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## Transcript

Dariel Vasquez

We have more young men of color on college campus than ever before, but more of them are. Driving out at this point. There's a lot of articles and reports out right now about college enrollment being at an all time low was like, yeah, we can identify that as a crisis. But what about the folks you already got on your campus? How are you taking care of that? Why are you not taking care of? Are you interested in this increasing diversity and recruitment? But what happened? Their lives only matter up until they get on campus. And then once they start failing, it's like she got about we don't have to support them. We're not them.

Rosemary Ferreira

We're back. Welcome to season two of the table podcast. This is still the place where we invite guests to unpack questions regarding race, ethnicity, culture norms and current events. This season, in addition to our long form episodes, we also have some fun mini episodes planned for those listeners who also want something a little shorter. My name is Rosemary Ferreira. Right.

Courtney Jones Carney

And I'm Courtney Jones Carney. Rosemary, Can you believe that? We made it to season 2?

Rosemary Ferreira

No, Courtney, I can't believe it. I mean, this is really a labor of love, of passion, of really caring deeply about the work that we do addressing these topics that we talk about. On our own, but we're really grateful to have the platform to be able to do so in a way where we can invite folks to really unpack a lot of these issues. And also have the listeners be able to learn and engage with these topics.

Courtney Jones Carney

You said a lot of. Things one of them was about a labor of love. Since we last were here, I had a whole baby all and he's over a year old now. So it's been a long time coming. I'm excited to be back in this space to unpack these topics, to talk to our guests, and to have this platform to share these sort of conversations that we would typically have with one another in the office.

Rosemary Ferreira

In today's episode, we're talking about black masculinity with our guests Dariel Vasquez and the Rance bar. Center and met both Dariel and Durante as undergraduate students. At Bard college. Dariel is a Co founder and CEO of brothers ads and organization that aims to improve the academic and social emotional outcomes of young men of color in both secondary and post secondary education. And that's brothers with the at sign. That ends like in an e-mail. Durante served as a director of programs at Brothers at before transitioning to becoming a higher education consultant.

Courtney Jones Carney

Black Masculinity is a huge topic to cover in under an hour, but we managed to answer a lot of important questions like what does it mean to be a black man? What does it mean to be oppressed and also have the power to be an oppressor? And how can black men uplift one another while also keeping each other accountable?

Rosemary Ferreira

During the interview, you're going to hear the term black diaspora. For those who don't know, the black Diaspora, also known as the African diaspora, is the voluntary and involuntary movement of Africans and their descendants to various parts of the world. It's often used as a collective term that acknowledges the diverse backgrounds and cultures of black people. Now, with that covered, here's our interview with Ariel and Lawrence.

Dariel Vasquez

Hey, happy to be here. My name is Dariel Vasquez. He him his pronouns. I am from Harlem, New York, and I am the CEO of. But is that organization as far as background, I'm first generation and like I mentioned, I'm from Harlem. I grew up in Manhattanville public housing projects. That's a big part of my identity and informs. A lot of the work I do and. Just the way I. Approach life. When I was an undergrad I major. In history and. Sociology and I had a concentration in Africana studies. Afro Latino identified as black, and I think I might mention my parents.

Speaker 4

Are from India. Can you stay with the PR?

Dariel Vasquez

Ohh, the Dominican Republic.

Durante Barringer

Also happy to be here, Durante Barringer. I am the director of programs for brothers that I was born in Atlanta, GA, went to Bard College, majored in political science. But for the past almost 10 years, I've been in youth development. I've been a teacher, a secondary history teacher, and now I'm in the nonprofit. Field as far as how I identify, I think that's always a hard question. I think you know black man cisgender. But I think the crux of it for me would be like it's a holistic human who is developing every day. I'm learning new stuff every day and and that plays a huge role in my. Leadership at brothers up.

Speaker 4

Thank you both for sharing and I appreciate that and say appreciating you, talking about being a human right. So yes, he's like now he's important in that issue. Our experiences and realities, but then they we are all complicated. Let's see and perfect look great human beings. What are your experiences? As black men in the United States specifically.

