

Survey of Former Students from the Gateways
for Incarcerated Youth College Class:
Stakeholder Presentation

Emily Sladek and Laura Coghlan

May 2, 2011

Agenda for presentation

- Introduce Survey & Method
- Learning Growth
- How did Gateways change students?
- What would students change about Gateways?
- Summary & Recommendations
- Outcomes
- Demographics: Who takes Gateways
- Highlights & Takeaways

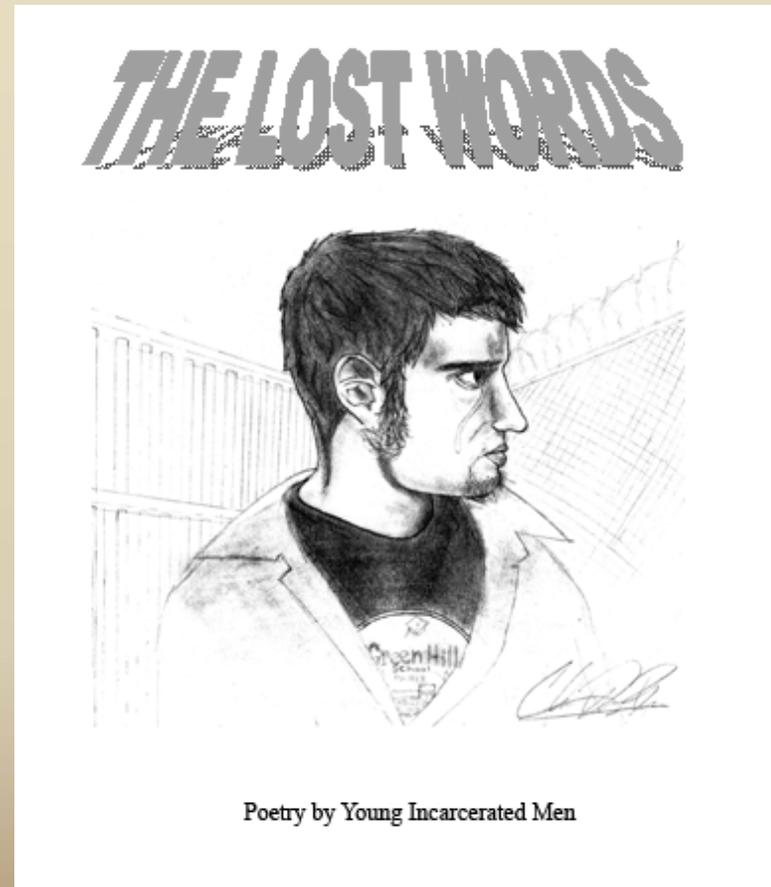
- Conversation

What Does Gateways Do?

Provide resources, access and support to incarcerated youth through youth-driven, strength-based academic, cultural, and mentoring programs, Gateways encourages incarcerated youth to create a positive future for themselves.

Current Programs:

- ▶ College Class (enrolling both incarcerated and non-incarcerated Evergreen students)
- ▶ Diversity Workshops
- ▶ Academic Mentoring Program
- ▶ Cultural Identity Groups



Why this project?

- ▶ **Needs of the Gateways for Incarcerated Youth program**
 - ▶ Show effectiveness of the program to its participants and other stakeholders
 - ▶ Explore more sustainable administrative structure
 - ▶ Conduct an assessment linked to program objectives/mission
 - ▶ Survey of alumni had not been conducted previously

Orientation to Survey

How do Gateways Alumni perceive their experiences in the College Class, as related to programmatic goals?

