

Summer academic enrichment program

Written by Marcia Humphrey
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Last week, my husband and I were discussing summer plans for our three children. We want them to have opportunities to work their brains and their bodies all year round. Last summer their brains got a workout with daily reading assignments --regular math worksheets and writing tasks were on the list as well. To help with healthy bodies, we got them involved with a summer track team-although not the fastest children on the track, they each enjoyed some aspect of the experience.

Have you already started thinking about the summer activities for your child? Although we are just coming off the heels of another intense winter storm, all the snow will eventually melt and we must strategize about how to keep the minds (and bodies) of our kids in top shape. If you are on a tight budget, yet want to get your child plugged in to stimulating learning opportunities this summer, the Minnesota Office of Higher Education may be able to help. Made possible by the Federal College Access Challenge Grant Program, the 2011 Summer Academic Enrichment Program may have funds available for your student.

If you have a student who is in third through 11th grade and who is eligible for free or reduced-priced lunch, you can apply for a summer academic enrichment stipend of up to \$1,000. Applicants in seventh through 11th grade must have an overall C average for the most recent term in the applicable subject area. The award funds are limited and will be available on a first-come first-served basis.

By visiting the website, www.getreadyforcollege.org/summerenrichment/, you will find eligible enrichment programs throughout Minnesota covering various topics; math, social studies, performing arts, humanities, communications/language arts, science, and world languages/cultures. In addition, the site offers many other valuable college-readiness tools for students of every age. Explore the additional resources that the site offers: college prep timelines, college and career awareness, planning and saving, and succeeding as an adult student, to name a few.

Begin setting your child's summer plans in motion today. Visit the website and apply for the stipend www.getreadyforcollege.org/summerenrichment/. Help your child thoroughly explore the road to summer enrichment and higher education. It's never too early (or too late) to dream

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big! Enjoy!

Marcia Humphrey is an interior decorator and home stager who specializes in achieving high style at low costs. A native of Michigan, she and her husband, Lonnie, have three children.