



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**MC  
MONTGOMERY  
COLLEGE**



**The Universities  
AT SHADY GROVE**

# **CAREER READINESS PATHWAY POTENTIAL**



# Our Challenge: National Landscape on College & Career

*Nationally...*

- **22%** of students graduate community college within three years
- **13%** of students earn a bachelor's degree within six years
- Only **25%** of low-income, public high school students receive career readiness support
- Employers deem **40%** of all college graduates as unprepared for workforce entry.
- First Generation Grads receive significantly lower starting salaries.



# Career Competencies: National Initiative

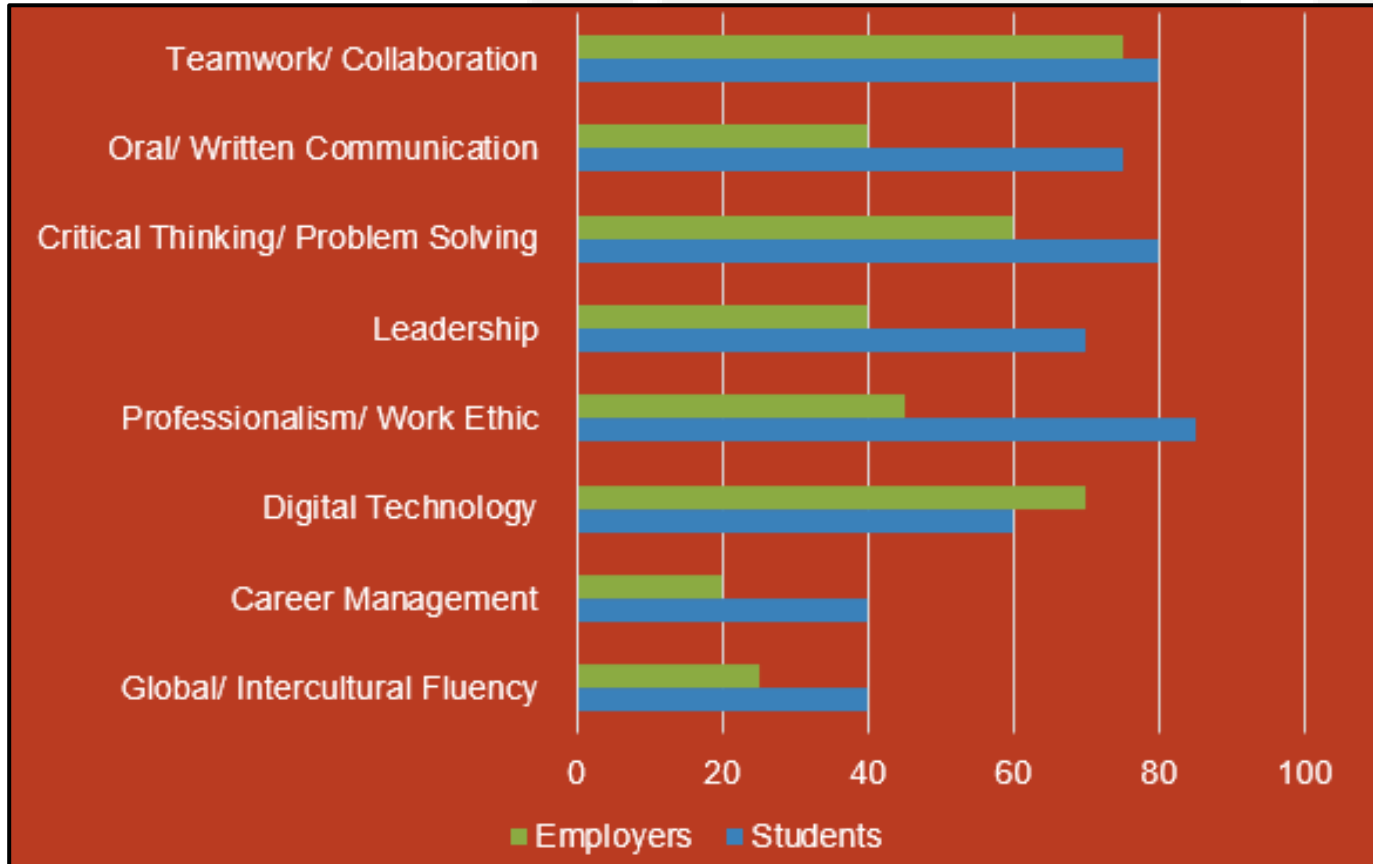
In 2015 - NACE assembled a task force of corporate and higher education leaders to answer these questions from “both sides of the table”. Over 600 employers were surveyed representing nearly 20 distinct industries ranging from business to STEM

