

Living the Mission: *celebrating*



years of GEAR UP



NCCEP / GEAR UP ANNUAL CONFERENCE
JULY 21 - 24, 2024 / WASHINGTON, DC



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Schedule At-A-Glance

SUNDAY JULY 21	MONDAY JULY 22	TUESDAY JULY 23	WEDNESDAY JULY 24
<p>Join us in Washington, D.C. for the NCCEP/GEAR UP Annual Conference from July 21-24, 2024!</p> <p>For additional information regarding the conference, visit NCCEP's website: edpartnerships.org</p>   <p>2:00 pm - 3:15 pm Pre-Conference Session</p> <p>3:00 pm - 7:00 pm Registration and Info Booth Open</p> <p>3:30 pm - 4:45 pm Pre-Conference Session</p> <p>5:00 pm - 6:30 pm Orientation to GEAR UP</p>	<p>7:00 am - 5:00 pm Conference Registration & Information Booth Open</p> <p>7:30 am - 8:45 am Networking Breakfast</p> <p>9:00 am - 10:15 am OPENING CEREMONY & ROLL CALL OF THE GEAR UP STATES</p> <p>10:15 am - 11:00 am Networking Break & Raffle in Exhibit Hall</p> <p>11:00 am - 12:00 pm Concurrent Sessions</p> <p>12:15 pm - 1:00 pm Networking Lunch</p> <p>1:00 pm - 2:00 pm LUNCHEON PLENARY</p> <p>2:30 pm - 3:30 pm Concurrent Sessions</p> <p>3:30 pm - 4:00 pm Networking Break & Raffle in Exhibit Hall</p> <p>4:00 pm - 5:00 pm Concurrent Sessions</p>	<p>7:00 am - 5:00 pm Conference Registration & Information Booth Open</p> <p>7:30 am - 8:45 am Networking Breakfast</p> <p>9:00 am - 10:15 am MORNING PLENARY</p> <p>10:15 am - 11:00 am Networking Break & Raffle in Exhibit Hall</p> <p>11:00 am - 12:00 pm Concurrent Sessions</p> <p>12:15 pm - 1:00 pm Networking Lunch</p> <p>1:00 pm - 2:00 pm LUNCHEON PLENARY</p> <p>2:30 pm - 3:30 pm Concurrent Sessions</p> <p>3:30 pm - 4:00 pm Networking Break & Raffle in Exhibit Hall</p> <p>4:00 pm - 5:00 pm Concurrent Sessions</p>	<p>7:00 am - 10:00 am Conference Registration & Information Booth Open</p> <p>7:30 am - 8:45 am Networking Breakfast</p> <p>9:00 am - 10:30 am MORNING PLENARY Youth Leadership Summit Presentation</p> <p>11:00 am - 12:00 pm Concurrent Sessions</p> <p>12:15 pm - 1:00 pm Closing Lunch & Adjournment</p>

Sunday | July 21

2:00 pm-3:15 pm

Pre-conference Session

PRE-CONFERENCE | FINANCIAL AID COMPLETION 101

This session will equip college access and success professionals to navigate the financial aid application process, with a focus on FAFSA and CSS Profile. With the recent changes to the FAFSA, this session will give professionals foundational knowledge that will support their students and families in receiving the best financial aid package available.

Learning Objectives: (1) Review FAFSA and CSS Profile requirements. (2) Explore strategies to support efficient completion of FAFSA and CSS Profiles. (3) Interpret award letters and their implications for students.

Speakers:

ShaCara Telemaque, Director of Training and Curriculum, Bottom Line

Jessicca Lopez, Senior Manager of Training and Curriculum, Bottom Line

3:00 pm-7:00 pm

Registration and Information Booth Open

3:30 pm-4:45 pm

Pre-conference Session

PRE-CONFERENCE | ADJUSTING TO COLLEGE: SUPPORTING FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS TOWARD PERSISTENCE

This session will share best-in-class tips and tools to assist college success professionals in guiding first-year students through enrollment and their initial college experience. We'll also explore common challenges and situations students may face with the college transition and share best practices for support and problem-solving, with an emphasis on leveraging the right campus resources available to support your students. This is an ideal session for professionals working with high school seniors and current college students to build and discuss strategies to support students with the transition to college.

Learning Objectives: (1) Describe common challenges and barriers of first-year college enrollment. (2) Find strategies to support students in overcoming first-year college challenges. (3) Brainstorm ways to implement strategies locally.

Speakers:

ShaCara Telemaque, Director of Training and Curriculum, Bottom Line

Jessicca Lopez, Senior Manager of Training and Curriculum, Bottom Line

5:00 pm-6:30 pm

Orientation to GEAR UP

GEAR UP 101: INTRODUCTION TO GEAR UP & NCCEP

Welcome to the family! Let's begin the GEAR UP journey together.

Are you new to GEAR UP and/or interested in learning more about NCCEP? If yes, this is the session for you! Join your fellow new hires, re-hires, and seasoned GEAR UP colleagues for a deep dive *into all things* GEAR UP and NCCEP.

During this session, we will: (1) Discuss the history, mission, vision, goals, and objectives of GEAR UP and what makes the program unique. (2) Share how GEAR UP is funded and how this translates into supporting

the work you do within your school community. (3) Review strategies and tips to support you in your work as a GEAR UP professional through collaborating with NCCEP and building relationships within the national GEAR UP community.

Plan to walk away from class with information, tools, and resources to help you implement GEAR UP in your everyday work and programs to support you throughout your GEAR UP journey.

Speakers:

Alex Chough, President, NCCEP

Monday | July 22

7:00 am-5:00 pm	Registration and Information Booth Open
7:30 am-8:45 am	Networking Breakfast
9:00 am-10:15 am	Opening Ceremony & Roll Call of GEAR UP States <i>Join us as we kick off the NCCEP/GEAR UP Annual Conference! More information is coming soon.</i>
10:15 am-11:00 am	Networking Break & Raffle in Exhibit Hall
11:00 am-12:00 pm	Concurrent Sessions, Block 1

1. A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO USING DATA: WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY (AND HOW!)

This workshop will introduce new GEAR UP coordinators or anyone who is new to collecting and using program data, to a variety of data sources used by GEAR UP programs. We will explore ways in which staff can use that data for the benefit of their program and its students.

Participants will leave the session with a draft of a “Data Use Plan”, which includes: (a) a list of the common sources from which GEAR UP grants collect data and the types of information available in each source; (b) a list of questions that can be answered using fields from one or more of those data sources; and (c) ideas of how staff can use the answers to each question as a guide to inform decision-making in their everyday work.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify the most common sources of data collected and used by GEAR UP. (2) Apply knowledge of GEAR UP data sources to write targeted questions that can be answered using one or more of the sources. (3) Develop a plan to leverage the findings from the targeted questions to inform GEAR UP decision-making.

Speakers:

*Meghan Ecker-Lyster, Director of Research, Evaluation, and Dissemination, University of Kansas
Amelia Murray, Assistant Researcher, University of Kansas Center for Research, Inc – Kansas
Joanna Full, Associate Researcher, Center for Educational Opportunity Programs, Achievement & Assessment Institute, University of Kansas*

2. BETTER TOGETHER: IMPROVING WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

Teamwork is a major contributing factor to job satisfaction and work engagement. The investment in building strong team collaboration creates a win-win outcome for both the employee and the organization (Ogbonnaya & Valizade, 2018; Karatepe & Olugbade, 2016; Arnold et al., 2020). Team members who are given meaningful opportunities to work with others in order to meet organizational goals feel valued. This results in increased commitment to the organization and less disengagement (Ogbonnaya & Valizade, 2018).

We ask ourselves, “How can we strive to create a sense of community in an organization that contributes to meaningful and effective teamwork?”, and in this session, we will explore the research behind collaboration and have some fun analyzing our own data!

Learning Objectives: (1) Explore research-based characteristics of the research construct, collaboration. (2) Analyze survey data in the context of your organization. (3) Apply strategies to your role within your team and your organization.

Speakers:

Lindsay Williams, Director, K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal
Lindsay Hawkins, Director, GEAR UP for the Future

3. BEYOND GRADUATION: NUTURING ALUMNI CONNECTIONS TO ENRICH THE COLLEGE-BOUND JOURNEY

Middle and high school students celebrate their seniors each year as they pursue their postsecondary and career goals, but may not hear about their continued journey after graduation. This presentation will discuss ways of bringing recent alumni back to the source - their middle schools and high schools to provide insight about college through Ke Ala Na'auao, a first-year college student support program.

Through engaging narratives and open dialogues, this session will empower educators with tools to shape students' thoughts and provide insightful guidance. Participants will learn how to harness the collective wisdom of peers to enrich the college-bound journey. Presenters will discuss the reciprocal benefits that students and mentors receive from this opportunity. Participants will also walk away with engagement activities that their GEAR UP alumni can implement in their middle and high schools.

Learning Objectives: (1) Explore strategies for alumni engagement and discuss effective methods for bringing alumni back to their schools to share their experiences. (2) Apply mentor curriculum and strategies to expose the college student perspective to middle and high school students. (3) Demonstrate peer wisdom integration through talk story.

Speakers:

Eugene Marquez, Peer Mentor Coordinator, Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education
BJ Angelo Ramel, Peer Mentor, Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education
Rafael Habon, Peer Mentor, Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education
Aelyn Ibarra Medina, Peer Mentor, Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education

4. BEYOND THE NEXT STEP, THERE'S NOTHING 'SOFT' ABOUT IT! BUILDING DURABLE SKILLS FOR SUCCESS

In the urgency for test scores and grades, we can lose track of support needed for other critical skills for students. Called durable, transferrable, professional, or soft skills, these strengths are essential for students' success in and beyond their next step but are often considered optional. Surveys show 93% of employers look for durable skills in applicants. Colleges not only look for these strengths in applications, but view soft skills (including networking, teamwork, critical thinking, and communication skills) as some of the most important things their graduates gain for career success.

Although difficult to measure, developing these 'non-APR' skills is a crucial part of our services to students for long-term success. This highly interactive session targeting site and program coordinators and more, is packed with activities and resources for attendees to sample and take home, including workshop guides, activity collections and resources for student growth.

Learning Objectives:(1) Illuminate the need and importance of student durable skill development for success in post-secondary and the workforce. (2) Identify and enhance durable skills opportunities in new and existing GEAR UP programming from lesson activity to guided practice to student confidence in personal strengths. (3) Initiate a scaffolded plan integrating durable skills strengths into student engagement in 'next-step' achievement.

Speakers:

Terry Hosler, Student Leadership Coordinator, Partners for Rural Impact
Vicki Dye, Project Director, Partners for Rural Impact

5. COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS DATA USE: PUTTING YOUR DUCKS IN A ROW FOR SUCCESS

In the challenging landscape of K-12 education, the pivotal role of data-driven decision-making cannot be overstated. This presentation aims to share the significance of judicious software selection and comprehensive capacity building for data teams in fostering career and college readiness.

Drawing on experiences from GEAR UP SOUTH BEND!, we will delve into the critical considerations when choosing software tailored to the unique needs of K-12 schools and showcase the transformative impact of aligning software solutions with the specific goals of career and college readiness initiatives. From strategic training programs to ongoing professional development, we will highlight how investing in the growth and proficiency of data teams cultivates a culture of continuous improvement and collaboration.

By the end of this presentation, participants will be equipped with insights, best practices and practical strategies for navigating the intersection of technology and education.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify data management gaps in implementing effective and intentional College and Career Readiness programming. (2) Illustrate how aligning the right software solution for data-driven College and Career Readiness initiatives leads to transformative impact. (3) Illuminate the significance of building a culture of continuous improvement and collaboration through data team capacity-building.

Speakers:

Jennifer Pittman, Project Coordinator, GEAR UP South Bend!
Shaban Varajab, Data and Accounting Manager, South Bend Community School Corporation

6. COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS NIGHTS TO EXPAND YOUR PROGRAM'S DEMOGRAPHIC REACH

Struggling to attract the students you most need and want to serve? In this session, coordinators, directors, and others will learn how GEAR UP Massachusetts successfully reached more young men of color in their program.

In this session, the speakers will teach you how partnerships with local sports teams have changed the way their program is viewed and how these partnerships have expanded their demographic reach. You will receive a playbook on how to bring similar partnerships to your district. The session will be hands-on, collaborative and most importantly, fun!

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn how partnerships with local sports teams (or other entertainment fields) is a viable avenue for your GEAR UP program. (2) Plan how your community can replicate what GEAR UP Massachusetts has got down to a science! You too can plan College & Career Readiness Night/Days with your students, families, and administration. (3) Understand how data from these events can make a huge impact on your program and who you serve. Changing our perspective on what students want from us, while still giving them what we need, can make all the difference in the world!

Speakers:

Krista Callinan, GEAR UP Financial Literacy Coordinator, GEAR UP Massachusetts
Robert E Dais, Statewide Director, GEAR UP Massachusetts, Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

7. CREATING A COUNSELOR NETWORK IN RURAL DISTRICTS TO INCREASE COUNSELOR LEADERSHIP

In rural counties, low population density can mean only one high school serving a wide area. With only one high school in a district, the learning opportunities for school counselors are lacking. Additionally, high quality professional development for counselors may be priced out of reach.

In western North Carolina, this is precisely the obstacle that Appalachian State GEAR UP faces. We established a Counselor Network within our schools and utilized grant funds to provide high-quality professional development for our schools, supported by intermittent, targeted support meetings facilitated by Appalachian State GEAR UP.

The presenters will share a model for building counselor learning that will improve knowledge and skills around systemic change and program management. They will also walk the audience through the steps of planning and implementing a collaborative network amongst counselors.

Learning Objectives: (1) Create a plan to foster collaborative practices. (2) Utilize data to capture Counselor learning. (3) Develop professional development for counselors that improves practices.

Speakers:

Wes Calbreath, Assistant Director, Appalachian State University GEAR UP

Kristin Edwards, Postsecondary Success Coordinator, Appalachian State GEAR UP

8. DISCUSSION LAB: WHAT WORKS (AND WHAT DOESN'T) WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Come ready to participate! Discussion Labs are an opportunity to share, learn, and problem-solve together.

Dive into the art of effective communication with students and families. Through real-life scenarios and interactive discussions, participants will explore what works and what doesn't in communication tactics and language choices to meet audience needs and foster engagement.

Learning Objectives: (1) Connect with others in the GEAR UP community. (2) Talk about tactics that help GEAR UP effectively connect with parents and students. (3) Discuss language that parents and students gravitate towards—and shy away from—in communications.

Speakers:

Alexandra Alder, Communications Manager, Arizona GEAR UP

Hector Ponce, Senior Marketing Content Creator, Arizona GEAR UP

9. EMPOWERED MINDS: BUILDING A TOOLKIT FOR STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Addressing students' mental health is a key component in supporting their academic success. While techniques to address common mental health struggles are implicit in many educators' approaches, possessing a robust, evidence-based toolkit is an important component of holistic support in secondary education.

The speakers will provide psychoeducation on risk factors for mental health struggles in high school-aged students, paired with practical and empirically supported techniques to support student engagement. In this workshop, participants will learn about the etiology behind common mental health struggles like depression and aggression, engage in skill-building activities aimed at supporting affected students, and gain confidence in their ability to seamlessly integrate existing skill sets with new knowledge in their day-to-day work.

Learning Objectives: (1) Articulate underlying causes and symptoms of common mental health struggles experienced by underrepresented youth. (2) Translate evidence-based strategies such as Behavioral Activation and grounding techniques into practical interventions for holistic student support. (3) Synthesize mental health topics into an individualized plan for working with students experiencing anger and depression.

Speakers:

Melissa Tolentino, Graduate Assistant, Heart of Texas GEAR UP
Cheyenne Fryar, Graduate Assistant, Heart of Texas GEAR UP

10. HIGH ENGAGEMENT AND AGENDA-SETTING FOR STUDENTS

What's the difference between education and schooling? One of many correct answers is: schooling ends and education does not. GEAR UP Austin ISD wants seniors to be prepared for all of the above as they leave K-12 – prepared to work, learn, grow, and succeed in college as well as life in general. And this calls for a celebration!

Learn how we engaged students' eyes, ears, hearts, and minds while introducing them to agenda-setting activities in a pair of large National GEAR UP week assemblies.

This session is designed for GEAR UP coordinators as well as any decision-makers who design events and book speakers. Participants will track/discuss the intentional engagement strategies, as well as put on their "student hats" and begin practicing with the "Set Your Agenda" tool that students and GEAR UP coordinators accessed after our event.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn about a successful cohort-wide kick-off event for seniors during National GEAR UP week in Austin, Texas. (2) Practice a student-centered activity ("Set Your Agenda") that guides teens through assessing themselves and their visions, setting goals and managing their time. (3) Consider effective ways to engage students as we guide them through college and career readiness.

Speakers:

Laura Olvera, GEAR UP Director, Austin ISD GEAR UP
Bavu Blakes, Scholar Emcee, Hip Hop Grew Up

11. HOW TO DESIGN A SUCCESSFUL FIELD TRIP

Field trips are an excellent way to engage students and provide them with hands-on learning experiences. However, designing a memorable and successful field trip can be challenging. In this presentation, we will discuss the key elements of a successful field trip, including planning, logistics, and safety.

We will also provide tips for engaging students before, during, and after the field trip to maximize learning outcomes. Attendees will leave with a better understanding of how to design and implement successful field trips that meet their educational goals.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify the key elements of a successful field trip, including planning, logistics, and safety, along with how to identify educational goals of a field trip. (2) Develop strategies for engaging students before, during, and after the field trip to maximize learning outcomes and how to prepare students for the field trip. (3) Design and implement a successful field trip that meets educational goals, including how to manage logistics and ensure the safety of all participants.

Speakers:

Ronald Tipton, Coordinator, Southside High School GEAR UP
Amalia Salas, Coordinator, Southside High School GEAR UP

12. INCORPORATING INTERACTIVE AND FUN STEM ACTIVITIES INTO GEAR UP PROGRAMMING

STEM programming can be daunting for some coordinators, but it doesn't have to be! In this workshop for any GEAR UP staff involved in program planning, attendees will hear ways West Virginia GEAR UP implemented successful interactive STEM activities into their yearly programming and will work collaboratively to design a STEM event for their own grant.

The session will also discuss and help attendees identify ways to create partnerships with local community, business, and state STEM organizations to enhance their GEAR UP programming. Attendees should be prepared to discuss STEM successes (and challenges!) within their own grants. Participants will walk away with ideas for STEM-based programs and a plan for how to integrate such programming into their own grant. No previous STEM background or experience needed!

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify opportunities for engagement with STEM education and career exploration. (2) Design an interactive and engaging STEM program for students. (3) Create a plan for generating academic enrichment via classroom-level STEM activities.

Speakers:

Mallory Carpenter, College Access and Success Program Director, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

Janine Coutu, College Access and Success Program Director, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

Casey Patterson, College Access and Success Program Director, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

13. INTRODUCING SUCCESS COACHING TO SUPPORT POSTSECONDARY SUCCESS

Get Ready/GEAR UP Minnesota combines student success coaching with the scholarship initiative. Get Ready's student coaching utilizes the InsideTrack Student Success Coaching model to ensure scholarship recipients receive the necessary support to thrive in their first year of postsecondary education. The coaching focuses on academic achievement, financial management, and social and emotional well-being as essential to maintaining persistence. Additionally, Get Ready coaches assist students with bridging active relationships between the facility, campus-based support services, and staff who can serve as advocates and mentors.

