

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness
for Undergraduate Programs
(GEAR UP)

FY 2006 Project Abstracts for
Partnership Grants

Salinas Union High School District
Hartnell College: East Salinas GEAR UP Project

The Hartnell College: East Salinas GEAR UP partnership will serve two cohorts totaling 1,890 students at two middle schools in the Salinas Union High School District. Located in the poor east-side section of Salinas, California, in the agriculturally rich Salinas Valley and a mere 50 minutes from Silicon Valley, the area is undergoing rapid growth and economic change. The influx of highly paid relocating Silicon Valley employees has contributed to both the growth and the economic disparity between east-side families compared to families in the rest of Salinas. Hispanic workers in the agriculture industry and migrants dominate crowded east Salinas residences and their children dominate east Salinas schools.

The need in the target schools, El Sausal Middle School and La Paz Middle School is profound: 96 percent of the students are Hispanic; 72 percent are English language learners; 91 percent are potential first-generation college students; and 87.5 percent are eligible for free and reduced lunch. Academic performance (based on standardized test scores) in language arts and math are below district, county, and state levels, carrying over into Alisal High School.

The partnership proposes to customize activities for each school, each cohort, and each student and family offering quality services that will lead to improved academic performance, high school retention and graduation rates, and assist them to prepare for, pursue, and complete postsecondary education successfully. The school day will be restructured; education, programs to support teachers and parents, will improve expectations of teaching and learning and update information about college going and financing. Teachers, released from normal duties, will modify, articulate and align curriculum among departments and the entire K-16 academic pipeline. Impacting 11,340 students over six years, the changes will be permanent and sustained. The project meets the 30 percent match waiver requirements and the college acceptance priority.

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Des Moines Independent Community School District
GEAR UP for the Future

The Des Moines Independent Community School District's GEAR UP for the Future creates a broad-based partnership of the schools, parents, higher education institutions, community agencies, and businesses to bring the dream of a college education to reality for 1,480 low-income students. Cohorts of all 7th Graders will be formed at eight middle schools that have free and reduced lunch enrollments of 56 percent or more and significant minority enrollments. Eleven GEAR UP Advisors will work directly with students, families, school staff, and the partners to implement a comprehensive GEAR UP curriculum and provide academic and family support services to students most in need. The advisors will move with their cohorts to high school and stay with them until graduation. Made up of partners, students, parents, and school staff, the GEAR UP Advisory Council will meet quarterly to monitor the implementation of the program and identify additional partners needed to meet the needs of students and families. This partnership represents a community investment of \$1,184,000 in the life-long success of low-income students. In-kind matching contributions include scholarships, early college awareness, financial aid planning, campus visits and activities, professional development, and support of an external evaluator. GEAR UP goals address:

- (1) Increased academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education;
- (2) Increased rate of high school graduation and postsecondary education;
- (3) Increased knowledge of postsecondary options and financing; and
- (4) Professional development in curriculum, instruction and school design to support all students.

As a result of GEAR UP for the Future, systematic changes will lead to on-going success for low-income students in both the K-12 and postsecondary settings.

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Lorain City Schools
Lorain GEAR UP Coalition

The Lorain GEAR UP Coalition will marshal community-wide services and resources to raise the overall academic performance of an entire cohort of 698 incoming 7th graders and increase their likelihood of enrolling in college. More than 77 percent of these students qualify for free and reduced-priced lunch, and many combat social problems typical of an inner-city. As a result, students in the Lorain City School District (LCSD) struggle to meet Ohio academic standards and high school graduation requirements. Students who graduate face the daunting challenge of navigating through the college application and financial aid process that are foreign to both them and their families. To address this situation, LCSD and its partners will:

- Provide sufficient tutors and summer programs to enable students to practice academic skills;
- Offer a more rigorous curriculum by increasing enrollment in pre-algebra and algebra in all middle schools, and by increasing Advance Placement (AP) classes in all high schools;
- Reduce social barriers to academic success by introducing school-based social workers and social services in all target schools, and recruiting 60 adult mentors to assist students;
- Offer a myriad opportunities for students and parents to increase their awareness of college benefits through community-wide outreach, college visits, and guest speakers;
- Assist students and their parents to prepare for college entrance examinations, to complete college applications and to access financial aid through workshops and consultations; and
- Improve the teaching skills of over 300 middle and high school teachers with intensive, ongoing training in math, science, and AP instruction, as well as classroom management.

After six years, Lorain's GEAR UP students will demonstrate: increased performance over baseline standardized test scores; a graduation rate of at least 90 percent and a college enrollment rate of at least 65 percent.

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El Paso Independent School District

The El Paso Independent School District (EPISD) proposes a GEAR UP Program that will address the identified funding priorities including:

- (1) Low academic readiness and achievement;
- (2) Poor performance in the core subjects areas of math, science, and language arts;
- (3) High incidences of risk factors, disciplines and low attendance that eventually contribute to low graduation rate;
- (4) A low college going rate; plus high rate of remediation once they enter postsecondary institutions.

