

## **College of Lake County Diversity Best Practices**

### **Men of Vision**

Men of Vision (MOV) is a student-driven retention initiative that encourages male students to strive for academic excellence and to be active participants in the cultivation of community. The MOV members are encouraged to embrace leadership by being positive examples for each other through a strong commitment to academic and professional achievement, brotherhood, and community service. The students' focus is directed toward the motto that "I am my brother's keeper."

The MOV Organization began at the College of Lake County in the Spring of 2009. The students collectively met to develop the mission and objectives of the initiative which includes academic, intellectual, social, personal and spiritual development of males based on respect, accountability for self, family, justice and integrity. As a chapter of the Student African American Brotherhood, the College of Lake County's program reaches out to male students of all ethnic backgrounds. The chapter is supported by over twenty faculty advisors who meet weekly on campus with MOV members to provide study sessions, developmental seminars, business meetings, social activities, and work with various non-profit service agencies (i.e., Habitat for Humanity, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Boys Club, etc.).

### **Thrive**

THRIVE is a retention initiative which promotes academic success of at-risk students by targeting these students for special programs, activities and services that can assist them academically. Students are invited to participate in the Faculty and Staff Mentor Program and/or the Peer Mentor Program. The students who have been identified as at risk include all new degree seeking students between the ages of 18 – 24, financial aid recipients on student academic probation, and students of color who have a cumulative GPA of less than 2.2.

The THRIVE program, which hosted the first annual THRIVE Student Success Conference in January 2008, is guided by the belief that personal intervention can make the difference between success and failure for many students who are struggling academically. By identifying students who are struggling or have risk factors which make them predisposed to academic distress the committee provides these students with various opportunities to reach out for help. Students then benefit by participating in study groups, conferences, and social interactions.

The concept of THRIVE is to help students quickly identify where to get help when they are in need. Instead of the College identifying the department and program as Retention, the initiative is promoted as a social community that includes “coaches” and mentors who assist students in reaching their academic goals. THRIVE is a collaborative initiative, born out of the Multicultural Student Center that now includes First Year Experience, Bridge Program, Women’s Center, Faculty champions and the Math Department.

### **Women’s Center**

The Women’s Center, located within Student Life, is a student service that provides referrals to counseling and social agencies, discussion groups, workshops and other events for the CLC community, targeting special populations of students, including returning female adults, single mothers, displaced homemakers, victims of sexual assault and domestic violence, women in cultural transition, and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community. The Center was established in Fall 2003 Semester to address the need for gender awareness and to help particularly at-risk female students who attend CLC. Students who qualify for the Center’s assistance can receive emergency funds, donations from the college community, small-group workshops, assistance with county referrals and other supports as they pursue their education at CLC.

### **Gender Conference**

The Gender Conference is a bi-annual academic conference inviting faculty and students from CLC and surrounding colleges to present their creative and academic work in a public forum. It is one of the few college conferences that invite undergraduate students to participate with faculty. The conference also serves as a networking opportunity for both presenters and audience members. This two-day event, open to the public, features presentations, professional guest speakers, a film showing and discussion, and entertainment.

### **Multicultural Student Center**

The Multicultural Student Center (MSC), coordinated through Student Life, provides support for the student organizations and special interest groups who plan and promote cultural activities on campus and also provides resources and information on issues relevant to the promotion of multiculturalism in academic and co-curricular programs and services.

Opened in 2005, the Multicultural Student Center was established to create and maintain educational, cultural, and social programs to assist in the development and advancement of an ethnically diverse student body. In an effort to educate students, faculty, and staff about the importance of diversity at the College of Lake County, the MSC collaborates with a variety of on- and off-campus constituents to support diversity initiatives in retention and recruiting.

Multicultural Programs strive to promote the following:

- Respect for diversity
- Ensure social, educational, and cultural student programming for underrepresented groups on campus is inclusive and accessible
- Provide students with a variety of resources and opportunities to learn about themselves, other cultures, and their community
- Strengthen students' academic and social skills
- Encourage students to build a support network with staff, faculty, and administration
- Recognize and reward exemplary leadership behavior

### **Bridge Program**

The Bridge Program is a retention effort that assists recent high school graduates who place into developmental English with successfully transitioning to ENG 121 and credit courses that require language proficiency. The Bridge Program also helps developmental students with learning and practicing the necessary skill set in order to accomplish their academic goals.

The Bridge Program, which began as a pilot program in summer 2006, is critical to increasing the likelihood that incoming freshman will accomplish their goals efficiently and in turn have a successful college experience. Recent high school graduates are the population most likely to enroll as full-time students. Consequently, they are at a greater risk of getting into academic trouble faster than other populations. Those that begin with developmental courses are at even greater risk because many lack important academic and study skills. The Bridge program, coordinated through the Student Life Office, offers programs and services to students allowing them an opportunity to begin their college experience with enhanced support and a strong foundation from the college. The ultimate goal is to ensure that students who are at-risk have the necessary support to help them matriculate successfully through the College.

### **Head Start**

The College of Lake County Head Start initiative is a cooperative partnership between the College of Lake County and the Community Action Partnership of Lake County whereby the College provides Head Start child care programming at the college's two campuses. The program began in fall 2008 semester in response to a request for collaboration from the Community Action Project needing more classroom space for eligible children in Lake County.

Head Start services are provided four days per week, morning and afternoon at the Lakeshore campus and afternoon only at the Grayslake campus. Head Start serves children ages 3-5 whose family meets the eligibility standards of the Head Start Act, 42 USC 9840, and its implementing regulations, as set forth at 45 CFR 1305.4. College of Lake County students who meet these eligibility standards are given preference in

placement at one of the centers. The Head Start program provides free child care services as well as social services to the parent and child. The Head Start program has assisted many returning adult students and low-income parents by offsetting the cost of attending and alleviating child care needs.

