

FOCUS SECTION – UNIVERSITY OUTREACH

Enacting Social Justice to Teach Social Justice: The Pedagogy Of Bridge Builders

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This article describes a particular endeavor, the Bridge Builders Academic Mentoring Program (BAMP), a partnership between a school of education in a Catholic university in the Northwest and a community-based rites of passage program for adolescent African American males. The partnership exemplifies tenets of Catholic social teaching, in that it is community-based, justice-oriented, and in many ways countercultural. The pedagogy aligns with the goals of service learning; that is, the service extended by university students satisfies a genuine community need, and at the same time affords those engaged in service an opportunity to acquire crucial knowledge, skills, and dispositions to which they would not otherwise have access. Implications for translating this program to other contexts are provided.

Introduction

Prospective Gent David: “Stephanie, she’s my homey now. I just got a 4-year Black United Fund Scholarship and if she hadn’t have been dawgin’ me all spring to get my application in, I know that would not have happened.”

Stephanie: “Every time I see David on campus now (he’s a freshman and I’m a senior), I get reminded that I can make a difference as a teacher even for people who are totally different from me.”

Although hardly endangered, institutions of higher learning are finding themselves challenged to assert their relevancy in a world outside the “clean and ordered space of the university” (Giamatti, 1990). A popular public perception seems to be that graduates of colleges and universities leave with few practical skills after a 4 to 6 year delay in entering the working world. This coincides with a particular concern among Catholic institutions that colleges and universities that identify themselves as Catholic are

not doing all they can or should to inculcate the rich intellectual and catalytic nature of Catholic social teaching into curricula and campus life.

The ascendancy of systematic service-learning projects on college campuses in general, and Catholic colleges in particular, affords one possible solution to these issues. The endeavor explored in this article illustrates how one well-designed service-learning project, the Bridge Builders Academic Mentoring Program (BAMP), can be intellectually rigorous, contribute lasting solutions to a fundamental community problem, and be transformative in the manner envisioned by the growing exhortation to include Catholic social teaching in Catholic higher education. While still an evolving effort, BAMP models a specific pedagogy that can bring about social justice. Specifically, the tenets of Catholic social teaching related to respect for all human life and genuine commitment to the common good explicitly drive BAMP.

Survey of Relevant Literature

Three distinct bodies of literature help contextualize BAMP: Catholic social teaching, systematic service learning, and the need for culturally responsive teachers in increasingly diverse classrooms. Each will be addressed in turn.

“We are called to reach out and to build relationships of love and justice” exhorts the United States Catholic Conference ([USCC]; 1998, p. 1) in its recent document encouraging stakeholders in all educational endeavors to reclaim social justice as central to their missions. Catholic social teaching offers several starting points to discuss promoting social justice. For the present project, two are paramount. The first is that all human life has inherent dignity and worth best fulfilled in the context of community. It really is as simple as that (Mich, 1998). The communitarian perspective is rooted in the communal ethics of the Old and New Testaments (Micah 6:8; Luke 4:18-19; Matthew 25:45) and later Aristotelian and Thomistic social philosophies given such “faces” as “corporatively organized society,” the solidarism of Heinrich Pesch, or the body of Christ image of Virgil Michel (Weakland, 1992). Catholics believe in a triune God whose very nature is communal. God is revealed to us not as one who is alone, but one who is relational, who is Trinity (USCC, 1998).

In its modern iteration by the U.S. bishops, the communitarian view posits that poverty, lack of access to high-quality education, and unemployment are wrong because they result in people’s explicit exclusion from the economic life of the community. Such exclusion is injustice, as it treats one as a nonmember of the greater community. The bishops are very clear about this in their 1986 pastoral letter *Economic Justice for All*:

Basic justice demands the establishment of minimum levels of participation in the life of the community for all persons. The ultimate injustice is for a person or group to be treated actively or abandoned passively as if they were nonmembers of the human race. (National Conference of Catholic Bishops [NCCB], 1986, p. 77)

Within a just community, citizens live out a balance of rights and responsibilities, eschewing individualism and “seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable” (USCC, 1998, p. 5).

