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Sunni Ali

Northeastern Illinois University

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A Qualitative Study: How Northeastern Illinois University's College of Education Program Successfully Prepares Black Males with a Previous Individualized Learning Plan to Become Teachers

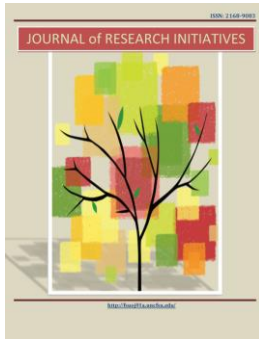
About the Author(s)

Dr. Sunni Ali is a 5th-year Assistant Professor at Northeastern Illinois University within the Education Inquiry and Curriculum Studies Department (EICS).

Dr. Ali also has 19 years of high school teaching experience (11 years as a Social Science Instructor, 2 years of which were an administrator, and 8 years as a Diverse Learner Instructor).

Keywords

Education, Specialized Supportive Services, Educational Assessment, Cultural Responsive Education



A QUALITATIVE STUDY: HOW NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY'S COLLEGE OF EDUCATION PROGRAM SUCCESSFULLY PREPARES BLACK MALES WITH A PREVIOUS INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING PLAN TO BECOME TEACHERS

Sunni Ali, Northeastern Illinois University

Abstract

As Teacher College Programs throughout the country attempt to increase their numbers of quality educators entering a classroom, an abiding concern remains: how do universities attract and successfully transition Black male students to become K-12 teachers? Such a lasting question has caused several national programs to arise, specifically a national initiative consortium (NIC) that involved several colleges of education programs to develop and sustain strategies to increase Black male teachers in the profession.

This qualitative-interview based study reviews how a teacher college program located in Chicago, Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU), applies NIC external and internal mechanisms to engage Black male students' interest. Also, the study identifies the various support systems utilized to improve this populations' academic skills that formerly possessed a K-12 individualized learning plan.

Introduction

The Need for Black Male Teachers

Problem Statement. As recent studies continue to show, time-and-time again, the number of Black male teachers in K-12 school models continues to decrease with a percentage of less than 3% working in public education (Kunjufu, 2002). In some cities or suburban spaces, Black males make up less than 1% of the teaching pool (Ravitch, 2012). Although public schools barely have this population in classrooms teaching, they exist in schools serving as security personnel, disciplinarians, custodians, or food service providers. What kind of message does this send to learners, parents, and community members where schools exist? Does it say to people that Black males can cook, clean, and “scare the hell” out of children, but they are not smart enough to teach in a schoolhouse? (Kozol, 2009). Students in K-12 schools need Black men to represent the academic intelligentsia of a learning community while also serving as role models to provide different learning experiences and perspectives for students to discover. With more public schools having Black and Brown students and fewer teachers of color, it is essential teacher college programs recruit, retain, and transition Black men into public schools.

Besides teacher college programs not doing enough to recruit and retain men of color to become educators, it is also necessary for such programs to recognize the learning challenges some black males may possess transitioning to college. When students have an individualized learning plan attached to an undergraduate's enrollment application, what kinds of support will they receive to help them one-day stand in front of children? (Baker, B.I., Pearl, H., Reynolds, N., 1998).

Selected Research Site

Northeastern Illinois University is a fully accredited public university serving the Chicago metropolitan area. Total graduate and undergraduate enrollment are approximately 10,300. In addition to offering traditional programs in the arts, sciences, business, and education, Northeastern has a strong commitment to innovative, non-traditional education and has been a leader in the development of specialized programs for adult learners. Northeastern Illinois University traces its origin to the beginnings of teacher training in Illinois. Founded in September 1867 in Blue Island as the Normal School, Cook County's first teacher training school, the institution has evolved into the comprehensive university that it is today. Its main campus, located at 5500 North St. Louis Avenue, opened in 1961 and was then called Chicago Teachers College North. Two more satellite campuses soon emerged, Carruthers Center for Inner City Education began in 1967; El Centro started in 1968.