The proposed activities will address the weaknesses and gaps in current services provided to students, parents, and teachers. Key components of EPISD's GEAR UP include tutoring, mentoring, professional development, academic readiness testing, positive coping and life skills, transition events, and exposure to higher education. The program will also increase parents' awareness of success factors for the GEAR UP cohort by impressing upon them the significance of their support for their children's futures. GEAR UP staff will also provide them knowledge of the benefits and accessibility of both college and financial aid. Staff development includes training on technology-based curriculums for math and science, preparing students for academic readiness in high school and beyond, and strategies for increasing students' ability to relate academics to every day experiences. The expected outcomes are academic readiness for high school graduation, high achievement on entrance exams, and college entry. Parents will gain awareness of support for pursuing postsecondary education and teachers will receive support for up to date research proven effective strategies. GEAR UP is proposing an average budget of \$1,000,000 per year to serve 2,759 students. The average cost per student is \$362. This is a relatively small cost considering the services proposed for the students and the extension of service to parents and partner school staff.

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San Diego Schools GEAR UP Project

The San Diego City Schools GEAR UP Project will enhance and existing partnership among the University of California, San Diego; the San Diego Unified School District; the San Diego California Student Opportunity and Access Program (CAL-SOAP); and, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), with the addition of new partners: the San Diego Community College District and the Parent Institute for Quality Education. Needs being addressed through a comprehensive set of services and activities include gaps in achievement, high school completion, completion of college prep courses, colleges entrance examinations preparation and scores, lack of college-going culture, limited availability of counselors; many inexperienced teachers with limited understanding of students' cultural background and the culture of poverty that may affect the way they behave in school, and lack of parental and community involvement.

Proposed activities for students include: tutorial support; mentoring; intensive summer academic programs; test preparation; leadership development; additional counselors assigned to the cohort at each school; information about financial aid and college preparation courses; college campus tours; field trips; and 21st Century Scholars certificates. Proposed activities for staff include: staff development to address the effect of economic class on student behavior and mindset; instructional strategies using content standards; tools to improve the quality of instruction in the classroom; AVID training; a counseling institute; a leadership training institute for principles; and planning seminars. Proposed activities for parents include: workshops on helping their children prepare for college; leadership training; college campus tours; information about financial aid and scholarships; home visitations; child care for program events; and translators and program materials available in their native languages. Intended outcomes include: improved academic achievement among students; professional enhancement among staff; increased parental involvement; increased aspirations to attend college; development of a positive school climate and college-going school culture; and improvement through continuous program monitoring and evaluation.

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Friendship Public Charter School

Lead Applicant: Friendship Public Charter School (FPCS), a local education agency (LEA), funded to prepare a cohort of 375 low-income 7th graders to complete four-year college degrees. Since its inception in 1998, FPCS has been recognized for increasing test scores through research-based practices and the use of educational technology. In January 2006, ABC News featured FPCS in a 20/20 television program segment about successful public charter schools. Partners include a local social service agency, the Center for Youth and Family Investment; two local radio stations (WAMU and WOL), the Washington Post, the George Washington University; and the Uniformed Services University.

Needs: FPCS serves 3,542 students preK-12 on five campuses in high crime, high poverty areas in Washington, D.C., where 74 percent of them qualify for free and reduced lunches. Students who enter FPCS secondary schools, with an average of 3.5 grade levels behind, face daunting academic challenges. While students have improved once they enter the FPCS LEA, they are still not on par with their peer public charter schools in other urban areas. More than 100 of FPCS students in 2004-2005 took an advanced placement (AP) class, but only one earned a 3.0 grade point average or better, which is the threshold for earning college credit. A full 95 percent of the GEAR UP cohort will be the first in their families to attend college.

Interventions include: comprehensive, advisor-lead efforts with portfolio assessments to track progress through six-year college plans; individualized counseling; math and reading clinics; student-parent college visits; professional development for teachers; PSAT and SAT tutoring; early college credit and AP opportunities; career exposure; parent counseling on financial aid; and intensive assistance with the college applications process.

Outcomes will show: enrollment in selective colleges; increased enrollment in advanced science and math classes; and improved overall grades and test scores in high school.

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Pasadena Independent School District

Pasadena Independent School District (PISD) provides public education to a culturally and economically diverse student population enrolled in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. The district enrolls a total of 48,758 students of which 80.6 percent are minority (total: 3.5 percent Other; 6.5 percent African-American; 70.7 percent Hispanic; and 19.4 percent Caucasian). Sixty-seven (67) percent are eligible for the free and reduced lunch program and 26 percent are identified as having limited English proficiency. PISD will partner with one institution of high education, San Jacinto College, and two community organizations, HOSTS and the Rotary Club of Pasadena to form a program called GEAR UP for Success that will result in the 2006-2007 school-year cohort of 2,870 seventh graders at eight PISD intermediates to be academically prepared, enrolled, and successful in postsecondary education by fall 2012.

Historically, PISD graduates have not pursued postsecondary schools. Surveys from the 2004-2005 graduates revealed that approximately 41 percent enrolled in postsecondary education. GEAR UP for success will raise that percentage by preparing the cohort academically through increased intensity in the classroom, providing student academic support programs, providing teachers with research-based teaching techniques through an intensive program of ongoing professional staff development, and implementing vertical Pre-AP and AP curriculum alignment between the intermediate and high schools.

