Kessler Scholars Collaborative
Stakeholder Engagement & Strategy Exploration Recap

Executive Summary

On July 19th, 2021, members of the Kessler Scholars Collaborative met for day one of their Summer Convening session. SME Strategy facilitated three key conversations:
- What is working well?
- What is not working as well?
- What are our ideal outcomes moving forward as a partnership (3-year vision)?

After these conversations, we generated a list of possible action items that Kessler Scholar Collaborative can take on to move towards a shared 3-year vision.

Kessler Scholars Collaborative will meet as a team to review the list of brainstormed action items in order to identify quick wins and tasks to prioritize to begin moving forward.

What's working well?

- Monthly meetings held with a commitment to students & network
- Established community who works well together and collaborate with other experts - cross functional communication
- Consistent participation and great attitude throughout the team
- We still have our programs running (even throughout this past year)
- We reach out to others when things aren't going well - vulnerability is accepted and contributes to a resilient and safe space
- Welcoming and inclusive group, non-judgemental, and open to sharing ideas
- Although coming together from different institutions, we have shared goals that can help us move forward as a collaborative and as individual institutions
- Strong sense of collegiality among the group
- We have the right mix of people - well suited for their roles, and well suited for jumping into the national collaborative level
- Great mix of expertise
- People (new & old) have "gelled" and work well together in a respectful and non-competitive manner
- Worked hard on fine tuning the evaluation work to determine the impact of the collaborative's work
- Everyone comes to meetings with a smile on their face and are dedicated to service (invested in conversations that support the collaborative and those they serve)
- Without meeting in person over the past 14-months, friendships have formed
- Recently hosted a collaborative event
- Willingness and commitment with engaging each other's and student perspectives when developing and improving programming
- Sense of collective is clear and strong
- Individual institutions can learn from the collective and bring back the information to their locations to serve their students
- Effectively onboards every school that joins the collaborative, which sets Kessler apart from other organizations (despite not yet being national)
- Launched a Kessler summer bridge this summer and share resources and helpful information with students
- Comfortable with discussing concerns and resource constraints as a group

What's not working well/what can we improve?

- Systems & Institutional knowledge: We don't yet have one space to share information and documentation so sometimes knowledge gets lost in transformation
- Everyone has a different amount of time to spend on focusing on Kessler Scholar's Collaborative initiative
- Still learning about/working on new ways to bring students together more often
- Internal struggle with resources due to different roles - competing priorities that lead to some members not being able to give 100% of their energy and attention
- Not sure what welcome back looks like for 1st & 2nd year students (from Kessler's perspective) - how can we connect and engage with the scholars realistically while recognizing the resources we have?
- Contrast or pull between institutional needs and group needs
- Homework between meetings that not everyone has completed - capacity issues
- We don't yet know what each year should look like - we don't have a roadmap and we're not sure what other schools are doing that we could build off of
- Time to step back to look at what we want for the future - where are we headed?
- Don't yet have a shared vision & mission that recognizes that we're doing similar things, sometimes in different ways (a unified format that isn't restrictive)
- How can we have enough alignment across our 6 programs so that it's recognizable (for both students and programs) but so that it's not too prescriptive at the program level
- Capacity at the collaborative level - what can we realistically do?
- We don't know enough about each other's institutional needs and commitments to make decisions around shared Kessler programs that serve everyone's needs
- We don't know enough about what each other are offering and we haven't spent enough time as a group to talk about it (both similarities & differences)
- Program transparency across sites is lacking at times - how can we improve campus sharing at the collaborative level?
- Individual grants - sometimes those carrying out the program weren't consulted about the activities or funding allocation in advance
- Transition from online to on campus - we haven't yet considered what their experience for this fall will look like

What are the ideal outcomes for us as a partnership? (3-Year Visioning)

July 19th, 2024:

