

Students Exposed To STEM Opportunities

SMASH Program At UC Davis Provides Comprehensive Learning For Low-Income Students Of Color

For the past four weeks at the University of California, Davis (UC Davis), 30 rising high school sophomores have participated in an intensive Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) program

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targeted at underrepresented youth of color.

The STEM program, SMASH, the Summer Math and Science Honors Academy, allows the students to spend five weeks living and studying on the university campus. The inaugural program at UC Davis, completely free of cost to students and their parents, ends next week.

"SMASH is a program designed to prepare low-income students of color to enter and succeed in college and succeed at STEM," said Eli Kennedy, the CEO of the acad-

emy.

"More specifically, we partner with universities, students come to us when they finish their freshmen year in high school. They literally live on the campus and experience the college life," he added.

SMASH Academy, first started in 2004. The program is inspired by and loosely modeled after Phillips Academy Andover's Math and Science for Minority Students.

It is a three-year, five-week summer program practiced at Stanford, UC Berkeley and UCLA campuses. Morehouse College in Atlanta is also one of the landing spots for the program.

SMASH launched the first residential summer program 12 years ago at UC Berkeley. In 2006, the academy moved up to a year-round academic program, based on student requests. In 2007, SMASH experienced 100 percent of



SMASH CEO Eli Kennedy says the program prepares students to succeed in college.

the first class of scholars apply to and enroll in college.

For three years, the SMASH

students also obtain year-round academic support including SAT prep, college

counseling, financial aid workshops and other activities to ensure continued academic success.

The students in the summer academy at UC Davis are currently living on campus with other high-potential Black, Latino, Native American, Southeast Asian or Pacific Islander high school students from low-income areas in the Sacramento region.

"They'll get a mix of education and hardcore, STEM teaching," Kennedy said.

"They learn math, they work on engineer design challenges, and do a whole bunch of social justice curriculum. If you look at a block of our schedules they are programed about 12 hours per day. It's really deep levels of instructions. We do this for three years," Kennedy added.

For more information, visit Level Playing Field Institute's web site at www.LPFI.org.

CSUS Expands Campus 'University Union' Area

Sacramento State University will break ground early next year on a 71,000-square-foot expansion-renovation of the University Union, which serves as the campus "living room" for 30,000 students.

A three-story addition to the north side of the 183,000-square-foot building will include a storefront for Peak Adventures (currently located at The WELL), a premium coffee venue, meeting and conference spaces for student groups and other organizations.

Additional restrooms, a study lounge, food-service storage, expanded casual seating, and an outdoor-seating pavilion area are also part of

the renovations.

The addition will be built to meet the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold standards. The existing building will be updated with new HVAC, and fire alarm and lighting-control systems.

Construction is expected to begin in the first quarter of 2017 and to be completed by August 2018.

"The Union suffers from an overall lack of space, primarily for open seating and places for people to just 'hang out,'" says Bill Olmsted, associate executive director of Union WELL Inc. "If you walk through the Union at any given time, you will see peo-

ple sitting on the floor in hallways and alcoves. You will see them trying to eat lunch or type a paper while sitting in a stairwell. For several years, those have been the blatant signs of our space limitations. The expansion will allow more students to spend time comfortably in the building."

The \$53 million project will be paid for with student fees approved in a campus-wide alternative-consultation process, reserves from Union WELL Inc., and generated revenue. No state funds can or will be used.

The University Union project will add to a flurry of ongoing campus construction activity:

Work continues on

Student Housing II, a 416-bed residence hall that will be completed in time for the Fall 2017 semester. And Sac State will break ground next spring on Science II, a state-of-the-art education building with cutting-edge teaching labs.

Science II and Student Housing II are the first new-construction projects in the Campus Master Plan 2015. As work begins on the University Union expansion, campus officials also plan to break ground on an 1,800-space parking structure for the north end of campus.

In addition, the University has plans to expand The WELL. The campus health and fitness center has 22,000 active members and is used

daily by more than 4,000 students, faculty, and staff.

And the University Library is closed this summer for asbestos abatement in anticipation of an eventual renovation. The library will reopen in August.

When the University Union opened in 1976, gasoline was 57 cents a gallon, a postage stamp was 10 cents, and the year's top song was Silly Love Songs by Paul McCartney and Wings. Expansions to the Union were completed in 1990, 1992, 1998, and 2005 as the student population continued to grow. The building currently houses study areas, food services, meeting spaces, and program offices.