

Cuyahoga County Equity Commission Meeting

March 16, 2023, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Cuyahoga County Administrative Building –Room 5-006

2079 East Ninth Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

Cleveland, OH 44115

Cuyahoga County Equity Commission		
Last Name	First Name	Agency
Lockett	Lenora	Equity & Inclusion
Johnson	Vaughn	Development
Marshall	Sheba	Human Resources
Merriman	David	Health and Human Services
Smialek	Jill	Public Safety and Justice Services
Calovini	Daune	Communications
Roberts	Sabrina	County Executive
Guests		
Slayton	Shaunna	Equity & Inclusion
Rife	Madeline	College Now

- I. Welcome
- II. Call to Order (10:05 am) – Director David Merriman
  - a. Review & Approval of Minutes
    - Minutes approved: Motion to approve made by Director Merriman, seconded by Deputy Director Johnson.
- III. Public Comment
  - No public comment.
- IV. Opening Remarks from Equity Commission Members
  - i. Interim Director Marshall stated the inaugural Conversations that Matter event was Why Black History Month is still relevant. They are looking into expanding these conversations to a quarterly event and maybe a Podcast. The first discussion was led by County Executive, Chris Ronayne. HR looks for ways to continue diversity and to broaden horizons within and outside of the County. The Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage will be featured in their next newsletter.
  - ii. Deputy Director Johnson spoke on how serious Director Paul Herdeg is about DEI internally and externally. They are doing a lot of minority

business enterprise support and collaboration. Currently, there is a MBE inclusion construction project with Cleveland. This is an ongoing banking/lending panel and round table series with the Business Growth Compass. One topic is having access to capital and becoming bankable. There is a major healthcare provider who will participate in webinars on how MBEs can do business with them. The C.U.B.E. (Construction Utilities Buildings Equity) Symposium will have panel discussions like leveraging public policies and including community benefit agreements to ensure public investments flow more equitably to people of color, women, and other underserved groups.

- iii. Director Smialek stated Public Safety and Justice Services is continuing to convene their employee led committee. They met in January and February and ensured all staff had all the material put forth by The DEI Department. Their intention is to do a planning retreat to make sure they are determining how they can fit into all the county's initiatives. They plan to schedule the retreat after the What's Next Kickoff. Looking forward to announcing their department's direction at the next meeting.
- iv. Director Merriman stated the Office of Homeless Services launched a strategic action plan to reduce homelessness by 25%. The video and materials are posted on the Office of Homeless Services website. There is equity language baked into the Go-Five Plan. The first goal is to improve engagement and access and to undertake ongoing equity analysis. There are other specific sub-goals that speak to equity throughout the five goals such as prepare an equity plan for persons experiencing a housing crisis and promoting race equity among the team system staff from frontline to management. A final goal is to build capacity. This is Go-Five's current example of DHS baking DEI into their strategies with staff, partnerships and residents. It requires significant investment. Effective Monday, there is a new Assistant Director in HHS. Chris Murray, (formerly the County Treasurer) is taking the role and will be David's alternate. Sabrina Roberts continues to be very engaged with HHS, but she is now Senior Advisor to the County Executive. She has maintained the portfolio with equity work.
- v. Senior Advisor Sabrina Roberts is honored to still be a part of HHS equity team and very proud of the entire team. Acknowledged Jennifer Croessmann for pulling together where there were gaps and moving forward with departments in the way they would like to move forward. Looking forward to working with the Directors and doing well in one or two areas (at a time). Also, acknowledged the Steering Committee for volunteering and looking at overarching topics. There are a lot of crucial conversations taking place. Senior and Adult Services has done a great

job at celebrating other cultures. Excited about continuing the crucial conversations and the great perspectives of the Steering Committee and all levels of staffing. Steering Committee has an engagement survey that they are currently working on. Over one hundred people have already filled it out.

- vi. Director Lockett stated it is very inspiring to hear each area discuss how they are moving the needle with equity and inclusion and taking their own stance within their department. Each department can learn from other departments. DEI welcomed two new Contract Compliance Officers, La Quisha Lyons and Carmen Chapman-Cameron. Effective Monday, Jennifer Wilson has been promoted to Senior Contract Compliance Officer. DEI is excited about enhanced capacity, so DEI can fulfill missions and goals. Thank you to Daune Calovini (Communications) for assisting with outreach about the upcoming What's Next Initiative Event. This is a two-part series. The second part of the series will be in September.
- vii. Additional comments- Interim Director Marshall would like to stay informed by The Department of Development about the healthcare initiative.

V. College Now Mentoring Program (Madeline Rife, Director of the Mentoring Program)

- i. Madeline Rife, Director of the Mentoring Program for College Now spoke on the specifics of the program as well as the need for mentors for new college students (PowerPoint presentation included as an attachment to these meeting minutes).
- ii. Director Merriman asked how many mentors are they seeking? Ms. Rife commented, 150-200. Merriman asked if there have ever been more mentors than mentees? Ms. Rife responded, they do tend to overshoot the amount of mentors, however every mentor will be used in some capacity. Deputy Director Johnson commented, he likes that the program is a pathway to the American Dream. He made the correlation to their program at Development called Skill Up. Ms. Rife and Deputy Director Johnson stated they will be in communication. Director Lockett asked, what's the timeline from signing up to being awarded a mentee? Ms. Rife responded, first is the application and soon thereafter, a 30-minute telephone interview is scheduled. Then, a virtual orientation occurs. There is a background check. Once the volunteer is cleared, the matching process usually will begin in June. Director Merriman said he

will investigate including the College Now information in his all-staff message tomorrow.

