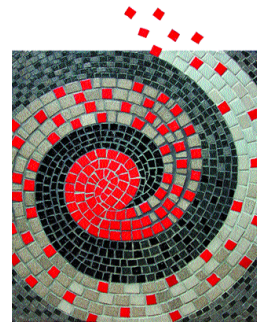


Inspire Students to Become Youth Workers

Juanita Crider

Purdue Black Cultural Center



“Encourage youth workers to visualize what helped them succeed and who was there to guide them, and to see this as their opportunity to be that for someone else.”

CREATE MENTORS

The Black Cultural Center provides mentoring services and activities for students of color at Purdue University. Incoming freshmen are paired with upper classmen as mentors who help them in their adjustment to college life. Regular program activities are held by the Center and the mentoring pair are encouraged to maintain regular contact with each other. The Center believes it is important for mentors to focus on the people and experiences that have helped them get where they are, and to view this as their opportunity to be that person for someone else. As a result, many students continue to serve as mentors throughout their college experience. For instance, there are currently three doctoral students at Purdue who have been mentors since their sophomore year. The relationships that develop through the mentoring program, as well as the networks created between mentoring pairs, facilitates a successful college experience. In addition, it is the goal of the Center that by participating in this type of experience, students may decide to work with youth after college.

PREPARATION FOR A YOUTH WORK CAREER

Important to the work of the Purdue Black Cultural Center is to inspire students to become youth workers. The Center recognizes that youth work necessitates having knowledge in a

variety of areas (e.g., social work, human development, psychology, fundraising), and that this need for interdisciplinary knowledge can be stressful and lead to burnout for anyone not prepared for it.

Students interested in youth work careers are encouraged to get a degree in something of interest to them, discover ways to apply it to youth work, and then get as much volunteer experience in that area as possible. The Center also provides students with supportive renewal activities that help them discover ways to offset potential burnout as they move into a career in youth work.

***The Black Cultural Center at Purdue University** provides programs for 475 college students, and employs five full-time and four part-time workers. Ninety-seven percent of their workers are African-American, 1% are White (non Hispanic/Latino), 1% are Hispanic/Latino, and 1% Asian-American.*