- We graduated our first cohort and they are attending grad school at another Kessler Collaborative site (any of the ones we have) and we have high retention rates based on the campuses we're operating within
- We have had five cohorts who we've admitted, and some are doing their studies or internships abroad at other Kessler sites
- We have a strong and inclusive network among the students themselves
- First collaborative wide (cross-institutional) graduation celebration has been a success
- Vibrant network of alumni connected across the world (roughly 300) - keeping up to date with contacts & communicating regularly
- Had a successful convening for the students with Kessler institutions present
- We have a complete list of comprehensive goals for all students
- We have endowed positions to support programs at each Kessler site, with funding in perpetuity
- We have 10 campuses as members, and we have resources and experiences to support them
- We have built a collaborative-wide understanding of what it means to be a Kessler scholar while respecting the similarities and differences among campuses
- We all have Kessler coins for our students at all institutions
- We have partnerships at community colleges as well as 4- year institutions, and are admitting juniors transitioning from community colleges to Kessler partners?
- We are presenting nationally about our work and letting others know about the good work we're doing
- We have a clear definition of what each year entails and what we have in common
- We have celebrated together in-person as a collaborative members
- We have a student advisory board so students have a leadership role within the collaborative
- We have a collaborative student leadership board with representatives from every partner school on that board, coming together to develop student led social events (networking, relationship building, collaboration)
- We have systems, processes & structures to be able to solicit student input
- Our program has allowed us to gain more insight into the student experience at

every institution
- We have a workshop every year that highlights first gen identity and we do this collaboratively through an annual shared program and event
- We have porous institutional borders to enable consistent cross-site navigation and collaboration.
- We have demonstrated success outcomes by affective measures and traditional higher ed measures (ex: cohort beating institutional completion rate)
- There's an article about Kessler that expands on how we have achieved our goals and vision over the past 3-years
- Kessler serves as a national model for first generation students
- Students have a sense of what it means to be a Kessler scholar, and they are able to articulate this in a way that speaks to other students and future employers (speaks to the benefits of why the program exists)
- We have no college stop-outs, only transfer students
- Our students say that the Kessler Collaborative feels like family and that they belong to this space
- Students have confidence in where they're going - next steps and paths
- We have a shared database (institutional neutral) so we can track data on current scholars and alumni
- We have a web presence, branding, and identity that exists for the collaborative so that we are easily recognized and found
- We have a program model that we can all point to and explain that represents all programs and partners - "this is who we are and what we do"
- Cornell University will set the model for a 4-year curriculum that other institutions can adapt

What actions can we take to move towards this vision?

Recommended next steps:

- Organize themes/similar items
- Bold quick wins and high priority items
- Add the bolded tasks to the implementation chart below with owners & due dates

- **Have a conversation around how the same programs are being run at different organizations so we know what is being done and what is not being done (variances between programs, grant funding allocation, and more)**

- Hold a meeting to cover what milestones are currently set for each cohort and then brainstorm and solidify what we all agree to move forward with.
- Putting together the info on how all the different schools are using their resources in order to inform our plans and our resource pursuits
- Documenting all of the programming elements, staffing structures, student funding elements on each respective campus so we can begin to see where there is alignment and where there is divergence across program sites.
- Kessler branding that can be customized for each school (by color?)
- **Sub committees for specific projects: network wide student activity, how to form individual student advisory boards and perhaps a network wide board.**
- Help develop a 4-year curriculum model
- Establish the foundation for a 4 year peer mentoring program model
- Quick win: Establishing a programming committee - students and staff
- Quick win: crafting a mission, vision, values statement
- Starting alumni network, or student connection space (i.e. LinkedIn)
- Create and share career resources with students as the first step toward building an alumni network
- Develop cross-institution rituals and branding that build a sense of identity/belonging
- Establish annual cross-site event (e.g. speaker series or some such)
- Program model/handbook to drive clearer alignment
- Four-year curriculum alignment across sites
- Clearer structural/operations structure (staff sub committees, student leadership panel, role of central 'office')
- LinkedIn page to start laying groundwork for alumni network.
- Start building a Collaborative-wide student advisory board from campus-based ones – maybe with a single brainstorming session, building to a more intensive commitment over time
- Upload tool kits and resources to shared google drive.
- Establish foundation for student database, cross-site mentoring program.
- Create 4 year model for programming support/offerings at collaborative level.
- Play that game Stephon mentioned (match the program to the institution).
- To help build national visibility, work with our respective PR/UR departments to have the Kessler program featured and also identify folks who are interested in presenting at an upcoming national conference. The NASPA conference will be in Baltimore this March.
- Develop a "program handbook" and onboarding process for potential new

