



EAB

Building a Sense of Belonging for Black and Latino Men

Meet the Research Team and Introductions



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- 1 Is There a Crisis of Men in Higher Education?
- 2 3 Critical Relationships for Black and Latino Men's College Success
- 3 Breakouts

Male Enrollment Dip Sets Off Alarm Bells



Widespread Reports Warn of a “Crisis of Men” in Higher Education



‘Male College Crisis:’ Male High School Graduates Going to College at Much Lower Rates than Women



A Generation of American Men Give Up on College: ‘I Just Feel Lost’



Men in College: Another Casualty of the COVID 19 Pandemic



Colleges Have a Guy Problem



The Male College Crisis is not Just Enrollment but Completion



The Pandemic is Speeding Up the Mass Disappearance of Men from College



What’s Going on Here, Guys?



The Male Enrollment Crisis



The Crisis of Men Continues to Worsen

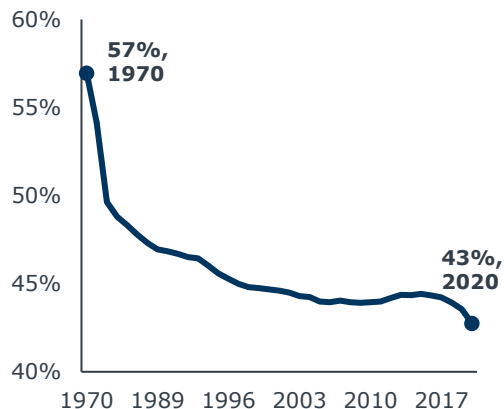


What’s Behind the Growing Gap Between Men and Women in College Completion?

Less of an Obvious Crisis Than We Thought

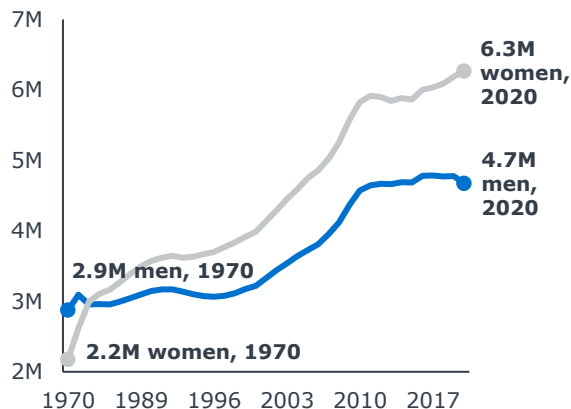
Men Constitute Lowest Share of College Enrollments in History...

Men as Percentage of Total Enrollments, U.S. 4-Year Universities



...But Real Numbers Show More of a Plateau Than a Plummet

Total Enrollments by Gender, U.S. 4-Year Universities



“The growing gap between men and women is not because men are enrolling less **but because women are enrolling more**. That’s not a crisis.”

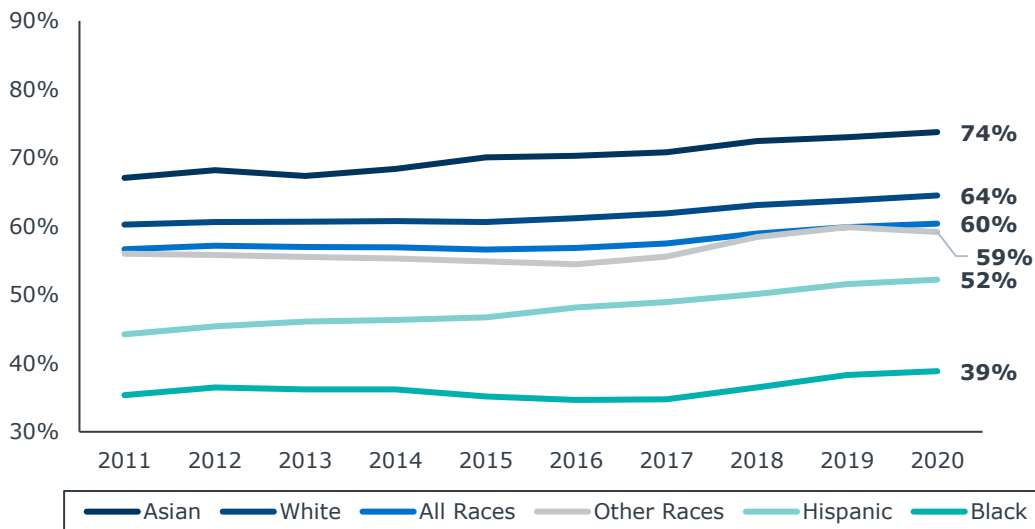
—Carine M. Feyten, Chancellor and President, Texas Women’s University

