

PROGRAM:

Time to Experience Campus Life and Programs

OBJECTIVES:

Introduce 7th grade students to a college campus, campus activities and campus life. Event objectives:

1. Provide an opportunity for 7th grade students to dream big about life and college.
2. Acquaint students with Whitman campus and campus activities.
3. Remind students that the work that they are doing in middle school makes an impact on what they want to do later.

LOCATION:

College Campus

DESCRIPTION:

In early May, at 8:30 a.m., 350 7th grade students, their teachers and GEAR UP staff exited their buses and headed straight to Whitman College's largest auditorium, Cordiner Hall. 350 is the maximum capacity for an event of this nature at Whitman. In Cordiner, Whitman College and GEAR UP representatives welcomed everyone and then eighteen student pods waited their turns to be dismissed with their Whitman College student leader(s).

By 9:00 a.m., student pods were off to either enjoy a campus tour or a campus activity. May 2009 campus activities included: Book Arts, First Aid, Touring the Biology Department, Science Experiments, Geology Stream Analysis, Frisbee Fun, Hip Hop Dance Lessons, Soccer, Community Service, or visiting Whitman's Writing House. Events differ each year, depending on which academic departments and student organizations volunteer to help with the day.

Tours and activities were scheduled in 50-minute sessions. Event guests were led to the Student Center around 11:00 a.m. for a 30-minute lunch. Lunch was provided by Whitman's food contractor, which included: a sub sandwich, chips, fruit, cookie and lemonade or water.

The day's keynote speaker was Whitman's Director of Outdoor Programs, Brien Sheedy. He concluded the event with a 60-minute presentation titled, "Follow Your Dreams". This was a mixed-media presentation featuring his Mount Everest ascent. The presentation included plenty of student interaction, as he: demonstrated some of his climbing gear, talked about some of the details involved with planning a hike and climb of this magnitude, provided a geographical overview and acquainted the audience with many of the physical challenges that an endeavor of this nature entails.

Whitman College student leaders provided excellent campus information, including personal stories about life on campus, during tours. Brien Sheedy's keynote presentation received instantaneous positive feedback from students and teachers alike.

At 1:00 p.m., event guests were led to their busses. Whitman student leaders then provided 7th grade students an informational packet as they loaded onto their busses. The packet included: a letter to the students highlighting the event's purpose, college information and a flyer for WISE (Whitman Institute for Summer Enrichment).

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE:

1. Event date confirmed by early November.
2. In November, a lead GEAR UP representative and Whitman College Admissions representative were assigned as primary contacts for each organization.
3. GEAR UP schools confirmed participation by no later than November.
4. After Winter Break, Whitman College began recruiting activity leaders for the event.
5. February, contracts for lunch were reviewed. Contracts were finalized soon after Spring Break.
6. After Spring Break, Whitman College began recruiting student leaders.
7. Late March, Whitman College confirmed bus drop-off and pick-up times to GEAR UP schools.
8. Mid-April the Whitman College event team and GEAR UP event team met. This meeting was dedicated to Student Supervision & Safety Planning and reviewing the day's schedule.
9. Late April, Whitman College provided the final schedules to GEAR UP schools.
10. Early May, 7th grade students enjoyed a morning on Whitman campus.

PREPARATION ACTIVITIES:

1. GEAR UP staff surveyed teachers and students.
2. Survey summary was provided to Whitman College.
3. Whitman College and GEAR UP lead contacts debrief.

COSTS OR COST CONSIDERATIONS:

- Contract for lunch with campus food provider
- Transportation
- Speaker's Fee
- Staff Time

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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