Durante Barringer

I've been thinking about this question a lot. This is a question that I posed to my high school when I was a teacher. It's like, what does it? Mean to be black in. America, it was very hard for them. To answer the question. There's a lot of kind of like similarities amongst the black be asked for, but as black Americans

and the blacks, they asked for his coined right, you know, being black isn't monolithic. And being a black man isn't monolithic the way I would describe it for me has been this kind of like duality of really amazing moments of joy and peace and other ability to really understand human. Through a perspective in the lens that I think many people don't really get a chance to have, and at the same time, part of that perspective and duality is because of the brokenness right, that black men and black people live in, not just in America, but as we're seeing. Across the world. So there's this hard duality, I guess for me, like growing up, it took a negative form for a long time when I was a kid, I wanted to be white, and many of my cousins and just friends. I knew, you know, would say, you know, ohh the wrong thing. You're Oreo and I'm like, yeah, white man, the black man's body. That sounds awesome, and you know I spoke differently. You know, I grew up in Atlanta and in Charlotte, and those are very southern spaces and everyone like a twang. And then there's me. And I sound like this. And so I was differentiated in that sense. And as I grew older, I would say high school. Probably the most defining moment. I start to see, but not really unpack the kind of like the vision between race and class. I recognize that a lot of white people at the school I went to in Charlotte or Huntersville, NC at the time were very wealthy. And a lot of the black people that I knew were not. Mentally, as a young kid, I started to equate wealth with whiteness, which is now a well documented concept that psychologically happens between people of color. Whiteness in this country and that led to a form of self hate. I would say that was not the joyful part of the. Rents, but what happened was almost like a cocoon, like a butterfly coming out of their cocoon. You know, I went back to Atlanta due to homelessness and all this other stuff. And around 2009, 2008, I had my first black male teacher, Mr. Walker. He was a U.S. history. Teacher and he was the first person to really teach me. Being black is actually a really great thing, and that really was like my turning point in life as a black man and as a black person to being able to understand the world through the context of the oppress or margin.

Speaker 4

Dario, before I jump to you, I did have a question for you Durance about when you were talking about being an Oreo. What were the? Responses or guidance that you were receiving from your guardians, the adults in your life, your mom lowered their thoughts since you were going through this your race.

Durante Barringer

I didn't vocalize it too much, but. My mom also joked around and said the same thing, and so I think at that time for her growing up in the 1950s and everyone else, the people I grew up around weren't thinking about race in the same way that we do now. It was almost like a innocent joke, but at the same time it had very real consequences for me later on in life.

Dariel Vasquez

For me, you know, I mentioned I'm from Harlem, the best place in the world. So I think, you know, as far as diaspora is concerned, we got it, you know, I mean, we had it go being from Harlem, really informing my sense of identity really early on, my experience growing up in Harlem with my boys. I grew up with really. And for my identity as a young black man as well, I think. Around middle school, when I started getting stopped at first a lot like 8th and 9th grade for me was peak stop at first in New York City. If y'all know about was stopping from it was a set of policies and laws and. I want to say like was also a way of just treating people and the way that we were treated, I think even at 1314 as kids being put up against gates or being stopped. And I think strange, stripped of our rights and whatnot, I think was really gave

me just like a really, really harsh, rude awakening to just what it means to be. Black in America. So super early on, it's not like I really had. A choice or or space to really intellectualize it, that young it was just like, oh, this is what it is and what I'll say is beyond that, you know, I went to Thurgood Marshall Academy for middle school and high school. It was a beautiful experience being in all black and I, you know classrooms I had majority black and I think. Teachers and it's like that was super unique, right? So again, like really strong like reaffirming like that sense of identity. And then my mom. Her dad's part Haitian. She's the only dark skinned person on her side of the family compared to her siblings. So our conversation is just about like hair texture and all that kind of stuff in the home really influenced me a lot too. I would say that my experience is also captured by like the reality I was the only one out of my boys. I grew up with that, went to college. I was the only one with a pop song. That was a. Part of all these mentoring programs, none of them were then there's, like, where I'm at. In life compared to. We're there at. We live in two different worlds, although it's like this to that love there. And connection to. Me like that also sums up what it means to be a black man in America. I think my relationship with law enforcement and authority in general is, you know, it's still a sore spot, to be honest and still very triggering. And I don't know if that's something that you just get used to. As you get older and like eventually you just live through it or like there is actually a way of or a point of healing around it. But I will say it's come to inform a lot of my experiences in America.

