

LEAD Scholars Students Visit Florida High Schools

"The LEAD Scholars' Leadership Excellence Award has actively impacted high school students throughout various counties in Florida," said Kylie Hernandez, graduate student Student Leadership Development.

The Lead Scholars' Leadership Excellence Board (LEB) strives to provide quality marketing and promotions for the program, as well as oversees the selection and recruitment process of future LEAD Scholars students. In Fall 2008, board members and eight other LEAD Scholars (both first and second years) visited high schools in the following Florida cities: Fort Myers, New Smyrna Beach, Daytona Beach, Marathon, Orlando, Clermont, Niceville and Fort Pierce.

Presentations ranged from "LEAD Scholars Marketing" and "Various Leadership Styles"

to "True Colors" (an adjective-associated personality test that identifies four predominant leadership styles. "The College Experience" presented by second-year LEAD Scholars students, discussed high school students' frequently asked questions concerning college. This question and answer type session allows high school students to learn more about topics that concern them, such as those regarding on-campus residence living, making friends, getting involved on campus and maintaining a good GPA, in a relaxed, non-confrontational setting.

The board hopes to reach students from diverse populations and ethnic backgrounds,



Left to right, LEB board members: Matt Yeager, Brittany Schmitke, Adam Tulp, Meghan McCaffrey and Ethan Johnson

while mutually recruiting highly qualified, well-rounded future LEAD Scholars.

First Year Scholars Recognized at Reception

Encouraging administrators, high-achieving students and proud parents and families came together on January 27 for the First Year Scholars Reception. Over 1,700 UCF First-Time-in-College freshmen received a 3.5 or higher grade point average for Fall 2008, making them this year's First Year Scholars. Students were honored with their names printed in a full page ad in the Central Florida Future, a campus affiliated publication.

Over 400 students, family and friends crowded into the Pegasus Ballroom for the reception. Congratulatory remarks and words of praise were provided by DeLaine Priest and Mark Allen Poisel, associate vice presidents Student Development and Enrollment Services, and Jeff Novak, associate director Housing and Residence Life. Students Laura Lord and Eric Smith, co-presidents of the UCF chapter of the Golden Key International Honour Society, also took the stage to congratulate their fellow Knights.

"It felt wonderful for the inspiring speakers to acknowledge our accomplishments for our first semester in college," First Year Scholar Sharlynn Gabarda said. "The speakers understood that we had worked hard, and they encouraged us to further excel not only in our studies, but also in extracurricular clubs and sports." Like Gabarda, many students had invited their parents and family to attend the honored event. After being recognized at the First Year Scholars Reception, Gabarda is enthusiastic about continuing to receive high marks throughout her college experience. "I want to excel and maintain my position at the top or aim even higher in my future."

"As parents, these award ceremonies make us feel proud about our children's accomplishments," said Eva Gabarda (mother of Sharlynn) who came from Ft. Lauderdale with Sharlynn's father, Manny, to attend the reception. "Students who are recognized for their achievements tend to perform at a higher level, and the performance itself becomes a further motivator in continuing to excel. It does not only improve the morale, but it also brings families together."

First Year Scholars were honored with a certificate of achievement and a First Year Academic Scholar lapel pin. Closing remarks were offered by Joe Ritchie, executive director First Year Experience. "It's impressive to see so many first-year students excelling in their academics," stated Ritchie. "They are our hope for the future and inspire us all to continue to excel in our daily lives." Following the ceremony, students enjoyed congratulatory cake and refreshments with their families.

Unlocking the Keys to Success—Spring Learning Fair

The Student Academic Resource Center (SARC) held its first-ever Spring Learning Fair on January 26 showcasing the academic support services available to assist UCF students. The event was co-sponsored by Kaplan Test Prep. The Spring Learning Fair goals were to foster the academic success and retention of first-year students, identify personal and academic skills, and increase awareness and use of learning support services on campus.

Display tables included: SARC Tutoring, Supplemental Instruction (SI), University Testing Center, Math Lab, University Writing Center, Counseling Center, Career Center, Student Disability Services, Office of Undergraduate Research, Office of Student Involvement, Learning and Interacting with New Knights (LINK), American Medical Student Association and Allies. Staff, faculty members, and peers answered students' questions and provided information on how students connect with resources for success both inside and outside the classroom. SARC SI leaders provided hands-on demonstrations on effective study strategies applied to different disciplines.

The Learning Fair offered three academic success workshops to enhance students' learning skills, covering topics on Understanding Financial Aid, How to Succeed in a Math Class and Time Management. By attending the Learning Fair, first-year students earned 1,000 LINK LOOT points, which they can use at the LINK Auction at the end of the semester. A total of 240 students participated in the Learning Fair. Students' comments included: "Being able to talk to peers about the best ways to study was very helpful," "I learned there are academic clubs I can join here at UCF," and "It's great to know tutoring at UCF is free."

Jennifer Wright, director SARC, commented, "As a first time initiative, we consider the SARC Spring Learning Fair a success and a necessary resource for all students at UCF. We look forward to making this event a SARC tradition in continuing to provide UCF students with intentional and purposeful academic programming."



Students checking out information on tables.