Learning Objectives: (1) Share a framework for implementing a success coaching program. (2) Discuss the strategies applied through success coaching to support the student's postsecondary persistence. (3) Discuss strategies to support persistence across multiple postsecondary pathways.

Speakers:

Veronica Deenanath, Manager for Program Innovation and Research, Minnesota Office of Higher Education
Steven Martinez Grande, Postsecondary Pathways Coordinator, Minnesota Office of Higher Education

14. PLANTING COLLEGE PROMISE: CULTIVATING BUY IN FOR GEAR UP

The path to college is riddled with obstacles for low-income and first-generation students, yet the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) Grant clears the way for their postsecondary success. This interactive workshop offers strategies for securing district and school buy-in to ignite GEAR UP transformation through sustained stakeholder engagement, implementation benchmarking to fertilize ongoing enthusiasm, and cultivation of environments devoid of barriers.

Presentation elements incorporate "elevator pitch" development, buy-in tracking templates, and scenario practice to equip any K-12 or higher education professional seeking to harness GEAR UP outcomes. Participants will emerge better prepared to till relationships, plant promise, and nurture the next generation

of college attendees. With GEAR UP's bountiful resources, we can grow college and career ready students for years to come by kickstarting thoughtful buy-in cultivation.

Learning Objectives: (1) Analyzing school/district goals to identify priority GEAR UP services to plant, including tutoring, mentoring, financial guidance and college visits to harvest increased graduation rates, college enrollment, test scores, and student support. We will facilitate. (2) Practice strategies to coordinate school staff in fertilizing college readiness, including exploring models that inspire buy-in across essential personnel to cultivate GEAR UP success. Simulate elevator pitch messaging to principals, student support staff. (3) Apply techniques to track GEAR UP implementation benchmarks and nourish stakeholder commitment by emphasizing grant requirements for harvesting data to showcase impact. Provided tracker templates aligned to staff roles and measuring participation rates, proficiency gains, and family involvement will model maintaining buy-in through milestone check-ins. Participants will strategize benchmarking frameworks to yield a bountiful crop of college-ready students.

Speakers:

Kaelyn Brown, Program Manager, College Now Greater Cleveland
Meya Miller, Program Coordinator, College Now Greater Cleveland
Camille Graham, Senior Program Coordinator, College Now Greater Cleveland

15. RETHINK YOUR STORY: THE POWER OF MULTIMODAL STORYTELLING

In a world increasingly defined by diversity and individuality, empowering students to share their unique narratives is paramount. This session will delve into the transformative potential of employing a multimodal approach when it comes to storytelling.

With the changing landscape of college admissions, students must be able to effectively convey their identity, background, and life experiences. Embracing a multimodal approach gives the students agency and the space to explore innovative ways to view themselves, their stories, and their place in the world.

Multimodal storytelling goes beyond traditional methods, incorporating a spectrum of communication channels such as visual, auditory, tactile, and digital elements. By embracing diverse modes of expression, educators can provide students with a toolkit to articulate who they are and where they come from. This session will explore practical strategies and case studies showcasing the positive impact of multimodal storytelling.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand how multimodal storytelling fosters an inclusive learning environment, ensuring that every student, regardless of their preferred mode of expression, feels seen, heard, and valued. (2) Discover how incorporating digital tools and platforms can amplify the impact of multimodal storytelling, providing students with an interactive and dynamic platform to share their stories. (3) Gain practical insights and resources to integrate multimodal storytelling into your teaching practices, fostering a creative and supportive space for student expression.

Speakers:

Amanda Cardoza, Content Specialist, Region One Education Service Center
Macarena Hernandez, Journalist and Educator
Angelica Gomez-Gonzalez, Education Specialist, Region One Education Service Center
Wanda Perez, Mental Health Specialist, Region One Education Service Center

16. REVERSE ENGINEERING THE CAREER EXPLORATION PROCESS

Passionate and pragmatic, Gen Z is a unique and powerful generation! The way students approach the decision-making process can seem foreign and frustrating to many educators who are uncertain how to adapt practices to best serve today's students. Zoomers will likely change jobs three times more than any generation before them, and we can support students by helping them develop career discovery skills that they can employ throughout their journey.

In this session we will look at the research behind how Gen Z approaches making important decisions about their futures, discuss common mistakes that educators make in the college and career advising process, learn how to engage students in meaningful decisions around career discovery, and practice using different tools and resources that can enhance your work with students. This session will be highly interactive and full of discussion!

Learning Objectives: (1) Uncover the secrets of using real-world problems as a platform for engaging and inspiring students. (2) Discuss the challenge mindset as an ideology on which to base your career exploration efforts. (3) Learn how to use the challenge mindset to teach the skill of career discovery.

Speakers:

Jacque Deahl, Project Director - GEAR UP Idaho, GEAR UP Idaho
JP Michel, Founder, SparkPath

17. SO YOU WANT TO TALK TO PARENTS

You want to engage families but aren't sure where to start? GEAR UP 4 LA will share how we use data to deliver targeted services to our families to ensure the largest reach possible. Virtual, in person, hybrid, we aim to meet our families where they are with information that they need to make informed decisions about their future and hope this session will give you the tools to do the same.

In this hands-on workshop, participants will have the opportunity to look at case studies and decide the best way to reach the family. You will leave with handouts and the knowledge that you can reach families where they are!

Learning Objectives: (1) Discuss data collection techniques to ensure that you have the most up to date information on your families. (2) Engage in different scenarios to determine the best way to connect with families. (3) Learn how to analyze data from your grant to help you discover family needs.

Speakers:

Jill Manning, Program Coordinator, GEAR UP 4 LA
Frida Samayoa, Family Engagement Specialist, Occidental College
Lorena Almaguer, Family Engagement Facilitator, Occidental College
Maria Cortez, Family Engagement Facilitator, Occidental College

18. SUMMER CAMPS TO COLLEGE: USING STUDENT FEEDBACK TO DESIGN PROGRAMMING

Engaging and relevant programming for GEAR UP students can be challenging to create without first-hand knowledge of student needs. In this session, participants will learn how Indiana GEAR UP uses tools such as the Engineering Design Process to develop and iterate programming based on student feedback and input.

Participants will also have an opportunity to examine their own programs and projects. Using sample student feedback, they will then build their own designs with a focus on relevance and engagement. Finally, participants will receive a toolkit of resources to help them reflect on ways in which their programs can use student data and feedback to inform and build their programs over time.

Learning Objectives: (1) Reflect on ways in which student data, voice, and feedback help tell your “GEAR UP story”. (2) Understand how Indiana GEAR UP uses the Engineering Design Process and Hart’s Ladder of Youth Participation to design and iterate engaging and relevant student programming with students as key stakeholders at the center of the feedback cycle. (3) Imagine, Plan, and Improve student-centered programming for GEAR UP that uses student feedback, through an iterative and interactive brainstorming session.

Speakers:

Joshua Faith, Regional Director, Indiana GEAR UP - Purdue University

Virginia Bolshakova, Executive Director, Indiana GEAR UP - Purdue University

Steve Heinold, Associate Director, Director of School Programs, Indiana GEAR UP - Purdue University

Ben Fritch, Regional Director, Indiana GEAR UP - Purdue University

19. THE 7TH YEAR OPPORTUNITY: EMBRACING CHANGE AND MODELING SUCCESS THROUGH PEER MENTORSHIP

Join Washington State GEAR UP to learn about the expansion of their 7th Year Programming, and the launch of their first-ever Peer Mentoring program. In this session, Washington State GEAR UP will review how they embraced change in the 7th Year, including a new staffing structure, expanded programming, moving onto a variety of college campuses across the state, and utilizing a team of Peer Mentors!

Join us to reflect on planning for this transition, and to learn about insight gained throughout our first year of 7th Year programming. Two Peer Mentors will be in this session to provide perspective as students and advocates for first-year GEAR UP students. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect and plan towards their own goals of 7th Year and/or Peer Mentoring, and to engage with other participants, and Washington State GEAR UP staff and Peer Mentors. If you are on the cusp of planning your 7th Year programming, or considering Peer Mentorship in your grant, this session is for you!

Learning Objectives: (1) Reflect on current program offerings and consider approaches and lenses that could strengthen practice. (2) Engage in conversation with other grantee and GEAR UP supports around best practices in the first year of post-secondary. (3) Consider what moving the needle would look like for you in programming and develop a plan to get there. What would you need as an administrator, grantee, or program lead to make your best 7th year plan a success?

Speakers:

Annie Pocklington, Assistant Director, Washington State GEAR UP

Erika Gonzalez, Peer Mentor, Washington State GEAR UP

Jorge Luis-Contreras, Peer Mentor, Washington State GEAR UP

20. WHAT COMES NEXT?: RESOURCES FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL SUCCESS

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission and GEAR UP Tennessee created The Next Guides, a series of six Tennessee-specific college and career workbooks, to provide information and activities for students as they decide what their next step will be after high school: University, Community College, TCAT (technical college), Military, Apprenticeships, or entering the workforce.

We'll trace the evolution of the Next Guides, share best practices for middle school and high school users, and brainstorm ways the Next Guides can be adapted for use by other programs. This presentation will follow a lecture format, with audience members engaging in small group discussions of questions related to the topic. Audience questions are encouraged throughout the presentation. Preview the Middle School, Family, Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior Next Guides at www.CollegeForTN.org/next-guides/

Learning Objectives: (1) Participants will have a comprehensive understanding of the content and resources contained in the Next Guides. (2) Participants will leave with clear and actionable best practices that can be leveraged within their local context. (3) Participants will be exposed to a multitude of college and career resources which include in depth looks at each Next Guide as well as other resources available on CollegeForTN.org.

Speakers:

Suzette Telli, Director of Statewide Services, Tennessee Higher Education Commission
Sara Marrero, Coordinator of College Access Communications, Tennessee Higher Education Commission
Elvin Browne, Regional Coordinator, Tennessee Higher Education Commission

21. YAWP! HOW A CRITICAL WRITING PROGRAM TURNS STUDENTS INTO SCHOLARS

How can we, in 2024, effectively prepare students for college-level writing? Without foundational skills, time for grading, and agreed upon standards, teaching writing can feel nearly impossible. When Artificial Intelligence can generate papers in a minute, one may wonder if learning how to write is becoming obsolete.

In this session, a panel of seasoned educators will discuss the YAWP! Writing Program, which teaches students how to compose critical thesis-driven essays on any topic through a writing and publishing process. Speakers will cover: student engagement, effective partnership with GEAR UP schools, the role of Artificial Intelligence in the writing process, and the impact of writing skills on college readiness. Attendees will participate in brief critical thinking activities and Q&A and receive practical strategies and resources for teaching writing and elevating student voices.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand a personal approach to engaging students in a critical thinking and critical writing process. (2) Clarify an order of operations for responding to a writing prompt. (3) Understand how to implement a project-based approach to teaching writing.

Speakers:

Brian Connell, Founder/CEO, The Connell School of Writing
Chrystal Abernathy, Project Director, GEAR UP Jefferson County
Rhonda Anderson, English Language Arts Instructor, Department Chair
Melanie Melanie, Area Facilitator, GEAR UP Jefferson County

12:15 pm-1:00 pm

Networking Lunch

1:00 pm-2:00 pm

Monday Luncheon Plenary

More information coming soon.

2:30 pm-3:30 pm

Concurrent Sessions, Block 3

22. BLACK GIRL MAGIC: SUPPORTING THE SOCIO-EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING OF BLACK GIRLS

Black Girls, like all students, deserve educational spaces that support their ability to thrive academically and emotionally. Far too often, schools and society disregard Black Girls as seen in disproportionate rates of harsh school discipline, and stereotypes depicting them as loud, aggressive, and unworthy of care.

Through this engaging session, we will highlight multiple ways schools and GEAR UP partners can create affirming, humanizing, and safe spaces to support Black Girls' well-being. We will share examples from our programs which focus on supporting Black Girls' positive identity development, conflict resolution skill-development, best practices for using social media, and emotional and physical well-being. Additionally, we will discuss data gathering tools, and how we ground programs in equity and care-based theories that center Black Girls' life experiences to ensure they can thrive academically. Participants will also have the opportunity to share their own best practices.

Learning Objectives: (1) Establish collaborative relationships between GEAR UP program leaders and school leaders to develop, implement, and grow school-based programs focused on supporting Black Girls' well-being. (2) Develop and strengthen data gathering tools useful for capturing Black Girls' experiences in school, which is a necessary step to subsequently link identified areas of support with programming. (3) Understand the connections between equity-based theories including culturally relevant pedagogy, that provide grounding for the creation of socio-emotional programming, honoring the unique experiences of diverse students, including Black Girls. (4) Understand the connection between Black Girls' academic well-being and their socio-emotional well-being, and how supporting this connection is foundational to their college and career success.

Speakers:

Theda Marie Gibbs Grey, Associate Professor, University of Michigan Dearborn, GEAR UP

Latresa Rice, Assistant Director Office of Trio Programs, University of Michigan Dearborn, GEAR UP

23. COLLEGE, CAREER, FUTURE READY: TOOLS FOR SUCCESS THE SEQUEL

Don't want to reinvent the wheel? Want access to multiple presentations and promotional materials that you can personalize for your school? Join us and walk away with new, innovative ideas to increase college application submissions, FAFSA completions, and students enrolling in college, as well as increasing participation in family events.

Building off of our presentation last year and adding to our toolkit, come learn about the new activities we've tried this year, improvements on past successful events, and have it ready to implement at your school with a click of a button in this engaging, interactive session.

Learning Objectives: (1) Utilize and personalize the tools found in the College, Career, and Future Ready Toolkit. (2) Engage in a senior family event simulation. (3) Implement today's events and activities to establish a college-going culture.

Speakers:

Denise El Habach, GEAR UP Coach, Buckeye Union High School District
KenJuan Lockhart, GEAR UP Coach, Buckeye Union High School District
Clara Pond, GEAR UP Coach, Estrella Foothills High School
Christina Taylor, GEAR UP Coach, Buckeye Union High School District

24. COME ALONG ON A FANTASTIC VOYAGE: BEST PRACTICES IN COLLEGE VISITS AND STUDENT TRAVEL

College campus visits and educational trips have always been an important part of getting prepared for college. In the past, they helped get students out of their comfort zones, showed them all the potential and possibilities of a college campus, and were fun. But a lot has changed. Post-COVID, our students deserve and need more than the same tired bus trips.

Let's not plan trips, let's create student experiences that are inspiring, engaging, and transformative. Join us in this interactive session where Kansas City GEAR UP, Washington Tri-Cities, and CoolSpeak share the best practices you need to transform your bus trip into a fantastic voyage.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand the important role that college visits and bus trips play in the overall educational success of a student. (2) Recognize the need to upgrade student travel plans to meet the the post-COVID, social emotional needs of their students. (3) Learn how to implement energizers, ice breakers, and activities in student travel to make them more engaging and meaningful and brainstorm ideas for their upcoming students travel.

Speakers:

Carlos Ojeda Jr., Creative Force & CEO, CoolSpeak
Jennifer Reyes, Regional Manager, Washington State University Harvest of Hope 4 & 5
Korri Hall, Director of Student Services, University of Kansas GEAR UP Program

25. CREATING IMPACTFUL FAMILY EVENTS THAT GUARANTEE ATTENDANCE, ENGAGEMENT, AND EXCITEMENT ABOUT GEAR UP

Looking for more family engagement? Want higher attendance at events? Want to boost GEAR UP impact and results? A GEAR UP Family Event can do just that! In this session attendees will learn about the importance of educating families and students about the purpose of GEAR UP.

GEAR UP staff will engage in hands-on planning using our GEAR UP Event Planning Guide and will go home with a personalized, use-next-day, event plan, sure to engage, excite, and educate students and families. Presenters will share their essential, tried and true methods of event planning, including budget, food, decorations, transportation, entertainment, and data collection. A video presentation of a sample GEAR UP Family Event will also be shared. Attendance will ensure the success of your event as you engage your students and families in a meaningful experience, guaranteed to produce results and bright futures!

Learning Objectives: (1) Secure proven strategies for drawing attendees to GEAR UP Events. (2) Acquire valuable event planning knowledge and skills to enhance the quality of GEAR UP experiences. (3) Cultivate impactful engagement of families and students during events, fostering excitement and yielding meaningful results.

Speakers:

Monique Squire, Program Coordinator, USU STARS! GEAR UP
Jason Payne, Director, USU STARS! GEAR UP

26. DISCUSSION LAB: CREATING YOUR FAMILY ENGAGEMENT COOKBOOK

Come ready to participate! Discussion Labs are an opportunity to share, learn, and problem-solve together.

Have you been using the same recipes for family engagement? Are you looking to add some new ingredients to your regular programming? Join NCCEP's Family Engagement Advisory Committee for a lively discussion to learn, share, and brainstorm ways to engage with your families. While each community has its own dynamic differences from program to parent (much like farm to table restaurants), we can brainstorm ways to adapt ideas to help our GEAR UP families gain knowledge, resources, and skills to support their students on their college journey. We hope to see you in the kitchen!

Learning Objectives: (1) Connect with others in the GEAR UP community. (2) Share, learn, and problem-solve together about family engagement strategies. (3) Gain ideas you can adapt locally to work with your GEAR UP families.

Speakers:

Katie Hill, Director of Programs, NCCEP

27. DON'T WORRY, BE APPY

In this hands-on session, participants will learn how coding apps and workforce skills are inherently connected. According to a CASEL report, 92% of businesses agree that social-emotional learning skills are equally or more important than technical skills, specifically problem-solving and communication. But experiences like building a mobile app can actually help develop, enhance, and augment these skills.

Using the six-step design thinking process, educators will build their own apps and hear how students at Nevada State GEAR UP used mobile app development to foster both computer science and the necessary soft skills that are vital for today's students entering tomorrow's workforce.

Learning Objectives: (1) Gain a deeper understanding of how design thinking fosters future-ready skills. (2) Experience the design thinking process through creating their own mobile app. (3) Brainstorm ways to use design thinking in your classroom and learn how to incorporate curriculum-based standards and content with computer science.

Speakers:

Janet Stake, Director, NSHE GEAR UP Programming & Outreach, GEAR UP / Nevada System of Higher Education

Alefiya Master, CEO, MAD-learn

28. FOSTERING PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Everything is better when we work together. Region One GEAR UP has partnered with rootED Alliance to enhance college and career readiness efforts for students and their families. The partnership focuses on rural school systems and has provided intentional pathway opportunities, aimed at producing greater outcomes in some of the most underserved communities.

In this session, presenters will provide resources and examples of how to leverage grant funding, to support students in post-secondary success. During outreach events, students are empowered to reach their post-secondary goals in collaboration with their parents. Attendees will participate in a "Platica" to share best practices that can be implemented within their organizations.

Learning Objectives: (1) Equip attendees with resources and strategies for their organization to help students achieve postsecondary goals. (2) Intentional and impactful ideas to enhance students' achievements within two grants. (3) Developing and enhancing organization's resources.

