Removing College Application Barriers for Low-Income and First Generation Students

11.19.12

Lisa King, Assistant Director
Michigan College Access Network

Agenda

- Welcome & MCAN introduction
- College Application Week –
  - Need, Concept, Growth
  - American College Application Campaign
- Michigan's Efforts in 2011 & 2012
- How to be involved in 2013
- Q & A

MCAN's Mission

To increase college *readiness*, *participation* and *completion* in Michigan, particularly among low-income students, first-generation college students, and students of color.

MCAN's Vision and Values

- **College is *Postsecondary Education***: MCAN uses the term "college" to refer to the attainment of valuable postsecondary credentials beyond high school, including professional/technical certificates and academic degrees.
- **College is *a Necessity***: Postsecondary education is a prerequisite to success in a knowledge-based economy. Everyone must pursue and complete a postsecondary credential or degree beyond high school.
- **College is *for Everyone***: The postsecondary education attainment rates among low-income students and students of color are significantly lower than those of other students. MCAN is committed to closing these gaps.
- **College is *a Public Good*:** Postsecondary educational opportunity and attainment are critical to a just and equitable society, strong economy, and healthy communities.

MCAN's Big Goal

Increase the percentage of Michigan residents with high-quality degrees or credentials to:

60% by the year 2025

MICHIGAN
COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK

Michigan's Strategy

- Increase College Completion by lowering **barriers** that prevent students from getting to and through college
  - Social Capital
  - Academic Preparation
  - College Knowledge – Navigating the Process
  - Affordability

MCAN's Strategies

- Local College Access Network Development *(Primary Strategy)*
  - Support the creation, expansion, and sustainability of high-quality, community-based college access strategic alliances
  - Technical assistance and seed funding
- Implement Statewide Initiatives – support and maintain key statewide initiatives in order to increase college access, particularly within LCANs.
  - Michigan College Access Portal
  - **Michigan College Application Week**
  - KnowHow2Go Michigan
  - ItsMiLife

MCAN's Strategies

- Coordination and Partnerships
  - Coordinate MI's college access resources, programs, and services
  - Strengthen existing like-minded and mission-aligned college access and success initiatives
- Leadership and Advocacy
  - Serve as MI's authority on college access and success issues through leadership
  - Advocate for policy reform that expand postsecondary opportunities for low-income, first generation college going students, and students of color
- Professional Development
  - Train college access professionals, such as high school counselors and other community- and campus-based professionals, to be highly qualified and effective college advisors
  - Host regular professional development opportunities (Webinar series, annual conference) *Save the Date: April 29, 2013 – Kellogg Center, East Lansing*

