



Tuesday, August 24, 2004

GEAR UP receives \$99,872 in supplemental grants

Oakland University's GEAR UP partnership, a U.S. Department of Education federally funded program that includes Oakland University, the School District of the City of Pontiac, Oakland Community College, the State of Michigan, and the Pontiac Collaborative, recently received two one-year supplemental grants totaling \$99,872 from the SBC Foundation.

The awards will further the GEAR UP partnership goal of increasing higher education attendance rates of students enrolled at Jefferson/Whittier Middle School, Pontiac Central High School and Pontiac Northern High School in the School District of the City of Pontiac by providing after-school programs to students and professional development for teachers. These supplemental grants also will assist the partnership in meeting its 100-percent matching funds commitment for the Gear Up grant, which by the end of the 2005 fiscal year will have provided approximately \$1.8 million in federal funds for students, teachers and parents in the school district.

The student-based grant for \$49,872 was written by Mark Simon, associate professor in OU's School of Business Administration (SBA), with the help of Kevin Fowlkes, assistant principal at Pontiac Central High School. Titled "GEAR UP Bridge to Life," it is being directed by Mike Callahan, operations director for Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) in SBA, and will focus on three areas: mentoring by OU SIFE students and Pontiac Central High School juniors and seniors; skill building in math, science, and technology; and experiential training in developing self-efficacy and a stronger sense of self-reliance.

Ultimately, the students will create a business that will help them and their peers make a successful transition to high school.

The SBC Foundation grant at Jefferson/Whittier Middle School for \$50,000 provides teachers with instructional technology training so they are able to integrate technology into the curriculum and thereby improve grades and performance on the MEAP. The director of the grant, Wendy Fitzpatrick, is the principal at Jefferson/Whittier. She and Assistant Principal Bettie Clark will oversee and implement the grant throughout the academic year.

In early August, 16 teachers at Jefferson/Whittier Middle School were recruited to participate in a 36-hour instructional technology (IT) course designed by Judy Hoppin, executive director for Professional Development for the School of Education and Human Services at OU. When school starts in August, those 16 teachers will be the instructional technology leaders in the school and will provide IT in-service activities to their colleagues.

Grant funding also will support an additional IT course for Jefferson/Whittier teachers in the fall. The grant was written by Val Hughes, director for instructional improvement for the Pontiac School District, and Lynn Hockenberger, director of Learning Resources and GEAR UP at Oakland University.

SUMMARY

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