Purpose:

This Action Guide will help you identify and explore the influence of family, culture, and personal identity on your major and career planning.

Description:

Your experience of family, culture, and identity can all play influential roles in shaping academic and career choices. Keep in mind that “culture” can encompass a broad range of categories that define how individuals identify themselves in relation to their society – these categories can include ability, age, ethnicity, gender, gender expression, language, race, religion or spirituality, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or class, and other dimensions. As for the term “family”, when completing this Action Guide, you might include influential friends, role models, mentors, coaches, extended family members, etc. Anyone whose education and/or career path influenced you in a significant way may be important.

Directions:

Career Genogram Exercise

1) Read Introduction (below)

2) Construct your own career genogram. Make sure to include influential friends, role models, mentors, coaches, extended family members, etc. Anyone whose education and/or career path influenced you in a significant way may be important.

3) After completing your genogram, identify similar occupations (teaching, medical, business, etc.), education (technical college, 4-year degree, high school degree, etc.), and type of work (for profit, non-profit, government, etc.)

4) Complete Reflection Prompts (below example genogram)

Introduction

A genogram is a diagram of a family tree. So, a career genogram is a family tree that shows the career positions of family members. For our purposes, you might also include influential friends, mentors, coaches, extended family members, etc.

Here is a sample career genogram. Note “circles” are females and “squares” are males.
Reflection Prompts:

1) Referring to your genogram, describe the overall influence of your family, friends, role models, etc. on your career and academic choices. How important are these influences?

2) Has there been a significant experience that has influenced your decision to pursue a certain career path or major? If so, describe that circumstance or event (example: a brother or sister with a disability, sibling/parent in college, etc.)

3) How would you describe or define your personal identity or culture?

4) How has your identity influenced (either positively or negatively) your ideas of major or career path?