The common good is the other key element of Catholic social teaching that drives and informs this effort. In the context of Catholic social teaching, the common good has three essential elements: (a) respect for the person, which is reflected in social structures that promote each person’s opportunities to realize his or her full dignity; (b) social well-being and development of the group in such a way as to make accessible what is necessary for a truly human life; and (c) peace and security protected by the public authority to ensure a just order (Henriot, DeBerri, & Schultheis, 1988; NCCB, 1986; USCC, 1998). Countering the Enlightenment’s emphasis on individual rights, Catholic social teaching has continued to emphasize the common good and the duty and responsibility of all members to build up their community (Daniel-Rops, 1966; Misner, 1991).

Parallel to the Catholic notion of the common good is the rising importance of service learning in higher education in secular American society (Jacoby, 2003). There are several catalysts for the burgeoning service-learning endeavors underway in colleges and universities. Partly the efforts arise from a desire to assert the relevance of higher education in a complex world (Battestoni, 2003). Cantor (1997) documents external calls to higher education from the business and civic community to produce educated workers equipped to meet the challenges of the new world economy and order. Moreover, there is a sense of civic responsibility to stakeholders and the public at large, whose tax dollars and other financial contributions sustain specific institutions (Canada & Speck, 2001; Peña, Guest, & Matsuda, 2005; Zlotkowski, 1998). And very practically, in many disciplines it makes good pedagogical sense to use the community as a crucible in which the theory of the classroom is fused with the practice of solving authentic problems (Soder, Goodlad, & McMannon, 2001; Williams, Shinn, Nishishiba, & Morgan, 2002). Research on late adolescent and adult cognitive development and learning (Canada & Speck, 2001; Cantor, 1997; Jensen, 2005) highlights the impact of service and experiential learning on student career decision making and retention of material. In the best service-learning initiatives, students from colleges do

not swoop in, dispense a service, and leave unchanged. Rather, service learning transforms both the one providing and the one receiving service. College students acquire practical skills and applications of the theoretical knowledge gained in their texts and classes through their interactions with those they serve. Those served are crucial to the learning of those providing service in a profound way, and so are not merely recipients of charity.

A final facet of this endeavor that provides helpful context is demographic. While 90% of the people entering the teaching force are White, middle class, and predominantly female, the classrooms in which they will teach are much more diverse (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). Teachers today must be prepared to attend to the learning needs of students who do not resemble them or anyone in their own personal histories. Indeed, frustration with being woefully underprepared to address effectively a panoply of diverse student backgrounds (while being publicly exhorted to do so) is a major contributor to the high rate of burnout among new teachers, up to 65% of whom leave the profession within 3 years (Soder et al., 2001). Another key demographic relevant to this enterprise is that Black males “lead” the nation in two distressing areas: They comprise nearly half of the prison population in the United States, which is disproportionate to their number in the general population and, as a group, they also have the lowest high school grade point average (1.6) in the nation (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). With grade point average serving as an excellent predictor of college matriculation, it is no surprise that Black males, over-represented in the prison system, are under-represented in higher education. Study after study confirms that even in the suburbs, race is a more important factor than socioeconomic status in predicting academic achievement (Conchas, 2006; Hill, 1992; Kunjufu, 1986; Tatum, 2005). Compounding what might be perceived as systemic racism is a problem within the Black community itself: Many Blacks taunt those who choose to be academically successful for “acting White” (Fordham & Ogbu, 1987). Even students of successful, professional parents sometimes find themselves struggling, often succumbing to peer pressure. However, the great majority of African American students want to succeed in school (Noguera, 2003).

