



The
Steve
Fund

EMHC RETROSPECTIVE

Excellence in Mental Health on Campus

Strengthening mental health, belonging and student flourishing in partnership with The Steve Fund's national campus network

A MESSAGE FROM

The Steve Fund

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Dear Partners,

Since 2016, The Steve Fund has pursued a bold vision: to ensure that students from under-resourced and underserved communities receive the mental health and emotional support they need to thrive. What began as a program to address unmet needs in campus mental health has grown into the Excellence in Mental Health on Campus (EMHC) initiative, grounded in cultural responsiveness and transforming educational, organizational, and workplace environments—one of The Steve Fund's core pillars. EMHC exemplifies this pillar in action, showing how transformation within learning environments can profoundly improve student flourishing.

Through EMHC, we have worked with campuses nationwide to strengthen mental health and emotional well-being at a time of unprecedented challenge and change. Our multi-state, multi-year, and multi-million-dollar initiative has generated meaningful impacts across institutions, equipping campuses to support all students, particularly those historically underserved.

We bring deep expertise and student-centered approaches to help institutions foster persistence, promote well-being, and create sustainable systems that allow students to flourish. Our experience in peer-to-peer engagement, cohort-based learning, and expert consulting has turned insights into actionable campus strategies, demonstrating that focused attention on mental health drives tangible results.

Today, our capabilities are urgently needed. We are part of the national response, ready to work with campuses to address their current challenges, leverage lessons learned, and scale transformative approaches to student success.

We are deeply grateful to our donors, partners, and champions whose support makes this work possible. We invite you to join our Community of Action—as a partner, advocate, or supporter—to help expand this transformative work to more campuses nationwide. The lessons learned through EMHC can guide us in today's fraught environment, helping campuses meet the mental health needs of all students.

Stephanie Bell-Rose

President, The Steve Fund

KEY IMPACT



100%

of participating campuses
raised awareness of student
mental health



93%

Enhanced the cultural
responsiveness of the
counseling staff



92%

Were better prepared
to center the
mental health of all students

EMHC PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

Reach & Scale

The
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NATIONWIDE REACH

Participating campuses across the
United States engaged in EMHC

66 COLLEGES &
UNIVERSITIES
ENGAGED

1,126,300

STUDENTS IMPACTED

through campus programs, workshops,
summits, and listening sessions.

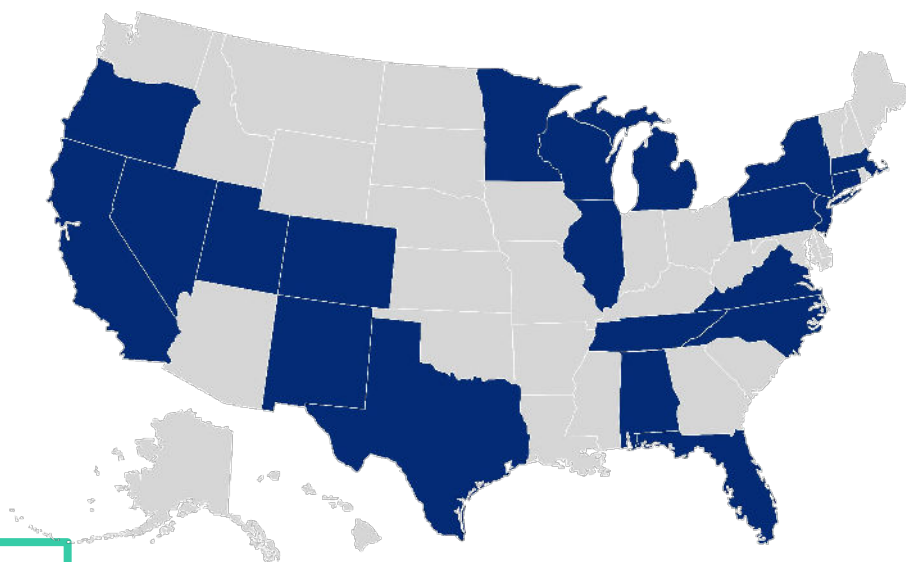
66 COUNCILS &
COMMITTEES FORMED

Student-faculty-staff steering
committees and advisory boards

“

A multi-cohort network sharing
strategies, practices, and
innovations.

LEARNING COMMUNITY MEMBER



23 STATES
REPRESENTED

AL, CA, CO, MI, NJ, PA, TN, NY, NV, NC,
MN, MA, UT, TX, FL, IL, WI, OR, VA, CT

	TOTAL
2-Year Colleges	22
4-Year Colleges	42
Post-Graduate Institutions	2
Public Institutions	44
Private Institutions	22

Key Outcomes

CENTERING STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH



100%

Raised awareness of student mental health

"The most significant impact has been raising awareness on our campus."



90%

Improved understanding of cultural strengths and support resources for students

"We collaborated more with other departments to promote mental health and destigmatize counseling for students."

BUILDING BELONGING



91%

broadened participation from key campus stakeholders



92%

improved ability to build trust

One student said "It felt less like we're the only ones worrying about mental health on campus."

DRIVING INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION

76%

elevated mental health as a top priority



80%

positive changes in faculty, staff, and administrator attitudes

"The most noteworthy result was that the institution shifted campus culture toward proactive support."

CATALYZING PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING

92%

better equipped to activate campus support systems

84%

positioned to apply trauma-informed leadership

CONCLUSION

Advancing Excellence in Campus Mental Health

The mental health crisis among college students, particularly those from under-resourced and underserved communities, is urgent. Students from these groups face systemic barriers, heightened stress, and limited access to culturally responsive support—**threatening academic persistence, economic mobility, and overall flourishing.**

Grounded in The Steve Fund's mission to promote the mental health and emotional well-being of all young people, the Excellence in Mental Health on Campus (EMHC) initiative was designed to help institutions meet these challenges head-on. Through this work, we have seen the power of transforming campus environments so they enhance mental health, belonging, and opportunity for every student.

Across more than 65 campuses, EMHC demonstrated what's possible when institutions center mental health. Together, we have strengthened leadership commitment, developed trauma-informed and culturally responsive practices, and equipped faculty, staff, and administrators to create sustainable systems of care. Students, in turn, reported stronger trust, belonging, and engagement—**key drivers of persistence and success.**

Through this work, The Steve Fund has built a strong foundation of knowledge, relationships, and proven strategies for advancing student mental health and belonging. This work underscores the deep connection between mental health, persistence, and long-term success. Today, higher education faces a moment of great challenge and transformation. The insights and capabilities now guide how we partner with campuses to address unmet needs and ensure that mental health and well-being are embedded into every facet of campus life.

By meeting these challenges together, we help institutions build environments where every student is seen, supported, and able to thrive.

The lessons from EMHC offer a roadmap for the future of higher education: campuses that foster belonging, resilience, and opportunity for all students.



The Steve Fund

A Community of Action

We invite you to join the Excellence in Mental Health on Campus Community of Action—as a donor, partner, or advocate—to help ensure that every student, particularly those from underrepresented communities, has the mental health support they need to thrive.

The Steve Fund is building a national movement for excellence in campus mental health—connecting educators, mental health professionals, and students to share strategies, scale solutions, and transform learning environments so that all young people can thrive.

Join us in advancing this vision. Together, we can strengthen trust, belonging, and well-being across higher education.