

BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

1999

Contact: Matthew Williams
Phone: (254) 710-4975
Email: matthew_williams@baylor.edu
Total Students Served: 6,621

PROJECT OVERVIEW GEAR UP Waco is a comprehensive, collaborative initiative focused on preparing at-risk students both academically and socially for college. GEAR UP Waco, during the five-year grant program, will serve 6,621 students in the Waco Independent School District. GEAR UP Waco's partners are Baylor University, McLennan Community College, Texas State Technical

College, the Waco Foundation, the City of Waco, the Waco Independent School District, and the McLennan County Youth Collaboration/Communities in Schools. The partners have implemented programs in the areas of math, science, critical reading and writing, debate, physics, gifted and talented, tutoring, mentoring, social and emotional services, and other activities focused on helping students prepare for college. GEAR UP Waco is serving as a community catalyst to assure an increase in students who pursue advanced and enrichment courses, pass the state exam, and continue their education beyond high school.

STRATEGY GEAR UP Waco's Project Democracy was designed to institute speech and debate instruction in the six Waco Independent School District middle schools. During the past two years, GEAR UP has been able to offer: college mentors to each school; classroom instruction for students; on-campus college training programs for students and teachers; and a number of public events featuring middle school students. On paper, the promise of Project Democracy is tremendous. In person, the reality of the effect of Project Democracy is more impressive. Watching the students demonstrate the research, writing, speaking, and critical thinking skills they have learned is testament to the success of this program.

EL CENTRO COLLEGE

1999

Contact: Uvaldina Turley
Phone: (214) 860-2294
Email: uxt5704@dcccd.edu
Total Students Served: 405

PROJECT OVERVIEW El Centro College is an urban community college in the heart of Downtown Dallas. Already established as an innovative partner with Dallas Public High Schools, the goals of GEAR UP were not unfamiliar to the mission of the institution. In 1999, El Centro "adopted" a GEAR UP cohort of 400 seventh-graders at T.J. Rusk Middle School, committing to serving them as they

continue their education at North Dallas High School. While dedicated to addressing academic needs with some previously successful strategies, El Centro is acutely aware of the need for experiential learning opportunities to prepare these students to face the challenge of succeeding in today's complex society. Community partners have been enlisted to offer mentoring, leadership training, and unique programming to the students, such as adventure challenges through Boy Scouts Venturing. In addition to traditional tutoring, counseling, and enrichment services for students, El Centro has thought to include teachers and parents in the preparation process with such programs as Advanced Placement strategies, staff development, and intensive parent training seminars.

STRATEGY A survey of parents revealed that parents wish to receive training on how to handle issues that face their adolescent children. Giving the parents this choice and the requested training has had the effect of empowerment to the extent that a core of parents has emerged and is now in leadership training. They are willing to challenge, and inspire, others to push their children towards achievement and will be addressing a large gathering of parents at a conference for college awareness. The GEAR UP project staff believes that informed parents hold the key to both turning around their child's future and to improving education in the public schools. The parents now want to participate alongside their children in the Science and Math Saturdays, scheduled for El Centro College this spring.

EL PASO COMMUNITY COLLEGE

1999

Contact: Lucia Rodriguez
Phone: (915) 831-7815
Email: luciaro@epcc.edu
Total Students Served: 680

PROJECT OVERVIEW The El Paso Community College GEAR UP (EPCC-GEAR UP) project targets the partner schools' cohort of 680 students. The program aims to accelerate the academic achievement of students so that increasing numbers will graduate from high school, enroll, and succeed in college. Parent Involvement Training and Teacher Professional Development are key components. A priority

was to ensure project understanding, support, and commitment by each institution's leadership and all members of the partnership. Project activities include tutoring and mentoring by college students/partner school graduates; counseling for students and parents; summer academic enrichment camps; an Annual Youth Leadership Conference; in-class workshops to encourage critical thinking, early college awareness, career exploration, and study skills; dual enrollment in high school and college; "college culture" integration into the public school and family environment; parent workshops to encourage effective communication with their children and school personnel; homework tips and practical advice for parents on adolescent development and college processes, procedures, and financial aid; and teacher development.

STRATEGY EPCC-GEAR UP sponsors Summer Academic Enrichment Camps at the college's five campuses throughout El Paso County to facilitate student participation and campus familiarity. Activities promote critical thinking through collaborative, interactive projects that integrate reading, writing, math, technology, and the arts. Activities combine career exploration, college orientation, academic, and personal development. Instruction builds toward a final project to give students a sense of accomplishment. Camp themes have included the following: Math, Ballet Folklorico, Web Page Development, Entrepreneurship, Culinary Arts, Writing, Theatre Arts, ESL, Advertising, Digital Camera Fun, Drafting and Design, Power-Point, and Health Occupations.

HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

1999

Contact: Laurie Ballering
Phone: (713) 986-0481
Email: lballing@projectgrad.org
Total Students Served: 7,889

PROJECT OVERVIEW The Houston Independent School District and Project GRAD identified six middle schools and three high schools from the Davis, Yates, and Wheatley vertical teams for inclusion in GEARING UP Project GRAD-Houston. The project's purpose is to give more low-income middle school students the skills, encouragement, and preparation needed to pursue postsecondary

education. The project adopts a multiple cohort model involving sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth grade students of each of the six middle schools and three high schools. The long term goal of GEARING UP Project GRAD-Houston is to produce college-bound graduates of distinction who are highly motivated and have the necessary skills and determination to complete postsecondary education.

STRATEGY GEARING UP Project GRAD-Houston's design has nine strategies or support systems, each comprehensively structured to effectively address the specific needs of teachers, students, parents, and administrators. The nine components are: professional development; ongoing support system of consultants and facilitators; individualized diagnostic assessments; content area instruction; tutoring; mentoring and counseling; college awareness and preparation; parental involvement; and summer programs.

LEE COLLEGE

1999

Contact: Laura Prati
Phone: (832) 556-4018
Email: lprati@lee.edu
Total Students Served: 4,787

PROJECT OVERVIEW The GEAR UP at Lee College project is designed for the add-a-cohort model in which a new seventh grade is added each successive year. By the project's end, it will serve 4,787 students from Baytown and Horace Mann Junior Schools and Lee and Sterling High Schools. Activities are in the following three areas: student academic achievement, parental involvement, and

professional development. Student activities include: individual academic advising; educational enhancement tutorials; mentoring for at-risk students; study skills and career awareness classes; career and motivational speakers; college visits; and summer institutes. These institutes include: Algebra I, Pre-Advanced Placement (AP) Language Arts, Pre-AP Science, Pre-AP Social Studies, Pre-AP Art, and a preparation for high school study/organizational/test-taking skills class. Parent activities include parent workshops on student success, financial aid, college prep, college visits, and individual parent sessions. Professional development activities include: 1) sensitivity to multicultural populations through a review of multicultural literature, summer institutes in Mexico and Texas, and the promotion of the multicultural classroom; 2) workshops focused on science and math and an intensive science summer institute in Wyoming; 3) programs for student success and motivation; and 4) team training for teachers in all four schools in the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Summer Institute.

STRATEGY The annual "GEAR UP for Your Future" conference offers 240 students, their parents, and teachers the opportunity to participate in separate concurrent workshops to encourage careers in math, science, and technology as well as to promote student success. All participants are treated to a chemistry magic show, and lunch with a motivational keynote speaker. Students select from twenty-four separate sessions in the four different areas. Parents are provided with workshops on student success, financial aid, and college preparedness. Teachers are offered professional development aimed at using math, science, and technology in the classroom. All attending teachers receive a resource guide.

