



Center for Education, Engagement and Evaluation

Attracting Students into Science: Mentor for a Summer Student Research Program for Community College Students

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Research Experiences for Community College Students

The Research Experience for Community College Students (RECCS) is a 9-week paid internship that pairs community college students with research mentors and authentic research experiences in environmental and geosciences. The RECCS program aims to increase **students' persistence in STEM disciplines** (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), and develop a more **diverse geoscience workforce**. Students learn basic research, writing, and communication skills, and they present their research at a local student science symposium. RECCS will be entering its ninth year this summer.



2021 RECCS Student, Kyle Greaves, along with mentor, Samuel Yevak.

“Definitely working with my mentor was life changing and so incredibly valuable...”

APPLICANTS FROM RURAL COMMUNITIES

New in 2024, applicants were asked if they had spent a significant percentage of time (75% of childhood or last 5 years) living in a rural community, regardless of community college they currently attend.

28%

2024

REFERENCES

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Weston, Timothy J. & Laursen, Sandra L. 2015. The Undergraduate Research Student Self-Assessment (URSSA): Validation for Use in Program Evaluation. CBE Life Science Education. Sept 3; 14(3): ar33.

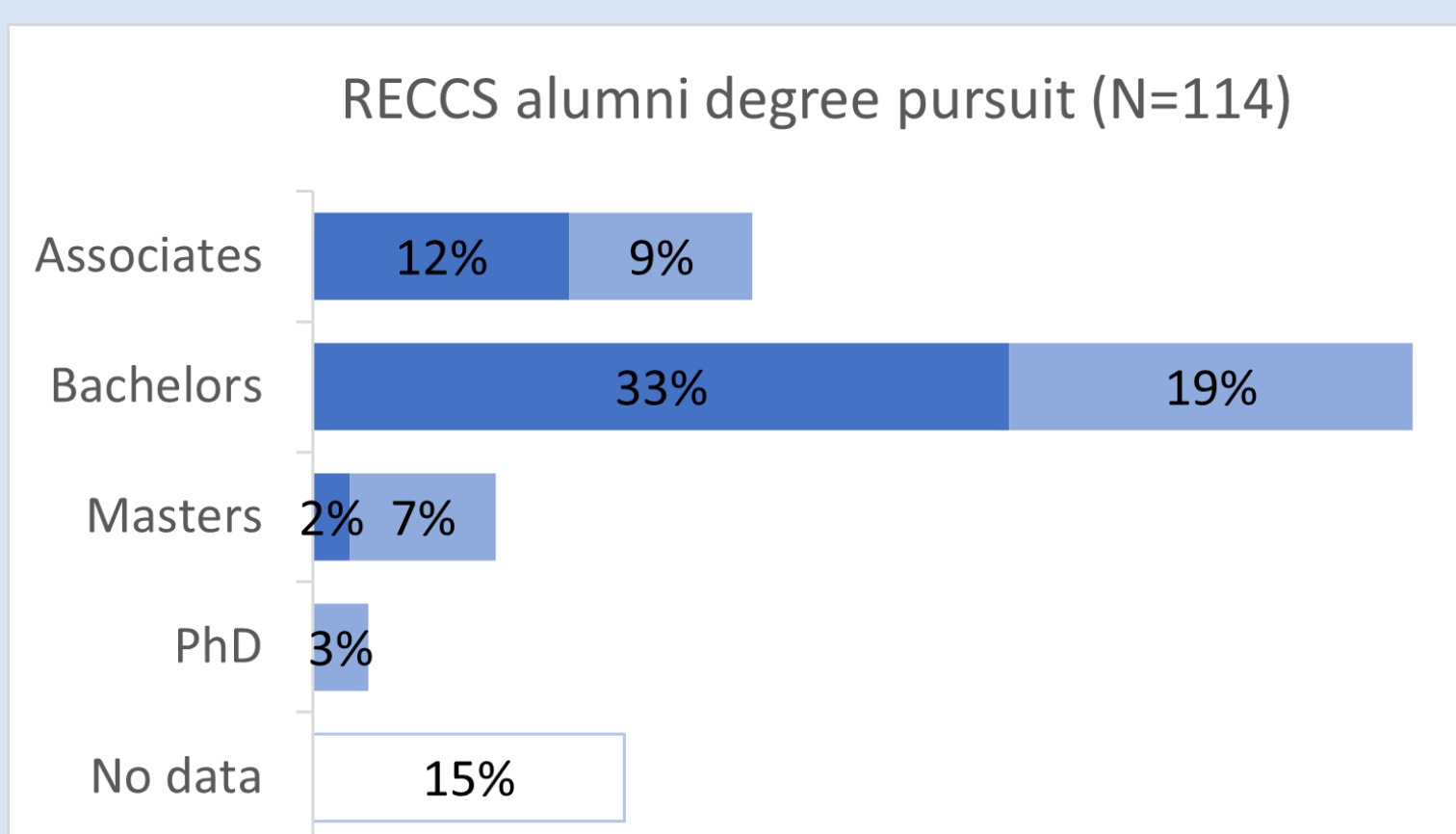
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WHY MENTOR A RECCS STUDENT?

