

African American Males in College Report

Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning

May 2009

African American Males in College

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Attachments

IHL Enrollment by Gender and Ethnicity

IHL Retention and Graduation Rates for Students by Gender and Ethnicity

ACT Composite Score for Entering Freshman by Gender and Ethnicity

African American Males in College Report

Introduction

African American males at Mississippi public institutions of higher learning lag behind females in degree completion rates. As noted in the report “African American Males in College in the State of Mississippi,” one of the greatest challenges facing college administrators today is the recruitment and retention of African American male students. Nationally, there is a 2 to 1 ratio of African American females to males enrolled in higher education. Many factors affect the college enrollment, retention and graduation rates of African American males in Mississippi. For the academic year 2006-2007, the high school graduation rate for African American males was 59.7% compared to 76.9% for African American females. (Mississippi Department of Education) African American males in Mississippi’s institutions of higher learning parallel their peers nationally. In 2008, there were 8,452 African American males enrolled in colleges and universities in the state of Mississippi compared to 17,597 females. (Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning) During the 2007-2008 academic year, community/junior colleges reported an enrollment of 10,383 African American males; compared to 23,939 African American females. (Mississippi State Board for Community and Junior Colleges)

In late 2008, the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning established a task force to examine ways to increase African American male enrollment, retention, and graduation rates at Mississippi’s eight public universities. The task force was divided into six sub-committees to identify specific areas and provide feedback on ways to improve said area. Sub-committees formed were: Research, K-12, Recruitment and Retention,

Best Practices, Community Affairs, and Community/Junior Colleges. The subcommittees held conference calls, email forums and in-person meetings to converse findings. Each subcommittee produced results and recommendations that were submitted for consideration by the full Task Force in early 2009. The Task Force's goal "To increase the enrollment, retention, and graduation rates of African American males at Mississippi's institutions of higher learning," lead to twenty-three recommendations and strategies.

Recommendations

1. To craft a model for data collection, database development and analysis that will inform the content of recommendations on policies and program directions for the African American Males Task Force.
2. To use data and analyses to determine what programs work (i.e., best practices) and those that do not work.
3. Review steps, programs and procedures that lead to successful collegiate-level matriculation of African American males.
4. Identify essential social resources that measures success (i.e., financial and human). Determine social determinants that impede successful collegiate-level matriculation.
5. Adopt a School Program: Each institution of higher learning will adopt a school that it may support academically, and sponsor special programs. Each institution of higher learning will develop a special and unique affiliation with the secondary school it adopts. For example, Mississippi State University's Veterinary Medicine School would be able to adopt high school students and encourage them to consider veterinary medicine as a profession.
6. Summer Programs for Young Scholars: Institutions of Higher Learning can sponsor summer camps for secondary school students.
7. Life After High School Tours: High school graduates return to their schools to discuss their experience after graduation.

8. Identity Programs: Sponsor educational and training programs aimed at defining what it means to be an African American.
9. Speakers Bureau: Provide motivational speakers to inspire students at middle and junior high schools.
10. Provide a peer mentoring training that will assist first year African American male students.
11. Provide leadership activities for African American male students focused on civic engagement and leadership development.
12. Provide African American male students cultural enrichment and co-curricular activities that assist in developing their intellectual and analytical qualities.
13. Expand African American male student's involvement in student organizations and campus activities.
14. Provide African American male students exposure to other cultures and communities.
15. Provide academic advising and planning to assist in monitoring African American students in their educational plan for degree attainment.
16. Provide a peer mentoring training that will assist first year African American male students.
17. Provide leadership activities for African American male students focused on civic engagement and leadership development.
18. Assist community groups with exposing African American males to college campus life.
19. Provide ongoing seminars to the students and their families through churches and other community opportunities.
20. Financial support from Greek organizations to assist with the implementation of the African American Males Initiative.
21. Utilize existing community programs to inform parents and students the importance of a college education.
22. Mississippi Institutions for Higher Learning, Mississippi State Board for Community and Junior Colleges, and the Mississippi Department of Education will consider the implementation of a statewide marketing campaign to inform and educate African American males, other underrepresented groups and their

parents on the importance of a college education, what it takes to attend college, and how to finance a college education.

23. Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning, and the Mississippi Association of Community and Junior Colleges will consider support and incentives to institutions to establish and/or enhance programs that promote the enrollment, retention, and graduation of African American males.

African American Males in College Sub-committees

Research Sub-committee

Dr. Marvin Haire, Chair

Dr. Larry Day
Ms. Vrita Delaine
Ms. Pearl Pennington

Sub-committee Members:

CHAIR: Dr. Marvin Haire, Mississippi Valley State University

Dr. Larry Day, Mississippi State Board for Community and Junior Colleges

Ms. Vrita Delaine, Assistant to Vice President for Student Affairs, University of Southern Mississippi

Mr. Andre Heath, Assistant to Dean for Strategic Initiatives, University of Southern Mississippi

Ms. Pearl Pennington, Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning

Recommendations and Strategies

Research Subcommittee: Provide research data and trends for the task force.

1. To craft a model for data collection, database development and analysis that will form the content of recommendations on policies and program directions for the African American Males Task Force.
2. To use data and analyses to determine what programs work (i.e., best practices) and those that do not work.
3. Review steps, programs and procedures that lead to successful collegiate-level matriculation of African American males.
4. Identify essential social resources that measures success (i.e., financial and human).

5. Determine social determinants that impede successful collegiate-level matriculation.

K-12 Sub-committee

Dr. Stephen Middleton, Chair

Dr. Marvin Hair
Mr. DeAndre House

Sub-committee Members:

CHAIR: Dr. Stephen Middleton, Mississippi State University

Dr. Marvin Haire, Mississippi Valley State University

Mr. DeAndre House, Delta State University

Mr. Marcus Thompson, Mississippi Department of Education

Recommendations and Strategies

K-12 Sub-committee: Identify critical issues that contribute to and impact the number of African American male students enrolling and graduating from Mississippi's public universities.

1. Adopt a School Program: Each institution of higher learning will adopt a school that it may support academically, and sponsor special programs. Each institution of higher learning will develop a special and unique affiliation with the secondary school it adopts. For example, Mississippi State University's Veterinary Medicine School would be able to adopt high school students and encourage them to consider veterinary medicine as a profession.
2. Summer Programs for Young Scholars: Institutions of Higher Learning can sponsor summer camps for secondary school students.
3. Life after High School Tours: High school graduates return to their schools to discuss their experience after graduation.
4. Identity Programs: Sponsor educational and training programs aimed at defining what it means to be an African American.
5. Speakers Bureau: Provide motivational speakers to inspire students at middle and junior high schools.

Recruitment and Retention Sub-committee

Dr. Marcus Chanay, Chair

Mr. Gary Crosby
Ms. Iika McCarter
Mr. Tommy Morris
Mr. Edwin Quinn
Ms. Linda Rush
Ms. Carmaleta Shaw
Ms. Sonya Webster

Sub-committee Members:

CHAIR: Dr. Marcus Chanay, Associate Vice President for Division of Student Life, Jackson State University

Mr. Gary Crosby, Assistant Director of Residential Programming, Jackson State University

Ms Iika McCarter, Assistant Director of Admission, Mississippi University for Women

Mr. Tommy Morris, Director of Center for Student Leadership and Involvement, Jackson State University

Mr. Edwin Quinn, Dean of Student Development, Jackson State University

Ms. Linda Rush, Director of Undergraduate Marketing and Recruitment, Jackson State University

Ms. Carmelita Shaw, Delta State University

Sonya Webster, Coordinator of Retention, Jackson State University

Recommendations and Strategies

Recruitment and Retention Sub-committee: Review recruitment and marketing strategies directed at attracting African American males into the Mississippi higher education system.

