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# My First Year Research Experience

Itzel Guillen

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## FYRE Experience

Hello, my name is Itzel Guillen. I am a graduate of Rio Grande High School, and a freshman at UNM. I am a participant in the **FYRE** (First Year Research Experience) program.

**FYRE gave me the opportunity to work more on a project that I participated in while I was in high school: RAPS.** My research interest is the response of adults who were part of the project.

As a freshman, finding a mentor can be hard. Many students need more experience, but there may not be many open opportunities. For my mentor, I contacted Courtney FitzGerald at the UNM PRC. I met Courtney through the RAPS project while I was in high school.

**For FYRE, I wanted to work with RAPS project data.** I was able to do this with Courtney as my mentor.



## Results: Emerging Themes

Adults learned that students really care about their community.

*"It really empowered the students to think about helping their fellow students."*

Adults learned that students have the ability to think critically about issues.

*"Sometimes we feel like high school aged students can't critically think about these really complex ideas. But they did that!"*

Adults felt like students can make a difference.

*"It's real important... that they have a voice instead of just sit back and not do anything."*

## Background



RAPS is a positive youth development project. It gives high school students their school's YRRS data, allowing students to report their own findings to their school and community.

The project took place at Rio Grande High School and the Native American Community Academy from 2012-2015.

## Research Question & Methods

### Research Question

***What did adults learn from students in the RAPS project?***

### Qualitative Methods

1. Secondary analysis of process data
2. Seven, 30-minute interviews (2013-16)
3. Recursive abstraction process to identify relevant themes
4. Narrowed supportive evidence to draw conclusions
5. Used quotes to illustrate findings.

## Other Findings

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Improved student-staff relationships	Participation would have been less if data weren't local (local data are critical)
Students were comfortable doing facilitation	More PhotoVoice emphasis would have helped
Teachers gained awareness of why YRRS is important	Students should present to their fellow students

## Acknowledgements

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