



UX DISCOVERY

Competitive Analysis

A competitive heuristic analysis is used to analyze and evaluate the web properties of key competitors, highlighting strengths to emulate or improve upon, and weaknesses to avoid repeating.

1= Strongly disagree
2= Disagree
3= Neither agree nor disagree
4= Agree
5= Strongly agree

Denver
scholarship

Advising
Corps

Tech
Prep

Design for User Expectations

Clear menu items with no misleading labels

3

5

4

Consistency and Standards

Use common naming conventions

3

4

5

Place items in standard locations like search boxes at the top right of the screen

3

4

5

Create a system that behaves in a predictable way

4

5

5

Prevent Errors

Disable irrelevant options

3

4

5

Promote a pleasurable and positive user experience

Home page design

3

5

5

Event page design

3

4

4

About page design

2

4

3

Contact page design

2

4

5

Total

26

39

41

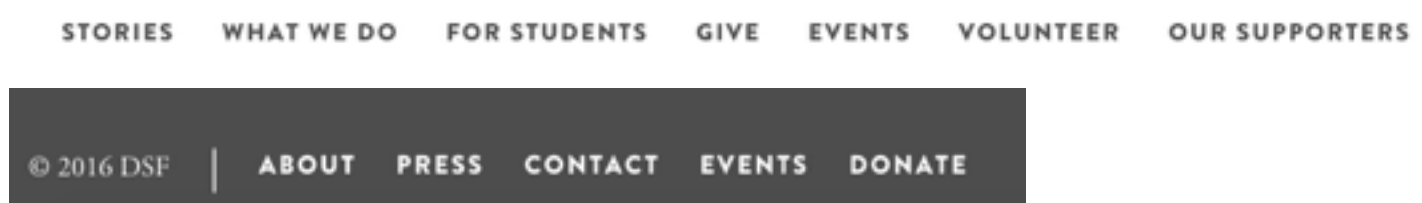
DENVER SCHOLARSHIP



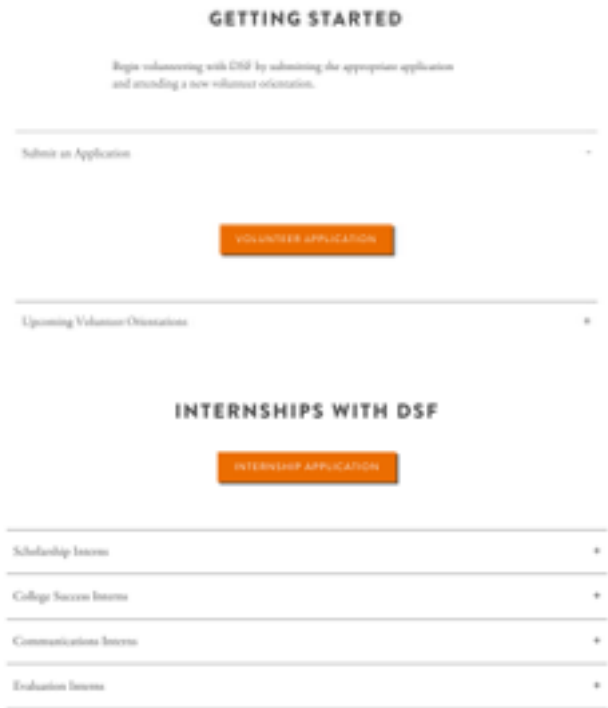
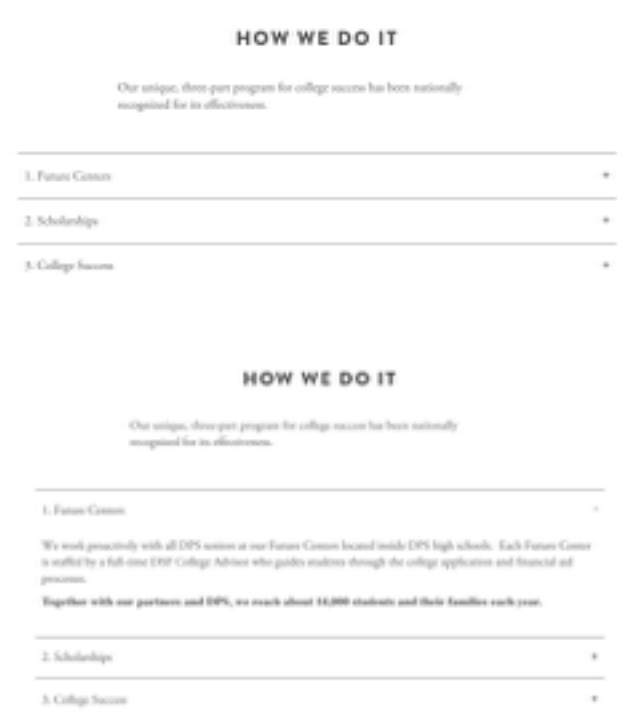
Homepage

