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Gateway Program prepares students for future at Morris

Summary: This July, incoming freshmen participate in four-week Gateway program to aid their college careers

(July 13, 2012)-On Monday, July 9, 2012 the University of Minnesota, Morris once again welcomed incoming first-year students to the Gateway program. Twenty-three freshman with student mentors, faculty, and staff joined one another for a day of introductions and sloppy joes.

Gateway is a Multi-Ethnic Student Program designed as a primer for incoming first-years. As a pre-collegiate experience first-years work with current Morris student-mentors in three ways: first, new undergraduates work through a four-credit course covering topics in English, mathematics, and computer science as a primer for coursework in the coming academic year. Second, activities on weekends and after classes are arranged for students to get to know one another, the Morris campus, and the Morris community. Third, seminars and workshops instruct students in college necessities such as career planning, academic advising, and financial aid.

The late Joseph Latterell, professor emeritus of chemistry the late Thomas McRoberts, director of continuing education and William Stewart, former Multi-Ethnic Student Program director, founded gateway in 1995. The program is meant as a way to aid the transition to college life for incoming students in a supportive and personal environment, one that inspires learning and development. The course runs four weeks and this year's student mentors will guide program students during their first experience at Morris. Coming from Illinois, Alaska, and all over Minnesota, the students will spend time learning and socializing with campus faculty, staff, mentors, and each other.

On July 20, Gateway students will again participate as part of the UMM Cougar Pride team in the Steven's County Relay for Life fundraiser for the American Cancer Society. Beyond coursework and a relay race, weekends are given to enjoying the Morris area. Through trips to local parks for barbeques, visiting Alexandria, and taking a tour of downtown, students will become well acquainted with the community the last weekend will be spent on a trip to Sioux Falls, culminating with a trip to the local water park.

The program ends on August 3 when Gateway students have the choice of going home or sticking around before classes start. Program coordinator Sue Lor aims for the experience to "give roots to hold and wings to fly." All program staff and students are excited for the program and past events have left students with success and a sense of belonging.

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.