

Janine Franklin

Pipeline Programs Coordinator, University of Chicago

2018 Surge Fellow

Janine Franklin, affectionately called “Dr. J,” is an educator, leader, mentor and passionate youth development specialist committed to improving college access, transition, and persistence outcomes for underrepresented, low-income and/or first-generation students in the city of Chicago.

As a first generation woman of color, Janine has often navigated educational systems that sought to render her stagnant, invisible, and voiceless and has committed her professional life to ensuring black and brown youth have the tools necessary to navigate their academic path successfully and authentically.

Janine is skilled in program development and organizational leadership and has served in various professional and civic capacities within education for almost a decade. Currently, Janine serves as the Pipeline Programs Coordinator at the University of Chicago, overseeing initiatives to train and mentor underrepresented students into academic pathways from the high school to the postgraduate level.

Prior to joining UChicago, Janine served as a college access team leader at the Comer Education Campus on the Southside of Chicago. While there, she successfully transformed and revised their college preparation curriculum for the Gary Comer Youth Center, launched their STEM exploration initiative, created and launched ParentU, a series of college planning seminars and workshops for parents and community members, and piloted collaborative college planning efforts between Gary Comer Youth Center and Gary Comer College Prep. She was formerly a State of Illinois’ Diversifying Higher Education Fellow and a Powers-Knapp Scholar at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Janine is a proud Badger and alumna of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Women’s Studies. She also holds a Masters of Social Work from the University of Illinois at Chicago and a Doctor of Philosophy from the department of Education Policy at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her research interests include issues of access, representation, college readiness, resistance, and critical race theory.

Janine finds joy in serving and helping people in whatever ways she can. She currently serves on the Associate Board for Providence-St. Mel, her high school alma mater, works as a college counselor for the Chicago Scholars Foundation and facilitates Rockstars, a black girls’ empowerment group on the Southside of Chicago. When Janine is not mentoring youth in some way, you can find her shopping or traveling!

