Ivy Tech's ASAP achieves one of highest graduation rates in US among first-generation college students
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INDIANAPOLIS - Ivy Tech Community College's nationally-recognized Associate Accelerated Program (known as ASAP) has achieved a 66 percent graduation rate, one of the highest graduation rates in the nation amongst at-risk, first-generation college students who are at a greater risk of not completing a college degree. Retention rates for students participating in the program are 90 percent, which is nearly double that of Ivy Tech students outside the program.

Ivy Tech's Associate Accelerated Program provides at-risk high school students facing life and family issues that prevent them from completing a degree, the opportunity to earn a marketable and transferable associate degree on a full-time basis in just eleven months. Most students who are chosen for the program are identified while still in high school and are the first in their families to attend college.

Depending on the student's eligibility, most ASAP students are able to complete the associate degree program for free or at little cost.

The students attend school full time, almost 40 hours a week, which allows them to graduate in a year. A traditional Ivy Tech student may take two or more years to complete the same degree. The program is one of the many initiatives the college has implemented to help fulfill the Indiana Commission for Higher Education's "15 to Finish" Initiative, focused on encouraging more students to attend college on a full-time basis.

"This program is a great example of how we are helping our students persist and graduate at Ivy Tech," said President Thomas J. Snyder. "Through ASAP, Ivy Tech is able to help students who may not otherwise attend college and provide them with a solid foundation and head start to their next step, whether that is a transfer route to a bachelor's degree or a career."

The ASAP program was launched in the Fall of 2010 at two campuses and is expanding to all Ivy Tech campuses this year. Lumina Foundation funded the expansion with a grant of more than $2.2 million in 2013, when the program was just offered at four campuses. Lumina provided the additional funding after the first three years of the program showed high success rates.

Since ASAP's inception, the program has enrolled 441 students with another 173 students enrolled for the 2015-16 school year.

Through ASAP, students can get a degree in Liberal Arts, Business Administration or Education. ASAP prepares students to graduate and enter the workforce immediately or transfer to a four year institution.
The program provides wraparound support with dedicated program mentors. Students attend as a group, which allows them to form a learning community and provide peer support for each other. ASAP also incorporates service learning, allowing students to give back to the community outside the classroom.