



25 January 2012
Dr. Maggie J. Viverette

Valdosta State University
Director of the Office of Social Equity

Hi John, The research that I mentioned to you this morning is part of a project implemented by the Board of Regents called the *African American Male Initiative*. It is the BOR strategy for addressing the imbalance between the representation of college-going African American females and college-going African American males. As I mentioned this morning and as you'll discover when you review the research, AA females outnumber AA males by a 2:1 ratio in postsecondary institutions.

Although this is a national trend, the BOR research methodology specifically targeted and addressed causes within the state of Georgia. Although the research was conducted by the BOR to address the problem from a postsecondary approach, I think it can also be very relevant to and useful in the secondary setting because many of the critical pieces refer to "pipeline" issues. Meaning that the causes of lower college attendance occur much earlier than the freshmen year of college. They occur in elementary, middle and high school. I hope this data will be useful to you.

http://www.usg.edu/aami/External_Research_Report_and_Appendices.pdf

Thanks, MV

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Dr. Viverette gave me the following charge during my internship interview:

“John, you’ve come a long way, from your 2.07 high school GPA to a current GPA of 3.68. You’ve used our office from day one, back in August 2009. Your website is amazing and innovative in the way that you’ve captured your higher learning journey. John, you will be in high demand, with people across the country inquiring why, when, how, who, and what made you take on this challenge.

“You’ve been telling me for years that you’ve heard and witnessed the obvious problem of African American males not enrolling in or graduating from college. You often spoke with me about how you wanted to be part of the solution to this problem.

You now have actions to back up your words, and your story is simply amazing. “You may want to do research and see how the 36 universities in the Georgia Board of Regents are dealing with this issue. Some have created programs to assist. My suggestion is that you consider creating a program or tool VSU can use to attract and retain African American male students. The goal would be for your example, starting and finishing college, to be standard rather than an exception. Your challenge is to create some kind of way for the program or tool to be used after you graduate in December. I think you may be surprised at the outcome of packaging the story contained on your website to inspire other African American males. This is not a command, but it’s something you may want to consider for your fall semester internship.”