

# The Cynthia E. Gayles College Preparation Program

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# Purpose

The Cynthia E. Gayles College Preparation Program is a faith-based program designed to equip African American youth and their families with the knowledge and skills necessary to apply, matriculate, persist, and graduate from a four-year college or university.

# Target Population

- ◉ African American church and its congregation
- ◉ Bringing the education to the community rather than expecting the community to come to us
- ◉ Utilize the structure and accountability already established in the African American church
- ◉ Origin of the civil rights movement

# Theoretical Frameworks

## Nguzo Saba:

- ◉ Afrocentricity examines our world with Africans as the subject rather than as objects (Asante, 1987).
- ◉ Afrocentricity has been identified as an appropriate intervention paradigm for Black men (Littleton, 2002).
- ◉ Afrocentricity has been researched on African American adult males but is effective beginning in middle school and continuing through post secondary education.
- ◉ Afrocentricity is not limited to African American students.

# Theoretical Frameworks

## Nguzo Saba:

- ◉ Umoja- unity
- ◉ Kujichagulia- self determination
- ◉ Ujima- collective work and responsibility
- ◉ Ujamma- cooperative economics
- ◉ Nia- purpose
- ◉ Kuumba-creativity
- ◉ Imani-faith

# Theoretical Frameworks

## Validation:

- Rendón (1994) “states that ‘validation is an enabling, confirming and supportive process initiated by in and out-of -class agents that foster academic and interpersonal development” (p. 44).
- Through the components of Validation Theory (Rendón, 1994) students should feel capable of learning by experiencing self-worth and recognizing their contribution to the college experience is valuable (Rendón, 1994).

# Theoretical Frameworks

## Validation:

- Validation is not an end in itself, rather a continual process (Rendón, 1994).
- Validation must occur early in the student's preparation process.

# Theoretical Frameworks

## Hope Theory:

A strength-based concept of the positive psychology field. (Snyder, et al 2002)

# Theoretical Framework

## Hope Theory:

Three components of hope related to an individual's capacity to

- > Clearly conceptualize goals
- > The development of strategies or pathways thinking
- > The ability to initiate and sustain motivation or agency thinking are necessary components for hopeful individuals to develop (Snyder, Lopez, Shorey, Rand & Feldman, 2003).

# Theoretical Frameworks

## Hope Theory:

### Three factors of Hope

- › Students with low hope experience high anxiety (Snyder et al 2003),
- › Students with high levels of hope and high self-esteem are more optimistic about their future (Snyder et al, 2003) and
- › The higher an individual hopes, the more their academic achievement and social competence increases (Snyder et al, 2003).

# Strengthsquest

- Assessment tool- Strengthsfinder
- Utilizing an asset-based model
- Positive Psychology
- Mechanism for self-exploration
- Direct link to Strengths and Hope Theory

# The Concept of Strengths

- Each of your talents can be applied in many areas including relationships, learning, academics, leadership, service and careers.
  - > - naturally recurring patterns of thought, feeling or behavior
  - > -consists of facts and lessons learned
  - > - the steps of an activity
  - > These three together combine to create your strengths

# Why Strengths?

- To help identify your greatest talents.
- To show you how to develop and apply your strengths.
- To teach you how to maximize your talents in academic learning and performance

# Why Strengths?

- To encourage you to apply your talents in career planning and decision making.
- To help you apply your talents in areas beyond academics and careers, for example in leadership, service and relationship building of all types.

# Boot Camp for College Bound Parents

## Phase I- Motivation

### Key Questions:

- What could be different about your life?
- What kind of company do you keep?
- Why is this important to you?
- What is the value to you in furthering your students education?

### **Social Capital:**

McKay et al. (2003) "However, low participation rates by urban, minority parents at formally sanctioned school activities represent an ongoing concern for educators and school-based mental health providers." (p.107).

# Boot Camp for College Bound Parents

## Phase II- Educational History

### Key Questions:

- What kind of student were you?
- How did you experience education?
- What educational expectation do you have for your student?

McKay et. al. (2003)

“A growing body of research provides support for the importance of parental racial socialization practices in promoting academic achievement and emotional well-being among African-American youth.” (p. 107).

# Boot Camp for College Bound Parents

## Phase III- Resources

### Key Questions:

- What assistance is needed in order to feel comfortable in the college planning process?
- > What are the implications your financial decisions will have on your student's access to college?

Validation Theory- Rendón (1994) states that "validation is an enabling, confirming and supportive process initiated by in-and out-of -class agents that foster academic and interpersonal development" (p.44).

# Boot Camp for College Bound Parents

## Outcomes:

Awareness

Empowerment

Involvement

Commitment

Nguzo Saba- Johnson (2001) Seven principles to rebuild and restructure African American student and parental involvement.

# Workshop Goals

- ◉ Building Community
- ◉ Defining Self
- ◉ Information Sharing
- ◉ Educational Value

# Inspired Leaders of the Future

- ◉ Collaboration with Thomas Jefferson High school
- ◉ African American male leadership development program
- ◉ Candidates “nominated” to participate
- ◉ Working with high school principal

December 3, 2009

Congratulations! You have been nominated along with an elite group of college bound students to participate in a new and innovative partnership between **The University of Denver** and **Thomas Jefferson High School** titled **Inspired Leaders of the Future (ILF)**. The criteria for selecting applicants into this program include; *leadership potential, academic potential, personal strength and college bound potential*. We have reviewed your school profile, recommendations, records, awards and accolades. We believe you have the potential to excel in a post-secondary educational environment. We also hope and believe that you have the potential to become a great leader in our community and society!

Upon the acceptance of this nomination you will be placed in our Inspired Leaders of the Future cohort. The Director of the Center for Multicultural Excellence and African American Services Coordinator from the University Of Denver Tracey Adams-Peters will greet you and serve as your program director. Tracey Adams-Peters is a DPS graduate who has excelled in her career and studies; she is a great resource for you as she can relate to the DPS experience. Working together with Principal Just you will interact with college students from the University of Denver. As a participant in this program you will have access to the prestigious DU college campus, student representatives, DU college athletics, and esteemed professors. You will receive information about the college preparation and planning process. You will receive assistance in everything from the financial aid process to experiencing life on a college campus first-hand. The ultimate goal of this program is to maximize your leadership, and academic potential and to secure admission and access to financial resources to a college or university. We would love to see every student in this elite cohort enroll in a college or university. It our expectation that each participant will attend each scheduled meeting. We also expect that each member will be supportive of his peers, and will in turn use their leadership skills to give back to their community and school by modeling the attributes of a successful student and leader.

Your response to this opportunity is due no later than **November 10, 2009 at 3pm**. Please deliver your signed copy of this sheet to our secretary. Remember, you were chosen through a very selective process, this is an opportunity that requires you to bring your best and hold positive intentions. We hope you will be joining us as we begin our magnificent journey this winter. Thank you! We look forward to welcoming you!

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Sandra Just, Principal, Thomas Jefferson High School

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Tracey Adams-Peters, Director,  
Center for Multicultural Excellence

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



# Projects in development

- ◉ Manual High school in Denver
- ◉ South High school in Denver
- ◉ Other community organizations
- ◉ Current focus on high school students
- ◉ Discussions with local churches

# Program benefits

- Flexibility- can be adapted to work with any population
- Can be created in a community-based setting, K-12, and college student setting
- Provides students and parents with a variety of options
- Provides common language for parents and students and resources to higher education professionals

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