



# LOSFA LOOP

June 2014 Edition

Volume 7-6

## From the Desk of the Executive Director



Dr. Sujuan Boutté

*“Things may come to those who wait, but only the things left by those who hustle...”*

~ Abraham Lincoln

I saw this utilized in the signature line of an email this week and immediately thought of what we do. Each and every day we work hard in the field of college access to keep things moving for the benefit of the students and the families we serve. As we bring this school year to a close the only break we afford ourselves is one long enough to reflect on what we’ve done. This past year we reached 69,125 students, parents, professionals and members of the general public. Here are the highlights:

### Trailblazer Camp

Staff trained 156 Students during the summer of 2013. These students serve as our peer ambassadors in the high schools.

### Professional School Counselor Seminars

LOSFA conducted 21 seminars at 11 locations around the state. These seminars were attended by 1,573 Professional Middle and High School Counselors.

### STS Workshops

LOSFA provided hands-on training on the Student Transcript System for 72 non-public Professional School Counselors.

### College Application Month

Staff conducted a pilot program involving 25 Louisiana GEAR UP and Lafayette GEAR UP high schools. 1,049 Students completed at least one college application.

### College Goal Sunday

862 students completed and submitted a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) with 2,090 students and parents attending events around the state, receiving guidance and assistance regarding qualifying and applying for state and federal financial aid.

### FLY Tour: College Quest

The FLY Tour performed at 10 Louisiana high schools and the 2014 GEAR UP Leadership Conference. The tour was seen by more than 2,800 high school juniors and seniors.

### College Knowledge

LOSFA conducted 22 events attended by 2,205 Middle School Students on the concepts of financial aid, going to college and choosing a major.

### TOPS/Financial Aid Visits

LOSFA staff made 204 high school visits reaching 33,650 students and parents.

### General Public Events

LOSFA conducted 65 events for the general public and faith based communities reaching 18,917 participants.

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## From the Desk of the Executive Director *Continued*

### START Saving Events

Staff made 33 visits reaching 5,533 individuals regarding the benefits of opening a START Saving Account.

### Telephone Assistance

Staff provided program and college access assistance to 46,998 callers.

### Email Assistance

Staff provided assistance via email by responding to 2,824 inquiries.

As you can see, we are moving not waiting and as a result good things are happening for Louisiana students, parents and schools.

We plan to...



Best-  
S.



## LOSFA's News Briefs

### "5-29" Day

In observance of national "5/29 Day", LOSFA conducted its second annual START Saving Program Facebook chat from 6:00 until 9:00 p.m. on May 29 (5/29). The online discussion of the benefits of Louisiana's 529 college saving plan was followed by up to 460 Facebook users.

### Trailblazer Camp

LOSFA's 21<sup>st</sup> annual Trailblazer Camp will be held at Northwestern State University July 13 – 15, 2014 and at Nicholls State University July 20 -22, 2014. If you are a professional high school counselor and have not submitted a high school junior (Senior for school year 2014-2015), please submit your nominee here: <http://www.osfa.la.gov/trailblazersnomination>

### 2014-2015 LAICU TOPS Tuition Amount

The Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission approved the 2015 award year amount for TOPS recipients who attend institutions that are members of the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (LAICU) at its June meeting. The TOPS Opportunity award amount for students attending LAICU schools during the 2014-2015 academic year will be \$4,648 a year or \$2,324 per semester.

### LOSFA Employee Retires

Wendy Dalawari will retire from LOSFA in July after 24 years of state service. We wish Wendy good luck during her retirement. Pictured is Wendy with F. Travis Lavigne, Chairman of the Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission.

## A Bridge to the Future



**When:** June 8, 2014 to July 19, 2014  
**What:** College Success Scholars  
**Where:** Grambling State University  
**Who:** LA GEAR UP graduating seniors

A lot can happen in that summer between high school graduation and the fall college semester. After the cap and gown are put aside, students worry about money, as in finding some, as in scholarships, grants, and loans. They worry about leaving home, making new friends, and facing new experiences. Even college registration forms, housing options, and orientation programs can bewilder recent high school graduates.

