



THE SUCCESS CONNECTION

News and highlights from the *Pathways to Persistence and Success* initiative under the Title III Strengthening Institutions Grant

What is the *Pathways to Persistence and Success* initiative?

In 2018, the federal government awarded Cambridge College a \$2.25 million Strengthening Institutions Grant under Title III to **transform the student experience** and **reform curriculum and instruction** in order to promote student success. With this initiative, we've been working hard to implement new processes so that our students can experience the grant's impact first-hand. Read on to see what we've been working on.

THIS PUBLICATION IS
BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE TITLE III TASK FORCE AND THE
OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

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NEW THIS FALL

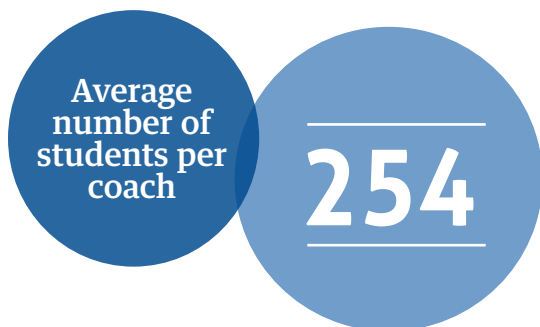
ACADEMIC SUCCESS COACHING & NEW UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT ONBOARDING PROCESS

Cambridge College is transitioning from a traditional academic advising model to a more comprehensive, holistic success coaching model.

Our Success Coaches

In the summer of 2019, we hired three new Success Coaches, designed and ran an intensive four-week training, incorporated the new coaches into our current undergraduate academic advising team, and relocated all of our Success Coaches to the OneStop to make them more accessible for students.

Each Success Coach is responsible for monitoring their caseload of students and meeting with them regularly for advising, but also helping them with key college and career skills such as organization, time management, goal setting, and career exploration.



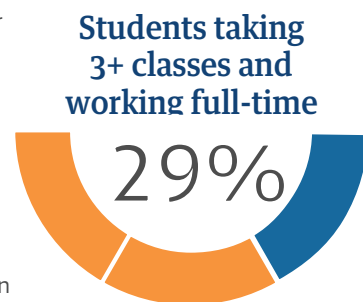
New Onboarding Process

Title III task forces built upon this success coaching model to create a new process for incoming undergraduate students that ensures that each new student is more closely guided and supported through their first term. Redesigning the student experience is one of the primary goals of the Pathways to Persistence and Success Initiative because it has a large impact on student success. This fall, we piloted a new intake process for new undergraduate students.



Breaking it down:

- 1 Success Coaches reach out to new undergraduate students within 48 hours of their admittance to the College to arrange a writing assessment and intake interview.
- 2 Students are asked to fill out a brief intake survey to give their Success Coach initial insight into their strengths and the challenges they are facing. Among other things, the survey asks how many courses they are taking, if they are working, and if they have other obligations. The questionnaire aims to highlight any areas in which the student may need practical support.
- 3 Each student then arrives on campus to complete the writing assessment and meet with their Success Coach to discuss the student's motivation for studying at Cambridge College and their academic goals. This is a chance for students to get to know their coach and begin to build a relationship that will last throughout their entire time at Cambridge College.
- 4 As the semester begins, the coaches work with the first semester LRN175: Principles and Processes of Adult Learning faculty to conduct regular outreach and workshops. They also schedule further individual meetings with their students throughout the first semester.



In each issue of this newsletter, we will be highlighting two individuals who support students every day. In this issue, you'll meet Success Coaches Jean Lendall and Tatiana Baez.



MEET

JEAN LENDALL & TATIANA BAEZ



Why did you choose to work at Cambridge College?

I believe that Cambridge College and I chose each other. The leadership intentionally selected 3 coaches with unique strengths. I am excited to build a program and make an impact.

What is your favorite thing about Cambridge College students?

My favorite thing is students' courage to make their education a priority among so many competing interests.

What is your coaching style?

My style of coaching is Appreciative and Strengths-based. I encourage students to grow from experience and maintain focus on their life purpose.

“I encourage students to grow from experience and maintain focus on their life purpose”

What advice would you give yourself 10 years ago?

Don't underestimate yourself.

What is the most important thing you want students to keep in mind while they are studying here?

When it gets tough, remember your “why story” and if you don't remember, ask your coach.

