

**IOWA**

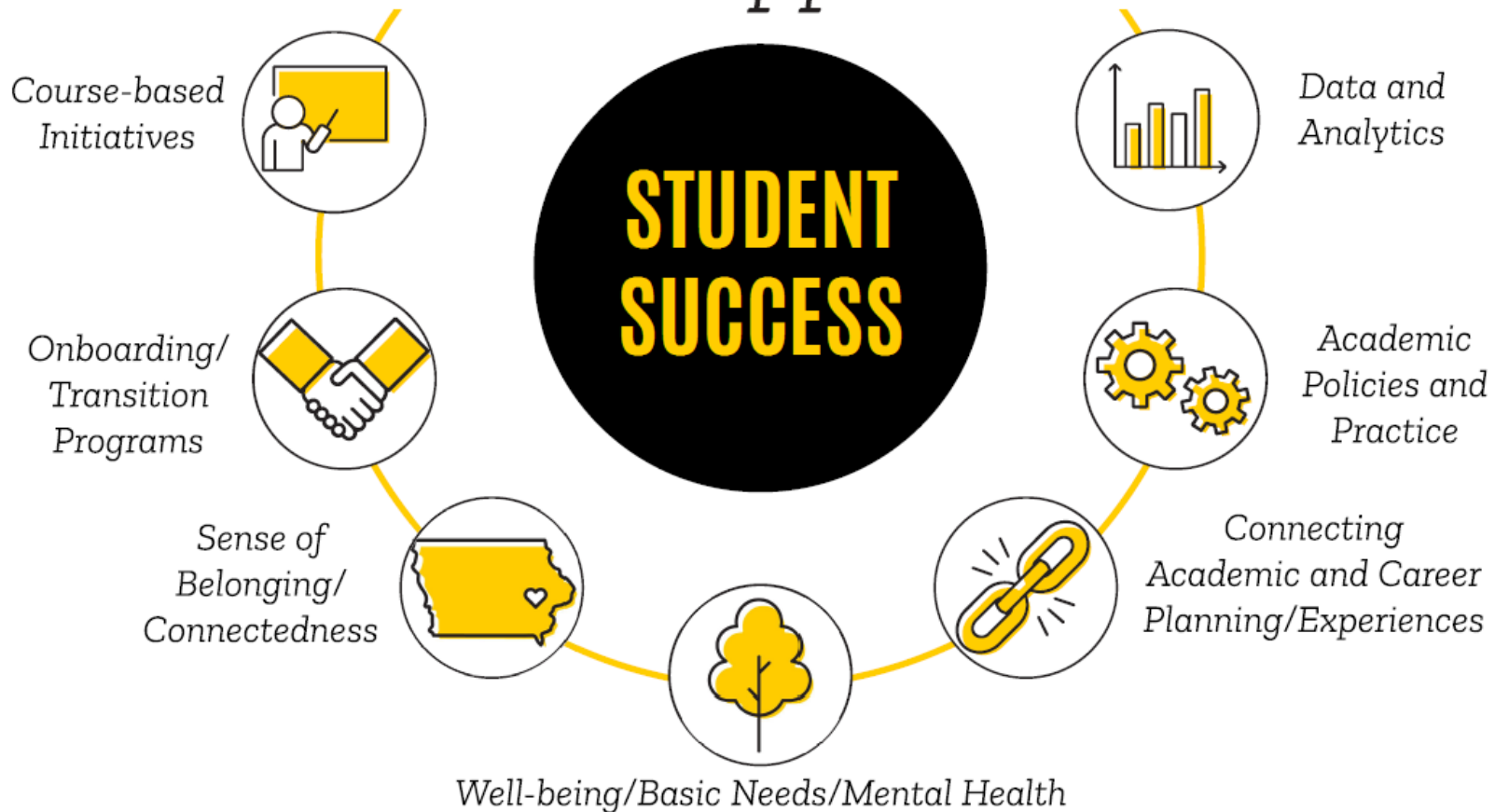
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**IOWA**  
**GROW**  
Guided Reflection on Work

