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Enhancing Access: The University System of Georgia's African-American Male Initiative

A Presentation and Recommendations
Presented to the Board of Regents of the
University System of Georgia

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THE CHARGE:

- Conduct research to identify the barriers to college participation by African-American males
- Devise strategies to overcome those barriers
- Create new opportunities for access and participation within the University System of Georgia
- Develop action plans, including marketing, to increase the participation rate of African-American males in the USG



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“THE AAMI STUDY”:

USG TASK FORCE

- Task Force on Enhancing Access for African-American Males

EXTERNAL RESEARCH STUDY

- Matlock Advertising & Public Relations/Paul Warner & Assoc.

STRATEGIC AAMI PILOT PROGRAMS

- Funding recommended for programs at six USG institutions

STRATEGIC INTEGRATED MARKETING

- Development and implementation of a marketing plan and marketing collaterals



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THE TASK FORCE PROCESS:

Six Task Force subcommittees:

- Research
- K-12 Pipeline
- Recruitment/Marketing
- Retention
- Programs of Excellence
- Partnership Opportunities



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THE RESEARCH PROCESS:

- 16 focus groups at eight USG institutions; one with Black male prisoners
- One-on-one interviews with USG administrators/staff
- Quantitative telephone surveys with:
 - Parents
 - 18-25 year old African-American males
 - High-school juniors and seniors
 - guidance counselors and teachers
 - USG students, graduates, faculty and staff



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THE AAMI PILOT PROGRAM:

- Six programs funded with your approval at last month's board meeting
- \$10,000 each to six institutions or programs
- Funds will support programs aimed at expanding 2003-2004 Black male enrollment and retention
- Programs will be formally evaluated via written reports



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THE INTEGRATED MARKETING PLAN (PHASE II):

- Developing a comprehensive, integrated marketing plan to address the key communications goals of the AAMI
- \$60,000 from existing FY '03 funds being dedicated
- Communication will target Black males and their influencers
- Some projects already underway with GPTV
- Plan and the associated costs will be brought back to the board for review and approval



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SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS:

- African-American males' attitudes and perceptions about college are heavily shaped by:
 - Parents' college attendance
 - Socio-economic environment
 - Peer group pressures
 - Academic experiences in middle through high school



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ADDITIONAL FINDINGS:

- Some males are less inclined to attend college because they:
 - did not receive adequate academic preparation
 - lack the necessary self-motivation and discipline to attend
 - are intimidated by their perceptions of college
 - see college as too great a financial investment with delay gratification
 - need to provide financial support for their families
 - are directed more toward vocational/technical schools; and
 - are afraid to fail



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ADDITIONAL FINDINGS:

- Significant and early intervention is required at the K-12 level
- Authority figures were rarely concerned about their academic performance
- Higher steerage to vocational/technical schools;
- Little is done to help prepare Black male students for college.
- Once enrolled in the USG, “climate” and support are key factors in retention



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ADDITIONAL FINDINGS:

- Many successful model programs exist to address our charge, nationally and in Georgia—including within the USG
- These programs are successful due to several commonalities that they share
- The public and private sectors are highly supportive of our goals and it should be quite feasible to secure external funding and resources for this strategic initiative



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OVER-ARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS:

- A comprehensive approach is needed to systemically address the identified “pipeline” problems (P-16 model is ideal infrastructure)
- Specific initiatives must address need for:
 - ✓ Partnership with K-12 and civic groups directed at similar goals
 - ✓ Enhanced communication (with parents, students) regarding the college preparation process
 - ✓ Targeted programs to track Black males toward the college preparatory curriculum at early stage, i.e., 6th grade
 - ✓ Data reporting systems to identify vulnerabilities/monitor progress



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RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. The University System of Georgia (USG) should partner with the Georgia Department of Education (DOE) and the Education Coordinating Commission (EEC) to implement programs, including incentives and workshops to increase understanding and awareness of issues affecting African-American males, and to encourage teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators to work toward increasing the number of African-American male students in college preparatory courses and extracurricular SAT preparation sessions.**

The partners should ensure that such efforts include the creation of a sustained program of training, informational sessions, public awareness, and possibly incentives for high-school guidance counselors to improve their skills in guiding and preparing African-American males for college admission.

