

# GEARUP

CURRENT PROJECT OVERVIEWS 2002

Gaining  
Early  
Awareness and  
Readiness for  
Undergraduate  
Programs



U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Postsecondary Education

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# GEAR UP 2002

## Current Project Overviews

### Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs

U.S. Department of Education  
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# GEAR UP

Enacted in 1998, GEAR UP conducted its first competition in 1999. Since that time this program has awarded 272 grants and provided \$615 million in total program funds.

The annual award for each type of grant averages:

- State: \$ 5,212,476
- Partnership: \$ 2,654,402

These partnership grants coordinate the efforts and resources of more than:

- 370 institutions of higher education
- 800 school districts
- 1,000 business, community, and non-profit organizations

Minority serving institutions of higher education receiving awards include:

- 5 Historically Black Colleges and Universities
- 29 Hispanic-Serving Institutions
- 3 Tribally Controlled Community Colleges
- 1 Native Hawai'ian-Serving Institution
- 2 U.S. Affiliates of the Pacific Region

Over 600,000 students as well as their parents and the administration and staff of the participating schools will be served through the GEAR UP projects. These services are designed to meet the specific needs of the communities in which they are located. Examples of funded activities include:

- A continuous system of mentoring, advising, counseling, and tutoring
- Providing information about higher education options, required academic courses, and financial aid
- Ensuring student access to rigorous courses that help prepare them for college
- Providing staff development such as training and in-service programs for teachers, tutors, guidance counselors, and other school staff
- Organizing activities to foster parental involvement in preparing students for college
- Administering skills assessments and providing tutoring and other services to improve student achievement
- Providing services that are specially designed for students of limited English proficiency

at a  
glance



LITTLE PRIEST  
TRIBAL COLLEGE, NE

# Introduction

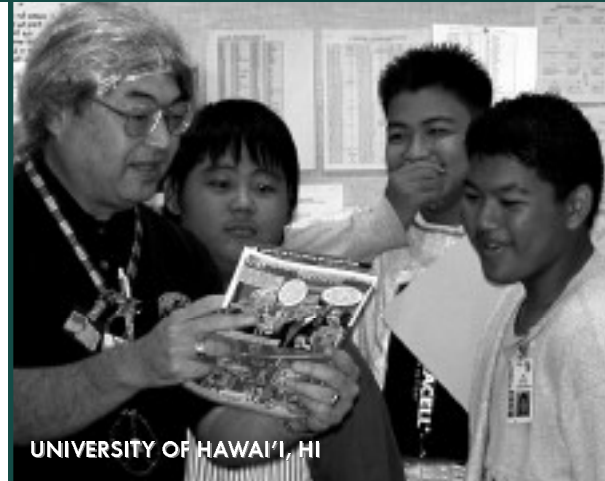
**T**oday, more than ever before, education is the fault line between those who will prosper in the new economy and those who will not. Yet many students never receive a college education, some because they lack the preparation for college and others because they lack the financial resources.

To students, the message is clear: Planning for their future means setting high expectations in all the work that they do; working hard and earning the best grades they can; finding and connecting with mentors who will support their positive goals; planning to take the right courses - including algebra and geometry starting in the eighth and ninth grades - to keep their education options open; and learning about the many financial aid opportunities available to them.

But students cannot do it alone. Nor should the responsibility rest with parents alone, or with schools alone. Parents and families, schools, and many groups in the community can each play a role in providing our middle-grade students with support and help that will ultimately help them succeed in college.

Enacted in 1998, Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) was designed to enable more young Americans to stay in school, study hard, and take the right courses to go to college. It is aimed at providing services to low-income student populations through communities and States to create new or expanded plans that strengthen their schools. Through GEAR UP, the U.S. Department of Education addresses the challenge to help more low-income students become prepared academically and financially to enter into and succeed in college.

**GEAR UP would like to thank all of its project directors, project coordinators, principal investigators, and administrative staff for writing the project overviews for this publication.**



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII, HI



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, CA



SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, CA

## State and Partnership Grants





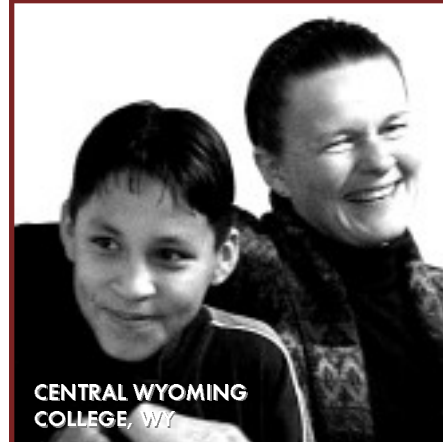
# State Introduction

**G**EAR UP State grants are competitive five-year matching grants that must include both an early intervention component and a scholarship component. Under the early intervention component, the project will provide early college awareness and preparation activities for participating students through comprehensive mentoring, counseling, outreach, and supportive service. Under the scholarship component, the project will establish or maintain a financial assistance program that awards scholarships to eligible students so that they may attend an institution of higher education.

Sustained commitment and leadership are part of the vision of GEAR UP that is so crucial to its success. State GEAR UP projects provide the support for stronger accountability systems, curriculum alignment in the direction of collegiate expectations, and improved teacher quality. In State grants, partners must implement effective interventions in planning and implementing the program, measuring its progress on a continuous basis, and sustaining the gains in academic resources. All must be committed to the vision that all students will raise their level of performance to succeed and must be willing to take on the systemic issues that are causing children to fail. The partners cannot be mere signatories. State educational agencies, postsecondary institutions, schools, and outside organizations must work together, with their own strategies, to plan together and leverage resources to ensure that progress is made across the K-16 continuum and that low-income students achieve at high levels.

States are encouraged to involve their top leadership in planning, coordinating, and implementing GEAR UP State projects and to give appropriate attention to the State's academic reforms and higher academic standards. Making the issues of school reform and standards an integral part of the project's college readiness efforts is essential. The State grant should use State, college, and university resources wisely as part of the State's project and in cooperation with Partnership projects. Each participating organization in a GEAR UP State project will want to be clear about its particular contribution and how that contribution will coordinate with other related efforts and resources.

Cooperation and commitment are an essential part of a GEAR UP State project. Commitment to careful planning, proper implementation, effective partnerships, communication, monitoring performance, and dedication to continuous improvement are necessary to ensure success.



## ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

1999

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**Total Students Served:** 2,100

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** GEAR UP Alaska students are receiving locally developed programs that most appropriately meet their diverse cultural and educational needs. Over 47 percent of the students participating are American Indian or Alaska Native. All of the school districts served with the exception of four – Ketchikan, Anchorage, Juneau and Fairbanks – are considered remote. The only school

districts connected by a road system are Anchorage, Alaska Gateway, Kenai and Fairbanks. The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (EED) developed statewide academic standards in 1991, and the Quality Schools Initiative in 1995, that are focused on four major areas of education: 1) high academic standards and assessment; 2) family, school, business and community networks; 3) quality professional standards; and, 4) school excellence standards.

GEAR UP Alaska and the Quality Schools Initiative are combined to support systematic change. School staff members, in collaboration with community members, teachers, parents, and students, design appropriate intervention and college awareness activities that will continue to help students succeed in their unique Alaskan communities.

**STRATEGY** Innovative strategies vary according to site and represent concern for the following: a) cultural appropriateness; b) proximity to program sites, a factor especially important for remote sites; and c) relationships between, and within, agencies. Partners include: parents of students; the Anchorage House program for rural students; US Forest Service; Alaska Fish and Wildlife; Association of Alaska School Boards; the University of Alaska system; Cook Inlet Tribal Council; the Alaska Native Heritage Center; Ketchikan Indian Association; Saxman Tribal Community; and college students, staff, and volunteers. Increasing, strengthening, and sustaining these partnerships will continue to be a focus for GEAR UP Alaska.

## NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

2000

**Contact:** Melvin Hall  
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**Total Students Served:** 2,000

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** The State of Arizona GEAR UP project seeks to provide comprehensive services to more than 2,000 students in a cohort model. The students attend schools in seven diverse areas of the state, including a residential school for the deaf and blind. Program services include a summer enrichment program, tutoring and after-school activities, a mentoring program, a leadership

academy, college and financial aid information services, a parental involvement component, professional development for teachers and others, and expanded student access to rigorous coursework. The project interventions are bonded together by the Passport to Success which each participant is issued and maintains throughout the five years in order to be eligible for an award from a \$5 million scholarship trust fund. Further, the passport provides parents with a clear indicator of the student's participation and progress. The project has attracted twenty-two state partners and numerous local partners for participating schools.

**STRATEGY** Project SOAR (Student Opportunity for Academic Renewal), a mentoring program for university undergraduates to serve as mentors to high school students and for high school students to serve as mentors to middle school students, has been implemented in each GEAR UP site. This research-based program has proven extremely effective with students who have traditionally slipped from the view of school officials and become part of Arizona's nation-leading dropout statistics. Mentors commit to five hours per week of paid service, after receiving extensive training and agreeing to complete structured mentor notes.

## REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

1999

**Contact:** Shelley Davis  
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**Total Students Served:** 101,200

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** The California State GEAR UP Program was initiated in 1999. The California Education Round Table is the sponsor of this project, and the University of California is designated as its administrator. Currently, eleven formal partners participate with the Round Table to implement GEAR UP through their participation on Implementation Teams and through contributions

of matching funds to the program. The GEAR UP project has provided services throughout the state to ninety-two middle schools in which at least 51 percent of the students have families designated as low-income. Approximately 101,200 students are enrolled in these middle schools.

**STRATEGY** GEAR UP professional development services are provided in partnership with the Achievement Council. This component is designed to create a college-going culture by teaching educators to use data-driven strategies to promote change. Each year Institutes are conducted for middle school Leadership Teams that include principals, assistant principals, counselors, departmental chairs, and parents. The process is guided by the School Self-Assessment Rubric (SSAR) which provides the foundation for individualized Professional Development Action Plans that schools submit to the State GEAR UP Program to obtain financial support for implementation.

## STATE OF COLORADO

1999

**Contact:** Peggy Littleton  
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**Total Students Served:** 6,000

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** GEAR UP Colorado is a unique program as it is operated from the Office of the Governor. By having this status, the project staff has significant flexibility for influencing systemic change within the schools. In nine of the nineteen schools, GEAR UP has conducted staff in-services with GEAR UP providing curriculum for the school. Among the GEAR UP services are: 1) providing ISSP's

(Individualized Student Success Plans) for each student through high school; 2) teaching classes, tutoring, and providing peer tutoring; 3) mentoring both students and parents; 4) providing counseling; and 5) taking students to visit Colorado college campuses annually. GEAR UP Colorado has invested 50 percent of its grant into a trust fund. The funds will be used as postsecondary monies for the GEAR UP students who seek education beyond a high school diploma. It is hoped to provide college funding for over 6,000 students beginning in the year 2005.

**STRATEGY** GEAR UP staff has found that most of the GEAR UP students were unable to decode well, and some not at all. Since they had never "learned to read" and could not "read to learn," it was decided to train the GEAR UP staff, and other willing teachers, to utilize a very effective neurolinguistic phonetic curriculum and an intensive writing program. The project was able to establish GEAR UP classes that are required for the students who are below grade level in reading and writing. The response of the students has been delightful as they have finally been given the keys to unlock the language and now are feeling successful, some for the first time.

## CONNECTICUT BOARD OF GOVERNORS/ STATE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

1999

**Contact:** Arthur Poole  
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**Email:** apoole@ctdhe.org  
**Total Students Served:** 10,000

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** The Project's curriculum focus is mathematics. Its chief goal is to increase the number of students at target middle schools taking and succeeding in Algebra I at the eighth grade level, and subsequently to increase the number of students taking upper level math courses in high school in preparation for college. To date, all three participating school districts have made

policy and/or curriculum changes to facilitate goal attainment. In one district, there has been substantial increase in the number of students in the seventh and eighth grade taking either Pre-Algebra or Algebra I. The other two districts are working toward goal attainment. In each district, there is an increased importance given to math instruction. New math curricula and/or instructional programs have been established. Two districts now require the completion of Algebra I or Algebra I and Geometry as graduation requirements.

**STRATEGY** In addition to mathematics, staff development provided by the Project's service providers that include the College Board, the Project has facilitated the exploration of new math curricula by the districts. Also, the Project has advanced changing the role of school guidance through staff development activities and a guidance (affective) curriculum developed by a service provider. This curriculum stresses early college awareness and personal (self) explorations.

## UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII'

2000

**Contact:** Susan Kanagawa  
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**Total Students Served:** 25,000

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** GEAR UP (GU) Hawai'i supports statewide education reforms and targets thirty middle and high school complexes in low-income communities. There are four main components of the GU program. The first, Standards-Based Teaching and Learning, is supported by professional development activities for math and language arts teachers on the new Hawai'i Content and

Performance Standards, as well as on a standards-based tutoring program to help middle school students learn the more rigorous curriculum. In the Comprehensive Student Support Services component, GU provides additional support for schools through the Parent Community Network Center system and is hosting supplemental workshops for middle and high school students and families. The Public Awareness and Information component launches a campaign to help Hawai'i's families realize the importance and affordability of a college education. GU is also working with community organizations to raise funds for the sustainability of programs. Through the Scholarships component, students who complete the eighth grade with at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA, and sign a pledge to work towards higher education, may become GU Scholars. Scholars will have the opportunity to apply for needs-based scholarships from a \$4 million dollar fund. GU is also providing tuition assistance to low-income students who participate in Running Start, a program for students who wish to earn dual high school and college credit for completing rigorous courses.

**STRATEGY** GU Hawai'i is offering a distance learning class to train approximately 150 college students and community volunteers to be effective middle school tutors. Working with Kapiolani Community College and the Hawai'i Department of Education's Teleschool branch, GU Hawai'i created a 12-part series entitled "GU Tutor Training," which is being broadcast statewide in half-hour segments via public access cable. The course covers topics such as: roles and responsibilities of tutors, characteristics of middle school students, the Hawai'i Department of Education's math and language arts standards, and ethics in tutoring. An accompanying handbook has also been created for school-based personnel to facilitate this course.

## STATE STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF INDIANA

1999

**Contact:** Floyd Worley  
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**Total Students Served:** 46,693

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** The Twenty-first Century Scholars GEAR UP project challenges low-income seventh and eighth-graders to fulfill a "Pledge of Good Citizenry" and academic achievement by their senior year in high school. If successful, students earn a scholarship for full tuition. Also, the program connects more than 1,500 parents through the Parents' Project, a support and resource group for parents interested in finding ways to become better advocates on behalf of their children's educational success.

The Scholars GEAR UP project collaborates with state, federal, and local partners for a comprehensive early awareness and intervention initiative which: 1) increases Scholar enrollment rates at Indiana universities and colleges; 2) increases the number of students who complete college preparatory coursework; 3) provides early financial aid awareness to families so that Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) errors are reduced; 4) strengthens parental involvement in a child's education by expanding the regional Parents' Project; 5) brokers health and human services to responsible and professional organizations and individuals; 6) provides college selection and admissions assistance; and 7) engages teachers, counselors, and staff in professional development and training.

**STRATEGY** As the number of AmeriCorps Volunteers for the program decreases, it is essential that the Scholars Program recruit volunteers to replace them. Volunteers for the program who come from the community, such as Twenty-first Century Scholars parents, allow for more local input. In addition to the increased parent participation, a partnership with Communities in Schools, Inc. (CIS) has provided a strong entryway for community volunteers who represent local businesses and schools. The partnership with CIS will allow local Scholar Coordinators to concentrate on core programming for college matriculation while still providing students with essential assistance in the health and human services area.

## KENTUCKY COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

2000

**Contact:** Yvonne Lovell  
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**Total Students Served:** 19,871

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** Five Strategic Priority Areas define the work of GEAR UP Kentucky. The first, AWARENESS provides information to students and families on valuing education and postsecondary options. Activities include workshops on early preparation for college, career exploration, financing college education, and visits to colleges. RIGOR improves student

performance in subjects essential for college. GEAR UP targets preparation for algebra, laboratory science, and reading comprehension across content areas. Offerings include: supplemental instruction in math, science, and college entrance tests; advanced instruction in gatekeeper subjects; academic competitions and contests; and professional development for teachers. ENGAGEMENT involves families in setting education goals and raising expectations for students. GEAR UP Kentucky enlists parent support and builds their skills through workshops, home visits, leadership training, and conferences. The fourth, ACCESS, provides guarantees. State-funded, need-based scholarships will be available for GEAR UP participants. Students having C+ grades and above will receive scholarships from the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarships (KEES) program. Others receive state-funded, need-based grants or privately funded GEAR UP scholarships. Lastly, SUPPORT prevents students from failing. GEAR UP Kentucky provides a continuum of services by collaborating with existing programs.

**STRATEGY** GEAR UP Kentucky is collaborating with the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) to provide training in entrepreneurship for eighth grade students in seven schools. Students will participate in this after-school enrichment program to understand the fundamentals of creating and running a business. Students learn about start-up capital by visiting a local small business owner; they learn about personal finance and managing their money by opening a bank account; and, they will learn about investing through a visit with a stockbroker.

## STATE OF MAINE, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

1999

**Contact:** Pam Gatcomb  
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**Total Students Served:** 4,283

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** The Maine State GEAR UP is dedicated to serving 4,283 students in grades five through eleven. The continuity of working with students from their middle school years throughout their high school education will help ensure they receive the support and information necessary to successfully continue their education after high school. Support and training for parents is equally

important as the project strives to raise aspirations. Principal activities the program uses to provide the intensive early intervention component include: 1) providing a continuous system of mentoring, advising, counseling, and tutoring to students; 2) providing information about higher education options, required academic course work, and financial aid; 3) ensuring student access to rigorous college preparatory courses; 4) providing staff development for teachers, tutors, guidance counselors, and other school staff; 5) organizing activities to encourage parental involvement in preparing students for college; 6) providing assistance in obtaining summer jobs, career mentoring, and academic counseling; 7) conducting early college awareness training for partners; 8) visiting college campuses; 9) providing after-school activities that promote student achievement and college preparation; and 10) providing summer programs and rigorous coursework for seventh and eighth grade GEAR UP participants.

**STRATEGY** Seventh grade students participating in the Maine State GEAR UP program spend a week in a residential summer program on a college campus. This experience has not only provided participants with extensive exposure to a math curriculum, but also with the chance to explore college programs and facilities at an early stage as they begin to think about their future education. This extended time on a campus has given students first-hand knowledge about living at college and helps students envision themselves coming back in the future.

## MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

1999

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**Total Students Served:** 2,000

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** The GEAR UP project sponsored by the Maryland State Department of Education is a five-year, early intervention program. Based on tracking a cohort of low-income, middle school students from sixth through the eleventh grade, interventions are designed to prepare students to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. Intervention strategies for students include

tutoring, mentoring, career counseling, college awareness, summer academies, and academic enrichment.

