Adapting Retention Practices to Support and Retain Black Students from High School to University

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Peer Mentoring: Adapting Retention Practices to Support and Retain Black Students from High School to University

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Abstract

This proposal will explore perceptions of the institutional forces that create support for Black or African American male and female students attending a four-year institution in California. Previous studies have found that the lack of retention amongst Black or African American students at institutions is based on the following main factors: campus racial climate, unawareness of resources, and absence of mentorship. In an effort to support this population, Black high school students will be mentored by current Black college and university students. The Big Little Program is an initiative that will address the negative factors that decrease the productivity and success of Black students. The Black college and university students will guide the juniors and seniors in high school and provide assistance with navigating high school responsibilities as they matriculate into college.

Keywords: Black students, high school students, PWIs in California, persistence, and retention

Introduction

In the state of California, there are nearly 2.2 million Black residents, yet the educational pipeline for Black Californians does not provide equitable resources to advance Black educational success (State of Higher Education for Black Californians, 2019, p. 3). The term "Black" will refer to individuals who identify as African American or from the African diaspora. Black high school students are graduating from high school at higher rates compared to previous years, but the graduation rate is still lower than all other racial/ethnic groups. Black families understand the value of higher education, and with the increase of Black high schoolers graduates, there has been an increase of Black students applying to college. "In 2016-17, 89 percent of Black 19-year-olds had a high school diploma or equivalent" (State of Higher Education for Black Californians, 2019, p. 8).

However, there is still a disparity in bachelor's degree achievement between Black and White students. The majority of Black Californians who attend community college have low completion rates. Only 3% of Black students in California Community Colleges transfer after two years, and only 35% after six years. While "63 percent of Black community college students do not earn a degree, certificate, or transfer within six years" (State of Higher Education for Black Californians, 2019, p. 4). "This is about 10 percentage points less than the six-year transfer rate of White students" (State of Higher Education for Black Californians, 2019, p. 20).

Essentially, most Black students who attended college left without a degree. This problem does not only persist at community colleges but at four-year institutions as well. Only 9% of Black CSU first year students complete their degrees in four years, and only

57 percent do so in six. Only 93 percent of Black students enrolled in for-profit colleges earn their degrees within six years (State of Higher Education for Black Californians, 2019, p. 4). While Black students are able to matriculate from high school to college, they are unprepared for the new academic expectations at their postsecondary. For instance, specific soft and hard skills need to evolve when navigating the complexity of an academic environment, such as time management, study habits, socialization skills, and research abilities.

Further research indicates Black students attending underperforming high schools are not provided the necessary courses, curriculum, or classroom supplies to be prepared for college/university, which can cause students not to transition to college/ university. "Nearly 67% of Black high school graduates are still [ineligible] to apply to the University of California (UC) or the California State University (CSU) system because their high schools have failed to provide them with the opportunity to access and complete college preparatory courses" (State of Higher Education for Black Californians, 2019, p. 3). Ultimately, due to the lack of college preparation, some high school students are unable to transition to college. One of the main factors is Black students are attending high schools that do not offer a college preparatory curriculum, such as the A-G requirements, which are used to assess if a student is eligible for a college or university. In 2017, there was a 17% gap between Black and White students' completion of A-G requirements.

In an effort for the United States to fulfill the American dream, specifically in California, the promise of equal opportunity and success for its residents, regardless of race/ ethnicity or income, requires improving education to ensure racial equity in college

preparation, access, and success. The educational experience for Black students is proportionally different compared to White students who have ample resources and access. Many minority students, specifically Black students, attend high schools located in poorer districts, resulting in insufficient educational expenditure. The goal of this proposal is to improve the transition pipeline from high school to college graduates.

History

Institutions initially only allowed cis gender-heterosexual Christian White men to pursue higher education. Over time, the United States Supreme Court agreed separate amenities offered to Black and Whites were equal. In reality, schools serving pupils of color, on the other hand, got much less money than schools serving white students, resulting in overcrowding, insufficient resources, and underpaid instructors. In 1952, the Supreme Court merged five cases under the term Brown v. Board of Education, and Thurgood Marshall personally presented his argument before the Supreme Court. On appeal, he argued a variety of legal arguments, the most prevalent of which was that segregated education systems for Blacks and Whites were fundamentally unequal and violated the Fourteenth Amendment's "equal protection provision" (United States Courts, 2022). The end of legal segregation was followed by efforts to equalize student achievement; however, educational inequality continues to be illustrated in other ways.

In 1964 Civil Rights Act was signed by President Lyndon Johnson, which called for the desegregation of schools and other public places to end discrimination on any premises. About sixty years ago, Brown v Board and Civil Rights Act was passed, yet many “public districts and schools remain segregated by race and socioeconomic status today” (Chatterji, 2020). Since 2000, 128 communities have tried to split from bigger

school systems in states ranging from Maine to Utah. The secession of wealthier and whiter communities reduces municipal tax income and increases the number of racially segregated schools (Chatterji, 2020). Over half (52%) of White students in California high schools are prepared for UC/CSU eligibility, compared to just over one-third (35%) of Black students. This is a 17-percentage-point equity disparity that has been constant since 2010 (State of Higher Education for Black Californians, 2019, p. 20). Furthermore, community colleges are more affordable to Black students in comparison to four-year institutions, but students have a difficult time transferring due to remedial classes.