One Crisis We Can Be Certain About



Despite Moderate Growth, Black and Latino Male Graduation Rates Lag Peers

Average Six-Year, Bachelor's Degree Graduation Rates for Men by Race, 2011-2020

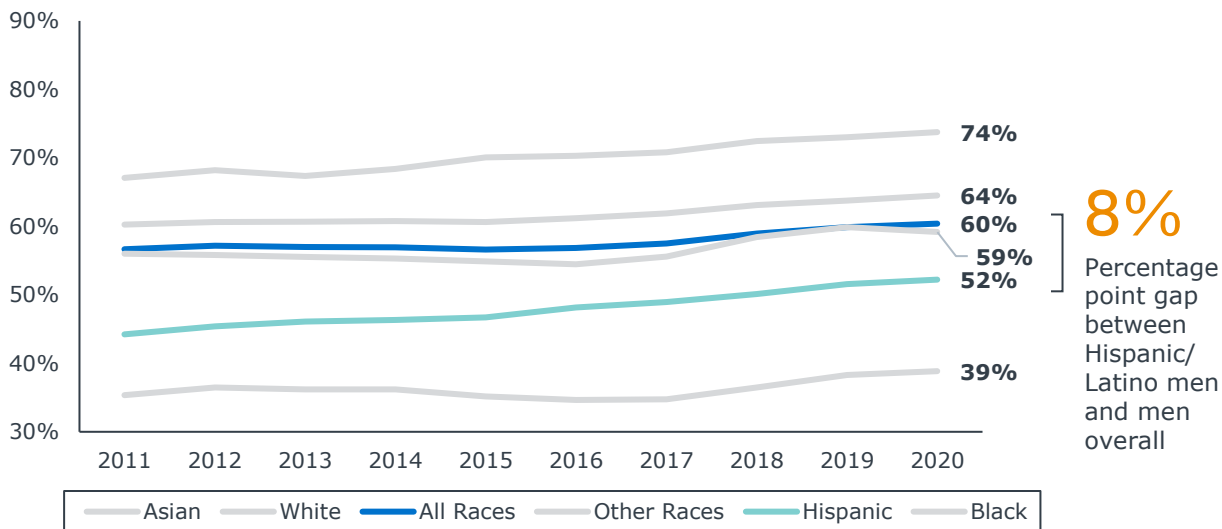


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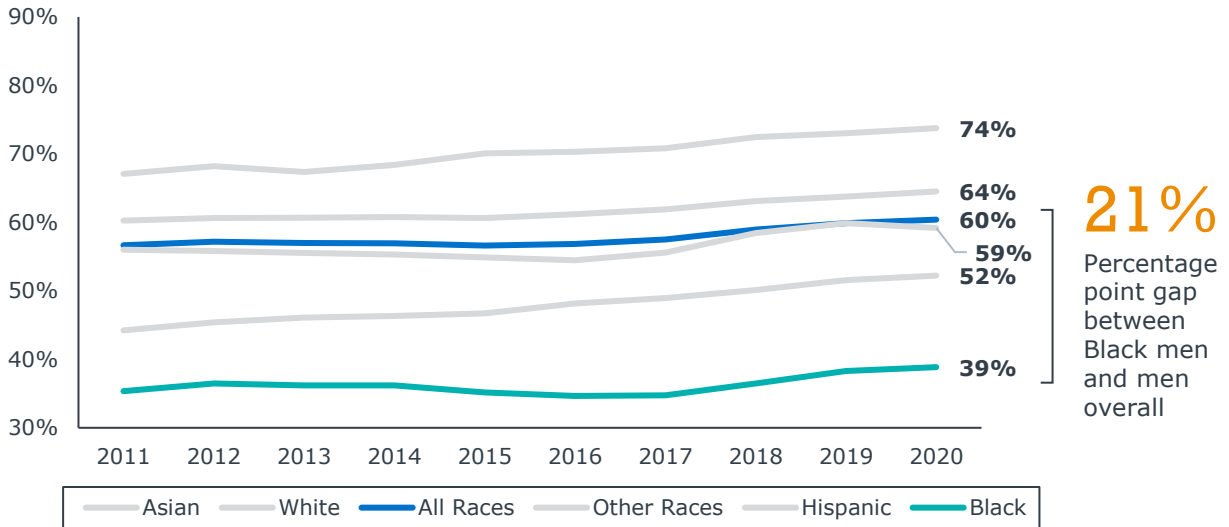


One Crisis We Can Be Certain About



Despite Moderate Growth, Black and Latino Male Graduation Rates Lag Peers

Average Six-Year, Bachelor's Degree Graduation Rates for Men by Race, 2011-2020



21%
Percentage point gap between Black men and men overall

This is one question we ask our partners

You've invested in bridge programs, cultural centers and other identity-based programs... Why might there still be a gap in graduation rates, what else is happening or not happening?

The Missing Piece: Sense of Belonging

Black and Latino Men Struggle to Connect to Campus Community

Leaders Stress Importance of Belongingness for Black and Latino Men

Some of the biggest issues [for Black and Latino men] are still connections and helping the students make connections, [both] how they are treated in the classroom and outside the classroom.”

