

First-Generation Students

A Neglected Part of the “Pipeline”

- First in their families to attend college
- **Typical Characteristics**
 - Average performance in high school / dropped out from college
 - Bewildered by “the system”
 - Demographically not typical – often not minority/underserved
 - Often do not start out in the sciences
 - Academic promise NOT immediately apparent - not top-tier choice
- **Transformation into scientists**
 - **Transformation is the result of sustained mentoring**
 - Primary impetus from undergraduate research – on campus or REU
 - Academic promise developed **during** undergraduate years

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- **NSF-CRCNS at Elmhurst**

- 13 students over 4 years – 4 first-generation (FG)
- 3 of 4 FG are in Ph.D programs, 4th is applying this year
- 5 of 13 are in Ph.D programs

- **Comments and Suggestions**

- Increase research output from Primarily Undergraduate Institutions
- **Sustained mentoring is the key to transformation**
- Even “bottle-washing” in a research lab is preferable to a retail job!
- **Perhaps new “small-grant” opportunity?**
 - \$12/hr – 10hrs/week + \$3000 summer = \$6000/student/year (approx.)
 - Faculty summer stipend = \$6000, 4 students = \$24,000, Total = \$30,000/year
- **Research and mentoring experience for the student - *Priceless!***