

# Dayton Daily News

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## More Ohioans earning college credits early

### Advanced Placement tests help reduce costs

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College students are taking on more debt than ever to pursue degrees, but in Ohio, a growing number of high-schoolers are earning college credit for a fraction of the cost through Advanced Placement tests.

About 21 percent of the state's high school students who graduated in 2012 took an AP exam — a rate that grew nearly 9 percent in the last 10 years, but that still trails the national average of 32 percent, according to the College Board 2013 report.

With a score of three or bet-

ter on an \$89 AP exam, students are guaranteed college credit at Ohio's public colleges and universities.

Miami University student Patryk Giza earned 73 credits through AP tests before entering college — the equivalent of a year-and-a-half of schooling and a savings of nearly \$43,600 off his out-of-state tuition sticker price, not to mention room and board costs.

"My family is definitely happy that I'm saving all this time and money," said Giza, of Illinois.

Ohioans overall passed more AP exams in 2013, and the state saw important double-digital gains in the number of tests taken and passed by black and Hispanic students, the Ohio Department of Education recently announced.

which could save him about \$16,500 off his out-of-state tuition sticker price.

Cedarville University student Zachary Saha-dak earned 39.5 credits through AP tests, which is a year's worth of classes and represents a \$26,220 tuition savings. The pharmacy student from Virginia said getting the general education credits out of the way helps him focus on his major.

The students' accomplishments are at the high end of credits usually earned by high-schoolers. At Miami, about half of the incoming freshmen class took AP tests for an average 15.3 credits, said Michael Kabbaz, associate vice president for enrollment management.

Kabbaz said having the credits often allow Miami students to pursue a second major or take time to study abroad.

"It puts them in a pretty good position basically to maximum their college experience," he said.

## Students save time, money

The 2013 College Board report shows that the percent of Ohioans earning a passing score on an exam increased from 8 percent in 2002 to 13.8 percent in 2012; and that the gap between the state and the national average grew slightly.

Nationwide, 11.6 percent of students earned a passing score in 2002, rising to 19.5 percent in 2012, according to the College Board.

Each of the exams could qualify students for college credit at no cost in Ohio, giving them the "potential to graduate from a higher education institution in less time and spend less money on their degree or certificate," said John Carey, chancellor for the Ohio Board of Regents.

That is important today, because college students in Ohio are borrowing more money to pay for their education. Graduates of the class of 2011 who took out loans owed on average \$28,683, according to the Project on Student Debt.

Overall, 1.6 million Ohioans owe \$34.4 billion in student loans, according to the White House.

Giza fulfilled nearly every general education requirement in his undergraduate degree through credits from AP tests. The electrical engineering student said he took one AP class his sophomore year, and liked it so much he enrolled in seven classes his junior year and seven senior year.

"I just enjoyed the fact that it was both rigorous and challenging," said Giza, who plans also to pursue a master's degree at Miami.

At Wright State University, Nick Kutskill started this fall with 43 credit hours from AP tests, as well as two classes he took at a community college during high school through a dual enrollment program.

The credits qualified Kutskill, a Michigan native, as a sophomore,