The GEAR UP project also includes intervention and development funding for parents, teachers, counselors, and school administrators. Interventions for parents include campus visits, financial aid seminars, parenting skills, and helping students develop high academic aspirations. School-based personnel who work with GEAR UP students are the focus of staff development initiatives including academic enrichment, enhanced teaching and evaluation strategies, and high school transition options.

Currently, eleven local education agencies are served by the project. This includes twenty-one middle schools. GEAR UP services support students across the State of Maryland. Annually \$600,000 is designated for scholarships to be awarded to the cohort of students at the time of postsecondary matriculation.

**STRATEGY** Several innovative strategies are being implemented, including: 1) a partnership formed with the Rotary Club in Frederick County to place a computer in the home of all students participating in the project at West Frederick Middle School; 2) a partnership formed between Somerset County Public Schools and Salisbury State University focused on hands-on science and mathematics; and 3) a partnership implemented between the Academic Champions of Excellence (ACE) and Morgan State University, Coppin State College, and Baltimore City Community College to offer after-school tutoring programs and mentoring for over 200 students in Thurgood Marshall 170 Middle School.

## MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

1999

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**Total Students Served:** 11,600

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** GEAR UP Massachusetts promotes school-wide changes that boost college awareness among students and parents and improve professional development of teachers and school counselors. The program targets seven high-need areas of Massachusetts, focusing on ten at-risk middle schools. The program serves all seventh-graders at these schools and adds additional seventh

grade classes each year. For each of the ten target schools, a GEAR UP plan includes tutoring, mentoring, college visits, and after-school and summer programs. Each school will have: 1) a GEAR UP coordinator to integrate service delivery, develop education plans, establish a framework of activities, provide early awareness counseling services, and ensure supervision of tutors and academic advisors; 2) a parent coordinator to inform parents about GEAR UP, and conduct parent workshops; 3) professional development programs for school staff regarding high content, high expectation academic courses as well as student career awareness; and 4) 21st Century Certificates, an early notification of eligibility for financial aid, provided for each participating seventh-grader.

**STRATEGY** GEAR UP Massachusetts is innovative in its commitment to reach out to schools in other low-income areas. The project identified ninety-six middle schools that meet the GEAR UP focus on low-income. While the ten target schools will receive day-to-day services, project partners will offer parent, teacher, and counselor training programs to all other schools eligible for GEAR UP, primarily via traveling workshops, regional seminars, and a GEAR UP website.

## MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT

2001

**Contact:** Michael Beamish  
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**Total Students Served:** 16,800

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** GEAR UP Michigan! targets students, families, teachers, and counselors in major urban areas. Students in Detroit, Flint, and Muskegon take part in services that increase career awareness, promote academic excellence, and provide scholarships needed to pursue their dreams. Students and parents sign the GEAR UP Pledge to study hard, become academically

competitive, stay in school, and graduate from high school.

GEAR UP Michigan! builds on the multitude of career education programs available through the Michigan Department of Career Development. Students receive academic counseling, a detailed educational development plan, after-school tutoring, career and college preparation assistance, and an opportunity to participate in on-campus college enrichment programs. Emphasis is placed on connecting future careers with the academic skills needed to be successful. GEAR UP Michigan! provides teachers and counselors with intensive professional development opportunities to help them strengthen curriculum and to interconnect career decision-making with future college choices. Scholarships for GEAR UP Michigan! are linked with the numerous scholarships enacted by the state legislature. The Michigan Department of Treasury provides parents, students, and counselors with in-depth financial aid information to plan for future college costs. GEAR UP Michigan! promotes new attitudes that encourage students to realize their full potential regardless of their economic conditions.

**STRATEGY** The Michigan Merit Award rewards all students for academic excellence with state-funded scholarships. Students take the tests for the Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP) or WorkKeys to qualify for the Michigan Merit Award. GEAR UP schools that document improved student academic achievement in MEAP and WorkKeys tests are eligible for performance incentive funds. GEAR UP scholarships will complement the Michigan Merit award for qualifying students.

## MINNESOTA HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICES OFFICE

1999

**Contact:** Philip Lewenstein  
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**Total Students Served:** 10,000

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** Minnesota's GEAR UP project, Get Ready!, serves low-income students, and their parents, by providing college planning information, academic skills enhancement, and first-hand experiences in college and career awareness. The program serves students, primarily in grades four through eight, through monthly individual or small group meetings, campus and career visits, and

tutoring sessions. The curriculum covers self-esteem, career awareness, college options, costs and financial resources. Additional students are served through college planning presentations to entire classrooms and college awareness theater performances in schools. College students on State Work Study provide tutoring to the students in several schools. Students and parents attend several major events such as the Career Expo and Higher Education Night. Summer programs are also offered.

**STRATEGY** The program recruits college students on State Work Study who are prepared to provide tutoring to students at several of the GEAR UP schools. The college students constitute GEAR UP's College Corps and meet together to reflect on their experiences. Positive responses have been received from staff at the schools served. Strong partnerships with the state's financial aid community and colleges have enabled GEAR UP staff to implement this component.

## MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

2000

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**Total Students Served:** 3,190

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** GEAR UP Missouri is a state program which serves twenty middle schools in sectors where the greatest educational challenges exist. These areas include St. Louis, Kansas City, and southeast Missouri (the Bootheel). The GEAR UP Missouri program provides funding for the participating schools to offer after-school programming in mathematics using the reform curriculum,

Connected Mathematics Program (CMP). Although the primary focus of the after-school program is mathematics, students receive assistance in all disciplines. Each school has an after-school coordinator and a cadre of tutors/mentors. Successful students in the after-school program will be prepared to take Algebra I by the eighth grade. These students will also understand the core college preparatory curriculum to take in high school and the need for academic achievement. For those students who complete the GEAR UP program, graduate from high school, and go on to college, a GEAR UP scholarship will be provided.

**STRATEGY** The use of the CMP allows students to learn mathematics by using mathematics in practical ways. The program utilizes small group discussion and hands-on approaches to foster mastery of concepts. Research shows that mathematics mastery is the best indicator of college success. Family mathematics sessions will allow parents to be involved and better understand how to support their students as they prepare for future education. Other activities, like college visitations, presentations from role models from business and industry, and summer academies will cause students to take an interest in academic achievement and preparation for postsecondary education.



## OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION

1999

**Contact:** Rene Dubay  
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**Total Students Served:** 2,656

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** Montana GEAR UP is operated by the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education in cooperation with the state education agency and two lead institutions for the Montana University System. The project directly serves forty-two demonstration schools through multiple initiatives. Among the initiatives are: 1) providing early intervention services including

tutoring, mentoring, counseling, academic advising, college visits, summer enrichment programs, parental support, financial aid information, and college planning services; 2) ensuring systemic change by using initial funding as a springboard to extend GEAR UP activities, materials, and services to increase college awareness and readiness for all students statewide beyond the grant period; 3) establishing a permanent scholarship program supported by the University System, business and industry, tribes, and communities; and 4) designing and implementing professional development to change teacher instructional practices and expectations regarding the academic potential of low-income students.

Montana GEAR UP is a catalyst for education reform and improvement, increasing local and state capacity to achieve GEAR UP goals. Stakeholders who have not previously come together are building a permanent, statewide culture that supports college awareness and preparedness for all students.

**STRATEGY** Montana GEAR UP faces the challenge of working with students, school staff, and parents in the low-expectation schools of rural and reservation communities. These schools are often characterized by high turnover of staff and political turmoil. To provide additional tutoring and instructional stability in schools where sustained curriculum development is lacking, Montana GEAR UP provides computer learning systems and the necessary hardware and training. Students love this strategy. In a recent phone call, the director heard cheering when the teacher announced that every student would now have access to a math learning library.

## NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

2001

**Contact:** Charlotte Curtis  
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**Total Students Served:** 3,091

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** The Nevada GEAR UP project is a collaborative effort of the Office of the Governor, the University and Community College System of Nevada, the Nevada Department of Education, Wells Fargo Bank and other stakeholders including parents, students, educators, and business and agency representatives. Nevada's vision is to change the culture of low-achieving, economically

disadvantaged students so that they are prepared academically and have the resources to attend and succeed in college. Nevada GEAR UP, initiated in 2001, will be implemented in seven counties including: Clark, Elko, Esmeralda, Humboldt, Mineral, Nye, and Washoe. Middle schools having a population that is 60 percent disadvantaged are targeted for services and grant resources. The project began serving a seventh grade cohort and will progress with them until twelfth grade. Each one of the pre-selected districts and schools involved committed matching resources in order to qualify for the state grant application. The strength of the partners, activities and evaluation process will become a positive template as part of Nevada's Comprehensive K-16 Education System.

**STRATEGY** GEAR UP program resources will be used to support several goals: 1) improve academic achievement and increase proficiency on high school exam scores; 2) decrease high school dropout rate, increase high school graduation rate, and increase enrollment in college preparation course work; 3) increase the college-going rate, supported by GEAR UP scholarships; and 4) increase the number of graduates from GEAR UP high schools who will receive Millennium or GEAR UP Scholarships.

## NEW JERSEY COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

1999

**Contact:** Michelle Johnson  
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**Total Students Served:** 1,092

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** The New Jersey (NJ) GEAR UP state project was awarded to the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education in 1999. The project supports six colleges and universities in serving students from seventeen middle and high schools in Camden, Trenton, Newark, and Jersey City. NJ GEAR UP participants are provided with a full complement of academic preparation services

such as a six-week summer program on a college campus; Saturday classes; tutoring; information about the college-bound curriculum; college visits; assistance with college applications; financial aid information; mentoring; counseling; preparation for achievement tests; field trips; and college scholarships for New Jersey colleges and institutions only.

The New Jersey GEAR UP path to college is hands-on and effective. Some examples of the wide variety of learning activities to increase participant academic readiness and knowledge about postsecondary education include: building and programming robots at a Summer Engineering Institute; viewing constellations in a portable StarLab Planetarium; taking trips to the Hayden Planetarium, the Camden Aquarium, and the Franklin Institute; sponsoring a Community Census Day; conducting scientific experiments at the Environmental Center in Camden; proving a scientific hypothesis; and camping out overnight. By the end of the project, over 1,000 students will have fully participated in the program and at least 300 more will have benefited from indirect services such as after-school tutoring.

**STRATEGY** The NJ GEAR UP State Project has adopted several innovative strategies such as: 1) encouraging the customization of the GEAR UP programs at each site to meet local needs; 2) partnering with target schools to share the cost of test preparation classes; 3) establishing a mentoring program with college students who have similar backgrounds to NJ GEAR UP participants; 4) building career clusters to encourage learning; 5) offering financial aid workshops to middle school students, parents, and guidance counselors; and 6) designing a common database used at six higher education campuses and aggregated at the state level for reporting.

## NEW MEXICO COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

1999

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**Total Students Served:** 2,500

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** The GEAR UP New Mexico project has seven components that are either targeted to low-income middle schools or provide statewide benefit: Component A) Mini-Lesson plans (targeted) facilitate the dialogue of early college/career awareness, and subsequent activities such as tutoring, mentoring, field trips, career fairs, and ACT and SAT preparation are available for each grade;

Component B) Clearinghouse of Outreach Programs (statewide) provides a GEAR UP Directory of Educational Support Services that identifies academic support programs in the state; Component C) Community College Tutoring Programs (statewide) through which students participate in tutoring, campus visits, educational workshops, and summer youth college programs; Component D) Enhanced Literacy through MESA Model (targeted) provides expansion of the Math, Engineering and Science Achievement (MESA) model to include year-round academic enrichment in English, history, fine arts, social studies, foreign language, and career awareness; Component E) College Awareness (statewide) creates various displays, publications, and workshops for students, teachers, and parents to promote early college and career awareness and financial aid availability; Component F) College Access (statewide) creates online college admission applications through collaboration with the public colleges and universities; and Component G) offers professional development (targeted) to promote academic rigor for the teachers, counselors, and administrators assisting GEAR UP students.

**STRATEGY** The Mini-Lesson plans are aligned with the New Mexico State Standards and Benchmarks to promote teacher usage in the classroom. GEAR UP New Mexico participated in a business, government, and education collaborative which produces School to World, New Mexico's largest career event with over 125 career professionals who give a hands-on demonstration of their jobs and emphasize the education needed to attain those jobs.

## NEW YORK STATE HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICES CORPORATION 1999

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**Total Students Served:** 6,500

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** A priority of the New York GEAR UP (NY GEAR UP) state project was to award over half the annual \$5 million grant to eligible sites through a competitive proposal process. Ten sites providing College For Me programs received funds, increasing the number of GEAR UP students who would benefit from early college preparation services. These sites are in addition to the

thirteen GEAR UP partnership projects funded directly. By encouraging additional school districts and institutions of higher education to apply, New York State was expanding the opportunity for other eligible entities to compete for these federal funds.

