



News Release

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Public Universities “Jump Start” Students to College Success

PIERRE, S.D. – South Dakota State University, in partnership with six other South Dakota higher education institutions, has received a \$3.6 million federal grant to help American Indian and low-income students enroll and succeed in college.

Called South Dakota Jump Start, the program will introduce 900 students to higher education through a summer campus-based experience prior to their freshman year of college. The students then return for two summers after that to earn college credit and participate in part-time employment through on-campus jobs or undergraduate research to help pay for their higher education.

“We face a continuing challenge to help more minority and low-income students succeed in college,” said Jack Warner, executive director and CEO for the South Dakota Board of Regents. “Many of these students come unprepared for higher education, or without adequate resources to succeed in college.”

“An innovative program such as this has the potential to significantly improve success rates of these students over time,” Warner said. Jump Start students will be identified in their senior year of high school and then receive targeted help with college admissions and preparation. Once on campus, they will also have close access to retention advisers and other resources to help them find their sense of place.

Led by SDSU, the program will operate at all six public universities under the authority of the Board of Regents, as well as at Oglala Lakota College, a tribal institution. The funds will be awarded over a four-year period, through the U.S. Department of Education’s Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education. Institutions partnering with SDSU are Black Hills State University, Dakota State University, Northern State University, Oglala Lakota College, South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, and the University of South Dakota. The grant was developed by a 10-person team representing all seven partner institutions and the Board of Regents’ central office, and led by two vice presidents from SDSU and the grants office.

“After receiving nearly 500 applications from around the country, we’re excited to announce that South Dakota State University and its partner institutions will receive a First in the World grant, funded for the first time this year,” said U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. “Each grantee demonstrated a high-quality, creative, and sound approach to expand college access and improve student outcomes,” Duncan said.