



Task Force on the
City University of New York
Black Male Initiative

Final Report of the
Pre-Kindergarten-Grade 12
Working Group

APPENDIX A

The City University of New York Black Male Initiative

Report of the Working Group on Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 Issues

Director: Joyce Coppin, Ph.D.
Distinguished Lecturer
The City College

Executive Summary

The Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 Working Group proposes to begin the process of preparing of Black males socially, psychologically, and emotionally as well as academically, beginning at age 10 –11, to attend college and obtain Bachelor’s degrees. Current programs that prepare middle and high school students to go to college focus mainly on taking more challenging courses and passing high stakes tests. Supplementary education services and academic intervention programs are in place to enable low performing students to be promoted and graduate from high school. However, none of these programs address in systematic and meaningful ways the impact of non-academic variables that interfere with the student’s ability to learn, achieve, and adjust to the school environment.

It is recommended that five college campuses become directly involved with cohorts of students as they transition from Grade 5 in elementary school to Grade 6 in middle school. The work of the colleges would be planned and conducted jointly with partner schools to deal forthrightly with the effects of low academic effort syndrome and counteracademic attitudes that are the consequences of peer pressure, distrust of authority, feelings of powerlessness, racial isolation, negative public images of Black males, socioeconomic status, and conceptions of mistreatment in school.

Academic and Cultural Enrichment Centers (ACE), a cohort based program, would follow students over a seven – eight year period from feeder middle schools to high schools affiliated with these colleges. The centers would focus on producing emotionally intelligent, self-confident students who would be taught to deal with and overcome the social-psychological issues that impair their growth and development and lead to failure and behavioral problems. These activities of these centers would supplement and support the work done by academic programs and would be integrated in the formal and informal curricula (the hidden curricula) of the schools. The School of Education in the each college would spearhead the ACE center.

The activities of the Academic and Cultural Enrichment Centers would mainly take place in off-school hours, vacation periods, and summers when adolescent males get into difficulty. These centers would have four components: an Advisory Panel for Development and Planning, Curriculum and Instructional Study Groups, Student Development Teams, and A Parent Support Network.

The City University of New York Black Male Initiative

Report of the Working Group on Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 Issues

Working Group Members

Joyce Coppin, Director, Distinguished Lecturer and Educational Leadership Program Head at The City College and formerly a High School Superintendent and Community Superintendent in the New York City Public School System

Evelyn Castro, Dean of the School of Education at Medgar Evers College and recently retired Community Superintendent

Lester Young, retired Senior Policy Advisor to Chancellor Joel Klein, former New York City Community Superintendent, and former Assistant Commissioner of the New York State Education Department

Sharon Rencher, Director of School Improvement, New York City Department of Education

Gregory Seward, Black Male Empowerment Center, Medgar Evers College

Description of the Group's Work

The working group conducted research and held discussions among its members, colleagues on CUNY campuses, and staff associated with school improvement and academic intervention for students in the New York City public schools. It reviewed the reports and findings of College Now, GEAR-UP and Freshman Year programs. Discussions were held with staff of the Black Male Empowerment Center in Medgar Evers College. A graduate student from Medgar Evers shared some findings from research he conducted on working with Black males from puberty to 22 – 25 years of age.

Findings

- The historical experiences of dominated groups in our culture have created a cultural frame of reference that has resulted in basic distrust of major institutions in American society. The Black male is a dominated group.
- Black males need assistance in developing strategies to negotiate large, impersonal systems.
- Academic learning is an acquired interest that students usually gain through social, emotional, and cognitive interactions with meaningful others - parents, teachers, administrators, and support staff.
- There is a need to address non-cognitive variables that affect academic achievement (self esteem, confidence, self image, and leadership skills) of Black males early in their educational experiences
- There is a need for validation and affirmation among Black males that they have made the correct choices to be successful.
- Black males are often not enrolled in higher level mathematics and science courses – the “so-called gatekeeper subjects” - which prevent them from doing

more challenging coursework. These subjects are considered also as predictors of educational and career aspirations.

- Preliminary research from the College Now Program shows that students who are exposed to information about college programs and have opportunities to take college courses while still in high school are more likely to continue in college until graduation than comparable New York City public school graduates.

Recommendations

It is essential that if Black males and students at risk are to have an opportunity to attend college, preparation must be initiated in the elementary schools. Programs to support these students academically, socially, emotionally, psychologically and culturally should begin no later than Grade 5. The preparation and support must be an on going, nurturing, and carefully executed experience that results from collaborative efforts of teachers and administrators, college faculty, parents, and community based organizations. There must be constant reinforcement, especially among the students and their parents, that a college education for them is realistic, achievable, and an appropriate goal for their lives. In the elementary grades, these students should grow up with the notion that they are expected to go to college.

The New York City public school system has recently expanded its promotional policy to retain fifth grade students as well as third graders who do not meet New York State's Learning Standards in reading and mathematics. Summer schools, year-long tutoring, supplementary education services, academic intervention services, and other academic programs assist them in attaining the standards and passing promotional examinations. Despite this, it has been shown that students who are at risk of being retained and who are promoted after an intensive summer program often struggle and falter in the next grade. Essentially, these programs do not address the complex non-cognitive variables that impact on student learning and adjustment to the school environment.

The Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 12 Working Group recommends that five college campuses become directly involved in working with cohorts of students, beginning during the year they transition from Grade 5 in elementary school to Grade 6 in middle school and continue to work with them until they enter college. To accomplish, colleges and partner schools would establish Academic and Cultural Enrichment Centers to specifically address the non-cognitive variables that the impact so heavily on students' self images, self worth, confidence, and values, goals, and expectations for themselves. These centers would deal forthrightly with the effects of what Ogbu calls *low academic effort syndrome and counteracademic attitudes* that are consequences of peer pressure, distrust of authority, feelings of powerlessness, racial isolation, the negative public images of Black males and other minorities, socioeconomic status, and mistreatment in school – perceived or otherwise.

Current academic programs in middle and high school grades do not handle these issues systematically in the context of their programs to improve academic achievement. By concentrating almost exclusively on academics, the schools are failing to develop

students' social, psychological, and emotional intelligence. School staff may not have the personnel, professional development, resources, the inclination, or attitudes and behaviors to deal with these matters. The college community and its faculty have expertise and knowledgeable about research that can assist schools with these challenges.

Though the focus of the efforts for the cohorts would be to improve academic achievement among young Black males and enhance their preparation to do college level work, the students in the cohort would not be exclusively composed of this group. Certainly, females and males of other ethnic backgrounds can be included since the low academic effort syndrome and counteracademic attitudes shown by poorly performing Black males are issues for some other at risk students who can be helped by this program.

The middle schools with which the colleges would work may be located in largely racially isolated communities and be designated by the State Education Department as a School In Need of Improvement (SINI school). Additionally, these middle schools should be in the same regions as and be major feeders for one of the affiliated high schools with which these colleges work. It is vital that work with these students be continued through their high schools. The colleges and the Department of Education must jointly set up a system to keep track of and maintain data on these students. In so far as possible, students should continue and move in cohorts through Grades 6 – 12.

Academic and Cultural Enrichment Centers

The five academic and cultural enrichment centers begun in Grade 5 should be considered a seven-eight year program for the students they serve. These centers would have four components: an Advisory Panel for Development and Planning, Curriculum and Instructional Study Groups, Student Development Teams, and A Parent Support Network.

The Academic and Cultural Enrichment Centers program would be anchored in the School of Education in the colleges. A full time member of the School of Education faculty should be granted released time from teaching duties to work jointly with a full time staff member employed specifically for this program. Each partner school would have a facilitator who would receive compensation for coordinating the Academic and Cultural Enrichment Center in the school.

The Academic and Cultural Enrichment Centers would design and conduct multi-disciplinary programs to recognize and celebrate students' culture, address the social and psychological transitions pre-teens and adolescents pass through in society and in their communities, provide opportunities for career exposure and development, foster leadership skills and behaviors, and assign mentors from among successful Black male college students.

Selected students served in the centers should have achieved Level 2 on state tests in mathematics and literacy. Teachers can recommend students who achieved in the upper range of Level 1 if it is determined that test scores do reflect actual achievement.

Cohort groups would meet before and/or after school, on weekends and during semester breaks and vacations – depending upon the activities to be conducted. Each cohort would have approximately 25 students; there may be more than one cohort group on a grade if it is warranted by the size of the school.

Curriculum and Instructional Study Groups

Multi-disciplinary study groups would be formed in each of the five schools composed of classroom teachers, college faculty, and school supervisors to design course content that is culturally relevant, interactive, and pedagogical effective for at risk secondary school students – particularly in the middle grades. These study groups would address the “hidden curriculum” of the school as well – that is, expectations for students and teachers’ ability to teach them, the school’s values and belief systems, the reward and punishment structure, and assessment strategies to determine students’ true potential. The study groups would provide opportunities for joint college faculty – school staff professional development and for sharing effective pedagogy. Faculty from the colleges would be encouraged to seek approval to take time off to teach at least one semester in a school with an ACE center and be given credit for service for actively participating in a study group. Student teachers from the college’s teacher and counselor preparation programs would be assigned to the school and participate in the study groups.

Advisory Panel for Development and Planning

Representatives of college faculty, teachers, supervisors, and parents would serve as an Advisory Panel for each ACE center program. The panel would include individuals from the community and successful Black male businessmen and/or professionals. The panel would also work closely with the School Leadership Team to implement, guide, coordinate, and disseminate information about ACE activities.

Student Development Teams

The school facilitator, counselors, parent coordinator, attendance coordinator and an administrator would form a team to ensure that every cohort member has a individual guidance plan that would contain courses to be taken, remediation and/or tutoring, career exposure and development. The plan would include sequential enrollment in college courses from workshops to cohort courses and tuition waiver courses. Trips to colleges and universities would be planned.

An academic area in which a student is interested would be identified, guided, and mentored during his/her secondary school career. This academic area may become the student’s major in college. These plans would be shared and designed with input from parents and students.

Student Development Teams would ensure that every cohort member has mentor – at least one adult that has personal relation with the student. Mentors would be successful Black male college students and an adult from the school.

Student Development Teams would organize service learning programs that would begin in the middle grades with service in the school and progress to volunteerism in the community and other socially oriented or cultural organizations.

Clubs would be formed for students to become skilled at negotiation, build leadership skills, develop effective communication, learn conflict resolution and anger management, learn organization skills and time management, appreciate cultural diversity, build healthy bodies, and educate students about good nutrition. These clubs would involve appropriate ceremonies and rites to celebrate stages, passages, and achievements in the in the lives of pre-teens and adolescents.

Parent Support Network

Based upon the successful Yale Child Study Center model, the Parent Support Network would coordinate its efforts with the school's parent coordinator and parent leadership to get parents involved on three levels:

- Level 1: Actively work with cohort parents to get their support to attend parent meetings, monitor their youngster's progress, attend school events, and develop fund-raising projects
- Level 2: Recruit volunteers for service in daily school affairs, trips, club activities, and class assistants
- Level 3: Recruit and provide training for parents to serve on School Leadership Teams and be resources to component groups of the Academic and Cultural Enrichment Centers. Parents would be encouraged to provide service for district/regional activities.



Task Force on the
City University of New York
Black Male Initiative

Final Report of the
Higher Education
Working Group

APPENDIX B

The City University of New York Black Male Initiative Report of the Working Group on Higher Education

Director: Brenda M. Greene
Professor of English and Director of the Center for Black Literature,
Medgar Evers College

Executive Summary

The Higher Education Working Group was charged to develop an implementation plan for recruiting, retaining and improving the performance of black males in higher education and specifically on CUNY campuses. After reviewing the literature, holding focus groups and reviewing various programs across the country which address the challenges of the black male college student, it became evident that successful Black Male Initiative Programs flourish when there is an institutional commitment to them. Thus, it is necessary that CUNY campuses embrace this as part of their mission and establish an infrastructure that will support the recruitment, retention, and success of black male students.

Specifically, the Working Group recommends that integrative and holistic Black Male Initiative Programs be established on each CUNY campus and that these programs be adequately supported by the administration and structured to address the personal, academic, cultural, and social needs of black male students. Through the development of campus-wide discussions, student seminars, mentoring programs, cultural programs, financial incentives, high school/college partnerships, a sound research program, and specific recruitment strategies for black students, faculty and administrators, each CUNY campus will send a clear message that it is morally committed to improving the performance and retention of black males.

