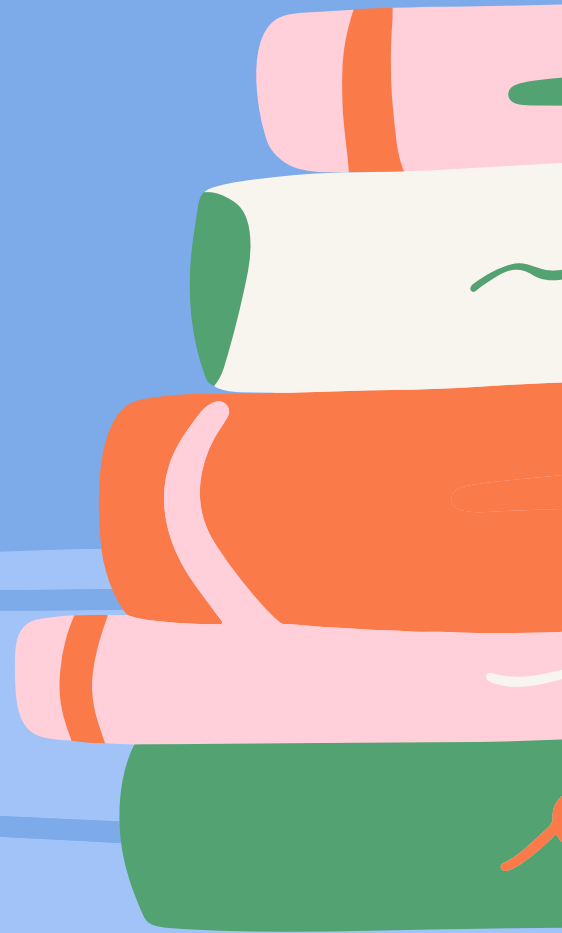


T.K. CARTER COLLEGE

Social Engagement in a Virtual World

With Jasmine Carter
Kirby Fitzpatrick
Tyler Parker



Committee Introduction



Jasmine Carter

Gamecock Gateway Programming
and Assessment Graduate Assistant



Kirby Fitzpatrick

Peer Consultant Graduate Assistant



Tyler Parker

Orientation Graduate Assistant

Overview

Part 1: Briefing

- University Demographics/Background
- Identifying the Problem
- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
- Benefits of Mentorship
- Retention

Part 2: Proposal

- Program Overview
- Details of Program
- Step-by-Step Timeline
- Recruitment and Marketing
- Program Management
- Cost/Budgeting
- Why this program?
- Discussion of High Impact Practices
- Assessment/Future Steps

Part 1: Briefing

University Demographics/Background

College Name: T.K. Carter College*

College Type: Small, Women's, Private Historically Black College/University (HBCU)

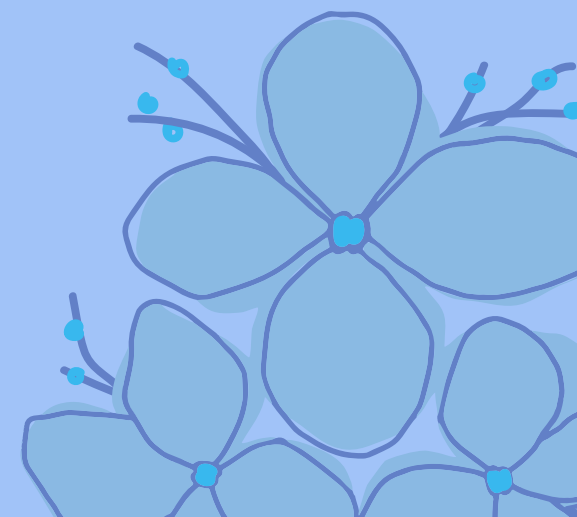
Institution Size: 2,500 students

Region: Southeast

Mascot: Blue Bird

- Blue Birds symbolize good luck and guidance, which is why we decided to utilize this animal as our mascot for the college.

***Denotes fictional university**



Identifying the Problem

There has been a lack of social engagement from our students in and out of classes. They're sitting in their singles or logging in remotely to their courses or campus events, but there's no interaction. Students are not meeting new people, having necessary conversations, or building relationships.

This problem can lead to issues with decreases in retention for the university, which will negatively impact the financial resources on an institutional level. More importantly, lack of social engagement can lead to feelings of isolation and issues with mental health.



