Educators and Schools Receive GEAR UP Support

GEAR UP Wyoming assists educators in reaching under-resourced students through professional development. Over the past year, in-school training and regional workshops were offered to GEAR UP Wyoming schools.

In-school trainings included workshops and resources targeted at:

- improving ACT® preparation.
- working with low-income and under-resourced students.
- engaging students and assisting with transitions.

Regional workshops were provided to administrators, Instructional Facilitators, classroom teachers, and Bridges Summer School teachers. Topics included ACT® preparation for teachers, under-resourced learners, understanding and implementing the Common Core, and coaching strategies for educators.

In addition to offering in-school and regional workshops, GEAR UP Wyoming worked with AdvancED to support the semi-annual School Improvement Conferences. GEAR UP Wyoming sponsored guest speakers and conference resources to hundreds of Wyoming’s educators. During the past year, GEAR UP Wyoming provided professional development to over 723 educators in Wyoming.

Over 160 Students Prepared for College at Camp GEAR UP

From July 8 - July 12, 2013, over 160 students “Experienced the Possibilities” at Camp GEAR UP. Students in 9th through 12th grades stayed in the residence halls and participated in academic activities at the University of Wyoming, the Laramie County Community College (LCCC) Wind Energy Technology Center, the NCAR-Wyoming Supercomputing Center, and the Snowy Range Mountains. Activities included college readiness and career exploration workshops, science and technology modules, canoeing experiences, and team-building ropes courses. Students also participated in a leadership workshop and showcased their skills at the camp talent show.

Students explored careers in renewable energy at the LCCC Wind Energy Technology Center and at the NCAR Wyoming Supercomputing Center.
GEAR UP WYOMING College Freshmen Continue with College

In 2014, 68 percent of GEAR UP WYOMING college freshmen continued to their second year of college compared to the national average of 63 percent for all students, regardless of income status.

GEAR UP WYOMING provides services to college freshmen who were served by GEAR UP during junior high school or high school. These services include peer mentoring, tutoring, FAFSA assistance, scholarship information, and introductory level college courses which focus on college success. These opportunities help students feel invested in the college campus and increase the likelihood of students continuing from year one to year two of college.

In 2013, GEAR UP WYOMING had a college enrollment rate of 72 percent, compared to 22 percent for low-income students in Wyoming and 39 percent of low-income students nationwide.*

*Postsecondary Education OPPORTUNITY, 2013.

GEAR UP WYOMING Works to Increase the Number of Students who Complete the FAFSA

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) determines a student’s eligibility for financial aid. The FAFSA serves as a gateway to federal, state, and college sponsored aid such as grants, scholarships, loans, and work-study programs.

GEAR UP WYOMING provides a variety of statewide services to increase financial access to college by providing FAFSA education and support in FAFSA completion to both students and their parents.

By April 2014, 69 percent of GEAR UP WYOMING students had completed the FAFSA, compared to less than 55 percent nationwide.¹ According to the U.S. Department of Education, approximately 90 percent of students who complete the FAFSA enroll in college.

¹ Education Sector at American Institutes for Research. 2012.
GEAR UP WYOMING Prepares Students for College Admission Tests

The ACT® college admissions test is Wyoming’s primary measure of college readiness. Wyoming high school juniors are given the ACT® in their schools at no cost.

In order for GEAR UP students to prepare for the ACT®, GEAR UP WYOMING offers them free access to PrepMe, an online ACT® preparation program. GEAR UP WYOMING also encourages students to utilize the ACT® website to explore and familiarize themselves with the ACT®, PLAN, and EXPLORE test series.

This past year, GEAR UP WYOMING students outperformed eligible, non-GEAR UP students by 6 percent on both the EXPLORE and ACT® assessments.

In 2012-2013, 98 percent of high school seniors in the GEAR UP WYOMING program graduated, a 4 percent increase over the 2011-2012 school year.

2014 Bridges Summer School Summit

The 2014 Bridges Summer School Summit was held in Casper, Wyoming on April 16, 2014. The presentations and interactive workshops were cosponsored by GEAR UP WYOMING and the Wyoming Department of Education. Presentation topics included: The Bridges Summer School program, 21st Century Learning Centers, Differentiated Instruction, and A Framework for Understanding Poverty. Over 57 educators attended the Summit.

GEAR UP WYOMING Reaches 2,337 Students Statewide

GEAR UP WYOMING is a federally-funded grant program which prepares 7th-12th grade, low-income students for college. The goal of GEAR UP is to increase the number of eligible students who complete high school and who are prepared to enter and succeed in college. This year, GEAR UP WYOMING provided services to 2,337 students in over 118 schools. This is a 4 percent increase over last year.

GEAR UP services are provided by outreach coordinators located at each of Wyoming’s seven community colleges and the University of Wyoming. Activities include:

- Tutoring
- Mentoring
- Career exploration and advising
- ACT® preparation
- Financial aid and scholarship literacy
- Educational summer academies
- College visits

These activities emphasize the importance and value of education and are designed to help students see themselves as successful college students.
Quantum Learning Regional Training

GEAR UP WYOMING is hosting Quantum Learning Workshops. There will be three days of training in levels 1-3 and a two day Curriculum Review. Additionally, an administration tract will be offered. Participants can register for one day or five days of training. The training will be held in Gillette, Wyoming. A hotel room block will be available. Call (307) 766-6570 or email gearupwy@uwyo.edu for additional details.

“This was the most beneficial training that I’ve ever attended. It made me anxious to get back into the classroom and try out the new techniques.”

“I gained valuable tools that I can use!”

“This course should be required of all teachers! It will be worth the time. You won’t be disappointed!”

“This is a MUST TAKE class!”