GEAR UP for Success will use its three partners to prepare the cohort mentally by counseling students and parents on financial aid, career awareness, by guiding students through post-secondary education application and financial aid, and engaging students in college-based enrichment programs. By fall 2013, GEAR UP for Success and PISD expect a minimum of 70 percent of the 2012 graduates to enroll in postsecondary education.

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American Samoa Community College
GEAR UP SAMOA

American Samoa Community College (ASCC) in Pago, U.S. Territory of American Samoa, in collaboration with the American Samoa Department of Education and four social service agency partners, is seeking funds to establish GEAR UP SAMOA to significantly increase the number of low-income students prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education.

There is an urgent need to improve opportunities for American Samoa students' extremely poor remedial skills (3-4 grades below grade level) and chronically low standardized test scores seriously threaten the territories' abilities to generate college-bound youth. Of the approximately 300 high school graduates who enter ASCC every year, 90 percent require additional remedial support prior to taking college courses. Primary issues underlying this academic crisis include:

- (1) Inadequate remedial skills due to lack of English proficiency;
- (2) Lack of qualified teachers;
- (3) Lack of coordinated student support services; and
- (4) Lack of family emphasis and resources for postsecondary education.

Virtually all students in American Samoa are low-income. Currently, 99.4 percent (15,824) of students qualify for free or reduced lunch. GEAR UP SAMOA will serve a cohort of 846 students by providing: (1) intensive after-school tutoring, summer school workshops and standardized test preparation; (2) new Advance Placement (AP) courses held at the community college; (3) teacher training toward certification and degrees for up to 50 teachers each year and; (4) coordinated counseling, support and financial assistance for all cohort families. The island's strong communal structure almost completely precludes student mobility and reinforces high classroom attendance. The project's partnership will provide a 36 percent match for funding based on federal eligibility requirements. Comprehensive baseline, process, and outcome evaluation will ensure core GPRA outcomes are measured.

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Memphis City Schools
21st Largest School District

As the 21st largest school district in the United States, Memphis City Schools (MCS) serves a student base that, on average, is poorer than other public schools systems (75 percent free and reduced lunch recipients vs. 59 percent nationally), serves more minority students than other systems (91 percent minority vs. 39 percent nationally), and has fewer students who are prepared for college (ACT Composite average of 17.6 vs. 20.4 nationally). MCS students also graduate at a rate lower than the national average (62 percent vs. 71 percent) and have the stability rate of 72 percent, meaning that less than three-fourths of all students who begin the school year are at the same school in May.

To address the needs of the students in nine schools, a comprehensive model of intensive intervention is proposed here as a way to achieve the following outcomes of the GEAR UP program:

- 1) Increase participation, students' academic performance, and preparation for postsecondary education;
- 2) Increase the rate of high school graduation among participating students and help ensure eventual participation in postsecondary education; and
- 3) Increase the knowledge of participating students and their families about postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing.

GEAR UP Memphis will serve approximately 1,400 students over the course of the six-year grant project through enhanced guidance counseling, tutoring, coaching for college-going behavior, support and information for parents and families about college requirements and costs, and meaningful partnerships between the schools, the school system, and three higher education institutions.

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South Carolina State University
GEAR UP

Need To Be Addressed: This GEAR UP project will address the need in the target area school districts of Allendale County and Orangeburg 3 in South Carolina to ensure children achieve academically and are prepared for college. The needs to be addressed include: increasing the number of students who meet SC State Performance Standards; increasing the number of students who complete a college preparatory course of study; training teachers to identify and implement methods of instruction which maximize student achievement; increasing parental and community involvement; increasing the awareness of financial aid resources for college; and developing a rigorous curriculum that will meet the needs of all students while preparing them for college entry.

Proposed Project Activities: This GEAR UP project will provide services to a cohort of approximately 450 seventh grade students in the districts' middle schools. These students will continue in GEAR UP through high school graduation. Activities of this project will include direct services to students including tutoring, mentoring, counseling, enrichment instruction, workshops, field trips, college visitations, and college preparatory and financial aid sessions. Staff development activities will be conducted to assist teachers and school staff in identifying best practices for student achievement. Parental involvement activities, including workshops, school and classroom aides, etc., will be implemented, as well as activities to increase community involvement. Activities will be scheduled during both an academic year and summer component.

Anticipated Project Outcomes: The anticipated outcomes of this project include an increased number of students who leave high school that are college-ready and college bound, that parents and community have joined in collective efforts with the school in the education of students, and that practiced and validated best practices in pedagogy and supplemental services to students are adopted throughout the Allendale School District.

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Savannah State University
GEAR UP

Savannah State University—a four year, co-educational unit of the University System of Georgia—seeks funding for a six-year GEAR UP Partnership grant. This high-quality program will enroll sixth and seventh graders (approximately 637 students) from Tompkins and Hubert Middle Schools as a cohort to begin the program in fall 2006.

The major partnership will include Savannah State University, Savannah-Chatham County Public School System (Tompkins and Hubert Middle Schools, Beach, Groves, and Savannah High Schools), Memorial Health University, Carver State Back, Parent University and St. Joseph's/Candler Hospital. GEAR UP services will be sustained beyond the grand period by Savannah State University in collaboration with project partners.