**Sarah Hansen, Vice-President for Student Life**

# INSTITUTIONAL-LEVEL EFFORTS

*to support*



# What Matters for Undergraduate Retention

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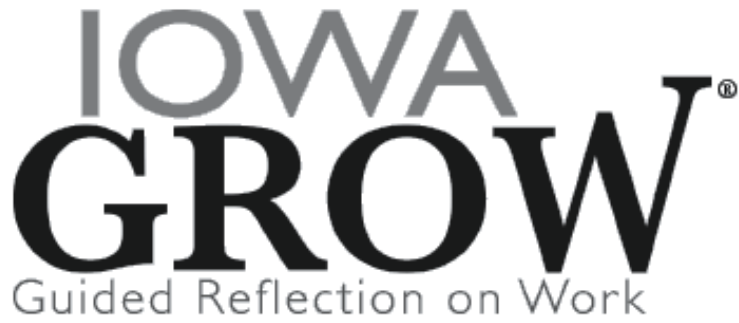
- **Learning:** Make learning central
- **Relationships:** Don't leave relationships to chance
- **Expectations:** Clear and high expectations
- **Alignment:** Transform silos into systems
- **Improvement:** Assess and improve process and outcomes
- **Leadership:** Nurture a culture of purpose across the organization

# Make Learning Central

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“One dimension of **making learning central** to campuses that deserves much greater attention is **helping students integrate their various learning experiences**. Excellent undergraduate education prompts students to make connections between **classroom and out-of-classroom** learning, between **college and career**, and between **academic disciplines and personal purpose**.”

Felten, Gardner, Schroeder, Lambert, Barefoot, 2016



# What is Iowa GROW? Guided Reflection on Work

- Iowa GROW® uses brief, structured conversations between student employees and their supervisors to help make the learning that is occurring through student employment more “visible” to the students.
- The conversations focus on 4 key questions about what students are learning and how they are applying their learning.
  - How is this job fitting in with your academics?
  - What are you learning here that’s helping you in school?
  - What are you learning in class that you can apply here at work?
  - Can you give me a couple of examples of things you’ve learned here that you think you will use in your chosen profession?

# Why does Iowa GROW matter?

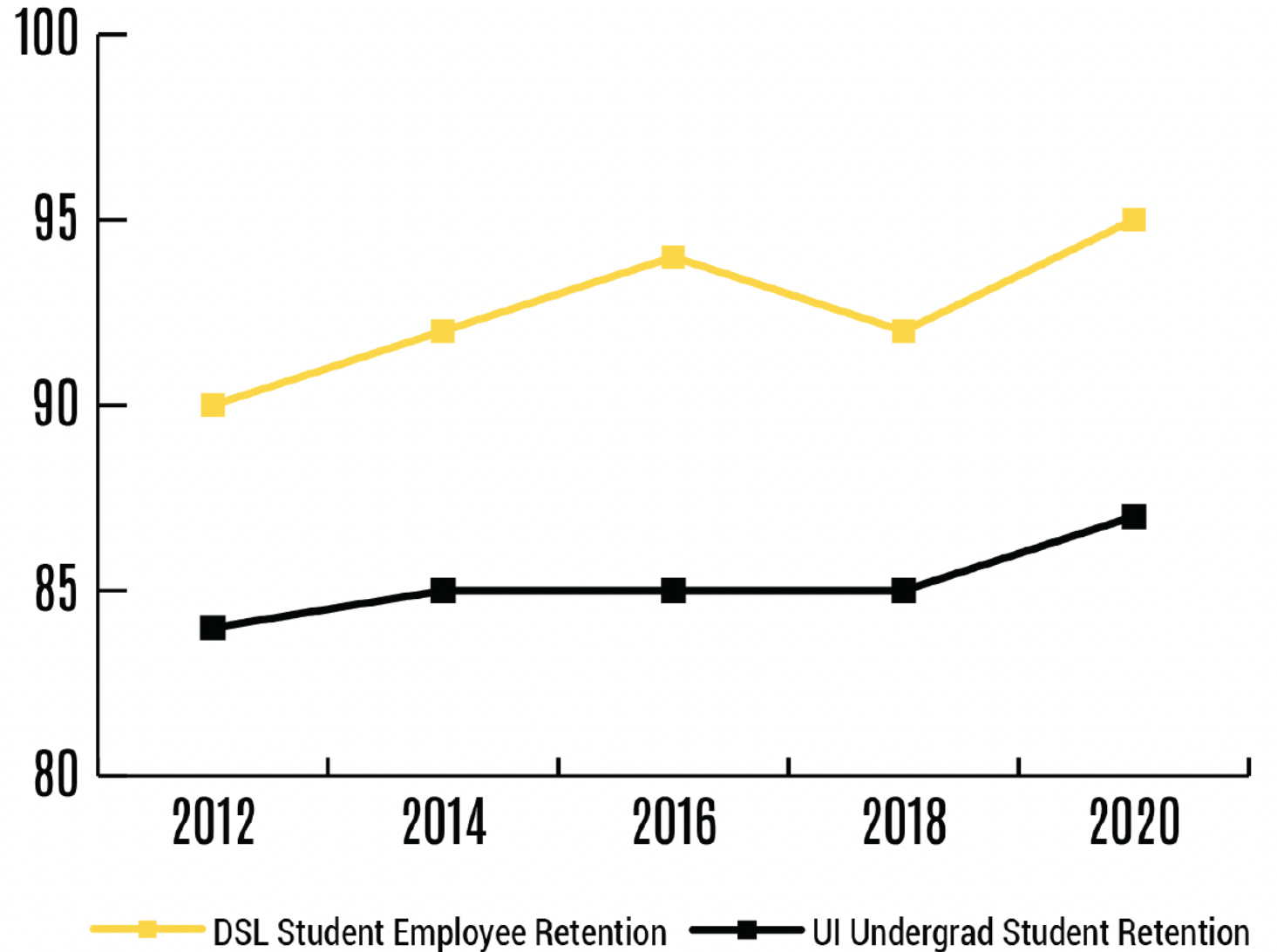
- Iowa GROW® (Guided Reflection on Work) makes student employment a "high-impact activity," one that requires students to reflect on their learning and connect their learning within and beyond the classroom.
- GROW® participants are retained at **7-15 points higher** than non-GROW® participants
- Jump start to belonging
- On-campus internships