The City University of New York Black Male Initiative Report of the Working Group on Higher Education

Working Group Members

Brenda M. Greene, Director, Professor of English and Director of the Center for Black Literature, Medgar Evers College

Richard Green, Professor, Founder and Director of the Crown Heights Youth Collective and Adjunct Lecturer of History, Medgar Evers College

Richard Jones, Dean of Institutional Advancement and Development, Medgar Evers College

Gloria J. Browne-Marshall, Assistant Professor of Law at John Jay College

Introduction

The Higher Education Working Group was charged to develop an implementation plan for recruiting, retaining and improving the performance of black males in higher education and specifically on CUNY campuses. After reviewing the literature, holding focus groups and reviewing various programs across the country which address the challenges of the black male college student, it became evident that successful Black Male Initiative Programs flourish when there is an institutional commitment to them. Thus, it is necessary that CUNY campuses embrace this as part of their mission and establish an infrastructure that will support the recruitment, retention, and success of black male students. The CUNY-wide Task Black Male Initiative Task Force indicated that the institution had a moral imperative to address the status of the black male on its campuses; the Higher Education Working Group supports this stance. It recommends that Black Male Initiative Programs be established throughout CUNY and that these programs be adequately supported by the administration and structured to address the personal, academic, cultural, and social needs of black male students.

Overview

In his book, **The Envy of the World on Being a Black Man in America**, Ellis Cose (2002) indicates that “Being a black man in the 21st Century is a very complicated thing and requires one to be open to unprecedented possibilities.” This statement by Cose points to the magnitude of this issue and supports many findings including those of the Georgia University system on the black male. The African American male phenomenon is not just an African American dilemma; it is a societal one. Cose’s statement also underscores the necessity for developing a comprehensive program that addresses the recruitment, retention, and success of the black male on every CUNY campus. Once we become aware of the complicated challenges and issues faced by black men in our society on a daily basis, we can develop an infrastructure and specific strategies that will assist in ensuring their personal and academic success in CUNY and that will open the way for them to be exposed to “unprecedented opportunities.” To accomplish this, we must first become aware of the research that affects the academic performance and retention of black males and we must provide venues for black males to articulate their concerns. These tasks became the central focus of our working group.

The Higher Education Working Group was comprised of Richard Jones, Dean of Institutional Advancement and Development, Medgar Evers College, Professor Richard Green, Founder and Director of the Crown Heights Youth Collective and Adjunct Lecturer of History, Medgar Evers College, and Professor Gloria J. Browne-Marshall, Assistant Professor of Law at John Jay College. We decided to identify programs that had success with black male recruitment and retention, review the research and literature on the black male, and conduct focus groups within CUNY on student and faculty perception of issues and challenges facing the black male.

Based on our review of the literature and research on the black male as well as the focus groups we convened, we came up with the following conclusions.

Racial prejudice is a prevailing force in the lives of black men in America and in the view of many, the black man is still considered an endangered species. Specifically, black men are subjected to stereotypes that affect their identity, their personal and professional growth, and their survival and success in America. For example, according to Cose, 52% of black men believe police have stopped them unfairly and unless the course of this is changed, ¼ of black men will spend part of their life in lock down. Cose argues that we need to reconceptualize our idea of the black man as an endangered species.

Upon examining the research of those who attend and succeed in college, we found that there were very few programs nationwide that address the recruitment, retention and performance of black males. Of the programs that have been designed to impact the retention and success of black males, it is evident that black male recruitment, retention, and performance are linked to the creation of campus programs that are specifically targeted to meet the personal, academic, social, and financial needs of the black male. There are mentoring programs at universities such as the University of Memphis, North Illinois University, Cleveland State University, Texas Southern University and Ohio State University. These mentoring programs focus on providing personal, academic and social support for students and more specifically a meeting place where students can bond and engage in informal conversations and discussions with their peers, counselors, and other members of their support team. In some cases, these programs provide black male students with black male faculty mentors. Students at these colleges also participate in seminars, lectures, workshops, and conferences. Like the New York State legislature has done re: CUNY, some university systems have a legislative mandate to recruit more black males into public and university educational systems. The Georgia University system has legislated a state-wide mandate to recruit more black males into its teacher education programs. Similarly, the Indiana Commission on the Social Status of the Black Males has also mandated legislation that addresses the need to recruit more black males into its colleges and universities. Specifically, it has called for alternative teacher certification programs. These programs send a clear message to black male students that they are wanted and that college and university systems recognize that they have a moral obligation to ensure that they are recruited and they remain in school.

Within CUNY, Medgar Evers College has developed a Center for Male Development and Empowerment with institutional support led by the President. The mission of the Center is to maximize the involvement of males in their community by increasing their knowledge and understanding of self, promoting leadership, encouraging educational pursuits, and enhancing

their level of economic independence. In 1988, Borough of Manhattan Community College developed a Black Men's Initiative Program as part of its Pre-freshman Summer Immersion Program. Its purpose was to provide a series of courses that would introduce students to the history and struggles of black people. This program also provided participants with opportunities to go on field trips, visit area businesses, and attend lectures, seminars, and workshops by black professionals. York College, within CUNY, does not have a formal Black Male Empowerment Center yet, but it has submitted a proposal and is waiting approval for the program's implementation.

One vital component of many BMI programs is the concept of community service or participating in an activity that fosters civic engagement. Another emerging pattern among all programs that focus on the black male is an emphasis on the application of good retention strategies which are directed at the black male.

A major part of the Higher Education Working Group's activities centered on holding focus groups on the issues and challenges facing pre-college and college level black males. We held focus groups at Brooklyn College, Medgar Evers College, John Jay College, York College, and the Crown Heights Youth Collective. The research from our focus groups substantiated the need for comprehensive campus programs that address the issues and challenges facing black males.

Upon correlating the findings from the literature review and focus groups, we found one resounding theme. There is a need to make race more visible. President Clinton called for a national dialogue on race during his first tenure as President. He observed that there was a need for a dialogue then; obviously, this need still exists. In **Race Matters** Cornell West (1994) meditates on what happened after the Los Angeles riots. He notes that although the events were presented as if they had been precipitated by race, the situation emerged because of a number of societal factors including race. The fact that the nation responded to these events as if they only occurred because of race reveals the need to complicate our notions of race. In discussing the complexity of the race issue in America West states:

Most of us remain trapped in the narrow framework of the dominant liberal and conservative views of race in America, which with its worn-out vocabulary leaves us intellectually debilitated, morally disempowered, and personally depressed. The astonishing disappearance of the event from public dialogue is testimony to just how painful and distressing a serious engagement with race is. Our truncated public discussions of race suppress the best of who and what we are as a people because they fail to confront the complexity of the issue in a candid and critical manner.(pgs. 4-5)

We still have much to do when it comes to making race visible in our society. In general, educators, students, and the public in general are not comfortable talking about race and the absence of this dialogue helps to perpetuate the problems in our nation and hence in our public places of learning. Based on the focus groups we conducted, this conversation is very much needed on our college campuses. We need to create a campus climate that makes the discussion of race visible and that foregrounds the ways in which race impacts on classroom performance, student/teacher relationships, and interpersonal relationships. Black male students respond positively to environments where their presence is acknowledged and validated. In order for this

to occur, individual colleges and faculty, staff, and students must have forums where these issues can be raised and discussed in nurturing and supportive environments.

Findings from Literature Review

There are a number of factors that impact on students' ability to succeed. According to Walter Allen (1988), "Improving Black Student Access and Achievement in Higher Education," interpersonal relationships are crucial in determining how students negotiate between their individual dispositions and the institutional requirements. Students need environments where they feel a sense of community with their peers. In **Black Men, Obsolete and Dangerous**, Madhubuti (1990) expounds on the need for black males to socialize with consciously aware groups. This socialization with black males who care and are conscious becomes a replacement for gangs and other negative groups,

The fear of success is another factor that impacts on student performance and retention. According to Campbell and Fleming (XVIII), who conducted a study on fear of success, racial identity, and academic achievement of black male college students, fear of success has long been identified as an inhibitor of achievement. As the individual approaches indicators of accomplishment and begins to attain specific goals, self-defeating mechanisms develop (pgs. 5-6). The individual's approach to the goal becomes characterized by conflict, ambivalence, inconsistency of effort and self-doubt.

Campbell and Fleming also found that individuals who had identity problems suffered most from fear of success and that racial identity was the most predictive self-defining factor for black males. They conclude that a consolidated internalized racial identity is needed for the effective psychological functioning of black people in America. In a society constructed by race, racial identity is affected by stereotypes, low expectations, and negative assumptions about the academic potential and abilities of black males. In a lecture on Intellectual Diversity, Claude Steele corroborates the effect of stereotypes on student performance. He points out that debilitating stereotypes can have a negative impact on students' overall academic achievement; he further notes that teacher focus groups found that stereotypes affect teachers' and students' behaviors. Cose also expounds on the notion of how stereotypes affect the psyche of black men. In his view, the perpetuation of stereotypes by others cause "demons to reside in black men . . . eating away at confidence and sense of worth, . . . placing them at greater risk of miseducation, imprisonment, and spiritual and emotional devastation."

According to scholar Ogbu, students' self-identity issues and challenges are rooted in students' knowledge of self from an historical and cultural context (Fries-Britt, 1998). Ogbu postulates that the academic difficulties some minorities experience are linked to their status as voluntary or involuntary minority. Involuntary minorities are people who were originally brought to the United States against their will, through slavery, conquest, colonization or forced labor. Voluntary minorities move to the United States by choice. Although members of both groups develop mechanisms for coping and living in the United States, according to Ogbu, involuntary minorities respond differently to their forced incorporation in the dominant society; they develop an oppositional cultural frame of reference to the majority culture. They regard some behaviors as not appropriate for these are characteristic of Euro-Americans. Voluntary minorities, on the

other hand, move to the United States because they want all that is associated with better economic treatment, greater political freedom, etc. They more readily buy into the American dream (558).

Haki Madhubuti also stresses the need for black males to have a strong sense of self, and he adds to this the value of having a strong understanding of their culture. In his view, knowledge of identity and a sense of consciousness are important to the survival of black men. Culture is necessary in that it helps fulfill and perpetuate people's understanding of themselves. Campbell's and Fleming's research also support this. They suggest that programmatic efforts which take the identity and historical issues of African American males into account are important to fostering a strong sense of self and hence success.

Madhubuti's emphasis on the need to provide environments where the black male takes responsibility for his destiny, economically, socially, and politically, provides a paradigm for the kinds of institutionalized mechanisms which must be put in place to address the needs of the black male on CUNY campuses. Students need to view their education as liberating, not culturally, personally, or academically stagnant. They need to understand the importance of struggle and the ways in which they play a major force in their own survival. This can be accomplished when an infrastructure is set up to enable students to learn in culturally responsive and academically supportive learning environments.

Findings from Focus Groups

The Higher Education Working Group collectively compiled the questions that were used to generate discussion and data for the focus groups. Focus group leaders were then given the questionnaire and asked to use it as a guide to ascertain answers to the questions and to generate discussion on the focus group topics. Data were collected from five focus groups. In two of the focus groups, the focus group leader read the questions aloud and the students responded to the questions. These sessions were taped. In the other three focus groups, students wrote written responses to the questionnaires and then the focus group leader reviewed the questions and generated a discussion that prompted students to provide additional commentary and responses to the questions. The findings discussed here represent a summary of the responses from the questions and taped discussions. Approximately 150 students participated in the focus groups; however, due to time constraints in collecting the data, the findings presented here represent the data collected for about 50 students. The questions used for the focus groups are in the Appendices.

Student Profile

Students who participated in the focus groups ranged from high school through college. The majority of the students who responded to the questions were juniors and seniors. When asked what had motivated them to attend college, they responded that it was a family member, the desire to study in a particular field, the desire to give back to the community and the wish to expand their opportunities in general. Those who did not attend college indicated that finances, early parenthood, and little family support were the obstacles that had kept them out of college. More than 50% of the respondents who were in college indicated that they were not the first person to attend college.

Student Performance

When asked what had motivated them to perform well in college, students spoke of zeal, determination, dedication, networking, discipline, and hard work. They emphasized that their peers were important in helping them to keep focused and to stay committed and that a good professor-student relationship and good college advisors were important. Their response to what makes a good college student was similar to their responses about their own success. In their view, good students developed relationships with their professors and other students. They knew the importance of hard work and they were willing to face challenges and to be inquisitive and ambitious. Good students planned their time wisely and were disciplined.

Peer influence was important to students in general. This supports Allen's (1988) finding on the importance of interpersonal relationships for students. In their view, their peers helped them with studying and motivated them to work harder.

