in the Media

LEARN MORE AT
WWW.COLLEGEUNBOUND.ORG

collegeunbound collegeunbound collegeunbound
Accreditation and Innovation
October 2, 2019, By Madeline St. Amour

The accreditation system worked -- slowly -- for an unusual start-up college aimed at adult students, according to a case study by the American Council on Education.

Over its decade-long history, College Unbound has developed an educational model that works for students who aren’t considered traditional but who are poised to become the future of college populations.

The nonprofit institution located in Rhode Island lacks a campus. But it has an 83 percent graduation rate for a student population that skews female, older, poorer and less white.

A case study released Wednesday by the American Council on Education looks at College Unbound's journey through the accreditation process to identify barriers that could be hurting innovation that could most help future students.

ACE Convening Puts Spotlight on College Unbound
October 2, 2019, By Sarah Wood

WASHINGTON- College Unbound (CU), an innovative institution located in Providence, Rhode Island, designed for low-income working adult students who want to earn their bachelor’s degrees, was the subject of a symposium convened on Wednesday by the American Council on Education (ACE).

The event was designed to discuss the 10-year regional accreditation process and a newly released case study about the nonprofit institution.

“This is an institution that works on the premise that it should shape itself around the learner and not the other way around,” said Dr. Ted Mitchell, president of ACE. “It's not an institution that says, 'you come here and you shape yourself to us.' No, College Unbound says 'you are who you are, you've achieved a lot and you have great promise. Let us meet you where you are and let us help you along.'”

A Different Approach (video)
November 9, 2018, By Jim Hummel, The Hummel Report

Over the past decade hundreds of adults - some who had given up their dream of ever graduating from college - have been taking a different approach to earning a bachelor's degree. College Unbound, headquartered in Providence, is taking college to low-income and minority students: offering flexible schedules, favorable tuition rates, a tailored curriculum and locations at various parts of Rhode Island to go to class. This month Jim Hummel finds that the educational world is paying attention.

TO DOWNLOAD THE CASE STUDY

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8MshF7gKh4
College Unbound Helps Working Adults Earn Fast Affordable Degrees

April 22, 2019, By Tom Vander Ark

Why College Unbound Works for Working Adults

1. Not alone. College Unbound learners belong to a 15-person cohort with an evening faculty meeting once a week. The cohort communicates all week through WhatsApp and becomes very supportive of each other.

2. Flexibility and support. Small cohorts and personal relationships give college staff a good sense of the kind of support needed from housing to tutoring to mental health services. When a student wants to quit (as many do at some point), peers and staff find ways to meet needs and build persistence.

3. Little amenities matter. College Unbound takes away the excuses for skipping class, through supports like serving dinner or babysitting children.

4. Credit for prior learning. College Unbound respects the students past and present experience outside of school. There is a process working with the Council for Adults Experiential Learning (a Strada Education affiliate) where students develop a portfolio of their work to match a course. Students can take a CLEP test from College Board to earn credit in 32 different subjects.

5. Full-time school for full-time workers. Carrying the equivalent of a full college load allows students to finish in a reasonable amount of time. By enabling rapid progress, assembling prior credits, and granting credit for prior learning, students graduate with a bachelor’s degree more quickly than through traditional degree programs.

6. It’s personal. Classes are built around projects of interest to each learner. The project of a student who has a child with Down syndrome creates information to help the public understand disabilities. A woman whose young child died is researching the disease that was responsible. A learner in the United Way cohort built a performance dashboard—and when she presented it, each department wanted their own.

A debt-free personalized college option with supportive cohorts is adding up to high completion rates for adults previously not likely to graduate. For the 37 million working adults in the U.S. with some college and no degree, College Unbound is a great option likely to become more widely available.

Innovation In Education Takes Many Forms

July 17, 2019, By Jeanne Allen

Dennis Littky is a radical, fascinating and successful education rebel. He’s a serial education entrepreneur who’s redefining the term “higher education.” The former principal of Thayer High School in Winchester, New Hampshire, co-founder of both The Big Picture Company and The Met School has launched the best of his innovations yet: College Unbound, a “Bachelor’s degree completion program designed around an innovative, personalized, interest/project-based curriculum model” for adults, especially those who can’t afford the time or money it takes to leave their jobs or their families to hang out on increasingly irrelevant college campuses. It’s the epitome of the “k through career” vision that 21st-century education must embrace to stay relevant.

