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## Mission Statement

The Bowie State University Male Initiative focuses on the advancement of male students at BSU through mentoring, speaker's series, and academic and career workshops. Started in fall 2009, by President Mickey L. Burnim, it aims to achieve higher retention and graduation rates for male students at Bowie State. Mentors are committed to helping male students to reach their full potential through the development of their academic, personal, and social skills.



## Objectives

1. Recruit from diverse socioeconomic populations, cultures and localities.
2. Educate through a structured, tiered program designed to help students utilize the resources (including academic support offices and programs, financial assistance, and student life and engagement) in order to be successful.
3. Retain students through continued mentoring and support programs.
4. Promote involvement and inclusion in leadership activities, both on-campus and in the community.

5. Promote community service and engagement Facilitate and promote developmental mentoring.

## Marketing Strategy

Bowie State University's Male Initiative is a program dedicated to helping the young men on campus achieve their academic, personal, and social goals. The program's desired outcomes for the young men are as follows:

- Strengthen the secondary-to-higher education pipeline to enable many more male students to attend college.
- Increase male admission and graduation rates at Bowie State University.
- Improve faculty and staff education to prepare the university to address the needs of the men of Bowie.
- Reduce the attrition rate of men at Bowie.
- Provide strong campus leadership on the challenges facing youth and men in the community and beyond.

According to the Forbes article, 'The Disappearing College Male', "if males graduated from college in the same proportion as women, there would be about 14 percent more college graduates each year –over two million more over a decade. An under-discussed issue is: why aren't men going and graduating from college as much as women?"(CCAP). Going back to the first two desired outcomes listed above, using this program to increase the number of males that attend college will close the gap to the gender ratio on campuses all across the country. We want

to position this program in the market of young males attending Bowie State, as a way that will speak to them and get them to understand that their peers, professors, and other faculty are here for whatever they may need in life. Not only that, but we want to speak to the faculty and staff as well and get them to understand that the time they invest in these young men can go beyond the school grounds. Many male students do not have the support system of their education in their home, so it would be up to the faculty and staff to remind these men that they are here to help them. Even if the students are living on campus, we want them to be confident in the fact that they have a home away from home.

In today's world, almost everything is fast paced and many people are on the go so much that they do not have the time to sit and take in information about a certain good or service. We are going to make sure that the buzz of the Male Initiative reaches everyone on campus. As far as the students, a lot of their time is spent on their mobile devices and on social media sites. So we are going to use this to our advantage and spread the

word about the purpose of the program through, social media postings, placing internet ads on school websites, and utilizing the television screens in the many buildings on campus to showcase information about the program. For the faculty and staff, they can also benefit from internet ad



placements as they login to their Bowie email and office computers. We will encourage those already involved with the Male Initiative to represent the organization by wearing merchandise such as, t-shirts, key chains, and school supplies that advertise the program. This tactics will catch the attention of many students, faculty and staff, and will increase the buzz about the program, attracting many young men to join the cause.

<b>Promotional Activity</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Price</b>
Social Media	Post pictures, events, and information on joining every 3 to 4 hours. Place ads on newsfeeds.	Instagram ad (\$4.17 CPM), Twitter (\$.50-\$4.00 per engagement) Facebook (\$.16-

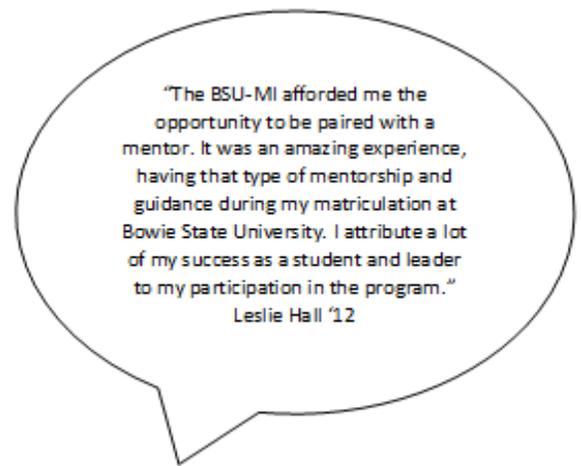
		\$1.00 per click).
Internet Ads	Display ads on Bulldog Connect, Blackboard, and Bowie email.	Banner Ads (\$10-\$100 per impression)
Merchandise	T-shirts, mugs, pens, and key chains, and other school supplies. Encourage everyone to purchase and sport these items around campus frequently.	Staples promotional products as low \$.50 per pen to \$1.77 per notebook, \$2.68 per mug, and \$3.08 per t-shirt.
Campus TV's	Slide show ads shown on televisions in student center, business building, etc.	Free school announcements.