Colorado is home to more than 100,000 community college students at 15 institutions. These institutions often serve racially or ethnically diverse groups, as well as first-generation college attendees. Providing an authentic research experience for community college students serves to develop a more diverse geoscience workforce and builds motivation for students to transfer to a geoscience field of study at a 4-year institution. Undergraduates who participate in a research experience are more likely to pursue additional research experiences or to enroll in graduate school than those who don't have this opportunity.



“I feel like I gained so much from this program. Communication, how to formulate a scientific question, how to think creatively about the problem, how to investigate, and dig deeper when results weren't what I expected, and how to interpret results. I also found a community, I finally have friends.”

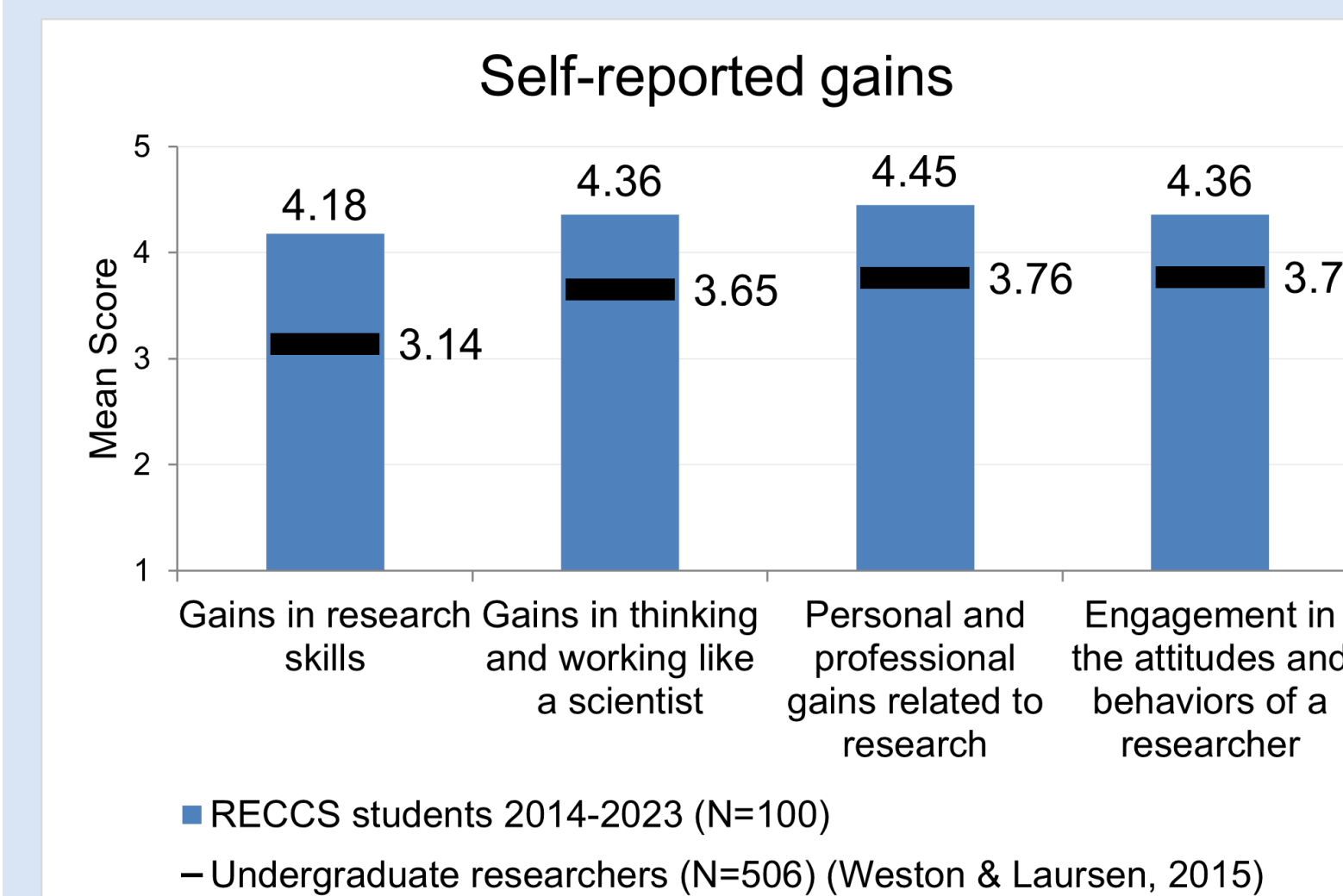


STUDENT IMPACT

Mentors have a tremendous opportunity to impact student growth when the research experience is scaffolded with professional development, reflection on the research experience, and supported by peers. RECCS students have shown greater self-reported gains than other undergraduate researchers in understanding the process of science, research skills, attitudes such as feelings of efficacy and belonging, and personal gains like confidence in their ability to do research.



2023 RECCS Students



“RECCS provided me with resources and opportunities I didn't know were possible such as learning about how to apply to graduate school and the opportunities available in for me in STEM. I was able to unapologetically show up as myself and remove any stereotypes I had about academia, STEM, and research. RECCS made me realize that I love research and that I can be involved in academia.”

RECCS APPLICANT DEMOGRAPHICS

