Over the summer break, many low-income students fall behind. Admission Possible high school juniors recently attended a summer enrichment fair to help prevent this problem. On Saturday, March 7, nearly 200 Admission Possible students attended the Summer Enrichment Fair at the Blake School in Minneapolis. This is the second year Admission Possible has joined with LearningWorks at Blake and Minnesota Minority Education Partnership in hosting the event. The fair offered Admission Possible students access to summer programs that will keep them learning throughout the summer.

“It’s important for all students and critical for low-income students to continue learning throughout the summer,” said Jim McCorkell, founder and CEO of Admission Possible, “Summer enrichment programs give low-income students the chance to gain more knowledge about future careers, more knowledge about themselves and ultimately better access to the types of experiences colleges look for.”

According to a paper authored by the Hamilton Project, a research and policy institute out of the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C., low-income students are especially susceptible to the effects of the “faucet theory.” When the faucet of learning is on during the school year, achievement rises for all students; over the summer, the faucet is turned off for lower-income students, but left on for students in higher income households, who often continue to participate in some form of activity, either at home or in an organized activity away form home.

Representatives from 19 summer enrichment programs actively recruited students at the fair. The programs ranged from business, law and education sectors. Students heard from Admission Possible student, Brenda Xiong, a senior at Harding High School in St. Paul and LearningWorks participant, Tin Tran, a senior at Blaine High School. Brenda spoke about her opportunities with St. Kate’s First Step Summer Institute, while Tin elaborated on serving as a teacher to younger students in the summer LearningWorks program. Both reported that investing in an intensive summer program was well worth the effort.

Admission Possible’s two-year curriculum includes the requirement that juniors apply to at least one summer enrichment opportunity to remain in the program. Many students enjoyed the fair and found at least one program they plan to apply for.

LearningWorks at Blake works with middle school students who will need to find another high quality summer enrichment opportunity when they reach high school. "There are many terrific summer enrichment opportunities for students in the Twin Cities and across the state," said LearningWorks Executive Director, Scott Flemming, "but there are not many events like this that offer students a chance to meet representatives from these programs and find out first-hand what they have to offer."

“The opportunities at the fair will be good for resumes and college applications," said Admission Possible student, Jonathon 'J.T.' Weedor, a junior at Cooper High School in Robbinsdale. "The fair helped me learn about careers I might be interested in.”