OFFICE OF MULTICULTURAL STUDENT SUCCESS (OMSS)

PARENT AND FAMILY OUTREACH PROGRAM

DePaul University
OMSS MISSION

The Office of Multicultural Student Success seeks to cultivate student success for students of color, low-income college students, or first generation college students through sustained developmental programming, financial resources, and advocacy.

Welcome,

On behalf of the Office of Multicultural Student Success (OMSS), it is my pleasure to welcome you to the OMSS family. My name is Richard Morales and I serve as your staff contact for the new Parent and Family Outreach Program.

You might be asking, what is this program about? The Parent and Family Outreach Program helps you be more involved in your student’s higher education. Research shows that when low-income students, first-generation students or students of color are surrounded by strong holistic support systems—both at a university and at home—they have an increased chance of completing their degree. In 2007, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) distributed a national online survey completed by 4,518 first-year students and 4,644 senior students to examine the “nature and quality of the support college students receive from members of their support systems” (NSSE, 2007). The results indicated “about three quarters of all students followed the advice of a parent or guardian…” (NSSE, 2007).

The OMSS staff realizes this and are now starting the first ever Parent and Family Outreach Program. The goal of this program is not just to provide you with general information about DePaul programs and services, but to help you, the parent, become a partner in your student’s success at DePaul University. Throughout your student’s first year, we will provide you information (through newsletters and parent events) on how to effectively communicate, collaborate and strategically plan with your student to help them achieve success.

Each newsletter is designed to address the critical needs of first-generation students, students of color and low-income students based on the most current scholarly research, department collaborations at DePaul University, and our student community.

We package that information in an easy to read format for all parents to use as a reference to create healthy relationships with your student about student success at DePaul.

We hope this is the beginning of a great relationship between OMSS, our students and you. To help OMSS start on the right track, we ask that you complete our short survey at the end of this newsletter. This information is critical to help OMSS design the Parent and Family Outreach Program to cater to your needs.

Thanks for your time and I look forward to working with you.

Richard P. Morales
Area 1: Academics, Leadership, Access and Service

Financial Awards for Service and Excellence (FASE)
FASE is a suite of scholarship offerings that provide financial support, leadership development and academic support for the constituents.

› Financial Support: Offers scholarship awards ranging from $500-$15,000. Often, students must demonstrate financial need to be eligible for certain scholarships.

› Leadership Development: Each scholarship applicant is required to demonstrate academic excellence and provide details of their service and/or extracurricular activities in support of their application. In addition, OMSS encourages participation in the programs offered through the office and/or other leadership development opportunities.

› Academic Support: Each scholarship recipient meets with professional staff to assure they are maintaining good academic standing and progressing toward degree completion in four to five years.

REACHING for Early Access for Developing Youth (READY)
The READY Program works to provide pre-college students with the opportunity to connect with DePaul University and learn about the university, its mission and various offerings. Students participate in a series of activities to enhance their knowledge in the areas of awareness, access and preparedness for the college-going process. Students are invited to campus to attend various workshops, immersion experiences, shadowing and mock classroom exercises where they interact with DePaul faculty, staff and students.

Women Empowered
From networking to attending cultural events, the Women Empowered (WE) Program offers undergraduate women of color guidance and support in achieving academic, personal and professional success. Through a combination of on-campus workshops and Chicago-area excursions, WE program participants build camaraderie among a select group of women from diverse backgrounds while exploring issues of race and gender, developing leadership skills, and fostering a commitment to service. The WE program also offers open workshops and events to the broader community of women of color at DePaul to positively impact their experiences at college and beyond.

Area 2: Empowerment and Student Success

Students Together Are Reaching Success
Students Together Are Reaching Success (S.T.A.R.S.) is a peer-to-peer mentoring program designed for first year DePaul students. S.T.A.R.S. pairs up highly motivated upperclassmen (the peer mentors) with first-year students that identify as low-income college students, first-generation college students, or students of color for a year-long mentoring relationship that focuses on building academic excellence, leadership development and strong social networks.