*Edwin Mayes, Director of First-Year Experience,
Case Western Reserve University*

Sometimes belongingness gets over-used as a buzzword, but if we don't get belongingness right as foundational to a student's success, then we may create a barrier or a hole early on in the student's experience that is hard to climb out of. **What we see with Black and Latino men is that when the belongingness hole happens early, it makes it hard to come back...** being connected, comfortable and valued in the community strengthens the trajectory for success.

*Connie Carson, Vice President of Student Life,
Furman University*

Research Finds Sense of Belonging Is...



Lower for male students than for female students¹



Lower for first-gen and minority students than for white students²



Critical to improving Black/Latino male college completion gaps³

1) Bonner, 2018.
2) Gopalan & Brady, 2020.
3) Lee et al, 2011.

Source: Bonner, Kenyon Robert, "[Making Sense of Belonging for Black Undergraduate Men on a Predominantly White Campus](#)" (2018). *Dissertations available from ProQuest*. AA110841138; Gopalan, M., & Brady, S. T. (2020). "[College Students' Sense of Belonging: A National Perspective](#)". *Educational Researcher*, 49(2), 134-137; John Michael Lee, Jr. et al, "[The Educational Experience of Young Men of Color](#)", College Board, 2011; EAB interviews and analysis.

What Does It Mean to Belong?

EAB's 3 Components of Belongingness for Black and Latino Men

Social Connection

"I belong at this institution."

1



- Meaningful friendships
- Support network
- Relationships where it is safe to express your authentic self

Representation

"Others like me belong here too."

2



- Visible in-group role models and peers
- Feeling like you can relate to others in the campus community
- Faculty and Staff in roles throughout campus, especially leadership

Academic Efficacy

"I can succeed in college."

3

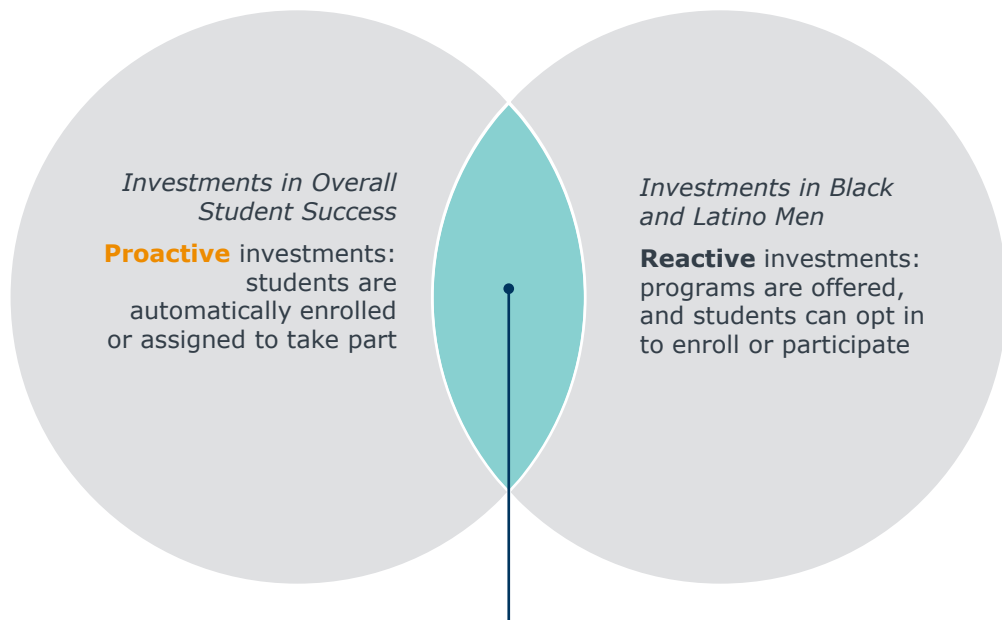


- In-classroom engagement
- Sense of purpose, long-term goals for college education
- Resilience to overcome academic setbacks

A Needed Mindset Shift



Thinking Beyond Opt-In Models of Black and Latino Men's Involvement



What opportunities can colleges **proactively offer that contribute to Black and Latino men's retention, graduation, and belongingness?**

Building a Sense of Belonging for Black and Latino Men

3 Existing Relationships to Maximize for Student Success



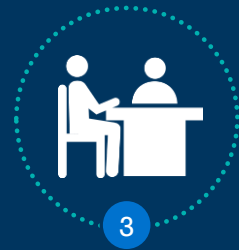
1

Relationships with **peers**



2

Relationships with **families**



3

Relationships with **mentors**

1

Is There a Crisis of Men in Higher Education?

2

3 Critical Relationships for Black and Latino Men's College Success

3

Eliminate Financial Roadblocks to Persistence

Building a Sense of Belonging for Black and Latino Men

3 Existing Relationships to Maximize for Student Success



Relationships with **peers**



Relationships with **families**



Relationships with **mentors**

Peer Connections Critical, but Stop Too Soon



Opportunities for Same-Group Social Connections Dry Up After First Year

The Importance of Peers for Black Men and Latino Men

- 1. Latino males who feel supported by peers have **stronger aspirations for succeeding** in college¹
- 2. Social engagement and peer associations are critical to Black and Latino male **academic performance**²
- 3. Peer-to-peer bonding between Black men enhances and supports **persistence in college**³

Why Stop at the First Year?

