



INSPIRING INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

Supporting Pathways to Post-Sec at
the University of Toronto Scarborough
By Nadia Rosemond


HEQCO Conference: 2023

1

UTSC OVERVIEW



- **Inclusive Excellence**
- **Access Strategy**
 - Culturally relevant
 - Access on a Continuum
 - The community as a partner



2

OUTREACH AND ACCESS



Imani Black Academic Mentorship Program



Imani mentees laughing



Imani student team with Mary Anne Chambers

ACTION: Asking and Inviting



3

IMANI: OVERVIEW



- **Goals** of IMANI is to encourage Black youth to consider post-secondary as an option; high school students that need extra support to qualify for admission
- **Audience** is Black-identifying UTSC students mentoring Black-identifying middle school and high school youth of East Scarborough
- Academic and Afro-centric **curriculum**
- **Partnership** with Toronto District School Board and Toronto Catholic District School Board
 - Supported by wonderful school liaisons (teachers, vice-principals and principals)
- **Financial support** from external donors, including Scotiabank, and the campus
- Monthly **site visits** to the UTSC campus to spend the day as a university student
- Imani mentees are invited to other UTSC **community events** throughout the year
- Focus on supporting **UTSC student** mentors and student staff (career and academic support)



4

OUTREACH AND ACCESS



See U of T

- Designed for Grade 11 and 12 TDSB students to immerse themselves in university studies, leadership development, and campus life over two semesters
- Students who identify as Black or Indigenous from designated TDSB schools



See U of T participants at UTSC

ACTION: Across campus collaboration



5

OUTREACH AND ACCESS



Transitional Year Program (TYP) @ UTSC

- Based on TYP at Innis College, St. George Campus
- A pathway to university for individuals without formal qualifications for U of T's admission requirements due to barriers in their academic journey
- University level courses, workshops, and one-on-one support to support each student's transition to degree studies



TYP Graduation May 2023

ACTION: Question and challenge institutional ways of being



6

TRANSITION PROGRAM

INSPIRING
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Modern Day Griot Project

- Initiative was brought to us by community member and journalist, Shellene Drakes-Tull.
- Recognizing our Black history of storytelling and oral tradition, based on West African Nguzo Saba principles.
- Black-identifying UTSC students disturb the mainstream narrative of Blackness, share the stories of the Black community, and mentor younger students from the Durham District School Board.

ACTION: Inviting community in



MDGP participants in African drumming workshop



7

TRANSITION PROGRAM

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Black Student Engagement (BSE)

- **Black Student Orientation**
- **Let's Talk: Weekly Gathering**
- **Reviving Black student clubs**
- **Field trip to HBCU**

ACTION: Create Black student spaces.
Help Black students be in community
with each other.



Black UTSC students sitting in a circle



8

SUPPORTING BLACK AND RACIALIZED STAFF



- **Black Student Support Network for staff**
- **Conversation and Connections**

CONNECTIONS AND CONVERSATIONS
AN AFFINITY GROUP FOR RACIALIZED STAFF AT U OF T



Black and racialized staff at various events

ACTION: Support for teachers and parents/caring adults; access to resources, education, awareness, and self-care



9

CHALLENGES



- **Dedicated funding for access initiatives**
- **Intentional Relational Accountability (relationship building- which is a good thing)**
- **Taking care of folks doing the work**
- **Equity data**
- **“Starting over” post-pandemic**
- **How do you currently support your EDI students?**



10

OPPORTUNITIES

- Campus values of collaboration
- “Starting over” post-pandemic
- These programs work!
- Assessment and research
- Challenging colonial practices
- Being in community with one another



NEXT STEPS

- Are we asking our students? Are we inviting them to the table?
- Are we supporting and developing our equity deserving (ED) student leaders for post graduation?
- Are we utilizing our networks/asking for help? Are we inviting and including our community?
- How can we utilize our space/rooms for ED students to gather? Is this encouraged?
- How do we support our ED teachers? ED parents/caring adults? (Resources, time to gather, development opps, self care strategies, etc.)



**THANK YOU, NGIYABONGA, ENKOSI,
DANKIE, MERCI, ASANTE, WEBALE,
SHUKRAN, NAGODE, NATOTELA,
MIGWETCH**

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