

# WASHINGTON GEAR UP



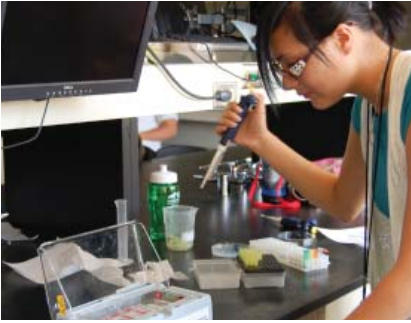
Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs



**College: My Dream. My Plan.**

PROGRAM UPDATE 2009 - 2010

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**GEAR UP in Washington:  
12 programs  
82 school districts  
27,118 students served**

# Overview



At GEAR UP, we believe that young people who start planning in middle school have a better chance of entering college and completing their degrees.

Serving an entire cohort of students beginning no later than the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, GEAR UP provides services at high-poverty middle and high schools. With programs in districts around the state, we focus on students from underserved populations, helping them prepare for college and gain access to financial aid.

GEAR UP is a discretionary federal program that provides six-year grants to education/community partnerships and states to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education.

In 2010, GEAR UP had 42 state and 167 partnership programs nationwide. Combined, these programs served a total of 747,260 students.



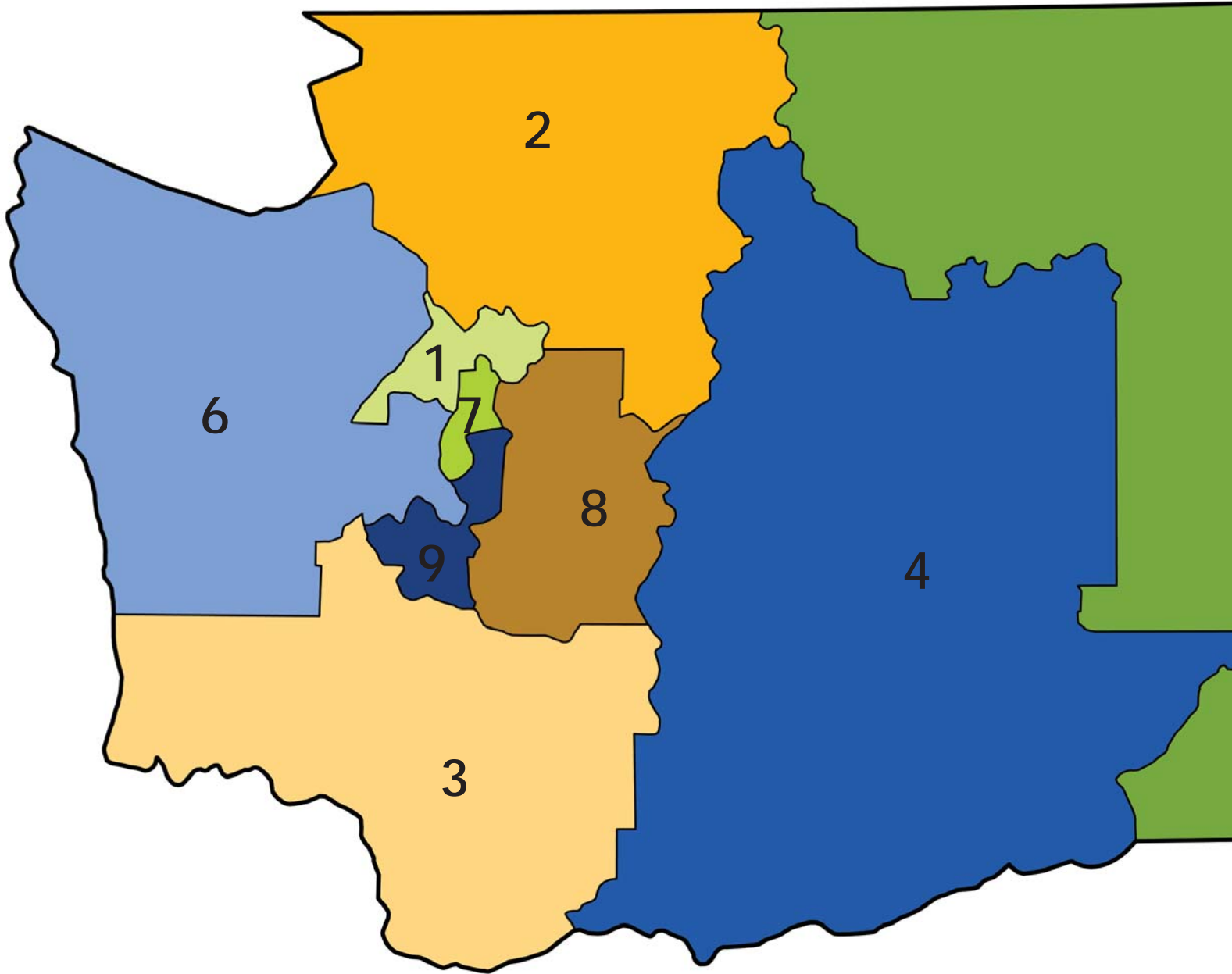
- We promote equal access to education and educational excellence through concerted partnership efforts on behalf of low-income students.
- We encourage student enrollment in rigorous and challenging curricula and coursework, in order to reduce the need for remedial coursework at the postsecondary level.
- We provide information about financial aid for postsecondary education to students and their families.
- We improve the number of participating students who obtain a secondary school diploma and enter postsecondary education.
- We promote reforms and improvements in the school curriculum as well as in teaching and learning methods.
- We build local and state efforts to encourage local and state investment that will sustain GEAR UP activities and services beyond the federal grant period.

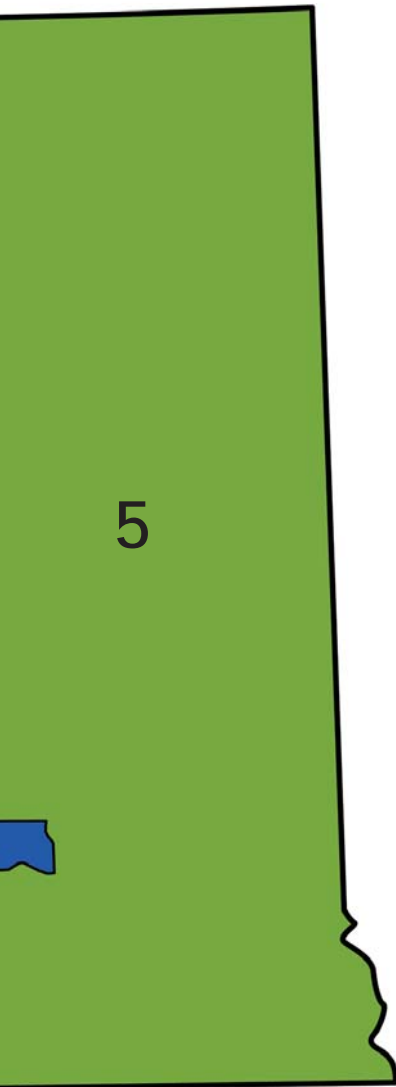
One of the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) elective teachers, Mike Stevens, was named the teacher of the year in the Blaine School District. He has GEAR UP to thank because that is how he has gotten the recent training that has made all the difference. Yes, he was a good teacher before, but he has had his eyes opened. He is affecting the attitudes and confidence of many students and teachers.