Providing Access Through Holistic Support
Providing Access Through Holistic Support (P.A.T.H.S.) is a sophomore success program to help low-income students, first-generation students or students of color gain early access to critical information that will better prepare them to pursue their career choice upon graduation. Participants will earn a P.A.T.H.S. certificate by completing campus workshops and personal and group reflections that focus on five learning domains: major declaration and advising, graduate school awareness, career awareness, financial fitness, and socially responsible leadership. Each participant who completes the certificate will be ready to choose whether they want to pursue a graduate degree or a career by the end of their sophomore year.

Transfer Student Success
The Office of Multicultural Student Success recognizes the need to assist transfer students as they make the transition to a new college or university. We are here to provide programs, services, information and opportunities for them to succeed. Take advantage of all of the opportunities specifically designed just for transfer students.

› Transfer Student Seminars
› Transfer Student Mentoring
› Transfer Student Scholarship

The Transfer Student Success Program is launching its pilot year and will provide the necessary resources and support to transfer students of color, first-generation transfer students, and low-income students.
Area 3: Men of Color Initiative

The Men of Color Initiative (MOC)
The MOC Initiative is a multi-year, multi-tiered program that exists to provide students with opportunities and information critical to their success at DePaul University. The initiative is designed to support its participants over the course of their entire time at DePaul University from the moment they enroll until the day they graduate. To that end, the MOC Initiative is divided into two distinct components: one directed primarily at first-year students, and another focused on sophomore students and above.

1st-year Program for Academic Retention and Transition (1st-PART)
The MOC 1st-PART is vital in assisting first-generation, low-income, male students of color matriculate into their sophomore year by creating opportunities for one-to-one mentoring and large group social interactions for its participants. All first-year participants are paired with an MOC upperclassman who serves as their mentor in the areas of college transition, navigating the university culture and academic achievement. Through the MOC Academy and an optional Discover Chicago course, the MOC provides safe spaces for participants to engage in conversations critical to their success at DePaul University. The MOC promise is this: if your student commits to the program by being an active participant, we will commit to your students’ success.

MOC Upperclassmen Experience
The MOC Upperclassmen Experience focuses on providing male upperclassmen of color with opportunities for life-skills attainment, intergenerational mentoring, graduate school and career preparation, and civic and community engagement. With the use of on-campus workshops, alumni networking events, Chicago excursions, interactive programs and its “Real Men Serve” campaign, the MOC Initiative’s Upperclassmen Experience works to ensure its participants will succeed at their post-graduation endeavors.

OMSS Services

Book Loan Program
Every academic quarter, DePaul students who bring a list of titles and authors with them to the front desk can check out free books from OMSS’s Book Loan Library, any time between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Computer Lab
Throughout the academic school year, DePaul students are also welcome to sign in and utilize OMSS’s computer lab.

Monday-Friday from 9 a.m.-4:50 p.m.
The Division of Student Affairs at DePaul University has an Office of Multicultural Student Success, a Center for Intercultural Programs, and an Office of Diversity Education. In brief, what are the differences between each of these offices?

The Office of Multicultural Student Success (OMSS)
OMSS is called to work with low-income college students, first-generation college students, and students of color by developing sustained developmental programs to assist these populations in having a successful DePaul experience. Beyond managing these retention, persistence, and empowerment programs, OMSS also serves as an advocacy office for marginalized college students that experience a crisis during their time at DePaul.

The Center for Intercultural Programs
The Center for Intercultural Programs is the main programming department for the diversity area in Student Affairs. The center collaborates with other departments, student organizations, faculty and staff to provide cultural arts education that represents the diverse cultures in the DePaul community.

The Office of Diversity Education
The Office of Diversity Education is the central resource for diversity education workshop and dialogue experiences for faculty, students, and staff. This department is charged with engaging learners to critically think about their own identity through multiple lenses while also considering systems of power, privilege and oppression that we are located in.

How can OMSS help if a student is in trouble?
OMSS prides itself on being knowledgeable in numerous areas of the college student experience. By coming into our office, students will be able to meet with a professional staff member, discuss their situation, and devise a plan of action that is right for them. We partner with various departments across the entire university and will continuously work to find a resolution.

