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THE POWER OF KINDNESS AND POSITIVITY IN THE COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT

Kayla M. Vasilko (*English*) and Joseph T. Stewart (*Mechanical Engineering*)

STUDENT AUTHOR BIO SKETCHES

Kayla M. Vasilko is a third-year English writing student at Purdue University Northwest. She has completed research on the effects of shyness and bereavement on college success, in addition to how kindness and positivity can combat the negative repercussions of those factors. Along with Joseph Stewart, she has been accepted at the Clement Stacy, Days of Discovery, National Collegiate Honors Council, and Johns Hopkins Macksey Symposium research conferences and has received notable awards. She has published fiction on these themes in *Furnace* and *The Symphony of Reason*, and she is currently working on a grant-funded research project on Anita King in Hollywood, California.

Joseph T. Stewart is a fourth-year Mechanical Engineering student attending Purdue University Northwest at the Westville campus. He has presented at several conferences in conjunction with Kayla Vasilko, including at Days of Discovery, Clement Stacy, and National Collegiate Honors Council, and has been accepted to the Johns Hopkins Macksey Research Symposium. Most notably, he has received the Clement Stacy student research award and is the recipient of several Purdue grants. He is also currently conducting research into solar radiation collection at high altitude, and is the volunteer committee coordinator for the PNW Honors College.

Their article, *The Power of Kindness and Positivity in the College Environment*, provides a detailed summary of research on the benefit of those factors while also narrating the real-world applications they have put forth through their organization, S.H.I.N.E.

Research has shown that positivity in school climates has a direct connection to academic success. For this project, the objectives were as follows: to compile a literature review to prove or disprove the above thesis, contrast the effects of positivity and negativity on health and performance, highlight the overall damaging effects of negativity, and outline possible solutions for these effects while demonstrating current action being taken at Purdue University Northwest (PNW) for this cause.

It has been proven that building high self-esteem and recognizing the value of kindness in terms of emotional learning are key factors for schools to prioritize when aiming to help students succeed (Gadernann & Reichil, 2016). Collectively, our sources have shown that kindness and positivity naturally trigger upward spirals of improvement in overall performance; they have been noted to promote better social interactions, relationships, and health. Positive emotions, such as happiness, also

broaden thought-action repertoires, which account for various portions in the brain responsible for happiness, joy, interest, and anticipation. This phenomenon is part of the Broaden and Build Theory of Positive Emotions, and it encourages novel and exploratory thoughts and actions. Thus, the broadening of our thought-action repertoires in turn builds intellectual, physical, social, and psychological factors in all of us (Bhujade, 2017; Otake, 2006).

Despite the beneficial power of positivity, however, students face such an abundance of negativity, both inside and outside the college environment. We are enduring an unsettling increase in bullying from peers and professors, suicide rates, and depressive episodes nationwide (Chapell, 2004; Koskie, 2018; Nutt, 2018). Kindness and positivity have been linked to good overall health, stimulated mental health, and increased academic achievement (Otake, 2006; Bhujade, 2017). That is why it is important to examine both the statistics that support that thesis, and the opposing statistics of negativity in the world that stimulate the opposite effects. Throughout this project, we have focused on looking strictly at these effects in the college environment while outlining several solutions and discussing at length the action we are taking at our university to promote awareness and produce real results of a more welcoming, positive, and successful campus environment.

Kindness, positive organizational scholarship, and positive abstract and concrete attitudes have all been shown to correlate with satisfying overall performance, success, and subjective happiness. Abstract attitudes are ideas that are consistent with mainstream societal views, while concrete attitudes are ideas that are based on one's personal experience. Organizational scholarship correlates with the tone of a work environment. When the connotation of these terms is *positive*, these factors in turn influence positive output from others working around those who practice them. This simultaneously leaves the mind of the practitioners more open for innovation and creativity in a variety of situations (Gerardi, 2006; Pace, 2010).

This is affirmed by several studies in the educational and psychological disciplines, projects examining a range of ages and environments, and hands-on experiments at our own university that collectively and repeatedly note the benefits of these practices, as we will see throughout the paper (Gerardi, 2006; Stiglbauer et al., 2013).

In correlation with the Self-Determination Theory and the Broaden and Build Theory of Positive Emotions, another recent study of the effects of positivity in the

school environment notes that positive school experiences have a stable effect on happiness, and in turn, that happiness affects future positive school experiences in a cycle (Stiglbauer et al., 2013).