Another responsibility of NY GEAR UP is to be a facilitator and coordinator for the GEAR UP partnerships and other early intervention programs throughout the State. NY GEAR UP has held the following: annual state conferences; statewide Directors' meetings and statewide staff development workshops; and training opportunities for school counselors and teachers. GEAR UP has distributed biannual publications to targeted administrators, teachers, and GEAR UP sites; and student planners and early awareness publications to all GEAR UP students. The GEAR UP website is a cornerstone element of the project.

**STRATEGY** New York's Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC), the state lead for NY GEAR UP, works closely with its distinct partners: 1) New York's four college sectors—the State University of New York, the City University of New York, the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities, and the Association of Proprietary Colleges; and 2) the College Board and the New York State Education Department. An immediate success of NY GEAR UP has been the alliance of these major players. Together, they have focused and coordinated resources to assist NY GEAR UP middle and high school students.

## UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ADMINISTRATION 2000

**Contact:** Anthony Locklear  
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**Total Students Served:** 7,400

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** A recent study found that only 22.3 percent of students from North Carolina's low-income families attend college, ranking the state thirty-fifth in the nation for college attendance (Mortenson 2000). The goal of the GEAR UP collaborative is to significantly increase the number of low-income students who pursue and complete postsecondary education.

Barriers to postsecondary education identified in a community needs assessment include: lack of awareness of the accessibility, affordability, and benefits of college attendance; lack of college preparatory courses; high teacher turnover rates; and, language and cultural barriers. Students, educators, counselors, parents and citizens from fourteen middle schools in fourteen school districts will be involved in a continuum of activities to motivate students and enhance academic curriculum delivery from the seventh through the twelfth grades. Activities will include: career planning; academic planning and preparation; financial aid planning, campus tours; mentoring; teacher training workshops; statewide public television programming; cultural and language awareness programs; and individualized counseling. Grounded in research and effective practice, GEAR UP North Carolina will be a model of reform and, following a comprehensive formative and summative evaluation, will be replicated statewide.

**STRATEGY** GEAR UP North Carolina (NC) is working to leverage additional resources by securing federal, foundation, and corporate support. Through these efforts it will be possible to assure sustainability and expand GEAR UP NC statewide. Additionally, the primary partnership with the College Foundation of North Carolina has assured that GEAR UP students, teachers, and parents have access to written, verbal, and electronic information to help them plan, apply, and pay for college. Paramount to the success of the initiative is the widespread dissemination of information regarding GEAR UP NC and those educational opportunities available to students beyond high school. In partnership with UNC-TV, North Carolina's only statewide public television station, programming highlights GEAR UP regularly.

## OHIO BOARD OF REGENTS

1999

**Contact:** Leslie J. Sawyer  
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**Total Students Served:** 7,950

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** Ohio's state level GEAR UP project provides the opportunity to identify, pilot, expand and replicate exemplary college access practices and programs in low-income rural and urban communities. To this end, the Ohio Board of Regents collaborates with the Ohio College Access Network (OCAN) to identify best practice ideas and program models, further develop

and sustain them, and extend them to various sites in Ohio.

To achieve the project's goal, Ohio's GEAR UP program is pursuing the following objectives: 1) increase public awareness of, and interest in, college access programs and activities; 2) identify outstanding programs and practices for improving college preparation, aspiration, early awareness, and participation, with special attention to the needs of urban and Appalachian communities; 3) develop comprehensive model programs for improving college aspiration, preparation, and participation for low-income urban and Appalachian communities (Cleveland and Ironton); and 4) develop new access products (e.g., student portfolio, student database, the school-as-a-neighborhood-resource center) and disseminate them in urban and Appalachian communities throughout Ohio.

**STRATEGY** Ohio is fortunate to have the support of the Knowledge Works Foundation (formerly the Thomas L. Conlan Foundation) for the development of an Ohio College Access Network (OCAN). OCAN will enhance collaboration and resource sharing among Ohio's existing college access programs and assist them in replicating successful programs and practices developed with GEAR UP funding. The GEAR UP initiative focuses on furthering the development of this network and extending best practices throughout the state and to regions not served currently.

## OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

1999

**Contact:** Dolores Mize  
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**Total Students Served:** 85,432

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** To ensure all students in Oklahoma are prepared to succeed in their postsecondary education, Oklahoma GEAR UP focuses the resources and services of its partners on college readiness, statewide awareness, and scholarship funding. Recognizing that students need opportunities to acquire appropriate academic skills, information, financial assistance and psycho-social support to

succeed, the college readiness component builds on the Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS), a program implemented by the State Regents and ACT across Oklahoma. The statewide awareness component consists of a comprehensive and innovative public relations campaign aimed at fifth through twelfth grade students and their parents. It also provides websites for parents and students, enhanced resources for teachers and guidance counselors, and college readiness information for the general public.

Oklahoma GEAR UP also provides supplemental scholarship funding, OHLAP-Plus, for students who complete the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program (OHLAP). OHLAP-Plus awards will allow OHLAP to award 100 percent of the student's cost of attending college, not to exceed the average cost of attendance based on an institutional tier. The program will also address some of the extenuating social and economic barriers lower-income students face when attending college.

**STRATEGY** By providing school districts with additional resources to revise their school curriculum and to involve parents in students' education and career planning, Oklahoma GEAR UP hopes districts can make full use of all EPAS components. Partnering with state agencies, higher education institutions, and community organizations, GEAR UP assists thirty school districts each year to implement strategies for early academic preparation for enrolled students. GEAR UP also helps teachers and guidance counselors make better use of individual student test data and provide early intervention for students whose performance is below expectations.

## RHODE ISLAND OFFICE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

1999

**Contact:** William Formicola  
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**Total Students Served:** 15,480

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** The Rhode Island (RI) Office of Higher Education is the fiscal agent for the state's GEAR UP project, with the Rhode Island Children's Crusade for Higher Education (RICC) providing the services. Since 1989, RICC has enrolled students in the third grade. Crusaders pledge to work hard in school, avoid drugs, alcohol, and early parenthood. RICC provides Crusaders with a

comprehensive ten-year series of support services and higher education scholarships. RICC's elementary program draws upon state, GEAR UP, and AmeriCorps resources to provide direct services in school settings. A team of thirty-five AmeriCorps members works in the elementary schools and sixth-grade classrooms. The program builds literacy and math skills and provides individualized academic and social support. Grants to partner schools help expand program offerings.

