

CAHNRS DEI Grant Report
Department of Human Development
Grant Year: 2024

The CAHNRS DEI grant has played a crucial role in supporting the Department of Human Development's student ambassadors' efforts to recruit a diverse pool of students during Washington State University (WSU) recruitment events, both on and off campus. The funding allowed us to enhance our outreach and ensure that our recruitment materials and representation reflect the diversity of the student body we aim to serve.

The grant funding was utilized in several impactful ways:

- Providing student ambassadors with branded shirts that highlighted their department, Human Development (HD), fostering a sense of pride and unity while promoting the program to prospective students.
- Purchasing new tabling materials and swag that showcased Human Development's commitment to serving diverse populations through prevention science. These materials were designed to engage potential students and communicate our department's dedication to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Attracting a diverse group of student ambassadors who reflect the range of backgrounds and experiences we seek to bring into the HD program, further strengthening our ability to connect with a broad spectrum of prospective students.
- Pairing these recruitment efforts with the development of a student-led social media campaign. This campaign has proven invaluable in engaging prospective students where they spend their time most — online. By highlighting student experiences, departmental initiatives, and WSU's commitment to diversity, the campaign has significantly increased our visibility and engagement.

Additionally, we have been able to expand the visibility of WSU and the College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences (CAHNRS) by participating in large conferences and events, including the National Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) and National Council on Family Relations conferences in Seattle. These events have allowed us to engage with a wider audience, including students from diverse backgrounds, and to showcase HD's commitment to inclusion and excellence in education.

As a result of these efforts, we have seen significant benefits in our recruitment process over the past academic year. Prospective students are more likely to engage with our student ambassadors, ask meaningful questions, and form authentic connections with the campus community. This increased engagement has led to more informed decision-making and a stronger sense of belonging for future students, creating a clearer reflection of the diversity that makes WSU unique. It has also created agency and developed leadership skills amongst our ambassadors. We believe that this will continue to attract HD students as they view service in the ambassador role as a valuable opportunity for growth and connection.

Overall, the DEI funding has been a key driver in creating a more inclusive and welcoming environment for students exploring opportunities in Human Development, fostering stronger connections that reflect our commitment to serving diverse populations. Through a combination of in-person outreach, social media engagement, and participation in large conferences, we have successfully broadened our reach and created a more diverse and inclusive community at WSU.

Specific to the intended uses of the grant funds:

- Students were hired to help create, launch, and analyze a survey about why students choose WSU and Human Development
- Students were hired to begin generation of social media posts to engage current and future students
- Current students working on the projects had greater interest in earning credit for their activities than pay, so a switch was made in engaging student participation. Students working on the social media campaign and other recruitment activities are working toward earning credits. This is a much more sustainable practice than hiring students.
- Access to two programs was purchased, Hootsuite to post and track the effectiveness of social media, and Canva for the creation of high-quality documents to post
- As noted, branded shirts for the ambassadors and other swag for recruitment events was purchased

These efforts paired well with other Human Development recruitment activities. The department generated and printed posters for high school classrooms and guidance counselor offices. These posters were distributed at FCCLA events and at family and consumer sciences teachers' conference. Departmental swag and information were also available at a Human Development table for the teachers' conference. Research into how our students find us indicated that about half of the students transfer from other programs at WSU. To capitalize on these data, posters were also printed and hung in the WSU dormitories in the fall of 2024. Students also traveled with the recruitment team to the State FCCLA conference to help with tabling, evaluating competitive events, and leading workshops.

The Department of Human Development believes that the combined efforts, in part supported by this grant, are starting to create greater visibility for the program, the College, and WSU. It is exciting to have the current students engaged in the processes of recruiting future students. These funds helped launch sustainable recruitment practices.