

NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE SYSTEM



**Minority Male Mentoring  
Program Annual Report  
2008-2009**

“Changing the Image of Education”

North Carolina Community College System  
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# North Carolina Community College System

## Minority Male Mentoring Program

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### Executive Summary

The mission of the North Carolina Community College System is to open the door to high-quality, accessible educational opportunities that minimize barriers to post-secondary education, maximize student success, develop a globally and multi-culturally competent workforce, and improve the lives and well-being of individuals by providing: education, training and retraining for the workforce, including basic skills and literacy education, occupational and pre-baccalaureate programs; support for economic development through services to and in partnership with business and industry and in collaboration with the University of North Carolina System and private colleges and universities; and services to communities and individuals which improve the quality of life.

During a time of a global workforce, corporate diversity initiatives, and historical political firsts, the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) realizes the graduation and retention rates of minority male students are at a staggering decline. To address the issues that contribute to the decline in academic success for this underrepresented community the NCCCS pursued and obtained a grant from the Governor's Crime Commission to develop the Minority Male Mentoring (3M) Program.

The 3M Program was developed to increase graduation and retention rates among minority males in North Carolina Community Colleges and other institutions of higher learning. Additionally, this program will assist colleges in providing programs, activities, leadership opportunities, and experiences to promote the development of personal, professional and academic skills of program participants. To accomplish this, the 3M Programs have created programming and partnerships with community, state, and corporate entities.

Currently, there are forty 3M Programs operating within the Community College System. The colleges represent a number of regions within the state and serve populations with various needs. Because of the different dynamics of the students served, each program is diverse in their approach. In addressing the issue of student success the concerted effort of each program seeks to:

- Form partnerships with local community-based programs serving the identified targeted population;
- Monitor the progress of the student participants;
- Report the status of goals and objectives established by the programs;
- Recruit faculty, staff and peer mentors;
- Provide training and workshops for mentors;
- Coordinate personal and professional development seminars;
- Implement special programs to prevent drug and substance abuse among minority males;
- Identify and measure the academic progress of at-risk minority males;
- Promote a healthy college experience;
- Promote student satisfaction in the college experience, graduation, and retention rates of minority males;
- Collaborate with local, state, and community based organizations.

## The 3M Program Vision

The 3M Program was established in the fall of 2003. The 3M Program's goal was to improve the retention and graduation rate of minority male students in the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS). Initial funding was provided through a grant from the Governor's Crime Commission Division in the North Carolina Department of Crime Control and Public Safety. The intent of the grant was to provide comprehensive activities that would help improve the academic and professional success of students. These activities included personal development, and drug and substance abuse education.

In May of 2003, the Governor's Crime Commission informed NCCCS of its approval of a one year grant. A request for proposals was sent to all 58 community colleges in July 28. Five community colleges were awarded the grant, Durham Technical, Mitchell, Piedmont, Southeastern, and Wayne. These colleges would later be used as models for future programs.

In May 2004 the NCCCS received additional funding from the Governor's Crime Commission. The confirmation letter, from the Commission, stated the "*proposal is a shining example of how we can have far-reaching impact on the problems that plague our communities.*" This funding was allocated to the five pilot colleges to continue their efforts.

Wayne Community College received alternative funding which allowed them to release the Commission's grant after the first year. As a result, NCCCS was able to provide funding to Johnston Community College. All six colleges have continued their dedication to provide customized academic programs along with administrative provisions to ensure the improved academic success of minority males.

Initially the target population of the program focused on students that were first-generation, with GPA of below 2.5, or had a history of substance abuse; however, the program has evolved. Recognizing that the retention and graduation success of minority male students suffer many barriers, the program has broadened its scope. More focus is directed toward the students' personal and professional growth, self-image, cultural differences, and student experiences.

### **State Appropriated Support**

During the 2007 session of the General Assembly, House Bill 1473 appropriated \$475,000 to expand the 3M Program to 15 additional community colleges. Each college received \$30,000 to assist in the operation of their 3M Program; as a result, there were twenty-four, state and independently funded 3M Programs within NCCCS in 2007.

The program was so successful that during its July 2008 session, the NC General Assembly appropriated \$985,000 for the 15 previously funded programs and 17 new programs. Each college received \$30,000. There are now 40 active 3M programs within the NC community colleges.