- The homepage of <http://www.denverscholarship.org/> is simple and clean, but it lacks of essential introduction of who DSF is. Visitors may feel lost when they first visit this page. The first CTA is about donation without a clear content, it's hard to persuade. Visitors won't make any actions before they get a clear idea about what's this web for. The testimony has the same problem. When we design the homepage for AA, we should have a brief para to introduce who AA is first, so that visitors can have a clear impression and will stay longer on our web and engage with us
- The hero pictures are confusing and distracting. Showing visitors recent events and interesting content and attracting their interest is a good intent, but the pictures are not well-designed. There are too many contents going on in each page where visitors can concentrate on. Also the style is inconsistent with the other parts of the web, which looks more like irrelevant ads. Visitors may recognize them as useless information and ignore them due to the banner blindness. The pictures moves too fast and visitors might not follow. When we try to use pictures or ads to attract visitors' attentions, we need to design the ads carefully, so visitors can recognize them as valuable information when they scan. Also, we should control the speed of the motion, or when visitors hover one they should stop. The motion can also stop after 2-3 rounds to reduce fatigue. Showing how many ads totally to visitors can make their status more visible and visitors can also choose which ad to look at freely
- The three CTAs at the bottom of the page is easy to navigate. We should also consider how to show the main functions of AA's web to visitors clearly, so that they can find what they need as soon as possible and won't quit because can't find relevant information

Navigation



- The navigation bar is a little confusing. The word choice is ambiguous, such as when visitors see button named "GIVE", they may relate this button to donation. But actually the donation button is in the footer bar, which is very invisible. Also there is no submenu of each button. Visitors must go to each page to find specific information by themselves. Each page has tons of information which is hard to digest in a short time. When visitors are on a specific page, it's both hard for them to recognize where are they and come back to the previous one. So when we design the navigation bar for AA, we should put the most important buttons on the main bar instead of footer bar, though we may put them in submenu. Also there should be submenu of some button, so that visitors can find some specific information more easily. We should indicate visitors their status at any time, too



Subpages

- The font and format of subpages are neat and easy to read, and the CTA button is very attractive. But there are always too much information on each page. It's even impossible for visitors to scan all the information in a short time although the structure of each page is reasonable. Specific info is hidden and only show when visitors click the plus button. This is a good strategy to ease the pressure, but the whole system is inconsistent. Some important info and CTAs are hidden in the folder which is easily ignored or skipped by anxious visitors. But there are also some CTA buttons follow the subtitle directly which gives visitors a wrong signal that all the important CTA buttons is unfolded. So when we design the website for AA, we should make sure the structure of the whole site is consistent and we should give visitors freedom to jump into what they want directly, so it can be more predictable for visitors to navigate. We can use this strategy to hide unimportant info so that we won't scare visitors away because too much info. But at the same time we need to make sure no important info and CTAs are hidden. So visitors can find important info first, and if they are interested in finding more relevant info, they can unfold other info to explore