Rosemary Ferreira

That's a heck of a question that you left us.

Speaker 4

With do black men get to heal from the?

Courtney Jones Carney

Or is it just something that you just get used to over time? Because that's just your reality in this country. So I'm a black woman. I'm married to a black man. I'm raising black boys and so as a family, we often have very complex discussions that merge how my husband and I have been conditioned to think about masculinity and what we consciously choose to believe about masculine. So recently my five year old son said that he was scared of the latest demonic Muppet that is designed to scare children and my husband quickly told our side that he shouldn't be afraid and that his job is to protect his little brother so he can't be afraid. So I. Paused for a moment. And then told my son that he's allowed to be afraid and he's allowed to. Scared and that plenty of scare people do brave things. Or choose not to do. Brave things at that moment. But having fears is not something that he's prohibited from having. That leads to our next question as black men. What are the positive and harmful types of masculinities that you have encountered?

Durante Barringer

It's a very hard question to think about, like, positive masculinity growing up, partly because that wasn't a conversation. So when I was. I didn't look for it. Even the idea of masculinity itself wasn't really something that ever popped up into my head as a kid. It was just a man as a man. A woman, a woman. When I think back, I think about Mr. Walker, the US history teacher. I was going to say his ability to invest in me, but that's something that all humans do. I think that's the other hard part about having conversations around. Masculinity is a lot of the things that we would talk about are. Things that we. All

do that are positive and meaningful and. I think, but I would say I guess, under the guise of masculinity, his ability to invest in me as a black man was the thing that changed my life. I went from having a 2.0 GPA coming from the school I was at in Huntersville, which was extremely racist to being able to get a 3.2 that investment. And mentorship allow me to also have the confidence to be courageous, which I guess you could say is a positive, masculine or assertive masculine. But I also saw that my mom too, it was just reflected in. And and maybe that did have some impact on me, you know, not growing up with a father figure in my life. And so the. Absence of masculinity was always a thing, but I think in that moment, yeah, it was the courage that was a a huge thing. It led me to try out for the role of Oberon in the Midsummer Night's Dream. That's just something I had never would have done. That courage inspired me to make friends. It allowed me to get out my shell and do that. I would say it was also, I guess a different type of love. I was used to cause my mom's love was very maternal and I would say, and this could be in partnership with toxic masculinity, but his love was very much kind of like what your husband was saying. Courtney, like, you can't be afraid. You can't afford to. For you, you just gotta do it. And I actually think that helped me, though. If it hadn't been for that, I probably wouldn't have gotten the posse scholarship. I probably would have never left Atlanta. To go to. Some random place in upstate New York and I never would have gotten through barren thing, but at the same time, think not being able to feel fear and not being. Able to feel. Not being able to access really my humanity in a way that was healthy and safe landed me in the hospital due to some very severe depression while I was being courageous and being functional. Being all these things as a man. As a human, I was not functioning at a place that was healthy and are safe. I will honestly say the most positive aspects of humanity that I saw were for many of my female friends who took care of me and called me out and challenged me. And it wasn't till later I would say until I was 25. With people like Darielle and my current friends that I was able to start experiencing A masculinity that was softer like me and Dario. Whenever we see each other, we hugged for a very long time, and that's not something we grew up with. At least I can't say I grew up with.

Dariel Vasquez

I grew up in very hyper masculine spaces like it was almost like no escaping that straight, cisgender black men are very, very interesting spaces, both oppressors and those who are oppressed. And so for me, like I knew something was off when I would be in spaces and it just felt like. I couldn't be. Or other folks who might have had. Other identities couldn't be like I mentioned. I've been a part of metal color groups most of my life, and so I knew, you know, when I had the opportunity to create my own, I wanted to be 1 where it was open to all young men of color, regardless of those \*\*\*\*\* identities, to guarantee. Point there's a way in which, like a lot of us, just couldn't be my pops. For example, if I would appointed him as like a positive example of masculinity, there was still some troubling aspects of it, but. And then when my boys I grew up would forget about it like that wouldn't even. Yeah, like we ain't broaching these convos at all. So there's a way in which we socialized. Even with the quote UN quote positive examples of male cause, I had two positive male role models in my life. Really, really positive male role models, but. Even then, their definition of masculinity was was informed by their generation when they grew up and where where they were from and what they've been told and how they were socialized. And so they. 18 years of being socialized in a particular kind of way and that going to Bard where I had the opportunity to sort of start questioning those things for a while, they. He was he was very abrupt now looking back, it's informed a lot of the work that we do with college students who come from neighborhoods like ours because there is this sort of. Expectation when you. Enter new spaces. That

