

Spring 2022 | Vol. 1.4

Spring has sprung in Wyoming and with it has come another edition of *The Path*! Check it out:

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## What is our mission?

GEAR UP Wyoming strives to increase the number of low-income students who graduate high school and enter a post-secondary educational institution to improve their access to career and life opportunities. Visit our [page!](#)

Here are our spring updates:

### Student Spotlight: Jesus Lopez

We wanted to sit down with some GEAR UP students and alumni to learn more about their stories. Continuing our interview series we had the opportunity to speak with Jesus Lopez, a GEAR UP University freshman. We conducted interviews in both English and Spanish, here are the highlights from our interview plus a bonus question. To view the full English interview visit GEAR UP's [youtube channel](#).

Queríamos sentarnos con algunos alumnos y ex alumnos de GEAR UP para aprender más sobre sus historias. Continuando con nuestra serie de entrevistas, tuvimos la oportunidad de hablar con Jesús López, estudiante de GEAR UP en primer año de la Universidad. Realizamos entrevistas tanto en inglés como en español, aquí están los aspectos más destacados de nuestra entrevista más una pregunta extra. Para ver la entrevista completa en español visita el canal de [youtube](#) de GEAR UP

**Please share with us why you joined GEAR UP and what has the experience been like so far? ¿Que te hizo querer estar en GEAR UP y como ha sido tu experiencia?**



*(Continued)*

## Student Spotlight (Continued)

English Statement: I am a first-generation student so it was really hard for me being part of school programs and GEAR UP has been really helpful for me. I really enjoy being a part of the program and how they help me in everything, like doing homework, applying for scholarships, literally everything.

Spanish Statement: GEAR UP ha sido un programa que me ha ayudado muchísimo en los últimos años. Me ayuda mucho para aplicar para becas, aplicar para programas incluso para aplicar para la Universidad porque esto es un proceso que yo solo no hubiera podido hacer por mi mismo. Es realmente un programa que me ayuda muchísimo a poder salir adelante en la escuela.

### **Why did you decide to go to college, and how has college been going so far for you? ¿Por qué decidiste ir a la universidad? ¿Como va todo?**

I am a first-generation student so seeing my family struggling working as immigrants, I feel like I want to be the change in our family. I decided to come to college when I got some scholarships. It has been so good. I love everything, I love campus, I love classes, and I've made new friends. Coming to UW, it's been really helpful for me. Everything here is good.

Decidí venir a la universidad cuando yo ví que mis papás no tuvieron oportunidad de ir a la escuela, entonces soy el primer estudiante en mi familia en ir a la universidad. Hasta el momento me ha gustado muchísimo, es mi segundo semestre en la universidad y todo me gusta mucho, el campus y el ambiente. Las clases son un poco pesadas pero nada del otro mundo. La universidad ha sido una de las mejores decisiones que he tomado en mi vida.

### **¿What impact do you hope to have on the world in the future? ¿Qué impacto esperas tener en el mundo?**

When I graduate I want to help other students that are in my situation — first-generation students. I want to be their mentor and help them apply for programs and scholarships. I want to help them to be the change that I want to be for myself.

Yo espero ayudar a otras personas como GEAR UP me ha ayudado a mi. GEAR UP ha sido un mentor durante toda mi educación en los últimos 2 semestres entonces yo espero regresar ese apoyo a estas personas que no han tenido el apoyo suficiente para salir adelante y realmente construyan un mejor futuro para ellos mismos y para su familia.

### **What is some advice that you want to give GEAR UP students in junior high and high school? ¿Qué consejos tu quieres dar a estudiantes de GEAR UP en escuela secundaria y escuela preparatoria?**

Be active in GEAR UP so you can get “points” to apply for GEAR UP scholarships. It's a program that's helping you to succeed. It's not going to push you to do your homework. It's just here to help students to apply for the university you want to go to. They help you to apply for scholarships... the FAFSA.... It's really helpful. This program helped me a lot.

Yo aconsejaría a los estudiantes de la escuela de high school y junior high a aplicar a este programa. Ser muy activos en este programa para que los tomen en cuenta en todo en cuestión de becas en cuestiones de programas y de esa manera van a sobresalir y vean lo como un programa que está para ayudarnos, este programa es más un ayuda para ustedes, para nosotros, para que todos salgamos adelante. Entonces apliquen a este programa, sean activos y saquen el mejor provecho que puedan de este programa.

*(Continued)*

## Student Spotlight (Continued)

**BONUS QUESTION: What sort of obstacles did you face as an ESL student trying to enter college? ¿Qué obstáculos enfrentaste cuando quieres ir a la universidad como un estudiante hispanohablante?**

Financial aid is the main thing that was like “should I go to college because it’s really expensive?” When I got here, financial aid was not a problem because we applied for multiple scholarships. The other issue was that I live in Gillette which is four hours away from UW, so I was like I don’t want to be really far away from my family. That was kind of hard for me, but once I got here at UW it was really worth it. I really enjoy the community here on campus. There’s always a way to get away from all of the fears that you have so just don’t give up and work for it.