Literature Review

Research indicates Black college students' retention is low. Each study briefly mentioned the systematic inequalities that affect Black students by addressing how institutions initially only allowed cis gender-heterosexual Christian White men to pursue higher education (McClain, et al., 2017; Brooms et. al., 2021). The efforts of Historically White institutions (HWIs) to exclude Black students caused Black people to form Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) throughout the United States of America (Brooms et. al., 2021). The American higher education system has made tremendous progress, yet there are areas that need improvement. While institutions have tried to become more diverse and inclusive, marginalized communities are still ostracized. (McClain, et al., 2017; Salvo et al., 2019).

While predominantly White institutions (PWIs) may not be explicitly biased or racist, certain policies, perspectives, and curricula have been historically designed to benefit the needs of White students (McClain, et al., 2017; Salvo et al., 2019). White 25- to 29-year-olds were 55% more likely than Black 25- to 29-year-olds to hold a bachelor's

degree or higher in 2019 (Hanson, 2021). Research indicates academic failure beginning in primary school for Black students jeopardizes their ability to graduate high school and matriculate to college stems from socioeconomic livelihood (Brooms et. Al., 2021). Many factors contribute to Black students' retention and academic failures, such as lack of mentors, stressors, and campus climate (Salvo et al., 2019).

Ultimately, the numerous deficits combined with students' gendered and racial identities cause Black students to feel alienated in educational environments (McClain, et al., 2017; Salvo et al., 2019). A consensus amongst researchers is that the lack of engagement with faculty has been linked to low retention among Black students, whereas; positive faculty mentorship has been related to high retention. (Salvo et al., 2019). However, the definition of a mentor has evolved as time progresses. Initially, a traditional mentor was a one-on-one relationship cultivated through a trusted guide council for less experienced or younger mentees (Sinanan, 2016). Now, a mentor's definition has broadened to include formal and informal experiences, group, and academic mentoring. Yet, a commonality of reciprocal and intentional mentorship is needed to foster growth and development between parties (Brooms et. al., 2021). Researchers indicate a strong relationship between a mentor and mentee can improve student outcomes regardless of ethnic background (Liou, 2016). Often in high school, if students are not supported by their instructors, it can impact their motivation to complete classwork and matriculation. Similarly, a college student can benefit from having a mentor.

The academic setting is filled with lots of changes, including adjusting to new academic expectations. To navigate the complexity of an academic environment, certain

skills need to evolve, such as study habits, socialization skills, research abilities, and networking (Sinanan, 2016; Winkle-Wagner, 2020). However, these skills may be unfamiliar territory for first-generation and/ or Black students matriculating from high school to college. Also, if Black college students do not have a support group to express and process the microaggressions, racism, and discrimination faced, it can impact the students' health negatively.

According to studies on minority stress, students of color encounter cognitive stressors unique to their cultural origin or status as members of a minority community on campus. (Lige et al., 2017). Clark & Mitchell (2018) examined the minority stress concept in relation to Black college students' mental health and the campus culture impact. African American college students may be more susceptible to feelings of imposter phenomenon (IP) due to the environmental cues as the "other" or inferior group in higher education and society (Lige et al., 2017). Perhaps African American K-12 pupils with higher self-esteem and self-efficacy have stronger coping abilities when dealing with a potentially discriminatory and alienating atmosphere at PWIs (Lige et al., 2017). On the other hand, African American students who do not perceive their racial identity positively may internalize their feelings due to being considered "other." (McClain & Perry, 2017). One way to ease the feelings of "other" is to establish a haven or community for students. Institutions should have a program or organization created as an academic and social counter-spaces due to the negative experiences with the social and academic communities at the HWI (Clark, 2018). Research suggests students involved in an organization foster a sense of commitment to campus and improve their time management skills (McClain & Perry, 2017).

After analyzing the differences between HBCUs and PWIs, the research provided insight into the Black student experience and low retention. While no institution is perfect, HBCUs have created an innovative way to ensure a positive campus environment that fosters positive retention, which PWIs could learn to implement (Winkle-Wagner, 2020). Based on my research, I discovered limited studies surrounding mentoring students of color at all levels, especially in high school. Studies indicate that institutions need to determine how to best support Black women and men through orientation, programming, campus-wide events, or graduation ceremonies (McClain, et al., 2017; Winkle-Wagner, 2020). Additionally, further research in this area could provide insights into supporting this particular population and other underrepresented communities of color.

Remedial Education Problems: Prior to California Law, AB 705

California community colleges have different values, but they all share a common mission. California Community College's mission is to assist students with transferring to a four-year institution by providing a roadmap to career education through developing a student's foundational skills in Math or English. Initially, remedial courses, also known as pre-collegiate courses, focused on basic math and English skills and prepared students for college-level work. Unfortunately, students remain in the basic remedial classes that often prevent them from completing college and begin their career preparations. In 2011, "it is estimated that states and students spent more than $3 billion on remedial courses last year with very little student success to show for it" (Remediation Higher Education's Bridge to Nowhere, 2012, p. 2). The data indicated that 51% of students enrolled in two-year colleges and 21% of those enrolled in