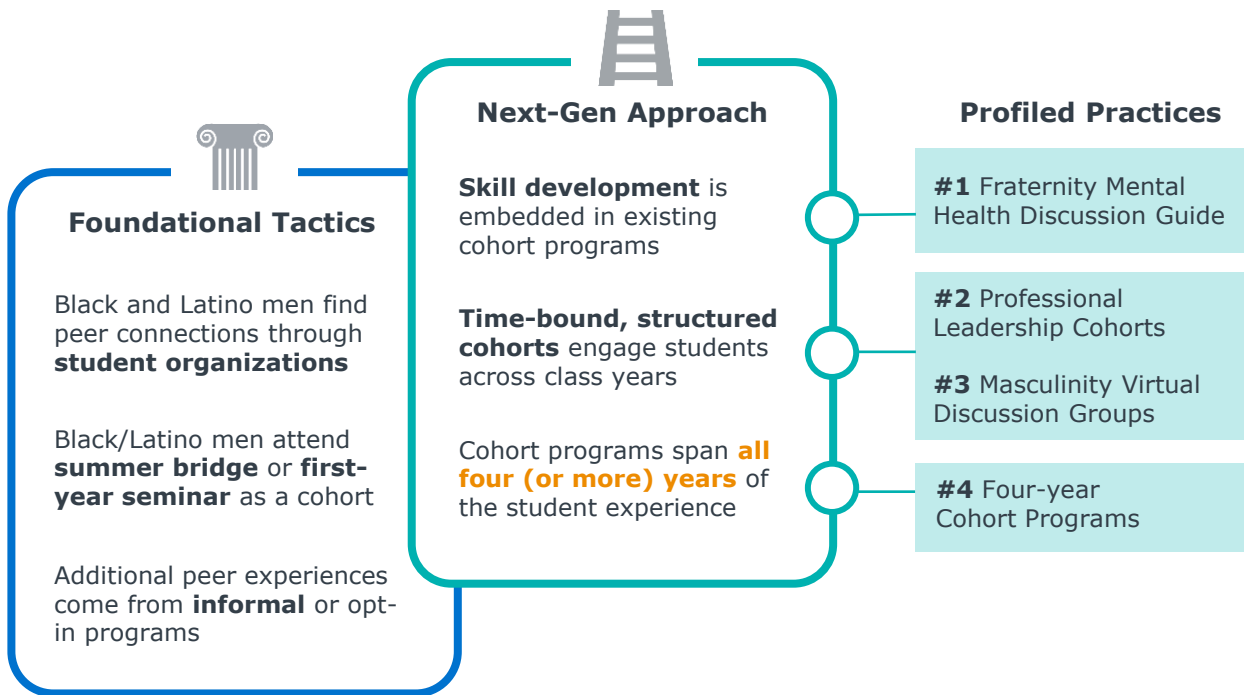
"We have a summer bridge program for underrepresented students, and on the last day I always talk to them about preparing for the shock when everyone else gets to campus. The compositional diversity that we have in the bridge program? **Our students may never see that again in four years of college.**"

*Dean of the College
Private Liberal Arts College*

Source: Saenz, Victor B. and Ponjuán, Lewis, "[Latino Males: Improving College Access and Degree Completion--A New National Imperative](#)", *PERSPECTIVAS: Issues in Higher Education Policy and Practice* 1: Spring 2012; Brooms, Derrick R., Clark, Jelisa, and Smith, Matthew, "[Being and Becoming Men of Character: Exploring Latino and Black Males' Brotherhood and Masculinity Through Leadership in College](#)," *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 2017; Brooms, Derrick R. and Davis, Arthur R., "[Staying Focused on the Goal: Peer Bonding and Faculty Mentors Supporting Black Males' Persistence in College](#)", *Journal of Black Studies* 48(3): 305-236, 2017; EAB interviews and analysis.

1) Saenz & Ponjuán, 2012.
2) Brooms, Clark, and Smith, 2017.
3) Brooms & Davis, 2017.

Maximizing Relationships with Peers





Leveraging Peer Support for Mental Health

Omega Psi Phi Toolkit Equips Members to Start Tough Conversations

Toolkit Educates Black Fraternity Brothers on Impacts of Depression and Stress



Fact sheets on how depression can impact Black men

Conversation guides for discussing mental health with peers

Group activities to practice conversation and empathy skills



The college years and young adulthood can be tough and full of stressful situations. We might be being away from home for the first time, making family and friends, and being alone in a new place. We might be in charge of our own food, clothing, shelter, and sleep schedules for the first time—and not always managing so well. We might be encountering new and difficult academic work and jobs. We might be having relationship problems or breakups. A lot of us are worried about finances. Our encounters with racism and discrimination in daily life add to our burdens. Sometimes there are a lot more problems than pleasures.

