

Belin-Blank Center for Gifted Education

Director

- Megan Foley Nicpon

Website: <https://belinblank.education.uiowa.edu>

The Connie Belin and Jacqueline N. Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development is dedicated to serving the needs of the gifted community at local, national, and international levels. It offers programs for preservice and inservice educators, including the State of Iowa Talented and Gifted Endorsement. Its online and on-campus courses about the nature and needs of gifted learners, as well as about ways to facilitate talent development, support the professional development of educators worldwide.

The center is home to the Assessment and Counseling Clinic and the Acceleration Institute.

Precollege Program Offerings

The Belin-Blank Center offers a wide variety of programs for precollege students.

Belin-Blank Exceptional Student Talent Search

The Belin-Blank Exceptional Student Talent Search (BESTS) (grades 4–9) helps determine talented students' academic abilities and needs.

Junior Science and Humanities Symposium

The Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (grades 9–12) engages students in original research and experimentation in the STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and math). Students present the results of their research to a panel of judges and an audience of their peers at the Iowa Regional Junior Science and Humanities Symposium. The top two presenters are invited to present at the national symposium.

Scholastic Art and Writing Awards

The Belin-Blank Center is proud to serve as the Iowa and Midwest region at-large affiliate for the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards (grades 7–12), which recognizes achievement in the literary and visual arts. The Scholastic Art and Writing Awards program is the nation's longest-running, largest, and most prestigious recognition program for creative teens. Over the past 90 years, the awards have recognized and encouraged artists and writers such as Sylvia Plath, Andy Warhol, Truman Capote, Robert Redford, Tom Otterness, Zac Posen, among countless others.

Weekend Enrichment Program

The Weekend Enrichment program (grades 2–8) consists of half-day enrichment opportunities for elementary and junior high students that take place on the University of Iowa campus. Classes in STEM, the arts, and the humanities cultivate students' interest and enliven their curiosity.

Summer Programs

The Belin-Blank Center also offers the following summer programs, many of which are residential programs held on the

University of Iowa campus during the summer. Students in each program participate in cultural and recreational activities and have access to the university's libraries, computer facilities, and study areas. For residential programs, housing and meals are provided at the university's residence halls. Junior Scholars Academy students do not stay on campus.

Blank Summer Institute

The Blank Summer Institute for the Arts and Sciences (BSI) is a program that provides an intensive, advanced educational experience designed to enhance exceptionally talented students' intellectual and social growth. The BSI plan of study complements the regular school curriculum. Students are nominated for program participation.

To be eligible for BSI, students must be Iowa residents, must be completing grade 7 or 8, and must be nominated by their schools. Students selected for BSI receive a scholarship to cover part of the institute's cost.

Junior Scholars Academy

The Junior Scholars Academy (JSA), formerly known as Blast and the Junior Scholars Institute, hosts students (grades 2–8) with a deep curiosity, a love of learning, or a great deal of talent in a particular area. It is a summer program designed specifically for bright elementary and middle school students who want to thoroughly explore a topic while having fun with other kids who share their enthusiasm for learning. Students choose one class to focus on all day, for a full week.

Perry Research Scholars Institute

Students completing grade 9 or 10 may apply for the Perry Research Scholars Institute (PRSI), a two-week residential summer academic program. PRSI students experience first-hand the wide variety of research that takes place at a research-intensive university. Students earn 1 s.h. of academic credit. Visit the PRSI website to learn more about the program, including eligibility and application.

Secondary Student Training Program

Students completing grade 10 or 11 may apply for the Secondary Student Training Program (SSTP), a five and one-half-week residential summer research program. SSTP students conduct research in university research groups under the guidance of a faculty mentor. Students earn 3 s.h. of academic credit. Visit the SSTP website to learn more about the program, including eligibility and application. See the Secondary Student Training Program in the catalog.

Summer Writing Residency

The Summer Writing Residency offers a three-week residential program for students completing grade 9, 10, or 11. The two programs immerse students in the creative environments of University of Iowa world-class faculty in art or writing. Out of class opportunities include evening tours, lectures, and events that are designed to stretch the developing artist or writer. Students earn 2 s.h. of academic credit. For more information about the center and its programs, contact the Belin-Blank Center or visit its website.

University-Based Programs

Academy for Twice-Exceptionality

A college journey at the University Iowa embraces meaningful academic experiences and the development of important skills, including independence, social-emotional maturity, effective communication, and career readiness. The Academy

for Twice-Exceptionality partners with neurodiverse college students to foster and support these experiences and skills and enhance community engagement as an Iowa Hawkeye. The academy strives to ensure that neurodiverse students have a positive and fulfilling college experience, nurturing students' talents while also creating a sense of community and helping students connect with resources from the Belin-Blank Center, the University of Iowa, and the broader community.

Bucksbaum Early Entrance Academy

The Bucksbaum Early Entrance Academy gives high-achieving students the opportunity to enroll at the University of Iowa before they finish high school. The Bucksbaum Academy provides top students with a high-level curriculum while supporting them through the transition from high school to the University of Iowa. To enter the program, students must have completed grade 10 or the equivalent. The program is open to high-ability students worldwide.