

FIRST2 NETWORK



West Virginia University Institutional Team



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and

**Keyzar Dominguez (former First2 Director & current
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Special thanks for our Funded First2 Directors!

**Ella Moats, Tyler Seifert, Sarah Warder, Russell Dillon,
Doreen Winter, Miah Smith, Trinity Kimmins, Adalaide Hickey**

***Funded First2 Student Directors work 1-on-1 with
faculty/staff on change ideas.***



CHANGE IDEA #1

FirstGen Student Mentoring

TRACKER STATUS: Coached (Study)

Funded by the WV HEPC First Gen Student Success grant.

8 successful first-gen students (FirstGen Student Ambassadors) & 2 First2 Student Directors each mentored 2-3 1st & 2nd year first-gen students in both in Fall 2025 (24 students) & Spring 2026 (24 students)

Mentoring? Individual and group lunch meetings, templated emails, journaling.

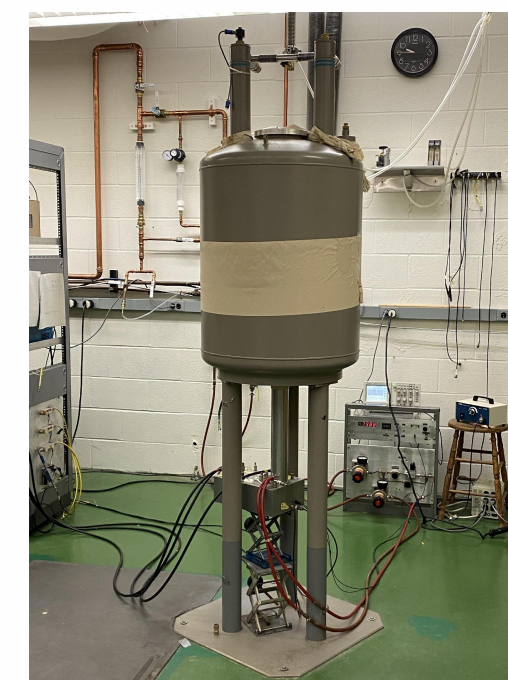
- Near-peer mentoring fostered consistent, relationship-based contact (in-person meetings, email, text) to connect students to campus resources.
- **Mentees reported substantial growth (avg self-rated gain of 67%)**
- Quantitative data showed statistically significant increases in feeling respected, comfortable, and sense of belonging.





High School Outreach

TRACKER STATUS: Coached (Study)



- 193 of 263 students (74%) indicated positive impact from visiting them.

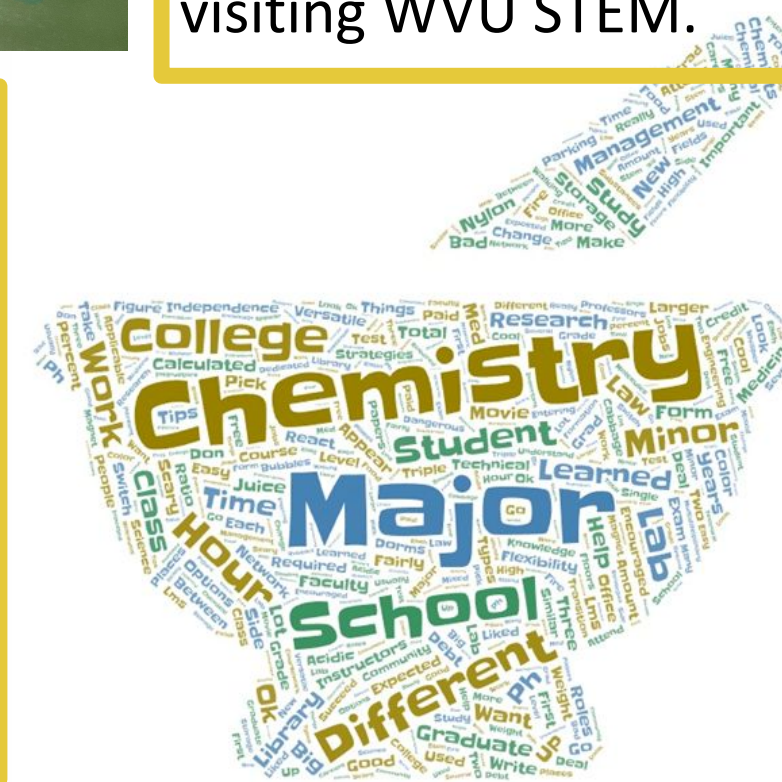
- 32 of 40 students (80%) indicated positive impact from visiting WVU STEM.