- Programmatic goals are being met
- Positive outcomes in school, community work and employment

Orientation to Survey

Common Indicators of Success				
National Research	JRA Goals/Objectives	The Five Foci of Evergreen	Gateways Goals/Objectives	Common Elements
Academic skills	Promote and Support Education	Interdisciplinary Study	Educational Programming	Academic Skills
Independent Living Skills	Develop Employability Skills	Linking Theory with Practical Applications		Independent Living Skills
Support	Mentoring; Provide Culturally Competent and Equitable Services and Workforce	Collaborative Learning	Community Collaboration	Support Network
Social and Emotional Learning	Evidence-Based Mental Health Treatment	Learning Across Significant Differences	Cultural Empowerment	Social Skills
Engagement and Challenge	Engage Targeted Communities in Prevention of Disproportionate Minority Contact	Personal Engagement in Learning	Dream/Envision/Support a Positive Future	Positive Life Goals

Sample Population

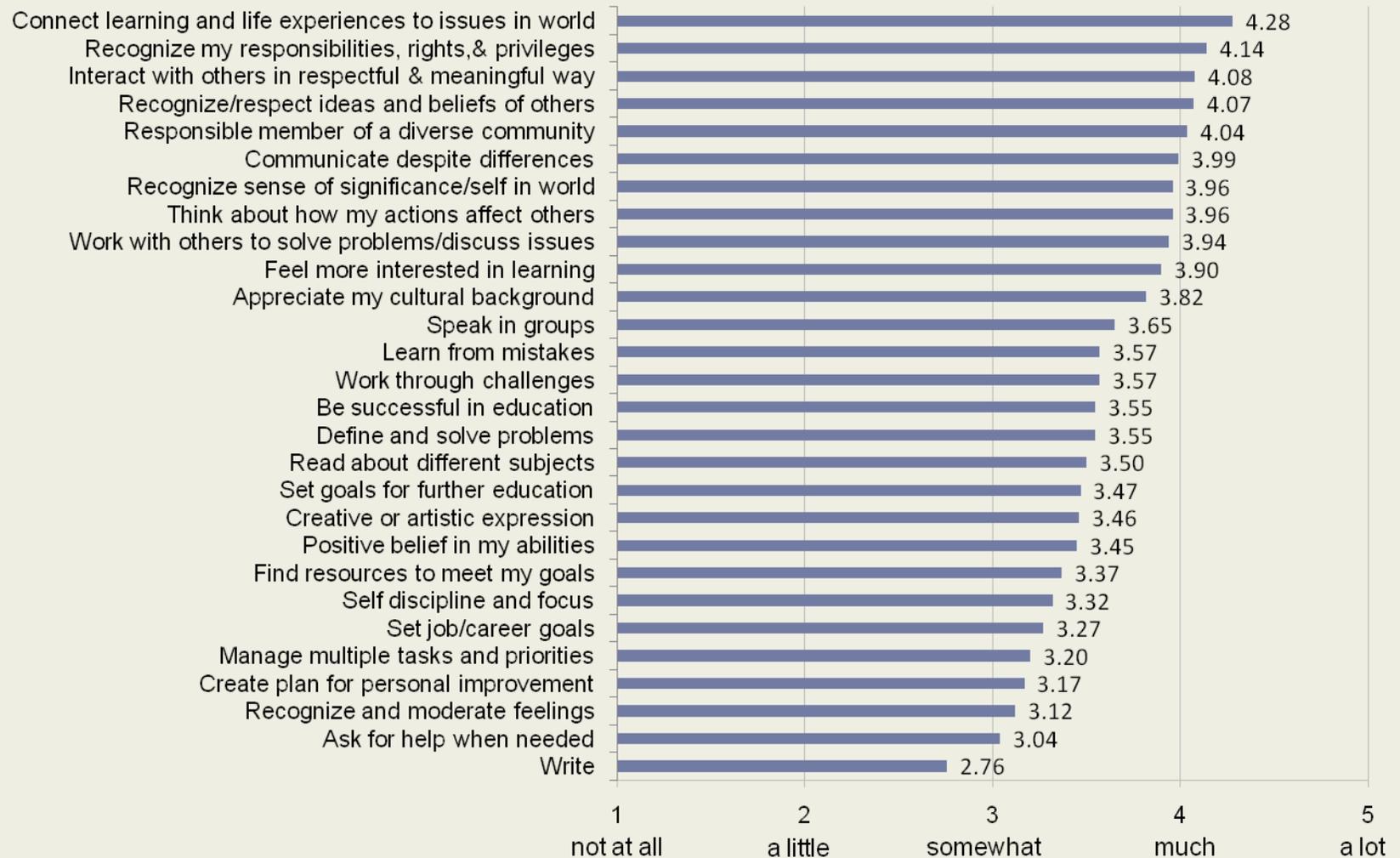
- ▶ **541 Alumni of Gateways College Class**
- ▶ 38 Ineligible; Eligible sample=503
- ▶ 59 Unable to locate
- ▶ 444 Final locatable sample
- ▶ **103 Respondents**
- ▶ **23% Response Rate for the locatable sample**
- ▶ **Only five formerly incarcerated Gateways students responded**