At LA GEAR UP Summer Bridge Programs, newly-graduated seniors will adopt strategies to help alleviate the stress associated with facing college in the fall. College-bound recent high school graduates will take English and Math courses and earn six credit hours at Grambling State University. By the time these



**When:** July 6, 2014 - August 2, 2014  
**What:** Bridge Building for Future Bulldogs  
**Where:** La Tech State University  
**Who:** LA GEAR UP rising seniors

students take classes in the fall, their expectations of college courses and knowledge of study skills and time management will be greatly enhanced.

Juniors (rising seniors) will get a jumpstart on the transition from high school to college. After days of high intensity college and career preparation, including mock English and Math courses, students will de-stress on the rock wall, in the swimming pool, and on the basketball court at one of the Lambright Intramural facilities.

Stay tuned! Watch the LOSFA LOOP for Summer Bridge Program student profiles and reports on student activities.

## Adventures in Advocacy

Two LA GEAR UP students have been selected along with 30 students nationwide to participate in the second GEAR UP Alumni Leadership Academy (GUALA) in Washington, DC in June: Nigena Brooks and Darian Johnson. Students will receive training in grassroots advocacy, social media advocacy, and leadership skills during the weeklong retreat.

Nigena Brooks, Bastrop High School, has been an active Explorers' Club member and frequent participant in the annual Explorers' Club Leadership Conference. She also volunteered as a peer tutor during Louisiana College Application Week.



Darian Johnson, Bastrop High School, was elected as an Explorers' Club State Officer in the 2013-14 academic year and served as president. Darian has played a leading role in the Bastrop HS Explorers' Club since his freshman year.

Both of these students are passionate about college readiness and exemplify the spirit of GEAR UP.

The GEAR UP Alumni Leadership Academy is an initiative launched by the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP) in the

2012-13 academic year. NCCEP is the national training and technical assistance provider for the federal GEAR UP program. The Kresge Foundation provided funding to support the Academy.

Timenee Thomas, a LA GEAR UP alumni from Bunkie High School who is now a graduate of La Tech University and a certified teacher, participated in GUALA's pilot year and will devote time in the 2014-15 academic year to mentoring the two new GUALA members. GUALA is a 12-month commitment of a minimum of 10 hours a month.

"Nigena and Darian's dedication to education and desire to give back to their community is inspiring," said Dr. Tireka Cobb, LA GEAR UP assistant director. "To have two students selected in a national competition is astounding and reflects well on LA GEAR UP initiatives."

Stay tuned for future updates on the advocacy adventures of Nigena and Darian as they promote college access in the year ahead.





## Answer Key: May LOSFA Loop “Success Stories”

1. We toured ten campuses.
2. Our biggest success story this year is our ACT tutoring program.
3. More than 1,000 seniors applied for college during Louisiana College Application Week.
4. Students were able to find a school of interest, apply, and gain acceptance.
5. Due to the promotion of FAFSA this year, students seem to finally have an understanding of the college admissions process.
6. Students are generally excited about college.
7. We encouraged our students to sign up for the ACT online prep and get on A+ Learning sites.
8. Students are scoring higher.
9. Our club members tutored and mentored 8th grade students on LEAP.
10. We encouraged students to begin a college search via Louisiana Connect.
11. Until now, very few of these kids have ever set foot on a college campus.
12. We filled 50 boxes with donated gifts and toiletries for the Samaritan Christmas Project.
13. At the beginning of school I encouraged students to find a school of interest, apply, and gain acceptance.
14. Over 80% of seniors attended our college fair.
15. At the school-wide homecoming block party, the club had two booths.

## Employee Appreciation Luncheon

LOSFA celebrated Louisiana State Employee Appreciation Day on May 7. Dr. Sujuan Boutté, Ed. D. provided lunch for all LOSFA Employees. Thanks to Deborah Paul, Kelvin Deloch, Jason McCann, Wendy Dalawari and Rhonda Bridevaux who helped serve lunch. A huge THANK YOU to the entire LOSFA team for doing what you do best each and everyday!



## LOSFA's Social Media Sites



<http://www.facebook.com/LOSFA>



<http://www.twitter.com/LOSFA>



<http://www.youtube.com/LOSFA1000>



[www.Flickr.com/LOSFA](http://www.Flickr.com/LOSFA)



For more information, contact the  
Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance:

By Phone: 800-259-5626

By E-mail: [custserv@la.gov](mailto:custserv@la.gov)

By Mail: P.O. Box 91202, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-9202

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For submissions, opinions, or comments for the LOSFA LOOP,  
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