**Michael Spriggs was a participant of one the first Minority Male Mentoring Programs at Wayne Community College.**

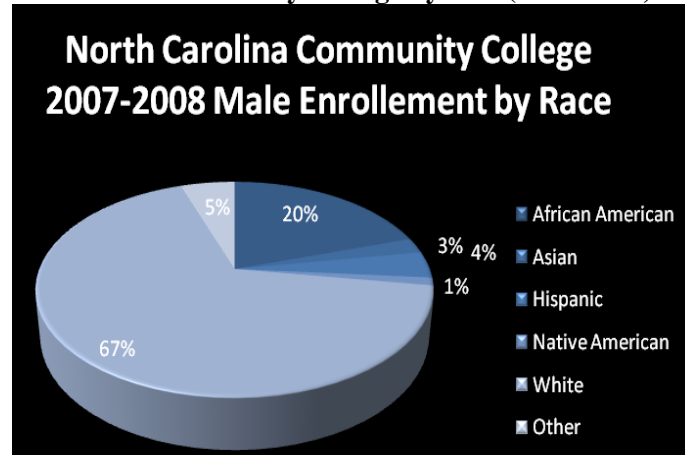
# A Look at the Community College System

## Racial make-up (2006-2008)

The unduplicated count of curriculum students enrolled during the 2007-2008 academic year was 295,951. Of this headcount, 74,529 were white males; 25% of the total population and 67% of the male population. Although the higher male population of curriculum students is white, the lowest retention and highest dropout rate is among their minority male counterparts. The minority male population consists of African-American, Hispanic, American Indian, and other.

**Table 1.0 and 1.1 Racial Makeup of Males in the Community College System (2007-2008)**

| Race             | Number  |
|------------------|---------|
| African American | 22,216  |
| Asian            | 2,551   |
| Hispanic         | 4,377   |
| Native American  | 1295    |
| White            | 74,529  |
| Other            | 5,856   |
| Total            | 104,395 |



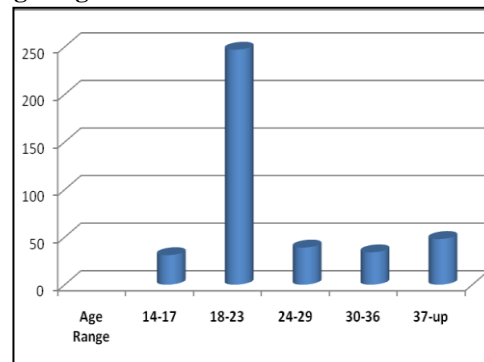
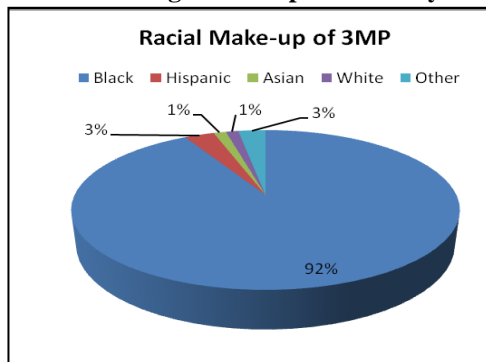
## Enrollment status and age of program participants

The 3M Program includes first semester and continuing students with an average age of 25. Student enrollment dates vary per program. Not only first-year students require assistance. Continuing and readmit students, and those who in need of academic or social guidance are also at risk of dropping out. As a result, the programs consist of a diverse enrollment population. Although the programs primarily consist of students ages 18 - 23, many of the program participants are older; this group is significant because of prevalent issues associated with their age such as, family duties, employment responsibilities, time management, and other outside influences.

## Program racial makeup of the 3M Program (2008-2009)

Since the inception of the 3M Program, its racial population has been primarily African-American. The individual programs are making efforts to increase the participation of other minority group; however, the current minority racial makeup is consistent to the racial population of the NC Community College System.

## Racial and Age Make-up of Minority Male Mentoring Program



## Minority Male Mentoring Program Initiatives

To assist with the success of students in the program, each college developed initiatives tailored to their campus population. Although programs may be customized, the overall goal is to improve the success rate for retention and graduation of the student. To accomplish their goals, programs provide one or more of the following services:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b><u>Coordinator/Staff Interaction</u></b><br/>         Coordinator-Mentoring Sessions<br/>         Academic Advisement<br/>         Writing Labs/Skill Enhancement<br/>         Tutorial Services<br/>         College Transfer Counseling<br/>         Public Speaking Workshops<br/>         College Tours<br/>         Financial Aid Workshops<br/>         Multicultural Enrichment<br/>         Mock Interview/Interview Training<br/>         Etiquette Training<br/>         Soft Skills Training</p> | <p><b><u>Student Interaction</u></b><br/>         Peer Mentoring Sessions<br/>         Peer-Tutorial Sessions<br/>         Weekly Meetings<br/>         Roundtable Discussion<br/>         Multicultural Enrichment<br/>         Book Clubs</p> |
| <p><b><u>Community Interaction</u></b><br/>         Personal Responsibility Workshops<br/>         Leadership and Professional Development<br/>         Substance Abuse Awareness<br/>         Diversity Issues</p>   | <p><b><u>Corporate Support/Interaction</u></b><br/>         Employment Sessions<br/>         Professional Development<br/>         Mock Interviews<br/>         Soft Skills Training</p>  |

