DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE MENTORING PROGRAM FOR FACULTY AND STAFF OF COLOR

Insoon Han, PhD, and **Jacqueline Ariri Onchwari**, EdD

Abstract

This paper describes a mentoring program for university employees of color and American Indians that employs a culturally responsive mentoring framework. The mission of the program is to foster a community of support and interdependence to assist members to navigate the university systems, so that members can thrive and, ultimately, be successful. The partnership and collaboration among faculty, staff, and students of color across campus has created a robust mentoring network that has organically grown stronger through the diversity of members represented. This paper discusses the history, goals, components, and outcomes of the culturally responsive mentoring program, and the plans for the future. The paper concludes by offering recommendations for individuals, researchers, and administrators who might consider adopting a similar mentoring program to improve retention, recruitment, and satisfaction of employees of color in their respective higher education institutions.

Keywords: faculty of color; staff of color; students of color; faculty retention; faculty recruitment; employees of color; culturally responsive model; culturally responsive mentoring; mentoring; higher education, retention of students of color, diversity, inclusion

INTRODUCTION

In the Fall of 2014 the University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD)'s Employees of Color and American Indians (EOCAI) Mentoring Program was launched. The group comprises a

broad range of faculty and staff which includes Native Americans, African Americans, Latino Americans, Arab Americans, Asian Americans, and international faculty from Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean. There are about 50 active members in the program. However, all of the approximately 200 employees of color and American Indian employees at the university are welcome to participate any time, and receive all the correspondence. The partnership of faculty and staff from all departments and ranks on campus has created a mentoring mosaic, or mentoring network, aimed at meeting a variety of needs of each member. The program also focuses on making the most of members' strengths and experiences. Our mentoring mosaic has expanded to include a robust mentoring program for students of color, supported by the EOCAI.

University of Minnesota Duluth's culturally responsive mentoring program is described by members as a 'self-help' program run by and for employees of color. The program focuses on the overall wellbeing of its members. Informal in nature, the program utilizes current best practices on mentorship in the workplace that emphasize a need for combining more than one mentoring model, hence creating a mentoring mosaic or network (Cawyer, Simonds, & Davis, 2002; Lindsay-Dennis, Cummings, & McClendon, 2011; Peluchette & Jeanquart, 2000). While the membership is very diverse, shared experiences and the need to overcome culture-related obstacles to achieving success unite them. A similar culturally responsive mentoring program for adolescent African American girls is described by Lindsay-Dennis et al. (2011) as including the following characteristics: (1) a focus on pervasive problems that members face, (2) an ethic of care, (3) shared lived experiences, and (4) the birthing of a collective voice. Our culturally responsive mentoring program shares these characteristics, some of which are emerging. The initial aim of our program was to develop and implement a mentoring program that would support retention and recruitment of EOCAI. The program has grown organically into a culturally responsive framework.

The purpose of this paper is to describe the UMD's mentoring program for employees of color and American Indians, with an emphasis on the culturally responsive mentoring

framework the program employs. First, we will share literature on the problems associated with recruiting and retaining faculty of color in higher education, and unique challenges that faculty of color face, followed by background information on the mentoring models and the benchmarks for developing culturally responsive mentoring programs. We then illustrate the history, goals, components, and outcomes of the UMD's culturally responsive mentoring program, and plans for the future. We conclude the article by discussing implications and offering recommendations for other researchers and administrators who might consider adopting a culturally responsive mentoring framework for faculty and staff of color as a viable effort to improve retention, recruitment, and satisfaction of employees of color in higher education institutions.

BACKGROUND

The persistent problems of recruiting and retaining people of color in higher education

> *"By not mentoring adequately, we are wasting talent. We educate, and train, but don't nurture."*
>
> *(Wright & Wright, 1987, p. 207)*

The benefits of having a diverse faculty and staff in institutions of higher learning is well documented, yet the recruitment and retention of diverse employees notoriously remains a revolving door, especially in predominantly white institutions (Guenter-Schlesinger & Ojikutu, 2009; Turner, Gonzales, & Wood, 2008; Vandelinder & Brannan, 2016). Among other benefits, a diverse faculty and staff (1) prepare students for a diverse society, (2) meet various unique needs of a diverse body of students, (3) potentially help recruit more students and employees of color, (4) engage in new scholarship and diverse ways of teaching that bring cognitive diversity into higher education institutions, and (5) enhance faculty relationships and administrative skills through cross-race faculty mentoring (Turner, Gonzales, & Wood, 2008; Vandelinder &

Brannan, 2016). Furthermore, research has demonstrated that a positive correlation exists between the number of faculty of color and retention of students of color (Benitez, James, Joshua, Perfetti & Vick, 2017; Constantinou, Bajracharya, & Baldwin, 2011; Padilla, 1994; Smith, Turner, Osei-Kofi, & Richards, 2004).

Unfortunately, only 17% of employees in U.S. institutions of higher education are employees of color (Turner et al., 2008), which is far from the national average of nearly 50% of the general population. Worse still, the low retention rate of employees of color is equally alarming, especially in predominantly white institutions (Betinez et al., 2017; Vandelinder & Brannan, 2016). Many employees of color who do stay report feeling dissatisfied with their jobs (Griffin, Pifer, Humphrey, & Hazelwood, 2011). This fact makes it insufficient to measure success at meeting the needs of EOCAI by merely examining retention rates. The significance of nurturing and sustaining productive and fulfilled employees of color cannot be overstated. Yet, providing such an environment sustainably remains elusive. Factors such as time, resources, and knowledge about the needs of under-represented employees are among the common barriers for creating a campus climate that is conducive for all students and employees to effective achieve their goals and responsibilities (Turner et al., 2008).