Washington State GEAR UP for Student Success staff member, Blaine High School

# WhoWeServe

## School Districts Served (by Congressional District)





**District 2**

Bellingham  
Blaine  
Burlington-Edison  
Everett  
Monroe  
Mount Vernon

**District 3**

Naselle-Grays River Valley  
Oakville  
Ocean Beach  
Raymond  
South Bend  
Vancouver  
Wahkiakum  
White Pass  
Willapa Valley

**District 4**

College Place  
East Valley  
Eastmont  
Ephrata  
Finley  
Glenwood  
Goldendale  
Grandview  
Granger  
Kiona-Benton  
Klickitat  
Lake Chelan  
Mabton  
Mansfield  
Manson  
Moses Lake  
Mt. Adams  
North Franklin  
Pasco  
Pateros  
Paterson  
Quincy  
Soap Lake  
Sunnyside  
Toppenish  
Union Gap  
Wapato  
Warden

Wenatchee  
Wilson  
Creek  
Yakama  
Tribal School  
Yakima  
Zillah

**District 5**

Brewster  
Bridgeport  
Clarkston  
Columbia (Stevens County)  
Columbia (Walla Walla County)  
Curlew  
Cusick  
Dayton  
Endicott  
Grand Coulee Dam  
Inchelium  
Kettle Falls  
Mary Walker  
Northport  
Okanogan  
Omak  
Oroville  
Prescott  
Republic  
Rosalia  
Selkirk  
Spokane  
St. John  
Tekoa  
Tonasket  
Touchet  
Walla Walla  
Wellpinit  
West Valley

**District 6**

Aberdeen  
Bremerton  
Cape Flattery  
Shelton

**District 9**

Clover Park  
Federal Way

# Our Successes

There are innumerable opportunities for those who find it in themselves to persevere and work hard to gain a better future.

GEAR UP to me means gaining the knowledge, the motivation, and the confidence that I need to possess in order to get a higher education and to achieve my goals.

*Yadira Oregon, Okanogan Valley GEAR UP*

## GEAR UP vs. Statewide College Enrollment Rates among Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Price Lunch

78%

56%

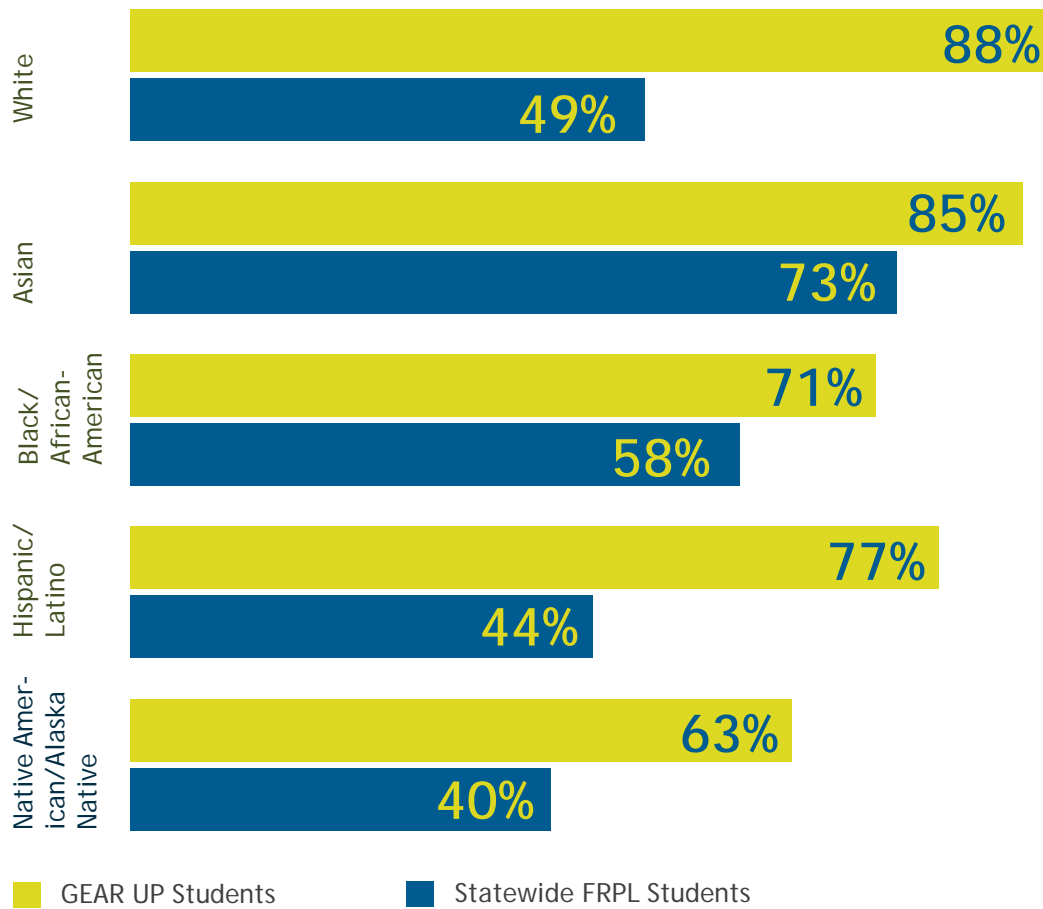
■ GEAR UP Students      ■ Statewide FRPL Students

*Source: Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, Social & Economic Sciences Research Center, Washington State University, Olympia, WA, July 2008.*





## GEAR UP vs. Statewide College Enrollment Rates among Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Price Lunch (by ethnicity)



Source: *Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs*, Social & Economic Sciences Research Center, Washington State University, Olympia, WA, July 2008.

# Our Programs

## Central Washington University Okanogan Valley GEAR UP Project

Grant Award Years: 2005-2011

### Who We Serve:

1,610 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students in isolated agricultural communities in Chelan, Douglas, and Okanogan counties on the east slope of the Cascade Mountains in North Central Washington.

### School Districts:

|             |          |
|-------------|----------|
| Brewster    | Omak     |
| Bridgeport  | Oroville |
| Lake Chelan | Tonasket |
| Manson      |          |

### Program Features:

Annual visits to 2-year and 4-year postsecondary institutions help rural Okanogan Valley GEAR UP students learn about college entrance requirements and prepare for postsecondary application.

30 high-achieving high school students, a valuable staffing resource in isolated rural districts, developed tutoring and mentoring skills in specially designed two-credit college courses at Wenatchee Valley College. Tutors and math coaches provide quality tutoring for GEAR UP cohort students in rigorous math and science courses.

77% of GEAR UP students are presently enrolled in rigorous math courses and 37% in rigorous science courses. This unique academic support program composed of tutors and coaches, serving the academic needs of students in seven districts, will be a valuable post-grant resource in districts.

In May, 2010, 9<sup>th</sup> grade transition videos produced in each GEAR UP district will be released for public review and used in conjunction with 9<sup>th</sup> grade transition activities, a practice introduced by GEAR UP and sustained by all seven districts.

### Partners:

Original grant partners include Central Washington University, Wenatchee Valley College, Secondary Education for Migrant Youth, Northwest Learning and Achievement Group, CWU Bridges Program and CWU Cornerstone Project.