All of these stresses can leave us exhausted, irritable, or sad. If these "blues" last more than a few weeks, or make it hard to carry on with daily life, you may be depressed. Depression is one of the most common mental health problems, but it often goes unnoticed and untreated among young African American men. We're expected to be strong in a crisis, hide our sorrows, and keep personal problems within the family. And a nationwide survey found that about 30 percent of college students reported feeling "so depressed that it was difficult to function" at some time in the past year.

The good news is that depression, like other illnesses, is treatable, and we can recover.

PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL SIGNS

Depression symptoms can be different for each person. Someone with depression may feel sad, anxious, empty, hopeless, guilty, worthless, helpless, tired, irritable, or restless. Other potential symptoms of depression include:

- ❑ Aches, pains, headaches, cramps, or digestive problems
- ❑ Loss of interest in activities that one used to enjoy, including sex
- ❑ Problems concentrating, remembering information, or making decisions
- ❑ Problems falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much

Omega Psi Phi and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. are proud to partner with the National Institute of Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMH) and the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. The information is intended to raise awareness of the mental health challenges associated with depression and stress that affect Black American men and their families.

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An HBCU's Take on Four-Year Cohorts

Fostering Brotherhood Through the Men's Achievement Center



About the African American Male Initiative (AAMI)



NC Central University – African American Male Initiative



Four-year cohort program run out of the Men's Achievement Center



Individual meetings, social programming, and career preparation

Key Components of the Program



Proactive Invitations for Black Men

Applications begin in the late spring/summer for incoming freshmen



Peer Cohort Model

40 students are accepted into each cohort



Living-Learning Community

Shared living space creates opportunities for peer support and interaction

Supporting Young Men at NCCU

“ Every day we get new young men coming [to the Men's Achievement Center] looking for guidance. This is the place where [they] can get it and get back on track.

Dr. Roderick Heath

Director of the Men's Achievement Center, North Carolina Central University

Engaging Black Men Over Four Years

Yearly Themes Create Cohesion Around Cohort Activities



1

Freshman Year:
Introduction



- Acclimating to campus and getting acquainted with the institution
- Ensuring students join clubs and are active participants in the community

2

Sophomore Year:
Goal Setting



- One-on-one meetings
- Social events
- Academic goal-setting and assessments

3

Junior Year:
Major Focused



- Facilitating smooth transition from prerequisites to major coursework
- Verifying that students are comfortable with major and course selection

4

Senior Year:
Career Readiness



- Updating resumes and LinkedIn pages
- Graduate school application support
- Graduation ceremony includes a blazer and ring conference

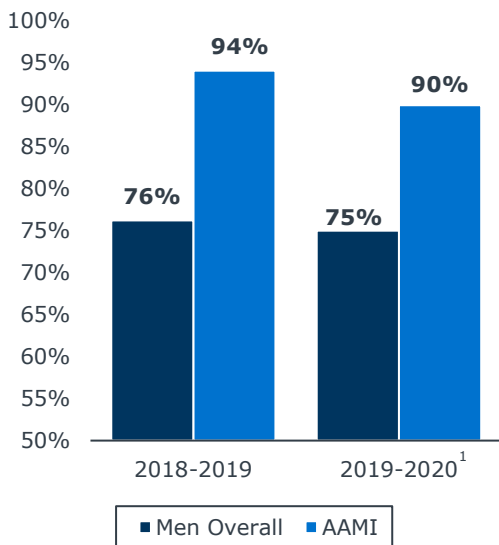
Outperforming Institutional Expectations

AAMI Boosts Male Retention and Graduation



AAMI Outperforms Male Student Average

First-Year Retention Rates, NC Central U



600

Black men who participated in AAMI graduated from NCCU

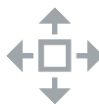
30%

Higher graduation rate for AAMI students than overall campus

4000+

Sign-ins to the Men's Achievement Center

Expanding to Serve More Men



NCCU is developing a Latino Male Initiative and a cohort program for international male students from Africa

1) Retention rates impacted by Covid-19.

Taking the Cohort Model Online



YBMen Project Provides a Private Virtual Setting for Cross-Year Cohorts



About the Young Black Men (YBMen) Project

- Run by independent organization housed in University of Michigan¹
- Program staff recruit cohort of 20 Black men across class years to participate
- Participants join a private Facebook group for 2-12 weeks
- Discussion facilitated by YBMen staff follows a **structured curriculum** focused on masculinity and health

Example YBMen Curriculum

- Week 1: Introduction
- Week 2: Black Masculinity
- Week 3: Mental Health Education
- Week 4: Health and Well-being
- Week 5: Plans for the Future

3 Reasons YBMen's Model is Effective

Minimal Cost to Adopt

YBMen staff responsible for outreach and logistics

Relevant to Black Men

Prompts based on current events and pop culture

Moderated Discussions

Trained staff select prompts and keep comments on track

1) Currently available only in Michigan and Ohio but expansion is planned.

