

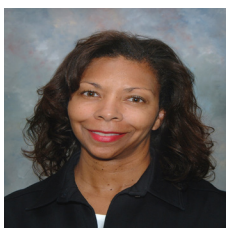


LOSFA LOOP

August 2014 Edition

Volume 7-8

From the Desk of the Executive Director



Dr. Sujuan Boutté

And so it begins...the journey of the senior year in high school. Those of us that remember that year think we know what's on the minds of the students we serve. But how can we be sure?

We've spent our summer here at LOSFA examining our services, thinking about what worked well and thinking about what we could improve upon. We came to the conclusion that the greatest challenge for our agency is to 'take it to the seats'. In other words we feel it is critical for us to ensure that our services are meeting the needs of the students we serve.

We also came to the conclusion that the best way to do that would be to ask the students to tell us their areas of greatest concern regarding going to college. We polled our Trailblazers and we polled our GEAR UP summer transition program attendees.

Here's what they asked:

How will I pay for college tuition?
What classes should I take?
How do I narrow down my scholarship options?
Will I be accepted into college?
Will I be eligible for scholarships?
How do I write a college essay?

How can I increase my ACT score?
Will I have debt after graduating from college?
What are the ACT requirements to get into college?
What will be the best college choice for me?
How do I decide what I will major in?

Here's what they said:

I would like better quality teachers at my high school.
I would like ACT prep.
I need help finding scholarships.
I believe that more students would participate if they knew more about the programs available to them.
Students need to know what programs like GEAR UP mean to people. They need to hear how these programs can help them.
Students are interested in college but they don't have money and don't know much about financial aid so it is easy to get discouraged.

Two groups of students, same theme, same fears, same concerns...
Same anticipation, same excitement, same opportunities...

Bottom line is: There's never been a better time to do what we are all committed to.

Best-
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In this edition. . .

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LASFAC Adopts Emergency Rules to Implement Program Changes Enacted During the Recent Legislative Session

At its July 17, 2014 meeting, the Executive Committee of the Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission approved Emergency Rules and Notice of Intent that implement Acts 566, 733, 737, and 837 of the 2014 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature.

ACT 566 – TOPS and TOPS TECH

Beginning with 2018 graduates, students can meet the TOPS Core Curriculum social studies requirement for civics by earning one unit from the following: Government, Civics, AP US Government and Politics: Comparative, or AP US Government and Politics: United States.

Beginning with 2018 graduates, Economics, AP Macroeconomics and AP Microeconomics are added to the list of social studies electives from which students must earn two units.

Act 733 – TOPS and TOPS TECH

Beginning with students graduating in 2018, adds certain honors, talented, and articulated courses that will be converted to a five-point scale for calculating the grade point average for TOPS eligibility.

Makes the administering agency responsible for defining “skill or occupational training” for the purpose of the TOPS Tech, Opportunity, Performance and Honors Award. Previously, the Board of Regents was responsible for this determination.

Revises the definition of “Skill and Occupational Training” by deleting references to the Board of Regents and adding “any training leading to an Industry-Based Certification, a Certificate of Applied Science or a Certificate of Technical Sciences approved by the Workforce Investment Council offered by a provider recognized by the Louisiana Workforce Commission.”

Adds the TOPS Opportunity Award core curriculum for 2018 high school graduates to the list of core curriculums that may be used to meet the TOPS Tech initial eligibility requirements.

Provides that BESE may approve changes to course names and equivalencies for AP and IB courses.

Act 737 – TOPS and TOPS TECH

Changes the TOPS core curriculum for the Opportunity, Performance and Honors Awards to allow one unit of drafting to substitute for Fine Arts Survey through 2017 and to use one unit of drafting to substitute for one art unit beginning in 2018.

Changes the TOPS Tech core to allow one unit of drafting to substitute for one unit of Fine Arts Survey.

Allows students to qualify for TOPS Tech using the TOPS core for the Opportunity, Performance and Honors Awards for 2018 graduates.

