



Wyoming Department of Education

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MEMORANDUM NO. 2011-003

TO: School District Superintendents
School Principals
Curriculum Coordinators
Counselors

FROM: Bob Bryant, WDE GEAR UP Coordinator
Educational Quality and Accountability Division

DATE: January 14, 2011

SUBJECT: GEAR UP Wyoming Newsletter – Winter 2011 Edition

INFORMATION TO SHARE

GEAR UP Wyoming has published the Winter 2011 edition of its state-wide newsletter, *GEAR UP Wyoming Matters*. An electronic version is attached to this memo. The newsletter is published three times per year with a focus on the GEAR UP Wyoming program at the University of Wyoming and Wyoming's seven community colleges.

GEAR UP, which stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, is funded by a federal grant with matching state funds. The Wyoming program, called GEAR UP Wyoming (GUWY) is an educational partnership including the University of Wyoming, the seven community colleges, the Governor's office, the Wyoming Department of Education and the Wyoming Community College Commission.

This issue features articles on a variety of GEAR UP Wyoming programs including:

- a description of a GEAR UP Summer Leadership Academy hosted by Laramie County Community an overview of how select community colleges celebrated National GEAR UP Day,
- some highlights of Northern Wyoming Community College District's GEAR UP program,
- a preview of GEAR UP sponsored Keynote and sessions at the Spring School Improvement Conference
- an interview with a GEAR UP Wyoming student scholarship recipient and graduate from Tongue River High School.

Please take some time to review this *GEAR UP Wyoming Matters* newsletter. You are encouraged to share it with school district staff, parents and community members.

Please contact Bob Bryant with questions at (307)721-1946 or rbryan@educ.state.wy.us.

RB:al

Attachment

WINTER 2011

GEARUP

WYOMING

Matters

GAINING EARLY AWARENESS AND READINESS FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

University of Wyoming
<http://www.uwyo.edu/gearup/>

Wyoming Department of Education
<http://www.k12.wy.us/>

Casper College
<http://www.caspercollege.edu/index.html>

Central Wyoming College
<http://www.cwc.edu/what/Gearup>

Eastern Wyoming College
<http://www.ewc.wy.edu/future/gearup/>

Laramie County Community College
<http://www.lccc.wy.edu/highschool/collegeprep/gearup>

Northern Wyoming
Community College District
<http://www.sheridan.edu/gearup/>

Northwest College
<http://www.northwestcollege.edu/gearup/>

Western Wyoming Community College
<http://www.wwcc.wy.edu/gearup/>

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Wyoming Roots: GEAR UP's Summer Leadership Academy

By Kevin Malatesta

"Is this one?!" "How about this?" "I think I found one too!"

The shouts of excitement drown out the clatter of tossed sandstone. The mid-June air is coated with dust as GEAR UP students hop down the embankment in search of fossils. Each stone is examined carefully. The dirt is rubbed off, and the specimen held inches away from the eyes. Is it a slightly off-brown color? Is it straight? Does it have a pattern on it? All candidates are hastily grasped in a sweaty hand and run off to the paleontologist.

"Nope, that's a metallic inclusion." "Let's see... This one's a stone called 'Leverite' — leave-'er-right there." "Hmm, now here's something; this is a piece of fossilized turtle shell." "What you've got there is a long bone from a hadrosaur."

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Laramie County Community College Dig

Photo courtesy of LCCC

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Sixty-five million years ago this field in eastern Wyoming looked entirely different. Instead of sagebrush being overrun by a throng of curious teenagers, it was populated with things far more fierce: crocodiles, gar fish, clams, and turtles. Not to mention the dinosaurs.

All week at the Summer Leadership Academy, the students were getting their hands dirty and learning without even realizing it. With sessions in cowboy cooking and Native American drumming on the first day through meeting a local author and conducting a Q&A with a Laramie County Community College (LCCC) rodeo student on the last day, our students participated in learning more about Wyoming. In doing so, they also learned more about themselves.

“The students were getting their hands dirty and learning without even realizing it.”

Local professionals and teachers helped to facilitate the six days of learning for forty students (7th through 9th graders) enrolled in LCCC’s GEAR UP Summer Learning Academy. By exploring Wyoming in depth through history, anthropology, paleontology and poetry, the academy was casting off sparks of interest for college and careers.

