BRIGHT PROSPECT
ETHNOGRAPHIC REPORT

EFFECTIVE PRINCIPLES OF PRACTICE
FOR COLLEGE ACCESS AND PERSISTENCE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report describes an ethnographic evaluation of Bright Prospect, a service organization located in Pomona, California. Bright Prospect’s charge is to empower low-income students to graduate high school and gain admission to, persist in, and graduate from four-year colleges and universities. In 2011, Bright Prospect approached Claremont Graduate University to conduct a ten-year evaluation of its program outcomes. Given significant and robust evaluation findings in this first phase, validating Bright Prospect’s success across all of its expected outcomes, an ethnographic evaluation was designed to explore the program practices that are associated with these outcomes. This second evaluation was conducted by the Claremont Evaluation Center at Claremont Graduate University.

While the results of the first evaluation provided the empirical validation of Bright Prospect’s effectiveness and accomplishment of its mission, this second study was designed to gain understanding of the principles that underlie the processes, practices, and culture of Bright Prospect. Objectives for this exploratory and descriptive ethnographic study included:

1. To explore, describe, and document how Bright Prospect creates its unique culture – i.e., how adults and students enact the beliefs, values, attitudes, and norms that create culture
2. To explore, describe, and document Bright Prospect program staff characteristics and training
3. To refine the program logic model (Phase 1), as needed, according to new findings.

The specific questions of the study were derived from the findings of the outcome evaluation and asked how those outcomes are achieved. Questions included:

- How does Bright Prospect achieve cultural norms among the adults and students in the program?
• How do Bright Prospect team members convey the concepts and beliefs that they espouse to students? To parents? To new staff and intern recruits?
• How do Bright Prospect team members use verbal and non-verbal cues?
• How do Bright Prospect team members employ visual and graphic organizers and symbols?
• How do Bright Prospect team members model desired practices, beliefs, and expectations?
• How do Bright Prospect team members inspire students to hold high expectations for themselves and for one another and to set goals accordingly?
• How do Bright Prospect team members empower students to believe in themselves and take initiative to achieve their goals?
• How do Bright Prospect team members develop relationships of trust that equal or surpass the degree of trust students have with their closest family members?

Key Findings by Objective

Objective 1: To explore, describe, and document how Bright Prospect creates its unique culture – i.e., how adults and students enact the beliefs, values, attitudes, and norms that create culture

Six Purposeful Practices emerged in how Bright Prospect achieves its culture and outcomes:

1. Transformative Education
2. Goal-Setting and Self-Evaluation
3. Commitment with Consistent Follow-Through
4. Loving Support
5. Requiring Accountability of Self and Others
6. Transfer of Beliefs and Expectations

These Six Purposeful Practices stem from the program’s purposeful design. They are founded in literature on critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970), loose and tight
coupling (Weick, 1976), and academic culture model (Charlton, 2009). The Five Purposeful Design elements identified in the study include:

1. Research-Based Design
2. Continuous Improvement
3. Organizational Structure
4. Unique Culture
5. Purposeful Use of Human Resources

**Objective 2:** To explore, describe, and document Bright Prospect program staff characteristics and training

Interviews and observations demonstrated that all Bright Prospect staff and collaborators are very *clear and unified in their understanding and adherence to the organization’s Purposeful Design*. Though they may not have readily categorized the principles driving the design of the organization into the five elements we’ve identified, the design elements named here were tacitly understood and deeply assimilated by all staff and students.

Charlton’s academic culture model (depicted in Figure 3 of Findings) assisted with understanding program staff characteristics. All Bright Prospect practitioners demonstrate Charlton’s *Strong Visionary Leadership* and not only espouse but also *Walk the Walk* in modeling *Positive Core Values* through the Purpose Practice of *Commitment with Consistent Follow Through (Purposeful Practice #3)*.

The study highlighted the most significant characteristic of program staff as genuine care for students’ wellbeing. The nature of the caring culture at Bright Prospect was akin to the *loving and supportive nature of a family* culture and was, therefore, coined in this study as the purposeful practice of *Loving Support (Purposeful Practice #4)*.

As with the program structure, the recruitment, training, and socialization of staff are well thought out, systematic processes that maximize program effectiveness and optimize use of program funds, keeping per-student costs at a minimum.
Objective 3: To refine the program logic model (from Phase 1), as needed, according to new findings

Study findings produced a program theory logic model that includes clear inputs, throughputs (program activity level variables – activities and practices), and outcomes (Figure 4 below). Inputs include: Visionary Leaders, Purposeful Design, Staff, and Students. Throughputs include Purposeful Practices and Program Activities. Program Outcomes that result from these throughputs were addressed in the Phase 1 evaluation and not elaborated upon in this study. The findings of this report elaborate on the Purposeful Design and expand upon the six Purposeful Practices that support and stem from the Purposeful Design. The six Purposeful Practices are principles of practice by which Bright Prospect is able to achieve high success with its students.

As noted in the logic model, the study found that Bright Prospect’s activities and practices stem primarily from its Purposeful Design, which was developed by visionary leaders based on research- and evidence-based practice and is supported
by selectively recruited and well-trained staff. The program is open to all sophomore and older students, and students have to maintain a minimum level of academic performance to remain in the program.

While these inputs all feed into the program activities, it is the Purposeful Practices that give life to the program activities and distinguish Bright Prospect from other college access programs. In fact, it may be said that many of the program activities are common across college access programs; however, they are certainly not commonly practiced based on Bright Prospect’s principles of practice.

The outcomes are psychosocial empowerment skills that lead to both developmental and academic performance. The development outcomes in turn also strengthen academic achievement.

**Findings by Question**

The eight research questions listed above drove the study and resulted in the findings, which were categorized into the Purposeful Design and Purposeful Practices. These design elements and practices are discussed at length in the Findings section of the report. A summary table is provided below to demonstrate the relationship of the questions with the practices that resulted. The specific ways in which each practice is used are elaborated at length in the Findings section.
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<th>Purposeful Design Elements</th>
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<td>1. How does Bright Prospect achieve cultural norms among the adults and students in the program?</td>
<td>All Elements 1-5 were important</td>
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<td>2. How do Bright Prospect team members convey the concepts and beliefs that they espouse to students? To parents? To new staff and intern recruits?</td>
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<td>4. How do Bright Prospect team members employ visual and graphic organizers and symbols?</td>
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<td>2- Continuous Improvement</td>
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<td>5- Requiring Accountability of Self and Others</td>
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<td>5. How do Bright Prospect team members model desired practices, beliefs, and expectations?</td>
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<td>5- Purposeful Use of Human Resources</td>
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<td>6. How do Bright Prospect team members convey the concepts and beliefs that they espouse to students? To parents? To new staff and intern recruits?</td>
<td>1- Research-Based</td>
<td>All Practices 1-6</td>
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These practices are embodied in the Program Activities, as well as in the culture of the organization. The culture of Bright Prospect is unique and is instilled in students, deliberately and systematically, from day one of the program.

**Conclusions**

The Purposeful Design Elements and Purposeful Practices identified in the evaluation findings drive the critical process of transformation that is at the heart of the work of Bright Prospect. In order for transformation to take place, barriers to desired outcomes must first be broken down to create a vision of reality in which
those outcomes are in fact possible. Through its purposeful practice of *Transformational Education*, Bright Prospect lucidly and effectively removes images, perceptions, and beliefs that pose mental barriers to college and career success and replaces these limiting beliefs with positive and achievable messages and beliefs, for parents and students alike. Through the remaining purposeful practices, it builds on this open and fertile foundation the interpersonal and intrapersonal skills necessary for psychological empowerment and academic success (see logic model):

- **Goal Setting and Evaluation**学生 develop the skills of self-regulation and self-reflection. The staff encourages students to set high goals and supports them in meeting those goals. Positive results reinforce positive beliefs and high expectations.
- **Commitment and Consistent Follow-Through**, the program models responsibility and accountability and demonstrates to students their worth and value. Staff’s commitment to students and their goals also models for students a commitment to themselves and their own goals.
- **Loving Support**, students learn to love themselves and others. “They taught me how to love,” a student noted in her graduation speech, and others echoed the sentiment repeatedly. Loving Support, as demonstrated by staff and mirrored in crews, models for students how to build constructive, supportive, and positive interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships.
- **ACCOUNTABILITY OF SELF AND OTHERS** further reinforces self-regulation, responsibility, and accountability. Further, when staff members hold students accountable to high standards, they provide evidence to students of their high expectations for them. In staff-student relationships, holding students to high standards is constructive when it is in combination with Loving Support and Commitment and Consistent Follow-Through, which provide students with the certitude that if they fail a task, they can pick themselves up, dust themselves off, and try again. Thus, students build resilience and grit, qualities required for academic and life success. Adult modeling, in turn, provides a framework and crews provide a venue for implementation of accountability in student-student relationships.
Through *Transfer of Beliefs and Expectations*, students then learn to set and maintain high expectations of themselves and to broaden their horizons for academic and career success and for contributions to their communities and to society at large.

All of the purposeful practices, working collectively and in coherence, create a foundational culture of psychological empowerment that leads to progressive development of youth and their continued and persistent advancement into college, through college, and beyond.
Bright Prospect is a 501(c)(3) organization based in Pomona, California, on the eastern border of Los Angeles County. Its mission is to empower low-income students to graduate high school and gain admission to, persist in, and graduate from four-year colleges and universities, by providing a comprehensive skill-building, counseling, and support system throughout their high school and college years. Bright Prospect’s mission is not unique, but its results are exemplary. The program has grown from serving 12 students in 2002 to 1,900 students today at nine high schools and over 60 colleges and universities. The program accepts any student at those high schools who wants to join, with most students joining at the end of 9th grade, and others joining in 10th and the first semester of 11th grades. Bright Prospect reports that to date, their students graduate from college at a 91% rate.

In 2011-12, Claremont Graduate University’s Institute at Indian Hill conducted an external evaluation of Bright Prospect outcomes that established Bright Prospect’s effectiveness both in meeting its quantitative goals of college persistence and college graduation rates, and also in achieving success with qualitative indicators of positive youth development.

The evaluation found that all (100%) program participants graduate high school and all (100%) matriculate to college. A matched-comparison quasi-experimental
study demonstrated that program participants achieve higher state assessment scores and completion rates for A-G courses (the courses required for admission to the University of California and California State University). Participants are more likely to attend a four-year institution (80% versus 49%), to matriculate to college (100% versus 82%), and to persist\(^1\) in college (100% versus 84%) than matched peers from their high schools\(^2\). What’s more, students emerge from the program with greater self-confidence and trust, stronger and more positive relationships with peers and adults, higher self-expectations, and greater initiative and self-efficacy in accomplishing their goals. This validation of Bright Prospect’s effectiveness begged further inquiry into Bright Prospect’s approaches, processes, and methods and, effectually, led to the current ethnographic study of Bright Prospect.

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\(^1\) Persistence assessed two years into college.

\(^2\) Findings represent data from 10-year outcome evaluation (Zargarpour, 2012).
BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

This section sets forth a brief description of the Bright Prospect program and how both the program and the evaluation of the program have evolved over time, leading to the purpose of the current study.

Bright Prospect Programs

Bright Prospect began its original program, the Scholar Support program, in 2002 with 12 selected outstanding students from the 2003 high school graduating class. The program provided, in the twelfth grade, one year of college counseling and mentoring toward the aim of attending the nation's highly selective universities and private colleges, and continued mentoring throughout the students’ college years.

In 2006 Bright Prospect launched an additional program, the Academy of Young Scholars (the Academy program), which recruited students at the end of 9th grade, and accepted any student interested in going to college. Students were also permitted to join at any time in their high school career. The program began with 29 students at one school and expanded to a population of over 500 students in the 2011-2012 year from seven area high schools. Central to the structure and processes of the Academy program was the development of the Bright Prospect Crews® structure—the grouping of high school students into three- to six-student peer-support teams called crews led by student crew leaders trained by Bright Prospect. Crew members develop a deep commitment to help and support one another to achieve their goal of graduating from a four-year college. Much of the Bright Prospect programming, which is designed to build strong life skills, attitudes, and values essential to success in college and beyond, is organized and in some cases delivered by the students themselves within these crews. In their crews, students carry out activities and build relationships that support the deep commitment to attend and graduate from college.
The concept of organizing high school students into peer-support crews was embedded in an embryonic way at the inception of the Academy program; the high school Crews® curriculum has become much more thoroughly developed over the years. A college Crews® program was first implemented starting with the high school graduates of 2010, and implemented in a more structured and developed way with the classes of 2011 and beyond. Beginning in 2011, high school graduates of the original Scholar Support program (half of whom were also served by the Academy program) were also organized into crews at the college level, and Crews® activities have continued to be strengthened as a vital aspect of the program since.

In 2012, the Scholar Support Program and the Academy of Young Scholars were merged into a single Bright Prospect program, which now recruits students beginning in 9th grade at nine high schools, seven of which are in Pomona. The program now serves over 1,900 high school and college students.

**Bright Prospect Evaluation**

Bright Prospect’s growth and perceived success beckoned the need for formal external evaluation to validate its outcomes and assist with documenting its practices, in anticipation of disseminating and scaling its methods and outcomes. Additionally, while the program was well designed and managed internally, an external evaluation partnership would afford the development of a formal program theory that could be tested by and derived from research findings. The following section sets forth the evolution of Bright Prospect’s evaluation efforts in partnership with Claremont Graduate University.

**Evaluation Purpose**

Bright Prospect collaborators – staff members, students, parents, partner school stakeholders, and funders – believe that the culture and processes at Bright Prospect are uncommon in the sphere of college access programs and that their
culture and processes directly contribute to Bright Prospect’s unusually high rate of success in students’ high school graduation, college matriculation, college persistence, and college graduation rates. They also believe that their Crews® structure contributes strongly both to the success rate of the program and to Bright Prospect’s ability to achieve that success at a low annual cost per student. As a result, two studies were commissioned, sequentially, to (1) validate the effectiveness of the program with regard to its intended outcomes and (2) study the processes, practices, and resulting culture that led to those outcomes, respectively.

In 2011, Bright Prospect approached Claremont Graduate University to conduct a ten-year evaluation of its program outcomes. The findings were intended to be used to determine the potential for scale-up and to provide data for dissemination of best practices through presentations, publications, and potential training opportunities. The study was conducted during the 2011-12 academic year. It validated empirically the robust outcomes that Bright Prospect staff and collaborators believed existed all along. The evaluation findings helped support increased requests for grants and donations to expand Bright Prospect’s revenue stream and continue to scale up the numbers of students it serves.

The compelling results of the outcome evaluation study lent support to the Bright Prospect vision of disseminating its practices to other like-minded organizations across the country. However, the board and staff believed strongly that the culture of Bright Prospect is at least as integral to its success as its activities and practices; this belief was also indicated by the findings of the outcome evaluation. Thus, in further preparation for the dissemination of the program, Bright Prospect commissioned Claremont Graduate University to conduct a subsequent qualitative study over the course of the 2013-14 academic year, utilizing an exploratory and descriptive ethnographic design to investigate, identify, and document the principles of practice that underlie the processes, practices, and culture of Bright Prospect and lead to its extraordinary outcomes. This second study was intended to delve more deeply, more inquisitively, and more thoughtfully into Bright Prospect’s practices and uncover the assumptions and principles that lie behind Bright Prospect program activities and that are less readily visible, often unstated, and, while tacitly understood,
at times outwardly unrecognized by even the practitioners themselves. This study was intended to provide a foundation for the design of thoughtful and effective training and coaching materials for the replication of Bright Prospect's practices among sister organizations and for dissemination of those findings among practitioners, funders, and researchers alike.