Benefits of Mentorship

For the mentee:

- Gain practical advice, encouragement, and support
- Increase of social and academic confidence
- Make new friends across year groups
- Develop your communication, study, and personal skills
- Become more empowered to make decisions

For the mentor:

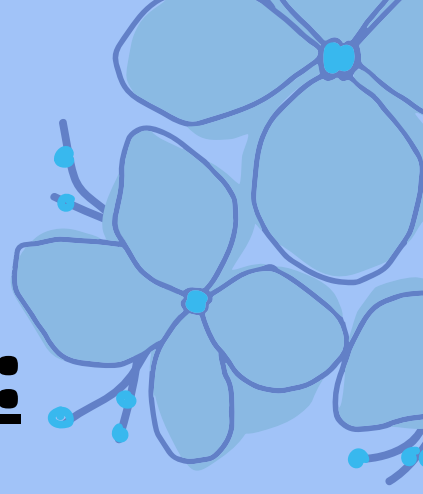
- Develop leadership and management qualities
- Increase of confidence and motivation
- Benefit from a sense of fulfillment and personal growth
- Increase your circle of friends
- Gain recognition for your skills and experience

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

The benefits of mentorship relationships are endless. During the collegiate journey, it is important that students build relationships with others to contribute to their development, growth, and overall experience at a college or university. This past year, it has been noticeable that virtual settings decrease social interaction and the likelihood of building lasting relationships. A mentorship program would significantly impact the Love and Belonging category for students at T.K. Carter College!



Let's Talk Retention



Quotes regarding the importance of retention during the Pandemic:

"Student engagement is the strongest predictor of student satisfaction and retention".

"Almost one-third of college students stated that they were considering not returning in the fall after this past spring semester."

"80% of higher ed leaders say that retention is their number one priority"

"There's immense pressure on school staff to maintain current enrollment numbers in this era"

"Many students without access to the necessary technology, internet access, and space in the home are also experiencing the frustrations of online learning"

For the reasons and facts mentioned above, we believe a mentorship program will strongly positively impact the retention of first-year students at T.K. Carter College. The issue cannot be solved with a one-time program!

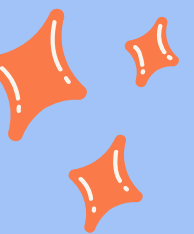
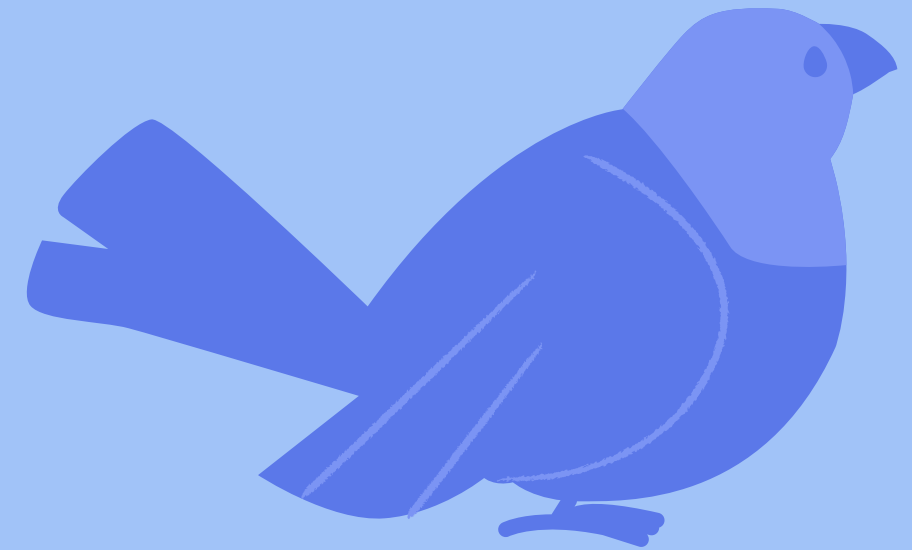
Part 2: Proposal

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

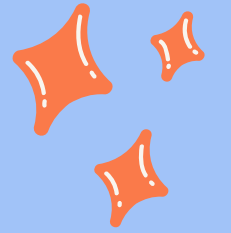


Birdie Buddies Mentorship Program

The Birdie Buddies Mentorship Program will focus on the institutional values of valuing student engagement and community building. First-year students will be paired with a student in their junior year who will serve as a role model and will assist the student in connecting to campus resources and involvement. The purpose of this program is to encourage a holistic involvement in all areas of campus.



