Evaluation Data
- Lessons Learned
- Questions



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Overview:

In today's presentation we will discuss the history of the You Belong Here CSE Recruiting Initiative and the details behind each event.

We will also cover the impact data of those events and how they compare to the previous year's events.

We will show you the evaluation data we gathered from students and their guests.

Finally, we will get into your lessons learned from this initiative and then open for any questions.

In this presentation here is how we define the following terms:

Matriculation – moving students through the recruitment process to enrollment into engineering

Underrepresented populations – in the Cockrell School the underrepresented populations consist of:

Hispanic, African American/Black, Native Hawaiian, Native American, Women, Low Socioeconomic, Transfer, Rural, LGBTQIA+, Veterans, Former Foster Youth, Students with Disabilities, First Generation

Due to the audience discussed in the presentation along with the limited data provided by the university, only some of these populations are mentioned throughout this presentation

History

- Equal Opportunity in Engineering (EOE) Program founded in 1970
- Women in Engineering Program (WEP) founded in 1991
- Historical Recruitment Strategy
 - EOE Program focused on underrepresented students
 - WEP focused on women
 - Cockrell School of Engineering (CSE) focused on high achieving students
- 2017 – EOE & WEP collaborated on Women of Color event
- 2018 – CSE allowed EOE & WEP to coordinate CSE events called “You Belong Here” Recruitment Events



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History:

Since 1970, diversity programs have existed in the college of engineering with a focus to recruit, retain and graduate underrepresented students in engineering.

Two programs were created to support underrepresented student populations within engineering which are identified as women, ethnic minorities (African American/Black, Hispanic, Native American and Native Hawaiian) and students with marginalized identities (i.e. first generation, low socio-economic status, etc.).

Before their establishment, there was little attention from the engineering college given to recruitment efforts for underrepresented populations. In the years following their establishment, the diversity programs initiated recruitment and yield efforts to increase the diversity within the college. With the college focusing on recruitment of high achieving students, the diversity programs would target the underrepresented populations needing attention in engineering. Efforts were made independently from each other and therefore each program would host their own recruitment events without significant collaboration. With the continued research and attention on the theory of intersectionality, two years ago, the two diversity programs collaborated to create an event that recognized the different identities that our prospective students could hold. The event formed to be “You Belong Here: Women of Color Weekend”. The joint event was designed for our prospective admitted engineering women who also hold an ethnic minority identity (such a defined

above) to showcase the diversity programs' student support initiatives. This past academic year of 2018-2019, the engineering college agreed to support a collaboration, led by the diversity programs, to solely focus on recruitment efforts of underrepresented students. The college's involvement with this initiative elevated the level of resources and importance. This is significant because it showed that college was invested and prioritizing the recruitment of these students. This collaboration produced the "You Belong Here" recruitment events that continued to be focused on underrepresented populations with the purpose of increasing those percentages and to showcase the types of support services offered for underrepresented students. Since the college supported this initiative with more resources, the events expanded to three total "You Belong Here" recruitment events including an evolved version of the "You Belong Here: Women of Color Weekend".

Programming

10:00am	You Belong Here Check-In	EER East Entrance
10:30am	You Belong Here Welcome Amy Beebe, WEP Program Coordinator Enrique Dominguez, EOE Director Michelle Mansolo, ESP Director	EER Mulva Auditorium 0.904
10:45am	Student Session: Enrique Dominguez, EOE Director Andrea Herrera-Moreno, WEP Program Coordinator Parent Session: Amy Beebe, WEP Program Coordinator	EER 3.646 & 3.640 EER 0.904
12:00pm	You Belong Here Lunch: With Current Engineering Students	EER Mulva Lobby & EER Atrium
1:15pm	Family Engineering Activity Enrique Dominguez, EOE Director	EER Mulva Auditorium 0.904
2:30pm	Conversations with your Majors & Engineering Tour Engineering Ambassadors	In Department Buildings
4:00pm	You Belong Here Closing Amy Beebe, WEP Program Coordinator Enrique Dominguez, EOE Director	EER Mulva Auditorium 0.904



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What we did: (include both research papers used as a foundation)

Using research, best practices from our program's experiences and feedback from current students, we created an agenda that was replicated across all three events. We started the event off with a short welcome from the college and each of the diversity programs. In those welcomes, we each shared our pronouns and a little bit of our history/background as a way to connect with our guests and hopefully make them feel more at ease with asking us questions.

Following the welcomes, family members stayed in the auditorium with the admitted students being taken to another classroom. Family members had the opportunity to learn more about the various student support services offered by Cockrell School of Engineering, Next Steps presented by the Assistant Director of Admissions which included information about financial aid, housing & orientation (information relevant now that they were admitted students) and we iterating the May 1st deadline for accepting or declining offers. A significant portion of the Family Session was allocated for Q & A – families were able to ask staff as well as 3-4 current engineering students questions. We found that they had lots of questions for the current students ranging across different areas.