ODESSA COLLEGE

1999

Contact: Nancy Campbell
Phone: (915) 368-2226
Email: ncampbell@odessa.edu
Total Students Served: 925

PROJECT OVERVIEW The Odessa GEAR UP project is designed as a true partnership between Odessa College, schools, and the community with a mutual awareness of the desperate need for a college-preparatory program to serve youth in the area. A common goal is high school graduation and postsecondary entry for all participants. For effective implementation, the project objectives

focus on: 1) increasing academic preparation; 2) early awareness of college options; 3) financial aid opportunities; and 4) true involvement of parents in early planning for college. In 1999, a cohort of seventh-graders started in the program, and a second and third cohort were added in 2000 and 2001. All students will be tracked as they enter the high school campus. Concurrent enrollment in honors and advanced courses will be recommended for students. Career counseling will explore the students' interests and skills followed by academic counseling to help prepare course work for the students.

STRATEGY Operation Success is an after-school tutoring program held three times a week for one hour. Students meet to work with tutors, small peer groups, or simply to complete homework assignments or missed assignments due to absences. Reading and math reinforcement classes are held at this time to strengthen the skills necessary for success on the state-mandated tests. Mentoring is a strategy used to meet the educational and physical, as well as the emotional needs of eighth-graders on campus.

REGION ONE EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER

1999

Contact: Tina Atkins
Phone: (956) 984-6220
Email: tatkins@esconett.org
Total Students Served: 30,700

PROJECT OVERVIEW Region One Education Service Center (ESC), in partnership with twenty-five school districts located on the Texas-Mexico border, will restructure services to increase the academic performance of low-income students toward pursuit of a postsecondary education. In the targeted schools, 95 percent of the enrollment is Hispanic, 82 percent of the enrollment is economically disadvantaged, and 69 percent of the

student population is categorized as at-risk. Additionally, 42 percent of Region One students are Limited English Proficient, the highest percentage in the state, and 40 percent are from migrant families. The primary goal of Region One "GEAR UP: Right Choices for Youth Partnership" is to increase the number of economically disadvantaged students who attend college and succeed.

A single cohort approach has been implemented, in coordination with existing early intervention programs, to supplement services provided by participating schools. Needs addressed include: low academic scores in math and reading, low SAT and ACT scores, and a low number of students who enter postsecondary education from the GEAR UP districts. A proactive approach to promote rigorous course work through student-centered teams is currently in use. These teams are composed of LEA (Local Educational Agency) personnel, university, community members, business leaders, and parents. The partnership has established a structure to deliver services for early intervention through three major components: mentoring and tutoring; counseling and outreach; and support services.

STRATEGY Through the Region One GEAR UP Advisory Curriculum, students participate weekly in three, twenty-minute lessons focused on goal setting, academics, life and study skills, career investigation, and leadership. Specifically written for the project, this curriculum is connected to the goals of GEAR UP with lessons directly correlated to the 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens, the Search Institute's Developmental Assets, and the Texas State Counseling Framework. A customized planner, connected to the curriculum, is used to teach students planning and organizational skills. Through the video-conferencing network provided by the partnership, schools are enhancing salient features of this initiative within and outside their campus buildings.

STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

1999

Contact: Betty Alford
Phone: (936) 468-1865
Email: balford@sfasu.edu
Total Students Served: 5,176

PROJECT OVERVIEW The East Texas GEAR UP project is designed as a comprehensive and proactive program of services for 5,176 students in grades seven through eleven over a five year period and will increase students' access to, and success in, postsecondary education. Intervention activities to strengthen a culture of high expectations for all students are provided through

the following five project components: 1) student services; 2) professional development; 3) parent outreach; 4) community outreach; and 5) evaluation.

As increased numbers of students participate in rigorous secondary school courses, project interventions of tutoring, mentoring, pre-college activities, college visits, and Summer Academies serve as a means of vital support. Professional development for teachers through College Board subject-specific institutes and vertical team training provide further assistance in meeting project goals and objectives. In addition, GEAR UP Leadership Institutes and the process of collaborative planning of interventions based on analysis of performance and survey data assist in meeting student needs. Through participation in GEAR UP activities and the combined efforts of teachers, administrators, counselors, parents, community groups, businesses, and community college and university partners, East Texas GEAR UP students are responding to the important message, "When you go to college, go prepared."

STRATEGY Increased numbers of students in the East Texas GEAR UP project have enrolled in Pre-Advanced Placement (AP), AP, and other advanced level courses. GEAR UP councils reviewed policies and practices to ensure that students had access to the more rigorous courses. Councils then planned outreach activities for students such as participation in summer math-science camps, college class visits, and programs by college students to reinforce the importance of taking the more challenging classes. Parent meetings, educator professional development, and student support services were also provided. Systemic results have included increased advanced level course offerings and increased student participation in the more rigorous classes.

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

1999

Contact: Gus Cedillo
Phone: (940) 898-2213
Email: s_cedillo@twu.edu
Total Students Served: 2,202

PROJECT OVERVIEW Education Alliance is a partnership of Texas Woman's University (TWU), Mountain View College and the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)-LNESC. To date, the project has served some 925 students through the seventh and eighth grade years at W. E. Greiner Middle School in Dallas. The Education Alliance will continue to address the needs of half of this number through their high school years at W. H. Adamson and Sunset high schools.

Key activities center on four areas: high student academic standards; parent education; teacher professional development; and establishment of a school-to-college infrastructure. Students receive instructional services in math and science such as tutorials, advanced placement courses, and college and university classroom instruction using hand/desk technology. School-to-college pathway activities are offered to assist in understanding such areas as financial aid, admissions, and academic and testing requirements. Parents are provided pathways to college information along with instruction to learn English and computers. In addition, information on access to community agencies and services is provided. Teachers receive training in advanced placement, ESL (English-as-a-Second Language), math, and science. Other key activities are peer/adult mentoring and leadership skills training. Students completing the program have proven to do better in terms of their academic achievement as measured by the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS).

STRATEGY Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) is a national program for elementary schools. TWU GEAR UP will provide RIF at two receiving high schools, W. H. Adamson and Sunset. Reading cuts across all areas. The program will yield positive benefits to all students, not only in academics but also for their self-confidence and self-worth. The program will consist of three to-keep books of their choosing, each given through a separate distribution. Other activities include sustained silent reading, community mentors as readers, book author assembly, book reading contests, a school-wide Reading Is Fundamental Day to read and exchange reading materials, and donated magazines and journals.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

1999

Contact: Juliette Caire
Phone: (915) 747-5367
Email: jcaire@utep.edu
Total Students Served: 300

PROJECT OVERVIEW The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) coordinates a GEAR UP project that serves approximately 300 eighth grade students in a community which has been designated a Round II Urban Empowerment Zone. The target schools are Guillen Middle and Bowie High School. Both are Title I schools and provide free and reduced lunch to almost 100 percent of their students. Traditionally,

there have been few students graduating from the high school who score at, or above, the national average on college admissions tests. A majority of the families residing in this area live well below the poverty level and have low educational attainment. Strong partnerships will be crucial in delivering services that help young people with great minds to understand and realize their full potential.

STRATEGY In an effort to motivate students during tutoring and to elicit active participation, workstations are set up in a manner that is appealing and student-friendly including: 1) reading groups which feature comic books and motivating short stories with read-a-long tapes; 2) a journal writing station which features a topic of the day or food for thought; and 3) an art station which allows for expression and creativity, and 4) a computer Lab which features a variety of programs on science, social studies, math, and language.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

1999

Contact: Aurelio Hurtado de Mendoza
Phone: (972) 780-3612
Email: ademendoza@unt.edu
Total Students Served: 1,700

PROJECT OVERVIEW The University of North Texas (UNT), in collaboration with the Dallas Independent School District (DISD), League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), and Mountain View College established a GEAR UP project in 1999 to work with DISD Stockard Middle School, Sunset, and Molina High School students in the Oak Cliff area of South Dallas. The program provides

tutoring and mentoring for students as well as computer training, math and science after-school programs, reading and writing remediation, and life/study skills. GEAR UP is meant to be an integrated part of the school rather than an additional program that might interfere with the existing school agenda.