Students Selection and Profile

For the past several years, Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) College of Education Program has reviewed the success rate of Black and Brown males transitioning through their teacher academic program. Based on their data points since 2016, the university captured the following data:

- Since Fall 2013, NEIU's undergraduate College of Education (COE) has a list of 143 Men of Color (Latinos and Blacks) who have taken education courses and indicated interest in becoming teachers; there are 4 Men of Color enrolled within the graduate studies program;
- To gain entry into the undergraduate COE, students must have a minimum GPA of 2.5 and pass the Illinois TAP test or receive a score of 21 on the ACT to earn admittance;
- Based on Black and Brown men initial interest to enter the teaching profession, 25 have not received entry due to them having a GPA less than 2.5 (143-25);
- A roster of Black and Brown men yet to gain entry because they have either not passed or taken the Illinois TAP test. As such, their numbers in COE reduced from 122 to 42 (118-80).

Disaggregating the data, to determine the number of Black males' entering and transitioning in COE, further indicated that out of the 38 *Men of Color* enrolled into the academic programs, eight of them were Black males with grade point averages ranging from 2.61 to 4.00. The 8 Black *male* students enrolled as juniors, student teaching, or within the post-undergrad program (students holding an undergraduate degree enrolled in the teacher of college).

Having such low enrollment numbers of Black males may speak to several factors:

(a) Campus location- is situated on the Northside of Chicago, which is a separate and ethnically distinct area of the city having a low residential population of Black Americans. Chicago exhibits a history of segregated geo-spaces that contributes to Blacks being unfamiliar to the parts of the city, specifically the Northside (Moore, 2017); (b) marketing-The North campus tends to market to Latino and White adult returning learners, which makes the school appear more attractive to this population. Most recently, the university is doing a better job of marketing to Black Americans through its satellite campuses, such as the Bronzeville location. Yet, students attending this campus do not have the option of taking the required college of education courses to become a certified teacher (the school's specific academic concentration is urban studies); (c) on-campus residential housing- NEIU recently built an on-campus housing unit for students; however, the university offers limited housing capacity for undergraduate learners who may find

it ideal to live away from home. Black American male students who do show interest may attend elsewhere to receive an on-campus residential experience.

Intervention Focus

To ensure and support the Black-and-Brown students progression of COE, the university became part of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) National Initiative Collaboration (NIC) program, to partner with other progressive teacher academic programs seeking to identify effective intervention strategies that advance Black-and-Brown males' successful transition and entry into a k-12 classroom.

AACTE's NIC is in the midst of developing a *White Paper* that quantifies the effectiveness of recruitment and retainment strategies to improve Black and Brown males in the teaching ranks (see Appendixes A and B for more specific information about the AACTE's NIC strategies applied). More important, the programs offered have been shown to benefit traditional learners who struggle in the teaching program and are invited to participate. AACTE's NIC has been shown to stabilize university-teaching programs that were under-enrolled due to some factors, specifically the national rigor of testing, added course preparations, and future salary that serves as a deterrent to young people to enter the profession (Ravitch, 2016).

Methodology

A qualitative investigation applying an interview-study format was utilized to access how effective NEIU's college of education applies AACTE's NIC framework transitioning black males to become K-12 teachers. Students identified in the study possessed a low ACT entry test scores and had high school individualized learning plans attached to their college admission applications. Interviews were conducted and coded to determine three-Black males' recruitment and matriculation through NEIU's College of Education Department (COE).

Theoretical Framework

College of Education programs that adopt a culturally responsive education incorporates an essential structure into their instructional systems to support men of color and their abilities to become classroom teachers. What a culturally responsive education (CRE) does, according to Ladson-Billings (2009), is entice students to engage and succeed in a curriculum because they are made to feel not only wanted but also an integral member of a classroom. Students of color, in this way, believe the educator or instructor believes in them while caring for their success, which helps the learner buy-in and engages the content and material. Ladson-Billings proved through her research that when students are shown love, provided learning supports, coaching, and personal advising by educators, students garner greater engagement and discipline toward school. Also, students acquire efficacy that helps them to feel good about themselves and their learning journey.