VI. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Annual Equity Report- Update

- i. Director Lockett discussed the Annual Equity Report. It was posted by January 31, 2023. It was great to see all the departments' accomplishments in 2022 and 2023 commitments for DEI. The goal is to fulfill the County Code Requirements as far as embedding DEI in our operations.
- ii. Senior Advisor Sabrina Roberts stated the layout of the Equity Report was great.
- iii. Director Merriman gave accolades to the Communications Team for producing high quality products. Director Lockett agreed. Director Merriman spoke of messaging. He is looking for a toolkit to promote DEI work with people who want to be a DEI/County partner. We need sample messaging to guide them in an easy-to-understand format.
- iv. Interim Director Marshall stated GARE's site is overwhelming but has great resources and information.
- v. Senior Advisor Sabrina asked, is there an opportunity for GARE to join a future meeting? People may have forgotten how to navigate GARE.
- vi. Director Lockett stated that the County's membership to GARE allows us to join monthly groups that focus on different components.
- vii. Communication Specialist Daune reminded us, we can sign up to get a daily message board from GARE on the county intranet-initiatives (drop down).

VII. Closing Remarks

- i. Director Lockett stated the meeting was great, informative, and inspiring.
- ii. Director Marshall stated that she has enjoyed working with Director Lockett and is looking forward to the upcoming training.
- iii. Director Smialek shared, she is no longer the interim, she has been promoted to director. Also, she is thankful for the intranet reminder, it is a great clearinghouse.
- iv. Deputy Director Johnson stated, we are off to a great 2023.
- v. Interim Director Marshall agreed with Deputy Director Johnson.

VIII. Adjourn (10:58 am)

*Next Scheduled Meeting: May 18, 2023 @ 10:00am*



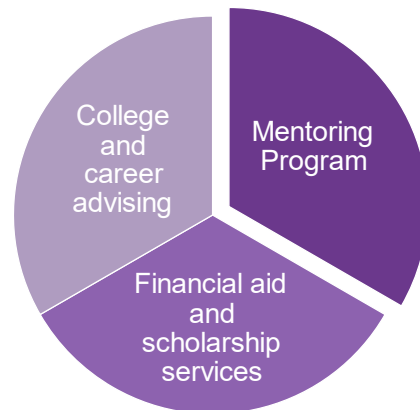
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# The College Now Mentoring Program

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## Who is College Now?

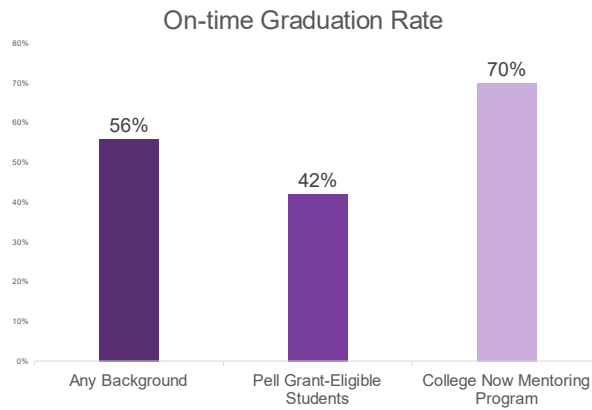
College Now's mission is to increase postsecondary educational attainment through:



# Changing the Calculus



# Mentoring to Graduation



## How it Works

- Program is currently 1,700 students
- Multi-year match
- Structure of the program:
  - Matched with one student
  - Messaging: **two messages per month** via online platform
  - Meetings: **pairs meet three times** per academic year



College Now  
Greater Cleveland

## Program Outcomes



### Student success

*70% of students who were mentored graduated on time*



### Regional impacts

*NEO is the real winner!*



### Mentor development

*Improve your **skills** and expand your **network**, while **paying it forward***



College Now  
Greater Cleveland

# YOU are needed!



College Now  
Greater Cleveland

## Next Steps



- Apply by **April 1<sup>st</sup>** at:  
[http://collegenowgc.org/become -a-mentor](http://collegenowgc.org/become-a-mentor)
- Have a **30-minute phone interview** with College Now staff
- Attend a **90-minute virtual orientation**
- Be **matched** in the program over the summer



College Now  
Greater Cleveland





# The College Now Mentoring Program

Be someone who matters to someone who matters.

Join a network of over 2,000 like-minded individuals helping the next generation realize their dreams and succeed in their college journeys.

The College Now Mentoring Program is your opportunity to give back to the community - and to do so virtually from your own home.

All you need is a college degree and access to the internet.

Apply at [www.collegenowgc.org/become-a-mentor](http://www.collegenowgc.org/become-a-mentor) or contact

Madeline Rife, Senior Director of the Mentoring Program, at [mrife@collegenowgc.org](mailto:mrife@collegenowgc.org) or 216.635.0163.

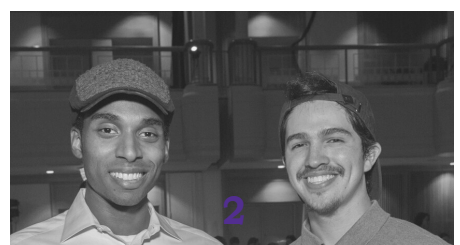
Applications are due April 1, 2022, to be matched with a freshman college student during summer 2022.



**EMAILS PER MONTH**



**MEETINGS PER YEAR**



**LIVES CHANGED**