

The Path from GEAR UP Wyoming

Fall 2021 | Vol. 1.2

GEAR UP across Wyoming

Even though Wyoming falls are short, it's GEAR UP Wyoming's favorite time of year! It's also college application and FAFSA season. This newsletter aims to provide GEAR UP participants and partners throughout Wyoming with some critical information to think about and share over a nice, warm cup of cocoa.



Are You on The Path?

GEAR UP Wyoming delivers academic success and college access services to middle and high schoolers through local community college programs across Wyoming. There's likely a program in your backyard. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Here are our fall updates:

Student Spotlight: Bethany Haworth

GEAR UP Wyoming participants are **amazing**. We wanted to sit down with some GEAR UP alumni (past participants) to learn more about their stories. Our first interview was with Bethany Haworth. Here are the highlights from our interview:

Please go ahead and introduce yourself.

I'm Bethany Haworth. I'm originally from Green River and I was involved with the GEAR UP program based at Western Wyoming Community College. I was in GEAR UP all throughout high school from 2014 through 2018, and then I attended Western. From there, I transferred to the University of Wyoming where I'm studying Political Science and Sociology. I also have minors in History and the Honors Program.

Now that your bachelor's degree is wrapping up, what are your next steps?

I am currently working on applications to grad school. I'll be applying to Ph.D. programs in sociology.



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Student Spotlight (Continued)

Nice! But, doesn't it cost money to apply to grad programs?

Yes. I want to say, like, maybe around \$70-80 per application. But, I participated in the McNair Scholars program. It's like a program to prepare underrepresented students for grad school. One benefit of being a McNair scholar is that many institutions will actually waive application fees.

Great! So you can apply to grad schools for free! Could you tell us a little more about how the McNair research went?

So that was here at UW, just over the summer of 2021... I received a scholarship to work with UW faculty to study alienation in fast-food workers in the United States. For that, we studied one specific dimension of alienation. We created a scale to measure alienation, submitted it to the Institutional Review Board, which allows you to work with human participants, and then gathered our survey data. Now, two faculty mentors and I are working on a manuscript that we're hoping to send out for publication at the end of the semester.

So as an undergraduate student, you might be prepared to publish your research before you have even entered a Ph.D. Program? That's incredible!

Hopefully! I do really like the study of alienation and its history in the field of sociology. I'm looking forward to continuing this research in grad school.

Do you have any final words for our GEAR UP participants in junior high, through high school, and even first year of college?

You know, the idea of college may seem daunting, but if you just pursue your interest and your passion, wherever that takes you, it can be really rewarding. I've really loved my experience so far in higher education.

Want to hear more about Bethany's GEAR UP story? [Click here](#) to watch the full interview on the [GEAR UP Wyoming YouTube channel](#).

Think about (Re)taking the ACT

You have probably heard about it before, but what's the [ACT](#)? It's a 3-hour, multiple choice test with multiple sections:

- English (75 questions in 45 minutes)
- Math (60 questions in 60 minutes)
- Reading (40 questions in 35 minutes)
- Science (40 questions in 35 minutes)
- Writing (1 essay in 40 minutes; *optional*)

You can earn a score of 1-36 (36 being a perfect score), but what is a "good" score? For example, the minimum score to receive a [Provisional Hathaway](#) award in Wyoming is a 17, but a 25 is required to receive the [Honors Hathaway](#) award (which is a difference of \$840/semester).

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Think About (Re)taking the ACT (Continued)

Most students take it during the spring semester of their junior year. But, we recommend you try taking it earlier. Data shows that scores almost always increase after retaking the ACT. Plus, GEAR UP students are automatically eligible for fee waivers to take the ACT 4 times for free! Talk to your school counselor or [local GEAR UP coordinator](#) to get registered for the next upcoming test date.

It's better to prepare for the ACT than to go in blind, and there are lots of FREE resources:

- Ask a high school counselor what resources your school already provides.
- Ask your [local GEAR UP coordinator](#) about setting up a free account with [Magoosh](#), a premium test-prep software that GEAR UP provides for free. It delivers cutting-edge information and practice questions and tests to train for the ACT.
- Attend a winter ACT-prep workshop hosted by GEAR UP Wyoming (keep an eye on your email/Remind app for upcoming information!)

Fill Out Your FAFSA, Wyoming!

As of October 1st, the [2022-2023 FAFSA application portal](#) is open! Seniors who plan to graduate from high school this spring should work with their parents or guardians to complete the FAFSA as soon as possible.

The [Wyoming Department of Education](#) has also released a FAFSA completion campaign! This means they'll be tracking which school in Wyoming has the highest FAFSA completion rate. [Click here](#) to check it out.

You've probably heard about the FAFSA (which stands for the "Free Application for Federal Student Aid"). But why should you take the time to fill it out? Because you could earn thousands of dollars to go to college or university, that's why! Here are the types of funding:

- [Federal grants](#), such as the Pell grant or the Supplemental Educational Opportunity grant. You can get paid thousands of dollars just to go to college, and you don't have to pay the money back.
- [Federal loans](#), which are great ways to offset college costs that aren't covered by your scholarships (such as living expenses). Loans are different from grants and scholarships because you usually need to pay them back once you've earned your degree and gotten a job. But, there are also ways to make federal loans disappear! [Click here](#) to learn about federal loan forgiveness programs.
- [Work study awards](#), which provide part-time jobs to undergraduate and graduate students with financial need, allowing them to earn money and help pay education expenses. Bonus: you can often find jobs related to your major!

If you are having trouble completing your FAFSA, you can always reach out to your [local GEAR UP coordinator](#) or your high school counselor. Or just send us an email at gearupwy@uwyo.edu! Don't miss your chance and ask for help if you need it!

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GEAR UP 2022-2023 Scholarship Applications are OPEN

If you're a senior in high school, it's time to apply to colleges, and also to apply for scholarships! Did you know that GEAR UP Wyoming offers several scholarships to active GEAR UP participants to attend college both in-state and out-of-state?

GEAR UP Federal Opportunity Award

Award Amount: Up to \$800 per semester (depending on how many courses you take)

Deadlines: Opens October 1 - Closes June 1

Requirements:

- Must have participated in the GEAR UP program
- Must complete the FAFSA
- Can be used both in-state and out-of-state

Length of Award: 6 semesters for associates and 12 semesters for bachelors

[Click here](#) to apply for the GEAR UP Federal Opportunity Award.

GEAR UP University of Wyoming (UW) Institutional Award

Award Amount: Up to \$5,500 per semester (depending on how many courses you take)

Deadlines: Opens October 1 - Closes April 1

Requirements:

- Must have participated in the GEAR UP program
- Must complete the FAFSA by January 15
- Must apply to attend UW

Length of Award: Up to 12 semesters

[Click here](#) to apply for the GEAR UP UW Institutional Award.

GEAR UP Community College Institutional Awards

Wyoming's seven community colleges set aside extra scholarships just for GEAR UP students. For some colleges, all you have to do is mark that you were in GEAR UP when applying for all financial aid. Ask your [local GEAR UP coordinator](#), or click one of the links below to learn more:

[Casper College](#)

[Central Wyoming College](#)

[Eastern Wyoming College](#)

[Laramie County Community College](#)

[Northwest College](#)

[Northern Wyoming Community College District](#)

[Western Wyoming Community College](#)

Have questions? Send them to us at gearupwy@uwyo.edu. With the right planning, GEAR UP participants have the opportunity to get a good education with little to no debt. That's definitely a path worth taking.

GEAR UP Wyoming
uwyo.edu/gearup

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