

**Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR-UP)
FY 2007 Project Abstracts for Partnership Grants**

**Texas A & M International University
P334A070030**

Abstract

Texas A&M International University (TAMIU), Jim Hogg CISD, San Diego Independent School District, Benavides Independent School District, Carrizo Springs Consolidated Independent School District, Crystal City Independent School District, Zapata Consolidated Independent School District, International Bank of Commerce Zapata, and International Bank of Commerce Hebbronville are partnering for the proposed “Creating a Vision III” GEAR UP grant application. The target area schools deal with a complex set of challenges; chief among them is educating students who come from low-income, Spanish language dominant homes and whose parents have limited education themselves. “Creating a Vision III” will serve 930 seventh grade students from Hebbronville Junior High School, Bernarda Jaime Junior High School, Benavides Secondary School, Carrizo Springs Junior High School, Zapata Middle School, Newman Middle School, and Fly Junior High School and continuing to Hebbronville High School, Carrizo Springs High School, Crystal City High School, Zapata High School, Cotulla High School, and San Diego High School, respectively.

The Program goals are: 1) to strengthen existing academic strategies and implement new programs to raise academic standards, provide academic support for students, improve teacher training, and increase student knowledge of higher education opportunities and admissions; and 2) to develop a parental education program to enable parents so they can provide a nurturing academic environment for their children and make them aware of the higher education opportunities. Various activities have been designed to enable more students to stay in school, study hard and complete the appropriate courses that will prepare them for college. “Creating a Vision III” will provide academic assistance, counseling, tutorial services, cultural events, a summer component, and educational activities to supplement their regular school program before they enter college.

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**San Francisco Unified School District
P334A070032**

Abstract

The San Francisco Unified School District GEAR UP Partnership grant project will serve over 3,000 students. Services will commence at eight middle schools and continue on to high school. The students are predominantly from the southeastern section of the city and these eight middle schools have a combined average of 68 percent free or reduced lunch eligible. The Academic Performance Index (API) averages 648 for these schools. The educational attainment of the adult population is very low, with less than 50 percent of the adults over 25 years old completing high school, and just 30 percent who have finished college.

The services will include: 1) Student population receiving academic tutoring, academic counseling and advising, enrichment courses in science, college/career and financial aid counseling, college presentations, visits and summer camps; 2) Families being provided with on-going information about graduation and college planning, support in literacy issues, basic computer skills, and college-to-career opportunities; 3) Teacher Professional Development provided in school wide positive behavior supports, strengthening teaching skills in science and math, and assisting teachers in ensuring that students have the skills necessary to engage in college level work; and 4) Community involvement establishing of a closer linkage between the neighborhood businesses, and postsecondary institutions, schools and families in an effort to enhance and sustain communication and education in the community.

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Research Foundation CUNY on behalf of Lehman College/CUNY
P334A070040

Abstract

The Bronx Institute of Lehman College is the lead organization and fiscal agent of the South Bronx Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR-UP). The following partners join us in this effort: a local educational agency (The New York City Department of Education—Region Two); two community-based organizations (ASPIRA of New York and Mosholu Montefiore Community Center); three colleges (Fordham University, Harvard University, and Yale University/EXPLO -- Exploration Summer Program); four not-for-profit organizations (United Negro College Fund Special Projects, The After School Corporation, The New York Public Library, and Experiment in International Living); and two businesses (The College Board, and Thomson-Peterson Learning). The Lehman College Foundation will match contributions to a Scholarship Trust established as part of this program to meet Invitational Priority Two.

Our six-year initiative serves 2,500 low-income, predominantly African-American and Hispanic students from 15 Bronx middle schools by addressing: 1) Low academic performance (as few as two percent of students pass English Language Arts; as few as four percent pass Math); 2) Low graduation and college attendance rates for students of color (up to an 80 percent dropout rate for African-Americans and Hispanics); and 3) Professional development and technology needs.

Objectives to address these gaps: Objective 1—increase achievement and preparation for college; Objective 2—increase students' and families' postsecondary knowledge; Objective 3—enhance teacher quality; and Objective 4—support long-term sustainability once federal funding has ceased.

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**New Mexico Highlands University
P334A070059**

Abstract

The Rural Northern New Mexico GEAR UP (RNNM GEAR UP) is a partnership of twenty-three school districts, one institution of higher learning—New Mexico Highlands University—and two educational alliances. The student population in the target schools is 95 percent Hispanic or Native American in one of the highest pockets of poverty in the United States. The project's goal is to increase the number of students graduating from high school and enrolling in postsecondary education by addressing the following needs: low percentage of students taking rigorous classes; English language deficiencies; high class sizes; high counselor/student ratios; lack of tutoring, parent involvement, role models and mentors; inadequate teacher experience and training; and lack of student motivation.

