WE ARE MLK

The Martin Luther King Academic Retention Program, is a family for students coming to Shippensburg University. Students are able to connect with other students from a variety of different backgrounds, meet professors from different areas of study, and learn culture and techniques that better rounds them as students and people. Working an MLK F.R.I.E.N.D. Mentor and the Assistant Coordinator, I have been able to touch every aspect of the MLK Program to understand its true meaning and purpose. I dedicated three years of volunteering to ensure first year, first generation minority students attending Shippensburg University have an environment to feel included and to grow during their four years at Shippensburg University.”

~ PRICHELE PRESSLEY

MLK F.R.I.E.N.D. Mentor
Assistant MLK Academic Retention Program Coordinator

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Martin Luther King (MLK) Academic Retention Program is to create an academically rooted learning community for regularly admitted students. This program targets students of color, students who are the first in their family to attend college, and students who have an economic need. All students with a commitment to diversity are encouraged to participate. It is the goal of this community to improve the quality of participants’ academic experience. The academic viability of its members will be of prime importance to all, and all members will work collaboratively to ensure personal and collective academic success. In addition, the community values the importance of its members’ social interactions. The community will encourage positive social interactions within its membership and with the entire campus community. The community will support and refer students to other offices and programs that provide positive social involvement.

LEARN MORE AT WWW.SHIP.EDU/MLK
MLK 101: NON-CREDIT SEMINAR
MLK 101 is a non-credit course offered once a week for students with a sincere desire to explore who they are and their academic options as well as to develop the skills necessary to be successful college students. Seminar content includes study skills, time management, personal values, and interests’ exploration. The seminar is designed to assist students in choosing a major, setting goals, and using general education coursework as a guide for exploring potential majors and careers. Activities include mini-lectures, class discussion, guest speakers, assessment activities, and individual research.

ACADEMIC MONITORING
One of the most important elements of the MLK Academic Retention Program is the academic monitoring. The coordinator monitors your academic progress and attendance, and if you are doing well—or not-so-well—you will get a call. The coordinator can access your midterm grades. In the middle of each semester of your first year, your professors may submit an early warning grade if you are earning a D or F. The grade doesn’t count, but it lets the coordinator know that you are experiencing difficulty so that she can help.

MLK WINTER RETREAT
The MLK Program Winter Retreat is a great opportunity to reconnect with other MLK students after winter break. The retreat provides the mentors and MLK students the chance to forge stronger bonds. Everyone—the MLK students, the FRIEND mentors, and the coordinator—agrees that this overnight retreat is a remarkable experience, creating lifetime memories!

EXTENDED ORIENTATION PROGRAM
The MLK Academic Retention Program offers many programs and activities throughout the year. It all begins with the Extended Orientation Program. The Extended Orientation Program is the most important part of the program. Before other students arrive for Fall Welcome Week, new MLK Program students come to Shippensburg for an extended orientation, which provides many opportunities that allow MLK students to get a step ahead of everyone else. First, since MLK students are among the first students to move in, they get to choose which bed they want in their room in the residence hall. Besides the room perks, the information given to MLK students during the Extended Orientation Program is invaluable. We provide workshops such as “What Does It Take to Make It at Ship?”, “Cross-Cultural Communication,” and “Classroom Etiquette.” These workshops provide insights into what it takes to be successful and what professors are expecting from first-year students. At the end of the Early Orientation Program, we sit down, watch a movie, and have a discussion over some good home-cooked food. There is absolutely no cost for the Extended Orientation Program.

MENTORS
As a member of the MLK program, you will have a dedicated peer mentor, a FRIEND (Furthing Relationships In Every New Direction). Your FRIEND will be an upper-class student who will work with you throughout your entire first year here at Shippensburg. You will meet your FRIEND at the Extended Orientation Program, and they will “show you the ropes” from a student’s point of view. You can contact your FRIEND for any reason. If you need help on a test, or if you are having a problem with the girl or guy you met last week, or if you just need someone to talk to, your FRIEND will be there to listen and provide assistance.

* Mentors hold weekly office hours that are scheduled around mentees’ availability.

WHY SHOULD YOU JOIN?
“The MLK Retention Program helps incoming freshmen take that first step into college. We are a big family. We come from different backgrounds but that’s the unique thing about this program. We get to learn something new from every single person. The people you meet in this program will help you with anything that you are facing physically, mentally, academically, etc. Again, we’re a family!”
~ SHAKIR ALEXANDER
Noah (mentor)

WHAT THE PROGRAM MEANS TO ME...
“The MLK Program made SHIP feel like home for me. The mentors were a big help in my transition to college.”
~ KARINA PADILLA
MLK Mentee

“The Martin Luther King Jr. Academic Retention program was very influential in my academic success. Without the MLK program, I would have never been about to properly survive my freshmen semester.”
~ JARRED JALLAH
MLK Mentor