

Aspire Arizona Expands Dual-Credit Scholarship for Payson Families

The Aspire Arizona Foundation (AAF) of Payson is expanding its support for the “dual-credit courses” taken by Payson High School students. Currently, AAF pays for one academic course each semester, but will expand its support beginning in January and pay for up to THREE COURSES each semester per student. This will reduce the costs incurred by parents for the additional dual-credit courses taken by their students and encourage even greater participation.

The impact on student achievement of the dual-credit program has been significant. Since 2016, the AAF has enabled 256 students to take 742 college-level courses taught by faculty provided by the Gila Community College. This year 31% of seniors and 25% of juniors are enrolled in the program. Dual-credit courses count toward both college and high school credits and provide students a great head start on their higher education. Not only do these courses allow high school students to earn credits transferable to all Arizona state universities, but they also reduce their total college tuition expenses. Every 18-24 credits earned through the dual credit program can save \$11,800 in equivalent in-state tuition and fees for an academic year.

It is possible for participants to receive their Associate of Arts degree from Gila Community College before collecting their high school diploma. 2018 Payson High School graduate, Randall Adcock earned his AA degree with Dual Credit courses and estimates that he will save approximately \$65,000 by advancing directly to his junior year at ASU.

The dual-credit program is also available to home-schooled high school students taking the dual-credit courses on the Gila Community College campus.

The Aspire Arizona Foundation Board was inspired to expand the program by paying for up to three courses per semester when it learned of financial hardships incurred by families to pay for additional courses. Funding for this program has come largely from generous donations from the Payson community. This year the MHA Foundation will match all contributions allowing AAF to expand the Dual Credit initiative.

Visit aspirearizona.org to learn more about dual-credit courses and to see some of the local students enrolled in these classes. If you wish to help AAF to continue this very worthwhile program, select “Give Now”.