**Evaluation Team**

*Dr. Nazanin Zargarpour*, Senior Research Fellow at the Claremont Evaluation Center (CEC), applied research center of the School of Social Science, Policy and Evaluation at Claremont Graduate University (CGU), led both the outcome evaluation and the current ethnographic studies of Bright Prospect. *Dr. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi*, one of the founding fathers of the field of positive psychology, provided advisory feedback to the evaluation team during the ethnographic study.

Dr. Zargarpour has considerable expertise in quantitative and qualitative research and evaluation methods and has over 20 years of experience working with underrepresented groups, particularly in the education sector. Dr. Zargarpour was nominated to lead this evaluation as principal investigator due to her extensive experience in educational policy, evaluation, and reform; application of mixed research methodologies in real world educational settings; qualitative and quantitative instrumentation, data collection, and data analyses; her cultural competence in matters related to underrepresented populations; and her client-centered and developmental approach to evaluation. The evaluation team included a cadre of graduate students who supported data collection, analyses, and report writing. Dr. Zargarpour also brought to the study the vast resources and faculty expertise of the School of Social science, Policy and Evaluation's Division of Behavioral and Organizational Sciences (DBOS) and the School of Educational Studies (SES).

The Claremont Evaluation Center (CEC) is an applied research and evaluation center at Claremont Graduate University (CGU). The CEC’s mission is to provide research and evaluation services that improve the effectiveness of social projects,
programs, policies, and organizations. Using state of the art scientific knowledge and methodologies, CEC has provided services to over 160 organizations over the past 15 years. The CEC is recognized globally for its long history and vast experience in the use of applied research and evaluation methods.

**Phase 1 Evaluation – Quasi-Experimental Study**

**Evaluation Questions.** In the 2011-2012 academic year, the evaluation led by Dr. Zargarpour, at that time affiliated with the Institute at Indian Hill, applied research center of the School of Educational Studies at CGU, conducted a robust outcome evaluation study of the first 10 years of the Bright Prospect Program. Using a quasi-experimental, comparison group design, the evaluation provided the Bright Prospect leadership team, Board, funders, and community with robust data and findings about the degree of effectiveness of the program in (a) developing psychological and social capital in their students and (b) promoting student academic success in high school, enrollment in college, and persistence in and graduation from college. The types of colleges attended were also tracked to control for the level of rigor pursued and achieved by students in post-secondary education. Additionally, the evaluation identified program elements that were perceived to contribute most to these outcomes.

Three over-arching questions formed the basis of the outcome evaluation research in Phase 1:

1. What was the effect of Bright Prospect program participation on students’ high school performance, college attendance, college persistence and college graduation?

2. What were students’ perceptions of the effect of Bright Prospect program participation on their self-efficacy with regard to intended social, psychological, and academic program indicators?

3. What aspects of Bright Prospect programming did students identify as most closely associated with their academic and personal growth and achievement?
**Evaluation Results – Validation of Outcomes.** The study validated the effectiveness of the Bright Prospect program by means of a longitudinal matched comparison group study (Question 1) and qualitative methods consisting of surveys and focus groups (Questions 2 and 3). It is important to note that the population of students who participate in the Bright Prospect program is among the nation’s lowest income populations, with over 90% economically disadvantaged (qualify for the federal Free or Reduced School Lunch Program). In 2011-12, when the evaluation study was conducted, 65% of Bright Prospect high school students were female and 35% were male. Seventy-six percent (84.7%) were Hispanic/Latino, 7.4% Asian, 4.8% African American and 1.1% White, with American Indian (0.1%), Filipino/Pacific Islander (1.3%), Multiple Race (1.3%), and Unspecified (0.3%) students completing the total number. The population demographics had remained relatively constant throughout the duration of Bright Prospect’s tenure at the District. The college/alumni group was distributed similarly, with 68% female and 32% male participants. Of those participants, 77.6% were identified as Hispanic/Latino, 13.4% as Asian, 3.1% as African American, 2.1% as White, 0.2% as American Indian, 0.8% as Filipino/Pacific Islander and 2.6% with Multiple races.

The outcome evaluation study documented the effectiveness of the program in yielding significant desired outcomes such as high school graduation, college acceptance, and college persistence for traditionally at-risk and underserved populations. One remarkable finding of the study was that 100% of Bright Prospect students graduate from high school and matriculate to college, as compared with only 82% of high–performing students in the matched comparison group. In addition, the data showed that 80% of Bright Prospect students attend a 4-year institution compared to only 49% in the comparison group.

On another important measure, college persistence for Bright Prospect students was also higher than their matched counterparts; at the second-year mark, 100% of Bright Prospect students persisted in college, as compared with only 84% of the matched non-participant group. Another noteworthy finding was that Bright Prospect students attending private colleges were persisting at much higher rates (100%) than students in the comparison group (75%). There was also preliminary
evidence indicating that Bright Prospect students are completing college at a higher rate (preliminarily 91%) than the matched comparison group (preliminarily 21%).

With respect to psycho-social factors, students reported increased efficacy in building and maintaining meaningful, trusting, supportive, and loving relationships. These relationships spanned multiple layers, including intrapersonal skills (relationship with self) and interpersonal skills with adults, peers, family, and community. Student relationships were marked by displays of higher expectations for themselves and their peers. Students also reported greater self-confidence, increased leadership skills, proactive initiative in setting and pursuing goals, and greater facility with knowledge and skills needed to access the resources and information required to achieve their goals. Students’ anecdotes in focus groups, particularly with alumni of the program (then in college), also revealed great resilience and grit in the face of the challenges that life, particularly in college, presented.

The evaluation of Bright Prospect outcomes established that Bright Prospect leaders – both staff and students – are empowered to develop and shape a student culture that is strong enough and transformative enough that it overrides norms existing in both the school and family environments in which participating students reside.

**Evaluation Results – Bright Prospect Culture.** With respect to the third evaluation question, the outcome evaluation identified the program elements that students and staff perceive as pivotal for achieving Bright Prospect’s quantitative and qualitative outcomes – academic achievement and positive youth development, respectively. Focus group interviews and surveys with Bright Prospect students, staff, leadership team, Board member representative, and funding agency representative all pointed to a well-developed and robust climate of trust and high expectations as significant elements of the culture that Bright Prospect creates and which generates the remarkable outcomes of the program. The importance of trusting and supportive relationships was emphasized and their linkage to agency was supported by both qualitative and quantitative data. On a survey, students rated staff dedication to and
concern for their well-being and success equally as high as their own parents’ dedication to them. They consistently reported that Bright Prospect staff members believe in them, expect them to succeed, and go beyond the call of duty to support and empower their success, and they identified this factor as the greatest contribution to their success. The emphasis on trusting relationships and high expectations was noted as a key finding of the study.

The existence of various critical cultural elements of the program was documented extensively and detailed through qualitative research methods, including surveys and interviews with all program stakeholders. Results were triangulated across all data sources to ensure robust, valid and reliable findings. A program theory approach was then utilized to synthesize and organize all evaluation findings, from both quantitative and qualitative methods, into a coherent logic model.

**Evaluation Results – Program Logic Model.** The evaluation study yielded a logic model (see Figure 1 below) representing the flow of the Bright Prospect program outcomes associated with program inputs and throughputs as follows: Relationships → Agency → College Readiness → College Success. It was noted that the qualitative outcomes of trusting and supportive Relationships lead to the development of psychological and social Agency in students, which, in turn, yield the desired short-term and long-term academic outcomes of the program. Both adults and students reported profoundly trusting and supportive relationships at and across all levels of the program as an aspect of Bright Prospect culture that influences personal growth with regard to social and psychological factors and thereby impacts academic success.
The outcome evaluation generated both impetus and urgent rationale for further study of the processes, relationships, and practices at Bright Prospect that form the cornerstone of a culture of increased agency and associated outcomes for students. Having documented the effectiveness of the program in yielding significant desired outcomes, such as high school graduation, college acceptance, and college persistence for traditionally at-risk and underserved populations, and identified the program elements that students and staff perceive as pivotal for achieving these outcomes, a strong recommendation that emerged from the evaluation was the need for a future study focused on a descriptive exploration of the methods and strategies that Bright Prospect employs to achieve its unique culture – a culture found to be generative of student academic achievement results and positive youth development outcomes. An ethnographic process evaluation was recommended to explore deeply and document in detail Bright Prospect program and staff characteristics, practices, processes, and activities.
**Phase 2 Evaluation – Ethnographic Study**

The very positive, statistically significant results of the outcome evaluation study led to discussions about the urgency and importance of further examining Bright Prospect’s methods, processes, and practices and documenting the resulting culture associated with Bright Prospect outcomes. In 2013, Dr. Zargarpour led a second study, this time grounded in naturalistic inquiry methods. An exploratory and descriptive ethnographic study was undertaken to document and analyze the methods underlying Bright Prospect activities and processes. While the first study focused primarily on program outcomes, the second study focused predominantly on program activities and implementation processes and practices.

Extensive discussions between the evaluation team, Bright Prospect leadership staff, and the program officer from the key funding agency, The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation, explored and examined Bright Prospect activities in light of evaluation findings and in the context of principles from a number of related fields – positive psychology, positive youth development, critical pedagogy, and cognitive-behavior theory. It was determined that an ethnographic study was indicated to examine the methods and principles of practice associated with the successes described in the previous evaluation study. The ethnographic study was carried out during the 2013-2014 academic year.

**Purpose of Current Study**

It was intended that the findings and products of the second, ethnographic study – the subject of the current report – will be used to develop a training and coaching system for dissemination and scale-up of Bright Prospect’s successful practices and outcomes. Specifically, findings will be integrated with an existing and evolving matrix of electronic Bright Prospect documents that describe current program activities – *what Bright Prospect does*. The products of the current study will add to the existing matrix of activities the *methods, principles*, and *strategies* associated with each activity – that is, *how Bright Prospect does what it does*. 
The existing working documents that describe each Bright Prospect activity are electronically stored and managed at Bright Prospect in a matrix of folders by activity and are intended to serve as living documents that will evolve and be modified as the program evolves. They include detailed lesson plans for every Bright Prospect event together with the materials used for the activities – agendas, invitations, presentation notes and PowerPoint files, as well as electronic versions of all handout materials. The ethnographic study and the resulting current report, in turn, describe how Bright Prospect staff members conduct these events and activities, how they conduct themselves, how they interact with one another and students, and how they utilize the materials to create the inclusive and supportive culture that is fundamental to the program’s success.

The study pursued questions and methods that served the following broad objectives:

- To explore, describe, and document how Bright Prospect creates its unique culture – i.e., how adults and students enact the beliefs, values, attitudes, and norms that create culture
- To explore, describe, and document Bright Prospect program staff characteristics and training
- To refine the program logic model (Phase 1), as needed, according to new findings

To address those three objectives, the specific questions of the current study were derived from the findings of the outcome evaluation and asked how those outcomes are achieved. Questions included:

1. How does Bright Prospect achieve cultural norms among the adults and students in the program?
2. How do Bright Prospect team members convey the concepts and beliefs that they espouse to students? To parents? To new staff and intern recruits?
3. How do Bright Prospect team members use verbal and non-verbal cues?
4. How do Bright Prospect team members employ visual and graphic organizers and symbols?
5. How do Bright Prospect team members model desired practices, beliefs, and expectations?
6. How do Bright Prospect team members inspire students to hold high expectations for themselves and for one another and to set goals accordingly?
7. How do Bright Prospect team members empower students to believe in themselves and take initiative to achieve their goals?
8. How do Bright Prospect team members develop relationships of trust that equal or surpass the degree of trust students have with their closest family members?

The current report presents the methods and results of investigative activities related to the objectives and questions above. The report begins with a description of the Design & Methods utilized, is followed by a summary of the salient findings from relevant Literature Review, builds up to key Program Findings, and culminates in a set of Conclusions & Recommendations.
The study began with a detailed review of the existing and evolving matrix of electronic Bright Prospect documents that describe current program activities (as referenced above) and a review of relevant literature. Next, building on the context provided through review of literature, review of existing Bright Prospect documents, and results of the Phase 1 outcome evaluation study, the evaluators observed, over the course of nearly one full year, an extensive sample of seminal Bright Prospect activities in an annual program cycle. The intensive cycle of data collection also included focus group interviews with key stakeholders.

**Design**

The current ethnographic study employed a naturalistic inquiry design, using an exploratory and descriptive qualitative research approach. The naturalistic inquiry design allowed the evaluation team to learn about human phenomena that comprise the program processes and practices by exploring them in their natural settings (Merriam, 1988). Qualitative research designs use “a ‘discovery-oriented’ approach that minimizes investigator manipulation of the study setting and places no prior constraints on what the outcomes of the research will be” (Egon & Guba, 1978, as cited in Patton, 2002, p. 39), thus maximizing the researcher’s ability to understand, describe, and document the phenomena under study. The ethnographic approach, in particular, allowed evaluators to “observe, intuit, sense what is occurring in a natural setting—hence the term *naturalistic inquiry*” (Merriam, 1988, p. 17). Patton (1987) explains the advantages of the qualitative approach in a naturalistic paradigm:

> Qualitative designs are naturalistic to the extent that the evaluator does not attempt to manipulate the program or its participants for purposes of the evaluation. Evaluators engaged in naturalistic inquiry study naturally occurring activities and processes. These activities are “natural” in the sense that they are not planned and manipulated by the evaluator as would be the case in an experiment. (p.13)
Qualitative research methods allowed the evaluation team to press for understanding the complexities of the various levels and layers of relationships at Bright Prospect in their natural environments, allowing for the pursuit of in-depth understanding and meaning-making (Merriam, 1988; Patton, 1987) in a complex system. The study was conducted over the course of a full year, thereby allowing for observation and documentation of a full, annual cycle of program activities and processes, utilizing the following methods: 1) in-depth, unstructured observations, 2) homogeneous participant focus group interviews, 3) document review and analysis, and 4) audiovisual analyses. The sample and methods are discussed in greater detail in the sections that follow.

Using Glaser and Strauss’s grounded theory approach (1967), the research team built on findings from the Phase I report, a current review of literature related to Bright Prospect program elements and outcomes, and findings from the current ethnographic study, to generate a full program theory logic model. The logic model includes (A) Bright Prospect’s Purposeful Design (Inputs) that lead to and guide (B) a series of key Purposeful Practices and Program Activities (Throughputs), which, in turn, lead to (C) Psychosocial Outcomes (Mediators) and (D) Developmental and Academic Outcomes (Outputs). The program outcomes were explored in-depth in the Phase I evaluation through a quasi-experimental and mixed methods design.

