About BRAID 2018

Background
BRAID (Building, Recruiting, and Inclusion for Diversity), an initiative co-led by the AnitaB.org and Harvey Mudd College, helps Computer Science departments increase their percentages of women and underrepresented minority students. Launched in 2014, it includes a mixed methods longitudinal research study conducted by the UCLA BRAID Research Team — led by Dr. Linda Sax — and is additionally supported through funding from the National Science Foundation.

Under the leadership of their department chairs, 15 Computer Science (CS) departments (BRAID Schools) have committed to implementing practices such as those initiated at Harvey Mudd College and the University of Washington (Beacon Schools) which increased the representation of women and underrepresented minorities in computing on their campuses.

Each BRAID school implements a combination of commitments, successful on Beacon school campuses, in order to increase the number of women and underrepresented minorities in their undergraduate CS departments. The four BRAID commitments are:

1. Modify introductory CS courses to appeal to students with less prior background in computing.
2. Lead outreach programs for high school teachers and students to build a pipeline of diverse students interested in computing.
3. Build confidence and community among underrepresented students through programming on and off campus.
4. Develop joint majors and interdisciplinary courses in areas like CS and biology that are attractive to underrepresented students.

In addition to the 15 annual BRAID Schools participating in the longitudinal research study, we annually accept several schools (Affiliate Schools) to gain access to the learnings of the BRAID initiative for one year. Department Chairs from accredited, degree-granting institutions can apply for their schools to become Affiliate Schools. They will spend the year learning about best practices from the Beacon and BRAID schools, and will convene in person with corporate BRAID Funders, the UCLA BRAID research team, the AnitaB.org team, and all the BRAID School Department Chairs at our annual summit. Learn more about participating in the BRAID initiative.

We envision a future where the people who imagine and build technology mirror the people and societies for whom they build it.
**Participating 2018 BRAID Institutions**

**Beacon Schools**
“Beacon Schools” are the schools after which the participating BRAID institutions model their commitments. Each of the Beacon Schools has substantially improved the number of undergraduate women in their CS departments and provide guidance to the participating BRAID institutions. Harvey Mudd is the lead model and has implemented four strategies to increase their numbers. These strategies include changing the Intro to Computing course; bringing first year freshman to GHC; securing internships for their students; and performing outreach to local high schools. These Beacon schools are used as guides and advisors to the BRAID universities and the BRAID affiliates. The Beacon Schools include:

California Polytechnic State University, Harvey Mudd College, University of Washington, and University of British Columbia.

**BRAID Schools**
“BRAID Schools” are the 15 institutions that are receiving funding to implement the four BRAID commitments and participate in the UCLA BRAID Research Team’s longitudinal study. They include:

University of Illinois at Chicago, University of Maryland Baltimore County, University of Maryland College Park, University of Nebraska Lincoln, University of North Texas, University of Rochester, University of South Carolina, University of Texas El Paso, University of Vermont, University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, and Villanova University.

**Affiliate Schools**
“Affiliate Schools” are institutions that are working towards implementing BRAID commitments to increase diversity in their CS departments but are not receiving funding. Currently, they participate with BRAID on a one-year basis through attending the annual BRAID Summit. They include:

Brown University, Lehigh University, Michigan Tech, Tennessee Tech, Tufts, University of the Pacific, and University of Waterloo.
2018 BRAID Initiative Highlights

Annual BRAID Summit
The annual BRAID Summit took place July 12-14, 2018 at Harvey Mudd College. We welcomed roughly 50 participants from different BRAID Schools, 2018 Affiliate Schools, Beacon Schools, funding bodies, and nonprofit partners. Participants engaged in a variety of discussions on topics such as how to recruit more diverse faculty, and how to focus on diversity and inclusion efforts when all CS departments are facing unprecedented booming enrollment. The UCLA BRAID Research Team provided an in depth update on their research following the progress of students and CS departments as a whole over the past four years of the project (see their slide deck).

Participant feedback included:

“The most important thing is reestablishing connections and getting reinvigorated. We are all so busy that it is easy for important things to get neglected.”

“This was by far the best Summit ever. There was a strong sense of community and trust built among the participants.”

Save the date for the 2019 Annual Summit at Harvey Mudd, July 11-13, 2019.

BRAID Welcome Reception at GHC 18
The BRAID Welcome Reception at GHC 18 was sponsored by Northrop Grumman and New York Life. Nearly 250 attendees enjoyed the great food and company as we celebrated the success of four years of the BRAID initiative. 13 out 15 BRAID institutions had representatives at the Welcome Reception, as did two Affiliate institutions. Students and faculty alike had the chance to network with the BRAID initiative’s annual corporate funders, the Welcome Reception sponsors, allies in the work of broadening participation in computing, and one another.

For more details on the representation of BRAID schools at GHC 18, attendance at the GHC 18 BRAID Research presentation, or participation at the BRAID Welcome Reception, check out these quick stats.

BRAID Research and Broader Impact

UCLA BRAID Research Team
The UCLA BRAID Research team, led by Drs. Linda Sax and Kate Lehman, hosted an attentive audience of nearly 100 attendees at their GHC 18 update. The research team shared the progress of the longitudinal research study, looking at successful practices for recruiting and retaining underrepresented students in Computer Science departments on the 15 BRAID campuses.

Some highlights:
- Across the 15 BRAID campuses, women’s enrollment has increased by 51% since 2014.
- At each institution, women’s enrollment growth outpaces the total growth in enrollment.

Check out the UCLA BRAID Research Team update or their research website for more details on the results of this longitudinal study.