The University of Minnesota Duluth has expressed commitment to implementing effective, measurable processes to recruit, retain, and support diverse students, faculty, and staff as part of its goals revised in 2011 (Onchwari, 2011). Our mentoring program for EOCAI was strategically positioned to support these efforts Like many universities, efforts to recruit and retain faculty, staff, and students from under-represented groups continues to be an institutional challenge.

Unique problems employees of color and American Indians face
One of the main goals of our mentoring program is to create in members what Weiston (2015) terms "a critical consciousness" (para. 2) of common challenges that they are likely to encounter by virtue of their racial, cultural, and/or ethnic status. If you're

aware of something you can fix it. Discovering that a perpetual adverse experience is similarly shared with a host of other people is extremely liberating (Lindsay-Dennis et al., 2011; Osajima, 2009). Such awareness can create transformation both at the individual and group level. Ultimately, affected individuals can achieve success at all levels, personal and professional (Osajima, 2009; Weiston, 2015). Members of our culturally responsive mentoring program have attributed growth in their critical consciousness of some of the issues they experience by virtue of their socio-cultural and racial status to the culturally responsive mentoring program.

Common challenges faculty and staff of color face in the workplace include (1) feelings of isolation, both in the campus and in local communities; (2) tokenism, experienced by being expected to represent their own sociocultural groups in committees and other events; (3) students' and colleagues' biased perceptions about their abilities, authority, and expertise; (4) perceptions that their research, teaching, and/or service are less valuable and relevant than their white counterparts'; and (5) cultural taxation (i.e., the extra burden of service responsibilities placed upon minority faculty members because of their racial or ethnic background) (Baez, 2000; Cawyer et al., 2002; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012; Lindsay-Dennis et al, 2011; Osajima, 2009; Padilla, 1994; Turner, 2002; Turner et al., 2008; Vandelinder & Brannan, 2016). Admittedly, much of the service done by employees of color is very fulfilling to them, and valuable to students and the campus community at large. Unfortunately, it takes away from time and energy needed to build one's dossier to meet traditionally expected requirements for promotion (Benitez et al., 2017; Vandelinder & Brannan, 2016). In addition, the existing vague criteria for attaining promotion to full professorship and other top positions makes reaching such goals a challenge for EOCAI and women (June, 2016).

A focus on nurturing existing EOCAI therefore provides a priceless narrative that attracts people of color into an institution. Implementing an effective mentoring program is an evidence-based practice in recruiting EOCAI through constructing a positive campus climate that will keep and nurture them. Research shows that when EOCAI are seeking

jobs, inquiring about the campus climate and supports in prospective institutions is not an uncommon practice (Bronstein, Rothblum, & Solomon, 1993; Deo, 2015; Leon, 2014).

Types of mentoring models and the adoption of the mosaic model
Higher education institutions (e.g., Indiana University, 2018; Wake Forest School of Medicine, 2016) identify several models of mentoring.

One-on-one mentoring model. This is one of the most traditionally practiced models, in which mentors guide mentees along their career paths. Relationships can be formal or informal, pre-assigned by a department or self-selected by the mentee.

Group mentoring model. This often involves 1-3 mentors working with multiple mentees in a group setting. This model has the potential for tapping into collective knowledge that might lead to more possibilities for building support systems. It serves well to reduce the demands on time and effort of the few senior mentors.

Mentoring panel or committee model. In this model, a panel of 2-5 mentors works with one junior mentee. In this mentoring type, multiple experienced mentors offer the mentee a wide range of guidance in one setting every 4 – 12 months.

Peer mentoring model. This model constitutes junior members at the same level of training, rank, or experience who often create informal relationships in which they share insights and experiences during informal lunches, peer support groups, career development sessions run by an expert, or writing support groups.

Online mentoring model. This model is convenient when members are in separate locales. While it makes mentoring accessible, it also requires self-motivation to maintain regular communication because of the absence of face to face connection. The National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD, 2018) adopts this model.

Mosaic mentoring mode. This model can be viewed as a multi-dimensional guidance and a longitudinal landscape of career mentoring. In mosaic mentoring, a diverse group of individuals of different ranks, ages, genders, races, skills, and experience come together in a non-hierarchical community or network. Benefits include collaboration, reduced pressure on mentors, and the potential for merging small pools of people together.

THE UMD EOCAI MENTORING PROGRAM IN THE CONTEXT OF THE MENTORING MODELS

Our program has grown organically as a mosaic mentoring model. As a multifaceted approach, the program offers opportunities for multiple types of mentoring practices, including one-on-one mentoring, group mentoring, and peer mentoring. Flexibility in matching mentees to mentors either as dyads, triads, or even via double matching is common practice in our program. The matching mechanism throughout the year allows for dyads/triads either self-selected by the mentee or assigned by the coordinators based on information collected by the mentor/mentee application forms. With about 50 actively participating members, cross-discipline, cross-gender, and cross-race matching is common. Monthly meetings, intermittent breakfasts, and informative member handbooks also address member-driven and member-centered mentoring topics. Building a non-hierarchical community of support is, indeed, the mission of our program. Consequently, the most important advantage of the mentoring mosaic becomes its ability to give individual mentees access to a network of mentorship that ensures increased opportunities for meeting their full range of needs (Bower, 2007; Cawyer et al., 2002; de Janasz, & Sullivan, 2004; Kanuka, & Marini, 2013; Sorcinelli & Yun, 2007). Our mentoring program is not designed to replace members' departmental mentoring; rather the program encourages members to seek and maintain relationships with their department-assigned mentors in addition to partaking in our mentorship opportunities, which is a sign of our commitment to the mosaic mentoring model.

