



Aggie Next Step GRADS College Experience

2023

Newt McCarty and Laura Bittner

4-H and Youth Development

SITUATION

Attainment of a high school diploma or college degree is important because of the correlation between educational attainment and earning potential through one's lifetime. Only 51 percent of teen moms have a high school diploma compared to 89 percent of non teen parents. Thirty percent of teen girls cited pregnancy or parenthood as a reason for dropping out of high school and less than two percent of teen mothers attain a college degree by the age of 30.



NMSU EXTENSION RESPONSE

Pursuing higher education is a top priority for Aggie Next Step. In response, ANS GRADS College Experience brought 14 GRADS students from Century High School in Valencia County and University High School in Chaves County to spend one and a half days exploring life on a college campus. The primary goal was to help the students understand higher education is a viable option and support systems exist focused on helping them succeed in pursuing their educational aspirations. Students learned about financial aid, admissions, TRIO SSS, Family Outreach, Avanza, family housing and Myrna's Children Village in addition to exploring Fire Science, EMS, Culinary Arts, and Advanced Technology programs.

IMPACT

- 29% of participants had been on a university campus
- 8% of participants had been on NMSU's campus
- 100% of participants stated the visit/experience provided a clearer understanding of pursuing higher education
- 78% of participants are considering post-secondary education
- 92% are more likely to pursue higher education after learning of available resources

Youth Responses: "This field trip was amazing and showed me so many opportunities I have available to me that I never knew existed. Being a young, single parent, I love the fact that NMSU showed me all of the resources I would have available to me and my child to get me through my schooling and finish my education. Everyone I met on this trip made me feel welcomed and comfortable. I am considering very heavily on applying to NMSU after high school." *Aryana, Age 15*

Adult Response: "The GRADS College Experience was such an incredible opportunity for my young mothers. Most of them had never even been on a college campus so it was so amazing watching them explore this new world. They definitely left with so much information and hope for their future. We always tell students there are so many opportunities, but we rarely get to take them to these opportunities and allow them to explore new ideas."

DEMOGRAPHICS

Hispanic: 14 • White: 3 • Native American: 1