Whereas students viewed peer influence as important, their responses to the influence of media varied. Some saw it as a good source of information. For others it was a reminder of what it means to be a black man in this society. They viewed it as a distraction and a mechanism for promoting negative images and stereotypes of black men. One student stated: "Whenever I see the stereotypical negative representation of black men, I am reminded about my duty to change the view." In another student's view, "The media is filled with examples that are counter to what I want to amount to in life. Thus it spurs me on to succeed in obtaining my goals." Students' comments on the portrayal of black men in the media provide concrete examples of the literature on the effects of stereotypes. Stereotypical images negatively impact on the self-esteem and identity of black males.

Teacher Influence

Students were consistent in wanting teachers who helped to facilitate the learning process and who took a personal interest in them as students. They wanted teachers who knew how to provide process and "who put more emphasis on the practical over theory."

Campus Life: Performance

Students had a range of responses when asked about the ways in which campus life impacts on their performance. Many felt disconnected from college life. Some discussed the need for more access to professors, the need for more computer facilities, and the need for more research opportunities. Others discussed the need to be surrounded with students who are serious. In their view, some students still view college as a high school

College Life: Positive Experiences

Those students who were able to form meaningful relationships with other students and faculty and to become involved in campus activities viewed college in a positive way. One student expounded on the value of the college environment. In his words, "Being around positive brothers, a family type atmosphere, a sense of belonging, and a better understanding of culture" contributed to his success. He had become more "sober about the obstacles to be faced, broadened his opinions and received a daily dose of positive energy." He had learned to "step out of the box." This student's comments corroborate the findings of Madhubuti (1990) who

argues for creating culturally conscious environments where students can identify with their peers and feel that they are strongly connected to their community.

Other students discussed discovering career directions, becoming involved in club activities, helping with fund raising and other college programs. Still others praised the diverse environment at their school with respect to students and faculty. Students explained that college equipped them for life and that they were surrounded with people who wanted them to succeed. Specific student comments follow.

“College has equipped me for the world.”

“You see people who want you to succeed.”

“In elementary school, privileged to have teachers that showed that they cared. And with such a stable foundation, what was built on it was able to stand.”

Students’ comments underscore the importance of having teachers who care and who are concerned about how and what they learn.

College Life: Negative Experiences

Students discussed how difficult it was to work and go to school. The recurring theme, however, with respect to negative experiences, was the feeling that some professors had racist attitudes towards blacks. They spoke about the need for more black and culturally sensitive teachers.

Impact of Racism

Almost all of the students responded that they had been affected by racism. Some of their comments follow.

“Rarely affects me.”

“Race has a tremendous effect. I often find myself being stereotyped by faculty and certain professors.”

“Yes it does, for a teacher to respect me I have to work much harder than other students. My work must be flawless, otherwise, they would overlook my opinions, unlike the white students.”

“Yes, there are assumptions that we are not as capable of performing as well as people of other races.”

“I have gone to certain offices and have received a rather cold reception from staff. I can say this because the person before me was treated differently.”

“Yes it does. I am a very radical person; however I am forced not to express it when writing papers for submissions to professors.”

Assumptions about Black Males

Most students responded that they witnessed situations in which there were assumptions about black males. As Cose (2002) and Steele report, these students were affected by the stereotypes that others had about them. The range of responses follows.

“Yes, stereotypes about performance still exist. There are assumptions that most black males are average students.”

“Yes, I have witnessed other students and professors discriminating against black males”

“They assume that we are not that bright. I, on a few occasions, helped students with their work to then be told that they never met a black person who was so smart.”

“It appears that some do. In one particular class, the faculty member was extremely arrogant when relating to me. Sometimes I felt she didn’t expect me to succeed in her class”.

Challenges facing Black Males

The responses of the students supported the findings identified in the literature on black male retention and success. Retention improves when students have academic support, financial support, counseling and mentoring. Student comments on specific challenges follow.

“Having to prove that a black male can be a top student in class.”

“Work/job load needed to cope with cost of living”

“Greatest challenge I face as a black male is prejudice from professors and other students.”

“In my technical field, computer science, I have little challenges, as there is little subject matter.

In my non technical classes, on the other hand, I have to work harder to gain respect in discussions and in my writings.’

“Lack of positive role models”

“Faculty support and counseling”

“Scholarly programs are not made known to blacks”

“Lack of black professors”

“Easier to be failure than a success,”

“Need for more black males, a critical mass of black students needed at CUNY students”\

“Balancing everything”

Reasons for Low Retention Rates of Black Males

The literature on retention of black males correlates with the responses of the participants. Campbell and Fleming (XVIII) point out that black students need strong mentors and role models from the academic and professional community. The students also call for this. Sample participant responses follow.

“Poor counseling, mentoring”

“I think that the individualistic attitude of black males decreases college numbers.”

“ We also face with a lack of moral support from successful black community.”

“Financial status, many times forces us to settle for menial or lower paying jobs. I speak from experience.”

“ The environment and the desire to be making money. Many view college as delaying this process.”

“There are relatively few black male role models that the youth can look up to for motivation since many

families often lack father figures who can influence kids.”

“Tuition,”

“Unfriendly professors”

“Many black males feel marginalized and discouraged about the future.”

“White professors are apathetic”

“Negative assumptions from other students”

“Need support system from faculty; home environment, K-12 elementary school college orientation”

“No support system for teens’

“Feeling overwhelmed with schoolwork”

“Lack of ambition, low morale”

“Family problems”

“Lack of knowledge of self”

“Increased responsibility”

Ways to Help Recruit, Retain, and Improve the Performance of Black Males on College Campuses

The respondents recommended that the college appeal to black males by creating holistic programs geared towards academic and personal development. Programs should focus on the benefits of college. Students should have opportunities to hear speakers from a range of disciplines speak about their research and fields of expertise. Students also want to hear speakers who are passionate about their work and who know how to motivate them. In addition, students urged that more funds should be allocated to support them financially as they pursue their higher education goals.

Students also recommended that college expand its services; for example they called for evening administrators and more resources for students in general.

Students recommended that colleges hire more black faculty and develop programs to recruit more black males into the schools. For example, they recommended the creation of partnerships with local high schools.

Higher Education Working Group Recommendations

1. Develop long term and short term goals for continuing the work of the task force. The task force only had three months to complete its work and there was insufficient time to accomplish its desired goals. Set up a CUNY-wide infrastructure for ensuring that the work of the task force is extended over a period of time. For example, there should be a Chancellor’s Task Force on the black male that meets on a monthly basis. Its goal would be to implement the work begun by the initial task force and to monitor the development of the CUNY-wide Black Male Initiative on campuses throughout CUNY.
2. Establish a **Black Male Initiative Program** (BMI) on every CUNY campus. Directors of these Centers/Programs should be responsible for reporting on program activities to a CUNY-wide Black Male Initiative Committee.
3. Establish an integrated and holistic BMI. Components of the CUNY-wide BMI should include faculty, students, staff, and administrators from various components of the college. The program should include activities designed to provide mentorship, counseling, academic support, extra-curricular activities, and seminars on personal, economic, cultural, and social consciousness and development. Students should be exposed to key leaders in the African American intellectual community who have expertise in various disciplines including the physical, behavioral, and social sciences, history, mathematics, economics, and literature.
4. Establish campus-wide discussions on ways that the entire college community can help to support and nurture black males. Hold focus groups on every CUNY campus. This

emphasizes that CUNY has set this initiative as a priority. Focus groups should also be held with faculty across disciplines, race, and gender.

5. Invite Directors of successful Black Male Initiative Programs to participate in a CUNY-wide forum on recruiting, retaining and improving the performance of the black male.
6. Establish a strong mentoring program which includes faculty, staff, and professionals from a variety of settings and disciplines. Expose students to black faculty role models across the campuses of CUNY. Invite faculty scholars who have expertise in the study of African American studies to conduct seminars, workshops, and courses which can be taken by students across campuses. For example, an African American English or History Professor at Medgar Evers College might go to Queens College or the College of Staten Island to offer students courses in these areas. Students on all CUNY campuses should have opportunities to take African American Studies courses which are taught by black men and women.
7. Recruit more black male faculty and administrators on campuses throughout CUNY.
8. Require each CUNY campus to create an institutionalized mechanism for recruiting and retaining black males. For example, this could be included in the mission statement of each college.
9. Establish mechanisms to ensure that students learn about their history and culture. Integrate the study of African American culture in the general education or CORE requirements at each campus. All students should be exposed to the culture and contributions of African Americans in this country.
10. Establish financial incentives to support black males who are in school.
11. Establish partnerships with various organizations including high schools that help to bridge the gap between college and high school, businesses that offer internships and jobs, and community organizations that serve as models for how students can help to build and strengthen their communities. All of these programs have the potential to impact on the financial, social, and personal lives of black male students. Some of CUNY's current programs and partnerships can be expanded to focus on the black male.
12. Identify a researcher on each college campus who can evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of the Black Male Initiative Program on each campus. The researcher should make regular reports to the proposed Chancellor's Task Force on the Black Male.
13. Establish a good retention plan, a safety net to strengthen retention and performance.

Bibliography

- Allen, W. R. (1988). Improving black student access and achievement in higher education. Association for the Study of Higher Education. 403-416.
- Austin, R. An exploration of the factors affecting career choice and the career development of adult African American males. (Unpublished manuscript).
- Campbell, D. B. & Fleming, J. Fear of success, racial identity and academic achievement in black male college students. Community Review, Volume XVIII, 5-18.
- Cose, E. (2002). The envy of the world: on being a black man in America. Atria.
- Davis, J. E. (1998). Campus climate, gender and achievement of African American college students. [Online] Available: www.rcgd.isr.umich.edu/prba/perspectives/spring1998/jdavis.pdf
- Fries-Britt, S. (1998). Moving beyond black achiever isolation: experiences of gifted black collegians. The Journal of Higher Education, Vol. 69, No. 5 (September/October) 557-576.
- Golden, M. (1995). Saving our sons. Anchor.
- Greene, S. & Abt-Perkins, D. (Eds.) (2003). How can literacy research contribute to racial understanding? In Making Race Visible: Literacy Research for Cultural Understanding. Teachers College Press. 1-31.
- Jenkins, J. O. & Singh, M. (1984). Stress its relationships to black student attrition. Paper presented at the meeting of the Association for Advancement of Behavior Therapy, Philadelphia.
- Madhubuti, H. (1990). Black men: obsolete, single, and dangerous. Third World Press
- Madhubuti, H. (2002). Tough notes: a healing call for creating exceptional black men.
- Mickelson, R. A. (2003). When are racial disparities in education the result of racial discrimination? A social science perspective. The Teachers College Record. August. Blackwell Publishing. Vol. 105, No. 6 . 1052-1086.
- Noguera, P. (2003). How racial identity affects school performance. Harvard Education Letter Research. March/April. [Online]. <http://www.edletter.org/past/issues/2003-ma/abstracts.shtml#a2>

Smith, R. A. (2005). Saving black boys: The elusive promises of public education. The School Administrator January 16-25.

Steele, C. M. Expert Report. [Online]. Available:
www.mich.edu/~urel/admissions/legal/expert/steele.html

Texas Southern University Black Male Performance Report. 2001-2002

West, Cornel. (1994). Race Matters. Vintage.

CUNY Black Male Task Force on Higher Education Focus Group Questionnaire

1. What is your highest level of education? Please circle one.
High School, College Freshman, College Sophomore, Jr. Sr.,
2. What motivated you to attend college?
3. Are there special persons/mentors in your lives who were influential in your decision to attend or remain in college?
4. Are you the first person in your family to attend college?
5. What helps you to perform well in college?
6. What helps to make a successful college student?
7. How do your peers influence you as a college student?
8. How does the media influence you as a college student?
9. How do teachers influence you as a college student?
10. Does race or racism affect you as a college student? If so, how?
11. Is there evidence that faculty, students, and staff in the college environment have assumptions about black males? If so, what are these assumptions?

12. In what ways does the campus environment affect your performance?

13. What are the greatest challenges to you as a black male college student?

14. What do you think contributes to the low retention rate of black males in college?

15. What structures, mechanisms, etc. are needed to help recruit, retain, and improve the performance of black males on college campuses?

