Actually, That Does Compute:
Steps to Success in Graduate School
Presented by Jeff Harlig
IU School of Social Work

What Do We Know?
- Persistence for black students can be tough at a PWI (predominantly white institution)
- Funding is critical
- Learning the system is critical
- Mentoring is critical

Keys to Retention — External
- Mentoring by supportive professors and staff
- Support from black peers
- Respect from professors
- Continued funding
  (Johnson-Bailey, 2004)

Keys to Retention — Personal
- Leadership opportunities
- Community service
- Mentoring others
Leadership, support & social networks at Indiana University

Greek-letter Organizations

- Alpha Phi Alpha
- Delta Sigma Theta
- Kappa Alpha Psi
- Iota Phi Theta
- Omega Psi Phi
- Phi Beta Sigma
- Sigma Gamma Rho
- Zeta Phi Beta

Field-specific Organizations

- Black MBA Association
- Black Law Student Association
- MESA - Multicultural Education Student Association
Other Black Organizations

- Black Scholars Collective
- Black Graduate Student Association
- Blacks Like Us (GLBT)
- Brother to Brother (IUPUI, K-12 mentoring)
- African Students Association (grad and undergrad, U.S. citizens and other nations)

Biculturalism

“The greater the degree of biculturalism exhibited, the greater the [level of] adjustment of minority students to the culture of a predominantly White college or university.”

(Braxton, 2003)

AGEP

- Through University Graduate School

Be Bicultural!

- You have two wardrobes:
  - Take what’s beneficial from the dominant culture and “wear” it when the occasion calls for it.
  - With the folks who knew you back in the day, wear your comfortable clothes
- Underneath, you are still who you’ve always been
Here’s a well-kept secret...

White People *Can* Help You!
(Though they might be a little annoying while they’re doing it….)

A Challenge

- Identify and use your support network
- Continue to develop your consciousness as an African American
- And then ….
- Just be YOU for a little while every day