CLIMBING THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT LADDER
Promoting the Engagement and Success of Black Males

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2011 Report on Black Male Students in Public Higher Education

Black Male Six-Year Graduation Rate = 31.7%
Students Overall = 46.1%
“We know one thing for certain: Students who are actively engaged in educationally purposeful activities and experiences, both inside and outside the classroom, are more likely than are their disengaged peers to persist through graduation.” (Harper & Quaye, 2009, p. 4)
On Black Male Disengagement

Black men...

- Take fewer notes in class
- Spend less time writing papers and completing major assignments
- Participate less frequently in campus activities
- Hold fewer leadership positions
- Report lower grades

...than their same-race female counterparts

- Cuyjet (1997)

Data Source: College Student Experiences Questionnaire
Those who had...

- Earned cumulative GPAs above 3.0
- Established lengthy records of active engagement in multiple student organizations
- Been elected by peers to at least 2 leadership positions
- Cultivated relationships with faculty and staff outside the classroom
- Participated in enriching educational experiences (e.g., study abroad programs, internships, service learning projects, and summer research programs)
- Earned numerous awards, scholarships, and honors for their college achievements
## Research Sites

### Highly-Selective Private Research Universities
- Brown University
- Columbia University
- Harvard University
- University of Pennsylvania
- Princeton University
- Stanford University

### Public Research Universities
- University of Illinois
- Indiana University
- University of Michigan
- Michigan State University
- The Ohio State University
- Purdue University

### Liberal Arts Colleges
- Amherst College
- Claremont McKenna College
- DePauw University
- Haverford College
- Lafayette College
- Occidental College
- Pomona College
- Saint John’s Univ. (MN)
- Swarthmore College
- Vassar College
- Wabash College
- Williams College

### Public Historically Black Universities
- Albany State University
- Cheyney University
- Florida A&M University
- Norfolk State University
- North Carolina Central University
- Tennessee State University

### Comprehensive State Universities
- California State Polytechnic University
- California State University, Long Beach
- City University of New York
- Lock Haven University
- Towson University
- Valdosta State University

### Private Historically Black College and Universities
- Clark Atlanta University
- Fisk University
- Hampton University
- Howard University
- Morehouse College
- Tuskegee University
Active engagement specifically enables Black men to:

- Resolve masculine identity conflicts (Harper, 2004)
- Acquire social capital and access to resources, politically wealthy persons and exclusive networks (Harper, 2008)
- Negotiate peer support for achievement (Harper 2006a)
- Craft productive responses to racist stereotypes (Harper, 2005)
- Develop political acumen for survival in professional settings in which they are racially underrepresented (Harper, 2006b)
- Overcome previous educational and socioeconomic disadvantage (Harper, 2007)
- Develop strong Black identities that incite productive activism on predominantly white campuses (Harper & Quaye, 2007)