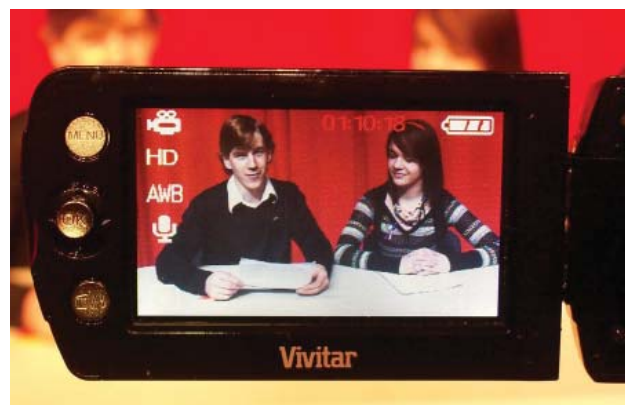
New partnerships include CWU Science Talent Expansion Program, LIGO Hanford Observatory, Marzano Research Laboratories and CoBro Consulting.

### Program Successes:

- 89% of GEAR UP student survey respondents expect to complete either a 2- or 4-year degree.
- 92 teachers, principals, superintendents, and counselors participated in a workshop presented by Marzano Research Laboratories on Standardized Grading and Assessment that Works.
- Student enrollment in rigorous math increased 225% in two years. In Year 5, 1,246 students enrolled in rigorous math courses including Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Trigonometry/Pre-Calculus, and Calculus.
- 589 students enrolled in rigorous science courses, up from four students in Year 3 and 273 students in Year 4. Reduced failure rates in rigorous math courses have been achieved by utilizing trained student tutors and math coaches.

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# Student Voices

It's 2:55 p.m. and the bell rings, doors open, and the steps and voices of students are heard through the hallways. Some students head home or to the streets, others stay for sports practice and others head straight into the library. Why the library? The last place you might expect to find a student at the end of the day. But the library is where our GEAR UP is located.

Students attend GEAR UP every day. Imagine walking into library after school and seeing students working on the computers, worried to finish that essay due the next day, and busily working out long Algebra problems. A GEAR UP tutor is helping a student on his physics, another tutor and student speak in low voices over an AP World History book.

Now, let me introduce myself to you and tell you how GEAR UP has affected me, my community, and my school. I'm Ivon Garcia, I come from a Mexican migrant family. I'm a senior this year at Bridgeport High School, where we are proud because of our school has been ranked number one in the nation. It's quite interesting how a community that is 85% Hispanic, first generation immigrant, with many undocumented community members, is exceeding so many expectations.

Our small rural community school has much to offer our students. Let's begin with our school's college classes, add AP classes in there and, let's not forget about GEAR UP and the determination of our students. GEAR UP has been a part of our school for about four years. Beginning with middle school and leading up to high school. I have been a GEAR UP peer tutor for several years. And through the years it has been a great experience. To explain what GEAR UP means to me is a story that has to be told.

Like the day I needed to ask the GEAR UP advisor a question. She seemed a little sad or worried about something and we began to talk. She explained how there is only one more year of GEAR UP and then the grant is over. Hearing that made me sad and disappointed, how can a program that has done so much for my community and students come to an end? She also explained how she thought that maybe she had not reached enough of the kids. I was shocked and frustrated. And when I get frustrated I begin to talk about what I believe is true.

GEAR UP has done so much for the students, especially in this community, where seasonal agriculture is so important and the only source of income to our families. Where parents believe that their daughters should stay nearby and be housewives and where the sons should stay home and work for the family. Students have grown up with this state of mind, but GEAR UP has offered them something new.

Because of GEAR UP, since the sixth grade these students have gone to educational places such as colleges, career fairs, and had other rich opportunities to learn about life beyond Bridgeport.

GEAR UP has been instrumental in teaching us that we can change our lives for the better. We don't have to continue working in the orchards. We see how hard our parents labor for others and know we want and can have a better life for ourselves and our family through higher education.

Ivon Garcia, 12<sup>th</sup> grader, Bridgeport High School, CWU Okanogan Valley GEAR UP Project

# Eastern Washington University GEAR UP Project Onward: Preparing Rural Students for Success

Grant Award Years: 2005-2011

## Who We Serve:

Eastern Washington University is working in a partnership with eight rural school districts in northeastern Washington to increase successful college attendance. We are currently serving 626 students.

## School Districts:

|             |           |
|-------------|-----------|
| Columbia    | Northport |
| Curlew      | Republic  |
| Cusick      | Selkirk   |
| Mary Walker | Wellpinit |



## Program Successes:

- 330 Students visited college campuses.
- 317 Students have traveled on educational field trips.
- 76 Students are enrolled in Advanced Language Arts classes.
- 105 Students are enrolled in Advanced Mathematics classes.

## Student Successes:

School staff members report that the various types of additional academic support they can offer with GEAR UP funding are a contributing factor toward overall increased academic success of the cohort students. One school administrator, commenting on the value of their tutorial program stated that, as the students attain greater academic success, "Kids are feeling better about themselves." A tutor in another school referred to a high school girl who was underachieving academically and said that, with supportive counseling through the GEAR UP program, she was "lighting up because she could achieve A's and B's in math."

At the end of a long, financial aid presentation for parents, a student just lit up and said, 'I know now that I will be able to go on to college.' The GEAR UP program is making a difference for our students.

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One success stands out above the rest this quarter. There is one boy in this [GEAR UP for Student Success] cohort who has constantly struggled to pass English. He was ready to throw in the towel and drop out to pursue a GED. He came to me in April and shared his frustrations.

I called his folks and they had similar concerns. They really didn't want him to get a GED but they didn't feel there was any other path at that point.

We set up a plan with the after school tutor and he began coming to homework help every time. He ended up passing all of his spring quarter classes and is now enrolled in credit recovery summer school. He feels more confident in his schoolwork and now knows that there is hope. I believe he will graduate on time.

Washington State GEAR UP for Student Success  
Staff Member, Wahkiakum High School

# The Evergreen State College GEAR UP Program

Grant Award Years: 2008-2014

## Who We Serve:

The Evergreen State College (TESC) GEAR UP Program consists of one higher education institution, two public school districts and 26 community partners serving a cohort of 1,026 students. The project primarily serves two urban schools in the Clover Park School District and one in the rural Oakville School District.

## School Districts:

Clover Park

Oakville

## Program Partners:

School Partners: Woodbrook Middle School, Lochburn Middle School, Oakville Middle School, Clover Park High School, Lakes High School, Oakville High School. The Evergreen State College, Clover Park School District, Oakville School District, Pierce College and Centralia College.

## Community Partners:

Assembly of God, Boys & Girls Club, Centro Latino, Caring for Kids, College Success Foundation, Communities in Schools, First Baptist Church of Lakewood, Habitat for Humanity, Junior Achievement, Lakewood's Promise, MESA, Making it Count/Monstor.com, National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice, Northwest Education Loan Alliance, Office of Education Ombudsman/Governor's Office, Pierce County Alliance, Pierce County Careers Connection, Pierce County Public Works, Puget Sound Energy, St. Clair's Hospital, Sterling Savings Bank, The Michael Shawn Hines Foundation, and Youth for Christ.

## Program Successes:

- 778 students visited college campuses.
- 960 students participated in computer assisted labs.
- 984 students worked with tutors and received homework assistance.
- 653 students received comprehensive mentoring.