16. Additional Comments

\

Acknowledgements

The work of this committee would not have been possible without the commitment and dedication of the Higher Education Working Group: Professor Richard Green, Dean Richard Jones, and Professor Gloria J. Browne-Marshall. In addition to serving as a think tank and advisory committee, committee members led focus groups. Moreover, program directors, faculty, and students who were not members of the team also recommended articles, discussed programs, and served as focus group leaders. Marcus Allison, Director of Brotherhood of Akido and a researcher, gathered the initial documents for our literature review and pointed us in the direction of several programs. My discussions with Dr. Rosie Bingham at the University of Memphis and Don Bramletter at North Illinois University were very helpful and assisted us in identifying the necessary components for successful Black Male Initiative Programs (BMI). Dr. Perry Greene at Montclair State University recommended articles and faculty who were interested in helping with the project. Dr. Sandra Lewis, Professor of Psychology at Montclair State led us to some articles on challenges faced by black males. My colleagues at CUNY, Peter Holoman, Director of the Center for Male Development and Empowerment at Medgar Evers and Gregory Seward, Assistant Director of the MDEC led focus groups. Ronald Stanley, Registrar at York College, led a focus group with the assistance of Lynnette Velasco, Assistant for the Center for Black Literature. Stanley also provided a number of articles related to the status of the black male. Richard Austin, a counselor at LaGuardia Community College provided a summary of his research on career choices for African American males. Dean Jacqueline Williams at Brooklyn College and her student Keith Davis, helped to facilitate the focus group at Brooklyn College. The staff of the CUNY Office of Academic Affairs and members of the CUNY Black Male Initiative Task Force provided support, documentation, and the time to get this work done. I was able to recruit Professor Gregory Pardlo in the English department at Medgar Evers to assist me with the work of the Center for Black Literature while I was engaged in this initiative. Essential to gathering data were the students on various campuses who provided authentic responses and helped us to make concrete recommendations which we hope will clearly impact on their college experience. As always, my program assistant, Shelly Moore, was there to take care of all the administrative details of this project. She is essential to the running of the Center for Black Literature. Finally, I am thankful to President, Dr. Edison O. Jackson, who had the vision to spearhead the drive in making the Black Male Initiative part of the mission at Medgar Evers and a central focus for CUNY. I thank him for his continued support of this important initiative.



Task Force on the
City University of New York
Black Male Initiative

Final Report of the
Criminal Justice
Working Group

APPENDIX C

The City University of New York Black Male Initiative Report of the Working Group on Criminal Justice

Director: Jeremy Travis, J.D.
President, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY

Executive Summary

John Jay College of Criminal Justice offers two distinct, yet interrelated perspectives on the issues being discussed by members of the Chancellor's Task Force on the Black Male Initiative. First, reflecting our expertise on the workings of the criminal justice system in our society, we bring to those discussions an important empirical perspective. In short, we would argue that the criminal justice system has a profound impact on the well-being of black men. At every stage in the system – including victimization, arrest, and incarceration – black men are represented at higher rates than other demographic groups. This reality has attendant consequences for education, workforce participation, communities, and family relationships. Consequently, CUNY must come to grips with this reality when constructing any educational intervention that would address the needs of black men. Second, as a college within the CUNY system, we offer our own perspectives on the work the University should carry out to improve educational outcomes for black men who attend our College. A planning process within John Jay has revealed opportunities for further research to understand better the hurdles to attracting black men to John Jay and ensuring the success of these students once they arrive at the College. The John Jay community has committed to an extended period of analysis, planning, and consultation over the next several months. It is expected that this process will lead to the development of an initiative by John Jay to improve educational outcomes for black men at the College.

The City University of New York Black Male Initiative Report of the Working Group on Criminal Justice

Working Group Members

Jeremy Travis, Director, President, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY
Ms. Rosemarie Maldonado, Counsel to the President
Provost Basil Wilson, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
VP Roger Witherspoon, Vice President for Student Development
Dean Rubie Malone, Dean of Strategic Planning and Outcomes Assessment
Prof. Jama Adams, Department of African-American Studies, Ph.D
Prof. Chevy Alford, SEEK Department
Prof. Avram Bornstein, Department of Anthropology
Prof. Christopher Charles, SEEK Department
Prof. Kirk Dombrowski, Department of Anthropology
Prof. Jannette Domingo, Department of African-American Studies
Prof. James Malone, Department of Counseling
Prof. John Pittman, Department of Art, Music, & Philosophy
Prof. Doug Thompkins, Department of Sociology
Mr. Clayton Walton, Assistant Director, Student Activities
Mr. Paul Wyatt, Director, Department of Career Development
Mr. Christ-Yves Dabel, Student
Ms. Norine Knowings, Student
Mr. Kevin Thomas, Student

Introduction

Over the course of the discussions of the Chancellor's Task Force on the Black Male Initiative, it has been clear that John Jay College of Criminal Justice offers two distinct, yet interrelated perspectives on the issues being discussed by members of the Task Force. First, reflecting our expertise on the workings of the criminal justice system in our society, we bring to those discussions an important empirical perspective. In short, we would argue that one contributing factor to the difficulties faced by black men in our society is the deep penetration of the criminal justice system into the lives of these men, from racial profiling to high rates of incarceration. Second, as a college within the CUNY system, we offer our own perspectives on the work the University should carry out to improve educational outcomes for black men who attend our College.

These two perspectives overlap in important ways. For example, to the extent that the criminal justice system is identified as a negative reality, we believe that many black men are dissuaded from attending an educational institution aligned with law enforcement and criminal justice professions. On the other hand, precisely because of the deep penetration of the justice system into communities of color, we believe John Jay College of Criminal Justice has a special obligation to focus on the intersection of race and justice and address these issues squarely.

With these distinct contributions in mind, John Jay College of Criminal Justice had conducted two activities to support the work of the Chancellor's Task Force, which are summarized below. First, we compiled a presentation of data entitled "Black Men and the Criminal Justice System." This presentation covered crime rates, victimization rates, racial profiling, juvenile justice, sentencing, drug arrests, prison admissions, incarceration rates and the death penalty. In each domain, the presentation demonstrated the racial disparities on these phenomena and the recent changes that affect black men, particularly the rapid increase in incarceration rates over the past three decades. (A copy of that presentation is attached.)

The second activity was an ad hoc committee, including faculty, students, and staff, convened to discuss the challenges facing black men on the John Jay College campus. (The names of those attending the committee meeting are attached.) The operating premise of the meeting was that the University would likely be launching an initiative to improve educational outcomes for black men and that the John Jay community should begin now to lay the ground work for such an initiative at the College. We discussed the University proposal submitted to the City Council, but recognized that a fully-developed initiative would be more ambitious than the City Council proposal.

Presentation: Black Men and the Criminal Justice System

The following summary of the presentation to the Task Force highlights the new and troubling realities regarding black men and the criminal justice system.

I. Crime Rates

- The research on the race differences in offending behavior shows that there are no dramatic differences between involvement of black and whites in initial participation in criminal behavior, but blacks are nearly twice as likely to continue offending into their twenties. Among those who adopt adult roles – who are employed or living in a stable relationship, there are no differences between blacks and whites in the rates of persistence in criminal behavior (Mauer 1999).
- These findings argue strongly for programmatic interventions that will identify young black men at the point of their early involvement with the criminal justice system in order to divert them from continuing involvement. This research also underscores the importance of transitions to adulthood through attachments to work, family, and stable peer and intimate partner relationships, all of which have been found to be associated with pursuit of educational goals. The CUNY proposal to the City Council, which includes both a diversion program for first time offenders, and a program working with returning prisoners to facilitate successful reentry, should assist in decreasing the level of involvement of black men in the criminal justice system.

II. Victimization Rates

- Black males are most likely to be victims of violent crime, compared to other racial groups and to women, and are most likely to be victimized by black offenders (Greenfeld 1999). Victimization rates for blacks have decreased even more sharply than those for whites during the recent period of decline in levels of violence in America (NCVS).
- These finding underscores the importance of community level interventions to reduce victimization rates. Victimization has been found to be strongly correlated with subsequent criminal offending and is accompanied by trauma and other negative effects that separately have the impact of decreasing productivity and life chances.

III. Juvenile Justice and Criminal Justice System

- As a general matter, blacks have been found to be more likely to be arrested for criminal offenses, referred for prosecution, convicted and sentenced to prison.
- These findings call for policy attention to practices of law enforcement and criminal justice agencies to ensure fairness in enforcement and equal treatment in criminal justice outcomes.

IV. Drug Enforcement Policies

- Certain drug enforcement policies, e.g., the disparate sentences for crack vs. powder cocaine, have disparate effects on racial minorities, leading to increased levels of criminal justice involvement in those communities.
- Beginning in the late 1980s, at a time when the law enforcement response to crack cocaine was first underway, the numbers of prison admissions for blacks convicted of drug offenses began to rise precipitously, far out-stripping the increases for whites and Hispanics.

V. Incarceration Rates

- The incarceration rate for black men is significant higher than that for white and Hispanic men. In 2003, for black men, it was 3,405 (per 100,000); for Hispanic men 1,231; for white men 465.
- Between 1974 and 2001, the percent of black males who have served prison time has doubled (8.7% vs. 16.6%), more than doubled for Hispanic men (2.3% vs. 7.7%), and doubled for white men (1.4% vs. 2.6%).
- Black men now (2001) have a 32% lifetime chance of spending a year in prison, compared to 13.4% in 1974. The probabilities have also increased even more sharply for Hispanic men (4.0% vs. 17.2%) and much less for white men (2.2% vs. 5.9%)

- The net result of these dramatic changes in incarceration rates is that black men are more likely to have their lives defined by periods of incarceration, resulting in interruptions in the cycles of work, family and education. Efforts that provide educational opportunities to black men while in prison or upon reentry will reach a growing segment of that population and may interrupt the cycle of incarceration. Efforts that prevent initial incarceration will also pay dividends. The policy decision to reduce Pell grants and other in-prison educational opportunities is experienced most harshly by the population of black men.

VI. Community Concentrations

- The impact of the increased levels of incarceration is felt acutely within communities of color, particularly African-American communities. Families are affected, as are the civic and political institutions of those communities, which bear the burden of deeper penetration of the criminal justice system into family and community life.
- For example, on blocks in East New York with high levels of incarceration, one in eight men between the ages of 18-45 are arrested and sent to jail or prison each year.

VII. Conclusion

- The rapid increase in levels of incarceration among black men, and the lifetime probability that one in three black men will spend at least a year in prison, mean that efforts to increase the participation of black men in institutions of higher learning must recognize the new realities of criminal justice involvement within this population. These historical trends also explain, in part, the declining levels of college participation among black men and add to the complexity of providing support services for these students when they are enrolled.
- These trends also argue for designing educational interventions that are explicitly linked to the criminal justice system, such as the diversion and reentry programs proposed by CUNY in the City Council budget initiative. Finally, these trends underscore the importance of designing effective interventions at the earliest possible ages, specifically in the elementary, middle school and high school years, when this population is experiencing the first instances of antisocial behavior that too often translates into deeper involvement in criminal behavior and ultimately incarceration.
- Thus this review of the research provides support for the conclusion of the Task Force on the Black Male Initiative that the entire system of public education, from K-12 to college and beyond, should be mobilized to address the challenges faced by black men in America.

Black Male Initiative at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY

Three important themes emerged from our discussions about how John Jay College might contribute to the CUNY Black Male Initiative.

I. Need for a better understanding of the experience of black men at John Jay College

The discussion group arrived at a strong consensus that we should undertake a number of simultaneous research activities to inform our planning efforts:

- Examine John Jay data more closely to determine how black men at our college were doing compared to other colleges, compared to women, and compared to white and Hispanic men.
- Examine John Jay data to determine the different levels of black male presence in associate, bachelors, and graduate programs.
- In particular, examine John Jay data to determine whether there were important differences comparing native-born black men with foreign-born black men.
- Conduct structured focus groups with black men at John Jay to learn more about their experiences, including understanding the components of success and the nature of challenges. One of the areas of inquiry would be the relative importance of the distinction between the experiences of native born and foreign-born black men at John Jay.
- Conduct structured interviews or focus groups with black men who have left John Jay to determine why they left and what, if anything, might have kept them at John Jay.
- Conduct structured focus groups with black men at the high school level who would be eligible to attend John Jay to determine whether they might consider John Jay and, if not, why not.
- Conduct interviews with “first responders” at the College, namely those staff (e.g., counselors and other student development professionals) who provide support for black men at any stage of the process, from recruiting to graduation, to learn about the unique challenges faced by this population, and identify effective strategies.

We committed to carrying out these research activities over the summer and fall months. The Office of Strategic Planning and Assessment, led by Dean Rubie Malone, will carry out the first two tasks over the summer, analyzing the John Jay College data in Institutional Research. The focus groups of students (including those who have left and those who might attend) will be

designed by a subcommittee consisting of Prof. Douglas Tompkins, Prof. Jama Adams and Provost Basil Wilson. At a meeting of the full committee in the fall, we will decide how best to implement the focus groups. The interviews with “first responders” will be carried out over the summer by the Office of Student Development, headed up by Vice President Roger Witherspoon.