Institutions that prepare teachers for schools that serve Black students might see one solution as diversifying the teaching force to ensure that students of color have role models leading their classrooms. However, with the well-documented trend of increasing workloads and decreasing pay and status for teachers, capable young people of color are not attracted to teaching in meaningful numbers (Allen & Hermann-Wilmarth, 2004; Garmon, 2004). Human service professions such as social work and nursing face similar challenges

in the worthy goal of diversifying their own numbers (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2002; National Association of Social Workers, 2006). A pragmatic approach, then, is to do a better job of preparing those in the White middle class who are attracted to teaching to be more competent in meeting the needs of diverse student bodies, particularly those potential students most at risk of failure in the current system. To do this well, Ladson-Billings (1994) suggests a context in which students becoming teachers learn the central role of culture in the African American community, are immersed for prolonged periods of time in that culture, have the opportunity to observe culturally relevant teaching, and are provided opportunities to critique the U.S. social, economic, and political system, both historic and contemporary. At the same time, these teacher candidates need to understand the centrality of strong relationships, rigor, respect, and heritage to teaching African American students (Conchas, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Noguera, 2003; Wilson & Corbett, 2001). These principles are imperative in the preparation of teachers to work in urban schools. In the context put forth by Ladson-Billings (1994), the ideal practical field experience has the potential to be mutually reinforcing, with African American students receiving needed tutelage, while their mentors become acculturated, learning to be firm, fair, respectful, and demanding.

So what do we have here? Two populations facing dilemmas: prospective teachers, nearly all White middle class females, needing to acquire the skills to be effective teachers for students not at all like themselves, and Black males, who know that, statistically, there is currently a better chance that they will be incarcerated than that they will matriculate in college. A college degree is increasingly imperative for citizens to gain access to the financial means necessary to live the truly human life to which the U.S. Catholic bishops proclaim all citizens have a right. This intersection exists in the confines of a Northwest Catholic university in the liberal tradition, during a time when the U.S. bishops, through the establishment of the Task Force on Catholic Social Teaching and Catholic Education, exhort their colleges and universities “to deepen, broaden and strengthen the sharing of Catholic social teaching in our educational institutions and efforts” (USCC, 1998, p. 11). Finally, colleges themselves, regardless of public or private status, are being compelled to assert their relevance in a world that often values bottom-line productivity more than the conceptual rigor that is the domain of many higher-education classrooms.

Service learning has offered one solution to this nexus of dilemmas. The pedagogy of BAMP illustrates one integrated attempt to instill the most noble aspects of Catholic social teaching in college students by asking them to

serve the needs of a marginalized group while acquiring necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions to which they would not otherwise have access. The result is several strides toward social justice for all stakeholders. In the next section, we enumerate the goals and objectives of BAMP, describe the strategies devised to accomplish those objectives, and detail our experiences of the strengths and challenges of the program in its current form. The article will conclude with three portable lessons, implications for other human service and education formation programs intrigued enough by this approach to translate all or parts of it to their own contexts.

Objectives and Design of the Bridge Builder Academic Mentoring Program

There are two broad instructional objectives for BAMP; one is related to the youth served and one pertains to the college students who are academic mentors: (a) youths in the Bridge Builder organization will graduate from high school prepared to succeed in college and (b) college students preparing to become high school teachers will develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of culturally competent educators.

Before enumerating the general qualities that make BAMP a model for other human services training programs interested in promoting social justice, it is necessary to understand the logistics of the enterprise. Bridge Builders is a community-based rites of passage program for Black adolescent males, based on four “barometers” of manhood: (a) scholarship, (b) entrepreneurship, (c) spirituality, and (d) community building. Technically, a Bridge Builder is a person who has matriculated through the entire rigorous 5-year formation program and into college, proving himself a “man” according to the four barometers. Until that time, he is a “Prospective Gentleman,” or “Gent” for short. The expectation—not merely a hope—for all Gents is that they matriculate at either a 2- or 4-year higher-education institution upon graduating on time from high school.

