

NORTH SUBURBS

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EDUCATION

Grants to help needy students

McGuire family will pledge \$10 million

BY PAUL TOSTO
Pioneer Press

United HealthGroup Chief Executive William McGuire today will pledge \$10 million from his family foundation for scholarships and other aid to help needy students make it to and through college.

The money, believed to be the largest single private effort to help low-income Minnesota students prepare for college, will go to new and existing programs, including Admission Possible, a St. Paul-based group currently helping 600 high school juniors and seniors in St. Paul and Minneapolis.

"We're really hoping this is the beginning of a broader community conversation," Jim McCorkell, Admission Possible's executive director said Tuesday.

"This is no longer an issue about social justice or fairness for low-income people. It's increasingly about how we have a well-trained work force and vibrant economy."

Local business and education leaders have raised concerns in recent years about the size and quality of the state's future work force.

Minnesota's high school population is expected to decline and become more racially and ethnically diverse in the coming decades. Yet less than half the state's students of color graduate from high school on time, and less than 5 percent earn a bachelor's degree from a Minnesota college within 10 years

Scholarships

(continued)

of their freshman year in high school, the nonprofit Citizens League reported in 2004.

Admission Possible expects about \$1.5 million over three years from the William W. and Nadine M. McGuire Family Foundation. The money will let it aid another 300 students and is a big step in the group's goal to aid 1,300 students by 2008,

McCorkell said.

Besides Admission Possible, initial funding also will go to the University of Minnesota and to LearningWorks, a joint effort of Minneapolis public schools and the Blake School that helps Minneapolis students.

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NEW COLLEGE MONEY FOR NEEDY STUDENTS

- The William W. and Nadine M. McGuire Family Foundation is expected to pledge \$10 million in grants to help motivated, low-income students get from high school through college. The pledge will be announced at a morning event at Roosevelt High School in Minneapolis.
- Programs the grants will fund initially include Admission Possible and LearningWorks. Go to www.admissionpossible.org and <http://blakeschool.org/learningworks/> to learn more.