Representation of Sample

- Alumni living below federal poverty level as students were more likely to complete a survey ($p=.05$)
- Former JRA youth students in Gateways were less likely to participate ($p=.007$)
- Respondents did not differ from non-respondents in terms of race/ethnicity, sex, first-generation status, residency, or # of years of participation in Gateways ($p\leq.05$)
- Responses came from Gateways alumni who participated from 97/98 through 09/10; about 10% of the 1997 through 2000 cohorts are represented, whereas 25-38% of cohorts 02-09 responded.

Learning Growth

Extent to which Gateways improved abilities: mean ratings



Learning Growth

- The top five areas of growth were:
 - Connect my learning and life experiences to problems & issues in my local community & the world
 - Recognize my responsibilities, rights, & privileges
 - Interact with others in respectful & meaningful way
 - Recognize and respect the ideas & beliefs of others
 - Function as a responsible member of a diverse community

Learning Growth

- The lowest five areas of growth were:
 - Write
 - Ask for help when needed
 - Recognize and moderate feelings
 - Create a plan for personal improvement
 - Manage multiple tasks and priorities

Did Gateways change your life? If so, how?

94% said “Yes”, Gateways changed their lives.

Coded Themes	N	Percent of those who said they were changed
General Reflections on Gateways	44	55%
Changed Values and Beliefs about Self	41	51%
Changed Values and Beliefs about Others	41	51%
Changed Values and Beliefs about Systems	30	38%
Change Behavior: Career Choice	29	36%
Change Behavior: Actively Using Gateways' Method	19	24%
Good and Bad Responses	5	6%
Negative Responses	5	5%

81%

48%

* Responses do not add up to 100% as they could have been coded in more than one category.

Change Behavior

“Participating in Gateways helped me develop my future career goals. I realized that I wanted to continue working in the social work field following my graduation from Evergreen. Years later I look back and can still connect to the Gateways program because it was a powerful aspect of my life. I still apply the philosophy and empowerment models of the program to my work as a social worker and future educational goals.”

“I still use lessons I learned from the program and my Gateways learning community everyday. The popular education experience it gave me assists me in the work I regularly do and in the ways I interact with others on a daily basis.”

Change Attitudes and Beliefs

“Yes, Gateways very significantly impacted my life. It changed the way I understand myself and the world and community I live in in a profound way. It positively affected the way I understand, value, relate to, and empathize with others. It was a real world lesson in history, systems of power, the interconnectedness of everything.”

- 16% of respondents described change in all 3 dimensions of their attitudes and beliefs
- 43% of respondents described change in at least 2 levels
- 81% respondents had at least one change in attitudes and beliefs

Reflections on Gateways' Pedagogy

“Gateways is the first program I've taken at Evergreen that was racially diverse. This diversity fostered a learning environment that evoked re-thinking how and what I've learned over my entire public school life. To me this meant learning about my own privilege and how race, culture, gender, sexuality and age all have their own institutionalized oppressions in our society. How this affects our interactions, ignorance's of each other, and views of self are barriers the Gateways program addresses through seminar, workshops, and interaction with youth.”

What would you change about Gateways?

Coded Themes	N	Percent of Respondents
Instruction	45	75%
Administration & Management	34	57%
Expansion	18	30%
Funding Capacity	6	10%

* Responses do not add up to 100% as they could have been coded in more than one category.

