

Subaru partnership to provide college readiness support for Camden students



Designed to increase students' skills in math, science, English and computer literacy, the C.H.A.M.P./GEAR UP Summer Program mixes academic work with field trips and other activities to make learning fun. (Above) Participants from the 2015 Summer Program enjoyed an overnight camping trip in Belle Plain State Forest.

Generous support from the Subaru of America Foundation, Inc. promises to yield a significant impact on the social and educational mobility of Camden's youth through the C.H.A.M.P./

GEAR UP program at Rowan University–Camden (The Creating Higher Aspiration and Motivation Project/Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs.

“At Subaru we have a heavy focus on education, specifically science, math and environmental programs,” said Anthony Trosclair, Field Marketing Specialist at Subaru of America. “The C.H.A.M.P./GEAR UP program was ideal not only because it's right in our backyard, but it's a program that will build a foundation for students to develop necessary skills and characteristics to succeed in their futures.”

“I was able to interact with the students and even parents about the program,” said Trosclair after an on-site visit.

“What's really great about this program is it gives students the opportunity to interact with other students who come from diverse backgrounds—students they

may not have had the chance to interact with otherwise.”

The program at Rowan University–Camden is one of seven GEAR UP programs in New Jersey specifically designed to serve students in grades 6–12. The original C.H.A.M.P. program was founded in 1985 as a small, volunteer counseling service that involved 100 Camden High School seniors. The project now serves over 400 Camden City middle and high school students through annual college access activities.

The program includes a six-week summer enrichment program on the Rowan campus, which concentrates on increasing the students' skills in math, science, English, public speaking and computer science. Emphasis is also placed on self-esteem and social and cooperative skill building as well as career broadening experiences.

The academic year program includes after school tutoring, in and out of school counseling and mentoring, Saturday field trips and educational activities and trips to colleges and universities. PSAT/SAT instruction is offered twice a week as well as assistance with college applications and financial aid forms.

The program is supported by funds from the U.S. Department of Education administered through New Jersey Higher Education, NJ College Bound Grant

Program, Camden City Public Schools and Rowan University.

“One of the great things about our program is it is hugely community based,” noted Winona Wigfall, Director of the CHAMP/GEAR UP Program. “Our entire staff cares about these students and we will do anything possible to get them prepared for college. We have a lot of siblings, neighbors and friends who encourage each other to join. Parents are also widely involved and we have a lot of our students come back and serve as tutors and mentors.”

“At Subaru we are frequently looking for ways to make a greater impact in Camden and the C.H.A.M.P./GEAR-UP program will be one them,” said Sandy Capell, Philanthropy and Corporate Responsibility Manager at Subaru. “Our support will not only help by enhancing academic opportunities, but also by opening doors for these students to have career exploration and really think about what they want to do after high school.”

The support from the Subaru of America Foundation, Inc. will provide students with the resources they need to prepare for college and will make it possible for students to gain valuable knowledge about the importance of education and the lasting, life-long impact of programs like CHAMP/GEAR UP.