partners
- Develop a roadmap for each cohort. What freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors should achieve by the end of their academic year. It helps in creating a curriculum, and it helps students to stay on track.
- Consult on 'live' database options to move towards a common way to track, evaluate, connect, etc.
- Consult on website development to move in that direction
- Begin leadership (advisory board) opportunities at each site for future collaborative-wide advisory board
- Establish some smaller committees within collaborative to consult on shared programming, etc.
- Creating a collaborative mission and vision
- Create a linkedIn page for students to begin to connect academically and professionally
- Create social media pages to connect students further and to share what each campus is doing
- Funding for added personnel to support program is allocated for partner institutions
- Data is made available to the collective
- Splashy website
- More shared events
- The LinkedIn page can also help with national visibility and alumni engagement. Also help the scholars connect with potential employers.
- Share out the site reports so that we can all have access to each other's snap shots to increase understanding/knowledge of how each program is ran
- Would we be able to all have a specific email address for Kessler related work? In terms of Google Suite and secure sharing.
- Pilot a shared graduation celebration this coming spring
- Begin conversations on campuses with students about what it means to be a Kessler scholar and use that to start working toward a Collaborative-wide conversation
- Quick: Facilitate the building of connections and bridges between students at different institutions as a way to build toward a unified advisory board
- Quick: Be in conversation about how each Kessler program differs across each site, so that we have a better sense of how each program plays into the larger collaborative.
- Technology that facilitates better communication and collaboration.
- LinkedIn - a way to connect current students and alumni and employers
- Student Advisory Board - develop closer connections between students - programming opportunities too

● Clearer guidance or examples of what programming can be for 2nd Year, 3rd Year, and 4th Year students.

Quick Wins: Actions and Next Steps

Milestone/Deliverable	Responsibility	Date Started	Date Completed

Appendix

Parking lot

What was left un discussed that needs to be revisited?

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Survey Results

If you had 3 wishes that would make our partnership work better, what would they be? 12 responses

Time together to build closer relationships and trust (we've done a great job so far building this, but we could potentially take it to a different level).

1. Ability to be in-person for planning and convening at least once when it is safe, 2. Start to get our students involved in open forum/dialogue, 3. Continue to set short and long term goals and continue bolstering dedicated resources to build bonds within institutions with team building and site visitations (once safe)

I would have a group that focuses on scholar curriculum development (i.e. for first-years, sophomores, juniors, etc.). I will also create a group for folks with mentoring programs to collaborate. Lastly, I compile internships that our students can apply to and share the list so that my colleagues can add to it.

1. I wish we could all meet in person!
2. Shared database to track student and alumni profiles
3. Collaborative programming committee to identify and plan non-institution specific workshops for Kessler Scholars across all universities

More narrowly targeted working groups to replace some of the large monthly meetings
More sharing of successful individual initiatives
strategic planning meeting during academic year rather than summer

1) An in-person gathering/event 2) Invitations to join attend workshops/events from other institutions, 3) Kessler Scholar jackets

Based on the discussions we have as a collective, perhaps we can have a platform where we share resources and ideas that would be beneficial to both our students and as partners. Another wish is to organize events across sites where students have the opportunity to network and build connections. Lastly, my wish is for all of us to organize more events as a collective that are not limited to computer screens.