Obstáculos que enfrente cuando quería ir a la universidad principalmente fue como iba pagar la universidad. Yo creo que los gastos de la universidad son muy caros pero siempre hay una manera de salir adelante. Siempre va a haber un programa que te ofrezca becas o va haber alguna otra manera como préstamos y la mejor forma de ir a la universidad es aplicando para becas. Otro obstáculo ha sido la distancia. Yo vivo a cuatro horas manejando de mi casa porque estoy en la universidad. Yo creo que muchas personas deberían querer ir a la universidad y no parar por los obstáculos que se enfrenten. Entonces si tienes obstáculos como ayuda de dinero o de miedo puedes siempre hablar con alguien de GEAR UP ellos pueden ayudar de cualquier forma ya sea económicamente o incluso ayuda emocional.

## Consider Dual and Concurrent Enrollment!

Are you a highly motivated student looking for an opportunity to excel? Consider dual or concurrent enrollment! You might find yourself asking “what are concurrent and dual enrollment courses?” Great question!

Dual and concurrent classes are courses offered in all seven community colleges in Wyoming that give students an opportunity to earn college credits while in high school. Concurrent courses are taught at the high school by college-approved teachers and these courses offer both high school and college credit. Dual enrollment courses are taught at the college and may or may not offer high school credit.



Dual and concurrent classes provide an opportunity for students to save money in future tuition costs by getting some classes out of the way for free. These classes also potentially eliminate the need for remedial courses upon entering college as well as provide experience with college-level coursework. If you are self-motivated and are looking for an opportunity to get a step ahead, dual and concurrent courses are a great option for you.

Ask your GEAR UP coordinator or high school counselor, or consult with the academic advisor at the community college near you to see which option would be the best fit for you. You can also visit the [Wyoming Community College Commission's Website](#) for more information.

## GEAR UP Summer Academy is Back!

This summer, GEAR UP Wyoming will host a summer academy for students going into 10th, 11th, and 12th grade. We are hoping to welcome 100 participants from across the state. You don't want to miss out!

The camp will run from June 13 - 16 (Monday - Thursday):

- Exclusive (and completely free) summer program at the University of Wyoming
- Transportation provided by your nearest community college to and from Laramie
- Explore careers and college options through workshops and activities
- See the fun side of college by participating in different club activities
- Earn points toward GEAR UP scholarships ([uwyo.edu/gearup/scholarships](http://uwyo.edu/gearup/scholarships))
- Make friends for life with other students around the state and have a BLAST!



Visit [uwyo.edu/gearup](http://uwyo.edu/gearup) for updates, or send us an email at [gearupwy@uwyo.edu](mailto:gearupwy@uwyo.edu)

[Click here to request an application](#)

## GEAR UP Supports Professional Development

At GEAR UP Wyoming (GUWY), we know that a huge part of investing in our participants involves investing in their educators. To this end, GEAR UP Wyoming works to deliver and support quality professional development (PD) initiatives across the state that help teachers and schools foster the success of GEAR UP students.

Back in January, GUWY was thrilled to partner with Josh Varner, a nationally recognized speaker on the effects of trauma, to talk to the Wyoming Association of Secondary School Principals. He taught them valuable ways they could examine the structures at their schools to better support students dealing with and healing from traumatic experiences.

GUWY also sponsored Dr. Haley Wikoff in February to speak at the Wyoming School Counselor Association (WySCA)'s annual conference. She helped counselors consider ways they can make schools more welcoming to all students.



**If you'd like support from GUWY for a PD initiative at your school or district, email us as [gearupwy@uwyo.edu](mailto:gearupwy@uwyo.edu).**

## Summer Learning Loss and How to Combat it

Summer is an excellent opportunity to take a load off and enjoy the warm weather, but summer is also often a time of lowered mental stimulation. Finding a healthy balance between leisure activities and mentally stimulating activities can be difficult, but a lack of balance has shown potential negative side effects such as summer learning loss. Though there is discourse regarding the validity of summer learning loss, studies such as "[School's out: The Role of Summer in Understanding Achievement Disparity](#)," published by Brown University, found that over the summer a student can lose as much as 17 to 34% of the previous year's teachings. This means many students waste the first six weeks of classes in the fall relearning content from the previous year.

Information gathered by the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) also provide details on summer learning loss. Through careful analysis and comparison of nationwide MAP test scores in grades K through 8, NWEA found that test scores in the subjects of reading and math suffer the most following summer break. There are many reasons students might not test as well after summer break. While we might not currently have all of the information about what exactly causes summer learning loss there are means of overcoming it.

Doing coursework over the summer might not sound like a blast, but setting aside 15 to 30 minutes a day to review work you learned during school has been proven to reduce the effects of summer learning loss. Try creative writing and reading a fun book a little bit each day to maintain language arts skills. Also, doing as little as 3 grade-appropriate math problems a day is enough to maintain valuable math skills. Take advantage of your local library's summer reading programs and other summer activities, and make sure to keep an eye open for summer learning opportunities provided by your school district.

As a result of COVID-19, there are many free opportunities for summer enrichment such as the [Summer Learning Guide](#), provided by Wyoming Afterschool Alliance. Staying sharp doesn't have to be boring. Use this summer as an opportunity to discover the joy in learning and come back next fall a step above the rest. By maintaining your knowledge you are well on your way down *The Path*.



GEAR UP Wyoming  
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