

**Title III - Strengthening Institutions Program**  
**Year Two Report (AY 2024 – 2025): Executive Summary**

### **Purpose**

Title III grant initiatives aim to strengthen Kutztown University's capacity to serve low-income and minority students through high-impact practices (HIPs), targeted student support, and equity-focused strategies.

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### **Impact on Graduation Rates**

- **Four-year graduation rate increased to 48.6%**, the highest in a decade.
- HIP expansion shows **positive trends among low-income, first-generation, and URM students.**
- Summer Reboot participation and Starfish faculty engagement increased.
- Overall graduation rate rose slightly by **1%**, with stronger gains expected by the end of the grant period

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### **Impact on Retention/Persistence**

- **Record-high retention rate:** 81.6% for first-time, full-time students, the highest of the century
- The Fall 2025 cohort posted a **3.37 average GPA**, the second highest in KU history

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### **Key Accomplishments and Milestones**

- Faculty workshops led to 5 study away programs; one new approved trip sent 8 students to Greece
- 6 students completed micro-internships; feedback informed program improvements
- 22 Course-based Undergraduate Research (CURE) courses delivered; 8 faculty trained

- First Year Seminar “Wonderfest” showcased 122 first-year student research projects
- Neurodiversity programming included campus-wide reading groups over the year and a keynote program/event day with author and reporter Eric Garcia
- Baseline metrics established for additional performance indicators

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## Highlights

- Retention reached **81.6%** (exceeded target)
- 67% of seniors completed 2+ High Impact Practices
- CUREs and Study Away goals surpassed
- Reboot program participation up 50%
- Starfish adoption reached 53.4%

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## Challenges and Adjustments

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  - Delayed approval for reallocating construction funds toward sensory spaces
  - High demand for neurodiversity resources
  - Ongoing efforts to resolve budget scope changes

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## Evaluation & Assessment Findings

- External evaluators (University of Kansas RED team) provided continuous monitoring and annual evaluation analysis
- Formative evaluation showed:
  - HIP participation, retention rates, and program engagement exceeded goals
  - Micro-internships and Tutor.com usage fell short but showed promise
  - Improved documentation practices
  - Better onboarding and cross-campus coordination