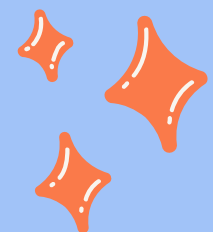
BIRDY BUDDIES DETAILS



WHO DOES IT SERVE?

First-year students and students in their junior year are the target demographics for the mentorship relationship.

Birdie Buddy pairs will be on campus for two academic years together; thus, the program becomes an integral part of the experience for the entire undergraduate experience at T.K. Carter.



WHY JUNIOR YEAR MENTORS?

Choosing mentors in their third-year is successful for two reasons. First, third-year students have a greater amount of college experience and can provide more support to first-year students.

Second, students in their junior year will be able to mentor first-year students for two full years, assisting with the transition from the first-year to the second-year.

HOW WILL WE ENSURE THIS WILL BE A MEANINGFUL PROGRAM?

Junior year mentors will be selected through an application process and will be trained on expectations of the role.

Application questions will focus on personal values, time commitment mentor will be able to provide, and will discern areas of expertise (major, career goals, etc.) to ensure compatible pairings.

Step-by-Step Timeline

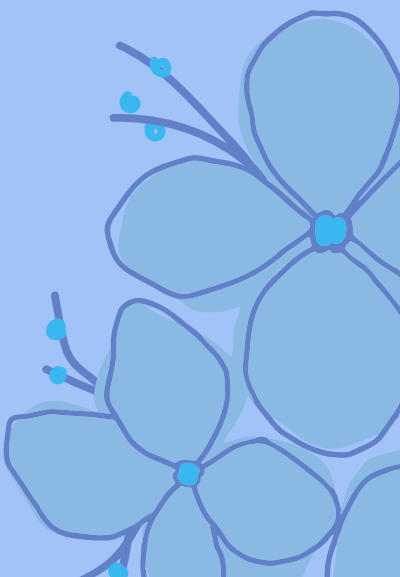
Once accepted to T.K. Carter College, freshman students will be notified about the Birdie Buddies Mentorship Program and have the chance to sign up!

During the Spring semester, Juniors will be able to sign up to be a mentor!

Once everyone has signed up, Matching forms will be dispersed and collected until the end of Spring semester.

Once freshman participants and Junior participants have submitted Matching Forms, the committee will match them based on similarities. Afterward, the Mentors will be given their Mentee!

At the beginning of Orientation, there will be a virtual reveal where Mentors will reveal themselves to their Mentees!



RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING

BIRDIE BUDDIES

THE SIGNATURE EXPERIENCE OF T.K. CARTER COLLEGE

The Office of Student Transitions is actively seeking rising juniors to serve as Birdie Buddies, a meaningful mentorship role, to the incoming first-year class.

- 1-2 hour per week time commitment
- Opportunity to create relationships with new students
- Increased one-on-one social engagement opportunities

**APPLY BY MARCH
15TH!**

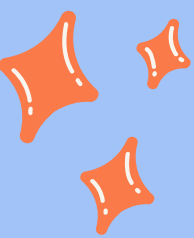
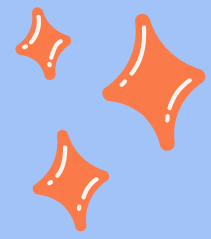


Marketing for Rising Juniors:

On-Campus Flyers, Email Outreach, Social Media Marketing, COVID-Safe tabling on campus

Marketing for Incoming Students:

Mandatory orientation session on program, email outreach, orientation newsletter, COVID-safe tabling on campus, Social Media Marketing



PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The Birdie Buddies Program will be formally added as a program for the Office of Student Transitions, with a committee of support from different areas across campus.

By creating a collaborative effort across departments, we can ensure the program is effective and is focused on key priorities for the university.

The committee will have two student representatives in their third and fourth years at T.K. Carter College. Student involvement on the committee is key for ensuring the program is catered to student needs and also to create additional engagement opportunities for older students.

MEET THE COMMITTEE!

