Summer Bridge Program Prepares New Trailblazers for a Successful College Start

Atlanta (June 28) – Low college graduation rates can be partly attributed to the number of students who are not prepared academically and socially to succeed in college.* Atlanta Metropolitan State College (AMSC) addresses this by preparing students academically and socially to succeed at AMSC through its Trailblazer Institute (TSI).

TSI provides a holistic, intrusive, and proactive approach from enrollment to graduation through five strategic areas: summer bridge program, thematic learning communities, academic support, peer mentoring, and service learning opportunities. It helps first-time, full-time students, specifically men of color, adjust academically and socially to college life by removing the barrier of learning support courses and providing year-long peer mentors and academic support to students as they matriculate through college.

“Recent high school graduates are able to gain a realistic understanding of what it really means to be a college student,” said Sharon Duhart, director of the TSI and the Center for Academic Advising and Success. “Students in TSI are able to take valuable academic and social skills, from learning how to navigate the college process to activities and workshops that allow them to boost their confidence and self-esteem and ultimately graduate from college.”

TSI increases the number of students of color at AMSC who successfully complete college-level English and mathematics and avoid remedial coursework which has been shown to increase the amount of time to degree attainment and amount spent to pay for a college degree. TSI currently has four cohorts with an overall retention rate of 67 percent and a graduation rate of 33 percent.
TSI has been identified as a proponent of the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s (AECF) mission to increase access to quality education and has been the primary funding partner since 2015.

This year’s TSI summer bridge program started June 11\textsuperscript{th} and ends July 13, 2018.

\textit{*The Impact of Developmental Summer Bridge Programs on Students’ Success} by Heather Wathington Joshua Pretlow Claire Mitchell