## Student Successes:

Amy Walsh graduates from high school this June. That may seem ordinary to many, but for Amy it means the world. Amy began working with GEAR UP when she was in 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Woodbrook Middle School, Lakewood, Washington. A petite child, Amy struggled with health

issues early in life, discovering in her freshman year at Clover Park High School, Lakewood, Washington, that she had a tumor in the center of her brain. No stranger to the medical establishment, Amy had cared for her mother, an epileptic, and provided support for her dad, a diabetic, for most of her childhood. She did not let her health problems slow her down. Amy manages her symptoms with medication and has succeeded in spite of her health difficulties.

An Associated Student Body (ASB) Executive, Amy coordinates events and activities for Clover Park High School and tutors 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders working with the Community in Schools Program. An active GEAR UP student, Amy was chosen from several hundred students to introduce our Washington State Senator at the 2006 Summer Event at the University of Washington. Next fall she will begin The Evergreen State College with a full tuition waiver and high hopes for her future. Passionate about animals, Amy plans to pursue coursework and a career in zoology.

Amy credits GEAR UP college visits with helping her see options for higher education and shaping her next steps.

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Website: [www.evergreen.edu/gearup/home.htm](http://www.evergreen.edu/gearup/home.htm)



# University of Washington Two Valleys One Vision GEAR UP

Grant Award Years: 2005 - 2011

## Who We Serve:

The Two Valleys One Vision (TVOV) Partnership served 2,988 9<sup>th</sup> Graders in 2008-2009.

## School Districts:

|                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Burlington-Edison | Mt. Vernon           |
| East Valley       | Sunnyside            |
| Goldendale        | Toppenish            |
| Grandview         | Union Gap            |
| Granger           | Wapato               |
| Mabton            | Yakama Tribal School |
| Mt. Adams         |                      |

## Program Successes:

Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) passing rates are an academic measurement used to assess program impact. Between 2008-2009 academic years, 100% of sites serving 10<sup>th</sup> graders increased 10<sup>th</sup> grade WASL reading passing rates over the previous 8<sup>th</sup> grade WASL. There was little or no improvement in WASL math passing rates at University of Washington GEAR UP sites.

The percentage of students reporting that they have spoken with UW GEAR UP or school staff about college entrance requirements has more than doubled over the four years of the program - from 32% in 2005 - 2006 to 76% in 2009. Parent knowledge about college increased dramatically between the third and fourth years of the program with over 60% of sites who reported data for both years reporting an increase. Parent expectations of their child obtaining a 4-year degree maintained at 61% in 2009.

The Parent Observer Program trained a cohort of parents to be observers of GEAR UP activities with the intent of giving written feedback to the program from a parent perspective. This is a follow up to the Parent Academies and gives the parents an opportunity to see GEAR UP in action, while giving staff the opportunity to hear parent feedback. At this time, most GU events are observed by trained parents.

We continue to work with students, teachers and parents to increase educational expectations on all levels. We offer students interactive, hands-on experience especially in science and math. We also contractually require all students take the PSAT or PACT test no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Such activity increases potential for

students to be recognized by colleges and aids guidance counselors when working with students around college and career planning goals.

## Student Successes:

The Math and Science Initiative, was a primary focus of our program last year. The goal was to foster growth in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) - partners applied for funding to support a rigorous STEM curriculum, lab/computer equipment and technical experts to train math and science departments. The Math and Science Initiative has since evolved into our very successful "Project Lead the Way" (PLTW) classrooms. Project Lead the Way is a challenging four year engineering curriculum utilizing the Auto-CAD (Computer Assisted Design) software. Working with such state of the art equipment is a challenge for both students and teachers so we support the PLTW classrooms with technical assistance from University of Washington engineering students.

Project Lead the Way, has been the biggest success this year. One group of students has so far complete one year of curriculum in one semester. The students teamed up with Yakima Memorial Hospital to design a step stool for shorter triage nurses to more easily reach patients for procedures such as CPR. The cohort is now looking to the production phase of the project. This project has not only increased the academic performance and educational expectations of the students, but has opened the door for students to access the private sector. We hope to build job shadowing and other opportunities for the students as the projects progresses.

We hosted a Leadership Academy trip to Washington DC, our first out-of-state trip, where 16 students focused on college campus visits, as well as visiting and learning about historical sites. The students then created a presentation for the Department of Education and presented to Andrea Baird, GEAR UP Program Officer, about their trip and what they planned to do with their newly acquired leadership skills.

## Contact Information:

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# Student Voices

In the 6<sup>th</sup> grade I joined the University of Washington GEAR UP Sky's the Limit program. Every Monday-Thursday after school I would go to our cafeteria, this is where our GEAR UP program would meet. I believe I was one of about 75 students that attended after-school tutoring through GEAR UP.

We would start by working on assignments for thirty minutes. This always helped me because I usually had a difficult time finishing my homework at home. Then for the next hour and a half we would attend a variety of clubs that helped increase our educational knowledge in things such as robotics, computer technology, mathematics and journalism. After a few weeks, GEAR UP got me into the habit of working on my homework right after school until I was completed with all my classroom assignments.

As I continued with the program I soon saw that this routine I had gotten into, improved my grades and made me more successful academically. I was able to keep straight A's throughout the school year. My parents were so proud of me, especially, when they received a letter saying that I had made the principal's honor roll list. I knew it was because the GEAR UP staff was always there for me. Our GEAR UP staff was always there when I needed help with my academics and that little dose of encouragement when I struggled with a teacher, class, or assignment.

It wasn't until GEAR UP that I actually became interested in postsecondary education. Every week someone talked to me about college, whether it was just a, "you should go to college" statement or an actual college and career presentation. So when they offered a field trip to Columbia Basin Community College I seized the opportunity.

On our field trip we were able to see the different college majors, clubs, organizations, activities offered, and much more. This got me completely hooked. GEAR UP also brought my attention to the Washington State College Bound Scholarship. I signed a contract with GEAR UP saying that if I maintained a 2.0 or better, stayed out of trouble with the law, and met income requirements throughout school, I would receive a scholarship. To this day I am still doing what I can to uphold that contract.

Now I'm in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, a straight A student and interested in going to many different colleges and universities. I know for a fact that if it weren't for GEAR UP, I wouldn't be interested in college as much as I am now. Our GEAR UP program here at Toppenish School District has opened up a lot of windows for me. My family and I are truly grateful for all the opportunities it has provided us. Plus I can always get help from GEAR UP if I need it. I'm striving to do my best so I can achieve all my academic and career goals in my life. And GEAR UP has been with me, every step of the way.

Emily Blackeagle, 9<sup>th</sup> grade student, Toppenish School District GEAR UP Program

## University of Washington Sky's the Limit GEAR UP

Grant Award Years: 2006-2012

### Who We Serve:

The Sky's the Limit (SKY) Partnership served 2,449 8<sup>th</sup> graders in 2008-2009.

### School Districts:

|                   |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| Burlington-Edison | Mt. Vernon |
| East Valley       | Sunnyside  |
| Goldendale        | Toppenish  |
| Grandview         | Union Gap  |
| Granger           | Wapato     |
| Mabton            | Zillah     |
| Mt. Adams         |            |

### Program Successes:

Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) passing rates are an academic measurement used to assess program impact. Between the 2007-2008 and the 2008-2009 academic years, more than 65% of sites serving 8<sup>th</sup> graders increased 8<sup>th</sup> grade WASL math passing rates over the previous year's 7<sup>th</sup> grade WASL. More than 75% of sites increased WASL reading passing rates.