## Measuring Our Success

### **Identifying Indicators of Success in the Minority Male Mentoring Program**

The NCCCS Minority Male Mentoring program seeks to identify and address factors affecting the academic progress of currently enrolled 3M Program students and recruitment of minority males. These factors include, but are not limited to the following: peer pressure, low self-esteem, student campus involvement, financial hardship, transition from developmental courses to curriculum courses, and communication between the student and the college.

Because North Carolina community colleges offer many academic programs and certificates, the Minority Male Mentoring programs seek to create a new approach to accomplishing and measuring student success. To do so, the 3M programs continue to work in the following areas:

1. Determine the definition of a successful North Carolina minority male student.
2. Establish a baseline for North Carolina per Achieving the Dream markers:
  - All NCCCS students;
  - All NCCCS minority students;
  - All minority male students;
  - All 3M Program students.
3. How can the enrollment of North Carolina minority males in community colleges be increased?
  - Minority Male Mentoring Programs;
  - Early High School Programs/Middle College High School/Learn and Earn Online Financial Aid/ K-12;
  - TRIO/Math Science Education Network/GEAR Up;
  - Market to parents and families.

4. How can Minority Male Mentoring Programs increase student success in:
  - STEM programs;
  - Retention;
  - Graduation;
  - 4-year Transfer;
  - Grade Point Averages.

To measure the success and challenges of these practices, the colleges are asked to provide data on each 3M Program student. Data may be compiled, in collaboration with Achieving the Dream, to determine the following quantitative and qualitative benchmarks:

- **Performance Benchmarks** - Measure the indicators of the 3M Program, such as retention, transfer, graduation, job placement, developmental courses taken and completed, and progression through academic programs.
- **Diagnostic Benchmarks** - Processes that influence the outcomes of the 3M Program, such as 3M Program student attitude and behavior, campus environment, and campus support.
- **Process Benchmarks** - Strategies and processes that maximize 3M Program outcomes. This includes a review of retention, graduation rate, and attainment of certificate, associate degree, or four-year transfer of minority male students in the 3M Program.

By collaborating among the colleges, community support, other partners, and gauging research, the North Carolina Community College 3M Program has enhanced the success of minority males in North Carolina community colleges.

### **Expected Outcomes**

The colleges anticipate the following results:

**Earn an Associates Degree** – The 3M Program encourages students to complete an associate degree. By addressing institutional barriers such as orientation, registration, financial aid, and academic advisement, the program seeks to increase the seamless matriculation of the participants.

**Transfer to a Four-Year Institution** – The program seeks to assist students in attaining transfer credit into a four-year institution. This includes academic advising, college tours, academic planning, career mapping, and other activities that assist in the students' transition.

**Mentor – Protégé Engagement** – Programs will increase personal engagement with faculty members, staff, and college life. Additionally, programs will provide academic and personal skills development focused on the minority male experience, developing experiences and academic materials within learning community classes.

**Community Engagement** - Speakers will be invited to address issues pertinent to the 3M Program. These events will also be open to the entire college community.

**Learning Community** – Colleges will create learning communities. In higher education, curricular learning communities are classes that are linked or clustered during an academic term, often around an interdisciplinary theme, and enroll a common cohort of students. A variety of approaches are used to build these learning communities, with all intended to restructure the students' time, credit, and learning experiences to build community among students, between students and their teachers, and among faculty members and disciplines.

These results will enhance the college experience for the student. Participants will gain the experience and confidence to excel within the classroom and beyond.

## The Program Conference

In 2005, NCCCS hosted its first Minority Male Mentoring Best Practice Conference. Participating colleges shared their successes and challenges with conference attendees during concurrent sessions.

Conference participants included community college administrators, school counselors, program participants, educational leaders, and state and community leaders. More than 250 participants attended the conference. Best practices shared during the conference are currently being used to operate successful mentoring programs.



Students enjoy the 2008 3M Conference. The Conference theme was “Changing the Image of Education: A Call to Action!”

As a result of the positive feedback and success of the 2005 conference, the North Carolina Community College System and North Carolina Central University collaboratively hosted a 2006 conference. There were more than 550 participants.