*(NACE, 2019).*

## *Employers Deem Essential*

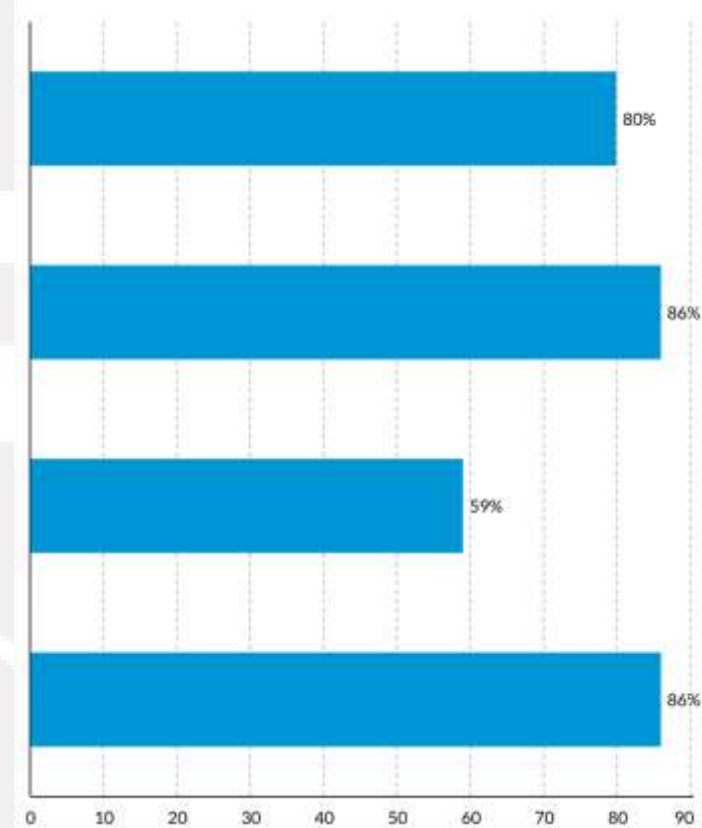
<b>Professionalism/Work Ethic</b>	97.5%
<b>Critical Thinking/Problem Solving</b>	96.3%
<b>Oral/Written Communication</b>	91.6%
<b>Teamwork/Collaboration</b>	90%
<b>Information Technology</b>	72%
<b>Leadership</b>	55.9%
<b>Career Management</b>	45%
<b>Global/Intercultural Fluency</b>	31.1%

# Employer View vs. Graduate View



# ACES - Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success

- Established in 2013, ACES uses a case management approach to identify and neutralize barriers to student success.
- Students apply and 800 are selected for the program in their 10th grade year based on potential barriers to academic success.
- 99% of ACES students graduate from high school and enter into higher education.
- 9 out of 10 persist from year one to year two of college.



## THE ACES PATHWAY

Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success (ACES) is a first-of-its-kind partnership among Montgomery County Public Schools, Montgomery College, and the Universities at Shady Grove. ACES provides individualized coaching, scholarship opportunities, and career readiness programming for students who have been historically underrepresented in higher education, improving their ability to thrive in college and into a career. Each year, more than 2,500 students participate in ACES across all three institutions.



Students apply to ACES in 10th grade and participate in 11th and 12th grades. Each student receives:

- Individualized coaching that continues throughout the entire pathway
- College application and financial aid assistance
- College preparation and transition support

When enrolled at one of the 80+ programs offered at USG, ACES students continue to receive:

- Leadership development
- Career readiness programming and internship guidance
- Networking opportunities

While working towards their associate's degree at Montgomery College, ACES students receive:

- Transfer advising into USG
- Career exploration opportunities
- Financial aid and scholarship assistance