Speakers:

Raquel Salinas, GEAR UP Facilitator, Region One ESC
Cindy Marroquin, College and Career Success Advisor II, Region One ESC
Sebastian Dougherty, College and Career Success Advisor II, Region One ESC

29. FROM ONE TO ALL: EFFECTIVE POSTSECONDARY PLANNING IS EVERYONE'S WORK

"Go see the counselor" is a common response when students have questions about planning for their future. Too often college and career advising is siloed to one individual or a small team. But it takes the engagement of an entire school community to move the needle.

For two years, Honoka'a High & Intermediate School (a rural remote high school in Hawai'i) and College Access: Research & Action (a college access organization in New York City) have collaborated on a whole school model of support for students.

This partnership has yielded early success demonstrated by: increased awareness of postsecondary pathways, strengthened ability of staff schoolwide to provide accurate culturally relevant postsecondary advising, and higher rates of college application, financial aid completion, and matriculation at well-matched colleges.

In this session, teachers, counselors, and GEAR UP staff will learn more about the project and leave with ideas to build capacity for postsecondary exploration and advising across an entire school.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand the whole-school inquiry model for postsecondary exploration and advising. (2) Identify how your school or district could benefit from a similar approach. (3) Plan to use strategies to increase your school's college-going culture and meet your intended outcomes.

Speakers:

Dana Petteys, GEAR UP Hawai'i Site Coordinator, GEAR UP Hawai'i / Hawai'i P-20 Partnerships for Education
Alana Haitzuka Fernandez, College and Career Counselor, Honokaa High and Intermediate School
Ally Levy, Senior Director of College Inquiry & Whole School Partnerships, College Access: Research & Action
Janice Bloom, Co-Founder and Co-Director, College Access: Research & Action

30. HOW TO EFFECTIVELY INCREASE SAT AND ACT TEST SCORES WHILE REDUCING STUDENT TEST ANXIETY

GEAR UP Fort Wayne Community Schools (the largest district in Indiana), through strategic partnerships, collaboration, and communication, helped engage the majority of its student cohort in preparing for the PSAT/SAT/ACT and was able to quickly raise scores - creating advanced scholarship and admission opportunities for all.

By making impactful decisions with data, balancing skills and strategies at all grade levels, supporting teachers through professional development and curriculum, and utilizing resources tailored to meet the needs of students, GEAR UP Fort Wayne will demonstrate how to effectively address test preparation and alleviate the impact of test intimidation & anxiety on students.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand and utilize proven test taking strategies to increase student PSAT/SAT/ACT scores. (2) Explore testing strategies to alleviate test anxiety and intimidation during PSAT/SAT/ACT. (3) Engage in interactive, meaningful and fun learning, similar to what students experience during a PSAT/SAT/ACT test preparation session.

Speakers:

Shenita Bolton, Executive Director of College and Career Readiness, GEAR UP Fort Wayne
Amelia Pflieger, High Ability, Dual Credit, Advanced Placement and Internship Manager, GEAR UP Fort Wayne.

Jim Giovannini, Owner/Author, Academic Tutoring and Test Prep
Yuval Trachtenberg, Vice President of School Partnerships, Academic Tutoring and Test Prep

31. HOW TO STAY OUT OF PRISON BY KNOWING YOUR FINANCIAL REGULATIONS!

Federal grant compliance is complicated! Have you ever wondered, “Is that an allowable cost?” Or “Where do I find the regulation to support this financial decision?” Or the dreaded, “Could that cause an audit finding?!” This interactive session fosters a deeper understanding of federal regulations and promotes effective fiscal management.

If you are a GEAR UP stakeholder making financial decisions and want to be audit-proof, this session is for you. Participants will leave with actionable insights and a renewed commitment to leveraging federal funds responsibly to create lasting positive outcomes for GEAR UP students. Attendees are guaranteed to sleep better at night, stay out of prison, and learn to utilize the knowledge of other GEAR UP administrators through the GEAR UP Back-Office-Operators (GU BOO) peer-learning network.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand the federal grant compliance regulations all GEAR UP grants must follow. (2) Articulate and define “allowable, allocable, reasonable, and consistent” expenses. (3) Learn how to utilize best practices by connecting with other GEAR UP administrators through a peer-learning network.

Speakers:

Charmaine Chidester, EAC Director of Grants, Eastern Arizona College
Durice Wallace, Grant Contract & Fiscal Manager, Tennessee Higher Education Commission
Laura Negron, Associate Director, Operations & Development, GEAR UP Kentucky

32. INFLUENCING YOUR DISTRICT THROUGH SEL

Coordinators, administrators, and evaluators, join us for an engaging session that unravels the influence of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) – the secret sauce for personal growth, effective communication, and conquering the academic adventure! Discover ways to integrate SEL into your mentoring program so mentees not only survive but thrive personally and academically.

It's mentorship like you've never seen before – dynamic, impactful, and downright fun! Dive into the art of behavior management, where balance and awareness will reset your students and create well-managed classrooms. Don't miss out on this SEL experience! Join us and turn learning into a captivating journey filled with new friends, laughter, and growth.

Learning Objectives: (1) 5 SEL Competencies: develop specific skills to contribute to students' emotional well-being and positive social interactions, which are essential for personal growth, effective communication, and success in school and postsecondary life. (2) Difference Makers: incorporate social emotional learning into your mentoring program to create supportive environments for mentees to grow personally and academically with guidance from their mentors. (3) Balance Check and Reset: establish a well-managed classroom that supports effective teaching and learning while fostering a positive and respectful environment for all students.

Speakers:

Alexandra Martinez, GEAR UP Social Emotional Coach, Jubilee Academies
Eva Reyna, Senior Principal, Jubilee Academies
Shareika Jones, GEAR UP Social Emotional Coach, Jubilee Academies
Kassandra Placencio, GEAR UP Social Emotional Coach, Jubilee Academies

33. MIDDLE SCHOOL SETS THE STAGE FOR GEAR UP SUCCESS ... AND SAVING THE WORLD

Far too often we see academic growth in eleventh grade, but because students are starting so many years below grade level, GEAR UP graduates can have permanent math and reading deficits. GEAR UP is the only program in the U.S. that has the power to focus on closing precise, essential skill gaps gradually, six years in a row.

While schools are understandably preoccupied with safety, emotional, family, gender, and other world issues, GEAR UP has the power to change academic destiny. This highly engaging session illustrates the unique power of adaptive, supplemental, core skills scaffolding.

Learn how a very special GEAR UP program has harnessed the power of middle school with immediate sixth grade impact. Model, personalize and adopt the three tenets (Academic Prep, College Aspiration, and College Entry) of GEAR UP academic success so your program has measurable impact for six consecutive years. Students above grade level in eleventh grade can save the world.

Learning Objectives: (1) Combine Academic Prep, College Aspiration, and College Entry to achieve academic success six years in a row. (2) Select a scaffolded, grade, level, and subject appropriate supplemental essential skills curriculum. (3) Model your program to eliminate math and reading deficits.

Speakers:

Charlotte Rainey Parham, Associate Professor, School and District Leadership, University of Central Arkansas

David Waldherr, Founder, Cambridge Educational Services

34. MISSION ACCOMPLISHED: REACHING ALL STUDENTS THROUGH 1:1 SUCCESS PLANS

In this interactive session, a large GEAR UP grant in rural Appalachia shares a process and the 1:1 Success Plan used to maximize mentoring relationships and to heighten student progress toward post-secondary goals. This systematic approach for completing the Success Plans with ALL junior and senior students started with a professional development summit to empower GEAR UP leaders to engage students.

Discover how this process was implemented to complete structured conversations and transition staff from “naming and claiming” to “monitoring and moving” students. This comprehensive program spurred effective collaboration with high school counselors and admin that led to meeting GEAR UP, as well as, state objectives and performance measures. By providing tailored resources and support to students, based on the data collected, these mentoring meetings were designed to catapult students across the finish line. Mission Accomplished: Imagination and Dreams were Fueled; Possibilities Magnified!

Learning Objectives: (1) Discuss benefits of having a structured approach to mentoring meetings with individual students. (2) Examine methods for compiling the data generated by the process. (3) Evaluate 1:1 success plan and determine application to the needs of other grants.

Speakers:

Dara Evans, Program Manager-IHE Success, Partners for Rural Impact

Anita Anglin, Program Manager-IHE Success, Partners for Rural Impact

Lillian Norris, Program Manager-Academic Achievement, Partners for Rural Impact

Rebecca Issacs, Program Manager-Academic Achievement, Partners for Rural Impact

35. MIXING METHODS IN PROGRAM EVALUATION

In this discussion, we will share how we have used qualitative and quantitative methods in complementary ways to answer GEAR UP’s primary evaluation questions. Designed for evaluators, this session will walk

participants through our process of using qualitative methods to better understand how GEAR UP functions, as well as student and staff views on the types of experiences that led to students' development of key outcomes.

We will then explain how these qualitative findings informed our design of the quantitative methods we used to measure student outcomes and model relationships among program participation and outcome development. Participants will walk away with an understanding of how to design a mixed methods evaluation plan for GEAR UP, as well as how the results of both methods can be valuable to program managers and directors and how these findings can inform work with students.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand how to design a mixed methods program evaluation. (2) Learn how to use qualitative and quantitative methods to inform one another. (3) See examples of qualitative and quantitative data collection tools.

Speakers:

Katie Shoemaker, Evaluation Specialist, CEDER– Michigan GEAR UP
Abbie Barondess, Evaluation Intern, CEDER – Michigan GEAR UP

36. PBL & J: HOW INDIANA GEAR UP SANDWICHES PROJECT-BASED LEARNING WITH OUR “JOURNEY” TO IMPLEMENTATION

Project-Based Learning (PBL) is gaining popularity in light of the engagement crisis of students that has been exposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. However, we know it has been an issue that is long overdue to be addressed. PBL provides a framework to shift our mindset from lectures and worksheets to a hands-on, problem solving, public-facing approach. It has the potential to re-engage both students and teachers in the classroom setting. Beyond the classroom, Indiana GEAR UP has used PBL as a framework for program development and administration, injecting its programs with authenticity, participant voice, and collaboration!

This session will model PBL and explain how Indiana GEAR UP has integrated PBL into our programs through in-school programs, professional developments, and instructional coaching. Participants will evaluate their own programs with the PBL framework and design strategies to empower stakeholders in engaged participation and staff in collaborative project development.

Learning Objectives: (1) Explore the many advantages of implementing Project-Based Learning. (2) Evaluate your own program(s) around the components of Project-Based Learning. (3) Design a Project-Based design around one of your own projects or programs.

Speakers:

Ben Fritch, Regional Director, Indiana GEAR UP
Joshua Faith, Regional Director, Indiana GEAR UP
Jenny Caffrey, Regional Director, Indiana GEAR UP
Lynda Bodie-Fernandez, Program Coordinator, Indiana GEAR UP

37. PRACTICAL AI: REAL-WORLD IMPACTS SEEN TODAY

Come join our session on how Artificial Intelligence (AI) has impacted Anaheim Union High School District, as told by Dr. Tyler Sherman. From large-dataset analysis to practical AI-powered teaching / learning tools, Dr. Sherman shares how their district leverages the eKadence Learning Platform puts configurable AI in the hands of educators.

His session will equip participants to create engaging, supportive, and tailored educational experiences through AI and data analytics. And of course, meet our student AI tutor Skrappy, who not only will support and mentor on subject matter, but also knows everything about the student as a useful aid to keep students engaged.

Learning Objectives: (1) Explore real-time progress analysis for understanding students' academic standing and enabling early interventions. (2) Learn strategies to support struggling students and recognize high achievers using personalized plans that align with frameworks such as Multi-Tiered System of Support and Universal Design for Learning. (3) Discover AI tools for detailed assignment breakdowns, customized learning aids, and career awareness enrichment.

Speakers:

Tyler Sherman, Teacher, Magnolia High School

38. SENIOR SUCCESS LAUNCH

Senior year is full of exploration, preparation and decision making regarding the next steps of a senior's life. GEAR UP grants within the K20 Center created Senior Success Launch to help seniors and families navigate senior year. Through the eKadence course, senior engaged in activities designed around four areas (ICAP, PSIs, Financial Aid, and Family).

We will explore the modules, discuss successes and challenges with implementation, and share overall participation from our seniors. Come to discover the engaging activities within the course and take away ideas that can be adopted for your location.

Learning Objectives: (1) Explore activities within the Senior Success Launch eKadence course. (2) Brainstorm ideas to incorporate activities to support senior cohort students. (3) Create a planning schedule to put activities into practice.

Speakers:

Amber Stokes, Lead Student Experience Coordinator, K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal, GEAR UP for MY SUCCESS

Sheridan Kautzmann, Student Experience Coordinator, K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal, GEAR UP for MY SUCCESS

39. SENIOR YEAR LET'S MAKE IT SLAP... CELEBRATING SENIOR SUCCESS

As we wind up our time with our seniors and their lives become hectic keeping students involved can become more of a challenge. Through this dynamic presentation and discussion we will explore various ways to engage your students at a variety of levels.

The speakers will engage participants in discussions about engaging seniors and recognizing their accomplishments in 3 different areas, College Acceptance, Scholarships / FAFSA, and Graduation, as they prepare for postsecondary education. Attendees will also receive a toolkit with examples of what we did to engage the seniors and to promote postsecondary buy-in.

Learning Objectives: (1) Facilitate student engagement to promote postsecondary buy-in. (2) Assist GEAR UP professionals in developing a senior focused plan that will help to engage and display the accomplishments through the students' final year of high school. (3) Build a toolkit for senior engagement.

Speakers:

Jacob Poletek, College Access Advisor, Wichita State University

Tegan Bonham, College Access Advisor, Wichita State University

40. STUDENT STORIES MAPPED: USING EMPATHY MAPPING FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

Empathy mapping is a well known strategy used by marketing and production companies, but how would this tool work with GEAR UP students? In the fourth year of the program, the Heart of Texas GEAR UP team

harnessed the power of empathy mapping to gain insights into their students' motivations, concerns, and personal experiences both in and out of school.

The speakers will share their experiences and how this tool influenced decision-making and student support strategies. Participants will be guided through the empathy mapping process so they can gain experience that can be applied to their own work.

Learning Objectives: (1) Describe opportunities for implementing empathy mapping in GEAR UP programs. (2) Evaluate the ways in which empathy mapping can contribute to a deeper understanding of students' motivations, concerns and experiences. (3) Explain the practical application of empathy mapping in educational settings.

Speakers:

Kelli Armstrong, GEAR UP Coordinator, Bryan ISD

Brittany Owens, GEAR UP Specialist, Bryan ISD

Wendy Nobles, GEAR UP Specialist, Bryan ISD

Marcia Montague, GEAR UP Co-Director, Heart of Texas GEAR UP

41. THE ALUMNI EFFECT: HOW ALUMNI CAN SHAKE UP YOUR PROGRAM FOR THE BETTER

It can be challenging to gather and implement student feedback – however, we also know that students are heavily influenced by their peers when it comes to meaningful participation. For the last two years, Vermont State GEAR UP has integrated alumni engagement into our program and built a thriving alumni network, including a highly impactful Alumni Advisory Committee.

Learning Objectives: (1) Empower attendees with concepts centered on alumni engagement and youth leadership. (2) Articulate and model effective communications strategies that allow youth to engage meaningfully. (3) Bring an action plan back to your program with you to begin creating your own engagement plan.

Speakers:

Adriana Eldred, Communications and Outreach Specialist, Vermont State GEAR UP

David Richardson, GEAR UP Alumni Intern, Vermont State GEAR UP

42. TOOLS FOR TURNING YOUR GEAR UP PROPOSAL INTO A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ACTION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Just got a new GEAR UP grant and not sure how to get from your approved proposal to a plan for actually delivering services with fidelity? Or need new tools to help you plan and continually improve project services and implementation? This session is for you!

Presenters will share how to utilize the Deming Cycle (Plan – Do – Check – Act) as a tool to plan and monitor delivery of GEAR UP services, identify and address barriers throughout the year, and inform the development of the GEAR UP Annual Performance Report. Attendees will receive process documents, templates and samples of grantwide and district level strategic work plans and reporting tools that can be customized to your project.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand the Deming Cycle process for continuous improvement and how it can be applied to GEAR UP implementation throughout a project year. (2) Review and receive templates and sample processes for creating and monitoring strategic work plans at the district, campus and statewide levels. (3) Discuss processes and tools for using real-time data to identify and address project implementation barriers including sample staff reports and meeting agendas.

Speakers:

Kim Welch, Executive Director, GEAR UP Kentucky, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
Missy Ross, Associate Director, Communications & Outreach, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
Bruce Brooks, Associate Director of Project Planning and Evaluation, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education

3:30 pm-4:00 pm

Exhibit Hall and Raffle Break

4:00 pm-5:00 pm

Concurrent Session, Block 3

43. BOOSTING DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS: POVERTY, MOTIVATION, AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Poverty is the single most significant event impacting education today. As educators and counselors struggle to address the many challenges facing disadvantaged students, key research has shown the impact poverty can have on the brain.

An impact that contributes to behavior and academic challenges our schools are eager to overcome. In this presentation, participants will take a closer look at the effect of poverty on brain function, student motivation, and absorption of knowledge in the classroom. Through activities and facilitated discussions, participants will leave with strategies to help support disadvantaged students in their academic success.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify the impact of poverty and trauma on the brain. (2) Understand the impact of circumstance on motivation, behavior, and academic success. (3) Explore strategies to help change the narrative for students of poverty.

Speakers:

Candy Vera, Educator Outreach Coach, The University of Texas at Austin, Institute for Public School Initiatives

Kelli Taylor, Educator Outreach Coach, The University of Texas at Austin, Institute for Public School Initiatives
Catherine Cantrell, Senior Project Manager, The University of Texas at Austin, Institute for Public School Initiatives

Megan Oberman (Mossman), Senior Field Trainer, The University of Texas at Austin, Institute for Public School Initiatives

Melissa McClatchy, Educator Outreach Coach, The University of Texas at Austin, Institute for Public School Initiatives

44. CULTIVATING SUCCESS: NURTURING A THRIVING CULTURE IN GEAR UP PROGRAMS

Acknowledging that culture manifests in both subtle, unintentional moments and deliberate, impactful events, this workshop explores the pivotal role of leaders in intentionally shaping a healthy culture that drives tangible results within GEAR UP programs. Attendees will delve into the four pillars of culture, unraveling their significance and learning how to apply them effectively.

Drawing inspiration from the innovative approaches of Mississippi Delta GEAR UP and Paradigm Shift, participants will discover creative programming strategies designed to align with and reinforce the desired cultural framework. Whether in the early stages or concluding years of the grant, all attendees will acquire practical tools for identifying positive traits and leveraging them to foster meaningful connections and enhance student retention. Join us for an enriching exploration of the symbiotic relationship between culture and success within GEAR UP programs.

Learning Objectives: (1) What is Culture? 4 elements of culture; defining your program's culture. (2) Who makes up a culture? How to identify the stakeholders in your community; what can stay; what needs to go. (3) How do you influence a culture? Utilize your stakeholders; find influences from other partners outside of your grant.

