CCSC Embarks Upon Student-Help Program

The State's oldest public institution of higher learning, 120-year-old Central Connecticut State College, will embark upon an innovative project this month whose ambition is to prepare students with learning difficulties for college entrance. The 33 chosen, including 11 from Hartford and one from Farmington, will live on campus for six weeks learning and living together with their teachers. Program architect George A. Wyer, instructor in mathematics at Central, selected them with the aid of high-school guidance counselors, community leaders and Connecticut Talent Assistance Cooperative (CONTAC). The latter is a federally-funded agency which seeks out students who have the capacity but not the means to go to college.

The 17 boys and 16 girls all were graduated from high school during the last three years. Among them are 15 from the black community and 4 are of Spanish descent. While the Summer Extended Orientation Program will be free of charge to the participants through State and college funds, entrance in the project does not guarantee admittance in CCSC or any other college in the fall. It is up to the student to earn that privilege.

The reason the candidates failed to make the grade previously is mostly due to a need for remedial work in English or mathematics. Many are slow readers which prevented them from maintaining the necessary academic level. Otherwise, they are considered to be highly intelligent prospects. When the sessions close, Mr. Wyer will evaluate each student according to his individual ability and decide whether he should be a candidate for admission in the fall either on a part-time or full-time basis. A limited program with further remedial help could solve the student's former frustrations caused by his being unable to keep up with his peers.

The youth will have the assistance of a seven-member staff who hope to become their friends as well as their teachers. Field trips, seminars and game times will augment classes to broaden young horizons.

Thus, disadvantaged students now may benefit from programs to help them at every step of their academic careers. Head Start prepares preschool children. Upward Bound challenges high-school students to try harder by giving them a taste of college life during summers at Yale and Connecticut College. For instance, midway through secondary school, CCSC will assume the task of helping them cross the bridge from there into college, hopefully. Meanwhile, whether he succeeds or not is still up to the student which is proper for all students seeking college entrance.