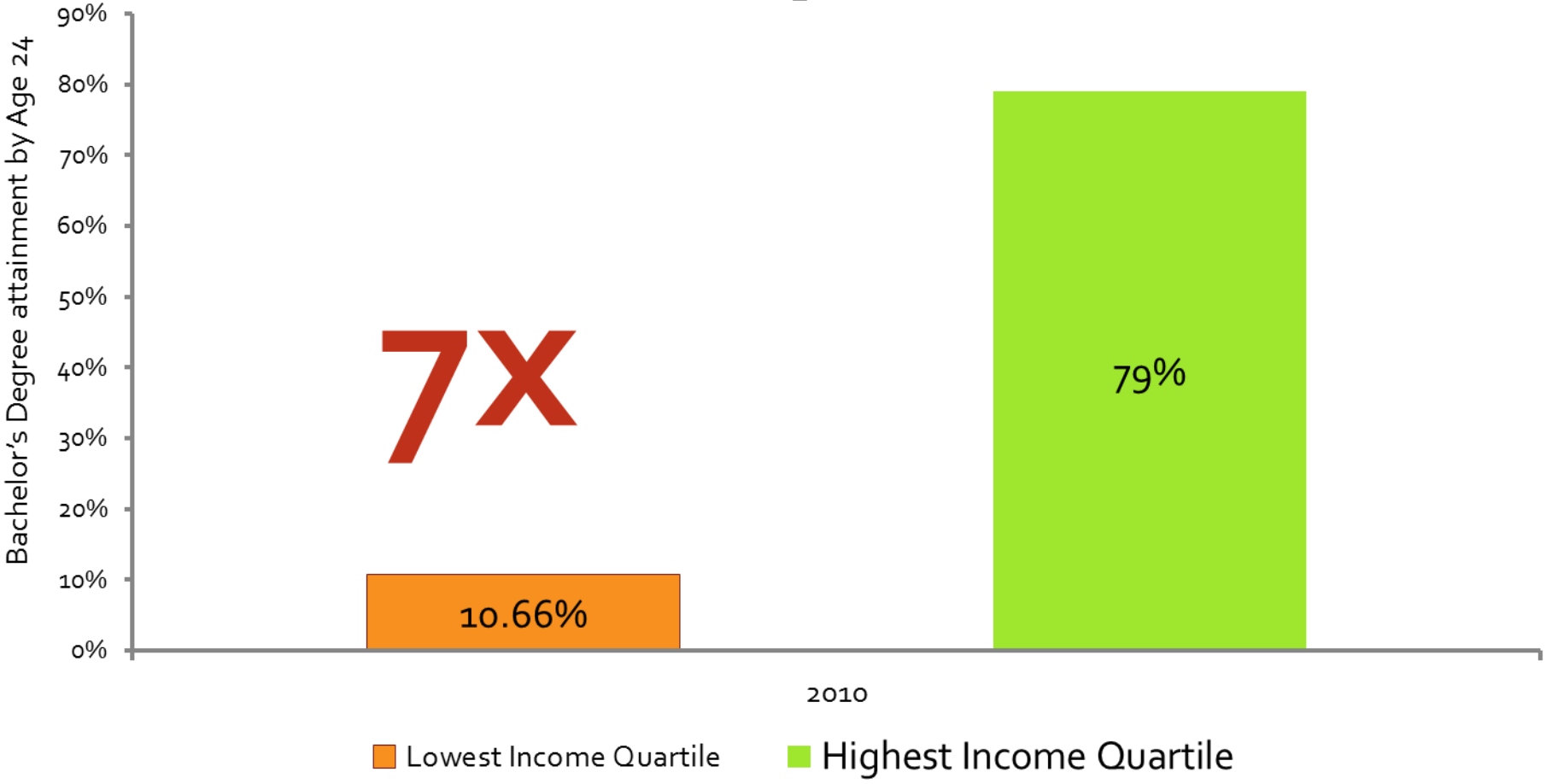
CAW - The Need

- 90% of students have college aspirations regardless of their income level
- 80% of students expect to attain a bachelor's degree or higher
- 65% of students enroll after their senior year
- 25% of low-income students who score in the top quartile on standardized tests never go to college.
- In the U.S. only 38.3% of working-age adults (25-64 year olds) hold at least a two-year degree. (2010 Census)
- In Michigan, only 36.39% of working-age adults (25-64 year olds) hold at least a two-year degree. (2010 Census)

CAW - The Need

- College access studies have found that the complexities of college and financial aid applications are a serious barrier for low-income students, many of whom are the first in their families to consider college.
- The national student-to-guidance counselor ratio of 467:1 means that the average student spends 20 minutes per year talking to a counselor. In Michigan the average student-to-guidance counselors ratio is 641:1

Bachelor's Attainment Rates by Income

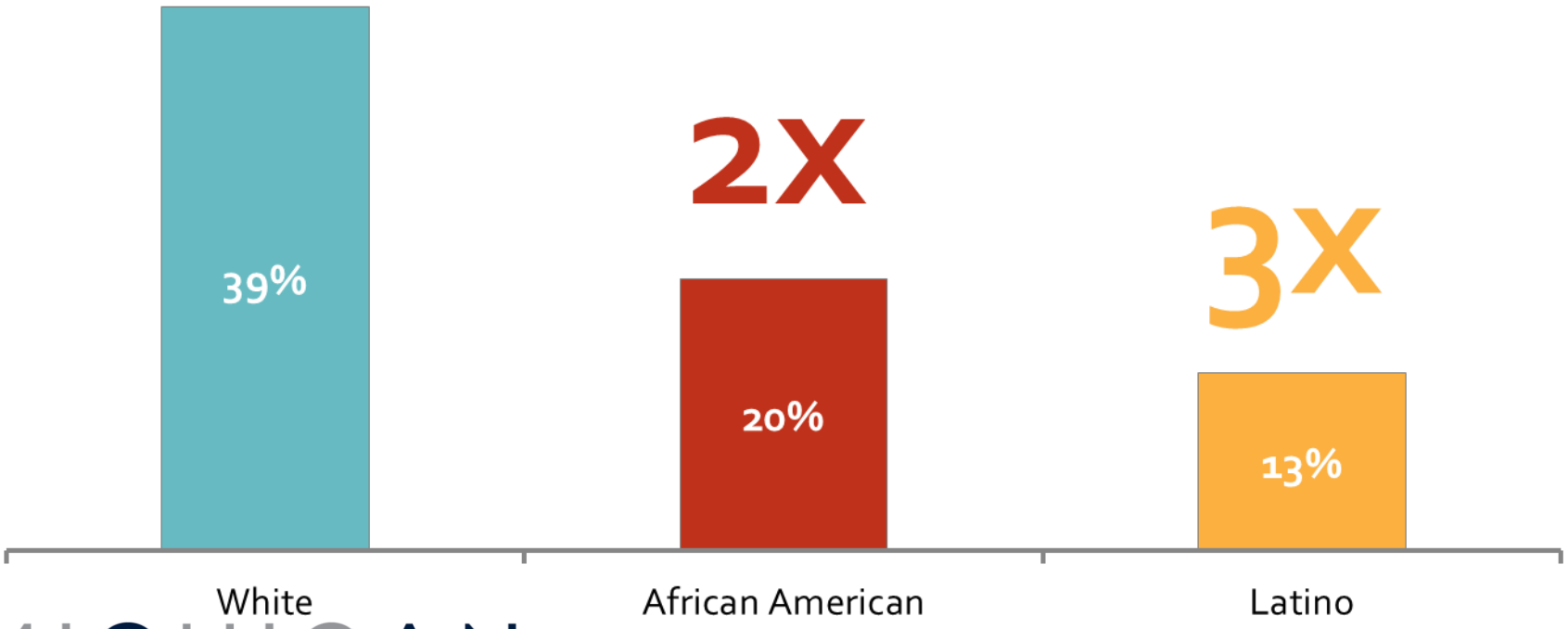


MICHIGAN COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK

Postsecondary Education Opportunity, "Bachelor's Degree Attainment by Age 24 by Family Income Quartiles, 1970 to 2010."

Bachelor's Attainment Rates by Race

Bachelor's degree attainment of young adults (25-29 year olds), 2011



MICHIGAN COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK

NCES, *Condition of Education* 2010 and U.S. Census Bureau, Educational Attainment in the United States: 2011.

It's Daunting!

