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Research Title:

Black students' networks with peers and staff at Texas higher education institutions:
Understanding social connections in the Post-Fisher era

Abstract of Proposed Plan of Research:

Educational attainment at the postsecondary level holds considerable weight in determining the future work and social success of students. A higher degree generally equates with higher earnings. Black students enrolled at postsecondary institutions are more likely to face a lack of social support and discomfort with the social climate of their institution. Colleges and universities can serve as brick walls (Ahmed, 2012) that can serve as psychological and academic hostile environments that impede Black students from learning and graduating. In my proposed research project, I plan on investigating Black student networks at two universities to understand how they facilitate college completion, workforce readiness, and a positive college experience. The findings from this project have implications for postsecondary institutions as it relates to policies and practices that can be implemented to improve the overall campus climate, and how foundations can invest in student organizations, university offices, and programming that support improving the environment (social and academic) for students of color.