# Career Experience Opportunities (CEO): Pathways & Career Readiness Together

Progressive and hands-on career readiness supports were added to enhance the ACES pathway experience. Starting with an initial pilot group, students were challenged to participate in coaching, career readiness instruction, and professional experiences spanning from high school to college

## Key Innovative Components of CEO:

- Progressive and hands-on learning
- Emphasis on Career Competencies
- Access to career experiences, regardless of academic standing
- Quality career coaching
- Simulation activities vs. traditional instruction
- Emphasis on accessibility and addressing barriers
- Utilizing student voice in programming
- **Flexible format employer partnership**



# Business Engagement Toolkit: Experiences for all Students

**Opportunities for Regional Employers - *beyond the traditional internship.***

## CAREER IMMERSION

Half-day organization tour and industry overview - in person or virtual



## VIRTUAL INTERNSHIP

Student gains experience remotely or in hybrid format



## JOB SHADOWING

One day pairing of a student with an employee in your organization



## TEAM-BASED INTERNSHIP

Multidisciplinary student team focused on solving an business problem



## MICROINTERNSHIP

Short-term placement focused on a specific project or problem (max 30 days)



## MENTORING

Experienced professional assisting with development of skills and network



## SPEAKER SERIES/ SIMULATIONS

Subject matter expert for one-day project



## SERVICE LEARNING

Career focused service opportunities



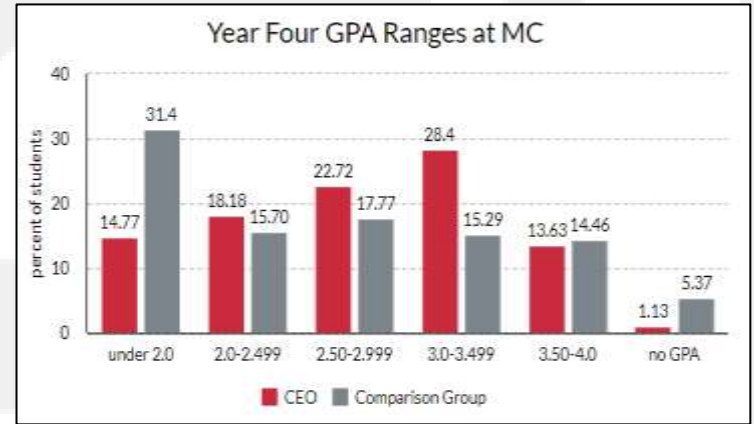


# Student Outcomes & Data

*The pilot indicates what is possible when underrepresented students have access to progressive career readiness interventions.*

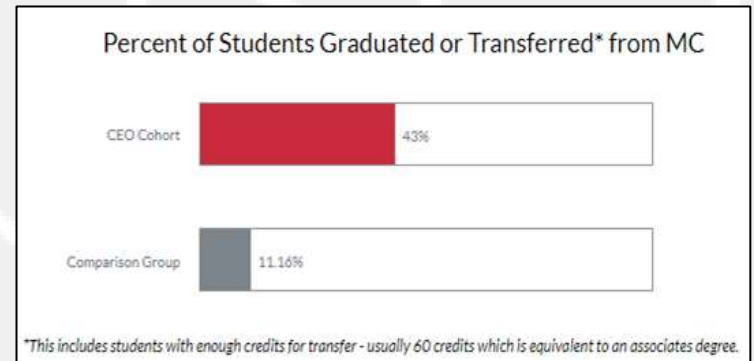
## Higher academic performance

- **42%** of CEO students at Montgomery College had GPAs of 3.0 or above compared to **28%** of the comparison group.



