



Middle School Students Get a Feel for Future

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STAMFORD - The University Pals program held its first commencement yesterday, giving 102 middle school students an idea of what it's like to graduate from college.

The month-long program gave students a sampling of college life.

The program was put together by the city schools and the University of Connecticut at Stamford.

Students took college courses tailored for the program, and visited area companies - including The Advocate - to learn about career options.

The program grew out of concern about a projected shortage of college-educated workers in the area over the coming decade.

It targets children who would be the first in their immediate families to attend college.

Michael Ego, associate vice provost for the campus, said the program met its goals and drew interest from Norwalk educators. Officials will evaluate University Pals to see how it can be enhanced next year, he said.

There was only one dropout, he said.

"The retention rate was fantastic. To me, it says that the students and the parents really believe that the program was beneficial."