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MSCC Students, Staff Participate in Minority Male Conference

Mid-South Community College's Men Aspiring to Lead and Excel (M.A.L.E.) Mentoring organization along with the new Title III Predominantly Black Institution (PBI) Grant Department teamed up to take eight students to the Minority Male Conference in Little Rock.

Pulaski Technical College hosted the third annual event on Friday, Feb. 24.

The learning experience is one of the project tasks aligned within the PBI Grant's Goal II: Develop the engagement and self-confidence of African American male students to increase their success, retention and completion.

Students shared the opportunity to participate in a community round-table discussion addressing the issues affecting African Americans in the college setting. In



MSCC STUDENTS AT CONFERENCE – From left, Kenneth Cunningham, Frank McCauley, Joshua Sharp, Bradley Nilsen, Mario Bass, Louis Jamison, Demetrius Gregory and Kenneth England participated in the 3rd Annual Minority Male Conference in Little Rock.

addition, students interacted with their peers from other state institutions such as Arkansas Baptist College and the University of Central Arkansas.

“Exposure is the key,” stated Tony Wilson, MSCC Coordinator of Student Activities.

Jay Chesshir, President and CEO of the Little Rock Regional Chamber of Commerce, spoke at the opening session, and an introduction to The Network for Student Success followed.

Students participated in variety of breakout sessions at the conference, including, “Purposeful Impact!” “Marginalized Male Workforce,” “Campus Collaboration,” “The Four-Year Transfer Challenge,” “The High Risk and Post-Incarceration Student,” and “The Arkansas College & Career Coaches Initiative.”

Dr. Ed Franklin, Executive Director of Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges, provided the keynote address at the morning luncheon. The conference concluded with a Real Talk Panel and an Idea Exchange.

After the conference, students had the opportunity to sample a different kind culture while dining at a Japanese restaurant. As they waited for their food to be prepared, the men participated in a chopsticks demonstration led by PBI Academic Counselor Robert Oselen and posed for a photograph with former middleweight boxing champion Jermain Taylor, who is a native of Little Rock.

“We want our students to know that success lies here in West Memphis and beyond,” stated Ramone Smith, Academic Counselor for the PBI Grant. “As students, they too can achieve great things in life and become whoever they want to become,”

Students representing MSCC included Joshua Sharp of Memphis; Mario Bass, Kenneth England, Frank McCauley, and Bradley Nilsen, all of West Memphis; and Kenneth Cunningham, Demetrius Gregory, and Louis Jamison, all of Marion.



MSCC student Mario Bass talks about his experiences as an African American male)

“It was nice to meet students from other colleges,” said Demetrius Gregory. “The sessions were informative, and they taught us how we could become better in life.”

Staff members who attended the conference included Paula Rose-Greer, Director of the PBI Grant; Oselen, Smith and Wilson.

There will be more opportunities for students and campus-wide staff to become involved with male mentoring and the new Title III PBI Grant initiatives in the near future. For more information, visit the PBI Office located in the Sandra C. Goldsby Library, Room RC 101, of the Donald W. Reynolds Center on MSCC’s South Campus.