A culturally responsive conceptual framework for mentoring

A culturally responsive framework of working with people accepts, honors, and utilizes members' cultural orientations in supporting their work and needs. A cultural orientation is defined as "an inclination to think, feel, or act a way that is culturally determined" (Rosinski, 2003, p. 49). Tools that measure a person's orientation are often in the form of a continuum. Some aspects of cultural orientations include individualism versus collectivism, competition versus cooperation, emotional expressiveness versus restraint, focus on task versus relationships, and equality versus hierarchy (Hofstede, 2009; Hofstede & McCrae, 2004). Our mentoring program has attempted to identity the cultural characteristics of our members to develop a culturally responsive program.

Cultural responsiveness has been heavily used in pedagogy in which success in working with students of diverse ethnic an cultural background is the focus (e.g., Au, 2007; Gay, 2002). In the context of mentoring, Lindsay-Dennis et al. (2011) stated that:

> Culturally responsive pedagogy views students' cultures as a useful tool for teaching and learning. Cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students are valued and used to connect student to the curriculum. The goal of culturally responsive pedagogy is to engage students in learning but also to help them to maintain their cultural identities. (p. 72)

Therefore, to be culturally responsive, a mentoring program requires that the cultural orientations and experiences of members should be incorporated, in order to enrich each member (Bennet, 1988; Hofstede, 2009; Hofstede & McCrae, 2004; Rosinski, 2003).

From the inception of our mentoring program, distinct and defining characteristics of cultural responsiveness were prevalent. While the membership of the mentoring program is heterogeneous, general cultural attributes expressed by our active members

lean more toward the collective and cooperative orientations. The general characteristics of the group that have become part of the evolved culture are: collective leadership, interdependence among members, acknowledgement of senior members, the use of resources within the group (hence self-sufficiency of the group), a member-driven orientation, and a focus on building relationships and connections across campus. It is in this spirit that members decided to include a mentoring program for students of color. Details about the students of color mentoring program will be provided later in the paper.

There is a dearth of literature about culturally responsive approaches to mentoring for individuals of color. One mentoring program by Lindsay-Dennis et al. (2011) encouraging African American women to mentor African American adolescent girls uses a culturally responsive orientation. The conceptual framework they adopted aligns with ours. Lindsay-Dennis et al. used benchmarks created by the Valentine Foundation (1990, 1992) to conceptualize what they have termed 'a culturally relevant mentoring program'. The benchmarks include:

- safe space for sharing stories and exploring multiple identities. Here collective meaning from individual and shared experiences is developed.
- guidance from peers and elders. This provides nurturing, and emotional support.
- development of trust and interdependence
- capturing of members' strengths rather than focusing on risk factors
- comprehensive nature of program in catering to psychological, social, and professional components
- opportunities to create positive change that benefits individuals as well as the community
- opportunity for members to design, implement, and evaluate the program
- financial stability of the program
-
-

- involvement of stakeholders (for example, families, peers, communities, and schools in the context of youth mentoring) in the development and critique of the program.

Our mentoring program has addressed most of the Valentine benchmarks for developing culturally responsive programs (see Figure 1). The first seven benchmarks have been adopted and, over time, effectively addressed. As the program organically spreads its wings, the last two benchmarks have been set as goals, and currently there are good possibilities for success.

Valentine Foundation Benchmarks for culturally responsive mentoring	Problem faced by EOCAI	UMD's Employees of Color & American Indians (EOCAI) Mentoring Program
(1) Safe space for sharing stories and exploring multiple identities. Here collective meaning from individual and shared experiences is developed.	Feelings of isolation; Tokenism	The program is by and for EOCAI. Members report that the program has created for them a safe space and gives them a sense of belonging.
(2) guidance from peers and elders. This provides nurturing, and emotional support.	Biased perceptions against value of work of EOCAI; Less access to institutional resources, including mentorships	The mosaic mentoring model has integrated many types of mentoring (e.g., one-on-one, group, peer mentoring). Senior and/or more experienced members mentor junior members, and they learn from each other. The council, a 20-member collective leadership team with many elders, is also charged with the responsibility of reaching out to potential members, like new employees.
(3) Development of trust and interdependence	Incidents of bias; Microaggression; Students' lower perceptions of competency (Stereotype threats; Feelings of isolation; Tokenism	Members of all ages, with varying years at the institution, dialogue around topics of interest and relevance. These conversations occur both in large and smaller groups. Rapport is established through regular meetings. The safe space encouraged members to share their own stories and ideas, which were supported and validated by members listening with empathy.
(4) Capturing of members' strengths rather than focusing on risk factors.	Undervalued perspectives; Cultural taxation	Among the topics addressed in meetings is the focus on building, reflecting upon, and using one's cultural identity as a strength at the workplace. That is part of the benefit of hiring for diversity in higher education.