There is a compelling need for intervention services in the target schools. The majority of students enrolled at Tompkins and Hubert Middle Schools come from traditionally underrepresented groups in higher education. Tompkins and Hubert Middle Schools have a population of 967 students, of whom 87.3 percent qualify for free or reduced lunch.

The GEAR UP project promotes rigorous academic coursework. The project will enhance the curriculum of the Savanna-Chatham County School District. Services will include parental involvement, tutoring, study skills, summer programs, mentoring, personal counseling, test-taking skill, career exploration, and college and financial aid awareness. Students will receive 21st Century Scholarship Certificates during parent and student orientations. The program will include an academic year component and a summer component.

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The Regents of the University of California
Building a College-Bound Community

The proposed “Building a College-Bound Community” GEAR UP project will serve 902 at-risk and underrepresented sixth and seventh grade students in three rural, agricultural communities located in southern Monterey County, California.

Needs being addressed: Numerous socioeconomic and educational indicators demonstrate the need for this project, including the large percentage of children who are from low-income families (82.71 percent of students are eligible for the Federal Free/Reduced-Price Meal Program), migrant farm worker families (54.8 percent of students are English language learners), or households with parents who have extremely low educational attainment levels. The severity of the problem is intensified because the targeted GEAR UP schools have been designated by the state as “persistently low-performing.”

Proposed activities: The project will address several gaps in services at our partner schools in the following four key areas.

- (1) Students will receive academic and college advising, tutoring, counseling and coaching, help with college applications, college awareness, and online academic support services.
- (2) Families will receive ongoing information about college planning and financial aid, counseling through the Parent Peer Network, and the opportunity to attend an annual Parent Conference.
- (3) Teachers will receive professional development in language development, mathematics, and applied mathematics in science, with an emphasis on English learners.
- (4) Communities will mobilize to build strong school and community partnerships and create the necessary structural changes in schools to provide access to college preparation for more students and insure the sustainability of the project.

Intended Outcomes: Intended outcomes include increasing student academic performance and preparation for college through success in gatekeeper mathematics courses; increasing student and families’ college awareness; increasing teachers’ capacity to prepare students for college; and creating a college-bound community that supports retention through high school graduation and college enrollment.

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University of Kansas Center for Research, Inc.
APEX GEAR UP

The Mid-America Regional Council, in seeking Empowerment Zone status for Kansas City, noted that since 1960 in Kansas City, Kansas, Wyandotte County, the population and the range of economic opportunities have declined at the core, “which has three times the poverty rate, twice the unemployment rate, and half the median housing value” of the local suburbs.

Many elements have changed but many others remain constant in Kansas City, Kansas Public Housing community in Wyandotte County. Kansas City continues to be an Empowerment Zone and Kansas City, Kansas Public Housing-Wyandotte County continue to face severe economic and educational challenges: 72.9 percent of our target population who are 18 years old and under are eligible for free or reduced lunch, 53 percent of the population is at or below poverty level, and 89 percent of the population over age 25 do not have a college degree. These extremely harsh socioeconomic conditions have a direct impact in school completion and college aspirations in a population where, on average, 57 percent of students score “below proficient” and 8 of 9 target schools did not make “Academic Year Progress.” The extreme need of the population supports the need for APEX GEAR UP, which will partner with local agencies and the school district, to provide students and families with comprehensive academic support services (research-based professional development for teachers, supplemental instruction, college admission awareness and preparation, tutoring, professional mentoring, college visits, age-specific summer enrichment programs, and after school programs) aim to increase the number of students who pursue postsecondary education and live a productive and fruitful life. The APEX GEAR UP project design reflects up-to-date knowledge and research, encourages parental involvement, and supports rigorous academic standards for participants. The program will open new academic opportunities for this underserved population, promoting systematic changes in the community’s conception of and access to opportunities in higher education.

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Syracuse University
Syracuse University (SU) GEAR UP

Over the last five years, Syracuse University (SU) GEAR UP has demonstrated that it is a unifying agent in building genuine collaboration among diverse partners. Students in the City of Syracuse are in dire need of thoughtful, targeted support to improve academic performance, graduation rates, and interest in pursuing postsecondary educational opportunities. A partnership between Syracuse University, LeMoyne College, Onondaga Community College, the Syracuse School District, and diverse community/business partners seeks to continue this support. Two cohorts of seventh grade students (fall 2006 and fall 2007 – 1,720 students each year) attending school in a Federal Empowerment Zone as designated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, their families, and the teacher and guidance counselors who serve them will be targeted to participate in the project. Participants will experience a career/college culture that includes tutorials after school, summer academic enrichment, and career and college-focused development linking successful instruction to college access and career attainment. The proposed project will also provide information and training to enrich parent, student and guidance counselor knowledge of postsecondary and financial aid options; direct services to students including mentoring by college students and adults; intellectual enrichment; access to college level courses; preparation for success in gateway math, science, and English/language arts courses; professional development experiences for teachers/counselors that develop effective methods for the urban student; and training to support the infusion of career curricula. The project will deliver improved student academic performance, graduation rates, and understanding of and interest in postsecondary education opportunities, increased parent involvement, and a revision in curriculum and teaching methods consistent with a career focus and the needs of urban children.