II. Need for faculty development on teaching about race and multiculturalism

The committee discussed the hypothesis that the curriculum at John Jay College might play a role in dissuading black men from coming to the College and/or alienating them from the educational programs of the College. The committee even discussed the names of some of the College majors, such as “deviant behavior and social control,” as conveying images and messages that might have a chilling effect on student interest within communities of color. At the same time, the committee recognized that some faculty members had done extremely well at infusing racial analysis and multicultural perspectives into their curricula. The committee felt these teaching techniques should be replicated where appropriate, and the entire curriculum should be analyzed with a view toward modifications along these lines. When the committee meets again in the fall, these issues will be explored in greater depth, possibly leading to an innovative faculty development proposal on infusing discussions of race into a criminal justice curriculum.

III. Need for immediate focus on incoming freshmen

Prof. Jim Malone suggested that the College take immediate steps to work with the incoming freshmen to try to address some of the problems they face. Members of the Committee who work with freshman services were tasked with the responsibility of devising a plan for welcoming these students. In a similar vein, the Committee discussed the need to cultivate alumni who are black men who can serve as role models or mentors to John Jay students so that the image of post-college life can become clearer in the minds of these young people. The College needs to demonstrate the variety of career opportunities after graduation.

The discussion was infused with a very strong sense of mission – namely, that as an educational institution with a criminal justice focus, John Jay College of Criminal Justice has a special obligation to recruit, educate, retain and graduate black men. The committee was committed to working at the high school level (some even suggested going into the lower grades) to reverse some of the stigma attached to higher education, and criminal justice education in particular. To accomplish these goals, the Committee realized that support from across the College would be required. The Committee ended its meeting with a commitment to carry out the tasks identified over the summer, to meet again in the fall to complete the planning tasks, and then be ready to launch a College-wide initiative, following a period of consultation with relevant sectors of the community.

Presentation to the Chancellor's Black Male Initiative Task Force

Black Men and the Criminal Justice
System

By Jeremy Travis
President, John Jay College

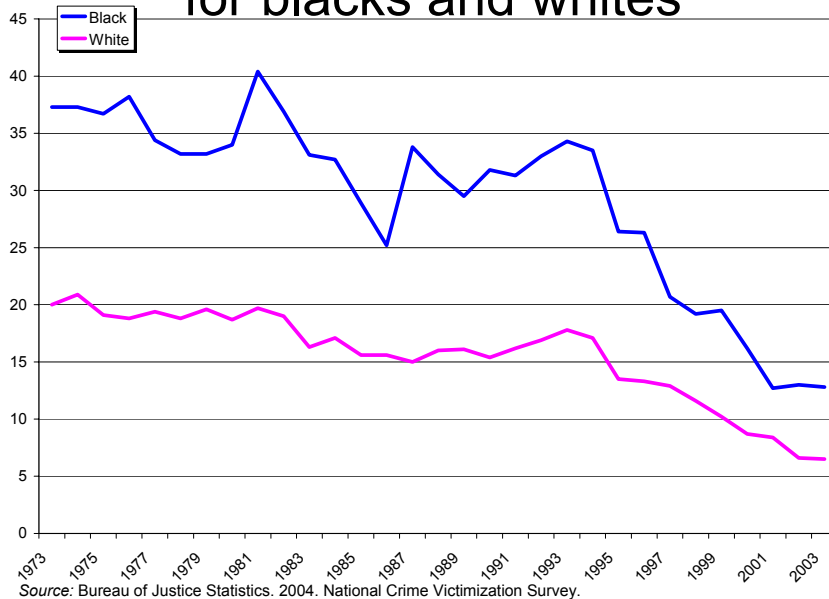
Crime Rates

- “While there are no dramatic differences in the degree to which blacks and whites become involved in offending at *some point*, blacks are nearly twice as likely to *continue* offending into their twenties. But among young adults who adopt adult roles – who are employed or living in a stable relationship – there are no differences in the persistence of offending by race” (Mauer 1999).

Victimization Rates

- Black males are most likely to be victims of violent crime, and to be victimized by Black offenders (Greenfeld, 1999).

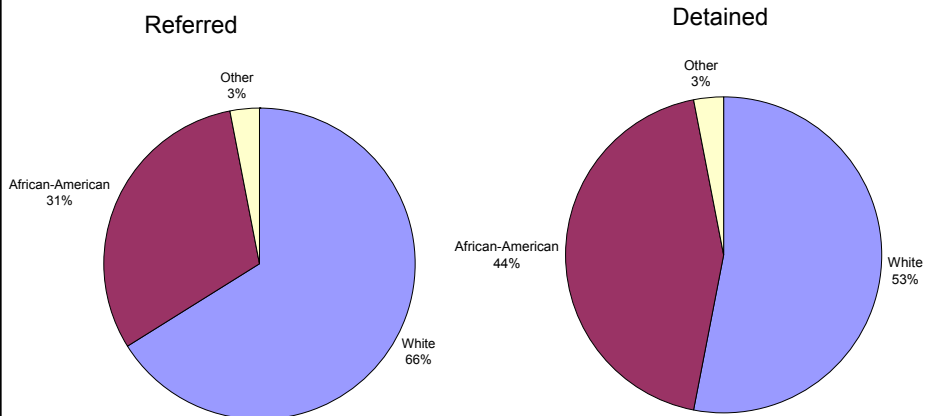
Victimization rates have decreased for blacks and whites



Racial Profiling

- No Systemic Racial Profiling by N.C. State Highway Patrol; Some Individual Officer Bias Possible, Researchers Say
 - Press Release from NCSU
- Research has found that African-Americans and Hispanics are stopped by police at much higher rates than Whites – for Blacks, a ratio of 2:1 in virtually every precinct in a recent New York City study -- and are more often ticketed or searched, or handcuffed. This is true even for law-abiding minority citizens (New York OAG, 1999; Schmitt, Langan, and Durose, 2002).

Juvenile Justice



Sentencing

- Research is mixed
- A 1990 RAND study of sentencing in California found no evidence of racial disparities when severity of offense and prior record were controlled for
- New York State – minor differences among sentencing for more serious offenses; but minorities were significantly more likely than whites to be sentenced to prison for property offenses and misdemeanors
- Discretion is key factor; little discretion for violent offenders (they are mostly sent to prison) and more for less serious offenders
- Not necessarily racism: e.g. quality of representation is likely a factor

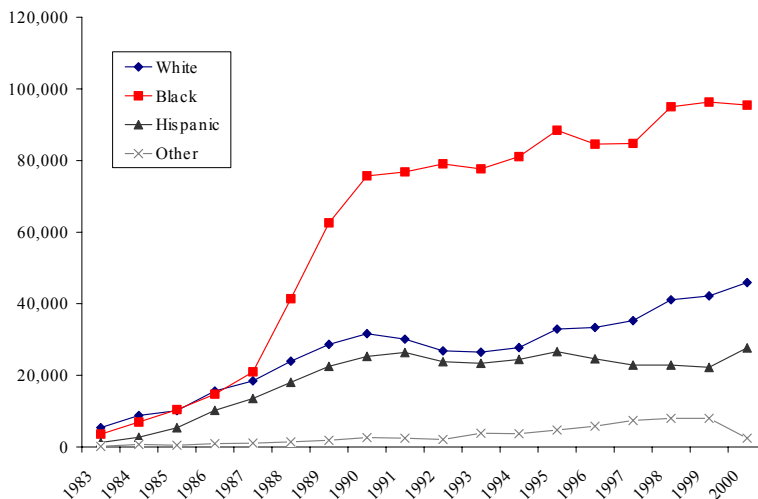
Disparities in Drug Arrests

- In 1996, African-Americans who comprised 13% of the population and, according to drug use surveys, 13% of drug users, accounted for 38% of those arrested for drug offenses (Welch and Angulo, 2000)

Explaining Disparities in Drug Arrests: Heightened Surveillance

- The focus on crack in local, urban enforcement
- Greater visibility of drug dealing in minority communities invites closer surveillance of inner city distribution systems compared to suburban and rural ones (Hawkins, 1998; Saxe et al., 2001).
- Higher stops and searches of minority motorists result from heightened surveillance in minority neighborhoods that have higher calls for service and crime rates (Walker, 2001).

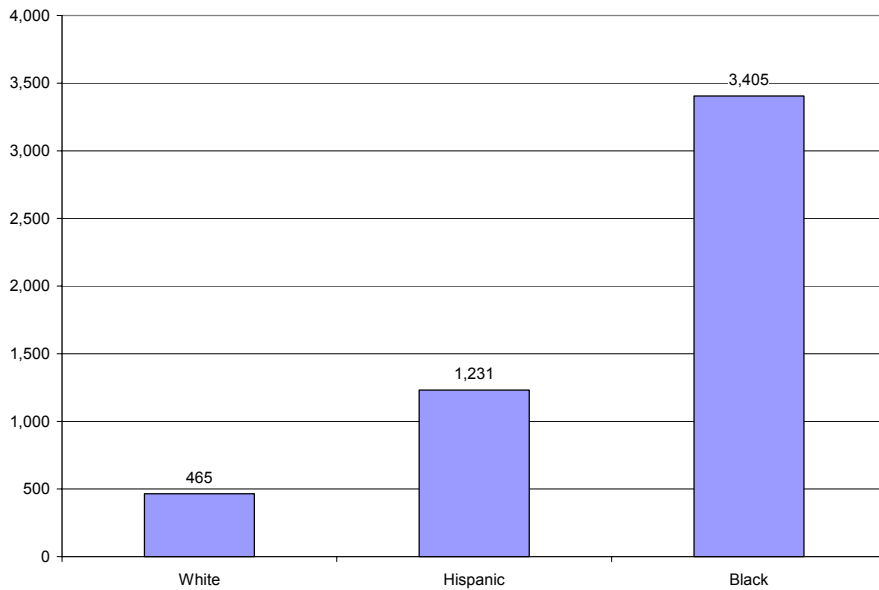
Male and Female Admissions to State Prison for Drug-Related Offenses by Race



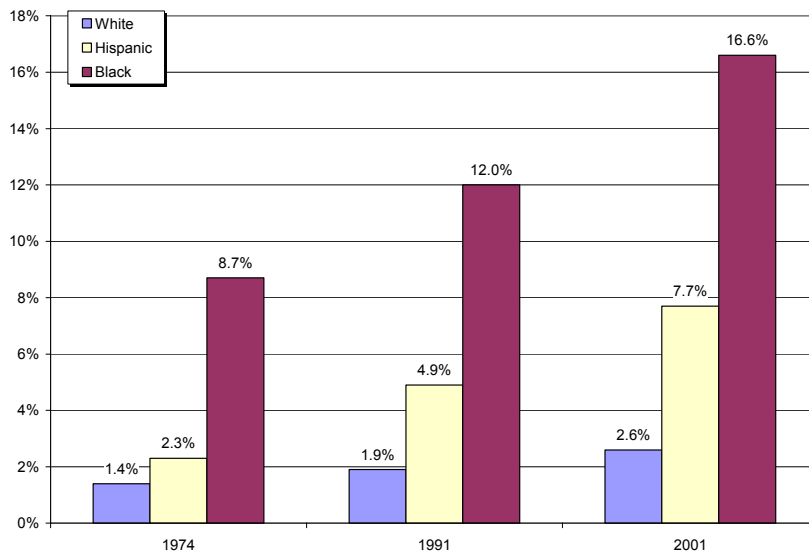
Sources: 1983 through 1998: Iguchi (2001); 1999 and 2000: National Corrections Reporting Program, 2000 and 2001.