(5) Comprehensive nature of program catering to psychological, social, and professional components.	Feelings of isolation; Imposter syndrome; Microaggression; Students' lower perceptions of competency (Stereotype threats); Pressure to be perfect to negate stereotypes of persons of color	The program targets members' overall psychosocial wellbeing, including professional success. Often mentor-mentee pairs/triads are across disciplines and might even be faculty-staff. Our program does not replace department-offered mentoring.
(6) Opportunities to create positive change that benefits individuals as well as the community.	Undervalued perspectives; Cultural taxation; Pressure to be perfect to negate stereotypes of persons of color	The program's mission is to support members to be successful in their various capacities. The student support has risen gradually as one of the critical components of the program because the university has a keen interest in retention of students of color. We disseminate important information through presentations to deans, department heads, and at local conferences. We also share with all members, including non-active members crucial self-help information created and discussed at meetings in the form of an informative member handbook.
(7) Opportunity for members to design, implement, and evaluate the program.	Biased perceptions against value of work of EOCAI	Agendas, topics to explore, and other major decisions are made collectively through discussions. This is done both in the council and all-member meetings. We do annual surveys and intermittent focus groups to evaluate the program. So far it has been evaluated as a successful program. We follow through on suggestions given by members. For instance, our current focus on getting staff more involved came from the surveys.
(8) Financial stability of the program.	Biased perceptions against value of work of EOCAI; Less access to institutional resources	So far, our budget has remained small because we use the rich human resources within the group to enrich ourselves. We receive financial support from the Chancellor's office through a budget allocated to the office of diversity and inclusion.
(9) Involvement of stake holders (for example, families, peers, communities, and schools in the context of youth mentoring) in the development and critique of the program.	Biased perceptions against value of work of EOCAI; Less access to institutional resources	We began addressing this benchmark by presenting our program to deans, department heads, and state conferences, and inviting university administration, including the chancellor and vice chancellor, to our program meetings. Our annual surveys evaluate our program, including critique of the program, which will be presented in a research article.

Figure 1. Applying Benchmarks of a Culturally Responsive Mentoring Program to Our EOCAI Culturally Responsive Mentoring Program

UMD's CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE MENTORING PROGRAM

A brief history of the program

The program was created with the help of a grant from the University of Minnesota Office for Equity and Diversity, awarded to the authors of this article. We coordinated the program in its first three years, 2014 – 2017, in partnership with a leadership council of 20 members from across campus. The leadership council was created at the onset of the program, and played a very critical role in its launching. Their role is still pivotal. It is important to note that the initial focus of the program was only on faculty. At the time, some council members suggested we include non-teaching staff as well. We were surprised that existing research hardly mentions non-teaching staff of color when addressing the unique needs of underrepresented groups in higher education. In fact, the only document we found that mentioned both faculty and staff of color was Guenter-Schlesinger and Ojikutu from Washington State University (2009). Yet there is a lot of shared experiences, and unique and very valuable expertise, among members of these two groups. Saying that the partnership between faculty and staff in our mentoring program has been extremely enriching for everyone is indeed an understatement. For instance, it is through staff working with under-represented groups that we were able to readily identify students to mentor. Additionally, staff working in different capacities provided us with perspectives on the working of the university that we might otherwise never have been aware of. Faculty, on the other hand, share their experiences in the classroom, their research, and service.

At its inception in 2014-2015, the program's broad goal was to support existing members, with the purpose of retaining them. Additionally, the program had (and continues to have) three main components: welcoming new members, mentoring on the run, and monthly meetings. Detailed descriptions of these components are provided later in the article.

After a dynamic first year of the program as a pilot, core characteristics of a culturally responsive mentoring model were emerging. The initial goal of the program was broadly stated as a focus on retention. The leadership council decided to analyze the themes and articulate them in A formal mission statement was created at the beginning of the second year: "The mission of our mentoring program is to foster a **community of support** and **interdependence** to assist members to navigate the university systems, so that members can thrive and, ultimately, be successful." The phrases "community of support" and "interdependence" define the culturally responsive nature of the program. While the vision for the program at its inception was grand, its evolution within three years of its implementation has been very intriguing and worth sharing.

In the second year, in addition to activities already in effect, the focus was providing newcomers with intensive support through proactive outreach by the leadership council. The second year also saw the program expand to include a student support committee that plans and foresees activities focused on mentoring students of color. The student support activities carried out by the mentoring program include: mentorship dyads, 'meet-and-greet' events every semester, and targeted talks by the EOCAI members. The student support component of our program is one of the endeavors many members find most gratifying and worthwhile. It has attracted the involvement of members who are not as involved in other program activities that solely target employee support.

The third year, 2016-2017, embraced two additional goals: (1) establishing ways of supporting non-active members of the program, and (2) reaching out to and collaborating with the university administration, with the purpose of getting our voices heard and our needs met. In other words, our aim was to address institutional or systemic changes that would create an improved work environment for students, faculty, and staff of color. Both goals were and continue to be implemented. For instance, we have shared some important information discussed in monthly meetings with all members, including non-active members, in an informative handbook.

Examples of information shared include "Student Course Evaluation and Effective Teaching: Guidelines for Faculty of Color and American Indian Faculty at UMD", which has been discussed at all-member meetings twice, and "Welcome to UMD: A Guide to Diversity Resources at Duluth and Twin Cities Areas." Additionally, a team of members have presented about our program to the university administration (the vice chancellor of academics, deans, and department heads) and to the campus and local community at a summit. In these presentations, members shared our plight, as well as our accomplishments, and ideas on how our members in respective colleges and universities could be acknowledged and supported

The current year, 2017-2018, focuses specially on getting more staff involvement. Most of our meetings are attended by mostly faculty, hence a challenge to our vision of being inclusive of both faculty and staff. We have had conversations about obstacles to staff attendance, and recently found that staff members have to take vacation time in order to attend our meetings. The reason behind this unfortunate restriction was that our meetings are not directly related to their job responsibilities. We are currently addressing this problem with the university administration, and hope to make some progress by the end of the year. The program has encouraged and supported leadership council members in reaching out to non-active staff. Other efforts include actively recruiting more staff members into the council so that their voices can be represented equitably at the venue where most decisions are generated and discussed.