The sparks of interest were punctuated with lightning strikes from the oncoming storm at Fort Laramie as a student begged for more time to examine the artifacts. “But I love history now! Can’t we stay any longer?”



Returning to the bus after the dig

Photo courtesy of LCCC

We ran into the bus soaking wet, but continued the conversation of the significance of the fort. At Register Cliff, students organized their own contest to hunt for the oldest name engraved along the Oregon Trail marker, the winner earning the first position in the line for dinner at Arby’s.

Back at the dinosaur dig, the excitement was high. “Look here! These look like bones, and they’re all together in a row!” “Don’t dig it up! Let’s go ask if it’s something big. Maybe it’s a whole dinosaur!” It was a whole dinosaur and the site is now named after the two GEAR UP students who found it. It’s one thing to go to college, but another thing entirely to go with enthusiasm and confidence! 🇺🇸

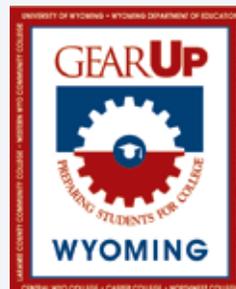
About the author:

Kevin Malatesta is Assistant Outreach Coordinator for GEAR UP WYOMING at Laramie County Community College.

GEAR UP WYOMING is administered by the office of Student Educational Opportunity (SEO) in the Division of Student Affairs at the University of Wyoming.



Persons seeking admission, employment, or access to programs of the University of Wyoming shall be considered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, or political belief.



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Community College Spotlight



This issue's featured community college is Northern Wyoming Community College District (NWCCD) which includes Sheridan College, Gillette College, and outreach programs in Sheridan, Johnson, and

Campbell Counties. Within these three counties, 160 students are served on nine junior high and high school campuses.

On each of the nine campuses, monthly lunch workshops are offered. The topics include personal finance, college life, pathways to college, admissions processes, and study skills. Careers are explored through guest speakers such as business owners and other professionals in the area.

Once per year during the lunch workshops, a college panel is held with former GEAR UP students who are currently attending college. These college students share information about themselves and their majors. Afterwards, the GEAR UP students have a chance to ask questions. Not only does this help the students, but it also enables NWCCD to plan future topics based on the insights gained concerning what the students are most excited about and most afraid of regarding entering college.

NWCCD offers after-school tutoring at most of the schools, which also includes a mentoring component. Students are asked to check in once each month with the staff during tutor



NWCCD GEAR UP Team:
Jamie Chacon, Tracy Myers, and Denise Scammon

Photo courtesy of NWCCD

times, even if they don't need tutoring. It helps NWCCD stay connected with them and gives them one more person with whom to connect during their time in GEAR UP.

Parent and family events are also provided throughout the year. These are geared toward helping parents and guardians maneuver the college admissions processes from start to finish, including helping their students apply for admissions, scholarships, and Federal Student Aid. NWCCD also helps lead the parents through what the first year of their student's college life will be like. NWCCD's Enrollment Services staff and Financial Aid staff play a vital role in these family events and workshops. Sometimes after attending events, parents, guardians, and other family members become interested in either beginning or going back to college themselves. By helping the students, sometimes the entire family is affected!

"Sometimes after attending events, parents, guardians and other family members become interested in either beginning or going back to college themselves."



GEAR UP students
during a geo-caching
activity at NWCCD



Photos courtesy of NWCCD

Parents are encouraged to become involved mostly through individual contact by NWCCD. Personal phone calls before parent and family events are vital in encouraging parents to attend the events. Once they feel a connection with GEAR UP staff and realize help is available, they really connect. NWCCD also stresses to parents how much it means to their students that they become involved in this process with them.

One of the most successful aspects of NWCCD programs is the relationship-building with parents and students. This, combined with a team of tutors and school liaisons, enables NWCCD to positively impact lives with each contact.

For more information, visit the NWCCD website at <http://www.sheridan.edu/gearup/> 



National GEAR UP Day

On September 30, National GEAR UP Day was celebrated across the nation. In Wyoming, many of the community college GEAR UP programs marked the day with educational field trips and family events. Some, such as Northern Wyoming Community College District, Central Wyoming College, and Eastern Wyoming College, wrote letters of appreciation to the governor. The staff and students at Laramie County Community College celebrated by sending out a press release and wearing their GEAR UP shirts to work and school.

