

## Problem

The Millennial Generation is taking longer to mature and transition into full adulthood. Several factors in contemporary society have left young people in an “extended adolescence” or “emerging adulthood” without many resources to navigate this period in life.

Recent graduates face a road to adulthood fraught with challenges:

- ▶ Low graduation rates (only 57% graduate who began 4-year bachelor’s programs)
- ▶ Little Emphasis on Personal and Professional Improvement
- ▶ Too Many Choices and Information Overload
- ▶ Lack of Guidance
- ▶ High Student Debt and Sluggish Job Market

These factors, when coupled with high expectations of landing an ideal job, leave recent graduates unprepared for the transition from classroom to career.

## Solution

*Prepare a Future* is a developmental life-course program specifically designed to address the psycho-social identity development stage in young adults.

*Prepare a Future* is structured to help students determine what their most fulfilling and productive societal contributions are likely to be through:

- ▶ Cultivating identity formation through self-discovery and personal maturation
- ▶ Integrating personal and character growth with professional development
- ▶ Empowering students to make conscious decisions consistent with their values

Young adults who have formed a coherent, mature identity are: more focused, less distracted, make better decisions, are more committed to those decisions, and exhibit better time and resource management.

## Program

The proposed pilot program would consist of 12 students engaged in a two-year cohort experience. The program consists of both group interaction and classroom time, combined with one-on-one mentoring.

*Prepare a Future* is divided into three phases: 1) Discovery, 2) Integration, and 3) Implementation.

By participating in this program, students will:

- ▶ Learn about themselves and their natural identity based on individual gifts/strengths, personal values, and unique vision.
- ▶ Become more productive and ultimately improve job performance
- ▶ Be more career-ready with more realistic expectations of life post college
- ▶ Become well-rounded individuals that participate and become leaders in the community at large

Since no one to my knowledge has built a program that addresses this human developmental transition, I am proposing a pilot program in order to test these strategies to see if they achieve the desired aim in identity formation in modern young adult development. I also propose testing the long term results and track students longitudinally over time to record their progress. I propose this groundbreaking work be integrated as part of a PhD study and dissertation to add to the body of knowledge in developmental and social psychology.

## Specific results from VCU



### Alumnus

“There is a vastly important link missing between the academic world and post academic world. Too many students quickly approach graduation with absolutely no vision in place for what they want their future to be. This is where I think Drew’s Prepare a

Future process can provide necessary insight and guidance to give students a better chance of success upon graduation” –Thomas Cary, VCU School of Business, 2008, Associate Financial Representative, Northwestern Mutual Financial Network

### Undergraduate

“Drew has helped me in having a clear direction in what I want to do in life. The most important things Drew helped

me with were evaluating my schedule and helping me prioritize, staying focused, time management and decision-making. His program would help most youth and young adults in becoming better leaders and knowing the right path to go in life.” –Peter Olatuyi, VCU Accounting Major, Class of 2013



### Undergraduate

“I was in a place of indecision and insecurity. The major I had chosen was based off vague ideas of what I was passionate about, but it didn’t take into account what I was gifted at or what kind of person I was. I was confused and disheartened about my future. But when I started *Prepare a Future*, the first thing I learned was to *combine* my passions and my talent into something that the world needed. With Drew’s guidance, I learned how to evaluate my strengths and weaknesses, and how to utilize them with my interests to find the right path for me. Through his program, I realized I work best in a team environment, and I thrive being around and helping others. Now, at the end of *Prepare a Future*, I have chosen a major, Public Relations; and two minors, Psychology and Business. For the first time since I

started college, I feel confidence not only in my decisions about what to study, but also in my abilities and in what I have to offer the world. Drew’s intensives have been such a valuable part of my life this past year. So many people out there are unsatisfied with their career and as a result, with their identity, and I wish every one of them had the opportunity to participate in Prepare a Future.” –Sara Clark, VCU Public Relations, Class of 2015

### Alumnus

“Drew’s process helped me identify my strengths and weaknesses earlier in life that have given me more confidence in my decision as I progress through my career and personal endeavors. The guidance and direction he provided me in 2007 was foundation and still applicable to my everyday life today. He helped me figure out what was important and who I was.” –Shawn Jackson, VCU School of Business, 2008, IT Project Manager, Wal-Mart Corporate



### MBA Alumnus

“Drew’s process has been extremely helpful both personally and professionally in preparing for my future. I have changed my view of the world and I have successfully navigated through tough decisions across various topics. Having completed the VCU MBA program, I sincerely believe that Drew’s content would enhance not only the business school, but could be an asset to the entire university.” – Jay Carpenter, VCU MBA, 2009, VP Organizational Development at Advancement Concepts, LLC

### VCU Parent

“I believe Drew’s services can fill a real need in the educational experience of college. I believe a large majority of students are like my two—without a real clue as to how to go about figuring out where they should head in life and how they should get there. The university should offer such a cutting edge service. I can even see it being used as a recruiting tool—as much for the parents as for students. To be offered access to this type of service under the auspices of the university would lend a huge amount of credibility to their decision. I certainly hope the university will see it that way.” – Ingrid Aller, mother of two current VCU students