four-year universities are held in remedial courses (Illinois Community College Board, 2013). Nearly 40% of students in remedial courses at community colleges never complete their course. Less than 10% graduate from community colleges within three years, and slightly over 33% of students complete their bachelor's degrees in six years. Students are capable of passing the remedial course. Still, research indicates 30% of students who pass remedial courses do not attempt their gateway courses within two years (Remediation Higher Education's Bridge to Nowhere, 2012, p. 2). Students' educational progress has been delayed due to remedial courses, which cause them to spend money, time, and resources on a class that does not count towards transfer credit. Remedial classes are hindering students' success. Students placed in low remedial courses are unable to enroll in a class that counts towards a bachelor's degree if they do not pass. The percentage of students needing remediation based on race is the following: African American 67.7%, Hispanic 58.3%, White 46.8%, and other 48.9%. Additionally, African American, Hispanic, or low-income students are more likely to head towards remediation dead end which means they have few opportunities of advancement in academic career (Remediation Higher Education's Bridge to Nowhere, 2012, p 10). Moreover, this is a staggering amount especially considering community colleges serve underrepresented communities.

Christopher Edley is the president of The Opportunity Institute, a program that aims to "increase social and economic mobility and advance racial equity through partnership and collaboration with those seeking to promote" systemic change (The Opportunity Institute, 2015). Edley stated students take the same course three times and are still not succeeding. The students begin to use a majority of their financial aid

eligibility and get discouraged. Students then drop out and never return to complete their college degrees (Sreenivasan, 2019).

Background on AB 705 & Remedial Education Progress

To decrease the number of students dropping out and increase the transfer rate in California, former Governor Jerry Brown signed Assembly Bill 705, also known as AB 705, in 2017. The Bill officially took effect on January 1, 2018, and "all community colleges are required to comply with AB 705 by the fall 2019 semester" (Perez, 2019). Assembly Bill 705 created changes for California's Community Colleges' placement structure for English and math courses. For example, community colleges offer alternatives to remedial classes such as statistics. For instance, algebra skills are taught concurrently in a statistics class. The Bill was implemented in fall 2017, which allows high school grades to be used for students' college placement, and it restricts colleges from denying transferable college courses. Ultimately, students can begin their college journey in classes they have the best chances of fulfilling the English and math requirement for a bachelor's degree. A report on 47 community colleges in the Central Valley, the Inland Empire, and greater Los Angeles, revealed that in 2018, the transfer level classes approximately increased by twice the proportions previous year (The Campaign for College Opportunity, 2019). The transfer level increased by 43% in the introductory English sections in the fall schedule across the three regions. The transfer level increased by 38% of introductory math sections across the three regions (Odekar, 2020). The number of colleges offering these models grew from 10 to 39 in English composition, from 5 to 33 in statistics, also, from 0 to 30 in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) courses across the 47 colleges surveyed. In compliance

with the Bill, most colleges enable all students to enroll directly in transferable college-level courses, yet some schools made an exception.

Current Problems with Remedial Educations - AB 705

Despite the progress made by the Bill, an area of weakness was discovered that requires further attention from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (Chancellor's Offices), colleges, and legislation. Many colleges have remedial courses constituting a majority of the course offerings, especially in math. Only 10% of the 47 colleges met the benchmark in pre-transfer coursework in English and math. Over 30% of introductory courses were below the transfer math section (The Campaign for College Opportunity, 2019). The data indicates colleges provide a small portion of the transfer level of quantitative reasoning and statistics when most students need math for their degree. Yet, course schedules are geared toward transfer level and pre-transfer STEM programs based on calculus. In the three regions, STEM-related courses represent 51% of the introductory math offerings. Following an examination of the websites of 11 implementer colleges, it was discovered that these colleges offer a substantial number of remedial courses. (The Campaign for College Opportunity, 2019). However, none of the colleges provided data on enrolling below transfer classes, decreasing students' odds of completing the English and math requirements. Without this clear data, students cannot make informed decisions or protect their right to enroll in courses with the best opportunity to complete the transfer level of English and math.

Solution

Many colleges are not adhering to the legislation's math component, and they are continuing to offer many remedial classes even if students cannot enroll in them.

Community college administrators and faculty believe in the benefit of remedial courses; hence it is listed in the college schedules. This mindset remains even though statewide and local data indicate the likelihood of completing a degree at a community college declines with every remedial course a student takes. Remedial courses undermine the benefits from AB 705 and continue to increase the likelihood of economic and racial inequalities amongst marginalized communities (The Campaign for College Opportunity, 2019). In the future, colleges should address the problem by offering primarily transfer-level courses in English and math and a few stand-alone remedial courses. Also, aligning courses to match the student's program needs and providing corequisite support for transfer-level courses such as liberal arts, math, etc., if a college does not already have a system in place. Ensuring transfer level material is clearly stated on the college website, and various departments explain students' rights to enroll in transfer-level courses (The Campaign for College Opportunity, 2019). This information should be clear regarding the differences and likelihood of completing a transfer-level versus a remedial course on their educational progress.

Addressing the Problems

U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson signed two acts to address the systemic inequity in education. Economic Opportunity Act (EOA) is federal legislation that established a social program aimed to "facilitate education, health, employment, and general welfare for impoverished Americans" (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022). Also, the Higher Education Act of 1965 aims to "strengthen the educational resources of our colleges and universities and provide financial assistance for students in postsecondary and higher education" (American Council for Education, 2022).