Speakers:

Bryan Harris, GEAR UP Specialist, Paradigm Shift
Nakisha Watts, Executive Director, Delta State University
Jerrod Murr, Founder and Chief Visionary Officer, Paradigm Shift

45. CULTURA + DINERO = ÉXITO

Do you want to learn how to make talking about financial literacy fun and culturally relevant? Then stop on by to see how we are using our cultural holidays to bring some color, flavor, and fun to financial literacy to our GEAR UP students, families, and educators!

Learn how we have teamed up with other GEAR UP grants, institutions of higher education, financial institutions, and non-profits to bring to fruition financial literacy in our community. Let's talk about our FIESTAS and engage in a fun Loteria!

Learning Objectives: (1) Examine personal habits, strengths, weaknesses, and values when it comes to money with a cultural twist. (2) Explain the role of financial preferences in relationships with others and their culture. (3) Recognize the role GEAR UP can play in Financial Literacy through partnerships and outreach.

Speakers:

Lizeth Olivarez, Education Specialist, Region One Education Service Center
Sonia Flores, Education Specialist, Region One Education Service Center
Esperanza Rodriguez, Education Specialist, Region One Education Service Center
Laura A Salinas-Vasquez, College Access Specialist, Region One Education Service Center
Sandie Mayorga, Educational Specialist, Region One Education Service Center

46. DEVELOPING TEACHER'S STEM IDENTITY IN THE MATH AND SCIENCE CLASSROOM

For more than 30 years, TI has been an active member in math, science, and STEM classrooms, and today is no different. As demand for STEM talent skyrockets, learn how a partnership with TI can support and encourage math and science teachers to integrate STEM-related activities and real-world connections into their daily instruction.

Learn how to equip your districts with technology-rich resources to ignite students and motivate them to pursue high-need, high-wage career pathways. We look forward to discussing roadblocks and challenges that teachers may have in developing their STEM identities and how we can assist in overcoming them.

Learning Objectives: (1) Discuss possible roadblocks and solutions to incorporating coding in math and science classrooms. (2) Discover resources that can help transform math and science classrooms into STEM classrooms. (3) Engage in fun and easy-to-do coding activities that can be used in math and science classrooms.

Speakers:

Lisa Goddard, Professional Development Coordinator, Eastern Oklahoma State College GEAR UP
Marco Gonzalez, Educational Technology Consultant, Texas Instruments

47. DISCUSSION LAB: THE GEAR UP COMPLIANCE “UNCONFERENCE”

Come ready to participate! Discussion Labs are an opportunity to share, learn, and problem-solve together.

There are so many unique grant administration and compliance issues in GEAR UP that it is challenging to focus on just one topic to explore. This “unconference” is a unique meeting format, where the agenda and topics to discuss will be entirely driven by the participants. No pre-set agenda will be in place.

We will encourage attendees to nominate topics for discussion, then gather in small groups to take a deep dive into the GEAR UP compliance issue of your interest. This loosely structured and facilitated process is designed to group people who share a common interest in a specific administration or compliance issue.

Learning Objectives: (1) Connect with others who share a mutual interest in a topic. (2) Collaboratively problem-solve around common challenge. (3) Explore effective practices that enhance grant compliance.

Speakers:

Alex Chough, President, NCEP

48. DON'T FORGET ABOUT ME! WHY COLLEGE ACCESS MUST INCLUDE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In this discussion, presenters will highlight how GEAR UP Virginia is working to improve the college going rates and success of students with disabilities in their cohort and priority population through their Level Up Virginia website and GEAR UP Transition documents.

Attendees will learn about the laws governing K-12 and Higher Education for individuals with a disability and some common barriers to enrolling in college and graduating from college. They'll hear about the personal impact of these laws and barriers from a recent college graduate. Then, they will be able to practice planning for an event by including intentional supports, programs, or resources for students with disabilities. Attendees will know why collaboration is so important in improving retention and success rates for this special population, and how GEAR UP can be a great place to start collaborating.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn about the recent data trends for students with disabilities in K-12 and Higher Education and hear from a recent college graduate on their experiences in K-12 and Higher Education. (2) Synthesize the data presented to recognize similar trends in your program and / or state. (3) Identify ways to better support students with disabilities in your program through collaboration and intentional program planning.

Speakers:

Sarabeth Dreis, GEAR UP Virginia Regional Manager, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

Emma Donovan, College Access Communications Specialist, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

49. FAMILY FORWARD: NURTURING FAMILY ENRICHMENT AND GROWTH FOR EMPOWERED LIVES

This immersive workshop aims to provide a comprehensive blueprint encompassing the integration of adult education, workforce readiness, personal growth opportunities, and the fostering of a college-going mindset within the realm of parenthood and family enrichment.

This session is specifically tailored to offer an insightful overview of how supporting opportunities for parents and guardians to grow significantly impacts and shapes the college-going mindset of their students. Through a detailed exploration, we'll illustrate how parental personal development, career readiness, and continuous growth directly influence and inspire the educational aspirations and success of their children, fostering a culture of higher education within the family.

Learning Objectives: (1) Attendees will identify and assess different avenues for parental growth in education and career development that can help foster a deeper understanding of the benefits of higher education for their children. (2) Attendees will identify specific resources in the community for workforce training, personal enrichment classes, parenting skill development, and other adult education offerings to support family empowerment goals. (3) Attendees will examine the short and long-term positive impacts that continuous personal growth and development of soft skills can have on family dynamics and children's educational outlook.

Speakers:

Jonathon Vasquez, Family & Financial Advocate, Vanguard Academy
Barbara Gonzales, GEAR UP Director, Vanguard Academy

50. GEAR UP-4-SUCCESS: A CURRICULAR APPROACH TO PREPARE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR POSTSECONDARY SUCCESS

As part of core student services, GEAR UP Kentucky developed and is delivering a specialized course to equip GEAR UP high school students to successfully transition to and through postsecondary education whether learning in the classroom or online.

In this interactive team presentation, participants will view and experience GEAR UP-4-Success, an adaptable, research-based curricula developed specifically by GEAR UP for GEAR UP. Each grade level is organized into five units designed to prepare students financially, academically, culturally, emotionally and socially for successful postsecondary transition. Attendees will understand the purpose, partnerships and process for developing adaptable curricula for GEAR UP students; experience a sample classroom lesson; receive resources to implement online curricula and discuss strategies for implementation in various formats.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand the purpose, partnerships and process for developing adaptable curricula for GEAR UP students. (2) View online curricula and experience a sample classroom lesson. (3) Discuss strategies and receive tools for implementation in various formats.

Speakers:

Kim Welch, Executive Director, GEAR UP Kentucky, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
Laura Negron, Associate Director, Operations & Development, GEAR UP Kentucky
Jessica Lester Mullis, District Program Manager, GEAR UP Kentucky

51. HOPE: CULTIVATING A PATHWAY TO A BETTER FUTURE

This session will explore use of the Children’s Hope Scale to cultivate feelings of hopefulness among West Virginia GEAR UP students, who face challenges from limited broadband Internet to an uncertain economy and opioid abuse that has increased placements in foster and kinship care. The scale annually measures hope among students, parents, and guardians, using questions about their beliefs in their ability to build and sustain progress toward long-term goals.

Evaluators and program staff will learn how West Virginia GEAR UP uses these findings to emphasize students’ sense of belonging, college and career interests, and perceptions of GEAR UP. Participants will answer questions from the Hope Scale and learn how West Virginia GEAR UP program staff and the external evaluator work together to support robust analysis of the data. Through hands-on activities, participants will brainstorm ideas for changing the landscape of hope for GEAR UP students and develop hope-building activities to take back with them.

Learning Objectives: (1) Recognize why it is important to cultivate hope. (2) Describe how hope is measured and what we know about hope in GEAR UP students so far. (3) Generate ideas for cultivating hope in GEAR UP students’ nationwide.

Speakers:

Lesli Taylor, Assistant Director of Research & Evaluation, WVHEPC - West Virginia GEAR UP
Lauren Kennedy, Research Analyst, ICF

52. LET'S MAKE IT WORK! MAKING STUDENT PROGRAMMING ATTAINABLE, DATA-DRIVEN, AND EQUITABLE

Discover how Multi-Tiered System of Support as a framework can support in creating equitable student programming. Key benefits to using the Multi-Tiered System of Support Framework include: specific and attainable program goals, efficient resource allocation, promote school site collaboration, data informed and equitable programming.

Learn how to apply Multi-Tiered System of Support to your programming and practice creating goals that are productive towards meeting your grant objectives. Attendees will gain access to an online resource folder with templates and resources for the future.

Learning Objectives: (1) Define the Multi-Tiered System of Support Framework. (2) Identify key benefits to using the Multi-Tiered System of Support Framework for programming. (3) Apply the Multi-Tiered System of Support framework to student programming examples.

Speakers:

Jocelyn Jaime, Asssitant Director, California State University Long Beach GEAR UP

Dominica Scibetta, Assistant Director, California State University Long Beach GEAR UP

53. MAKING EDUCATION WORK FOR STUDENTS: DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNICAL SKILLS, 21ST CENTURY SKILLS AND VOICE

Education must work for students and not the other way around. How do we move from a traditional, standardized test environment to one that prepares students for a global economy and careers that don't exist yet?

In this interactive presentation, Anaheim Union High School District and California State University, Fullerton GEAR UP will share methods and structures focusing on three key student drivers: 21st century skills, technical skills, and voice and purpose, and the systems in place to measure the growth and attainment of these drivers. The connection between these drivers and college, career, and life success will be discussed.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand, implement, and measure the 5 Cs (Collaboration, Communication, Critical Thinking, Creativity, and Character/Compassion) as it relates to college, career, and life success. (2) Understand, implement, and measure Civic Engagement and its impact on preparing students for the future of work. (3) Understand Career Technical Education Pathways and bridging the metrics and skills needed for college, career, and life readiness.

Speakers:

Joshua Bilbrew, Director, California State University, Fullerton GEAR UP

Amanda Bean, Director of Career Preparedness Systems Framework Implementation, Anaheim Union High School District

Mike Switzer, ELA Curriculum Specialist, Anaheim Union High School District

Amy Kwon, Director of Innovative Programs and Instructional Systems, Anaheim Union High School District

Jaron Fried, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, Anaheim Union High School District

Michael Matsuda, Superintendent, Anaheim Union High School District

54. POWER OF DATA TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS

Onward We Learn is Rhode Island's most comprehensive college readiness and success organization and serves students from middle school to postsecondary. In this session, we will explore how we utilize data to make informed decisions about our students and their families as they navigate and shape their identities toward a more probable postsecondary pathway.

We will present metrics that highlight our learning strands and explain how we leverage these numbers to offer comprehensive programming to both parents and students, ensuring their holistic development. Directors and administrators will gain insights into using these practices and models to foster a post-secondary pathway culture within their families, contributing to the enhancement of both their programs and home environments.

Learning Objectives: (1) Explore how to tailor programming using a tagging system through case management & programs to ensure the right services are provided to students and families. (2) Leverage data to ensure that programs help to develop well-rounded individuals. (3) Apply those data points to make data informed decisions regarding students and families to establish long term postsecondary goals.

Speakers:

Victor Montanez, Project Manager, Onward We Learn

Erin Twomey-Wilson, Evaluation and Research Specialist, Onward We Learn

55. POWERFUL PARTNERSHIPS: FAFSA EDITION

As the famous quote states, “It takes a village to raise a child.” While the origin of this popular reference may not necessarily have GEAR UP in mind, we believe that powerful partnerships with our school systems contribute to the success of our students.

The benefits of a well-oiled partnership are endless, especially when it comes to student success. It’s no surprise that having partners in education helps provide a more well-rounded support system for all students and families. However, the more difficult challenge is for organizations to actually retain and enact those partnerships during the busy school year. Join us as we take a deep dive into how ParterCorps and GEAR UP SOAR partnered together to achieve FAFSA completion.

Learning Objectives: (1) Explore the capacity of cross-collaboration between organizations to maximize the quality of student services. (2) Identify ways to actively seek multi-partner initiatives. (3) Engage and plan strategies to cultivate organizational relationships and partnership.

Speakers:

Kaitlyn Miller, Program Manager, Partners for Rural Impact

Tammie Sanders, Volunteer Services Navigator, Partners for Rural Impact

Safia Sykes, Project Director, GEAR UP SOAR, Partners for Rural Impact

56. REACH HIGHER WITH COMMON APP: HELPING STUDENTS SHOOT FOR THE MOON

Reach Higher was founded in 2014 by former First Lady Michelle Obama to build a college-going movement and inspire first-generation and low-income students to continue their education past high school and obtain a postsecondary degree. In 2019, Common App united with Reach Higher to reach more students who might not otherwise think about college and to bring more joy to the college admission process.

Each year, more than one million students apply to college through Common App’s online application. In 2023, Common App launched its Next Chapter with a moonshot goal of closing its equity gap in low- and middle-income students applying to college by 2030.

Learning Objectives: (1) Discuss innovative ways to remove barriers, advise, and celebrate students on their postsecondary journey. (2) Learn how to use data insights and key national, state, and district partnerships to help all students access, afford, and attain higher education.

Speakers:

Meredith Lombardi, Director-Education and Training, Common App
Amani Manning, Engagement Associate, Common App
AuBriana Busby, Program Manager- Student and Family Engagement, Common App

57. TECH TRIUMPH: GEARING UP TO EMPOWER OUR STUDENTS IN IT SUPPORT FOR FUTURE CAREER

This presentation aims to empower GEAR UP staff in establishing an IT Support program for high-risk students, particularly focusing on engaging young men of color. The goal is to inspire them to pursue STEM careers, specifically in computer networking and support. By implementing collaborative teaching methods that create an inclusive learning environment, participants will gain insights into fostering passion and confidence in students from diverse backgrounds.

The focus is on bridging the gap between IT support skills and overall career and life skills, offering practical strategies to nurture a sense of belonging and facilitate success in the tech industry. The session explores how fostering inclusivity in IT education can positively impact underrepresented students, enabling them to thrive in the dynamic tech landscape with the potential for lucrative careers.

Learning Objectives: (1) To encourage first generation and historically marginalized students to pursue computer science as a career and de-stigmatize STEM careers. (2) To provide students with career and life skill opportunities through creating a resume, building soft skills, and being hired for an internship. (3) To provide students with the necessary foundation to be college and career ready with experience in a lucrative field where they may also choose to major in college.

Speakers:

Christine Scafidi, STEM and Workforce Development Coordinator, GEAR UP Massachusetts
Rachelle Lappinen, Coordinator, MassEdCO
Casey Duva, Teacher, Worcester North High School

58. TELL IT IN TWENTY

GEAR UP program personnel and vendor partners across the country employ myriad strategies to increase parental and family engagement to increase student success, but rates of parental involvement remain low. Based on previous research, parents reported that they would be more likely to participate in parental programming if team members would connect with them considering their time constraints and establishing a sense of family/community (Peters, 2014).

This workshop will introduce “Tell it in Twenty”, a strategy to engage small groups of parents (3-5) to participate in 20-minute on-line sessions where team members share student accomplishments and GEAR UP goals and outline how families can assist. In the 20-minute session, family members/caregivers are encouraged to share student accomplishments that our team may not know. This strategy will increase the sense of community, build trust with program staff, and provide time flexibility for families.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn how to set up small groups and develop lesson plans so that the “Tell it in Twenty” strategy is easily replicated. (2) Develop scripts to use to invite family members to participate in the groups and eventually, in GEAR UP on-site activities. (3) Engage in role play to reinforce the “Tell it in Twenty” strategy for increasing parent engagement.

Speakers:

Glori Peters, GEAR UP Coordinator, University of North Florida
Sophie Filibert, Associate Professor, Counselor Education, University of North Florida
Stephanie Oliver, GEAR UP Director, Duval County Public Schools

59. TELL ME I'M LEARNING WITHOUT TELLING ME I'M LEARNING: EXCAVATING FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT!

Understanding the excavation process for what brings students to high levels of engagement and unearths the gold mine of relationship building and building student potential can be daunting! Discover tools and strategies to meet and equip students in creating their roadmap to success.

Join us for an “all hands on deck” engaging collaborative session that will provide you the tools you need for your archaeological hunt and lead you through the different parts of student engagement exploration. This session is intended for anyone who works directly with students and wants to dive deeper into best practices and strategies that work and produce results!

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand the landscape and threats to student engagement by reviewing the science and research. (2) Identify the successes and challenges you currently experience with engaging students. (3) Engage in revealing what unlocks student potential and motivation to inspire, engage and execute best practices in developing successful student journeys.

Speakers:

LeAnna Wilson, Vice President of Partnerships, Student Success Agency

EJ Carrion, Chief Executive Officer, Student Success Agency

Jana Burd, GEAR UP College Coordinator, Nevada System of Higher Education

Jairon Castellanos-Boteo, GEAR UP & Recruitment & Access Center Senior Coordinator, Nevada GEAR UP / Truckee Meadows Community College

60. VITAMIN C WORKED FOR ME: ENHANCING GEAR UP PROGRAMS WITH A DOSE OF CLIMATE, CULTURE, AND COLLABORATION

Calling all middle school and new GEAR UP programs! Having a hard time trying to figure out where to start? Need ideas and collaborative efforts to vamp up and improve your GEAR UP program? Join the College Driven GEAR UP team as we share some of our best practices, resources, and activities as a new GEAR UP program.

During this interactive session coordinators, program directors and family advocates will identify or re-examine your campus climate and learn more about creating an impactful culture, which will increase collaboration amongst all stakeholders that play a major role in the success of your program.

Learning Objectives: (1) Climate: Establish and execute a clear vision for successful middle school GEAR UP programs and beyond. (2) Culture: Examine and create ways to build GEAR UP culture on middle school campuses. (3) Collaboration: Discover and implement effective ways to establish collaborative relationships with community partners.

Speakers:

Calvin Green, Project Director, College Driven GEAR UP

Chatney Mercer, Family & Financial Advocate, College Driven GEAR UP

Michael Green JR., Site Coordinator, College Driven GEAR UP

Jasmine Williams, Site Coordinator, College Driven GEAR UP

61. WHY LEAD? SOWING THE SEEDS OF EDUCATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY STUDENTS: OVERCOMING THE FIXED MINDSET

What do schools do when GEAR UP is gone? In this collaborative learning experience, participants will develop an understanding of how and why promoting a sustainable school culture is necessary to continue the momentum of the GEAR UP partnership and how it is linked to school improvement and student achievement.

Participants will review key research on school culture sustainability, teacher leaders, and the train-the-trainer model and how these ideas can support school improvement and student achievement. Participants will then view and reflect on first-hand testimonials from teachers who have participated in the Leading Educators in Authentic Development (LEAD) program. These LEAD participants will share how this experience has supported and empowered them to take on a leadership role in their schools and how they have grown as teachers. Participants will then consider their GEAR UP partnerships and how coordinators might create and implement a LEAD program in their partner schools.

Learning Objectives: (1) Develop an understanding of how a sustainable school culture of authentic teaching and learning is linked with school improvement. (2) Explore and reflect on the Leading Educators in Authentic Development (LEAD) program. (3) Generate solutions to creating and sustaining a LEAD program in schools.

Speakers:

Shelby Blackwood, Professional Development Coordinator, K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal, University of Oklahoma

Bailie Cobble, Professional Development Coordinator, K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal, University of Oklahoma

Tuesday | July 23

7:00 am-5:00 pm

Registration & Information Booth Open

7:30 am-8:45 am

Networking Breakfast

9:00 am-10:15 am

Tuesday Morning Plenary

More information coming soon.