you're ready to question these things, but it's hard to start peeling away the layers 18 years or 19 years worth of being socialized in a particular kind of way.

Speaker 4

Very are you touched? On that space of being an oppressor and being oppressed, how do we acknowledge the ways that black men are horned by white supremacy and patriarchy? And I'm thinking about the ways that black men have also been historically harmed by white women throughout. History and target. While also being perpetrators upon to other black men, to black women and black trans plus people. So transgender folks, non binary, gender nonconforming people. How do you both navigate do y'all talk about that brothers app?

Dariel Vasquez

I think that's what separates us from previous generations. I'm always the youngest in this space as I navigate as far as leading this type of work you've developed. Particularly for black males, and it's a huge contention in the field of black male achievement. Youth development has just centered that one side of just like this is the disproportionate effects that white supremacy and systemic racism have had on black men and boys. That's the only narrative. And for generations we moved away from the real raw conversation of just like. Our spaces are not inclusive. The way in which we have these conversations don't allow for all of our brothers to have a seat at the table or be welcomed at the table except for one and #2 we are the main ones causing harm to others within our community. How do we broach that? We approach the work when we're working with again like our 131516 year olds from a place of empathy and understanding where and how they're being socialized, where they have these sort of snap reactions like hey yo, that's gay and like, hold on, let's sit down. Like, let's unpack that and and that that confrontation is still. Coming from a. Place of love and understanding, but addressing that. At 13, from my experience this is just a very personal. Think I'd rather invest and give my all into the youth this population as opposed to like these 40 something year old guys who are so set in their ways, even generationally, ideologically, come to class. Or this is how they define masculinity. This is how they lead the work and do the work, and we're so on the opposite. Spectrum of. That work and then. Even with the trans students that we work with. I think have taught me a lot about just like ohh actually we thought we was doing something, but there's even more to do, right? There's even a bigger space for us to advocate if we want to change this space and allow that there was a moment in which I realized, like, I have friends with young men of color who are gay, and they would approach me and say, like, I just never felt safe in these types of rooms. I became obsessed with trying to make a space that was actually inclusive that needed to just be part of the work, or else we weren't doing it right. And beyond that, unpacking the relationships we have with women in our. Community to the. Point where we should even be certified. As a mentor. You have to go through a training with rank and stop rapings. Who are one? Of our partners, so they come in every year and they speak with our guys. I think part of the issue is that men don't have enough spaces where they can open up and be like, you know what? Oh, my God. I realize I've been causing so much harm. Without being judged, be able to like, open up about it and then understand like you play a role and not just the way you live your life, but how you influence other men around you and hold them accountable in the spaces in the communities that they're in.

Durante Barringer

Some of our guys, when they first entered the brothers at space, they really do feel empty going back to this feeling like I'm just a piece of flesh here going through. By getting to the root of their issues through these group conversations and these healing processes that we do through mentorship, through having guys ask essential questions about themselves and about the people around them, not to exaggerate, but I don't think it. Is it's like it brings. Them life and then from there. We could start really thinking about. So when you got angry or when you did this or when you did that, what was behind that? What made you think that was OK and that's where we started getting to the root of the issues, both with our mentors and our mentees around masculinity and toxic behavior in. Because that stuff is always gonna be there. The way I see it and the way Dario sees and everyone else that works the brothers at it's like it's our prerogative and our mission to create a safe space for our guys. Which means when you go out and you experience a safe space, you create it for others. I do think toxic masculinity is like any other. Form of trauma. It's the. Common response to whiteness, I think in a lot of ways, especially when we think about black men and men of color, culturally, what masculinity looked like in the Caribbean and Africa and South America before European influence was very different. When we look at the way whiteness and white masculinity was shown throughout history and. How our young men have seen it, masculinity and whiteness is teemed with violence. It's about dominance and a lot of white spaces. You see the lack of emotion. Culturally and a lot of the black diaspora, the presence of emotion is part of being masculine. But in the American context, in the European context and the global white context, that's not true. And I do think I've taken that on Dario. It's taking that on many black men and men of color have taken that on.