Upward Bound is funded through the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (EAO) and the Higher Education Act of 1965 and was established on August 26, 1965. Upward Bound, also known as Trio Program, provides opportunities and resources for participants to succeed in their precollege performance. Upward Bound serves high school students from low-income families and or students who are first-generation college students who would be the first in their family to acquire a bachelor's degree in the United States. The goal of Upward Bound is to increase the high school graduation rate and have students enroll in a two or four-year institution (U.S. Department of Education, 2022).

There are numerous other organizations such as *College Match* and *Minds Matter* which provides mentoring and assistance to low-income families. College matches help students from low-income families get into and graduate from the nation's top colleges and universities (College Match). Each student is provided a counselor who guides them through the application process to graduation. Minds Matter allows high school sophomores and juniors to attend a summer program to experience college life, such as taking college-level courses that are transferable. While all of these programs have been effective, they do not focus solely on Black students (Minds Matter).

Unfortunately, not enough students know about Upward Bound and its resources which caused it to be closed down or relocated to other areas. Since it is a federally funded program, it requires students to participate each year to maintain funding. Also, College Match and Minds Matter are extremely competitive and only select the top 10% from high schools. The question then becomes how one does assist as many Black students as possible. Often high school counselors do not provide enough personalized assistance to students and classrooms may be overcrowded.

Theoretical Analysis

Many factors contribute to the achievement gap of Black students as they transition from high school to a college or university. The values and culture that working-class and low-income students have as adolescents do not stop once they enter college. If Black students come from working-class or low-income, then; Tara Yosso's Community Cultural Wealth Model (CCWM) can be used to determine the culturally relevant events that would allow programs to discover the best way to recruit and retain Black students (Patton, et al., 2016, p. 254).

Yosso describes six types of capital that communities of color' intersectionality to form cultural wealth, which can create support mechanisms for students. While the educational system was initially meant for heterosexual, cisgender white males, it has become available for all people. Black students need a support system as they transition from high school to college where they can receive mentorship and guidance on determining the institution they would want to attend. Every Black student's socioeconomic livelihood varies, but all Black students are culturally rich. Yasso defines aspirational capital as an "individual's capacity to remain hopeful and optimistic despite the presence of obstacles" (Patton, et al., 2016, p. 255). Black students are constantly breaking systemic barriers but having support is imperative. By using Yosso's Community Cultural Wealth Model when mentoring Black students, it can cultivate a community that disrupts the negative narratives. As current Black high school students and Black college and university students navigate their institutions, they are able to foster community.

Bourdieu's deficit model of capital explains how economic, cultural, and social capital is fundamental to shaping social class structures. Economic capital allows for the investment of time and resources in the development of adolescents, which is linked to future educational and occupational success. "Capital in that one's social network becomes broader, more influential, and more conducive to opportunity and further enhancement of one's other capital stocks" (Patton, et al., 2016, p. 252). Black students have questions but do not know how to frame their questions as they are not aware of the process of applying to college. Additionally, once a student is in college, they may not be aware of the resources available to them at no extra cost. For instance, student psychological services and tutoring but having a mentor would assist with navigating a new environment. Bourdieu mentions economic capital, which mentors can provide as they will assist mentees who would accentuate the capital. Mentors, in retrospect, devote their time and resources to mentees, which influences their educational careers. Mentors will assist mentees in enrolling in and graduating from colleges and universities. These mentees will subsequently enter the workforce that will benefit society by contributing their knowledge of their particular skill. Navigational capital refers to communities of color's capacity to navigate systems not designed to benefit them. The Black mentees and mentors will have a community post-university that fosters a strategy to navigate discrimination and microaggression in the workplace.

Organization’s Purpose

Big Little Program is an official organization supported by the institution's leadership team. The program started from the initiative of a student leadership organization on campus that partners with the enrollment and admissions team at a university. The program consists of a Black junior or senior in high school being matched with Black college student. The mentor will guide the student and provide assistance with navigating how to fulfill post high school life as they matriculate into college.

Learning Outcomes

- Big Little participants will demonstrate knowledge of institutional resources.
- Mentees and mentors will foster academic and social support networks inside and outside the classroom
- Mentees and mentors will create a community-based learning environment
- Mentors will develop effective strategies to teach while employing critical reflection skills when discussing potential problems with mentees.

Services provided include, but are not limited to:

- Weekly academic advising and check-in
- Assistance with the college and financial aid application process during the summer
- Generate a list of potential general education classes mentees can enroll in once at their institution and how to decrease the chances of remediation dead end.
- Local college visits on weekends and Spring Break tour (for eligible juniors) of Northern California colleges/universities.
- Social, cultural, and leadership enrichment activities and community service.

  *Due to COVID-19 all activities are currently happening virtually via Zoom.

Qualifications of Mentors

- Identify as Black, African American, Black biracial, multicultural, African, Afro-Latinx, or within the Black Diaspora.
- Be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident and enrolled in a 2 or 4-year college degree.
- Be a current freshman, sophomore, junior, senior at a university in California
- Cumulative university GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Willing to be trained and committed to be a mentor for a minimum of one year that can be renewed at the end of the academic year.