1) Develop a clearer shared vision for what the Collaborative is striving to be and answer the question: What is it about the Kessler Scholars Collaborative that makes us unique/stand out from other first-gen student scholarship/support programs?; 2) Have dedicated full-time Kessler staff at each partner site, who can spend more time on Collaborative-level activities; 3) Connect students across sites in meaningful ways

1. Clear vision/focus/goals/outcomes/alignment/etc. around what it means to be a Kessler Scholar across sites

2. Clear direction with evaluation/data management, potentially universal 'software' to keep consistency across sites for optimal report out
3. Clear home for the collaborative, from institution agnostic place, likely outside foundation (which is not for us to decide, but could make leading the collaborative less restricted by one institution)

1) Clearer alignment of program structure and activities across sites 2) More opportunities for cross-site engagement (staff and students) 3) Clearer shared goals for program outcomes/mission

1) more collaborative events.
2) a newsletter to share updates from each institution
3) more ways for students to have opportunities to collaborate and work witht he collaborative

While there may be some opportunities for growth, we must acknowledge the great work accomplished during the first year. The support and relationships established have been great. Continue to explore ways to streamline communication and duplication of effort.

In your ideal world: What would the Kessler Scholars Collaborative look like in 3 years? 12 responses

Our students will be able to build community and find support with each other across our institutions. As administrators, we'll have the technology to easily communicate and share resources with each other - and of course, we'll also have strong relationships that make us want to share and support each other. We'll be thinking about how our learnings from the Kessler Program can inform how we approach improving our support of first-gen students at our institutions and nationally.

Nationally recognize as a feeder for first generation college students to apply to exclusive programs within the six sites to fulfill the philanthropy of the donors (elevating first gen students socio-economically). Being able to have student board members collaborate with the institutions even more than the programming staff at each institutions. Dedicated week to honor and celebrate the consortium and the mission of the program. Within my role and the institution at St. Francis College, represent our institution and our program and become the director of our McGuire Scholarship Program and build upon the importance of first generation student support. Hopefully this will gain interest of other institutions that are similar and grow the consortium as a society with similar passion and interests.

In three years we would have graduating classes, collaborating events, and a Kessler Scholars conference that is hosted at the Kessler Scholar campuses ever year.

In three years, the Kessler Scholars Collaborative would function as a cohesive entity with a shared vision, mission, and core objectives to implement at the program level. While respective institutions may meet these objectives in slightly different ways, the benefits and requirements for Kessler Scholars would be universal. There would be a number of collaborative student leadership opportunities such as a collaborative advisory board, a high school outreach board, an alumni database for all Kessler Scholars to access as a way to network and experience mentorship, and cross-campus exchange and immersion programs. Upon acceptance into the Kessler Scholars Program, students would be sent a video of Kessler Scholars from all across the country welcoming them to the Kessler Scholars community. Every semester, students would have the opportunity to participate in shared programming and connect with students across institutional boundaries. Ultimately, Kessler Scholars would feel supported and connected at the university level and beyond.

> All partners will have graduated the first cohort with a high retention rate
> we will have a substantial set of data about what has been effective and not
> We will have an effective means to share our insights and best practices.
> We will have begun presenting our work at conferences

A well oiled machine! Ideally each campus would have their own unique identities but hopefully by then we can create collaborative traditions once a semester such as a guest speaker event and a social event. We would have created set milestones for each of the four years students are with us.

In my ideal world, we would have graduated our first cohort of Kessler Scholars. Given that we have a graduated cohort, we could perhaps think about coming up with a longitudinal study where we follow up with graduated cohorts to see what careers paths they end up pursuing, maybe conceptualize social mobility and compare and contrast Kessler graduates to non-Kessler graduates?

In 3 years, my hope is that the Collaborative would have a seamless system for communication and collaborative across sites, that students would actively contribute to the Collaborative and have opportunities to meaningfully connect across sites, that the Collaborative would have a small staff to help support its activities, that staff members from each campus would be able to come together at least once per year and that students would have the chance to participate in a Collaborative-wide in-person program (like a leadership summit or Kessler service trip).

I envision the Kessler Scholars Collaborative to become a nation-wide, premiere scholarship for first generation students. I see the network of scholars as a melting pot of talented individuals who would be a network of support to each other throughout undergrad and beyond. This vision is based on a model in which the collaborative would become an outside, philanthropic foundation model in which sponsors could help supplement the work that is done or re-granting could be done to tailor programming, grow staff, etc. I envision an exclusive summer experience that brings together students and programs, to bring leadership and development opportunities to both the students and the staff. There would be a clear focus and staff at the collaborative level that would supplement what each program was offering, and would give Kessler Scholars that feeling of being privileged to be part of a network that could benefit them throughout their career. I see a robust alumni network as part of this vision, and some national student leadership positions.