Committee Chair:
Director of Office of Student
Transitions

- Leads Committee
- Leads program assessment efforts
- Organizes all recruitment processes

Committee Member:
Activities Director

- Coordinates activities with Director of Office of Student Transitions to ensure Birdie Buddies are encouraged to attend events
- Leads Birdie Buddie reveal planning

Committee Member:
Senior Student Representative

- Trains Birdie Buddies on job responsibilities
- Assists committee chair with assessment and selection efforts
- Serves as role model to students involved in the program

Committee Chair:
Junior Student Representative

- Assists committee chair with recruitment efforts, matching, of buddies
- Student representative and advocate for a campus events
- Assists Activities Director with Birdie Buddie reveal

COST AND BUDGETING

During a pandemic, it is necessary to be mindful of budgets and program costs to ensure the reservation of university operations.

COMPLETELY FREE PROGRAM

Mentors and students
volunteer to participate.
Current staff and students
will direct the program.

EMPHASIS ON UTILIZING EXISTING RESOURCES

Mentors will assist students in
engaging in existing
involvement opportunities.

WHY THIS PROGRAM?

This program is a better fit for the university than alternative ideas.

- This program does not contribute to Zoom fatigue because it creates ongoing opportunities for students to engage with one another. Birdie Buddies will be encouraged to communicate via email, text message, social media, video conferencing services, and even traditional mail.
- Birdie Buddies can form a long-term relationship that continually promotes social engagement as opposed to one-time events.
- This program will create a lasting tradition of mentorship at the university that will continue after the pandemic and when events can return safely in person.
- Being a small community of female students, mentorship is incredibly valuable. Due to the small size of the campus, coordinating a campus-wide mentorship program is a feasible option.
- The program creates opportunities to create relationships with other students virtually, which is necessary in the absence of in-person interactions.
- The creation of an ongoing social engagement mentorship program will promote attendance and engagement at all campus events.

WHY THIS PROGRAM?

This program is an excellent fit for a small, HBCU.

"The supportive environments of historically Black colleges communicate to Black students that it is safe to take the risks associated with intellectual growth and development."

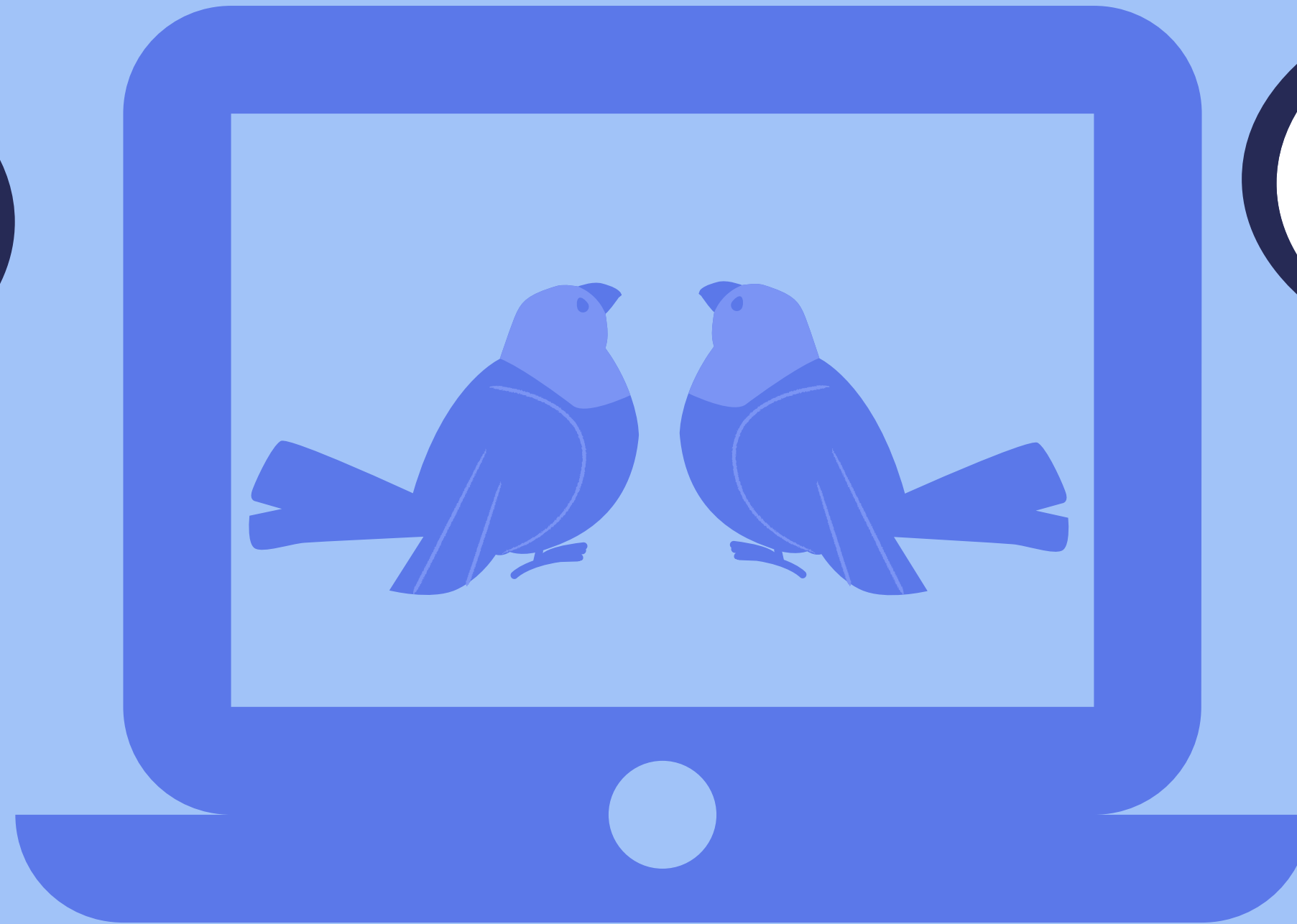
-Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?*