Positive Outcomes for Cohort Members



YBMen Sees High Participation, Gains in Leading Indicators of Persistence

847

Men have participated at five colleges in Michigan and Ohio

94%

Of participants viewed the Facebook page every week

83%

Actively participated in Facebook discussion every week

▶ Pre- and Post- Survey Comparison Shows Positive Outcomes

- ↓ Decrease in depression symptoms
- ↑ More progressive definitions of masculinity and manhood
- ↑ Increased feelings of social support

“ Our partnership with YBMen allows us to understand better the difficulties that our students face, provide them with resources that directly address their needs and **position them to be retained and to graduate in a timely manner.**”

*Dan Thomas
Assistant Director,
Bell National Resource Center*

The Case of the Missing Black and Latino Men

UT Knoxville Identifies a Clear Need for Support



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

UT Knoxville Identifies Significant Disparity for Black and Latino Men



23%

Lower graduation rate for Black and Latino men at UT Knoxville than overall campus in 2020

“

Year-by-Year Decline for Black and Latino Retention

When you look at [Black and Latino male] retention and persistence rates ... there's a good chunk of them that come back after year one, but [the rates] continue to decline every year for four years.

- Dr. Amber Williams
Vice Provost for Student Success, UT Knoxville

”



Extending the Cohort Program to Four Years

UT Knoxville's Success Academy Invests in Ongoing Peer Support



UT Success Academy

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE KNOXVILLE

- ▶ Four-year cohort program for Black and Latino men
- ▶ All first-year Black and Latino men invited to apply
- ▶ Launched fall 2021, now in its second year with 250+ students participating

Three Required Activities Where Students Connect with Peers and Staff



Academic engagement through group meetings, peer coaching, and seminars



Career advising and tutoring through UT Knoxville's Academic Success Center



Social convenings such as a reception for students and families and study parties

Staffing Models to Ensure Year-Round Support for Students



1). New role added 2022. © 2022 by EAB. All Rights Reserved. eab.com

Source: [UT Success Academy](#); EAB interviews and analysis.

Early Signs of Success for Black, Latino Men



Success Academy Sees Higher Retention Rates, Larger Incoming Class



67%

Increase in new students participating (from 100 in 2021 to 167 in 2022)

91%

Retention rate for Success Academy, 13% higher than non-Success Academy Black and Latino men



Two Degrees of Separation

'Raise Hand'

- Hand raise for Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. already on your campus
- A colleague/peer at UTKnoxville or NCCU(or Fayetteville State)
- A DEI or Strategic Plan that has a goal of graduation rates improving (YBMen Virtual)

Building a Sense of Belonging for Black and Latino Men

3 Existing Relationships to Maximize for Student Success



Relationships with **peers**



Relationships with **families**



Relationships with **mentors**

Maximizing Relationships with Families



Foundational Tactics

Email newsletter to parents/families sent quarterly, in English

Parent/family coordinator shares **personal contact info** for 1:1 support

Black and Latine families convene **once, typically at first-year orientation**



Next-Gen Approach

Parent/family information is shared in **multiple languages and media**

Staff provide information and support in **virtual, 1:many** formats

Black and Latine families convene **regularly, throughout all four years**

Profiled Practices

#5 Bilingual Family Resources

#6 Virtual Family Network

#7 On-Site Family Cultural Programs

A Clear Need for Spanish Resources

Few Institutional Websites have Family Resources in Spanish

UC Berkeley's family resource guide



Of **U.S. News top 50** institutions have family resources in Spanish

Williams' family website



Of **U.S. News top 50** liberal arts institutions have family resources in Spanish



Breaking Down the Language Barrier

Two Family Info Sources You Should be Translating for Latine Families

1

Campus Events



UT Austin offers onsite Spanish interpretation at campus events for families

- ✓ Easier for Spanish-speaking families to participate
- ✓ Sends message that speaking Spanish is normal at UT

2

Family Newsletter



Texas A&M mails postcard version of family newsletter with one side in Spanish

- ✓ Information can reach Spanish-speaking families
- ✓ Print format accessible for homes without computers

Let us know in Chat:



- Does your campus offer this information in Spanish already?
- What other information sources could you translate into Spanish?

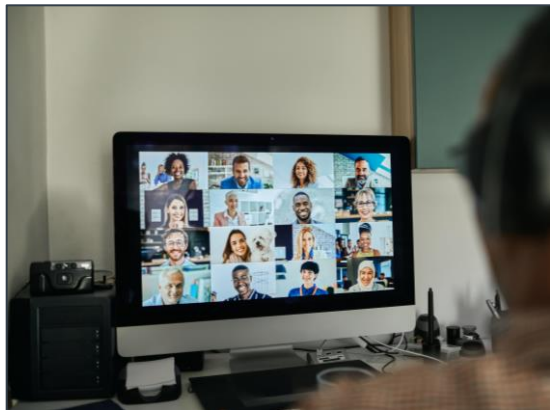
Connecting Families Virtually



Video Chat Provides an Accessible Way to Socialize and Learn



University of Alabama's Black UA Family Affinity Group Video Meetings



1 hour video chat meetings held 1-2 times per semester



Afternoon/evening timing is convenient for most time zones and schedules



Mix of casual chat and guest speakers (e.g. Black Faculty/Staff Association)



Meetings use Zoom so families can access by computer or phone

60+

Family members joined Black UA's most recent Zoom meeting



Building Community, Strengthening Support



As Black UA Grows, More Families—and Students—Access Resources

Black UA's Facebook Group Fosters Sense of Community

"Because the families are connected, **students are connecting as well...** so outside of the parent connections, that helps them matriculate to graduation and just stay connected."

