



News Release

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READY.SET.GO ... DISCOVER COLLEGE

St. Joseph, Mo. —May 23, 2005—When is a good time to start thinking about college? Missouri Western State College's admissions office thinks the answer is middle school. In collaboration with the St. Joseph School District, the office created Ready.Set.Go ... Discover College, a program aimed at encouraging middle school students to start thinking about post-secondary education before they start high school.

According to Kim Schank, admissions counselor and coordinator of Ready.Set.Go, the main focus of the program is to inform students of the Missouri core curriculum so that they take the appropriate classes in high school. Beginning in fall 2008, Schank said, all students will be required to have completed the core curriculum if they wish to attend a four-year college or university in Missouri.

Ready.Set.Go began as a pilot program in February 2004 in St. Joseph, but this past school year the program expanded. Schank visited over 30 area schools and made presentations to approximately 3,000 students.

As part of the program, middle schools are given the opportunity to visit Western, receive a campus tour from one of the admissions' VIPs and have lunch. The middle

school students also meet with faculty members who coordinate activities with them and talk to them about various careers in their field of expertise.

The campus visit also includes a simulation game called The Reality Store. Students are given monthly income and draw cards to see if they are married, single, or divorced as well as if they have children. They get to pay their monthly bills such as rent, insurance, transportation, utilities, childcare, personal care, clothing and groceries, and at the end of the game, students are able to see how much money they have left over based on the occupation and monthly income they were given. “It’s like a reality check for them,” said Schank. This year, five middle schools visited Western.

“The Ready.Set.Go...Discover College program has been a huge success,” Schank said. “Those students who visited campus had a great time. We’re looking forward to continuing this program and expanding it in the future.”

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Missouri Western State College is a four-year public institution providing a blend of traditional liberal arts and professional degree programs. The college offers student-centered, high quality instruction that focuses on experience-based learning, community service, and state-of-the-art technology. Western is located in St. Joseph, Mo. and is committed to the educational, economic, cultural and social development of the region it serves.