Concurrently in the alternate location, admitted students were given the same opportunity to learn about the student support services while asking questions of staff and current

students. A portion of that time was dedicated to a hands-on activity: designing & building a paper tower. Students were only allowed to use paper (no other tools aside from their hands) and had 20 minutes to complete. This activity has multiple purposes: introduce the admitted students to the engineering design process (which we expanded & debriefed about after the activity), showcase the collaborative nature of engineering and begin the process of community building with their peers. Current students were around the room & interacting with the admitted students – giving them advice, offering to help and answering any questions.

Bringing family members and students back together for lunch they were able to sit at tables with current students, faculty and staff for informal conversations. It was mixed between whole families sitting together and students sitting away from families. We were intentional to ensure that regardless of whether there was an admitted student or not sitting at the table, there was a current student or staff at the table to interact with the family and be available to answer questions. We found it helpful as staff organizing the event, to sit/stand a little away from the groups so that families who might have specific questions unique to them could ask them.

After lunch, everyone was brought together for a family activity. The family activity highlighted engineering concepts, communication and the changing future of their family dynamic. ENRIQUE TO GO MORE IN-DEPTH ABOUT THE DEBRIEF & DETAILS OF ACTIVITY

The student and a single guest/family member/guardian participate in a Lego activity that challenges many of their skills. After the timed tasks ends, discussion of 3 relevant main points (engineering, collaboration, college life) brings family awareness together.

Family members and students then transitioned to breakout sessions that were major specific which were held in their respective engineering buildings. All breakout sessions included current students whose majors aligned with the departmental session. This was the portion of the day that families and admitted students learned more about their specific department and major. Breakout sessions also provided time to ask questions relating to their major and take a tour of the major specific building and the engineering area of campus.

The day was closed out by bringing everyone back together in the auditorium for any other questions, evaluations and a short closing statement. Staff and current students were available after the official end of the event for more informal one-on-one conversations. The full day event begins at 10am with check-in until 4:30pm.

Planning & Logistics

- Timeline
- Invites
- Location
- Picking Dates
- Recruiting & Organizing Volunteers
- Waitlists



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How did we do it?

Planning for the events began by identifying and reaffirming the mission of the initiative: increasing the matriculation of students who come from these historically underrepresented backgrounds. Planning for this event began around the start of the Fall semester – we selected dates & created a rough program outline. We met periodically to touch base on progress and next steps. We tried to select dates that would work about not only our schedule but also our current students and the admitted students – taking into account holidays and Austin happenings such as SXSW & such. We had invites to the events sent out as part of the CSE cascade of communications – embedded within that communication schedule so that they weren't receiving a bunch of information at once! (That was the idea anyways – more in lessons learned!) We touched based with our various collaborators long in advance so that they were aware of where we were in the process, what we might need from them and ensure that items on their end were completed in time.

An event invitation was crafted and sent out to those who identified with one or more of those underrepresented populations in their university application through the university's recruitment database. The invite creation was done between the diversity programs and the engineering college's communications team. Two reminder emails were also created for students who had not signed-up for an event. A printed invite was also mailed to the

family of the admitted student. Students who had registered for the event received a confirmation email of registration, a reminder to attend (with all event details) and if they attended the event, they also received a “thank you for attending” email. The “Thank You” emails included contact information for following up if any additional questions arose plus links to other resources (like housing, financial aid, etc.). The university’s admissions office managed two parts of the process: identifying the invite pool from admitted engineering students and sending all the invitation materials (emails and letters – more about this in the lessons learned section) through our CRM.

Who was invited: all students from underrepresented population (as defined earlier)

How were they invited: via email & printed letters for families, the printed letter to the parents is key since families play a significant role with our ethnic minority populations in particular when choosing a institution

Location: We were deliberate in showcasing our new engineering building as being the central hub of engineering student experience while also ensuring that they were able to spend some time in their own department building.

Handouts & Giveaways: We made sure to include a folder with helpful information about their department, student services, stickers & branding items – everyone loves giveaways! It’s also a way for them to feel a part of the CSE community & have something that shows that off.

Recruiting & Organizing Volunteers: Aside from the programming and invites, recruiting and organizing volunteers was the 3rd biggest logistical task. A cornerstone of our event was the fact that we wanted to have as many current student volunteers assisting and being part of the event. We utilized every bit of student capital we had to spread the word and encourage student to give up parts of their Saturday to volunteer to be part of this event! What was surprising, is that we had quite a few students willing to do so & excited at the opportunity to interact with admitted students. There were some challenges for specific departments but with enough of the students natural excitement, student buy-in & great student leaders, we were able to always have representation across the departments. We sent out emails, canvas messages, GroupMe and face-to-face, word of mouth. Our student org leaders were great at volunteering and advertising it as an opportunity to their membership. For the most part, we had plenty of students who showed up and did a wonderful job. We really couldn’t have put on such an expansive programming without their help. On our end, we took the time to create a Qulatrix survey for sign-up where students could self-select what days & times they wanted to volunteer for – we made sure to include what was going on during the different time blocks so students could pick the times that worked for them but also had things they might be interested in specifically helping out with for the event. We sent follow-up messaging with reminders of the times they had submitted, volunteer training times they selected (we held 4 – more in the Engineering Community Involvement) and allowing them the opportunity to change or cancel with enough time. We wanted to make it clear that we were flexible & understood things come up but a level of professionalism & communication needed to be maintain – so communicating the changes or inability to no longer be there besides just no showing up & why that’s important for their future. We also created and

assigned specific duties to each of the students. We found that students like to have very clear directions and tasks assigned to them – for instance, if they signed up for the first time block of welcoming & checking in, we made sure to specifically assign someone to the check-in table, greeter at each entrance, taking checked in families to the auditorium, etc. This was probably one of the most time intensive aspects of the planning since we were creating these only a couple days before each event & adjusting in real time as students reached out with changes in their schedule or cancellations. But it was the most helpful when it came to getting the student ambassadors checked in, they knew exactly what they would be doing, when & where so there wasn't anyone just hanging around not knowing what they needed to do or how they could help.

