

Press Release

Equal Opportunity in Excellence and in Higher Education ESSEC launches a new project, POLLEN

Cergy, 1st February, 2010

On Saturday 23rd January 2010, at the start of the new school year for the equal opportunity program *Une grande école: Pourquoi Pas Moi?* and as part of the national *Journées de l'Excellence et de la Réussite* designed to propel high-school students into the top echelons of French higher education, ESSEC announced the launch of POLLEN, a new equal opportunity initiative designed to provide academic and professional support to high-school students.

The program aims to help school students develop personal and professional goals and career paths that are best adapted to their profiles. Meetings will take place twice a month at ESSEC, at partner organizations and in companies, in the form of workshops, debates, group projects and orientation forums, in an effort to ensure a collaborative approach to professional mentoring. 105 high-school students will take embark on the program this year, which will accompany them throughout their three-year high school period.

An Entire Range of Equal Opportunity Initiatives

POLLEN marks the implementation of a fifth equal opportunity program at ESSEC. Other initiatives include:

High-school Tutoring:

Created by ESSEC in 2002, this program provides tutoring and mentoring for high-school students from disadvantaged backgrounds with the goal of improving their chances of success in top higher education establishments.

Middle-School Tutoring:

Students nearing the end of their middle-school studies are often faced with choices that will determine their career path later on in the academic system. In liaison with teachers and mentors in each school, the program provides complementary training and support in areas such as cultural and social development, critical thinking, self-confidence, oral presentation skills, commercial awareness, group work, IT skills and networking.

Higher and Further Education Support:

The accompaniment of students continues beyond the *baccalauréat* stage, traditionally passed at the end of high-school. Students receive customized support designed to enable them to successfully realize their academic or career goals: Moral support, financial aid, academic tutoring etc. The program also includes preparatory courses, with a particular emphasis on technology, for students planning to enter the competitive *prépas* which pave the way for access to the *grand écoles*.

PHARES

The PHARES program provides support and mentoring to handicapped middle and high-school students, based on the same model as *Pourquoi Pas Moi?*

Over 600 students are currently included on the different equal opportunity programs offered by ESSEC Business School.

About IIES (l'Institut de l'Innovation et de l'Entrepreneuriat Social de l'ESSEC)

Following the successful conception of numerous projects developed by the Social Entrepreneurship Chair and with the support of prestigious corporate partnerships, ESSEC has launched the first institute dedicated to Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship. IIES will experiment with new tools from RSE and Base of Pyramid, designed to stimulate education and research methods in the social entrepreneurship and equal opportunity in education. ESSEC provides social entrepreneurs and managers of social advancement with a wealth of resources and expertise, that builds on its long-standing commitment to humanism and the advancement of academic excellence.

About ESSEC

The ESSEC Group, Ecole Supérieure des Sciences Economiques et Commerciales, founded in 1907, is a major actor in management education on the world scene. With 4,200 students, a wide range of academic programs offered in management, partnerships with the most prestigious universities in the world, a network of 35,000 alumni, and a faculty composed of 135 permanent professors, renowned for quality and influential research, ESSEC has an established reputation for academic excellence and an innovative socially and economically aware, open-minded culture.

For more information, visit: www.essec.edu

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