This study looked at the reciprocal effects of positivity and happiness on the well-being of 215 students over the course of an academic year. Additionally, it was noted that these theories are currently being explored and applied heavily in educational research and by school psychologists and counselors in an attempt to combat the increasingly severe problems of violence, bullying, and depressive symptoms. Moreover, positive school experiences have been linked to higher levels of resilience and subjective well-being (Stiglbauer et al., 2013, p. 1).

Looking specifically at the power of positivity in the workplace, we can apply those same theories to classroom and study space settings as well. Positive organizational scholarship concepts of virtue, compassion, and positivity prove to be crucial implements for broader general success (Pace, 2010).

Positive organizational scholarship stresses the value of virtuousness, positive processes, and elevation in organizations. It focuses on outlining the life-giving or stimulating, invigorating dynamics, optimal functioning, and enhanced capabilities and strengths that result from these practices (Pace, 2010, p. 3). Companies with more positive climates perform significantly better in profitability, productivity, and innovation, as a positive atmosphere allows for positive emotions and thoughts to predominate over negative emotions and productivity to ensue (Pace, 2010). Logically, it follows that these same benefits apply to school atmospheres as well.

Furthermore, as we look at the theory of abstract and concrete attitudes, we see these principles transcend here as well. Abstract attitudes involve ideologies about education, merit, and opportunity. Concrete attitudes are indicators of realized benefits of social mobility and education. It followed from the study of these theories that those with high abstract and concrete attitudes perform better than those with low abstract and concrete attitudes (Gerardi, 2006, p. 189). The positive side of abstract and concrete attitudes has a specific influence on retention and growth, two extremely useful abilities in academic and nonscholastic work and everyday problem solving (Gerardi, 2006).

Overall subjective well-being has been linked to positive school experiences (Stiglbauer et al., 2013, p. 2). More specifically, life satisfaction is an indicator of *cognitive*

well-being and school connectedness. Academic performance, academic competence, and social support all contribute to perceived self-efficacy. The collective school climate and teacher and classmate support, above others, are key contributors to ensuring these factors rank on the positive end (Stiglbauer et al., 2013, p. 2). That is why creating a positive, welcoming campus environment is so important, especially against all of the harsh statistics we are facing in the world today. The following statistics illustrate these facts with horrifying clarity (Koskie, 2018; Nutt, 2018; “PACER’s Bullying Statistics,” 2017; “The Stigma of Mental Illness,” 2019; “Suicide Statistics and Facts,” 2019).

- 800,000 people die by suicide in the world each year (“Suicide Statistics and Facts,” 2019).
- Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States, and 44,965 Americans die from suicide (“Suicide Statistics and Facts,” 2019).
- Suicide rates have increased by 30% since 2017 (“Suicide Statistics and Facts,” 2019).
- Every minute, 20 people are victims of physical abuse in a relationship (Koskie, 2018; “The Stigma of Mental Illness,” 2019).
- Each year, 10 million Americans are subjected to emotional abuse (Nutt, 2018; “The Stigma of Mental Illness,” 2019).
- 16.2 million adults identify as being depressed (“The Stigma of Mental Illness,” 2019).
- 90% of the news that we have access to portrays something negative (“The Stigma of Mental Illness,” 2019).
- 1 in 4 students *report* being bullied (“PACER’s Bullying Statistics,” 2017).

Bullying is widespread throughout the world, and it has been observed to start occurring severely as early as the second grade, according to a study by *Adolescence*. Bullying, however, does not end in grade school. “Bullying graduates to college.” Sixty percent of students in the study attested to that being true (Chapell et al., 2004). Sixty percent either witnessed or endured bullying from a peer or a professor. Bullying can lead to low self-esteem, depression, shyness, anxiety, and stress, which can in turn lead to low exam grades and low success in college (Chapell et al., 2004).

Attending college brings so much stress all on its own. Students in the college age group have so much in their lives to manage: home responsibilities, studying, grades,

income, jobs, rent, relationships; the list goes on, and bullying only adds to this stress, when it need not exist. Why should bullying even be a part of the equation in college? Why should bullying be a part of the equation at all? Peers and professors should ease the college experience, not make it worse (Bhujade, 2017; Chapell et al., 2004; Mayo Clinic Staff, 2017).