Our mentoring program has gone through three stages of network development, as described by Plastrik and Taylor (2006). The first stage involves building relationships; the second stage involves learning together and identifying a shared purpose; and the final stage is productivity or collaborative action (Jordan, Charles, & Cleary, 2017; Plastrik & Taylor, 2006). The history of our program demonstrates that it has progressed from building relationships (2014-2015) to identifying a shared purpose (2015-2016) to collaborative action (2016-2017), which all ultimately contribute to the improved work experience of our members. This progression occurred organically in the context and

outcome of what we collectively identified as the most important action of each period. Further, our branching out to support students and involve administrators, beyond our initial member-centered program goals and components, can be an integral part of the productivity of our program, as described of the final stage in Plastrik and Taylor's model. It is our hope that our EOCAI group will ultimately contribute to solving complex equity and inclusion problems within the entire UMD community, and social justice problems in the society.

While progress has been made in the three years the program has been implemented, there is plenty of room for growth and improvement. Members continue to show commitment by attending meetings and engaging in discussions. More directions for the future are yet to be identified and articulated. Given the remarkable evolution of the program so far (see Figure 2) and the commitment expressed by members and the administrators, we expect that there will be more growth to come for our program. As we anticipate the growth, we need to be mindful of the likelihood that members could be subjected to more cultural taxation, a challenge affecting EOCAI (Baez, 2000; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012). It is a concern because our members' race-related service responsibilities exert an extra burden that uses up time and energy needed to build a dossier to meet traditionally expected requirements for promotion. We have begun discussing ways to seek recognition of this work as social justice service supported by the institution.

Year 1

Who involved:

Faculty & Staff
Council of leaders

Activities:

Building relationships
Member support
Development of vision

Year 2

Who involved:

Faculty & Staff
Council of leaders
Students of color

Activities:

Establishing mission
Member support
Student support (mentoring, meet and greet, &
launching of student scholarship)

Year 3

Who involved:

Faculty & Staff
Council of leaders
Students of color
Deans & department heads
Larger UMD community (through summit presentation)

Activities:

Including student support (mentorship, a meet-and-greet, & the launching of student scholarship)
Talking and sharing with deans and department heads
Presenting program on campus & at conferences
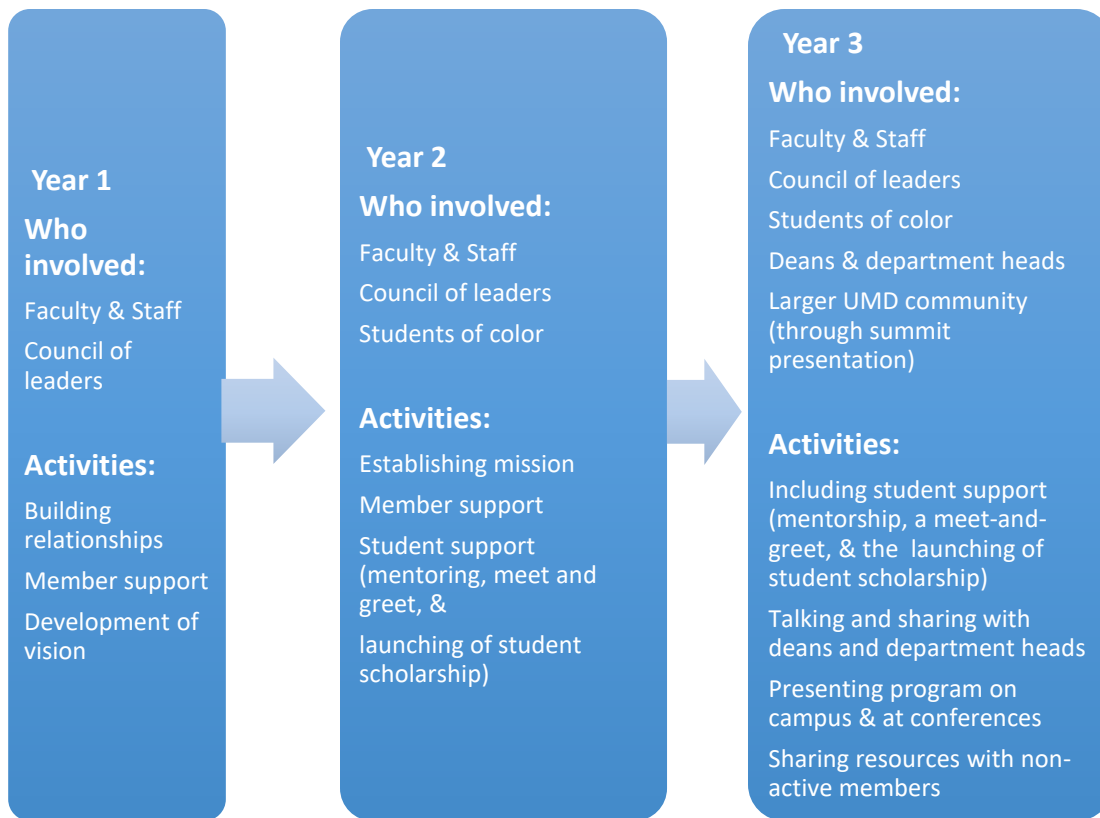Sharing resources with non-active members

Figure 2. Evolution of the Culturally Responsive Mentoring Program

In the spirit of cultural responsiveness, our mentoring program has stayed committed to the members' cultural orientations, such as practices of collective leadership, interdependence, relationship building among members, acknowledgement of senior members in the group, and the use of the human resources within the group to inform and engage in deep dialogue.

Goals of the program

Conversations and issues that emerge during the year are incorporated into the coming year's plan. The context of collaboration among members is key in this process. The current cumulative goals of our culturally responsive mentoring program are:

- to establish a strong and robust mentoring program: build a network and community of support; encourage active interactions and collaborations in mentoring pairs/triads, monthly meetings, and informal get-togethers

- to provide sufficient support for newcomers: Intensive support by senior faculty

- to build and sustain an infrastructure to support all employees of color: Endorse candidates for key positions; as well as identify and share resources

- to establish ways of supporting non-active EOCAI members of the program.