Qualifications of Mentees

- Identify as Black, African American, Black biracial, multicultural, African, Afro-Latinx, or within the Black Diaspora.
- Be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
- Participate in service projects and have intentions to earn a 2 or 4-year college degree.
- Be a current 10th or 11th grader at a high school in California
- Cumulative high school GPA 2.5 or higher

Purpose of Qualifications

The Big Little Program's goal is to become a non-profit that will receive funds from the federal government to assist with supporting students. While the application process and qualifications to be a mentor and mentee seem excessive, it will be used to personalize the services provided to future participants.

Steps for Mentee Admission

1. Submit Application

2. Interview

The interview serves to determine a mentee's interest in the program. The interview would occur in person unless the student has a work conflict then it would be conducted virtually via Zoom.

3. Admission Decision

Admitted students and parents/guardians will be notified via the email listed on the application.

4. Once admitted, students attend mandatory orientation with a parent/guardian.

5. “Speed Dating”

One set of mentors stay seated at the same table, while the mentees move from table to table. If two people register a mutual interest in a second date, they receive each other's contact information. This way mentee and mentor can determine if they have shared interests.

Steps for Mentor Admission

1. Submit Application

2. Group Interview is meant to assess how students interact with peers.

3. Admission Decision

Admitted mentees will be notified via the email listed on the application and have two to three business days to accept the offer. Once the offer is accepted, they will sign I-9 documents, W4 forms, and an acknowledgment form that they agree to work for one

academic year. Also, the students will receive paperwork on how to set up direct deposits.

5. “Speed Dating”
One set of mentors stay seated at the same table, while the mentees move from table to table. If two people register a mutual interest in a second date, they receive each other's contact information. This way mentee and mentor can determine if they have shared interests.

Application for Mentees: Pleaseclickheretoaccesstheapplication

Communication:

During the initiative the Black mentees and mentors will continue to have two-way communication to grant all parties an opportunity to share personal experiences. All mentees and mentors are in an informal WhatsApp/ group me chat, and all official communication about weekend campus tours and events will occur through email.

Application for Mentor: Pleaseclickheretoaccesstheapplication

Orientation Weekend:
Day one - Saturday
7:30am - 9:00am Check In
Check in upon arrival and bring belongings to the mentor's room. A continental breakfast will be served at the institution’s cafeteria

9:00am Welcome address
During the Welcome address students will meet their orientation leader

10:00am Group time
Interact with orientation leader and new classmates while participating in ice breakers

Noon Lunch on the patio

1pm Academic Major Meeting
Each mentor will speak with student to discuss realistic expectations and how to prepare over the summer

2pm Campus tour

3:30pm group time
Community Expectations
The directory of community standards will discuss expectations of mentees

4pm Finish up projects that have been worked on (Myers-Brigg tests and Enneagram)

5:45 Dinner for students

6:30pm - 11:30pm Fun nighttime activities led by orientation leaders (movie night)

11:30pm Mandatory Hall check in for all orientees

Day 2 - Sunday

8:00am Breakfast

9am Housing/ Commuting
Representatives from each area will host a discussion on the specifics of living on campus or commuting to campus

11am final group bonding activity time / closing

11:30am move out of residence halls, grab lunch, and depart from institution

University Tour Weekend Itinerary Example - Saturday (different from orientation weekend)

- 9:45am - 10:00am
    - Parents drop off students at Big Little Program's office
- 10:00am - 11:00am
    - Departure
- 11:00am - 12:00pm
    - Arrival at institution
- 12pm - 1:00pm
    - Students eat lunch
- 1:15pm - 2:30pm

    - Tour of campus
- 2:45pm - 3:30pm
    - Depart from institution and arrive at Big Little Program's office and parents pick up their children
- I will be making an example itinerary for the first weekend but moving forward parents will drop students at Big Little Program's office and then students will do a day trip to a university's campus
- Students will bring sleeping bag or sleep on couch of mentor's dorm rooms
- Admissions or Enrollment Management of the institution that is being visited would pay/ provide food
    - Students would use the institution's cafeteria for that weekend

How to recruit Black mentors:

- Contact the leaders and have the information disseminated amongst Black fraternity / sorority
- Contact leaders of Black student organizations on campus
- Contact African American Studies department chair to have the information dispersed amongst faculty who would share with their students
- Advertised in institutions' official eblasts, newsletters, and social media
    - Promoted on the university's service and job section of the website
- Word of mouth

How to recruit Black mentees:

- Contact the neighboring high school counselors within the vicinity of the university so they can share the information
- Shared during announcements and placed on the school's bulletin
- Partner with Los Angeles Urban League and access their network
- Partner with Black fraternities and sororities
- Connect with the local and surrounding church communities around the institution

- Word of Mouth: Current Black students at the university can share the program with their friends and family

Training for Black Mentors:

- First mentors fill out a form of their interests and what they hope to get out of the program
- Having an in person meeting so all mentors can meet each other and have lunch on campus
- Black mentors will create a list of things they wish they knew before they started their college journey as a group activity
- Case studies for example: How to address the problems Black high schoolers face as they transition into university
- Training is once every week during the course of one semester

Budget

	Budget	
TItle	Description	Cost
Bus & Driver	Ordering a bus and driver for college tours	$1,000
Hiring 2 graduate assistants	Support program	$48,000
Campus Tours	Schedule tours on campus in advance	$0
Mentors	Paying mentors	$240,000
Food	Snacks for traveling and events	$10,000
Hiring a Director of Big Little Program	Support program	$90,000 + benefits
		$389,000

Each mentee will have two students each, and they will be paid $18 per hour with a maximum of 20 hours a week to work. Once the program starts, there will be 20 mentors and 40 mentees, and depending on the outcome of the first year, the program can increase its offerings. Each graduate student is paid $18 per hour with a maximum

of 20 hours a week, which means each graduate assistant would make $24,000 a year. After each training and mentor session, each mentor will complete a reflection. Based on the mentor's perspective, the reflections will be utilized to evaluate what modifications need to be made within the program. The hourly charge would be the recommended method of paying the charter bus in order to optimize the program's savings.

