“How to…expand your mentoring strategies”
Dr. Keivan Stassun

FAQs
Would you know of equivalent BRIDGE programs focusing on Hispanics?

Note that our program includes a large number of Hispanic students, despite the partner school being an HBCU. However, probably the closest program like ours that specifically partners with a Hispanic serving institution is the CAMPAARE program at Cal Poly: http://physics.csupomona.edu/academic-programs/astronomy-program/research/campare-overview

Also the program at York CUNY: http://www.york.cuny.edu/news/york-professor-scores-major-grant

How are mentors paired with mentees for "best fit"? When is this determined - during an interview process?

We do an initial best fit assessment during the interview and intake process. But we then revisit the best fit when students prepare to transition to the Vanderbilt PhD program as they complete their Fisk master's degree. See item #31 in the Fisk-Vanderbilt Architects Toolkit in the section on Monitoring and Tracking for an example of how we monitor students through the milestones required to establish a good research mentoring fit: http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/bridge/tools.htm

How reliant do you believe your programs success depends on the proximity of the partnering university?

It is not yet clear. We think it is probably important, but we are also experimenting with partnering with institutions that are farther away.

Are the bridges students completing their degrees at the same pace as the rest of the PhD class? In other words, is there a difference in time to degree for bridges students?

Mostly on the same pace, however our statistics suggest that the Bridge students take on average 1 year longer to complete their PhD, starting from when they join our program as 1st-year master's students. In other words, the 2-year master's phase adds about 1 year to total time to PhD. This is because the 2-year master's allows them to fill in gaps in undergrad preparation while most of the master's course credits (and research experience) "transfer" to the PhD requirements.
**Additional Resources**

Angela Lee Duckworth: What is grit?
TED talks Education 06:12min
http://video.pbs.org/video/2365008073/

Carol Dweck
Growth Mindset
http://www.mindsetworks.com

Tools for Practitioners
www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/bridge