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Project Title: Our Story from the Shadows: The Ongoing Journey of Chicana/o EOPS Students From Community College to a Four Year University

Abstract: The California Community Colleges are the main gateway for Californias Latinas/os to enter higher education. Out of 100 Latina/o first time freshman 75 start at the California Community College. Out of those 75 first time Latina/o freshman at the community college only 7 transfer to a CSU or UC. Through this qualitative study I hope to analyze Chicana/o EOPS community college students who are striving toward transferring to a four year university. For the purpose of this study Chicana/o will be defined as someone of Mexican origin or decent. EOPS students are first generation low income and academically and economically disadvantaged. My central question for this study is: What are internal and external factors that contribute to Chicana/o EOPS student persistence in transferring to a four year university? The Critical Race Theory was used to centralize the lived experiences of Chicana/o EOPS students. The purpose of this qualitative research is to analyze Chicana/o EOPS Southern California Community College students who are striving toward transferring to a four year university. Through their voices the information collected via semi-structured interviews will provide recommendations to California Community College EOPS directors and others who serve large Chicana/o populations such as the receiving EOP institutions at the Cal State and other similar EOP programs at the University of California institutions to have an insight on what Chicanas/os community college students need and what has worked to help them persevere to transfer to a four year university.