*Tawanna Brown
Assistant Director, Parent & Family Programs
University of Alabama*



Other common discussion topics:

- ✓ How to find a campus resource
- ✓ Antiracist efforts on campus
- ✓ Campus safety for Black students
- ✓ Celebrating student 'wins'

Participation in Black UA Continues to Grow

750+

Family members joined Black UA as of August '22

~4x

Growth in Black UA Zoom call attendees since 2020

Building a Sense of Belonging for Black and Latino Men

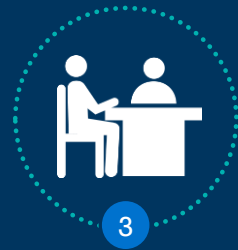
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Relationships with **peers**



Relationships with **families**



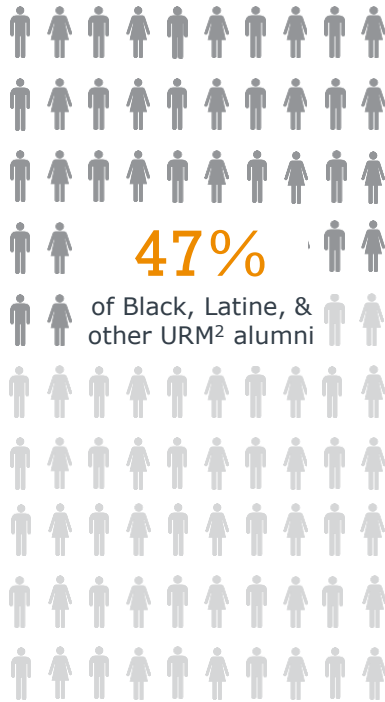
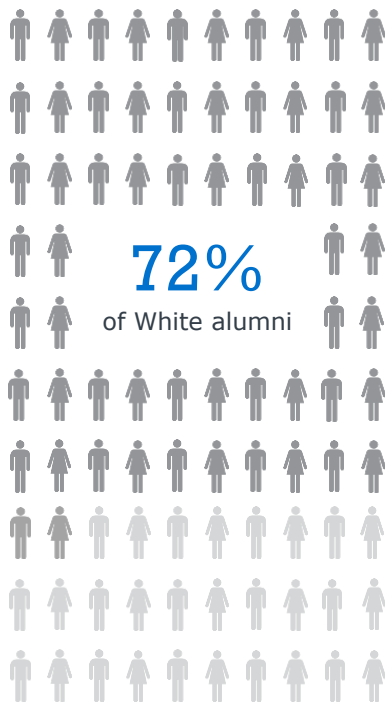
Relationships with **mentors**

The Haves and Have Nots



Significant Mentorship Gap Faces Students of Color

Share of Recent Graduates Who Had a Mentor in College, Strada-Gallup Survey¹:



1) n = 5,100 students who graduated in the last four to nine years, surveyed in 2018.

2) Underrepresented minority.