## Faster graduation/transfer rates

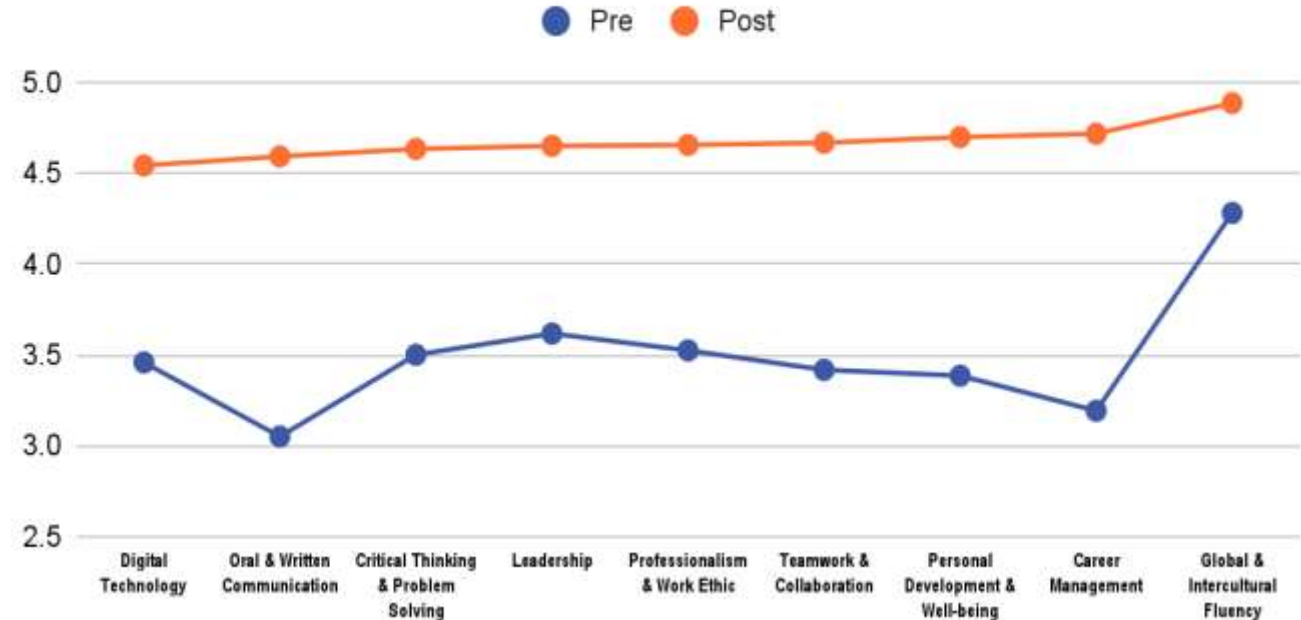
- Students graduated or transferred to 4-year schools at rates nearly **3 times** that of the comparison group



# Strengthened Career Readiness Competencies

Utilizing a pre/post assessment, students rated their competencies pre-CEO with an average score of **3.5** and post-CEO with an average score of **4.7**.

## Perception of Competencies: Pre and Post CEO Program



# Student Profiles



**Ebonie**

B.S. in Information Science, UMD  
M.S. Human Computer Interaction, UMD

Job Shadowing, VariQ

Micro-internship, Sodexo

Mentor, Senior Director  
of IT (Asbury)



**Julie**

B.A. in Social Work, UMBC  
Dual MSW/MPH, UMB

Job Shadowing, KindWorks

Micro-internship, Maryland State's  
Attorney's Office

Mentor, Assistant Director of Social Work  
(Asbury)



**Jorge**

B.S. in Biological Sciences, UMD  
*Pursuing Dental School*

Job Shadowing, Bunnag Comprehensive  
Dentistry

→ became a Part-time Job as Dental  
Assistant!

Mentor, Current Dental Student

# Toward Systemic Change: Program Expansion

Based upon the success of the CEO Pilot, Program Leaders expanded the central mission of ACES to include professional success for all student. In January of 2019 - career readiness supports were launched for all ACES students beginning with a focus on supports for high school students.

