



FAST FORWARD YOUTH PROGRAM

SPRING 2008 NEWSLETTER

Dear Fast Forward Friends,

This has been an incredible year! Together, our students, volunteers, and staff have succeeded in dramatically transforming our program and focusing intensively on college preparation. Our **students** have proven their commitment to the program through continued attendance, working hard on tough topics (like the dreaded ACT writing exam!), and taking advantage of extra opportunities to get ready for college. Our **volunteers** have shown themselves to be great mentors by sharing their personal stories through the College Mentor Spotlight, encouraging students during challenging activities, and even working through the various sections of the ACT (something they thought they had left in the past!). Our **staff** has demonstrated great perseverance and responsibility by developing a new curriculum, taking risks and trying out new ideas, and adapting quickly as we learn during this first year of college access programming. ***It is amazing what such teamwork can accomplish during one short school year!***

I am very proud to report the following achievements for spring 2008:

- Seniors have been accepted to various colleges and have submitted the FAFSA
- Juniors have taken the ACT
- Sophomores have started practicing for the ACT early
- Many students have visited Hamline University, St. Paul College, the College of St. Scholastica, and Lake Superior College

We salute our seniors for the years of hard work that have contributed to their success, congratulate them on their upcoming graduation, and wish them the best of luck in college. We look forward to working with our sophomores and juniors again next year as they continue moving forward on their journeys to college. Join us for Youth Day at St. Ben's and St. John's on Saturday, April 19, to celebrate our successes and wrap up a tremendous year!



Sincerely,
Erin Truhler, Director

College Visit Day - Twin Cities

College Visit Day in the Twin Cities a great experience! Students from all sites had an opportunity find out about college life in a metropolitan area through visits to Hamline University and Saint Paul College. There was an overwhelmingly positive reaction to both campuses. The diverse atmosphere of Hamline with its energetic counselors seemed to be a favorite amongst the youth. Saint Paul College's hands-on approach to learning in the areas of nursing, cosmetology other areas invoked a curious interest among the students. Students learned about dormitory life, requirements to enter college, and financial aid. They even had the opportunity to eat at the Hamline cafeteria. The day concluded with a visit to the Candyland store where participants were treated to the candy of their choice. It was definitely the best way to end a fun filled day!

~Raquel Gudiel, Site Coordinator

College Visit Day - Duluth

We started our big adventure to Duluth bright and early with a great breakfast and smiling faces. The bus to Duluth was long, but everyone got to exchange languages and stories. Just when we thought we couldn't stand being on the bus any longer, we drove over a hill and BAM! There was Duluth and Lake Superior. You could see forever! At St. Scholastica, we met with Jeremy, an admissions representative from Kenya, who taught us all about scholarships and the great classes offered by St. Scholastica. After a delicious lunch, we headed to Lake Superior College. There was too much laughing and fun on the bus to notice that we got a little lost on the way there. Frank, Rahmo, and Janet were busy teaching everyone Swahili. Melissa from Lake Superior College was emphatic about the advantages of Lake Superior's two-year programs, such as lower tuition, smaller class sizes, plus expert instruction. The building was state of the art and included automobile workshops, carpentry shops, a hospital room, and plenty of classrooms. The view from Lake Superior College looked over Duluth and just made the visit even more exciting! ~Andrew Zimmerman, Site Coordinator



SOUTHSIDE

At Southside, we have consistent attendance and our students are very motivated. They take advantage of the curriculum part of the session while engaging in the community building part as well. There are lots of smiles throughout the session because the students like to laugh and have fun. We have been able to cover college preparation, as well as the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA), which is necessary for graduation. I am very happy to see the students get more and more interested in the college lives of our College Mentors, which are showcased during the College Mentor Spotlights at each session. It is also great to see the interest in colleges that students have acquired through the college visits. Overall, I am thrilled with the progress I have seen at Southside and am very proud of our wonderful students!

~Zaira, Site Coordinator



MONTICELLO

This semester at Monticello has been fantastic! Since the shift to college access activities last fall, we have gained a new group of stellar students. Our students are highly motivated and have a genuine interest in the college experience, especially the steps to reach that goal. It is amazing to see students excited about preparing for something like the ACT exam! Currently, our juniors are scheduled to take the ACT in April, and our seniors students are figuring out which colleges they will attend. One student has even been accepted to St. Ben's! Regardless of where our current seniors end up, we are confident that through their hard work and determination (not to mention their work with FFYP), they will continue to excel through their college experience.

~Ed Hart, Site Coordinator

APOLLO

This has been a great semester at Apollo so far. More students are enrolling in the program, and each session is better and better. We hope that all the activities we are doing at the sessions are very useful to our students. On top of their hard work on ACT preparation, our students are also having a great time working with the College Mentors. I am really proud of all of them because they are always positive, willing to laugh, and involved in everything we do. I am sure that participation in FFYP will benefit them in the future! Keep up the great work!

~Aga, Site Coordinator



WILLMAR

This semester FFYP joined forces with Smart Club and worked with a group of 20- 30 students each week. Every session was different and tutoring students in many different subjects was very exciting. Challenging math and science activities turned out to be fun learning experience for students, volunteers and staff. Besides math and science, we had the chance to learn other very interesting and completely new things, such as Chinese letters and words. I enjoyed working with the students who matured and grown up so much since I started working with them last year. I really appreciate the positive energy of the Smart Club leader and the students' enthusiasm. If you keep working hard, you will have great success!

~Kristina Seslija, Site Coordinator

