

**AtD Equity & Inclusion Team Minutes**  
**January 10, 2019**

From: **Nichols, Carol** <[cnichols1@dacc.edu](mailto:cnichols1@dacc.edu)>

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To: Erika Harris <[eharris@dacc.edu](mailto:eharris@dacc.edu)>, Ashley Hargrove <[ahargrove@dacc.edu](mailto:ahargrove@dacc.edu)>, Candace McNeal <[cmcneal@dacc.edu](mailto:cmcneal@dacc.edu)>, Carla Boyd <[cboyd@dacc.edu](mailto:cboyd@dacc.edu)>, Carol Nichols <[cnichols1@dacc.edu](mailto:cnichols1@dacc.edu)>, Cydney Boyd <[cboyd1@dacc.edu](mailto:cboyd1@dacc.edu)>, Dawn Nasser <[dnasser@dacc.edu](mailto:dnasser@dacc.edu)>, Melanie Green <[mgreen@dacc.edu](mailto:mgreen@dacc.edu)>, Penny J McConnell <[pmcconn@dacc.edu](mailto:pmcconn@dacc.edu)>, Robert Mattson <[rmattson@dacc.edu](mailto:rmattson@dacc.edu)>, Shanay Wright <[swright@dacc.edu](mailto:swright@dacc.edu)>, Shannon Childers <[schilders@dacc.edu](mailto:schilders@dacc.edu)>, Stephen Nacco <[snacco@dacc.edu](mailto:snacco@dacc.edu)>, Wendy Brown <[wbrown@dacc.edu](mailto:wbrown@dacc.edu)>

At our Equity and Inclusion team meeting this week, we reviewed the progress of our first group of M-SWIFT students and our approach since we began working with these students in October.

Of our 33 students, nearly half had not enrolled for spring semester in December when the spreadsheet was compiled. Many were struggling academically with 14 of the 33 receiving D's or F's in their classes. Many had started with schedules of 12 to 17 credit hours and only ten finished the semester with the same number of courses. It was noted that in researching the information to be included, that the feeling was the students who received financial aid were not performing as well as though who did not. A Pell/Non-Pell column is going to be added to the spreadsheet to more easily track this.

Only one student attended the initial M-SWIFT meet & greet with community mentors. Eight others attended the Buffalo Wild Wings night, along with seven non-M-SWIFT students.

While exposure to this group of community mentors is important and will continue, the committee feels the mentors/mentees have not been able to bond in any significant way yet and that that will take time.

We will go ahead and offer the January 26 trip to the DACC/Parkland Basketball game utilizing a DACC van leaving at 2 pm from DACC. An invitation will be sent to mentors and mentees requesting an RSVP to gauge interest. The van driver will be determined from DACC faculty or staff attending. Rather than food in Danville after the game, funds will be provided for concessions at the game. Cydney, would you be willing to send out the invitation?

All of the students on our list have DACC mentors as well. Those mentors names will be included in our file so we can maintain contact with them regarding these students. Carla Boyd has revised the DACC Mentor handbook for community member mentors to offer them a resource.

All students on the list who were in jeopardy were contacted personally before the holiday break. Those who had not registered for spring offered a variety of reasons including past due balances and family challenges. We will reach out again to double check on progress and current status.

A key point in talking with the students was that often they did not share true information. One said their outstanding balance was \$200 when it was nearly \$2,300. Some committee members who had talked with these students were surprised at their status because the students had been asked many times during the semester how they were doing in their classes and they had indicated they were doing well when in fact they were failing multiple classes.

Given what we know about the mind sets of people in poverty, it was noted that it is not unusual for students to want to paint a positive picture rather than let down someone they respect. There is also a tendency to live in the moment and to ignore problems rather than attempt to fix them.

As people from a middle class mindset, an initial discussion in the committee was to find a way to motivate these students through scholarships or bonus classes. After further discussion, we realized these challenged students were typically receiving federal and state grants that not only covered their tuition and fees but books with additional money refunded back to them for living expenses. Reducing the amount charged would not save them money, it would increase the amount they receive as a refund from the grant which may or may not help with our goal of well-educated graduates with improved career opportunities.

It should be noted that balances on accounts, especially in the case of those receiving financial aid, stem from dropping classes after the drop date which keeps the student from failing but the student still owes for the class and the class now does not qualify for financial aid so the student has a balance due and no credit earned.

Given our target group is male African-American students, we feel we need to focus on including committee members of this demographic so we can be sure we are developing strategies that may be well-received. We will encourage DACC employees on the list of community M-SWIFT mentors to participate in the meetings.

Our meetings will continue to be the first Wednesday of the month at 1 pm in Laura Lee unless there is a conflict. The next meeting will be Wednesday, Feb. 6.

Thank you all for your time and commitment to this project.

Carol and Candace