Sample

Study participants included parents, students, interns/volunteers, program employees (leadership and staff), and a Board representative. Inclusion of a representative sample of all stakeholders allowed for a well-balanced and broad scope in the evaluation. For the focus group interviews, the sample included the entire Bright Prospect leadership team and one Board member in one group, all available program staff members in a second group, and all available interns and volunteers (all of whom were Bright Prospect college students) in a third group. Student and parent focus groups comprised a representative sample from each group. The evaluation team collaborated with Bright Prospect management staff to select the participating
students and parents for the focus group interviews based on the depth of their knowledge of the program. As this was not an outcomes evaluation and was rather a study of processes and practices, it was important that participants have extended experience with and deep knowledge of the program. For the observations, the research team selected a full range of program events to be observed. The range of observations included participation from all students, staff, and parents. Photo and video journals of selected events also included all program stakeholders.

The population from which our sample was drawn derived from five secondary schools in the Pomona Unified School District (PUSD) and two high schools in the Chaffey Joint Union High School District. Table 2 below lists the demographics of each participating school in addition to their respective Academic Performance Index (API) scores for the 2013 year. The PUSD schools are comprised of a minimum of 90% students with low socioeconomic status and over a quarter English Learners, with APIs ranging in the mid to high 600s; and the Chaffey schools (Montclair and Ontario) are comprised of over 75% students with low socioeconomic status and 15%-22% English Learners, with APIs ranging in the mid 700s.

Table 2. Population Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High School</th>
<th>Low SES</th>
<th>English Learners</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Black A.A.</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>AI / AN</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>2013 API</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ganesha</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garey</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomona</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fremont Academy</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palomares Academy</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montclair</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>745</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methods

The study implemented both primary and secondary data collection methods in the naturalistic inquiry design. Secondary methods included: 1) a thorough review of literature and 2) review and analysis of existing program documents. Three primary data collection methods were also implemented, namely: 1) in-depth, unstructured observations, 2) homogeneous participant focus group interviews, and 3) audiovisual data. Findings from the review and analysis of relevant research literature and extensive data and findings from the previous outcome evaluation study contextualized and supported the data collection and analytics.

Data sources included Bright Prospect students, parents, interns and volunteers, program staff, and leadership team and Board representation. The table below (Table 3) indicates the research methods used to collect data from each stakeholder group. A more detailed description of each method of data collection follows in the subsections below.

Table 3. Crosswalk of Sources and Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Document Review</th>
<th>Focus Groups</th>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Audiovisuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interns/Volunteers</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Staff</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership/Board</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Data Collection**

The study began with in-depth, unstructured observations of program activities. Simultaneously, the evaluators conducted a focused review of literature associated with youth empowerment, college access, culture and climate, positive psychology, critical pedagogy, and cognitive behavior theory. Based on ongoing observations, findings from literature review, and data and findings from the previous evaluation, a draft program theory logic model was generated and continually refined as data collection progressed. The logic model assisted with an evolving understanding of the linkages between inputs, activities, and outcomes.

As the evaluation team continued its detailed observations of program activities and began collecting data from focus group interviews and audiovisual sources, evaluators were able to analyze data and continue to shape the program logic model. Focus group interview questions corresponded with the constructs in the evolving program theory logic model. Thus, data were collected via an ongoing, iterative process of correlating findings across data sources (triangulation) and using the results to further refine and define the logic model. The program theory logic model evolved with each data collection activity and additional reviews of associated literature. The cyclical process of data collection, reflection, and triangulation continued throughout the study.

Table 4 below sets forth the specific activities that were included in primary data collection. These activities were identified in collaboration with the Bright Prospect leadership team, to include observation and/or audiovisual recordings of at least one sample of each of the program’s core activities, as well as, focus group interviews with all key stakeholder groups relevant to the study. Leadership team members also provided input in protocol development. According to Jean King this approach allows “practitioners and theorists alike to place their practice in a participatory context, and form the set of questions, which encourages them to think purposefully about improvement” (p. 85, 2007).
Table 4. Primary Data Collection Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer 2013 Activities</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summery Academy</td>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Focus Group Interview</td>
<td>Early October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Focus Group Interview</td>
<td>Early October</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2013/ Winter 2014 Activities</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HS Crew Leaders - Seniors</td>
<td>Focus Group Interview</td>
<td>Late October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interns (college students)</td>
<td>Focus Group Interview</td>
<td>Early November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Focus Group Interview</td>
<td>Early November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Seminar</td>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Meeting</td>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Academy Prep</td>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Academy:</td>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Seniors College Application</td>
<td></td>
<td>November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Sophomores</td>
<td></td>
<td>November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CREW Leader Training</td>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Juniors</td>
<td></td>
<td>December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Sophomores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Setting Follow-Up</td>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Interventions with Students</td>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>January</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spring / Summer 2014 Activities</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff Shadowing</td>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Decision Day</td>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>May</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Document reviews.** Document reviews were conducted for the following resources: Bright Prospect activity procedures manual, Crew leader handbook, quarterly calendars, articles, crew leader training materials, and Goals worksheets. The procedures manual contained detailed outlines of agendas and materials for each aspect of the program organized under the following headings: Summer Academy, Sophomore Year, Junior Year, and Senior Year.

Documents were provided for the research team electronically and collected by team members during the numerous observation events. Four team members, utilizing the qualitative analysis template, reviewed the Bright Prospect Manual in sections. Upon completion of individual sections, the team met to discuss and amalgamate findings.

**Focus Group Interviews.** All focus group interviews were conducted in pairs. One researcher predominantly asked questions, while the second researcher served as a scribe. Findings were recorded in the qualitative data analysis template by one researcher, then reviewed and added to as necessary by the second researcher.

The study included a total of five focus group interviews. Focus groups were conducted with leadership, staff, high school crew leaders, interns, and parents. Focus groups were 1 to 2 hours in length. The participants for the senior crew leader focus group were selected from different high schools based on their attendance to crew leader training and having been in the Bright Prospect program since their sophomore year. Participants in the parent focus group were selected due to their activity in parent meetings and having multiple children in the Bright Prospect program. The goal of this report was to understand how Phase I findings are achieved. This required some level of purposive sampling in order to collect data from parents and students who are familiar with the Bright Prospect program.

Focus group interviews were arranged with homogenous groups for several reasons. Homogeneous grouping allowed for candor in addressing issues, clear specificity in views held by each sector, and it further strengthened the team’s ability to triangulate collected data.
A review of the literature was employed to develop focus group protocols. The research team collaborated prior to each focus group meeting to discuss the pertinent themes to be addressed. The interview questions were linked to constructs from the literature. Questions were reviewed by the program leadership team prior to implementation.

All focus group participants reviewed and signed confidentiality forms prior to their participation in the focus group interviews. The research team briefly reviewed the purpose of the focus group, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and questions or concerns prior to collecting signed consent forms. For Parent focus group participants, confidentiality forms were verbally translated into Spanish.

**Observations.** Observations ranged from 1 to 4 hours. Individual researchers carried out most observations. An ethnographic study is less structured and there is no effort to test a hypothesis, therefore the team remained open to any and all observations. Budgetary constraints were a contributing factor to observations being completed by individual researchers. After each observation the team met as a group to debrief findings, triangulate, and interpret data. The team modified the theory of change on an ongoing basis according to progressive findings.

**Audiovisuals.** Audiovisuals were combined with all other methods. All researchers collected audiovisual data from the various events they attended utilizing video recording, audio recording, and photography. Focus group interviews and observations were audio and video recorded. Photographs were taken of documents that were utilized during observations. Individual researchers used audiovisual data when completing qualitative data analysis template. The evaluation team also utilized audiovisual data to update evaluation team members who were not part of an observation event. This method was used for debriefing and triangulation meetings. The audiovisual data also serve to enhance this report by providing concrete visuals of findings.
Confidentiality and FERPA. Confidentiality and FERPA requirements were all met via Bright Prospect. To ensure confidentiality during focus group interviews, release forms were provided for and signed by all participants. The form was verbally translated into Spanish for the parent focus group. In preparing the current report of findings, the evaluation team adopted certain language conventions in identifying data sources – e.g., parents, students, staff, etc. – while maintaining the confidentiality of individual subjects within each group. Individual staff members are referred to only by function or title. Parents and students are identified only as a group and not by name. Direct quotations from individuals refer only to the activity in which they were recorded so that individual identities may not be recognizable. No personal names are used in the report.

Reliability and Validity Measures. Several strategies were utilized in the data collection process to optimize validity and reliability of findings. First, we triangulated data collection methods across data sources (see Table 4). Secondly, two or more evaluators collaborated in the collection of data for each activity to improve validity and reliability in the interpretation and analysis of findings. Findings were recorded by one of the researchers, and were reviewed by the other researcher. In rare cases where two researchers were not available, recordings of events served as a means for providing additional observations of the same phenomena.

^ On two occasions, although two researchers were scheduled, one was unavoidably detained therefore there was only one observer.
**Data Analysis**

As part of the analysis process, and as an added measure to ensure validity in findings, the research team held frequent and routine meetings to debrief findings from each data collection activity and triangulate findings across data sources and methods. During this process, recurring themes with high intensity were identified. These findings were utilized to add detail and make modifications to the developing program theory logic model. Program leadership team members were informed and included in the triangulation and interpretation process as needed to clarify findings.

For all events, a qualitative data analysis template was utilized to organize data uniformly according to prevailing themes. All findings were supported by anecdotal data and quotes, as evidence of findings, and assigned a value according to level of intensity (high, medium, or low). Through this process the team developed a matrix of thematic findings. As researchers observed selected program activities, they debriefed findings from observations, to ensure inter-rater reliability. Findings were then added to the matrix, supporting existing themes and adding newly emerged themes.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

Building upon the findings from Phase 1 of the evaluation, a literature review was conducted that related to the program elements and outcomes of Bright Prospect and explored empirical linkages between program activities and outcomes. Utilizing the findings from the outcome evaluation, as well as findings from the review of literature, a draft program theory logic model was created to demonstrate key elements of Bright Prospect’s program and the association of those program elements with the program’s intended outcomes. As findings were generated from the ethnographic study (presented in this report), the draft logic model was further defined, reshaped, and refined. Specifically, this logic model explains the inputs, throughputs, and outcomes of Bright Prospect. This section sets forth the literature review findings and their association with the resulting Bright Prospect program theory logic model.

A general and condensed version of the program theory logic model is presented in this Overview section (Figure 2 below), to provide context for discussion of the literature findings. The literature review informed the general framework for the logic model, which was then revised, substantiated, and refined through the findings of the study. The more detailed, final version of the logic model is presented further below in Program Findings.
Program **Inputs** (resources and actors) include *Visionary Leaders, Purposeful Design, Staff, and Students*. These Inputs flow into program **Throughputs** (principles of practice and activities), identified as *Purposeful Practices* and *Program Activities*, and are designed to produce the desired **Outcomes** of the program. *Psychosocial Empowerment*, the mediating outcome, is comprised of three factors – an interpersonal component, interactional know-how, and behavioral engagement. Psychosocial Empowerment leads to **Developmental Outcomes**, such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-regulation, resilience, reduced risk behaviors, and higher and broader aspirations. Psychosocial Empowerment and Development Outcomes, in turn, lead to greater achievement of **Academic Outcomes**, such as college matriculation, persistence in college, and graduation from college. It is important to note that research validates the link between the intermediate outcome, Psychosocial Empowerment, and the final Developmental and Academic outcomes.

The Literature Review section of this report includes a discussion of aspects of the literature that informed our findings related to the organizational design of Bright Prospect. This “Purposeful Design” is considered a critical and foundational aspect of the program **Inputs**. Literature topics that informed our study included critical
pedagogy, loose and tight coupling, school culture, and academic culture model. *Five Purposeful Design elements* emerged from the study as follows:

1. Research-Based Design
2. Continuous Improvement
3. Organizational Structure
4. Unique Culture
5. Purposeful Use of Human Resources

Concerned primarily with understanding Bright Prospect processes and practices that lead to its successful outcomes, the study next focused on program *Throughputs*. While *Program Activities* may be thought of as *what* Bright Prospect does, *Purposeful Practices* may be characterized as *how* Bright Prospect carries out these activities. Program Activities include Summer Academy, Crew Connect sessions, Leadership Academies, Crew Leader Training sessions, Goal Setting sessions, and College Decision Day. The *manner* in which these activities are carried out is referred to as “principles of practice” in this study. Six principles of practice were identified as inherent in Bright Prospect’s culture and infused in all of Bright Prospect’s activities. These Six Purposeful Practices are as follows:

1. Transformative Education
2. Goal-Setting and Self-Evaluation
3. Commitment with Consistent Follow-Through
4. Loving Support
5. Requiring Accountability of Self and Others
6. Transfer of Beliefs and Expectations

These practices are presented and discussed in great detail in the Program Findings section of the report.

While primary and secondary data collection drove our findings regarding the Purposeful Practices, the literature review guided our understanding and classification of the practices. A brief discussion of the literature that informed our understanding of the Purposeful Design and Purposeful Practices is presented in this section. It is important to note that the discussion of literature is not inclusive of the entire body of
research that may relate to the subject of study. We have included key research that relates to the particular complexities of the Bright Prospect program elements under study.

We have not included in the report the more extensive literature review that informed the design of the full logic model. Since this study is focused on processes rather than outcomes, aspects of the literature concerned with outcomes are not included in the report. These include operational definitions of Outcome components and subcomponents, their antecedents (e.g., factors that increase or decrease the prevalence of psychosocial empowerment), and their consequents (e.g., what psychosocial empowerment influences), and the link between Psychosocial Empowerment as a mediating outcome the final Developmental and Academic outcomes of the program.

**Literature Findings: Organizational Design & Practice**

Several concepts in review of literature from the fields of psychology, education, and organizational development informed our study and understanding of Bright Prospect’s processes as an organization. Our understanding of Bright Prospect’s Unique Culture, a critical element of its Purposeful Organizational Design, was informed by concepts derived from critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970), loose and tight coupling (Weick, 1976), definitions of culture (Jones & Bouffard, 2012), and Charlton’s academic culture model (2009). Bright Prospect’s Unique Culture, in turn, both drives and derives from the organization’s Purposeful Practices.

**Critical Pedagogy**

Paulo Freire wrote *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) after experiencing political persecution as a consequence of efforts to organize and educate illiterate peasants. In this work, he proposed that education should be a dialogical process, in which students and teachers interact about social and scientific realities. In particular, Friere
postulated that through dialogue related to the marginalization of certain groups in society, students would develop critical awareness of their social reality and be empowered to rise beyond their current social state. This concept gave rise to Freire’s theory of critical pedagogy.

Critical pedagogy champions educational systems that create possibilities for social change by raising awareness and empowering and releasing human potential. Some of the tenets and principles of critical pedagogy relate intimately with the core organizational design of Bright Prospect and the resulting practices and processes we observed, despite Bright Prospect’s unawareness of the theory of critical pedagogy. The organization is driven by an empowerment model that holds awareness raising at the heart of its organizational approach. It employs a transparent and direct model of communication and utilizes *Transformative Education (Purposeful Practice #1)* in its relationships with its staff, its students, and its parents, most of whom are from at-risk populations. Thus it empowers all stakeholders to operate as change agents in their sphere of influence, while also expanding their sphere of influence.