- Financial misperceptions
- Academic misperceptions
- Confidence
- Family issues
- Career Decisions

The National Concept

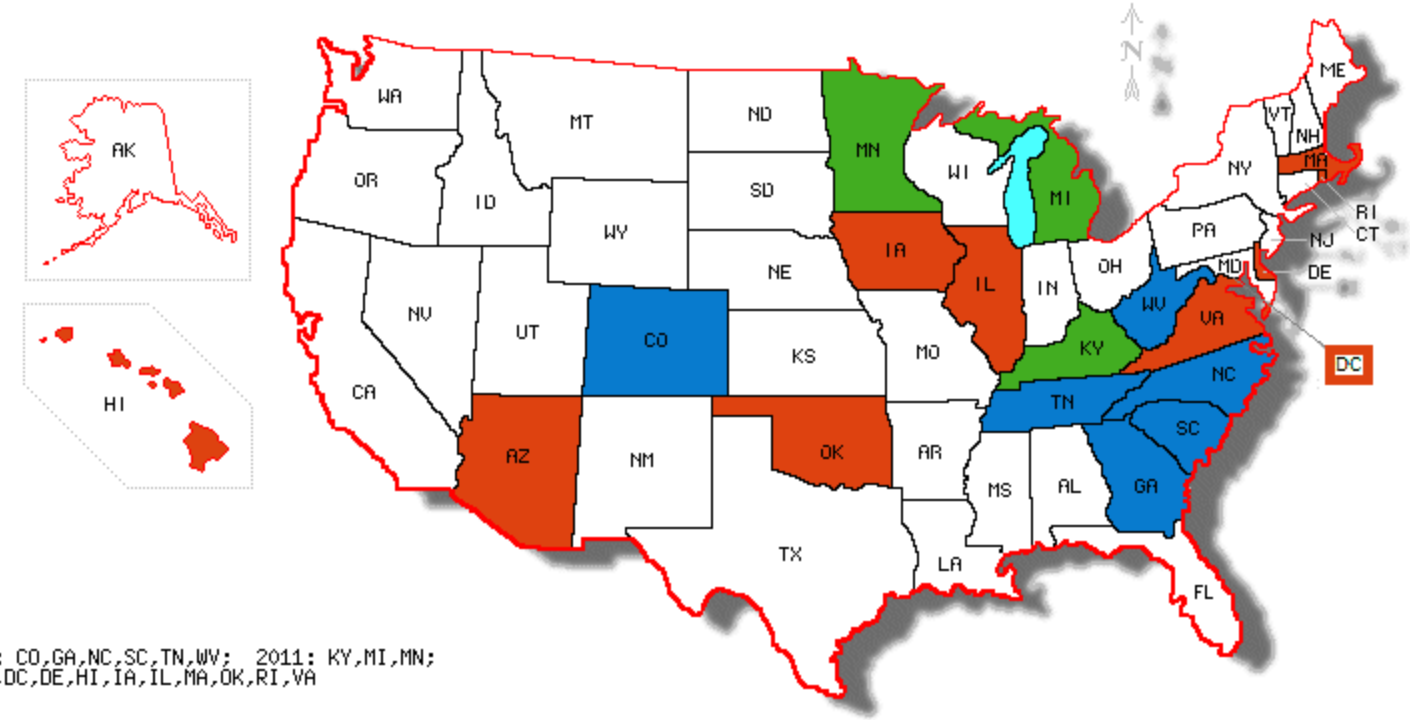
- One week in late October or November. Week is selected by the state.
- All graduating seniors complete **at least one** application
- **Designated space** and **time** is set aside **during** the school day for completing applications
- Gives students who **normally would not have considered college,** especially low-income and first-generation students, the opportunity to explore their options.
- High Schools are key partners as host sites – select one on-site college access professional as site coordinator (counselor, college adviser, teacher, etc.)
  - Counselors – assist high need students in obtaining fee waivers
- Postsecondary institutions are key partners – recruiting and organizing volunteers; can consider dropping application fees
- Encouraging all students to apply gives confidence

National Movement

- Began in North Carolina as a College Application Day in 2005 – now statewide college application week
- Large southern market continued growth
  - Georgia Apply to College Week
  - South Carolina College Application Week
  - Tennessee College Application Week
  - West Virginia College Application Week
- Colorado College Application Month
- Minnesota and Kentucky piloted in 2011 along w/ Michigan
- Anticipated 19 participating states in 2012

National College Application Week

- Original States
- 2011 Pilot States
- 2012 Pilot States



NOTES:
Original: CO,GA,NC,SC,TN,WV; 2011: KY,MI,MN;
2012: AZ,DC,DE,HI,IA,IL,MA,OK,RI,VA

The Michigan Concept

- Pilot year in 2011, while developing a growth plan for statewide implementation
- MCAN serving as the state coordinator
  - Create How-to materials for Site Coordinators
  - Provide Site Coordinator and Volunteer Training
  - Assist w/ Marketing and Communication
  - Facilitate Implementation Committee
- Statewide Implementation Committee
  - Provides statewide oversight
  - Ensure necessary resources are available
  - Evaluate the impact of College App Week over time
  - Determine how to best track aggregate data
    - Number of applications at the high school and state level
    - Number of students participating