Fun fact about you:

I walked a pilgrimage in Northern Spain known as the Camino de Santiago, or the walk of Saint James. I used this time to reflect and discern on my life's journey and it led me to doctoral study! ❖

Jean is passionate about student development and civic engagement. She has served in higher education for 20 years as an Academic Advisor, tutoring center coordinator, and faculty member. She often speaks to students in schools and organizations on behalf of Sandy Hook Promise to promote healthier and safer homes, schools, and communities. She served as a facilitator of welcoming diversity and controversial issues process workshops for ten years at North Shore Community College. She is currently an Ed.D. Candidate in Education Leadership and Management at St. Thomas University.

What is your favorite thing about Cambridge College students?

My favorite thing about CC students is their perseverance and ability to push through and show up when life happens, just their sheer determination to try their very best while juggling a range of competing priorities outside of school. It's pretty admirable.

What drives you?

My faith and my upbringing. Growing up in the projects in Boston, I understood very early on that if I wanted to evolve beyond the chaos and dysfunction around me, I needed to make my education a priority. While it didn't happen overnight, once I embraced it as a young adult and had the right support in my corner, it truly made all the difference.

“There is no such thing as rejection in life, only REdirection”

What excites you the most about joining Cambridge College?

Being part of an inclusive and diverse institution that makes higher education a reality for adult learners. I'm also excited to pay forward some of the lessons I learned as a nontraditional student from my own advisors. It's like coming full circle.

What advice would you give yourself 10 years ago?

To stop questioning situations and opportunities that don't work out in my favor and to remember that there is no such thing as rejection in life only REdirection.

Your most proud moment to date:

Taking a leap of faith in 2017 and moving to Chiang Mai, Thailand to teach abroad. It was by far the most life-changing experience, which not only confirmed my passion for working with students, but set the foundation for my career. ❖

As a former first-generation nontraditional student, Tatiana is passionate about teaching ESOL, mentoring, and helping students tap into their full potential. As a communications professional, she has held roles such as project assistant, communications associate, and ESOL tutor and instructor. She currently teaches ESOL part-time at Bunker Hill Community College. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Communications Studies from Northeastern University and plans to pursue her masters in Mental Health Counseling in the near future.



Interview with **MICHAEL DICKINSON**

DIRECTOR OF UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC ADVISING

What is your favorite part of your role as Director of Undergraduate Academic Advising?

It's hard for me to designate one part of my role that is my favorite. What I love about my job is the variety of roles that I get to play. Certainly, balancing a variety of roles can be challenging but it is also what makes the work rewarding. My day includes meetings that are strategic and creating overarching plans and processes to one-on-one appointments with students helping them with their specific academic goals.

How have Title III funds affected your work?

It has affected my work significantly. Title III has provided the opportunity to hire two new academic coaches and to adopt Starfish software for providing a more robust and supportive communication network for the college community. These are tremendous additions but getting the staff and systems established while maintaining the regular responsibilities has certainly kept me busy.

How has the arrival of the Success Coaches affected your work?

My role is changing. Before the Success Coaches arrived, Jeff Hogan and I were responsible for advising all of the undergraduate students in Boston. I am still advising continuing students but I only am advising a few new students. My management responsibilities have increased considerably. I am excited about our team of Academic Success Coaches; they are a fantastic resource and able to provide greater support to our students. My job now is to make sure that the team has the training, support, and direction to communicate and provide greater guidance and resources to students.

What is your ultimate goal when working with students?

That they have a clear plan of what they want to accomplish, understand how they will execute the plan, and recognize what support/resource is available to help them do it.

What advice do you have for students while they're at CC?

One of my favorite quotes is "No matter how diligent or persistent you have been, there is not one of us who made this journey toward success by ourselves." I have tremendous respect for our students. I truly admire their determination and persistence. My advice is to enjoy the journey and make sure they are proactively communicating

with and tapping into those resources that are available to them along the way: their professors, their advisors/academic coaches, and their fellow students.

"I have tremendous respect for our students. I truly admire their determination and persistence"

What do you want students to take away from their time at CC?

- Pride, confidence and a plan. Earning a college degree is a lot of work, especially while juggling family responsibilities, work, and all the day-to-day challenges life brings. Students should be proud of the steps they take while at Cambridge College, have a plan for where they are going next, and confident in their abilities in taking the steps that lie ahead.

Fun fact about yourself?

Not sure if others will consider it fun, but I grew up in Pennsylvania and continue to be a loyal Philadelphia sports fan. I have raised my family in Massachusetts, so I wasn't very popular in my house when the Eagles won the Superbowl two years ago. I'm rooting for another Eagles/Patriots Superbowl this year. Go EAGLES! ❖

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE



In conversation with **BA'RAN LEWIS**

HUMAN SERVICES MAJOR

Responses recorded by Leili Ansari

Ba'Ran is a first-year student in the School of Undergraduate Studies who transferred from Northeastern University. Ba'Ran works with the homeless population in the healthcare field.

