

# Future Teacher Program – Preparing Future Educational Leaders

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*Future Teacher Program participant Deonte Iverson works in the Center for Students with Disabilities to gain hands-on skills while pursuing his degree.*



*Students and faculty represented the Future Teacher Program at the state Capitol in 2012 to accept a program achievement award from the State Council on Affirmative Action.*

Consider Kayla, who recently spoke with her advisor about trying to make the decision between taking a required \$150 PRAXIS exam and paying her rent. A passing score on the exam would enable her to enroll in her final semester of coursework. But without a place to live, she would not be able to continue her studies.

The College of Education and Professional Studies is committed to expanding opportunities and promoting the success of first-generation and low-income students. Wisconsin needs diverse, motivated and highly qualified teachers. The Future Teacher Program (FTP) at UW-Whitewater is committed to the recruitment and retention of diverse students in the teaching profession and those who are interested in teaching in high-need subjects in Wisconsin. FTP's goal is to increase the enrollment, retention and graduation rates of undergraduate students who major in education.

The cost of teacher education has risen, and there is often a gap between scholarship and financial aid package and the actual out-of-pocket expenses of completing a program. New state testing requirements exceed \$1,000 per student. Community-based fieldwork, a cornerstone of all education majors, requires reliable transportation, professional dress and

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extra living expenses. Without adequate funding, students often work long hours at off-campus jobs, which can result in poor grades and makes full-day internships and fieldwork placements difficult to schedule. The Future Teacher Program seeks to address this funding gap to keep promising students on track to graduation and employment.

Started in 2009, FTP has grown to include a portfolio of high-impact practices including community engagement, summer institutes, learning communities, a student organization, peer mentoring, undergraduate research, and service learning programs. A key component of FTP is a week-long summer program, allowing prospective students the opportunity to visit UW-Whitewater and become acclimated to living on campus. During the intensive on-site program, they consider strategies for academic success, familiarize themselves with the college environment, and engage in mentoring and advising

opportunities, including pre-application testing and involvement in support programs. Those support programs continue, in conjunction with student learning communities, throughout the critical freshman and sophomore years. Students admitted through the program continue to work with a designated FTP advisor throughout their time on campus.

The program is a proven success. In 2012 it was awarded the Anne Lydecker Educational Diversity Award by the State of Wisconsin. Now in its eighth year, FTP boasts a 90% retention-to-graduation rate for its students.

With your support, the Future Teacher Program will continue to attract, retain and graduate students of promise and potential who are dedicated to making a difference in the world by inspiring generations of learners.