Engineering Community Involvement

- Engineering Student Ambassadors
- Academic Departments
- Dean's Office (financial support)
- Central Admissions



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Engineering Community Involvement:

We recruited engineering student mentors from various leadership programs across the engineering college: student organizations, engineering ambassadors, department volunteers, leadership seminars, program/office assistants and personal connections. We hosted multiple one hour volunteer training sessions to discuss their responsibilities, duties, program schedule and answer any questions they might have about the event. We wanted to empower them to be authentic and open to sharing their experience of being an engineering student. We discussed why it was important for them to be honest and not to feel pressured into only making positive statements while giving them tools on how to follow-up if they share a not-so-great experience. For example, "I heard that engineering students don't have a social life cause they have to study so much, is that true?" We encouraged them to be honest, "Yes – I have to study a lot & sometimes I'm not able to go out as much as I might want but by using some time management strategies & prioritizing, I can make sure that I'm really getting to do the kinds of things that I want plus even while studying, we take breaks so that it's not just all studying." We tried to get them to think about it in a way that if they had problems, what did they do to solve them & those are the two pieces for them to relay to the admitted student. Problem + Solution = Answer

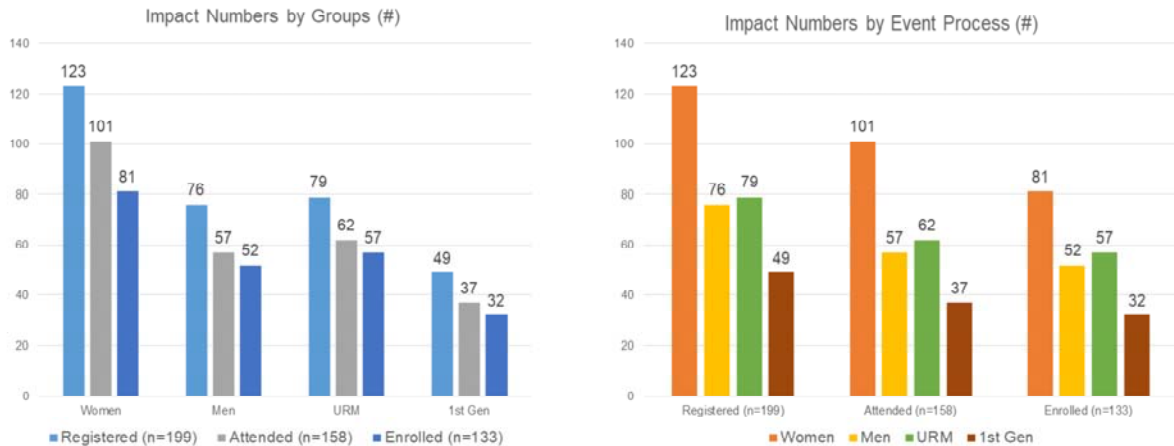
The current students were strongly invited to participate in all aspect of the events. While they assisted with the logistics (setting up and break down), most importantly they were

there to interact with the guests! They welcomed, got them checked in and escorted them to the opening session. The family session had a minimum of three students from various disciplines, years and backgrounds to help answer questions families might have from the student perspective. The student session had 5-10 student volunteers (again from various disciplines, years and backgrounds) to act as facilitators for the hands-on activity as well as answer questions from their perspectives. They were there for lunch, led the students to their respective department breakout session, participated in the session and acted as the tour guide around the engineering area. Current students also acted as facilitators for the family hands-on activity. We have 115 total student volunteers between the three events.

Not only was this a collaborative effort with current students and the diversity programs, we also had five academic departments actively participate in the events. This included leading the department breakout session, opening up labs for tours, having staff or faculty interacting with guests during lunch. Those same academic departments were also allies and advocates for the engineering college's support and recruitment plan's shift to the "You Belong Here" initiative and focus on the recruitment of underrepresented students. Through this advocacy and strategic alignment, we were able to secure CSE funding for the events whereas previously (as mentioned earlier) all diversity recruitment efforts were funded by the individual programs. This made a significant difference because we were able to cover event logistics and associated costs to ensure everything was set-up and created an engaging experience for the guests. It also showed that it was an initiative supported by CSE and a priority – which goes a long way in garnering support and participation among the CSE community!

