

A GROWTH AGENDA FOR WISCONSIN

GROWING PEOPLE, JOBS, & COMMUNITIES

Growth Agenda Action Step # 6:

Build a Wisconsin KnowHow2GO Network, Enlisting Undergraduates as Mentors to Kids

Brief summary: Wisconsin ranks 30th nationally in the percent of its population aged 25+ with four-year degrees. Expanding programs that provide parents and young people with easy-to-understand information about higher education options is needed to improve college attendance rates. The UW System is a leader in KnowHow2GO, a national campaign to raise college aspirations in young people and teach them how to get there. Working with UW campus colleagues and student government leaders, the UW System will call upon the generous volunteer spirit of undergraduates to become mentors and carry the KnowHow2GO message to young people and families statewide. This will build upon other efforts, including the Wisconsin Covenant, a state program promising students who get good grades and are good citizens a spot in a Wisconsin college, and the Fund for Wisconsin Scholars, a private endowment providing scholarships to lower-income UW and technical college students.

Progress to date and future plans:

- Existing programs in the UW System, which could expand to other UW campuses, include:
 - The UW-Green Bay Future Phoenix, a program which assists at-risk children from northeast Wisconsin to believe a college education is in their future; and
 - The UW-Madison PEOPLE program (Pre-College Enrichment Opportunity Program for Learning Excellence), a pre-college pipeline for students of color and low-income students, most of whom are the first in their families to potentially attend college.
- New programs underway:
 - A UW-Marathon County project, which uses the University of Washington Dream program, a student-initiated high school outreach program, as a model; and
 - UW-Eau Claire's "Line Up for College," a precollege program for 6th- through 8th-grade students.
- A systemwide event was held in April 2009 to showcase successful mentoring programs and encourage the development of similar programs across the state.

Related funding:

- Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation: Access Challenge Grant
- UW System Committee on Baccalaureate Education (COBE) grant supporting UW-Eau Claire's "Line Up for College" initiative
- UW System Growth Agenda Grant funds to support proposals for new mentoring programs or to expand existing programs

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