Deletes the TOPS Tech core requirement to earn one unit of Chemistry or Applied Chemistry and requires two units of science from the list of TOPS Tech science subjects and adds Chemistry and Applied Chemistry to the list.

Act 737 – TOPS TECH EARLY START

Provides that the TOPS-Tech Early Start award can be used to enroll in programs to pursue certifications approved by the Workforce Investment Council.

Deletes the graduation exit exam requirements.

Allows nonpublic postsecondary education institutions offering courses leading to an Industry-Based Certification, a Certificate of Applied Science, and/or

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LASFAC Adopts Emergency Rules to Implement Program Changes Enacted During the Recent Legislative Session *continued*

a Certificate of Technical Sciences in a top demand occupation to participate in the TOPS-Tech Early Start program.

Allows up to five Louisiana training providers recognized by the Workforce Commission and approved by BESE to participate in the TOPS-Tech Early Start program. Note that these providers may be, but are not necessarily nonpublic postsecondary education institutions.

Personally Identifiable Information

ACT 837

Provides policies and procedures for the collection, receipt, use, protection and destruction of personally identifiable information.

These procedures include requirements for consent from a parent or guardian for the public schools to collect and disclose certain personally identifiable information related to sixth through twelfth grade students to LOSFA to make it possible for the agency to

guide and motivate these students to prepare for and achieve eligibility for college financial aid programs, and to allow LOSFA to determine eligibility for financial aid programs, including the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS).

Requests for Exception to the Requirements to Maintain Continuous Full-Time Enrollment and to Earn 24 Hours During The Academic Year

In other action, LASFAC approved an Emergency Rule to change the maximum length of an exception for parental leave from, "Up to two consecutive semesters (three consecutive quarters) per pregnancy", to, "Up to the equivalent of one academic year (college) per pregnancy."

This aligns the period of exception with the current academic year (college), which now includes summer terms.

140 Rising High School Seniors Attend Trailblazer Camp

Another year of Trailblazer Camps has passed, with 140 rising senior high school students from across Louisiana gathering at Northwestern State University and at Nicholls State University to learn about college access and financial assistance. Two of those campers walked away with \$1,000 scholarships provided by our friends at LELA (Louisiana Education Loan Authority) and all walked away with a deeper knowledge of what it takes to pay for higher education.

the Trailblazers to LOSFA's new service model geared to a much more comprehensive approach to college access including:

- More LOSFA-sponsored motivational events
- More information on admission standards
- More information on application deadlines and awareness of associated fees (application fees, housing registration fees, orientation fees, etc.)

But the major focus of this year's camps was introducing

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Trailblazer Camp *continued*

- More information on summer bridge programs to ease the transition from high school to college and to meet any required developmental course prerequisites for college admission
- More emphasis on the advantages of earning postsecondary credit while in high school
- More emphasis on selecting the right postsecondary institution for the individual student's career goals, financial situation, and social/emotional comfort level
- More hands-on follow-up with application filing assistance and FAFSA completion assistance
- More recognition for students who are accepted to the postsecondary institution of their choice

The 2014 Trailblazers seemed to completely buy-in to their critical mission to serve as peer counselors to their fellow students and to help convey the importance of utilizing all of the information provided by LOSFA to ensure a smooth transition from high school to postsecondary education and to acquire the funding necessary to achieve their dreams.

Trailblazer Camp 2014 Scholarship Winners!

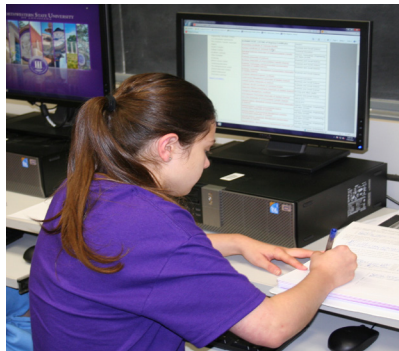


Christie Smith (left) of the Louisiana Education Loan Authority (LELA) presents Carencro High School senior Shakanna Riles (right) with her \$1,000 scholarship. Riles won the scholarship while attending LOSFA's Trailblazer Camp at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, LA.