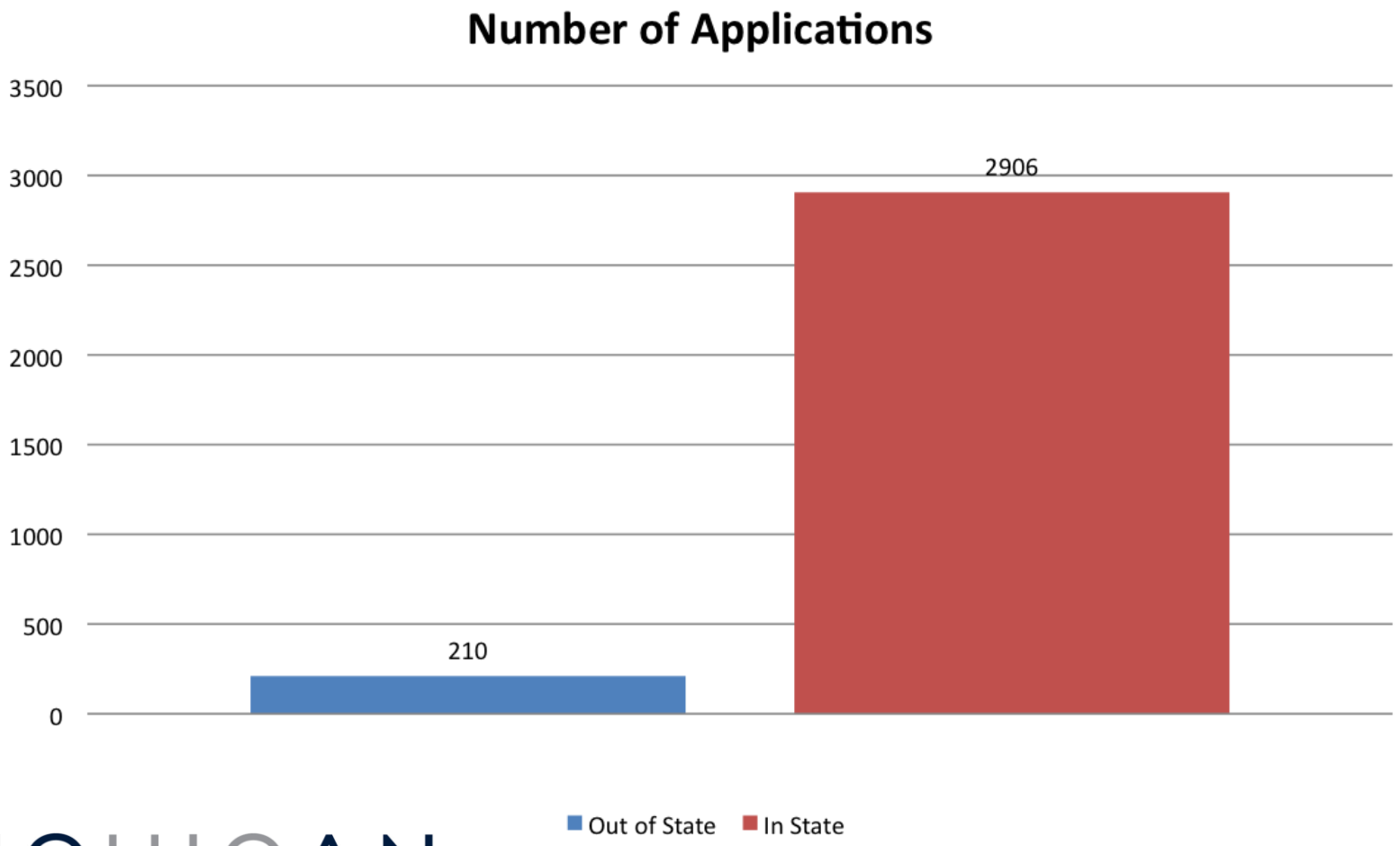
MI's Implementation Committee

- John Ambrose, Michigan State University
- Mike Boulus, Presidents Council, State Universities of MI
- Gary Brasseaur, MI Community College Admissions Directors
- John Carroll, ACT Midwest
- Linda Forward, MDE, Office of Education Improvement & Innovation
- William Hancock, MI Assoc for College Admission Counseling (MACAC)
- Julian Haynes, The Kresge Foundation
- Hoon-Yung Hopgood, Michigan State Senate
- Keith Hutcheson, Michigan College Foundation
- Karen Hutslar, MI Assoc of College Registrars & Admissions Officers (MACRAO)
- Ruthann Jaquette, MI Parent Teacher Assoc
- Jody McKean, MI Assoc of Secondary School Principals
- RaGina McKissick, MSU College Advisor, Bay City Central High School
- Jay Miller, MI School Counselor Assoc
- Patrick O'Connor, MCAN Board of Directors
- Chris Rutherford, UM College Advising Corps
- Jenny Schanker, MI Community College Association
- Kelsey Stewart, MSU College Adviser, Oakridge and Holton High Schools
- Christopher Tremblay, UM-Dearborn and DASUM
- Casandra Ulbrich, MI State Board of Edu
- Keenan Wade, King*Chavez*Parks Initiative
- Ruben Watson, MSU College Advising Corps
- Heidi Witucki, M College Access Programs & Personnel (MI-CAPP)

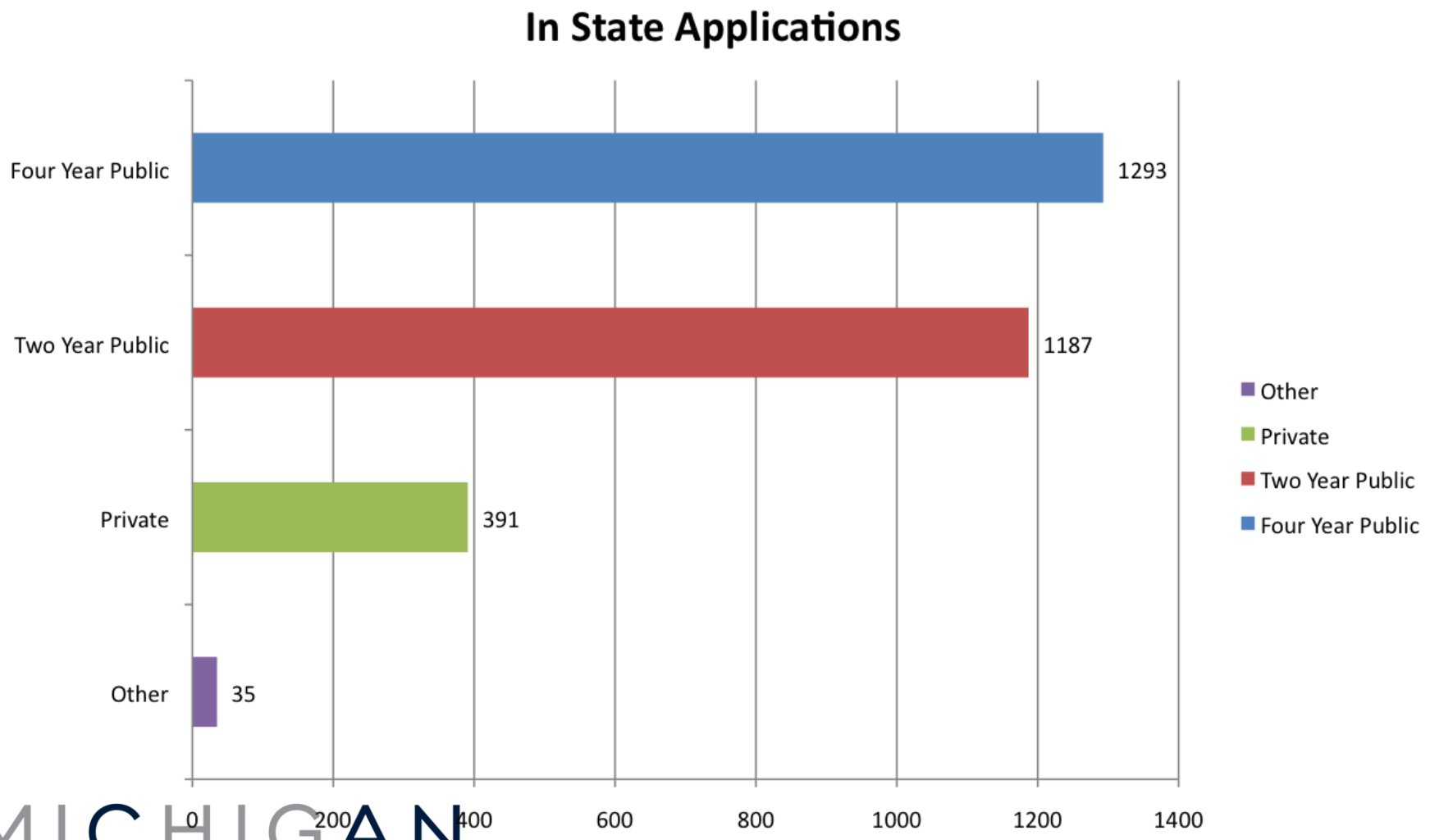
By the Numbers – 2011 Success (Pilot Yr)