10:15 am-11:00 am

Networking Break & Raffle in Exhibit Hall

11:00 am-12:00 pm

Concurrent Sessions, Block 4

62. ACTIVATING PARTNERSHIPS: SYSTEM-WIDE SUPPORT FOR CAREER PATHWAYS

Educators from the Anaheim Union High School District will share how activating the coordination efforts of school administrators, counselors, teacher leaders, GEAR UP, and other key stakeholders, increases student participation in, and completion of, Career Technical Education pathways.

Participants will learn how dedicating space for collaboration meetings, the implementation of innovative master scheduling, robust opportunities for counselor professional development, and leveraging community resources and partnerships supports student success in Career Technical Education pathways in high school and beyond.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn how to leverage school administrators, counselors, teacher leaders, and other key stakeholders to increase student participation in and completion of Career Technical Education pathways. (2) Discover how school site master schedule and counseling professional development can help ensure that students' academic plans are driven by their own voice and purpose. (3) Learn how to utilize partnerships with community colleges and universities to develop career pathways that extend beyond high school to college and career success.

Speakers:

Joshua Bilbrew, Director, California State University, Fullerton GEAR UP

Scott Reindl, Coordinator of 21st Century Career Readiness, California State University, Fullerton

Amanda Bean, Director of Career Preparedness Systems Framework Implementation, California State University, Fullerton

Rachel Nankervis, Assistant Director, California State University, Fullerton GEAR UP

63. ARIZONA SUMMER CAMP: TOO HOT TO HANDLE

To our students, GEAR UP is the program that sets them on a path to become their future selves and a residential summer program on a college campus allows them an opportunities to visualize and experience a college-like experience.

The Arizona GEAR UP Lumberjack Leadership Summit has been a program for students to challenge, develop and explore who they are while providing them with unique opportunities, time away from home, postsecondary pathway exploration, and memories to last a lifetime. In this session, participants will begin to formulate a successful summer experience, learn to navigate potential unknowns, and strategize on a blueprint for future GEAR UP summer experience success.

Learning Objectives: (1) Explore participant demographics to formulate a successful summer experience that meets student needs but also GEAR UP goals and objectives. (2) Identify and discuss tips and tricks to help navigate potential unknown variables related to families, logistics and site coordination. (3) Strategize and create a blue print for future GEAR UP summer experience.

Speakers:

Jasmine Dean, Program Manager, Northern Arizona University GEAR UP

Andrea González Sotelo, Assistant Director, Northern Arizona University GEAR UP

64. BEYOND GRADUATION: GEAR UP 28 AND HEIGHTS CAREER TECH CONSORTIUM SHAPING THE FUTURE WORKFORCE

"Beyond Graduation: GEAR UP 28 and Heights Career Tech Consortium Shaping the Future Workforce" – an electrifying session that goes beyond the ordinary! Buckle up for an exhilarating ride as we blend captivating presentations, riveting case studies, and a dynamic group activity.

Expect an engaging discussion on fostering partnerships between educators, industry leaders, and policymakers. Picture this: a hands-on workshop where attendees collaborate to design personalized career pathways, leveraging the power of GEAR UP and Career Technical Education. Experience crafting strategies that resonate with students' passions, making education a thrilling journey towards meaningful employment.

This presentation is a must-attend for educators, administrators, and stakeholders passionate about empowering students beyond graduation. Join us as we explore how GEAR UP and Heights Career Tech Consortium shape the future workforce, paving the way for a brighter tomorrow.

Learning Objectives: (1) Evaluate: Assess the effectiveness of GEAR UP and Career Technical Education integration in fostering student engagement and preparedness for future careers. (2) Apply: Practice hands-on techniques for designing personalized career pathways within the GEAR UP and Career Technical Education framework, exploring innovative strategies to address diverse student needs and aspirations. (3) Collaborate: Engage in interactive group activities to simulate real-world scenarios, fostering collaboration among educators, industry leaders, and policymakers in creating a dynamic ecosystem for student success beyond graduation.

Speakers:

Jasmine Arnold, College and Career Readiness Advisor GEAR UP 2028, Cleveland Heights-University Heights/College Now Greater Cleveland

Carmen Daniel, Business and Community Engagement Specialist, Heights Career Tech Consortium

65. DISCUSSION LAB: DIRECTOR'S SUMMIT FOLLOW UP

This session is only for those who attended the 2024 GEAR UP Directors' Summit in Chicago.

Come ready to participate! Discussion Labs are an opportunity to share, learn, and problem-solve together.

The GEAR UP Directors' Summit had three goals: building relationships and new connections, providing peer support and consultation, and collaborative problem-solving of common challenges. Let's continue the conversations!

Learning Objectives: (1) Re-connect with attendees of the 2024 GEAR UP Directors' Summit. (2) Reflect on your experience and key takeaways from the Summit. (3) Review the collaborative problem-solving frameworks and discuss solutions.

Speakers:

Dana Beck, Director of Practice, NCCEP

66. DON'T START FROM SCRATCH: COLLEGE PREP THAT IS READY-TO-GO

Who has the time to develop student workshops from scratch? “Student workshop” is a broad term which includes topics focused on academics, colleges and careers, leadership, social-emotional skills, financial aid and literacy, among others. This broadness means that a lot of time can be spent developing materials to present to students.

Why not use NCCEP’s research-based Career & College Clubs ready-to-go activities? Come and learn about program and activities, various implementation strategies, and about the evaluation efforts from Pennsylvania State GEAR UP. Additionally, participants will have the chance to examine the evaluation findings and discuss them in small groups. Participants will leave with potential implementation plans and how they can create similar retrospective surveys for their schools and grant.

Learning Objectives: (1) Discuss various ways to implement the Career & College Club activities. (2) Describe how a retrospective survey can be used to evaluate activities. (3) Examine results of an evaluation of implemented Career & College Club activities.

Speakers:

Kelly Pappas, Director of Career & College Clubs, NCCEP

Christy King, Internal Evaluator/Associate Director, Pennsylvania State GEAR UP

Amber Kelly, Program Manager, Pennsylvania State GEAR UP

Marcio Vargas Sejas, Research Associate, FHI 360

67. GEAR UP AND RPPS: HOW YOU CAN USE RESEARCH TO SUPPORT YOUR GRANT

University partnership GEAR UP grants may benefit greatly from collaborating in research-practice partnerships with graduate students in the social sciences fields (e.g., education, psychology, sociology). Research-practice partnerships (RPPs) are long-term collaborations between researchers and educational stakeholders that intentionally shift power dynamics within research for the purposes of equitable improvement and transformation within education.

Collaborating with graduate students presents an opportunity for GEAR UP directors to acquire programmatic support, and assistance with data analytics and program evaluation at a set cost outlined by the university. In this workshop you will learn about how RPPs can support the evaluation of your grant’s impact and progress. Attendees will also participate in a hands-on activity designing a logic model for assessing their grant’s goals and outcomes.

Learning Objectives: (1) Discover research-practice partnerships: what they are, who they involve, and how they can support your grant. (2) Learn about an example of a GEAR UP research-practice partnership involving graduate student research. (3) Create a logic model for evaluating your grant’s goals, resources, services, and outcomes.

Speakers:

Ashlee Belgrave, Graduate Student Researcher, University of California, Irvine Center for Educational Partnerships

Rodolfo Acosta, GEAR UP Director, University of California, Irvine Center for Educational Partnerships

68. GEAR UP ALUMNI PANEL: USING STUDENTS’ LIVED EXPERIENCES TO INFORM PROGRAMMING

GEAR UP alumni hold an exceptionally unique perspective of how GEAR UP programming can hone its focus to produce better outcomes. Their lived experiences, challenges, and successes can be dramatically impacted by the people they meet and the programming they participate in.

Join the GEAR UP Alumni Association for a panel of alumni from across the country discussing the topic of mobilizing student voices to shape the services grants deliver.

Learning Objectives: (1) Expand their understanding of what GEAR UP students need to be successful after the grant. (2) Collaborate with other GEAR UP professionals to brainstorm effective practices. (3) Engage directly with alumni in a candid format to hear honest feedback and suggestions about what grants can do to equip their students with lifelong tools.

Speakers:

Casey Weld, Executive Director, GEAR UP Alumni Association
Nicholas Mathews, Board President, GEAR UP Alumni Association
Timenee Thomas, Board Member, GEAR UP Alumni Association

69. LOCAL ROOTS, GLOBAL REACH: EMPOWERING RURAL STUDENTS FOR GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Let's connect our rural students with the larger world, exploring how to prepare them for a globally competitive marketplace. Learn how a partnership between Participate Learning and Appalachian GEAR UP transformed our students' awareness of global issues, empowering them to problem-solve and tackle complex projects locally and globally from their classroom.

Hear from teachers engaged in this work and the partnering organizations, how to unlock profound learning experiences that encourage our students to think deeper about the world, take action to make it better, and become better prepared for future careers.

Learning Objectives: (1) Participants will understand the relationship between rural communities and global challenges outlined by the United Nations. (2) Participants will learn how to engage in service partnerships that engage and benefit both organizations. (3) Participants will learn how educators are implementing this framework to engage students, broaden their perspective and appreciation of other cultures as well as empathize with growing and changing needs of the human population.

Speakers:

Doug Thompson, Associate Director GEAR UP, Appalachian GEAR UP
Maggie Murphy, Global Leaders Strategy Coach, Participate Learning
Freebird McKinney, Director of Partnership Development, Participate Learning

70. LOOKING BACK TO MOVE FORWARD: LESSONS LEARNED FROM A GEAR UP PARTNERSHIP GRANT

This panel session aligns with Maya Angelou's quote, "Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better." GEAR UP coordinators experience unique challenges throughout the grant cycle. Immediately following grant approval, organizers must plan to secure vendors, budget, collect data, and make informed program decisions. These challenges can be beneficial when viewed as learning opportunities for making proactive future decisions.

Panelists will share challenges and successes they have encountered during the first 6 years of a GEAR UP partnership grant, serving 5,000 students. Discussion will align with session objectives and explore how program coordinators can: (a) engage in data collection and analysis to promote continuous improvement; (b) develop college and career summer programs; and (c) foster partnerships with various stakeholders to embrace a college-going and career ready culture. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask related questions.

Learning Objectives: (1) Explore ways to leverage data to promote a culture of data informed decision making and continuous improvement. (2) Develop diverse and multifaceted programming that supports

students' unique college and career goals. (3) Foster partnerships with a variety of stakeholders to build and sustain a college and career ready culture for students and families.

Speakers:

Gregory Samuels, Co-Principal Investigator, GEAR UP Jefferson County
Tiffany Dukes, Associate Director, GEAR UP Jefferson County
Amy Samuels, Co-Principal Investigator, GEAR UP Jefferson County
Chrystal Abernathy, Project Director, GEAR UP Jefferson County
Fallon Brantley, Associate Director, GEAR UP Jefferson County
Alvin Taylor, Principal Investigator, GEAR UP Jefferson County
Cassie Raulston, Co-Principal Investigator, GEAR UP Jefferson County

71. MENTORING THE FUTURE: STRATEGIES FOR FIRST YEAR SUCCESS

The first year in college can be an exciting and uneasy transition. This workshop aims to explore and discuss tools that KAN transition first year students from surviving to thriving. KAN, Ke Ala Na'auao, is a first year program that supports GEAR UP first year students at any of the University of Hawai'i campuses. Presenters will highlight successful strategies that have helped students persist including thoughtful nudges, mentor-developed events, and one-on-one check-ins.

Beyond traditional roles, this relationship becomes a reciprocal learning experience because as the mentor is still navigating their own college experience, they discover valuable insights through this mentorship, making it a transformative experience for both parties. Participants will walk away with tools and strategies to utilize mentors as a retention strategy for both the mentees and mentors as well as receive training strategies to equip mentors with this important role.

Learning Objectives: (1) Explore tools and strategies that has helped first year students persist through their first year. (2) Discuss the role peer mentors play in a student's first year of college. (3) Examine the impact of peer mentoring on the mentors.

Speakers:

Katrina Abes, First Year Student Support Manager, GEAR UP Hawai'i
Mariel Limos, Peer Mentor, GEAR UP Hawai'i
Theresa Mae Pacada, Peer Mentor, GEAR UP Hawai'i
April Cacdac, Peer Mentor, GEAR UP Hawai'i

72. PATHWAYS TO PROGRESS: PARENTS DRIVING PROGRAM ENGAGEMENT AND COLLEGE-GOING MINDSETS

In this interactive workshop, we delve into the pivotal role parents play in advocating for programs, fostering involvement, and facilitating a growth / college-going mindset within families. We explore strategies to empower parents as advocates, encouraging active participation and nurturing a supportive environment for family development.

Attendees will gain insights, practical tools, and actionable steps to harness the power of parental advocacy for program success and holistic family growth.

Learning Objectives: (1) Examine tools and resources to facilitate parental involvement in program planning and implementation. (2) Synthesize the acquired knowledge and formulate personalized strategies to overcome common barriers to parental involvement and advocacy in programs. (3) Equip attendees with actionable strategies to involve parents effectively in program advocacy and involvement.

Speakers:

Jonathon Vasquez, Family & Financial Advocate, Vanguard GEAR UP
Barbara Gonzales, GEAR UP Director, Vanguard GEAR UP

73. PATHWAYS TO UNLOCK YOUR SUMMER POTENTIAL IN GRADES 9-12: DUAL ENROLLMENT FOR STUDENT SUCCESS TOOLKIT

Unlocking the potential of summer dual enrollment is within reach for all. We'll delve into national trends, defining dual enrollment and its benefits and pitfalls. Our focus will be on summer models, ensuring flexibility, tailored courses, and robust support services.

Join us as we explore how these programs can transform high school students' educational experiences and prepare them for college life. Plus, attendees will receive a comprehensive toolkit, equipping them to implement these programs effectively within their grant objectives. Throughout the discussion, we'll explore various models for dual enrollment, providing insights into customization for different student populations and program settings.

Learning Objectives: (1) Explore the benefits students gain from participating in comprehensive summer dual enrollment programs, including early exposure to college admissions processes, access to student support services, opportunities for leadership development, and the acquisition of life and executive functioning skills essential for college success. (2) Discuss program structures using strategic, logistical, and financial planning techniques to maximize student and family engagement, strengthen community partnerships, and create pathways for academic and career advancement. Identify lessons learned with implementing summer dual enrollment programs and develop strategies to address those effectively. (3) Examine how summer dual enrollment initiatives contribute to building stronger community partnerships between high schools and partner colleges. Analyze the importance of establishing relationships, fostering trust, and meeting support match requirements. Additionally, identify and explore opportunities for family engagement in supporting students through their dual enrollment experiences.

Speakers:

*Kaara Koplowitz, GEAR UP Program Director - Meriden, Connecticut State Community College Middlesex
Megan Houlihan-Aceto, GEAR UP Director, Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education*

Ondri Enwerem, Program Coordinator, Naugatuck Valley Community College / Waterbury District High Schools / GEAR UP program

Juliana Juliana, Social Emotional Learning and Summer Program Coordinator, GEAR UP Meriden

74. PAVING THE WAY TO COLLEGE PREPAREDNESS

The University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley JumpStart program offers incoming freshmen a unique academic and social experience that leads to student academic success. Students enrolled in the program are immersed in a supportive five-week academic program designed to assist students in meeting Texas's College Readiness standards while accessing and utilizing resources at the university level.

JumpStart provided students with the opportunity to collaborate with campus coordinators, faculty, peer mentors, academic advisors, and highly qualified tutors to create a learning environment conducive to achieving their college preparedness goals. University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley GEAR UP partnered with the university departments of Student Success, housing, food services, P-16 Outreach, and Testing Services, Academic Advisement Center to facilitate the process. The program resulted in better preparing students for the fall semester, receiving housing scholarships, student involvement, and employment opportunities.

Learning Objectives: (1) Prepare students for academic rigor of post-secondary education. (2) Develop student social and emotional skills. (3) Develop student study skills.

Speakers:

*Diana Carcano, Academic Content Coach, University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley GEAR UP
Jacqueline Garza Lara, M.S. Counseling, La Joya ISD GEAR UP*

75. PUT AWAY THE CHECKBOOK, COME GET FREE TEXTBOOKS! INDIANA GEAR UP'S GUIDE TO YEAR 7 ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

Just as our students are settling into college, they are faced with the challenge of paying for a long list of textbooks. More often than not, scholarships and financial aid don't cover these materials and students are left with an expensive bill. Through a textbook library program, we are supporting the needs of year seven students while increasing student engagement beyond textbook meetings.

Join Indiana GEAR UP in a collaborative session for College Access Advisors and Program Coordinators with group discussion, brainstorming exercises, and guided reflection to investigate opportunities to engage students in year seven. Participants will utilize handouts, real world examples, and role playing scenarios to explore how we operate a textbook library program and design components for their year seven programming. Attendees will take away knowledge about creating a textbook library, skills to more deeply engage students after high school, and resources for large-scale engagement efforts.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify methods GEAR UP programs are using to engage students in Year Seven programming. (2) Explore how Indiana GEAR UP developed and operates a Textbook Library Program. (3) Design and construct engagement and textbook library components for your program.

Speakers:

Tabitha Cinowski, Director of Operations, Purdue University Indiana GEAR UP
Brooke Stafford, College & Career Specialist, Indiana GEAR UP

76. SCHOOL'S OUT, NOW WHAT? COLLEGE AND CAREER PLANNING ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Career exploration opportunities help young people to envision life after high school. They feed their imaginations for what their future could hold, serving as a bridge for planning and acquiring skills that will support their college and career endeavors.

In this session, participants will take part in a model career exploration activity developed for current GEAR UP O+K=C students that introduces them to a variety of careers, their average salaries, and the educational pathways for those careers. This activity has been used with several hundred high school students and has increased their awareness of the many post-secondary options available. After experiencing the model activity, participants will then collaborate with one another to begin planning an activity that meets a need they see for their cohort students.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand the need for explicit college and career planning activities for students. (2) Explore a ready-made career and college planning activity for students. (3) Begin planning an activity to meet a specific college readiness need of your cohort students.

Speakers:

Laura Halstied, Social Studies Curriculum Specialist, K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal
Patricia McDaniels-Gomez, Professional Development Coordinator, K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal

77. SELF-EFFICACY BELIEFS: LESSONS FROM FACTOR ANALYSES

In this discussion session, we will describe how our measurement of students' college-going self-efficacy and self-efficacy for self regulated learning not only provided useful measures of students' development of these outcomes, but also provided insights into how our students are thinking about these concepts. Specifically, we will share results from factor analyses that illustrate self-efficacy dimensions.

These dimensions serve both evaluators and program coordinators and managers by providing insights into how students think about their own self-efficacies. Participants will leave the session with an understanding

of how factor analysis can help them understand how students' self-efficacy beliefs evolve over time, and how they might consider different factors at different stages of their schooling when thinking about self-efficacy. Participants will also see our self-efficacy survey instrument and hear a brief overview of how we developed its sub-dimensions.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand how factor analysis can provide insights into how students think about self-efficacy beliefs. (2) See our self-efficacy survey instruments and hear how we constructed and refined them for use with our GEAR UP students. (3) Learn about the nuances of how our students think about their own self-efficacy beliefs through a discussion of sub-dimensions of these outcomes.