Students' knowledge about college improved significantly this year compared to last year's data. Of those schools reporting survey data for 2007-2008 and 2008-2009, 70% of schools increased student knowledge about college. The increases ranged from 3% to 46% with the average increase being 14%. The percentage of students reporting that they have spoken with GEAR UP or school staff about college entrance requirements has almost doubled over the three years of the program—from 43% in 2006 to 82% in 2009.

The percentage of students reporting that they have spoken with UW GEAR UP or school staff about college entrance requirements has more than doubled over the four years of the program - from 32% in 2005 - 2006 to 76% in 2009. Parent knowledge about college increased dramatically between the third and fourth years of the program with over 60% of sites who reported data for both years reporting an increase. Parent expectations of their child obtaining a 4-year degree maintained at 61% in 2009.

### Student Successes:

The Math and Science Initiative was a primary focus of our program last year. The goal was to foster growth in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM).

Partners applied for funding to support a rigorous STEM curriculum, lab / computer equipment and technical experts to train math and science departments. The Math and Science Initiative has since evolved into our very successful "Project Lead the Way" (PLTW) classrooms. Project Lead the Way is a challenging four year engineering curriculum utilizing the Auto-CAD (Computer Assisted Design) software. Working with such state of the art equipment is a challenge for both students and teachers so we support the PLTW classrooms with technical assistance from University of Washington engineering students.

Project Lead the Way, has been the biggest success this year. One group of students has so far completed one year of curriculum in one semester. The students teamed up with Yakima Memorial Hospital to design a step stool for shorter triage nurses to more easily reach patients for procedures such as CPR. The cohort is now looking to the production phase of the project. This project has not only increased the academic performance and educational expectations of the students, but has opened the door for students to access the private sector. We hope to build job shadowing and other opportunities for the students as the projects progresses.

### Contact Information:

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## Washington State GEAR UP

Grant Award Years: 2005-2011

### Who We Serve:

Washington State GEAR UP has two direct service components: the federally-funded GEAR UP Scholars Project and the state-funded GEAR UP for Student Success program. The Higher Education Coordinating Board administers both programs and serves a combined total of approximately 4,000 students in 37 school districts.

### School Districts:

|               |                            |             |                |
|---------------|----------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Aberdeen      | Finley                     | Ocean Beach | Tekoa          |
| Bellingham    | Grand Coulee Dam           | Okanogan    | Toppenish      |
| Blaine        | Grandview                  | Pateros     | Vancouver      |
| Bremerton     | Inchelium                  | Quincy      | Wahkiakum      |
| Cape Flattery | Kettle Falls               | Raymond     | Wapato         |
| Eastmont      | Klickitat                  | Rosalia     | Wenatchee      |
| Ephrata       | Mansfield                  | Shelton     | West Valley    |
| Everett       | Monroe                     | South Bend  | White Pass     |
| Federal Way   | Naselle-Grays River Valley | Spokane     | Willapa Valley |
|               |                            |             | Wilson Creek   |

## GEAR UP Scholars Project

### Program Features:

The Scholars Project is the federally-funded direct service project managed by Washington State GEAR UP.

The project provides comprehensive services to students and their families in 12 contracted low-income school districts. The research-based program design requires students to meet benchmarks set for each grade level. Currently the cohort of students is in 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

The program continues to provide intervention and information services. They include:

- Tutoring and mentoring
- After-school activities
- Career exploration
- Financial aid information
- Summer programs

### Program Successes:

- 96% of GEAR UP students attended information sessions relating to college admissions, financing, and scholarship opportunities.
- 92% of students received GEAR UP-specific academic enrichment services.
- 98% participated in counseling and academic planning activities.
- 75% have visited a college or done college student shadowing.



## GEAR UP for Student Success

### Program Features:

GEAR UP for Student Success is the first state-funded GEAR UP program in the nation. It was established in 2007 by the Washington Legislature.

GEAR UP for Student Success serves 3,400 students in 29 high schools, representing 25 of the highest need school districts across the state. Through coordinated programs that are aligned with school improvement efforts, schools provide GEAR UP activities to students and their families, as well as professional development opportunities to staff. Schools are currently in their third year of funding and serving the Class of 2011.

### Program Successes:

- In the first two years, over 10,000 hours of college awareness and planning activities were provided to students and their families.
- In the second year, schools led 90 visits to college campuses across the state.
- More than 5,000 hours of tutoring has been provided to ensure that students are academically prepared for the challenges of postsecondary education.

The community of Neah Bay is made up of primarily Makah tribal members and most of the kids have lived here their whole lives and are related to numerous people in our small village. The opportunity to visit academic institutions, towns and cities outside of our reservation exposes the students to another culture than what they are familiar with, and we believe this will greatly increase their change of academic success.

The GEAR UP program has taught them how to figure out the admission requirements of different institutions, how to prepare themselves and their families for the financial requirements, and how different but exciting life will be when they leave Neah Bay to go to a college, university or a trade school. This past spring the GEAR UP kids made presentations to members of our community where they articulated their academic and personal goals. They beamed with confidence and spoke knowingly about their college and university plans.

**Michael Lawrence, Chairman, Makah Tribal Council & Parent of a GEAR UP for Student Success Student**





# Student Voices

Hello my name is Thomas Lawrence and I'm 16 years old. I'm currently a junior at Neah Bay High School and I'm associated with the Washington State GEAR UP for Student Success program. I am writing this essay for a couple of reasons. One being I feel that it's necessary for the public to see from an actual GEAR UP student's perspective how the program has impacted my life and two being I want to have a chance to go to Washington D.C.

When I first thought of college, I just thought that it would be a waste of time. Time that I could be using to spend with friends and doing wild and crazy things. As soon as I hit my freshman year of high school I was told by my school counselor that my class, the Class of 2011, would be participating in a program that exposes us to different universities, educational institutions and other cultural activities.

Since 2007 my class and I have been to Western Washington University, Washington State University, Everett Community College, The University of Washington, The Art Institute of Seattle, Gonzaga University, etc. Honestly, I believe we as a class have been to just about all the major colleges in the state. To make things even better I have decided since I set foot on a college campus for the first time I was college bound.

Now that my mind is made up, here comes the hard part, I have to choose a college. Even though this will be hard, GEAR UP makes my decisions a lot easier because I'm able to be on a college campus, get a feel for its environment, taste its food and learn about what they have to offer. Also through GEAR UP I have gone on a couple of trips which allow me to stay on a college campus for at least a week. Programs like the NWABR program, a biomedical retreat, had us stay on the University of Washington campus for five days. I know that some people think that UW is too large of a campus, but honestly I feel that it wasn't so bad because I knew where everything was due to our trips to the University. The GEAR UP tours made the big difference.

GEAR UP has also taught me that there is a lot of help out there; scholarships, financial aid and all kinds of neat things that can help people of minority backgrounds become successful in college. GEAR UP means a lot to me because being a minority and living on a small Indian reservation you think that your life will be limited to the reservation. But GEAR UP has proven to me that statements like that are wrong because I AM COLLEGE BOUND!