- 37 high schools participated
  - Utilized National College Advising Corps sites
- Estimate 2,377 seniors participated in CAW activities
- Estimate 3,116 applications submitted
- 60+ Volunteers from 28 various organizations and institutions
- 155 volunteer hours reported by 35 volunteers

Total Applications: 3116



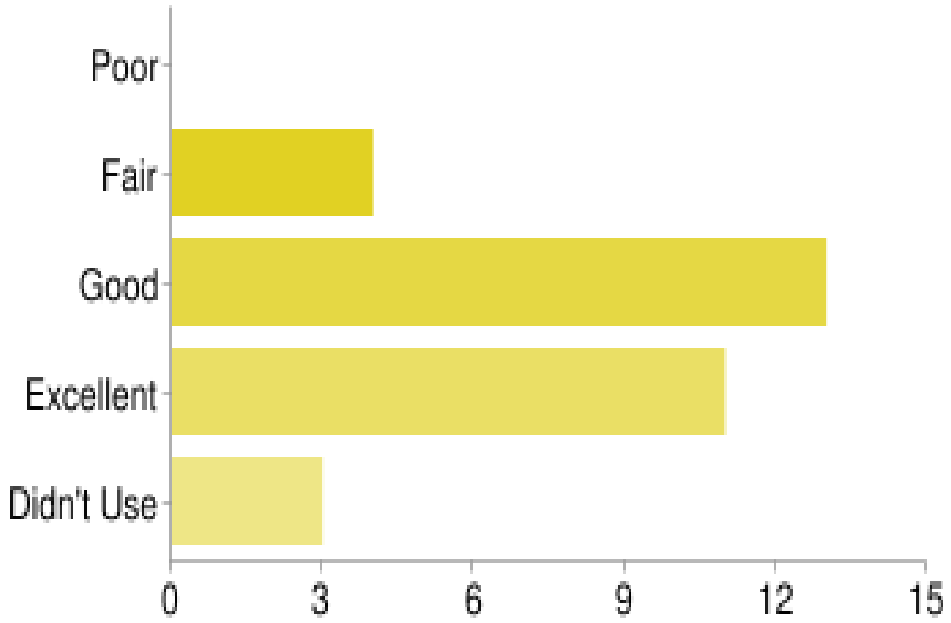
In State Comparison



MICHIGAN COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK

2011 Site Coordinator Feedback

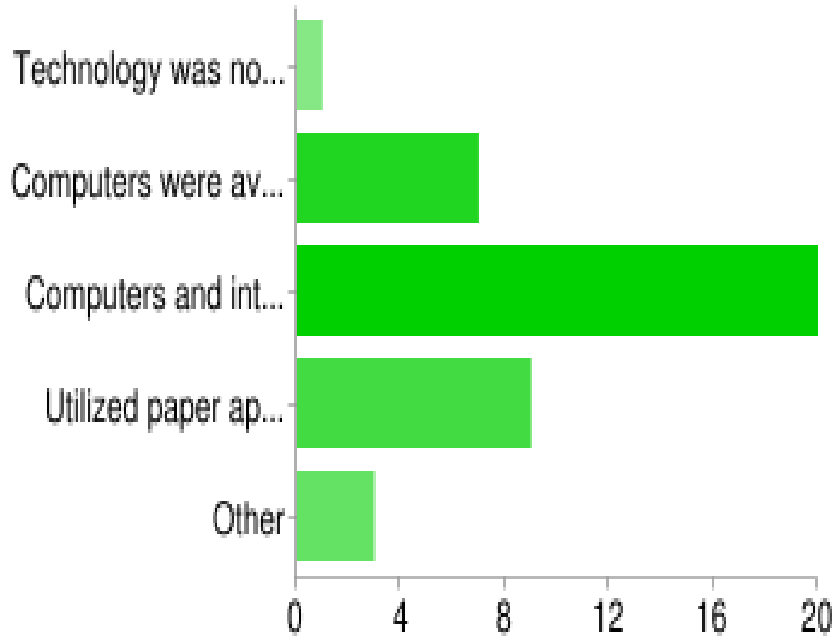
Please rate the quality of the following resources. - Site Coordinator Resource Manual



Poor	0	0%
Fair	4	11%
Good	13	35%
Excellent	11	30%
Didn't Use	3	8%

2011 Site Coordinator Feedback

Did your school have adequate technology available during CAW activities?

