

## *Making the Grade with CCAMPIS*

Pursuing a degree is a huge undertaking alone, but imagine pursuing a degree as a parent raising young children, when your responsibilities are already at their threshold and you're not sure how to make it all work. The CCAMPIS (Child Care Access Means Parents in School) program has been vital in allowing student parents to balance school and family successfully at the University of Wisconsin-Madison since 1999.

CCAMPIS is a federally-funded grant which supports the participation of low-income parents in post-secondary education through the provision of high-quality, campus-based child care services. In order to qualify for CCAMPIS funding at UW-Madison, students must be enrolled full-time and be eligible or receiving a Pell Grant (undergraduates) or considered a low-income graduate student.

The UW-Madison's CCAMPIS program has contributed nearly \$1 million in support of our campus student parents and early education programs, with the grant money going directly to each of our five campus early education centers to reduce the cost of child care tuition for eligible students.

The results of CCAMPIS at UW-Madison are incredible. Considering the research statistics that 53% of student parents versus 31% of non-parent students will leave college without a degree after six years and, among low-income college students, student parents are 25% less likely to obtain a degree than their low-income counterparts without children,<sup>1</sup> the fact that UW-Madison parents demonstrated an 88% graduation rate as of 2013 speaks to the power of supporting student parents with this grant.

Other notable results of UW-Madison's CCAMPIS program<sup>2</sup>:

- We have served 123 students with CCAMPIS funding, and an astounding 111 of them have either since graduated or are still finishing their degree
- Student parents enrolled in the program have over a 90% persistence rate
- Students have completed 4,352 college credits *while receiving* CCAMPIS funding
- 70% of students maintained a GPA over 3.0
- 82% of students either maintained *or increased* their GPA while attending our University as a student parent
- 17% of graduates went on to pursue an even higher advanced degree at UW-Madison

At a time when the importance of earning a degree beyond high school is getting national recognition from the First Lady's Reach Higher Initiative which, in turn, supports the President's North Star goal that America will once again have the highest proportion of college students in

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<sup>1</sup> Bethany Nelson, Megan Froehner, and Barbara Gault, Ph.D., "College Students with Children are Common and Face Many Challenges in Completing Higher Education," *Institute for Women's Policy Research*, no. C404 (March 2013)

<sup>2</sup> since 2005, when we began collecting quantifiable data

the world by 2020, the results from UW-Madison's CCAMPIS program deserve acknowledgement.

Beyond the statistics are the testimonials of the student parents who have received CCAMPIS funding and are fully aware of the true value of the program.

"CCAMPIS funding is so important to my family because it allows my son to attend high quality child care that is not otherwise possible on a graduate stipend," says D.R., Ph.D student in Sociology and CCAMPIS recipient since 2014. "I take solace in the fact that my son's growth and development does not have to suffer as a result of my choice to pursue a graduate degree, thanks to CCAMPIS funding. I am extremely grateful for the support and peace of mind that comes from being a part of a program that invests so heavily in the future of our family."

And that investment in families moves from one generation to the next. Using programs such as CCAMPIS to improve the educational achievement of low-income parents has both immediate economic benefits to families and multi-generational benefits for the future. "Higher education is paramount for achieving family economic security, and parental education yields powerful two-generation benefits, by improving children's economic, educational, and social outcomes."<sup>3</sup>

It's another testament to the long-term value of the CCAMPIS program, which students like J.Q., a 2015 CCAMPIS graduate who earned her Bachelors in Fine Arts, can appreciate: "CCAMPIS is an indispensable program that tackles the hurdles that keep good students from providing better futures for their families through education."

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<sup>3</sup> Attewell, Paul, and David E. Lavin, *Passing the Torch: Does Higher Education for the Disadvantaged Pay Off Across the Generations?* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2007)