Not to bring up comparisons, but just so it is clear how my vision is inspired, I was part of the Emma Bowen Foundation, which is a national foundation with a goal to increase diversity in media. Although the foundation has a more clear focus in terms of what students study, the feeling I had as a fellow connected to other fellows across the US was that of prestige and excitement (part of my privileged poor experience). There is also a component that is not at all part of our collaborative, which could become an aspect down the road (knowing Fred's focus on this), in that each of the fellows were supported by a (media) company where they would gain valuable real-world work experience each summer. For instance, I was 'sponsored' by a local cable company who paid me (and matched my wage – the scholarship portion) to learn from/work for each aspect of the company. There were also summer conferences in which we had access to field trips to FCC, media companies, leadership opportunities, and socializing.

In three years, we will be celebrating the first graduates who started at the forming of the national Collaborative project. Ideally, the various Kessler Scholar Programs would be operating with clear shared activites, goals, and outcomes, and both staff and institutional leaders and students would see clear, shared value in our collective work. The Collaborative in three years should be emerging as a nationally-recognized model for supporting first-generation, limited-income students as well as for productive, innovative, and authentic sharing across institutional contexts and borders.

In 3 years I would hope that the students are getting the opportunity to interact as much as possible. There would be a student advisory board that helps the collaborative make decisions and bring all Kessler scholars together. I would like to see social media pages and groups that allow perspective students and outside stakeholders to see what the scholars are going. I would also like to see a LinkedIn group where the students/alumni can connect professionally.

in three years, we should continue to build upon the success to support the growing program sites. Additonally, create a shared website (with mission, values and objectives), social media presence and marketing materials. Establish a national advisory board to help guide and foster greater collabortion

among the schools, students, and Wilpon family. Opportunities for in-person conference or summit with sponsorship support from corporate partners. An opportunity for the program directors to meet as a collective with the Wilpon family twice a year. I don't get the impression that all programs have equal access to the Wilpon family.

What's holding us back from getting to that place? (If anything) 12 responses

We are all super busy with other competing priorities. The more initiatives and tasks added to our Kessler responsibilities could lead to stress and burn out. The opportunity here is to find ways to "work smarter, not harder".

Resources (think this would apply to most, if not all, institutions) and staffing. SFC is very short staffed in this and similar realms. I believe that staff members from all institutions have shared focus in other parts of their roles/institutions which doesn't give most of us full dedication to this as much as we want

A lot of the programs are new, so now that most of us have come to 1 year or 2 years, it might be time for us to consider hosting a conference.

The collaborative is still very much in the early stages of development, so I think a lot of what is keeping us from that place is time. While all Kessler Scholars are first-gen, their needs and concerns vary depending on their university, which is something that needs to be represented in our work together. I think we need to identify core objectives that authentically address and reflect the unique experiences of students at all partner institutions. Many collaborative partners only have one or two years of program data to analyze, so that can make inferring themes and overarching needs difficult.

staffing and resource limitations

UM is the only institution to have four years of cohorts, I think everything is still so new that folks haven't had an opportunity to strategically plan out all four years.

I imagine that since what I am suggesting is a longitudinal study, two things that might hold us back are time and money.

Time and resources. Maybe also lacking a clear, unified vision and mission for the Collaborative as a whole. Having explicit goals that we want to accomplish together.

If anything, the institutional alignment, or more precisely, the lack of a foundation from which the collaborative would run seems to be the next natural place for this to get out from being an extension of the U-M program.

Project still is in formation and earliest work has played out amid extreme complications due to pandemic. Not all sites came to project in same manner or with same goals. Fact that project still is in formation makes alignment/vision difficult to exactly pin down at this moment.

We just need more time to execute all of our ideas, but they are coming together.