Dariel Vasquez

I'm gonna just say. So quick though I think across the diaspora, I don't doubt that men were still very oppressive, especially towards women. I think that's just a man thing. Throughout history and throughout the diaspora, him. So I'm just saying I. Don't wanna leave us. Leave us off the hook. As far as that, like the way you phrase the trauma response piece, I never thought about it like that. But those traumas, you know, there's a way in which black men have produced trauma within me as well, not just white men and whiteness. I think that it's because we see power in this vacuum in this one way. It's like the white man. And because we only have this one. Seeing where power and oppression comes from, we are allowed to really complicate it and unpack it. The reality is there's a lot of different ways in which we exercise power unit. As many as we want, we'll navigate spaces, navigate conversations and as bad and as black men. When we enter space and interact with space, we're imposing that power. And we just have to, like unpack what does. That look like, what does that mean?

Durante Barringer

And you're absolutely right. I apologize. This sounded like I was just saying it's just white men because that was not that was not. But I guess like as a black American, I don't know what black masculine, toxic masculine looked like in the African diaspora before enslavement. But for 400 years during enslavement, there was this. Image of masculinity that was passed down, where it was just constant violence and constant oppression and constant communication through manipulate.

Dariel Vasquez

I don't know what it does to a people to see that overtime psychologically. So that point like history aside, is a real cognitive dissonance that happens. Speaking from my own experience, when you really

realize how you are both oppressed and. The not just an aha moment, you start to really question so much parts of yourself and so many things that you've. And how you navigate your spaces like it's more than just like looking at history and sociology and all those things. It's like what happens in your psyche when you come to grips with that, and I would argue, like, you can intellectualize it all you want, but until you start having these conversations with young people and with young men and like, you need to question a large part of every way that you come to. Form your identity and it's just like what? Do you mean? Like that needs to happen in a. Safe space where? We can, you know, dive deeper into it.

Courtney Jones Carney

We were talking about patriarchy and white patriarchy being at the top of the hierarchy. I did think about enslavement, but I also thought about the current context and I thought about what people were able to control. If folks then are able to control their household, if they're able to control their children, their spouse, the patriarchy. Can continue, perhaps as a black man. You're not at the top of the hierarchy, but you're still in there somewhere, right? Because that's how the hierarchy work. If 15 year old Courtney is walking home from school in Philadelphia on a hot day and this guy runs after me and wants to talk to me and I'm like no, I'm cool and he's like, well, why did after you? Make me run. Over here then, I didn't make. You run over here, you. Made yourself run over here. However, that is the toxic masculine and the patriarchy. I can't even. Be in my neighborhood and just walk down the. Without someone telling me that I was supposed to respond to them the way that they wanted me to respond to them, and I don't even know this person. But they believe that they have power over me, perhaps because they are a man, they're male and I'm female, right? And so just thinking about how that continues to play out, whether or not in the grand scheme of things that guy has. Any real power at 1516, he probably did not, but he felt like he had some over me in that particular instance.

Durante Barringer

I think if we took black boys and young men of color and and like knew what Dario was saying is have them think about where is this stuff coming from? If this is what it means to be a black man going back to the past question around black male identity, it's like a lot of black men blame white men. A lot of men of color blame white men. For these systems. But at the same time, if you think about yourself and what you're perpetuating, what you're saying is black masculinity might be something else. It might be something, again, a trauma response.

Dariel Vasquez

For borrowed it's both. Is produced by whiteness and power structure, but also culture plays a role in the way that we've created something within ourselves. Cat calling was annoying like this idea of having games, and if that was something that's been better than you since elementary school middle school, to the point where that's how you navigate when you pull up to the bar or when you see somebody in the in the street, not to make a joke. But there's a way in which you're just an object. Like, yo, you with the hair and the da, da, da. We can't just take that and be like, that's white supremacy. Way in which we. Play the role in creating that.

