

Program Name: Student African American Brotherhood (SAAB)

Target Population: Men of Color (particular focus on African American men) on Affiliated College Campuses

Contextual Background

Current state of college success among men of color

Graduation rates...

- Lowest for African-American males compared to all.
- National college graduation rate for Black males as of 2005 = 35%
- National three-year graduation rate [from community colleges] = 16 %
- Nationally, there is increased attention to low enrollment and retention of African-American males on college campuses.
- In 2007, the overall college graduation rate for Latinos was 49%, with females graduating at higher rates than males
- Graduation rates among HCBUs and HSIs vary widely; the best graduate 78% of their black students, but others lack the resources to offer sufficient financial aid.

Demographics...

- “Of the African Americans in college, only 38% are male.”
- The number of African-American males seeking higher-education is low, but increasing.
- “Between 1977 and 2003, Black women experienced an average gain of 2.6 percentage points per year in attainment across all degree levels. Black male attainment increased by an average of 0.2 percentage points....”
- Blacks make up only 5.3 percent of all full-time faculty at U.S. colleges and universities, and only 4% at PWIs.

Challenges Regarding Implementation

- Each chapter has a different signature event, and other unique elements that are difficult to trace back to a national organization.
- There is some resistance to the changing nature of the organization nationally by older chapters; in particular some do not want to start paying dues when they were not previously required to.
- SAAB does not currently collect national student-level outcomes data
- The rapid expansion of SAAB resulted in some inconsistencies in the implementation of SAAB at the local level.
- Lack of staff and financial resources at the national level make local oversight difficult.
- Some student affairs personnel and college administrators are offended by the assumption that their efforts don't benefit African-American males and other men of color on their respective campuses.
- Some SAAB members cannot financially afford to stay in college and so drop out.
- On some campuses there have been tensions between the Latino and AA male students.

Assets and Opportunities Regarding Implementation

- SAAB has recently developed a set of five strategic goals, and aims to establish “a culture of data-driven decision-making... across the organization while a sustainable, well-crafted system to assess progress on strategic plan goals is implemented.”
- Each SAAB chapter has a set of strategic goals and plans, which set a blue print for the chapter and aids in succession of leadership.
- SAAB encourages and requires that each chapter has institutional support, as is evidenced by paying dues and recognizing the chapter.
- SAAB has some evidence of success of increased graduation rates and GPA, but research to date has been limited.
- SAAB has been able to expand over a number of years into over 100 chapters nationwide.
- The founder of SAAB is respected as an expert on African-American males in higher education, and his reputation lends itself to the organization. He utilizes his network of other experts in the field of African American men in higher education to inform SAAB.
- SAAB incorporates many features proven to benefit African American men in college, including the use of mentoring, creating a positive social climate, and leadership development activities.

Assumptions

About the Problem

- Individual-level factors (as opposed to environmental) lead to the inability to matriculate through college and beyond and should be the target of intervention.
- Challenges facing African American males can be resolved by providing student development interventions and support to those who participate in such interventions.
- Existing student organizations that target men of color, which still fill a useful social role, are failing to guarantee their members' emotional or academic success.
- Middle schools, high schools, and colleges/universities are concerned with the under-representation of African-American males and other men of color.
- Networking opportunities for African-American males (particularly with career professionals) are hard to find.
- Current mentorship models are ill-suited for men of color.

About the Program

- The model is one that is and will remain attractive to education institutions, such that they will invest financial resources in the model.
- SAAB seeks change among individuals, which may subsequently create institutional change. Institutional change, however, is secondary to creating change among individual SAAB participants.
- SAAB does not compete with, but compliments pre-existing support mechanisms for African-American males and other men of color on campuses.
- GPA is a valid and reliable measure of the success of African-American males and other men of color on college campuses.
- The SAAB experience: “creates culture” -> “shapes values” -> “forms beliefs” -> “transforms behavior.”
- SAAB's emphasis on accountability, independence, and personal responsibility is an effective approach for generating positive student outcomes.
- SAAB is able to attract members because men of color will search for and/or create an “alternate family.”
- Dressing in business attire displays a sense of unity, better prepares participants for the business world and dispels negative image myths.
- The mix of programs, and activities SAAB offers leads to positive short-term outcomes (e.g., increased self esteem, sense of belonging, better grades).
- The only ones who can credibly communicate the message of caring to African American males are their peers.
- Mentoring (both being the mentor and the mentee) is a successful strategy for increasing outcomes among African American male college students.
- Mentoring empowers African American male students to seek out professors in a mentoring role, in ways they have not done before.
- The more connected they are to other students on campus via SAAB, the more likely they are to persist and graduate.
- Regional conferences and fireside chats provide networking opportunities that promote career development among SAAB members

About the Organization

- The national office could support local chapters in a very impactful way, and maintain quality across chapters despite differences among institutions.
- The organization can elicit, receive, and meaningfully utilize student-level data given some technical assistance.

Strategic Focus:

To increase college retention, academic performance, graduation rates, and career preparedness among men of color (particularly African American men) by creating a supportive on-campus experience

Goal 1

To increase SAAB member graduation rates and enhance the experience of men of color (particularly African American men) in an effort to produce good men, fathers, and productive citizens in society

Goal 2

To support the successful implementation of SAAB at the college level

GOAL 1: To increase SAAB member graduation rates and enhance the experience of men of color, particularly African American men, in an effort to produce good men, fathers, and productive citizens in society.