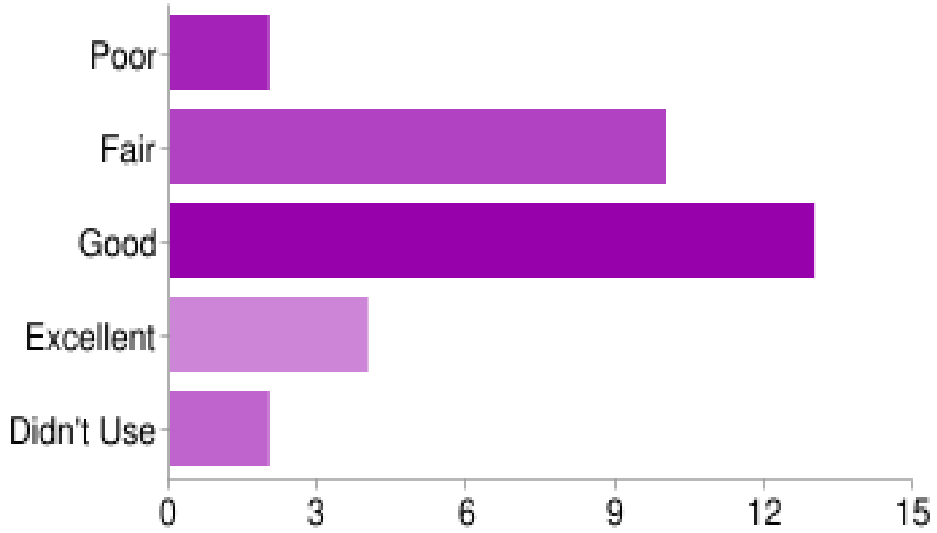


Technology was not available; utilized paper applications	1	3%
Computers were available, but internet was unreliable	7	23%
Computers and internet were available and reliable	20	65%
Utilized paper applications	9	29%
Other	3	10%

People may select more than one checkbox, so percentages may add up to more than 100%.

2011 Site Coordinator Feedback

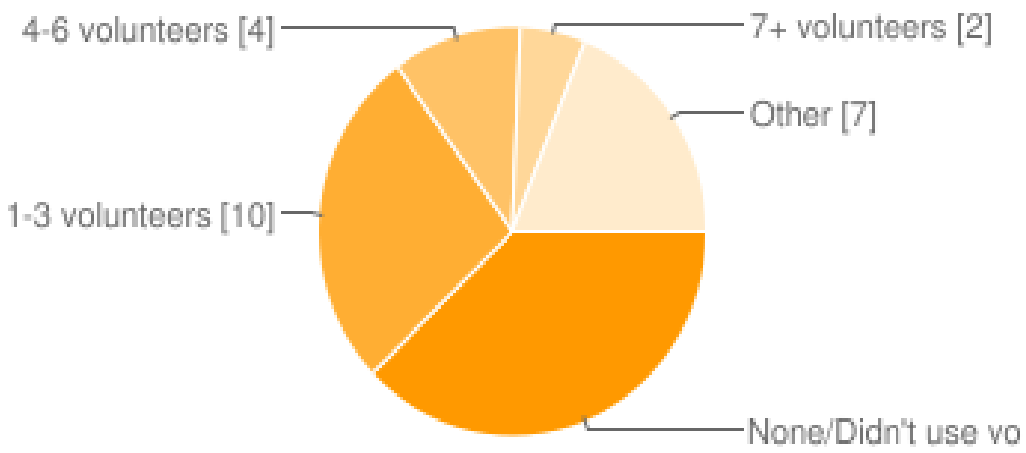
What was your experience with the following aspects of College Application Week 2011? - High school administration support



Poor	2	5%
Fair	10	27%
Good	13	35%
Excellent	4	11%
Didn't Use	2	5%

2011 Site Coordinator Feedback

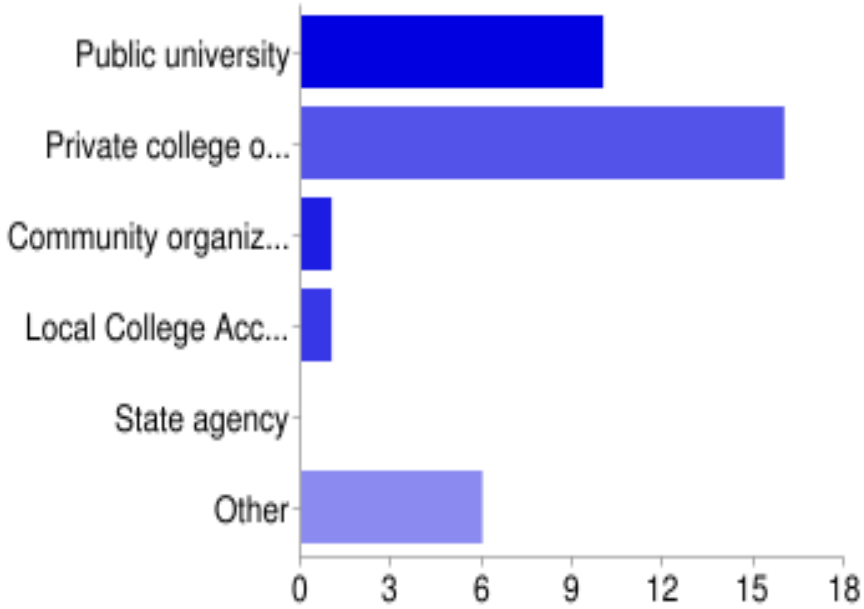
How many volunteers from outside agencies assisted with the event(s) at your school?