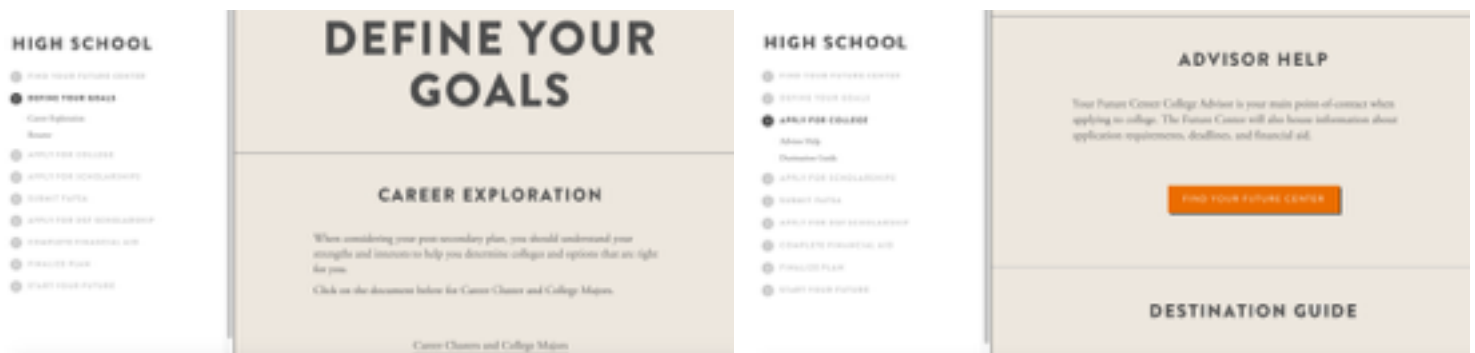
“Donate” Page

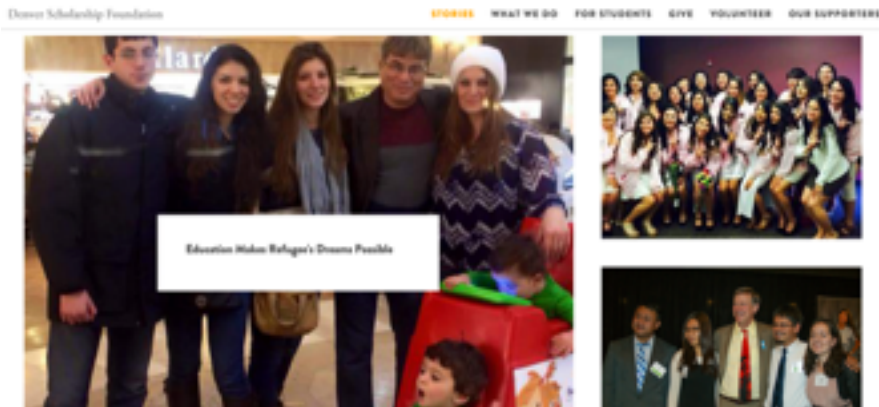
- This page is neat and well-structured, but it uses a different color scheme with other pages. There is no clue why green is the main color of this page. When we design the AA's web page, we should make colors coding more meaningful. Maybe pages for different audiences can have different color scheme, such as parents, students, and community can have different main color to lead visitors to right content that they are searching for. Maybe there can also be a processing bar to how how much left



“For Student” Page

- This page help visitors to find relevant information more easily. Visitors can choose their identities first and then choose which stage are they in. They will be directed to the most relevant info. This a efficient way to group info and facilitate visitors to find what they need. When we organize the info for AA, we can also consider some innovative way to help visitors with various intents and status to find info more easily
- There are two buttons in the bottom of the page navigating visitors to content provided by partners. The intent to navigate visitors to partners' resources which they may need is good, but put the entrance to resources here makes no sense. When we want to design AA's web as a hub of partners' content and service, we should consider how to relate those info to our content in a reasonable way instead of throwing all the info into visitors' faces directly and ask them to find what they need from the ground
- The content page shows after visitors finishing navigating is very helpful. Visitors can know their status from the side bar on the left column and move to previous and next steps easily. The content is tightly related to some other resources and CTA buttons. Visitors don't need to leave the page to find resources or finish actions. When we try to organize AA's resources and partners' resources, we can consider place information in this way too. We can show visitors different partners' service when they are in different stages. Maybe when visitors just come, we recommend agents who provide college consulting service to them. When they are in the mid, we can provide link to partners who provide SAT preparation service. So visitors don't need to consume all the information at the same time. Instead, we give them the information only when they need it. So we can make them more relaxed and satisfied





