

### **Rihanna's Story: Developmental Assets in College Planning**

Rihanna is an English learner in the twelfth grade who arrived in the United States as a child with her parents. Rihanna is social and bright, and her teachers enjoy interacting with her. Rihanna has strong relationships with her parents and with her maternal grandmother, who remains in her native country but is an active participant in family discussions and events through FaceTime. However, Rihanna has difficulty with written expression and reading comprehension. She achieves at grade level in math and science, with accommodations, but continues to struggle in her writing and reading skills. Rihanna's guidance counselor has encouraged her to complete an inventory of skills in preparation for applying to community college. Using a list of developmental assets, she has identified several assets that have prepared Rihanna well and that she can continue to leverage in the next phase of her education. These include caring relationships with family, the presence of community supports and role models, and leadership experiences and opportunities. Her counselor makes a chart for Rihanna listing some of these assets and asks her to brainstorm ways she can access each of these assets and supports in her college studies. They agree on a plan for Rihanna to check in weekly with some of her community contacts, text and FaceTime family members frequently, and identify at least one student organization to join. The counselor goes a step further and contacts advisors and officers of some student organizations that are particularly aligned with Rihanna's interests. These include organizations that offer mentoring to students from diverse and first-generation backgrounds as well as the college's disability support counselor. Rihanna arrives on campus with a lunch meeting already scheduled with one faculty advisor and with a tentative accommodations plan developed over the summer with the disability support office.