As the gap continues to grow between well-served and under-served K-12 public schools, U-M’s Michigan College Advising Corps (MCAC) is stepping in to make a difference.

MCAC advisors work to engender a college-going culture in some of Michigan’s most underserved high schools from Muskegon to Flint, Benton Harbor to Port Huron — beginning with eight, and now at 15 partner schools every year since MCAC began in 2010. Their goal is to increase the number of low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented students who enter and complete post-secondary studies.

“Ninety percent of today’s fastest growing jobs require a post-secondary degree,” said MCAC Program Manager Chris Rutherford. “As a state, Michigan must develop the talent of all our young people.”

MCAC advisors get results that are measured by their students’ success.

“Having an amazing college advisor during my junior and senior years at Port Huron High School was absolutely vital to my success. As a first-generation college student, I began the college application process and scholarship search with minimal knowledge,” said U-M sophomore Alicia Morrisey. “My college advisor was able to guide me every step of the way and answered not only my questions, but my parents’ questions, as well. She made my senior year of high school less terrifying.”

To help students explore their full range of opportunities, MCAC advisors have helped almost 9,000 high school seniors make higher education plans, whether to two-year or four-year institutions. The advisors have held more than 36,500 one-on-one meetings with students, and assisted with almost 4,200 ACT registrations. MCAC advisors have organized almost 340 college tours for about 9,200 students, and planned 900 visits to partner high schools by college representatives who have connected with approximately 12,000 students.

An average of 84 percent of graduating seniors in MCAC partner schools submit one or more college applications, for a total of nearly 23,500. And, once they apply, these applicants enjoy a 67 percent higher likelihood of receiving an offer of admission, and a 13 percentage point increase in college enrollment.

To enable the students’ aspirations, MCAC advisors have helped 60 percent of their graduating seniors secure more than $60.6 million in scholarships and other forms of financial aid.

“Highly qualified students from under-resourced schools generally do not even apply to any college matching their academic credentials, because they don’t believe college is an option. Or they believe they won’t fit in. Then, if they do apply, it’s often to colleges that do not challenge them intellectually,” said Dr. William Collins, Executive Director of the Center for Educational Outreach. “This is called under-matching.

“Under-matching compromises the students’ potential for success,” Collins continued. “Today, at the University of Michigan, we have successful graduate and undergraduate students whose MCAC advisors helped them identify the opportunity and seek out the rigorous challenge of building a fulfilling and productive future right here at Michigan.”

Perhaps inspired by the example of their MCAC advisors, all of whom are recent U-M graduates — or by MCAC’s Michigan Experience Day, which brings more than 100 of the state’s top-performing high school juniors to the Ann Arbor campus — U-M has enjoyed a 60 percent increase in enrollment of graduates from MCAC partner schools.

Location of MCAC’s 2014–2015 partner schools

1935
Nov. 23. For the first time, the season ended with Ohio State, a tradition that continues today. Over the next 65 years, the outcome of this game directly determined the Big Ten champion 22 times and impacted the title-winner another 24 times.

1938
Princeton’s Herbert Orin “Fritz” Crisler was hired, bringing the single-wing offense and a new helmet to Ann Arbor.