A portion of the General Assembly funding for 2008 and 2009 was appropriated for the 3M Conference. The 2007 conference focused on those social issues that hinder the progress of the minority male student, such as finances, family responsibilities, and incarceration. The NCCCS partnered with the North Carolina Fatherhood Development Advisory Council, to afford the conference a more socio-educational scope.

The 2008 conference registered over 600 participants. A strategic action plan was created to address ways to overcome barriers for minority male success. This plan encompassed the combined efforts of educators, community and faith-based professionals, as well as students. It is intended to be used by colleges and organizations to create processes and procedures.

## Student Success

**Brandon** first enrolled at Johnston Community College (JCC) two years ago after a short stint at two other North Carolina four year and community colleges. Brandon came to JCC with three goals in mind: obtaining a job after college, growing as a person, and obtaining a good education. Prior to entering JCC, Brandon reports that he did not have any specific goals in his life. He always knew that he wanted to attend college, but was unsure of why; this was reflected in his grades. He also faced another obstacle that shaped his life. An illness appeared early in his college career that caused Brandon to develop a learning disability. Eventually he discovered he needed to have brain surgery.

Prior to the surgery, Brandon found that it was hard to read, comprehend, communicate clearly, and perform daily life activities. After surgery and the transfer to JCC, Brandon stated that he began to notice a change in himself. Brandon enrolled in the Minority Male Mentoring Program. Through this program, Brandon was able to meet other young males like himself were motivated to succeed in obtaining a degree and employable skills. He quickly became friends with several students at JCC who were dedicated to performing well in school. Their success motivated him to work hard to achieve better grades. Because of his friends, he also had a desire to read more.

Brandon states that he now has several goals for himself; to obtain his Associate of Arts Degree, obtain licensure in plumbing, enroll in the Truck Driver Training program, and obtain a Bachelors degree. Because he now feels that education is the key to success and the future, Brandon reported that he desires to obtain as much education as possible. He believes that the 3M Program helped him to progress during

his time at JCC, and he learned that “no matter how hard the obstacle and no matter the disability, you can still succeed and make it if you try.”

**Daniel** decided as a high school student he had to make his own footsteps to succeed in life. Growing up, Daniel had few role models and examples to follow. His brothers weren’t serious about school and he was constantly craving attention and approval from his parents. “I struggled,” he says. “I didn’t really know my father, and I never could seem to do right in my parents’ eyes.” Daniel’s decision to stay on the right course in life allowed him to graduate from Smithfield-Selma High in 2006 and become a student a year later at JCC. Daniel, now 19 and in his second semester at JCC, says he’s finally found the support he’s desperately needed through his involvement with the 3M Program. He joined the program when its coordinator, Dr. Grova Bridgers, asked him to participate.

Daniel is unique to 3M because he is a white male. The class is geared toward teaching minorities the importance of skills such as respect, responsibility, money management, and setting goals to succeed in life. “The atmosphere was very different because I was the only white person in the room,” Daniel recalls. “But once I started listening, I noticed they were talking about encouragement, sticking together and bonding with each other, and it gave me a really good feeling of pride.”

Daniel never felt out of place because his definition of minority extends beyond a person’s skin color. “The program has taught me not only to break down racial barriers, but stereotypical barriers as well. I’ve learned there is more to people than how they look or act in certain situations. To me, everyone has their own unique style, which makes them a minority.” Daniel conveys.

Daniel’s classmates and instructors have embraced him for who he is as an individual. They’ve served as a new family to help motivate him when things get rough. “I like everything about the group,” Daniel says. “These guys are like a family to me. They understand some of the obstacles I’ve faced. I really enjoy seeing the bonds formed and the friendships made.” Daniel completed the course but returned to serve as a student mentor for the program. He goes on field trips to other campuses and encourages students to dream big.

Daniel is studying to earn his Associate of Science degree and hopes to transfer to a four-year university. As for the future, he says he’s considering a career in physical therapy or physical fitness. For Daniel, the 3M Program, “is a good, family-oriented atmosphere, and that’s really why I continue to go back.”

**Antonio**, a young boy growing up in rural Harnett and Sampson counties, never expected his life would take such a drastic turn. Antonio was a good student in high school, an athlete, who managed to avoid most of the trouble usually associated with high school trials and tribulations. High school graduation did not take him directly to college, but down a potential path of danger and destruction.

Growing up, Antonio had no relationship with his father and was raised by his single mother. At that time, no man had stepped up to assume a positive influence in his life. After graduating high school in 2000, Antonio found himself spending time with a group of individuals who were unconcerned with right, wrong, good or bad. He found himself susceptible to the mindset of complacency, laziness, and trouble-making. His environment taught him the negative consequences of making bad choices and surrounding himself with toxic people.