Speakers:

Katie Shoemaker, Evaluation Specialist, CEDER

Abbie Barondess, Evaluation Intern, CEDER – Michigan GEAR UP

78. STEMAGINATION...IGNITING CURIOSITY IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Rural communities face numerous challenges when it comes to STEM education including limited staff and resources. To counter these challenges, four rural schools joined forces to host STEM Family Nights. This event brought together surrounding industries, colleges, and universities to provide hands-on activities and inspire students' interests in STEM. In this interactive session, our team will share how we collaborated as four different rural schools to develop, plan, and execute successful STEM Family Nights. We will provide resources we compiled and an outline we developed so that attendees can implement their own Rural STEM Family Night.

By attending, you can expect to gain: (a) an outline and steps to organize and execute a STEM Family Night at your campus; (b) a list of ideas for various institutions, community partners, and programs from higher education institutions that can attend your event; and (c) examples of activities and equipment you can use to make your STEM Family Night a success.

Learning Objectives: (1) Share tips to help your campus create a STEM family night that not only engages families in STEM but also contributes to the overarching goal of preparing students for success in postsecondary education. (2) Develop a plan to include technology, activities and local resources, such as businesses, universities and organizations that can support students in pursuing STEM education beyond high school. (3) Explore equity issues in STEM education and careers, how can we encourage underrepresented groups to explore opportunities in STEM.

Speakers:

Beatriz Valenzuela, GEAR UP STEM-CTE Specialist, GEAR UP: Pathways to the Future

Rosanna Gomez, GEAR UP Facilitator, GEAR UP: Pathways to the Future

Yesica Castillo, GEAR UP Facilitator, Lyford ISD, GEAR UP: Pathways to the Future

Cristobal Vela, GEAR UP Facilitator, San Isidro ISD, GEAR UP: Pathways to the Future

Amando Cantu, GEAR UP Facilitator, Brooks County CISD, GEAR UP: Pathways to the Future

79. STUDENT CAREER CONVERSATIONS WITH INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS: A PEER TO PEER MODEL

In partnership with Belmont University and the Martha O'Bryan Center, Stratford High School is implementing career readiness and social capital curriculum via a peer-to-peer model to equip students with 21st century skills and increase equity.

The 8-step, scaffolded framework founded on 13 years of research guides students through industry and career exploration and relationship mapping exercises for students to reach out and have career conversations with an adult in the professional world. Student outcomes include increasing student's confidence related to professional verbal and written communication and feeling less anxious about the future.

Presenters will share a case study highlighting best practices and lessons learned on how this curriculum empowers students to cultivate agency in their career exploration, increase professional communication skills, and level the playing field.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn a researched scaffolded, step-by-step method that provides students the permission, guidance, and accountability to explore and increase their social capital. (2) Identify best practices for implementing social capital curriculum via a peer to peer model. (3) Understand how social capital curriculum creates equity for students from different backgrounds and how it can be replicated at other high schools.

Speakers:

Mark Photivihok, GEAR UP Specialist, GEAR UP Nashville / Metro Nashville Public Schools
Marieli Rubio, Partner and Director of Impact, Career Launch

80. THE LITERACY LEGACY: A STORY OF PROMISING PARTNERSHIPS, INSPIRING INNOVATION, AND SIGNIFICANT OUTCOMES

As the 21st Century catapults toward a STEM-saturated career landscape, literacy is deprioritized until it is too late. However, Region One GEAR UP, with dedicated community partners, has designed a literacy initiative that has recaptured the strength of writing to empower students on their postsecondary journeys.

In this session, participants will learn about recent legislative changes and why the need for captivating admission essays for underrepresented students has increased. Workshop presenters will also share how Region One GEAR UP has connected with local partners to establish an ongoing literacy initiative that evolved over middle and high school and equips students with literacy skills for their future selves. Through varied hands-on activities, participants will engage in the student experience of using writing to share their story to establish their own legacy in a changing world.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand the changing climate of college entrance requirements and the challenges presented to underrepresented students. (2) Examine the timeline and structure of initiative implementation process. (3) Participate in activities to gain experience in college admissions essay and scholarship writing.

Speakers:

Rachael Sanchez, Education Specialist, Region One Education Service Center
Amanda Cardoza, Content Specialist, Region One Education Service Center
Macarena Hernandez, Journalist and Educator

81. USING SEM IN YOUR GEAR UP EVALUATION: A CASE STUDY OF STUDENT ASPIRATIONS AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

High school students' college aspirations and parent involvement are two key predictors of whether students will apply and go to college (Gong & Toutkoushian, 2023; Jaiswal & Choudhuri, 2017). Understanding the factors associated with both student aspirations and parent involvement can help practitioners develop more effective programming.

During this session, we will share an example of how we used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) within our GEAR UP evaluation. We will highlight how SEM can be used to examine the associations between student college aspirations and parent involvement. We will share our findings outlining how participation in GEAR UP services and student academics have direct and indirect impacts on student aspiration and parent involvement. Attendees will engage in a facilitated discussion and small group activity to unpack the research findings and translate the data into actionable interventions and strategies to inform GEAR UP programming.

Learning Objectives: (1) Use structural equation models to explore dynamic relationships within GEAR UP (e.g., college aspirations and parent involvement). (2) Use student and parent data to inform your programming decisions. (3) Translate quantitative evaluation findings into actionable interventions and strategies.

Speakers:

Meghan Ecker-Lyster, Director of Research, Evaluation, and Dissemination, University of Kansas

Sabrina Gregersen, Associate Researcher, University of Kansas

Joanna Full, Associate Researcher, University of Kansas

12:15 pm-1:00 pm

Networking Lunch

1:00 pm-2:00 pm

Tuesday Luncheon Plenary

More information coming soon!

2:30 pm-3:30 pm

Concurrent Sessions, Block 5

82. 2-4-6-8 WHO DO WE APPRECIATE! CULTIVATING A CULTURE OF APPRECIATION IN YOUR GEAR UP PROGRAM

The last few years have been pretty tough. Even though we gave our all to overcome the pandemic, we sometimes feel unappreciated and lose focus on the things that matter. So let's change that! Come learn how GEAR UP Kentucky's simple request sparked a culture of appreciation that spread throughout their partner schools.

During this interactive session, participants will learn how to set up and execute a staff and/or student appreciation experience. We will learn the importance of being "greatful." (We meant to spell it that way.) Come to this session to laugh, possibly cry (sorry) and learn how to pay it forward and show them exactly who we appreciate.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand the importance of highlighting the effort and accomplishments of educators and students in your program and the impact such recognition has on the overall success of your students and the relationship with your partner schools. (2) Learn how to set up and execute a staff / student / parent appreciation experiences in various sizes and scale and brainstorm how to implement them in their respective programs and schools. (3) Recognize the impact COVID has had on the mental health of students and staff and the culture of your partner schools, and the need to address that trauma in order to accomplish the goals and mandate of your GEAR UP program.

Speakers:

Missy Ross, Associate Director, Communications & Outreach, GEAR UP Kentucky, Council on Postsecondary Education

Carlos Ojeda Jr., Creative Force & CEO, CoolSpeak

83. CAMPUS NEXUS: CRAFTING AN IMMERSIVE RESIDENTIAL EXPERIENCE FOR HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARS

Crafting an immersive residential experience for high school scholars transitioning to college is a multifaceted endeavor that demands careful planning and thoughtful execution. This abstract explores key elements integral to designing such a program, encompassing academic, social, and personal development aspects.

The foundation of our approach lies in fostering a supportive and intellectually stimulating environment. Academically, we propose a curriculum that blends core subjects with hands-on projects, encouraging critical thinking and collaborative problem-solving. Tailoring coursework to align with college-level expectations equips students with a head start, instilling confidence in their academic abilities. The residential aspect is not solely about academics; it extends to cultivating a holistic growth experience. We emphasize the importance of a diverse and inclusive community, where students from various backgrounds can interact and learn from one another.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understanding the Academic Transition: gain insights into the academic expectations and challenges that high school scholars may face when transitioning to a college environment; learn strategies to design a curriculum that not only aligns with college-level standards but also fosters critical thinking and collaborative learning. (2) Building a Supportive Community: explore the importance of creating a diverse and inclusive residential community to enhance the overall learning experience; acquire

methods for promoting social engagement through team-building activities, mentorship programs, and workshops, fostering connections that contribute to a positive and supportive environment. (3) Promoting Holistic Personal Development: discover the significance of integrating life skills and personal development workshops into the residential program to prepare high school scholars for the challenges of college life; learn how to address aspects such as time management, effective communication, and resilience, ensuring that students develop the necessary skills for success both academically and personally.

Speakers:

Monae Bispham, GEAR UP Coordinator, Richland School District Two, Central Carolina Consortium GEAR UP Project

L. Nicole Williams, GEAR UP Project Director, Central Carolina Consortium GEAR UP

84. CELEBRATING 25 YEARS! GET READY FOR NATIONAL GEAR UP WEEK

In 1999, the first GEAR UP grants were awarded. Twenty-five years later, the program has grown to serve over half a million students annually. To continue growing this critical college access and success program, we must ensure everyone knows that #GEARUPworks!

Enter: National GEAR UP Week, the GEAR UP community's week of advocacy. The biggest misconception about advocacy is that it simply means calling your member of Congress. Advocacy is tweeting out photos from college visits. Advocacy is hosting an event to celebrate the success of your GEAR UP students. Advocacy is informing leaders that GEAR UP is essential to your community. Advocacy is celebrating National GEAR UP Week!

Attend this session to learn more about aligning your GEAR UP Week programming with national advocacy efforts and getting your leaders (locally and nationally) to become GEAR UP champions. This session is for anyone planning to celebrate National GEAR UP Week.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify ways to celebrate GEAR UP in your communities. (2) Explore techniques to share the #GEARUPworks message. (3) Align your local programming to the national event.

Speakers:

April E. Bell, Director of Constituent Relations, NCCEP

Rakia Hassell, Manager of Communications & Public Relations, University of Montevallo, GEAR UP Jefferson County

Jessica Lilly, Communications Manager, Concord University, GEAR UP Southern West Virginia Partnership

Luis González, Associate Director of Communications and Engagement, NCCEP

85. COLLEGE APPLICATIONS SIMPLIFIED: PREPARING STUDENTS EARLY WITH SCHOOL-BASED EVENTS

Recent research from ACT has highlighted the importance of school-based college preparation supports for students and their self-reported preparedness for college. Specifically, students say they wanted more information to assist them with exploring college majors and future careers, finding good-fit colleges, and more direction on how to prepare the college application materials.

In this session, ACT's American College Application Campaign and myOptions Encourage will explore college match and fit activities to ensure students create a healthy college list in preparation for application season. Oregon GEAR UP will share how its program implemented the available toolkits and curriculum to improve the college planning process for Oregon students.

Learning Objectives: (1) Use data-informed practices to better understand students' postsecondary planning process. (2) Discuss how to support college application events and college list building activities at high schools. (3) Use students' college preparation experiences to understand why K12 / higher education collaborations are important to improve support practices for the college planning process.

Speakers:

Lisa King, Director, American College Application Campaign, ACT's Center for Equity in Learning
Melissa Caperton, Senior Director of Education Programs and Partnerships, myOptions
Adrienne Enriquez, Project Director, Oregon GEAR UP

86. CYCLE STARTER: YEAR 7 GEAR UP COLLEGE STUDENTS LOOK BACK AND LOOK FORWARD

First generation college students are often challenged by a lack of financial resources, academic preparedness, and cultural conflicts between home and the college community. Through our work evaluating GEAR UP programs, we have learned that college access and success is a multidimensional issue, particularly for our students who are first-generation college students from rural Appalachia.

This presentation will discuss social and academic issues, from a combination of data analysis and gleanings from focus groups and interviews with students. Our panel will culminate in a presentation by a GEAR UP success story.

Learning Objectives: (1) Gain a greater understanding of the college going experiences of Appalachian students, learning directly from students' voices. (2) Expand their understanding of college access, college readiness, and college success. (3) Learn how an evaluation focus can guide program development and improvement.

Speakers:

Judy Kim, Lead Evaluator, Evaluation Consulting Group
Wendy Nealy, Senior Evaluator, Evaluation Consulting Group
Chase Carson, Founding Director, Unity Allies

87. DISCUSSION LAB: EXPLORING TIME AND EFFORT

Come ready to participate! Discussion Labs are an opportunity to share, learn, and problem-solve together.

Despite every GEAR UP grantee having established procedures for documenting staff time and effort, very few programs are perfectly satisfied with their approach. On one hand, we need to ensure that time and effort procedures conform with federal compliance and audit expectations, and on the other, we need to ensure that the process isn't so challenging that they aren't overly burdensome to our teammates.

This Discussion Lab is designed to create an open forum where attendees can share their procedures, discuss best practices, and learn from the successes of others.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn how other grantees manage their time and effort procedures. (2) Problem-solve around common challenges. (3) Explore promising practices that help gain efficiencies.

Speakers:

Alex Chough, President, NCCEP

88. EDUCATING WITH PERSPECTIVE: INTEGRATING CULTURE

Culture is an important consideration in the design of student-centered learning environments. Studies show that students are better supported in taking control of their learning when teachers create an environment that recognizes cultural perspectives from outside the classroom. How does GEAR UP support schools to educate with perspective and integrate culture?

In this session, participants will explore the benefits of recognizing students' cultural backgrounds, learn inclusive classroom strategies, and devise a plan on how to incorporate a cultural framework fostering a culturally aware, safe, and respectful learning environment.

Learning Objectives: (1) Participants will explore and identify the benefits and advantages of acknowledging students' cultural backgrounds in various school settings. (2) Participants will learn and discuss practical strategies and techniques for creating an inclusive school environment that acknowledges and respects students' cultural backgrounds. (3) Participants will create an implementation plan to acknowledge students' cultural backgrounds in their own school.

Speakers:

Mariana DeLoera, Lead Social Studies Curriculum Specialist, K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal

Samaya Williams, Lead Math Curriculum Specialist, K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal

89. EXPOSE, EXPERIENCE, EXCEL: UNVEILING THE E3 PLAN FOR POSTSECONDARY SUCCESS WITH SPECIAL POPULATIONS

In this engaging session, we delve into the significance of affording students with disabilities the opportunities they need to navigate a successful transition to college, career, and life. In this session, we will explore the 5-year plan Region One GEAR UP created for a successful transition for students with disabilities. By breaking down barriers and providing self-advocacy and awareness, we have created pathways that ensure all students successfully transition to life after high school.

Through a formal lecture and small group discussion, participants will gain a better understanding of how to create an equitable educational landscape. This workshop will shed light on the wide array of opportunities and resources that GEAR UP can provide to assist in student transition to life after high school. Attendees will explore strategies that promote self-advocacy, family involvement, and the power of partnerships.

Learning Objectives: (1) Participants will gain a comprehensive understanding of the unique challenges faced by students with disabilities during the transition after high school. (2) Participants will explore evidence-based strategies to ensure effective transition planning for all students. (3) Participants will understand key components of transition frameworks for students with disabilities including legal considerations, individualized planning, and partnership supports.

Speakers:

Vanessa Salazar, Education Specialist, Region One Education Service Center

Ricardo Lee Lopez, Director, Region One Education Service Center

90. FINANCIAL EDUCATION REIMAGINED THROUGH STORYTELLING

In partnership with Minneapolis College, GEAR UP Minnesota created a culturally relevant and trauma-informed financial literacy course for students pursuing a postsecondary opportunity. The curriculum utilizes the power of stories to teach students about key financial concepts and decision-making. The curriculum fosters self-compassion and promotes a growth mindset about coping with personal or family financial circumstances.

Students study case vignettes incorporating day-to-day money issues, followed by guided decision-making activity. As they participate, students learn financial concepts, skills, and how to maintain a growth mindset when wrestling with finances. The vignettes are true stories rooted in the experiences of current and GEAR UP alumni. This innovative course design and development approach ensures content is relevant, culturally anchored, and engaging and supports student postsecondary success.

Learning Objectives: (1) Discuss creating consequential partnerships between GEAR UP, colleges and universities, and the local community. (2) Guiding students through financial literacy from a compassionate

to growth mindset approach. (3) Leveraging technology to create accessible courses to ensure meaningful learning experiences.

Speakers:

*Veronica Deenanath, Manager for Program Innovation and Research, Minnesota Office of Higher Education
Shaneka Flournoy, Financial Aid Specialist, Minneapolis Community and Technical College
Dung Mao, Founder and CEO, Storyloon, LLC*

91. GEAR UP WORKS! 20-YEARS' WORTH OF EVIDENCE

In this presentation, GEAR UP team members will share the findings from the 20-years' worth of research, and qualitatively and quantitatively evaluate the effects of GEAR UP on traditionally underrepresented students' educational outcomes such as academic, behavioral, and social outcomes.

The first section of the presentation will discuss the findings from a systematic review of thirteen studies that investigated the effect of GEAR UP and specific activities that were positively associated with students' educational outcomes. The second part of the presentation will further support positive effects of GEAR UP via evidence from a meta-analysis.

This presentation will be informative to GEAR UP directors and evaluators in that it provides an overarching picture of various educational outcomes GEAR UP yielded in the past two decades. Furthermore, the findings from the research will provide pedagogical insights on which GEAR UP activities are closely correlated with educational outcomes.

Learning Objectives: (1) By the end of the session, participants will be able to describe the overall effectiveness of GEAR UP on the participating students' academic, behavioral and social outcomes. (2) By the end of the session, participants will be able to identify at least two activities that have positive correlations with GEAR UP outcomes. (3) By the end of the session, participants will develop initial plans that include GEAR UP activities that present positive correlations with student outcomes.

Speakers:

*Haemin Kim, Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Houston, Heart of Texas GEAR UP
Marcia Montague, GEAR UP Co-Director, Heart of Texas GEAR UP*

92. HOW TO CREATE SUSTAINABLE STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS THAT SUPPORTS EXPANDABILITY

This hands-on workshop will help GEAR UP grantees take a closer look on leveling up partnerships and build community activities that benefit all stakeholders. The GEAR UP Newark location at New Jersey Institute of Technology of the New Jersey State partnership has had success for over thirty years in creating and maintaining strong active community partners. Two of those partners have been Clara Maass Medical Center, and the Latino Action Network Foundation.

These relationships have fostered leadership development opportunities, provided access to resources that affect the entire family, and served as a pipeline of stem and leadership careers for our students. The overall goal for participation is to explore practices that explore the creation, expansion, and sustainability of strategic community partnerships and its potential for impact for the GEAR UP community.

Learning Objectives: (1) Gain insight from a thirty-year program in a thorough discussion on actual partnerships that highlight both conceptual and practical examples of activities and their impact, including a candid discussion on strategies for overcoming challenges. (2) Observe program staff discuss methods in creating partnerships that benefit both groups and allow for annual planning strategies. (3) Participate in peer review exercises and build annual planning strategies. (4) Identify ways to expand and elevate partnerships with community partners that build a supportive community.