The project will provide professional development, instructional support, tutoring, Saturday and summer programs, mentoring, college planning, and financial aid planning. Intended outcomes include increasing, by 10 percent each year, the percentage of students passing state testing and the percentage of students in advanced classes; by 20 percent each year, the percentage of students taking SAT and ACT tests; by 100 percent students' and by 50 percent parents' knowledge about postsecondary education; by 20 percent each year parents' knowledge of career options made possible by post-secondary degrees; by 20 percent each year the cohort's graduation rates and enrollment rate in postsecondary education, by 50 percent, the number of parents completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid; and decreasing by 10 percent each year, the dropout rates of cohort students.

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**Amarillo College, Texas
P334A070063**

Abstract

Amarillo College, serving as the lead in a twenty-six-member partnership, submits this GEAR UP proposal to serve seventh graders to their high school graduation. Students come from three partner school districts located in the Texas Panhandle where poverty rates are double the national average, almost 80 percent of children are low-income, up to 48.1 percent of adults have not graduated from high school, and less than four percent hold bachelor's degrees or higher. Within our partner schools, up to 89.5 percent of students are eligible for free and reduced lunch, student assessments of minimum skills fall well below state averages, and more than 37 percent of ninth graders drop out before high school graduation.

Five middle and/or junior high schools and four high schools will participate in the partnership, along with three higher education institutions, three private foundations donating more than \$400,000 for GEAR UP scholarships, and twenty community organizations providing a variety of services.

The project design draws on effective practices of similar partnerships. The project's objectives and services will have a significant impact on students, parents, and teachers by increasing: 1) academic achievement and preparedness, as well as college enrollment; 2) motivation, retention, and engagement; 3) parent and family involvement in school activities; 4) professional development opportunities for teachers; and 5) long-term partnership investment in programs that support disadvantaged students. Services to be delivered will include after-school and summer academic programs; tutoring, mentoring, and advising; educational and cultural field trips; professional development for teachers; and parental involvement activities.

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Fayetteville State University
P334A070115

Abstract

Fayetteville State University (FSU), a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) is proposing a GEAR UP Partnership project. The FSU GEAR UP Partnership (GEAR UP) will initially serve 1366 sixth and seventh grade students in Cumberland County, North Carolina, using the cohort model. In years two, three and four of the GEAR UP Partnership, an additional sixth grade cohort will be added, bringing the total students served to 3,373 by year four. GEAR UP will continue to follow all 3,373 students as they transition into college and postsecondary education.

Statistics show that Cumberland County has nearly the highest rates in the state in high school dropouts, teen pregnancies, child abuse, and juvenile violent crime. All GEAR UP middle schools are failing to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) standards. Only nine percent of seventh grade students in the proposed GEAR UP middle schools are enrolled in pre-Algebra.

This GEAR UP Partnership will prepare low-income, at-risk students to enter and succeed in postsecondary education by:

- 1) Increasing academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education through early intervention.
- 2) Increasing the rate of high school graduation and participation in postsecondary education by providing tutoring, mentoring, outreach, and other supportive services.
- 3) Enhancing educational expectations for students by increasing parent and student knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation and financial aid.
- 4) Creating systemic change within the schools by providing professional development and programs that will be continued after the funding ends.

This proposal offers services grounded in evidence-based practices as cited and includes effective strategies consistent with previous state and partnership GEAR UP initiatives.

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**Long Beach Unified School District
P334A070119**

Abstract

Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD), with more than 96,000 students, is the third largest school district in California. The District faces a number of challenges, which disproportionately impact the increasingly low-income, minority student population the District serves. The schools targeted for GEAR UP intervention (13 middle schools and six high schools) are the District's highest-poverty schools, and are comprised of an ethnically-diverse, high-need student population. Sixty-four percent of cohort students are Latino, 17 percent are African American, seven percent are Asian, four percent are Caucasian, two percent are Filipino, two percent are Pacific Islanders, two percent are Native Americans, and percent are of other ethnicities. Forty-four percent of the students are English Language Learners.

The LBUSD GEAR UP project will move greater numbers of students in the cohort into the college-going pipeline by: (1) increasing students' academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education; (2) increasing the rate of high school graduation among GEAR UP students; and (3) increasing students' and their families' knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing.

The proposed intervention will begin with 13 middle schools and guide these students as they transition to the six target high schools. To meet the objectives of the GEAR UP project, the District will provide students with high-quality academic enrichment opportunities, and enhance classroom instruction and academic counseling through a host of professional development services for teachers and counselors at the target schools.

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