1. Provide a peer mentoring training that will assist first year African American male students.

2. Provide leadership activities for African American male students focused on civic engagement and leadership development.
3. Provide African American male students cultural enrichment and co-curricular activities that assist in developing their intellectual and analytical qualities.
4. Expand African American male student's involvement in student organizations and campus activities.
5. Provide African American male students exposure to other cultures and communities.
6. Provide academic advising and planning to assist in monitoring African American students in their educational plan for degree attainment.
7. Provide a peer mentoring training that will assist first year African American male students.
8. Provide leadership activities for African American male students focused on civic engagement and leadership development.
9. Provide African American male students cultural enrichment and co-curricular activities that assist in developing their intellectual and analytical qualities.
10. Expand African American male student's involvement in student organizations and campus activities.
11. Provide African American male students exposure to other cultures and communities.
12. Provide academic advising and planning to assist in monitoring African American students in their educational plan for degree attainment.
13. Distribute college information for summer programs participants.
14. Provide college information for civic clubs and organizations.

Best Practices Sub-committee

Mr. Rickey Coleman, Chair
Dr. Valerie Thompson

Sub-committee Members:

CHAIR: Mr. Rickey Coleman, Alcorn State University

Dr. Valerie Thompson, Alcorn State University

Recommendations and Strategies

Best Practices Sub-committee: To identify successful programs in recruiting, retaining, and graduating African American males in higher education.

- I. Student African American Brotherhood (SAAB) increases the number of African American and Latino men graduating from college by creating a positive peer community based on a spirit of caring. SAAB operates through student run chapters on college and high school campuses throughout the nation. SAAB members excel academically, socially, culturally, spiritually and in service to the community.
 - a. Mission: The Student African American Brotherhood Organization is established specifically to assist participants to excel academically, socially, culturally, professionally, and in the community. SAAB is primarily comprised of male students who strive for academic excellence and make a commitment to plan and implement programs that benefit their community at large. Participants are encouraged to embrace leadership by being positive examples for each other through a strong commitment to academic achievement, brotherhood, and community service. Weekly study sessions, weekly developmental seminars for students of all ages, business meetings, and social and religious activities are provided. SAAB works with various non-profit service agencies i.e., Habitat for Humanity, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Boys Club, etc.
 - b. SAAB members of a Toledo, Ohio high school and collegiate operate according to the following: “We the brothers of the Student African American Brotherhood embrace the principles of accountability, pro-active leadership, self-discipline, and intellectual development; we are our brother's keeper!” (Courtesy of the Sojourner’s Truth)
 - c. SAAB offers regional conferences throughout the United States to incorporate the message of empowerment and success to thousands of young men each year. The purpose is to meet other like minded young men, professionals, community activists and scholars striving to make a difference in the lives of men of color as well as the community at large.

- d. Successes: Graduates of SAAB are competitive in the professional world of work and serve as role models for inner-city neighborhoods throughout the country. Over the past decade, SAAB has helped to ensure the continued academic success of African American males by helping 80% of SAAB participants persist from their freshman to sophomore year and helping 86% of SAAB participants graduate. This success greatly exceeds the 42% national retention rate of retention for African American Males that persist from their freshman to sophomore year and the 55% average national five-year graduation rate for Black males
- e. Steps To Establish A SAAB Chapter
 1. Contact an official S.A.A.B representative to express interest in starting a chapter on your campus and seek official authorization from the SAAB national headquarters to begin the start-up process. A contract will be executed between the SAAB National Headquarters and the institution.
 2. Constitute a student steering committee of at least 15 African American males at your school along with at least one or more faculty and/or staff member who will serve as advisor to the group once formally established. Steering committees are required to follow a three (3) month planning module in an effort to allow adequate time to develop the leadership team and strategic plan for the chapter. The national office will be extremely supportive providing guidance during this process.
 3. Arrange the two required SAAB campus visits for a member of the national headquarters staff to conduct the orientation and strategic planning sessions. (Fees required-see step #6)
 4. Submit the proper paperwork to establish a recognized student organization on your campus. This process varies from campus to campus; therefore, it is important to adhere to instructions/procedures outlined by your institution.
 5. (OPTIONAL) Arrange a recognition ceremony once your chapter has been recognized by your campus. It is suggested that at least one member of the SAAB national office along key campus constituents (i.e., President or Chancellor, other administrators, faculty, staff, appropriate community leaders and other student leaders) be invited to the ceremony in order to formally introduce the organization to the campus community.
 6. Cost: The total start-up cost for collegiate chapters is \$4600 plus expenses, which covers two site visits (\$1800/visit plus expenses) from a SAAB representative to conduct an orientation and strategic planning sessions along with the first year's annual chapter membership dues (\$1000) payable up front. All chapters are responsible for all financial-related responsibilities. High School chapters will be assessed the same consultation fees (\$1800/visit) along with the \$500 chapter membership dues up front for a total start-up cost of \$4100.