Funded First2 students, along with peers, visited WV high schools to discuss *“How to Succeed in College: Using Resources and Making Connections”* and majoring in STEM.

Visits? Morgantown, University, Pocahontas, Cameron, Winfield (Putnam Cty) & had visits from ~40 students during Scout Chemistry Merit Badge, STEM Outreach Saturday, and Tyler Cty 9th grade students. **Reached ~303 WV students.**

What did students learn?

- Free STEM Grad School
- Choosing STEM major
- Balancing school and life
- 3:1 study rule
- Exam weights
- Professors want you to succeed
- 7-Up is acidic



CHANGE IDEA #3

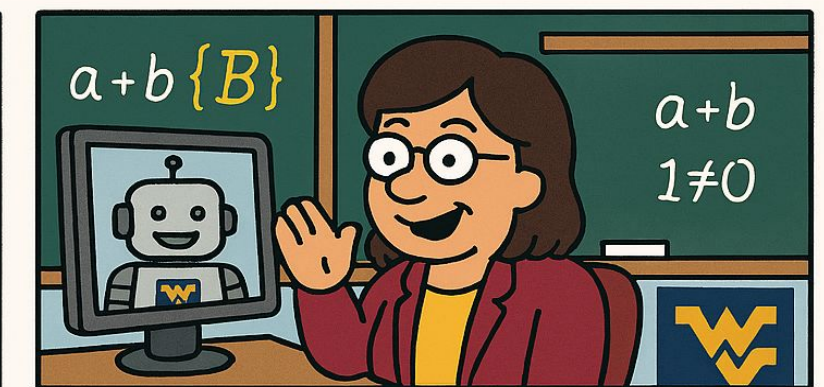
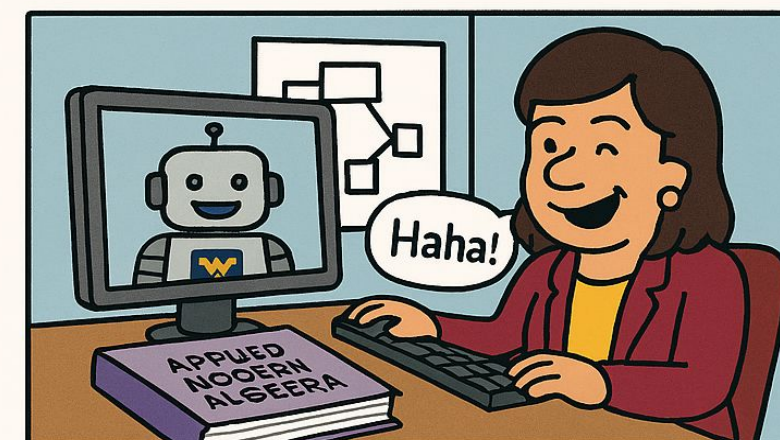
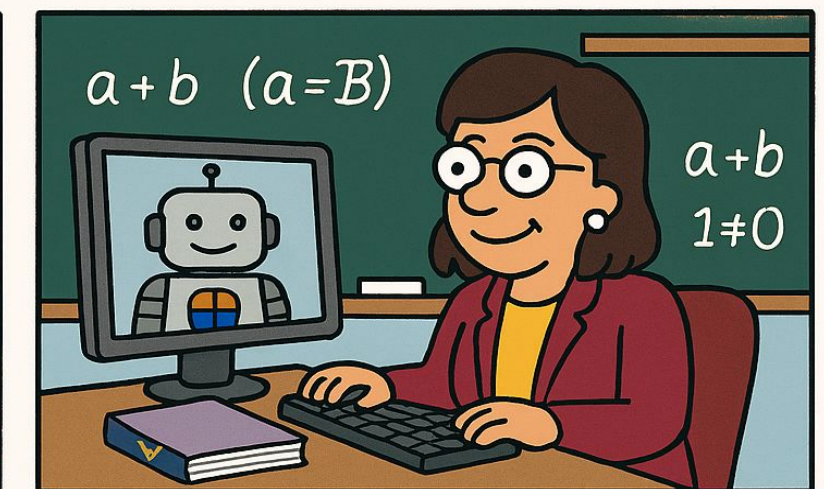
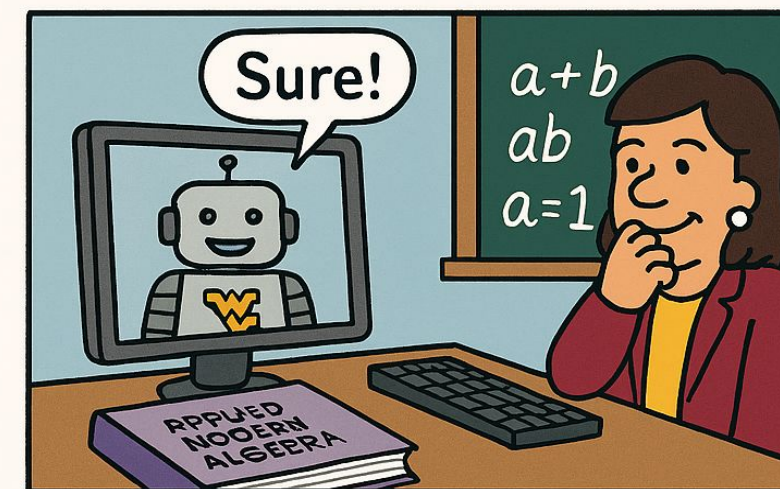
Redesign of Course Using AI

