Walmart Minority Student Success Initiative Touts Accomplishments

Washington, D.C. — Thirty Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs), including Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), and Tribal Colleges and Universities, are putting forth a roadmap of promising practices to foster academic success among first-generation college students, or those students whose parents did not attend a postsecondary institution.

In a new report released from the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP), these MSIs are presenting faculty-driven, classroom-based strategies — all proven to bring about significant and successful results when it comes to identifying and addressing challenges unique to first-generation students — based on their experiences as participants in the Walmart Minority Student Success Initiative, a $4.2 million program launched in 2009 and that officially ending last week.

The brief, Supporting First-Generation College Students Through Classroom-Based Practices, captures how the 30 MSIs leveraged support from the Walmart Minority Student Success Initiative to develop a multipronged approach premised on the notion that what takes place in the classroom is central to the college experience.

Specifically, the report shares exactly how the institutions integrated faculty members as principal agents to create a more engaging learning environment — ultimately, promoting stronger performance academically and socially among first-generation students.

In addition, the brief provides insights from the Walmart Minority Student Success Initiative participants on how to redesign instructional styles and course content, use data to develop and sustain programs, and secure community partnerships and support.

“Conversations around supporting first-generation students need to begin with the classroom, which is a perspective often overlooked,” said IHEP President Michelle Asha Cooper, Ph.D. “Through the Walmart Minority Student Success Initiative, we learned that faculty contributions and support are paramount to successful academically driven initiatives that target first-generation student achievement. These individuals are students’ primary point of contact in the classroom, and they can provide a powerful connection between in-class and out-of-class learning experiences for students new to college life.”

For more information about the Walmart Minority Student Success Initiative, visit IHEP’s website at www.ihep.com.