Changes to Instruction

- Teacher Expectations

- Seven alumni recommend increasing the academic rigor
- Three disliked the structure and had difficulty communicating with faculty

- Classroom Climate

- Peer-Learning: more youth-driven decisions; improving conflict resolution, especially topics of race and gender; more time to debrief

- Subjects

- Media, art/music, writing, juvenile justice system, experience of being incarcerated, female incarceration issues, prevention, politics/current events, community organizing strategies, facilitation, adolescent development, meditation, yoga, fundraising, non-profit administration, personal life experiences and popular education, and anti-oppression techniques, including sexism and racism

- Increase Activities

- Reading material, youth-led workshops, role-playing activities, developing lesson plans, outside presenters, field trips, reflection on own culture

Changes to Program Administration

- Faculty rotation and credit load
- More collaboration with institutions
- Orientation and Interviewing
- Who Participates?

Larger Scale Changes

- Expanding programs: 18 alumni wanted to see Gateways expanded.
 - Eight would like more transitional services provided
 - Six wanted to see it expand with state institutions
- Expanding funding
 - Six would like to see the program better funding to support hiring staff and program services.
 - “I would cast a magic spell to ensure that all the young men emerge from Green Hill and Maple Lane fully capable to manifest their potential. Said spell would also remedy overreliance on a small number of people to keep the organization functioning and funded. Other than that, I think it does the messy work that it does in an amazing way. Thank you for continuing the amazing work!”

Qualitative Analysis Summary

- What about Gateways changed their life?
 - Peer learning from people different from themselves
 - Learning style: peer learning, popular education and applying theory to action learning opportunities.
- More support and resources to address conflict, especially racial and gender.
- Applicable ideas suggested by alumni:
 - Better screening techniques when accepting students into the classroom that assess expectations/willingness to work through conflict
 - More orientation and anti-oppression training
 - Reading/learning more about incarceration, race, gender etc.
 - More time to discuss and share experiences, esp. in a way that involve more incarcerated youth.

Qualitative Analysis Summary

- Better prepare students for the popular education learning style through orientation.

“If I was to change Gateways I would change the introduction to popular education. Instead of using a popular education model immediately, I think being eased into it more slowly would have proved possibly more beneficial for the group as a whole. I feel the lack of guidance at the beginning was frustrating, especially coming out from a very traditional education model. I believe the professor handled the confusion and frustration well, yet I think this frustration added to later tension our class struggled with.”

Exciting Success!

Within the subcategories of self, others, and systems were statements that Gateways has enabled alumni to recognize inequality and their own roles in either perpetuating the cycle of oppression or understanding a more conscious way of actualizing themselves and interacting with others to create societal change.

Alumni increased understanding which translated into changes in attitudes and behavior according to the:

- High Growth Ratings: recognition of self & others, change behaviors toward others, praxis
- Qualitative research = 35% of alumni described changes in both attitude and behavior.

Outcomes School

- 94% completed some additional college classes and/or earned a college degree after Gateways
- Of those of who have completed 4-year degree, 43% are either in currently in graduate school or have completed a graduate degree
- All 5 of the former JRA student respondents completed High School/GED subsequent to Gateways participation.
- 4 of the 5 former JRA respondents have completed additional college coursework, and one has earned a bachelor's degree.

Outcome Employment

- 80% employed
- 54% are employed in either Community and Social Service or Education