In its first year, the project was designed to work with and impact the seventh grade cohort. This second and third year has seen the addition of the incoming seventh grade to the original classes now in the eighth and ninth grade. Since the UNT partnership has continued to grow yearly, GEAR UP moves with the students on to Sunset and Molina High Schools. This makes the impact of GEAR UP in the community very significant.

STRATEGY UNT GEAR UP is conducting an intramural sports program during lunch periods. The program is designed to help students develop teamwork and social skills while participating in a structured supervised activity. The program has not only helped to improve student morale, but also to improve social and race relations at the school. The GEAR UP staff and Stockard administrators have worked diligently to break up cliques at the school. The staff selected the teams for intramurals, thus separating cliques. Once students were placed on teams, they had lunch with their new team members, and participated in the intramural activities together. All of the teams were named after colleges and universities.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT BROWNSVILLE AND TEXAS SOUTHMOST COLLEGE

1999

Contact: Alma Garcia
Phone: (956) 983-7586
Email: agarcia@utb.edu
Total Students Served: 17,932

PROJECT OVERVIEW The University of Texas at Brownsville (UTB) GEAR UP project has been funded as a systemic reform initiative to improve student academic performance and college enrollment within six identified school districts in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. To date, the program is on target in meeting the goals and objectives of the project. Through a partnership council network, staff

implements a structure to deliver service for early intervention through three major components: 1) design/promotion of rigorous academic course work; 2) training and staff development for teachers; and 3) counseling, awareness, and outreach support services for teachers, students, and their parents.

STRATEGY The University of Texas at Brownsville GEAR UP partner membership is unique. The partners include superintendents from each of the six school districts and five business and community members. The Council meets once monthly to network and share best practices from their school districts. The UTB GEAR UP project also provides valuable data, including college enrollment numbers, Advanced Placement information, algebra enrollment, and developmental courses to share with members of the school boards, teachers, principals, and others. From this data, academic and program decisions are made to promote success at the middle and high schools serving GEAR UP students.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

1999

Contact: Esther Arredondo
Phone: (210) 458-2925
Email: earredondo@utsa.edu
Total Students Served: 1,442

PROJECT OVERVIEW The University of Texas San Antonio (UTSA/North Side Independent School District) GEAR UP project seeks to increase college-bound students among the 1,442 middle school and high school participants. The project provides academic tutors, UTSA/business mentors, academic advisors, financial aid information and high school/college seminars. Career exploration

services include a Self Direct Search interest survey and many college-based summer programs including: TX-PREP, the Texas Pre-Engineering Program; ART START; and College for Kids. Regularly scheduled college visits, college student organization events, and visits from admissions counselors are provided. Students participate in Academic Milestone events that recognize student achievement. Students from the original cohort receive a scholarship upon graduating from high school and enrolling in two or four years of postsecondary education.

STRATEGY UTSA/NSISD GEAR UP provides cohort students with Upward Bound junior and senior mentors in a Preparation for High School and College Seminar Series. The college application /essay activity is done through the English Department at their school. Students research colleges, apply, and complete a personal statement. College Week includes alumni speakers, teacher diploma displays, and college representative visits.

WEATHERFORD COLLEGE

1999

Contact: Avalon White
Phone: (800) 811-7435
Email: awhite@wc.edu
Total Students Served: 1,500

PROJECT OVERVIEW The Weatherford College GEAR UP partnership serves students from low-income/high poverty families residing in the rural city of Mineral Wells. Over the duration of the project, approximately 1,500 students will be served. The following characteristics describe Mineral Wells: 55 percent of families are low-income; 89 percent of adults do not have a college degree; 37 percent

of adults do not have a high school diploma; up to 30 percent of students drop out of high school before graduation; and only 35 percent of graduates attempt college. This partnership is providing cohorts of participants with services that encourage persistence through high school and enrollment in postsecondary education. The program is designed to serve cohorts of students from grades seven through high school; assess their academic needs, disseminate appropriate academic, counseling, support, and enrichment services; monitor and evaluate academic progress; and ensure successful graduation and enrollment in a postsecondary institution. Weatherford College serves as the fiscal agent for grant funds, houses the grant director and financial officer, and provides a connection to higher education. The programmatic team is currently housed on the Mineral Wells Junior High and High School campuses. There are two GEAR UP counselors, one at Mineral Wells Junior High and one at the high school. The GEAR UP district coordinator, Pathfinder's Club coordinator, and support staff are located in the GEAR UP Career Center located at Mineral Wells High School.

STRATEGY Career Action Planning is a process in which teachers deliver academic and career guidance information to students and parents regarding course selection, college/technical training, and financial aid. Field trips to postsecondary institutions give students opportunities to learn about campus life, application processes, activities, and programs offered. Pathfinder's Club is a mentoring program which connects students with responsible, caring adults. Activities include leadership, community service, and volunteerism. Staff Development provides administrators and teachers strategies for increasing curriculum rigor, hands-on learning, curriculum integration, and character development.

YSLETA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

1999

Contact: Manuel Castruita
Phone: (915) 434-8200
Email: castruitam@yahoo.com
Total Students Served: 1,000

PROJECT OVERVIEW Ysleta Middle School's GEAR UP, Milestones to the Future, project provides college preparatory services and activities, including on-going mentoring, counseling, and tutoring, as students take courses to prepare for college. The program addresses several gaps in the current services provided to children, parents, and teachers at the targeted schools. It provides educational and social

services to children, including study skills training, test-taking skills, critical thinking skills, mentoring, and life skills training. In addition, the program provides long term course selection assistance, and financial aid and college admissions information. Participants have opportunities to visit area colleges and universities and attend month-long summer academic straightening and enrichment programs. Through partners, participants are able to develop their personal and social skills through leadership opportunities. Students are encouraged to seek the college preparatory route and begin taking the more challenging courses starting at the middle school level with Algebra I and Spanish 7-8. Students are encouraged to participate in the PSAT in the seventh and eighth grades, and those in the foreign language program are being prepared, and supported, as they take the Spanish 2 Language AP exam.

STRATEGY All Ysleta Middle School students are registered for a test preparatory course during the school day. This course allows students to have truly personalized instruction in areas of academic need. Daily, students receive forty-five minutes of instruction specific to their individual needs. Students and instructors work on strengthening areas of academic concern. As a result student performance on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) has increased. In 2001, TAAS scores were: Reading - 89.90 percent passing rate; Math - 96 percent passing rate. The End of Course Algebra I scores have increased to 65 percent of those taking the exam passing. This percentage has increased dramatically from the 45 percent for the academic year 1999 - 2000.

AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

2000

Contact: Sari Waxler
Phone: (512) 414-0138
Email: swaxler@austin.isd.tenet.edu
Total Students Served: 3,203

PROJECT OVERVIEW The GEAR UP Austin Project serves the 3,203 students in ten Austin Independent School District (ISD) middle schools and the thirty-eight students who attend the Texas Empowerment Academy Charter School. Project services will follow the cohort as they transition to eight high schools during the 2001-2002 academic year. Unique features of this project include: 1) case

management of at-risk students through campus-based IMPACT Teams comprised of counselors, teachers, school social workers, health professionals, and administrators; 2) annual individual academic and career planning processes to assist students in selecting courses, college majors, and career pathways; 3) collaboration with partners to bring technology, tutorials, and parent programs to students and families living in federal housing developments; 4) e-mail mentoring programs; 5) college admissions test preparation; and 6) college and career technology centers on each campus which help students acquire technology skills that will assist them in exploring colleges, careers, and financial aid. Higher education partners play a significant role in providing pre-college experiences such as the week-long overnight Camp College at Huston Tillotson College. Students who successfully complete the GEAR UP Austin Project will be acknowledged as Texas Scholars, having taken all necessary college preparatory coursework prior to high school graduation and having graduated on the State Recommended Graduation Plan.