Time and institutional support - many programs lack adequate human resources to fully commit to the potential growth of the collaborative

What other challenges/roadblocks do you think we need to address in the future to maximize our success? 12 responses

N/A

Same as previous question, the more staff dedicated towards this consortium (can only speak for SFC) the better focus and handle we can have to do even more intentional work!

We need full-time Kessler Staff and or for the current staff to be paid for additional labor that comes from having a full time job in addition to providing/working with the Kessler Scholars program at their respective institutions.

We are all using different technologies and data collection systems and have different university goals to meet, so it can be difficult to access information and approach things systematically. We also all have different titles and job responsibilities, and many programs don't have dedicated staff which means we don't all have the same bandwidth.

internal bureaucratic roadblocks

I think we need to get in the habit of utilizing the shared folders and familiarizing ourselves with the resources that are available to us.

I think we need to address the institutional roadblocks, such as those who are in charge of media and outreach, because I think that doing more outreach, advertising the program, would be beneficial in terms of more people learning about the program and thus, getting more students to apply.

Campus-based programs are in difference stages of development (some are brand new, others have 2, 3, or even 4 cohorts of students), so learning how to implement evidence-based practices across sites is somewhat difficult. More time to devote to Kessler-related activities (most staff members have multiple job responsibilities outside of Kessler).

Clear outcomes and goals and ways to ensure we're measuring what we see as successful programs, etc.

Greater clarity on roles -- at each site, and at a 'central' level -- how does each individual program contribute to the broader aims of the collective. What is the central organizing component and what can the sites expect or gain from that structure? Also, better alignment on mission (even including clarity on shared features of the students we are serving across sites) will, in turn, contribute to greater success.

I think each campus will need more support as the program grows. Many offices only have about 3-4 staff members working on Kessler projects and the more intensive it gets, the more they will need to focus on those projects.

Based on the current funding structure for the various Kessler sites, the success and stability of the collaborative is highly contigent upon a significant financial commitment to sustain the programs. Will all program sites exist in the future? How will the collaborative function with program sites coming in and out based on funding needs?

As a group what would you say are our strengths? 12 responses

Expertise and wealth of experience serving first-gen students. True passion for serving the students and wanting to see their success. Strong desire to collaborate with and help others in our group.

When goals are set, we are present to accomplish those goals. We have grown with each other more in a short amount of time, without actually meeting any of the partners in person!

We all bring positivity, willingness to share resources, and a collaborator spirit.

We all care deeply about college access and success and providing individualized student support. I also think we all see the value in collaborative work and perspective sharing. These shared strengths help make our collaborative meetings fun, informational, and energizing.

> We are a very supportive group with a true commitment to student well-being and to collaboration
> The process for creating the student surveys is very inclusive
> Collective expertise

Passionate and friendly staff! Kristen is super organized. Sarah and Molly are approachable and enthusiastic about collecting data. We all want to collaborate and offer each other help.

I think that our open communication is definitely a strength. The meetings allow us to learn from each other and find ways that are beneficial to our students. Having more experienced sites interact with new sites during our meetings has helped tremendously. Another strength is the fact that everyone is willing to help and offer guidance.

Our commitment and dedication to first-generation student success, a shared sense of responsibility to make this Collaborative a success.

We're an awesomely talented, especially passionate group of individuals who are ready and willing to figure this out together.

Dedicated, mission-oriented staff at all sites who are enthusiastic about the initial aims of this project and want to see the work -- and the students it supports -- succeed. Diversity of institutional contexts means we have much to learn from each other. True spirit of collaboration across sites and participants; there is never the sense that people are at the table out of obligation but, truly, because they want to be and believe in this still-forming entity.

we all work well together and keep our students as our top priority.

Strong leadership from Gail and Kristen, assessment support from UM and intentional engagement and strategic planning for long term growth and stability.

As a group what would you say are our weaknesses? 12 responses

N/A

Being less hesitant on what we want to "dream" and foresee for our future of this program. Sometimes we dream big and sometimes we don't dream big enough but giving ideas an attempt will help us know what works and what doesn't. It's very hard when everyone's schedule is so different, so some centralization is crucial and needed with future events and planning.