Cost Breakdown of Charter Bus Rental

Bus Type	Per Hour	Per Day	Per Mile
56-Passenger Charter Bus	$135 – $190	$1,350 – $1,750	$4.75 – $6.00
25-Passenger Minibus	$130 – $170	$1,300 – $1,600	$4.50 – $6.00
20-Passenger Minibus	$120 - $165	$1,250 - $1,500	$4.25 - $5.50
18-Passenger Minibus	$120 - $160	$1,200 - $1,450	$4.00 - $5.00

Moral & Ethical Analysis

Currently, the educational pipeline from high school to college does not adhere to Catholic Social Teachings (CST). All students should receive a quality level education from primary to secondary school and have the opportunity to pursue and complete higher education. The differences in educational readiness are based on an individual's location as their geographical location correlates with the education a person would receive. The Catholic Church created principles of social teaching that provide a compelling guide for building a just society. All eight themes are central to the heart of

Catholic social tradition and are instrumental, but the program is a solution to the problem students encounter and focuses on three to bridge the achievement gap made by the educational system. The Big Little Program strives to enhance the life of and dignity of Black students by granting students an opportunity to develop – body, mind, and soul. The value of human dignity emphasizes “everyone has inherent dignity and infinite worth” (Catholic Social Teaching). The program’s goal is to foster while aiding individuals as they grow. Community is about developing and fulfilling individuals in relationships with others. Also, it aims to address a need by Black students and demonstrate commitment through assisting students through the emphasis on solidarity.

Council for Advancement Services (CAS) created a working standard for professionals who provide services in higher education. CAS is used as a shared ethical principle and values that guide working professionals in higher education. Of the seven values, only four will be used to analyze the Big Little Program. In contrast, the program’s goal is to inform students about their resources and prepare them for the transition to college. The program allows students autonomy to determine their personal goals and choices. As autonomy is about “empowering others’ freedom of choice and fidelity is “faithfulness to a duty” (CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education). All of the parties involved in the program go through an extensive evaluation to ensure they are truly passionate and committed to their respective roles. Beneficence is “contributing to the welfare of others” by staff, mentees, and mentors treating everyone courteously to maintain a campus climate towards positive learning and personal growth. Furthermore, this is highlighted through affiliation as it actively promotes connected relationships to foster community.

Assessment and Measurement

Ideally mentees and mentors are developing a strong bond where they have open communication of their experiences. In an effort to form these communities organically a lot of activities will occur such as board games, speed dating, and travel

opportunities. Furthermore, by having an open and honest connection in which mentees and mentors can discuss current issues and how to help one another. Mentors will be sent an anonymous survey during the fall and spring semester to see if they want any changes to be made to the program. The questions are as follows:

Description of survey:

We would love to hear your feedback! This form allows you to communicate directly with the Big Little Coordinators on things you liked about some events we have had, things you would like to see more of ways we can improve the events, overall ways we can better support you. Please don't hesitate to fill it out, and we appreciate your support in making this unforeseen year still very memorable.

1. Which event(s) have you enjoyed so far?
2. What have you liked about our events so far?
3. What aspects of our events could be improved?
4. Which day and times of the week work best for you to mentor?
5. Are there any changes you would want made?

In addition, demographic information will be asked at the end, such as age, sexual orientation, transfer from a two year to a four-year institution, and gender to assess if a student believes their background influences their experience.

Once mentees have completed their first year at their year of college a focus group will be conducted to grant participants an opportunity to share personal experiences. The questions are as follows:

1) How did you choose the university you are attending/ attended?
2) What was your perception of higher education growing up?
3) What factors went into the decision-making process for where to attend?
4) Describe your college experience.

5) What was your motivation for getting through school?
6) Did you transfer at all or think about transferring at all?
7) How has your culture or ethnic background impacted your college experience?
8) What groups, communities, or individuals have been most supportive of you during your college year?
9) What do you like most about your university?
10) Is there any support you felt you could have benefitted from, but your mentee did not provide?

Program Outcomes

The measures of success will consist of monitoring the progress of Black high school students' completion as they apply and enroll to a two- or four-year institution. Also, Black high school students will complete a minimum of one community college course that will transfer towards their desired institution. Hopefully, mentees will remain with their mentor once they transition in college and university informally. The goal of this program is to foster a sense of community between mentees and mentors and increase retention of students at their high school or university. Ideally, mentors and mentees graduate within four to six years.