*"My job provided me with a sense of belonging. It gave me a place where I was needed, a place where I was accepted, and a place I was expected to be."*

*-DSL Student Employee*

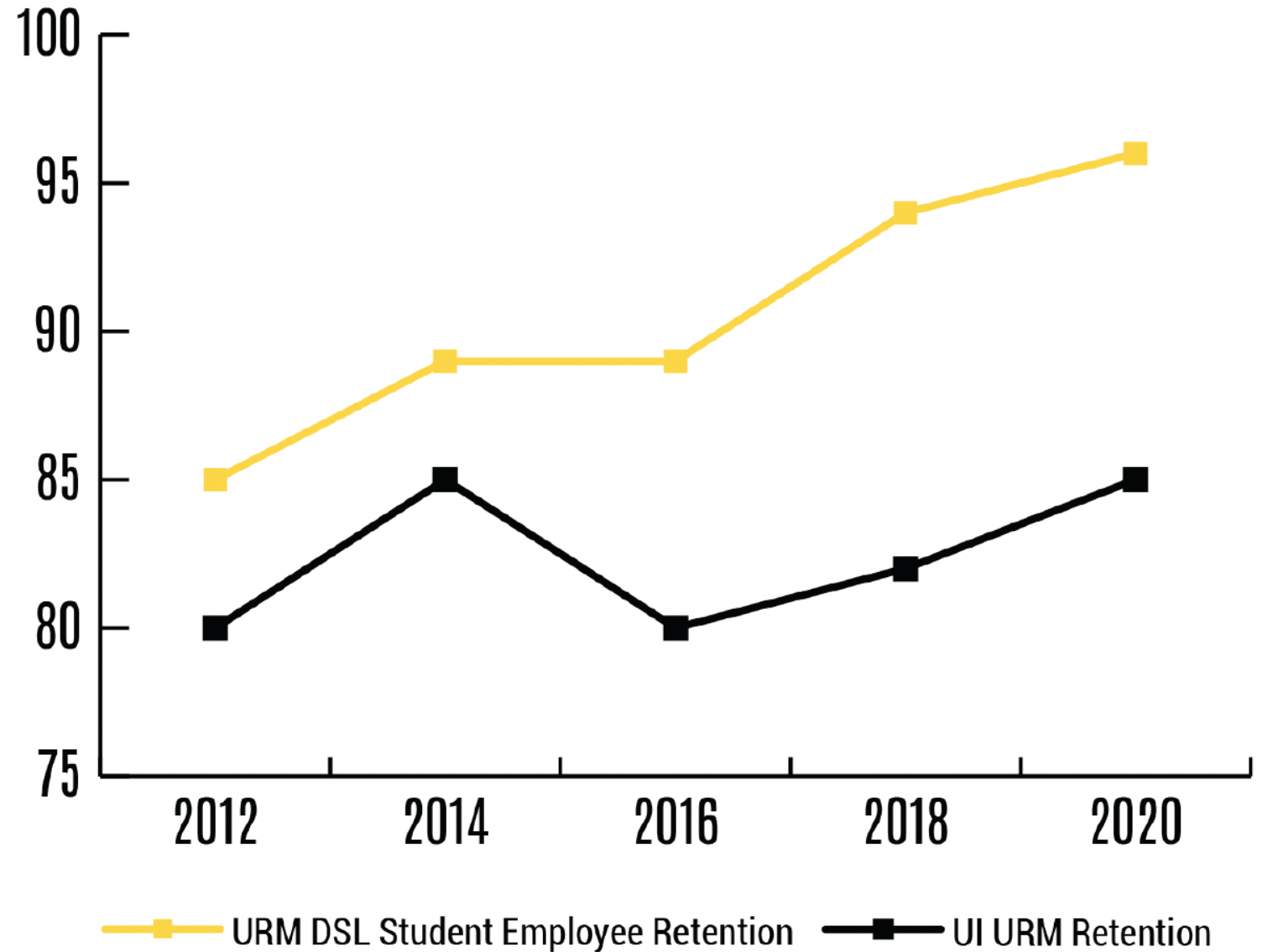
Why does Iowa GROW matter?

## CAMPUS JOBS ARE A RETENTION TOOL



# CAMPUS JOBS ARE AN EQUITY TOOL

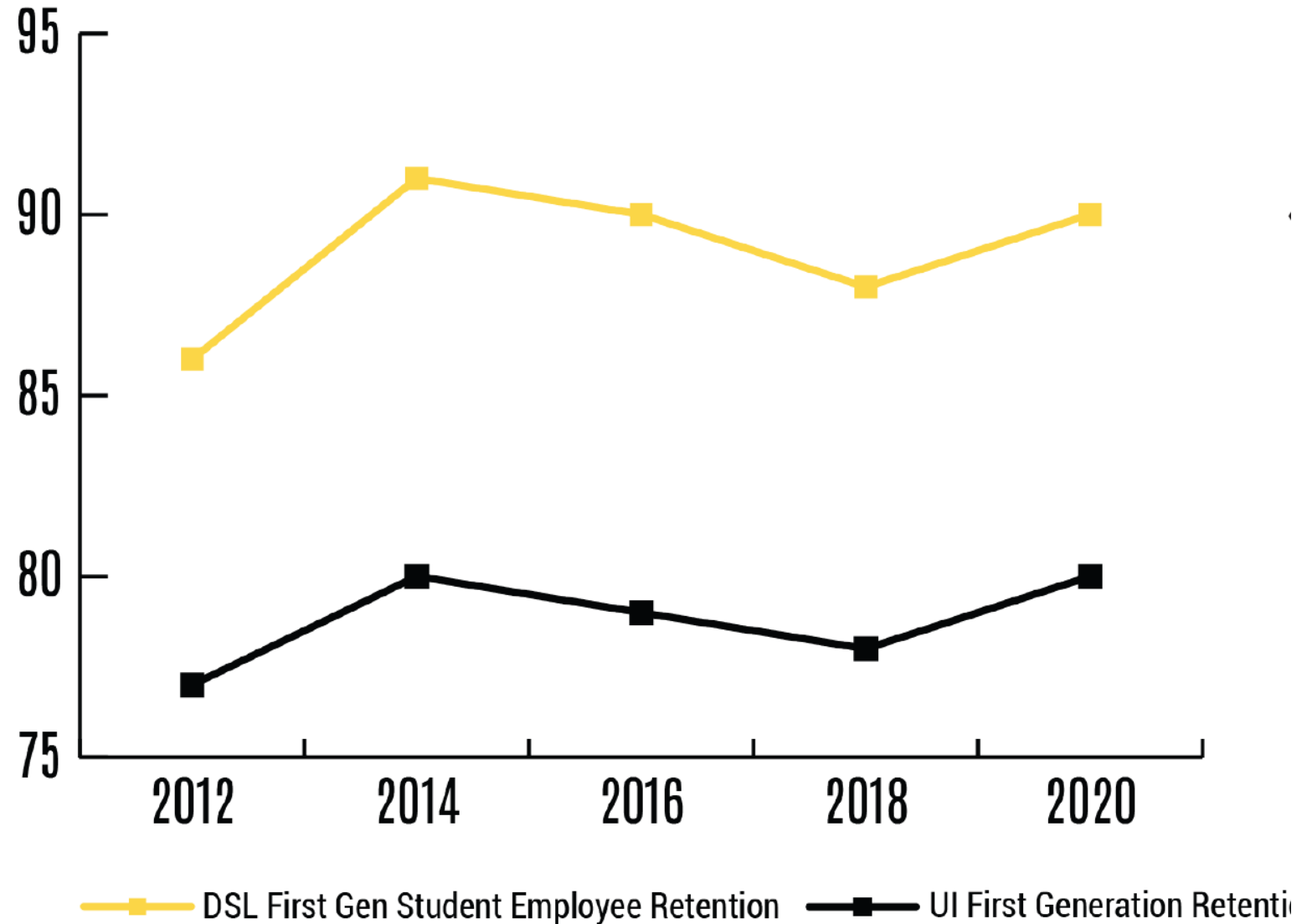
Why does Iowa GROW matter?





