

Task Force #2 Report: Support for Students of Color

1. **Immediate and Longer-term Priority Setting:** Identify the key priorities for your task force both in the short-term and long-term. Provide guidance on general questions and high-level considerations for future planning, including potential goals for 2025 and beyond.

Identification of Offices and Responsible Personnel: Clearly outline which offices and individuals will be responsible for each priority.

- **Immediate**

- **Recommendation:** Seek investment in at least 3 FTE to OMA in Allendale this current year for immediate retention and 1:1 student coaching (please see recommendation from [Coordinated Success Network committee](#). (Alisha Davis, AVP student Affairs Social Justice Centers and Jenny Hall-Jones, VPSA)
- **Recommendation:** Convene a student focus group to review student affairs weekly communication to students, as well as larger communication to students for feedback (Megan Weirenga, Student Affairs Marketing and Events)
- **Recommendation:** Place resource magnets in residence halls for Fall 25 and make sure magnets also get distributed to commuter students (Aaron Haight, Dean of Students)
- **Recommendation:** Communicate with the larger GVSU community the schedule for OMA Orientation and opportunity for collaboration/support. (Phillip Todd, OMA, Alisha Davis, AVP Student Affairs Social Justice Centers, Megan Weirenga, Student Affairs Marketing and Events)
- **Recommendation:** Extend the responsibilities of the peer leaders for Black Excellence programming to all year instead of just orientation and pay them, Pilot year FY25 (Phillip Todd, OMA and Jenny Hall-Jones, VPSA).
- **Recommendation:** Create physical and emotional spaces in FY25 for Black and BIPOC RAs to have community (Phillip Todd, OMA, Kyle Boone, Housing and Residence Life and Jenny Hall-Jones, VPSA).
- **Recommendation:** Improve support for [equitable access](#) to quality and affordable health care ([supporting both physical and mental health of students of color](#)) and address disparities that unfairly place students of color at greater risk for [poor health outcomes](#). (Jenny Hall-Jones, VPSA; Kate Harmon, Edward Jones, Abbe Forbes; Dean Linda Lewandowski, KCON)

- **Long-term**

- **Recommendation:** Seek investment in 1-2 additional FTE in OMA/Social Justice Centers in order to have full time staff downtown (NOT pulling from the new staff for Allendale. (Alisha Davis, AVP student Affairs Social Justice Centers and Jenny Hall-Jones, VPSA)
- **Recommendation:** Further review downtown space to look for space that is enclosed and more private. (Alisha Davis, AVP Student Affairs Social Justice Centers, Amber Roberts University Counseling Center, Karen Ingle, Facilities Planning)

- **Recommendation:** Charge sub-group to look into creating Multicultural RAs and expand support for BIPOC students in the residence halls. (Phillip Todd, OMA, Kyle Boone, Housing and Residence Life).
- 2. **Communication of Progress:** Detail how progress will be communicated to the university community.
 - a. Develop Clear and Inclusive Messaging
 - i. Key info and resources
 - ii. Create clear, concise, and inclusive messaging that highlights the availability and benefits of these resources.
 - iii. Incorporate visuals such as infographics, videos, and testimonials from current Black students or alumni who have benefited from these resources. This can help make the message more engaging and relatable.
 - b. Utilize Multiple Communication Channels
 - i. Post the information on websites and social media platforms (Instagram, Twitter, etc.).
 - ii. Email newsletter, and campus bulletin boards
 - iii. Student org meetings
 - iv. Group chats (potentially utilize a Laker Dock Group)
 - c. Engage the Community Through Events and Feedback
 - i. Info sessions and workshops
 - ii. Focus groups
 - iii. Collaborate student organizations
- 3. **Integration into Formal Structures:** Explain how the work of the task force will be integrated into formal structures to ensure sustainability beyond August 2.
 - a. Enhance Understanding and Communication of Student Experiences (See also: [SSEI Draft Objective](#))
 - i. Increase Qualitative Data Literacy, Storytelling, and Narrative at the Institutional Level
 - 1. Encourage the integration of qualitative research methods into academic and administrative practices and encourage students to reflect on areas for improvement:
 - ii. Implement reflective practices in curricula and extracurricular activities that prompt students to evaluate their experiences and identify areas for growth.
 - 1. Provide support and resources for students to act on their reflections and achieve their goals.
 - 2. Encourage leaders to engage in active listening sessions with diverse student groups to better understand their unique challenges and perspectives.
- 4. **Student Involvement:** Highlight where student leaders would like to continue their involvement, particularly those students who are graduating soon.
 - a. Students have a hard time giving up time in their busy schedules to attend committee meetings. Still invite them to meetings, but perhaps charge groups

with seeking both qualitative and quantitative feedback from students into their charge and mission. Ensure that student leaders are involved in how they want to be involved!

- b. Provide a variety of opportunities where faculty and staff can effectively gather valuable feedback from students, which can then be used to improve their experiences and address any concerns:
 - i. Focus Groups and Listening Sessions
 1. **Small Group Discussions:** Organize focus groups with a small number of students to discuss their experiences in a more personal setting. Ensure diversity within the groups to gather a wide range of perspectives.
 2. **Open Forums:** Host listening sessions where students can openly share their experiences and concerns. Provide an option for anonymous participation or feedback submission.
 - ii. Office Hours: Encourage faculty and staff to invite students to discuss their experiences during office hours. Promote an open-door policy to make students feel welcome.
 - iii. Advising Sessions: During regular academic advising sessions, ask students about their overall university experience and any specific challenges they face.
 - iv. Collaborate with Student Leaders: Work with leaders of student organizations, particularly those focused on Black students, to gather feedback from their members.
 - v. Student Advisory Boards: Establish advisory boards that include student representatives who can regularly provide insights and feedback on behalf of their peers. Specifically an OMA advisory Board where students are represented well (Kaiya Smith, Jourdan Watson and Javonte Jackson).

Data on costs for Peers:

- AOD Peer Educators \$410 per semester as a stipend. It is paid at the end of the Fall and Winter Semester. They work 3-5 hours per week (35-40 hours per semester).
- Wellness Peer Eds get \$700 a semester as a stipend. They do approx. 3-5 hours a week (with a goal of 60 hours for the semester). So \$11.60ish an hour.
- Mental health Peer Eds are paid \$415 stipend each semester. They do approx. 3-5 hours per week also.

Data on costs for AP Staff:

Assistant Directors in the social justice centers make around 60K, so fully loaded with benefits it would be about 85K in cost per Assistant Director. We allocate 2,500 in professional

development per staff member plus about 2K in computer/supplies, etc. So 90K in total cost would be beneficial.

Specialists/Coordinator type roles in DSA are around 52K. With benefits it's about 74K in costs, you add 5K in CSSM/PD and the total is about 79K.