Speakers:

Maria Andrade, Site Director, New Jersey GEAR UP State Project, New Jersey GEAR UP@ New Jersey Institute of Technology, Newark, New Jersey Location
Dr. Mary Ellen Clyne, President and Chief Executive Officer, Clara Maass Medical Center
Dr. Jesselly De La Cruz, Executive Director, Latino Action Network Foundation

93. MEASURING GEAR UP'S LONG-TERM IMPACTS: FINDINGS FROM FOUR STATE'S SUPPLEMENTAL GRANTS

In 2021, nine state grants were awarded a supplemental grant to evaluate secondary and postsecondary service impacts on college enrollment and persistence. Join Maine, Ohio, Oregon, and Pennsylvania as they share initial highlights, insights, and lessons learned from their respective studies.

During this panel presentation, each panelist will share their methodology, interpretations of the findings, key takeaways, and note key challenges and opportunities of tracking postsecondary enrollment and persistence. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask the panelists questions about their approach and findings regarding GEAR UP's relationship to postsecondary enrollment and persistence.

Learning Objectives: (1) Examine the various methodologies grants have used to understand GEAR UP's relationship to postsecondary enrollment and persistence to be able to implement similar methods to track postsecondary success. (2) Describe the findings of the analyses by the different grants and how they are increasing the understanding of GEAR UP. (3) Describe the challenges and opportunities of tracking postsecondary enrollment and persistence for five years.

Speakers:

Christy King, Internal Evaluator/Associate Director, Pennsylvania State GEAR UP
Felix Fernandez, Principal Research Scientist, FHI 360
Debbie Gilmer, GEAR UP Maine Project Director, GEAR UP Maine
Carlos Bing, Director, College Access Programs, The Ohio Department of Higher Education
Julia Alemany, Senior Associate, Metis Associates
Julie Jaramillo, Director of Data Insights & Evaluation, Xcalibur
Sara Silver, New York State Higher Education

94. NAILED IT! A RECIPE FOR DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING AN ENGAGING CURRICULUM

Finding curriculum that is challenging and engaging for students can be a daunting task. In this session, participants will explore essential phases of curriculum development such as planning, content, methods, and implementation. Attendees will receive useful hands-on activities and material that are student tested and approved.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify strategies and tools necessary to create a challenging and creative curriculum and curriculum map. (2) Discuss how to adapt these strategies to succeed within any GEAR UP program. (3) Engage in hands-on learning curriculum activities and ideas.

Speakers:

Mari Lovell, Education Coordinator, Eastern Oklahoma State College GEAR UP
Chanease Armstrong, Education Coordinator, Eastern Oklahoma State College GEAR UP
Amanda Woodley, Education Coordinator, Eastern Oklahoma State College GEAR UP

95. RESTRUCTURING CAREER EXPLORATION FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLERS USING THE APPRECIATIVE ADVISING FRAMEWORK

This workshop showcases how the Appreciative Advising Framework can empower students to discover, dream, and design their futures. Learn how Long Beach GEAR UP implemented the framework to inspire a three part workshop series, culminating into a college and career student showcase.

Attendees will brainstorm creative and realistic ways to incorporate the Appreciative Advising Framework into their programming. Resource packets and activity sheets will be provided.

Learning Objectives: (1) Define the three phases of the Appreciative Advising Framework. (2) Identify how to apply the Appreciative Advising Framework into college and career exploration programming. (3) Explore ways to incorporate the Appreciative Advising Framework into your current programming.

Speakers:

Ruthie Mendez, Student Success Coach, California State University, Long Beach GEAR UP

Patricia De Leon, Student Success Coach, California State University, Long Beach GEAR UP

Jocelyn Jaime, Student Success Coordinator, California State University, Long Beach GEAR UP

96. THE POWER OF EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION: A GEAR UP SWV AND TUTOR.COM SUCCESS STORY

This session includes an insightful session looking at how GEAR UP Southern West Virginia and Tutor.com overcame challenges to maximize our vendor partnership. An unexpected partnership twist occurred when Tutor.com secured a parallel deal with the state library system, leading to a redundancy in services.

We will outline the practical steps taken to turn this unforeseen development into an opportunity to provide students with essential academic tutoring and college readiness services, looking at how we fostered adaptability through a culture of resilience and creativity.

Discover how we harnessed existing resources, channeled them into joint initiatives that realigned our shared goals, and implemented strategic decision-making processes that redefined our partnership. Key takeaways will highlight the role of open communication in resolving complexities and strategies for GEAR UP programs to strategically turn setbacks into growth opportunities. Expect valuable insights into strategic planning and adaptability.

Learning Objectives: (1) Gain insights into practical strategies for transforming unforeseen challenges into opportunities within vendor partnerships. (2) Learn how to strategically harness existing resources for joint initiatives. (3) Discover the key components of open communication, strategic planning, and cultivating a resilient culture to enhance collaboration in GEAR UP programs and vendor relationships.

Speakers:

Kristen O'Sullivan, Director, GEAR UP Southern West Virginia, Concord University

Dan Howarth, Executive Director, Educational Partnerships, The Princeton Review / Tutor.com

97. THE RURAL GEAR UP TOOLBOX: LESSONS LEARNED FROM GEAR UP NEW HAMPSHIRE

This session will showcase examples of successful programming in rural areas that enabled students to expand their college knowledge. Over the past seven years, GEAR UP New Hampshire has worked to overcome geographic challenges presented by serving primarily rural school districts.

Participants will leave with a variety of potential interventions, such as Mini-Fairs, College Access Conventions, leveraging national service, etc., to bring back to their rural communities. Throughout the GEAR UP New Hampshire interventions, we will connect them back to a challenge facing rural communities. The

session will end with a resource share and brainstorming discussion. This will allow for questions and give the opportunity for rural practitioners to lift up challenges and solutions for discussion.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn about rural interventions for GEAR UP Programs. (2) Learn about challenges and opportunities facing rural communities. (3) Discuss solutions in a group setting for challenges in your local rural community.

Speakers:

Aarron Dupuis, Director of Community Impact, New Hampshire GEAR UP Alliance

MaeAnna Edwards, Director of Postsecondary Access and Success, New Hampshire GEAR UP Alliance

Ciaran Farley, Scholars Program Coordinator, New Hampshire Scholars Program at Campus Connect

98. UNLOCKING BRIGHT FUTURES: BUILDING STUDENTS' CAREER READINESS THROUGH MENTORING AND INTERNSHIPS

Participants will learn how the Anaheim Union High School District and California State University, Fullerton GEAR UP partner to develop a high-quality mentoring and internship program aimed at increasing students' career preparedness by linking career pathways and local workforce needs.

In addition, participants will understand how this partnership helps to empower students to take the lead in their own career exploration journey. Participants will leave with applicable ideas for developing high-quality career mentoring and internship programs aligned with industry needs, as well as materials such as business partner recruitment letters, sample internship agreements, and more.

Learning Objectives: (1) Develop strategies for collaborative educational planning that integrate career pathway completion, content-area learning, as well as career mentoring and internships. (2) Identify and discuss strategies for developing a work-based learning program, including business outreach, career event planning, and implementing internships. (3) Explore curriculum to help students seek their own career conversations and internship opportunities.

Speakers:

Joshua Bilbrew, Director, California State University, Fullerton GEAR UP

MJ Cooke, District Intramural Director of Educational Services, Anaheim Union High School District

Scott Reindl, Coordinator of 21st Century Career Readiness, California State University, Fullerton

99. WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER: LEVERAGING RESOURCES THROUGH EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION

Participants in this session will have the opportunity to hear from professionals from a GEAR UP partnership grant, State grant, and a TRIO program. This interactive session will highlight how these programs created and maintained sustainable partnerships and programming in Clark County.

This session will include a guided discussion on the "We Are All In This Together" concept and an exploration of practical strategies used between the three programs both individually and collectively. Participants will walk away with several takeaways and job aids that can be implemented in their respective programs.

Learning Objectives: (1) Summarize the collaboration between GEAR UP, TRIO, and community partners and how it led to sustainable programming in several middle and high schools in a large urban school district. (2) Demonstrate strategies used to acquire and sustain partnerships to help enhance college readiness programming at middle/high schools. (3) Describe current and potential resources and the strategic plan to ensure sustainability of some of the resources beyond the program being in the schools.

Speakers:

Rebecca Rogers, Director-UNLV GEAR UP, UNLV/CAEO
Cicely Morgan, Assistant Director for Educational Talent Search, UNLV/CAEO
Jana Burd, GEAR UP College Coordinator, Nevada System of Higher Education

100. YOU WIN, WE WIN... WE ALL WIN WITH BUY-IN!

Using buy-in to get key stakeholders in the game is a win-win for students! This session explores why program buy-in is essential and how leveraging relationships with teachers, administrators, and parents can be a powerful strategy in achieving this buy-in. Presenters will engage attendees in small / whole group discussions and activities to explore and strategize how to cultivate stronger rapport with stakeholders.

Calling all site coordinators, family engagement specialists or anyone interested in building buy-in and college culture on your campus. Let's team up and leave with resources that help us champion our program goals and objectives through campus and community outreach! Securing program buy-in is crucial for achieving alignment, commitment, and positive outcomes for the success and impact of GEAR UP.

Learning Objectives: (1) Engage and plan strategies to cultivate a stronger rapport with stakeholders. (2) Leverage existing relationships to create buy-in for your GEAR UP program. (3) Champion your program goals and objectives through campus and community outreach: Community→ on campus and off campus relationships. Advocacy→ Educating others about the importance of the program. Determination → Don't let no stop you. Find another way to reach the goal. Supporting existing events→ prevents GEAR UP from feeling like one more thing they have to do.

Speakers:

Treeca Clear, Site Coordinator, Region 10 ESC
Arabrian Poole, Site Coordinator, Region 10 ESC
Lori Pickett, Site Coordinator, Region 10 ESC
Alexis Wasson, Site Coordinator, Region 10 ESC
Brittney Hervey, Site Coordinator, Region 10 ESC

3:30 pm-4:00 pm

Exhibit Hall and Raffle Break

4:00 pm-5:00 pm

Concurrent Sessions, Block 6

101. BUILDING TEAM STRUCTURES 100 MILES APART

In this panel, staff will learn how to effectively build and maintain strong working team dynamics across multiple GEAR UP sites, no matter the distance. We will review structures, streamline forms of communication, and address potential challenges.

Learning Objectives: (1) Implement effective program planning. (2) Build strong team dynamics. (3) Communicate effectively.

Speakers:

Stephanie Hartfield, GEAR UP Director, Wonderful College Prep Academy

Rebecca Bernal, GEAR UP Coordinator, Wonderful College Prep Academy

Rosario Olmos, GEAR UP Coordinator, Wonderful College Prep Academy

Luis Favian Luis Favian, GEAR UP Coordinator, Wonderful College Prep Academy

102. DEEP DIVE INTO DESIGN THINKING

In this hands-on session, learn how students at GEAR UP Lufkin MS App Camp in Texas used the design thinking process to create mobile apps. Experience the design thinking process from a student's perspective and hear from GEAR UP Coordinator Robbie Kuykendall and MAD-learn CEO Alefiya Master how to integrate design thinking in any content area.

You'll explore engaging, low-prep design-thinking activities you can take back to your classroom and use immediately. Need something fun and engaging to kick off the school year? These interactive lessons are great to introduce (or refresh) the design thinking process with your students.

Learning Objectives: (1) Gain a deeper understanding of the design thinking process. (2) Engage in interactive design thinking activities. (3) Brainstorm ways to use design thinking in your classroom.

Speakers:

Alefiya Master, CEO, MAD-learn

Robbie Kuykendall, GEAR UP Coordinator, Lufkin ISD

103. DISCUSSION LAB: RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM AND ROUNDTABLE

Come ready to participate! Discussion Labs are an opportunity to share, learn, and problem-solve together.

The Research Symposium will provide an opportunity for small groups to engage in roundtable conversations with research and evaluation professionals from the GEAR UP community. Learn about the research they have been conducting in the field, discuss how similar studies could be designed for your context, and ask questions about research design, methodology, and implications.

Learning Objectives: (1) Connect with research and evaluation professionals in the GEAR UP community. (2) Share, learn, and problem-solve together about conducting research studies in GEAR UP contexts. (3) Learn about best practices in the field related to research and better understand how the findings of the studies could have implications for future programming.

Speakers:

Jackie Mania, Director of Research and Evaluation, NCCEP

104. EMPOWERING TOMORROW'S LEADERS: A STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP PROGRAM MODEL FOR GEAR UP PROJECT

After struggling with various iterations of student leadership initiatives that were not driving student participation or demonstrating measurable results, GEAR UP Kentucky redesigned its program into an integrated approach designed to engage students at each level of leadership. Building upon research showing effective leadership development strategies promote persistence to graduation and improved academic performance, the expanded program is tailored to foster active student engagement, cultivate and celebrate leadership skills, and instill a sense of empowerment among GEAR UP Kentucky students.

In this interactive session, participants will learn how GEAR UP Kentucky moved from a highly structured program with limited participation to a robust, inclusive program aimed at identifying and engaging potential student leaders and empowering student voice. Program staff will present successes and barriers to implementation and share student stories. Attendees will receive materials to support building their own program.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn how GEAR UP Kentucky transformed a student ambassador and peer mentoring program into an inclusive Student Engagement and Leadership Program at the district and state levels. (2) Receive materials and templates to support the implementation of a student engagement and leadership program. (3) Explore ways to integrate aspects of the student engagement and leadership program into programs.

Speakers:

Laura Negron, Associate Director, Operations & Development, GEAR UP Kentucky

Mason Doyle, Project Specialist, Operations & Development, GEAR UP Kentucky - Council on Postsecondary Education

Vanessa Moore, District Program Manager - Holmes High School, GEAR UP Kentucky - Council on Postsecondary Education

Amanda Amanda, District Program Manager - Mason County High School, GEAR UP Kentucky - Council on Postsecondary Education

105. FOSTERING THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF FAMILY AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

In this workshop, we will dive into how little things can become the BIG things that will impact your programming. We'll explore different strategies to fit your program needs. Participants will experience a simulation workshop of a student training that includes heavy audience interaction and some material sharing. Be ready to learn from the presenters as well as each other.

Learning Objectives: (1) Finding golden moments in your events to revamp and make your programming standout. (2) Building tradition and culture to engage and maintain your audience. (3) Utilize your team strategically to make the most of your programming.

Speakers:

Pedro Cordoba, Family Outreach/Financial Literacy Manager, Washington State University Tri-Cities

Anahi Trejo, Financial Literacy Program Specialist, Washington State University Tri-Cities

106. GOING CLUBBING: CONNECTING CLUBS TO COLLEGE AND CAREER

In this highly interactive session, GEAR UP site coordinators and educators will explore themes present in research on the value of clubs on college and career readiness and analyze ways clubs can capitalize on these benefits. They will engage in discussions about how different activities centered around life skills can be integrated into the work of clubs. As a result, they will develop an implementation plan for how to integrate curriculum within a club setting.

Participants will become familiar with curriculum available to club sponsors from the K20 Center's LEARN website and have time to develop a plan that could be implemented in their schools. Groups will evaluate

which activities work best with specific clubs. They will collaborate to share ideas and troubleshoot for a successful implementation. Club curriculum provides an opportunity for schools to prepare students in authentic settings for future success.

Learning Objectives: (1) Analyze how club curriculum can impact college and career readiness for students. (2) Evaluate the utility of activities for specific clubs. (3) Develop a plan for using club curriculum within your school setting.

Speakers:

Teresa Lansford, Evaluation and Data Scientist, K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal r, GEAR UP for LIFE

Sherry Franklin, Student Learning Designer, K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal

107. INTRODUCING THE GEAR UP 2 WORK INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The GEAR UP C-CREO mission states: Our youth will possess a career identity, know they are academically prepared for college, and be resilient so they persevere throughout the challenges they encounter. Research proves that future jobs will require more education (especially in the STEM areas), creativity, and problem-solving skills.

Together with our partners, our goal is to develop an “invest in your community spirit” by involving the business community and governmental agencies in internships and job shadowing opportunities. It is important for businesses and agencies to provide participants with the opportunity to take part in meaningful work and to gain skills that will aid them in future education and employment. Therefore, it is important to administer a project-based internship training and development periods to allow an intern to demonstrate ownership and initiative while becoming familiar with the company’s day-to-day operations and business model.

Learning Objectives: (1) Engage and motivate the right businesses. (3) Provide project-building incentives. (3) Develop and implement an intern recruitment process. (4) Implement workforce sessions. (5) Organize project-building activities. (6) Generate an evaluation process.

Speakers:

Kerri Muñoz, GEAR UP Associate Director of Family & Community Engagement, Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office- C-CREO GEAR UP

Maya Donnelly, C-CREO GEAR UP Director, Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office- C-CREO GEAR UP

108. MISSION POSSIBLE: WE DON'T JUST SURVIVE, WE THRIVE

You are meant to thrive, not just survive! It is possible to inspire dreams, create opportunities, and shape the future when we’re equipped with the proper tools, strategies, and processes that help our programs grow and don’t leave us drained.

In this interactive session, you’ll learn best practices for moving your program forward with less stress, increased organization, and systems to make the process more effective. Discover how Loom, Linktree, and Hootsuite are tools that can assist you in moving from surviving to thriving.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify tools to assist with program blind spots or gaps in student services and programming. (2) Share planning and preparation strategies to increase productivity and decrease burnout. (3) Discuss GEAR UP Dougherty's partnership with The Scholar Budget and how partnerships, in general, create a pathway for programs to thrive.

Speakers:

Rockell Bartoli, Scholarship Coach, The Scholar Budget
Alana Simmons, Project Director, GEAR UP Dougherty

109. MULTIPLYING MENTORING TO GROW ATTENDANCE, EQUITY, AND WELLBEING

Come get inspired and learn how to pass it on. This peer mentoring workshop will walk you through a powerful team building activity – shown in research to grow attendance, equity and wellbeing. Then you'll walk away prepared to use it with your staff and your students.

Learn five factors that distinguish mentoring that makes a difference. And start mobilizing your staff and your students to grow a more resilient peer mentoring community together.

Learning Objectives: (1) Gain research insights to improve the way you and your team mentor. (2) Walk away with a simple activity to motivate your staff and your students. (3) Get a boost in your day to inspire personal growth.

Speakers:

Bryan Taylor, Founder & President, EduGuide
Derrick Crum, State Administrative Manager, Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, Workforce Development (LEO-WD)

110. STRENGTHENING FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND EMPHASIZING INDIGENOUS VOICES IN COLLEGE AND CAREER SUCCESS

Discover how the GEAR UP New Mexico Pathways to Success conference strengthens Indigenous family and student engagement in GEAR UP programming. Each spring, this conference, delivered in partnership with the Department of Indian Education at the New Mexico Higher Education Department, brings together over 200 Native American students, families, and school personnel for a culturally immersive exploration of college and career readiness led by Indigenous thought leaders.

With universities, trade schools, workforce panels, and traditional dance performances, the two-day conference showcases culturally relevant frameworks for understanding and promoting college and career readiness. This lecture / discussion will explore several aspects of the conference, including collaborating with our Native communities and experts, recruitment using community-based recruitment strategies, delivery of the conference, and the results of an external evaluation that elevates the voices of all participants.