Another highlight was getting our Assistant Director of Admissions to be there to present on Next Steps – what students and families should be doing now that they've been notified of their acceptance. We felt this was incredibly helpful for not only our 1st generation students who might not have familiarity with the process but for all our guests – as we may know, institutions' processes can vary! So for there to be someone there available and able to answer off-shoot questions relating to financial aid, housing, orientation and where to submit vaccine records, really was a benefit for us all!

Impact Data of 2019 You Belong Here CSE Recruitment Events



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Impact Data for 2019:

The impact data expressed here shows the number of students in two different ways.

The graph on the left shows the number of students broken down by groups.

URM is defined as Underrepresented Minorities.

1st Gen is defined as first generation college students

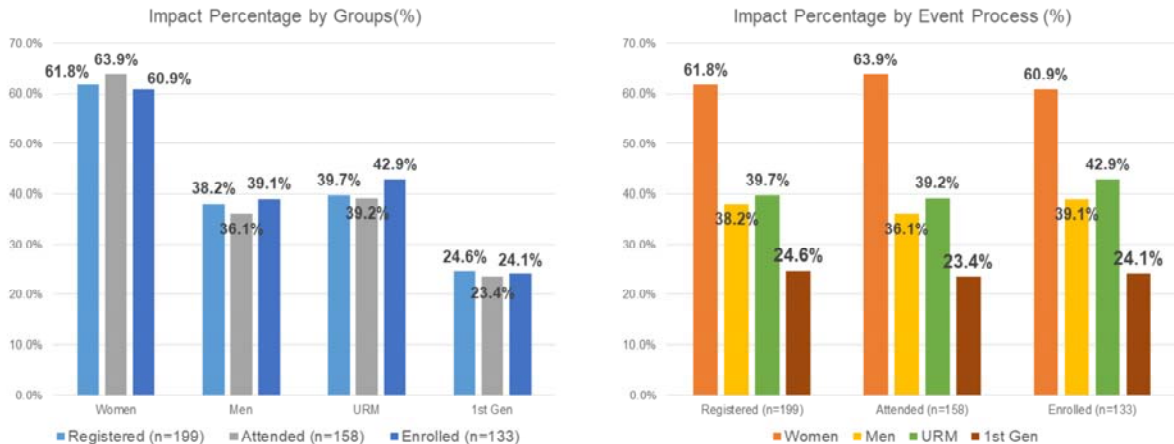
The graph on the right shows the number of students broken down by the event process of registered, attended and enrolled.

Registered is defined as being registered for any of the You Belong Here Recruiting Events

Attended is defined as having attended any of the You Belong Here Recruiting Events

Enrolled is defined as attending the Cockrell School of Engineering as a first year student in Fall of 2019

Impact Data of 2019 You Belong Here CSE Recruitment Events



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Impact Data for 2019:

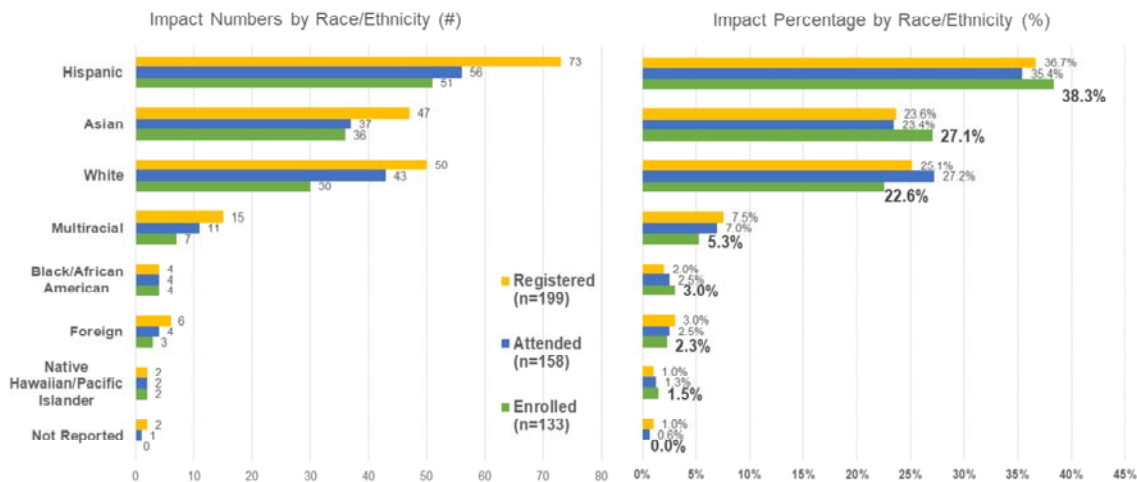
The impact data expressed here shows the percentage of students in two different ways.

The graph on the left shows the percentage of students broken down by groups.

The graph on the right shows the percentage of students broken down by the event process of registered, attended and enrolled.

The percentages are based on the total n recorded for each separate part of the event process: registered, attended and enrolled.