But, there is a way to fix it. According to the Measuring Kindness at School study, recognizing the importance of kindness for the factor of emotional learning is very important, as a positive school climate and peer support within it play big roles in academic success, as we have been outlining. So much of the achievement of academic success stems from self-esteem, and bullying directly depletes that (Gadernann & Reichil, 2016).

According to the *Journal of Happiness Studies*, there is a direct relationship to kindness and subjective happiness overall (Otake et al., 2006). Otake and colleagues surveyed 294 undergraduate students and found collectively that happy people scored higher on their motivation to perform. The survey also noted that happiness is increased by counting acts of kindness, such as noting when kindness is shown to you or instances when you were kind to others (Otake et al., 2006). The study asserted that happy people interpret life events more positively than unhappy people, and that happiness and kindness naturally trigger upward spirals of improvement. Happiness as a whole promotes better social interactions, relationships, and health overall.

The study suggests also that the bulk of events that connote happiness or stimulation for happiness come from acts of kindness that people put forth or receive, and from taking special note of that. Simply by counting acts of kindness for one week, participants reported a great shift in their personal happiness and well-being. Additionally, the study put forth that positive emotions, such as happiness, broaden thought-action repertoires, which in turn builds intellectual, physical, social, and psychological factors in all of us (Otake et al., 2006).

METHODOLOGY

Building on what we have determined about the power of positivity from our literature review, we created a survey to administer to students at Purdue University Northwest. The survey was vetted through the IRB. From it, we sought to determine PNW students’ connotation of positivity, negativity, and the effects of the two. To accomplish this, we administered the following questions:

- Do you feel that support and positivity from your friends and those you surround yourself with has a connection to your academic success?
- Do you feel that when your confidence and self-esteem are low, it has a negative effect on your academic performance?
- Do you feel that support and positivity from your friends and those you surround yourself with has a connection to the success of anything that you try to achieve?

The selected method used to collect this survey data from students at Purdue Northwest was e-mail. One degree college at PNW was selected (the Honors College) and a college-wide e-mail was sent out to all 265 honors students. A 33% response rate was received. This college was selected because of the high stress level noted by its students. Furthermore, the focus of the survey was in how students were affected by the presence of negativity in their daily life. This included impact on mood, perceived academic performance, self-esteem, and motivation to succeed.

Surveys were also distributed to Honors College students to discover the effects of organizational scholarship in a more academically intense environment. We sought to determine if a lack of positivity here would be more detrimental to mental health, and/or provide a more or less supportive environment to students. The Honors College is the only college at PNW with its own dedicated study lounges or “dens,” which mimic the workplace environments analyzed in positive organizational scholarship studies. Questions from this survey included how supportive students felt the Honors community was, whether or not a positive Honors study space made them more motivated, and whether or not negative behavior in this study space was detrimental to their academic performance, as listed below:

- How do you feel it would affect you if there was negativity in the den, such as if you didn’t feel welcome or if the general tone from conversations going on in the den was negative?
- Do you feel it is easier to concentrate and get work done successfully when the overall atmosphere of any space you study in is positive?
- How important is a positive atmosphere for studying to you?
- In your opinion, what does a positive study environment look like?

The success of the survey results was measured in terms of a comparison of real accounts to the literature review above, as well as a comparison of the results, literature review, and statistical dropout rates of Purdue University Northwest. In other words, we wanted to determine if the effects of negativity and depression outlined in our review could be observed in our own university setting by high dropout rates. The answer, by the end of the research, was yes. Based on the current statistics, **86.7%** of the first-time/part-time class of 2014 had not completed their degree by 2018 (“Purdue University Northwest Graduation and Retention,” 2020).

The cumulative study benefits students at Purdue University Northwest and students as a whole for the awareness raised for the need of the factors, along with the benefits. Additionally, the university itself benefits from these findings, for if they are employed, the more successful students that will come from the effects will lead greater university enrollment and retention. Lastly, the entire community exposed to the summary of results will prosper from the outlined tools for increased productivity, motivation, and success.

RESULTS

The surveys that were sent out had an average response rate of approximately 33% of the Honors body. Data gathered was evaluated in four basic categories. Those were: *Effect of Positivity on Concentration*, *Impact on Productivity*, *Impact of Negativity on Confidence/Self-Esteem*, *Effect of Negativity on Performance*. Overall responses to the survey are shown in Figure 1.