Does OMSS have job opportunities?
OMSS offers job opportunities for both undergraduate and graduate students.

UNDERGRADUATE
Peer Mentors—S.T.A.R.S. peer mentors are partnered with freshmen for one full academic year and serve as guides to assist them in navigating the transition from high school into the DePaul community.

OMSS Interns—A capstone experience for upperclassmen, OMSS interns gain experience in managing program logistics and event planning. Qualified internship candidates are highly organized and detail-oriented. The internships support a variety of areas of interest and OMSS programs through the following positions:

- Academics, Leadership, and Access (ALAS) Intern
- Egan Hope Scholars Intern
- Empowerment and Student Success Intern
- Logistics Intern

Front Desk Assistants—The front desk assistants serve as the first point of contact for visitors to both Lincoln Park and Loop offices and perform various tasks that demonstrate a commitment to customer service.

Applications for all undergraduate positions are available during the winter quarter.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTS
Graduate Assistants (GAs)—OMSS offers three graduate assistantships for students pursuing their graduate degrees at DePaul University. From assisting with program development to leading workshops, the GAs are paraprofessional staff with a high-level of responsibility and autonomy. OMSS GAs support the following initiatives:

- The Men of Color (MOC) Initiative
- S.T.A.R.S. Peer Mentoring Program
- Scholarships and Graduate Initiatives

Applications for all graduate positions are available during the spring quarter.

Is OMSS exclusive to people of color?
Regardless of race, ethnicity, class, gender, political or religious affiliation, all DePaul students, including low-income, first-generation college students and students of color are welcome to utilize the Office of Multicultural Student Success. OMSS is sensitive to the needs of all DePaul students, while at the same time recognizing the unique obstacles that low-income, first-generation students, and students of color may encounter in a university setting. While low-income, first-generation students and students of color have the highest utilization of our office, students from all walks of life are welcome to take advantage of the various opportunities OMSS makes available to the DePaul community.
Vijay Pendakur, Director: Vijay Pendakur has worked at DePaul University since February 2006 and currently serves as the director of the Office of Multicultural Student Success. As director, Vijay provides strategic vision for the department, works to establish new partnerships across campus to support departmental programs, and supervises the assistant directors in OMSS. Vijay strongly believes that parents and family members are a key ingredient in student success and that students’ needs change during the college journey. For parents and family members to effectively support their DePaul student, they have to grow with their student and be responsive to how the challenges and demands of college change over time.

Sara Furr, Assistant Director Empowerment and Student Success: Sara Furr joined the DePaul community in August 2009. She currently oversees the area of Empowerment and Student Success, which includes the S.T.A.R.S. Peer Mentoring Program, P.A.T.H.S. Sophomore Engagement Program, Transfer Student Success and Parent and Family Outreach. Prior to moving to Chicago, she lived in New York City and Maryland. Sara spent most of her young life in Tokyo, Japan. As a first-generation college student from a single parent household, Sara credits much of her success to her mom’s delicate balance of challenge and support. She is excited about not only engaging your first year students in the S.T.A.R.S. Peer Mentoring Program, but also providing parents with the tools necessary to navigate their involvement in the DePaul community.

Jeff Brown, Assistant Director Academics, Leadership, Access and Service: Jeff Brown has been a part of the DePaul community for almost four years and serves as an assistant director in the Office of Multicultural Student Success. Known as the ‘money man,’’ JB oversees OMSS’ scholarship offerings with awards ranging from $500-$15,000. JB also manages the Egan Hope Scholars Program, which was named after the late Monsignor John Egan, and designed to give inner-city Chicago students an opportunity to earn a DePaul education while performing community service and social justice work. JB’s support for first generation, low income students of color spans over 12 years and he has remained committed to assisting students from underserved areas of Chicago. He believes that students are only successful when their entire community is involved. If parents, teachers, counselors and other community partners are involved, there is no limit to what students can achieve.