“Stories” Page

- This page shows lots of pictures at the same time, but isn't busy because they hide all the text. Only when visitors hover their mouse on the pictures, they can see a brief description of the picture. They don't need to click into the pictures to learn what's it about, which saves them time and effort. If they find something interesting, then they can click into the picture to read more detailed info. When we design AA's pages, we can use pictures wall to provide context and hide the text. We should text only when visitors show interests into it. We also should avoid forcing visitors to click into certain page to get basic info

ALL STUDENTS VOLUNTEERS DONORS ALUMNI

“Event” Page

- The page can help visitors to filter what they want easily by color coding. But this page is not attractive because it lacks of images and intro about each events. Also some important info is not highlighted. When we design AA's event page, we should also have filter to help visitors to find relevant events. But we should provide more content about each events on this page before visitors click into or just leave



SUMMARY / OTHER OBSERVATIONS

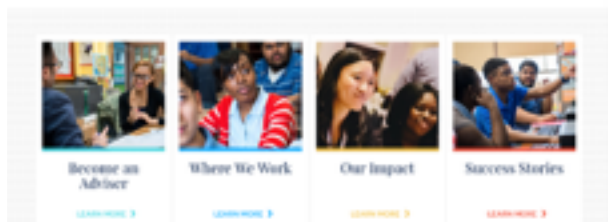
- The homepage is neat but lack of brief intro of the whole site. The hero pictures are misleading and displayed badly. We should have a brief para on who AA is and make more visually relevant ads
- The navigation bar has no submenu which will be very hard for visitors to find specific information
- The page are too dense and page structure is inconsistent. When we design AA's content page, we should show some unimportant info only when it's called and be consistent of color and structure
- The student page organizes info in a very clear way and facilitate visitors find what they need easily. We should also assist visitors to find what they need and provide only relevant info in right time
- As a hub, we should recommend partners' service only when they are needed by our visitors
- The story pages hide text and shows only brief description when visitors hover mouse on them, which make the page clear and easy to navigate. We should also use images to attract visitors to read text

ADVISINGCORPS



College Advising Corps works to increase the number of low-income, first generation college, and underrepresented high school students who enter and complete higher education.

To deliver on this mission, we place well-trained, recent college graduates from 24 partner programs within some college advisors in our nation's high schools.