Overall, the results illustrate that:

- 97% of students felt that positivity affected their ability to concentrate
- 93% of students said that a positive environment increased their productivity
- 86% had reduced self-esteem due to a negative environment
- 76% reported a reduction in performance due to a negative environment

The survey results in the figure, both in terms of statistics and student testimonials, greatly supported the literature review completed presurvey on the effects of kindness, positivity, and negativity. On average, the majority of our respondents found it difficult to concentrate and be productive in a study space where negativity was evident. Similarly, our respondents reported that they performed

Figure 1. Survey results.

better and more creatively, and even received higher grades when studying and interacting in a positive, supportive environment. Overall, the responses collectively reinforced the fact that negativity *does* diminish overall productivity and leads to damaging repercussions, and the opposite factors, kindness and positivity, are excellent stimuli for success in all forms.

As we continue with this study, we aim to examine how structural inequalities such as race, economic standing, and even degree plans affect the impact of positivity and negativity, as well as a student's ability to practice said methods. Presently, we aim to highlight that while it is not a complete cure for all of the damaging effects we cited, positivity is one arguably undervalued solution that has, as our research proves, the power to impact them all. It is especially important in the situations we described involving clinical depression and other mental health disorders to stress that while professional help is also necessary, negativity in the university setting could be detrimental and make those situations even more dire. Therefore, positive practices and actions are imperative, and universities at the very least providing equal access to positivity is key, as we will further go into below.

Building on the need for action, throughout the course of the research for this project we have also been able to start a student organization at Purdue University Northwest called S.H.I.N.E, (Students Helping Ignite Needed Esteem), whose logo is pictured in Figure 2. After examining the high percentage of students who are affected by negativity at PNW in conjunction with the effects of negativity we've identified from the literature review and the low rates of PNW degree completion, we felt it was imperative to start an organization such as S.H.I.N.E. It is part of an ongoing mission to promote kindness,

Figure 2. Official logo of the resulting student organization.

positivity, and academic success, learn more about how they are all connected, and create a more positive and welcoming university environment overall.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

The overarching goal of S.H.I.N.E is to create a more welcoming and positive university environment so that students are happier and more successful overall. For instance, we have held “Day of Encouragement,” “Day of Laughter,” and “Kindness Rocks” events. During these events, students made brightly colored flyers and sticky notes with encouraging messages to decorate bulletin boards around campus or library books, passed out jokes to students and faculty on campus, or decorated brightly colored rocks to hide around the community. New members of S.H.I.N.E are recruited through these pop-up events and are invited to join the organization at meetings where these important issues are discussed and for “random act days,” where they are required to complete a unique act of kindness on campus or in their community.

We have seen incredible results from these pop-up events. For instance, for the fall semester of the 2019–2020 academic year, S.H.I.N.E handed out over 250 colorful paper flowers to students and faculty. Afterward, the flowers were spotted all over campus, in offices, on desks, and balancing on windowsills. The bright colors were beautiful. We had dozens of people come up to us on campus to explain how that one small flower changed their day or outlook. Many, who also shared their feelings about depression, said the flowers made them feel that they were not alone, that someone out there really cared about them.

We received this same reaction following our “Kindness in the Library” event. We had students decorate over

100 colorful sticky notes with kind messages that we in turn placed in library books and on shelves for students to find when studying. Afterward, a student told us that they found one of the notes when they were having a really difficult time. They felt overwhelmed with their classes and completely hopeless, but then they found the note and things seemed just a little bit easier. After feedback like that, we as members of S.H.I.N.E were happier ourselves; we learned that the benefits of being kind truly work both ways.

S.H.I.N.E also helps fund the S.T.A.R (Support, Thanks, Appreciation, and Remembrance) Walk. The walk is an opportunity for community members to come together and honor loved ones they have lost and take the time to thank the heroes they are lucky enough to still have in their lives with a candle-lit trail walk. Many community partners united to put on this special event, such as the PNW Counseling Center, the PNW Department of Chemistry and Physics, the PNW Honors College, the Independent Cat Society, and the Calumet Astronomical Society. Each PNW department contributed their own resources and advertised to their respective communities. The Independent Cat Society, a sanctuary for homeless felines since 1977, helped advocate the cause of the walk to all of northwest Indiana. The Calumet Astronomical Society, which has promoted space science education since 1975, provided telescopes and on-site instruction to all attendees at the walk. We are now working with Gabis Arboretum, a continuation of Purdue University Northwest and the annual location of the walk, to create a remembrance garden that allows visitors to have the chance to honor their loved ones year-round. The university advertisement for the event is pictured in Figure 3. The signature candles used are shown in Figure 4.