Maximizing Relationships with Mentors



Foundational Tactics

Students are paired with **advising staff** to guide their academic journey

Faculty provide additional mentorship to students who reach out on their own

Optional one-off DEIJ training is available to faculty, staff and students



Next-Gen Approach

Proactively match students with **mentors** who share similar career interests

Broaden mentor pool via peer, community, alumni connections

Mentors receive **role-specific training** to serve Black and Latino men

Profiled Practices

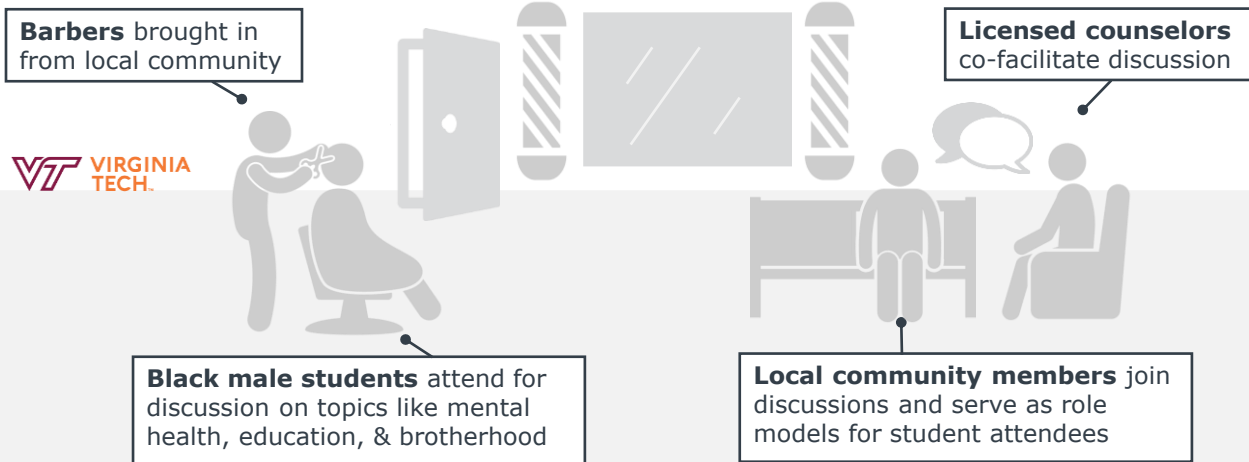
#8 Mentor Matching

#9 Peer, Community, and Alumni Mentorship

#10 Mentor Training Curriculum

Bringing Mentorship to a Black Male Space

Barbershop Discussions Provide Intentional Opportunity to Connect



Familiar Spaces as a Safe Platform to Explore Black Masculinity



The barbershop talk uses the cultural space of the barbershop to engage Black male students in very candid conversations on topics from family dynamics and relationships to building their communities via their academic achievements and success."

Patrick Wallace, Assistant Director of the Student Success Center, Virginia Tech

In the Company of Three



Case Western Connects Students with a Peer, Alumni, and Faculty/Staff Mentor

Líderes Avanzando Cohort Program



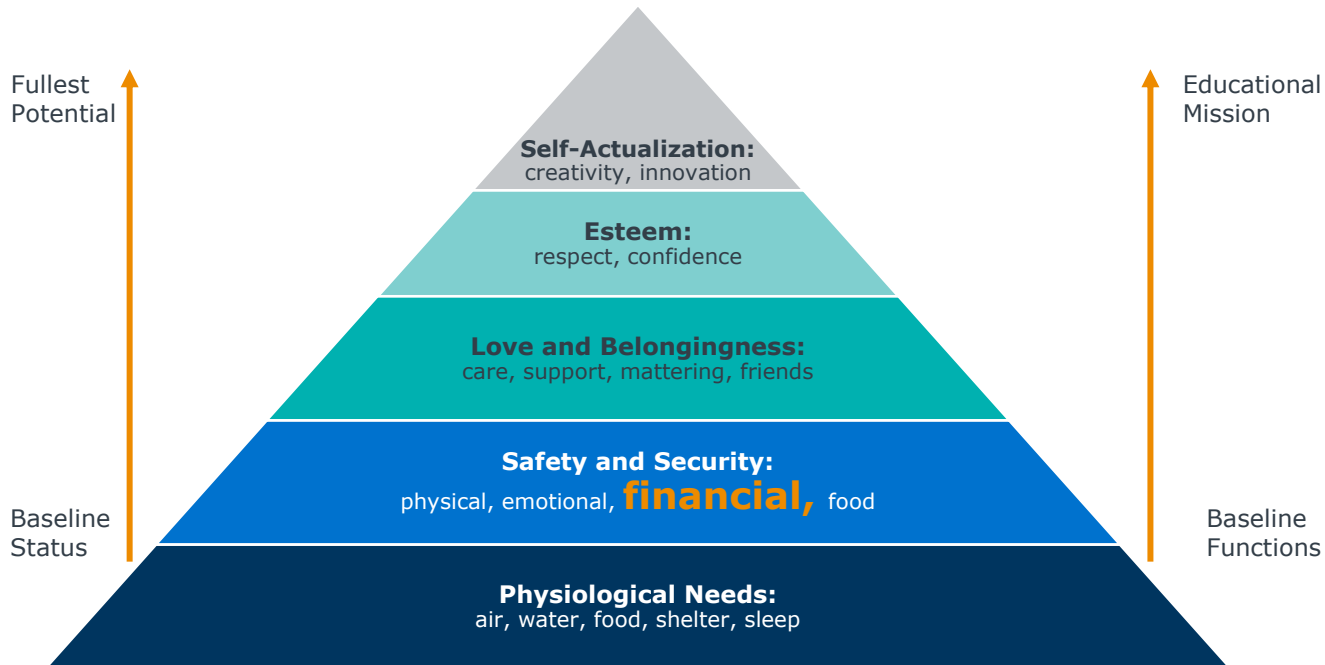
Each Student Assigned Three Mentors



Strayhorn's Sense of Belonging in Schools



Doesn't Negate Any of the Basic Needs, It Re-Emphasizes



Discussion

What is the biggest gap or challenge related to Black and Latino men's sense of belonging at your institution?

What is one idea you heard today or a program you already have that could be adapted to address that gap or challenge?

* How can we enforce or re-enforce belonging in **academic efficacy**?