In addition to the advertising, we intend to use the word of mouth to spread the word about the Male Initiative, in order to make the program available to all of the young men on campus we will need to take it a step further. We will go around campus while students are walking to class, and even after classes have ended for the day, and ask them about their experience at Bowie State University. Some of these questions will include the following:

- Are you the first generation of your family to attend college? What made you make the decision to enroll?
- Do you take full advantage of all the resources given to students on campus? If so, have they helped you succeed academically and prepared you for life after college?
- How do you feel about the faculty and staff here at Bowie State? Are they able to provide you with the help and advice that you need to get through each semester?
- Do you feel like you are on your own while going through this journey? If so, what would you like to see improved on campus that could change this feeling?

Going around and interviewing the young men on campus with these questions, will give us the opportunity to explain how the Male Initiative will provide them with the guidance they need to

graduate and be prepared for the working world. We will also use these questions for interviewing faculty and staff. Their answers will provide us with the opportunity to explain to them how the Male Initiative could use their knowledge and real life experiences, to guide the young men who are next up in line to graduate and get a successful career after school. Other ways to make the program available to all of the young men on campus, would be to hold special events. Each fall semester we will hold a seminar that welcomes all freshman and transfer male students to Bowie State University, and let them know that this program will make sure that you are never alone in this journey. Information tables can set up inside of the Student Center, MLK, and Business Building, these tables will recruit young men around campus and spread the good word about the program. These tactics will make sure that all of the young men, and faculty and staff on campus aware of the Male Initiative so that they can take action and get involved with the positive movement.



## SWOT Analysis

In order to further understand the goals and how to improve the future of the Bowie State University Male Initiative program, we have to understand the underlying strengths and weaknesses the the program has. We must also take a look into the opportunities that the initiative has yet to take advantage of and the threats the the organization faces. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are as followed:

## Strengths

- Clear information regarding the initiative on the Bowie State University website
- Different social media outlets such as WordPress and Facebook are used
- Community partners with Woodland Job Corps, Campus Compact, Toyota Financial Services, AmeriCorps, and Prince George's County in Maryland

As the main goal of the initiative is to advance the male students at Bowie State University, understanding the strengths that the organization has, will help the organization thrive and gain new members. Also, by deciphering the initiative's strengths, it is easier to understand how the organization has continued to prosper despite its weaknesses.

## Weaknesses

- Lack of funds
- Lack of updated social media outlets that members may be interested in
- No relationships with other established organizations or businesses
- Students are unaware of the organization and its overall goals

Despite the weaknesses that the organization has, there are ways that by advancing the initiative can help fix those issues. As social media is one of the prime marketing techniques, it is vital to have different networks that members or potential members may view, rather than outdated ones that most are not interested in.

## Opportunities

- Larger number of potential members due to the largest-ever freshman class
- The use of other social media outlets, such as Instagram and Snapchat, can be used to get to potential and regular members

By understanding the opportunities that the Black Male Initiative provides, there is an overall better chance at continuing the program. As the target market is the black males at Bowie State University, it is vital to center efforts on them, specifically the new students that are arriving either as freshmen or transfer students. Also, by using social media, it is easier to promote to potential members what their futures may hold in terms of the men that they will become, by showing alumni of the organization.

