

OPENING THE DOORS TO COLLEGE



Foster Youth to College

Created by: Foster Youth to College Advisory Group

Education is the key to opening doors to a successful future. It can lead an individual on a path that is limited only by the student. Information highlighted below will help guide and inform youth, and the caring adults working with them, of endless educational opportunity. Encouraging youth to take advantage of the services, programs, and information will contribute greatly to helping them achieve higher levels of education and training.

Plan & Prepare for College

Pursuit of higher education can be a challenge requiring youth to plan and prepare as early as middle school. Youth should be encouraged to take advantage of programs and resources designed to inform and promote education beyond high school. School counselors in middle and high schools are a great resource! Contact school, college, and university staff and ask them to do presentations for youth. A wealth of information can be found on the Internet by simply surfing websites that help youth plan and prepare for college. Encourage young people to have some fun and find sites with helpful information that is new to them. A good site to help get started is College.gov at <http://www.college.gov>. Wisconsin youth can learn a great deal about planning and preparing for college at KnowHow2GO Wisconsin. Check it out at <http://knowhow2gowisconsin.org/>.

Precollege, Precollege, Precollege!

These programs have a proven track record of helping students think about, plan for, and enter postsecondary programs. Precollege programs are available in a wealth of recreational and academic areas. Hundreds of precollege programs are available throughout Wisconsin. For information on precollege programs and opportunities at University of Wisconsin campuses, call the UW HELP at (800) 442-6459 or use the searchable database of precollege programs at <http://uwhelp.wisconsin.edu/precollege>.

For information on precollege programs at Wisconsin's private colleges, contact the WAICU Student Access Center at (800) 433-4733 ext. 227.

The Wisconsin Covenant

Eighth graders in Wisconsin are invited to sign the Wisconsin Covenant Pledge, a promise that they will:

- Earn a high-school diploma.
- Maintain at least a "B" average in high school.
- Complete the classes they need to prepare for higher education.
- Demonstrate good citizenship and participate in their community.
- Apply for state and federal financial aid in a timely manner.
- Take the necessary steps to gain admission to a University of Wisconsin System institution, a Wisconsin Technical College, or a Wisconsin private college or university.

In return for meeting these goals and keeping the pledge, Wisconsin Covenant students will be recognized as a Wisconsin Covenant Scholar, earn a place within a Wisconsin college or university, and receive a financial aid package, based on financial need, to help make college affordable. To learn more about this great program, visit the Wisconsin Covenant website at <http://www.wisconsin covenant.wi.gov/>.

Wisconsin Technical Colleges & Careers

Wisconsin Technical Colleges offer more than 300 career education programs at 16 different colleges throughout the state. No program takes longer than two years of full-time study and many can be completed in a year or less. Great educational choices exist that lead to great careers. Technical colleges may also be an option for students who need to build their academic skills. The Wisconsin Technical College website offers all kinds of great information and links to all 16 Wisconsin technical colleges at <http://www.witechcolleges.com>.

"The past is not my future."

Wisconsin Private Colleges & Universities

The Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU) includes 20 great colleges and universities. Large and small campuses throughout the state offer hundreds of majors and programs of study that lead to four-year degrees. In addition to information on Wisconsin's 20 private colleges and universities, the Wisconsin Mentor site at <http://www.wisconsinmentor.org> includes free ACT or SAT test prep, career exploration and plenty of helpful advice to plan and prepare for college. Student Access Center representatives are available to assist youth at 800-4-DEGREE (800-433-4733) ext 227.

University of Wisconsin System

The University of Wisconsin System includes 13 two-year campuses, 13 four-year campuses and UW-Extension. With 26 great campuses throughout the state, each with plenty of opportunity, there's something for everyone! Visit UW HELP Online at <http://uwhelp.wisconsin.edu> for information on planning for college, careers, majors, admission, financial aid and much more. Talk with educational advisors by calling UW HELP at (800) 442-6459 to learn more about University of Wisconsin campuses and college planning.

Wisconsin Educational Opportunity Program

The Wisconsin Educational Opportunity Program (WEOP) provides great information about state scholarships, loans, grants, and other aid to students. In addition to financial aid information, youth can participate in other opportunities provided by WEOP. Services and programs may include postsecondary counseling, campus tours, ACT preparation, financial aid counseling, help with completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and more!

The WEOP staff is ready, willing, and able to assist students with college planning and other program opportunities like Talent Search, GEAR UP, and precollege program enrollment. WEOP Offices are located in Ashland, Eau Claire, Green Bay, Madison, Milwaukee, Racine and Wausau. Visit the WEOP website at <http://dpi.wi.gov/weop> for more on the program and opportunities, as well as local contact information. Students are advised to initiate contact with WEOP early in their high school years.

Financial Aid

The only thing more expensive than going to college is not going to college! Youth coming from foster homes are generally considered independent for financial aid purposes and are eligible for a significant amount of federal and state financial assistance. There are many informative websites available on financial aid. For information on federal student aid, visit Student Aid on the Web at <http://studentaid.ed.gov>. Visiting financial aid sites at colleges and universities of interest is also very helpful.

To learn about other state scholarships and grants for Wisconsin students seeking to attend college after high school, visit the State of Wisconsin Higher Education Aids Board website at <http://heab.wi.gov/>.

For information about general scholarship opportunities, visit:

- FastWeb.com at <http://www.fastweb.com> or
- College Board Scholarship Search at http://apps.collegeboard.com/cbsearch_ss/welcome.jsp.

DCF Scholarship Fund

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) awards scholarships to youth formerly in out-of-home-care placements. Scholarship funds are available for tuition, room, and board expenses for postsecondary education and training programs. For information about scholarships, contact DCF at (608) 267-7287 or access the scholarship application form at <http://dfc.wisconsin.gov/cnildren/IndLiving/prgser/v/ScholarRes.htm>.

Be sure to submit an application in a timely way!

Fund for Wisconsin Scholars (FFWS)

The FFWS is a private scholarship established to help reduce the financial barriers to college and to lighten the debt that most Wisconsin students incur during their college years. The founding gift of \$175,000,000 from John P. and Tashia F. Morgridge creates a permanent endowment to provide grants for eligible, lower-income, talented graduates of Wisconsin public schools attending a Wisconsin public post-secondary institution. To learn more about the Fund for Wisconsin Scholars, visit the website at <http://www.ffws.org/>.