

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REALIZING EDUCATIONAL AND CAREER HOPES (REACH) PROGRAM STATUS REPORT**

**Action Requested:** Receive the status report of the Realizing Educational and Career Hopes (REACH) Program at the University of Iowa.

**Executive Summary:** The REACH Program is a two-year post-secondary certificate program which will be available on the campus of the University of Iowa. The Program will focus on meeting the needs of students with multiple learning and cognitive disabilities in an inclusive university setting while emphasizing life skills for independent living in the community at large. The curriculum will emphasize academic skill building, career preparation, life skill development, socialization, and career placement after graduation.

Support services will promote student success in all settings. Learning will be small-group focused and coupled with career coaching in real work settings. REACH students will live in Stanley Hall with the support of a specially trained resident assistant. Applications are currently being accepted for the first class of 18-20 students in August 2008.

This report addresses the Board's Strategic Plan objective (1.1) to "offer high-quality programs through ongoing program improvement for undergraduate, graduate, professional, and non-degree students and special school students."

**Background:**

- ◇ **Staffing.** The Program's staff is being recruited in phases. Full staffing will be completed by August 2009 when there will be both first- and second-year students in the Program.
  - 📖 The Program Director is Dr. Dennis Harper, Professor of Education, Pediatrics, and Public Health.
  - 📖 The current staff includes full-time professional Coordinators of Student Life, Academic Life, Community Life, and Career Life. These professionals, together with future staff members, will provide direct instruction to the students in the Program.
  - 📖 Core staff members are housed in Lindquist Center, home of the College of Education.
  
- ◇ **Housing.**
  - 📖 Students will live with REACH roommates and college peers at Stanley Hall on designated floors. Rooms have already been reserved.
  - 📖 To enhance the safety of REACH students, a curfew and visiting rules will be established.

- 📖 The Program will provide training to its own resident assistant staff in consultation with SUI Student Life administrators.
- 📖 Study areas as well as quiet time on house floors will be available.
- ◇ Program revenue.
  - 📖 Fees for participation in the REACH Program (including room and board and fees) are projected to be \$20,960 for Iowa residents and \$33,460 for non-residents.
  - 📖 Individuals and foundations have donated more than \$2 million to (1) support the REACH Program until it becomes self-sufficient and (2) provide scholarships to ensure that the Program will be accessible to eligible students.
  - 📖 Approval of program fees by the Board will be requested by the University in May 2008.
- ◇ Program features. The program will focus on four areas – Student Life, Academic Life, Career Life, and Community Life. Students may take selected University courses in addition to core courses. Students will learn through small class instruction, individual tutorials, group activities, and real-life experiences that extend learning beyond the classroom. Living on campus is a key component of the curriculum.
  - 📖 The staff has developed a complete curriculum map for the Program and is now developing individual courses. Courses in development include more than 35 core REACH offerings, such as Academic Success, Awareness of Issues in Society, Career Exploration, Computers and Technologies, Current Events and Citizenship, Daily Living Skills, Health and Wellness, Human Relationships and Sexuality, Internships, Job Search Strategies, Lifetime Reading, Literature and the Arts, Personal Finance and Math, Personal Leadership, Practical Writing, Social Skills and Conflict Management, Critical Thinking, Decision Making, and Problem Solving.
  - 📖 Morning classroom instruction will be followed by afternoon community-focused and career internships with evening study sessions provided throughout the week by staff.
  - 📖 Students will have assigned tutors, a mentor, and a cooperatively designed Personal Development Plan.
  - 📖 Career internships will consist of three semesters of mentored experience in Eastern Iowa job locations with prearranged employers. Many of these jobs and mentorships have already been developed. UIHC and SUI are designated mentored career sites as are other local and national employers, including ACT, Marriott Corporation, and Veteran's Hospital in Iowa City.
  - 📖 A certificate detailing academic and career skills will be awarded at graduation upon successful Program completion. Follow-up support will be offered to students to assist in job success and independent living.

◇ Program milestones.

- 📖 Admission requirements and Program features are available on the website [www.education.uiowa.edu/reach](http://www.education.uiowa.edu/reach). A special student section is available.
- 📖 The REACH Program Advisory Board, chaired by former Lieutenant Governor Sally Pederson, met for the first time in October 2007.
- 📖 An extensive marketing effort has been completed in Iowa and the Midwest.
- 📖 Thirteen applications have been received. Campus visits are being conducted for students and parents. Student interviews have been scheduled.
- 📖 The Program will begin in August 2008.