## Threats

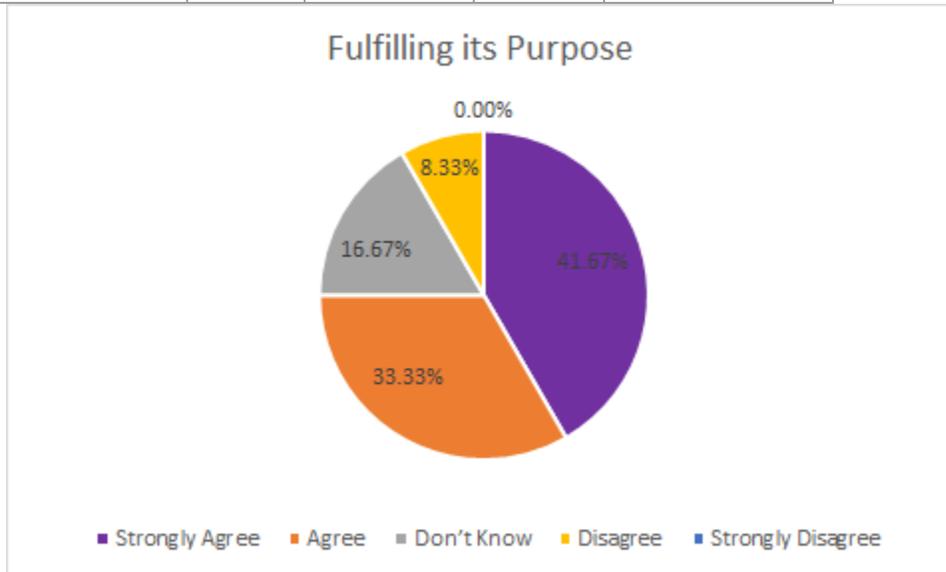
- Competition with other organizations that members may be more involved with on campus
- Efforts to bring in more active members may not be effective

The threats of the organization are the main thing that can cause the organization numbers to decrease and in turn, can cause the organization to disband. By taking into consideration the effect that the threats have on the organization, it makes it easier to understand what needs to be done in order to make the organization better.

## Evaluation

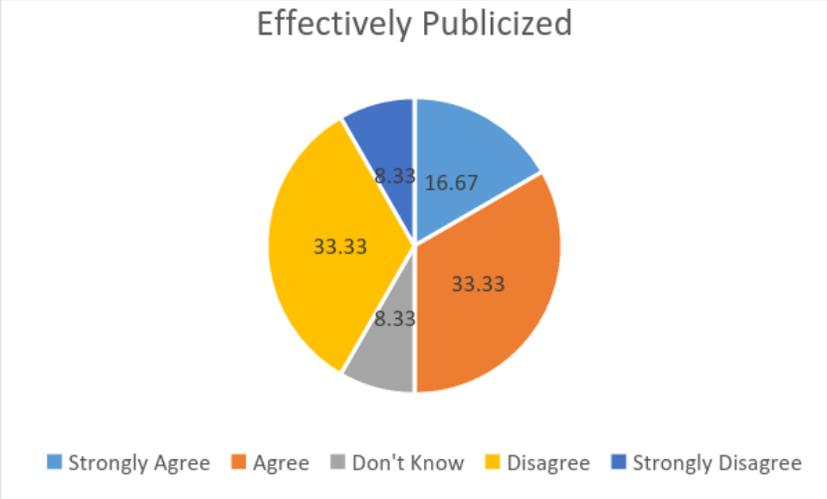
In order to evaluate the current state and effectiveness of the Black Male Initiative program, a survey was conducted of 12 members with various involvement levels. Using the 1 to 5 range Likert scale and three open ended questions, participants answered three questions and rated three statements. The first question was, “what is the purpose of the male initiative?”. There were many different answers but the resounding similarity deals with brotherhood, guidance, and support. The next statement asked participants if they believed the Black Male Initiative is fulfilling its purpose. Below is a chart of the answers. Based on the numbers presented, the majority of participants agreed that the Male Initiative is indeed, fulfilling its intended purpose.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
41.67%	33.33%	16.67%	8.33%	0.00%