Chapter-level Activities

Short-term Outcomes (during college enrollment)

Long-term Outcomes (after college)

- Establish mentoring relationships using a three-pronged approach to mentoring:
 - peer-to-peer
 - advisor-to-student
 - older student-to-younger student
- Provide context and understanding of the legacy of being a man of African American ancestry, through “teachable moments,” book clubs, public speaker series, etc.
- Provide topical meetings and “teachable moments,” which involve discussions of a topic relevant to the lives of SAAB participants
- Offer and connect students to cultural and social activities
- Conduct a signature program – designed to introduce chapter to campus (e.g. AA male summit, Tribute to Mom, banquet honoring faculty for contribution to AA students)
- Provide opportunities to network locally, regionally and nationally
 - Help students attain internships in desired fields of work
 - Encourage attendance at regional SAAB conferences
 - Provide on-campus networking events
 - Facilitated visits to the campus career center (or meeting w/center staff).
- Advisors encourage students to seek leadership opportunities on campus (R.A., orientation leaders, student government). The strategic planning for new chapters says “be intentional” when looking at challenges on campus and how to address them proactively.
- Provide on-campus programs via six program committees:
 - Academics:
 - Provide weekly study sessions
 - Provide information about academic assistance
 - Personal development:
 - Help students create a Personal Development Plan (PDP)
 - Provide career planning services
 - Provide information about counseling services and medical and health-related services
 - Service:
 - Offer opportunities for community service and service learning projects with local nonprofit organizations (e.g. Habitat for Humanity)
 - Membership/public relations:
 - Spiritual enrichment/social activities:
 - Offer opportunities to attend religious activities
 - Financial affairs:
 - Provide information and referrals on financial aid, part-time employment opportunities

- SAAB members will have:**
- Short-term**
- Increased aspirations for college (a)
 - A “sense of belonging” on campus (b)
 - Involvement with on-campus organizations , including demonstration of leadership through key positions, etc. (c)
 - Increased ability to navigate the college/university processes and systems
 - SAAB is looked to by administrators as voice on policies impacting students of color on campus
 - Increase self-esteem and identity (d)
 - A feeling of social responsibility (e)
 - Enhanced racial identity/sense of historical/cultural education and validation (f)
 - An attitude that “it’s okay to be successful” with a redefinition of success for AA males (g)
 - Achievement of PDP goals (h)
- Intermediate**
- Increased GPA among SAAB participants (i)
 - Persistence from first to second year of college (address sophomore slump)

- SAAB members graduate from college
 - SAAB members are prepared for entrance into the workforce
 - Improve campus climate to be more supportive of students of color (e.g. student leadership activities and SAAB as voice turned to by administrators, etc.).
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- Career attainment
 - Personal, academic, professional development
 - SAAB members “give back” as positive role models (and possible “mentors”) as proud SAAB/college alumni.
 - SAAB members become good men, fathers, and productive citizens in society.

*Letters assigned to activities correspond to the outcomes to which the activities lead.

GOAL 2: Successful implementation of SAAB at the college level.

SAAB National Activities

- Assist with the new chapter development by working with local chapters around the following activities:
 - Assist chapters with satisfying requirements to become a recognized club/organization by the school/institution
 - Train newly established steering committee members on principles and practices of SAAB
 - Conduct 2 campus visits
 - Meet with key stakeholders on campus to create awareness of, and support for, SAAB
 - Help chapters develop a Strategic Action Plan (SAP)
 - Establish and train 10-18 member steering committee
 - Offer technical assistance as needed
 - Offer SAAB Faculty for one-day summit
- Provide regional and national conferences for college and high school students
- Provide an online discussion forum for students and advisors (planned)
- Conduct Executive Officers Institute training (planned)
- Conduct Advisor's Institute training (planned)
- Initiate a full scale evaluation and assessment plan (conducted by third party)
 - Establish an Evaluation and Research Advisory Board (planned)
 - Develop an online web-based data collection portal for surveys and results (planned)
 - Retain staff and consulting services necessary to assist in compiling and collecting data (planned?)
- Upgrade website and online tools for chapters
 - Develop a designated chapter portal (i.e., Myspace) (planned?)
 - Create online training modules for students and advisors (planned?)
- Create of a Promotional Video and strategic publications to share evaluation results with key stakeholders. (planned?)
- Activities to develop continuous flow of financial resources (planned?)
- Activities to develop and promote more cohesive branding (planned?)

Short-term Outcomes (3 years)

- Have a continuous flow of financial resources sufficient to sustain operations and planned growth. (a)
- More cohesive branding (c)
- Public awareness of the SAAB mission, vision and core programs. (d)
- Adequate technology is in place to support cross-chapter communication, National-to-chapter communication, and dissemination of technical assistance to chapters (e)
- A system is in place for systematic evaluation and measurement (f)
- Through oversight, national ensures the 15 member leadership model and PDP approach are used on every campus (outside of these parameters, implementation approaches can vary)

Long-term Outcomes (5+ years)

- Sustainable SAAB chapters
- “A culture of data-driven decision-making across the organization, with a well-crafted system to assess progress on strategic plan goals.”
- SAAB continues to grow to colleges, high schools, and middle schools
- Increased presence in higher education dialogue, contributing evidence from evaluation