## CAMPUS JOBS ARE A MOBILITY TOOL

Why does Iowa GROW matter?



Iowa GROW® participants **were significantly more likely (p<.01) to agree/strongly agree** that their job was helping them attain the following 10 outcomes of student employment, and to be able to **articulate specific examples**:

- 1** My supervisor helps me make **connections between my work and my life as a student**.
- 2** My job has helped prepare me for the world of **full-time employment**.
- 3** I can **see connections** between my job and major/coursework.
- 4** My job has helped me learn about **career options**.
- 5** My job has helped me improve my **writing skills**.
- 6** My job has helped me develop more **effective time management** skills.
- 7** My job has helped me improve my **verbal communication** skills.
- 8** My job has helped me develop **conflict negotiation** skills.
- 9** My job has helped me use **critical thinking skills** to form opinions and solve problems.
- 10** Because of my job, I am able to **work effectively with individuals with a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and cultures**.

THE  
**UNDERGRADUATE**  
**EXPERIENCE**

FOCUSING INSTITUTIONS ON  
WHAT MATTERS MOST

*“Not only does GROW illustrate the power of simple reflective practices, but it also underscores how small interventions can have significant outcomes for the undergraduate experience.”*

-Felten, et al (2016)

# Nate Robinson

- Hired as a first-year student
- Worked in VSPL all four years
- Alpha Phi Alpha, Inc.
- Homecoming Royalty
- RA for  
Young, Gifted, Black LLC
- Teach for America
- Legislative Fellow for  
Rep. James Clyburn,  
Majority Whip



# Chloe Inskeep

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- Hired as a first-year student
- First-Gen Hawks Participant
- Active in CHAARG
- Senior Class: 82



*My employment is in the office of the vice president for student life. Every single time we see each other, the vice president talks to me about how it's going and how I'm feeling. And, along with her assistant, Eric Rossow, they have been, seriously, one of the best things ever for me and my education. They make you feel like you want to be there, and they want you there.*

# Student Employment as a Retention Strategy

We (faculty/staff/institutions) must reframe student employment from:

- ① **transactional to transformational**
- ② **supervision to mentoring**
- ③ **expenditure to investment**

**Student jobs can be on-campus internships**



**IOWA**