Why did you choose to transfer to Cambridge College?

My sister and brother-in-law both attended Cambridge College, and my sister is now getting her master's degree here. When I couldn't decide where to transfer to, my sister recommended Cambridge College. I hadn't heard of it before. At Northeastern, my program was always changing and professors weren't hands-on. I didn't know what I wanted to study and I felt like I was never going to graduate. When I first called Cambridge College, they told me to come in for a transfer session and they'd sign me up, and every step after that took me closer to coming here. I was scared and didn't know if I'd adapt, but the transition was so smooth. Just talking to staff... the energy was so different and refreshing.

Orientation was heartwarming. Staff and faculty took the time to speak to us...the dean, Michael Dickinson, and different professors, they all spoke. Previous students talked about their experience and said, "if I can do it, you can do it". It was so motivating.

What's one thing that makes you feel supported at Cambridge College?

Staff and faculty. Faculty here makes you feel like you mean something, like, "we're not going to give up on you, we'll keep working this out". They'll push me to get to that level. That's a good feeling. And everything is so accessible here: there are tutors on site, Starfish to make appointments...support is always accessible.

Have you heard of the Starfish Student Success Network?

Yes! Michael showed us how to use it in our LRN class. Starfish is so simple. Before, at Northeastern, we couldn't make appointments online, we'd have to go and see them in person to make appointments. Here it's easy to go online to make an appointment with a tutor. I haven't used it yet, but as soon as I take a math or science class, I'm definitely going to be using it to make tutor appointments!

How do you like your LRN class with Michael Dickinson?

Michael is so engaging with students; he's very helpful and he's relatable and brings a lot of life into the classroom. He's an amazing professor. I love the LRN class—I'm finding out things about myself, and I'm dealing with my self-doubt as a student. I love that the class shows you all the things you really need to work on. I also like all the students in my classes. We are all very supportive of one another. We are all in this together. If you need help or

assistance, we're all helpful. I've never had that before: people saying, "we can do this, we all have the goal of getting a degree and living a better life". The support here is definitely different than what I'm used to!

Who is your Success Coach? What has been your experience with your Coach?

Tatiana. I like that she's relatable, genuine, and she's been helpful in guiding me in a good direction. My coworkers were making me doubt my ability to work in human services, and at one point I broke down and called Tatiana. She was so helpful. She asked if I'm the first point of contact at work, and if I give people advice, and I said yes. She reminded me that I was in the right place, and that not every human services job will lead to burnout. It was refreshing, and I feel like human services is where I belong. This is it. This is the first time in a long time that I've had this feeling.

One day I was telling Tatiana that I was having a hard time with time management and putting things off until the last minute. She was really helpful in suggesting that I break down tasks into smaller pieces. Then the next LRN class I had was about time management! I got to hear other students discuss their opinions, how they handle time management, and learned more about my strengths and weaknesses and how to improve. I've definitely improved my time management skills as a result.

What is one piece of advice you would give to someone who is thinking about studying at Cambridge College?

Believe the hype! If you're seeing [Cambridge College] on the metro and hearing about it on the radio, believe the hype. I tell everyone to just do it. ❖

"I feel like a different student here; I finally feel like this is meant for me"



STUDENT SUCCESS NETWORK

COLLABORATE. ADVOCATE. SUCCEED!

What is Starfish?

Starfish is a tool that connects students with their personal success network at Cambridge College. Students, faculty, and staff have the ability to raise alerts to ensure that students receive the support they need to succeed. Starfish puts the services our students need at their fingertips, keeps everyone informed, and prompts action when necessary, so that the College can provide interventions just in time to prevent students from going off track. It's also where students can schedule appointments, complete to-do lists, and view their grades.

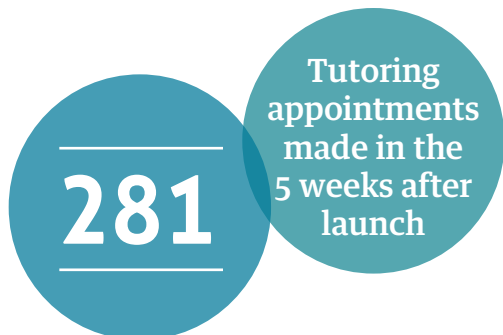
For Students

Starfish is a powerful tool for students because it allows them to effectively advocate for the support services they need while at Cambridge College. Students can access course information, grades, individualized success plans, and any To-Dos created by their advisor. They can view office hours of everyone in your Success Network (Success Coach or Advisor, Instructors, and Academic Tutors) to schedule appointments.