Impact Data of 2019 You Belong Here CSE Recruitment Events



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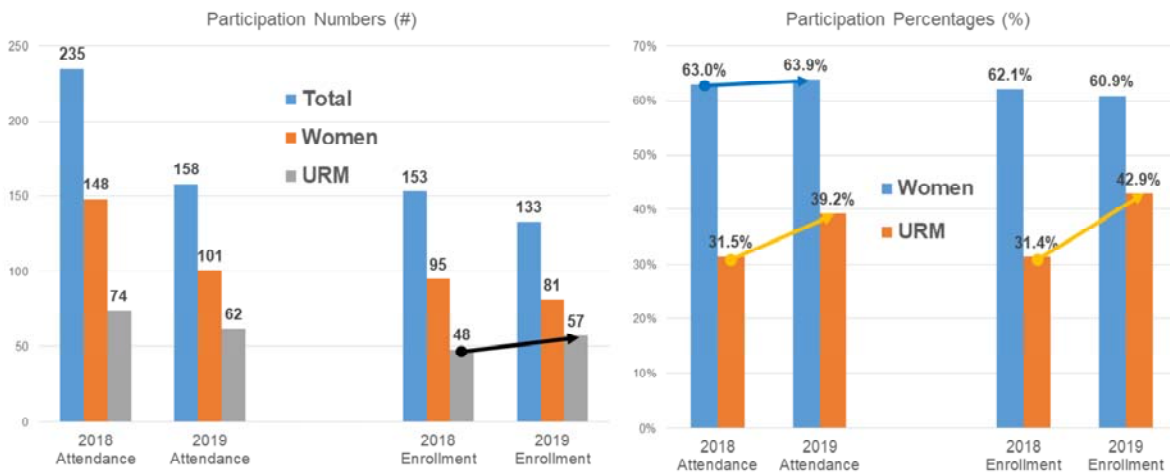
Impact Data for 2019:

The impact data expressed here is a broken down by the Race and/or Ethnicity of the student participants.

The graph on the left shows number of students

The graph on the right shows percentage of students

Comparison Data of 2018 vs. 2019 You Belong Here CSE Recruitment Events



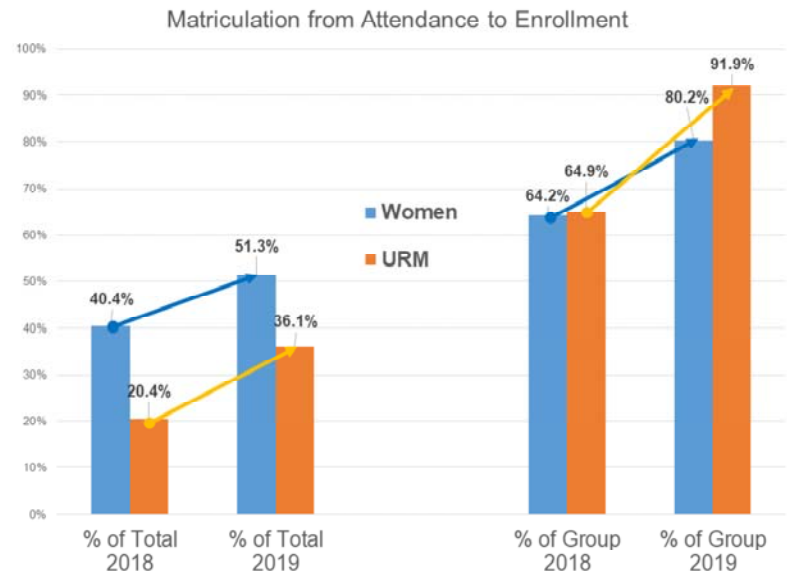
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Notable Data points when comparing 2018 vs. 2019

1. In the Participation Numbers – Increase in URM enrollment numbers by 9
2. In the Participation Percentages:
 1. Increase in Women attendance by 0.9%
 2. Increase in URM attendance by 7.7%
 3. Increase in URM enrollment by 11.5%