Bridge Builders partners with School of Education secondary education majors at a Catholic university in the Northwest to help fulfill the first barometer of manhood: to promote scholarship among the Gents. Working in interdisciplinary triads, these college students serve as academic mentors for an intact home base group of 10 to 15 Gents for one full academic year. There are approximately 10 home base groups per year at the institution. The term academic mentor, rather than tutor, is used advisedly, to underscore the truth that while remediation may be necessary in some cases, our students need to understand that Gents are as likely to be gifted and talented as in need of

remediation. Although mentorship certainly involves nurturing the development of a less advanced protégé (Kalbfleisch, 2002), mentor in BAMP connotes a relationship that is mutually reinforcing, because in fact the mentors often learn as much from the Gents as they teach them. For most of the mentors, Prospective Gents are the first African Americans with whom they have spent extended time, and much of the early part of the year is spent challenging long-held images and preconceived notions of what Black males can achieve. It is an ongoing challenge each fall to help new mentors develop the courage and practical skills to become comfortable in this role quickly enough to be effective.

The home base groups meet for 3 hours each Monday evening, immediately following the related course the college students take as part of their major. The evening begins with a shared dinner in the University Dining Commons, followed by 2-hour mentor sessions. The first hour is led by the mentors and involves generic topics such as study skills, test-taking skills, negotiating life on a college campus, college application processes, and cultural communication. Often the Gents share materials and insights new to the mentors. The last hour is a focused study hall, in which Gents complete homework, receiving help or extra challenges in content areas.

Opportunities for growth on the mentors' parts abound, as this role demands that they be more flexible in their approach to working with students than they may be expecting, particularly in the focused study hall/homework hour. For instance, preservice English teachers often assume prior to beginning BAMP that they will never have to cope with another algebraic equation in their lives. However, if a Gent needs help in algebra more than assistance analyzing a novel, the mentor must employ cognitive skills that might be on the road to atrophy. Feeling incompetent is unpleasant for anyone, and novice teachers are especially vulnerable as they assume this new role of mentor. A consistent challenge to the professor facilitating this program is providing moral support and conceptual scaffolding as mentors work outside their comfort zones, as well as exhorting mentors to be more creative about seeing connections among the skills they have acquired in their own disciplines and what is needed as they provide help outside those disciplines. Our educational systems do not often reward or reinforce this sort of interdisciplinary thinking, making yet another adjustment necessary for the academic mentors.

Mondays end with the Gents convening as a large group for *Kikao Wa Ndugu*, which means "meeting of the brothers" in Swahili. This meeting of the Gents and their Bridge Builder leaders explores African and Black American heritage, music, culture, language, and art. In the past year, we have required academic mentors to attend at least three *Kikao Wa Ndugu* sessions.

The college students are non-participants, asked only to observe the proceedings and reflect on their feelings while attending the meeting. It is in *Kikao Wa Ndugu* that some of the most profound learning seems to occur for the college students, particularly learning connected most explicitly to social justice and Catholic social teaching. None of the college students have ever been complete outsiders previous to that single hour, and this gives them much richer insights into how being marginalized and essentially clueless can have an impact on full participation in the culture. For instance, one young woman notes in an online debriefing chat after her first *Kikao Wa Ndugu* that

suddenly they are all standing and singing the Black National Anthem—should I have stood or stayed seated? Do you think they were offended that I didn't sing along? I was clueless that there even was a Black National Anthem. I am not used to being clueless and it made me wonder if this is what it is like for them in their regular schools.

For their part, most Gents are proud to be the experts, showcasing this element of their program to their mentors, who are suddenly cast in the role of novices. This reversal of roles strengthens relationships. Mentors show off their new vocabulary to one another and their professor, saying “*asante sana*” (thank you) and “*harambe!*” (attention!) at appropriate times during subsequent class sessions. Although required to attend only a handful of *Kikao Wa Ndugu*, nearly all the academic mentors value the experience so highly that they voluntarily attend more gatherings for their own enrichment.

Since the founding of BAMP in 1999, 100% of the Gents have graduated from high school; 97% of the Gents have matriculated in college; and 89% have graduated from college, which is significantly higher than the national average for Black males. One hundred percent of the academic mentors have entered the teaching force and have sought diverse classroom settings for their initial job placements.