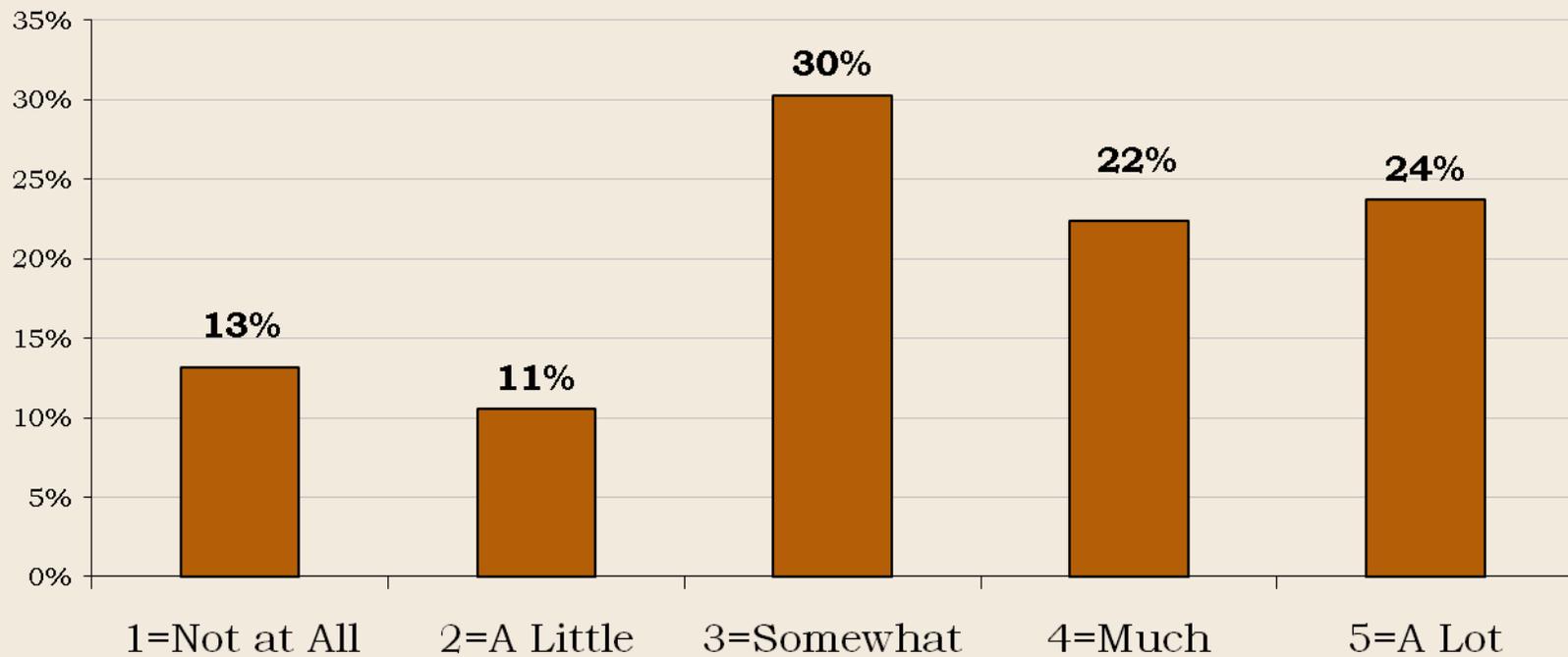
Top Standard Occupational Classification	N	Percent of those employed
Community & Social Services	25	32%
Education/Library	18	23%
Management	6	8%
Personal Care and Services	6	8%

Employment Context

	Gateways respondents	Evergreen (1 yr after grad)	Evergreen (5 yrs after grad)
Employed overall	80%	82%	82%
Community & Social Service	32%	15%	12%
Education/Library	23%	10%	20%
Management	8%	8%	7%
Office/Administrative Support	3%	13%	5%
Life Science	1%	8%	4%

Outcome Employment

How well did Gateways prepare you for your current job? (N=76)*



**2 respondents skipped this question*

Outcome Community Work

- **78% involved in community work**

Type of Community Work Organization	N	%
Social Services / Advocacy / Health	45	57%
Youth Organizations / Education	31	39%
Arts / Media / Culture	10	13%
Ecological / Environmental / Animal Advocacy	2	3%
Politics / Civic Office / Community Leadership	1	1%
Community Sustainability	1	1%
Other or Not specified	4	5%

* Responses do not add up to 100% as they could have been coded in more than one category.

Community Work: Marginalized Populations

- Regardless of their role and the type of organization, many of the alumni (77%) described their community work in relation to a specific marginalized population. Here are the populations identified by Gateways alumni:

Identified Marginalized Populations	N	%
Youth	37	47%
Low Income	16	20%
People of Color/Jewish	14	18%
Those with Criminal History/Addiction	13	16%
Women	10	13%
Immigrant/International	8	10%
Special Needs	7	9%
Violence Prevention/Crime Victims	4	5%
GLBTQ	2	3%

* Responses do not add up to 100% as they could have been coded in more than one category.