In the fall of 2011 I hope to attend Western Washington University and gain both a Bachelor's and then a Master's Degree in Business Administration. After I complete college I intend to return to my hometown to work for my Tribe, to give back to my community and to encourage other tribal youth to explore all of the amazing opportunities the world has to offer. So in closing I'd like to thank the Washington State GEAR UP Program for giving me an opportunity to pave my path to success.

Thomas Lawrence, 11<sup>th</sup> grader, Neah Bay High School  
Washington State GEAR UP for Student Success

# StudentVoices

What happens when your lifelong dream has finally turned into your reality? You grow up thinking you're going to be a doctor, a teacher, or maybe a dancer. My dream was simply to be able to make it to college. I wanted to be known as my family's first generation college student. I want them to believe that I'm someone with ambitions, someone they can look at and be proud to say, "That's my daughter," and someone that exceeded everything anyone ever expected out of me. GEAR UP became my fairy godmother that made my wildest dream come true.

Although my parents are supportive of me, I've never had anyone more behind me than GEAR UP has been in the past years. They believe I will become something great and they push me to my greatest ability to make sure I do. I've never felt so blessed to have such great people in my life that care so much about my future. Since I was asked to participate in 7th grade they were always behind me 100% to make sure I was being the best me that I could be. Without a doubt GEAR UP has become my home away from home, my second family.

With both of my parents working in the agriculture industry and neither of them having the knowledge of what the college experience is like, I was on my own to find answers and opportunities for college. What is the campus of the University of Washington like? Do they have scholarships for people like me out there? How can I get more involved in my community? GEAR UP has been able to always give me an answer to almost every question I have. If they don't have an answer they find it! Visiting a lot of the major college and university campuses in Washington state or simply just finding resources around my school would've never crossed my path without the GEAR UP program. It's opened a gateway with millions of opportunities to pick from.

As they have always said "College is not a dream. It's a plan." College was my dream but now I can dream even bigger. I've been given the opportunity to finally be that first generation college student I longed to be. So you ask, "What does GEAR UP mean to you?" And I respond, "GEAR UP means everything to me; it built the future of my dreams."

Maria Montiel, 11<sup>th</sup> grader, Wenatchee High School  
Washington State GEAR UP Scholars Project



## Washington State University One Vision Partnership I GEAR UP Grant Award Years: 2006 - 2012

### Who We Serve:

5,537 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> grade students.

### School Districts:

|                        |                |
|------------------------|----------------|
| Clarkston              | Kiona-Benton   |
| Columbia (Walla Walla) | North Franklin |
| Endicott               | Pasco          |
| Ephrata                | Paterson       |
| Finley                 | St. John       |
| Glenwood               | Walla Walla    |

### Program Features:

The program focus this year was preparing 9th and 10th grade students to plan and implement a four year educational plan to graduate on time and to enroll at the college or university of their choice.

### For Students:

- Advising of students on career and college interests by GEAR UP staff and school counselors.
- Tutoring during and after school and implementing intervention class rooms.
- Implementation of AVID curriculum with basic strategies introduced in home room classes.
- Campus visits focused on students educational interests
- Motivational speakers from college campuses.
- Mentoring of GEAR UP students by high school students participating in LINK Crew.
- On school site connection with university faculty: Imagine U at WSU.

### For Parents:

- Career planning/awareness activities.
- College campus visits.
- College planning workshops, including: setting high academic expectation, college entrance exams, courses required for college acceptance, applying to college, writing the college application essay, selecting a college.
- College financial planning workshops, including: paying for college, applying for college and financial aid.

### For Teachers:

- Professional development in GLADD, AVID and WASL testing (new high school test).
- Classroom technology and curriculum.

- GEAR UP partnership with AVID for local training.

### Student Successes:

Kiona Benton ninth grade GEAR UP student Pablo Guzman comes from a family of eight children of which he and his twin brother Pedro are youngest. His home environment is mostly Spanish monolingual and both his mother and father work seasonal jobs. Pablo has been part of the GEAR UP cohort since the sixth grade but admits he really hadn't heard much about it because he was absent so much. In fact his attendance was so poor that he ended up in truancy court three times during his 7th grade year. After seeing his brothers drop out of school before him, he believed school was a waste of time and stayed home most days. This set a bad example about the importance of school. He earned mostly 'F' grades in middle school because he missed so much and did not seek tutoring help.

However, Pablo was inspired by the GEAR UP sponsored field trips to college campuses. He said the college students looked very happy and he wanted to have that experience too. When Pablo participated in the GEAR UP 8th grade promotion, he really started thinking about his future and wanted to turn things around. Since starting high school, Pablo has been committed to staying focused on earning good grades and all the credits needed to graduate. He participates in school sports, but works to maintain his grades at the same time; regularly attending after school tutoring, participating in GEAR UP leadership activities, and has even become a leader among his peers. Pablo says it is his goal to make his family proud by succeeding in high school, graduating, and going to college. Ultimately, Pablo wants to have a career that will allow him to buy the Jeep his dad has always wanted. ~ Becky Wilson GEAR UP Site Manager

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## Washington State University One Vision Partnership II GEAR UP Grant Award Years: 2008 - 2014

### Who We Serve:

2,813 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.

### School Districts:

|                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Clarkston          | Kiona-Benton   |
| Columbia (Burbank) | North Franklin |
| Endicott           | Pasco          |
| Ephrata            | Paterson       |
| Finley             | St. John       |
| Glenwood           | Walla Walla    |

### Program Features:

#### For Students:

- Intervention class offered in middle school with the support of parents.
- Tutoring provided during and after school.
- APEX courses (web-based) were offered to students during the academic year and summer school to help students catch up on school work missed for variety of reasons.
- 8th grade career fairs were scheduled in the 3 different service areas of the program; Columbia Basin, Tri-cities and Walla Walla area.
- Motivational speaker Aric Bostic got students in the Tri-cities area excited about education, leadership and community service.
- Coordinating the 8<sup>th</sup> grade transition to high school with middle and high school principals.
- All GEAR UP students had opportunity to participate in writing contest on "What GEAR UP Means to Me."

#### For Parents:

- College planning workshops, including: setting high academic expectation, college entrance exams, courses required for college acceptance, applying to college, writing the college application essay, selecting a college.
- College financial planning workshops, including: paying for college, applying for college and financial aid.
- Spanish and English sessions on how to support your child through their educational experience (Abriendo Puertas, Opening Doors curriculum).
- Informational sessions on the Washington State College Bound Scholarship.

#### For Teachers & School Administrators:

- Professional development in AVID, GLADD and LIGO STEM curriculum.
- Teachers enrolled in one year ELL certification program.
- Jointly planned the design of GEAR UP Program at high schools after participating in NCCEP Capacity Building Workshop.

#### Student Successes:

Oriona Van Dyke is the Chairperson of POWERDEMICS, the academic committee of P.O.W.E.R., Pioneer Middle School's Leadership Team. Finding a safe environment in middle school is not an easy thing to do. But research and experience show that connected students are successful students. When asked "What Does GEAR UP Mean To Me?" Oriona wrote about the usual campus visit, and keeping an eye on long-term goals.

Shining through the expected highlights, came this phrase "positive peer groups," not one I hear bantered about by educators or students. Ori said her mom helped her work out exactly how to put into words the importance of finding an accepting place where she can thrive, outside the day-to-day drama that is middle school.