Ann Carmichael (right) of the Louisiana Education Loan Authority (LELA) presents Tyler Venable (left) with his \$1,000 scholarship. Venable won the scholarship while attending LOSFA's Trailblazer Camp at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, LA.

Trailblazer Camp 2014 at Northwestern State University



Trailblazer Camp 2014 at Nicholls State University



Trailblazer Tweets: What Students are Saying About Trailblazer Camp and College Access

So glad I was picked to go to Trailblazer camp, such an awesome learning & fun experience I'll never forget! Thank you so much!

If my parents sign up for a START program account for my college, they can save money from their state taxes.

Learning a lot about TOPS, GRANTS, LOANS, SCHOLARSHIPS. Great information to have for my future success.

Touring the campus of a college could change your mind about your college decision!

To reduce college costs consider living at home while in college or attend a 2-year school before entering a 4 year institution.

The more colleges you apply for the better chance you have at the best fit for you.

Seniors remember that college is always an option no matter your financial situation!

I learned that you should be careful to avoid scholarship scams

Borrow only what you need for student loans.

TOPS will be a life saver for college!

TOPS AWARD AMOUNTS FOR 2014-15
For All Award Levels

Institutions		Calculated 2014-15 TOPS Annual Amount	Fall Semester/ Quarter 2014 TOPS Maximum Payment	Winter Quarter 2014-15 Maximum TOPS Payment	Spring Semester/ Quarter 2015 Maximum TOPS Payment
Technical					
Northwest Louisiana Technical College		\$1,892.00	\$946.00		\$946.00
Proprietary and Cosmetology Schools		TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
South Central Louisiana Technical College		\$1,891.82	\$945.91		\$945.91
2 Year					
Baton Rouge Community College ⁽¹⁾		\$2,805.53	\$1,402.76		\$1,402.77
Bossier Parish Community College ⁽¹⁾		\$2,921.95	\$1,460.97		\$1,460.98
Central Louisiana Technical Community Col. ⁽¹⁾		\$2,921.95	\$1,460.97		\$1,460.98
Delgado Community College ⁽¹⁾		\$2,921.95	\$1,460.97		\$1,460.98
L. E. Fletcher Technical Comm. Col. ⁽¹⁾		\$2,921.95	\$1,460.97		\$1,460.98
Louisiana Delta Community College ⁽¹⁾		\$2,921.95	\$1,460.97		\$1,460.98
LSU – Eunice ⁽¹⁾		\$2,530.00	\$1,265.00		\$1,265.00
Northshore Technical Community College ⁽¹⁾		\$2,921.95	\$1,460.97		\$1,460.98
Nunez Community College ⁽¹⁾		\$2,921.95	\$1,460.97		\$1,460.98
River Parishes Community College ⁽¹⁾		\$2,921.95	\$1,460.97		\$1,460.98
South Louisiana Community College ⁽¹⁾		\$2,921.95	\$1,460.97		\$1,460.98
SOWELA Technical Comm. College ⁽¹⁾		\$2,921.95	\$1,460.97		\$1,460.98
SU-Shreveport ⁽¹⁾		\$2,618.00	\$1,309.00		\$1,309.00
4 Year					
Grambling State University		\$4,895.00	\$2,447.50		\$2,447.50
Nicholls State University		\$4,922.28	\$2,461.14		\$2,461.14
LSU – Alexandria		\$4,620.00	\$2,310.00		\$2,310.00
LSU – BR		\$6,464.54	\$3,238.73		\$3,225.81
LSU HSC – NO	Allied Health	\$6,341.50	\$3,170.75		\$3,170.75
	Nursing	\$4,637.60	\$2,318.80		\$2,318.80
	Dental Hygiene	\$4,559.50	\$2,279.75		\$2,279.75
	Dental Lab Tech	\$4,121.70	\$2,060.85		\$2,060.85
LSU HSC – Shreveport		\$6,529.60	\$3,264.80		\$3,264.80
LSU – Shreveport		\$4,813.60	\$2,406.80		\$2,406.80
Louisiana Tech University (Quarters)		\$5,438.80	\$1,813.00	\$1,813.00	\$1,812.80
McNeese State University		\$4,679.40	\$2,339.70		\$2,339.70
Northwestern State University		\$4,934.60	\$2,467.30		\$2,467.30
Southeastern La University		\$4,798.20	\$2,399.10		\$2,399.10
SU-Baton Rouge		\$4,521.00	\$2,260.50		\$2,260.50
SU-New Orleans*		\$3,501.00	\$1,750.50		\$1,750.50
*2014-15 TOPS amounts for SUNO to be determined after approval of percentage increase by SU Board					
UL – Lafayette		\$4,915.42	\$2,457.71		\$2,457.71
UL – Monroe		\$4,985.20	\$2,493.00		\$2,492.20
University of New Orleans		\$5,536.70	\$2,768.35		\$2,768.35
Out-of-State Institutions for Hearing Impaired Students ⁽²⁾					
Gallaudet University		\$4,648	\$2,324.00		\$2,324.00
Rochester Institute of Tech.		\$4,648	\$2,324.00		\$2,324.00
LAICU Institutions: Centenary, Dillard, Holy Cross College, Louisiana College, Loyola, NO Baptist Seminary, OLOL, St. Joseph's, Tulane, Xavier					
All Schools (Academic Program)		\$4,648	\$2,324.00		\$2,324.00
TOPS Eligible Students in a Graduate Program					
All Graduate Programs ⁽⁴⁾ (Semester)		\$6,464.54	\$3,232.27		\$3,232.27
All Graduate Programs ⁽⁴⁾ (Quarter)		\$6,464.54	\$2,154.85	\$2,154.85	\$2,154.84