**Balance of Loose and Tight Coupling**

In 1976, Karl Weick proposed that in loosely coupled systems several means can produce the same result. In addition, loosely coupled systems are marked by a lack of coordination among systems, an absence of regulations, and highly connected networks with very slow feedback times. In other words, loosely coupled systems are independent of one another; whereas, tightly coupled systems are highly interdependent and tightly coordinated. According to Weick (1976), if tight coupling occurs in some areas of an organization, loose coupling must occur in others.

Bright Prospect’s organizational design and approach exemplify this balance exceptionally. Participants and collaborators alike – staff, students, and parents – are given a set of well-defined and high expectations, and they are held tightly accountable to those expectations (tight coupling). Yet, they are also given a great degree of freedom in expressing their creativity and individuality (loose coupling) in the means by which they achieve those expectations. Examples of this approach are described in
detail in the Findings section related to the Purposeful Practice of Requiring Accountability of Self and Others (Purposeful Practice #5).

**Culture**

For the purposes of this report, an organization’s culture is defined as the regular and consistent patterns that characterize how individuals in an organization think, feel, interact, and behave (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Culture refers to the organization’s norms, beliefs, and practices and is driven by the organization’s values, which are embedded in the design and implementation of the organization. The ethnographic study focused on exploring and describing Bright Prospect’s culture. We found that Bright Prospect’s *Purposeful Design* includes a strong and unique culture that is operationalized through *Six Purposeful Practices*. Thus, the Purposeful Practices, in a sense, form the culture of the Bright Prospect organization. These practices are enacted through the program’s relationships and activities: awareness-raising, transfer of beliefs and high expectations, goal-setting and self-reflection, accountability, loving support, and commitment and consistency.

**Academic Culture Model**

An understanding of culture, in the context of educational programs, is important for further defining and describing the culture of Bright Prospect. Based on studies of graduation rates of student athletes in historically black colleges and universities, Charlton’s (2009) academic culture model explains how an athletic department achieved exceptionally high student graduation rates. The key to success was the department’s congruent academic culture. In a congruent academic culture, all levels of the organization embrace and demonstrate the organization’s core values, leading to positive academic outcomes.

Charlton’s academic culture model (depicted in Figure 3 below) assisted with understanding the organizational design of Bright Prospect. Notably, we found tremendous congruence in upholding high academic and behavioral standards for all students, across all levels of the Bright Prospect organization. These standards were
coherently implemented across all activities and aspects of organizational practice. All Bright Prospect practitioners demonstrate Charlton’s *Strong Visionary Leadership* and *Walk the Walk* in modeling *Positive Core Values* through the Purpose Practice of *Commitment with Consistent Follow Through (Purposeful Practice #3)*, resulting in high levels of developmental and academic outcomes for all students in the program. Perhaps the most noteworthy and most commonly mentioned aspect of the Organizational Design of Bright Prospect emerged as Charlton’s practice of *Caring Individuals*, which manifests through the *Loving Support (Purposeful Practice #4)* of staff at Bright Prospect. These practices are discussed briefly in the subsections below and covered in greater detail in the Program Findings section of the report.

**Figure 3. Charlton’s Academic Culture Model**
**Strong Visionary Leadership.** Visionary leaders initiate the creation of organizational culture by embedding their beliefs, values, and attitudes in the organization. Having a clear vision of the needs and priorities of the organization is vital, and previous experience in a similar organization helps. It was noted that Bright Prospect’s founder was previously deeply involved with another successful college access program, which then served as a template for the initial Bright Prospect. Visionary leaders also hire and train individuals who share their vision and expectations for the organization, thus ensuring congruence. Bright Prospect achieves this primarily by recruiting its staff, volunteers, and interns from among its alumni or other young professionals with similar backgrounds and circumstances. These aspects of visionary leadership exemplify Bright Prospect’s *Purposeful Use of Human Resources*, one of its key organizational design elements, and its emphasis on *Transfer of Beliefs and Expectations (Purposeful Practice #6)*. Bright Prospect’s deliberate and active emphasis on the *Transfer of Beliefs and Expectations (Purposeful Practice #6)* is also mobilized through *Transformative Education (Purposeful Practice #1)*. These practices include modeling, verbal and visual messaging, goal setting, and accountability with support. A detailed discussion is included in the Findings section of the report.

**Positive Core Values.** Visionary leadership, as expressed through *Purposeful Use of Human Resources*, the *Transfer of Beliefs and Expectations (Purposeful Practice #6)*, and *Transformative Education (Purposeful Practice #1)*, cultivates and reinforces the organization’s positive core values. These values serve as the foundation for the cultural content, as well as the socialization processes of the organization, and permeate everyday life in the organization. Bright Prospect expects students to adopt positive core values with regard to academic achievement, college and career success, and making contributions to their families and community. These values are supported through all of the Purposeful Practices (*Purposeful Practices 1-6)*.

**Purposeful Design.** When organizations are designed with a specific purpose, based on researching and understanding the dynamics of human environments, they succeed in creating a congruent academic culture. Organizational design is informed
by personal and professional experiences, as well as findings from empirical research. The congruent academic culture is born of a thoughtful consideration of lessons gained from experience and research. Bright Prospect developed its program pragmatically, based on specific practices that worked in other similar organizations, and by researching both psychological theory and educational best practices.

Evaluation findings demonstrate that Bright Prospect staff and collaborators hold shared understanding of the organization’s Purposeful Design. Although staff and students did not discuss the design using the specific terms and categories in this report, it was clear that the elements of the Purposeful Design were understood and deeply assimilated by all staff and students.

**Caring Individuals.** An organization in which individual members view themselves as a family is readily able to create a congruent culture. In a familial environment, individuals genuinely care about one another’s personal and professional success and demonstrate their caring both verbally and through actions (see *Walk the Walk* below). The Phase 1 evaluation of Bright Prospect validated a strong culture of trusting and caring relationships in the organization. Students rated their relationships with Bright Prospect staff and peers as comparable with or stronger than their family relationships (Zargarpour, 2012). The ethnographic study further confirmed this finding and shed light on the nature of the caring culture at Bright Prospect, referred to in this study as the Purposeful Practice of *Loving Support (Purposeful Practice #4)*. It was noteworthy that many of the students who gave speeches at a Bright Prospect 2014 College Decision Day mentioned the word “love” in their speeches and asserted that Bright Prospect taught them how to give and receive love, thus strengthening their relationships with peers and their families. “They taught me how to love,” one student professed at College Decision Day 2014.

**Walking the Walk.** An organization is better able to provide a congruent academic culture when its policies and practices are implemented and enforced properly and continuously. Individuals at all levels of the Bright Prospect organization
model the values of the organization and hold one another accountable to high standards. The Purposeful Practices of *Goal-Setting and Self-Evaluation (Purposeful Practice #2)* and *Requiring Accountability of Self and Others (Purposeful Practice #5)* are critical aspects of this work. Self-reflection is built into the fabric of Bright Prospect at all levels of practice. Staff members work closely with students to teach them how to set goals and to review progress regularly and systematically toward those goals. As a result, students learn goal setting, self-evaluation, and self-regulation. In staff meetings held after each program activity, staff members reflect on their performance and the effectiveness of the activity and make refinements to practice as needed. The evolution of formal evaluation practices (discussed in the Background section above) adopted by Bright Prospect in recent years is also an indicator of the practice of self-reflection and evaluation for *Continuous Improvement (Purposeful Design #2)*.

**Congruent Academic Culture.** Charlton’s academic culture model posits that when the five previous steps – *Strong Visionary Leadership, Positive Core Values, Purposeful Design, Caring Individuals, and Walking the Walk* – are realized, a congruent culture geared toward academic success emerges. In this culture, all aspects of the organization are aligned and directed toward shared beliefs, values, and attitudes that lead to positive academic outcomes. Bright Prospect’s unique culture demonstrates all aspects of Charlton’s Academic Culture Model.
Overview

Through an in-depth ethnographic study, we explored the eight research questions regarding how the positive outcomes, validated in Phase 1, were achieved. The findings from these questions were categorized into Five Purposeful Design Elements and Six Purposeful Practices. These Design Elements and Purposeful Practices form the core factors driving the program inputs and throughputs. The inputs and throughputs, in turn, lead to the program outcomes.

The study produced a program theory logic model (Figure 4 below) that includes these inputs, throughputs (activities and principles of practice), and outcomes in a coherent framework, indicating associations across each level, from inputs to outcomes (Figure 4). Inputs include: Visionary Leaders, Purposeful Design, Staff, and Students. Throughputs include Purposeful Practices and Program Activities. Program Outcomes that result from these throughputs were addressed in the Phase 1 evaluation and thus are not elaborated upon in this study. The findings of this report elaborate on the Purposeful Design and the six Purposeful Practices that stem from and support the Purposeful Design. The six Purposeful Practices, are the methods by which Bright Prospect is able to achieve its high success with its students.
The Six Purposeful Practices that emerged from the ethnographic study about how Bright Prospect achieves its culture and outcomes include:

1. Transformative Education
2. Goal-Setting and Self-Evaluation
3. Commitment with Consistent Follow-Through
4. Loving Support
5. Requiring Accountability of Self and Others
6. Transfer of Beliefs and Expectations

These practices are embodied in the Program Activities and form the culture of the organization. The culture of Bright Prospect is unique and is instilled in students from day one of the program.
The Six Purposeful Practices, in turn, stem from the program’s Organizational Design. The research- and evidence-based design is built on Five Purposeful Design elements identified in the study as follows:

1. Research-Based Design
2. Continuous Improvement
3. Organizational Structure
4. Unique Culture
5. Purposeful Use of Human Resources

**Purposeful Design Elements**

When organizations are designed with a specific purpose, based on the understanding of the dynamics of human environments, they succeed in creating a congruent academic culture, whereby desired outcomes can be achieved (Charlton, 2009). Based on the literature and the findings from Phase 2 of the evaluation, five components of purposeful design were determined for Bright Prospect. Findings related to the five Purposeful Design elements are discussed below.

**Research-Based Design**

In the initial design process of Bright Prospect, the founding team brought a wealth of research and experiential knowledge about what works with low-income youth to increase their college readiness. This practice continues. The program founder and president and leadership staff continuously keep abreast of the latest research that might help Bright Prospect in its mission of empowering students to attend and persist through college. Staff meetings also bring research to the conversation and build on findings. Indeed, when comparing the practices of Bright Prospect to those that research has found to be linked with increased college access for underrepresented students, it is clear that they match up. These core practices that research has shown to be effective and that the Bright Prospect program encompasses include:
1. “Long-term investment in students that usually includes a key person who is attached to each student and monitors and guides her/him over many years through frequent, regular contact
2. A strong focus on academic college readiness skills
3. A strong peer group that supports students’ academic/college aspirations and also provides social and emotional support
4. A supportive counseling and college advisement environment and curriculum
5. Direct financial assistance and scholarships
6. Program content and processes that are responsive to and affirm students’ ethnicity and backgrounds
7. Family involvement in which families are considered a vital resource in supporting students’ aspirations and commitment to academic achievement and postsecondary success
8. Strong partnerships with local colleges and universities” (Lieber, 2009).

Tierney and Colyar (2006) further elaborate on these best practices, stating that college access programs are most successful when they provide students with a special place to belong, a peer-centered social network, intensive academic intervention and enrichment opportunities, and personalized support and college guidance. The findings of both phases of the report show that Bright Prospect incorporates all the eight best practices, helping to explain why they achieve such high successes with their students. The following observations provide insight as to how Bright Prospect adopts and adapts these best practices in its program:

1. **Long-term investment in students:** Bright Prospect staff members are all intimately familiar with the students, and the trust and interpersonal relationships they create provide the long-term investment students require. Staff members remain accessible to students throughout and beyond their college years.
2. **Academic college readiness skills:** Among the goals that Bright Prospect students develop every semester are academic goals that are geared toward matriculation and success in college. Students are held accountable to these goals and are supported in achieving the goals. They are encouraged to seek academic
support from their peers, their teachers, and other sources, rather than from Bright Prospect.

3. **A strong peer group**: The Crews® system is one of the most powerful and influential ways by which students experience a strong peer group. These crews provide the socio-emotional support, as well as the high expectations and aspirations, necessary for students to persevere into college. The Bright Prospect structure incorporates three levels of peer group support, based on Steinberg’s *Beyond the Classroom* (1997). At the most intimate level is the crew, comprised of 2-6 students who provide direct support throughout high school and college. The second level is comprised of the peer group of all Bright Prospect students at each high school, which creates a nurturing environment in which it’s cool to be smart. Steinberg cites this level as the most influential in peer influence on academic success. The third level consists of the entire Bright Prospect community of students across all high schools, who meet periodically at “Crew Connect” days for bonding activities.

4. **Counseling and college advisement**: Bright Prospect provides both of these services to students from the beginning of the program.

5. **Direct financial assistance and scholarships**: While Bright Prospect awards financial aid to roughly 25% of its students who have the greatest unmet need, it also helps students navigate the financial aid process, thereby ensuring that students are able to secure federal and state grants and private scholarships to pay for college.

6. **Responsive to and affirming of students’ ethnicity and backgrounds**: Deliberate hiring practices ensure that nearly all staff grew up in the community, went to the same schools, and reflect the ethnicity and backgrounds of the students they serve. Many are also alumni of the program. Thus the staff reflects and celebrates the ethnicity and backgrounds of the students they serve.

7. **Family involvement**: Bright Prospect conducts periodic programs for the parents of its students to educate them about admissions, financial aid, and the benefits of their children attending and graduating from college.
8. **Strong partnerships with local colleges and universities:** The program has strong ties with admissions officers at nearly 60 postsecondary institutions throughout the nation. The presidents of two local universities sit on the Bright Prospect board. Additionally, the program takes students on frequent field trips to local colleges and universities to expose them to the post-secondary environment prior to matriculation.

**Continuous Improvement**

After twelve years of practice, and with demonstrated outcomes from Phase I of this evaluation, Bright Prospect staff members feel they have achieved processes and methods that work (Staff Meeting). However, they continuously ask themselves, “How do we slightly improve the things we do?” (Staff Meeting Observation). During a staff meeting, they discussed how they could increase their capacity to help students beyond college graduation and into their careers (Staff Meeting Observation). Staff also discusses issues such as students needing a computer lab and what staff-to-student ratio most benefits students. They modify and refine program activities, based on reflection on practices and outcomes, brainstorming how best to impart the attitudes and behaviors they want to convey to students. They incrementally reinvent their activities based on the goals of the activity, never losing sight of the big picture and end result. Their process involves planning, action, and reflection on action.

Each activity has a purpose. Staff meetings prior to activities help ensure that the activity goes according to plan, the activity is aligned with its purpose, and that the overall purpose flows from each activity to the next (Staff Meeting Observation). The manual for the staff is also always being improved as activities are changed and refined:

“Shortly after the Summer Academy, the staff meets to debrief and reflect on Summer Academy – the program as a whole, and individual workshops – suggestions for improvement are noted for incorporation the following year” (Staff Observations).
This focus on continuous improvement of the program helps not only to improve Bright Prospect practices but also contributes to the field of college access, as Bright Prospect engages in evaluation of its outcomes and processes and disseminates its learning.