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City University of New York

Numerous obstacles hinder the readiness of New York City (NYC) public school students for college—poverty, gaps in school services, lack of teacher experience, and insufficient parental support among them. The City University of New York (CUNY) successfully addressed these obstacles for 2,300 mostly black and Hispanic students through a New York State-funded GEAR UP grant between 2000 and 2005. The University has since established the CUNY Middle Grades Initiative (MGI), modeled on the best practices and lessons learned from our previous GEAR UP grant. Despite limited resources, MGI has established strong relationships with 13 schools. CUNY now seeks a GEAR UP partnership grant, in the amount of \$800,000 per year to work with 1,000 students at these schools from September 1, 2006 through August 31, 2012.

We have developed a comprehensive consortium project made up of the CUNY Central Office, five colleges, 13 schools, and 2 external partners that is designed to increase the number of low-income public school students prepared to enter and succeed in college. This goal will be achieved through the integrated delivery of academic support services in math, reading and writing; advisement and counseling; college awareness and readiness activities; curriculum-linked arts learning; and parent outreach and professional development.

CUNY GEAR UP will build students' academic skill and help them begin to plan for college in middle school and then guide them through a rigorous high school program that will include college-credit course work. CUNY GEAR UP will ensure that parents understand how their children can attend college and what they must do to get there. The multi-layered resources of CUNY GEAR UP linked through a comprehensive strategy will show an increase in the high school graduation rate of our cohort and, ultimately, an increase in their enrollment into postsecondary programs and their successful matriculation.

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Eastern Oklahoma State College
BRIGHTER TOMORROW GEAR UP

Our proposed BRIGHTER TOMORROW GEAR UP project is designed to meet the specific needs of low-income, underserved, and underrepresented students and, in particular, American Indians who make up at least 45 percent of the student population in nineteen target schools in a rural and isolated area of southeastern Oklahoma officially designated as the home of Choctaw Nation. At least 78 percent of students are eligible for free and reduced lunches. The project is meant to address severe gaps in services and resources at these schools primarily serving low-income Caucasian and American Indian youth. The gaps include inadequate school staffing and funding per student; faculty development not primarily professional or instruction-centered; inadequate counseling and academic support to attack the problem of only 40.2 percent of high school graduates who pursue postsecondary education (57.5 percent state, 63.9 percent nationally). None of the schools met benchmarks for the Oklahoma Core Curriculum Test (2004).

Eastern Oklahoma State College is proposing services to improve academic performance and preparation for college, increase graduation rates and participation in college, and increase students' and their families' knowledge of college options and financing beginning with a cohort of sixth graders and a cohort of seventh graders totaling 1,718 students. Project services include mentoring, tutoring, cultural field trips, 21st Century Scholar Certificate Awards Event, summer camp, college/career advisement for students and parents, access to multimedia computers and online interactive educational material – because some schools do not even have libraries, and FISH! For Schools (teacher training and classroom resources for Active Learning). In addition to the nineteen school partners, a major partner will be the Choctaw Nation providing cultural activities and, more importantly, American Indian mentors.

Total First Year Request: \$1,374,400
Total Cost Per Student: \$800

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University of Tennessee
Hamilton County GEAR UP 2006

The applicant for this GEAR UP grant is the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga, working in conjunction with the Hamilton County school system and six community partners. The students served will be sixth and seventh graders in the fall of 2006 at five inner-city middle schools that all feed into Howard and Brainerd High Schools. Currently at Howard and Brainerd, only 21 percent of the students in ninth grade will go on to graduate and go to college. The overriding goals of this project will try to address this disparity by improving our target students' academic preparation, increasing students' self esteem and motivation, and facilitating parental and community involvement in students' self-esteem and motivation, and facilitating parental and community involvement in students' academic and social preparation. The objectives to meet these goals are:

- To increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education of GEAR UP students;
- To increase the rate of high school graduation and participation in postsecondary education of GEAR UP students;
- To raise educational expectations for GEAR UP students as well as student and family knowledge of postsecondary education options and financing; and
- To facilitate systematic, sustainable improvement of the target schools.

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Louisiana State University and A&M College
GEAR UP LSU

GEAR UP LSU is a proposed partnership involving Louisiana State University, East Baton Rouge Parish Schools, Baker Schools, The Young Leaders' Academy, Volunteers in Public Schools, Baton Rouge Area Chamber, Access2, Teach for America, and Baton Rouge Parent University. The project seeks to progressively improve changes to teaching and learning in five middle schools populated with students that qualify demonstrably for free or reduced lunch within East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana. The program focus is especially conceived to raise student skill levels in English/Language Arts and Mathematics. Moreover, this undertaking will simultaneously concentrate on advancing thinking and problem solving capabilities, while raising the education aspirations of both students and parents. In Year One, all seventh grade students in participating middle schools will be recognized as the project's first cohort. In each subsequent year, the original cohort will matriculate to the succeeding grade until completion. The population to be served will remain the same each year of the project, from the original cohort of 1,199 students, recognizing that the project's goal seeks to increase the number of low-income students prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. Attaining this goal, likewise, revolves around three key supporting objectives:

- (1) Increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education for GEAR UP students;
- (2) Increase the rate of high school graduation and participation in the postsecondary education for GEAR UP students; and
- (3) Increase GEAR UP students' and their families' knowledge of postsecondary options, preparation and financing.

