



Dual Credit Saving College Families Time and Money

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Godfrey, Ill. – Throughout the community, dual credit through Lewis and Clark's High School Partnership program has given students a leg up on college, and in some cases even helped them save as much as an entire year.

Sara Joseph, 18, of Godfrey is one of those cases. Joseph graduated from Alton High School last year and took a whopping 36 hours worth of college credit with her to Pittsburg State University in Pittsburg, Kansas. Even though it was her first year, she transferred in as a sophomore, allowing her to earn two bachelor's degrees - in biology and commercial graphics -by 2014, in the time it takes most people to earn one.

Her previous credits also earned her priority registration over other first-year students, and the course curriculum helped prepare her for college-level courses.

"It was definitely a different atmosphere, and there was more work to do, but they were a lot more like college courses. I think the teachers did a good job teaching us not only the material, but what to expect in a college classroom," she said.

Chris Kratschmer, a Marquette Catholic High School alumnus and junior accounting and history major at the University of Notre Dame, is also saving time and money through the program. Thanks to dual credit courses and summer school classes at Lewis and Clark, he will be able to sit for his Certified Public Accountant exam right after he graduates, while it takes most students at least a partial fifth year in college to collect the 150 credits needed for eligibility.

Kratschmer will save that tuition money instead, which at Notre Dame can run about \$20,000 a semester for a full time student.

"You can save a lot of money, and it's really convenient," he said.

Brett Ostrander, 22, of Edwardsville is now a senior at Stanford University, which accepted 25 of his 30 credits from Edwardsville High School's dual credit program as a freshman.

Although Ostrander, EHS Class of 2007 valedictorian, is opting to complete all four years of his college experience to take a few more courses, be with friends, and prepare for medical school applications – he could have graduated as early as March 2011 had he wanted to. Instead, he used his dual credit to take some of the pressure off his college experience and take more comfortable course loads.

“The thing that helped me the most was my Spanish transfer credits. Stanford requires a full year of foreign language, but I was fortunate enough to already have that done,” Ostrander said. “If you're planning on going to college, you're probably going to have to take some of these classes anyway. If you take them in high school, you can save the money on tuition and books and time. It would be really beneficial.”

Lewis and Clark's High School Partnership program, accredited by the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships, offers students at 18 area schools the opportunity to start earning college credits before they leave high school.

The program saw a 15 percent increase in the number of students receiving dual credit in 2010 and a 30 percent increase in the number of credit hours taken.

“This fall's credit hours taken by high school students represent a savings of \$1,122,264 for district parents, and that number is based only on Lewis and Clark's low tuition rate,” Vice President of Enrollment Services Kent Scheffel said.

The Edwardsville School District reached an all time high in Fall 2010 by offering 46 dual credit courses – the most ever offered by a high school in the dual credit program.

“We were amazed to see such a large number of courses and students from one school district who are taking advantage of the dual credit offering,” Scheffel said. “I believe that more parents are realizing the value of their student earning college credit – at no cost to them – while they attend high school. I am sure this college savings is even more significant given the current economy.”