Learning Objectives: (1) Evaluate the effectiveness of culturally relevant iterative frameworks in engaging and empowering Indigenous students and families in GEAR UP programming. (2) Become empowered with practical knowledge on how to establish meaningful connections within Native communities to enhance the effectiveness of GEAR UP outreach efforts. (3) Evaluate the effectiveness of culturally relevant frameworks in engaging and empowering Indigenous students and families in GEAR UP programming.

Speakers:

Corine Frankland, GEAR UP Director, New Mexico Higher Education Department GEAR UP
Shellie Aguino Garcia (Ohkay Owingeh), Fiscal Officer, GEAR UP New Mexico
Julie Jaramillo, Director of Data Insights & Evaluation, Xcalibur

111. SURVIVING COLLEGE: A HIP HOP STAGEPLAY BRIDGING THE GAP TO COLLEGE READINESS

Struggling to energize students and parents around college readiness? Engagement has been the most significant challenge to post-pandemic college preparation. Through an interactive stageplay, you'll see why edu'tainment approaches produce significant improvements in student success and college preparation.

Students who are engaged, genuinely interested, and see cultural relevance and connection to their everyday experiences show up proactive about learning and taking action. Students who cannot bridge the gap between core educational content and its relevance to their own experiences, goals, culture, and identity continue to underperform, despite the overwhelming availability of educational resources, tutorials, and empowerment speakers.

Through the lens of an interactive stageplay, this workshop will teach attendees impactful engagement techniques that get students to take action towards their college futures.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn how proven cultural engagement tools like social media and pop culture make college prep relevant, engaging, and interesting. (2) Discover strategies for soliciting student voice to increase buy-in and actionability. (3) Learn how edutainment, such as incorporating Tik Toks, hip hop, and culturally relevant pedagogy (as well as Karl Kapp's "gamification of learning" theory) offers evidence-based research supporting higher engagement and improved college preparation amongst GEAR UP participants.

Speakers:

David Horne, Teaching Artist, Genius Potential

Tenya Moravec, Associate Director, University of Washington GEAR UP

Bert Gervais, Teaching Artist, Genius Potential

112. THE IMPACT OF TUTORING AND COLLEGE VISIT ON STUDENTS' GPAS AND POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT RATES

High school grade point averages (GPAs) and postsecondary enrollment are two key performance indicators in GEAR UP; both are consistently reviewed by Congress to better understand how GEAR UP grants are doing. It is imperative that GEAR UP works to improve student high school GPAs and postsecondary enrollment rates, and to study the effectiveness of GEAR UP learning services on these two outcomes.

In this interactive presentation, we aim to discuss the impact of two GEAR UP learning services (tutoring and college visits) on two identified outcomes (GPAs and postsecondary enrollment rates). Understanding the impact of these two services can better leverage sustained growth in students and the quality of these service. Results of our study will be shared along with three facilitated activities throughout the session, to help audience (coordinators, evaluators) ENGAGE (share their experiences of providing these services), EXPLORE (reflect on their observed impacts of these two services), and EVOLVE (strengthen these services for students).

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify the impact of two College and Career Readiness Evaluation Consortium (CCREC) learning services (tutoring and college visits) on student high school GPAs and postsecondary enrollment rates. (2) Differentiate the impact of each service on student high school GPAs and postsecondary enrollment rates. (3) Investigate and reconstruct these two learning services the GEAR UP project has provided or plans to provide to their high school students.

Speakers:

Jui-Teng Li, Assistant Director for Research & Evaluation, Appalachian State University

Corinne Smith, Director of College Access Partnerships Operations and GEAR UP Coordinator, Appalachian State University

Shawn Bergman, Distinguished Professor, Appalachian State University

Ross Gosky, Professor, Appalachian State University

113. TI AND STEM PATHWAYS: HANDS ON LEARNING AND ALTERNATE POSTSECONDARY STEM PROGRAMS

Do you have students who are constantly thinking of new ideas about a topic and questioning the norm? Are your students interested in new information or materials and how separate parts work together to solve a problem? This session may be just the ticket for you!

Texas Instruments has assembled a panel of experienced robotics mentors and coaches who will ask and answer questions about robotics workshops, instruction, and competitions that connect students, mentors, and schools to a variety of successful and engaging technology-based programs.

Learning Objectives: (1) Provide an overview of robotics programs and benefits of hand-on learning. (2) Engage attendees in a Q and A session about the skills and attitudes imbedded in this type of learning. (3) Provide handout that details ways to get started in a robotics program and resources available through Texas Instruments.

Speakers:

Joanie Funderburk, Strategic Alliance Director, Texas Instruments

Brian Dunncliffe, Education Technology Consultant, Texas Instruments

Monique Squire, Program Coordinator, Granite School District

114. USING YOUR WHY TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH STORYTELLING

Understanding your why using storytelling helps form lifelong bonds, change lives, and build relationships with students. Stories allow us to reflect, express, and connect to our why. PLUS ME centers storytelling on building connections, courage, and confidence. Speakers will engage participants in writing activities to discover elements of their story so they can share their experiences in a meaningful way.

In this workshop, participants will engage in activities that result in sharing their life experiences. Attendees will share elements of their story, discuss ways in which their story can be used to build strong relationships, and walk away with an experience that will help build a culture of trust and support on their journey in supporting students in realizing they are not alone, gaining a stronger sense of self, and learning how to share their stories for college essays, scholarships, and growth.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify ways in which GEAR UP staff can build a culture of trust and sense of self on behalf of students. (2) Explore and articulate personal life experiences through storytelling. (3) Demonstrate and share effective strategies through dialogue and interactive activities

Speakers:

Esheonn Conner, Site Coordinator, GEAR UP 4 LA

Richard Reyes, Executive Director, PLUS ME Project

115. WELLNESS WITH WANDA: FOSTERING EMOTIONAL WELLNESS FOR OUR GEAR UP COMMUNITY

This session will explore the vital connection between a balanced mental well-being and academic success. Through the Wellness with Wanda initiative, the focus is on providing cohort students, parents, and educators with tools and resources to overcome mental health issues such as stress, emotional uncertainty, and anxiety through hands-on support services and motivational activities.

Attendees will explore some practical applications, including mindfulness practices and stress management techniques, that have impacted our own cohort students, parents, and educators in this initiative. Wellness with Wanda advocates for the integration of creating a safe space where participants build community and develop an open dialogue about supporting students' academic and social success. It offers simple, yet powerful tools to nurture holistic mental well-being.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand the correlation between mindfulness and academic success through mental health best practices. (2) Apply communication skills, making connections, and developing self-advocacy through the Storytelling Stones activity provided in the Wellness with Wanda initiative. (3) Brainstorm and draft a mental health plan of action identifying the partnerships and resources they can utilize to effectively implement this initiative at their respective campuses and districts.

Speakers:

Wanda Perez, Mental Health Specialist, Region One ESC
Esperanza Rodriguez, Education Specialist, Region One ESC

116. WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER: HOW TO ENGAGE MORE EFFECTIVELY WITH PARTNERS TO MEET GEAR UP GOALS

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." -Helen Keller. Join us to explore how collective impact through communication, coordination, and collaboration work to cultivate and grow partnerships.

In this interactive session, attendees will use a partnership framework to create a plan to engage new partners and reengage existing partners to meet program goals and best serve students. Together, we will identify how engagement of new and existing partnerships can aid in maximizing resources and minimizing duplication of services within your GEAR UP programs and organizations.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify partnership frameworks and how to implement their best practices in your program. (2) Gain new strategies and insights in developing and maintaining new and existing partnerships. (3) Develop a plan consisting of next steps to engage your existing partnerships and create new partnerships.

Speakers:

Jessica Yang, Program Supervisor, Minnesota Office of Higher Education
Matt Gutsch, External Relations Manager, Minnesota Office of Higher Education

Wednesday | July 24

7:00 am-1:00 pm

Registration and Information Booth Open

7:30 am-8:45 am

Networking Breakfast

9:00 am-10:30 am

Morning Plenary and Youth Leadership Summit Presentation



Betty Paugh Ortiz, Vice President of Programs, NCCEP

During the conference, 150 GEAR UP students gathered to gain leadership skills, explore the issues that impact them the most, and cultivate a national community among their fellow #GEARUPworks students.

During this morning's plenary, we will hear from the students about what they have learned and discussed over the last two days. Their performances will aim to address the following important questions. How do our students view the future? What are their priorities and concerns? How can we best support them as they navigate the world today?

Join us as we welcome these leaders to the stage!

11:00 am-12:00 pm

Concurrent Sessions, Block

117. BLUEPRINT FOR VIRTUAL TUTORING SUCCESS

Join us to explore how Alabama State University GEAR UP is revolutionizing after-school learning with our virtual tutoring program. Our initiative focuses on student engagement, high-quality instruction, and academic performance.

Learn the intricacies of our universal tutoring model targeting eighth and ninth graders in ELA, math, and science. Discover how we foster a culture of academic achievement, leverage certified classroom teachers, and maintain consistency in tutor scheduling. Uncover the key elements of our delivery model and join the movement to inspire student success in postsecondary education through innovative virtual tutoring!

Learning Objectives: (1) Design a universal virtual tutoring model catered to your student population. (2) Discover strategies used to encourage student participation in virtual after school tutoring. (3) Learn to effectively utilize certified classroom teachers to cultivate a culture of academic achievement and enhance overall program success.

Speakers:

Amanda Viikinsalo, Director of Client Relations, College Prep Alabama

Michelle Hayes, Executive Director, College Admissions Made Possible

Imma Sanders, Partner Coordinator, Alabama State University GEAR UP

118. BUILDING YOUR TOOLKIT FOR EMOTIONAL, PHYSICAL, AND SOCIAL WELLNESS

GEAR UP coordinators, instructors, and teachers are in the business of working with many people. Taking care of others to their greatest capacity starts with personal wellness. The speakers will lead participants in

discussion as we unpack real-life scenarios and the tools we can use to support emotional, physical, and social wellness.

During the workshop, participants will complete an activity that allows them to experience how social, emotional, and physical factors impact our ability to interact with others. Attendees will wrap up the session considering tools they can use as they find themselves in challenging situations and environments.

Learning Objectives: (1) Define and understand emotional, physical, and social wellness. (2) Identify tools, resources, and strategies for emotional, physical, and social wellness. (3) Select and demonstrate skills to support overall wellness and balance.

Speakers:

Brandi Elder, GEAR UP District Coordinator, Vancouver Public Schools, GEAR UP Washington State

Alexander Green, GEAR UP Advocate, GEAR UP Vancouver Public Schools

Ryan Griffith, GEAR UP Site Coordinator, GEAR UP Vancouver Public Schools

119. COLLEGE READINESS 360°: AN EXPERIMENT IN DEEP LISTENING AND SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION-MAKING

In this presentation, Dr. Fairley Patton and Debra Rodriguez share their story of how deep listening and relationship building led to the innovation of a sustainable tool that is impacting success among dual-enrolled GEAR UP students in rural Western North Carolina. The tool is College Readiness 360° - a guided, practice-based course simulation responsively designed to address a particular set of essential skills that students need for college-level engagement.

After its initial offering, data trickling in suggests that College Readiness 360° is having an impact and future offerings will provide the data necessary for continued improvement and innovation. Early in the journey, stakeholder feedback indicates that it's not just results making College Readiness 360° a success, but the process of developing it and gains along the way. As part of this session, participants are guided in creative solution-making within their own contexts and share possibilities for progress among their peers.

Learning Objectives: (1) Engage with the story of a rural Western North Carolina high school and make connections between this and other student communities to identify student needs and supports available for success. (2) Apply sustainable solution-making methods to address opportunities within student communities. (3) Articulate possibilities for progress with peers and prepare to communicate with stakeholders.

Speakers:

Debra Rodriguez, GEAR UP Coordinator, A-B Tech Community College

Fairley Patton, Executive Director, Student Advising and Educational Partnerships, Asheville Buncombe Technical Community College

120. DISCUSSION LAB: CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL SELF-CARE DAY WITH REFLECTION AND RELAXATION

Come ready to participate! Discussion Labs are an opportunity to share, learn, and problem-solve together.

Did you know that every year, people worldwide pause today, July 24th, to celebrate International Self-Care Day to care for themselves and those who matter most to them? We all know it is easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of work and daily life; however, taking care of ourselves is essential to our overall health and happiness. This day reminds us to prioritize our mental and physical well-being. Remember, self-care is not selfish! It is a win-win for us and those we serve and support.

Learning Objectives: (1) Discuss what self-care is and why it matters and reflect upon our current self-care practices. (2) Brainstorm (and practice if you like) some ways to prioritize ourselves with self-care activities. (3) Make plans to purposefully include self-care in our daily lives.

Speakers:

April Bell, Director of Constituent Relations, NCCEP

Riccardo Harris, Executive Director, Wichita GEAR UP, Wichita State University

121. HOW AM I GONNA USE THIS? NOVEL CAREER LESSONS

Participants will discuss the importance of career exploration in core subjects along with current research highlighting the importance of novelty. They will participate in activities from the LEARN lesson “The Sound of Polynomials” and discuss how the lesson was created.

A guest speaker from Ableton, the music production software company that developed the app in the lesson, will discuss math and the music industry. Participants will design a lesson idea using a career field as inspiration. Then they will reflect on what they have learned with the Mirror, Microscope, Binoculars strategy.

Learning Objectives: (1) Discover practical applications of high school level mathematics in the music industry. (2) Discuss methods of finding ways to make core subjects relevant by connecting with career and community partners. (3) Learn how to develop lessons with novel career applications in mind.

Speakers:

Samaya Williams, Lead Math Curriculum Specialist K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal, University of Oklahoma

James Doyle, Electives Curriculum Specialist, K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal, University of Oklahoma

Dustin Ragland, Education Development Manager, Ableton

122. LEVERAGING NATIONAL STUDENT CLEARINGHOUSE DATA TO ENHANCE GEAR UP OUTCOMES

Join us for a comprehensive session designed for GEAR UP professionals, including directors, evaluators, and coordinators, as we delve into the capabilities of the National Student Clearinghouse and its pivotal role in educational data analysis.

This session will introduce attendees to the wide range of services offered by the National Student Clearinghouse, highlighting how these can be effectively utilized to monitor and improve student pathways. We will explore practical strategies for using National Student Clearinghouse data to identify feeder patterns essential for optimizing first-year college services. Additionally, the session will cover methodologies for tracking pre- and post-GEAR UP student engagement, including postsecondary enrollment, persistence, and completion rates.

By the end of this session, participants will be equipped with the knowledge to use NSC data to make informed decisions that foster student success and program effectiveness.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand the range of services and data provided by the National Student Clearinghouse. (2) Learn how to analyze NSC data to identify critical feeder patterns for first-year college services. (3) Gain insights on tracking and evaluating student outcomes pre- and post-GEAR UP to enhance program impact.

Speakers:

Michele Gralak, Senior Product Manager, Learner Insights, National Student Clearinghouse

123. POWER UP YOUR GEAR UP: THE FAMILY CONNECTION

Learn how to empower and implement a successful GEAR UP program using sustainable and proven practices. In this interactive session, we will navigate through seven keys of success: Communication Strategies, Building Relationships, Cultural Competence, Handling Difficult Conversations, Involving Families in Learning, Understanding Family Dynamics and Utilizing Resources to Create a Plan.

Through needs assessment data, we know what families want and need! Come collaborate with us and design your course of action by leveraging proven systems. We will share helpful engagement practices, a robust toolkit, and partnership ideas to generate grant success, sustainability and match.

Learning Objectives: (1) Distinguish seven connection keys for program success and sustainability. (2) Identify the impact: Collect and evaluate a variety of resources, supports and examples to implement immediately. (3) Create an Action Plan: Develop practical and realistic strategies, a communication plan and initiatives to increase student achievement and family participation.

Speakers:

Megan Oberman (Mossman), Senior Field Trainer, The University of Texas at Austin - Institute for Public School Initiatives

Candy Vera, Educator Outreach Coach, The University of Texas at Austin - Institute for Public School Initiatives

Catherine Cantrell, Senior Project Manager, The University of Texas at Austin - Institute for Public School Initiatives

Kelli Taylor, Educator Outreach Coach, The University of Texas at Austin - Institute for Public School Initiatives

Melissa McClatchy, Educator Outreach Coach, The University of Texas at Austin - Institute for Public School Initiatives

124. TURNING INFORMATION GAINED FROM POSTSECONDARY PLANNING CONVERSATIONS WITH STUDENTS INTO USABLE DATA

Data isn't just for reporting!!! All GEAR UP programs do a wonderful job meeting and coaching students during postsecondary planning conversations, but what should you do with all the information gained from those conversations after they are completed? Join us to examine how the GEAR UP program at Arizona State University takes information gained during postsecondary planning conversations and turns it into usable data that informs programming to better support students in a systematic way that allows Arizona State University GEAR UP to serve as many students as possible.

This session will explore the postsecondary planning conversations process such as documentation, best practices when speaking to students 1 on 1, and how Arizona State University GEAR UP uses information gained to identify needs and knowledge gaps of the students they serve.

Learning Objectives: (1) Apply effective engagement strategies to foster meaningful conversations during postsecondary planning sessions. (2) Create a form to during postsecondary planning sessions that meets the needs of the students as well as GEAR UP staff. (3) Design a data sheet to track information gained during postsecondary planning sessions that can help a team identify trends and needs of the students they serve.

Speakers:

James Reinhardt, Assistant Director, Arizona State University

Shelby Frederick, Coordinator Senior, Arizona State University

125. UTILIZING ACT WORKKEYS TO INCREASE COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

Discover how teaming with ACT can help improve student outcomes, equity, access, and college and career readiness. ACT team members will discuss how to harness ACT WorkKeys Occupational Profile data and insights to help student identify how their skills compare to the requirements of jobs they are interested in. WorkKeys Occupational Profile questions reflect real-world work scenarios. That's why employers nationwide rely on the assessments to train, hire, and promote the most qualified candidates.

This session will demonstrate how students can understand their current skills, match their WorkKeys skill levels to different types of jobs, and provide discussion points for building skills given the type of career a student wants to pursue.

Learning Objectives: (1) Attendees will receive sample lesson plans for showing students how to leverage their WorkKeys scores in exploring career options. (2) Attendees will understand how to access and utilize ACT's JobPro Database that provides WorkKeys recommended scoring for every occupation referenced in the U.S. Department of Labor's O*Net database of occupations. (3) Understanding student voice - what recent high school students are telling us about their college preparation wants and needs to help them prepare for life after high school.

Speakers:

Lisa King, Director, American College Application Campaign, ACT's Center for Equity in Learning
Greg Napierala, Director, ACT

126. PARTNERSHIP DIRECTOR'S MEETING

This peer-to-peer meeting is entirely led and organized by GEAR UP Partnership Directors. Due to space constraints, this meeting will be limited to only a GEAR UP Project Director and/or Principal Investigator from each grant's fiscal agent (no guests).

127. STATE DIRECTOR'S MEETING

This peer-to-peer meeting is entirely led and organized by GEAR UP State Directors. Due to space constraints, this meeting will be limited to only a GEAR UP Project Director and/or Principal Investigator from each grant's fiscal agent (no guests).

12:15 pm-1:00 pm

Closing Lunch and Adjournment

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years of GEAR UP



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