

Inside Track

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2019

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PEER MENTORING CAN BE DEFINED AS "A RELATIONSHIP WHERE A MORE EXPERIENCED STUDENT HELPS A LESS EXPERIENCED STUDENT IMPROVE OVERALL ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND PROVIDES ADVICE, SUPPORT, AND KNOWLEDGE TO THE MENTEE" (COLVIN & ASHMAN, 2010).



Student to Student Peer Mentoring

WHAT IS INSIDE TRACK?

Inside Track is the only student-to-student mentoring program on HFC's campus. It provides students with an inside track to HFC resources as well as a way to connect socially through its gatherings and involvement in campus activities. Now in its 10th year, Inside Track has 8 mentors and approximately 200 mentees. Its office is located in Building A, within the Counseling Center. Mary Kosmalski, J.D., M.A., LLPC, the program coordinator, can be reached at (313) 845-9611.



WHY MENTORING?

The short answer is because it works. Research shows that effective mentoring programs within higher education increases student success as measured by retention rates, higher grade point averages and fulfillment of academic goals. Students in mentoring programs reported feeling more connected with their campus. The more connected a student feels to their college, the less likely they are to drop out. This is borne out by the data collected by Inside Track which showed a 67% percent retention rate from Fall 2018 semester to Winter 2019.

Mentoring programs also help students transition from high school to college. For many new students, the first weeks of college can be intimidating as they adjust to a new environment. Inside Track mentors are busy during these weeks showing their mentees around campus and introducing them to academic resources, student clubs and other activities.



WHY PEER TO PEER MENTORING?

Why not use faculty or counselors as mentors? Research shows that many first year students feel uncomfortable going to an education professional with their questions or concerns. This is especially true for HFC's diverse student body, which includes first generation college students, students of low socio-economic status, and international students. While the early college experience may be fraught with uncertainties and insecurities, the foregoing factors may intensify those feelings.

Peer mentors, who are experienced students and have succeeded academically, can be safe allies and serve as role models for their mentees. In fact, studies show that students who were mentored by peers reported increased confidence in performing the college role. A meaningful mentoring relationship occurs when mentors successfully model the college student role.

"I have had two Inside Track mentors and in my experience as a mentee I have gotten better at organization, I passed an exam in one of my toughest classes and I have found support to get into my dream school – U of M Dearborn." - Mychel-Anne



STUDENTS DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY DON'T KNOW



I don't know.

"As a mentor I have introduced many students to HFC resources including the Learning Lab, tutors and the CIS 100 lab. A lot of mentees are unaware of the resources that are available to them." – Yosra

Inside Track mentors value their role as a liaison between mentees and campus resources. Mentors are not counselors or advisors; they understand their role is to connect mentees with available resources. They feel a strong sense of purpose in helping mentees discover and use campus resources and also in helping mentees get involved in social activities. Mentors provide informal tours of these resources, especially those located in Building A. Mentees increase their knowledge and use of available resources such as the library, tutors and the Learning Lab through their interactions with mentors. In short, mentors help mentees access resources that are relevant and critical to their success.



NEW DIRECTIONS

English Language Institute Outreach

Inside Track makes a concerted effort to reach all students who may benefit from a mentoring program. This effort has most recently focused on connecting with students in the English Language Institute (ELI). The outreach includes in-class presentations and the translation of promotional materials in to Arabic. Most ELI students are not only new to HFC but also to the country. With 6 bilingual mentors, Inside Track is uniquely positioned to provide them with support and guidance. ELI faculty can contact Mary at 845-9772 or mkosmalski@hfcc.edu to arrange for her and a mentor to talk to students about the benefits of being involved in Inside Track.

Drop-In Office Hours

In a continued effort to connect with as many students as possible, the mentors and Mary are available every Tuesday and Wednesday from 11:00 to 2:00 to answer any questions that a student may have. No appointment is needed. This is not limited to mentees but is a service available to all HFC students. We have helped students register for classes, make appointments with counselors and find the CIS 100 lab, among other things.

Send your students by!

**Questions about academics,
campus life, anything HFC?**



We Are
here to
—help—

Inside Track

**Come and speak with a student mentor or counselor
Tuesdays & Wednesdays
11:00am-2:00pm
Room A-117T**

William Mercer @gheddoe



MEET THE 2019 MENTORS

Inside Track mentors have strong GPAs, concrete academic goals that typically include transferring to a four-year institution, and a desire to help other students succeed. Prior to mentoring students, they complete at least 6 hours of training across many domains including effective communication skills, developing the mentor-mentee relationship, independent and critical thinking skills and multicultural sensitivities. The mentors are also introduced to the vast resources available to HFC students.

Inside Track seeks to hire mentors that reflect the diversity of the HFC campus. Aside from the obvious benefits to mentees, it is an enriching aspect of being a mentor. The mentors are from different backgrounds (ethnicities, religions, and even counties) and bring this rich diversity into their friendships with each other. The 2019 Mentors are Antoine and Nawaff, who are tackling engineering, Yosra, Sahar and Ramzi who are studying business, Jude, who is pursuing architecture, Luay who is in general studies, and William who is studying accounting. All work hard at both their academic pursuits and helping their mentees.



“This winter semester has not only given us the opportunity to help others but doing so brought us mentors closer together. We’ve laughed, shared ideas, gave a helping hand whenever needed. We are truly grateful for the small diverse family we’ve become.” – 2019 Mentors



A Note from the Program Coordinator and a Pitch for your Support

The strength and success of Inside Track depends on your support. IT is always looking for capable mentors and is always welcoming new mentees. To be a mentor, a student must have completed 24 credit hours with at least a 3.0 GPA, and be responsible, outgoing and empathetic. This is a paid work study position. Please refer students who meet these requirements!

If you identify a student who needs extra support and guidance, would like to be more socially connected, or who may benefit from being on the inside track to HFC resources, send them to Inside Track. The door is always open!

**Contact information: insidetrack@hfcc.edu or mkosmalski@hfcc.edu
(313) 845-9772 Building A, Counseling Center, Room 117C**
