

EDUCATION MATTERS

Mayor Anthony A. Williams Attends Launch of DC Free Summer Meals

In recognition of Free Summer Meals Program week, the SED hosted the 2nd Annual "Come To The Table" event to raise awareness about hunger in the District and the 2005 DC Free Summer Meals Program on Monday, June 20th, 2004 at the beautiful, new King-Greenleaf Recreation Center in Southwest Washington, DC.

The program included remarks from Mayor Anthony A. Williams, students from Bruce Monroe Elementary School, corporate partners, food advocates, USDA representatives a proclamation from the Mayor and the raising of the DC Free Summer Meals banners, which will be displayed throughout the District at DC Free Summer Meals locations.

The DC Free Summer Meals Program which is administered by the SED, will offer approximately 300 feeding sites throughout the District, providing **FREE** nutritious meals to youth up to age 18 and some adults with disabilities throughout the summer. Most sites will be located at DC Parks and Recreation locations, DC public Schools and community and faith based organizations. The program will run from June 22 - August 31, 2005.

The goal of the SED is to further promote the DC Free Summer Meals Program, DC Free Summer Meals locations, and strengthen alliances with various government agencies, businesses and food advocacy organizations in an effort to prevent hunger in the District.

To find the nearest Free Summer Meals location or to find out how to register to have your organization become a Free Summer Meals site, please call the 24 hours a day, 7 days a week hotline number at (202)463-6211 or visit the web at www.summeryouthprogram.dc.gov



Mayor Anthony A. Williams delivering the DC Free Summer Meals Program Proclamation



State Education Officer Deborah A. Gist, raising the DC Free Summer Meals banners.



Kids sampling the DC Free Summer Meals.



Students from Bruce Monroe Elementary School attending the DC Free Summer Meals Program

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Anthony A. Williams, Mayor
District of Columbia Government



Letter from the State Education Officer



Welcome to the premier edition of *Education Matters*, the newsletter from the State Education Office (SEO). While it is true that the District of Columbia is not a state, the SEO carries out many state-level education functions for the District of Columbia. Some of you might wonder: What is the function of the State Education Office? We have included

an article on page 4 that provides an overview of the current functions of the SEO. These functions include: supplying college tuition assistance, providing education policy research and analysis, managing student food programs, licensing private postsecondary educational institutions, and housing the award-winning, online Education Resource Center.

In upcoming issues, we will focus on each of the exciting, beneficial programs that the SEO offers. This quarter, we would like to highlight the college financial aid services that District residents can access through the SEO - the DC Tuition Assistance Grant Program (DCTAG), the DC Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership Program (DCLEAP), and the Adoption Scholarship Program (DCAS). One of the most important education issues is the rising cost of college tuition. The proposed amount for DCTAG fiscal year 2006 is \$33.2 million, an increase of nearly \$7 million for fiscal year 2006. DCTAG allows DC residents to receive up to \$10,000 a year to attend college. Nearly 4,300 District residents have used the DCTAG Program to attend 258 colleges and universities throughout the United States in school year 2004-2005.

The impact of DCTAG on college attendance can be seen in the number of District students attending college. Since 1998, the number of high school graduates in the District going straight to college has increased to over 28%. Over 600 colleges and universities participate in the DCTAG Program, ranging as far from the District as the University of Alaska and the University of Puerto Rico. From the 2002-2003 school year to the 2003-2004 school year the number of grants awarded increased by 11%. At the same time, the

percentage of applications awarded in each year increased from 89% to 93%. In other words, more students applied for the DCTAG Program and more students won grants to help them afford a college education.

For the first time in school year 2005-2006, the applications for the District's three higher education financial aid programs - DCTAG, DCLEAP, and DCAS - were combined into one application, the DC OneApp, which you will find on our website at www.seo.dc.gov. The OneApp enables applicants to significantly reduce the amount of paperwork and time spent on applying to the District's college grant programs. The DC OneApp online is the result of an ongoing partnership between the State Education Office and the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) to provide a best-in-class service to District residents pursuing their dreams of obtaining a college degree. It's as easy as one, two, three. One application, two options (online or paper), three grant programs.

The State Education Office is proud to support college access to District residents. We look forward to sending more and more students to college each year. We also look forward to sharing our good news with our readers in the years to come.

Respectfully,

What's New

Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton Celebrates DC Tuition Assistance Grant Program Graduating Class



more than 9,000 students to attend colleges and universities all over the United States.

The DCTAG Reception was held Tuesday, June 21st at H2O Restaurant, 800 Water Street in Southwest Washington, DC. Jeannie Jones from the WKYS mid-afternoon show was the host for the event.

Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton spoke at a reception in honor of the DC Tuition Assistance Grant Program's (DCTAG) second graduating class. The DCTAG Program awards up to \$10,000 to qualified students to attend eligible public universities and colleges and historically black colleges and universities nationwide, as well as private universities in the Washington Metropolitan area. Since inception, the program has awarded \$96 million to

The DCTAG Program is not based on need or merit and is an award that does not have to be repaid. To qualify for the DCTAG Program, an applicant must be a resident of the District for one year prior to the start of college; registered with selective service (males 18 and over), a US citizen, not in default status with federal student loans and working toward obtaining his or her first undergraduate degree.



SEO Director of Marketing and Communication John Stokes and the Director of HEFS John Parham Jr., with Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes-Norton.



Deborah A. Gist and the Higher Education Financial Services (HEFS) Staff



DCTAG Graduates

About the SEO

The District's State Education Office Departments

The SEO's mission is to provide and enhance educational services and opportunities that meet the life-long learning needs of District of Columbia residents through research, effective policy, and programs that ensure the equitable distribution and availability of administrative, financial, and nutrition resources.

Some of our primary responsibilities are:

Nutrition Services (NS)

Provides federal funding, compliance monitoring, technical assistance and training, outreach and marketing information to the District's public, private and non-profit institutions. The services offered by sponsors awarded funding by the NS programs ensure the nutritional well-being of children and adults, while enhancing services provided by public, public charter and private entities such as schools, charitable organizations and government entities.

Higher Education Financial Services (HEFS)

Provides grant funds to students to assist in the financing of their post secondary education. The program includes DC Tuition Assistance Grant (DCTAG), DC Leveraging Education Assistance Program (LEAP) and other post secondary tuition programs. The purpose of the HEFS is to provide grants to assist District high school graduates with their college tuition payments.

Policy Research and Analysis (PRA)

Provides accessible, reliable and accurate information to citizens and policy makers so they can make well-informed decisions about education in the District. The PRA unit collects and analyzes data, formulates and promulgates rules for the documentation and verification of District residency for public school students, convenes members of the education community for the purpose of promoting thoughtful dialogue about education, conducts an annual audit of public school students, and provides recommendations for revisions to the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula.

Office of Public Charter School Financing and Support

Provides direct lending or credit enhancement to public charter schools for the purpose of acquisition, renovation and/or leasehold improvements for facilities. The office also manages the City Build program and an incubator project for new charter schools.

Education Programs

Educational Licensing Certification (ELC) provides regulatory compliance services to non-public educational institutions and residents of the District of Columbia so that educational institutions are legally enabled to meet the educational needs and requirements of the District residents. The purpose of the ELC requires trained staff to conduct site visits to review programs and service provisions in educational institutions against the required regulations. Based on this review, staff may recommend remedial or other actions to be implemented.

Gaining Early Awareness & Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) provides academic preparation; early college awareness information and education for students, parents, teachers, and counselors; college financial assistance information; and student and family support services, such as counseling, mentoring and tutoring.

Did You Know

By: Laurencia O'Connor Henderson

SEO Ed Digest

The SEO Ed Digest is a free online tool distributed monthly by the State Education Office. Our mission is to share national research about urban P-16 education with city leaders, administrators, researchers, the education policy community and other interested stakeholders. Visit the SEO Ed Digest www.seo.dc.gov. You can subscribe to the SEO Ed Digest by registering with DCDOCS.

DC Free Summer Meals

The DC Free Summer Meals program reimburses organizations that provide meals to District children from low-income areas or to people with disabilities.

The DC Free Summer Meals Program will operate from June 22–August 31, 2005. Most free meal locations will be at DC Parks and Recreation sites, DC Public Schools and community and faith based organizations.

Further information about the (SEO) programs is available on the SEO website at www.seo.dc.gov. Those interested in receiving additional information or an application for the DC Free Summer Meals Program are encouraged to call Sarah Latterner on (202) 442-4010 or the 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 211 Answers Please telephone number (202)463-6211.

Shelters and After-School Programs

Shelters and after school programs are eligible to use the federal entitlement program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, to feed youth up to eighteen years of age in their facilities.

Recently, Congress extended food program eligibility for children and youth in shelters from 13 years of age to up to 18 years of age.

After-school programs, homeless, runaway and domestic violence shelters can receive reimbursement. For more information about the Child and Adult Care Food Program, please contact the SEO Special Nutrition and Commodities office at (202)727-6436.

Counselors Trained

The HEFS department of the DC State Education Office conducted training in February for high school counselors from the D.C. Public High Schools, D.C. Public Charter Schools, area private high schools, community organizations such as the Educational Opportunity Center, Greater Washington College Information center and advisor from the D.C. College Access Program (DCCAP). Seventy five persons attended these update training sessions, which were held at One Judiciary Square and the Washington Post building. The attendees received information regarding the major college assistance programs administered by the HEFS department - D.C. Tuition Assistance Grant Program (DCTAG), the D.C. Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership Program (DCLEAP) and the D.C. Adoption Scholarship (DCAS). Much of the training focused on the new DC OneApp, which combines the three grant programs into one application.

