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MAYOR EMANUEL AND CITY COLLEGES OF CHICAGO ANNOUNCE MEN OF COLOR IN EDUCATION INITIATIVE

Initiative will build pipeline of diverse male educators in Chicago focusing on three distinct groups of students

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and City Colleges of Chicago today announced the Men of Color in Education (MCE) initiative, a first of its kind program in Chicago to support men of color pursuing careers in the education field. MCE will launch on three distinct tracks in summer 2019, and will provide students with college coursework, mentorship, and work-based learning experiences.

“Those of us who have walked through the door of opportunity have the responsibility to not slam it behind us, but to reach back, grab someone else’s hand, and pull them through too,” said Mayor Emanuel. “The Men of Color in Education initiative is not only vital to providing these students with a strong foundation for their future; it is the beginning of a ripple effect for men of color to continue teaching and mentoring their younger peers for generations to come.”

The Men of Color in Education initiative will be led by men of color in the education field across Chicago. These educators will work with three distinct groups of students who are interested in pursuing a career in education. The MCE initiative is three semesters, and students can earn a college-level early childhood credential or 15 transfer credits.

“This initiative has so many positive components to it – Chicago students will benefit from seeing more people who look like them at the heads of their classrooms, and talented young men will benefit from pursuing a career that gives them the chance to develop the next generation of leaders of our city,” said City Colleges of Chicago Chancellor Juan Salgado.

“There is a void when it comes to men of color in education, and this unique initiative—which was built by educators and for educators—allows Truman and City Colleges to help fill that need,” said Dr. Shawn Jackson, President of Truman College, which is City Colleges’ center of excellence in education, human and natural sciences and has taken the lead on guiding education programs at City Colleges. “With an esteemed group of mentors and strong support from CPS and our communities, these students will make up the next wave of minority leaders in education.”

The students will pursue an early childhood or education credential at City Colleges, with all classes for the MCE students offered at Truman College. The first group will be comprised of current City Colleges students, and the second group will engage Chicagoans interested in obtaining certification. Students pursuing these tracks will be eligible for the Chicago Early Learning Workforce Scholarship to support their pursuit of an early childhood credential at City Colleges. The scholarship will increase access to higher education certification programs across the city and build a more diverse, trained workforce that meets the needs of the youngest learners across the city.

The third group of students will be current Chicago Public Schools students participating in an early childhood education or education dual enrollment program, which allows them to take coursework at City Colleges for free while they are still in high school.

"We're working together with our partners to help bolster the pipeline of quality educators who reflect the students they serve, which exemplifies our underlying belief that the strength of our district lies in our diversity," CPS Chief Education Officer LaTanya D. McDade. "We must invest in a diverse educator pipeline and by extending our hands as mentors, we can build and empower the leaders of tomorrow."

All MCE students will receive guidance and lessons in career-readiness from mentors from the Chicago PK-12 and higher education community, including distinguished Chicago Public Schools principals. The program also offers the mentors supports and networking experiences to prepare for career opportunities in higher education.

Student participants will also be able to take advantage of an introductory paid internship through One Summer Chicago, and upon completion of initial coursework, a paid externship, also through One Summer Chicago. The program will work with CPS and the Department of Family Support and Services to create additional work-based learning opportunities for the students.

“One Summer Chicago provides more than a job. It gives youth pride, exposing them to mentoring opportunities and teaches them valuable life skills,” said DFSS Commissioner Lisa Morrison Butler. “The Men of Color in Education initiative will help to leave a lasting impression through additional work-based learning opportunities for the students, so they can continue to lead a positive and productive life while contributing to our communities.”

According to the Illinois Report Card Data, Black and Latino children make up 17 and 26 percent of the state population in school districts in 2018, while the teacher workforce is only made of up 12 percent of teachers from these two groups. Research completed by the National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force found that “increasing the percentage of teachers of color in classrooms is connected directly to closing the achievement gap.”

Students who have not yet completed a degree or credential will be given preference. To learn more about the Men of Color in Education initiative or to apply, students should contact Hollie Ware-Jaye at 773-907-4456 or hwarejaye@ccc.edu.

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