

Abstract for non-thesis project

Opportunities and Barriers in Florida's Higher Education for Children of Farmworkers

This study explores the opportunities and challenges within Florida's higher education system for children of farmworkers, many of whom are first-generation college students. These students often bring unique perspectives shaped by their families' experiences in agriculture, with some having worked in the industry themselves. Understanding the specific challenges they face—such as first-generation status, language barriers, and immigration-related issues—is essential for providing effective support. The study also clarifies key definitions, including the term "first-generation college student," which refers to individuals whose parents have not earned a bachelor's degree. This status can create significant obstacles, from navigating the college application process to succeeding in higher education. Additionally, farmworkers—whether migrant or seasonal—face distinct educational barriers that further complicate the path to college. Extension agents, educators, counselors, and higher education staff play a crucial role in raising awareness, informing families about educational opportunities and their rights, and offering support at every stage of the college journey. This study ultimately advocates for the development of tailored support systems that enable all students, regardless of background, to pursue higher education and achieve upward mobility.