



IowaCollegeAid.gov
Your Financial Aid Connection



NEWS RELEASE

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Summer Program Helps Students Stay on Track to Graduate

99 Des Moines students completing first-of-its-kind credit recovery on college campus

Des Moines, IA, July 28, 2011 – Ninety-nine students from GEAR UP Iowa and Des Moines Public Schools are experiencing life on a college campus while completing classes they need to stay on track for graduation. The 3-week program, held at Grandview University, is helping the students meet their high school academic credit requirements.

This first-of-its-kind opportunity was made possible through a partnership between GEAR UP Iowa, Des Moines Public Schools, Des Moines Public Schools GEAR UP, and Grandview University. Students are completing the summer program tomorrow.

“The goal of GEAR UP Iowa is to provide the resources and inspiration to instill a college-going culture among students as they make their way through high school,” says Karen Misjak, executive director of Iowa College Aid, the state agency charged with administering the statewide GEAR UP Iowa Grant. “By spending three weeks of their summer focusing on credit recovery, these students are taking responsibility for their future while experiencing a college campus environment.”

“Des Moines Public Schools offers students who need a little extra help a variety of options to get the credits needed to graduate, and this new effort to bring high school students onto a college campus is an added benefit for those students,” explained Nancy Wright, GEAR UP coordinator for Des Moines Public Schools. “Providing students with credit recovery support pays off, and was one factor that contributed to the significant increase in our graduation rate in Des Moines.”

“We are grateful that Grandview University is such a terrific partner with our school district and generously donated free classroom space to make this new summer school program a reality,” added Wright.

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Students have responded very positively to the program. Some, who in the past felt they couldn't catch up, now realize that the path to high school graduation is possible.

To learn about the summer credit recovery program, please contact Nancy Wright with the Des Moines Public Schools GEAR UP at nancy.wright@dmps.k12.ia.us or John Gilman with GEAR UP Iowa at john.gilman@iowa.gov.

NOTE: The final day of the program is Friday, July 29; students will be in class at Grandview University from 8:00 AM to Noon.

About the Iowa College Student Aid Commission

The Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Iowa College Aid) provides college access, financial literacy, and outreach services to Iowa's students and families as they prepare, plan and pay for college. Iowa College Aid also administers state scholarship, grant, work study, and loan forgiveness programs totaling nearly \$60.0 million annually, administers the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) program, provides borrowers with assistance to avoid the serious consequences of default, conducts research and distributes higher education data, and offers Iowans assistance in obtaining student financial aid and college-related information. Through its role, Iowa College Aid also serves as the state-designated administrator of the U.S. Department of Education's College Access Challenge Grant, which is designed to increase the college-going culture in Iowa. Additionally, Iowa College Aid is the administrator of the Federal GEAR-UP Grant, a multi-year state-wide grant which is being utilized to provide early awareness programming and outreach initiatives to thousands of Iowa's students and families. More information is available at www.IowaCollegeAid.gov.

About GEAR UP Iowa

Funded by a \$16.8 million Federal grant, GEAR UP Iowa (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) is charged with significantly increasing the number of students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP Iowa works to create a college-going culture through statewide and school-based services to a cohort of approximately 6,000 high school students and their families in 18 communities across Iowa. The Iowa College Student Aid Commission administers GEAR UP Iowa in partnership with the Iowa Department of Education and other state agencies; local school districts; postsecondary educational institutions; and community organizations, businesses, and industries.

About Des Moines Public Schools

The Des Moines Independent Community School District is Iowa's largest provider of public education serving the individual needs of more than 31,000 students in over 60 schools with more than 4,500 dedicated teachers and staff.