Figure 3. S.T.A.R Walk advertisement for PNW Homecoming week.

Figure 4. Candles for the S.T.A.R Walk.

S.H.I.N.E has not only held events that tied into our mission statement, but has also used them to further raise awareness for the cause behind it all. We presented research tied to our organization at the National Collegiate Honors Council Conference (Figure 5). We also worked with the Johns Hopkins Maksey Research Symposium to promote our research. Additionally, heal.org and Actively Moving Forward are working to help us brand our events with the goal of making S.H.I.N.E an organization that can be spread to multiple universities across the nation. For our events on campus at PNW, we have partnered with the Honors College, the Office of Student Life, Dean of Students, Psychology Club, SGA, and the Counseling Center. We have even contributed to sponsor Josh Rivedal and the i'Mpossible Project to come to the university in spring 2020 and promote mental health, suicide prevention, storytelling, and diversity.

S.H.I.N.E will also continue to further the research behind our mission statement and spread that research across the nation via conferences and partnerships. The value of the project and the benefits of its pursuit are evident by the interest so many national conferences have shown through acceptance, the partnership that has come from heal.org and Actively Moving Forward, and the testimonies our organization has received from students and faculty who have encountered the results of our pop-up events.

The efforts of S.H.I.N.E will be sustained as new members join each semester, the Actively Moving Forward and heal.org partnerships, and the continued progression and presentation of research supporting the underlying cause.

The Power of Kindness and Positivity in the College Environment: Positive Organizational Scholarship in Honors Dedicated Spaces

Kayla Vasilko & Joseph Stewart

Overview

- ◆ Research has shown that positivity in school climates has a direct connection to academic success. Building high self-esteem and recognizing the value of kindness in terms of emotional learning are key factors for schools to prioritize when aiming to help students succeed (Gademann & Reichl, 2016).
- ◆ Additionally, it has been shown that kindness and positivity naturally trigger upward spirals of improvement, and have been noted to promote better social interactions, relationships, and health. Positive emotions, such as happiness, also broaden thought-action repertoires, which in turn builds intellectual, physical, social, and psychological factors in all of us (Otake, 2006; Bhujade, 2017).
- ◆ Despite the power of positivity, we face such an abundance of negativity, both inside and outside the college environment. We are enduring an unsettling increase in bullying from peers and professors, suicide rates, and depressive episodes nationwide (Chapell, 2004; Koskie, 2018; Nutt, 2018).
- ◆ Stemming from this research, we've started a student organization at Purdue University Northwest called S.H.I.N.E, which stands for Students Helping Ignite Needed Esteem. It is part of an ongoing mission to promote kindness, positivity, and academic success, learn more about how they are all connected, and create a more positive and welcoming university environment overall.

S.H.I.N.E
Students Helping Ignite Needed Esteem

Supporting Statistics and Survey Results

- ◆ 97% of students feel positivity promotes concentration and productivity.
- ◆ 93% rank productivity as higher when in a positive environment.
- ◆ 86% said negative environments hurts confidence and self-esteem.
- ◆ 76% feel negativity directly impacts performance.

Supporting Facts:

- ◆ Suicide rates have increased by 30% since 2017.
- ◆ Each year, ten million Americans are subjected to emotional abuse.
- ◆ 16.2 million adults identify as being depressed.
- ◆ 1 in 4 students report being bullied.

S.H.I.N.E

The S.H.I.N.E student organization was created following our initial research in fall of 2018. The purpose of S.H.I.N.E is to promote kindness, positivity, and esteem on campus through special events, and combat the negative statistics we have found to be so prevalent. The goal of S.H.I.N.E is to create a more welcoming and successful university environment so that students are happier and more successful overall. SHINE has held special events including:

- ◆ Day of Laughter
- ◆ Kindness in the Library
- ◆ Kindness Rocks
- ◆ Flower Power
- ◆ Uplifting Flyers
- ◆ Remembrance Garden Project

Conclusion

Kindness and positivity have been linked to good overall health, stimulated mental health, and increased academic achievement. Life satisfaction is an indicator of cognitive well-being and school connectedness. Academic performance, academic competence, and social support all contribute to perceived self-efficacy. The collective school climate, and teacher and classmate support above others are key contributors to ensuring these factors rank on the positive end (Stiglitz, 2011, p. 2). That is why creating a positive, welcoming campus environment is so important.

