

DePaul University, City Colleges of Chicago partner to launch new path to bachelor's degree for Chicago high school Star Scholars

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CHICAGO — DePaul University and City Colleges of Chicago are launching the DePaul Harold Washington Academy, a first-of-its-kind partnership to provide Chicago Public School students with an affordable pathway to a bachelor's degree.

The academy will be held on DePaul's Loop Campus with classes taught by Harold Washington College faculty. It will serve approximately 100 Chicago Star Scholars in its first year.

“DePaul and Harold Washington College are two of Chicago's most respected academic institutions, and together they will help our hard-working students pursue the high-quality education they deserve,” said Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel. “The DePaul Harold Washington Academy will strengthen education and career opportunities for generations of Chicago students, and strengthen our city's reputation for world-class academic excellence.”

Taking Harold Washington College classes on DePaul Campus

The DePaul Harold Washington Academy will offer Star Scholars with a “best of both worlds” experience, giving students the chance to take advantage of DePaul's facilities and libraries, join student organizations and receive assistance from student tutors, while earning an associate degree from Harold Washington College. They will also have access to the network of academic, financial and social and emotional supports offered at Harold Washington College.

Students who complete an associate degree will be offered admission to DePaul at the end of the program, providing a seamless transfer between the two institutions.

“The creation of DePaul Harold Washington Academy is the result of a belief that Chicago Public School Star Scholars who excelled in high school should be able to access high quality higher education at an affordable price,” said A. Gabriel Esteban, Ph.D., president of DePaul.

“This initiative — along with the [recently-announced DePaul Chicago Promise and Catholic Heritage scholarships](#) — continues our longstanding commitment to Chicago Public Schools and the city of Chicago. We are proud to offer our facilities and resources to Harold Washington College and believe the academy will help serve students higher education might otherwise overlook,” Esteban said.

“City Colleges is committed to partnerships that create value for our students and this is a perfect example of our continued efforts to look for innovative ways to help our students reach their goals,” noted City Colleges of Chicago Chancellor Juan Salgado.

Begins fall 2019

The first class of academy scholars will begin in fall 2019.

Interested students must apply directly to DePaul to be considered for the program. Students who qualify for the Star Scholarship will be eligible for consideration. To be eligible for the Star Scholarship, Chicago public high school students need to graduate with at least a 3.0 GPA and be nearly college ready. More information is online at: <https://www.depaul.edu/Pages/dhwa.aspx>.

The academy was approved by the City Colleges of Chicago board on Dec. 6, after receiving an earlier approval from the Higher Learning Commission.

“This blended college model will expose City Colleges students to the four year college environment early and allow them to integrate into the university community, so when they are academically ready to transfer, the transition will be seamless,” said Ignacio Lopez, Ed.D., president of Harold Washington College.

Star Scholars who complete their associate degree at Harold Washington may also qualify for DePaul’s Star Transfer partner scholarship to continue their bachelor’s degree. DePaul has long been a Star Transfer Partner, along with more than 20 four-year colleges and universities that provide transfer scholarships for eligible students to continue progress toward college and career goals.

Mayor Emanuel launched the Chicago Star Scholarship’s first class of scholars in fall 2015, and since then more than 6,000 Chicago public school graduates have earned the Star distinction and the opportunity to earn a college degree from City Colleges at no cost. Chicago Star Scholars are graduating at a rate double the national community college average, and have transferred to more than 75 four-year colleges and universities around the country.

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