

POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

Foundation boosts college-bound

Nine of the students who graduated from Pottstown High School last week have a head start on college, paid in part or in full by the Foundation for Pottstown Education.

The students earned college credits from the Montgomery County Community College at the same time they were juniors and seniors at Pottstown High School. Depending on students' financial need and their grade point average, the Foundation paid for either half or all of their tuition.



Commentary by
Tom Hylton

The credits are accepted by state colleges and many private colleges.

Some students had already finished a full year of college (30 credits) by the time they received their diploma last week.

Operating out of a rent-free office in the Pottstown School District administration building, the Foundation is otherwise self-sustaining, with

donated funds.

Full-time Director Joe Rusiewicz, a part-time assistant, and a board of 18 raised nearly \$400,000 last year, of which \$180,000 went for scholarships and other programs, \$130,000 for administration, and \$110,000 to build up an endowment of about \$1 million.

Not all students who enroll in both Pottstown High School and the Community College receive a subsidy.

Only those who are accepted in the Early College program, demonstrating financial need, a 90 percent or above grade point average at the high school, and a good attendance record qualify.

All graduates in the program are in college or soon will be. The first cohort graduates from college this year.

In the six years the Foundation has offered the program, 54 students have had all or part of their dual enrollment college credits paid for at a total cost of more than \$300,000.

The college tuition program is just one way the Foundation enhances education in Pottstown.

(More Thursday)

College Cohort	Number Enrolled	Start date	Graduate PHS	Completed Early College program
Cohort I	9	Spring 2014	2015	9
Cohort II	11	Fall 2014	2016	11
Cohort III	14	2015	2017	11
Cohort IV	20	2016	2018	14
Cohort V	12	2017	2019	9
Cohort VI	15	2018	2020	
Cohort VII	15	2019	2021	
TOTAL				54

Colleges/ universities attended by Foundation-funded graduates		
Albright	Lebanon Valley	Susquehanna
Alvernia	Lynchburg	Temple
Cairn	Montgomery County CC	U. of San Diego
Cheney	Millersville	University of the Sciences
Drexel	Moravian	University of Virginia
East Carolina	Penn State (Main)	Ursinus
Gwynedd Mercy	Penn State (Berks)	Villanova
Indiana U of PA	Shenandoah	York