- Our mission is to provide the supportive environment Daniel mentions in her popular book.
- Being a small university of about 2,500 students, we have the means to create a strong mentorship program that will touch every student during their time at T.K. Carter College.
- By giving our students role models from their first day on campus, they will have the support to take risks to ensure their academic and social growth.
- At the same time, our third and fourth-year mentors will gain confidence serving as a mentor and will gain positive leadership skills that will help them long-term in their careers.

Birdie Buddies & Social Interaction

With peer encouragement, students will be more likely to be involved on campus

*86% of mentees express this program has improved their overall college experience



*60% increase in attendance to other campus events

Buddies are able to start the first day of classes with a friend and connection to campus

*projections based on other successful mentorship programs

High Impact Practices

Certain educational activities that engage students in active learning that elevates their performance on desired outcomes. (Kuh, 2008).

HIPS IMPROVE:

quality of student's experience, learning, retention, and success

WHO HIPS SERVE:

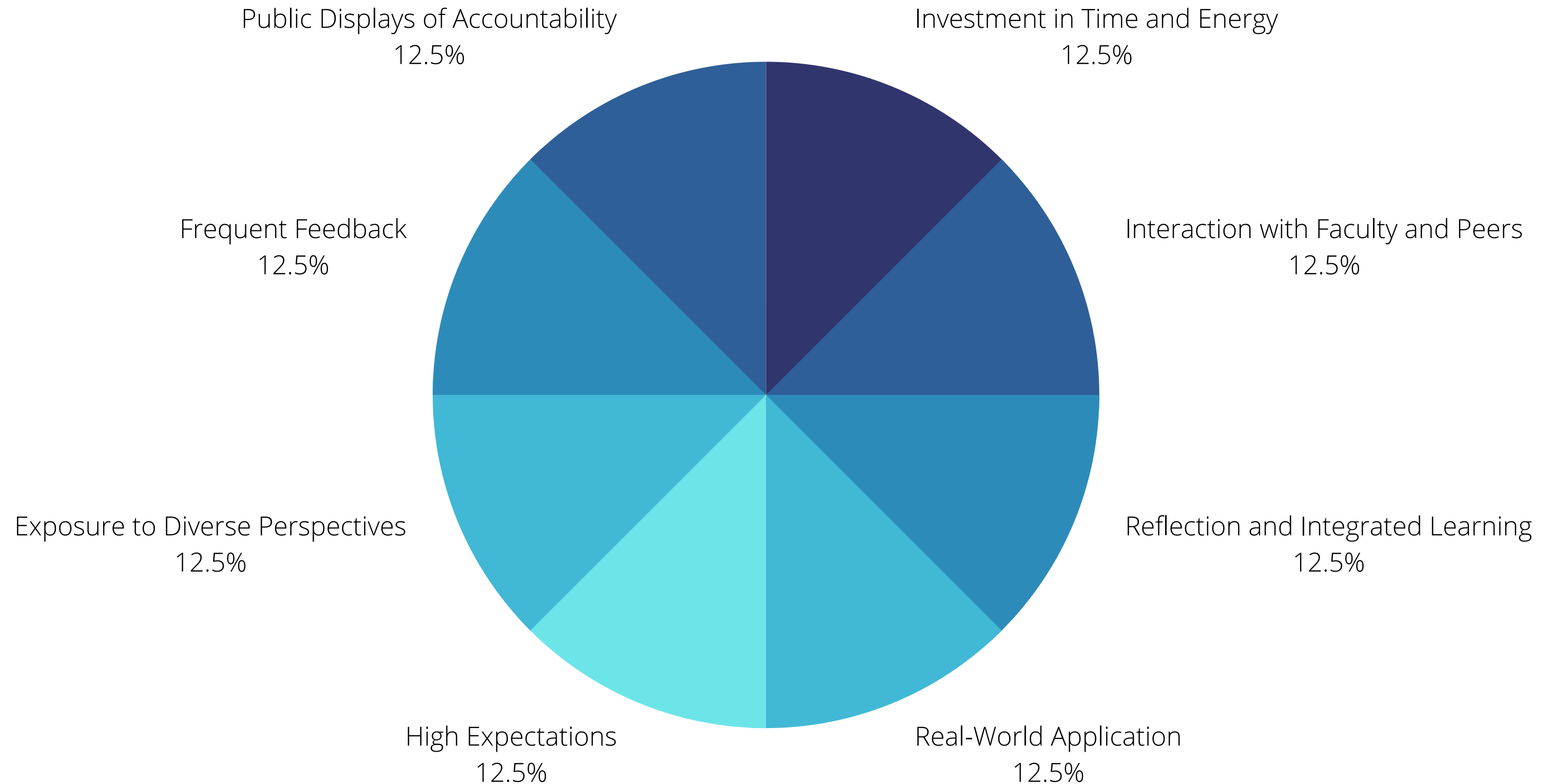
ALL students; but historically underrepresented students are seen to show the most improvement and impact

