



The Center Celebrates National TRIO/GEAR UP Day 2005

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The Center for Academic Enrichment and Outreach (The Center) hosted the annual TRIO/GEAR UP Day Celebration on February 26, 2005. This year's celebration honored United States Senator John Ensign along with several outstanding alumni of the TRIO Programs.

Each year, the TRIO programs throughout the United States designate a day in early Spring to celebrate and recognize students and community leaders who participate in the TRIO programs. The gathering included community leaders, TRIO program participants, and staff members from The Center. This year's celebration was held in the elegant Platinum and Gold Ballrooms at the Bally's Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

Yvonne Atkinson Gates, Clark County Commissioner and Deputy Executive Director for

The Center, served as the Mistress of Ceremonies. The program featured inspired remarks from U.S. Congresswoman Shelley Berkeley about the importance of the TRIO programs, and encouraging words for the participants in the audience from this year's keynote speaker, Dr. Daniel Boggan Jr., Retired Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the NCAA. Other honored speakers and award presenters included Dr. Arnold Mitchem, President of the Council for Opportunity in Education; Dr. Rebecca Mills, Vice President of Student Life for UNLV; Keith Rogers and Eva G. Simmons,

Deputy Directors for The Center; Dr. Patricia Mathews, Director of the Adult Education Services Program at The Center; and Dr. William Sullivan, Associate Vice President for Retention

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2005 TRIO/GEAR UP Awardees pictured with The Center's Keith Rogers (left) and Yvonne Gates (right): (from left) Uri Clinton, Crisanta Zamudio, Zuri Langhorn, U.S. Senator John Ensign, Bruce Ford, Alex Aragon, and Paul Salas.

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GEAR UP FOR COLLEGE READINESS

The Clark County School District (CCSD) has implemented the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program in nine local high schools as part of a continued effort to raise student achievement. The purpose of the AVID program is to improve student GPAs, assist with increasing their test scores, and inspire students to pursue higher education. AVID is designed to increase school-wide learning and performance especially among "average" high school students.

The average students are able to keep up with their class work through support from mentors, tutorial assistance by university students, and college and career workshops. The Center for Academic Enrichment and Outreach (The Center) is sponsoring the tutorial component of the AVID program at six of the GEAR UP

(Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) high school sites.

The GEAR UP partnership is looking forward to an exciting third year and being involved with the AVID program. GEAR UP is a federally funded program that was awarded to The Center in 2002. The program is designed to enable more young Americans to stay in school, study hard, and take the right courses to succeed in college. The mission of GEAR UP is to significantly increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in post-secondary education. The services provided by GEAR UP include higher education awareness, tutoring and academic enhancement, college preparation workshops, summer and after-school academic enrichment.

For the last two years, GEAR UP has pro-

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TRIO, GEAR UP Programs Target of Proposed Federal Budget Cuts

President Bush’s proposed budget for fiscal year 2006 contained an unwelcome surprise. The president has proposed abolition of federal funding for two popular TRIO programs, Upward Bound and Talent Search, as well as the elimination of funding for GEAR UP. The new budget was released on February 7, 2005 and received immediate criticism from a varied list of groups, including democrat and republican lawmakers, school district officials, and educational councils around the country.

Under this budget plan, the University of Nevada Las Vegas would no longer receive an \$11 million annual federal grant for support of GEAR UP (which currently serves about 2,000 students in Clark County) and other academic activities. In addition, funding for the two TRIO programs, Upward Bound and Talent Search, would simultaneously be eliminated.

Sentiments range from disbelief, anger, and confusion about the cuts to these educational programs. At a time when school districts are under pressure to meet critical requirements of President Bush’s No Child Left Behind Act, programs such as the one’s being targeted at The Center represent a vital resource available to school districts as they struggle to meet the requirements of the NCLB Act. In responding to Congress’ request for specific reasons why these programs need to be eliminated, officials from the Department of Education claim the students served by these programs do not represent a significant portion of the student population and the funds would be redirected to other programs that can better serve the needs of the students.

Upward Bound, Talent Search, and GEAR UP programs face elimination

In addition to the three programs currently administered by The Center, President Bush has also proposed elimination of the Perkins Student Loan program along with a requirement that colleges repay the money which has been funded to the program in the past four decades.