Comparison Data of 2018 vs. 2019 You Belong Here CSE Recruitment Events

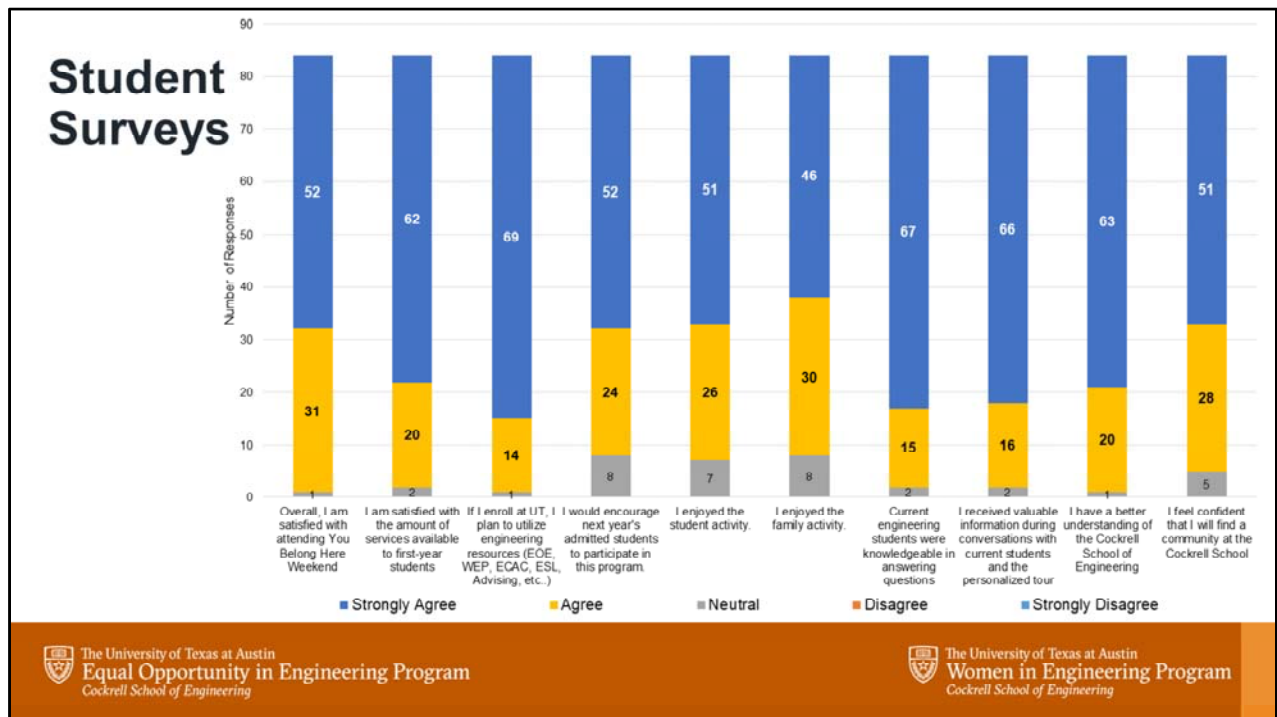


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Notable Data points when comparing 2018 vs. 2019

1. As a percentage of the total participants:
 1. Increase of Women matriculation by 10.9%
 2. Increase of URM matriculation by 15.7%
2. As a percentage of the group (Women or URM)
 1. Increase of Women matriculation by 16%
 2. Increase of URM matriculation by 27%



We surveyed students & families at the end of the event on a 1-5 scale with 1 being “Strongly Disagree” & 5 being “Strongly Agree”. It being the first time that we held this event and in the format, we really wanted to get feedback on what we were doing well and what could be developed further. For the most part, overall across all 3 events we received fairly high Strongly Agree & Agree on most of the questions asked.

Students were asked the following questions on the closing survey:

Overall, I am satisfied with attending You Belong Here Weekend – 4.61 AVG

I am satisfied with the amount of services available to first-year students – 4.71 AVG

If I enroll at UT, I plan to utilize engineering resources (EOE, WEP, ECAC, ESL, Advising, etc..) – 4.81 AVG

I would encourage next year's admitted students to participate in this program. – 4.52 AVG

I enjoyed the student activity – 4.52 AVG

I enjoyed the family activity – 4.45 AVG

Current engineering students were knowledgeable in answering questions – 4.77 AVG

I received valuable information during conversations with current students and the personalized tour – 4.76 AVG

I have a better understanding of the Cockrell School of Engineering – 4.74 AVG

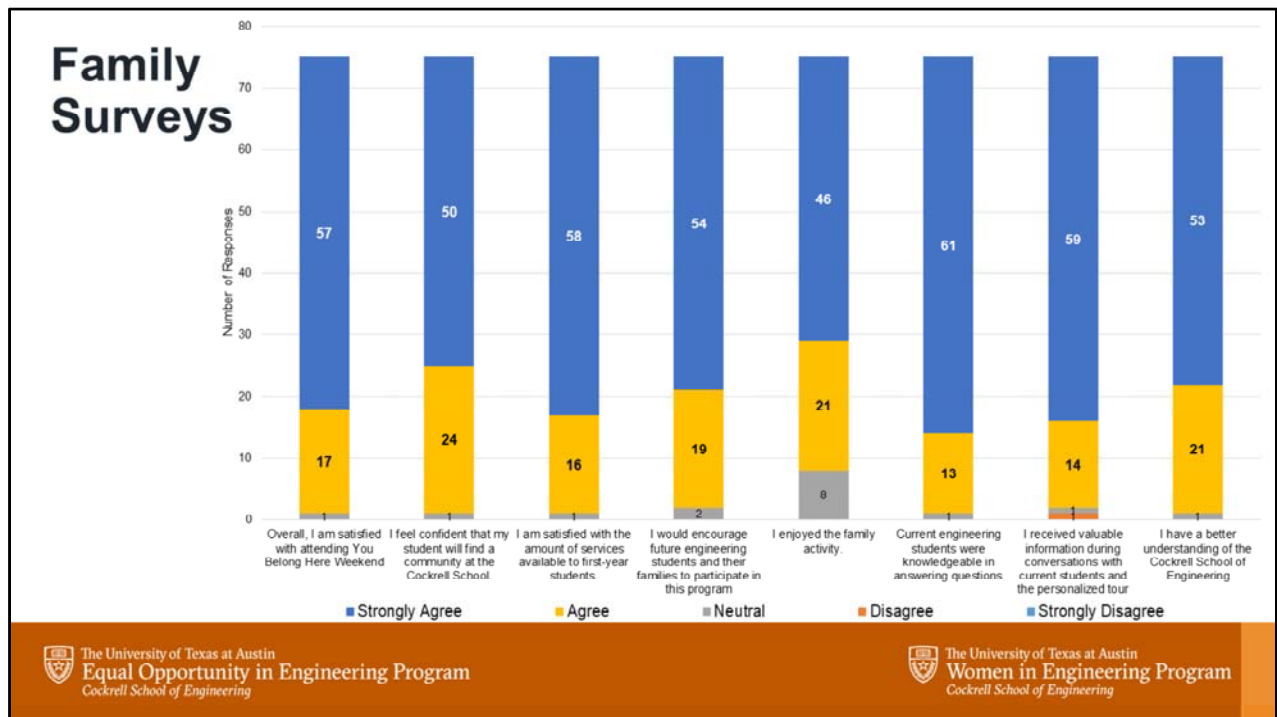
I feel confident that I will find a community at the Cockrell School – 4.55 AVG