STRATEGY "Camp College" brought the college experience alive for twenty prospective students. These students applied for admission to college and completed a housing application. Students participated in new student orientation, received identification and meal cards, and settled into their dormitories. The week's activities included PSAT preparation, nuclear history and science, web design, and theatre. Late afternoons provided leisure time, and evenings were spent rehearsing for the culminating activity. By week's end, students knew the layout of the campus, had experienced a full load of classes, had learned to live with one another, recognized the need to manage their time, and understood much more about the college experience.

HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

2000

Contact: Laurie Ballering
Phone: (713) 986-0481
Email: lballering@projectgrad.org
Total Students Served: 46,386

PROJECT OVERVIEW The purpose of the GEARING UP Project GRAD-Houston II program is to ensure that disadvantaged middle school students receive the rigorous academic preparation needed to be successful in pursuing postsecondary education. The GEARING UP Project GRAD-Houston II initiative allows Project GRAD to establish a financial assistance program to award scholarships to

participating sixth and seventh grade cohorts in the six targeted middle schools. A new sixth grade cohort in the six middle schools will be added in years two through five of the grant period. By the completion of the program, GEARING UP Project GRAD-Houston II would have impacted a total of 38,000 students. The four major goals of the project are: 1) to significantly improve the pedagogic skills, content-area knowledge, disciplinary management skills, and expectation of staff members in the middle and high schools; 2) to significantly increase students' skills in reading, math, science, and other content areas through more effective classroom instruction and strategies; 3) to significantly motivate project students through the provision of college scholarships, intensive mentoring, and counseling activities; and 4) to significantly increase parental involvement levels in all schools.

STRATEGY The Scholarship component involves four major elements, namely: Walk for Success; the Project GRAD Scholarship Contract; the Summer Institutes; and a college scholarship of \$1,000 a year for four years. GEARING UP Project GRAD-Houston II provides funds for critical staff and scholarships for cohort students. The critical staff will ensure the successful implementation of the scholarship component.

MIDLAND COLLEGE

2000

Contact: Rebecca Gonzalez
Phone: (915) 689-1389
Email: rgonzalez@midland.cc.tx.us
Total Students Served: 370

PROJECT OVERVIEW The Midland College GEAR UP project serves those students in the Midland High School Class of 2006 who come from San Jacinto Junior High. San Jacinto is classified as a Title I school, having a large percentage of students participating in the free/reduced breakfast/lunch program. A comprehensive plan of services is divided into three components: 1) the Academic Year

Component, consisting of after-school tutoring, peer mentoring, counseling, career exploration, and academic enrichment; 2) the Summer Component, consisting of a two-week, half-day summer session in which GEAR UP participants attend scheduled academic classes, participate in cultural enrichment activities, and take field trips to various four-year universities; and 3) the Scholarship Component, consisting of a scholarship funded with a percentage of grant money for each year of the five-year grant.

STRATEGY A point system has been instituted for the Class of 2006 whereby students receive a set number of points for topics ranging from attendance to behavior and grades. Students who reach the selected number of points are eligible to attend various extra activities. Teachers, and the students themselves, indicate that these incentive trips motivate many students to try harder and attend after-school tutorials in order to raise their grades as well as their chance of attending a trip. As the school year progresses, requirements for each additional trip are slowly raised. This system also utilizes the parent advisory committee for point setting and incentive activity.

TEXAS A & M INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

2000

Contact: Beatriz Salinas-Riojas
Phone: (956) 326-2766
Email: bsalinas@tamiu.edu
Total Students Served: 900

PROJECT OVERVIEW The Creating a Vision Program seeks to increase the number of students pursuing higher education in the community. The project serves a cohort of 900 students who currently attend the eighth grade in three middle schools, Lamar, Memorial, and Clark Middle. This student cohort will transition to two high schools, Nixon High (Laredo ISD) and Alexander High (United ISD). The local

university is partnering with two local school districts, the College Board, Communities in Schools, Community Action Agency, and ACT, Inc.

The major areas covered by the project design are: 1) direct services to students; 2) staff development, including curriculum innovations; and 3) parental involvement. Direct services to students include tutoring, mentoring, academic counseling, summer programs, career exploration, and educational field trips to colleges and universities. Staff development includes teacher and counselor training in Pre-AP and Advanced Placement course work. Parents become involved in group sessions for information on high school graduation plans, financial aid for college, standardized test preparation, and career choices for their children. Project objectives include: a) increasing the number of students taking algebra in the eighth grade; b) increasing the number of students passing the reading and math section of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills; c) improving the scores on standardized tests; d) providing AP training for teachers; and e) educating parents in college awareness.

STRATEGY To improve educational attainment by the cohort, the advisory committee focused on improving the scores on the end-of-course (EOC) Algebra 1 exam. For this purpose, the GEAR UP staff administered the Orleans-Hanna Algebra Prognosis Test to the cohort as seventh-graders. Students scoring high would be recommended to take Algebra 1 as eighth-graders. Students scoring low would attend a summer Pre-Algebra Camp for remediation. Also, GEAR UP implemented a computer-based Pre-Algebra and Algebra curriculum from COMPASS, Inc. Students practice algebra problems in their computer lab. Teachers received training to use this software. Scores on the Algebra EOC tests will be compared to previous years and the Algebra Prognosis Test will be re-administered.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS — PAN AMERICAN

2001

Contact: Mary Alice Reyes
Phone: (956) 381-3607
Email: reyesm@panam.edu
Total Students Served: 7,422

PROJECT OVERVIEW The University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA) GEAR UP project: Yes, You Can Go To College ¡Sí Se Puede! is committed to increasing college enrollment rates among low-income youth by offering them comprehensive services such as mentoring, tutoring, career advisement, and counseling; in conjunction with other sustained, supportive services for participants

and their parents. Through an existing collaborative, the South Texas Center for Professional Development of Teachers (STCPDT) and other partners, the project facilitates the high academic performance of middle school (secondary) students and enables them to be prepared for higher education by pursuing a rigorous program for postsecondary education. Through the program's focused and intentional strategies, the UTPA GEAR UP ¡Sí Se Puede! partnership will give more than 7,000 economically disadvantaged students, who attend twenty-three middle schools, the encouragement, awareness, preparation, and skills required to succeed in college.

STRATEGY Platicas in the Barrios and Colonias (Trainer of Trainers Model) - A Parent Liaison, funded by the UTPA GEAR UP ¡Sí Se Puede! grant for each of the participating sites, will train a cadre of twenty parents from each site. These parents will then impart a series of "Platicas" (get-togethers) in the neighborhoods to inform other parents about education issues and, specifically, methods to encourage their children to study hard, to stay in school, to learn about college, and, ultimately, to enroll in higher education and succeed.

PROVO CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

1999

Contact: Nancy Passaretti
Phone: (801) 370-4609
Email: nancyp@provo.k12.ut.us
Total Students Served: 3,005

PROJECT OVERVIEW The Provo City School District/Utah Valley State Community College GEAR UP project has formed partnerships with local businesses, community agencies, and organizations to increase college-going rates among low-income youth. The following activities will address current gaps in services: 1) promotion of rigorous academic course work; 2) formation of vertical teams; 3)

raised expectations for all students through college visits and programs; 4) provision of mentoring, tutoring, and counseling; and 5) establishment of financial assistance programs. Among the desired outcomes are: 1) raised academic scores; 2) increased enrollment in rigorous academic courses; 3) increased parental involvement and knowledge of college options; 4) decreased dropout rates; and 5) increased community involvement.