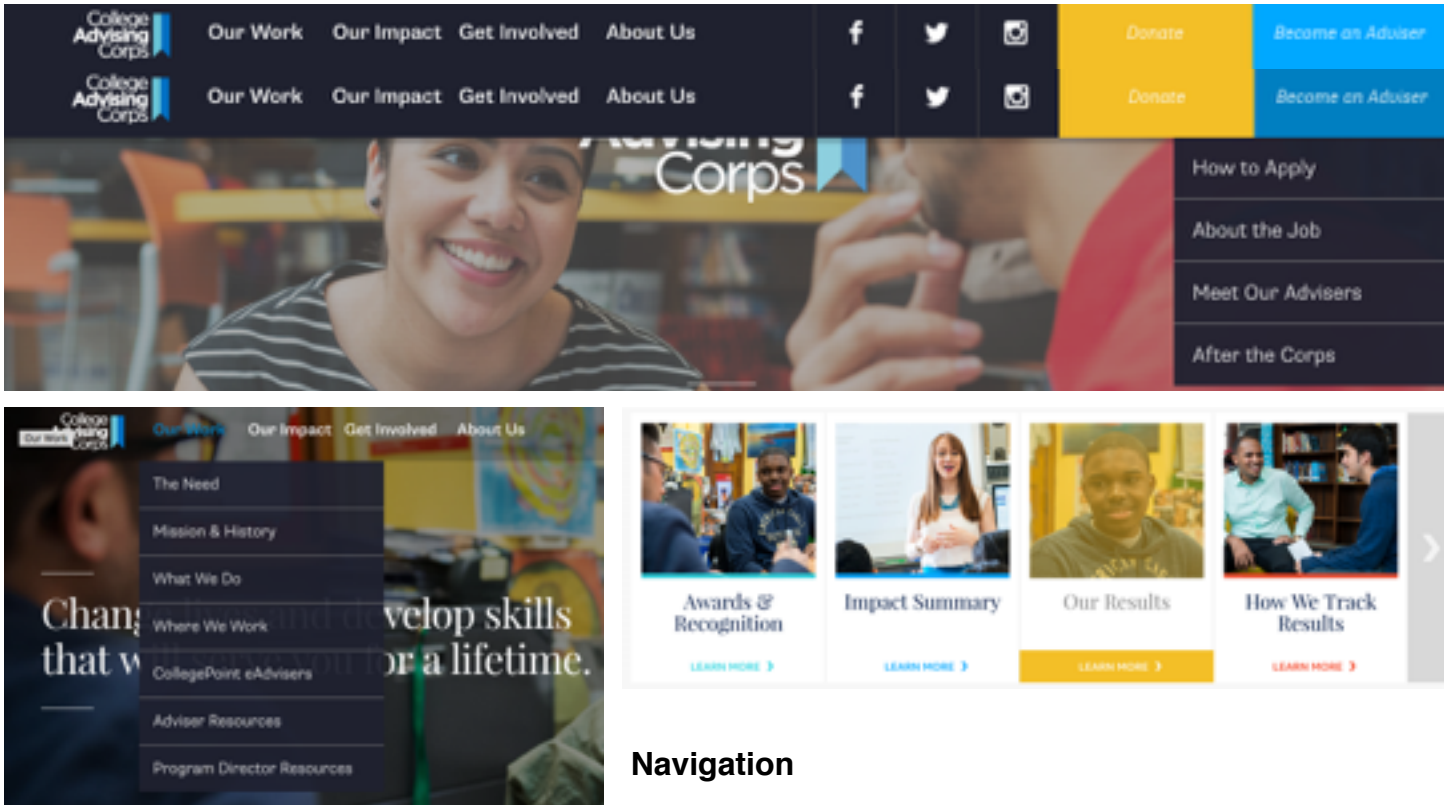


Homepage

- The homepage of <http://advisingcorps.org> is beautiful and clean, and it provides clear context about what AdvisingCorps is. Short intro para talks about who AdvisingCorps is and its main activities. Then one featured success story and a piece testimony makes the whole website more authoritative and accessible. If visitors are interested in the success story, they can read more details without leaving this page. Following the detailed article, there is a CTA inciting sharing directly. One the side bar there is a concise description of the whole article which can fulfill the need of some visitors who just want to scan instead of read. All the content builds a clear background about AdvisingCorps for visitors. This makes they search more predictive and productive. We should also provide these content on AA's homepage with a different order or format
- On the bottom of each page, there are pictures of advisers. People like smiling faces, so these pictures connect with visitors emotionally. People are intended to donate or become an adviser when they emotionally response to the website. We should also build these kinds of emotional connection between AA and it's visitors



- Although following the testimony, there are four entrances for more content, there are no clear entrance for visitors who want to preform certain actions on this site such as donating, becoming an adviser or collaborating. So visitors are easy to lose in the content rather than find what they need directly. When we design AA's homepage, we can provide entrances for visitors with different intends on the homepage, so they can find what they need more easily