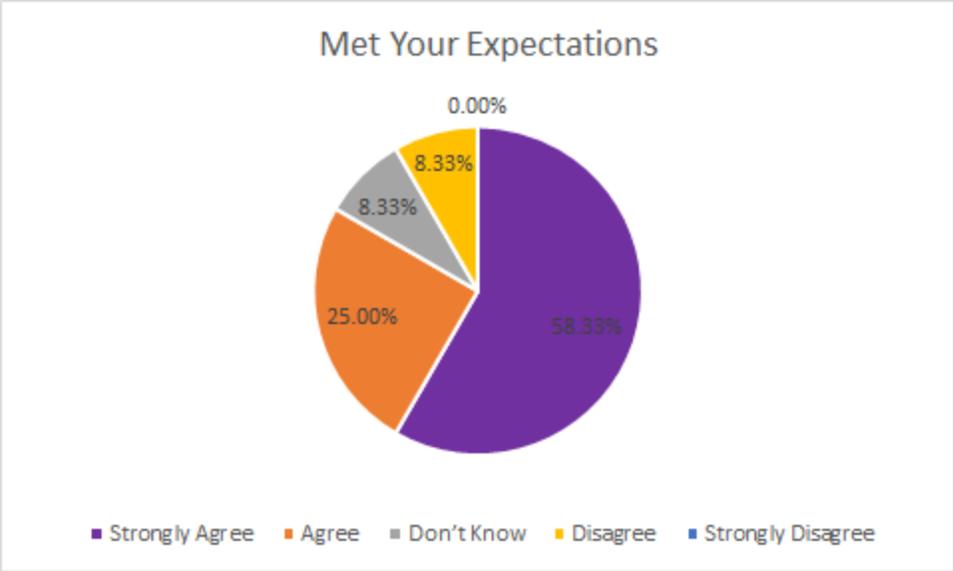
The next statement asked participants if they felt the Male Initiative as effectively publicized on campus. There was a slight shift in the data collected. The data was more dispersed and more people agreed did not know, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that the Male Initiative program was effectively publicized on campus.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
16.67%	33.33%	8.33%	33.33%	8.33%



The fourth question asked was for recommendation on how to better publicize the Male Initiative program on campus, which have been addressed and incorporated into our marketing strategies. The fifth statement was whether the Male Initiative has met expectations. More than half of the participants either strongly agreed or agreed that the program has met their expectations. The sixth and final question asked participants how they felt the program could improve and the answers reflected back to an increase in promotion and advertisement.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
58.33%	25.00%	8.33%	8.33%	0.00%



## Implementation

One of the first steps in implementing a strategic plan is to take a step back and reevaluate what the actual plan is. After doing this we must create a vision for what we desire the strategy to look like once it has been executed. Based on the survey conducted and analysis, there is a slight disconnect between the effectiveness of the program and it being publicized. The overall vision of the Male Initiative is to have an obvious presence on the Bowie State University campus. In order for this to happen, the suggestions from current members and our own marketing strategies must be incorporated. The next step is to choose leaders who will help to guide the group in the new direction. They must be dedicated and able to lead the group while maintaining the new vision. Finally, the last step is to put everything together. It is imperative that all members of the organization are on the same page about the new strategies. It cannot only be the leaders, but everyone must be striving towards the same goals.

## Control

Control is one of the last and most important steps of the plan. The control aspect allows the marketing strategies that were implemented to be measured. It is a way to track the effectiveness of the program.

One way this could be seen is by taking a survey at events to see if there was an increase in the number of interests in the program or an increase in the number of attendees at events. The purpose of the control sector is to see an increase in the program. Stagnancy in the program is not beneficial to current members, future members, or the program as a whole.

## Conclusion

The Male Initiative Program is fulfilling its purpose at Bowie State University. The program has allowed black males to achieve their academic, personal, and social goals. In the survey conducted 41.67% strongly agreed and 33.33% agreed that the program is indeed fulfilling its purpose. The Male Initiative is using their knowledge and real life experiences, to help guide the young man who are in line to graduate from Bowie and help create a successful career after graduation. However, the program's success cannot be celebrated or shared because of the lack of publicity. Through an increased frequency of events, and promotion of the program through social media, word of mouth, and traditional sources, the Male Initiative is more likely to become a popular and outstanding organization on the Bowie State University campus.

## References

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