The **Upward Bound** and **Talent Search** programs each provide access to post-secondary education. Upward Bound focuses on empowering disadvantaged students with solid academic skills by providing the tools necessary to succeed through to college. The services include tutoring, workshops, and the real-world experience of college life. Talent Search is a specialized program for at-risk students with serious potential to continue on to college. The program identifies the needs of the student, provides the necessary assistance, and encourages the student to go on to a post-secondary education. In addition, this program also specifically seeks to help high school dropouts return to school and pursue a college education.

GEAR UP is the largest program at The Center in terms of the number of students who participate in the program. This pro-

gram focuses on long-term support of disadvantaged students – in Nevada, middle schools are the primary group – by providing much needed assistance in creating new or expanding existing programs within the school community. These programs represent a holistic approach to assisting students so they may succeed in their current schools, prepare for college, and succeed at the post-secondary level. An important element of this program is the community-wide participation that is encouraged and fostered by The Center. Key partnerships with community leaders, businesses, and institutions of higher learning are created to help students and their parents gain needed knowledge and bolster their academic success.

The Division of Curriculum Design and Implementation: A Look Inside

What is Curriculum Design and Implementation? What exactly does this division do at The Center? These are questions often heard when members of the Curriculum Design and Implementation (CDI) Division are introduced. Actually, the division works on providing tutorial modules and tutor training for the various programs at The Center. In addition, CDI oversees professional staff development for the GEAR UP teachers, and functions as the key liaison for CCSD, UNLV, and The Center.

Alma Garcia Vining, Director

As the Director of the CDI, Alma brings thirty-seven years experience in education to The Center, including twenty-four years as a classroom teacher and thirteen years as an elementary school principal. She is responsible for all operations within CDI. In addition to her duties at The Center, Alma also serves on many different community boards. (See “The Center Welcomes Alma Vining” in Vol. 2, Iss. 3 of the *CenterPoint* newsletter.)

Julie Joyce, Coordinator for Teacher Development

Julie works on a collaborative partnership initiative with the Clark County School District in which student teachers may apply for tuition waivers for student teaching credits. In addition, she is involved with the Tuition Waiver for Systemic Change program, and the Academic Coaching program.

Amy Kernin and Robin Wood, Educational Advisors

Amy Kernin is in charge of the tutorial modules and materials for the GEAR UP Math and Science Academy. Robin Wood is responsible for the Language Arts Academy. In addition, Amy and Robin are taking on a new responsibility as Tutor Trainers where they will be assigned the task of ensuring the tutors sent to GEAR UP schools and the Upward Bound programs are familiar with the AVID strategies of tutor-ology.

Carlos “CJ” Jose, Program Assistant

Carlos Jose is the Program Assistant for the Curriculum Design and Implementation division.

CONFERENCE NEWS



Council for Opportunity in Education Annual Conference

AES staff Yvonne Berry, Roland Charles, and Kyle Ethelbah presented at the Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) Annual Conference held September 12-14, 2004 at the San Antonio Marriott Rivercenter Hotel in San Antonio, Texas.

The trio presented in the “Best Practices” category. Their topic: establishing partnerships with local businesses to help adult high school dropouts enter and graduate from college. The focus of the presentation was collaboration as a model to demonstrate student assessment, learning formats, and program structures. Other topics covered included calculating operation costs and securing initiative funding, guidelines for preparing students to pass GED and high school proficiency exams, and strategies for overcoming the particular retention challenges faced by adult students

National Educational Opportunity Centers Association Annual Conference

Kyle Ethelbah, Assistant Director for AES, presented “The Creation of The Academic Success and Cultural Enrichment Project: Advising That Addresses the Needs of First Generation and Limited English Speaking Students” at the National Educational Opportunity Centers Association (NEOCA) Annual Conference held in San Antonio, Texas on September 12, 2004. During the conference, Kyle was nominated and elected as the NEOCA Secretary for 2004-2005.

Northwest Association of Special Programs Fall Conference

Marisa Hearn and Sandy Kijanka of the Adult Educational Services Program presented at the Northwest Association of Special Programs (NASP) Fall Conference held December 5-8, 2004 at the Portland Marriott Hotel in Portland, Oregon. Hearn and Kijanka assisted in the facilitation of discussions designed to address issues facing low income, first generation, and disabled adults adjust to the higher education environment. Topics included counseling and information on college admissions, financial aid, federal regulations, and programs maintaining efficient processes to better serve students from the target population.

