



The Impact of Summer Science Camps Alumni Survey Results 2013

ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Summer Science Camp (EMBHSSC)

INTRODUCTION

It has been argued that growing the number of college graduates proficient in STEM fields is essential to America's economic well-being and national security. Learning in traditional K-12 school settings can be enhanced by summer science camp programs. These programs should allow students to encounter constructive STEM learning activities thereby positively influencing self-efficacy and motivating their interest in taking STEM related coursework and pursuing a STEM career.

Since 2007, The Harris Foundation, Inc. (THF) has teamed up with the ExxonMobil Foundation on the ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Summer Science Camp (EMBHSSC) program, a free, two-week academic program at universities across the nation, which provides STEM experiences and opportunities for underserved and underrepresented middle school students. Camp attendance encourages, motivates and provides students with exposure to **successful role models**, feeling a **sense of belonging**, experiencing **college life**, and having opportunities to experience **success working with STEM related activities**. As a result, many of these students will take STEM related coursework in high school and possibly pursue a STEM related career in college. This research, conducted with camp alumni, provides valuable information on ways to increase underserved and underrepresented students participation in STEM related career fields.



THF enables youth to develop and achieve their full potential through the support of educational STEM programs such as the ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Summer Science Camp (EMBHSSC).

RESEARCH PURPOSE & QUESTIONS

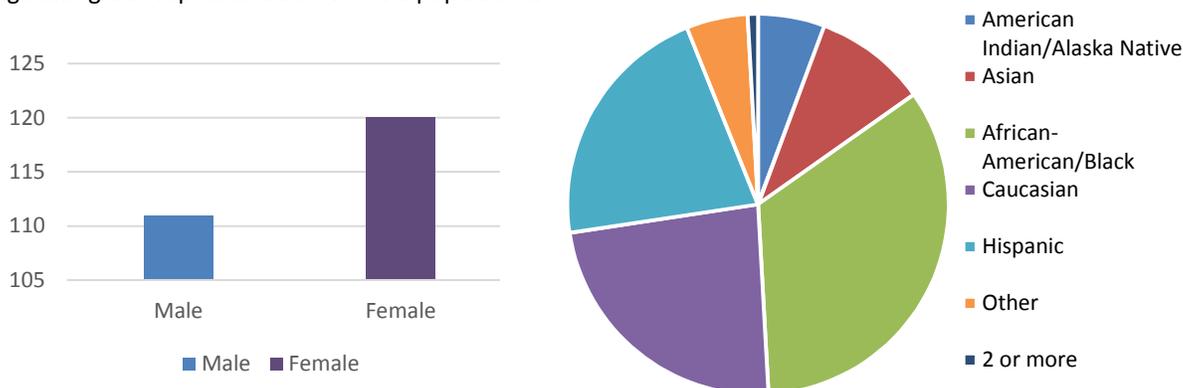
The University of Houston - Clear Lake, Department of Educational Foundations-Research, conducted the study to evaluate whether or not attending the EMBHSSC influenced the participants to pursue STEM related coursework and consider a STEM related career.

METHODOLOGY

During the spring of 2013, volunteers were solicited to complete an online survey from a purposeful sample of previous EMBHSSC attendees: (a) entering 9th grade, who were rising 6th through 8th graders during the summers of 2010, 2011, and 2012 respectively and (b) recently graduated from high school, who were rising 6th through 8th graders during the summers of 2006, 2007, and 2008 respectively.

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

A total of 242 alumni responded to the survey. Female respondents comprised 49.6% of the sample, while males comprised 45.9% (Table 1., eleven respondents did not report gender) Thirty-two percent of the students reported to be African-American with another 22% reporting to be Caucasian. Hispanic/Latino followed at 20% (Table 2). Students entering ninth grade represented 77% of the population.



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"It made me realize that I have a passion for science. I have several ideas in mind. The summer camp helped me to really see the lack of black/minority students who are pursuing science. I intend to take this opportunity to make my mark."

*-EMBHSSC Alumni,
Current 9th Grader*



"The summer science camp offered many memorable experiences, but the opportunity to experience college life in a dorm and away from my family was the most memorable and prepared me for this coming school year."

*-EMBHSSC Alumni,
Current College Freshman*

FINDINGS/DISCUSSION

The key findings of the long-term survey are divided into three categories: EMBHSSC's influence on participant's future plans, EMBHSSC's influence on participant's lives, and EMBHSSC's influence on high school choices. Within each category, data are provided for the two cohorts from whom data were received: those who were entering ninth grade (n=187) and those who graduated high school in 2013 (n=55). A summary of each is below.

EMBHSSC's Influence on Participant's Future Plans

Ninety-seven percent of the 9th graders reported that they planned on attending college following high school graduation. Of those, 77% of credit the EMBHSSC for influencing their thoughts about going to college. Further 76% plan to study a STEM field.

Of the surveyed 12th graders, all graduated from high school and 96% will be attending college in the fall. Nearly 70% received scholarships to attend their institution of higher learning. Approximately, 80% of the participants credit the EMBHSSC for influencing their thoughts about going to college.

EMBHSSC's Influence on High School Course

Nearly fifty percent of high school graduates claim to have taken at least one AP or honors course: AP Calculus (47.3%), Honors/Pre-AP Algebra II (50.9%), Honors/Pre-AP Pre-Calculus (52.7%), and Honors/Pre-AP Chemistry (50.9%) to name a few. Approximately, 83.6% of the participants credit the EMBHSSC for impacting their decision or desire to take STEM related Honors, Pre-AP, and/or AP classes in high school. while 89% of eighth graders say EMBHSSC is influencing their decision to take STEM-related Honors, Pre-AP and/or AP classes.

EMBHSSC's Influence on Participants' Lives

Both ninth graders and high school graduates claim that Hands-On Activities, Field Experiences and Campus Experiences have influenced their lives *"More/A Lot."* For ninth graders, the percentages were: Hands-On Activities, 89.3%; Field Experiences, 82.4%; and Campus Experiences, 87.1%. For high school graduates, the percentages were: Hands-On Activities, 74.6%; Field Experiences, 72.7%; and Campus Experiences, 80%.

97%

Of EMBHSSC alumni
plan to attend
college

84%

Of seniors credit
EMBHSSC for
impacting their
decision or desire to
take STEM related
Honors, Pre-AP,
and/or AP classes in
high school

75%

Of EMBHSSC alumni
plan to pursue a
STEM-related degree
at a four-year
university