STRATEGY Central Bank has entered into an agreement with Provo City School District to open an Education Trust Funds account for every GEAR UP student. Each term, participants will receive monies for academic achievement, low income, and first-generation status. Students and their families may add to the accounts, which will be tracked through the Central Bank's 401K system with monthly statements issued to each family. The account status may also be accessed through the Internet. The monies will be invested through an allocation plan of 50 percent in certificates of deposit and 50 percent in stocks. Students and their families may watch the monies accrue and will have access to the funds at any time for educational fees and books.

SAN JUAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

1999

Contact: Chris Johnson
Phone: (435) 678-1226
Email: johnson_chris@do.sanjuan.k12.ut.us
Total Students Served: 1,100

PROJECT OVERVIEW The San Juan GEAR UP project is working with 681 students in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades. Most of these students live on the Navajo Indian Reservation and attend one of the following schools: Albert R. Lyman Middle School, Monument Valley High School, Navajo Mountain Community School, Navajo Mountain High School, San Juan High School, or Whitehorse High

School. The program was instituted in 1999, with the first group of seventh grade students, and has added a new group of seventh grade students each year. By the fifth year, GEAR UP will serve 1,100 students and will follow them through high school. Principal activities include an advisory program, annual job shadowing experiences, participation in career fairs, a "Mock College Day", participation in "Reality Town" real-life simulation, college visits for older students, Recent Graduate Mentors, after-school tutoring, Family Literacy Night, remedial summer school, Summer Scholars at Northern Arizona University, and parental involvement through the Student Educational and Occupational Plan (SEOP) process. Students who successfully complete the program will have accomplished the following: 1) passed Algebra I in the eighth grade with a C or better; 2) scored at, or above, the 50 percentile in reading, math, and language arts on the SAT-9 test in the eighth grade; 3) selected a tentative career goal and enrolled in preparatory classes; 4) completed a SEOP; and 5) remain on schedule in meeting college or university entrance requirements.

STRATEGY The use of Recent Graduate Mentors has proven to be an innovative strategy by bringing former graduates back into the schools. These students, who are currently succeeding at college, have demonstrated the ability to connect with current students. Many of the students are first-generation college and prove to be very effective role models. Some students remain in contact with their mentor by way of e-mail, and the program has been expanded by identifying other college students who can mentor by way of e-mail. This innovative connection has given many of GEAR UP students the confidence they will need to be able to prepare for, and complete, a college degree.

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1999

Contact: Bayyinah Jeffries
Phone: (703) 228-8628
Email: bjeffrie@arlington.k12.va.us
Total Students Served: 2,360

PROJECT OVERVIEW The Arlington GEAR UP program is designed to help create new and challenging experiences for all students. The project is called D.E.E.P., which simply means dedicated to Developing, Exploring, Enriching and Preparing middle school students for any and all future endeavors. Whether a student's postsecondary school goal is to enroll in a two-year or a four-year

college, the Arlington Public Schools and GEAR UP community partners are expecting to have students prepared for both entry and successful completion in a degree program.

GEAR UP Arlington provides information to parents, teachers, and students on current issues in education, and provides services to build, maintain, or enhance their skills through a series of opportunities. Some provisions include: 1) tutoring (during/after-school), especially in math and reading; 2) after-school enrichment programs offered by the Greenbrier Learning Center to GEAR UP students who attend Kenmore Middle School; 3) field trips to colleges and universities to have a first-hand look at the college experience; 4) reading programs that bring well-known authors to the schools to talk about reading and writing; 5) career exploration programs that include bringing professionals to the schools as well as field trips to local businesses; 6) ESL and computer classes for parents; 7) certification for potential reading teachers, and other professional development/training, resources, and materials for GEAR UP teachers; and 8) three summer programs to provide students with algebra, reading, writing, science, and career enrichment. Arlington GEAR UP is about building a strong sense of community among administrators, teachers, parents, community members, and students.

STRATEGY In an effort to enhance parental involvement, GEAR UP has offered programs on Saturdays, and at varying times and locations. Follow-up telephone calls for mailings are made by multilingual individuals. Moreover, the project utilizes translation equipment to meet the needs of the non-English speaking parents so that they are able to fully grasp the content of the programs offered. These strategies have greatly increased the participation of parents who are often unable to attend scheduled evening programs.

NEWPORT NEWS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1999

Contact: Vanessa Whitaker
Phone: (757) 591-4924
Email: vwhitake@sbo.nn.k12.va.us
Total Students Served: 6,000

PROJECT OVERVIEW The GEAR UP Program in Newport News, initiated in 1999, was administered to approximately 750 seventh grade students at three middle schools: An Achievable Dream Academy, Crittenden Middle School, and Huntington Middle School. Each year, the project adds a new cohort of seventh-graders from these three middle schools. In 2001-02, Year Three of GEAR UP, the program

serves 3,000 students in grades seven through nine at three middle and three high schools. By the program's fifth year, 6,000 seventh through eleventh grade students will be served.

The program has focused on teacher training, provision of parent information, instructional strategies for students, and program evaluation. These essential elements will encourage achievement of goals related to preparing students for postsecondary experiences. Because the GEAR UP program is based on a "total immersion model" of student participation (attributed particularly to the curricular reforms), program interventions and services are available to 100 percent of the seventh, eighth, and ninth grade students who attend the six participating schools.

STRATEGY The project focuses on training teachers, through 16 in-service hours, and GEAR UP students in three major strategies designed to improve student achievement: 1) OCCW; 2) Cornell Note Taking; and 3) Costa's Level of Questions. OCCW is an acronym for students to focus on: (a) Organization (e.g., teaching students to use three-ring binders with divided subject areas); (b) Critical Thinking (i.e., teaching strategies to promote students to think at higher levels); (c) Collaboration (i.e., implementing successful strategies for group work); and (d) Writing (i.e., utilizing writing and reading skills in all subject areas). Cornell Note Taking is an organized system for lecture notes and study taught to all students. It is a two-column note taking process, with notes typically written on the right, and keywords, questions, and comments written on the left – a process which helps students distinguish between important/essential and less important information; and build study, organization, and comprehension skills. Costa's Levels of Questions is an education approach in which teachers construct examinations and classroom discussions to challenge thinking and correlate the objectives with the Virginia State Standards of Learning.

RICHMOND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1999

Contact: Janice E. Fisher
Phone: (804) 780-5232 or 5233
Email: jfisher@richmond.k12.va.us
Total Students Served: 1,847

PROJECT OVERVIEW Richmond Public Schools Project GEAR UP serves 1,847 students tagged as seventh-graders in the 1999-2000 academic year. This initial cohort group is monitored as they matriculate through the twelfth grade. The project is designed to increase the number of students who enter, persist in, and successfully complete college and utilizes several initiatives to ensure academic

success. These initiatives include: 1) mentoring, tutoring, and peer mediation; 2) academic support for the core subject areas of mathematics, science, English, and history; 3) cultural and social enrichment initiatives to assist students and their families in learning more about colleges and universities; 4) parental involvement initiatives, such as "Town Hall" evening meetings; and 5) college preparation provisions, which include seminars/information sessions on admissions requirements, test taking skills, majors of study, and financial aid information.

The project is implemented through several avenues, including daily instruction aligned with the Richmond Public Schools Instructional Model. Overall, the project seeks to address every aspect of preparation for college entrance and completion as well as for other postsecondary educational opportunities.