A team of twenty GEAR UP Advisors tracks all seventh through twelfth grade Crusaders in their schools, providing college access services and linking them to programs provided by RICC or its partners. For middle schoolers, RICC provides school-based tutoring services, college visits, mentoring, academic and personal development programs, and Adventure Education activities that teach teaming, leadership, and writing skills. For high schoolers, RICC offers a range of support programs including SAT preparation, college information sessions, college campus visits, financial aid application assistance, school choice information, study skills workshops, and more.

**STRATEGY** As a program designed to test the effectiveness of ten years of sustained intervention for individual students, RICC places a high priority on locating and maintaining contact with students. It is impossible to serve students if they can't be found. This is a challenging task, as student mobility is a persistent problem in RI's urban districts, and 26 percent of the students move or change schools annually. To address the problem, RICC provides constant tracking of Crusaders, through its GEAR UP Advisors, AmeriCorps members and MIS staff. This strategy has been effective in helping RICC stay in students' lives. For example, RICC was able to contact 80 percent of the students in a graduating class ten years after they had enrolled in the program.

## SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

1999

**Contact:** Joellen Cook  
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**Total Students Served:** 70,000

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** South Carolina (SC) GEAR UP serves students with six programs that focus on academic improvement and preparation to succeed in college. The programs are: 1) Saturday Academy and Summer Institutes to build middle school/college academic and personal development connections with over 750 students who participate in a twenty-week Saturday program and a three-week Summer

Institute. 2) High Performance Partnerships to develop 120 business and education partnerships that are carefully designed to meet the individual needs of each school. 3) Early Awareness Programs to serve 141 schools by encouraging students to explore college and career through numerous avenues including a power2earn.com website, career fairs, essay contests, academics, college and career planning through arts and physical education lessons, and shadowing. The AIM COLLEGE program also addresses issues of preparation for high school and college success in grades six through thirteen in a CD format. 4) The SC Governor's School for Science and Mathematics implements a TEAM GEAR UP science program with assistance from eleventh and twelfth grade Governor's School students. 5) SC Educational Television (SCETV) produces numerous student, family, and educator training videos for SC GEAR UP. And, 6) The SC Department of Education Mentoring Program includes extensive training for business partners as well as for other organizations not traditionally designated as business partners.

**STRATEGY** The SC GEAR UP project is working on a senior citizen mentoring program with the SC Department of Health and Human Services Title 5 Senior Community Service Employment Program and the South Carolina Department of Education's GEAR UP Mentoring Program. The program matches adults, fifty-five years of age and up, with middle school students in the local educational setting that supports academic improvement. Qualified mentors work with Saturday Academy and Summer Institute GEAR UP students after completing a mentor training program that includes necessary background checks. Mentors work with these well-established programs on college campuses across South Carolina to serve both individuals and groups of GEAR UP students who need the extra academic and personal support. This collaboration is made possible through efforts between GEAR UP and Title 5 funding sources from the SC Department of Health and Human Services.

## TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

1999

**Contact:** Ann Rogers  
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**Total Students Served:** 34,561

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** The State of Texas GEAR UP program, Texans Getting Academically Prepared (TGAP), is designed to prepare students for eligibility for the state's new scholarship plan for economically disadvantaged students. Six school districts in South Texas with predominantly low-income, Hispanic students will participate in the TGAP project. Partners with the Texas Education

Agency are Project GRAD, two pre-college Outreach Centers, the Texas Business and Education Coalition, and AMS Production Group. TGAP will reach more than 34,000 low-income students through the project's three objectives: 1) build capacity of educators and students so that teachers can adequately prepare students for successful participation in challenging college preparatory programs; 2) increase student and family awareness about, and support for, opportunities for college and financial assistance; and 3) provide meaningful incentives and support from the business community for high student achievement.

Products developed to further these goals in the six TGAP districts will be distributed to all middle and high schools in Texas through a collaborative effort with the twenty regional education service centers, greatly enhancing the impact of the project. The Texas Education Agency will also serve as the coordinator of a network comprised of all GEAR UP partnerships in Texas. The agency will hold an annual forum for GEAR UP grant recipients and make all TGAP products available to them.

**STRATEGY** University professors mentor high school teachers for Advanced Placement (AP) courses. Activities include assisting each classroom teacher with planning the year's course of study, locating appropriate instructional resources, and teaching the class. The professors are available for email consultation. University professors also conduct at least one seminar for each subject-area vertical team of teachers, grades six through twelve, and one seminar in the spring for students preparing to take an AP exam.

## VERMONT STUDENT ASSISTANCE CORPORATION

1999

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**Total Students Served:** 1,500

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** The Vermont State GEAR UP (VSGU) project is built upon the school and community relationships, and the staff infrastructure, developed under the former National Early Intervention Scholarship Program (NEISP) and in conjunction with the TRIO Talent Search grant. GEAR UP statewide partners take the lead by providing programming, technical support, and vital resources

to schools. Thirteen counselors work with over 1,500 participants within regions where the students live. A partnership agreement outlines the roles, responsibilities, and commitments between the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) and the participating forty-six middle and high schools to facilitate a successful collaboration and positive outcomes for the school and the students.

The GEAR UP team within each school consists of the VSAC GEAR UP counselor, members of the school counseling staff, faculty, and administration. The team evaluates the needs of the school and develops a strategy that best promotes school improvement. Strategies focus on promoting increased academic performance, professional development for teachers, and career development curriculum and resources. To complement the ongoing one-on-one and group counseling, workshops, peak experience field trips, and parent activities, GEAR UP offers summer programming, a statewide mentoring program, multi-site career fairs, a Career Fair Curriculum Handbook for school counseling staff and faculty, a College Planning Kit for parents, and hardware and software support to schools for career exploration.

**STRATEGY** The Richford GEAR UP Team established a Teacher Advisor Program for the seventh and eighth grades. The goal was for each student to develop a relationship with an adult at the school who would then become the student's advocate. Intervention focused on attendance, disruptive behavior, and academic performance. As a result of this program, suspendable offenses dropped by 33 percent, course failures were down by 37 percent, and the total absentee days dropped by 41 percent the first year. Teachers, parents, and students have overwhelmingly supported its continued development and expansion. In 2001, the program was combined with a series of targeted career and college workshops that were integrated into the curriculum.

## STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA

2000

**Contact:** Vanessa Power  
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**Total Students Served:** 4,800

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** The purpose of "ACCESS Virginia: Today's Scholars, Tomorrow's Leaders" is to increase the rate at which low-income Virginia students enroll, persist, and succeed in college and to ultimately close socioeconomic gaps in academic achievement and educational attainment. The work of the project is tightly integrated with the Commonwealth's comprehensive school reform initiative,

which began in 1995. Research findings from national studies and empirical evidence in Virginia both show three broad barriers to college attendance by low-income students: 1) the need for increased academic readiness and preparation; 2) the need for increased awareness about college and financial aid; and 3) the need for increased scholarship funds. This project adopts the cohort approach and provides early intervention services to approximately 4,800 students, beginning in their seventh grade (in 2000-2001) and serving them through twelfth grade. The students served are in twelve target Virginia school districts, at twenty-four middle schools and eventually nineteen high schools. Early intervention services address the need for students to take rigorous "gateway" courses, as well as Advanced Placement and dual-enrollment courses. A wide array of academic support services, such as tutoring, mentoring, and summer programs on college campuses are provided. Scholarships based on achievement of academic milestones will be available for students who are eligible for Pell grants.

**STRATEGY** Neighborhood Academies are being created within each school division to increase the support and resources available to students. The Academies foster opportunities for parents, school and college personnel, community leaders, business leaders, and students to meet regularly to implement strategies to enhance students' academic success. A major thrust of the Academies is the technology component that provides access to computers, the Internet, and software related to academic course work and standardized tests. Additional services may include workshops for parents, financial aid information sessions, tutoring and mentoring opportunities, computer literacy classes, and community service projects.

## STATE OF WASHINGTON, OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

1999

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**Total Students Served:** 6,000

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** The Washington State GEAR UP Project partners with the Office of the Governor, the Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the University of Washington (UW). It provides two early intervention initiatives: the State and Partnership Coordination Project; and the Scholars Project.

The Coordination Project establishes partnerships and structures within the state to provide considerable support to the state GEAR UP projects and to all GEAR UP partnership projects. The Coordination Project develops college planning and outreach materials for students and parents; establishes linkages between local K-12 schools, the various sectors of higher education, state and local governments, businesses, community organizations, and statewide educational outreach organizations; and develops and implements effective curricula and early intervention strategies for serving students, families, and schools that can be replicated across the state and the nation. The Scholars Project annually serves 1,200 low-income, disadvantaged students in grades seven through twelve who live in twelve communities. The project provides long-term, year-round, comprehensive support to motivate and prepare students to enroll and succeed in postsecondary programs. All successful participants, known as Scholars, receive scholarships, covering up to four years, upon enrollment in an approved postsecondary program. A family component encourages parent participation of forty hours or more annually.

**STRATEGY** The Washington project employs seventy-five college students, many with backgrounds similar to that of GEAR UP participants, as mentors and tutors. Tutors are trained to foster independent learning among GEAR UP students. One thousand GEAR UP state and local project participants come to the University of Washington (UW) each summer to participate in a week-long institute. They take courses taught by UW faculty, do career and college planning, and visit educational and cultural sites. A curriculum transformation component partners UW faculty with GEAR UP teachers to develop collaborative improvements to teaching and learning. High school leaders in GEAR UP become Ambassadors and provide outreach, tutoring, leadership, and service to extend GEAR UP's reach.

## WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

2000

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**Total Students Served:** 8,618

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** The West Virginia (WV) GEAR UP initiative is designed to address the barriers to, and influences on, access to higher education. This effort focuses on systemic changes within schools, colleges, communities, and homes, resulting in enhanced coordination among educational providers; improved communications with parents; engagement of state, regional, and

local agencies and related groups; and fundamental changes in how entities view their roles in ensuring students make successful transitions to college and adult life. Through a rigorous internal and external evaluation process, the collective goal is to institutionalize the values of GEAR UP so that college-going rates are increased; student self-esteem, motivation, and goals are increased; academic skills are improved; and the school environments foster learning for all students, encouraging each of them to reach for their highest education potential.

**STRATEGY** Understanding the importance of parental involvement in the educational and personal successes of their children, the WV GEAR UP project emphasizes the parental role by requiring parents to attend 75 percent of the monthly parent meetings and workshops provided by their children's school. These meetings and workshops are planned in accordance with the interests expressed by the parents, the academic and counseling needs of students, and the school staffs' academic concerns for students. The benefits for parents who participate are two-fold: parents have learning opportunities to help them better meet the needs of their children; and, parents assist their children in earning a GEAR UP scholarship for postsecondary education.

## WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

1999

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**Total Students Served:** 3,350

**PROJECT OVERVIEW** The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) - Wisconsin Educational Opportunity Programs (WEOP), enrolled 2,500 GEAR UP students using both the priority student approach and the cohort approach. The grant is serving low-income students, in grades six through twelve, who are enrolled in

twelve school districts, twenty-five middle schools, twenty-six high schools, two cohort elementary schools, and one community center. The mission of the project is to provide early intervention and college awareness to priority and cohort students attending fifty-four different urban and rural schools throughout Wisconsin. The goals are to: 1) retain the students in middle and high school; 2) help them to graduate from high school; and 3) enroll the students in postsecondary educational institutions. Once the students are accepted into college, they are provided financial assistance through a GEAR UP Scholarship.

**STRATEGY** The Wisconsin State project designed a unique tutoring program that partners with several local agencies to help the middle school students improve their grades. A local energy company donated twenty-five used computers to place in study clubs and in the YMCA so that students can work off-site on school projects. A local computer company donated and installed updated software and Internet access. College work-study students tutor the students weekly.



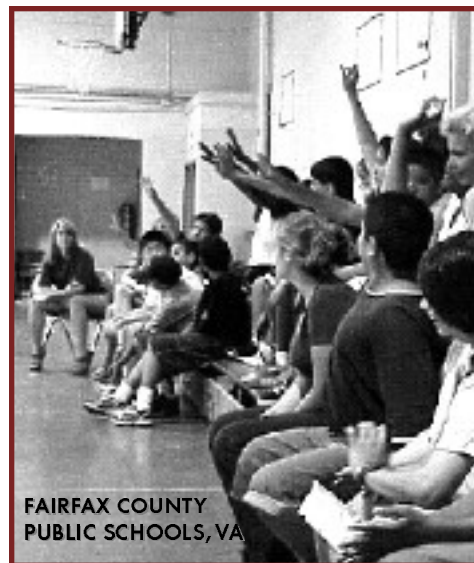
# State Grants



**BROOKLINE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, MA**



**LA JICARITA ENTERPRISE COMMUNITY, NM**



**FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, VA**

