



PRESS RELEASE

From the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LA GEAR UP Annual Explorers' Club Statewide Conference and Leadership Summit Set for March 12-14

BATON ROUGE – More than 300 participants, including 200 high school seniors and school personnel representing 30 Louisiana high schools, will converge on the Hilton Baton Rouge Capital Center hotel March 12-14 for the LA GEAR UP 2015 annual Explorers' Club Conference and Leadership Summit.

The statewide Explorers' Club Conference and Leadership Summit is the capstone event of Explorers' Clubs academic-year for the student run organizations that provide peer leadership opportunities throughout the year. Explorers' Clubs charge members to make wise academic and behavioral decisions leading to success in postsecondary education. As peer leaders, Club members are tasked with helping other students at their school make wise decisions.

The 2015 event is extra special because all seniors—mostly first-generation students— have been accepted to a college, university, community or technical college. The 2015 Conference is designed to help students transition to postsecondary education.

Conference Highlights

Thursday Evening (March 12)

Thursday evening events will be a celebration of college acceptance and begins with a college/university roll call in which students will sit according to the postsecondary institutions to which they've been accepted and concludes with a graduation cake and networking event. NCCEP (National Council for Community and Education Partnerships) President and CEO, Nathan Monell, will provide opening remarks.

Additionally, representatives from the Louisiana Department of Economic Development and the Louisiana Workforce Commission will facilitate a "Rip the Career Runway" in collaboration with Explorers' Club State Officers.

Friday (March 13)

Friday highlights include breakout sessions on navigating college course management systems; the cost of college choice; financial literacy; and ACT boot camp, focusing on psychometrics and test preparation.

Saturday Morning (March 14)

The Saturday morning schedule is loosely based on the “Go Center” concept in which a college and career access space is created to provide students with opportunities to research careers, college options, and financial aid with the assistance of college access professionals, mentors from higher education institutions or the community.

One Saturday-morning highlight is the Career Speed Networking Event. The objective is to provide students with career knowledge to promote educated college and career planning. Professionals working in fields related to their degrees—from culinary arts to chemical engineering—have been recruited to interface with students. Volunteers will staff round tables as small groups of students travel from career table to career table at the sound of a bell in a design modeled around the speed dating concept.

LA GEAR UP (Louisiana Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) is administered by the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) and supported by the U.S. Department of Education, which gives grants to states or institutions of higher learning to create partnerships with high-poverty middle or high schools. In partnership with 12 Louisiana parishes, LA GEAR UP aims to increase the number of low-income students that are prepared to enter and succeed in post-secondary education.

Participating High Schools include:

Avoyelles High School
Bastrop High School
Broadmoor High School
Bunkie High School
Converse High School
East Iberville High School
East Feliciana High School
East St. John High School
Florien High School
Glen Oaks High School
Iberville Math Science and Arts East High School
Iberville Math Science and Arts West High School
Jeanerette High School
Landry-Walker High School
Mangham High School
Many High School
Marksville High School
Negreet High School
New Orleans Accelerated High School #1 CP
New Orleans Accelerated High School #2 WB
Plaquemine High School
Pleasant Hill High School
Rayville High School
Red River High School
Scotlandville Magnet High School
Tara High School
Union Parish High School
West St. John High School
White Castle High School

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