STRATEGY Students receive tutoring in the core subject areas, foreign languages, and various above grade-level courses. All students within the cohort receive academic support to increase their academic achievement. Strategies also include an incentives program for students to receive awards for school and class attendance, positive behavior, and overall improvement in the four core subject areas and foreign languages. Students who are considered to be high risk, based upon academic records, behavior incidents by infraction, and attendance, receive additional services that include sessions with parents on how to strengthen communication and promote positive behavior. All initiatives are designed to thoroughly prepare students for entrance into, and completion of, college.

DANVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2000

Contact: Lynn Dillon
Phone: (434) 799-6406 ext. 2229
Email: ldillon@mail.dps.k12.va.us
Total Students Served: 625

PROJECT OVERVIEW The GEAR UP Program in Danville Public Schools (DPS), known as HIGH GEAR, is a five-year project housed in three middle schools. The GEAR UP beneficiaries are the 625 students who were enrolled in middle school as seventh-graders during 2000-2001. During the 2000-2001 academic year, all seventh grade students (except for the 26 students already taking Algebra I) were

expected to complete their math course with a C average or better, in order to be prepared to enroll in Algebra I in the eighth grade. Students who did not achieve this milestone would enroll in Algebra I, Part I during 2001-2002.

A major component of HIGH GEAR is that scholarship funds are being deposited into individual student accounts once they have reached certain milestones, including the completion of math courses with a grade of C or higher, good attendance records, and parent involvement. The funds provide both the financial and psychological support students from low-income families need in order to perceive college as a potential reality.

When responding to the needs-assessment question concerning college aspirations, high school students in DPS said they would be willing to do the required work if they could perceive enrollment in college as attainable. HIGH GEAR is building this perception. Support services include the after-school tutoring program at the three middle schools and at a network of area churches, as well as various parent meetings, workshops, and volunteer opportunities, all to ensure the success for each student. Overall, the project expects all students to successfully complete advanced math courses; aspire to go to college; take and perform well on the SAT; and apply to and be accepted by a college or university upon high school graduation.

STRATEGY During the initial year of the program, 171 students participated in after-school tutoring, logging 3,267 hours. Tutoring was provided two days each week at each DPS middle school. All of the 625 students in the seventh grade visited and participated in programs promoting career options at Averett University and Danville Community College. Summer Math Camps were held at each of the three middle schools where math was taught through equestrian studies and aviation.

FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2000

Contact: Ursula Ellis and Mary Taube
Phone: (703) 813-8729
Email: Ursula.Ellis@fcps.edu and Mary.Taube@fcps.edu
Total Students Served: 2,250

PROJECT OVERVIEW GEAR UP Glasgow targets two Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) – Glasgow Middle School and eventually Stuart High School (beginning in 2003-2004, when the first cohort is in the ninth grade) – as schools most in need of the opportunities GEAR UP provides. Each year, a new cohort of sixth-graders at Glasgow Middle is added to be served. Both schools serve a population that is ethnically,

culturally, and economically diverse. To ensure that students of Glasgow Middle and Stuart High School are motivated and prepared to pursue and succeed in postsecondary education, the schools and their partners have created a comprehensive program that includes: 1) off-site learning centers located in the areas where students live; 2) a career center and specialist at the middle school to raise children's awareness about career choices and to integrate lessons with information on career opportunities; 3) a university-developed course on tutoring the middle school child and a tutor-child matching program; 4) a comprehensive summer program for students having difficulty with reading and math; 5) a week-long summer program at a local university that introduces students to college life, courses, and the possible careers that follow; 6) targeted early intervention services for those students who are not reaching state-developed benchmarks in core subjects; and 7) parent workshops and parent involvement activities. Partners for the project include: George Mason and Marymount Universities, the Hispanic Business Foundation for Youth, the Hispanic Committee of Virginia, the Fairfax County Police Department, the National Association for College Admission Counseling, and others within the Fairfax County school system.

STRATEGY During the summer of 2001, GEAR UP Glasgow sponsored a four-week program for rising sixth and seventh-graders with reading skills two or more years below grade level and having difficulty in math (determined by course grades, test scores, and teacher input). This program, Summer Stars, included intensive morning instruction in reading and mathematics with an emphasis on the performing arts. The afternoons were spent in recreation. Professional performers worked with small groups of students in interactive workshops that culminated in a student production of "Poetry Alive" and scenes from "Macbeth." In addition to strengthening academic skills, all students benefited from working in cross-grade and cross-age groups, and from growing in pride and confidence as they became more polished performers.

COLUMBIA BASIN COLLEGE

1999

Contact: Debbie Dougan
Phone: (509) 543-6700
Email: ddougan@pasco.wednet.edu
Total Students Served: 3,125

PROJECT OVERVIEW The Mid Columbia Basin GEAR UP project, established in 1999, utilizes a variety of early strategies to help students plan and prepare for college, including student portfolios that are integrated as part of the language arts curriculum, individualized student advocacy, and activities that are educationally enriching. In developing portfolios, the students, beginning in the

seventh grade, reflect on visits to college campuses and local worksites, establish and maintain individual goals, participate in interest inventories and college placement testing, and chart their educational progress.

In addition, the GEAR UP staff work with students to ensure that each has an advocate to support their educational aspirations. Parents and other family members receive training to help them more effectively advocate for their students. Students who do not have family members to serve as their advocates are matched with volunteer mentors. Every student in the Mid Columbia Basin GEAR UP project has the opportunity to participate in extracurricular, educationally-enriching activities, including camps held on college campuses, after-school tutoring programs at each of three participating schools, and student conferences. The Mid Columbia Basin GEAR UP project currently serves approximately 1,920 students in grades seven through nine. The number of students served will increase to approximately 3,200 by the project's fifth year.

STRATEGY The Mid Columbia Basin GEAR UP project has experienced significant success in developing strategies that are co-curricular and tied to systemic change. This is due primarily to the relationship between the Pasco School District and Columbia Basin College. The project staff are employed by the college but housed in school district offices and in schools. Coordinators for each grade level work closely with administrative and teaching staff in their buildings to develop activities that are co-curricular and based on current needs. The Mid Columbia Basin GEAR UP project serves as a bridge between the school district and the college for teachers, administrators, students, and parents.

PIERCE COLLEGE

1999

Contact: Connie Brown
Phone: (253) 535-9881
Email: cbrown@pierce.ctc.edu
Total Students Served: 245

PROJECT OVERVIEW Pierce College and the Franklin Pierce School District, both located near Tacoma in western Washington, have formed a partnership with six other entities to serve a cohort of 245 students who were enrolled in the seventh grade at Keithley Middle School in 1999, when the program was established. The GEAR UP project will follow the students through Washington High School

until their graduation in 2005. Services and resources provided for the cohort are divided into three components. Among the activities for students are the following: 1) extensive individual advising; 2) tutoring; 3) field trips to colleges and businesses; 3) community service activities; 4) scholarships; 5) remedial services and study skills workshops; 6) workshops on financial assistance and postsecondary options; and 7) a summer bridge to college program. Services for the parents include: workshops on parenting skills and supporting their children in school and beyond; assistance in achieving personal educational goals; and workshops and other resources on postsecondary options and financial assistance. Services for teachers include resources and the opportunity to receive extensive professional and curriculum development activities.

STRATEGY Excessive absenteeism, among other factors, was linked to suspensions resulting from behavioral problems (mainly, conflicts). The group S.U.C.C.E.S.S. (Stress Under Control Contributes to Every Student's Success) program is a 12-week class with on-going support available. Role-playing and discussions based on real-life issues were the most effective methods for the students, helping them to understand that there are healthy and safe choices, options, and alternatives to every difficult situation. A 20 percent reduction in negative behavior was documented as a result of the students' participation in the class.

RENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT 403

1999

Contact: Barbara Fujita
Phone: (425) 204-2880
Email: bfujita@renton.wednet.edu
Total Students Served: 649

PROJECT OVERVIEW The Renton Community GEAR UP project is designed to increase the college enrollment rates for the 649 sixth and seventh grade students at Dimmitt Middle School who will later transition to Renton High School. This project is designed specifically to provide early intervention services that promote improved academic achievement, to support activities that increase

expectations for student success, to provide information about college options to students and parents, and to build partnerships to help sustain community support for ensuring equal access to postsecondary education.

The Renton Community GEAR UP project provides: 1) intensive academic support for the students who need it most; 2) added services that reinforce and supplement the efforts of counselors; 3) ACT and SAT preparation support; and 4) improved communication with, and increased involvement by, the parents. The GEAR UP program promotes systemic change and strengthens the motivation of students to succeed.

STRATEGY Access to technology is often difficult for the students. With assistance from the District's Network Technology program (a class of high school students studying various computer programming methods and maintenance), the Boeing Company, and the Boeing Employees Credit Union, GEAR UP put together operational computer stations, with no-charge Internet access, for loan to participating students. These computers are taken home for use during the entire school year. Parents report that having a computer at home is both an incentive and a strong motivator for students to complete their homework.

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

1999

Contact: Loueta Johnson
Phone: (509) 574-6810
Email: johnsonl@u.washington.edu
Total Students Served: 7,085

PROJECT OVERVIEW The Lower Yakima Valley GEAR UP project is addressing the needs of 7,085 primarily Hispanic and American Indian students, who are enrolled in the sixth through tenth grades in seven school districts and the Yakama Nation Tribal School in the Yakima Valley of Central Washington. The Yakima Valley region is marked by extreme poverty and low educational

attainment. Principal project activities include: 1) extended-day programs with highly-trained tutors and mentors from college, high school, and the community; 2) 'Lightspan' computer-assisted remedial coursework; 3) outreach and parenting programs; 4) all-cohort field trips; 5) teacher training and development; and 6) career and college planning. The project purpose is to ensure that all middle and secondary school students are prepared to pursue and succeed in postsecondary education. Students who successfully complete this program will have: a) completed an academically challenging curriculum; b) attained competency levels on state standardized exams; c) prepared an individualized education and career plan; d) attended college admission and financial aid workshops; e) received individualized assistance; and f) met college entrance requirements.

STRATEGY Innovative strategies are multiple. A competency-based 2+2+2 tutor and mentor training model recruits high school juniors and seniors, as well as college freshmen and sophomores, and provides core training and a supervised practicum quarterly for academic credit. All grade-level cohort field trips serve, on average, 1,200 students in each grade level. The field trips include: sixth grade, College Fair; seventh grade, Day at Yakima Valley Community College; and eighth grade, Grade Career Challenge Career Fair. Trained high school mentors receive both credit and stipends. A web-page data entry and tracking system for key project outcomes has been designed. Further, in-home kitchen table talks, conducted in Spanish and in English, help parents to discuss issues of interest such as financial aid testing, positive parenting, and others.

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

2000

Contact: Lette Hadgu
Phone: (206) 543-6436
Email: lhadgu@u.washington.edu
Total Students Served: 4,632

PROJECT OVERVIEW The Seattle Early Scholars Outreach (SESO) GEAR UP is a partnership of several educational institutions and two community groups. Included are six middle schools in the Seattle Public School District, one private school, the University of Washington, the YMCA Black Achievers program, and the Central Youth and Family Services. SESO also receives software and business

support from Microsoft Corporation. SESO GEAR UP develops and delivers comprehensive educational enrichment services that maximize learning opportunities for students attending partner schools. In collaboration with parents and the school and community-based partners, SESO helps students strengthen academic performance, develop college readiness, and improve self-esteem and social well-being in order to expand their access to postsecondary education.

In September 2001, SESO GEAR UP began the second year of services to students and parents. A brief summary of activities that are in progress, or scheduled to take place, during the academic year includes: 1) fifty-eight university students providing tutoring, mentoring, and academic skills building through after-school activities; 2) student assemblies for college readiness at each school; 3) campus visits to the University of Washington; 4) the year-end celebration of student accomplishments; and 5) a four-week summer bridge program for eighth-graders who are transitioning from middle to high school.

STRATEGY SESO GEAR UP values a variety of teaching and learning strategies. Currently, volunteers from business and community organizations are enlisted to teach students specialized courses such as Law, Computing, Language Arts, Mathematics, and Personal Finance. In addition, volunteers from community organizations and corporations are delivering career-preparatory presentations to motivate and educate our students. Student and parent feedback about SESO GEAR UP services has been extremely positive. The staff is committed to continue to be creative, explore new options, strengthen the partnerships, and maintain the support and the confidence of the University and the community at large.

HERITAGE COLLEGE

2001

Contact: Raymond Navarro, Jr.
Phone: (509) 865-8569
Email: navarro_r@heritage.edu
Total Students Served: 945

PROJECT OVERVIEW Heritage College, in cooperation with the Yakima School District, Yakima YMCA, Yakima County Substance Abuse Coalition, Yakima Valley Opportunities Industrialization Center, and EMPIRE, formed the GEAR UP Alliance to unite resources and funding for implementation of a comprehensive program. This partnership provides services to a cohort of 945 sixth-

graders from the four middle schools in the Yakima School District. GEAR UP: Steps to Success has a strong emphasis on systematic education reform designed to create a culture of belief and hope for a successful future. The motto, Dream It... Plan It... Do It, reflects the commitment of the program staff that all students, given information, resources, and resolve, can enter and succeed in college programs. The services provided include: 1) academic enhancement to increase graduation and postsecondary education entry rates; 2) a mentoring program; 3) academic and personal counseling; 4) parent education programs and activities; 5) information for parents and students about assessment, financial aid, and college admissions; and 6) a model for continual quality enhancement. In each of the four middle schools, two certificated teacher/coordinators and a parent specialist orchestrate this array of services for sixth grade students and their parents. They work collaboratively with the sixth grade teacher teams to support and enhance student achievement and to develop relationships that foster success.

STRATEGY The evaluation plan follows the process portfolio guidelines provided by the Rand Sourcebook for Evaluation. All GEAR UP students will build a portfolio with age-specific activities designed to help them systematically plan for their futures. These activities will be completed using software programs and reference materials that will be available at each site. Portfolios will include: interest and learning styles inventories; career exploration information; and an educational plan with mock admissions applications for college and financial aid, mock SAT, exemplary academic work, information from college visits, and other important information. The portfolios will be used as an additional assessment and planning tool to help identify student abilities and interests and will be reviewed by parents, teachers, tutors, and mentors.

FAIRMONT STATE COLLEGE

1999

Contact: Denise Whittaker
Phone: (304) 367-4215
Email: dwhittaker@mail.fscwv.edu
Total Students Served: 13,814

PROJECT OVERVIEW Nearly 14,000 students will participate and benefit from programs and services offered through the Fairmont State College GEAR UP partnership. Twenty-nine middle schools and eighteen high schools in a nine-county service area are being served. Activities have been designed to meet the goals and objectives of GEAR UP. These include but are not limited to: 1) after-school

and weekend programs; 2) tutoring, mentoring, and counseling; 3) curriculum review and academic rigor incentives; 4) college pen pal program; 5) college fairs and tours; 6) financial aid workshops; 7) computer projects; 8) motivational activities including a GEARING UP FOR COLLEGE poster contest; 9) summer enrichment programs and field trips; 10) leadership and learning style training; 11) comprehensive teacher training activities; 12) parent involvement; 13) literacy and academic readiness programs; 14) all-middle school Convocation and 21st Century Scholar presentations; 15) internship and job/college shadowing opportunities; 16) strong volunteer program development; 17) comprehensive coordination with state and local agencies to ensure the efficient use of resources; and 18) an innovative scholarship program.