Five Reasons Why Free College Doesn’t Make The Grade

Jul 16, 2019, By Michael Horn

[College Unbound is one of the] new private options that are designed to be faster, cheaper (in an unsubsidized world) and optimized for student success.”

Innovation In Education Takes Many Forms

July 17, 2019, By Jeanne Allen

Dennis Littky is a radical, fascinating and successful education rebel. He’s a serial education entrepreneur who’s redefining the term “higher education.” The former principal of Thayer High School in Winchester, New Hampshire, co-founder of both The Big Picture Company and The Met School has launched the best of his innovations yet: College Unbound, a “Bachelor’s degree completion program designed around an innovative, personalized, interest/project-based curriculum model” for adults, especially those who can’t afford the time or money it takes to leave their jobs or their families to hang out on increasingly irrelevant college campuses. It’s the epitome of the “k through career” vision that 21st-century education must embrace to stay relevant.

Five Reasons Why Free College Doesn’t Make The Grade

Jul 16, 2019, By Michael Horn

[College Unbound is one of the] new private options that are designed to be faster, cheaper (in an unsubsidized world) and optimized for student success.”

Innovation In Education Takes Many Forms

July 17, 2019, By Jeanne Allen

Dennis Littky is a radical, fascinating and successful education rebel. He’s a serial education entrepreneur who’s redefining the term “higher education.” The former principal of Thayer High School in Winchester, New Hampshire, co-founder of both The Big Picture Company and The Met School has launched the best of his innovations yet: College Unbound, a “Bachelor’s degree completion program designed around an innovative, personalized, interest/project-based curriculum model” for adults, especially those who can’t afford the time or money it takes to leave their jobs or their families to hang out on increasingly irrelevant college campuses. It’s the epitome of the “k through career” vision that 21st-century education must embrace to stay relevant.

Five Reasons Why Free College Doesn’t Make The Grade

Jul 16, 2019, By Michael Horn

[College Unbound is one of the] new private options that are designed to be faster, cheaper (in an unsubsidized world) and optimized for student success.”
College Unbound named 2019 Drucker Institute Semi-Finalist for “Change that creates a New Dimension of Performance” in non-profit work. C.U. is one of 50 semi-finalists for $100,000 award.


“Low-income students" get career unstuck

September 12, 2019, By Shawna Chen

Though College Unbound is open to all students with a minimum of nine college credits, its admissions policy prioritizes “underrepresented, low-income, adult learners with some college credit but no degree who are employed full-time in low wage jobs with little possibility of advancement.”

https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2019/09/12/college-program-adults-never-finished-college-228046?fbclid=IwAR27bZjdJqP0suSYRd4mdf1C3nDh10mc3a03aXh3YwAVWSujUNQawfo

Making Providence a talent hub

Jan 25, 2016, By Jamie Merisotis

Jamie Merisotis is president & CEO of Lumina Foundation and author of “America Needs Talent.”

College Unbound gives adult students who are returning to college a way of earning their degree that supports their unique needs, and is flexible, affordable and tailored to their interests. Students can pursue a project-based concentration that aligns with the in-demand skills of today’s economy or can pick their own concentration, and along the way they receive crucial support services.

https://www.providencejournal.com/opinion/20160125/jamie-merisotis-making-providence-talent-hub

Scholarship program launched in R.I. for adults returning to college

April 10 2019, By Linda Borg

“The Feinstein Senior Scholars program would help parents of Feinstein Junior Scholars return to college to complete their degrees.”


How Low-Income College Dropouts Are Getting Their Careers Unstuck

September 12, 2019, By Shawna Chen

College Unbound named 2019 Drucker Institute Semi-Finalist for it’s “Change that creates a New Dimension of Performance" in non-profit work. C.U. is one of 50 semi-finalists for $100,000 award.