2022 Fall - August 29 - December 16, 2022

DATE	EVENT
Aug 29 (M)	**Classes begin for Mentees**

Sep 2 (F)	**Mentor application is open - advertised on social media, word of mouth, and various organizations**
Sep 5 (M)	**No classes - Labor Day**
Sep 30 (F)	**Last day for mentors to submit applications and the mentee application opens. Mentor interviews are sent and conducted that week.**
Oct 3 (10)	**All mentors meet and play ice breakers. Also, everyone will participate in an activity to determine what they hope to get out of the program and a consensus on desired meetup day and time for training.**
Oct 14 (M)	**Training is once a week: group activity - what students wished they knew before they started university**
Oct 17 (M)	**Training is once a week: how to do a check in and how to help with FAFSA**
Oct 31 (M)	**Training is once a week: case study - knowledge of general education core requirements**
Nov 7 (M)	**Training is once a week: case study- how to navigate racism and microaggressions**
Nov 14 (M)	**Training is once a week: case study: address any questions students may have and a check in with their needs** **Mentee application closes**
Nov 21 (M)	**Training is shorter and a thanksgiving dinner after**

Nov 23-25 (W-F)	**No Classes - Thanksgiving Holidays and applications for Mentees open**
Dec 12-16 (M-F)	**Final Examinations week so virtual study rooms held via Zoom to support Mentors**
Dec 21 (W)	**Mentors on winter break**

Please note the calendar year of fall 2022 - spring 2022 is an example schedule for sophomores and juniors in high school. Depending on the students' needs, the contents of this calendar may change for mentees and mentors.

2023 Spring - January 9 - May 5, 2023

DATE	EVENT
Jan 9 (M)	**Mentors' classes begin**
Jan 10- 13 (T-F)	**Interviews for Mentees**
Jan 16 (M)	**No Classes - Martin Luther King, Jr., Day**
Jan 17 (T)	**Mentees know admission decision and invited to orientation with parents**
Jan 21 (Sat)	**Orientation for Mentees and their parents**

Jan 23 (M)	**Speed Dating with mentors and mentees**
Feb 10 (F)	**Mentees meet mentors: check in and ice breakers. Also, mentees ask questions and mentors do a Q/A panel**
Feb 23 (TH)	**Mentors work with mentees on scholarship application, personal statement, or resume**
Feb 24 (F)	**Mentors work with mentees on scholarship application, personal statement, or resume**
Feb 27 - Mar 3 (M-F)	**No Classes - Spring Break Holidays**
Mar 11- Mar 12 (Sat-Sun)	**Orientation Weekend**
Mar 17 (F)	**Case Study: Knowledge of general education core requirements**
Mar 31 (F)	**No Classes - Cesar Chavez Holiday**
Apr 5 (W) - 7 (F)	**No Classes - Easter Holidays**
Apr 28 (F)	**Case Study: How to navigate racism and microaggressions**
Apr 29 - Apr 30 (Sat-Sun)	**Check in and have the survey completed. Then group dinner will occur.**
May 1 (M) - 5 (F)	**Celebrate Mentors and Mentees that are graduating**

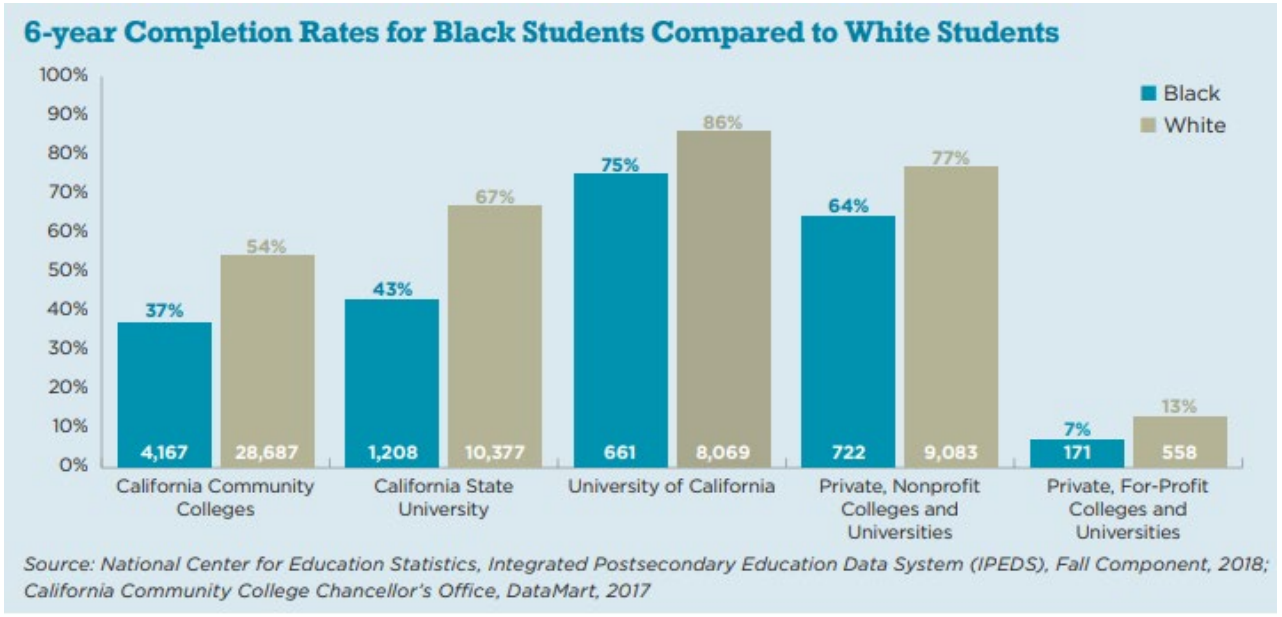
May 6 (Sat)	**Undergraduate Commencement**
May 7 (Sun)	**Graduate Commencement**