**Balance of Tight and Loose Coupling**

On one hand, the Bright Prospect program is highly structured, especially in its specification for how students proceed through the program, the steps they must complete, and the requirements they must meet. This structured approach impacts both students and staff. On the other hand, the program allows both students and staff a great degree of freedom, creativity, and autonomy in the manner in which they choose to fulfill their duties and requirements.

Specifically, the Summer Academy starts the program for students, as they get a first-hand glimpse into how Bright Prospect works and what they can expect from the program throughout the rest of high school and all the way through college graduation. Every student goes through the program very similarly, and the staff works hard to ensure that every meeting with students is aligned with the program’s goals of college graduation (Staff Meeting).

Despite a structured and purposeful design with clear expectations and requirements, there is more collegiality than hierarchy among staff; this allows each member to exercise his or her autonomy in implementation of activities and in the discharge of duties, which are quite specific. The interns interviewed suggested that everyone was equal and on the same plane and they felt themselves among one coherent team with the other staff, including the directors. Particularly given the “first name basis” (Intern Interview) and the layout of the Bright Prospect office, where everyone works together in the same room, interns and volunteers feel they are able to go up to staff whenever they needed without hesitation. During Staff Observations and observations of the Staff Meeting, it was clear that, while the directors are clearly the leaders of Bright Prospect, they create a flat organization, considering themselves among the other staff members and working together side by side. The Program
Director demonstrates great trust in his staff by allowing them to voice ideas and concerns and giving them ample opportunity to make decisions.

This balance of loose-tight coupling in the organizational structure trickles down also to the culture of practice between staff and students. While they are held to high expectations and accountability by staff members, students feel themselves part of the Bright Prospect family and feel a deep sense of love, respect, and trust toward staff. This was manifestly exemplified in students’ speeches at College Decision Day. As students approached the microphone to give their speeches, they all observed a similar protocol; their speeches, likewise, followed a common structure and included common elements. It was clear that they had been coached and trained with a highly structured format. Yet, each speech was uniquely creative, emotive, and special in its style and content. It was clear that students had been encouraged to express themselves fully and creatively within the structure that they were given.

This mix of high accountability, high support, and high autonomy allows students to develop self-regulation while maintaining high motivation and building highly trusting relationships. One after another, students gave graduation speeches that hailed Bright Prospect staff as heroes and heroines in their lives. Most mentioned the word “love” in relation to their feelings for the staff and some shed tears as they expressed their feelings of love and gratitude.

**Unique Culture**

Bright prospect distinguishes itself from other programs. The staff especially believes that the unique culture of Bright Prospect is the main reason Bright Prospect achieves its great success with students. Staff members’ comments regarding the uniqueness of the program tend to emphasize the warm environment. Some staff members have experienced other college access programs as former students or as adults and believe that Bright Prospect’s uniqueness is more in its culture and processes (identified in this report as Purposeful Design and Purposeful Practices) than its content.
“I wanted to add something that I think really highlights how unique the culture is here at BP. I’m an alumna of the program, but before coming back, I was at a similar position at a different organization on the east coast, where the culture was very, very, very different and very bureaucratic. Growing up and being part of BP as a student [and] as a college student, and seeing the culture here and seeing how the staff was with me when I was a student, I was eager and ready to provide that to my students out in NY. I was often reprimanded by the leadership for answering my phone past 5pm, for going to visit a student at the hospital because they called me and they were injured or whatever it was, and it was really frustrating to see that. I thought everyone was like BP. Why wouldn't everyone be like BP? … I was eager to come back and be able to just fit into that warm, welcoming environment that I wasn't allowed to embrace in this other organization. Understanding the different challenges that students are going through, it's like yeah, we can guide them and help them in their education, but if we're not providing them a warm environment, we're going to lose these kids. That's what I felt was lacking where I was before, and that's one of the main reasons why I wanted to come back.”

When asked directly what makes Bright Prospect successful in transforming student lives and ensuring college access and success, Staff members point to the unique, warm and welcoming environment of Bright Prospect that builds trust.

“I think it's clear to anyone who spends any significant time here, it's the unique environment. It's unusually warm, relative to what the norm is. If you look at professional life in general, people are normally guarded, and you're more having to be on the edge. Sometimes it can feel like yeah you're on a team, but at the end of the day it's you, you have to make sure that you are handled. That's the perception of the cold, dog-eat-dog world. Here, you definitely have to work, but in particular, you have to 1) be warm or 2) be very open to becoming that way. When you think of it, if this program was ever to expand, you couldn't just go buy a manual that has a list of activities; the culture would have to go with it. I think that's very, very key, and I think the kids pick up on that, and that's why they're able to trust.” (Staff Interview)
Many of the staff believe that the culture of BP - that of a second family, including “hugs, love, family, support, empowerment, community, relationships” (Staff Interview) – owes much to the Visionary Leadership of Bright Prospect and its Purposeful Use of Human Resources (see section below):

“…a majority of us are former [Bright Prospect] students, and we all have different stories, but I also think another major piece to it is that it does stem all the way from our board of directors to our executive team. That level of commitment, having [the president] come in here and meet with us and having a board be committed to this mission, and the executive team being committed and holding us all accountable, making sure that we’re accountable to our students. I think it also grows out of that. So our level of commitment, it grows a little from our experience in BP, but it is also instilled in all of us what we're expected to do” (Staff Interview).

The culture of Bright Prospect is also conveyed through its activities and practices. One of the most important activities that staff and interns felt best conveys the Bright Prospect culture to students is the Summer Academy. One staff member stated:

“I think the Summer Academy is the crucial piece to students' development. I think because that's the first time they have an interaction with BP and staff… we do a lot of hugs; they do a lot of activities where they interact with other students from other high schools; they interact with some of our college students who [embody] the culture…” (Staff Interview).

The Summer Academy introduces the program and becomes the students’ first experience of the culture – hugs, food, warmth, love, and educational activities that raise students’ awareness about college options and tools for gaining social and financial access to competitive colleges and universities. Students want to return for the cultural elements, as well as the knowledge and wisdom transmitted (Intern
Interview). Other activities viewed as important in instilling the culture in students included the leadership academies, crew leader trainings, and the Crew Connect. A staff member noted, “We do a lot of other things that are really important, but I view those, plus the SA [Summer Academy], as being the most essential pieces of programming where we practice all of these different things with them.” (Staff Interview).

“One of the pieces that I feel [really demonstrates] our culture is in the recruiting. When we do the very first time of recruiting and we go through 9th grade English/AVID class and 9th/10th grade classes at the high school, we bring our college students that are home from winter break, so in a lot of ways it establishes a link, a direct link with them because they’re usually students who have gone to the same high school and so it becomes directly attainable and relatable to them. And then the scripts we follow, it’s not really a script, it’s very open and from the beginning we establish ourselves as a very friendly crowd, very caring. And there’s a visual to that relationship because we have our college students there who are pretty relaxed around us, and they’re giving their very real, very raw experience. So even from the beginning, from the very first time these students even see us, they get that sense of openness. That sense of normality and community.” (Staff Interview)

**Purposeful Use of Human Resources**

A key method by which Bright Prospect is able to successfully run its program is through the empowerment and utilization of human resources that are not official staff members; these include volunteers, interns, and students - particularly through the Crews® system. Bright Prospect works with nine high schools within two different school districts, serving a total of 1,900 students, including roughly 320 high school seniors. Staff members need help from these non-staff members to ensure students reach their goals of college acceptance and graduation. For example, an intern stated, “Since the staff have a lot on their plate, my role (as an intern) is important because what I do helps get things done faster” (Intern Interview). In the Bright Prospect
Manual, it states at one point, as instructions for staff, to “Thank students for volunteering – without them we could not do it!”

**Purposeful Use of Human Resources** is a design element that also enables Bright Prospect to be effective in the *Transfer of Beliefs and Expectations*, one of the Purposeful Practices. By hiring staff and engaging volunteers who are already entrenched in the program, Bright Prospect is readily able to transfer core beliefs and expectations, such as the belief and expectation that all students will attend and graduate from college. Alumni returning from college, by their very existence, exemplify this expectation. They also demonstrate Bright Prospect’s expectation that students give back to their community. Student crew leaders are trained to hold their peers accountable to program expectations (see photo).

Many students achieve this expectation by returning to Bright Prospect to volunteer, intern, and even become a staff member; indeed, many of the interns and staff members were previously students of Bright Prospect (Intern Interview, Staff Interview). This also demonstrates alumni’s loyalty to the program. One intern wrote:

“I decided to become an intern because I wanted to give back to the program. The staff/program has done a lot for me and I wanted to know how things were done. I also wanted to contribute to the success of other students. I continue to be an intern because I like to be around students and help them make the best decisions possible. I like to be a role model for them and see them succeed” (Intern Interview).
By requiring accountability of students, particularly through their crews, students themselves help take some of the weight off the staff’s shoulders. Rather than staff ensuring each student has completed the college application checklist, for example, crew leaders are responsible for making sure each member of their crew completes the checklist. This frees up the staff to work on other activities, such as planning and providing quality activities that will best prepare students for college life. A staff member noted:

“My role is also to help students maintain their crews, which is crucial because staff is working with about 320 seniors this year, and we need to have the help of crew leaders to help [their crew] members compile college applications.” (Staff Interview)

As with the program structure, the recruitment, training, and socialization of staff is a well thought out and structured process that maximizes program effectiveness and optimizes use of program funds, keeping per-student costs at a minimum.

**Purposeful Practices**

In researching the literature for this study, it was noted that purposeful planning and practice is a key element in successful youth empowerment programs. In interviews and observations at Bright Prospect, we found that a clear sense of purpose permeates the practices of leadership, staff, and program participants. While the activities of Bright Prospect programming are diverse, the principles of practice underlying their approach are congruent across activities and coherent across the entire program. The Six Purposeful Practices that emerged from the deep ethnographic study are described below with discussion at four levels: Adult-Adult, Adult-Student, Student-Student, and Intrapersonal.
**Transformative Education**

Bright Prospect staff is committed to engaging its staff members, interns, students, and parents in transformative education. This process is evident in all relationships and occurs through a variety of research-based, carefully structured, and mindfully delivered activities.

“We were completely lost and she started this program and everything became clear.” (Parent Focus Group).

**Adult-Adult.** A great deal of transformative education occurs with parents. Bright Prospect is committed to having fully informed parents. Students who apply to the program receive their first introduction to what Bright Prospect is all about during a weeklong Summer Academy. During this time, parents are invited to attend an evening meeting where awareness is raised in regard to the financial accessibility of college due to the existence of need-based aid, and the great lifelong advantages of attending college. Parents commented during the focus group:

“We didn’t know how we were gong to do it and they opened our eyes as to how.”

“You don’t know that it’s possible for your kid to go to college… BP staff is like angels to us.”

During this awareness-raising process with parents, four major points are emphasized:

1. Your student can go to college
2. College is affordable
3. We can prepare your child for college if he/she commits to program responsibilities
4. There are a few things that you must do to support your student in the process.
The simplicity and clarity of the message reassures parents that college is a realistic, attainable goal, that they will be supported through this process, and that their children can experience success. Messages delivered to parents by staff at the Summer Academy include:

“Everyone who completes the BP program gets into college.”

“As a team we get more done.”

Bright Prospect continues to meet with parents periodically to keep them informed about the college application and matriculation process, especially during the time when high school seniors and their parents must decide which offer of college admission to accept. Most Bright Prospect students receive multiple offers, and financial aid packages can vary considerably. Bright Prospect also provides support to parents in sessions that prepare them for their sons and daughters to depart for their first year of college. Many of the program’s low-income parents had never experienced nor imagined that their child may leave home to attend college in another city or state.

*Adult-Student.* Bright Prospect utilizes leadership development, coaching, modeling, graphic organizers, concrete examples, iterative verbal and visual messaging, and exposure to history and culture to transform the mindsets and perspectives of students. Staff members model the behaviors they expect in students and hold them accountable to those behaviors. They are always professional, on time, prepared, organized, respectful, and friendly, and they are
always willing to go above and beyond the call of duty for one another and for students. This modeling provides the standards of behavior for students.

Verbal and visual messaging also plays a strong role in delivering transformative education to students. The Bright Prospect environment is replete with pictures, symbols, and materials related to colleges and universities, silently conveying the message to students that they can and will go to college.

Verbal and written messages are also utilized:

“Be proactive…it all starts with you.”

“There is no such thing as failure…only a change in strategy.”

The staff also plays an important role in coaching students. They meet with students regularly to go over their goals, discuss progress, and offer coaching as needed. They train students through activities such as Leadership Academy. A staff member commented:

“Leadership Academy is like practice – like football practice – and the staff is the coach.”

During leadership academies, emphasis is placed on the importance of recognizing one’s own strengths and weaknesses. Self-reflection and self-assessment are crucial elements of students’ development as leaders, and staff members coach them in this process.
The staff employs a wide variety of graphic organizers to help students assess themselves and set personal goals, both long-term and short-term, with detailed actions that will lead to accomplishment of their ultimate endeavors. Students are consistently required to share out loud with the larger group and are guided on how to develop their public speaking skills. One such graphic organizer is a goal sheet, which requires students to “count the costs” and acknowledge the sacrifices and commitments they will need to make along the way to accomplish their set goals. Thus, the activity prepares students to remain steadfast to the commitment they are making for their own future. Students are consistently required to share with the larger group and are guided on how to develop their public speaking skills. For example, after completing a “strengths and weaknesses” T-chart about acceptance to college, one student shared that:

“…the smallest things can make a difference in whether you are accepted or denied…leadership roles are important.”

Another crucial component stressed in Bright Prospect’s transformative education for leadership development is in the building of relationships, particularly relationships founded in the purpose of serving others. Thus, leadership is framed in the concept of service, and the leader is presented as one who is concerned with the welfare and success of others.
“Once students…start valuing helping others and the success of others, then they immediately get that sense of leadership. It’s through my actions and how I help others…that I can become a leader.”

The emphasis on relationships and service is most evident among crews. Crew leaders arrange for a variety of opportunities for their crews to serve their community through churches, shelters, school events, and school clubs. The establishment and maintaining of intentional relationships is the foundation of the Crews® system. Those relationships require investments of time and energy in order to be prosperous.

Students’ understanding of leadership is further developed with concrete examples. Bright Prospect staff incorporates news articles, campus tours, and biographical information of former Bright Prospect students to ingrain in students the belief that they can strive beyond their current conditions and that they each have the capacity to be a leader in their own family and community. Staff members noted:

“Almost none of our students have been on a college campus before, and the campus tour changes college from an abstract concept to a concrete goal.”

And a crew leader explained:

“BP has allowed me to be a resource that someone can rely on.”
Through engagement in these processes students fully understand that leadership is a critical component to success and it is developed through collaborative practices. The development of leadership through transformational education is accompanied by the creation of well-rounded students with exposure to history and culture. Students are taken on cultural excursions, from symphonies, to live theatre, to museums. A student commented on these cultural experiences:

“It has exposed us to more things to show us there is more than what’s in our community.”