Eric Mata, Assistant Director Men of Color Initiative: Eric Mata has worked at DePaul University for a year and a half as an assistant director for the Office of Multicultural Student Success. He is currently in charge of the Men of Color Initiative. Eric was born in Illinois, but was raised on the south side of Milwaukee, Wis. Being the first in his family to attend college, Eric believes that it is important that parents and students stay in constant communication. He believes that the more a parent knows about their student’s experience, the better chance they have at assisting them in their efforts to graduate. Eric is excited to become a partner in your student’s success at DePaul University.

Tomika Rodriguez, Coordinator: A coordinator for the Office of Multicultural Student Success (OMSS), Tomika has been at DePaul for over two years. Her roles include managing the Women Empowered (WE) Program and four scholarships offered within the department. Her own parents’ commitment to education inspired and bolstered her academic aspirations. She sees the work of OMSS as only one piece of the puzzle. In realizing firsthand the impact they have on their students, Tomika hopes to connect with parents in meaningful ways to build the complete picture of student success.

Richie Morales, Coordinator: Richard P. Morales has worked at DePaul University for five years as a coordinator for the Office of Multicultural Student Success. Today, he is in charge of P.A.T.H.S. and the new Parent and Family Outreach Program. Rich believes a balanced relationship between parents and students that focuses around student success will help low-income students, first-generation students and students of color graduate from DePaul. He is excited to share his in-depth knowledge with you to help you become a partner in your student’s success at DePaul University.

Bridgette Ratcliffe, OMSS Office Manager
Overview of Student Staff

- 42 S.T.A.R.S. Peer Mentors
- 6 M.O.C. Peer Mentors
- 5 Undergraduate Interns
- 3 Graduate Assistants
- 2 Front Desk Student Assistants
AN INSIDE LOOK

At OMSS we want to provide you with a preview of what topics we are covering this year in each of our newsletters. Take a look.

Fall Quarter
Negotiate Your Involvement in Your Student’s Education
› Setting up a healthy parent-student relationship through dialogue and teachable moments.
› How to start a conversation about your student’s experience at DePaul.
› Understanding the experiences your student is going through and how to empower them to get through it.
› Academic Progress Reports: What are they and how can parents and family help?

Winter Quarter
Collaborating Issues of Financial Fitness
› Tips on how to create a strategic plan with your student to help manage future DePaul expenses.
› Creating dialogue around how to read your financial aid packages.
› Important financial aid dates.
› Student leadership position opportunities in OMSS.

Spring Quarter
Making the Choice: Creating Healthy Relationships on Career Development and Graduate School Planning.
› Important information about what happens next after the first year of college.
› OMSS involvement programs every parent should know.
› How to create a conversation around healthy career and graduate school planning.

Be on the lookout
The First Ever OMSS Parent and Family BBQ
Come join OMSS staff at the first ever OMSS Parent and Family BBQ on Saturday, August 14 at the DePaul Quad at noon. This BBQ is designed for parents and family only. During the BBQ, OMSS staff will engage all parents and family members in critical discussions and provide you with in-depth information on how you can be a partner to help your student achieve success during their first year and through their time at DePaul. Invitations will be sent soon, so be sure to RSVP as soon as you get it in the mail.

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DEPAUL UNIVERSITY
ATTN: OFFICE OF MULTICULTURAL STUDENT SUCCESS
1 E JACKSON BLVD
CHICAGO IL 60604-9749
Is this your first student to attend college?
- Yes
- No

How prepared do you feel to support your student as he/she enters DePaul University?
- Extremely Prepared
- Very Prepared
- Prepared
- Somewhat Prepared
- Not at all Prepared

How worried are you that your child will not be able to succeed in college; that is, not be able to graduate and earn a diploma within the expected time frame for their program or degree?
- Extremely Worried
- Very Worried
- Worried
- Somewhat Worried
- Not at all Worried

How would you rate your current awareness of university resources?
- Extremely Aware
- Very Aware
- Aware
- Somewhat Aware
- Not at all Aware

During the past 12 months, which of the following have you and your student talked about? (Check all that apply)
- Plans for after high school
- Grades or test scores related to college
- Potential careers that might be a good match for them
- Improving skills needed to succeed in college (time management, organization, writing)
- Classes they should take to get ready for college
- How to pay for college