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The Urban Scholars Program at UMass Boston

David Lemmel, UMass Boston Urban Scholars Director

Summary/Abstract

Urban Scholars provides talented and gifted students—especially those from low income and minority backgrounds—with the resources to develop the skills and self-motivation needed to enter and successfully complete postsecondary education. The program accommodates 120 students, 75 students at the high school level and 45 at the middle school level

Mission and Objectives

The mission of the Urban Scholars Program is to identify and to prepare Boston's gifted and talented urban youth (ages 11-19), especially those who are low-income and first-generation college bound students, to successfully enroll in and complete college. We provide these students with the skills and attitudes necessary to achieve their full potential through a structured sequence of after-school and summer academic courses and activities designed to build a strong repertoire of basic and higher-level skills, task commitment and self-motivation. Our vision recognizes that the progress of society depends on developing the talent potential of its youth.

Partners

High schools partnerships include:

Tech Boston Academy
Jeremiah E. Burke Dorchester Academy
Excel High
Green Academy

Middle Schools partnerships include:

John W. McCormack
William B. Rogers
Tech Boston Academy

Other Community program partners include

John Hancock Financial Services
Youth Enrichment Services
Save the Harbor
The Institute for Contemporary Art,
The Appalachian Mountain Club's Youth Opportunities Program

Approaches and Methods

USP offers a year-round program featuring after school advanced academic courses on Tuesday & Thursday, tutoring Monday thru Friday, supervised study on Monday & Wednesday, seminars/workshops, and Friday field trips. A seven-week Summer Institute designed to reduce summer learning loss, offers morning classes and participation in afternoon activities including group projects, tutoring, cultural enrichment, and outdoor recreation.

The Summer Institute offsets summer learning loss by providing students with **147 hours of essential academic and college-ready skills and knowledge** (91 classroom instruction + 56 other college ready activities – advising, tutoring, independent and small group studying, enrichment, and personal development) to each student. Students return to school fully prepared to build on the rigorous academic foundation laid in the summer courses.

The Academic Year component of the Urban Scholars Program provides Scholars with an additional 180 hours after school: 120 hours of academic instruction and 60 hours in other activities (advising, tutoring, independent and small group studying, enrichment, and personal development). Some Scholars benefit from many more hours.



Results/Impact

Having served more than 1,900 students over the past 29 years, the Urban Scholars Program has an impressive record of preparing our city's most talented students to reach high and to attain their college and career goals.

- Over the past 5 years, 93% of Urban Scholars graduates have gone onto college and 82% of these students have enrolled in four year colleges.
- Over the past 5 years, 77% of Urban Scholars graduates have either graduated or are still enrolled in college. (By comparison, the BPS college graduation rate is 35.5%--27.7% for non-exam school graduates, and the national rate is 43.6%).
- In addition, we are pleased to announce that in 2010 the Urban Scholars Program was selected by Root Cause and Social Impact Research as one of seven recommended high-performing organizations in the College Access and Success field in Boston.

Urban Scholars' graduates are attending or have graduated from the following schools:

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Allegheny College | Emmanuel College | Smith College |
| American International College | Fairfield University | Stone hill College |
| American University | Fitchburg State College | Suffolk University |
| Babson College | Georgetown University | Syracuse University |
| Bates College | Harvard Graduate School | Tufts University |
| Bentley College | Hofstra University | Univ. of Central Florida |
| Boston University | Holy Cross | Univ. of Connecticut |
| Boston College | Johnson & Wales University | Univ. of Georgia at Athens |
| Bowdoin College | Laboure College | UMass Amherst |
| Brandeis University | Lasell College | UMass Boston |
| Bridgewater State University | Lesley College | UMass Dartmouth |
| Brown university | Lincoln University | UMass Lowell |
| Case Western Reserve Univ. | MCPHS | Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor |
| Clark University | MIT | Univ. of New Hampshire |
| Colgate University | Northeastern University | Univ. of Vermont |
| College of the Holy Cross | Norwich University | Univ. of Wyoming |
| Connecticut College | Oberlin College | Wellesley College |
| Cornell University | Regis College | Wentworth Institute of Tech. |
| Curry College | Roxbury Community College | Wheelock College |
| Denison University | Rutgers University | Rochester Institute of Tech. |
| Emerson College | Simmons College | |



Resources

Program information is also available at

urbanscholars@umb.edu or http://www.umb.edu/academics/vpass/support_programs/urban_scholars/about_program/. Phone number: 617-287-5830