



## **Bard Gets Fed Grant to Aid Needy**

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### **Poughkeepsie Journal**

Tuesday, November 28, 2000

ANNANDALE -- Bard College has received a grant to help students from low-income families nationwide obtain a college education. The Bard College Clemente Course in Humanities recently was awarded \$544,000 from the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education.

The funds were given to Bard primarily to help five colleges -- Reed College in Oregon, Trinity College in Connecticut, Bloomfield College in New Jersey, Northeastern University in Massachusetts and the University of Alaska at Anchorage-- set up similar courses at their institutions.

### **College has free classes**

Bard's Clemente program, in its fifth year, offers free college-level courses to economically disadvantaged individuals with limited access to a college education. The college teams up with local family and community centers to provide a space for the students to learn. Classes are set for evenings to accommodate the schedules of the students who often have families or work at full-time jobs.

Ted Dewsnap, assistant director of the Bard program, said the grant money would help expand such opportunity into other communities. "Working together with these colleges, we will help them develop something like the Clemente course that we run," he said. "The grant money goes partly to our five partners to help establish their own version of the Clemente course. A big chunk of that is also going to the classes themselves."

Students who qualify for enrollment in the course will study one year of college-level courses in the humanities. These courses include American history, moral philosophy, theory and history of the visual arts, literature, poetry, critical thinking and writing.

Through Bard's program with the Family Partnership Center in Poughkeepsie, students who complete the course at a superior academic level receive a certificate of achievement and six college credits. More than 30 students are enrolled.

The Clemente program began in 1995 as a pilot project in lower Manhattan. It has since grown into a national program offering courses in 14 communities across the country.

Of the 514 students who have participated in the program nationwide, 240 have earned college credits and 203 have gone on – or plan to -- attend college.

Two received diplomas from Bard in the past year, and six past Clemente Course students are now enrolled as full-time scholarship students at Bard.

Martin Kempner, National Program Director of the Clemente course in New York City, said the program will offer educational opportunities to many who may not have had them previously.

"This is a very exciting project. First, it allows us to bring the benefits of this successful program to a much larger population," he said. "Second, it allows us to develop a training program that will, in a few short years, help dozens of other colleges and universities offer humanities programs in low-income communities."

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