Takeaways for Outcomes

- 43% of Gateways alumni who have completed four-year degrees have gone on to graduate school.
- Over half of employed alumni are working as Social and Community Service Workers or Educators; this is more than twice as high as the proportion of Greeners-at-large who work in these roles.
- 78% of Gateways alumni are contributing to their communities through employment or volunteer service.

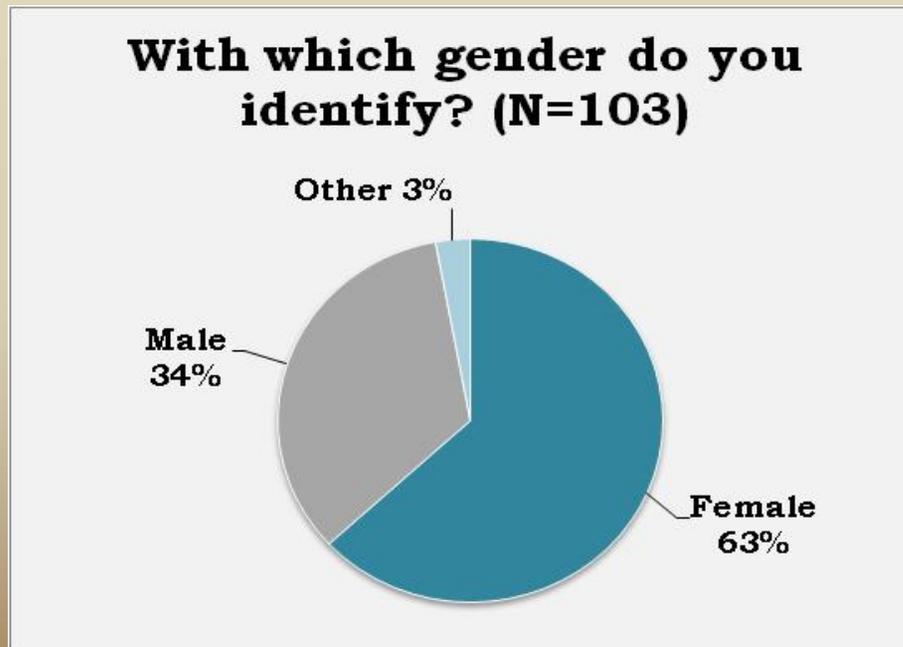
Survey Demographics

How long were you involved in Gateways?	N=103	%
one quarter	31	30%
two quarters	28	27%
three quarters	17	17%
more than three quarters	27	26%

In addition to the Evergreen College Class, what other Gateways programs you were involved in:	N=103	%
Diversity Class	48	47%
Independent Study/ Internship	28	27%
Cultural Identity Groups	27	26%
Challenge Program	25	24%
Online College Class	3	3%

Survey Demographics

Age during Gateways participation	N=103	%
<18-20	31	29%
21-23	39	38%
24 or older	33	32%



Who takes Gateways?

Gateways is disproportionately attracting:

30% of the Gateways survey respondents identify as GLBTQ or questioning, compared to 23% of all Olympia undergraduates.

30% of the Gateways alumni are Students of Color, compared to 17% of all Olympia undergraduates.

30% of the Gateways alumni were non-residents, compared to 27% of all Olympia undergraduates.

Overall Gateways Program Demographics

- Program provides opportunity to link theory and practice for students interested in social service, advocacy, education, critical theory, and criminal justice. Based on alumni feedback, the program also influences some students to choose such career directions.
- Disproportionately attracts students of color, women, and non-resident (out-of-state) students compared to the overall Olympia undergrad population.

Conversation

- Based on the feedback from Gateways College Class Alumni, what are some of the strengths you see in the program?
- Did any of the alumni recommendations resonate with you based on your experience with the program?
- Did anything surprise you or stand out to you?
- Do you see any implications for your practice?