

PENNSTATE
Office of the Vice Provost for Educational Equity

Overview

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Message from the Vice Provost

Dr. W. Terrell Jones, Vice Provost for Educational Equity

Fall is an exciting time on campus, and this year Penn State is particularly pleased with the growth in minority enrollment. Across the entire University, minority enrollment is up 8.3 percent from last year while the University's total enrollment increased by 4.5 percent. This increase in underrepresented student populations reflects a positive trend in Penn State's enrollment.

One of the key ongoing challenges for Educational Equity and our constituents is to place emphasis on closing the gap in the amount of unmet financial need available for low-income, first-generation college students. Our division recently formed a scholarship committee that resulted in us awarding more than \$35,000 in need-based scholarships in fall 2006. We would not be able to provide this kind of assistance without private support from alumni. For example, contributions from attendees at the Black Alumni Reunion in spring 2006 brought the Lawrence Young Scholarship over the \$30,000 level to create an endowment.

This past summer Educational Equity's precollege outreach programs enrolled more than 1,000 high school students who attend various academic advancement programs. The Talent Search program held a Leadership Summit conference for rising high school seniors. The Upward Bound, Upward Bound Math and Science Center, Talent Search Program, and Women in the Sciences and Engineering Institute (WISE) provided academically challenging experiences, including research projects supervised by faculty and graduate students from the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences. The evidence demonstrates that many participants eventually enroll at Penn State or other higher education institutions.

As college costs continue to rise, our office serves an important role in encouraging students to pursue a degree and providing assistance along the way. If you want to learn more about making a gift to support undergraduate scholarships in Educational Equity, please visit www.equity.psu.edu or go to www.giveto.psu.edu.

President of Shell Oil Company Visits UBMS Students

On November 9, 2006, the Upward Bound Math and Science Center (UBMS) coordinated a visit from John Hofmeister, president of Shell Oil Company, to Germantown High School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, one of the program's target schools. In addition to meeting with UBMS, Penn State, and administrators of the Philadelphia school district, Mr. Hofmeister spoke to students about mathematics and science careers and what students can do during high school to help prepare for these careers. Mr. Hofmeister also stressed the importance of ensuring U.S. energy for the future, and how the energy industry must address the delicate balance between energy production and consumption with increased supply. He outlined the use of a full array of energy sources, including conventional oil and gas, as well as the development of clean fossil fuels and alternative and renewable energy sources. Students had the opportunity to interact with Mr. Hofmeister and asked many questions, especially about Shell's



John Hofmeister, (right), listens to a high school student from UBMS

extensive efforts to rebuild New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina.

Each summer, Shell sponsors students from Germantown and other Philadelphia high schools for their participation in the UBMS Summer Academy and Research Experience in Earth and Mineral Sciences. Each year fifty high school students spend six weeks on Penn State's University Park campus conducting research in areas such as petroleum and natural gas engineering, geosciences, climate change, and industrial health and safety.

Annual Upward Bound Residential Program

The annual six-week residential program for Penn State Upward Bound was held June 18-July 29, 2006. Fifty-three area youth convened on the University Park campus for a unique opportunity they will never forget. Students were enrolled in academic courses (literature/composition, math, science, Spanish, careers, and drama) each weekday and enjoyed a variety of activities in the afternoons and evenings, including tours of Beaver Stadium, the Breazeale Nuclear Reactor, and numerous museums and offices on



UB summer students visit Beaver Stadium

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WISE Camp 2006 Stimulating the Next Generation of Women Scientists and Engineers



WISE Camp students experience *The Wonders of Fiber Optics*

For one week this past summer, thirty-one eleventh and twelfth grade girls from nine states came to Penn State to explore and experience science and engineering fields that many of them had never experienced before. Students were exposed to a broad spectrum of workshops that covered eight different science and engineering disciplines. They included: The Living Building, Studying How We Move, Language of Smell: Ecology of Plant Odors, Sun Alert!, The Wonders of Fiber Optics, Clean Energy for the Future, Make an LED Flashlight, and Atomic Sleuth.

Each participant was assigned to one of four weeklong projects, which included: Agriculture and Biodiversity: Specialized, Diversified, and Organic Systems, Biomaterials: Are Orthopedic Metal Implants in your Body a Good Idea?, Geography Camp, and Usability Engineering: Designing Good Web sites. On the last day of WISE Camp, each project group presented their results to all camp participants.

Judging from students' evaluations and thank-you notes, WISE Camp was an overwhelming success. Below are just a few of their comments:

"I had fears that the program might be an intense academic program attended by one-dimensional people. Instead, it was a dynamic experience of great diversity. I truly had one of the best times of my life."

"I really enjoyed the labs that dealt with electrical and mechanical engineering. The mechanical engineering lab helped me decide to do that aspect of automotive engineering."

"It was hard to understand at first, but Dr. Sikora always took time to explain things over and over again until we understood it. I definitely learned a lot."

Office of Veterans Programs

This fall, Penn State's Office of Veterans Programs reached out to the more than 13,000 Penn Staters who are veterans with an appeal to support the endowed Veterans Program Fund.

The Veterans Program Fund was created to provide support for sons, daughters, and spouses of deceased or totally disabled veterans; veterans whose G.I. Bill benefits have expired or ended; disabled veterans; and emergency housing needs.

The Office of Veterans Programs provides services in three major areas—outreach, certification, and general counseling—to veterans and Department of Veterans Affairs benefits recipients who attend Penn State.

Many veterans know firsthand how

challenging it can be to return to the classroom following military service. Gifts to the fund ensure that the Office of Veterans Programs has the resources to assist service men and women and their families in making the most of their Penn State education.

Anyone interested in making a gift to the Veterans Program Fund may do so by visiting www.giveto.psu.edu. Select *Other* from the drop-down list and type in "Veterans Program Fund (XXTVP)" on the Additional Information line.

If you have any questions about this initiative, please contact Brian Clark, director, Office of Veterans Programs, at 814-863-0465 or at bcc1@psu.edu.

Pennsylvania Student Leadership Conference

The Pennsylvania Student Leadership conference, sponsored by Penn State's Talent Search Program, was held July 14-15, 2006, in the Embassy Suites in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Students had the opportunity to interact with professionals from varying educational and career backgrounds.

The conference was geared toward "rising" seniors, or students who had just completed their junior year in high school. More than ninety-five students from across Pennsylvania participated, representing a wide variety of communities

and cultural backgrounds.

Students participated in a number of large group sessions, small workshops, and activities designed to enhance their leadership skills. As part of the workshop sessions, students engaged in hands-on activities focusing on teamwork, goal setting, time management, and other relevant topics. A college and career fair was held as part of the conference. Students had the opportunity to speak with college representatives and, in some cases, were able to complete college applications with the fee waived.

Annual Upward Bound Residential Program continued from front page



UB summer students visit the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C.

campus. Additionally, the program's senior students visited seven other colleges and universities to learn about other postsecondary institutions. The last Friday in June brought twenty-three higher education

institutions from across the state to the HUB-Robeson Cultural Center for the program's annual college fair.

Upward Bound's seniors also visited Washington, D.C., for a weekend and stayed on the campus of the George Washington University. All of the students visited Baltimore's National Aquarium and the Maryland Science Center on the last day. The evaluations of the summer experience were overwhelmingly positive, with one student writing that the experience "changed me for the better, making me more independent, giving me confidence in myself, and helping me believe that even my hardest goals can be achieved." Upward Bound's next summer program is scheduled for June 17 to July 28, 2007.