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Type of Presentation: Oral  
Title: Bridge to Higher Education

#### Abstract

Citizens Schools' 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy (8GA) helps students succeed in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and bridge them to high school, college, and beyond. Citizens Schools collaborates with middle schools to expand the learning day for low-income children across the county. The College of Education and Social Services (CESS) participates with 8GA on College Tours. For the last ten years, students from the Boston area, participates in classroom sessions, workshops, tours, and student panel discussion throughout the UVM campus.

This presentation will analyze the purpose of bridge programs such as Citizens Schools and understand whether these programs are beneficial for students. This presentation will cover the current issues for students of low-income and the difficulties of reaching college. It will provide details of the current subjects and topics UVM address to combat the low attendance rate of this population. There will be the opportunity to speak with a current student who went through the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy and is currently a UVM student.