**Student-Student.** Evidence of transformative education is also readily apparent in the formal and informal relationships between students. Graphic organizers are used to help students monitor progress of their Crews® goals. Students are given the opportunity to maintain relationships independent of adult supports. Crew leaders are expected to fully plan and organize crew meetings (including invitations, location, and food). Thus they are empowered with a transformed vision of themselves as leaders. A staff member notes:

“[Student-led programs] develop students’ leadership, teamwork, interpersonal skills, and the attitudes that contribute to successful outcomes in both academics and life.”

Students are repeatedly reminded of their responsibility for themselves and fellow students. Students made reference to their level of commitment to their peers and, particularly, their crews and provided examples of their leadership roles toward one another during observations and focus groups. Bright Prospect’s transformative education has proven capable of changing students’ self-perceptions through peer group support. A student commented on this personal transformation:
“I was a reserved person in middle school. I would have rather been in the background. I was in a crew with older students and they instilled in me that I couldn’t stay in the shadows.”

**Intrapersonal.** Times for reflection are afforded frequently in Bright Prospect activities. At the close of the Summer Academy, students reflected on their week. Students displayed increased confidence, persistence, and a commitment to being proactive in their pursuit of college education.

“You taught me in one week that I can change the world and for that I thank you. In the beginning I used to think I don’t want to do this but it was because I was afraid. Now I say I can do whatever I want and I WILL make a difference.”

**Goal-Setting and Self-Evaluation**

Goal setting and self-evaluation stem from the *Purposeful Design* element of *Continuous Improvement* and are apparent in every aspect of Bright Prospect’s work – at the adult-adult level, the adult-student level, and the student level.

**Adult-Adult.** Goal-setting permeates all levels of the organization. Staff members, as a team, set goals and work towards achieving these goals throughout the year.

“The BP culture is a culture in which students and staff are encouraged to work together in teams or crews in order to achieve personal and academic goals” (Staff Interview).
Furthermore, self-reflection and self-evaluation are built into the culture of the program, with staff members reflecting on their goals and monitoring their progress, debriefing program activities to ensure continuous improvement, and formally including in meetings how they can improve on current practice. A staff meeting we observed included the Program Director and other staff members in attendance debriefing their progress. After acknowledging significant successes, the staff turned to the question of how to improve their processes even more, even if only slightly. The conversation revolved around the following question:

“How can we slightly improve the things we do?” (Staff Observation).

The staff felt that they have reached the goals they aspired to but now they must improve the execution. A later meeting with all the staff, including the Executive Director and Program Director, involved discussion about a future goal of Bright Prospect to expand services beyond college to facilitate students’ transition into their careers. The program currently provides a career speaker series and encourages students to obtain internships over the summer, and is honing additional messaging to prepare students for their post-secondary transition. Through self-evaluation, leaders agree to focus on additional means to help students transition into professional life.

In a broader context, this improvement orientation manifests in a mission of Bright Prospect to improve the image and socioeconomic conditions of the city of Pomona and the adjacent communities served by Bright Prospect (Staff Seminar).

**Adult-Student.** The staff at Bright Prospect works hard to help students set, evaluate, and achieve their goals. The program places a big emphasis on the goal-setting process and worksheets for students. The process involves setting SMART goals – goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time bound – and “counting the cost” of achieving their goals. Staff members ask, “What do you have to do to reach the goals you set? What do you need to do in place of what you’re currently doing?” The goals set include short term (e.g., getting an A, finishing a
report) and long term (e.g., getting into a specific college), as well as academic and personal goals. Bright Prospect provides ample graphic organizers, which students can use to set and evaluate their goals. These include: goal-setting sheets, college applications check-lists, self-assessment sheets, timelines for the college application process, and more. The staff is also cognizant of the fact that some students may over-burden themselves with goals and responsibilities, so they actively counsel students to avoid setting too many goals at once. The worksheets allow space for only a few goals to help achieve focus.

For Junior and Senior students in high school, these goals become heavily focused on what students need to accomplish or complete in order to get into college (i.e., grades, extra-curricular activities, test scores, personal statement, and letters of recommendation). Activities from the start of Summer Academy through the end of students’ time in Bright Prospect heavily revolve around getting students into, and ultimately graduating from, college (Manual). Activities include:

- Informing students of characteristics that colleges look for in students
  - “What colleges look for in an applicant: Application reading session”
- Activities that provide students with a “road-map” to help them get into college, e.g.:
  - The “Mapping your way to college: Developing goals” session
  - “The Map is Right” activity – a quiz-show format based on “The Price is Right” television show
- Continuously setting, evaluating, and re-setting goals to achieve success, e.g.:
  - Through self-assessment sheets
  - Through frequent one-on-one meetings with students to revise goals
**Student-Student.** The Crews® environment provides an opportunity for the students to help each other set, evaluate, and achieve their personal and academic goals. Crew leaders in particular are responsible for helping their crews with goal setting and self-evaluation; however, staff stresses that all members of a crew must act like leaders. The crews report on progress made toward goals, even reflecting on their “proudest achievements” (My Crew’s Progress Report document). The staff emphasized that the culture is founded on everyone being committed to one another's wellbeing and “motivating each other to accomplish personal and academic goals” (Staff Interview). This committed builds a powerful sense of trust. A staff member emphasized the power of peer support and trust toward the accomplishment of goals:

> “Relationships at BP are characterized by the commitment each member has to the success of others. All the relationships are built on the trust that we all have each other’s best interests in mind and that we will support each other in pursuing our goals” (Staff Interview).

**Commitment With Consistent Follow-through**

Based on a firmly held belief in the potential of every student to succeed, the Bright Prospect program and staff have a deeply felt commitment to each participant. The program design and implementation procedures are a reflection of that commitment. At the very first session of the Summer Academy the staff makes a commitment to participants and their parents that, if the students do their part, Bright prospect will see to it that they can graduate high school, be accepted at college, attend college, and graduate from college. Over the ensuing years, the staff members follow through on that commitment. **This level of commitment, consistency, and stability in the students’ lives is transformative, because it tacitly yet loudly proclaims a belief in students’ worth, their value, and their prospects for a bright future** (Leadership Interview).
**Adult-Adult.** Bright Prospect staff members are provided with models and training that enable them to reflect and carry out the program's goals and commitment to the participants. Reliability and consistency are emphasized at every level. Many of the staff and volunteers are former program participants and are already familiar with the culture of commitment. Together with the high level of commitment, an equally high standard of consistent follow-through means that everyone is united in the common effort to guide, encourage and motivate students to succeed. A meeting script in the Bright Prospect staff manual states:

"In everything we do, there's the constant emphasis that the ultimate aim of everything we do connects back to their goal of graduating from college. What's most significant here though, is that we are committing to the goal of college graduation. We don't just want to help them get in, we want to make sure they graduate."

The staff manual contains detailed plans for each of the activities and processes that the program carries out each year. There are agendas, scripts and tools such as worksheets and planning forms. Of necessity, it is a dynamic document, subject to adjustment as a result of the plan/implement/reflect/revise process that the program staff utilizes, but it provides a consistent roadmap for program implementation year after year, and is an important piece in the training of staff and the maintenance of consistent viewpoints and practices.

The commitment that the Bright Prospect program makes to parents of participants at the first Summer Academy meeting is carried forward throughout the duration of the program. Parents are provided with information and reassurance about the availability of and access to financial aid for college, and about the wide variety of colleges to which students can apply. All through the time the students are in high school, program staff follow up with parents on their questions and concerns, in some cases making home visits, especially to reassure the parents that their son or daughter is going to succeed, or to allay fears parents may have about him or her going to a college far away from home. In a parent focus group, positive comments
were made about the consistent availability of staff members to them, and to their children.

**Adult-Student.** As has been stated elsewhere in this report, the element of trust is a significant factor in the success of the Bright Prospect program, and trust is built on consistency and reliability. In a section of the manual, the importance of consistency is described:

"In many cases, our staff [members are] the first and only stable, positive adults in our students' lives. Through unswerving integrity and commitment with and between our students, they come to trust our staff, each other and themselves, and to be willing to speak openly and help each other solve the challenges they face every day. The incredibly strong bonds our students form with our staff and with each other are what carry them over, around and through the obstacles they encounter, and lead to their success in school and in life."

A description of the development of trust through consistency by program staff follows:

"We're not just a program that helps students get into college. We stay with students through college and beyond. We help them through some of life’s most challenging times, and so we really become like family. We aim to build a solid relationship with each and every student because we know that we can't expect our students to trust our advice, or come to us when something comes up while they're in high school or college, or even participate whole-heartedly if they don't trust us, and also this is something that has to be built over time."

Bright Prospect **staff members are consistent in providing participants with a stable and tightly coordinated set of standards and expectations on one hand, while also encouraging them to be creative and develop their own unique self-expression in adhering to those standards.** Participants know they
can rely on a genuine welcome, a hug, some food, and accurate information about financial aid, college application procedures and about skills they need to develop. The program emphasizes the development of a comprehensive set of skills needed for success in academics and in life, and also the development of healthy, positive attitudes that include responsibility, accountability, integrity and trust. The staff follows students through high school to college graduation, with consistent interest, support, information, assistance, and yes – hugs.

A clear example of the consistent modeling by Bright Prospect staff of the **balance of careful planning and purposeful structure while allowing participants freedom of ideas and expression** was evident in the College Decision Days. Those days, held at the participating high schools, are a highlight of the program, during which graduating Bright Prospect seniors tell about their experience in the program and announce to the audience of Bright Prospect juniors and sophomores where they will be attending college in the coming Fall (photo above).

The preparations for the event evidenced a firm structure: the seating plan for students in the auditorium, the room arrangements and decorations, the agenda for the event, and the outline of the presentations were consistent across campuses and across students. Within that structure, however, students were allowed freedom to be themselves, to make their presentations as they wished, to choose their style of clothing within the parameters of a defined and appropriate dress code, and to express their true feelings. The staff modeled and encouraged respect and support for every student, and elicited the same from the audience. That event, which marks the completion of one of the several goals of the Bright Prospect program, was marked by the same degree of preparation, enthusiasm, commitment, and care as was shown
in the initial experience for those students in the Summer Academy and every activity in between.

Throughout the year, the staff provides lunchtime meetings to serve as regular points of contact with students, helping to develop consistency. It was reported in several gatherings of participants that the lunchtime meetings are a way to provide information, to organize logistics about activities, and to foster and demonstrate consistency. Having students refer to a calendar and show up to commitments, such as those meetings, without being reminded is one of the life skills reinforced through this procedure. Students are shown how to set up a goal sheet during the Summer Academy, and all during the school year, staff members encourage and help them to monitor their progress toward those goals, revising if necessary or adding additional possibilities. Action plans are developed and monitored consistently, to help students accomplish stated tasks, and to develop the habit of following through on decisions. Crews are set up, and staff members train the crew leaders on a regular basis.

**Student-Student.** Consistency in relationships between students is fostered by the Crews® structure, in which a small group of students and the leader they choose work together to help each other excel in school, do community service, organize social activities, and successfully complete the college application process. One of the functions of the Crews® structure is for students to experience consistent, positive, and supportive relationships with their peers. Students keep each other on track using a Task Chart that lists all the work that needs to be done in the Fall and Spring of senior year towards applying to colleges. Within their crews, participants learn to plan, to commit, and to follow through to completion. They learn about the importance and the costs of commitment and the critical need for timely follow-through on commitments in real world settings.
Loving Support

When staff and students describe relationships, they speak of strong, caring bonds and often refer to these exchanges as “love.” **Staff and students understand love as an essential capacity and capability needed for their success in life,** and they are grateful to have the opportunity to further develop this capacity at Bright Prospect. Within this academic document we have chosen to recognize this capacity and relationship as a Purposeful Practice of Loving Support.

**Adult-Adult.** Bright Prospect staff creates and maintains a strong sense of love and support through relationships with other staff, with parents, community members, and with Bright Prospect leadership. This practice is at the heart of the close, family environment that is so unique to Bright Prospect, and it is maintained deliberately and with clear purpose.

At Bright Prospect, everyone, whether staff, parent, student, or guest is greeted with a hug. This physical touch immediately increases one’s sense of belonging and level of comfort. Bright Prospect staff members support one another in all activities. During staff meetings there is a constant show of appreciation through statements and gestures of gratitude. This support among staff is evident in their teamwork approach to all tasks. While these actions build camaraderie, they simultaneously model interactions that students emulate amongst themselves.

Supportive adult-adult relationships are also sustained between Bright Prospect staff and parents. Bright Prospect staff is well known for complimenting parents on the work they have done with their students. They continuously reiterate their availability to support families with the college preparation and application process.
One parent shared, “Parents and the program together are a winning team.” A family atmosphere is created in the BP office amongst staff and is extended to parents and family members. The physical set-up of office space is conducive to open conversations. There are no cubicles or walls, and desks are arranged in close proximity to one another. This dynamic office space places everyone at the same level. While one-on-one meetings between students and staff members are generally scheduled ahead of time, members of the staff will almost always be available to meet with students who come in without an appointment or to answer questions anytime over the phone.

This sense of family was evident in interaction among staff and parents when parents arrived for the parent focus group. All parents were greeted by name and knew the staff members in return. Staff members asked questions about students or current family events. Parents were seated in a room that resembled a living room, with couches and a coffee table. Through Bright Prospect activities, parents of the Bright Prospect community have come to know one another and have created relationships amongst themselves. The staff encourages these relationships:

“BP Culture is having a sense of community and being involved with one another, helping each other – just like a family.” (Staff Focus Group)

**Adult-Student.** The loving support that exists between adults and students is manifested through genuine personal concern, supportive relationships, a family atmosphere, physical touch, food, and deep support that goes above and beyond the call of duty if needed. Bright Prospect staff believes in “support for support’s sake.”

“It’s a belief in them when they may not believe in themselves.” (Staff Focus Group)

Bright Prospect staff members make special efforts to stay up to date on family events or trials that students are experiencing, checking in with students regularly to
relay genuine concern with students’ personal lives. Bright Prospect staff sends care packages to students who have gone away to college. Current students are visited and communicated with on a regular basis to offer coaching and support and maintain open lines of communication in cases students have any needs with which Bright Prospect can assist. In one anecdote, a college student expressed that when her grandmother passed away, and her family didn’t have the funds to bring her home from college for the funeral, Bright Prospect flew her home in time for the services and flew her back to school afterward. Students at the Summer Academy defined their relationship with staff as one full of “kindness, care, and love.”

“They ask how you’re doing and really want to know…usually people just ask that and don’t REALLY want to know.”

This genuine display of care is part of the supportive relationships that exist between staff and students. When addressing students, Bright Prospect staff unfailingly refers to “we” in lieu of “you.” Statements like “we are a team,” and “we aren’t going to get it right the first time” allow for a level of comfort and reassurance that support is there and will not go away.

“In this community, there’s inconsistency in trusting adults – that they’ll do what they said… we become someone they weren’t able to find, even in their families.”