## KEY EXPANSION FEATURES



STEM exposure/experience infused into every activity



Progressive instruction with increasing levels of challenge



Collaboration with existing partners. No duplication of service



Every intervention mapped to career readiness outcomes



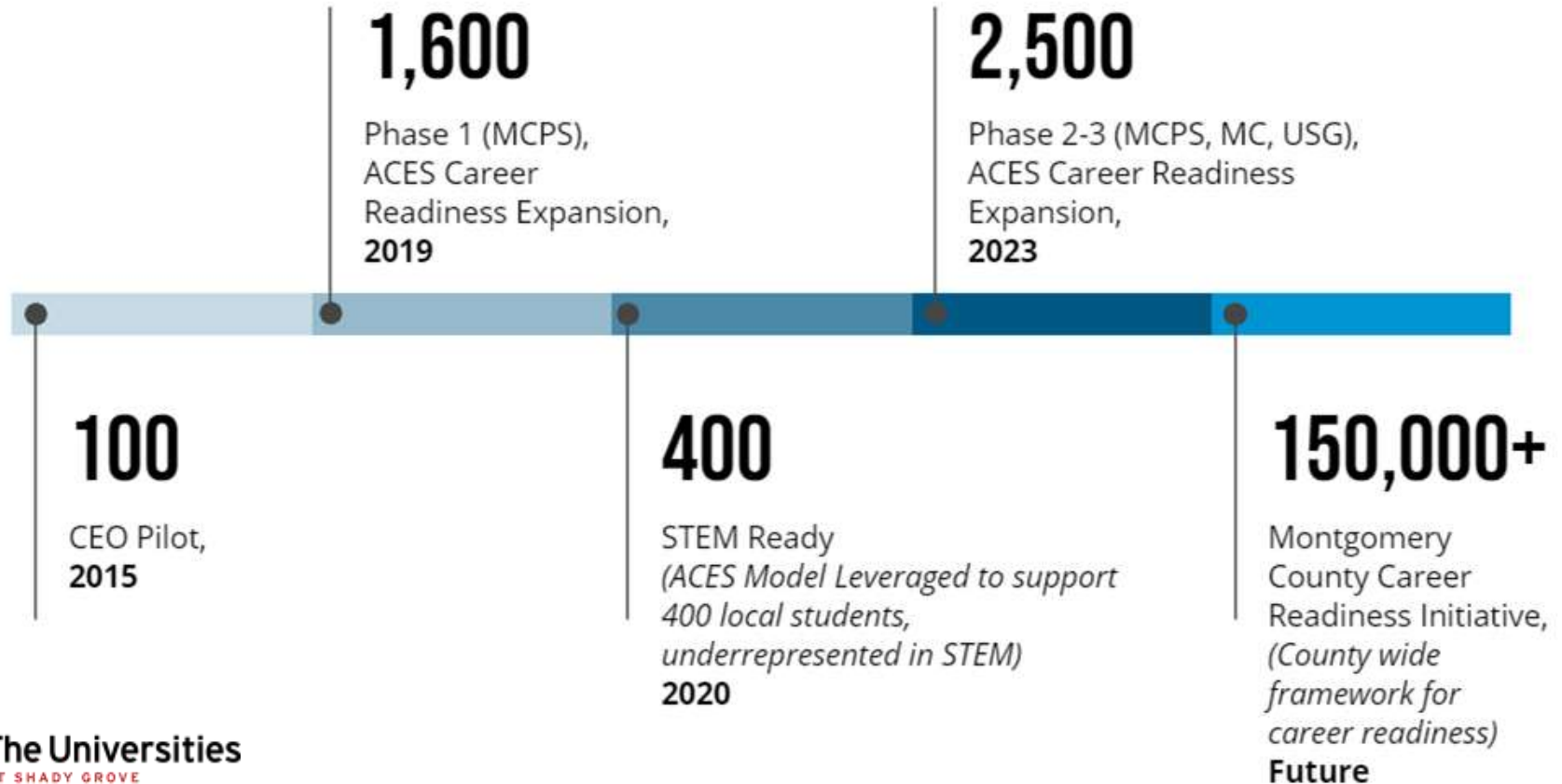
Students surveyed after each intervention and at pre/mid/post



Career experiences for every student with an emphasis on neutralizing barriers

- Original curriculum on topics such as **professionalism, communication, resume writing, interviewing, and STEM careers**. Streamlined tools for multiple audiences.
- **90% of all ACES HS Students** served (Over 1,500 students)
- Learning outcomes measured at **85% or higher on career readiness topics**.
- **750 + SSL Hours** with a career exploration focus

# Possibilities: From 100 to 150,000+



# Leveraging the Career Readiness Model

The potential for student success found in using career readiness as a framework for pathways is not just scalable - but replicable. The model is currently being layered onto other pathway initiatives for underrepresented groups.

- Talent/STEM Ready - increasing diversity in IT, Bioscience, and Engineering through accessible pathways supported by career readiness
- Healthcare Initiative Foundation - supporting scholars in Public Health, Nursing, & Social Work with career readiness and coaching
- A county wide framework for career readiness competencies which can span K-J