Links to Catholic Social Teaching

Under certain conditions, intergroup misunderstandings and prejudice can be reduced through interpersonal contact between members of those social groups (Brown & Hewstone, 2005; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000). Given BAMP's adherence to those conditions, it should be no surprise that novice teachers' respect for human life, especially human lives significantly different from their own, has soared, as tracked by self-report instruments and focused observations of preservice teachers engaged in their own classrooms.

The ethnocentric tendency to blame problems on students, who would be fine “if they would just act more like me [the dominant culture representative]” drops dramatically over the year of the experience, as the college students assume responsibility for developing a wider array of instructional strategies for meeting the needs of students who learn and look radically different from themselves. In addition to these expected attitude changes, empirical evidence also shows significant improvements over time in these novice teachers’ intercultural communication abilities (Kerssen-Griep & Eifler, 2006). The reciprocity between the rights and responsibilities of teachers and learners is brought to lasting life as a result of this experience.

As mentors and Gents work together to seek the common good, all three dimensions of what is meant by the Catholic notion of the common good unfold throughout the year. Indeed, seeking the common good even extends beyond the college campus on which BAMP occurs. As the college students take teaching positions in the 26 schools the Gents attend, those Gents assume responsibility for their academic mentors without being asked. For instance, they call off any of their peers who are harassing the novice teacher with pranks that are the domain of adolescents. That intervention by Gents, often the “cool” guys in their buildings, grants the academic mentors nearly instant credibility and social capital, a resource of infinite worth to new teachers. Mentors and Gents alike come to realize how each person’s well-being and dignity contributes to the health of the larger community.

One powerful vignette exemplifies this notion of Gents and their mentors working together for the common good. Several years ago, one of the Gents asked his high school English teacher why the offensive term “nigger” appeared so frequently in *Huckleberry Finn* (Twain, 1885/1996), the assigned text for the junior level course. This was a sincere, not specious question, as the inflammatory “N-word” is strictly forbidden within Bridge Builder culture. Rather than contextualizing Twain’s language and talking about how conventions and cultural norms change over time, the teacher told this Gent that if he was offended by the book, he could read a biography of Jackie Robinson on his own in the school library during class time. The student had not asked to be excused from the class, he simply wondered about the language; he also sensed that being invited to leave the class would lead him to an inferior educational experience.

The Gent shared this dilemma with his mentor, a preservice English teacher. The two of them explored the matter and how effectively to respond. Eventually, the Gent testified before the city’s school board, advocating for more culturally responsive teaching strategies afforded to teachers who chose to deal with sensitive classroom materials. The Gent had not wanted to avoid

reading *Huckleberry Finn*; he simply wanted to know why it was acceptable for Twain to use language he himself found demeaning in his own context. He reiterated that he did not want to be excluded from the classroom, nor did he necessarily want the text in question expunged from the curriculum. He did note that teachers who used provocative texts (which he agreed was a great way to combat adolescent ennui) would benefit from extra skill development in the use of charged materials, a stance eventually adopted by the school board. In partnership with his academic mentor, he found a voice that substantially changed policy in the district, affecting hundreds of students and improving the sensitivities of dozens of English teachers in this large urban district.

Implications and Lessons Learned from this Approach to Teaching Social Justice

Having documented the effectiveness of BAMP—extraordinary high school graduation and college matriculation rates of the Gents, as well as impact on the practices and outlooks of the mentors—it is useful to cull the elements of this endeavor that are portable to other contexts for those readers interested in using a service-learning model to promote social justice. There are at least three distinct lessons to be learned from this project. Those implications are in these three domains: (a) the power of direct experience, (b) the necessity of a caring learning community, and (c) the demand for broad-based and integrated institutional support of the endeavor.