Going above and beyond became a common description of the actions taken by Bright Prospect. When a student was not able to pay her way through summer
school, a loan was provided. Bright Prospect advocated for another student, resulting in increased school-provided financial aid. They take students to visit colleges, walk them through the application process, review and revise personal statements. The guidance, the care, and the concern seem to be boundless. **As a result of the consistent, loving support, students learn self-love and learn to believe in themselves.** As one student put it:

> “Because they believe in me, I can believe in myself.”

> “BP is like my family” was a common quote shared in a large group setting at the close of the Summer Academy. Students repeatedly found the most important outcome to be the bonding that occurred over the week and the extension of love and support. The relationships that are created are likened to a family member or a teacher, only better. Like a family, they give unconditional love and affection; however, they are perhaps more intentional, better prepared, and more systematic in being consistent and reliable in students’ lives, in holding them to high standards, and in providing training and support for meeting those standards and expectations. The relationship between students and teachers is also somewhat different from what Bright Prospect provides:

> “Our staff has a very different adult-student relationship than that which exists between even most caring of teachers and students. We are not part of a larger somewhat impersonal bureaucracy…we are known by our first names…”

Therefore, the adult-student relationships that Bright Prospect offers through the Purposeful Practice of **Loving Support** are unique in students’ lives. Even into college, alumni still report that the Bright Prospect relationships were unique and formative in their lives.

Functioning outside of a public educational institution permits Bright Prospect to express this love and support in a way that may be unacceptable in schools –
namely through the physical touch of friendly and supportive hugs. Hugs are given at the beginning, in the middle (to late-comers), and at the close of meetings. Part of the justification: students don’t always get hugs in their households.

“That’s why the hugs are so important, that we care for you, we love you…We tell them those things…that may be the only time that they hear that or feel it.”

The extension of touch when students are not within arm’s reach is a gesture, created with each hand’s fingertips meeting at the top of the head forming a heart, which says, “I love you.”

Sending the message of Loving Support is also expressed through the provision of food. The display of loving support through food is perhaps the most commonly mentioned by students, leading a staff member to note:

“…the way to students’ hearts is through their stomach.”

Practically, food is provided because staff understands that while some students may not always have food at home, all of them like to eat. Therefore, food is provided at most Bright Prospect events, large or small. While staff would prefer to serve healthy food at meetings, it has made a practical compromise that the primary goal of food is to attract students to meetings while ensuring that they have sufficient caloric energy. So the food at Bright Prospect events typically involves
pizza, with sweets and chips.

When ordering pizza, the staff errs on the side of ordering too much, partly to avoid not having enough for all attendees, but also so that students can take what’s left over home to their families who may not eat otherwise. Referring both to the provision of food to students at Bright Prospect events and allowing students to take food home to their families, a Bright Prospect staff contends:

“…I always say, a family that eats together, stays together.”

**Student-Student.** The examples set forth by Bright Prospect staff are modeled among the students within their crews and other social events. Crews recreate the supportive relationships, sense of family, and personal care that is modeled for them in the adult-student relationships. Students within crews focus on the importance of friendships, to be more precise, friendships with like-minded people.

The Bright Prospect manual describes these relationships: “Crew friendships are intended to encourage personal and social development with the aim of going to college… and ensuring a successful transition to professional life.” Crews allow for the expression of *Loving Support* among students while also strengthening the other Purposeful Practices. For example, in crews, students learn to hold one another accountable and stay committed to one another with consistent follow-through.

Students understand the importance of peer support and describe their relationships in the context of family:
“We are each other’s back up…if someone is falling we help each other…if you do it alone, it’s not going to work.”

“We’re like a mini family…if one person falls we help them.”

**Requiring Accountability of Self and Others**

Bright Prospect staff members hold themselves accountable for the success of each student. In turn, they require of each student a personal sense of accountability and responsibility to the tasks that are necessary in order to achieve the goal of going to college. In addition, students are made aware of the need to be accountable to one another.

**Adult-Adult.** The office set-up is conducive to staff members holding one another accountable. An open layout, with no cubicles and no walls, creates transparency and allows staff members to be intimately aware of one another’s work and whereabouts. Staff members can talk to one another from anywhere in the office. In addition to enabling accountability, this also reinforces the trust, teamwork, and team culture of Bright Prospect, which students are able to see and emulate. This transparency is a strong characteristic of accountability in the organization.

Along with requiring accountability of one another, staff members trust one another. Trust starts at the top of the organization. During staff observations, it was clear that the Program Director trusts his staff, giving them the freedom and autonomy (loose coupling) to make a lot of the day-to-day decisions of program implementation. This freedom, however, is afforded in a context of high accountability to program standards and expectations (tight coupling). This balance of loose and tight coupling is a feature of Bright Prospect’s Purposeful Organizational Design, as discussed previously in the report.
**Adult-Student.** The relationship characteristics that allow staff members to hold students accountable successfully are trust and honesty. Trust was cited as one of the major factors of the relationships within Bright Prospect. For instance, one staff member said:

“All relationships at BP have a high level of trust. All of the staff builds trust between other staff members, students, visitors, and community members.”

Another staff member echoed:

“Trust is a key in all the multidimensional relationships (with students, with staff, with supervisors, etc.).”

The interns agreed, listing four keys to the relationships at Bright Prospect:

“Trust, honesty, friendship, care. BP takes the time and effort to reach out to their students.”

This reinforces the findings from the first phase of the evaluation, in which Bright Prospect college students and alumni (84%) and high school students (80%) agreed that, “When it comes to my most sensitive personal issues, I trust Bright Prospect staff for advice.” At the high school level, trust in Bright Prospect staff (80%) was followed, in descending order, by trust in parents (76%), friends (74%), siblings (72%), high school teachers (62%), staff from other college preparatory programs (57%), and high school counselors (51%).

The staff achieves this high level of trust by modeling it for the students through consistent accountability and follow-through (Leadership Interview). **They gain trust by virtue of being stable, positive, and consistent adults in the students’ lives who hold them accountable for their actions.** It may seem counterintuitive that accountability would breed trust; yet, this finding was echoed
across several data sources. The staff members hold high expectations for the students, respecting them as “near adults” (Leadership Interview). This respect from caring and consistent adults in their lives breeds self-respect, self-trust, and eventually self-confidence in the students. They, in turn, learn to treat one another with the same respect and trust. It was noted that staff refer to the juniors as “rising seniors” to emphasize the fact that next semester in the school year they will be seniors. To make clear to students that the expectations of the program are realistic, the program brings in college students to show students that they too can strive for and achieve these results.

These expectations are also made explicit through discussions about the importance of persistence and resilience – “grit” in today’s academic literature. Grit is defined as perseverance and passion for long-term goals (Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, & Kelly, 2007; Larson & Rusk, 2010) and is highly correlated with intrinsic motivation to succeed, particularly in the face of obstacles. At Bright Prospect, students learn to persevere through difficulties, when they are held accountable. Staff doesn’t make or allow excuses for students. Instead, they hold their expectations high and offer the support needed to ensure success. Thus, through this modeling by staff and through personal goal-setting, students learn resilience and grit. Students are also required to sign a written statement of the expectations held of them (Manual). Staff members said:

“I think we also do a good job of holding students accountable for their choices, their decisions and how they work with staff and the assignments that we give them.”

“…whether it’s a monthly crew salon – how many of you actually did it, fill out this worksheet – we hold them accountable for not only attending our program but also carrying out the values that we instill within them. Once you set out a level of expectations, they will want to rise to the challenge, and they’ll do it themselves.”
This accountability also permeates to the community level, where they instill a sense of responsibility to return to their community to help others succeed:

“You are an essential part of the solution to transforming our community” (Summer Academy). Also, “The more open you are to being coached into growth, the more will be your contribution to the growth of this community. You will come back as professionals and help to change this community” (Crew leader training).

These high expectations are coupled with accountability such that praise is not automatic but rather earned based on effort.

**Student-Student.** Crews are a major way in which students hold each other accountable. The staff members ask students to hold each other accountable. Staff remarked:

“So they know that maybe a crew member is falling or is behind in their assignments that they can call them out and encourage them to keep up” (staff interview)

“Relationships at BP are characterized by the commitment each member has to the success of others. All the relationships are built on the trust that we all have each other’s best interests in mind and that we will support each other in pursuing our goals. There is also a lot of love and genuinely caring for each other, especially when one is going through a hard time. It is also about celebrating each others’ successes.”

“[The] focus is on we and not I. It takes a team to succeed to graduate from high school and college. Friends look out for each other, each student has the social responsibility and commitment to each other.”
“We encourage students to hold each other accountable for their actions and decisions.”

The program requires students to build trust with fellow students:

“Simultaneously, while we’re building trust with students, they’re learning to trust each other because everything we do requires such a collaborative approach that they need to trust each other as well.”

For instance, they hold crew leaders responsible for organizing and leading activities, reporting back to staff, and holding each other accountable (Leadership interview, Crew leader training, Staff observations).

**Intrapersonal.** Finally, the staff also expects that students hold themselves accountable. For instance:

“We have expectations of you [the student] and we’re going to hold you accountable; if we say we’re going to do something at the program, we do it.”

**Students are taught to self-reflect and self-regulate.** They are coached in goal setting and accompanied in the monitoring of their own progress toward accomplishing their goals.

**Transfer of Beliefs and Expectations**

One of the most important findings of the Phase 1 outcome evaluation of Bright Prospect completed in 2011-12 was the consistent emphasis on the power of the beliefs and expectations that staff members have in the potential success of students. Corollary to this findings was the resulting belief on the part of students that they can, in fact, succeed and will not only go to college but will have a successful
college career. In the current study, as well, the power of beliefs and expectations is seen and heard repeatedly in the observed activities. The critical question was, how did Bright Prospect staff transfer their beliefs and expectations, first, among the levels of staff and volunteers who implement the program, and next, to the students and their parents. Findings are discussed below by levels of relationships.

Adult-Adult. Bright Prospect leadership team models the commitment and beliefs it holds, every day, in every occasion. It also transfers beliefs through repetitive messaging. In a staff interview it was reported that the leadership team first shows staff how to be, and then tells them again and again. For example, the very high level of commitment that Bright Prospect has to every participating student is exemplified by the fact that staff office hours become secondary to their students’ needs. The leadership team demonstrates this fact by example and shows that everything revolves around the students. The needs of the students come first.

As a result, staff members also recognize that there will be times when a ride is needed, or an emergency occurs, and they will have to step in. Providing stability, commitment, consistency and caring – elements the students may not all always have at home – forms the basis of the support system that staff provides for the students. As staff members become more acculturated, their behaviors aligned with the culture of Bright Prospect are strengthened and reinforced by the response and gratitude of the students. They are also driven by recollection of their own needs as students and experiences in which adults (in many cases Bright Prospect adults) were there for them as students in need.

During a staff study session on the history of the development of the city of Pomona, the staff members were given a detailed description of the social, economic, and ethnic forces which shaped the city during the last two hundred years, so as to help them understand the community from which the participating students come. It was also designed to give the staff more perspective on the problems in the city and possible solutions. One of the facilitators stated:
"We present these facts to better inform ourselves so we can better guide the kids."

One of the expected long-term outcomes of the Bright Prospect program is that some of the graduates will return to Pomona to help bring about positive development in the city. The idea is to lift the community out of poverty by creating a group of college graduates that return to the community and to create a college-going culture where graduates return with degrees in various specialties to lift up the community. Other participants return to work at Bright Prospect as interns, volunteers, or staff. All staff members are on a first-name basis and work together in the same large room. This proximity and the flat structure of the organization also aid in the transfer of beliefs, norms, and expectations. The interns pointed this out as an indicator of the inclusive nature of the organization and the respect and caring evidenced by all for all.

In the initial Summer Academy sessions, and again at the very beginning of the school year, parents are invited for an orientation and information gathering about the program. Parents are clearly told:

"We expect all our students who put forth the effort to go to college and graduate."

“We believe in our students, and we expect them to go to college and graduate.”

Parents are encouraged to become a part of the support team for the student. In addition, the parents are asked to move around the room, introducing themselves and shaking hands with other parents, creating relationships from the beginning. Along with the assurance that their sons and daughters can go to college and be successful comes the reassurance that there will be sufficient help with securing
financial aid, so that parents need not be anxious or afraid that the lack of money will mean that college is not accessible to them.

**Adult-Student.** The transfer of beliefs and expectation by adults to students is carried out in many ways, beginning with the weeklong Summer Academy. *Incoming participants are told, shown, and immersed in examples of the staff’s belief in their potential* and the expectation that the participants will go to and graduate from college. From the very first session of the Summer Academy, participants see Bright Prospect college student volunteers and program alumni staff members who look like them, come from homes like theirs, went to the same schools they do, and who are attending or have graduated from the finest schools in the nation. They hear statements from current and former participants such as the following:

"Because they (the Bright Prospect Staff) believe in me, I can believe in myself."

Throughout the Summer Academy and during the ensuing year, participants are guided through a series of carefully planned experiences designed to help them develop the beliefs and expectations of themselves that the staff is demonstrating. They are given confirming information (through historical excerpts and current articles and data) about their potential for success and are asked to debunk disconfirming data. They engage in a New Friends Bingo activity the very first day, and a team-building activity on the third day. They are exposed to staff and volunteers modeling professional dress, language, and comportment that are desirable and will prove helpful to the participants in school and career.

Participants are given tools to enable them to make appropriate strides toward fulfilling the expectations expressed by the staff members, expectations that the students themselves come to hold. Throughout the school year, there are goal-setting sessions, study sessions on instructive articles, trips to cultural experiences and, finally, trips to colleges to help students see and feel what it is like on a college campus. Weekend meetings include food, fellowship and hugs, in addition to the matters on
the agenda. In the previous study and in the current one, hugs emerged as a vital and critical factor in the formation of the unique cultural environment at Bright Prospect that is so essential to their success. An embrace that expresses genuine caring is a positive, permanent element in the Bright Prospect culture, and the participants value it, even those who at first found it a little odd.

**Student-Student.** As the participants begin to respond to the beliefs and expectations of the staff for them, they also learn to relate to other students in similar ways. **An important element of the Bright Prospect program is the formation of crews,** small groups of students at the same school, who work together as a support system. A crew leader is chosen from the group, who plans activities, encourages the other members of his or her crew, helps them keep up with timelines and deadlines – especially during the college application process – and generally acts as a point of communication within the group, and with the Bright Prospect staff. Students form very close relationships within their crews and feel a responsibility to the group and to each other. In some cases, participants do not have a support system at home, either because a parent is not present, or is overwhelmed with work and worries, or for some other reason.

The staff provides training for the crew leaders. At the beginning of the school year, in a training session for new sophomore crew leaders, the topics were about knowing one's own strengths, being a good friend, and the characteristics of friendship. The students were helped to introduce themselves and to speak clearly about someone who has influenced them in positive ways. In a training session for senior crew leaders, the session reflected the remarkable personal and collective growth clearly evident in the leaders present. The leaders were discussing the outings or "salons" they were planning for their crews, and were very articulate about the needs of the group and the expectations for the outing. When asked if they consider themselves as role models for the others in the crew, without exception, and without ego, they said they did, and told of ways in which they are models for their group. Their examples reflected ways in which the leaders utilized the beliefs and expectations present in the Bright Prospect culture, for the benefit of their crews.
In practice, all of the Purposeful Practices work together in a coherent and congruent manner to transfer and transform beliefs and expectations. The Purposeful Practices work synergistically and are, in reality, not easily teased out from one another.