Durante Barringer

I think we're saying the same thing well, because when I look at our model, the main thing that we're trying to address is like, what does it mean to be a young man of color? But within that is was it mean to

be human? And if we're addressing what does it mean to be human, we have to address the fact that we are oppressed and oppressors. That's one thing always did in my history classes is let kids know that. The history that we're looking at, there's always no press or no press, and men throughout history, whether it's black men, white men, whoever have been the oppressor, right? If we want black men and men of color in the American content to start unpacking and healing, we have to understand the response. As a black man who? Had enslaved grandparents and grandmothers, I'm saying you have to recognize that if you have 400 generations of black men seeing their women. Harmed their wives, harmed their children, taken away from them, and your response has been meekness. Your response has been I can't do it. I can't do anything. And then you get to a point where you can, right. That assimilation happens. You start ticking on these things. Now, that's not saying that our young men of color are Scott free, but what I'm saying is where do we start? Really, having young men of color think about what does it mean to be black? Because what does it mean to be black? Blackness was something that's honestly quite honestly new, right? These identities that we're talking about, that our kids have. Is a new thing. Blackness was created in response to whiteness, especially the Black American concept of blackness. When I think about what does it mean to be black, I'm thinking about and this is. What the double consciousness that DuBois was talking about, like, what is me? What have I taken? What has been imposed upon me by this country that I'm in these social structures that I'm in? And then what have I created? That's a part of myself and we're talking about a psychological trauma that's been passed down for centuries. You have to look at it. Or you have to do all those things, but. Because that's how big it is for all.

Daniel Vasquez

Yeah, I got you. I got you. Can I into the? I'm just saying like all that to say though too. Like without knowing any of that, when I would go visit one of my boys, curbs and his dad was striking his mom. I knew that that was wrong. Without knowing his history, without knowing all that and without having to explain it as any of that, there was something within me that said like this is normalized in our neighborhood. Because you been. Good point. I don't have generations and generations of child of slavery to to point back to. But like yeah, we had sugar cane planted. You know all that kind of stuff, but it's different than the African American experience, right? And that that part of that blackness in the diaspora. You for me, like, even without having to trace it and point to the effects of slavery. This is rampant in my neighborhood, and one way or another, I want to change that. I started doing the parallels like Ohh wait a minute. I feel a certain way when I get stopped there first and my power just took away from me. That's must be what it's like when we do the same thing to other people. Our community, when we sit in a circle. We talk to our boys about this. Stuff at the core of it. Is like. Can you be whom and what does it mean to be human? Can you unpack these things? About your traumas your triggers, it is. All that and we're. Approaching it from a very real raw like. In your neighborhood right now. What's going down? Let's have a space in a place where we can. Openly talk about. It and without calling each other out. But we can't be sensitive, but we. Can't cry about it and we can. Choke that. Yeah, at the heart of.

Courtney Jones Carney

I just wanted to let you know y'all maybe pull out a textbook and I was looking at the racialization process specifically for Latin next immigrants. Rodriguez talks about this process and sites a lot of different scholars and like how step one is to accept and participate in discrimination of people of color. Right. So situating yourself in like the norms that are based off of whiteness and then determining

where you are and then figuring out like, who is putting it in quotes below you in the structure and then? You know racializing them and oppressing them, and I think that goes back to this conversation around like the patriarchy and the oppression that takes place there. Like part of that socialization process might be figuring out like what is my ranking order? Where do I fit in in this? And then who is beneath me? Beneath in quotes, right? Not really beneath. But in this structure. And then if I'm going to then adopt this pros. Says who do I oppress and what does it? Look like and. Like perhaps putting your own stamp on it based off of your social identity. So you recognize that if you're not white, then white sis, male oppression. The way that that gets worked into the patriarchy, that's not gonna work for you. So then you put your spin on it and figure out for my identity how. Does it work?

Speaker 4

We went down pretty deeply, influenced community and blackness, and I'd love to hear now, like, how are y'all putting that into practice? So can y'all walk us through brothers at?