Make Appointments

- 4** services with appointment-scheduling capabilities:
- Tutoring
 - Academic Advising
 - Disability Support
 - International Advising

And, by using the “raise your hand” feature, students can confidentially raise alerts for services they need (academic, personal, and financial). Alerts are only sent to the person who can provide the needed support, and that person will reach out to the student and schedule an appointment.



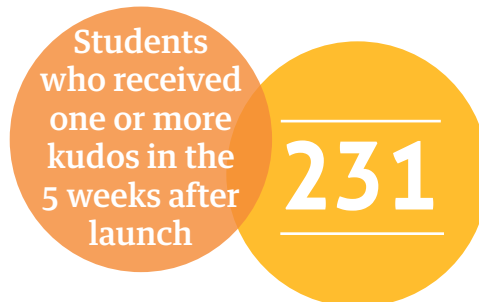
Raise Tracking Items

- 3** tracking item types:
- Flags
 - Referrals
 - Kudos

For Faculty & Staff

Faculty and staff can use Starfish to raise alerts when they have concerns about a student’s attendance, participation, or academic performance.

These alerts are sent directly to the student’s Success Coach or Academic Advisor who then follows up with the student to address and resolve those concerns. Coaches and Advisors will be able to use Starfish to send referrals to the Academic Success Center for further support when needed.



Faculty can also send Kudos to students to recognize academic excellence or progress made.

Progress Surveys can be created for any group or school. They provide faculty with an easy way to report tracking items on students during an early alert window. We created an early alert progress survey and administered it to all undergraduate faculty at all campuses. Many of the flags were raised during this single survey administration, connecting students quickly with advisors.

Early Alerts

4/5 faculty members completed the progress survey

To learn more about Starfish, please contact Robyn Shahid-Bellot at robyn.shahid-bellot@cambridgecollege.edu

TRAINING



Starfish Trainings

Our Starfish support team trained faculty and staff on how to use Starfish

Our Starfish consultants Ejob O'Brien and Andy Runyan

from Hobson's visited the College at the end of October to provide useful trainings, get to know Cambridge College, and prepare us for the next phase of Starfish features.

17 tutors
67 faculty members
34 advisors

In the 5 weeks after launch, faculty and staff raised...

459 tracking items on **307** students

138 flags **294** kudos **27** referrals



LAUNCH PARTY

"Starfish is changing the way Cambridge College supports students, and I'm thrilled to be a part of this transformation"

Robyn Shahid-Bellot,
Title III Senior Director of
Systems Integration



Robyn Shahid-Bellot and Ejob O'Brien

Congratulations to our raffle winners:

Roshana Koirala & Nicholas Curry!

25

Users signed onto Starfish at the launch party

LOOKING AHEAD

UPCOMING PROJECTS UNDER TITLE III

STARFISH

The party may be over, but the Starfish fun doesn't end there! We are now working to implement an analytics piece that will help us determine the variables that affect student success. Also, keep an eye out for the degree and career-planning pieces that will be added in 2020. Students will be able to use the career planner, in addition to the College Central Network currently available, to explore possible career options. The degree planner will allow faculty and staff to more easily create academic plans to help students reach their goals. The degree and career-planning pieces together will improve the student experience and change the way Cambridge College students shape their professional lives.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

School of Undergraduate Studies Dean James Lee and undergraduate program chairs have redesigned the undergraduate school-wide learning outcomes. Going forward, undergraduate faculty will be working in groups to redefine the general education outcomes and Management program outcomes. These agreed-upon outcomes will inform curriculum and instruction and lead to coherent program design. The goal is to better prepare students for success in the competitive global economy.



FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE

Creating a comprehensive First-Year Experience (FYE) is a primary goal of the Pathways to Persistence and Success Initiative. In addition to adopting the success coaching model and redesigning the onboarding process for new students as previously outlined, the First-Year Experience will be designed to connect skill-building to learning experiences, personal strengths and career paths through personal and career assessments.

FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Offering professional development training to faculty members is a critical component of improving curriculum and instruction to better serve students. In the coming year, MyCC will be redesigned so that faculty can more easily access professional development tools and training materials and begin incorporating high-impact practices into their courses and curriculum.



“Thank you to all those who have worked and are continuing to work to reach our student success goals. This was truly a team effort, and I am looking forward to the projects we have lined up for Year 2 of the grant!”

*Tracy McLaughlin,
Associate Provost & Title III
Activity Director*