First, the experiential component of this mentoring program is the most powerful and lasting in effecting long-term learning. Professors in human service preparation programs rightly invest substantial time in selecting readings and preparing class sessions that will inculcate knowledge and dispositions related to social justice in their students. Indeed, students often enter those courses with at least an intuitive sense of what it means to serve others and why this is a worthy pursuit. They may excel at distilling important truths from text and lecture and writing papers that seem to offer compelling evidence of all they have learned. However, until they are able to engage in practice and deal with the repercussions of human feelings and errors intersecting rather messily with theoretical principles, students can maintain a distance from crucial truths.

Related to this point is the insight that the feeling of being other, or marginalized despite one's effort, good intentions, and prior successes can only be learned through experience, not by reading about marginalization from a privileged perspective. The visits to the *Kikao Wa Ndugu* produce the most dissonance and discussion of any experience in the course and create

opportunities for developing empathy that would otherwise be unreachable. “I am hooked on *Kikao Wa Ndugu*,” Nate relates in his online reflection.

You made me go once, but I am not going to miss a single meeting this year if I can possibly help it. Nothing in my experience of growing up in a rural town prepared me for what I am getting from these Monday nights with the Gents, where every little thing is new and I can see how it will trickle into my own teaching. I am blown away by seeing through their eyes once a week.

The mentors and Gents are not the only ones transformed by this experience. The logistics of bringing 100 Black adolescent males onto a bustling private university campus once each week for dinner and 3 hours of coaching and instruction demand an extraordinary level of commitment on the part of every unit in the university. To name a few, the food service, facilities, public safety, admissions, and financial aid offices all must contribute time and resources to make this program work. When the program began, some university officials were convinced that there would be tremendous vandalism and insisted on a high standard of vigilance and extra personnel on hand to deal with those anticipated outbreaks. The boys and their mentors were watched closely, with inspections of each room after the sessions. Mentors learned firsthand what it was like to be associated with a group that was expected to be destructive, another first for most of them. This taught a lesson about institutionalized prejudice that would otherwise remain theoretical. As weeks and then months went by without a single instance of vandalism, the mentors were incensed at the suspicion that continued to be directed at “their kids.” The entire university, or at least the many units that make contributions to this program, has had to learn how to accept a new and traditionally underrepresented segment of society on campus.

Second, sharing the experiences of successes and failures within the context of a caring learning community contributes to students’ feelings that they could be effective teachers for children of color. The frustrations and anxiety inherent to learning foreign skills could shut learners down if not met with patience, wisdom, and encouragement from teachers and fellow students, rather than judgment and penalty. Mentors were not allowed to become mired in their own limitations and occasional stumbles; they were expected to seek and implement effective strategies to solve the complex educational and curricular problems they encountered, but not alone and not without support. Experiences from each Monday evening became fundamental “texts” for the course and took several forms. Occasionally the instructor had students

draw upon the events of recent mentoring sessions for in-class reflections and illustrations of concepts related to course objectives (Eifler & Greene, 2005).

Technology may afford one mechanism for creating a sense of safe community in which to try ideas. While there is significant face-to-face debriefing of BAMP in class and in the professor's office, it is likely that some mentors may not be prepared to discuss perceived personal failures out loud with their colleagues. An online chat board dedicated to BAMP, while not anonymous, provides mentors with a bit of distance in the discussion of challenges they confront from week to week, a chance to harness and post jumbled thoughts more articulately than may be possible in the heat of a classroom discussion. This is one layer of building community that computers provide. Students voluntarily post particular problems they face on the chat board and solicit help from one another, suggesting their emerging sense of the power of community to help members learn to solve complex problems. Their contributions are not limited to negative or discouraging aspects of mentoring; students also post specific strategies they have employed successfully with their Gents. Individuals' methods became templates for others. One specific prompt that elevates class discussions is "describe a victory you have had recently with your Gents and what you believe contributed to that success." This allows the students to focus on positive and replicable tools for their own work. In a profession such as teaching, where even our best efforts seem, in Shulman's (1990) evocative phrase, to "evaporate like dry ice at room temperature" (p. 17), the structures of caring—cognitive and emotional scaffolding via class activities, ongoing conversations, and consultations with those overseeing BAMP—contribute a great deal to the sense of forward momentum that propels students' efforts over the course of the year. This flexible pedagogy of crafting and scaffolding a caring community of learners is replicable in numerous other contexts.

