The Students We Share: A Cross-Border Workforce Development Priority

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

MAY 19, 2016

Mexican Migration Field Research Project 2015-2016

The Students We Share

Migration from Mexico to the U.S. and return migration back to Mexico has created a sizeable cohort of students whose education takes place on both sides of the border. These students are especially well-suited to participate in the binational economy because of their cross-border cultural fluency, and supporting their educational success should be a major regional workforce development priority. However, the flow of young people back and forth across the border can derail the educational trajectories of individual students who are not able to adapt to the pressures caused by migration. Research findings from a survey of a representative sample of 8,000 9th and 10th graders at 65 schools in San Diego and Tijuana offer insight into the educational trajectories and professional aspirations of youth in the region, informing policy solutions for policymakers in California and Baja California to respond to the specific needs of the shared student population.

The Mexican Migration Field Research Project

This research was carried out by the Mexican Migration Field Research Program (MMFRP), a unique, three-course offering for students seeking hands-on field research experience focused on international migration. Students participating in the course have the opportunity to work as part of an interdisciplinary, multinational research team of undergraduate and graduate students from the United States and Mexico. Through coursework and time in the field, students develop skills to collect and analyze both qualitative and quantitative data using established methods from the social and behavioral sciences. This course has been offered at UC San Diego since 2004 and is based at the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies (USMEX) at the School of Global Policy and Strategy (GPS) in collaboration with the Division of Global Public Health and the Latin American Studies Program.

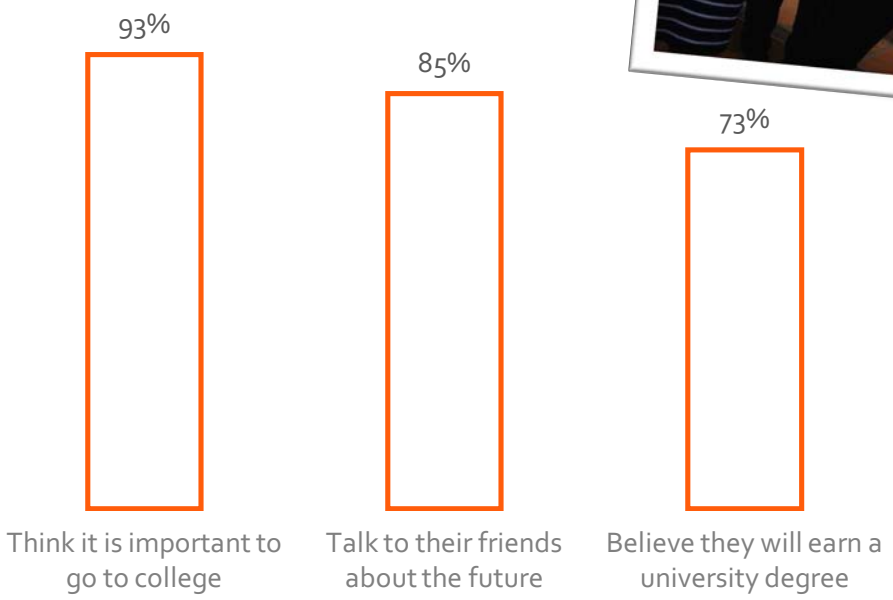
Photo by Erik Jepsen/ UC San Diego Publications

Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies

USMEX was founded in 1979 to study Mexico and the full range of issues affecting economic, social and political relations between Mexico and the United States. Spearheading UC San Diego's engagement with Mexico, it is a go-to source for rigorous academic research that can be applied to the creation, implementation and evaluation of public policy. The Center is privileged with the unique opportunity to engage in research on Mexico and the U.S-Mexico relationship from its location on the border. A binational perspective is part of the DNA of the Center and is a differentiating factor in its work.