RECOMMENDATION:

students should participate in at least 2 HIPS to benefit the most, but the ideal amount is 1 HIP per year at school

CAN THE BIRDIE BUDDIES BE A HIP?

This program meets the 8 tenets to be considered a High Impact Practice



Buddies should be meeting a **minimum** of once a week

Opportunity for peer interaction and interaction with our Student Transitions faculty

End of school year evaluation form for both buddies to reflect on their past year

Transitions are a part of life, learning to form connections is a life skill to use beyond graduation

Buddy trainings set rules, expectations, and provide tools for success

Everyone has a unique background, mentoring style, and personality; increasing both parties interaction with diverse peers

Buddies can always come to our office to work through various problems

Required events for all buddies to attend and our trainings require participation as well

Assessment/Future Steps

Birdie Buddies Mentorship Program Evaluation

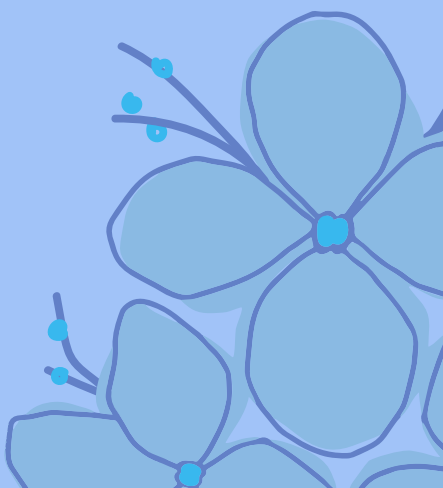
- We will send out a Program Evaluation form at the end of the school year to collect feedback from mentors and mentees regarding changes, if any, we should make moving forward!

Evaluation form here:



After Feedback is collected:

- Once we have collected all responses, the committee will meet to discuss the feedback and make plans on how we will improve for next year's participants
- We will also collect a few testimonials to showcase to next year's potential participants via social media



Two Year Goals

- Every student at T.K. Carter will have had the opportunity to serve as a mentor or will have been assigned a mentor.
- Transition the program to in-person opportunities depending on public health recommendations.

Five Year Goals

- Hire a staff member who works under the Director of Student Transitions to oversee the program, emphasizing program importance.
- Five-year Birdie Buddie anniversary ceremony at alumni weekend.

Ten Year Goals

- Program is operating fully under the Coordinator of Mentorship Programs.
- Expansion of program to include an off-campus retreat for Birdie Buddy Mentor training and development.
- Ten-year Birdie Buddie anniversary ceremony at alumni weekend.

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