None/Didn't use volunteers	**14**	38%
1-3 volunteers	**10**	27%
4-6 volunteers	**4**	11%
7+ volunteers	**2**	5%
Other	**7**	19%

2011 Volunteer Feedback

What type of school/organization are you affiliated with?

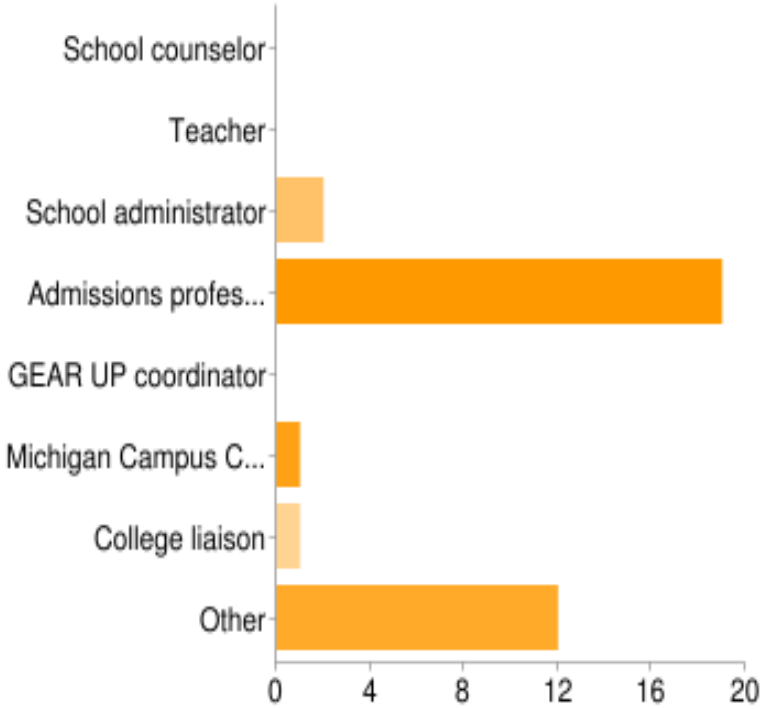


Public university	**10**	29%
Private college or university	**16**	47%
Community organization	**1**	3%
Local College Access Network	**1**	3%
State agency	**0**	0%
Other	**6**	18%

People may select more than one checkbox, so percentages may add up to more than 100%.

2011 Volunteer Feedback

Please select your title/position.



School counselor	**0**	0%
Teacher	**0**	0%
School administrator	**2**	6%
Admissions professional	**19**	54%
GEAR UP coordinator	**0**	0%
Michigan Campus Compact College Coaching Corps	**1**	3%
College liaison	**1**	3%
Other	**12**	34%

2012 Statewide Planning

- Date: October 29 – November 2, 2012
- Implementation Timeline:
  - **April/May** – recruited potential host sites within LCANs (Application deadline was May 1)
    - selected & announced host sites in early June
  - **August** – Site Coordinator resources available; Site Coordinator training webinar was held
  - **Sept** – host sites in planning mode – confirmed schedules w/ MCAN by mid to end of Sept; begin volunteer recruitment once schedules were confirmed
  - **Oct** – asked to confirm volunteers by early October; MCAN provided volunteer training webinar; activities executed
  - **November** – Send aggregate data to MCAN; Data collection and evaluation

2012 Recruitment Efforts

- Invited all 2011 sites to return
- Focused outreach on high schools within Local College Access Networks (LCAN)
  - Helped ensure high schools were high need
  - Helped ensure high school exists within a larger network focused on building a college going culture
- If a high school approached us to participate, they were not turned away
- Could not accept schools after August 29

What is an LCAN?

- Community-based college access coordinating body for college access strategy
- Highly structured collaborative effort, as opposed to isolated efforts of individual organizations
- Supported by an alliance of cross-sector leaders representing K-12, higher ed, nonprofit sector, government, business, and philanthropy
- Currently 51 across the state in various stages

What Do LCANs Do?

- **Networks not Programs**
- Commit to building a college-going culture in community
- Create a strategic action framework
  - Establish clear goals for the desired change
  - Execute proven interventions that can be employed at scale to improve college access
- Roles:
  - Provide overall strategic direction
  - Facilitate dialogue between partners
  - Manage data collection and analysis
  - Handle communications
  - Coordinate community outreach
  - Mobilize funding

Host Site Expectations

- Site Coordinator **must work within the high school** (counselor, college adviser, teacher, etc.)
- Must dedicate time and space **DURING the school day**
- Provide a location with computer and internet access during school hours
  - If unable to provide a location with computers/internet, must work to secure enough paper applications
- Recruit and secure volunteers to assist during activities
  - Implementation Committee will ***assist*** with recruitment but cannot secure each site's volunteer needs
- Track and share specific aggregate data
- Encourage utilization of the Michigan College Access Portal