Our approach of leading from an inclusive lens is not always our strengths. What I do admire however, is the ways in which we learn from one another and that may include having difficult conversation; efforts for us to be more inclusive of our students unique challenges and needs.

I wouldn't go so far as to say it's a weakness because I think it's a strength in many situations, but we tend to fixate on details over broader discussion. I think the convening will be a good opportunity for us to zoom out and think about the larger picture.

> There are enough differences among the different partners, concerning the program structures and the types of institutional support, that it may not be easy to transfer knowledge and strategies from one college to another

We could be better about sharing resources. I think we sometimes think we need to recreate the wheel when it's completely unnecessary.

I would say a weakness worth mentioning is that there are demographic differences among sites, and using one collective survey might not illustrate these differences that I think are important to consider.

We have a lot of ideas for what the Collaborative could do for students, but not sure how to best execute those ideas and may not have adequate resources to do so at the moment.

The different structures across institutions may be especially difficult for some of the institutions who do not have exclusive, dedicated staff to feel they can 'keep up' with those institutions with dedicated staff.

Across sites, staff members working on this project also have other (in some cases many other) obligations/roles/responsibilities, and the work on the Kessler Scholars and the Collaborative does not receive focused, dedicated attention. Staff also are balancing student-facing program development obligations alongside thinking about the opportunities/potential of this collective, national space. Project came together swiftly (late 2019, early 2020), and -- partly due to the pandemic -- there was not full opportunity to intentionally co-construct the work of this space. Opportunity now to step back and do that together.

not being able to connect more often.

The lack of 100% full-time dedicated staff present challenges both to the program sites and the collaborative.

What opportunities do you see out there for our partnership? 12 responses

Internship opportunities for the students across Kessler Program institutions. Cross-intuition programming - like collaborative-wide support of a National First-Gen College Celebration, conferences hosted by students and Kessler institutions, etc.

I think we all bring a diverse and unique information to the table regarding supporting first gen students. I see our students elevating us to the next level as this is for them, and creating student reps for each institution will help spread knowledge of the program, create a bigger, yet deeper community and bond.

We need to host a Kessler and McNair conference.

I see immense value in shared student leadership opportunities, whether that looks like campus exchange programs, virtual board opportunities, internship experiences, or shared study abroad excursions. I also see opportunities to collaborate and streamline programming that exclusively focuses on first-gen identity.

Local collaborations among geographically close partners; cross-network internship opportunities

More specific collaboration opportunities like for those who or plan to supervise mentors, oversee the application process, advise the Advisory Board etc.

I think that particularly with the sites located in New York City, there are opportunities to collaborate with one another, perhaps organize networking events across campuses, have cultural events that take place around the five boroughs?

Students could take advantage of the network of institutions that are part of the Collaborative, we can share our practices across sites and learn from each other, we can bring our resources together to create shared programming and reduce duplication of efforts, we could become a nationally-recognized first-gen student support network.

I see opportunities in terms of potential growth and 'value-add' to offer our students – alumni networks, upper level (junior/senior) mentoring from alumni, summer conferences or other prestigious leadership development opportunities, setting the standard for first-generation programming (sharing our work beyond collaborative at conferences, or w/ website), potential models for collaborative partnerships beyond higher education institutions (either through re-granting, institution buy-in, like Campus Compact, American Talent Initiative or a Bonner Program Model w/ civic engagement, and/or outside sponsorships), showcasing our students accomplishments (website), and giving back to upcoming first-generation students by instituting partnerships w/ pre-college CBO's or national foundations (NAACP, LULAC, Hispanic Fund, etc.)

At the program level: increased resources and opportunities due to collective network. As importantly, at the student level: opportunity to build robust, national network that otherwise would not be possible within the confines of one institutional experience.

I think being able to create a large networking group for our scholars is going to be incredible.

Possibly collaborate to share internship and employment opportunties. Engage with the Center for First Generation Student Success or other foundations (Bill & Melinda Gates, Suder Foundation, CrimsonBridge, etc.), committed to supporting first gen college students. Global immersion 2 week service trip.

If you had to pick one goal or target for us to hit over the next 12 months, what would it be? 12 responses

Finding and using a technology platform that allows us to easily communicate and collaborate.