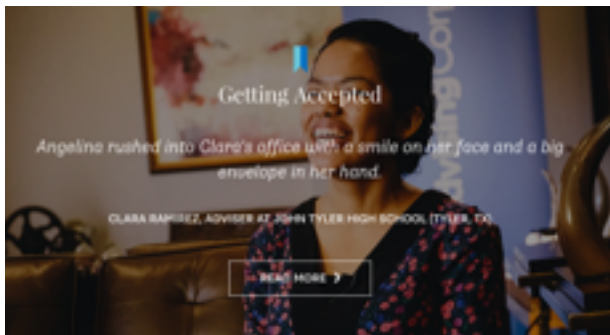


Navigation

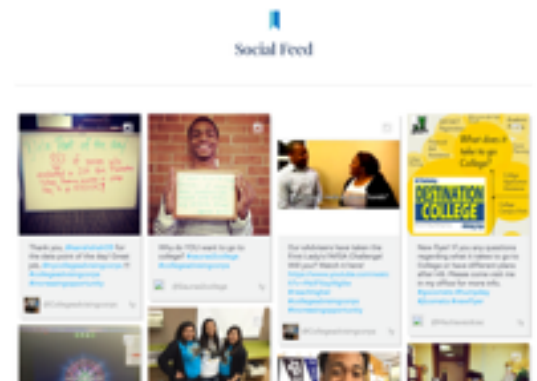
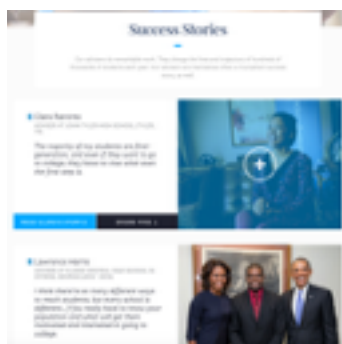
- This navigation bar design is very clear and well-structured. There are only four main catalogues and two CTAs on it. The terms used here are unambiguous, so visitors can know which one to choose. They can find specific informations form the submenu which can save their time and effort. Also the menu on each page is in the same order with the submenu. They can navigate to any page at any time using the navigation bar easily. When we design AA's navigation bar, we should also reduce the number of buttons and group different info efficiently, so visitors can find what they need early without confusion. Also we should put CTA in a obvious position and use conspicuous colors



- Visitors can find 'Become a Donor' and 'Become a Partner Program' Pages easily from the top navigation bar, and after a brief description, there is a CTA asking for action. This design is very neat and clear. The site only shows essential information which visitors need to know, which makes it easier for visitors to make decision. And there is also direct link to related info and contact info, so visitors don't need to navigate to other pages to find these info. When we design AA's CTA pages, we also need to keep the descriptions and contents short and easy to understand. Providing additional info and contact info are also help for visitors to make decisions



- Detailed info is hidden and shows up only when visitors call for them. This can support visitors' behavior as scanning instead of reading



- This site provides lots of interesting content including success stories and blogs. Each piece of content have a description image and brief intro which can provide basic info about the blog, so visitors can know what's it about before click into it. If visitors are interest in some specific content, they can find more detail info. There is also a attractive share button to incite visitors to share the content. When we design AA's page for blogs or other contents, we should make the page easy to scan and share

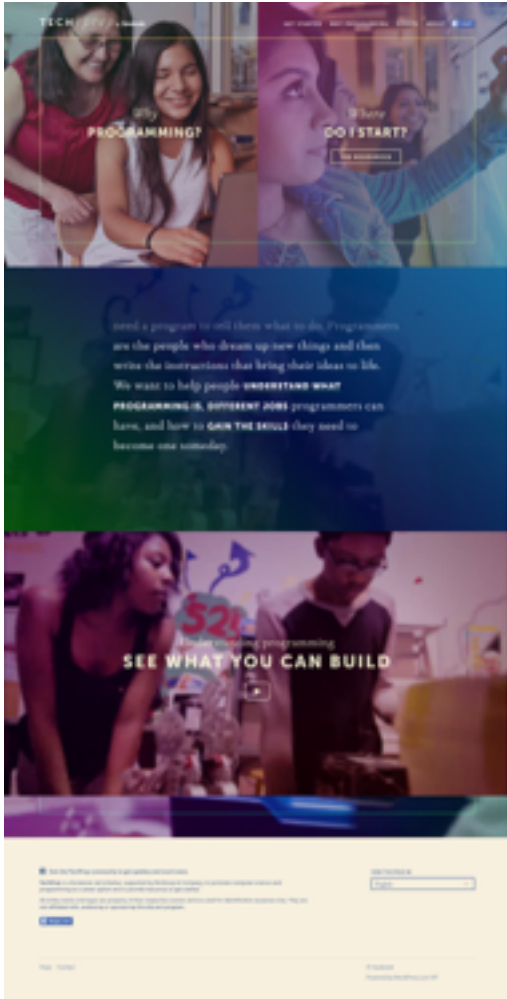


- Instead of only using numbers, this site uses a lot of infographic to convey info. This makes the impact and influence more obvious and persuasive. When we try to convey AA's vision and achievement, we can also consider use more graphic instead of purely text

SUMMARY / OTHER OBSERVATIONS

- This site is clean and well-structured. The homepage provides clear context about the site and the structure of the site is very easy to navigate, so visitors can find relevant info easily from both the navigation bar and link on each page. Info is concise and clear, CTAs are easy to find
- This site hides lots of details info which show only when called by visitors. There are lots of content inciting visitors to share. Using graphics to convey insights is also persuasive