Our young people have big dreams

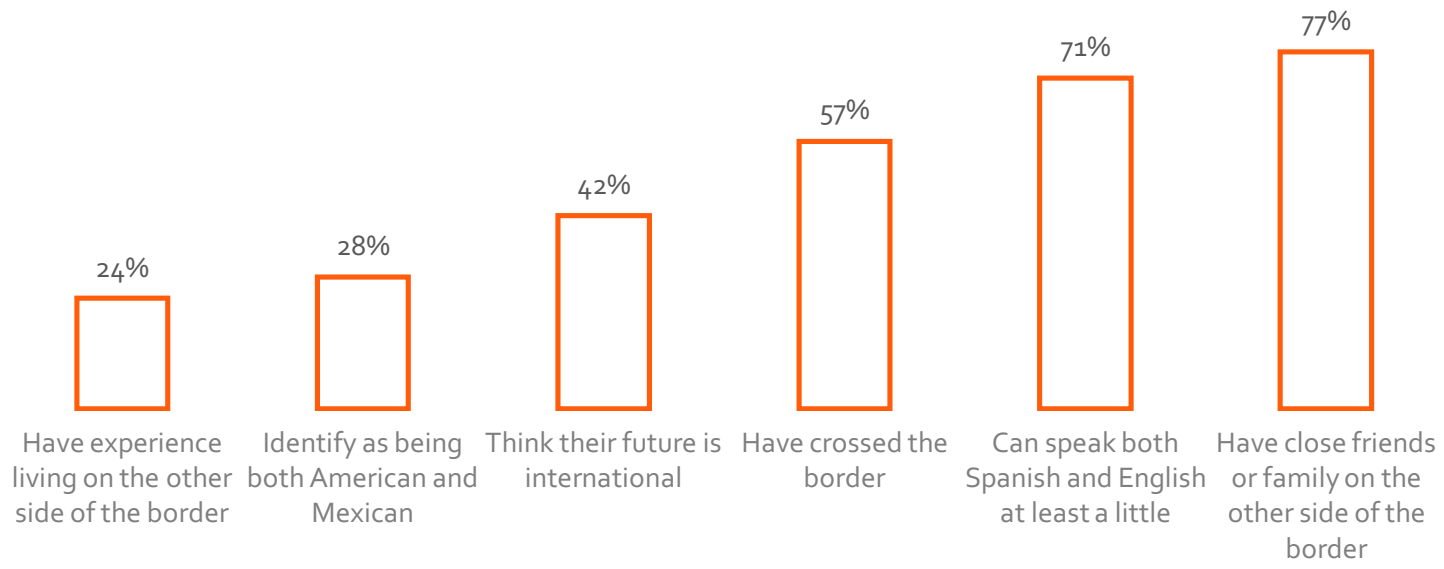
Photo by Erik Jepsen/ UC San Diego Publications



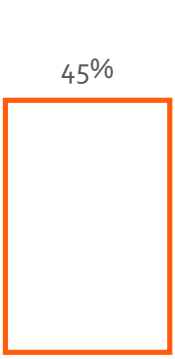
PRELIMINARY RESEARCH FINDINGS

Findings are preliminary and represent only the responses from a representative sample of 3,362 students in 9th and 10th grade in Sweetwater Union High School District and students in 10th grade in public high schools in the municipality of Tijuana. Additional findings from the full dataset will be available in September 2016.

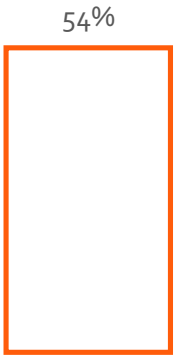
They live binational lives



They face barriers to success

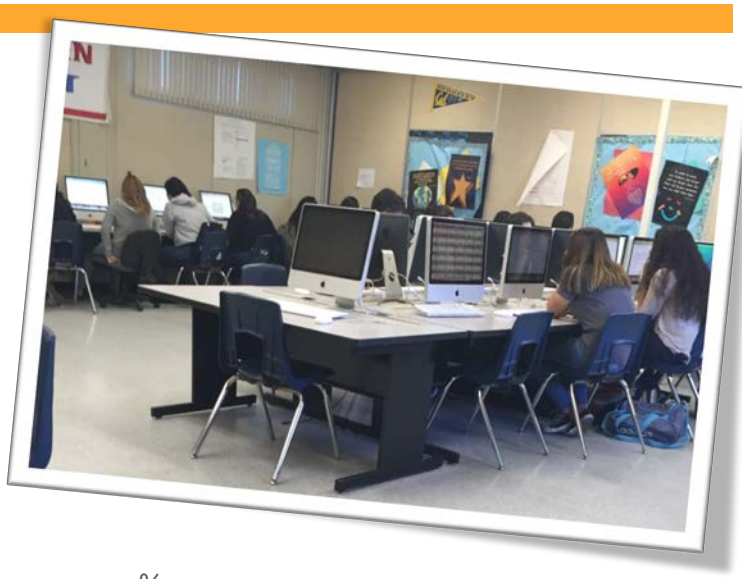


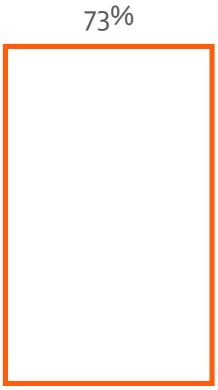
Might quit school for financial reasons



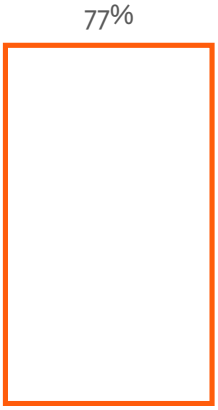
Don't know what university they want to attend

They rely on schools to prepare them for the future





Rely on teachers and counselors as the best source of career information



Believe the classes they take prepare them for the future

MMFRP would like to thank the large group of students and researchers who worked hard to carry out our fieldwork this year

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El Colegio de la Frontera Norte
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