The Pushkin Project

University of Wisconsin-Madison
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The Language Flagship: Results 2012
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Pushkin Summer Institute

6-week summer residential program for high school students on the University of Wisconsin – Madison campus

Instruction in elementary Russian and Russian literature (life and works of Alexander Pushkin)
Target Students and Partner Schools

Traditionally underrepresented groups through partnerships with schools
No cost to participating students
Summer 2012: 12 students from Pritzker College Preparatory Academy, Chicago, Illinois
Summer 2013: Also students from Cicely L. Tyson Community School of the Performing and Fine Arts, East Orange, New Jersey
2012 Funding

UW-Madison
Pritzker College Preparatory Academy
UW-Madison Russian Flagship K-12 Linkages Grant for 2011-12
Pushkin Summer Institute Idea

Alexander Pushkin, Russia’s greatest poet
Author of *Eugene Onegin* and many other works
Partly African heritage a formative aspect of his biography
Pushkin’s biography a powerful model for minority and underprivileged students
Program designed to combine Russian language instruction, reading of and writing about Pushkin
Pushkin Summer Institute Curriculum

Russian language instruction 4 hours/day
Weekly lecture on Pushkin’s biography and work
Students write essays and meet weekly with Professor Bethea on writing in English
Co-curricular programming: films, lectures, field trips in and near Madison, interactions with high-school students from other on-campus programs
Pushkin Summer Institute Staff

Professor David Bethea, director
Onsite director
Two native-speaking graduate teaching assistants
Two residential undergraduate counselors: one returning Russian Flagship capstone student and one outbound Russian Flagship capstone student
Part-time graduate student assistant and tutor
Undergraduate Russian Flagship student mentor
Mentoring and Flagship

Students mentored in writing by Professor Bethea
Students tutored and mentored by residential counselors, in addition to instructors’ office hours
Students’ home Russian teacher in residence, ensuring curricular integration
Russian Flagship director visited home school and class
Potential for applications to Russian Flagship Programs throughout U.S.
Assessment Results

Assessments: Pre- and post-program internal (unofficial) OPI, UW-Madison Russian Flagship online reading and listening exams

Students in most cases increased proficiency by at least one sublevel on the ACTFL scale in speaking, reading, and listening

Two sublevels in a few cases
Student 1

Student 2

Student 3

Student 4

Student 5

Student 6

Student 7

Student 8

Student 9

Student 10

Student 11

Student 12

Intermediate Low

Novice High

Novice Mid

Novice Low

OPI: Entry

OPI: Exit

Speaking
Student Feedback

“I have improved a lot.”
“I have grown a lot.”
“I felt like I understood everything that we have been learning.”

“Amazing teachers”
Resident counselors, helping them with homework late evenings: “They would still stay there. It is not like they were leaving. I feel like that really helped.”
Then after a while, it is like we almost forget that we are not speaking English.”
“I guess it taught me how to prioritize.”
“It really taught me how to study.”
“Not only will I have a leg up in Russian next year but I will have a leg up on everyone else in terms of writing.”
“So, I hope, maybe through a Flagship Program... it would help me go to Russia and get that job as a journalist on a Russian newspaper.”

“Once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.”