TECHPREP



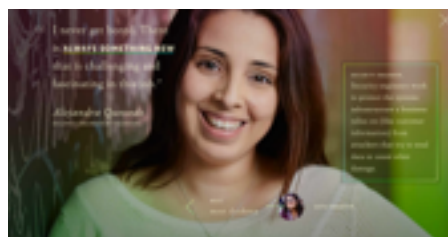
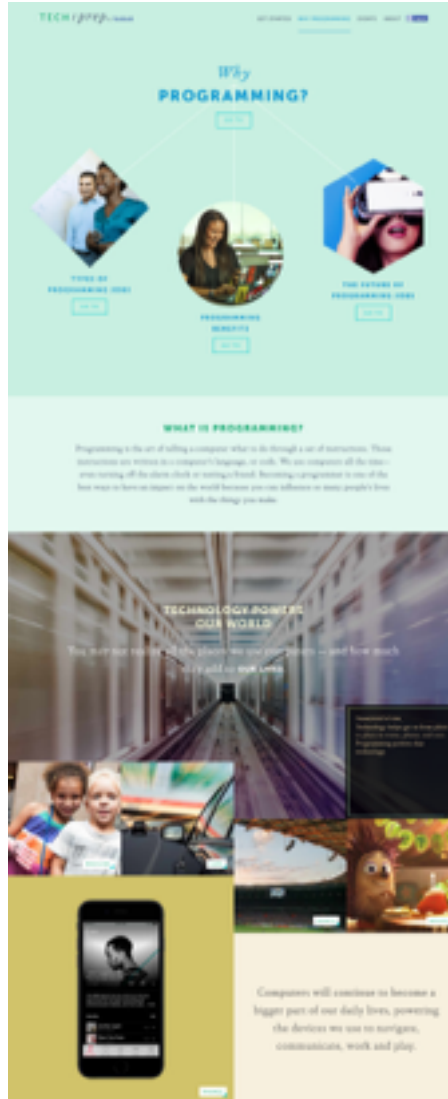
Homepage

- The homepage of <https://techprep.fb.com/> is visual and clear. There are only few things here. Two entrances to the most important content. One brief para of intro and a video. When we design AA's homepage, we should also make it visually attractive and clear to navigate. Maybe we can highlight some entrances to contents such as scholarship



Navigation

- The navigation is very user-centered. There are only four nav which visitors mostly concern. Also, the language is very innate and easy to understand, but it's a little confusing because the word choice is different in the homepage for the same functions. The current status is very clear (blue), and when visitors hover the cursor, there will be a underline. We can also design a user focused nav like this



Content Page

- This page is well-organized. Visitors can see a overview at the beginning of the page and be sent to that section by a button. The page uses lots of good images, icons and infographic to convey info, which is easy to understand and scan. When we design AA's page, we should also have overview of long pages and use more visual elements





Content Page

- This page encourages visitors to self identify and filter info by themselves. The choices are very easy to select without thinking, so visitors intent to finish them. There are always progress bars to entice visitors to finish their missions. Also the back button is necessary to change previous choices, which makes control more freely. So no matter when we want to help users to filter resources or collect info or lead them to finish their bold vision challenge/statements, we should also make the progress transparent and easy to walk through. We should also encourage self-identity so they can have more emotional connections with us, because they will think that the website is made for them. Also, the two main content pages directly connects, so visitors can know their relationship



- After finishing the self-identity process, visitors can get customized info for their situations. Then they can be directed to some related website which can be useful for them. When we want to relate our partners' service with our content or website, we can consider to use a self-identify filter to have visitors to find the service which can be helpful
- Visitors can adjust their filter even after the self-identify process. This makes the filter more efficient and user-friendly. Also this can encourage visitors to explore more info on this page. When we design our page, we also need to make all the selection more transparent and easy to control. Also, the icons here is attractive and easy to understand

SUMMARY / OTHER OBSERVATIONS

- This site uses user-focused navigation and it organizes and labels content encouraging self-identify. As a site to communicate with visitors, AA should customize information for different needs
- The site is very visually attractive, but not chaotic. It uses icons and infographic to make the content more clearly and attractive, and the photos they use as background are very emotional. We can also try to use more visual elements to convey our service and impact