OneApp Deadline

June 24th was the priority deadline for Higher Education Financial Service (HEFS) program (DCTAG, DCLEAP and DC Adoption). For the first time in the history of the programs we extended the hours of operation for constituents to submit their applications and supporting documents. We interacted with over 1,000 constituents and answered an estimated five hundred telephone calls between June 22nd - 24th. It was a great success! The HEFS team will be processing approximately 10,000 OneApp applications for the grant programs for the 2005-2006 academic year.

SEO Person of The Month

Congratulations to the Education Matters Person of the month, **Mr. Kenneth Howard, Coordinator for College Relations with the DC Tuition Assistance Grant Program (DCTAG)**. Known to many as "THE TAG MAN" Ken has been employed within the District of Columbia for over 30 years and Coordinator for DCTAG for five years. He is a licensed Professional Counselor and serves on the Advisory Board of The United Negro College Fund's Standard of Excellence Peer Review Project.

How long have you worked with the DC TAG Program?

I have been with the program since February of 2000 and I am one of the last of the program's original staff members.

What is your role in the Program?

As a spokesperson for DCTAG I initiated staff participation in over 500 workshops and trade shows throughout the District of Columbia and in other states. I personally participated in almost 400 sessions extolling the virtues of the program.

Have you received any awards for your accomplishments?

Yes, I received the Customer Service Excellence Award for 2003, and recently honored by the DCCAP Program as the Washington, DC Counselor of the Year.

What has been your biggest challenge working with the DCTAG Program?

My biggest challenge was making people aware of a program that many had never heard of, making an uncommon name as well known as the sun.

What past experience do you bring to the DCTAG Program?

I am the former Director of Financial Aid at the University of the District of Columbia, where I was selected as the first recipient of The Presidential Outstanding Staff Member Award. I also served as the Director of Financial Aid at

Washington Technical Institute and DC Teachers College, as well as being the Deputy Director of Financial Aid at Federal City College.



Ken Howard receiving the Customer Service Award from Mayor Anthony A. Williams.

What was your role with the US Department of Education?

I served as a National Financial Aid Trainer giving countless work-shops and conducting informational sessions for district and federal agencies, area communities and national organizations around the country.

I hear that you have worked 7 days a week pushing the DCTAG Program. Why has Tuition Assistance become so important to you?

Yes, sometimes. I don't consider it a job, it's a vocation.

As you can see, Ken Howard has made a huge impact in the financial aid profession. Take note that he twice served as the DC Representative to the Delaware-District of Columbia-Maryland Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, and also served as the President of that Association. Ken has written numerous articles, appeared on several radio and television presentations in Washington DC, Baltimore and Prince George's County.

It is with great pleasure to present the Education Matters Person of the Month, a man with strength, integrity and a passion for Education. We salute Mr. Ken Howard.

Interview by: Francine Pruitt-Judge

DC Government Employees Years of Service Anniversaries

The State Education Office would like to recognize all SEO employees on their anniversaries for the years of service in the District of Columbia Government.

April:

4/3/72 Arnita Price, Staff Assistant, Higher Education Financial Services

May:

5/5/03 Rehva D. Jones, Interim Manager, GEAR-UP

5/3/04 Francisco Negron, Jr., General Counsel

June:

6/1/92 Esi Afi Lydia, Program Analyst, GEAR-UP

6/2/92 Emilia J. Del Arroyo, Program Analyst Bilingual, Higher Education Financial Services

6/21/04 Major Langford, Food Program Monitor, Nutrition Services

6/28/04 Hom R. Achara, Program Analyst, Policy Research & Analysis

6/28/04 Abay Awash, Program Assistant, Higher Education Financial Services



New Team Members

SEO Welcomes New Team Members

- 2/22/05 Sarah Latterner, Special Assistant, Nutrition Services
- 3/21/05 Jo Ann Smoak, Director of Operations
- 5/2/05 Glenda Partee, Director of Policy Research & Analysis
- 5/2/05 Wayne A. Gardiner, Summer Food Monitor, Nutrition Services
- 5/16/05 John Parham, Jr., Director of Higher Education Financial Services
- 5/31/05 Bob Baik, Executive Assistant to the State Education Officer
- 6/13/05 Renee Evans, School Programs Manager, Nutrition Services
- 7/11/05 Yuliana D. Del Arroyo, Program Analyst, GEAR-UP
- 7/11/05 Kadidia Thiero, Outreach Coordinator, Higher Education Financial Services



Bienvenido

Education Inspiration



The DCTAG Program has been a tremendous asset to my education. Upon graduation from high school, I knew that I wanted to attend a college or university outside of Washington, DC. In order to accomplish this, I knew that I needed financial assistance along with several scholarships since college can be very expensive for out-of-state students. When I heard about the DCTAG Program, I immediately called to get more information. After reading the materials and realizing how it could benefit me, I applied.