The project-specific measures will generate a dearth of quantitative and qualitative data to ascertain overall project patterns and successes.

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Duval County Public Schools
Jacksonville's Future

The mission of Jacksonville's Future (Duval County Public Schools) is to ensure that a cohort of seventh grade students from Eugene Butler Middle School and Northwestern Middle School are prepared for, pursue, and successfully complete a postsecondary degree after graduation from William M. Raines High School. The schools were selected because they are the most academically and socio-economically needy schools in the system, with 89-90 percent of students eligible for free or reduced lunch benefits in the middle schools. Retention rates range from a high of 73.5 percent at the ninth grade level and from 70-94 percent of the students score unsatisfactory levels on Florida's state assessment of academic achievement in reading and mathematics.

Project success depends on collaboration among all four of Jacksonville's institutions of higher education, two of the city's most effective child advocate agencies, parents of the project's children, and the schools system's educators. Activities will include summer academic camps on the college campuses, intensive guidance counseling with students and parents, one-on-one tutoring in reading and mathematics, mentoring for every student in partnership with community agencies, a professional development plan for teachers that will focus on high expectations, and training and support for parents as key partners. Intended outcomes for the participants are as follows:

- Improved academic achievement for all students.
- Increased enrollment rate in postsecondary education.
- Enhanced student and parent awareness of and involvement in activities that develop understanding of postsecondary requirements, options, preparation, and financing.
- Implementation of a coherent, consistent plan for professional development for all teachers, administrators, and guidance counselors at the target schools.

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Washington State University
One Vision Partnership GEAR UP Program

The One Vision Partnership GEAR UP Program has brought together five higher education institutions, ten public school districts, and three community partners to provide a range of comprehensive early intervention services. This project will serve small, rural, isolated schools located in the Columbia Basin of Washington State. These schools have a large number of immigrant and Hispanic migrant farm worker students. The characteristics of these students include limited English speaking students, high poverty rates, low graduation rates, high mobility rates, low academic achievement on state testing standards, and limited opportunities for entering postsecondary education.

The One Vision Partnership GEAR UP will offer a range of comprehensive services starting with a sixth and seventh grade cohort of 2,478 students and serve them through high school graduation. The services will include: (1) Professional Development; (2) Before and After School Tutoring; (3) Saturday & Summer Programs; (4) Mentoring; (5) College Planning; and (6) Family Financial Planning. All services will be culturally appropriate, researched-based, and proven-effective practices.

The One Vision Partnership GEAR UP will serve 2,478 students each year of the six-year grant to achieve the following measurable outcomes:

- (1) Increase by 10 percent the number of seventh and tenth-grade students passing the state standard WASL Test in math and reading;
- (2) Increase by 10 percent each year the number of students either passing or enrolled in advanced math courses;
- (3) Increase by 20 percent the number of students who take the SAT and ACT tests;
- (4) Increase by 50 percent the number of students taking the PSAT in eighth grade;
- (5) Increase by 20 percent the number of students enrolling in postsecondary; and
- (6) Increase the number of parents aware of college requirements and increase college knowledge for their children.

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City University of New York/Discovery Institute

This project builds on and expands a 1999-2005 GEAR UP program that produced dramatic improvements in the achievement of high-need students. Through a unique approach to teacher professional development coupled with tutoring/mentoring, parental involvement, and college experience/counseling, the project effected fundamental changes in the “culture” of the target schools and therefore in student achievement.

However, the project did come up short of success for many high-need students, thus exposing the problem’s complexity and long-term nature. Two major shortcomings were exposed: (1) intervention began too late; and (2) too many parents were not reached.

The proposed project provides the same fundamental approach and activities as in 1999-2000, centering on improving academic achievement. But it also includes several initiatives to remedy the shortcomings. There are two primary remedies. The first, through the infusion of major funds from other sources, provides project services much earlier, beginning with high-need children in elementary schools that feed into the target intermediate school, and then into the target high schools and even into college. It also provides services continuously, at every grade level in every year of the project. The second, through 11 new partnerships with local civic, ethnic, and faith-based organizations reaches parents and children where they feel most at home by providing counseling, tutoring, and homework assistance at community-based sites.

It is expected that these new initiatives infused into an already successful model will succeed in producing substantially greater and longer-term improvements in achievement and college attendance for a much greater number of high-need students.

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Los Angeles Unified School District, Local District 6

The South Gate College Partnership will serve a cohort of 1,334 seventh grades that are predominately Latino students. The Partnership will follow these students, which will come from South Gate and South East Middle School. The Partnership will work with the students as they transition to and through South Gate and South East High School. South East Middle and High School were constructed to relieve South Gate Middle and South Gate High Schools' bulging enrollment. For over twenty years, South Gate Middle and High School were overcrowded multi-track schools. The new and old schools now operate on a single track with six small learning academies. The Partnership will provide tutoring, mentoring, parent/student education programs, academic enrichment academies, SAT Prep, teacher/counselor trainings, and college information. Services aim to fulfill objectives in the following order:

- (1) Increase academic performance and preparation for students' postsecondary education;
- (2) Increase the rate of high school graduation and college admissions; and
- (3) Increase students' and their families' knowledge of postsecondary options and financial aid assistance.