After several years of living on the edge and fulfilling the requirements of a risky lifestyle, Antonio’s opportunity for change would arrive. An uncle, who had previously been uninvolved in Antonio’s life, began to worry about the unhealthy choices he was making. He reached out to Antonio, offering him a

**Top Reasons for Student Drop-out**

- Employment
- Financial
- Transportation
- Incarceration
- Work Schedule
- Geographical Location (distance from college)
- Personal/Family Situations
- Economics

way out of the unsafe life he was living by offering him a job. He also began taking classes at Guilford Technical CC, unaware of the new hardship looming.

In July 2006, Antonio decided to visit an acquaintance that was unfortunately not at home when he arrived. In a strange evolution of events, Antonio would later be accused by this individual of robbing his home. He was driven into a rural area, dropped off on the side of the road, and shot – twice. One bullet grazed Antonio’s hand as he attempted to cover his head and the second bullet entered his back as he ran away from the shooter.

Still alive, Antonio crawled, paralyzed, 60-70 yards to the side of the highway. He was eventually found and taken by helicopter to UNC Hospitals for a three month stay. He endured surgeries and physical rehabilitation to repair damage from bone fragments and internal bleeding. He suffered complete paralysis in his left leg from damage to his sciatic nerve. Antonio left the hospital in a wheelchair. He learned to walk with a leg brace and crutches and how to let his family take care of him because he was no longer physically able to do so. During his painful recovery, Antonio had time to reflect on the choices he had made. His uncle and other family members provided support. He also considered lessons learned from his uncle.

He worked hard with Vocational Rehabilitation, and decided to relocate to community college. His uncle became more involved in his life and Antonio started developing a relationship with God, something he had never known before.

During his first semester at Johnston Community College, Antonio was introduced to the 3M Program by Dr. Grova Bridgers. The class was an additional support and positive influence in his life. He found the overall message of the class to be positive and uplifting. It taught him how to achieve success in life and the value of fellowship and communication with others. Antonio soon found out that not only could he learn from others in his class, but he could also be a role model to classmates. They could share the experiences and lessons from each others’ lives.

There is no doubt that Antonio continues to make improvements in his life; physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. He has learned vital life lessons through the difficult events he faced. His words of advice ring true for everyone, but especially for other young men who may relate to Antonio’s story, “Do not shortchange yourself. Life is really meant to be an enjoyable experience. Don’t be lazy or avoid hard work. Set goals. Individuals have so much potential. We should be ever-conscious and aware of our choices and what is going on around us and we should distance ourselves from negative influences in our lives.” When asked how he is different now, after being shot and after participating in the Minority Male Mentoring program, he says, “Now I have goals. “

### **Closing**

The 3M Program was established to improve the retention and graduation rate of minority male students in the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS). The program engages students by exposing them to new experiences, academic intervention, and professional development. Funding through the Governor’s Crime Commission and the General Assembly has afforded colleges the opportunity to develop meaningful programs that result in direct and indirect learning outcomes.

The program’s continued success is a reflection of the contributions of the stakeholders who share in the North Carolina Community College System’s mission. This necessary investment in the education of minority males reveals the academic and social benefits of this program, allowing participants a clear path to success.

**North Carolina Community Colleges (CC) with  
Minority Male Mentoring Programs**

| <b>College</b>             |                  |                     |
|----------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Alamance CC *              | Gaston College * | Roanoke-Chowan CC*  |
| Asheville-Buncombe CC*     | Halifax CC*      | Robeson CC*         |
| Bladen CC*                 | Isothermal CC*   | Rowan-Cabarrus CC*  |
| Brunswick CC*              | James Sprunt CC* | Sampson CC*         |
| Cape Fear CC*              | Johnston CC      | Sandhills CC*       |
| Catawba CC                 | Lenoir CC*       | South Piedmont CC*  |
| Central Carolina CC*       | Martin CC*       | Southeastern CC     |
| Central Piedmont CC*       | Mitchell CC      | Stanley CC*         |
| Craven CC*                 | Montgomery CC*   | Vance-Granville CC* |
| Davidson CC*               | Nash CC*         | Wake Technical CC*  |
| Durham Technical CC        | Pamlico CC       | Wayne CC            |
| Edgecombe CC*              | Piedmont CC      | Wilson CC*          |
| Fayetteville Technical CC* | Pitt CC*         |                     |
| Forsyth Technical CC*      | Richmond CC*     |                     |

*\* Represents colleges that have received NC General Assemble appropriated funding*