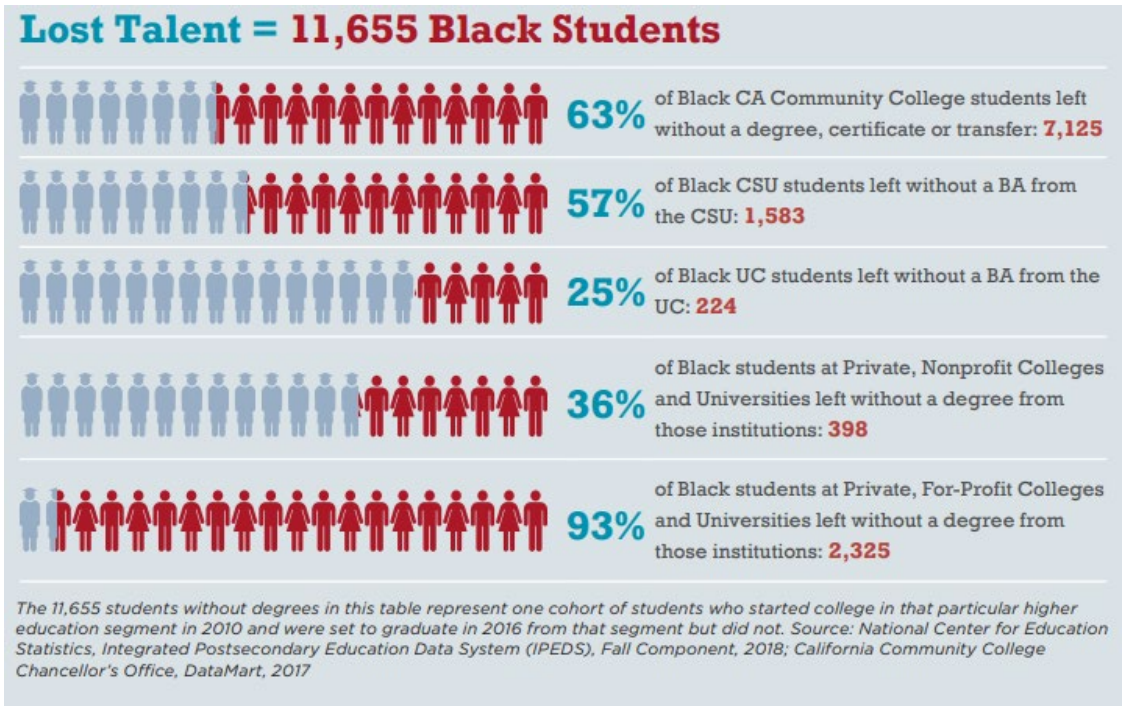
Conclusion

College students have a unique experience but including another identity layer as a Black or African American student presents challenges. African American students enroll at extremely high rates in two-year colleges and attend four-year institutions more than in past years. However, further progress needs to be encouraged and recognize African Americans' particular needs. The Big Little Program cultivates a support system to assist students in transitioning from high school to an institution with knowledge about campus resources. Ideally, all colleges should protect students' rights to enroll in transfer-level courses and inform students of the benefits and risks of remedial classes. Unfortunately, not all colleges and university advisors educate students on the possible pitfalls of remedial coursework. Hence, the Big Little Program will serve to inform students about campus resources and share courses designed to maximize a student's success by naturally addressing retention problems.

Graphics


More Black students are graduating from high school than ever before
19-Year-Olds with a High School Diploma (89%)
College preparation is increasing, but the majority of Black students are not prepared by their high schools to be eligible applicants to the UC or CSU.
A-G Completion (35%)
65%
of Black high school graduates are not prepared for college by their schools
Source: California Department of Education, 2017; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample, 2016, includes adults 25-64 years old


6-year Completion Rates for Black Students Compared to White Students
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Black
White
37%
54%
43%
67%
75%
86%
64%
77%
7%
13%
4,167
28,687
1,208
10,377
661
8,069
722
9,083
171
558
California Community Colleges
California State University
University of California
Private, Nonprofit Colleges and Universities
Private, For-Profit Colleges and Universities
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Component, 2018; California Community College Chancellor's Office, DataMart, 2017


Lost Talent = 11,655 Black Students
63% of Black CA Community College students left without a degree, certificate or transfer: 7,125
57% of Black CSU students left without a BA from the CSU: 1,583
25% of Black UC students left without a BA from the UC: 224
36% of Black students at Private, Nonprofit Colleges and Universities left without a degree from those institutions: 398
93% of Black students at Private, For-Profit Colleges and Universities left without a degree from those institutions: 2,325
The 11,655 students without degrees in this table represent one cohort of students who started college in that particular higher education segment in 2010 and were set to graduate in 2016 from that segment but did not. Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Component, 2018; California Community College Chancellor's Office, DataMart, 2017

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