7. Strongly recommended (optional): Consider bringing in a national headquarters representative for follow-up training year 2 and year 3 of the chapter's existence in an effort to ensure chapter effectiveness and focus. For more information, please consult with a national headquarters representative.

II. Mentoring Programs for Underrepresented Students:

a. California State University, Bakersfield

Description: The Mentor Program consists of three components--a mentor relationship, a mentor class, and a mentor club. Ten faculty from various disciplines recruit 10 to 20 mentees each from lists of under-represented students, from their classroom contacts, and from referrals by campus contacts, with an emphasis on sophomore transfers. Mentors are selected to represent a variety of disciplines, and they receive a one-course reduction as compensation. They attend training sessions during the year to help deal with such concerns as recruitment and relationship development. Faculty is encouraged to work on developing a mentoring relationship in the fall quarter and to promote group interaction in the winter and spring quarters. The mentor class is a one unit course offered each quarter. Its themes are: "Succeeding in College," "Succeeding in Careers," and "Succeeding in Life." Finally, mentees become part of a campus mentor club which sponsors extracurricular activities such as musicals, plays, discussion groups, out-of-town field trips, and group cultural events that provide a time for casual interaction between mentors and students. The primary objective of the program is to provide an opportunity for students to make meaningful contacts with faculty and others who can enhance their educational experiences.

- b. Achievements and Quirks: (1) There has been positive feedback from those who participate and many student participants now seek out our program. Recruitment success varies considerably by personality of faculty mentors and subject area. The program maintains contacts with other existing programs, such as the Academic Achievement Office and minority scholarship programs, to enlarge the recruitment pool. (2) Staff has clarified the nature of the program - a network, a class, and a club - to develop a clearer campus identity. A part of the identity is to be a non-remedial organization that provides meaningful information, contacts, and support for achieving a quality education. (3) Mentor students were well recognized with achievement awards in 1996 such as Outstanding Student for the School of Arts and Sciences, Outstanding Paper for Social Sciences, Outstanding Graduate Level Paper, and First Prize for the CSUB Research Competition. Several students published professional articles with their mentor faculty and several were awarded fellowships for Ph.D. programs. Our program provides assistance toward high achievement and a good connection for job references when students graduate at the BA level.

- c. Students and faculty who complete the program are awarded a certificate of completion. In addition, each year the school based coordinators nominate a faculty member from their school for recognition of their mentoring efforts, and one outstanding faculty mentor from among this group is honored with the University's Outstanding Faculty Mentor Award at the annual Educational Equity Banquet.

B. Miami University, Ohio

- a. Description: The Program is designed to assist minority students in making their academic and social transition from high school to college. It promotes positive, caring, relationships between minority students, the faculty and staff, and Miami University. Mentors assist students' total growth by giving them support and direction. The mentors recognize that access to the University's academic community helps build the students' self-esteem and promotes their success. Currently we have 15 Faculty and Staff mentors and 60 peer mentors and 140 protégés. A mentoring conference is held each spring; and Miami University created a mentoring planning committee, published a mentoring newsletter and formed a parent booster association.
- b. The First-Year Student Mentor Program matches first-year students with upper-class students and faculty or staff members. The Pre-S.T.A.R.S. Mentor Program matches 2nd semester first-year students with S.T.A.R.S. students and S.T.A.R.S. faculty mentors. Co-sponsored by the Graduate School, the Graduate Student Mentor Program matches graduate students with faculty or staff members. The Alumni Mentor Program matches seniors and graduate students with Miami alumni within their chosen career fields.
- c. Peer mentors come from the student population. From sophomores to seniors and graduate students volunteer to help first-year students become adjusted to life at Miami University. Mentors come from faculty and staff. These are people who have volunteered to help minority students develop their full potential. "Protégé" means someone whose career is assisted by a prominent person. It also means a minority student who accepts the responsibility of building a relationship with a Miami student and faculty or staff member. Protégés will seek information and develop strategies which will improve their academic and personal growth.
- d. Achievements and Quirks: (1) The program provides positive role models for first year students. (2) It creates a community of mentors who sincerely care about the total development of minority students at Miami. (3) It helps protégés and mentors establish a personal relationship that will enhance students' academic and social development. (4) It assists protégés in establishing a community that contributes culturally to the University.