**Findings By Research Question**

The eight research questions that drove the study and resulted in the findings, were categorized into the Purposeful Design and Purposeful Practices. These design elements and practices have been discussed at length in the Findings section of the report. A summary table is provided below (Table 5) to demonstrate the relationship of the questions with the practices that resulted. The specific ways in which each practice is used are elaborated at length in the Findings section.

**Table 5. Findings by Research Question: Elements of Purposeful Design and Purposeful Practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Purposeful Design Elements</th>
<th>Purposeful Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How does Bright Prospect achieve cultural norms among the adults and students in the program?</td>
<td>All Elements 1-5 were important</td>
<td>All Practices 1-6 were important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How do Bright Prospect team members convey the concepts and beliefs that they espouse to students? To parents? To new staff and intern recruits?</td>
<td>All Elements 1-5, and especially: 4- Unique Culture</td>
<td>All Practices 1-6, and especially: 1- Transformative Education 6- Transfer of Beliefs and Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How do Bright Prospect team members use verbal and non-verbal cues?</td>
<td>1- Research-Based Design 4- Unique Culture</td>
<td>1- Transformative Education 4- Loving Support 6- Transfer of Beliefs and Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How do Bright Prospect team members employ visual and</td>
<td>1- Research-Based Design</td>
<td>1- Transformative Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Elements and Practices</td>
<td>Practices</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. How do Bright Prospect team members model desired practices, beliefs, and expectations?</td>
<td>All Elements 1-5, and especially: 4- Unique Culture 5- Purposeful Use of Human Resources</td>
<td>All Practices 1-6 were important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. How do Bright Prospect team members inspire students to hold high expectations for themselves and for one another and to set goals accordingly?</td>
<td>1- Research-Based Design 2- Continuous Improvement 3- Organizational Structure 4- Unique Culture</td>
<td>All Practices 1-6 were important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. How do Bright Prospect team members empower students to believe in themselves and take initiative to achieve their goals?</td>
<td>All Elements 1-5, and especially: 2- Continuous Improvement 4- Unique Culture</td>
<td>All Practices 1-6, and especially: 3- Commitment with Consistent Follow-Through 4- Loving Support 5- Requiring Accountability of Self and Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. How do Bright Prospect team members develop relationships of trust that equal or surpass the degree of trust students have with their closest family members?</td>
<td>All Elements 1-5, and especially: 4- Unique Culture 5- Purposeful Use of Human Resources</td>
<td>All Practices 1-6, and especially: 3- Commitment with Consistent Follow-Through 4- Loving Support 5- Requiring Accountability of Self and Others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These practices are embodied in the Program Activities, as well as in the culture of the organization. The culture of Bright Prospect is unique and is instilled in students from day one of the program.
The Purposeful Design Elements and Purposeful Practices identified in the evaluation findings drive the critical process of transformation that is at the heart of the work of Bright Prospect. In order for transformation to take place, barriers to desired outcomes must first be broken down to create a vision of reality in which those outcomes are in fact possible. Through its purpose practice of Transformational Education, Bright Prospect lucidly and effectively removes images, perceptions, and beliefs that pose mental barriers to college and career success and replaces these limiting beliefs with positive and achievable messages and beliefs, for parents and students alike. Through the remaining purposeful practices, it builds on this open and fertile foundation the interpersonal and intrapersonal skills necessary for psychological empowerment and academic success (see logic model):

- Though Goal Setting and Evaluation it develops the skills of self-regulation and self-reflection in students. The staff encourages students to set high goals and supports them in meeting those goals. Positive results reinforce positive beliefs and high expectations.
- Through Commitment and Consistent Follow-Through, the program models responsibility and accountability and demonstrates to students their worth and value. Staff commitment to students and their goals also models for students a commitment to themselves and their own goals.
- Through Loving Support, students learn to love themselves and others. “They taught me how to love,” a student noted in her graduation speech, and others echoed the sentiment repeatedly. Loving Support, as demonstrated by staff and mirrored in crews, models for students how to build constructive, supportive, and positive interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships.
Requiring Accountability of Self and Others further reinforces self-regulation, responsibility, and accountability. Further, when staff members hold students accountable to high standards, they provide evidence to students of their high expectations for them. In staff-student relationships, holding students to high standards is constructive when it is in combination with Loving Support and Commitment and Consistent Follow-Through, which provide students with the certitude that if they fail a task, they can pick themselves up, dust themselves off, and try again. Thus, students build resilience and grit, qualities required for academic and life success. Adult modeling, in turn, provides a framework and crews provide a venue for implementation of accountability in student-student relationships.

Through Transfer of Beliefs and Expectations, students then learn to set and maintain high expectations of themselves and to broaden their horizons for academic and career success and for contributions to their communities and to society at large.

All of the purposeful practices, working collectively and in coherence, create a foundational culture of psychological empowerment that leads to progressive development of youth and their continued and persistent advancement into college, through college, and beyond.

**Limitations**

As with most qualitative studies of a program, a primary limitation of this study is the necessarily limited sample. Given a limited timeframe and limited budget, it was not possible to observe every program activity, nor to observe several samples of a given activity. Limitations on hours and resources required that the team select one or two of each seminal practice to observe. The triangulation of findings across the various observations, focus groups, and document reviews allowed for mitigation of this limitation.

Another limitation common to qualitative research is the element of the human mind serving as a research tool. As researchers, we are intent in maintaining
objectivity or bracketing ourselves out of the data collection process. We introduce inter-rater scenarios to mitigate the potential for bias. Nevertheless, there must remain some unavoidable amount of bias. This concern was addressed with regular and systematic team meetings for debriefing and triangulation of data sources throughout the data collection and analysis processes. Additionally, multiple researchers attended the bulk of activities in order to strengthen inter-rater reliability.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the research team offers the suggested next steps as described below. Areas of focus include Outreach, Program Scale-Up, and Suggestions for Further Research.

Outreach

Recommended outreach activities include advertisement and publication efforts.

Advertisement

Advertisement can be used to build public relations and broaden community awareness and support. For example, small bios of Bright Prospect alumni have been used in local newspapers to advertise the annual luncheon. Similar material could be used periodically throughout the year to maintain interest and support. One concern expressed by parents was the desire to have more parents receive information about the program. Presentations to PTA and Parent Advisory groups by staff and/or students would be one way to raise awareness. Further information delivery to parents might be accomplished through school websites, community organizations, and churches. Outreach to business groups, the Chamber of Commerce and local alumni groups for Cal Poly and the Claremont Colleges may expand the base of community support.
Publications

We suggest that another aspect of outreach be directed to the professional community. Articles should be prepared and submitted to peer reviewed journals. Conference presentations to groups in the evaluation and education communities and groups devoted to youth development may be undertaken, both in collaboration with the evaluation team and independently. Such presentations carried out jointly by members of the current evaluation team and Bright Prospect staff members would pool the resources of two powerful organizations and make an especially powerful contribution to the field of college access and generate much interest in Bright Prospect and respect for its processes and outcomes.

In addition to contributions Bright Prospect is poised to make to the field of college access, findings of the two evaluation studies stand to make a great contribution to the field of afterschool programming as legislation in that arena (SB 1221) moves toward more non-academic outcomes associated with positive youth development, areas in which Bright Prospect holds great experience and unique contributions.

Another possibility is the publication of a number of books such as a compilation of short biographies of successful Bright Prospect alumni, or a comprehensive presentation of the Bright Prospect program theory logic model and detailed description of each component of the program as discussed in the two joint studies. The books could be self-published, perhaps with the collaboration of local businesses to provide artwork, printing, etc., or published through educational publishing companies. The biographical compilation book could be vigorously marketed to high school libraries, youth organizations, and the general public. It could also be a companion piece to a documentary film about the Bright Prospect program, with an eye to placing it on local PBS and other educational media outlets. Having the film produced as a collaborative effort among local Pomona high schools and surrounding college media departments would be advantageous, would reduce the cost, and would generate tremendous community interest, pride, and goodwill. The more scholarly book may be published in collaboration with Claremont Graduate
University and Pomona Unified School District and serve as a seminal piece in college access programming.

In addition to the dissemination of best practices, all of these outreach activities would ultimately also lead to the generation of funding sources for Bright Prospect so that more students can be served.

Program Scale Up

Program scale up activities are recommended to accelerate the dissemination and replication of Bright Prospect practices and results by reaching a greater number of students nationwide and even globally.

Marketing Program Replication

Given the notable success of Bright Prospect in achieving its goals of student access and completion of college, a viable market for a program replication process should be investigated and explored. We envision a system of training modules based on key elements of Bright Prospect’s Purposeful Practices. The basis of the training model would be on-site immersion in Bright Prospect culture, using a train the trainer model, followed by ongoing coaching. Staff members noted during the current study that it would not be possible to give others a manual and expect that they could duplicate the Bright Prospect program or create a similar culture. In a successful program replication model, the participants would experience Bright Prospect over a period of time, engaging in hands-on learning and observation of staff/student interactions in a variety of situations.

A series of training modules, comprising a replicable package, may be carefully developed and marketed. Interested participants would be required to commit to stated minimum obligations, which would include but would not be limited to:

- A set timeframe, possibly a year
- On-site shadowing of key personnel who would serve as models
• Completion of topical modules based on the Purposeful Practices identified in this study
• Follow-up visits by Bright Prospect staff to the participant's location, for further monitoring and guidance
• Payment of fees which would generate an income stream for Bright Prospect, compensate any additional staff time involved, and allow more students to be served.

A strong marketing plan for the training program would necessarily have to be developed, as well as training materials.

**Development of Training Manual**

Development of a formal Training Manual was originally envisioned as a part of this study, but could not take place due to funding. The manual would begin with a clear definition of the theoretical, philosophical base of the Bright Prospect program, and build on the currently existing manual, which includes scripts, steps, resources, graphic organizers, worksheets, articles, and timelines. Based on Phase I and Phase II findings, the manual would include a connection to program design, practices, outcomes, and examples of how to Implement Purposeful Practices. It is recognized that a manual must necessarily be a dynamic document to allow for reflection and refinement over time, and as circumstances change and understandings grow.

**Further Research**

Given the unique nature and success of Bright Prospect, further research is recommended to examine aspects of the program which have not yet been addressed in studies and which assist with the development of training modules and manuals, dissemination of best practices, and further program development and refinement. Potential application of program findings to related areas of practice would also assist in raising Bright Prospect further toward national recognition.
Examination of Developmental Outcomes

The evaluation team identified developmental outcomes that result from the identified Purposeful Practices. These outcomes have yet to be studied empirically to validate the degree of Bright Prospect’s effectiveness in effecting these outcomes. To examine more closely the connection between Bright Prospect Purposeful Practices and developmental outcomes, we propose a more detailed study utilizing scales to measure developmental outcomes in a quasi-experimental design, comparing Bright Prospect students with non-Bright Prospect students from the same schools.

Examination of Program Inputs

In the development of a program replication training model, a module on program initiation will necessarily be included. A study of the inputs of Bright Prospect would assist greatly in the development of such a module. Topics may include recruitments, training, acculturation, and resource management.

College, Career, Community Impact Study

Bright Prospect impacts extend beyond high school and even college, affecting students’ careers, families, contributions to community, and intrapersonal factors such as happiness and wellbeing. Heretofore, the evaluation studies have focused primarily on high school students. A quasi-experimental study is recommended to explore eight factors beyond high school: The factors include 1) college selection, 2) persistence, 3) selected courses of study, 4) graduation, 5) professor feedback/perceptions, 6) career choice, 7) community involvement, 8) impact on family, and 9) long-term impact on intrapersonal factors. Since Bright Prospect participants are encouraged and stimulated to participate in community involvement, and many have adopted and declared personal goals to upgrade their family situation, we would have an opportunity to see the degree to which those intentions have been fulfilled. There would also be an opportunity to examine the effects, if any, on the general community climate.
Appendix 1. References


## Appendix 2. Primary Data Collection Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1: Fall 2013</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>Early October through December</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of Theory of Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership Interview (I)</td>
<td>Early October</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Interviews (2)</td>
<td>Early October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis Meetings</td>
<td>Early October</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 2: Winter 2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FG with HS Crew Leaders – Seniors</td>
<td>Late October</td>
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<tr>
<td>FG with Interns (College Students)</td>
<td>Early November</td>
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<tr>
<td>FG with Parents</td>
<td>Early November</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis Meetings</td>
<td>November</td>
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<tr>
<td>FG with HS Students</td>
<td>Spring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Seminar Observations (1 hr.)</td>
<td>Every 3rd Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Meeting Observations (1.5 hrs.)</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Preparation Observations – Leadership Academy Prep</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership Academy Observations:</td>
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<tr>
<td>a) Seniors College Application (2 hrs.)</td>
<td>November</td>
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<tr>
<td>b) Sophomores (1.5 hrs.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis Meetings and Write-Up</td>
<td>December</td>
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<tr>
<td>CREW Leader Training Observations</td>
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<tr>
<td>a) Juniors (1.5 hrs.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>b) Sophomores (1.5 hrs.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal Setting Follow-Up Observations</td>
<td>January and February</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis Meetings and Write-Up</td>
<td>January</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Interventions with Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Triangulation and Report Writing Meetings</td>
<td>February</td>
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<tr>
<th>Phase 3: Spring/Summer 2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Triangulation and Report Writing Meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Shadowing (full day)</td>
<td>April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Triangulation and Report Writing Meetings</td>
<td>May - June</td>
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<td>College Decision Day</td>
<td>June</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report Editing</td>
<td>July through September</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report Submission</td>
<td>September</td>
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</table>

Note: Items in black refer to data collection tasks and events (e.g., observations and focus groups), while items in blue refer to project management tasks (e.g., meetings and report writing).
## Appendix 3. Matrix of Thematic Findings

### Bright Prospect Ethnographic Study

#### Matrix of Thematic Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes*</th>
<th>PD1</th>
<th>PD2</th>
<th>PD3</th>
<th>PD4</th>
<th>PD5</th>
<th>PP1</th>
<th>PP2…</th>
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<td>Leadership Interview</td>
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<td>Parent FG</td>
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<td>Staff Meeting Observation</td>
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<td>Staff Prep Observation</td>
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<td>Summer Academy</td>
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<td>Leadership Academy Interview</td>
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<td>College Decision Day</td>
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*Note: Themes were coded according to the Five Purposeful Design elements (PD 1-5) and the Six Purposeful Practices (PP 1-6) that resulted from the study. Sample headings are provided in Row 1.
## Appendix 4. Qualitative Data Analysis Template

### Bright Prospect Ethnographic Study 2013 - 2014
Qualitative Data Analysis Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Group/Observation Title:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Researchers:</td>
<td>Primary Writer:</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme*</th>
<th>Bulleted Findings</th>
<th>Evidence: Stories, quotes, etc.</th>
<th>Related Documentation: Photo, video, handouts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PD1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PD2</td>
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*Note: Themes were coded according to the Five Purposeful Design elements (PD 1-5) and the Six Purposeful Practices (PP 1-6) that resulted from the study. Sample headings provided in Column 1.