- to reach out to and collaborate with the university administration, with the purpose of getting our voices heard and the necessary institutional changes implemented

- to focus on staff involvement in addition to faculty. As currently constituted, more faculty are actively involved in the program, and many of the topics in our discussions have been predominantly related to faculty issues. Initiatives toward meeting these goals include encouraging more staff representation in the leadership council, choosing monthly meeting topics that are relevant to all members, and creating interest groups

Components of the program

The program started out with three main components: welcoming new employees, the mentoring program which includes mentor-mentee dyads or triads, and monthly meetings. A fourth component added at the request of the employees of color is support for students of color.

Component 1: Welcoming new faculty. Welcoming new employees, introducing them to the EOCAI, and making our mission known is one focus of the program. Successful adjustment of new faculty members in the professoriate is often dependent on the types of relationships that newcomers establishes with colleagues, and on the willingness of older staff and faculty to help newcomers learn the ins and outs of the academy and their new community (Cawyer et al., 2002). Given the unique needs of faculty and staff of color, especially those in predominantly white colleges, the need is

even greater (Osajima, 2009; Turner, González, & Wong, 2011; Turner & Creswell, 1999).

During new faculty orientation that occurs a week before school reopens in the Fall, EOCAI representatives introduce our mentoring program and take contact information of faculty of color for future communication. A follow-up meeting and welcome is arranged, and an invitation to meet one-on-one with senior faculty and staff is made and pursued.

In response to feedback from members, there is now an increased focus on supporting individual new employees. Specifically, individual EOCAI council members periodically reach out to assigned new employees to find out how they are doing in their new environment. This year (2017-2018) the EOCAI council will be meeting all new faculty and staff members prior to the all-member meetings. The meeting will provide an opportunity for the new employees to meet EOCAI council members and to get a comprehensive idea of what EOCAI is and the opportunities it provides.

Component 2. Mentoring on the run. This component of the project involves one-on-one mentoring groups, of sizes that are based on the members' preferences. Informal in nature, the groups focus on the multiple needs of faculty and staff of color. This one-on-one mentorship provides an opportunity for the group to identify each other's strengths and common goals. The mentoring dyad or triad composition is based on self-reported needs of the mentee and strengths of mentors. The matching mechanism are versatile. While the coordinators use information reported on survey questionnaires that was delivered to all members, all other possible forms of matching are encouraged, such as inviting a newcomer to an existing mentoring pair, accepting an already established mentoring pair among employees of color, or creating a temporary project group. Four campus dining vouchers each year are provided to facilitate the informal but regular meetings.

In a lot of cases the relationship is bidirectional, meaning that all members in the group grow together. Given our belief in the mentoring mosaic (Peluchette & Jeanquart, 2000), members are informed that the program is not meant to replace the mentoring support provided by departments, but rather to complement it. Members are free to change mentors or to retain the same ones over the years. Through this program, several cross-department relationships have been built, which might not have happened otherwise. Bidirectional mentoring has also occurred, with senior members reporting having benefitted a lot from the younger member(s) of the group.

Component 3: Monthly meetings. The EOCAI program holds monthly topical meetings for its members. Topics of discussions are determined by members, based on their interests, during the first meeting of the academic year. Each member in attendance is requested to submit a list of topics he or she wants to be addressed. After the topics have been themed and tentative dates of presentation decided, panelists for each topic are sought from the culturally responsive mentoring group. Topics that have been covered during monthly meetings include:

- dealing with micro-aggressions
- implicit bias
- navigating the university system
- dealing with students' lower evaluations of faculty's teaching
- intersectionality of ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.
- supporting students of color
- success in the promotion and tenure process
- secrets to a productive and gratifying summer
- cultural taxation and how to avoid burn-out
- bringing our strengths and identities into our work as diverse employees

In a typical presentation, each panelist shares her or his insights on the topic, followed by an open discussion in which members are encouraged to share their stories. Sharing

our stories is very validating and empowering, and an effective way for creating and strengthening relationships (Osajima, 2009). These 90-minute lunch-hour meetings (lunch is provided) have proven to be a very safe space where members feel heard and understood. The first 30 minutes is an open and informal conversation time for catching up and getting to know each other. Typically, 20-30 members attend a meeting.

The monthly meetings provide a mentoring opportunity for "mentoring mosaic" (Peluchette & Jeanquart, 2000) or "mentoring network" (Sorcinelli & Yun, 2007), and "mentoring-on-the-run" (Omatsu, 2002), in which informal conversations provide mentoring opportunities. This mentoring mosaic brings together individuals from different ranks, expertise, backgrounds, ages, genders, race, etc., creating a very rich environment where a range of needs are met through the diverse combination of interactions (Indiana University, 2018). Monthly meetings honor our cultural practice of interdependence. Since its inception, knowledge, experience, and expertise of members continues to flourish.

ASSESSING THE IMPACT AND LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Evaluating the impact of our program is an integral part of our practice. At meetings, informal discussions are held and feedback sought about our programs. At the end of each year, surveys are administered to ascertain its impact, and the perceptions of the members. The results of the survey will be reported in another paper that will be published by the same authors.

Overall, the program has been successful in meeting the benchmarks outlined for a culturally responsive program (Valentine Foundation, 1990, 1992). Members appreciate that the program provides them with a safe space, gives them the feeling of a sense of belonging and, empowers them to express their identity in their work. They appreciate 1) the inclusivity of the program as it targets both faculty and staff, 2) connection with colleagues across campus, 3) access to otherwise not easily accessible senior faculty

and staff and, 4) the expansion of the program to include supporting students of color.

