Interview with Wendy Martinez

Wendy Martinez, a current University of Wyoming student, was one of 30 GEAR UP Alumni Leaders selected from across the country for the GEAR UP Alumni Leadership Academy (GUALA).

GUALA is an initiative launched by the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships with support from the national GEAR UP community and funding from The Kresge Foundation. GUALA is a 12-month program designed to train and engage GEAR UP alumni in advocacy and leadership. GUALA participants work to create positive change in education policy for their younger peers.

GUWY: How did you learn about the GEAR UP Program?

Wendy: I learned about the GEAR UP program through my high school counselors. They were offering a meeting in which the GEAR UP program was being explained. It seemed like the GEAR UP coordinator and my school counselors really cared about me and helping me succeed.

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in education. After I attended the first meetings, it became clear to me that I wanted to pursue higher education, and it was really the first time I gave it serious thought.

GUWY: Did your experiences in GEAR UP play a part in your decision to apply to GUALA? If so, what experiences led you to apply and why?

Wendy: My experiences in GEAR UP played a huge role in applying to GUALA. After graduating high school and having a successful first two years in college, I knew I owed it all to GEAR UP and their commitment to their students. This was an inspiration for me and an opportunity to give back to my GEAR UP community. More importantly, the advocating part of GUALA really got my attention because it was the opportunity to reach out to my community and my government leaders and advocate for the continuance of GEAR UP funding. This was something very important for me, because I wanted low-income students, like myself, to benefit from the same opportunities that were offered to me. I am a firm believer in the GEAR UP program, and to see the GEAR UP staff so invested in students has been an inspiration.

“GUALA was an eye-opening experience. Being raised in Wyoming all my life, I was never exposed to educational issues that other states faced.”

GUWY: What was GUALA like for you?

Wendy: GUALA was an eye-opening experience. Being raised in Wyoming all my life, I was never exposed to educational issues that other states faced. Therefore, when I attended GUALA and met 29 students that were from all over the U.S., I realized the high number of low-income students in the United States. I got the opportunity to listen to different stories from different students around the country and listen to the national impact that GEAR UP has. I spent a week with 29 students from around the country and learned leadership skills, advocacy skills, and public speaking skills.

GUWY: What are 2 things you learned from attending?

GUWY: What have you done so far as a GUALA?

Wendy: One of the most important things I have done in GUALA has been advocating in Washington D.C. by speaking to Representative Lummis, Senator Enzi, and Senator Barrasso. I told my story as a GEAR UP success story and provided a student voice for our Wyoming government leaders. I will continue to meet with them and speak of advancements in the GEAR UP program to advocate for a continuance in funding this educational program. In addition, I have worked with the Wyoming GEAR UP staff in creating videos for the Wyoming community, and I have become more active in all aspects of GEAR UP.

GLE WYOMING is a statewide program that serves 2,200 7th-12th grade, income-eligible students each year. Wyoming’s seven community colleges provide services to these students and encourage them not only to complete high school, but to enter and succeed at a postsecondary institution. GEAR UP WYOMING also supports students throughout their first year of college.

GEAR UP WYOMING is funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education totaling $3,548,876 annually with an additional $3,548,876 annually provided by in-kind and scholarship contributions.
Hathaway Scholarship Requirements
2016 Graduates and Beyond

THERE ARE FOUR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF THE HATHAWAY SCHOLARSHIP

Honors
$1,600 / semester

- Language Arts 4 years
- Social Studies 3 years
- Science 4 years
- Math 4 years
- Foreign Language 2 years
- High School GPA 3.5
- ACT Score 25

Performance
$1,200 / semester

- Language Arts 4 years
- Social Studies 3 years
- Science 4 years
- Math 4 years
- Foreign Language 2 years
- High School GPA 3.0
- ACT Score 21

Opportunity
$800 / semester

- Language Arts 4 years
- Social Studies 3 years
- Science 4 years
- Math 4 years
- High School GPA 2.5
- ACT Score 19

Provisional Opportunity
$800 / semester

- Language Arts 4 years
- Social Studies 3 years
- Science 4 years
- Math 4 years
- High School GPA 2.5
- ACT Score 17

* Check with your counselor for more information.

** Students may also qualify for the Hathaway Provisional Opportunity Scholarship by taking the ACT WorkKeys, a job skills test, and getting a score of 12 or better.

*** Students must include two of the following three: Algebra I, Algebra II and/or Geometry.
Hathaway Success Curriculum
Additional Requirements 2016 and Beyond

Honors and Performance
Additional Requirements
Students must take two years of either fine arts, career and technical education or additional foreign language.

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<tr>
<th>Fine Arts</th>
<th>Career and Technical Education</th>
<th>Additional Foreign Language</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Must take 2 years of fine arts courses in grades 9th-12th.</td>
<td>Must take 2 years of CTE courses in grades 9th-12th.</td>
<td>Must take 2 additional years in grades 9th-12th.</td>
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<td>Check with your counselor for more information. These courses will be determined by each district.</td>
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<td>These courses do not have to be sequenced.</td>
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Opportunity and Provisional Opportunity
Additional Requirements
Students must take two years of either fine arts, career and technical education or foreign language.

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<td>Must take 2 years of fine arts courses in grades 9th-12th.</td>
<td>Must take 2 years of CTE courses in grades 9th-12th.</td>
<td>Must take 2 years, one of which can come before grade 9.</td>
</tr>
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The ACT® is an important college entrance exam. Scores can affect college entrance and scholarships. All Wyoming eleventh-grade students will take the ACT® in April at their schools. Students who want to take the test again can visit the following ACT® website to register for the test and to locate testing centers: www.actstudent.org/regist/dates.html

GEAR UP WYOMING students may contact their GEAR UP coordinator to obtain an ACT test fee waiver. (GEAR UP WYOMING cannot pay for or waive late fees.) Also, GEAR UP WYOMING students have free access to ACT® preparation programs.
GEAR UP at Northern Wyoming Community College District

Northern Wyoming Community College District asked their students what they valued most about GEAR UP. Here are some of the answers they received.

“I am a senior at Tongue River High School, and GEAR UP has helped me have the opportunity to graduate this year. I would like to thank you all for the help and support.”
– Tongue River High School Senior

“The GEAR UP program has helped not only me but my friends. The upperclass loves the extra help with SAT and ACT programs and the organizational help is awesome. I really like the help with my classes.”
– Tongue River High School Junior

“I appreciate the help I get when I need it, and the tips for school and college. I am very glad I have GEAR UP.”
– Tongue River High School Junior

GEAR UP Wyoming Partners

Casper College, www.caspercollege.edu/gearup
Central Wyoming College, www.cwc.edu/what/Gearup
Eastern Wyoming College, www.ecw.edu/future/gearup
Laramie County Community College, lc.cc.wy.edu/highschool/collegeprep/gearup
Northern Wyoming Community College District, www.sheridan.edu/site/sc/admissions/gear-up-wyoming
Northwest College, www.northwestcollege.edu/gearup
Western Wyoming Community College, www.wwcc.wy.edu/gearup
University of Wyoming, www.uwyo.edu/gearup
Wyoming Department of Education, www.k12.wy.us