High School Equivalency Program/College Assistance Migrant Program (HEP/CAMP)

“The CAMP program has allowed the calluses in my hands to heal and my mind to grow.”
Concepción has blossomed from a shy college freshman into an outgoing engineer. After interning at the Texas Department of Transportation for two summers, Concepción received job offers from nine different corporations in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, all eager to bring her on board after her graduation. Concepción Mendoza, Civil Engineering Technology, New Mexico State University CAMP

- UNIQUE/NOT DUPLICATIVE: HEP/CAMP programs are the only federal programs that assist a unique population of students that face tremendous obstacles – students with migrant and seasonal farmworker backgrounds - to obtain their GED and pursue higher education. Furthermore, the programs are not duplicative of any other federal program.

- PROGRAMS ARE SUCCESSFUL AND ACCOUNTABLE: The GED passage rates for HEP students are substantially higher than those of other GED preparation programs and retention rates for first year students served by the CAMP program are significantly higher than those of most Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs). Among CAMP students, 86% completed their first year in good academic standing (Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 2009 8:247). Additionally, HEP/CAMP programs must comply with stringent accountability measures to ensure that the programs are meeting their goals.

- DEMAND FOR HEP/PROGRAMS: During a recent grant competition, the U.S. Department of Education received 64 HEP/CAMP grant applications from across the country but only 17 grants were funded due to limited funding.

- GOOD FOR THE ECONOMY: HEP/CAMP programs help students get better jobs to allow them to contribute more to the tax base and the grant awards bring jobs and spurs economic activity in the local communities in which grants are awarded.

For FY 2013, the National HEP/CAMP Association* is seeking level funding for HEP/CAMP. The Association believes there is tremendous need for an increase in funding of the HEP/CAMP programs but understands the significant budget challenges facing our nation and that there must be shared sacrifice if we are going to get the country back on a sustainable fiscal path.

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Students from farm working families that are migratory or seasonally employed face tremendous obstacles in completing high school and pursuing higher education. These students move frequently as a result of their parents’ or their own employment as migrant and seasonal workers. These frequent disruptions contribute to a high rate of drop-outs and a low rate of college attendance. For over three decades, the High School Equivalency Program and the College Assistance Migrant Program have succeeded in providing educational opportunities to farmworker students to enable them to pursue higher levels of education and secure jobs that allow them to become successful and contributing members of American society.

The High School Equivalency Program (HEP) helps farmworker students obtain a GED and, subsequently, begin postsecondary education, enter military service, or obtain employment. HEP grantees provide intensive GED instruction and support to farmworker students who have not completed high school. The College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) assists farmworker students in successfully completing their first academic year of college and to continue at a postsecondary education institution. CAMP grantees provide academic support, stipends and other support services necessary to ensure that students succeed in college.

Every year, approximately 6,000 students are served by the HEP program and 2,000 students are served by the CAMP Program.

The HEP/CAMP programs are authorized under section 418(A) of the Higher Education Act and administered by the United States Department of Education’s Office of Migrant Education (OME). Currently, there are 85 HEP/CAMP programs (45 HEP and 40 CAMP) throughout the country. The Department of Education awards competitive five-year grants to Institute of Higher Education (IHEs) or private non-profit organizations that work in cooperation with IHEs. In 2008, Congress enacted the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA) which recognized the importance of the HEP/CAMP programs by increasing their authorized funding levels to $75 million, an increase of $55 million.

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*The National HEP/CAMP Association is a nonprofit membership organization comprised of High School Equivalency Programs (HEP) and College Assistance Migrant Programs (CAMP) located throughout the United States. For more information, please see our website www.hepcamp.org