Finally, BAMP is successful because it has broad-based and integrated institutional support among disparate stakeholders. While the formation of teachers who are culturally competent and responsive is admittedly the special charge of schools and departments of education, the liberal arts formation dimension plays a crucial role. Academic mentors were explicit about the connections they made among several of their courses outside education and this service-learning project. In particular, concepts related to intercultural communication, multicultural literature, and historical perspectives on race contributed meaningfully to their emerging sense of competence, confidence, and compassion as academic mentors. It is important for the education instructor to afford spoken and written opportunities for students to articulate those explicit connections. At the same time, college students who are not

preparing for careers in education, or even in human services, will be rearing families, paying taxes, benefiting from excellent schools, and paying the human price of poor schools that do not serve the needs of the most marginalized students. This pedagogy of service learning has clear benefits for stakeholders beyond just education majors.

Furthermore, institutional endorsement is crucial. Human service institutions brim with inspiring stories of heroic individuals who take on a multitude of evils single-handedly and, in doing so, transform lives. As inspiring as such stories can be, however, they are not replicable and sustainable in the way that a systematic, well-articulated approach to service learning that connects theory to practice and uses truths gleaned from individual victories to scaffold the next set of efforts can be. As anecdotal evidence of BAMP's victories mounts and is disseminated throughout the university, more and varied units realize how consistent this effort is with their own mission statements and seek active involvement with the program. Consequently, the Bridge Builders have garnered help from (a) the campus public safety office, which grants Gents student ID cards that allow them access to computer labs and library services; (b) the campus admissions and financial aid offices, which provide individualized materials and training to academic mentors on behalf of their Gents; (c) Air Force and Army ROTC cadets, who provide supplemental, high quality tutoring in advanced mathematics beyond the scope of the secondary education students; and (d) the offices of residential life and food services, which facilitate meals and more extended glimpses into campus life through overnight visits and shadowing activities. In short, most of the stakeholders on the university campus contribute to the vitality of BAMP, reflecting the essence of the communitarian aspect of Catholic social teaching, in which we all bear responsibility to the common good.

Indeed, the buy-in of so many units of the campus inspires both admiration and despair in other organizations interested in replicating the program. When they shadow BAMP instructors, mentors, and Gents, read program information, and engage in conversation about what makes it work, it is not unusual for them to react like the young man in Matthew's Gospel who asks Jesus, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit everlasting life?" When told simply but unequivocally, "you must sell what you have and give it to the poor," we find that the young man goes away sorrowful, "for he had great possessions." This program demands much in the way of human resources, so it is crucial to give up some "great possessions" to create social justice. At least one faculty member must receive credit for coordinating and administering this effort. In addition to dedicated faculty time, financial resources must be allocated as regular line items in the annual budget for clerical support and

curriculum materials. However, even that commitment may not be enough to sustain and grow a program like this; the effort must include ongoing external grant writing to pay for the meals and materials that allow this program to help Gents understand what life on a college campus is like. Institutions may well require adjustments of faculty expectations related to teaching and writing. At a minimum, broader and more nuanced approaches to tenure and promotion decisions for faculty involved in this type of work can make the option a feasible one for college faculty concerned with advancement and security in academia.

As the program matures, each year a handful of Gents decide to make this small, primarily White campus their college destination. They have found a home here and the many welcoming gestures of support, in the form of scholarships, study, and support groups, provide ample evidence of that. However, they and their fellow Gents have also made important contributions to this community and know they are valued for those. For themselves, they have broadened their original view of what life might hold for them and have taken the first important steps in achieving their new dreams. Along the way, they have catalyzed others; their mentors and their mentors' teachers and institutions are transformed in fundamental ways. This is shown in the teaching jobs they take, the choices they make within those classrooms, and their attitudes and actions toward marginalized people. These instances of grace point to the power of engaging in social justice to teach social justice.

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