SEMINARS

On November 20th, 2004 AES hosted a seminar aimed at reaching out to college-ready adults nineteen years of age and older. The AES staff presented workshops in English and Spanish on the following topics: College Admissions, Financial Aid, Career Exploration, and Computer Basics. With over thirty participants in attendance, the seminar reached full capacity. Highlights of the day included a lunch buffet catered by Memphis Championship Barbecue and a turkey give-away. The AES staff received many compliments from those in attendance, including high praise

from a participant’s father who commented, “You make me feel like family.”

The Adult Educational Services Division and its participants would like to extend a special “thank you” to the Nevada Public Education Foundation in partnership with the Clark County Public Education Foundation for providing the funds that made this seminar possible.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

AES and University of Illinois (UIUC) Announce Joint Research Effort

The Adult Educational Services (AES) Program at The Center for Academic Enrichment & Outreach (The Center), in collaboration with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC), announces a joint research effort to study the impact of on-line education for low-income, adult students.

The study entitled “Online Post-Secondary Study for Low-Income Working Adults: A Case Study” will be facilitated by Dr. Angela Benson, Assistant Professor in the Department of Human Resource Education at UIUC, and Dr. Patricia Mathews, Director for AES at UNLV. The purpose of the study is to describe the experiences of low-income families enrolled in online courses and degree programs. The study will include individual interviews with AES staff and students to ascertain perspectives regarding online learning experiences. Emphasis will be placed on reasons for online study, challenges faced by students, and the strategies used to overcome the challenges.

Participation in this study will be voluntary and consist of AES participants. The study is in line with established university guidelines and procedures and has been approved by the UNLV Social/Behavioral Institutional Review Board.

REMINDERS



UNLV

Students applying for Fall 2005 should complete and submit an undergraduate application by **April 1, 2005**. The priority deadline for the Free Application For Federal Student Aid was **February 1, 2005**.

CCSN

The priority deadline to file your FAFSA is **April 15, 2005**. There is no established admissions deadline, however, all AES students are encouraged to apply as early as possible.

NSC

The priority deadline to file your Admissions application for Summer/Fall 2005 is **April 1, 2005**. The priority deadline for the Free Application For Federal Student Aid was **March 1, 2005**.

All students are encouraged to apply for admissions and financial aid as soon as possible.

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& Outreach and the Executive Director of The Center.

The 2005 Educational Pioneer Award was presented to United States Senator John Ensign. In addition, six alumni received TRIO Alumni Awards: Alex Aragonez, Uri Clinton, Bruce Ford, Zuri Langhorn, Paul Salas, and Crisanta Zamudio.

Finally, this year's ceremony took on a new sense of purpose in light of the recent proposed budget cuts to the TRIO and GEARUP funding. (See "TRIO, GEAR UP Programs Target of Proposed Federal Budget Cuts" on page 2). In spite of the anxiety surrounding the funding of TRIO and GEAR UP programs, the celebration was a success as all who participated conveyed unwavering dedication for these programs and their participants. Such dedication was no more evident than the courage displayed by Dr. Sullivan, who lost his beloved mother just days prior to the TRIO celebration. When asked why it meant so much to him to return to Las Vegas in time to attend the annual celebration, Dr. Sullivan passionately replied: "I didn't want to let my kids down, I want them to know I am here for them no matter what!"

GEAR UP

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vided services to students at six middle schools in Clark County. They include: Jim Bridger, James Cashman, Roy Martin, William Orr, J.D. Smith, and Charles I. West. During this academic school year the program will follow the first cohort of 9th grade students to Canyon Springs, Clark, Desert Pines, Mojave, Rancho, Valley and Western High Schools.

"GEAR UP provides students with enough tools to enable them to take advantage of the opportunity to attend and succeed in college," according to Deanna R. Davis, Assistant Director of College Readiness for The Center. "We have seen how successful our outreach has been to middle schools and look forward to the challenge of offering services that will benefit our high school participants."

Currently, the GEAR UP partnership has seen positive results in providing caring role models, tutorial assistance, summer enrichment, and academic enhancement to 8,000+ Clark County students. The support offered through GEAR UP programs help students believe that they can achieve and be ready for college.

Visit us on the web at <http://caeo.unlv.edu>

The Center is part of the Division of Student Life

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