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Gateway program provides exposure to academics, the campus, and the city of Morris--and lots of fun!

Summary: Gateway students arrived in July for the four-week program and already report a positive response to the experience and to the community.

(July 23, 2009)-The Gateway Program is in full swing on the University of Minnesota, Morris campus. The four-week summer program that began on July 13, 2009, prepares talented students of multi-ethnic backgrounds for success in their Morris college careers through courses, workshops, seminars, and recreational activities. Gateway students work with peer mentors and the Multi-Ethnic Student Program (MSP) staff.

Nineteen students from Texas, Connecticut, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Minnesota are participating in the program this summer. In addition to exposure to academics—English, computer science, and mathematics—and student life on campus, the program introduces the new Morris residents to their off-campus surroundings. Participants enjoy canoeing down the nearby Pomme de Terre River and seeing movies at the historic Morris Theater. They also become familiar with the city of Morris.

Gateway mentor Ayano “Ace” Jiru ’12, Shakopee, likes working with incoming students and helping them transition to college life. He enjoys making connections with the new students and seeing “how everyone changes over the time they are at Gateway.” He says: “I am excited to see how they start the school year and how Gateway prepares them for life at Morris. Of course, I plan on keeping in touch with them even after the program is finished.”

Jiru and his fellow current student mentors, Yang Me Moua ’10, St. Paul, Joshua Preston ’12, Montevideo, and Bobby Cheng ’10, Nanjing, China, appreciate the learning opportunity afforded by serving as mentors.

Incoming students participating in the Gateway program are happy to be experiencing such a fun program at Morris and are excited for the coming weeks. Representing participants, Winnie Lindstrom ’13, Ogema, Benjamin Alvarado ’13, El Paso, Texas, and Starr Fox ’13, Brooklyn Center, state they are in Morris looking for the “good education” that attracted them to the campus and have no doubt that is what they will receive.

“Since I’ve never been to Minnesota, I was nervous,” says Alvarado, “but this program is way past my expectations. I’ve met so many friends already, and I hope college is just like this.”

“It feels like we’ve been here for weeks!” says Lindstrom. “It’s a good program. It’s fun, and it’s nice to have familiar faces for when we start classes.”

“I love this campus,” says Fox. “I love Morris. I can’t wait to live here for the school year. I want a good education it’s important to me. That’s why I came here.”

The Gateway Program, administered by MSP, was founded in 1995 by the late Joseph Latterell, professor emeritus of chemistry, Thomas McRoberts ’68, director of continuing education, and William Stewart, former MSP director, to

motivate students to succeed and to give students an understanding of the level of work expected in college. The program encourages students to expand educational and career aspirations and provides an environment conducive to learning and personal development.

MSP's mission is to ensure a stable, strong, and supportive environment for multi-ethnic students by providing academic assistance and quality student support services.

Photo above: Seated—Fox, Alvarado, and Lindstrom, Standing—Jiru

Photo below: 2009 Gateway participants and staff

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.