

2008

DTP

**DEVELOPING
TOMORROW'S
PROFESSIONALS**

Components of the DTP

Young Men of Color
Development of sustaining community partnerships
Wrap-around mentoring - Professional and Academic
Partnership with university
Technological training for academic endeavors and assessment
Academic Saturdays
Addressing the assumptions of education
Professional Orientation
Training for education friendship & success

Themes of the DTP

EDUCATION My PARTNER
Compensation for good work
Celebrating of Education
Catch them doing something RIGHT

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~a brief summary~

INTRODUCTION

Developing Tomorrow's Professionals (DTP) is a carefully constructed program of training, instruction and support services designed to address the needs of young men of color (Black and Hispanic), academic skill set training, experiences and associations leading to academic achievement, four-year college matriculation, retention and graduation. Structured around a ten week, "academic Saturday" schedule, the program combines academic instruction, Black/Hispanic wrap-around mentoring (both academic and professional) for each young man, leadership and fatherhood learning opportunities, along with necessary tools and resources for continuing achievement. The DTP is a three-phase program designed to create, improve and sustain a student approach to learning, college matriculation with leadership development.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The DTP program is specifically designed for Black and Hispanic young men (grades 9-11, and adult education), ages 15-19. These young men have been identified by their respective schools as academically underachieving and in need of encouragement, support services.

AN UNDERSTANDING OF NEED

Conceptually, the DTP program is designed to address those skill sets that are far too often assumptions of public education. With the focus on measurable academic achievement, we often ignore the circumstances that limit student motivation in highly pressurized educational endeavors, tests and assessment. The DTP strives to address many of the barriers that dim a student's desire to achieve in the academic world, and subsequently in the world about them.

With the single parent domestic setting increasing annually, especially in Connecticut's urban cities and towns, we must embrace the consequences of those environments and how they impact the growth and development of our urban youth. According to recent United States Census statistics, Connecticut is experiencing a rather dramatic increase in single parent homes. From the '80s until now, the increase has been well in excess of 30 percent. Of these households, 78 percent are female-headed. Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, Stamford and Waterbury contain 32 percent of the state's single parent homes. In Hartford, the number of single parent families exceeded the number of married couple families for the first time in 1990, representing 55 percent of the city's total population. In New Haven 85 percent of single parent homes were female-headed, of which 41 percent had incomes below the poverty level. We cannot minimize the impact of the absence of a father, a male role model, especially for our young men in the educational process. Additionally, almost 25% of our Connecticut public school enrollment is students of color, yet only 7% of our faculties are minority teachers. These facts point to current and future parenting issues, a student population at risk of falling through the academic and social cracks and most importantly, potential generations of young men of color who may never approach the promise of their God given gifts.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Technology Orientation

Prior to selection by the high school principal to the DTP program, young men who wish to enter the DTP must complete a required three-hour internet training program. Created by DTP partner, the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium, our young men must be able to function with college level technology and basic software throughout the Academic Saturday component of the program.

Orientation

The DTP program begins with an intensive day long orientation that includes the identification of individual potential and talents, etiquette, and foundational professional attire and decorum. The day concludes linkage activities, joining of our young men, their parents, academic mentors and professional mentors together.

Academic Saturdays

Young men of the DTP program will be required to attend ten consecutive academic Saturdays at Southern Connecticut State University (for young men in the greater New Haven area), where they will be engaged in four hours of instruction in a carefully crafted, highly demanding course. Academic Saturdays include a combination of skill set development, discourse, rigorous writing, college lectures and assessment designed to produce:

- study skills;
- fatherhood and leadership;
- transition - high school to college;
- task & time management;
- critical thinking and reading;
- engagement and discourse
- college writing;
- lectures, effective listening, interaction, note-taking; and
- college test taking.

ACADEMIC Mentors

The young men will be grouped into teams of 4-5 with an academic mentor, an undergraduate or graduate student (Black and Hispanic men) at Southern Connecticut State University. These academic mentors help guide and support our young men through the on-line process and discussions, enhancing academic skill development and understanding.

PROFESSIONAL Mentors

Each student will be provided with a mentor (Black and Hispanic) in a workplace environment that is designed to expand the frame of reference of the student to positions of responsibility and authority in various professions while enhancing a greater appreciation for academic achievement. The purposes of the mentorships are to:

- expose young men to the demands, rigor and responsibilities of professional life;
- regard our young men as aspiring professionals, capable of significant achievement; and/or
- provide actual contextual applications through observed professional activities of the importance of academic learning.

Fall Math & Writing

All young men of the DTP program will participate in an 18-hour math and reading on-line course in the fall, 2008. This course focuses on the application of math/reading skills and techniques as they relate to college level work. Young men will be paid a stipend for the successful completion of the 18-hour course.

Student Incentives

The young men in the DTP program are selected by their schools based upon their demonstrated “potential” to work harder, academically achieve more and as a result of challenging life circumstances. In this regard they are truly representative of many of our urban, suburban and rural students across the state. Once our young men are selected we stressed to each of them the importance seeking the “greatness of their gifts” by recognizing the incentives of quality work and dedication. We emphasize incentive driven goals and commitments that for the DTP includes:

- To build technology skills and guarantee access to the online environment, each student will be provided with a laptop on loan at the start of the program.
- Each student will be provided an hourly performance-based stipend for completion of the entire 100 hour program and the fall 18-hour Math and Writing course.
- Each young man will be provided guidance in the selection of professional attire. Selected suit, jackets, ties, etc. will be purchased for each student.
- Upon completion of the entire program, each student will receive a laptop computer that includes software applicable to college level demands and work.