C. Kennesaw State University, Georgia

a. The mission of the Office of Minority Student Retention Services (OMSRS) is to provide essential resources, services, and programming to retain historically underrepresented minority students at Kennesaw State University. This office facilitates academic success for minority students by offering the following services and resources:

- MAP/MRO - Kennesaw State University's office of Minority Student Retention Services (MSRS) is a member of the mandated Minority Advisement Program / Minority Recruitment Officers (MAP/MRO), coordinated by the Board of Regents for the University System of Georgia. MAP/MRO exists for the sake of tracking, monitoring, and facilitating academic success and retention strategies for minority students enrolled in each of Georgia's 34 public colleges and universities. All full-time staff members of MSRS serve as coordinators and representatives for the MAP program here at Kennesaw State University through the attendance to two annual state conferences, and submission of annual statistical data reports on the specific demographics and achievements of KSU minority student population.
- Cultural Awareness & Resource Center - The Cultural Awareness & Resource Center (CARC) offers an array of services and resources that cater to the needs of African American, Hispanic American, Asian American, and Native American students. The Center fosters an environment where all KSU students, faculty, and staff, regardless of differences, can come together to utilize supplemental resources and services for academic success. Tangible resources include collections of over 300 books, over 100 DVDs, VHS and audio tapes, magazines and other minority specific information. These resources can be audio and visual resources that can be checked out at any time for class assignments, instruction or personal use. The CARC services include a full service ITC computer lab, appointment and walk-in tutorial services in math and writing support at no charge to faculty, staff and registered KSU students.
- KSU African American male Initiative (KSUAAMI) The KSU African American male Initiative exists in partnership with faculty, staff and students to focus on increasing enrollment, retention, and graduation rates of Black men at KSU through mentoring, leadership development, and the celebration of academic and leadership achievements..
- The Distinguished Black Gentlemen is the official student organization under this initiative, whose purpose is to elevate the minds and academic standards of African American men on campus, and those who are specifically invested in their interests. Part of this initiative also includes the utilization of current

resources to aid in the retention of African American males on campus.

- Sources of Scholarship (S.O.S.) - The S.O.S. program, formerly Linkages, is a service that informs minority students about scholarships, internships, grants, and other resources to supplement the increasing cost of education. Most of the information on scholarships and internships is distributed electronically.
- KSU P.E.O.P.L.E Mentoring Program - the KSU P.E.O.P.L.E. (Professionals Empowering Our Potential Leaders for Excellence) program is a mentoring program designed with the intention of pairing a KSU student with a faculty and staff with like interests, who are willing to offer their time to mentor a student for professional and academic success.
- Odyssey Peer Mentoring Program - Odyssey, a peer-mentoring program offered through the Student Development Center, is a program that matches freshman and transfer students with upper-division students for the purpose of mentoring and peer advising, and assisting new students in making a smooth transition to college.
- Making the Grade Workshop Series - “Making the Grade” is a series of workshops on topics relevant to your “survival” or retention at KSU. The purpose of these workshops is to provide a range of subject matters to help the student excel in various aspects of their lives at and beyond KSU. Examples of “Grade” workshops include the following: Relationship 101: A Dialog Among the Sexes, Men of Color: The “Mentality” of the Successful Minority Male, Financial Aid Workshop, MLK Jr. Celebration, and Faculty, Staff, and Student Reception.
- *NEW* Minority Student Welcome Seminar - The purpose of this orientation seminar is to provide information and insights on the resources that exist at KSU which specifically aid in the retention and successful completion of an academic career for minority students at KSU. During the OMSRS Orientation Program, participants will receive information on all of the mentoring and tutoring services and leadership opportunities provided by our office. This will also be an opportunity for students to meet some current KSU students, staff, and faculty from various departments who can help them with their transition to KSU.