College Unbound Names Kidder Chair of Board for 2019
Sunday, January 13, 2019, GoLocalProv Business Team

College Unbound has named attorney Patricia Kidder of Newport as the President of the Board of Directors for 2019.


College Unbound to Launch First-Ever Leadership Diversity Initiative
January 29, 2019, GoLocalProv News Team

“We know the talent and interest exists within our urban centers and across the state - we just need to tap it – for the good of our economy and the future of these institutions.” said Dennis Littky, PhD, president and co-founder of College Unbound.


Providence-based College Unbound gets OK for federal student aid
March 25, 2019, By William Hamilton

The president of College Unbound has announced that the U.S. Department of Education recently cleared the way for the nontraditional, degree-granting school to accept student requests for federal financial aid. College Unbound said the approval means students can apply for Pell grants, students loans and work-study arrangements through the school.

https://pbn.com/providence-based-college-unbound-gets-ok-for-federal-student-aid/?fbclid=IwAR0nbojJgUcucwmygHyLw4S8-1-AwKT8wKTDpq_5o0aWb386c13_d746FXQ

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

A College Designed for Adults (video)
Feb 15, 2018, By Goldie Blumenstyk

Goldie Blumenstyk interviews Adam Bush, co-founder and provost of College Unbound. He states: “Its about working to recognize the knowledge making that adult learners are taking part in their daily practice.”

https://www.chronicle.com/article/A-College-Designed-for-Adults/242559

The School For College Dropouts
January 9, 2019, By Adrienne Day

Designed to address the needs of underrepresented, nontraditional college students, most of whom have full-time, low-wage jobs, College Unbound caters to adults with some college credit but no degree. Focusing on each student’s unique talents and interests, Littky’s innovative formula seems to be working: The Providence, Rhode Island–based school currently enrolls around 200 students, 80 percent of whom graduate, says Littky.

http://nationswell.com/adult-college-degree-program/
Designing a High-Impact College for Returning Adult Students
Fall 2017, Vol. 20, No. 4
By: Lauren Roy, Liya Escalera, Stephanie Fernandez, Ebru Korbek-Erdogmus, Jennifer Reid, Adam Bush and John Saltmarsh

College Unbound embraces the idea that high-impact learning happens in many spaces, and that faculty are not the only holders and creators of knowledge. Students are true partners in their learning: they engage in coassessment of their work, and their stories and histories actively shape the curriculum. For students, this model results in a learning environment where they can all be successful and where inclusive excellence is expected and realized. For faculty, the model offers an entry point to an exciting, collaborative endeavor that highlights the impact of student-centered teaching.

A CLASS OF HIS OWN: Dennis Littky has gained the reputation of being an innovative educator by developing projects such as College Unbound, a nontraditional, degree-granting school.

Inaugural 25 Over Fifty-five honorees feted for achievement, contributions
August 23, 2019, By Nancy Kirsch

While Rhode Island is home to world-renowned institutions of higher education, Dennis Littky is focused on helping students he says are underserved by those colleges and universities: adults who started college but, for one reason or another, never finished and didn’t go back.

Helping students cross the finish line
Tuesday, February 5, 2019, By Robert Carothers

In 2015 the state of Rhode Island authorized College Unbound to give degrees. The next step was to get accredited. A veteran in the world of accreditation, I stepped down from my role as board chair and joined the staff to help guide CU to candidacy status, a critical and necessary step toward getting full accreditation. The New England Council on Higher Education (NECHE) granted us that status this past September, a moment we are celebrating.