Student representatives for each institution to convene focus groups on the students needs from this consortium and what they too envision for the programs, creating cross mentorship and cross platforms. this will help drive cross collaboration events and create more exposure and partnerships to each institution as well

My goal is to assist my supervisor and designing curriculum for all cohorts.

Opportunities for shared programming seems like a really great way to increase visibility, build connections across campus communities, and increase our ability to take on more innovative projects.

Use survey results to generate and implement strategies for improved student retention

An in-person conference or orientation specifically for staff but if possible it would be nice to invite students and have a student track.

One target to consider is student retention. We can work collectively to discuss the best practices to maximize student retention. We can talk about the methods that work across sites, and share reasons about why students have dropped out of the program in the past, and what we can do to change this.

Develop a shared "Kessler program model" in which all campuses have the same key aims for our programs (shared outcomes) and have common programmatic features across sites.

Setting up a way to connect our students across institutions, ultimately in-person

Build greater consistency/clarity on common work/common goals and outcomes of the programs across sites.

Get students to share what they want and begin to bring them together.

Opportunity to bring the student together for a retreat, conference, immersion experience.

What would you say our values are? 12 responses

Collaboration, Self-Care, Social Justice, Caring

Shared passion and interests. I do believe we're all still getting to know each other a bit better but it never hurts to continue to learn more about each other both in and outside of the specific work we do within the consortium. I think we all value each others craft and understand how we all were brought together to this position based on the work that we do and our interests. I would like to continue to learn more about what is everyone's "why" for what their passions are today in relation to their work and their gratitude.

We value understanding the first gen and low-income individual student experience.

- Autonomy - Support - Excellence - Community - Citizenship - Meaningful work - Service - Individualization

Student success: Using the donor funding to improve the academic and social experiences of our students
Diversity, equity, and inclusion: fostering diversity and inclusion within our own working groups and for students at individual campuses and across our network

Integrity, Service, Leadership

I think that community building and a sense of belonging are at the core of our values as a program. This value is achieved through diversity and inclusion, making sure that the identity of each student is acknowledged, making sure each student knows that their unique life experiences are not a hindrance, but an opportunity to have their voices heard, and an opportunity to be leaders in their communities. Autonomy is another value we strive toward, we make sure that we teach our students all the resources and opportunities available to them, guiding them toward these opportunities, but making sure that grasping the opportunities are their own doing.

Building a sense of community (within our respective campus programs with students and together as a collaborative); empowering and supporting students; authentic engagement among students and staff

Student access and success
Inclusive, welcoming communities
Developing holistic leaders
Giving back to others, especially reaching back to first-generation students
Supportive staff to give students concierge experience throughout undergrad
Connecting students to resources and opportunities

Collectively, we value access and equitable, inclusive opportunities for students in higher education. We value hearing all voices and amplifying those voices that are not always centered in conversations. We believe in practice based on evidence and in designing student opportunities that can be measured and assessed to understand how our work improves student lives.

supporting students. creating a more vibrant and engaging space. creating new opportunities for them.

Collaboration, shared governance, student centered, transformative engagement

If you want to add your name do it here.7 responses

Huey Hsiao

Anthony Desiderio

Selma Škrijelj

Kristen Glasener

Anna Maria Flores

![SME Strategy Management Consulting — Business Consulting | Strategic Planning | Facilitation]

Gail Gibson

Shakima M. Clency

Anything else that you think that we should know, or that you want to say? 6 responses

Extremely grateful for the opportunity to work with the Kessler Program and those involved, especially the leadership and guidance provided by Michigan. Last year, I could not have imagined making it this far in only one year!

Unfortunately. I wont be able to attend the meeting but I will be sharing my answers with my colleagues from SFC in case needed!

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be a part of this experience.

There's so much potential for our group to make a positive impact on students' lives and create a program that is bigger than what any one campus could accomplish on its own. Harnessing this potential is the challenging part!

Thank you for your leadership and bringing direction and focus to a monumental charge

Looking forward to exploring these ideas with the group!