The Los Angeles Unified School District has partnered with the University of California at Los Angeles; California State University, Los Angeles; East Los Angeles College; Salvadorian American Leadership and Educational Fund; Parent Institute for Quality Education, HON Company, and the City of South Gate. This South Gate College Partnership will use their resources and expertise to collaborate and make a difference in the lives of low-income, first-generation college-going students.

The project director and evaluators will collect and analyze data to monitor student progress. Our analysis includes monitoring of course performance, attendance, test performance, and participation in program activities. Student and parents will provide qualitative and quantitative data through attitudinal surveys.

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El Paso Community College
EPCC GEAR UP

The overall goal of El Paso Community College (EPCC) GEAR UP is to “increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education.” Our specific goals are:

- (1) Increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education for EPCC GEAR UP students;
- (2) Increase the rate of high school graduation and participation in postsecondary education for EPCC GEAR UP students; and
- (3) Increase EPCC GEAR UP students’ and their families’ knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing.

We will address the needs of 979 youth (7th through 12 grade) and their parents in five school districts in El Paso County, in far west Texas on the border with Mexico. We will target 10 schools (five pairs of feeder middle and high schools) and have three key community partners. Our project will: (a) target rural school districts; (b) reach a population that is predominantly low-income, Hispanic, and has a low college enrollment rate; (c) focus on using cross-institutional activities that will concentrate on early college awareness and readiness; (d) pay particular attention to sharing practices that are best for engaging and reaching youth in the target schools; (e) establish a sustainable research-based model that encourages high academic achievement and college preparedness; (f) build in the positive experiences and lessons learned in a previous GEAR UP project which provided college and financial advising, tutoring, and academic enrichment programs that incorporated culturally relevant activities; (g) develop effective practices in learning and teaching for students, parents, and teachers; (h) aim to decrease the number of students who must take remediation courses before enrolling in courses for credit at colleges and universities; (i) strengthen weaknesses in math, science, and English language arts; and (j) close the gap between secondary and postsecondary academic standardized tests.

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Eastern Michigan University

Goal: Eastern Michigan University has formed a partnership with three small area urban school districts serving low-income middle school students to raise educational attainment and promote college enrollment.

Objective 1: Increase the educational aspirations of low-income seventh-grade students and their parents.

Objective 2: Increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education.

Objective 3: Increase the number of low-income students who apply to and enroll in postsecondary education.

Students in each of these school districts, Wayne-Westland Community Schools, Ypsilanti Public Schools, and Willow Run Community Schools, face significant hurdles to high school graduation and postsecondary enrollment. These include low academic expectations, failure to take rigorous coursework that lead to college success, and lack of knowledge about the college application and enrollment process.

This project will provide academic support for students, information and help for families of students, and professional development for teachers and administrators to boost academic achievement and postsecondary enrollment and success rates.

This project includes a partnership with the local business and nonprofit communities including such local companies as Pfizer, United Parcel Service, and Altarum, and such nonprofits as the Ypsilanti Area Chamber of Commerce, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and the Ypsilanti District Library, each of which has committed time and resources to this effort to help the communities' seventh-grade students attain college enrollment.

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Board of Trustees University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
SMARTS

The Principal's Scholars Program (PSP), a statewide pre-college initiative at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, in partnership with the Chicago Public Schools and nine other entities, proposes to implement an early intervention college preparatory program entitled, Students Training for Academic Readiness (SMARTS), for 700 elementary students. The needs to be addressed in this project include: below standard academic achievement in the classroom and on standardized tests; low high school graduation and college attendance rates; and above average student to counselor ratios and dropout rates. In order to begin to remediate the impending needs of target schools and communities, SMARTS will initiate a Studying & Learning Plan which will provide consistent academic monitoring designed to lower dropout rates and improve overall academic growth as a result of the SMARTS advanced tutoring concept combined with test taking preparation of sufficient intensity and duration. In order to provide increased college-going rates, this project will expose participants to an array of college preparatory pathways such as college tours, financial aid presentations, summer college experiences, mentoring, academic competitions, college and career portfolios, personal development workshops and academic counseling.

Parent-directed activities support student achievement by exposing parents to college and financial aid information and personal development opportunities. SMARTS student and parent intervention, along with engagement in new teaching methodology in studying and learning and standardized test preparation will result in SMARTS participants graduating from elementary school and high school with a grade of "B" or better and enrolling in postsecondary education.

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Baylor University
GEAR UP Waco

The GEAR UP Waco partnership will serve the sixth and seventh grades in the Waco Independent School District. To address the needs of at-risk students, Baylor University, Texas State Technical College-Waco, Making Connections with Youth Count, Inc., City of Waco Academy for Educational Development, and the Waco Independent School District will build upon an established partnership with sustained, successful commitment to youth and public education. The GEAR UP Waco partnership has made considerable strides over the past seven years to become a community catalyst for educational change and a leader in college access and awareness both locally and nationally.

