



November 1, 2008
www.AspireOregon.org



Conference Success!

October was a busy month for Oregon Student Assistance Commission staff. There were a total of 4 conferences held throughout the month and all of them were raving successes. Congratulations to all of those who contributed and a sincere thank you goes out to all of those who attended these events.

1st Annual OrCAN Conference

October 27th marked the 1st annual OrCAN (Oregon College Access Network) Conference held at Lane County Community College. The conference, Bridging the College Access Gap, aimed to foster professional networking and sharing of strategies to increase college access efforts in Oregon. The purpose of the conference was to develop and strengthen the coalition of college access programs in the state, begin an advocacy effort for necessary support to college access, discuss results of statewide assessment of college access programs and regional gap analysis, and bring together public officials, education administrators, and practitioners for dialogue. Congratulations are in order for Tony McKown, OrCAN Coordinator, on a successful conference. We are looking forward hearing more about the exciting work that the committee is doing.

2008 ASPIRE Fall Conference

This year's ASPIRE Fall Conference was held on October 11th at the University of Oregon and attracted approximately 180 attendees from around the state. The University of Oregon was a great host and we were able to hear from President Dave Frohnmayer, as well as Elizabeth Bickford, the Director of Student Financial Aid, and Brian Henley, the Director of Admissions. The University also offered various campus tours throughout the afternoon.

This event was very successful and allowed ASPIRE Coordinators and volunteers to network with other sites and share best practices. Attendees also had the opportunity to attend breakout sessions of their choice. Topics included careers in healthcare, apprenticeship programs, Ford scholarship information, VIDA, college access for undocumented students, challenges for foster youths and students with disabilities, student athletes, and OSAC Scholarships.

Foster Youth Conferences

There were two Foster Youth Conferences held in October, one at Southern Oregon Community College and the other at Portland Community College, Rock Creek. This was a great forum to cater information directly to foster youth who have unique needs and are often overlooked. The sessions included student speakers, a College 101 training, and an interactive scholarship workshop. In this session, attendees actually starting writing scholarship application essays and were able to view other essays from previous successful scholarship applicants. The day also included a campus tour.

News

What is VIDA?

One of the breakout sessions at the 2008 ASPIRE Fall Conference covered Valley Individual Development Accounts, or VIDA. The Valley Individual Development Account (VIDA) Program is a collaborative of thirty-eight community based non-profit agencies offering IDAs to individuals and families. Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) are a great resource for low-income families as they provide a 3:1 match to help with post secondary or job training expenses. Please see <http://www.vidaoregon.org/what-is-vida.php> for more information on what VIDA is, who it is for, and how to get started.

Monthly Helpful Hint

The ASPIRE program at Leadership and Entrepreneurship Charter High School in Portland, Oregon was recently awarded a sum of money from Tektronix, a company with an Employee Volunteer Matching Program. Employee volunteer matching programs will differ from company to company but no matter what the company's matching program is, this is good news for the ASPIRE program. Some companies offer their employees paid time off to volunteer while other companies may make a monetary "match" to an employee's gift or volunteer time. Some companies that offer matching programs are: Microsoft, Chevron, Avon, Dell, McGraw-Hill, Starbucks, Bank of America, and the Gap. For more information, contact companies in your community and ask about their employee volunteer incentive programs.

Upcoming Events

College Night in Oregon: *Monday, November 24, 2008 6-9 p.m.*

Learn about choosing the right college for you, the financial aid process, and scholarship searches and scams. College Night in Oregon will be held at 12 sites statewide. There will be free pizza and a chance to win a \$500 scholarship! Visit www.collegenightinor.org for more information.

College Goal Oregon: *Saturday, January 24, 2009 9 a.m.-2 p.m.*

Drop in between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. to get free professional help with your financial aid application (FAFSA) and learn about scholarships and available funding for college. It will be held at 27 sites around the state so visit <http://www.collegegoaloregon.org/> for more information and to find a location near you!

~Mentor: Someone whose hindsight can become your foresight~

ASPIRE is administered by the Oregon Student Assistance Commission (OSAC) whose mission is to assist Oregon students and their families in attaining a postsecondary education and to enhance the value, integrity, and diversity of Oregon's college programs.

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