Practices at the University of Western Sydney regarding programs for gifted and talented students

Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Education of Gifted and Talented Students

At the University of Western Sydney there are a number of scholarships offered to academically high achieving students who want to study at UWS.

There is a leadership programme that students need to make application to and gain on merit based on high academic achievement and quality of submission. These students are then mentored and given opportunities for the duration of their study to gain and use their leadership skills.

There are also scholarships awarded to high achieving TAFE students who have successfully completed a Certificate or Diploma course at TAFE.

The UWS Schools Engagement group are currently working to increase school students' awareness of tertiary education at UWS by implementing the Fast Forward program.

All of the individual components of the Fast Forward Program aim to:
* Increase Greater Western Sydney (GWS) school students' engagement in learning and the completion of Year 12;
* Develop students' confidence, knowledge, skills and educational attainment;
* Enhance GWS students' awareness of post-school education opportunities;
* Promote the benefit of lifelong learning, providing life opportunities to students and their families; and
* Improve the participation of GWS students in higher education.

There is some significant research happening regarding the best education for gifted students. Professor Rhonda Craven leads a team of researchers who are looking at:

Realising gifted students potential: Elucidating psychosocial determinants and the impact of different educational settings on educational outcomes and psychosocial well-being.

The university promotes a number of activities and competitions for gifted students and lists their availability on their website.

Dr Diana Whitton and Dr Danuta Chessor with doctorates in gifted often provide courses and workshops for teachers, parents and researchers in gifted education and the development of talented children.

Danuta Chessor

Lecturer in Psychology University of Western Sydney

31/5/11