Positive Organizational Scholarship

- ◆ A theory focused on the importance of positivity in the workplace
- ◆ Virtues of kindness, compassion, and support are promoted
- ◆ Professional settings that employ positivity are more profitable, productive, and innovative
- ◆ Optimal functioning and enhanced capabilities result from these practices

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Dr. Jennifer

Figure 5. National Collegiate Honors Council Conference poster.

One of the biggest challenges with any student organization or campus/community event is receiving student participation. Given this, it was especially hard for us to gain members when starting out. However, as we raised awareness for the meaning behind S.H.I.N.E, interest grew steadily. It then became clear that when an organization or event has a greatly relatable message or fills a universal community need, strong support will ensue.

STUDENT IMPACT

The events that we have designed are twofold in terms of benefits for our campus community. The students who come out and participate in our kindness crafts such as flower making, flyer crafting, and placing kind sticky notes in library books receive the positivity and stress-reducing effects just as equally as the students who

see the flyers, receive the flowers, and find the notes. S.H.I.N.E continuously connects students to other positive and impactful resources on campus. Many of our members and participants have been connected to the Counseling Center, Dean of Students, Honors College, the Psychology Club, and more from the many various joint events we do. These events are represented by Figures 6, 7, 8, and 9.

Promoting kindness and positivity at Purdue University Northwest in turn lowers suicide rates and stress, increases productivity, and improves mental health. Promoting this on a general basis has been proven to help with overall university retention and enrollment rates. National college dropout rates are dishearteningly increasing every day; less than two-thirds of students graduate with a degree, and 30% of college students

Figure 6. Colorful flower handouts.

Figure 8. Kindness rocks.

Figure 7. Placing encouraging messages in library books.

Figure 9. Flowers made for Suicide Prevention Month.

drop out after their first year of school (Atlas, 2018). Among a list of factors, depression is one of the leading causes for college dropouts overall, which makes our efforts imperative.

We have found that our efforts have mirrored effects on us as well. Participating in these events, making handouts, brainstorming new ideas, all exercise the checkpoints from our research and unlock the same benefits in us that we are trying to create for the

community. We have both noted increased skills in problem solving and focus, as well as more consistently happy states of mind.

With our partnership with PNW for S.H.I.N.E funding, we have run into challenges with having enough to run the organization with events that make the best impact in students' lives. However, by continuing to share the message of S.H.I.N.E and hosting fundraising events, we have received incredible support. As long as we keep hosting events and working hard to share the research, we will keep making positive progress and keep reaching more students.

S.H.I.N.E and all the research behind it has been wonderfully eye-opening for us most of all. The project started as a personal wish to make our campus community a kinder place, as well as a wish to honor loved ones we were missing. It was incredible to see how many people believed in those same needs, wanted to support them, and felt, from their own personal standpoint, that they were important. Every time that S.H.I.N.E's research is accepted into a symposium, or a student comes up to us and explains what seeing the brightly colored flyers or painted rocks meant to them, we are surprised, humbled, and filled with joy. There is no more factual statement to close with than to say that this project has impacted us just as much as the students we are trying to reach, and it has and continues to change us for the better.

CONCLUSION

We are also continuing this research by looking at the effects of kindness and positivity in specific areas of college life. For instance, for the next two semesters we will be examining the repercussions a negative atmosphere in a public study space can have on student success. We will be surveying Honors College students with questions designed to evaluate how negativity and positivity from those they encounter in these spaces correlate to their productivity.

Specifically, this survey will be about studying in Honors dedicated spaces on campus. Student satisfaction with the college experience is imperative due to its direct ability to influence students' persistence and performance, thus implementing programs like S.H.I.N.E is just as important for creating a welcoming campus environment that *is* satisfactory as it is for stimulating an atmosphere and cycle of positivity designed to invoke the many additional noted benefits that stem from positivity itself (Gerardi, 2006).

Promoting student success will always be an important need in the university community, so by continuing our research and community partnerships, we will keep reaching and helping more students, raising awareness for incredible outside organizations, improving mental health, and by doing all of the above, shedding light on important issues and needs.

We hope that we can reach even more people by writing this article, and that by sharing what we have learned and accomplished so far, we can help others start similar models, touch students who have been affected by negativity or feel alone, and above all, make the world a more positive, kinder, and happier place.

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