TRACKER STATUS: Plan/Do Coached

Improve STEM course relevance for the MATH 375: Applied Modern Algebra course taken by engineering majors.

In several iterations, entered catalog course description and objectives into Gen AI (perplexity.ai), along with audience, and asked for design of 15-week course to cover relevant topics. Text materials chosen and schedule aligned with text. Finally, used AI to find real-world applications specific to Quantum Computing and later applications relevant to students' majors for each chapter.

Retrospective post-survey was used to assess student perceived usefulness of course material, motivation, interest, and applied applications. Final exam was to write a paper on how Abstract Algebra is used in students' majors.



 West Virginia University

Redesigning an Applied Modern Algebra course using generative AI

Per Margie Darrah: "Mid-term reflections gave excellent feedback on the class and the approach!"

CHANGE IDEA #4

Dogs & Dirty Sodas at Davis

TRACKER STATUS: Not Coached

The idea was to connect with one of our colleges that has STEM majors, but we haven't had the best luck with bringing into the network - Davis College (Agriculture).

Worked with two newly funded students - Doreen and Trinity on this change idea.

Discussed First2 Network and FirstGen Office with students while at the event.

Joined an event that already happens monthly with Davis College Student Success Office that has good turnout - popcorn.

We highlighted therapy dogs and added a Dirty Soda bar to switch it up.

Outreached to all Davis students that morning about the event = PANDEMONIUM!

Already met with Davis again to work on FirstGen efforts.





CHANGE IDEAS: OTHER

- **Quantum Technology Club (Russell Dillon)**
- **Tracking Student Participation in Chemistry Tutoring (Tyler Seifert)**
- **FirstGen Mountaineers Student Club (Sarah Warder & Miah Smith)**
- **Biweekly Opportunity Emails (Sarah Warder)**
- **STEM Movie Night (Sydney Kudlak & Doreen Winter)**
- **Exemplary Research Mentors: Student Voices & Effects of PDSAs (Ella Moats)**
- **Analysis of Non-Persisting RAP Biweekly Research Reports (Ada Hickey & Keyzar Dominguez)**
- **First Gen WV State Capitol Ambassadors (Sarah Warder & 2 STEM faculty)**



PLANS FOR FUTURE/ SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

- Continue to work together as a team on first-gen projects and proposals.
- Lessons learned from First2 PDSAs have been integrated into (i) Chemistry/Biochemistry NSF S-STEM and (ii) HEPC First Gen Student Success proposals/grants.
- All the support colleges offer STEM students does not matter if students/parents feel that they cannot afford college → ***partnering with Financial Aid is critical!***
- Expand connections with STEM majors that we haven't had a big collaboration with previously to grow support
- At this point, we need to finish out May 2026 and our current projects. We plan to meet to discuss sustainability and next steps soon.