*Margaret Thomas GEAR UP Tutor*

Positive peer groups are a group of students like myself involved with GEAR UP and help encourage each other to be better students and to achieve our goals along with all A's and B's. These groups are also creating a very safe environment. The environment is very safe because there is no peer pressure like in all of the other classes. When I say peer pressure I mean that your friends are always talking about what is cool and what is not.

*Oriona Van Dyke*

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# Student Voices

I have experienced how college life is. GEAR UP has awakened me to see my future can be full of life and excitement. I know what I want and how I am going to achieve my goals as a young adult. Knowing what schools are for me, what schools are not, is a benefit for me, because I now know what I want for myself. Being able to say that I know what I want is pretty good considering that many college freshmen don't know what they want and I am just a sophomore in high school. I have been exposed to many different colleges—private, liberal arts, technical, and public college.



I have been looking at colleges since 7<sup>th</sup> grade. At first I was wondering if I had the grades to get into college or if I would have enough money to go. GEAR UP has helped me realize that college is an option for me and there are several different ways to go. GEAR UP has shown me that using the resources available, such as tutoring or homework assistance helps me maintain a healthy GPA. GEAR UP has taught me about financial aid, scholarships, and grants. I have realized that colleges don't only look at your academics, but your community involvement as well.

I have visited over 10 colleges in Washington & Oregon, and I have found out which ones I like. I have listened to the admissions presentations, asked questions about their programs and how life on the college campus is. I have learned confidence, to step up, and take the initiative to ask questions. I mean after all, it is a benefit to me, looking towards my future.

Being organized in school is preparation for your future. Being aware of when assignments are due helps you meet deadlines. Using a portfolio is a good tool, especially for when you are applying for scholarships. With GEAR UP I have visited tons of colleges, heard presentations that demonstrate what exactly admissions is looking for when selecting a student. Taking challenging, well meaning classes while in high school is also a benefit for the future.

I have learned that being well rounded will open more doors. I have learned that trying new things can be inspiring as well as fun. Participating in class leadership has inspired me to be more of a leader than a follower. Stepping up to the plate and taking on challenges, such as service learning hours, also helps me become well rounded. I have participated in many things to get service learning hours such as the landscaping of our school. I know using my family's diversity when applying for scholarships will be an advantage. Getting out and experiencing new camps or places is good because you meet new people, learn new things.

GEAR UP has made a difference in my life. It has opened my eyes to recognize my dreams can be reality. I still have the time to turn my plan into action. If it wasn't for GEAR UP, I don't think that I would be thinking of college right now. College isn't a maybe for me, it is a for sure thing. Having and using resources, recognizing that god isn't going to do it for me; that I have to apply myself and commit to myself. I have been on the honor roll and being a student athlete where STUDENT came first. I am a sophomore attending Glenwood Secondary. I am Corbin Schuster. College is my Dream. College is my Plan.

Corbin (CJ) Schuster, 10<sup>th</sup> grader, Glenwood High School, GEAR UP One Vision Partnership

## Washington State University Harvest of Hope II GEAR UP Grant Award Years: 2008 - 2014

### Who We Serve:

2,110 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.

### School Districts:

|               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| College Place | Soap Lake   |
| Dayton        | Touchet     |
| Moses Lake    | Walla Walla |
| Prescott      |             |

### Program Features:

#### For Students:

- Intervention class offered in middle school with the support of parents.
- Tutoring provided during and after school.
- APEX courses (web-based) were offered to students during the academic year and summer school to help students catch up on school work missed for variety of reasons.
- 8th grade career fairs were scheduled in the three different service areas of the program; Columbia Basin, Tri-cities and Walla Walla area.
- 7th grade campus visits to Whitman University, Washington State University, Eastern Washington University, Walla Walla Community College, and Big Bend Community College.
- Coordinating the 8th grade transition to high school with middle and high school principals.
- Student representatives from each school participated in a Career Showcase at WSU TC in May.
- All GEAR UP students had opportunity to participate in writing contest on "What GEAR UP Means to Me."

#### For Parents:

- Middle school success informational sessions.
- College planning workshops, including: setting high academic expectation, college entrance exams, courses required for college acceptance, applying to college, writing the college application essay, and selecting a college.
- College financial planning workshops, including: paying for college, applying for college and financial aid.
- Spanish and English sessions on how to support your child through their educational experience (Abriendo Puertas, Opening Doors curriculum).
- Informational sessions on the Washington State College Bound Scholarship.

#### For Teachers & School Administration:

- Professional development in AVID, GLADD and LIGO STEM curriculum.
- Classroom technology and math curriculum.
- Teachers enrolled in one year ELL certification program.
- Jointly planned the design of GEAR UP Program at high schools after participating in NCCEP Capacity Building Workshop.

#### Student Successes:

8<sup>th</sup> grader Jordan Ulbricht is one of GEAR UP's great success stories. When Jordan joined the GEAR UP class, he was failing every subject. After discussions with Mr. Frost, Jordan expressed a desire to turn his life around. With each passing day, Jordan chose to do his homework. With each success, Jordan's self-esteem grew. He now has an A, 3 B's, and a D+, and each week they keep improving.

However, this wasn't just about the grades for Jordan. He has made a 180 degree turn in his young life, with the positive way in which he relates to his peers and his instructors. Jordan is quick with a smile and has a great personality, and we are proud to have him as a role model for other GEAR UP students! Jordan has expressed a desire to be a psychologist or medical doctor in the future.

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# Student Voices

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, better known as GEAR UP, has had a significant impact on my life. Not only has Isaac Stevens Middle School GEAR UP inspired me to achieve in middle school, it started me thinking about going to college. It has helped me realize that one of the most important things I can do for myself, my family and for society as a whole is to attend and complete college. I can honestly say that GEAR UP means a great deal to me.

GEAR UP has changed my life. In seventh grade, the GEAR UP director came to one of my classes and introduced me to the program. I had never heard about GEAR UP, nor was I interested when the teacher told the class that a guest speaker would be visiting our class. I thought, this will be just another boring speaker. I'll just pretend to listen and pass the time. But, he grabbed my attention because of his energetic, motivating and outgoing personality. He talked about doing well in school, going to college and the importance of education. He also told us that there were people in his program that would help us with our homework and that GEAR UP would take us on field trips to colleges and businesses. I thought, interesting, this would be a free pass to get out of class; it is too early for me to even be thinking college. [Little] did I know, this would be the turning point in my life. I started to turn myself around and thinking differently. I was changing into a new person. I started participating in the after school program to get help, went on field trips and begin thinking about what college I wanted to attend. For the very first time, I was concerned about my grades and wanted to do well in school. My grades improved and matter of fact, I was on honor roll each quarter. I felt good about myself and my parents were so ecstatic. They came to the Honor Roll Assemblies and brought balloons to celebrate my achievements.

GEAR UP has helped me learn how to face and overcome some of the hardest challenges in my life. GEAR UP took the seventh graders on a field trip to Eastern Washington University. The presenter talked about goal setting. Then, he talked about pushing yourself to work to your fullest potential, never giving up and how to solve problems. My teachers and parents had always told me I could be a leader and do great things. It seemed like everyone knew I could be whatever I wanted to be but me. I had gained courage and started believing in myself. Then, I had a major setback. My mother and father divorced. My mother left home and I was left to take care of my little sister and brother. It was hard coming to school every day. Sometimes, I would get to school late, but I remembered what I had learned from GEAR UP about achieving goals and staying focused.