Central Wyoming College held a mini-carnival of activities and games. Staff and students also gave radio interviews explaining National GEAR UP Day, as well as inviting the community to their open house.

At Western Wyoming Community College, GEAR UP families participated in the political process by meeting candidates running for Superintendent of Public Instruction and hearing their views on education. At an ice cream social afterwards, students were able to interact directly with the candidates. 🇺🇸



Photos courtesy of CWC

Above: A Central Wyoming College GEAR UP (CWC GU) student and her mother playing "SWAT", a college terminology game.

Right: The cards created by CWC GU students which will be sent to the incoming governor.



Photos courtesy of CC

Casper College created a variety of signs with GEAR UP quotes and statistics. As a part of their "campaign" of awareness, the signs were posted all over Casper including the high school campuses.



Northern Wyoming Community College District GEAR UP students mailed letters to Governor Freudenthal and Senator Enzi, in which they expressed their sincere appreciation for their support of the GEAR UP program.



Photos courtesy of NWCCD

Students from the Eastern Wyoming College GEAR UP program signed posters and photos which they sent with words of thanks to Governor Freudenthal for his support.



Photos courtesy of EWC

Scholarship Corner

GEAR UP WYOMING Matters interviewed Travis Shuck, a graduate of Tongue River High School, who participated in the Northern Wyoming Community College District GEAR UP program. Travis received a University of Wyoming GEAR UP Institutional Scholarship which covered all unmet college costs.

GUWY: How did you learn about the GEAR UP program?

Travis: I learned about GEAR UP while in high school from the school coordinator and was contacted directly by the program through the mail.

GUWY: What grade were you in?

Travis: I was a freshman in high school at the time.

GUWY: What type of scholarship(s) were you awarded?

Travis: I was awarded the University of Wyoming GEAR UP Institutional Scholarship that pays for anything not covered by other scholarships.

“I am not sure I would have been able to attend college if it wasn't for this scholarship.”

GUWY: What college are you attending, and why did you choose it?

Travis: I chose the University of Wyoming (UW) to attend because of the good scholarships. It was also closer to home than any other university.

GUWY: Was it difficult to apply for the scholarships?

Travis: It was not difficult at all to apply; all I had to do was spend thirty minutes filling out paperwork.

GUWY: Are the scholarships meeting your financial needs?

Travis: They sufficiently meet all my needs.



Photo courtesy of Travis Shuck

Travis D. Shuck, a former GEAR UP student currently attending the University of Wyoming

GUWY: What type of support are you receiving and does it help?

Travis: GEAR UP WYOMING is helping me not only financially, but providing support through the UW mentor program for former GEAR UP students.

GUWY: How does having your financial needs met affect your social and academic life?

Travis: It allows me to concentrate on school work and not worry about the financial aspect.

GUWY: What has having a scholarship opened up for you? Does it allow you to participate in extracurricular activities?

Travis: It does allow me to participate in extracurricular activities, and it opened college up for me. I am not sure I would have been able to attend if it wasn't for this scholarship.

GUWY: When do you graduate, and what are your plans?

Travis: I am set to graduate in 2015, but I am not sure of my plans yet. 🇺🇸

got fafsa?

To be considered for the Fall 2011 GEAR UP WYOMING Scholarships, GEAR UP students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) on or before April 1, 2011. The GEAR UP Federal Scholarship Application must be completed by June 1, 2011. Go to the GEAR UP WYOMING website at <http://www.uwyo.edu/gearup/> and select "Scholarships" to complete the online application.

GEAR UP WYOMING Professional Development

GEAR UP WYOMING is sponsoring the keynote speaker at the Spring School Improvement Conference in Casper Monday, February 28, 2011. Beverly Ray, a consultant for aha! Process, Inc. and professional educator since 1975, will present "School Improvement: Raising Achievement with 9 Systemic Processes." Bev will provide an overview of the nine teacher-friendly processes that are designed to raise student achievement. These processes are especially excellent for low performing schools, schools with demographic shifts, schools with students from poverty, and schools struggling to meet AYP with specific subgroups. 

