

Empowering Students Toward Independence

UAC Conference

March 2, 2011

Presented By:

Richanne C. Mankey, Ed.D.

Vice President for Student Affairs & Dean of Students

Sabrina Fennell, M.S.

Assistant Director, HEOP

Aishah Rudolph

Student

DAEMEN COLLEGE

Who are we?

Richanne C. Mankey

Student affairs professional for
over two decades

Teach research in Masters level
leadership program

Ed.D. from Teachers College
Columbia University--studied
Holistic Leadership

Holistic leadership led me to find
my authentic self

Sabrina A. Fennell

Higher educational professional
for over a decade

Masters of Science from Buffalo
State College in Student
Personnel Administration

Strong interest in empowering
students by promoting learning
through positive thinking and
encouragement

What to Expect Now

- Just heard about legal issues and definitions
- Defining independence
- Generations on-campus today
- Parents
- Adjusting our LENS
- Gap in the literature . . .
- AISHAH'S Story
- Concluding Remarks and AWARENESS
- Discussion/Questions and Answers

“Independence is essential in order to prepare
the young person effectively for adult life . . .
and an essential condition for the education of the
socially mature individual”

(Portnykh, 2001)

Today's Millennials Are:

- Optimistic
- High Achieving
- Civic Minded
- Moral
- Comfortable with Technology
- More Experienced with Diversity

(Howe & Strauss, 2000)

Today's Millennials Are Also:

- More Likely to FOLLOW than to LEAD
- Lacking True Intellectual Curiosity
- Lacking True Self Awareness
- More Shielded from Failure
- Less Resilient
- Relying More Heavily on their Parents for Emotional Support (College Parents of America, 2007)

(Howe and Strauss, 2000)

Therefore....

- Students are seemingly coming to college more emotionally under-prepared than ever before
- Self-ratings of emotional health among first-year students have hovered at their lowest rates since 2000 (Keup, 2008)
- These issues are affecting their decision making both personally and academically
- We can choose to empower them to be confident in beginning to make their *OWN* decisions

Parents

- Embracing Helicopter/Hover Parents
- Challenging and Supporting parents
- The ability for a student to make a healthy transition to independence will depend somewhat on the parents' ability and willingness to make the same transition (Moseman, 2003)
- <http://www.wnycollegeconnection.com/parents.100052.content>

The Literature Shows a Gap

- Talks about WHO our student are
- Talks about WHAT independence is
- Fails to discuss HOW to encourage students to challenge their practices and support new independent behavior

How Do We Fill the Gap?

- Our practice indicates that focusing on values and beliefs is pivotal
- Encouraging integrity
- Challenging choices
- Encouraging awareness of choices
- Awareness leads us to change—and encourage change—changing our perceptions (Covey, 1989)

Challenge Independent Thinking

- What is YOUR Opinion?
- What is YOUR attitude towards this decision?
- What feelings do YOU have towards this?
- What might the consequences of this decision?
- WHO will benefit?

(Portnykh, 2001)

Focus on Student Learning

- Dealing with difficult situations consistently
- Promoting Learning
- Really listening to the student
- Sensing the willingness of student to change
- Aishah Rudolph, a student at Daemen College, is here to tell her story. She has faced difficulty and chosen to change her habits through awareness and encouragement

Aishah's Story

Empowering can be Risky . . .

- BELIEVING our values is different than ACTING them
- It's that simple and it's that complicated
- As campus professionals we can continue to choose to encourage our students to be empowered and find independence . . . And that can be risky
- According to our experience and the experts on leadership and self-leadership, AWARENESS is the key.

Concluding Thoughts

- Meeting students where they are is important if we are to be successful in assisting their development.
- We don't know it all and students have much to teach us, too.
- We become more effective at meeting students where they are if we know where/who WE are!
- We can only know who we are if we choose time to reflect, if we choose time to go within
- Empowering students requires an effort to help them move from the dependence of home to the independence of life after college

References

- Covey, S. R. (1989). *The 7 habits of highly effective people: Restoring the character ethic.* New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Cutright, Marc. (2008). *From Helicopter Parent to Valued Partner: Shaping the Parental Relationship for Student Success.* *New Directions for Higher Education*, Winter 2008, 144, 39-48.
- Howe, N. & Strauss, W. (2000). *Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation.* New York: Vintage Books.
- Keup, Jennifer. (2008). *New Challenges in Working with Traditional-Aged College Students.* *New Directions for Higher Education*, Winter 2008, 144, 27-37.
- Moseman, Judy. (2003). *Not Ready to Leave Home.* *Campus Life*, Feb. 2003, 61, 16-23.
- Portnykh, V.I.A. (2001). *Teaching College Students to Be Independent.* *Russian Education and Society*, 2001, 43, 41-52.
- Smith, William & Zhang, Pidi. (2009). *Students' Perceptions and Experiences with Key Factors During the Transition from High School to College.* *College Student Journal*, 2009, 43, 643-657.

Please see “further reading” list for additional sources



Thank you!

Questions?