Notes: (1) Includes all campuses within the designated colleges.

(2) Schools that are specifically designed to accommodate deaf and hard-of-hearing students. Includes both Academic and Technical

(3) The total amount does not include summer payments allowed for students enrolled full time in technical programs or students in an academic program that elect to have their award paid for a qualified summer session. The amount of the award may not exceed the tuition

(4) The TOPS Award Payment for TOPS eligible students enrolled in a graduate/professional program is limited to the full tuition charged by a school for enrollment in the respective graduate program or the maximum TOPS Award amount listed here, whichever is less.

Revised 8/6/14

Louisiana Goes To Washington

Four LA GEAR UP students were selected to participate as members of the 2014 GEAR UP Youth Congress in conjunction with the 2014 National Council for Community and Education Partnerships/GEAR UP Annual Conference, July 20-23, 2014, in Washington, D.C.

Led by experienced national trainers and supported by GEAR UP Alumni, including Bunkie High School graduate and LA GEAR UP staffer, Timenee Thomas; Ni'Gena Brooks, the Bastrop 2014 High School class valedictorian; and Darian Johnson, the state president of the Explorers' Club, Youth Congress members received training in grassroots advocacy, social media advocacy and leadership skills during the 3-day retreat. In addition, students participated in a professional conference alongside LA GEAR UP staff while interacting and learning with GEAR UP students from around the country.

"To have multiple students representing Louisiana is



2014 LA GEAR UP Youth Congress representatives: Isaac Porter, Bastrop High School; Darius Spurlock, Scotlandville High School; Tatyanna Jones, Bastrop High School; and Tremia Lockett, Broadmoor High School.

extraordinary, as Youth Congress selection was competitive both within LA GEAR UP schools and across states with GEAR UP programs" said LA GEAR UP Director, Dr. Tireka Cobb. Not only that, as Lagniappe, Darius Spurlock was selected by Youth Congress peers to share his personal story to all conference participants from the podium on the final day of the conference. "It was a powerful experience for all involved," Dr. Cobb concluded.



Tatyanna Jones, Tremia Lockett, and Darius Spurlock visit "The Hill" to talk to legislators about the value of college access programs like LA GEAR UP.

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For more information, contact the
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