Designing a High-Impact College for Returning Adult Students
Fall 2017, Vol. 20, No. 4
By: Lauren Roy, Liya Escalera, Stephanie Fernandez, Ebru Korbek-Erdogmus, Jennifer Reid, Adam Bush and John Saltmarsh

College Unbound embraces the idea that high-impact learning happens in many spaces, and that faculty are not the only holders and creators of knowledge. Students are true partners in their learning: they engage in coassessment of their work, and their stories and histories actively shape the curriculum. For students, this model results in a learning environment where they can all be successful and where inclusive excellence is expected and realized. For faculty, the model offers an entry point to an exciting, collaborative endeavor that highlights the impact of student-centered teaching.

https://www.aacu.org/diversitydemocracy/2017/fall/roy

Inaugural 25 Over Fifty-five honorees feted for achievement, contributions
August 23, 2019, By Nancy Kirsch

While Rhode Island is home to world-renowned institutions of higher education, Dennis Littky is focused on helping students he says are underserved by those colleges and universities: adults who started college but, for one reason or another, never finished and didn’t go back.

Helping students cross the finish line
Tuesday, February 5, 2019, By Robert Carothers

In 2015 the state of Rhode Island authorized College Unbound to give degrees. The next step was to get accredited. A veteran in the world of accreditation, I stepped down from my role as board chair and joined the staff to help guide CU to candidacy status, a critical and necessary step toward getting full accreditation. The New England Council on Higher Education (NECHE) granted us that status this past September, a moment we are celebrating.

http://warwickonline.com/stories/helping-students-cross-the-finish-line,139947

Designing a High-Impact College for Returning Adult Students
Fall 2017, Vol. 20, No. 4
By: Lauren Roy, Liya Escalera, Stephanie Fernandez, Ebru Korbek-Erdogmus, Jennifer Reid, Adam Bush and John Saltmarsh

College Unbound embraces the idea that high-impact learning happens in many spaces, and that faculty are not the only holders and creators of knowledge. Students are true partners in their learning: they engage in coassessment of their work, and their stories and histories actively shape the curriculum. For students, this model results in a learning environment where they can all be successful and where inclusive excellence is expected and realized. For faculty, the model offers an entry point to an exciting, collaborative endeavor that highlights the impact of student-centered teaching.

https://www.aacu.org/diversitydemocracy/2017/fall/roy
The Story Behind Gaia’s “Still Here” Mural in Providence (video)
November 06, 2018

“Still Here,” is inspired by the history of the Custom House Street location, as well as the indigenous peoples of Rhode Island. The wall is close to Weybosset Street, which is named for an indigenous footpath, and a trading location that later became one of the first custom houses in America. The Avenue Concept partnered with the Tomaquag Museum in Exeter to develop a concept and research the history; this led to a connection with artist Lynsea Montanari, (College Unbound student) a member of the Narragansett tribe and an educator at the museum. She collaborated with Gaia on the concept and composition of the mural and is featured as a subject in it, depicted holding a picture of Princess Red Wing, a Narragansett elder who founded the Tomaquag Museum 60 years ago. (Italics ours)


If These Walls Could Talk
August 2018

“When we talk about the preservation of a city, we generally tend to focus on sort of the white European history, and we very often neglect the longer history, which involves indigenous people,” says Nick Platzer, 2D Art Director and Mural Program Manager at The Avenue Concept. All too often, Nick laments, the general public only gets one side of the story. Painting a portrait of Lynsea was a chance to change the narrative.


City, volunteer barbers help kids look sharp for first day of school
Aug 29, 2019, By Linda Borg

Back to School Cut-a-thon! A project facilitated by CU student Shawndell Burney, with photo featuring CU student Derek Brown


Pair of volunteers honored for making a difference in Newport
Sep 13, 2019, By Rachael Thatcher

Newport North End residents Dianne Ford (CU Student) and Ellen Pinnock completed their first year of full time volunteer service this September through the national AmeriCorps VISTA program as part of the Newport Working Cities Collaborative. On Thursday, The Boys and Girls Club of Newport County hosted Rhode Island State Senator Dawn Euer at the Florence Gray Center as she presented them with Senate award citations.

COLLEGE UNBOUND (CU), focuses on adult learners who have faced significant barriers to attending college. CU coordinates courses, field studies, and in-depth project work to help students develop field-specific knowledge and skills that encourage deep learning. CU fills a unique niche in postsecondary education for returning adult learners with a Bachelor’s Degree completion program designed around an innovative, personalized, interest/project-based curriculum model.