STRATEGY A highlight of the GEAR UP project is the Home Computer Scholarship. A total of 350 seventh and eighth grade students have received scholarships for home computers since the grant's inception in 1999. The GEAR UP Home Computer Scholarship program involves a comprehensive application process which includes, but is not limited to, the following components: 1) student statement about how the computer will be used to achieve GEAR UP goals; 2) student statement about their involvement in GEAR UP activities and how these activities have helped them become a better student; 3) parent statement of need and that, absent the scholarship, a home computer would not be an option for the family; and 4) teacher recommendation letter/s.

BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM 1999

Contact: Pamela Clark
Phone: (414) 229-2401
Email: pclark@des.uwm.edu
Total Students Served: 3,595

PROJECT OVERVIEW The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) GEAR UP initiative is a multi-year commitment to the students attending Edison, Kosciuszko, Malcolm X Academy, and Milwaukee Village Middle Schools. UWM GEAR UP, and its partners, are working to bring about systemic change in the target middle schools and their three feeder high schools, Custer, North, and South Division High School.

The mission of the UWM GEAR UP project is to create systemic change in the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) by preparing students to reach competency in the basic skills and to acquire the skills to take the rigorous course work in high school needed for postsecondary entry. GEAR UP, and its partners, provide services which will increase the number of students who improve their reading levels and pass local and state mandated proficiencies. Once this task is complete, there will be a decline in the target school dropout rates, as GEAR UP students go on to high school and enroll in the challenging courses required for postsecondary enrollment. Each target school has been assigned two academic advisors who work in the schools on a daily basis. Their duties include assisting teachers in carrying out specialized reading programs, implementing tutorial and mentor programs, and providing ongoing skills development programs and related academic support programs.

STRATEGY Among the innovative strategies is a cooperative partnership with UWM School of Education faculty that provides for GEAR UP teachers to receive undergraduate or graduate credit for taking content-based professional development classes aligned with program objectives. Another is the Saturday Booster Camp. GEAR UP students reading significantly below grade level can attend half-day Saturday classes with a partner institution, Milwaukee Area Technical College, to help develop better reading comprehension skills. Students who complete all assigned work with excellent attendance are eligible to receive a passing score in the communication portion of the Milwaukee Public Schools eighth grade mandatory proficiency examination.

MILWAUKEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS 1999

Contact: Cynthia E. Gallant
Phone: (414) 475-8252
Email: gallance@mail.milwaukee.k12.wi.us
Total Students Served: 5,070

PROJECT OVERVIEW The Milwaukee Public Schools GEAR UP Partnership Initiative provides a broad range of pre-college activities to engage middle school students from Burroughs, Muir and Webster Middle Schools. Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) and the YMCA are direct partners in the initiative. A collaboration between University of Wisconsin Milwaukee (UWM)-GEAR UP, Wisconsin

Department Public Instruction (DPI)-GEAR UP and MPS-GEAR UP is developing a citywide focus to prepare students to enter and succeed in postsecondary institutions in greater numbers.

The MPS-GEAR UP Initiative began with the 1999-2000 seventh grade cohort (1,070 students from the three middle schools), and adds a seventh grade cohort each year during the project period. The second year continued service to the eighth grade students and added 1,070 seventh grade students. All cohorts of students will be served as they progress through the twelfth grade. High schools receiving the larger number of GEAR UP students from the three middle schools were incorporated into the initial design. Vincent High School currently has the leadership role at the secondary level as a result of its ongoing relationship with the three middle schools through the Northwest Neighborhood of Schools Initiative. The Northwest Neighborhood of Schools is developing and implementing new strategies for creating locally-based systemic changes in a cluster of schools in the northwest section of the City of Milwaukee.

STRATEGY MPS-GEAR UP focuses on significantly increasing the number of students who are able to pass the proficiency requirements to enter high school. MATC provides Academic Booster Camps on Saturdays that focus on completion of proficiency requirements for seventh and eighth grade students. The YMCA provides access to facilities through out the Milwaukee Metropolitan area for MPS-GEAR UP students and enrolls MPS-GEAR UP students in academic support programs including the One-on-One Mentoring Program, Teen Achievers, Teen Leaders, Teen Summer Camp, and Girls Night Out. MPS-GEAR UP has developed a collaboration across the Milwaukee schools and community, creating student-specific interventions to accelerate learning in the classroom.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN — EAU CLAIRE

1999

Contact: Margaret Hebring
Phone: (715) 836-3367
Email: hebbrima@uwec.edu
Total Students Served: 456

PROJECT OVERVIEW The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire leads a GEAR UP partnership designed to serve 265 students who entered the third through seventh grade at the Lac du Flambeau Public School on the Lac du Flambeau Indian Reservation during 1999, the initial year of the project. Nine partners have collaborated to strengthen schools and provide opportunities for low income

students. Student services include: 1) a tutorial center; 2) a mentoring program; 3) an advocate who works with students through graduation; 4) pre-college programs on college campuses; and 5) college admissions, career and financial aid information. Parents receive support for an active parent group as well as information on college and financial aid resources. School teachers and support staff receive in-service development, including training to incorporate Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards into classroom curriculum and programming. Twelve objectives formed an ambitious, but attainable, program design. By providing early college preparation and awareness services to students from third through twelfth grade, a change in the aspiration level is resulting in a commitment to educational attainment and an involvement leading to graduation and future enrollment in postsecondary education.

STRATEGY The project has adopted a research-based program that presents forty attributes of successful young people. A diagnostic test determines which attributes an individual student has. The *What Kids Need to Succeed* book provides simple, down-to-earth examples of activities that parents, teachers, mentors, and community members can do to develop each attribute. The book has been approved by the Tribal Council and the Education Committee and serves as a shared resource for program activities and for parent and family involvement.

CENTRAL WYOMING COLLEGE

1999

Contact: Kristy Salisbury
Phone: (307) 855-2246
Email: ksalisbu@cwcc.wy.us
Total Students Served: 2,905

PROJECT OVERVIEW Central Wyoming College (CWC) is a small, two-year community college located within the boundaries of one of the largest American Indian reservations in the United States. The schools identified for GEAR UP services are among the poorest in the nation with community poverty rates as high as 70 percent. Nine out of ten individuals over twenty-five have not received a college

education. CHAMP (Community, Host, Academic, Mentoring, Partnership) provides early college awareness through four main strategies: 1) systemic changes in the school districts; 2) professional development for teachers and school staff; 3) rigorous academic coursework for students; and 4) advising and financial aid workshops for families. These strategies have been implemented by the following: district training and movement to block scheduling; Master Math instruction on a continual basis to strengthen teacher skills; and Cyber-Camp, with over 200 teachers attending, to incorporate technology into the curriculum.

CHAMP provides tutoring, mentoring, and enrichment activities to help prepare students for college. CHAMP also offers College Academies, intensive summer school programs, and cultural trips to broaden perspectives. GEAR UP has had a significant impact in the county. Over 1,200 students have participated in activities or courses on campus, and 95 percent of teachers have attended GEAR UP professional development workshops and implemented new ideas into their curriculum.

STRATEGY The CHAMP project has over 200 teachers in twelve schools working with students. At one of the schools, students who attended the GEAR UP math review night increased their math grades by an average of 11 percent. Central Wyoming College instructors are involved in teaching Friday Academies and summer classes for GEAR UP students, offer professional development courses for teachers, and provide ACT preparation workshops. The GEAR UP Master Math instructor offers monthly math workshops for teachers, schoolwide math improvement plans, and ACT workshops for students. Over 700 students have participated in these classes on campus this year and have reported increased understanding of difficult concepts.

