As Director of Student Support Services and Outreach Programs, I would like to take this opportunity to wish our program participants, on-site staff a happy and healthy 2010. It has been a busy, busy summer and fall semester for the SSS and Outreach staff members. My efforts have been working on two Student Support Services projects, with the help of Dr. Sally Berg our program liaison. If awarded, funding will be available for five additional years. The success of our SSS participants in maintaining a good grade point average, an impressive retention rate, and good rate of graduation helps in the SSS federal grant competition.

First semester was a busy time for our College Reach Out Program and Scholars Programs as staff geared up to begin the new school year. All school districts budgets have been financially impacted which has in turn affected these programs. Funds for transportation for College Reach Out Program and Scholars students to participate in activities located at the university have been limited, however, the Outreach Program staff members are making as many visitations to the programs schools as possible along with our activities on-campus such as Eagle Expo and the Brain Bowl. I encourage the on-site advisors and coordinators to continue supporting these programs offering students guidance and leadership skills. Our programs are housed within the Dean of Students Office in the Division of Student Affairs.

Outreach Programs Statistics 2008-2009

In the 2008-2009 Academic School year, the Office of Outreach Programs served over 1500+ K-12 students in the following counties: Lee, Charlotte, Hendry, Collier, and Desoto. College Reach Out Program is funded by a State of Florida grant and FGCU matching funds designed to prepare approximately 600 middle and high school students to successfully pursue and complete a post-secondary education. The Scholars Program is locally funded by organizations including United Way of Lee County, Collier and Lee County Schools, Mediterra, Regions Bank, Cedar Rapids Foundation, Duffus Family and Florida Gulf Coast University. Scholars promotes academic achievement and leadership among 900 minority and “at risk” students at participating elementary, middle, and high schools. Participants are required to maintain a 2.5 GPA, attend meetings and practice good leadership. The average GPA for both programs last year was a 3.15 overall. Out of the 272 seniors who were participants in the program last year, over 64% of them went on to pursue some form of post-secondary education.
**Brain Bowl**

On Saturday, November 21st, the Office of Outreach Programs hosted its annual Brain Bowl Competition. The day was a fun event as ten middle schools and three high schools competed for the title of “Brain Bowl Champion 2009”. The competition was divided into middle and high school levels with each division featuring between 75-100 questions covering History: Black, American, and Hispanic; Geography; Presidents; and Greek mythology.

First place in the high school competition was captured by Clewiston High School's College Reach Out Program team under the direction of On-Site Coordinator, Johnathan Williams. First place in the middle school competition went to Veterans Park Academy for the Arts’ Scholars Program team under Advisor, Keith White.

Along with being awarded as this year’s Brain Bowl champion, both teams were then presented with the opportunity to participate in the Florida Education Foundation Regional “Black History and Culture Competition” that was held January 16th at Florida International University in Miami. Each team faced immense competition from the other 16 teams that were present. In the end, Clewiston was eliminated within the first round, while Veterans was able to proceed to the semi-finals. However, they too came up short and were defeated in a sudden death showdown with Hammocks Middle School from Miami. This is the first time that our Outreach Program schools have participated in the “Black History and Culture Competition”. It was a great experience and learning opportunity! All teams did a wonderful job of representing their respective schools in our FGCU Brain Bowl. The Office of Outreach Programs would like to send a special CONGRATULATIONS to both schools for all their hard work...and we’ll get them next year! A special thanks to all who participated, and volunteered.

High Schools:
1st Place: Clewiston High  
2nd Place: Cypress Lake High  
3rd Place: Immokalee High

Middle Schools:
1st: Veterans Park Academy for the Arts  
2nd: Diplomat Middle  
3rd: (Tie) LaBelle Middle & James Stephens International Academy

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**Eagle Expo**

On Saturday, October 17th, the CROP staff, along with approximately 80 high school CROP students, participated in the FGCU Eagle Expo event. Students had the opportunity to talk with current FGCU students, faculty members, advisors, and staff who are a part of the campus community. Participants toured campus facilities, state-of-the-art classrooms, and viewed diagrams of FGCU in the years to come. The focus of the day was to give prospective students an overview of the entire campus.

High schools that participated in the event included: East Lee County, Immokalee, Lehigh Senior, North Fort Myers and Golden Gate High. A special thanks to the Office of Outreach Programs Staff, Student Assistants, On-Site Coordinators, Advisors and parents for supporting this event.
**Induction Ceremony**

The Public Schools Enrichment Partnership (PSEP) held 14 Scholars Program Induction Ceremonies with over 400 students being inducted during the 2009 fall semester in 4 different counties. These ceremonies gave a fascinating glimpse into the quality of the students who were candidates for membership in the PSEP/Scholars Program. Unlike other honor societies whose membership is based solely on academic performance, membership in the Scholars Chapters is based on the fundamental ideals of academic excellence, leadership, citizenship and service.