Through informal and formal assessments, goals for the program have been created and implemented. We try diligently to address members' concerns through discussions at council and whole-group meetings. Action on several of the suggestions that have been raised has been pursued. For instance, we are working on a community resource book to share with members, and we are sharing information with non-attending members via email or Google doc. Planning for a family event is underway.

Ideas generated by a focus group and by regular informal dialogue among members about our program's activities have been utilized in ascertaining the impact of the program and planning a way forward. We stay committed to our belief in shared leadership expressed both through the council and all-member meetings. The inclusion of student support, starting a student diversity scholarship, and creating a "Welcome to Duluth" booklet for new members are ideas that have been translated into action. Each meeting agenda topic has emanated from members' interests. Our outreach efforts to non-active members is a direct response to members' suggestions.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Our culturally responsive mentoring model can be replicated by other institutions. Finding committed coordinators who will help identify council members of color to help create a shared mission and goal would be a good starting point. The bottom-up approach has increased feelings of ownership of the program among members and made it thrive in the three years of its existence. Being able to provide EOCAI members a safe space where they can interact and learn from members across campus is a gift. This is even more beneficial in a predominantly white institution. Our chancellor and vice chancellor's office have been supportive in providing financial resources to support the program, recognizing our program outcomes that have contributed not only to our members' successes but to promotion of equity and inclusion on the entire campus.

Because we are able to find speakers from within the group for monthly meetings. our budget has remained small, a big advantage in keeping the program sustainable. The topics we have addressed at meetings with members have been well-received, and transformational for some. Benitez et al. (2017) shared a list of similar topics discussed in their workshops that have a goal that is very similar to our culturally responsive mentoring program. For several reasons, including cultural taxation, not all members who self-identify as EOCAI are able to attend meetings. We can make information accessible to members who are not able to attend meetings.

Members of the culturally responsive mentoring program hope to continue using their collective voices to reach out to the university, colleagues, and students, contributing to a positive climate for all in the university. As members grow and develop a strong collective voice, more meaningful involvement of administration and white allies and administrators might be a direction to be pursued (Benitez et al., 2017). Being a member-driven program, those in leadership positions must follow the lead of the collective members, and provide information that will help them to think critically about directions the program should take. Collective decision-making is critical in a culturally responsive mentoring program. So far, we are thrilled and confident that the program is impacting its members and the campus community. Networks have great potential to impact social change, and to solve complex problems (Jordan et al., 2017). Given that our member-run program keeps transforming year-after-year, we are curious and excited about what the group will evolve into.

References

Au, K.H. (2007). Culturally responsive instruction: Application to multiethnic classrooms. *An International Journal, 2*(1), 1-18.

Baez, (2000). Race-related service and faculty of color: Conceptualizing critical agency in academe. *Higher Education, 39*(3), 363-391.

Benitez, M., James, M., Joshua, K., Perfetti, L., & Vick, S. B. (2017). "Someone who looks like me": Promoting the success of students of color by promoting the success of faculty of color. *Liberal Education, 103*(2), 50–55.

Bennett, J. M. (1988.). Cultivating intercultural competence: A process perspective. In *The SAGE handbook of intercultural competence* (pp. 121–140). SAGE.

Bower, G. G. (2007). Factors influencing the willingness to mentor 1st-year faculty in physical education departments. *Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning, 15*(1), 73-85.

Bronstein, P., Rothblum, E.D. & Solomon, S.E. (1993). Ivy halls and glass walls: Barriers to academic careers for women and ethnic minorities. *New Directions for Teaching & Learning, 53*, 17-31.

Cawyer, C. S., Simonds, C., & Davis, S. (2002). Mentoring to facilitate socialization: The case of the new faculty member. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education (QSE), 15*(2), 225–242.

Constantinou, P., Bajracharya, S., & Baldwin, S. (2011). Perceptions of international faculty in the United States. *International Journal of Science in Society, 2*(3), 253–271.

de Janasz, S. C., & Sullivan, S. E. (2004). Multiple mentoring in academe: Developing the professional network. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 64*(2), 263-283.

Deo, M. E. (2015). The ugly truth about legal academia. *Brooklyn Law Review, 80*(3), 943-1014. Retrived from http://brooklynworks.brooklaw.edu/blr/vol80/iss3/6

Gay, G. (2002). Preparing for culturally responsive teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education, 53*(2), 106-116.

Griffin, K.A., Pifer, M.J., Humphrey, J.R., & Hazelwood, A. (2011). (Re)Defining departure: Exploring black professors' experiences with and responses to racism and racial climate. *American Journal of Education, 117*(4), 495-526.

Guenter-Schlesinger, S., Ojikutu, K. (2015). *Best practices: Recruiting and retaining faculty and staff of color*. West Washington University. Retrieved from http://www.wwu.edu/eoo/docs/Best%20Practices_Recruiting%20and%20Retaining%20Staff%20of%20Color.pdf

Hirshfield, L.E., & Joseph, T. D. (2012). 'We need a woman, we need a black woman': Gender, race, and identity taxation in the academy. *Gender and Education, 24*(2), 213-227.

Hofstede, G. (2009, June). Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture* (Unit 17, Chapter 14). ©International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology.

Hofstede, G. & McCrae, R.R. (2004). Culture and personality revisited: Linking traits and dimensions of culture. *Cross-cultural Research, 38*(1), 52-88.

Indiana University (2018). *Types of mentoring*. Office of Faculty Affairs and Professional Development. Retrieved from http://faculty.medicine.iu.edu/faculty-development/mentoring/mentoring-matters/models-of-mentoring/

Jordan, C., Charles, C., & Cleary, A. (2017). Enhancing the impact of research: Experimenting with network leadership strategies to grow a vibrant nature-based learning research network.

