

Great Ideas for Great Public Schools

NEVADA

Innovative approach to teacher recruitment includes \$20,000 scholarship equivalent

STEP UP—short for Student to Teacher Enlistment Project—started in 2004-05 as an effort to recruit minority students from across the Clark County School District to the field of education. The product of collaboration among the Clark County School District, the Clark County Education Association Community Foundation (a philanthropic affiliate of the teachers' union), the College of Southern Nevada, and Nevada State College, the program gives students the opportunity to earn a teaching degree in four to six years, tuition-free. In addition, for four years after completing the program, each participant is given priority to teach in the district. STEP UP is an innovative model for recruiting, preparing, and retaining quality teachers in districts that are growing fast or facing recruitment and retention challenges.

Background

- A majority of the participants in STEP UP are first-generation college students.
- 170 participants are attending the College of Southern Nevada and Nevada State College.
- 235 students at eight schools took part in the program in 2008-09.
- STEP UP prides itself on diversity—the program is 58 percent Hispanic, 19 percent white, 14 percent African American, 8 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1 percent American Indian/Alaskan Native.

How STEP UP works

- Students are recruited in cohorts of 100.
- Eight comprehensive high schools offer the program: Chaparral, Cheyenne, Desert Pines, Eldorado, Mojave, Rancho, Silverado, and Valley.

- Qualifying students complete a two-year associate's degree in pre-education coursework and simultaneously finish their junior and senior years of high school.
- The remainder of their coursework—upper division education courses—is completed in the next two to three years, after students have earned a high school diploma and an associate's degree.
- STEP UP provides the equivalent of a \$20,000 college scholarship.

Employment

- The first group of teachers completed the program in December 2008.
- Several STEP UP students who are working toward their bachelor's degree are employed as instructional aides in the Clark County School District.
- Qualified STEP UP students may apply to be substitute teachers while completing bachelor's degree requirements.

For more information:

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Great Public Schools for Every Student