First name:

██████

Last name:

██

Email address:

████████

Phone number:

██ ███

What is your affiliation with UW-Madison? For group submissions, please respond for main contact.

- Student (including undergraduate, graduate, professional)

Describe the concept. If already in use here or elsewhere, please indicate this.

I would like develop a peer mentoring program to support underrepresented minority students in a more on-going and sustainable fashion. As in freshman/sophomore undergraduate students can be matched with junior/senior undergraduate students/graduate students/alumni based on their academic interests/culture backgrounds/countries of origin etc. Graduate students can be peered up with each other by similar mechanism as well. So that students can share their stories in a more comfortable atmosphere and support, encourage each other when things go wrong. Also undergrad students may be able to have early research/professional exposure and gain confidence in themselves through learning with a role model. At the same time, grad students can have teaching and mentoring experience that will prepare them for their future career.

How would this affect cultural change on campus?

Having a trusted role model is a fortune that many students are not able to have, particularly for those who are underrepresented in their programs/dorms/classes. I believe it is very important to think about power dynamics when it comes to vulnerable students. They tend to experience more barriers comparing with mainstream students. Higher than average levels of barriers and adverse events can make them acquire learned hopelessness and lower the standards for themselves. Thus, voicing out injustice to authoritative figures might be too far out for them. Instead, talking with trusted peers can be a lot easier and less intimating. ████████████████████████ ████████████████████████████████ Same thing happened to another friend of mine, who was also ██████████████████████ and again sadly, too scared to voice out. However, we did supported each other and just knowing that we were not alone was very reassuring. Luckily, I had a great peer role model who taught me how to get back on my feet and helped me successfully finished my program. My point is that having professional services is important, however an on-going support and mentoring from a peer role model is equally necessary and may be more effective and beneficial.

What resources would be needed to implement your suggestion?

Infrastructure for identifying the students, and mentors, pairing and communicating to them, events as needed. Staff support for these efforts.