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GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL SPEECH

Requestor's ID:
BOB

Author's Name:
bob

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My favorite projects are always ones which are based on interesting intellectual concepts and are thereby unique. After nearly three years of observing the progress and results of my (our) "Governor's School on Public Issues and the Future of New Jersey" at Monmouth College, I am sure it is a project of outstanding positive importance.

We have created a four week course for 100 of New Jersey's most promising high school kids. Any excitement is principally over what we are exposing to these young hopefuls. The program, headed up by the husband/wife team of Drs. James and Cheryl Keen, brings these seventeen year old kids face to face with many of New Jersey's most pressing problems. So their presence where crucial debates are held and where big decisions are made will implant not only bits of precious enlightenment but also an immediate incentive to take action. I'm talking about a real world education that enables young adults to actually experience what is too often a covert connection between New Jersey's problems and the problems of the entire world.

During their four week session, students meet six evenings a week to hear debates by visiting professionals on urban development, the oceans, ethics and public policy, and nuclear arms (to name but a few examples). The students experience life situation simulation games and strategies, they observe master techniques for creative problem solving, and they see a film series which explores various themes of human development.

Scholars also participate in teaching seminars, the central focus of the curriculum, in which they are able to draw together the entire range of academic and human issues which emerge in the course of the four week program.

There is also some field work. Two days per week the kids have the Two days per week the kids have the opportunity to see professionals at work. The experience includes anything from lettuce picking with local farmers to visiting manufacturing plants of New Jersey's nation leading pharmaceutical and research industries.

Consider the uniqueness of such a program. the Long term benefits instilled in our future societal leaders are only secondary to the fact that these kids are presently dealing with the issues that are normally left in the hands of their parents.

For many reasons, the Governor's School at Monmouth excites me. The innovation involved in creating a program which uses state funds to expose our kids to the problems of our state is admirable. And it is always a positive sign when youngsters are given the means by which to become socially responsible, active adults.