The partners must also provide specific support services for African-American male students throughout the K-12 pipeline, such as mentoring, career-planning assistance, and college preparatory services such as targeted college admissions and testing guidance.



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RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2. The USG should monitor single and multi-year indicators of African-American male participation in the 34 University System institutions in enrollment, retention and graduation. Such monitoring will be aimed at establishing future USG goals for these three performance indicators.**
- 3. As part of the comprehensive public awareness campaign that will support the AAMI (Phase II project), the USG will provide guidelines and marketing strategies to USG institutions on how to reach/target young African-American males for recruitment, and hold them accountable for employing such strategies.**
- 4. During the next administration of the USG's Student Satisfaction Survey (the 2004-05 Academic Year), USG institutions will systematically investigate how currently enrolled African-American males perceive their campus climates. The research should drive policy and procedural changes.**



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RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 5. The USG should create an office at the System level to coordinate, oversee, advocate for, and ensure the effectiveness of programs that address barriers to enrolling and retaining under-represented student in USG institutions. Such an office should also be responsible for the System's Postsecondary Readiness Enrichment Program (PREP), the Minority Advising Program (MAP), the Minority Recruitment Program (MRO), and the African-American Male Initiative.**
- 6. University System officials should recommend to the state's Education Coordinating Council that tracking systems be established to allow in-depth analysis of the educational pipeline and where we initially begin losing African-American males.**
- 7. In keeping with Goal 1, Recommendation 2 of the University System of Georgia's Strategic Plan, the USG will complete the existing Academic Affairs study aimed at strengthening existing USG programs to more effectively address diversity/cross-cultural understanding inside and outside the classroom, and expand such programs as necessary.**



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RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 8. The Chancellor will establish high priority for and accountability by USG presidents for ensuring the effective use of existing academic support infrastructures on the campuses to enhance African-American male student retention at the institutions.**
- 9. The USG will encourage its institutions to create more opportunities for college-bound students to participate in summer enrichment programs housed on college campuses, in order to enhance young African-American males' academic and social/independent living skills.**
- 10. As a key element of the USG's AAMI integrated marketing campaign, the USG will utilize a variety of public awareness and communications efforts to encourage African-American parents to become significant partners with their sons to ensure that young African-American males receive adequate college-prep-oriented academic guidance and positive reinforcement.**



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RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 11. In conjunction with the DOE, the USG (especially the P-16 Office), will devise policies and incentives to increase the number of high-quality teachers teaching in hard-to-staff urban and rural schools where many African-American students attend and to eliminate of out-of-field teaching in Georgia's schools.**
- 12. The USG will encourage its institutions to expand their adoption of K-12 schools in their service regions and to develop programs through which African-American male college students can serve as mentors to African-American male high-school juniors and seniors. The USG will also explore enlisting the USG's Student Advisory Council in such an initiative. The USG will collect data on such efforts annually.**



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RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 13. The USG will encourage its institutions to identify and then replicate “Best Practices” programs relevant to their campuses regarding the recruitment, retention, and graduation of African-American males.**
- 14. The USG should establish specific data reporting criteria for PREP, the Minority Advising Program (MAP), and the Minority Recruiting Offices (MRO). Feedback from the System office about each program should be given to each institution.**
- 15. In conjunction with the DOE, the USG (especially the P-16 Office) should increase efforts to recruit and educate African-American male teachers and counselors to serve in K-12 schools, especially in areas where such individuals are under-represented in comparison to the student population.**



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Thank you for your support of the
USG'S AAMI!



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QUESTIONS?????

We look forward to your action today
on these recommendations.