b. Overall Goals for Minority Student Retention Services: The following general goals are specific to the character and mission of the Office of Minority Student Retention Services:

- To encourage and increase student enrollment, academic success and matriculation through KSU by providing individualized

services such as informal advising, referrals, mentoring, tutoring, and advocacy.

- To encourage and increase student enrollment, academic success and matriculation through KSU by providing co-curricular opportunities to students, which complement the KSU academic experience. Such opportunities include the Annual KSU Black History Celebration, MAP/MRO leadership conferences, academic success workshops, and hosting open-forum discussions on matters of social relevance.
- To assist students with identifying financial resources, including scholarships and employment, for the sake of covering academic related expenses.
- To develop and implement collaborative partnerships, on and off campus, that fosters necessary programs, activities and services for the OMSRS student constituents.
- To maintain contacts with various academic department advisors for the sake of referring students in need of formal academic advising and support.
- To provide ease in the acquisition of campus and community information for minority students through the provision of the Cultural Awareness and Resource Center.
- To consistently assess quality and effectiveness of our programs and services offered to students.

Community Relations Sub-committee

Mr. Will Jemison, Chair
Dr. Larry Day
Ms. Pearl Pennington
Dr. Reginald Sykes

Sub-committee Members:

CHAIR: Mr. Will Jemison, Chair of Pan-Hellenic Council, Jackson

Dr. Larry Day, Mississippi State Board for Community and Junior Colleges

Ms. Pearl Pennington, Director of Student Affairs, Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning

Dr. Reginald Sykes, Assistant Commissioner for the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning

Mr. Eric Stringfellow – 100 Black Men of Jackson

Mr. Eric Simmons, Esq. Simmons and Simmons, PLLC

Dr. Jason Dean, Vice President for Economic Policy, MEC

Recommendations and Strategies

Community Relations Subcommittee: Identify educational, civic and business leaders/organizations to serve as partners in this initiative.

1. Distribute college information for summer programs participants. Discussion will included:
 - a. Financial aid information
 - b. College prep
 - c. Technical and Career opportunities
2. When possible provide college information for civic clubs and organizations. Discussions will include:
 - a. social/economic data
 - b. benefits of a college degree
3. Assist community groups with exposing African American males to college life.
4. Provide ongoing seminars to the students and their families through churches and other community opportunities.

5. Financial support from Greek organizations to assist with the implementation of the African American Males Initiative.
6. Utilize existing community programs to inform parents and students the importance of a college education.
7. Mississippi Institutions for Higher Learning, State Board for Community and Junior College Relations, and the Mississippi Department of Education will consider the implementation of a statewide marketing campaign to inform and educate African American males, other underrepresented groups and their parents on the importance of a college education, what it takes to attend college, and how to finance a college education.
8. Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning and the Mississippi Association of Community and Junior Colleges will consider support and incentives to institutions to establish and/or enhance programs that promote the enrollment, retention, and graduation of African American males.

Community and Junior Colleges Sub-committee

Dr. Larry Day, Chair

Ms. Pearl Pennington

Dr. Reginald Sykes

Sub-committee Members:

CHAIR: Dr. Larry Day, Mississippi State Board for Community and Junior Colleges

Ms. Pearl Pennington, Director of Student Affairs, Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning

Dr. Reginald Sykes, Assistant Commissioner for the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning

Recommendation and Strategies

Community and Junior College Subcommittee: Identify strategies in the recruitment and retention of African American males at the community/junior colleges.

1. Each community/junior college identified a representative to serve as contact person for the African American males initiative.
2. The community/junior college recommendations and strategies are inline and similar to those presented by the other sub-committees.