



C.A.S.H. Program Frequently Asked Questions

1. What does C.A.S.H. stand for?

C.A.S.H. stands for College Awareness Symbolizes Hope. This is the original name of the program when it was started in New York City in 1993. The national organization of the National Black MBA Association refers to this program as L.O.T. (Leaders of Tomorrow).

2. When is the program scheduled for?

The C.A.S.H. Program typically is scheduled on select Friday evenings from January through June. The 2015 Program will run from January 8, 2016 through June 10, 2016.

3. Does the program meet every week?

No, the program only meets on set Fridays from 6pm to 8pm. Please refer to the Program Schedule for the exact dates of the sessions. The program's sessions do tend to coincide with the New York City school schedule, therefore sessions typically are not held during non-school dates or school breaks.

4. Is this a one-to-one mentoring program?

No, the C.A.S.H. Program is a "team-based" mentoring program. That means students are assigned to a team of peers from different schools throughout the city and each team gets three to five mentors. The mentors spend the session discussing that week's topic with their team and using their experience to get the groups to learn to work as a "team". Mentors guide the same team of students for the entire program year schedule.

5. What are the topics discussed in the sessions?

The topics range from college preparation topics such as choosing the right college, paying for college and writing college essays to career and general life skills topics such as etiquette, using Microsoft Office, negotiation skills, technology and social media, financial literacy and business plan competition.

6. How much does the program cost?

The C.A.S.H. Program has ALWAYS been a **"FREE"** program for any student that wants to join. There is never a situation where students must pay money in the program. That being said, as the teams prepare for their case competition, they might together as a team, have to spend money on props, materials, etc. to prepare their case competition presentation. But this is solely up to the team.

7. Who are the mentors? Are they affiliated with the New York Public School system?

The mentors are generally not affiliated with the New York school system in any capacity. The mentors are members of the Metro New York Chapter of the NMBAA and its corporate and community partners. Mentors are also either business people in the tri-state area or other individuals who give 100% of their time free-of-charge to try to positively influence the lives of the youth in our community.

8. Are parents welcome to attend any of the sessions?

Parents are ALWAYS welcome to attend the sessions. For 2016, it will be mandatory that parents come to between 1 or 2 sessions for the student to graduate. This would be ANY session of the parent's choosing but we especially welcome the parents to attend the first session "Introduction and Choosing the Right College" or the "Financial Literacy" session or any of our other session. But parents are absolutely welcome to any and as many sessions they want to attend. We will try to run concurrent sessions for parents to engage as a group in what their children are learning.

9. What grade level is the program open to?

The C.A.S.H. Program is intended for high school students from the 9th through the 12th grade. No 8th graders or children who have left school will be allowed to join the program. All students who attend the program are expected to start AND finish the entire program.

10. Is there a grade point average minimum to join the program?

No, there is NO G.P.A. minimum to join the C.A.S.H. Program. Our students typically come to us as A, B, or C students but we don't ask for the report cards nor do we consider it necessary for the program. The purpose of this program is to inform and education the youth in our community about the importance of finishing high school as well as college and starting their adult lives with financial security and other tools to help them be successful.

11. Is the C.A.S.H. Program "only" for African-American students?

The C.A.S.H. Program, like the Metro New York Chapter of the National Black MBA Association has as its central mission a goal of serving the African-American community. In addition, the program has historically had students from many ethnic and racial backgrounds join our program and become some of our best students. We welcome everyone and a student will NEVER be turned away due to his or her ethnic, racial, religious, sexual orientation, socio-economic condition or other demographic reason.

12. How do students get to attend the college tour?

There are multiple ways to attend the HBCU College Tour. Each year, the C.A.S.H. Program awards the college tour to the top students on each team of students. These are the students who have put in the hard work and achieved a level of success that their respective mentors deem them as eligible for the tour. The Metro New York Chapter sponsors this tour for any students the C.A.S.H. Program sends. Currently the cost of this trip is \$675 per student. However, if students do not "win" the tour, they may still possibly attend the tour if they or their parents pay the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity separately for the trip. Also, there are times when alternate students from the program are selected in case the winners cannot attend the tour.

13. Are there any additional costs for the college tour?

The Alphas will provide all of the information about costs related to the college tour near the end of the program year in June. In the past, students are typically asked to pay for their meal plan, typically \$135 along with bringing some spending money with them on the tour, but again the Alphas will inform all parents and students the additional financial requirements.

14. Does the National Black MBA Association sponsor the college tour?

No, the Metro New York Chapter of the NBMBA partners with the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity to send our top students on the tour. The tour is 100% completely organized by the Alphas. All questions beyond the C.A.S.H. Program's involvement with the tour should be directed to the Alphas.