Average based on the 5 point scale. We are particularly happy about the high average that students indicated they would utilize resources and have a better understanding of CSE. We can infer (& hope) that it meant we were able to clearly communicate the various student support services, organization of CSE and how to access all of the resources. As expected, current engineering students also rated highly among the admitted student which we were pleased to see but also not surprised – the current students were great & truly enhance the visiting experience!

The lowest average rating was the family activity.

We also asked if they were planning on enrolling at UT Austin – CSE: Yes 74% No 0, Unsure 26%

So most students who came to the event for the most part, had indicated that they would be attending – not surprisingly, the family surveys don't align!



We surveyed students & families at the end of the event on a 1-5 scale with 1 being “Strongly Disagree” & 5 being “Strongly Agree”. We asked only slightly different questions for the families. For the most part, overall across all 3 events we received fairly high Strongly Agree & Agree on most of the questions asked.

Families were asked the following questions on the closing survey:

Overall, I am satisfied with attending You Belong Here Weekend – 4.75 AVG

I feel confident that my student will find a community at the Cockrell School – 4.65 AVG

I am satisfied with the amount of services available to first-year students – 4.76 AVG

I would encourage future engineering students and their families to participate in this program – 4.69 AVG

I enjoyed the family activity – 4.51 AVG

Current engineering students were knowledgeable in answering questions – 4.80 AVG

I received valuable information during conversations with current students and the personalized tour – 4.75 AVG

I have a better understanding of the Cockrell School of Engineering – 4.69 AVG

Average based on the 5 point scale. As with the student surveys, families shared that the current engineering students were knowledgeable in answering questions. Families also indicated fairly high that they were satisfied with the event, services available for 1st years

and receiving valuable information during the conversations & tour.

Is your student planning to enroll in the Cockrell School of Engineering at UT Austin? Yes:
65% No: 1% Still deciding: 33%

Most Common Student Feedback

- More time reserved with current students for Q & A
- A more in-depth tour of engineering buildings and their respective labs
- More information regarding student organizations both within & outside of engineering
- Information about programs that provide research experiences for 1st year students with respect to one's major and outside of a student's major
- Time allocated to discuss the process of applying for financial assistance and scholarships to support college



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In the evaluation survey, we had left a section for students (and parents) to fill in additional comments to provide us with some feedback and see what gaps we might have in the programming. Based on this feedback, there might be a few things that we will try to tweak and/or be more intentional about but there are others that we just aren't able to accommodate in the limited amount of time. That just means that we'll have to think about creative solutions and/or other ways to be able to share that information with them. In general, the feedback is typical of what we anticipated.

More time reserved with current students for Q & A – ensuring that we are more intentional about stating where these opportunities are throughout the day

A more in-depth tour of engineering buildings and their respective labs – we will be working with our engineering ambassadors on how to make the most of the tour time, CSE is working on self-guided tour that could be included and more departments actively participating could potentially allow the opportunity to open up labs (though most don't really have too much exciting happening in them on the weekend), we are also considering more prominently featuring the makespace/studios

More information regarding student organizations both within & outside of engineering – covered and once on campus they have multiple opportunities to interact with the various student orgs but we will likely create a paper handout with some of orgs and where to learn more for them to research on their own

Information about programs that provide research experiences for 1st year students with respect to one's major and outside of a student's major – always a big topic students want to hear about that is covered but figuring out how to better convey it

Time allocated to discuss the process of applying for financial assistance and scholarships to support college – every time. We've tried to get financial aid to attend any of our recruitment events but aren't engaged at that level. We'll be doing a better job of showcasing the Scholarship Coordinator and Assistant Director of Admissions so that they can ask them questions as well as a FAQ sheet as part of their folder of handouts. Our Assistant Director of Admissions goes over the process and steps but likely not to the depth students or parents are wanting to hear so we are still working on finding a solution on how to address this especially as we consider our current economic climate....there are some new initiatives being implemented so we will take care to fully explain & share with the group. This is also something that is echoed in the family feedback.

Most Common Family Feedback

- Have more of a discussion about scholarship availability and financial assistance information, along with any other pending costs
- Equal amount of student representation – lacked gender representation (in particular at one event)
- More inclusive campus tour of both engineering buildings and UT as a whole



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These three themes were the most common in the family feedback.