Male Incarceration Rate by Race, 2003

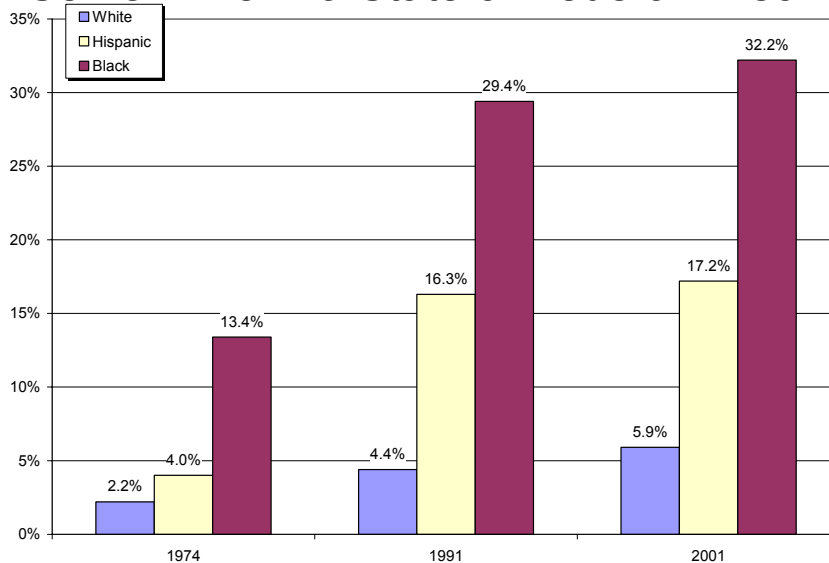
(per 100,000)



Percent of U.S. Male Adults Who Had Ever Served Time in a State or Federal Prison



Percent of U.S. Born Males Who Will Ever Serve Time in a State or Federal Prison



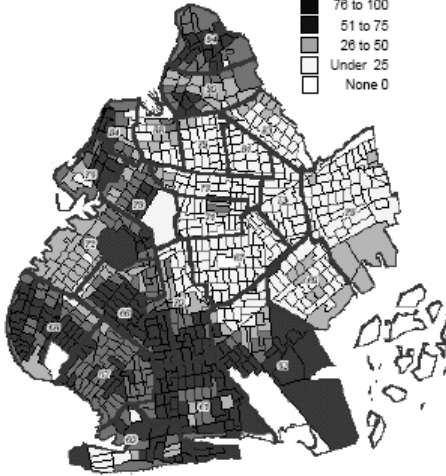
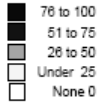
Race and the Death Penalty

- Minorities are considered for the federal death penalty more often than whites, accounting for 74 percent of federal capital cases between 1995 and 2000.
- According to the ACLU, prosecutors in Georgia “seek the death penalty in 70 percent of cases involving crimes committed by blacks against whites, but they seek the death penalty in less than 35 percent of cases involving other racial combinations.”
- And “over 60 percent of murder victims in Georgia since 1972 have been African American, but 20 of the 22 people executed [91%] during that period had murdered white victims.”
- Similar disparities have been found in Arkansas, Florida, Illinois, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma and Virginia

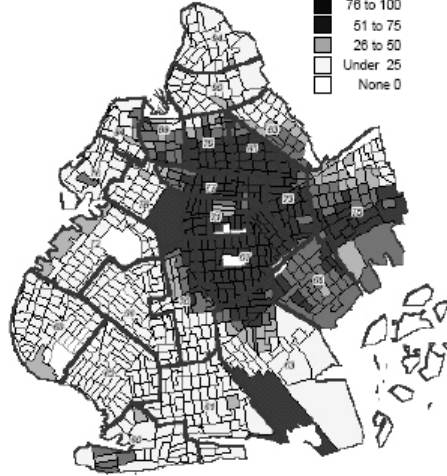
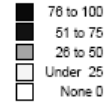
Population Profile

Brooklyn, NY

Percent White



Percent Black

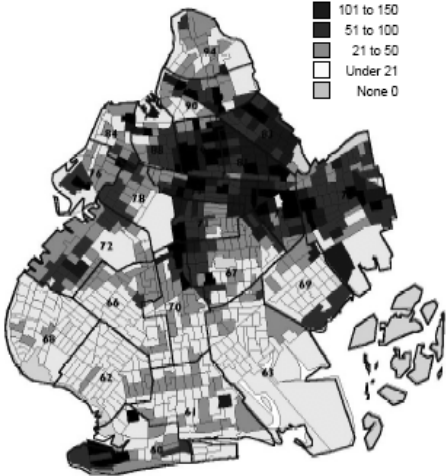
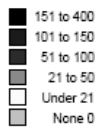


152

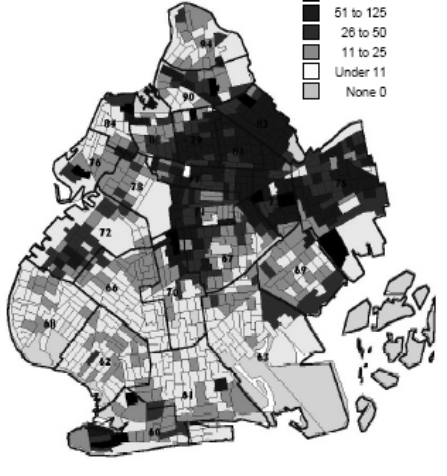
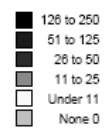
Criminal Justice

Brooklyn, NY

Jail & Prison Admissions (1 Yr)



Residents on Probation/Parole



Impact on black communities

- Families and children
- Political Representation
- Economic status



Task Force on the
City University of New York
Black Male Initiative

Final Report of the
Employment
Working Group

APPENDIX D

The City University of New York Black Male Initiative Report of the Working Group on Employment Issues

Director: John Mollenkopf, Ph.D.
Distinguished Professor, Political Science and Sociology
Graduate Center - CUNY

Executive Summary

The Employment Working Group focused on the challenges that black males have in finding employment in New York City. The group researched contributing factors and recommendations for possible actions by CUNY.

Black males in New York City have substantially lower rates of employment and higher rates of unemployment than white males and also have less employment than Hispanic males. The 2000 Census reports that only 55.2% of black males aged 16-64 have jobs, compared to 57.4% of Hispanic males and 74.2% of white males. The “disconnected” rate of young black males aged 16-24 (neither enrolled in school nor working) is 25.9%, compared to 23.6% for Hispanic men, 10.4% for Asian men, and 11.0% for white men in that age bracket. Conversely, of men aged 30 through 50 with some college, only 77.1% of blacks have jobs, compared to 78% for Hispanics, 83% for Asians, and 88.8% for whites. Thus black males are less likely to hold jobs even after controlling for age and education.

The reasons for this are many. On the demand side, labor market shifts have reduced jobs in industries that employed more black male workers in the 1950s, such as railroads, bus lines, shipping, laundries, and the postal service. Rising employment in other industries such as hospitals and construction provided some employment opportunities for black men, but the growth of employment in the service sectors benefited black women even more. Many studies have also shown that discrimination continues to be a factor working against the employment of black men.

On the supply side, black males have lower levels of educational attainment and greater involvement in the criminal justice system than males from other backgrounds, both of which are barriers to employment. In the low-wage, low-skilled sectors of the labor market, black males face competition from immigrants who may be willing to work for lower wages and women who were formerly on public assistance. In addition, non-custodial fathers do not receive the same tax benefits as do mothers.

Recommendations

1. Partner with New York City employers that provide tuition assistance to connect their black male employees with CUNY programs that would in turn lead to career advancement.

2. Develop programs to encourage black males to find jobs with employers who utilize CUNY's workforce programs through outreach to the general community.
3. Make stronger links with community-based workforce programs in black neighborhoods.
4. Partner with organizations that serve former prisoners in New York City to make CUNY's workforce programs more available to black males with criminal records.
5. Provide more job-training services in NYC jails or nearby NYS prisons.
6. Partner with 100 Black Males to find job mentors for young black males and connect them with CUNY's workforce and academic programs.

The City University of New York Black Male Initiative Report of the Working Group on Employment Issues

Working Group Members

John Mollenkopf, Director, Professor, Graduate Center, CUNY
Heidi Reijm, Graduate Student, Graduate Center, CUNY

Description of Working Group's Work

The Employment Working Group surveyed literature on employment in New York City with particular attention to employment patterns among black males. We convened a focus group of experts in the field and interviewed additional experts. These conversations were focused on the factors that contribute to low levels of black male employment and suggestions for the role CUNY could play in helping to address this problem.

Findings

I. The overall problem

A. Black males in New York City currently have substantially lower rates of employment and higher rates of unemployment and not being in the labor force (NILF) than white or Hispanic males. (Data from 2003 Current Population Survey, a sample of 3,500 individuals in New York City)

Employment Status by Race, Males Aged 16-64, New York City, 2003

Race	Employment Status			Total
	Employed	Unemployed	NILF	
NH White	75.7%	6.2%	18.1%	893,002
NH Black	51.8%	12.9%	35.3%	524,484
Hispanic	65.7%	9.6%	24.7%	667,184
Total	67.5%	8.5%	24.0%	2,465,351

B. Although black male employment levels at the end of the 1990s represented an improvement over the earlier part of the decade, recent Current Population Survey data suggests that black male employment levels deteriorated consistently relative to other groups during the 2001-2003 recession. Black male employment did increase more rapidly between 2003 and 2004 than for other groups, but this one-year gain is based on evidence from the CPS and must be confirmed by subsequent observations (Community Service Society 2005).

C. If anything, the lack of employment is even more aggravated among young black males. While black males aged 18 to 24 are almost as likely as whites only to be enrolled in school, they are far less likely to be employed and much more likely to be neither employed nor in school. Black males leaving school have worse employment experiences than other groups of males.

Employment Status by Race, Males Aged 16-24, New York City, 2000

	Employment/Schooling Status				Number
	Only In school	Only Employed	In school and employed	Neither in school nor employed	
NH White Alone	43.2%	29.8%	16.0	11.0%	134,370
NH Black	42.8%	19.5%	11.9	25.9%	122,360
NH Asian	49.6%	23.3%	16.7	10.4%	52,439
Hispanic	33.8%	30.9%	11.6	23.6%	166,410
Total	40.4%	26.9%	13.5	19.1%	494,592

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Public Use Microdata Sample

D. Even among young adults with a college degree and a job, black males earn substantially less than white or Asian males and about as much as Hispanic males. In other words, minority males get less of an income reward from earning a college degree and finding a job.

Median and Mean Wage/Salary Income in 1999 by Race,
Males Aged 21 - 32 with a College Degree

Race	N	Median	Mean
NH White	121,330	\$43,800	\$61,486
NH Black	17,311	\$32,000	\$38,447
NH Asian	29,724	\$38,500	\$51,801
Hispanic	17,653	\$31,200	\$39,852
Total	191,028	\$40,000	\$55,352

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Public Use Microdata Sample

II. Contributing factors

The literature suggests a variety of reasons for these trends, but has not coalesced around one primary cause or driving factor. Factors on the demand and supply sides of the labor market may both contribute:

A. Demand side

Employment in the New York City labor markets has been declining in the industries that have traditionally employed more black males, such as railroads, transportation, and the post office.

There has also been a hollowing out of middle-income employment opportunity. Conversely, the labor market has been growing in low-wage sectors with predominantly female workforces, such as retail, health care, and social services.

Employer preferences may also play a role. According to the literature, they may:

1. Perceive immigrants to have a stronger work ethic than young black men
2. Perceive young black men to have weaker soft (people) skills than black women or other groups.
3. Perceive black men to be more likely to have been involved in criminal activity. [Nationally, 22 percent of non-institutionalized Black men have been incarcerated (Holzer and Offner 2004)].
4. Practice “statistical discrimination” in applying group stereotypes to individuals. Having a criminal record has more of a negative impact of the likelihood of blacks being called back after job interviews than whites (Pager 2003). Resumes with white sounding names are 50 percent more likely to be called back than those with black sounding names (Bertrand and Mullainathan 2004).

B. Supply side

1. Young black males have also attained less schooling, attended schools with lower graduation rates and test scores, and go to less prestigious colleges or universities when they do attain a secondary education.
2. Young black males in New York City are more likely than other groups to encounter the criminal justice system and come away with a record. This dramatically reduces their ability to find work after being incarcerated.
3. Young black males in New York City face competition in the low wage labor market from:
 - a. Immigrant men from much lower wage countries. (It is important to note that despite many studies on this issue, there is no consensus on whether immigration has a negative impact on the native-born labor force. However, anecdotal evidence from employers confirms their preference for immigrant labor.)
 - b. Low-income women entering the labor market after welfare reform in late 1990s.
4. Recent changes in public policy have made work less monetarily rewarding for young black males:

- a. Stricter enforcement of child-support laws has led to a heavy “taxation” of wages from legitimate employment (nationally, one-fourth of black men aged 16-24 are non-custodial fathers, as are half of those aged 25-34)
- b. Non-custodial fathers are only eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit as single individuals, not as parents of dependent children. The EITC can boost the effective value of wages to mothers or custodial fathers by approximately a quarter.
- c. Native-born blacks may have a higher “reservation wage” (the minimum wage needed to make it worth taking a job) than immigrants. Immigrants accept job offers that native-born people will not. Competition (from abroad and welfare) in the low-wage labor market tends to keep wages low.

III. Challenges facing young Black males as they seek to move through school to work

A. Young black males attend high schools that often lack the supports (tutoring, mentoring, advising) that could help them connect with employment opportunities. Likewise, few black male adults fill professional role models in the schools. Young black males do not have a great deal of knowledge about the paths that lead to any career other than one in sports, music, or non-legal income opportunities.