15. When does the college tour take place?

The HBCU College Tour typically takes place in October every year. The Alphas have been organizing this tour for over 30 years. They have taken thousands of children to visit the many Historically Black Colleges and Universities, usually rotating the schools that they visit each year. The Alphas rent charter luxury buses and take advance scouts, chaperones, nurses, tutors and mentors on the tour to ensure a safe and successful trip for the students.

16. How long is the college tour?

The HBCU tour is usually 7-9 days. Students will have to miss a week of school to attend this tour. This is why the Alphas get the parents involved from day one and ask that the parents communicate the schedule to their child's school. Students are asked to bring as much of their homework as they can on the trip as there is dedicated study time allotted.

17. Are all students eligible to go on the college tour?

The only students who typically are not eligible are seniors. This is because these students should technically already be in the process of knowing which college they are going to attend and already scheduled to attend that college or university in the coming fall. On rare circumstances, a senior may be awarded the college tour. Also, favor is given by the mentors to students who are in the 10th and 11th grade as this is what we have considered as the sweet spot of students doing research and preparing for college. 9th graders and others are rarely awarded the tour as they are deemed to be too young and often don't have the same maturity level to get the most out of the tour.

18. Are there any statistics about the success of the C.A.S.H. Program?

We do not have any "official" statistics about our past students at this time. With that said we have recently begun to track former graduates of the program. We can say that through our 23 years of the program, we have influenced hundreds of metro New York kids on the importance of college. Many of them have gone on to college to get their degrees and often come back years later to speak to current C.A.S.H. students or even become mentors themselves.

19. What are some of the awards given to students?

Each year the level of student awards is based on the Chapter's corporate and community fundraising efforts. In addition, awards depend on the size of the program. If there are 100 students versus 60 students, this makes a difference on how many students receive awards. But given the recent history some of the awards that have been given out include, the \$675 scholarship for the HBCU College Tour, laptop computers for top seniors, video game systems, gift certificates, corporate goodie bags, books and subscriptions to magazines, as well as certificates of completion for all students completing the program.

20. Are the awards guaranteed?

There are no guarantees on awards for the C.A.S.H. Program. Each year award levels are based on budget, size of the program along with corporate and private donations. Awards also depend on the level of work and accomplishments put in by each individual student as well as the team. Awards are solely based on the discretion of the mentors and the Program Director. In other words, they are all merit based.

21. How many years can a student attend the program?

We have had students that have been in the program for all 4 years of high school. The average student is part of the program from their sophomore year through their senior year. Some students might even skip a year and then come back to the program, we have had this happen and notice that they are more mature and better prepared because they have had such a great experience in the past and just want to come back for more.

22. Will students be placed on teams with their friends from school?

Whereas we welcome students to have their friends come out to join the program with them, the purpose of the team-based approach is to have the students work with other students from all across the city. This is what life is about—working with people whom you don't even know and coming up with spectacular performances. This does not mean that students will not be on the same team as their friends, but historically speaking the students who don't know each other at the beginning, make for the best teams by the end of the program.

23. What is the business plan competition about as there seem to be a lot of sessions about this?

The business plan writing competition is new this year. It is where the students—not the mentors get to put everything together that they have spent six months learning. It is the culmination of all of the sessions that have come before it and it is a showcase for showing who has become the best team and for which students stand out as team and program leaders. Students will write a business plan based on a product or service idea they have and have the opportunity to present to a panel of venture capitalists. The overall point of this is for our young men and women to understand they have options for creating their own businesses and present an MBA-level type of presentation and analysis. Students who have completed these type of competitions have said they were so much more prepared to work in team settings once they got to college and/or the workforce.

24. Is there a dress code for the sessions?

There is no specific dress code required for students to attend the program. We just ask that students do NOT wear sagging pants since we do meet in a corporate and professional setting. Also, no hats or ball caps will be allowed to be worn in the rooms. Students may choose to dress in 'costume' when they give their case competition presentations at the end of the program year. This will depend on the style, format and structure that the student team decides to present in. However, for graduation and special sessions, students will be asked to dress in business attire, if possible.

25. Can a student only attend 'some' of the sessions or do half of the program?

We do realize that people hear about the program after it starts despite our marketing efforts going out before the start of the program. We will be signing up students through the end of the third or fourth session (see schedule). Beyond that will require special consideration from the Program Director. In addition, if students cannot make a session they are advised to contact their team mentors directly to inform them ahead of time. Students are cautioned to try and not miss sessions if at all possible. If a student who starts the program does not think they can commit to the entire six month program, they will be told at the very beginning to consider joining another year if they are still in high school. Students are expected to start AND finish the entire program. If they cannot do this, they should not attend and let another student have their spot. This year's program will be highly competitive and we are significantly reducing attrition so we ask students and their parents to pay close attention to the schedule and be ready to commit to the entirety of it. Often times, students who make the effort to come to all of the sessions and put in all of the work usually end up being the ones who get rewarded at the end of the program.