Author (2017) expounds on this point believing that when students apply a culturally responsive model, they place a higher value on their learning experiences. Students seek out to connect with the teacher viewing them as a role model. A responsive curriculum and environment do more than have students value who they are to feel good, and it also creates a cultural lens for students to guide, interpret, navigate, and assess their learning opportunities.

Such a theory gives excellent ammunition as to why it is essential faculty within teacher college programs require training applying this theory while also participating in mentoring sessions that develop significant relationships with minority students. Ultimately, what strengthens the value of a culturally responsive education is when a college or program sees the importance of incorporating the model as part of their learning and instructional systems (Billings, 2009).

Qualitative Approach

Phone and one-on-one interviews were conducted to discuss the recruitment and retention strategies applied to support men of color transition into the college of education.

Several interview questions were provided to the subjects to code their responses:

1. How did you come to find out about NEIU's COE?
2. What academic challenges and barriers have you encountered within the teacher college of education?
3. Directly speaking, do you feel NEIU's COE adequately supports and assists men of color? Why or why not?
4. Provide a brief assessment regarding NEIU's climate toward men of color? Do you believe it is friendly or inviting enough to maintain your existence within COE?
5. What supportive test prep guidance have you received or needed since your integration into NEIU's COE?

Extraneous Factors or Indicators

The three Black males in the study displayed the following extraneous factors:

Subjects	Extraneous Variables
A	Returning adult learner, 30 yrs. old; work full time
B	Working full time and attending college
C	The first member of the family to attend college

Coded Data Results

The following responses and specific coded themes developed from the interview study:

Subjects A-C

Questions	Response Details	Themes Emerged
1	<i>Grow Your Own Program</i> through Truman College, which was an external partner to NEIU's COE.	External and internal Partnering
2	Limited; NEIU's COE is very culturally responsive and supportive in/out of the classroom offering intrusive advising and instructional guidance.	Nurturing and supportive teachers and advisors
3	Returning adult learner is very self-sufficient and receives additional mentoring support working at private school teaching as a Physical Health & Fitness instructor	External and intrusive mentoring and advising
4	Connective and directional immersed throughout the university starting with the advisors to the professors	Intrusive advising; supportive professors
5	Taken advantage of pre-ACT; Program occurred on the weekends, which helped a student attend due to work and course schedules.	Internal Programs such as Men Coloring Education and test prep programs.

Explanation of Themes

Students in the study asserted the university's external partnerships and mentoring were critical for their entry into the COE. External modeling was not only necessary for Subjects A-C advancement, but also it was explicit internal programming such as mentoring, test prep system, intrusive advising, and culturally responsive professors empowering the transitioning of these subjects through *NEIU's COE* program.

Subject A

While attending Truman College, *Subject A* enrolled in NEIU's *Grow Your Own Program* working as a Para-professional at a private high school. Subject A took the ACT over the TAP test 3 times before acquiring an acceptable score of 21 to receive an entry into COE. Most minority COE students at NEIU tend to take the ACT over the standardized basic skills exam, TAP, to obtain entry into the program because the ACT is a more straightforward examination per advising recommendation. Not only did his entry provide him with the necessary supports to receive recruitment into COE, but also be able to partake in several activities of the mentoring programs while participating in the test prep programs offered on Saturdays at the academic support center.

Subject A demonstrated an incredible amount of maturity as an adult returning learner who because he had experience within a supportive school model, it minimized his academic need to seek further external mechanisms.

The participant also mentioned the vast amount of support and acknowledgment he receives from faculty and advisors reduce a need for him to continue to seek out the mentoring mechanism to advance his matriculation. The participant believes NEIU's COE's major strength is its ability to have a culturally responsive faculty and advising system that promotes men of color's efficacy and performance to become future educators.

In addition to having these supportive systems, *Subject A* also acknowledged the receipt of ACT prep advanced his entry into COE. He further added his desires to utilize further test prep supports to achieve certification credentialing.

Subject B

Subject B graduated from a Chicago Public School in the early 2000s before deciding to attend one of the city's junior colleges. After receiving his associate degree, *Subject B* journeyed away from home to a Black college. Unfortunately, he struggled in school while experiencing financial challenges. He eventually returned home after becoming employed for a few years before restarting college.

Eventually, *Subject B* attended a state university, not too far from his family's residence, where he graduated. Although he did not major in education, he later realized near the end of his semester that this was a desired major he never pursued. After graduating, he applied to several schools to work as a substitute teacher submitting several employment applications to work as a Paraprofessional at a charter school. *Subject B* was able to land a job where he later learned about NEIU's *Grow Your Own Program*. Already possessing a degree, he soon applied and received acceptance into the program ultimately leading him to refer to the post-undergraduate education degree program.

As a student at NEIU, he was recruited into the mentoring program by a black female professor who encouraged him to take advantage of the university's test prep programs and other supportive services to advance his transition. At first, *Student B* mentioned he was hesitant because he had already possessed a degree from a college despite earlier challenges he encountered as an undergraduate student. Academic issues that dealt with: test anxiety,

organizational problems, and writing issues. He mentioned as an undergrad, at the state university, he enrolled in an academic prep program where he received regular advising and a review of his academic progress. *Subject B* believed such intrusive advising, that sought him out, encouraged and promoted his desires to want to improve his writing, planning, and reading comprehension. Thus, he made it a routine to receive supportive services from the school's academic center that did help him improve his academic skills. However, he continues to worry about passing the series of teacher exams due to recent test challenges. Ultimately, this is what led the subject into NEIU's Men of Color program.

Subject B shared the major reasons why he enjoyed the program are: (a) he receives mentoring from a black male faculty along with other peers who desire the same things he wants to achieve and (b) the test prep program is very flexible for his schedule, which he works on every two weeks. As a result of *Subject B* already possessing an undergraduate degree, he did not have to take the TAP or ACT to receive admittance into COE. *Subject B* is in the second semester of the program working as a Paraprofessional while attending COE classes, which he is receiving excellent grades. *Subject B* remains hopeful toward passing the required teaching exams while continuing to participate in the mentor activities.

Subject C

Subject C grew up near NEIU's Bronzeville campus, a satellite location found on the Southside of Chicago. Despite him attending a neighboring public school not too far from the site, he never realized the area possessed undergraduate and graduate degree programs entitled, *Inner City Studies (ICS)*. He found out through a close peer who had graduated from the campus about its rich cultural history of graduating a considerable number of Black students. In fact, ICS recently was recognized as having the state's highest number of Blacks graduating with advanced degrees in the Midwest. As such, he soon inquired about enrolling in the college program.

As a student attending a Chicago public school in the 1980s, he never realized how far academically behind he was until he took the college placement exam. For years as a K-12 learner, he had some knowledge of him being labeled learning disabled (LD), but never quite understood how far academically behind he was being educated in a self-contained and challenging school environment with low expectations.

Subject C is the first person in his family to attend college. What motivated him to want to become an educator is the need to give back to his community while serving as a role model to young people. From working odd jobs such as construction, landscaping, and managing a small family business, *Subject C* believed he could do so much more with what life had taught him passing it on to young people. Reading Kwanza Kunjufu's text, *Conspiracy to Destroy Black Boys* and Haki Madhubuti's *Black Men, Obsolete, Single, Dangerous? The Afrikan American Family in Transition* further inspired his aspiration to want to one-day become a teacher and school counselor. Both texts highlighted the significance of Black men helping their children and community progress.

Visiting the Bronzeville Campus talking with a counselor allowed him to meet the author along with several colleagues eventually supported his enrollment into the *Inner City Studies program* where he attended for two years completing his general education requirements. From there, he enrolled in COE's test prep classes while receiving mentorship from ICS' faculty and placement into the *Men Coloring Education* program.

It took *Student C* approximately three years to complete his undergraduate requirements working full-time while raising two children. Also, *Student C* has received academic support to improve his reading and math attending a tutorial program sponsored by the *City Colleges of*

Chicago (CCC), which serves as an external partner of NEIU. *Student C* was able to bring his schoolwork receiving academic assistance that involved editing and revising his college papers and reviewing math work. Such academic support helped to improve his writing and math skills. However, *Student C* continued to dread taking the placement test to receive an entry into the teacher college program.

After several attempts trying to pass the TAP test, he was advised to take the ACT, which he recently passed about a year ago. Today, *Student C* continues to take classes studying to become an educator participating in the mentoring program while also working alongside his peers taking test prep classes gearing up to pass the series of teacher exams.

Summary

What fundamentally came from the interview study was to have an operational teacher prep program for men of color, external and internal support mechanisms are necessary to nurture and advance their academic performance and retention.

These three participants believe NEIU's COE is dutifully providing Black males with enough internal and external supports that direct their level of focus to achieve specific academic outputs (see Table C for more information about NEIU's COE services provided to Black males). It is further clear from the interview findings that advocacy, culturally responsive teaching approaches, and intrusive advising advance men of color's recruitment and performance within teacher college education programs.

Despite the university's attempt to transition Black males in the college of education with a challenging set of academic skills, some critics argue a stronger suited student is required to enter teaching to pass the required test. Would a person want a surgeon to operate on them or conversely an attorney representing them in a significant civil case who had a challenged academic record before attending medical or law school? The argument strongly suggests that such should exist for teachers working in public schools, especially in challenged urban areas. Bottom line, children need excellent educators with a strong academic record because he or she knows what it takes to pass high-stakes exams successfully, achieve quality grades, and exercise sound judgment in school (Ravitch, 2016).

As mentioned previously, the results of students having no teachers of color stand in front of them inevitably do more harm than good to the profession. For one, it silently suggests this population is not bright or smart enough to teach. To negate or push back on this premise requires universities to invest and value the recruitment of Black males to become teachers, especially if they have experienced a challenged academic background. Doing so would not only model for students struggling with their studies on how to apply strategies while embracing a strong work ethic to succeed academically. The study resonated this message from the three Black men interviewed and speaks to the fact more needs to happen to recruit and retain this population so desperately needed in public schools.

Limitations

Regardless of the study's attempt to highlight the importance of providing internal and external support strategies for Black males entering the college of education having a K-12 individualized learning plan, not enough men were interviewed and reviewed for the study. Also, more subjects were needed to offer perspectives and data that either supported or negated the study's findings.

Additionally, a review of why so few Black males enrolled in the university's College of Education should become explored, since NEIU is known for having a very diverse population of learners. As noted earlier, the university provides two-satellite campuses with one specifically

intended to increase Black Americans' enrollment at the university (ICS). Some of the arguments made regarding why there exist low numbers of Black males attending COE may have more to do with the campus location, lack of amenities, and limited off-campus housing; however, much of this is only speculation and has not received validation through a research result. Indeed, a study investigating these phenomena could lead the university to increase their overall enrollment of Black males in the college of education.

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Appendix A Recruitment

For the past several years, collaboration with NIC through AACTE engineered several strategies to recruit and retain Black and Brown men in their teacher college programs.

Table A1

Description of AACTE's NIC Recruitment Strategies

Initiatives	Intent/Purpose
Grow Your Own Program (GYOP)	A program that recruits Black American and Latino males Para-professionals or long-term subs into the AACTE's NIC program. Scholarships and other incentives were used to encourage and promote Black and Brown males recruitment into educational programs. In addition, the universities used an aggressive advertising and marketing campaign with neighboring K-12 school districts to recruit men of color into education
Target Neighboring High Schools black and brown student populations	The counseling department in secondary settings was provided literature by AACTE's NIC encouraging young men of color to join the teaching force ranks, similar to how the military recruits this same population. During career or college days at the high schools, the universities developed information booths with literature to promote men of color to attend their campuses to become educators. More specifically, Black and Brown male students enrolled in teaching programs along with professors of color worked alongside recruiters to encourage young men of color to join the teaching ranks.
Review of Pipelines	Quarterly assess the goals and effectiveness of internal and external partners that can recruit men of color into the college of education
"Men Coloring Education"	A sponsored club produced and supported by the AACTE's NIC at several district-area high schools encouraging Black-and-Brown men to enter the teaching profession. Black and

	<p>Brown students were invited to join the club where they received mentorship, academic support, and school-related counseling services. The club also partnered with the AACTE's NIC universities' student service department where learners visited the campus, participated in college-related activities, and received mentoring from men of color enrolled in the college of education.</p>
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Appendix B

Retention

AACTE's NIC retention strategies were developed and applied to retain Black and Brown men in COE.

Table B1

Retention Practices for Black and Brown Men Enrolled in COE

<i>Initiatives</i>	<i>Intent/Purpose</i>
Praxis Core test preparation	AACTE's NIC developed a software program, for men of color enrolled in their programs. Through intrusive advising, students with ACT scores of less than 21 were encouraged to enroll. NEIU further offered the classes on Saturday where individual tutoring sessions occurred at the Academic Center. Students worked at their own pace on the practice tests before registering to take the required tests
Culturally Responsive Training	Faculty and staff working with this population within the various Teacher Colleges were provided cultural competency workshops to implement "best practices" working for this population.
Early Alert System	The Academic Support Centers targeted and identified <i>Men of Color</i> who had borderline GPAs, around a 2.75, and provided them with academic supports, resources, and strategies to steadily manage and improve their grades.
Mentoring	Minority professors, Black and Brown, were each assigned or paired with one-to-three mentees during a semester. Faculty sent emails and texted mentees to chat, bond, review midterm grades, and hold quarterly mentoring forums with a set of activities that coached, peer, bonded, and encouraged their achievement, e.g., basketball games, movie night, book reviews and readings, board game board night.
Peer Mentoring	College of Education minority male students that were successful was paired with a struggling student to support their

	academic progress and test preparation before their entry into the teacher program, e.g., graduates, teachers, and graduate students.
Fee Waivers	Graduate students in the COE were provided an opportunity to receive fee waivers, stipends, or become graduate assistance mentoring <i>Men of Color</i> undergraduate students
Local Schools Partnering	AACTE's NIC partnered with area schools seeking to hire Black and Brown men to receive internships, summer employment, clinical observations hours, and student-teaching placement.
Intrusive Counseling and Advising	This strategy became an integral component of the AACTE's NIC that not only met quarterly with the men of color enrolled in education to check their academic progress, but also monitor their progression with test prep and involvement with mentoring activities.
Academic Cohorts	AACTE's NIC developed cohorts for men of color enrolled in classes often taught by a faculty member that received training or exhibited experience with a culturally responsive teaching practicum.

Appendix C NEIU's COE External and Internal Support Services

What these services suggest is that Northeastern Illinois University has a robust internal and external system at work to support Black males' success to become teachers. Whether or not these systems are integrated and entirely streamlined remains another matter, yet it is how the university operates quality programs to promote an increase of Black males into the education profession.

The most important being, the partnerships established with local junior college programs as a way to recruit this population into the college of education. Other applications such as *Project Success and Proyecto Pa'Lante* develop academic supports to retain Black males to succeed in their classes and pass the required teaching exams.

Table C

Internal and External NEIU's COE Partners

Partners	Explanation	External/Internal
Student Success and Retention (SSR)	<u>Intent:</u> A NEIU Peer Mentor Program that works successfully to transition students of color through NEIU's undergraduate program, most notably the Education Program. <u>Purpose:</u> Collaborating with SSR to identify men of color (Latinos and African Americans) majoring in education SSR supports and mentors.	Internal
Coordinator of African American Recruitment	<u>Intent:</u> The coordinator for African American Recruitment identifies African Americans to not only attend NEIU undergraduate programs but also seeks supportive programs that help students successfully transition academically. <u>Purpose:</u> Identify and provide support to Black men enrolled into education; Determine what strategies are most effective recruiting and enrolling Black men into the field of education (How can we help support the process of recruitment of Black men into schools?)	Internal
Task Force on African American Student Success	<u>Intent:</u> Department chairs, the provost, deans, and professors from various programs discuss and identify effective strategies and methods to recruit, retain, and transition Black students through the universities academic programs. <u>Purpose:</u> Target/identify Black men who are presently enrolled in the College of Education (COE) to provide mentoring and academic support. Seek strategies to find the most effective ways to promote Black men success within the COE (Provide target goals and a direct system of support to yield results to retain and graduate Black men into educational jobs).	Internal

TRIO-SSS Access	<p><u>Intent:</u> TRIO Student Support Services offers Northeastern Illinois University students' extra academic and social help so they stay in school through graduation. This help is free and includes a guide and mentor on campus. All support is individualized.</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> Identify and target men of color requiring academic support to retain and transition them within the College of Education (COE). Provide mentor support and strategies that work to keep these men enrolled within COE while providing them with more significant resources and tools to enrich their experiences.</p>	Internal
Proyecto Pa'Lante	<p><u>Intent:</u> Proyecto Pa'Lante is an academic support program that has historically, and continues, to serve Latino college students. Students in Proyecto Pa'Lante offer personal and educational support programs and services designed to enhance learning and development, as well as ease the academic and social transition to Northeastern.</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> Target/identify Latino men who are presently enrolled in the College of Education (COE) to provide mentoring and academic support. Seek strategies to find the most effective ways to promote Latino men success within the COE (Provide target goals and a direct system of support to yield results to retain and graduate Latino men into educational jobs).</p>	Internal
EMERGE Summer	<p><u>Intent:</u> The program is for first-year students requiring English and Math Enrichment, Readiness and Growth Experience (EMERGE). EMERGE exists as a Summer Program at Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) that offers two sessions to help incoming first-year students gain the skills needed to successfully place into at least one higher level math course and place directly into English 101 for the Fall 2014 semester.</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> Identify and target incoming freshmen interested in majoring in education by providing them: (a) continual support placement into academic programs that increase their reading and math proficiency to pass Illinois' TAP test; (b) identify a mentor program that sustains their transitions and encouragement to become future teachers/educators; (c) Link them to professional partnerships, external to the College of Education, that provides them with mentorship and job placement opportunities upon graduating from NEIU.</p>	Internal
Project Success	<p><u>Intent:</u> An educational access and equity program whose primary focus is to recruit and retain Black American students.</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> Target/identify Black men who are presently enrolled in the College of Education (COE) to provide mentoring and academic support. Seek strategies to find the most effective</p>	Internal

	ways to promote Black men success within the COE (Provide target goals and a direct system of support to yield results to retain and graduate Black men into educational jobs).	
Math Science Technology Quality Education (MSTQE)	<p><u>Intent:</u> The Office of Math, Science, and Technology for Quality Education (MSTQE) uniquely incorporates both mathematics and science content in its Math and Science Concepts Minor to provide and support students with a strong commitment to prepare and enter STEM professions or educational fields; specifically, in the subjects areas of teaching math and general science at the Elementary and Middle Level.</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> Identify and target MSTQE minority students enrolled in the College of Education (COE). NIC seeks ways to provide academic support, mentoring, and job placement for minority men studying to become future math and science educators.</p>	External (Wright and Truman College)