Upcoming Professional Development

February 28 and March 1, Casper

Quantum Learning for Teachers Level 1

This workshop will be a strand offered at the Spring School Improvement Conference at the Parkway Plaza in Casper. You may contact Karan Wright at kwright@advanc-ed.org for conference registration information.

February 28 and March 1, Casper

Quantum Learning for Administrators

GEAR UP WYOMING is sponsoring a three hour Quantum Learning for Administrators at the Spring School Improvement Conference at the Parkway Plaza in Casper. Administrators will learn to implement the Quantum Learning system of leadership in their educational organization. You may contact Karan Wright at kwright@advanc-ed.org for conference registration information.

GUWY Quantum Learning Site License

There are now six qualified Wyoming Quantum Learning Facilitators (WQLFs; pronounced WOLF) in Wyoming. They are available to provide Quantum Learning for Teachers Levels 1-5 to 7-12 educators in any school district under the GUWY Quantum Learning site license. Contact Lori Kimbrough at lorik@uwyo.edu or (307) 766-6736 to inquire about arranging a Quantum Learning workshop.

The EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT Tests for Wyoming Students

EXPLORE, PLAN, and ACT are a series of tests designed to help students increase their academic readiness for college. Specifically, each test measures student achievement in English, mathematics, reading, and science. The ACT also includes an optional writing test. Additionally each test includes a career exploration component that aids in course planning and academic advising. The table below provides information about each test including when tests are provided by schools in Wyoming.

EXPLORE

The EXPLORE® program is designed to help 8th and 9th graders explore a broad range of options for their future. EXPLORE prepares students for their high school course selection and for their post-high school career choices. It marks an important beginning for a student's future academic and career success. (Adapted from ACT website)

When	Where	Scores	Cost
Fall of 8th grade	At school	Indicate academic areas that may need to be improved	Free (paid by the WY Dept of Education for all 8th graders)
Resources For everyone: http://www.act.org/explore/			

PLAN

The PLAN® program helps 10th graders build a solid foundation for future academic and career success and provides information needed to address school districts' high-priority issues. It is a comprehensive guidance resource that helps students measure their current academic development, explore career/training options, and make plans for the remaining years of high school and post-graduation years. (Source ACT website)

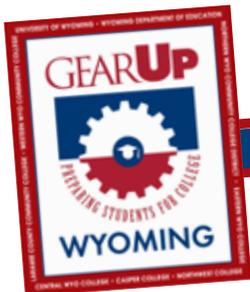
When	Where	Scores	Cost
Fall of 10th grade	Available at school in most cases	Predicts the ACT score	Free in some cases; \$12 in others
Resources For everyone: http://www.act.org/plan/			

ACT

The ACT® test assesses high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. (Source ACT website)

When	Where	Scores	Cost
Fall of 11th grade	At school*	Used for college admission and scholarship applications	Free (paid by the WY Dept of Education for all 11th graders)
Resources For students: http://www.actstudents.org/ For parents: http://www.act.org/path/parent/ For K-12 educators: http://www.act.org/path/secondary/			

*Available at various testing sites around the state for students who take the ACT more often than just the spring of their junior year



GEARUP WYOMING

GAINING EARLY AWARENESS AND READINESS FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

Free ACT, PLAN and EXPLORE Interpretive Workshops

If you have GEAR UP students in your school or district, GEAR UP Wyoming can fund staff development EXPLORE, PLAN and/or ACT Interpretive Workshops. Staff will learn how to quickly interpret results to improve student achievement. This information is especially beneficial for classroom teachers.

Who would benefit from this training?

- Teachers
- Counselors
- School and District Administrators
- District Assessment Coordinators

Workshops are 2 to 3 hours and include training with your own student data. You can customize the training to meet the needs of your staff.

Contact Lori Kimbrough, the GEAR UP Wyoming Professional Development Coordinator, at 307.766.6736 or lorik@uwyo.edu to schedule a workshop in your school or district.

GEAR UP WYOMING is funded 50% through a grant from the US Dept of Education totaling \$3.5 million annually with an additional \$3.5 million provided by in-kind and scholarship contributions from Wyoming's community colleges, the University of Wyoming, and the Wyoming Department of Education.