B. Even the young black males who enter a CUNY institution, who could rightly be considered “success stories” compared to their peers, have attended schools that do not provide much information about choices within CUNY programs or how to navigate the CUNY system successfully.

C. Those black males aged 18 to 25 who have graduated from high school and are enrolled in a public institution of higher learning are less likely to be working (47 percent as opposed to 49 percent for whites and 51 percent for Hispanic males) and have lower median household incomes than white males (though higher median incomes than Hispanic males). They (and Hispanic males) may find it difficult to afford a four-year education without working while in school.

IV. Manpower Training vs. Education

While a great deal of public support has been given to various kinds of employment training programs for at-risk populations, not many have been shown to be cost-effective on a consistent basis. This has led public policy to shift toward “job readiness” and “work search” programs rather than more intensive practical skills training. On the other hand, studies have shown that additional years of educational attainment yield substantial earnings gains, even for black males attending lower-status institutions. Therefore the long-term employment effect of additional college education within CUNY is likely to be more positive than that of more short-term training programs. Encouraging young black males to stay in and progress through CUNY may be the single most effective employment program for them.

Recommendations for CUNY

- A. In cooperation with the Department of Education, CUNY might forge closer partnerships with major employers (e.g. Chase Manhattan, Macy's) as well as with unions (civil service and/or health services) to encourage employees to enroll in CUNY programs. (Some corporations provide tuition for enrolled employees; CUNY might work with them to expand its enrollment of black males. Models like the co-operative work-study approach of LaGuardia might be replicated or expanded.)
- B. CUNY might consider raising or setting aside funds specifically to attract black males from firms that already utilize CUNY's workforce programs.
- C. CUNY might create additional training programs linked to specific employer needs. Links could be made with community-based employment training and placement programs in black neighborhoods. These agencies may already have clientele and may either have relationships with employers or need those relationships that CUNY could provide.
- D. CUNY might consider new ways to work with those who have been involved in the criminal justice system. Several organizations in NYC serve individuals with criminal records and provide job training and placement, such as the Fortune Society (<http://www.fortunesociety.org/>), the Osborne Association (<http://www.osborneny.org/>), and the National HIRE Network (<http://www.hirenetwork.org/>). CUNY could make its workforce development and employer relationships available to those organizations.
- E. CUNY might examine how to provide more educational or job-related training in City jails or State prisons located within a 100 miles of New York City, such as Greenhaven, Sullivan, and Sing Sing Correctional Facilities, as well as to develop more programs to remedy educational and skills deficits among ex-offenders. (Bronx Community College used to hold classes in local prisons to assist individuals in getting GEDs and progressing towards an AA degree. The program also arranged supervised release-time internships for incarcerated individuals with companies in New York City.)
- F. Prof. Roscoe Brown suggested a possible partnership with 100 Black Males. Many members are businessmen who could mentor young black males in CUNY's workforce programs. They may also provide connections to their respective employers/companies for internship or employment opportunities for CUNY students.

Information sources:

Bertrand, Marianne and Sendhil Mullainathan. 2004 "Are Emily and Greg More Employable Than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination. *American Economic Review*. September 2004

Community Service Society. 2004. Crisis of Black Male Unemployment: Unemployment and Joblessness in New York City, 2003. Downloaded from www.cssny.org/pubs/special/2004_02labormarket.pdf, March 1, 2005.

Community Service Society. 2005. "Unemployment and Joblessness in New York City, 2004: Better, But Still a Long Way to Go." Downloaded from www.cssny.org/pubs/special/2005_02labormarket.pdf, March 10, 2005

Community Service Society. 2005. "Out of School, Out of Work...Out of Luck: New York City's Disconnected Youth." Downloaded from www.cssny.org/pubs/special/2005_01_disconnectedyouth/2005_01_disconnectedyouth.pdf, March 10, 2005.

Holzer, Harry J.; Offner, Paul. 2004 "The Puzzle of Black Male Unemployment." *Public Interest*, Winter Issue 154, p74, 11p;

Moss, Philip and Chris Tilly, 1995. "'Soft' Skills and Race: An Investigation of Black Men's Employment Problems," (New York: Russell Sage Foundation). Downloaded from <http://epn.org/sage/rstill.html>, March 16, 2005.

Pager, Devah. 2003. "The mark of a criminal record." *American Journal of Sociology* 108(5): 937-975
<http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/publications/papers/2003/pagerajs.pdf>

New York City Department of Corrections. 2005. General Facts and Figures. Downloaded from DOC website, www.nyc.gov/html/doc, March 16, 2005.

Resource persons consulted

Tom Bailey, director, Center for Community College Research, Teachers College at Columbia University.

Roscoe Brown, CUNY Center for Urban Education, former President of Bronx Community College, Past President of 100 Black Males.

Annette Bernhard, Brennan Center, NYU Law School, expert on low wage labor market.

Suri Duitch, School of Professional Studies, CUNY, expert on workforce development programs.

Harry Holzer, Professor of Public Policy, Georgetown, and Urban Institute, expert on race and gender in the labor market and employer discrimination.

Neil Kleiman, Director, Center for Urban Future, studies workforce development programs.

William Kornblum, Professor of Sociology, CUNY Graduate Center, studies youth trajectories in poor neighborhoods, use of public space.

Mark Levitan, Community Service Society, expert on employment patterns among black males in New York City.

John Mogulescu, Senior University Dean for Academic Affairs and Dean of the CUNY School of Professional Studies.

Devah Pager, Professor of Sociology, Princeton, expert on employer hiring practices with respect to race, gender, and candidate qualifications.

Walter Stafford, Wagner School, NYU, expert on racial segmentation of New York City labor market.



Task Force on the
City University of New York
Black Male Initiative

Final Report of the
Social Relations
Working Group

APPENDIX E

The City University of New York Black Male Initiative

Report of the Working Group on Social Relations

Director: William E. Cross, Jr., Ph.D.
Social-Personality Psychology
Graduate Center - CUNY

Executive Summary

The intent of the Chancellor's Task Force is not to better service black men already headed for college, but to spread a broader net such that black men with college potential who are, for whatever reason, not being tracked as such, will, through our intervention, be more inclined to enter college and the CUNY system in particular. We want to make visible those who are currently invisible. The charge to our study group was to *unearth and isolate any socio-emotional, attitudinal, and identity parameters the CUNY intervention must take into consideration in the design and enactment of a new program that increases the number of black males entering the CUNY undergraduate system.*

Differences between black males who are college bound and those who are not may have less to do with general personality and more to do with attitudinal differences. In his new book titled, *From Brotherhood to Manhood: How Black Men rescue their Relationships and Dreams from the Invisibility Syndrome*, Anderson J. Franklin, who is Professor of Clinical and Social Personality Psychology at City College-CUNY, highlights not personality but attitudinal variables that divide one group of black males from another such as future orientation, sense of hope about the future, degree of trust in mainstream institutions, and ability to feel safe in displaying personal vulnerability in front of other people.

Recommendations regarding personality, identity, and attitudinal dynamics that should be taken into consideration in the design of the new CUNY Black Male Initiative:

1. *Personality*: We should not waste time searching for personality types of syndromes
2. *Global versus academic self-esteem*: In line with the prediction that the males we recruit will evidence character and a range of personality strengths, we must make a clear distinction between global self-esteem and academic self-esteem
3. *Vigilance, Respect & Trust*: The degree of vigilance and cultural mistrust found among black males can appear "weird" to observers not familiar with the plight of black males; we must "take seriously" this need for vigilance, while, at the same time, creating a program atmosphere that communicates respect and trust.
4. *Support*: Our intervention must demonstrate to the participants that they are not expected to sink or swim; that occasional failure and mistakes are part of the process

5. *Protection Against Racism:* Black male stereotyping and racist encounters will be par for the course, and the Initiative or intervention must provide almost instant access to support
6. *“Release” of Bi-cultural Propensities:* Our participants must come to understand that it is “OK” to be part of and successful in the mainstream; we will have to become experts at separating black males who are culturally mistrustful from those who are culturally alienated.
7. *Material Support:* Many of these young males are fully cognizant of the need and value of a college education; many of these young men will not be able to attend to the “work” of the initiative unless they are helped in providing relief to their individual and family financial needs. They need [part-time] jobs;
8. *Hip-Hop Culture:* Many of the young men we attract could care less about HH Culture but others will want to see strong, positive, and proactive HP “attitudes” weaved into the fabric of the program.

Program Ideas & Recommendations:

1. New program designed to sustain and graduate black males already enrolled in a CUNY Colleges
2. Prison to college program designed for 1st time offenders who show great promise
3. *The CUNY College Shop:* Storefront operation [on 125th Street] that has a bank of computers and is staffed by people who know a great deal about educational options beyond high school.
4. *Family and Community Connection:* Have a meaningful “family” component and engage key players and gatekeepers from the community.

The City University of New York Black Male Initiative Report of the Working Group on Social Relations

Working Group Members

William E. Cross, Jr., Working Group Director, Professor, Psychology and Urban Education and Head of the Doctoral Program in Social-Personality Psychology, Graduate Center, CUNY

Anderson Franklin, Professor of Clinical Psychology, City College, CUNY

Margaret Spencer, Professor, Developmental Psychology, University of Pennsylvania

Kenneth Foster, Assistant Professor in Psychology, Texas Women's University & recent graduate Social Personality Psychology, Graduate Center, CUNY]

Roslyn Cardwell, Assistant Professor of Forensic Psychology, John Jay College, CUNY

Key contact persons providing informational support:

Thomas Parham, Former President of Association of Black Psychologists; University of California-Irvine

Joseph White, Emeritus Professor of Psychology; University of California-Irvine

Kevin Cokley, Associate Professor of Psychology; University of Missouri

Jerome Taylor, Professor of Psychology and African American Studies; University of Pittsburgh;

Tamanike Howze, Activist from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Yasser Payne, Completed recent dissertation on black males and street life

Malcom Woodlund, Post-doctoral student at Graduate Center, CUNY, working with

Martin Ruck in developmental Psychology

Martin Ruck, Associate professor at Graduate Center, CUNY, developmental psychologist working on issues facing black school-age youth (K-12).

Introduction

The Civil Rights Movement and later the explosive Black Power or Black Consciousness Movement opened new pathways for black social mobility. Between the early 1970s through the present, American society witnessed the historic expansion of the black middle class. For the same period in question, changes in both the American and global economies resulted in downward mobility patterns for persons locked into working class life. Because of the legacy of historical racism, a disproportionate number of blacks have been entrapped in this downward drift. Unlike low-income whites who are literally "scattered" across both the urban and rural landscapes of most states, poor blacks are often hyper-concentrated in urban pockets. Thus, at the same time that cities like New York are addressing the needs and demands of the well-heeled members of the black middle class, equal concern is focused on the quality of life for blacks and others caught in the web of intractable poverty. Both black men and women are encased by underclass dynamics, but the plight of black males is worthy of special attention. The scope of the challenge facing the Chancellor's Task Force is revealed by the fact that for every black

male who is enrolled in college, another is either under arrest, incarcerated or on parole. Black people are 13% of the USA population but make up 44% of the prison population and 90% of this figure are black males. Finally, recent reports show that in NEW YORK CITY up to half the black males between the ages of 16-65 are unemployed.

The intent of the Chancellor's Task Force is not to better service black men already headed for college, but to spread a broader net such that black men with college potential who are, for whatever reason, not being tracked as such, will, through our intervention, be more inclined to enter college and the CUNY system in particular. We want to make visible those who are currently invisible. The charge to our Working Group is to *unearth and isolate any socio-emotional, attitudinal, and identity parameters the CUNY intervention must take into consideration in the design and enactment of a new program that increases the number of black males entering the CUNY undergraduate system.*

While the picture before us depicts two trajectories, one leading to college and social mobility, the other mobility stagnation or downward mobility and even incarceration, identity and personality research on black men suggest that the psychological divide between the two groups is not as wide as might be imagined. In a recent research proposal developed by Roslyn Cardwell of John Jay College and myself, we plan to systematically research the overlap in personality characteristics of college enrolled as compared to incarcerated black males serving time for their first offense. Our prediction is that the overlap will be significant and beyond the expectations of many observers.

In addition to the possible absence of demonstrative personality differences between black males facing radically different life trajectories, it is possible that this pattern carries over to group identity. Margaret Spencer and her associates at the University of Pennsylvania have isolated Afrocentrically focused black male adolescents who are doing well in high school, and another group, who, while sharing the same Afrocentric Identity, are nonetheless doing poorly in school.