Dariel Vasquez

Brothers are stemmed out of brothers at bar program that I had started when I was an undergrad. Really me and my friends started it cause we hated Bard. Really, it's like the the easiest way to sum it up, like a lot of us came from neighborhoods like mine, and, you know, or, you know, actually just found ourselves coming from our own respective context, regardless of our backgrounds and just being in this predominantly white institution. And having a hard time socially, academically, emotionally, you know, and I can point back to that time right now. And I could say, yeah, like we're dealing with our own forms of depression or anxiety. I had contemplated dropping out at one point. I had to think back to like what had gotten me to borrow in the 1st place and it was having these sort of support networks and spaces where we could come together and open up and support one another. And so that following semester, me and my friends decided to start this group on campus, and unbeknownst to us, what we were creating was this persistence model for collegiate mental color, then ultimately became the pilot. To what we do today and our secret sauce, so to speak, is basically positioning these collegiate men of color not as just objects of a particular kind of work, but training them in how to lead the work and shape it. We recruit, train, and hire them to be mentors and role. Models and local. They step in to become mentors, to live to 12 grade young amount of color. And so we're taking a dual beneficiary approach to the issue of increasing graduation and retention rates for young men in both high school and college. Oftentimes the question we get asked is how do you have 18/19/20 year old standing as mentors that would argue our belief. Our philosophy is. That they're the best equipped to do it because they are the you. I would say we're probably one of the only orgs that takes it a step further by going from censoring your voice to advocating for youth ownership, and that's what does it look like when you actually have young people owning the work and leading it and creating the workshops and thinking through these issues and then sitting down with their younger peers and challenging one another and pushing one another. We have more young men of color on college campus than ever before. But more of them are driving. Out at this. There's a lot of articles and reports out right now about college enrollment being at an all time low. It's like, yeah, we can identify that as a crisis. But what about the folks you already got on your campus? How you taking care of that? Why are you not taking care of? Are you interested in increasing diversity and recruitment? But what happens? Their lives only matter up until they get on campus. And then once they start failing, so we should get about. We don't have the support that we're not investing. That's at the crux of our work and our advocacy. We're not just about trying to implement these programs. At

these institutions. We're creating this consortium to bring these institutions and to create a community of practice and have them challenge themselves and think about what does it look like if we actually redesign our practices to better support not just young men of color, but make it an inclusive. Thanks for all.

Courtney Jones Carney

I just talked about that very same thing this morning. I was looking at campus climate for diversity data and how our black students are statistically and significantly experiencing the institution in ways that are different from students of all other races. Ultimately, people could decide like what's going on with these black students. They need to get it together. Teach them how to cope. Teach them how to thrive in this environment and it's like no change the environment. Acknowledge that there is this historical legacy of exclusion and the curriculum generally doesn't connect with our students. Maybe black students aren't seeing themselves properly represented in faculty. The only time they see themselves in faculty might be when it's an adjunct faculty member, and adjuncts are important. I'm adjunct, rosemary's adjunct. We're important, but. Also, we need to be tenure and tenure track faculty. We need to be able to put the mentorship into part of the work that we. We do that needs to be part of the design and so we have to totally rethink these institutions because they weren't designed for particular students. And in this case, we're talking about black students. It's not designed for them. How do you change that institution and not focus so much on? Like, how do we change the student? We can still make sure we're giving students what they. Need to be successful, but ultimately the culture has to shift at the institutions.

Speaker 4

Or need just drop the mic.

Speaker

Ohh you yeah work.

Rosemary Ferreira

The tape.

Speaker 6

Boa is a production of the intercultural center. And the division of. Student affairs at the University of Maryland, Baltimore. It's hosted and produced by Courtney Jones, Carney and Rosemary Ferrette. This episode was also written by Rosemary and Me. Angela Jackson, senior marketing specialist in the Division of Student Affairs and executive producer and editor. Of this podcast. A big thank you to our guests, Dario Vasquez and Durante Barringer for joining us at the table. For more information about the intercultural center, including events where students can learn more about race, ethnicity, culture norms and current events, visit [youmaryland.edu/ILE](http://youmaryland.edu/ILE). We'll see you soon.