Have more of a discussion about scholarship availability and financial assistance information, along with any other pending costs – As covered in the previous slide, we are working to be more intentional in this space and area since it's such a growing concern.

Equal amount of student representation – We did struggle to get our men students to participate in the events, especially in the first one. More became involved after but still not to the degree that our women were. We believe that part of the reason lies with the gender stereotyping – “women are naturally better with the people skills” & “hostessing skills”, “girls like those outreach kinds of stuff”, “girls do volunteer work”, things along those lines. In general within engineering even in student orgs, we see our women being relegated to the “people” or “marketing” or “communications” pieces of events. It could also have been that in the beginning they thought it was only coming from Women in Engineering Program since Amy was tasked with the engineering ambassadors recruitment. Another, is that our men of color especially populations are a smaller pool to pull from. We are going to take a look at our messaging to see how we can reframe to get our men students engaged & be really intentional in our recruitment effort for volunteers.

More inclusive campus tour of both engineering buildings and UT as a whole – Again, we

will work on creating a self-guided tour and include the UT Campus self-guided tour and map for guests to explore on their own.

Lessons Learned

- Invite & Event Communications
- Department Sessions
- Follow-up with student ambassadors
- Optional other languages invites & surveys
- More staff support



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Notable difference between the engineering college's previous recruiting efforts and the "You Belong Here" recruitment events are as follows:

"You Belong Here" recruitment events planned and coordinated by the diversity programs

"You Belong Here" recruitment events focused only on inviting underrepresented students

Diversity Program staff and students had more involvement with students during the "You Belong Here" recruitment events

Programming and activities were more appropriate for the target audience during the "You Belong Here" recruitment events

"You Belong Here" recruitment events were funded by the college and not the diversity programs' budgets

Lessons Learned:

As with many new initiatives, there is a learning curve as processes and programming are refined. The biggest challenge we found with the events was communication. Admitted engineering students receive a lot of communication and invites to different on-campus events. There was confusion on which events offered what information, conflicting events and then the number of times admitted students are even able to come to campus. The other issue on communication was ensuring that the correct populations were invited to the events. We will be taking a more active role in the invite pool and messaging being sent to try to avoid some of those issues. The engineering college is also creating a centralized

webpage with a list of events that can be filtered so that students can see exactly what events are available. The idea is to look like a more cohesive and collaborative college coordinating events and communication. We'll also be tailoring specific event invites to the different populations and combining the events invite. For example, our Mechanical Engineering Women are invited to not only You Belong Here events, but WEP Connects & Elevate ME (a dinner in the Houston, Austin, Dallas area to learn more about ME in particular). All three of these events are collaborative between the ME department and diversity programs. Those students would receive one email highlighting those events in particular so they can make an informed choice on what to attend as well as what kind of information they can expect to learn at each. It ties back to looking like a cohesive and collaborative planning while also not making it seem like the student NEEDS to attend all of them where they might hear much of the same information. We'll also be re-evaluating the wording that is used for the invites to ensure that it's being inclusive but also clear about why they are being invited to these particular events.

We will also be requesting more support and participation from other academic departments and units within the engineering college so that student can have a more comprehensive, consistent and informative visit. We anticipate that this will especially make a difference for students who aren't able to travel to campus more than once. It will also ensure that the quality of the department sessions are more consistent across all disciplines while also showing the students that there is department buy-in in bringing them to campus and having them be part of the community.

Another area we will be making sure to survey this year will be with our student ambassadors. We want to follow-up with them on not only "Thank You for volunteering" but to also see what they thought of the experience coming at it from a student perspective....what else would they have liked to see, or what did they find to be pain points, etc. Or what antidotal feedback they might have received from guests. We are hopeful to have many of them return to volunteer this year. (Which we'll know by the time the conference has happened.)

We would like to provide some invites & surveys in other languages – in particular Spanish since that is a significant Texas population. Family can indicate if they would like to receive communication in Spanish which we can then ensure that that is the language the communications are sent in (both print & email). Also exploring the possibility of other frequently/commonly used languages option – allowing students and/or families to indicate if they have a preference. As for the surveys, just having them be available at the event for guests to self select.

We will also have more staff support at these events – the student ambassadors are great but we do feel like having a few more staff from other departments there will help balance out the workload on/for the diversity programs staff and the students. If we can have some more consistency in staff to help troubleshoot while we are other wised engaged, would be very helpful!

Future & Questions

- EOE and WEP confirmed as coordinators of 2020 You Belong Here CSE Recruiting Events
 - 3 events in March
 - Target: Underrepresented Students
- Implement lessons learned
- Continued tracking of participants throughout engineering participation in EOE & WEP
- Questions?



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Future “You Belong Here” recruitment events:

The engineering college plans to keep the “You Belong Here” recruitment events for the upcoming recruitment cycle for 2020 – 2021 based on the success from this past year. We’ll be implementing the lessons learned with focus in communication and ensuring the admitted students can navigate the myriad of events they are invited to attend. As of writing this abstract, dates and initial planning for these events are underway for Spring 2020. Continued tracking of participants (both volunteers & admitted students) on their level of engagement within the CSE community.

Any Questions?



Thank you for your attention.
Have a great day!