The partnership's primary goal is to significantly increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. The partnership plans to increase the number of students who graduate from high school on time and are prepared for the demands of college curricula by expanding opportunities for meaningful interaction with colleges and universities; training faculty and other professionals in innovative, research-based strategies for the delivery of rigorous, accelerated, and enriched curricula; supporting the emotional and social development of all students; expanding student and parent awareness of postsecondary education opportunities; training students and parents to navigate financial aid access systems successfully; and increasing the academic achievement of middle and high school students. Finally, GEAR UP Waco seeks to increase the number of students pursuing advanced placement, dual credit, concurrent enrollment, and enrichment courses, as well as the percentage of students who pass standardized state exams and continue their education beyond high school.

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Green River Regional Educational Cooperative

The Green River Regional Educational Cooperative (GRREC), a local educational agency, has for 35 years provided professional development to central Kentucky educators. In recent years, we have expanded our collaboration with Western Kentucky University (WKU) to tackle significant teacher and principal shortages in rural schools.

With PostSec (Preparing, Overseeing, and Steering Today's Students to Expect College), we call upon WKU and more than 50 community partners to help us remedy yet another shortage--a shortage of rural college-going Kentuckians.

Our 1,126 students are from seven districts in four rural counties. They come to school each day from low-income homes where college is not even a dream. In fact, the college-going tradition in these seven middle schools and their seven feeder high schools is half the national average. The dropout rate is higher in these schools than in neighboring GRREC districts. Math performance, particularly in the ever-critical Algebra I, is abysmal; state assessments show a middle school system that is trying to improve, but it fails to transition students successfully to high school. About half of our 8th graders perform at proficient in math, meeting state standard; and only a quarter of our high schoolers do. More 9th graders in our region fail Algebra I than any other course at any other time in K-12.

Through PostSec, we will lead students to postsecondary opportunities and, along the way, teach them to be successful when they get there. By meeting four clear goals, we will:

- 1) Create a college-going culture through familiarization, demystification (parents, students);
- 2) Increase success in math by increasing success in Algebra I (teacher training, software);
- 3) Increase teacher quality and enthusiasm via collegial Learning Teams and AP/Pre-AP; and
- 4) Create a community support system by bringing families, teachers, and businesses together.

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Imperial Valley Office of Education

TEAM (Together, Expect & Achieve More) GEAR UP is funded by federal grant PR334A060168/Years 2006-2012, plus equivalent matching funds, to provide comprehensive support for two cohorts of 7th graders and their families to overcome obstacles and enter college in significantly larger numbers. Imperial County Office of Education (lead education agency) and a county-wide P-16 Council unite all school districts, Imperial Valley College, San Diego State University-Imperial Valley, University of California, Imperial County Partnership for Higher Education, and diverse business and community partners *to change the current culture of low college expectations and increase college attendance.*

Students and their families receive personalized assistance through Coaches, tutors, and cross-age partners. TEAM GEAR UP starts or extends proven programs such as Advancement Via Individual Determination/AVID, Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement/MESA, Parent Institutes for Quality Education, test and financial preparation, summer and after school activities, and college visits. Clear academic pathways, more mathematics and advanced courses, algebra academies, and teacher training in mathematics and writing increase rigor. College Action Plans, *Invest in Your Future* campaign, and *7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* enable students and their families to make good choices about their futures.

TEAM Gear Up serves students (Cohort 1=2224/Class of 2012; Cohort 2=2138/Class of 2013) at 13 schools with 7th graders and follows them into 6 high schools: Barbara Worth Junior High School (Brawley School District); De Anza, W. Moreno and Enrique Camarena Junior High School (Calexico Unified School District); Pine and Holtville Middle School (Holtville Unified School District), Kennedy and Wilson Junior High School (El Centro School District); Meadows Union (K-8 District); Mulberry (K-8); San Pasqual Valley Middle School (San Pasqual Valley School Unified School District); Seeley Union (K-8); Westmorland Union (K-8); and Brawley Union High School (Brawley Union High School District), Calexico High School (Calexico Unified School District), Central Union High School and Southwest High School (Central Union High School District), Holtville High School (HUSD), San Pasqual Valley High School (SPVUSD).

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University of Washington

The Two Valleys One Vision GEAR UP Program has brought together three Higher Education Institutions, 13 School Districts, one Tribal School, and eight Community Partners to provide a range of comprehensive early intervention services. This project will serve small rural schools located in the Yakima and Skagit Valleys of Washington State. The Yakama Nation Indian Reservation is also with the Yakima Valley. These schools have a large number of immigrants, Hispanic migrant farm workers and Native American students. The characteristics of these students include many being limited English speaking students, all have high poverty rates (average 77 percent), overall low graduation rates, high mobility rates, overall low academic achievement on state testing standards and limited opportunities for entering postsecondary education.

The Two Valleys One Vision GEAR UP will offer a range of comprehensive services starting with 6th and 7th grade cohort of 2,423 students and serve them through high school graduation. The services will include **1) Professional Development, 2) Before and After School Tutoring, 3) Saturday and Summer Programs, 4) Mentoring, 5) College Planning, 6) Family Financial Planning, and 7) 21st Century Scholar certificates.** All services will be culturally appropriate, researched-based and proven effective practices.

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