I am truly grateful that the GEAR UP Program is at Isaac Stevens Middle School. It has provided me with many educational opportunities that otherwise I would not have experienced. GEAR UP has opened many doors for me, helped me develop my skills and understand that college is my dream, my plan. I am now on the pathway to a better and brighter future.

Andrea Rose, Isaac Stevens Middle School, Washington State University GEAR UP



## Wenatchee GEAR UP Project

Grant Award Years: 2008 - 2014

### Who We Serve:

The Wenatchee GEAR UP Project is the second GEAR UP grant the district has received. The 2008 GEAR UP grant is currently operating in two of the three district middle schools. It serves all of the students in grades 6, 7, and 8, a total of 1,151 students. In the third year of the grant we will add our final cohort of students and serve four separate grade bands until 2014.

### School Districts:

Wenatchee

### Program Partners:

Wenatchee Valley College, Central Washington University, Washington State University, YWCA, and additional community partners.

### Program Successes:

- 918 students (80% of cohort) received an average of 24 hours of tutoring or homework assistance.
- 413 students (36% of cohort) visited a college campus.
- 100% of the eligible 8<sup>th</sup> graders and 89% of the eligible 9<sup>th</sup> graders are enrolled in the Washington State College Bound Scholarship program, an enrollment rate that far exceeds the state average.

GEAR UP created many systemic changes within the Wenatchee School District. Orchard Middle School (the only district middle school with GEAR UP) met AYP five years in a row. Prior to GEAR UP, it had never met AYP.

Orchard Middle School received state awards for academic improvement every year since GEAR UP started:

- 2003: State Achievement Award (7th grade Reading, Writing, Math)
- 2004: State Achievement Award (7th grade Reading)
- 2004: Title I Achievement Award (1 of 55 schools in Washington selected; 7th grade Hispanic Reading, Writing, and Math)
- 2005: State Achievement Award (7th grade Writing and Math)
- 2006: State Achievement Award (7th grade Reading)
- 2007: State Achievement Award (7th grade Writing)

- 2009: Great Schools Award (1 of 26 middle schools in Washington selected for five years of academic improvements)

It is our hope that the 2008 GEAR UP grant will create as much positive, sustainable change!

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GEAR UP made college seem attainable and made me feel more confident that I was submitting applications with substance... I was going to be able to go to college.

GEAR UP Graduate



## GEAR UP for Yakima

Grant Award Years: 2005 - 2011

### Who We Serve:

This is a partnership cohort program currently serving 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> grade students in the Yakima School District.

### School Districts:

Yakima

### Program Partners:

Partners with the Yakima School District are Yakima Valley Community College, YMCA, Yakima Greater Chamber of Commerce, and Comprehensive Mental Health.

### Program Successes:

Student participation in PSAT and PLAN exams more than doubled over the past year.

Another successful aspect has been led by our students. Our student-led advocacy programs have led to a culture shift toward expectations of postsecondary education. This includes an increase in active student leadership and the use of student leaders to disseminate information, role model and support GEAR UP objectives. Resulting from our focus on increasing expectations and overcoming barriers to postsecondary education, the students have helped initiate a culture change in schools based on these higher expectations, particularly as it relates to the pursuit of postsecondary education. We have also had several very successful college fairs this past year that have exposed students to a large and diverse set of colleges, universities and technical institutions.

Through the AVID program, we have been able to increase academic expectations of many mid-level students. By making professional development a priority in all areas of the program, we are increasing the capability and knowledge of our current staff.

In addition, our support for the adoption of new math and science curricula has helped our district build sustainable processes into its professional development and content adoption plans.

### Student Successes:

A week long residential summer camp was held in conjunction with several programs on the Central Washington University campus. We served a total of 85 students over the course of the two weeks. While at Central, students lived in the dorms, ate in the cafeteria, attended classes taught by university professors, completed

two detailed academic projects, attended leadership workshops held by university staff, and participated in recreational activities to include; group intramural games, swimming, high and low ropes courses, and free time activities. This experience gave students a real time look at University life as well as amazing personal growth. This event really enhanced the student advocacy that is changing the college going culture within our schools.

### Contact Information:

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GEAR UP for Yakima

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GEAR UP means a lot in a sense of that without this program I wouldn't have the opportunity to go and discover colleges let alone meet the people who can help me get into college. By learning new skills and having the chance to learn what courses you need to take I feel that I'm putting my foot in the door to open up more doors for colleges to know that I'm interested and committed to being a successful student. Without GEAR UP I could have never experienced these things on my own time or in my lifetime because of GEAR UP I have even done rigorous rope course where leadership and patience are learned quickly. GEAR UP has introduced me to new colleges and people who not only show me how to get to college but how to get help to pay for school and how to have good time management skills. Most importantly GEAR UP makes me feel like I am catching a family dream. That I can be the first in my family to go to college to have a successful job. Both my parents have tried to accomplish this same goal and failed. I am thankful that they have jobs but I want to feel that I did something with my life and not just have to work in the fields because I have a family and I didn't get the chance to educate myself. With a program like GEAR UP around I have no excuse to say, "Oh no I didn't go to college because I didn't know how or no, I needed help but no one helped me." With GEAR UP it lets me know that I have the chance to take total advantage of this program because GEAR UP has so many benefits for a student even as a learner and as a planner.

Edith Zargoza, GEAR UP for Yakima Student

# Student Voices

I come from a family with little education, so we never had a lot of money. For that I never was encouraged to go to college. A couple years ago GEAR UP took me and some other students on a field trip to Camp Dudley. That's where they told us more about college and how they can help us get there. For a while I was just going for the fun of it, but then I decided I was going for a reason.

After a few more field trips they explained more about applying for scholarships and financial aid. At that point I was still only considering college, but at the same time doubting I would still make it that far. We soon went to Washington State University and took a college tour. I liked it and their classes on engineering, which is also what I want to major in.

Not only did GEAR UP help me on deciding which college I want to go to, but they also helped me get there. They held summer programs with leadership classes. At YVCC was a college fair that had mentors from Central Washington University. They talked about a program called S.T.E.P and the beginning engineer classes they had to offer. One of the professors talked to me and said I can go to Central for the beginning classes and transfer...to major in mechanical engineering. That's when it was all going easy and I made my decision that I was gonna go to college.

GEAR UP is an important program not only for me, but for many others. They persuaded me that I can actually make it to college and I believe I can as well. Thanks to the GEAR UP counselors I am now looking for scholarships and planning to go to college. They prove to me and many others that college truly isn't a dream but a plan. This is just what I needed to get me on my way; this is what GEAR UP means to me.

Jesse Garcia, GEAR UP for Yakima



# Contact Information

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## GEAR UP for Yakima

Gary L. Fulker, District Director  
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GEAR UP means hope, hope of maybe having a better life than the one I have. With the jobs that my parents have we can barely make it through with rent and bills. They never had an education past middle school which would make it an honor for me to be the first one to go to college in my family. And it would give me the opportunity to give my children what I never had. This would also increase the chances of my children going to college.

This program has also taught me to be a better person. It has taught me to be more dedicated to my education. Also how to be more responsible to my decision making. I have also seen improvement on my work ethic.

This program means everything to me.

Javier Corona, 11<sup>th</sup> grader  
Washington State GEAR UP

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