

Northshore Technical College

Students in New GED Program Quickly Gaining Ground

Even though the GED program at Northshore Technical College in Greensburg, Louisiana, has only been operating for a short time (since October 2010), it's already helping students move towards their goals of higher education.

In 2009, state legislation turned the administration of GED programs over to community colleges and technical schools. Interested institutions are required to compete for a grant, and Northshore Technical College was the first school in Louisiana to receive approval.

With 38 students enrolled already, Assistant Dean Burke Jones has high expectations for the new program, which uses the Wonderlic General Assessment of Instructional Needs (GAIN)® to pretest and post-test each learner.

"We needed a good, solid test to evaluate the students when they first come into the program," says Mr. Jones. "I looked at several recommended assessments, and GAIN stood out."

GAIN, an English and math basic skills assessment that tests all levels of students on one form, provides the NRS Educational Functioning Level (EFL) of each test taker, scale scores, as well as detailed instructional needs that align with the new GAIN Essentials curriculum from Steck-Vaughn.

Some of the benefits GAIN brought to Northshore's GED program include the simple pricing structure, ease of use, and its motivational power with students.

Mr. Jones explains how students are using GAIN for inspiration. "The report GAIN generates shows the scores for the pretest and post test, with a graph showing the student's progress. This is very motivating to them, to see how far they've come, and also to know exactly what areas to study so they'll be ready for the GED."

Louisiana was one of the first states to adopt GAIN as an approved test for Adult Basic Education programs like Northshore's, and any ABE program using GAIN can easily upload their scores into Louisiana's state database.

"Selecting GAIN for our program was a no-brainer," enthuses Mr. Jones, who has recommended the testing platform to several colleagues. "It's so straightforward and so much simpler than the alternatives. I'm very pleased with the results so far."

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