### **Veterans Services**

Beginning May 2009 the College of Lake County created a Military Network of Services committee whose members are dedicated to providing service members and veterans with services and resources that will assist in adjusting to civilian and campus life. The committee consists of staff and faculty across the college. The committee was formed to improve and create veteran-friendly services and prepare for the expected return of service members from Afghanistan and Iraq. The committee and projects fall within the Student Development division with the leadership of the Assistant Vice President for Student Development. In August 2009, the College was recognized for its efforts to provide services to military service members and veterans by earning the distinction of being a "Military Friendly School" by G.I. Jobs magazine. Some of the best practices that have been implemented are listed below.

#### **SERVICES FOR MILITARY/VETERANS THAT HAVE BEEN COMPLETED:**

- Service members and veterans have been afforded priority registration privileges
- PeopleSoft programming has been developed to expedite the processing of financial aid benefits for military/veterans.
- A national student veterans club has been established on campus.
- Priority is given to transfer credit evaluations of military transcripts.
- Military/veterans are protected from the drop for non-payment.
- Contacts have been established within the VA for mental health referral sources.
- IL Dept of VA has a representative on site once per week at Grayslake and Lakeshore.
- A procedure has been developed and advertised for students who get deployed and need to withdraw from classes.
- Scholarship promotion and increases in awards for military/veterans has occurred.
- A guide for military credit has been developed and advertised.
- A veteran's website has been created so that the service members have a one-stop informational page.
- The Women's Center has been provided materials on assisting female veterans who have been in combat.
- The Office of Students with Disabilities is providing temporary accommodations while the VA is processing paperwork.
- CLC faculty and staff have been offered numerous training opportunities to assist them in working with military/veterans returning from combat.
- An email address for military/veterans has been established and communications have increased on important college and VA information.

- A referral system has been established within the college for key staff members who assist veterans.

### **Educational Talent Search**

Educational Talent Search (ETS) is designed to assist students in completing their secondary education and enrolling in post-secondary education, training or programming. Our mission is to provide necessary support services to primarily at-risk, low-income, and first-generation students at targeted high schools. Mandatory outcomes include:

- Secondary School Promotion - **85%** promoted to the next grade level
- Secondary School Graduation - **87%** of high school seniors will graduate or receive a GED
- Application for Student Financial Aid - **100%** of college-ready participants will apply for financial aid
- Post-secondary Application for Admissions - **95%** of college-ready participants will apply to post-secondary school
- Post-secondary Education Enrollment - **75%** of college-ready participants will enroll in a post-secondary program

During the current program period, ETS is serving 67% low-income, first generation students. Ethnic types include: 44% African-American, 42% Hispanic, 6% White, 6% Multi-racial, and 2% Asian. 44% students are male and 56% students are female.

### **Pride Alliance**

Pride Alliance Organization is a student organization which welcomes those who are members of the GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual & Transgendered) community as well as allies. The goal of the organization is to bring awareness and promote acceptance of the GLBT community at CLC. It is necessary to have such an organization on campus as it is an opportunity for students and staff to network, socialize and help to educate the community about those who are GLBT. This is accomplished through providing guest speakers, celebrating national events, and providing social events. Pride Alliance was re-established fall 2002 as a peer group. Pride Alliance, coordinated through the Student Activities Office, meets weekly. Beginning fall 2010 semester, Pride Alliance will be housed under the new GLBT resource center, called 'Reaching OUT'.

### **Safe Zone**

The Safe Zone program is a nationally recognized program that represents an effort to address homophobia in schools and is intended to provide support for GLBT students, faculty and staff. The Safe Zone programs tangibly identify "safe" allies for the GLBT minority group to increase students' academic success and retention. The Safe Zone program, initiated in fall 2003, is offered as a workshop for faculty and staff focusing on providing current information about the GLBT community, myths, facts and self-awareness through educational material and discussion. Representatives from the program are also available to hold in class workshops for professors who request it. Once

faculty and staff have completed the workshop they are given a Safe Zone emblem that can be displayed out in the open. The emblem represents understanding, non-judgment and knowledge of GLBT persons' needs and concerns. It is symbolic of a willingness and commitment on the part of the one displaying it, to provide an atmosphere of unqualified acceptance and assistance.



### **International Education**

The Center for International Education incorporates international education/curriculum development, grant proposal/management, study abroad, international admission/advisement and international student recruitment. The Center reports through the Student Development division under the leadership of the Assistant Vice Presidents for Student Development and Educational Affairs. The center is responsible for fostering an organizational culture and climate that fully supports global education and welcomes diversity. This is being achieved through coordination of the College's international efforts including international program offerings and curriculum development; applying for grant and funding opportunities; supporting international travel for recruitment, study abroad and exchange programs; and supporting international students who choose to study at the College of Lake County. This Center creates a focal point for the various international education and international student activities that are taking place throughout the College. The Center will build upon the synergies of the various areas currently involved in international education/students and expand the scope of what is currently being done.

The college currently hosts 126 students from 41 countries. The international student population continues to grow at the College. CLC was awarded a grant from the Community Colleges for International Development's (CCID) community college initiative whereby we will be hosting up to 12 students for one academic year from nations including Central America, Brazil, South Africa, Ghana, Egypt, Indonesia, Turkey & Pakistan. The Center will also be hosting up to 20 students from China in the fall 2010 semester as part of our exchange program with Xi'an University. A grant proposal is being finalized which would be a consortium between Joliet Junior College and CLC which would focus on strengthening international studies and foreign languages in Japan, Jordan and India. The role of the International Education committee has been solidified as an advisory group for the development of the Center.