



LOSFA IN THE NEWS

A Program of the Louisiana Board of Regents



LOSFA Mentions

SciTEC and Louisiana GEAR UP partner with Monroe City Schools on cyber camp

The GEAR UP Digest, a monthly newsletter by the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP), highlighted an opportunity for Louisiana students to learn more about cybersecurity.

Louisiana Tech University's Science and Technology Education Center (SCiTEC) and the Louisiana Gaining Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (LA GEAR UP) partnered with Monroe City Schools for a Connect2Success minicamp. Connect2Success is one of LOSFA's outreach initiatives that allows students to understand how academics relate to careers through experiential learning opportunities.

Juniors and seniors from Neville High School, Wossman High School, and Carroll High School were put into groups and given a scenario about a national security breach to solve.

Higher education officials with Louisiana Tech said the type of problem-solving the students used in this STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) is the same higher-level thinking used to solve real-world issues.

[Read Louisiana Tech's release](#)

Baker holds workshop to help seniors and families complete financial aid paperwork

The City of Baker School System held its first district-wide FAFSA Completion event.

Britt Kelly and **Charlie Lewis** (LOSFA representatives) led the workshop to provide students and parents with information on what the FAFSA is and why completion and submission of the form is a large part of the college preparation process.



Following the workshop, LOSFA staff were joined by financial aid officers from Baton Rouge Community College, Louisiana State University, and Southern University to assist families with FAFSA completion.

[Read The Advocate article](#)



Social Media



FalalaLOSFA Days is a year in review that sums up all the work LOSFA has done throughout the year. As 2021 continued to be a unique year for Louisiana students, it also brought the opportunity for a renewed focus on college access and affordability. LOSFA introduced a new way for students to ask questions about TOPS 24/7, promoted a new grant to help students near completion finish their degrees and certifications, and created a new division to expand LOSFA's outreach support and advance its engagement strategies to reach students.

[Click here to read LOSFA's Year in Review](#)



Other Related News



Understanding undergraduates' career preparation experiences

First-generation students are less likely to take part in social-capital building activities (like networking with alumni or job shadowing) and less likely to have internships - both of which are linked to workplace confidence skills, according to a new report *"Understanding Undergraduates' Career Preparation Experiences"* by Strada Education Network.

The report found that even though postsecondary seniors are graduating with a clear understanding of their career plans, first-generation students have equity gaps in developing positive career-building perceptions like discussing their career interests with faculty, taking on internships, or interviewing someone in their career of interest.

While seniors are finding employment, the level of preparation (applied-learning experiences) helps develop confidence and experience.

LOSFA's virtual Student Network Groups help postsecondary students connect with professionals in their field of study for mentoring, networking, and retention assistance. Currently, there are Student Network Groups for majors in nursing, engineering, accounting, and IT. Each group meets monthly with peers and professionals who can provide tips to persevere and and persist in their majors.

[Read Strada report](#)

Federal relief money boosted community colleges, but now it's going away

Community colleges used federal Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF) to keep students on a path to graduation. Some invested HEERF funds into technology such as buying laptops and hot spots; others purchased additional equipment for workforce training programs.

Iris Palmer, deputy director for community colleges at New America, a Washington, D.C. think tank that has surveyed community college leaders throughout the pandemic, says community colleges have also put money into programs to create high-quality internships and work-study programs that connect to their majors. As a result, graduation rates increased.

Community colleges must use their HEERF funds within a year (extensions are possible), but some education leaders say the funding only temporarily masked the problem of underfunding - compared with their four-year counterparts.

The solution, Palmer says, is in the Build Back Better Act - to fund competitive grants so colleges can offer more mentoring, emergency financial grants, and other support services that lead to graduation and certification.

[Read Hechinger Report article](#)

LSU Health Shreveport, AHA partner to steer students into STEM careers, and close equality gap

In Shreveport, students from Huntington High School participated in "Bringing STEM to Life," a program to close the equality gap in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) careers - particularly for women of color. The program is a partnership between the Center for Cardiovascular Diseases and Sciences (CCDS) at LSU Health Shreveport and the American Heart Association (AHA).

Students were able to take part in hands-on activities, like lab work and working with cells and microscopes. They also spoke with employers and experts who provided more information about STEM-related fields.

[Watch Fox 33 story](#)



About LOSFA

The Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA), a program of the Louisiana Board of Regents, strives to be Louisiana's first choice for college access by promoting, preparing for and providing equity of college access.



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