This program helped to fulfill my dream of attending a university in another state that ordinarily would have been too costly. I am very pleased to have been a participant in the DCTAG Program because it allowed me to attend the university of my choice. It is because of this program that I now a graduate of Norfolk State University with a B.S. Degree in Computer Science I hope that this program continues to assist other students like myself who have hopes and dreams of attending colleges or universities that are not very costly. This program can make hopes and dreams for many to become realities.

Natasha S. Mckeiver

05 April 2005

*College Relations
State Education Office
Executive Office of the Mayor
441 4th Street NW Room 350
Washington, D.C. 20001*

Dear DCTAG:

We are a nation that believes in leaving no child behind and the DC Tuition Assistance Grant (DCTAG) program has proven that statement true. We, LaKena and LaKeisha Grimes, will be graduating from Tennessee State University (TSU) on May 7 2005, which is located in Nashville TN. This would not be a celebration without acknowledging the DCTAG program and its generous contribution throughout our matriculation. Gaining assistance from DCTAG was a stamp for guaranteeing a successful completion without an outstanding financial obligation.

DCTAG involvement total to a sum of sixty-five thousand and sixty-two dollars (\$65,062); Individually, LaKena received thirty five thousand, two hundred and twelve dollars (\$35,212) and LaKeisha received twenty-nine thousand, eight hundred and fifty dollars (\$29,850). We are greatly appreciative for your generosity and encouragement. In return, we showed our support for the continuation of the program through attendance at the DCTAG Congressional Hearing to keep the program functioning.

LaKena will be graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and a concentration in Engineering. LaKeisha will be graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Sociology with a concentration on the Family. We would like to take this time to personally invite you to the graduations on May 7, 2005 at 9am and again at 2pm. If possible, we would like for someone from the DCTAG office to attend our graduations, this being the first graduation of two sisters supported by the DCTAG program. We would also like to send out a special invite to Congresswoman Norton and Mayor Williams. We are deeply grateful for all of the support given to us and we would like for you to celebrate this special day with our family and us.

Sincerely,

*LaKena and LaKeisha Grimes
Graduates of Tennessee State University*

Calendar of Events

JULY

Su	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

AUGUST

Su	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

SEPTEMBER

Su	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Scheduled Activities/Conferences/Meetings

Nutrition Services

- July 12, 2005, CACFP Training/At Risk & Adult 3535 V Street, 9:00am-4:00pm
- July 13, 2005, CACFP Training, Sponsors of Centers/Homes 3535 V Street, 9:00am-4:00pm
- July 13, 2005, Inaugural/Induction of the Food and Nutrition Commission, 6:00pm-7:30pm
- July 14, 2005, CACFP Training 3535 V Street, 9:00am-4:00pm
- July 17-20 2005, School Nutrition Association, Baltimore, MD
- July 21, 2005, CACFP Collaborative Meeting, Shaw Millennium Center, 1:30pm-3:30pm
- July 28, 2005, Mandatory SEO Ethics Training, Room 1114, 9:00am-12:00pm
- August 1, 2005, NSLP Training of Potential SFAs, 10:00am-12:30pm
- August 2, 2005, DC Action for Children, Community Fair, Kennedy Rec, 10:30am-4:00pm
- August 9, 2005, Food and Nutrition Commission Meeting, 441 4th Street, Room 1117, 6:00pm-8:00pm
- August 22-23, 2005, CRE Training for DCPS, V Street Warehouse, 7:00am-2:30pm
- August 27, 2005, Meeting with SFSP Sponsors, View Room, 2:00pm-3:30pm
- September 12-14, 2005, FNS National Nutrition Conference, Arlington, VA
- September 25-27, 2005, TSA Conference/CACFP Sponsors Assoc Mtg, Chicago, IL

Education Programs

- July 28, 2005, Public Sessions for formal licensing and approval actions for postsecondary educational institutions.
- September 8, 2005, Literacy Breakfast, 8:00am-9:30am. Location (TBD)
- September 9, 2005, Literacy Media Tour

Higher Education Financial Services

- July 23, 2005, DCCAP Pre-College Experience Workshop, at Trinity University 1:00pm
- July 26, 2005, Mentoring Program, at Library of Congress 10:00am - 1:00pm
- July 30, 2005, DCCAP Pre-College Experience Workshop, at Trinity University 1:00pm

Policy Research and Analysis

- July 20, 2005, Meeting of the State Advisory on Special Education for DC
- August 10, 2005, Enrollment Audit School Staff Training
- September 15, 2005, Policy Forum Breakfast. Location (TBD)