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Advisers to help with college decisions, procedures

Submitted story

FREMONT -- Officials from several area colleges, school districts, economic development entities and employment centers gathered Thursday at the Fremont Country Club to usher in a new Ohio College Access Network center.

The North Coast Center of Excellence, housed at Terra Community College, will place advisers in area high schools to assist students with decisions and procedures to open college access.

The mission of the NCCE is to inspire, motivate and encourage all students, particularly those students who are first-generation, minority, underprivileged and underserved, to reach their individual educational goals by providing knowledge of career and post-secondary opportunities to all students and families.

The \$247,000 grant from the Ohio College Access Network and the Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corp. will help support a regional effort in Erie, Huron, Ottawa, Sandusky and Seneca counties to assist students with access to college, career planning and financial aid awareness.

The grant, funded at least through June 2010, includes not only Terra, but also Bowling Green State University, BGSU Firelands, Heidelberg University and Tiffin University. It will fund two regional Directors of Advising Services who will be housed at Terra and BGSU Firelands and five college access advisers who will be located at the partnering school districts.

The districts involved include Bellevue City Schools, Benton-Carroll-Salem Schools, Clyde-Green Springs Exempted Village School District, Danbury Local Schools, EHOVE Career Center, Fostoria Community Schools, Fremont City Schools, Lakota Local Schools, Port Clinton Local Schools, Sandusky Central Catholic Schools, Sandusky City Schools, Tiffin City Schools and Vanguard-Sentinel Career Centers.

Other partners include North Coast Job Connection, North Point Educational Service Center, Sandusky County Economic Development Corporation, the Workforce Development Council Tech Prep Consortium and WSOS Community Action Commission.

The college access advisers will assist students and their parents in the following:

- Choosing a career and investigating the various career opportunities at career centers and colleges.
- Guiding students as they select a program or a college.
- Helping students understand the value in taking the appropriate academic courses and being successful in those courses.

- Doing what they need to do to apply to college (ACT or SAT tests, college applications, requesting transcripts, etc.)
- Helping students to be college ready through activities such as ACT preparation classes or bridge courses.
- Helping students understand the financial aid maze and how to research financial aid opportunities, complete the FAFSA and apply for "Last Dollar" or local scholarships.

Terra is joining an OCAN network in which nearly 175 Ohio school districts are being assisted by college access advisers. These college advisers work with Ohio students to directly supplement the work of guidance counselors.
