

For Immediate Release

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Media contact: Ron Cole, manager of news and information services, 330-941-3285.

YEC students earn 75 college credits, post high grades

Forty-three ninth-graders posted a combined 2.9 grade-point-average while earning 75 college credits during the first year of Youngstown Early College on the campus of Youngstown State University.

Overall, YEC students enrolled in college classes earned 18 A's, 17 B's, 8 C's and 3 D's. There were no failing grades. The 2.9 GPA is on a scale of 0 to 4.

“For high school freshmen to take 75 hours of college credit and to show that measure of success, it's very encouraging,” said Larry Johnson, dean of YEC.

YEC, a partnership between YSU and the Youngstown City School District, is an innovative high school designed to help average students with demonstrated academic potential succeed in high school and transition to college.

Students in the school take a combination of high school and college classes, graduating from high school with up to 60 hours of college credit.

The school, developed with the assistance of the KnowledgeWorks Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, opened in August 2004 with 75 ninth-graders in six classrooms on the second floor of Fedor Hall on the YSU campus. Sixty-eight students were enrolled when the school year ended on May 19.

The program will add about 100 students annually for a total enrollment of nearly 400 in grades nine through 12 by the 2007-08 school year.

Johnson said the program is accomplishing what it set out to accomplish – giving Youngstown public school students a head-start on college.

(more)

Youngstown Early College/Add 1

Of the 68 YEC ninth-graders, 43 enrolled in 46 college classes during YSU's spring semester. While most took physical education courses, nine students enrolled in other introductory college classes, ranging from criminal justice to computer science.

"We didn't expect students to enroll in introductory college classes until some time next school year," said Richard Bretz, YSU special assistant to the provost. "So, we're actually ahead of schedule in that sense."

In addition to the academic successes, the school also posted a 95.6 percent attendance rate, higher than the city's other three public high schools.

"We're moving in the right direction," Johnson said. "A lot of times, when you move into something like this, something that is brand new, you want to be successful overnight. But it's a process. The students made a good adjustment to being on campus. They adapted well to college classes. And I think they understand what the opportunities are in this program."