Site Coordinator Resource Guide

Plan

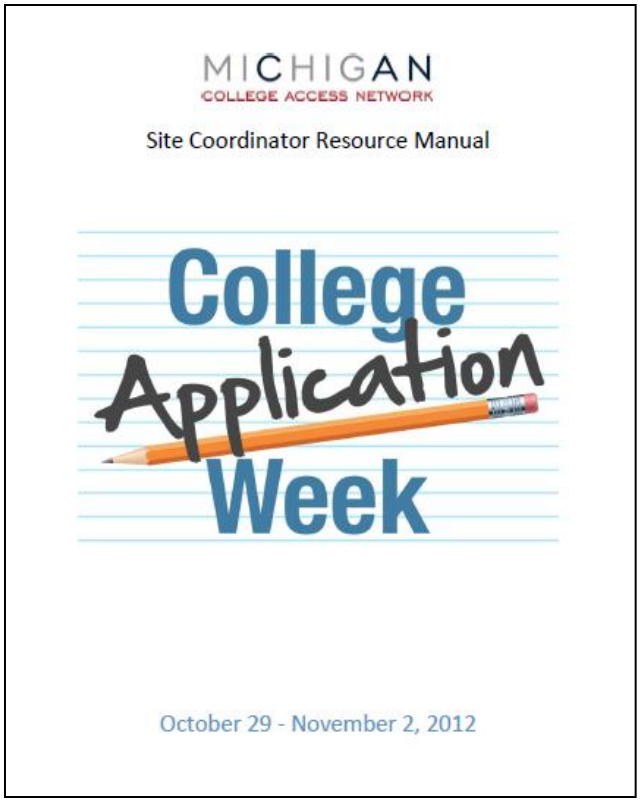
- Site Coordinator Checklist
- Sample Event Schedule
- Application Fees and Fee Waivers
- Senior Checklist
- Complementary Activities List and Templates

Outreach

- Sample Press Release and Newsletter Article
- Sample letters for students and parents
- Volunteer Resource Guide

Apply

- Student sign-in/sign-out sheet
- Now What? Handout
- College Glossary



MICHIGAN
COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK

Resource Guide

Understanding the word "college"

- Includes any type of postsecondary education or training beyond high school. (page 2)

Site Coordinator Checklist

- Recommended planning process and timeline Aug – Nov. (page 5-8)

AUGUST		
Status	**Recommended Due Date**	**Task**
○	8/20	Review Site Coordinator Resource Manual. www.micollegeaccess.org/events/college-application-week
○	8/29	Participate in a site coordinator webinar training.
○	8//31	Set up a College Application Week committee or team at your school to discuss the timeline of events and activities. This may include school counselors, teachers, students, administrators, parents/guardians, LCAN representative, etc.
○	8/31	Discuss with teachers possible tie-in assignments for students related to college application information and selecting colleges. Feel free to include activities for 9th-11th grade students to prepare them early for applying to college!
○	8/31	Elect to participate each day of College Application Week, or just one day during this week and confirm the event date(s) with the school and district's master calendar.
○		
○		
○		
SEPTEMBER		
		Review recorded Site Coordinator training webinar found at

MICHIGAN COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK

Affordability

Michigan College Access Portal

- Research financial aid options such as scholarships, available grants, loans, and incentive programs
- Paying for College Guide

Application Fees

- www.micollegeaccess.org/events/college-application-week
  - Lists standard online and paper app fees, essay requirements and letters of recommendation requirements
  - Document will be updated regularly if a school chooses to waive fees during CAW
- Michigan Postsecondary Handbook – www.michigan.gov/documents/mistudentaid

Application Fee Waivers

- National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) provides the "Request for Application Fee Waiver"
- Most Michigan colleges and universities accept the NACAC fee waiver
- Must be completed by students with the help of their high school counselor
- Download and print from NACAC website: http://www.nacacnet.org/studentinfo/feewaiver/Pages/default.aspx (page 11)

Volunteer Recruitment

- MCAN and Implementation Committee conducting general outreach to volunteers for all sites - **will not place volunteers** with sites
- Volunteers contacted the site coordinators directly
- CAW website: Promoted site and activity schedules once a site confirms
- Two webinars were offered
  - Recruitment/What is CAW – September 13
  - CAW Expectations for Volunteers – October 11

Potential Volunteers

- Counselors (current and retired)
- Teachers
- College access professionals (LCAN coordinator, Gear Up, TRIO)
- Admission Reps
- Parents & Grandparents
- Business leaders
- High School alumni –current college students

Michigan College Access Portal

- Available at www.michigancap.org
- Provides free support for all students and families in Michigan to simplify the process of transitioning from high school to college and career
- Comprehensive one-stop-shop to help students plan, apply, and pay for college
- Offers students, parents, counselors, advisers, and adult learners easy-to-use personalized tools to ensure that each step in the process of choosing and applying to college is seamless
- Offers information regarding career paths and give students the opportunity to map a plan of action to achieve their aspirations

Michigan College Access Portal

- Students should be encouraged to research different college and universities in order to find the best fit for them.
- College Search and Comparison tool, Career Planning, and information on how to Pay for College, apply for financial aid and research scholarship information
- Research financial aid options such as scholarships, available grants, loans, and incentive programs
- Paying for College Guide
- Webinar available if site coordinator is unfamiliar with the Portal

Tracking Data

- Excel Document – CAW Tracker
  - # of applications completed by a senior
  - Institutions senior applied to
  - Date applied
  - Fee Waiver used
  - Transcript sent
- Overall
  - # of graduating seniors
  - # of students that participated during CAW
  - # of applications to each institution
  - # of Fee Waivers used

By the Numbers – 2012 (*Preliminary*)

- 82 high schools participated
  - Utilized National College Advising Corps sites (45)
  - 61 were LCAN high schools
- Free and Reduced Lunch Rate Average – 61%
- Senior Count Average – 175 seniors
- Grad Rate (2011) Average – 85% *(not all reporting)*

2013 Planning

- Dec 2012 – Statewide Implementation Committee mtg to plan for 2013 and future growth
- Recruitment for host high schools will begin in late March/early April. *Watch MCAN enews for announcements*
- Host sites selected by June 1
- Resources will be developed during June/July and available by August
- Site will need to start planning in late August/first week of Sept
- ***TENTATIVE*** CAW 2013 will be either October 28 – November 1 or Nov. 4 - 8

2013 Involvement

- Pass along opportunity to high schools during April recruitment
  - There will be a webinar explaining What Is CAW in early April
- Assist with site planning, if appropriate
- Assist with volunteer outreach
- Volunteer!

Questions?

Thank you!

Lisa King

Assistant Director, Michigan College Access Network

517.316.1713

Lisa@micollegeaccess.org

CAW@micollegeaccess.org

www.micollegeaccess.org

MICHIGAN
COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK