

Aspiring Young Mentors

Foster student success through a collaborative network of students dedicated to leadership, mentorship, and a growth mindset at ACM

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About the Program

In the fall of 2018, a micro-grant was applied for at Allegany College with the intent to create an organization that is comprised of a group of African-American male mentors and emerging mentors to help guide and support other young African-American men on campus. *The graduation rate within 4 years for African-American males attending ACM is around 10% as compared to all other populations at 34%.* A major goal of this micro-grant was to establish a support group that could impact student success and growth for this population of students.

The goal is to provide services to struggling students in the form of a mentorship with students who have been recommended by instructors and trained to mentor other students. This goal was created with the intention that a mentorship program for struggling male students (particularly housing, first generation, or students in need) may increase the chances of those students successfully completing their first year (or semester) and returning.

The mini-grant was applied for by the program advisors with help from Tom Striplin. The grant was approved and in the spring of 2019 the organization and foundation for this group was created. 10 students were invited and participated in weekly meetings for 12 weeks to build the foundational components of this group.

The advisors and the group worked with Tom Striplin and Kurt Hoffman to identify a location on campus where the group could establish itself as an entity and where the location could provide a permanent identity for the organization. In Fall 2019, H-61 (former Math Lab) was selected as a location for a new Unity Center. Amongst other uses, AYM will have a presence in this room for mentoring sessions and programming.

An induction ceremony was conducted in May, 2019 and 10 young men were recognized as the trailblazers to set the path for future members. Mentoring is an increasingly popular way of providing guidance and support to people in need.

The program will consist of Mentors who reach eligibility and training requirements.

In addition to small group meetings with the mentors and individual sessions between a mentor/mentee, programming will be held each month open to any student. In fall 2019-Spring 2023, several programs were held on the topics of goal-setting, reaching your dreams, and beating stress during finals week.

Noteworthy Accomplishments to Date:

- 12 students so far have been officially considered mentors based on requirements.

- 9 of 12 graduated from ACM with an Associate's degree.

- 1 of those 8 graduates served as the first African American male graduation speaker at ACM.

- 3 of those ACM Associate's Degree graduates now hold Bachelor's Degrees.

- 1 of those 12 students will finish degrees in spring 2023 (Bachelor's).

- 6 of the 12 were Pathways for Success Students.

- 11 of the 12 entered as developmental education students, indicating their skill levels were below college-level, with 5 of them being in the lowest level courses at ACM. All 5 of these students have been successful because of a combination of AYM and Pathways for Success. 4 have graduated and 1 is graduating in the spring 2023.

- Average GPA of these 12 mentors: 2.67, above the overall college average GPA for African American males.

Program Mission and Vision

Mission: *Foster student success through a collaborative network of students dedicated to leadership, mentorship, and a growth mindset at Allegany College of Maryland.*

Vision: *Lead African-American students at Allegany College of Maryland in achieving their dream.*

Organizational Foundations:

- Empowerment and teamwork
- Leadership and mentorship
- Scholarship
- Support network
- Cultural change

Organizational Structure:

- Comprised of African-American or minority students engaged in mentorship activities guided by Program Advisors and other mentors.

Organizational Goals:

- Establish mentorship relationships with other students on campus.
- Improve student success in course work by providing guidance a network of support.
- Improve both retention and graduation rates of African-American students attending ACM.
- Provide role models who can emulate positive behaviors and attitudes that lead to success.

Program Advisors- Roles and Duties

- Create and oversee implementation of an ongoing mentor recruitment plan.
- Manage the planning and implementation of mentor/mentee group events.
- Plan and implement recognition activities for program participants.
- Attend regional/national conferences to increase knowledge of mentoring program and best Practices.
- Build a strong working relationship between the mentoring program and constituents at Allegany College and within the community.
- Manage budget of the organization and identify sources of income (grants, donations etc.) that can foster the growth of the organization.

Benefits to Mentors

While the peer mentoring program is designed to help the mentees, the mentors also receive many benefits. Peer mentors receive valuable work experience that will improve their career-related skills and enhance their resumes. Serving in this role also helps mentors identify and develop their leadership abilities. Peer mentors will have opportunities to connect with a network of college and possibly community leaders. Those connections can be a great benefit as mentors seek internships and employment opportunities. Through providing a valuable service and making a significant difference in the lives of their mentees, mentors' own self-esteem and sense of self worth is heightened. Additionally, peer mentors connect with other successful students. Mentors benefit from learning with and from their peers.

Mentor Eligibility Criteria

Required Qualifications:

- Have a cumulative GPA of 2.6 or higher
- Be a current student at Allegany College of Maryland
- Have successfully completed at least one semester at ACM
- Successfully Completed Developmental English and Reading
- 2 Faculty/Staff Names for Recommendation

Additional Preferred Qualifications:

- Sensitivity to and interest in issues of diversity
- Strong oral and written communication skills
- Genuine desire to help others
- Mature, trustworthy, non-judgmental, and responsible
- Enthusiasm for the college, students, faculty, staff, academics, and co-curricular opportunities
- Active on campus and in the community
- Effective study, organization, and time management skills

Application to become an AYM Mentor:

Name:

Student ID:

Contact Phone Number:

Email:

Number of Semesters Completed at ACM:

Cumulative GPA:

Have you successfully completed Developmental English and Reading?

Name of two faculty/staff members on campus who can provide a recommendation:

After reviewing the above guidelines and qualifications for Mentors, please provide a 7-10 sentence paragraph describing why you think you would be a good Mentor in this program:

Application to get a Mentor:

Name:

Student ID:

Contact Phone Number:

Email:

Please describe the reasons why you are requesting a Mentor:

Please submit this to Ashley Dively in Humanities 51.

Mentor Guidelines

Mentees

Most mentees will be first year students at Allegany College. Mentors and mentees meet as groups throughout the semester. You should also encourage mentees to attend large group mentoring activities, campus events, and our regular meetings.

Time Commitment

Each mentor should plan to meet with other mentors at least three times a semester. Each mentor should also plan to attend at least one campus event with a mentee each semester. Each mentor should plan to attend the majority of our regular meetings and programming events.

Duties

1. Primary

Provide individual mentoring to struggling students.

- Create a supportive and welcoming environment, keeping in mind the needs of African American students.
- Help students answer questions, find people and places around campus, study, and improve their academic and social skills.
- Keep accurate records of all contact with mentees.
- Attend all mentor training sessions and meetings.
- Turn in all required paperwork on time and in an organized fashion.
- Work cooperatively with the Coordinators of this program and other mentors

2. Secondary

- Work cooperatively with students, staff, faculty, and administration.
- Model appropriate social and academic behavior and skills.

Emerging Mentor Guidelines

This category of mentors has been created to allow students who show great potential in becoming a future mentor. An Emerging Mentor is attending all trainings and participating in weekly meetings and programming events.

An Emerging Mentor may shadow a current Mentor with the sole purpose to reach Mentor Eligibility Guidelines to become a Mentor. This student may be in their second semester at ACM, show great potential, and wish to become a trained mentor to begin in the following semester.

Faculty/Staff Resources/Mentors

Students in the program will gain knowledge and understanding of the many valuable employees and resources at ACM. In Fall 2023, guest speakers from a variety of offices on campus will visit AYM Programming. Students will have the opportunity to connect and make valuable relationships with other faculty and staff on campus who can serve as resources and perhaps mentors to them as well.

Individual Mentoring

Individual mentoring sessions can be formal or informal. At least half of your contact with each mentee should be formal. Formal mentoring means meeting with a mentee in person at a set location at a predetermined time. Informal mentoring consists of phone calls, emails, text messages, and other electronic communication. Informal communication can be done during your mentoring hours. Other forms of informal contact include incidentally seeing each other on campus or chatting for a few minutes in passing. Both informal and formal mentoring should be reported in your journal.

Large Group Mentoring Activities

Occasionally, all mentors and mentees get together for large group activities. These activities can be anything from workshops to pizza parties. Mentors take the lead on presentations.

Training and Meetings

Mentors will have meetings and/or trainings throughout the semester. They are usually about an hour in length. Training sessions will be scheduled with mentors by the Advisors.

Responsibilities

- Mentors will keep everything discussed in mentoring sessions and meetings completely confidential. Information about mentees, issues that were talked about in mentoring sessions, stories shared in meetings, or examples used in training sessions should never be discussed outside of meetings with the program coordinators and their faculty/staff mentor.
- Mentors will discuss any challenges or concerns with coordinators and their faculty/staff mentor in a timely manner. Mentors should not try to handle questionable issues on their own.
- Mentors may meet with mentees individually and as part of large group activities throughout each semester.
- Mentees will work cooperatively with other mentors, faculty/staff mentors, and students.
- Mentors will develop social events to bring mentees together.
- Mentees will help plan and deliver workshops related to academic, social, and career skills.

Expectations

Mentors are expected to:

- Be a positive role model
- Encourage campus and AYM involvement—Inform mentees about upcoming events and activities
- Ask questions if you are unsure of something. Promote program in a positive way.
- Direct students to make an appointment with campus resources and/or the

Advisors if they have concerns.

- Share knowledge, skills, and experiences about topics like:
 - Study skills
 - Time management
 - Test taking
 - Technology
 - Communication
 - Campus resources
 - Extra curricular involvement
 - Leadership opportunities
 - Selecting classes
 - Financial aid/scholarships
 - Stress
 - Buying books
 - Roommates
 - Living away from home
 - Appropriate use of social media
 - Organization
 - Differences between high school and college
 - Online classes
 - A/B term classes
 - GPA
 - Commuting
 - Living on campus
- Help students clarify expectations and responsibilities as a college student
- Take genuine interest in your mentee’s development
- Share stories with mentees about your own educational career and the ways you overcame obstacles similar to theirs
- Recognize your mentees’ accomplishments
- Help mentees maintain or develop a positive self-image
- Be there—mentally and physically for mentoring sessions
- Provide encouragement for mentees to stay in college and finish their programs
- Encourage mentees to ask questions in class and visit professors during office hours

Dos and Don'ts of Peer Mentoring

Peer mentors do not:

- Act as professional counselors or therapists
- Impose personal values, beliefs, or lifestyles upon mentees
- Develop romantic relationships with mentees
- Meet with mentees in a completely isolated location (avoid meeting in your apartment. Use common areas ex: Library study room, lounge outside of library, cafeteria, club house, Pathways, etc.)
- Skip mentoring sessions just because they don't feel like going or don't think they have anything to talk about
- Do their mentee's homework
- Attend class for their mentees
- Contact a mentee's professor about his/her performance
- Try to label or diagnose mentees with any disabilities or psychological conditions
- Represent the program at an event or other setting without the knowledge of the Program Coordinators

Peer Mentors do:

- Help with homework, studying, and other academic skills
- Listen to mentees
- Provide personal, social, and academic guidance and support
- Answer questions or help mentees find answers
- Encourage mentees to attend class and tutoring labs
- Help students find additional resources on campus
- Contact the Coordinators if they have concerns about a mentee's academic performance

Mentoring Session Topics

There are a variety of topics that you can cover and a number of activities that you can do to help ensure that the mentoring process will be effective. The following are suggestions of topics to cover in mentoring sessions to help meet the program goals.

Goal #1: Help mentees discover their potential.

- Ask mentees about their interests and strengths
- Praise mentees for their successes
- Encourage mentees to work hard and challenge them academically

Goal #2: Help mentees become effectively integrated into the college and campus as a whole.

- Introduce your mentees to students, staff, and faculty that you know
- Take students around campus and explain what the offices do and what resources are available to them
- Inform mentees about college-related activities, clubs, events, and athletic games
- Attend events, clubs, or games together

Goal #3: Help mentees articulate a sense of purpose about being at college and about pursuing their particular programs of study.

- Discuss goals with your mentee
- Share your experience—your goals, why you chose your major, why earning a degree is important to you, what you hope to do in the future
- Do research together on the Internet about the benefits of having a college degree and find interesting and important facts about your mentee's program of study

Goal #4: Help mentees strengthen their academic skills.

- Help your mentees in their weak academic areas
- Share what works for you in regards to study skills, time management, test taking, organization, etc.
- Work together to create a weekly schedule
- Help your mentees figure out their learning styles and what that means in terms of how they should study
- Have regular discussions with your mentees about their grades—help them figure out what is and isn't working for them
- Ask mentees to bring in any assignment or test that they did poorly on and go over it with them, making recommendations for how they could improve on a similar assignment in the future
- Hold your mentees accountable for the amount of time they put into studying, reading, and doing homework

Goal #5: Help mentees cultivate a positive view of education.

- Always speak positively about school and learning
- When a mentee complains about a class, assignment, or instructor, listen and reflect their frustration but don't join in, agree, or encourage negativity
- Help mentees identify specific frustrations when they make generalizations about disliking college overall
- Regularly ask mentees to recall positive school experiences

Goal #6: Help mentees increase motivation for completing a degree.

- Encourage mentees to keep a journal of their college journey. Include things such as:
 - Statistics about job availability and income of people with and without degrees
 - Why they chose to go to college in the first place (motivation)
 - Academic and career goals
 - What they've learned about themselves through being in college
- Encourage them to get to know someone who currently works in their desired career field
- Talk about your own motivation for completing a degree

Goal #7: Help mentees develop a supportive relationship with a successful role model.

- Be positive
- Be encouraging
- Be available and focused
- Set a good example through your grades, study habits, and personal choices

Goal #8: Help mentees achieve academic and personal success.

- Help your mentees with their homework, but don't do it for them
- Hold study sessions with your small group where they all bring their homework and you are available to help them
- Know your mentees' goals and help them stay on track for achieving them
- Talk to your mentees about how to communicate with professors, and allow them to rehearse with you what they might say to their professors. Then encourage them to visit their professors during their office hours.
- Encourage excellence
- Praise your mentees when they do well—even on little things

Goal #9: Help mentees acquire the skills to become successful independent learners.

- Be patient as mentees learn and grow
- Ask mentees questions and give them time to try to answer before answering your own questions
- Provide guidance and support to mentees but make them do the work
- Allow mentees to ask you questions and answer them honestly
- Don't try to make it appear like you're perfect and have been since your first day of college—share your mistakes and allow your mentees to learn from them



Location & Activity Ideas

- Meet your mentees for lunch in the café
- Hold study sessions for the program.
- Walk on the track or trail
- Go to the gym together
- Get coffee together
- Meet in the library
- Attend a cultural or social activity on campus with your mentee
- Do a service project together
- Request use of a classroom to hold a special activity with the group—meeting, carry-in lunch, ethnic food event, etc.
- Work on writing your resumes
- Have an organization session—bring notebooks, book bags, etc. to organize
- Start a mentoring journal

Just for Fun

- ☆ Research interesting or unusual careers.
- ☆ Pick a foreign language neither of you know and learn some basic words and phrases.
- ☆ Talk about your dream careers if money, time, location, and amount of education did not matter.

Qualities of Effective Mentors

Friendly

Responsible

Service-Minded

Patient

Organized

Knowledgeable

Respectful

Mature

Experienced

Non-judgmental

Helpful

Cooperative

Open

Professional

Punctual

Trustworthy

Honest

Accurate

Considerate

Understanding

Peer Mentor Contract

I understand that as a peer mentor with the AYM @ ACM program, I am agreeing to:

- Keep everything discussed in mentoring sessions and meetings completely confidential. However, I am aware that I need to tell my mentee that some topics of discussion may have to be shared with a Faculty/Staff Mentor and/or Program Advisors. [Information about mentees, issues that were talked about in mentoring sessions, stories shared in meetings, or examples used in training sessions should never be discussed outside of the our program {Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines apply to this program.}]
- Keep an accurate record of all mentoring contact.
- Attend scheduled training sessions, meetings, and activities.
- Discuss any challenges or concerns with the Program Advisors in a timely manner.
- Meet with mentees individually and as part of large group activities throughout each semester.
- Work cooperatively with other students and staff members.
- Respect mentees' privacy and dignity.
- Do not impose my personal values, religious beliefs, or lifestyle choices on my mentees.
- Be aware of my own weaknesses and seek assistance when needed.
- Set a good example—in and out of this program
- Understand the importance of my role and take the job of peer mentoring seriously.

I understand that violating any of these responsibilities or other college policies could result in removal from the peer mentoring program.

Mentor Name (print): _____

Mentor Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Coordinator Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Mentee Contract

I understand that by participating in the AYM @ ACM mentoring program, I am agreeing to:

- Attend mentoring sessions.
- Respond to my mentor's phone calls, emails, and other attempts to contact me.
- Be honest with my mentor about my grades and my challenges in classes.
- Participate in small group mentoring activities .
- Respect my mentor and fellow mentees.

Mentor's Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

I understand that violating any of these responsibilities or other college policies could result in removal from the peer mentoring program.

Mentee Name (Print): _____

Mentee Signature: _____

Date: _____

Mentor Signature: _____

Monitoring Progress

- Formal Reporting Form (see p. 22)- turn in to Advisors at assigned times. If notes are too large for spaces provided, please write on another sheet of paper (sign and date that paper)
- Informal Contact Form (see p. 23). If notes are too large for spaces provided, please write on another sheet of paper (sign and date that paper).
- Concern Report (see p. 24)



Mentor Progress Sheet

Mentor Name:

Mentee Name:

Please mark the type of contact:

Lunch

Coffee

Social Media

Informal Chat

Phone Call

Text

Email

Social Event Attendance

Please describe briefly the contact here:

Mentor Concern Report

Mentor Name:

Mentee Name:

Please discuss your concern below:

Mentor Signature:

Date:

Program Advisor

Ashley Dively, Assistant Chair/Assistant Professor, Academic Development

At ACM, Ashley is the Assistant Chair of Academic Development and teaches English 92/95 and Student Development 103 and 106. She also works as a Learning Specialist in the Reading and Writing Center (RAWC). She is in her 10th year of teaching at ACM. Ashley has a Bachelor of Science in English/ Professional Writing from Frostburg State University, as well as a Master of Arts in English from Millersville University, in Pennsylvania. She worked in the field of writing for five years, including writing for an Internet Marketing Firm, writing for a magazine, and working on a private novel publication for an author in Florida. She also worked for three years at Millersville University helping them write and edit a very important college document needed for Accreditation (totaling hundreds of pages).

As the advisor to AYM @ ACM, Ashley works closely with the mentors to develop programming ideas and activities. She also serves as a liaison to other faculty who wish to recommend students to the program.

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Founding Cohort

Antonio Cummins

Jamal McNeill

Karl Thomas

Broc Rowe

Kwame Ochieng

Edmond Ndagha

Jair Andrews

Alvin Nelson

Darius Hunter

JeanClaude Ndango