Scholars Chapter officers, current members and school personnel participated in the Induction Ceremonies along with a Florida Gulf Coast University Outreach Programs’ staff member as the Induction Marshal or some other distinguished role. After taking the Scholars Program pledge, new members received a Scholars pin, a Certificate of Membership, and a congratulatory letter from FGCU President Wilson Bradshaw. The Scholars Program chapter members have the opportunity to participate in school site Scholars meetings and visits to the FGCU campus for Brain Bowl, Leadership Retreats, Eagle Expo, College for a Day and Award Ceremonies. Parents are also encouraged to participate in all Scholars activities.

**Financial Aid Day**

On Saturday, February 27th, the Office of Outreach Programs will be sponsoring a Financial Aid Day for all College Reach Out and Scholars Program seniors. There will be a representative from the Financial Services Office on hand to answer all questions regarding the process of applying for aid, and how to complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). After the presentation, Outreach Program staff will then be available to help students and parents complete and submit the FAFSA. Seniors will also be assisted with completing the FGCU Scholarship Form. Families interested in taking part in this day should bring their 2009 tax information including their senior’s income information if they worked during 2009 tax year. Transportation and lunch will be provided.

**Summer Institute**

This year’s Summer Institute Program on the campus of FGCU will be held June 20th–25th and will be available for middle school CROP and Scholars participants only. The morning academic programs will include reading, college planning, and two math classes. This program will be math-intensive and will attempt to reinforce basic skills learned in the schools. Lunch in the campus dining hall will be followed by fun filled afternoon activities.

Applications for the summer program will be mailed to the school Coordinators and Advisors by mid-February and must be returned to the Outreach Program’s office no later than Friday, March 26. Incomplete applications will not be accepted and will be returned to the Coordinator or Advisor. As in the past, students will be required to write a 250-word essay, (topic to be determined), to be submitted with the application. Don’t delay! Get your application in early. If you have any questions, please contact Darlyn Scott in the Outreach Programs office at 239-590-7902.

"Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are..."
News from the Schools

East Lee County High School – Scholars Program
The Scholars Program at East Lee County High School submitted essays to celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, sponsored by The Dunbar Festival Committee. Our member, Blondine Cherisol, won first place! Congratulations Blondine! December 16, 2010, the Scholars Program accompanied East Lee County’s Orchestra to Shady Rest Nursing Home and presented the residents with slip-on socks as the orchestra serenaded them with Christmas songs. The Scholars Program, along with our Drama Club and Band sponsored a “Reggae Festival” on Saturday, February 6th. This activity was a part of our celebration of Black History Month at East Lee County High.

East Lee County High School – CROP Program
Seniors began the process of completing the FAFSA form on January 13th. They have mailed applications and are focusing on their community service, financial aid (FAFSA), and grades. Our community service projects included the Ronald McDonald House fundraiser for two weeks in December. We raised $435. Program members are continuing the fundraiser through can tab collections from now until end of March. All proceeds will go to the Ronald McDonald House. Another community service project is the “Teens for Jeans” collections. We are collecting clean, gently worn jeans for homeless teens. They will be transported to Aeropostle who, in turn, will drop them off at local shelters for teens. The program members collected items from January 11th through February 10th, 2010.

Three Oaks Middle School – Scholars Chapter
The Scholar’s Chapter at Three Oaks Middle School corroborated with National Junior Honor Society to hold a holiday toy and loose change drive. Students enthusiastically crafted signs, wrote scripts for the morning news, counted change, and collected toys around campus. Over 400 toys and over $350 was collected and donated to the Nations Charity of downtown Fort Myers. Fueling the fervor for the collections was the Scholars Program ad-age, “Help others as if it were yourself.” Both collections were a success and the grade level that donated the most change earned a grade level jersey day while the class who contributed the most toys won a pizza party.

Upcoming Events

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 1st</td>
<td>FGCU Scholarship Deadline</td>
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<td>March 17th</td>
<td>Summer Institute Applications available.</td>
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<td>March 24th–26th</td>
<td>CROP Day at the Capitol–Tallahassee, FL</td>
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<td>April 1st &amp; 2nd</td>
<td>College Tour: Gainesville and Tallahassee</td>
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<td>April 16th</td>
<td>Summer Institute Applications Due—</td>
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<td>May 19th</td>
<td>Senior Awards Recognition Ceremony</td>
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