The payoff for unearthing differences between black males within the same cohort may point, not to personality or identity markers, but to key attitudinal differences. In his new book titled, *From Brotherhood to Manhood: How Black Men rescue their Relationships and Dreams from the Invisibility Syndrome*, Anderson J. Franklin, who is Professor of Clinical and Social Personality Psychology at City College-CUNY, highlights not personality but attitudinal variables that divide one group of black males from another such as future orientation, sense of hope about the future, degree of trust in mainstream institutions, and ability to feel safe in displaying personal vulnerability in front of other people.

If not personality characteristics the goal of our Working Group is to put a finger on the attitudes held by black males that must be understood and then challenged in order for black males to be receptive to the intervention we eventually design. Attitudes of cultural mistrust, social alienation, and a sense of having to go at life "alone" play a critical role in the black male's struggle to adjust to what Anderson Franklin calls the invisibility

syndrome, a concept he draws from the great literary work by the late Ralph Ellison in his classic novel, *Invisible Man*:

I am an invisible man. No, I am not a spook like those who haunted Edgar Allen Poe; nor am I your Hollywood movie ectoplasms. I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids – and I might even be said to possess a mind. I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me . . . When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination – indeed, everything and anything except me.

As in Ellison’s novel, one must not mistake invisibility for absence. Black males are most certainly “seen” -- it is their basic humanity, their sense of being men among men that escapes the vision of those who look their way. In place of a human being, people “see” a threat, a monster, an object of disdain, a person not “fit” for college. I do not think it premature to say that one of the critical challenges facing each member of our task force is to take seriously the threat facing black men. Anderson Franklin states that “African American males learn at an early age that to be male and black is a matter of grave concern.” It results in a level of vigilance that is difficult to fathom. An entire community – parents, relatives, and community members alike – warn black male youth that even when they are just “engaging in normal, innocent risk-taking behavior . . . they get caught in a protective net of community vigilance . . . we learn . . . about society’s leeriness of black males (Anderson, page 80).”

Recommendations

Recommendations regarding personality, identity, and attitudinal dynamics that should be taken into consideration in the design of the new CUNY Black Male Initiative:

1. *Personality*: We should not waste time or hang our hats searching for personality types of syndromes; the young men we recruit will more than likely evidence adequate to strong personalities;
2. *Global versus academic self-esteem*: In line with the prediction that the males we recruit will evidence character and a range of personality strengths, we must make a clear distinction between global self-esteem and academic self-esteem. On average, black males will show signs of adequate to high general self-esteem and we should avoid program components aimed at increasing global self-esteem, as it will be received as insulting. On the other hand, most will have been put through the ringer in school and this may create problems for their sense of self as an academic student [that is, self as student]. Black male student self-esteem, academic self, and degree of connectedness to the academic enterprise may be targets of our intervention;
3. *Vigilance, Respect & Trust*: The degree of vigilance and cultural mistrust found among black males can appear “weird” to observers not familiar with

the plight of black males; we must “take seriously” this need for vigilance, while, at the same time, creating a program atmosphere that communicates respect and trust in three ways: [1] a fundamental respect for their individual humanity and worthiness; [2] the articulation of difficult but achievable program objectives which can lead to self-respect as an academic player; [3] a series of activities, events, and achievable standards that help the participants to have a deep level of trust in the program and its objectives;

4. *Support*: Our intervention must demonstrate to the participants that they are not expected to sink or swim; that occasional failure and mistakes are part of the process but in an overall sense, each can count of meaningful support [mentors; advisors; group discussions; role models, etc];
5. *Protection Against Racism*: Black male stereotyping and racist encounters will be par for the course, and the Initiative or intervention must provide almost instant access to support, when the young men need a place and space to “debrief” after encounters with racist situations and racist attitudes [Maybe 24 hour cell phone access and communication during the first year of program];
6. *“Release” of Bi-cultural Propensities*: Our participants must come to understand that it is “OK” to be part of and successful in the mainstream; we will have to become experts at separating black males who are culturally mistrustful from those who are culturally alienated; as we gain experience and success, we can take on the more hardcore culturally alienated – but at the front end or commencement of the intervention, we need to give ourselves a chance to be successful by engaging those who are mistrustful but not alienated;
7. *Material Support*: Many of these young males are fully cognizant of the need and value of a college education; many of these young men will not be able to attend to the “work” of the initiative unless they are helped in providing relief to their individual and family financial needs. They needs [part-time] jobs;
8. *Hip-Hop Culture*: Many of the young men we attract could care less about HH Culture but many others will want to see strong, positive, and proactive HP “attitudes” weaved into the fabric of the program.

Program Ideas & Recommendations

1. New program designed to sustain and graduate black males already enrolled in a CUNY Colleges; pilot “test” at City College and Medgar Evers College before spreading to other CUNY units;

2. Prison to college program designed for 1st time offenders who show great promise; test pilot at John Jay under guidance of Dr. Roslyn Cardwell and her Lab;
3. *The CUNY College Shop*: Storefront operation [on 125th Street] that has a bank of computers and is staffed by people who know a great deal about educational options beyond high school – not just CUNY Colleges, but CUNY sponsored tech and vocational options as well. A “one-stop” place that celebrates education beyond high school and is staffed by people who know the community and can answer questions about education and the future. Where possible, black male students from City College might be part of the staff to provide guidance. *Remember, many low-income kids do **not** have computers at home and sometimes at school so an operation that puts post-high school exploration at their fingertips would be valued.* Maybe two such shops, one in Harlem and one in East Harlem [Little Puerto Rico]. Maybe get college-prep shop that trains for SAT to open place next door.
4. *Family and Community Connection*: Have a meaningful “family” component and engage key players and gatekeepers from the community. The black and Puerto Rican communities must “see” their “finger prints” all over our venture.

References

- Franklin, A. J. (2004). *From Brotherhood to Manhood: How Black Men rescue their Relationships and Dreams from the Invisibility Syndrome*. New York: Wiley.
- Bureau of Justice Statistics. (2003). *Prison Population Statistics*. Retrieved March 14, 2005, from [http:// ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/](http://ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/).
- Cross, W. E., Jr. (2005; in press). Globalism, ghettos, and Black-American youth development. In C. Daiute, Z. Beykont, C. Higson- Smith, L. Nucci (Eds.), *International Perspectives on Youth Conflict & Development*. New York: Oxford Press.
- Caldwell, R. M., & Parham, T. A. "Community Life Vs. Incarceration: The Role Of Psychologists In Re-Socializing African Americans Toward Pathways To Productivity." CEU Workshop at the annual meeting for the Winter Roundtable at Columbia University, New York, New York, February 2005.
- Dance, L. J. (2002). *Tough fronts: the impact of street culture on schooling*. New York: Routledge.
- Ginwright, S. A. (2004). *Black in school: Afrocentric reform, urban youth, and the promise of hip-hop culture*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Hill, E. M., Ross, L. T., & Low, B.S. (1997). The role of future unpredictability in human risk-taking. *Human Nature*, 8, 287-325.
- Kitwana, B. (2002). *The hip hop generation*. New York: Basic Civitas Books.
- Payne, Y. (2005). *The Street Life Project: How street life oriented U. S. born African men demonstrate notions of resiliency in the face of inadequate economic and educational opportunity*. Unpublished dissertation, Social-Personality Psychology, Graduate Center-CUNY.
- Ogbu, J. U. (1994). Racial stratification and education in the United States: Why inequality persists. *Teachers College Record*, 96, 264-298.
- Ogbu, J. U., & Stern, P. (2001). Caste status and intellectual development. In R. Sternberg & E. Grigorenko (Eds.), *Environmental effects on cognitive abilities* (pp. 3-37). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Spencer, Margaret B. (2003). *Lecture on Black identity and University of Penn Program Intervention*. Delmos Jones Lecture Series, Graduate Center – CUNY, Spring 2003.
- Unger, D. G., & Wandersman, A. (1985). The importance of neighbors: The social, cognitive, and affective components of neighboring. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 13, 1985.
- Wilson, G. & Dunham, R. (2001). Race, class, and attitudes toward crime control: The views of the African American middle class. *Criminal Justice & Behavior*, 28, 259-278.

Appendix 1: Ideas collected from key figures across the country.

Interviews with Experts

In writing the final report for our Working Group, we will have interviewed a significant number of experts and generally speaking we are asking them two questions:

1. What three things should our task force be very careful to *avoid*?
2. What three things must we be certain to do or accomplish in order for our intervention/program to be successful?

As an example of the type of feedback we are receiving, here are the items noted by Tamanike Howze, an activist from Pittsburgh:

- A. Things to avoid:
 1. Disrespect;
 2. Lack of understanding their plight;
 3. Not providing a “full” support system;
- B. Things to do:
 1. Respect them and understand them – I mean “really” understand them; Listen to them, provide a forum that is theirs;
 2. Have the resources for them; ask them what they think you can do; ask them what they need to succeed. Many of these young men need work; many come without skills on how to negotiate educational success. Many do not have academic prep for college. They will need staff to be their family who are willing to go the extra mile to help them succeed. Understand the culture in which they are a part. Understand they have not built a culture of learning, a culture of excellence – we must do this on a community level. Teach them truth. Teach them our history. Provide ongoing inspiration with multiple forms;
- C. Celebrate! Celebrate them! Celebrate their successes, no matter how small or big. Assign staff members who have walked in their shoes.

Suggestions from Kevin Cokley, Associate Professor of Psychology at University of Missouri:

- A. Things to avoid:
 1. Avoid making appeals to intrinsic motivation. In other words, do not recruit by exposing the merits of learning and simply using the rhetoric of the importance of education. Black male students are more extrinsically motivated than most other groups;
- B. Things to do:

1. Related to first question, I would say that making appeals of extrinsic motivation would be fairly effective. Give very concrete examples of how going to college can make hem more financially secure. Show examples comparing the lifetime earnings for someone who goes to college versus those who do not.

Jerome Taylor, Professor of Psychology & Black Studies, University of Pittsburgh

NEGATIVE FACTORS: Diminishing or withdrawal of funding, absence of black faculty, lack of opportunities for mentoring by black faculty, ineffective student support services, little opportunity for forming and nurturing sense of community among black males accepted into the program, failure to offer assistance to students negotiating confrontation or encounter.

POSITIVE FACTORS: Inverse of negative factors; help in coping with racial prejudice; persuading students that achievement is a method for honoring the memory of black lives stolen from Africa, enslaved in America, oppressed by Jim Crow, slaughtered for their freedom; creating student teams or informal networks that share ideas, offer assistance, and identify resources that can be used to achieve excellence in the classroom.

Joseph White, Professor Emeritus, University of California at Irvine

Critical factors for success:

1. Look into program at University of Georgia;
2. Make CUNY a welcoming and friendly place within and without.
3. Develop a marketing strategy that works by helping black males in 9-thru-10th grade to fully understand what needs to be done to apply to college [classes needed; requirements, plan for making this happen];
4. Faculty willingness to learn new approaches to teaching;
5. A curriculum that reflects their existence – both culturally and in terms of critical issue facing black community;
6. CUNY self-examination to flush out what it is really willing and ready to do to make the intervention successful.

Focus Group:

Results focus group with college age Black males conducted by Dr. Malcolm Woodlund [Post-Doc in developmental Psychology at GC] in the Washington DC area. The young men offered many insightful comments.

1. They valued the extrinsic motivations for going to college such as increased income and access more than the intrinsic motivations.
2. They expressed a need to be able to support their families in some kind of way, while they are in school. Many of them care for younger siblings or their parents

- who may be unable to work for varying reasons. Likewise, they want their own spending money. This thinking would fall within the material support section.
3. All emphasized the need for consistent support. They thought it was important to have a network of people in place at the university with a similar background and belief system to help them negotiate the system so that they would not feel alienated from their surroundings. Some of the suggestions offered were colleges providing mentors that follow through, dispatching recruiters that they feel they can relate to or would want to model themselves after.
 4. They highlighted the need for parental involvement. All of their parents want to see them do well; however, none of them have attended college -- in fact none of them finished high school. Consequently, the parents feel intimidated and frustrated with the process of financial aid and their child's class schedule can also be overwhelming.

Some of the more novel suggestions that the group had were

- A. Have classes that discuss issues pertaining to Black males, similar to a freshmen experience class but just for Black males.
- B. Increasing access to vocational skills in addition to their primary academic course load.
- C. They also expressed concern about recruiters that talk to them simply because they are Black. They suggest that these recruiters are not genuine and could care less about them except that they are Black and can fill a quota. They want to know, "Why would I fit in your school?"