Fraternal Organizations and Mentoring:
Valuable Compacts for Young Black Males

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The involvement of African American males in the community and in school-based service-learning programs has been an ongoing conversation not only within the African American community but in academia. Often, when we hear of African American males, it is encumbered with negative images and negative associations versus positive ones. The primary push for this case study is to examine the critical nature of mentoring for African American male use within school-based mentoring and community-based mentoring through Black Greek-Letter fraternity. The following case study will examine the mentoring and support initiatives of three fraternities within the Divine Nine Greek-Letter organizations and their specific strategies for engaging youth and developing leadership.

MENTORING

Introduction

Since the onset of the Civil Rights Movement members of the African American community have thought it not robbery to identify future leaders within their cohorts of young people. The vestiges of economic and educational segregation has had a lasting impact on communities of color and have affected African American males in a very specific and sinister way. Understanding the roadblocks that exist for young men of color in a global community is a fact of life. Pockets of middle-class to affluent members of African-American society have sought to further support African American males of color in a way that would authentically prepare them for the racism they will face for the world at large as well as preparing them for being leaders in their own communities. The process of growing up Black and male in the Americas is one that is laced with complexities so it is critical that we examine the strongholds that help to support young men of color as they develop in a world that has traditionally not been accepting of them and downright afraid of them in multiple contexts.

In the face of greater emphasis on college and career readiness in PK-12 education, gifted Black males with disabilities still encounter various barriers in making effective shifts to collegiate academic opportunities. These obstacles include negative academic encounters, deficit philosophies, and inadequate chances for positive psychological identity development which influence their college and career preparation. Afforded these experiences, it is crucial that mental health professionals, school counselors work collectively to tackle system-based difficulties while employing mentorship and peer-mentoring to foster positive college and career preparation (Mayes, Bibbs, Rodman and Hines, 2019). Mentoring is a critical pathway that offers a specific and vital support for that journey.

Need for Mentoring

We live in an age where most images of African American/Black males are portrayed in a negative light, from social media and hip hop, to most movies that attempt to portray "urban" communities. At the age of 3, in many states, most children take some form of standardized test to determine reading, writing, and mathematical skills. Though standardized tests may have an optimistic aim to enrich education, the test is also used with pessimistic motives. Standardized tests are also used by private prison owners to determine how many prisons must be built in the near future to house soon to be adults who systematic underperform on these tests.as young students (Hall and Good, 2019).

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