Interdisciplinary Journal of Partnership Studies, 4(3). Retrieved from https://pubs.lib.umn.edu/index.php/ijps/article/view/175/169

June, A. W. (2016, February 14). The uncertain path to full professor: Vague criteria may signal to some faculty members that a promotion to the top is out of their reach. *The Chronicles of Higher Education*. Retrieved from https://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Uncertain-Path-to-Full/235304

Kanuka, H., & Marini, A. (2013). Empowering untenured faculty through mosaic mentoring. *Canadian Journal of University Continuing Education, 30(*2), 11-38

Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). *The dreamkeepers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishing Co.

Leon, R. A. (2014). Stella programs and initiatives. In J. F. L. Jackson, E. M. O'Callaghan & R. A. Leon (Eds.). *Measuring glass ceiling effects in higher education: Opportunities and challenges: New directions for institutional research, 15* (pp. 85-96). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Lindsay-Dennis, L., Cummings, L., & McClendon, S. C. (2011). Mentors' reflections on developing a culturally responsive mentoring initiative for urban African American girls. *Black Women, Gender & Families, 5*(2), 66–92.

National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity. (2018). *About us*. Retrieved from https://www.facultydiversity.org/about-us

Omatsu, G. (2002*). "Mentoring on the run" CSUN's response to the challenge of mentoring at a large, commuter campus*. Faculty Mentor Training Project Fall Semester 2002, Retrieved from https://www.csun.edu/sites/default/files/mentorontherun.pdf

Onchwari, J. A. (2011). *Faculty mentoring project report*. Office of Vice Chancellor of Academics, University of Minnesota Duluth.

Osajima, K. (2009). Telling Our Stories to One Another. *Education Digest*, *75*(4), 62–64.

Padilla, A. M. (1994). Ethnic minority scholars, research, and mentoring: Current and future issues. *Educational Researcher, 23*(4), 24–27.

Peluchette, J. V., & Jeanquart, S. (2000). Professionals' use of different mentor sources at various career stages: Implications for career success. *Journal of Social Psychology, 140*(5), 549–564.

Plastrik, P., & Taylor, M. (2006). *Net gains: A handbook for network builders seeking social change*. Retrieved from http://staging.community-wealth.org/sites/clone.community-wealth.org/files/downloads/tool-networks-social-change.pdf

Rosinski, P. (2003). *Coaching Across Cultures. New Tools for Leveraging National, Corporate & Professional Differences*. London: N. Brealey.

Smith, D. G., Turner, C. S., Osei-Kofi, N., & Richards, S. (2004). Interrupting the usual: Successful strategies for hiring diverse faculty. *Journal of Higher Education, 75*(2), 133–160.

Sorcinelli, M. D., & Yun, J. (2007). From Mentor to Mentoring Networks: Mentoring in the New Academy. *Change, 39(*6), 58–61.

Stanley. C.S, (2006). Coloring the academic landscape: Faculty of color breaking the silence in predominantly white colleges and universities. *American Educational Research Journal, 43*(4), 701–736.

Turner, C.S.V. (2002). Women of color in academe: Living with multiple marginality. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *73*(1), 74-93.

Turner, C. S. V., González, J. C., & Wong, K. (2011). Faculty women of color: The critical nexus of race and gender. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 4*(4), 199–211.

Turner, C. S. V. & Creswell, J. W. (1999). Exploring underrepresentation. *The Journal of Higher Education, 70*(1), 27–59.

Turner, C. S. V., González, J. C ., & Wood, L. (2008). Faculty of color in the academe: What 20 years of literature tells us. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 1*(3), 139-168.

Valentine Foundation. (1990). *A conversation about girls*. Bryn Mawr, PA: Author.

Valentine Foundation. (1992). *Valentine conversation II: Programs that work for girls*. BrynMawr, PA: Author.

Vandelinder, E., & Brannan, M. (2016). *Mentorship, promotion among challenges of keeping black faculty*. Retrieved from https://www.columbiamissourian.com/news/higher_education/mentorship-promotion-among-challenges-of-keeping-black-faculty/article_8ce54bfa-e494-11e5-a5eb-b33315c55989.html

Wake Forest School of Medicine. (2016). *Type of mentoring*. Retrieved from http://www.wakehealth.edu/JUMP/Types-of-Mentoring.htm

Weiston, T. (2015, November 1). *How to "do" critical mentoring: Making your program more culturally relevant. The Chronicle of Evidence-Based Mentoring*. Retrieved from https://chronicle.umbmentoring.org/how-to-do-critical-mentoring-making-your-program-more-culturally-relevant/

Wright, C. A., & Wright S. D. (1987). The role of mentors in the career development of young professionals. *Family Relations, 36*, 204- 208.

Insoon Han, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in the Education Department at the University of Minnesota Duluth. She co-initiated the Employees of Color & American Indians (EOCAI) Mentoring Program at UMD, and co-coordinated it from its inception in 2014 to 2017. Her current academic work is focused on integrating diversity, inclusion, equity, and social justice concepts into education curriculum.

Jacqueline Ariri Onchwari, EdD, is an Associate Professor in the Education Department at the University of Minnesota Duluth. She co-initiated the Employees of Color & American Indians (EOCAI) Mentoring Program at UMD, and co-coordinated it from its inception in 2014 to 2017. Her passionate involvement

in the EOCAI Mentoring Program is driven by her own lived experiences as an employee of color, and by research engagement in the topic.

Correspondence about this article should be addressed to Insoon Han at hanxx093@umn.edu.