



# Wyoming Department of Education

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## MEMORANDUM NO. 2011-138

**TO:** School District Superintendents  
School Principals  
Curriculum Coordinators  
Counselors

**FROM:** Bob Bryant, WDE GEAR UP Coordinator  
Standards, Assessment and Learning Team Division

**DATE:** November 7, 2011

**SUBJECT:** GEAR UP Wyoming Newsletter – Fall 2011 Edition

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### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

GEAR UP Wyoming has published the Fall 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:

- An announcement that GEAR UP is celebrating the award of a new seven-year (2011-2018) grant by the U.S. Department of Education,
- a report on the first time offered GEAR UP summer program, **Camp GEAR UP 2011: *Experience the Possibilities***,

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- some highlights on GEAR UP state partner, the Wyoming Department of Education,
- an update on GEAR UP Wyoming sponsored professional development opportunities including: the Aha!Process and Framework for Understanding Poverty workshops, Ignition, Quantum Learning and ACT, PLAN and EXPLORE Data Interpretive Workshops, and
- an interview with a former GEAR UP Wyoming student and Team Leader at 2011 Camp GEAR UP.

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)777-6840 or [robert.bryant@wyo.gov](mailto:robert.bryant@wyo.gov).

RB/js

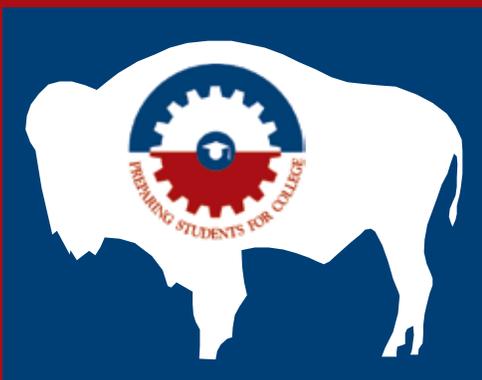
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FALL 2011

# GEAR UP WYOMING

# Matters

GAINING EARLY AWARENESS AND READINESS FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS



University of Wyoming  
[www.uwyo.edu/gearup](http://www.uwyo.edu/gearup)

Wyoming Department of Education  
[www.k12.wy.us](http://www.k12.wy.us)

Casper College  
[www.caspercollege.edu/gearup](http://www.caspercollege.edu/gearup)

Central Wyoming College  
[www.cwc.edu/what/Gearup](http://www.cwc.edu/what/Gearup)

Eastern Wyoming College  
[www.ewc.wy.edu/future/gearup](http://www.ewc.wy.edu/future/gearup)

Laramie County Community College  
[lccc.wy.edu/highschool/collegeprep/gearup](http://lccc.wy.edu/highschool/collegeprep/gearup)

Northern Wyoming  
Community College District  
[www.sheridan.edu/site/sc/admissions/gear-up-wyoming](http://www.sheridan.edu/site/sc/admissions/gear-up-wyoming)

Northwest College  
[www.northwestcollege.edu/gearup](http://www.northwestcollege.edu/gearup)

Western Wyoming Community College  
[www.wwcc.wy.edu/gearup](http://www.wwcc.wy.edu/gearup)

## UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

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## GEAR UP WYOMING Awarded New Grant!

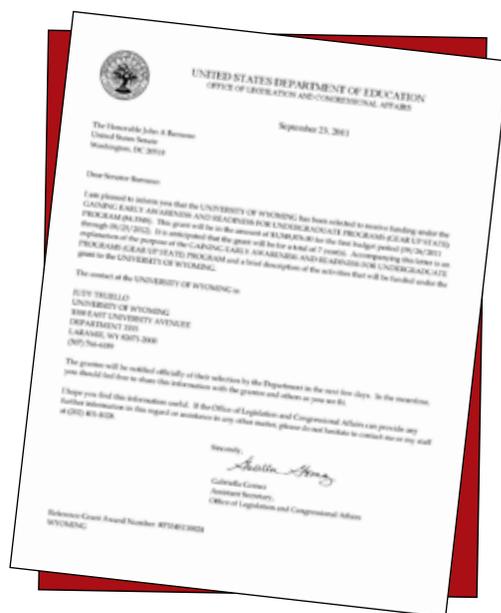
GEAR UP WYOMING is pleased to announce that it has received a new seven-year grant from the United States Department of Education.

Under the new grant, at least 2,000 7th-12th grade income-eligible students will be served by GEAR UP WYOMING each year. Through a partnership with Wyoming's seven community colleges, students will receive academic guidance and support to prepare them for high school graduation and college success.

In addition to student support, GEAR UP WYOMING will offer professional development opportunities for 7th-12th grade school personnel in a partnership with the Wyoming Department of Education. These programs will be aimed at increasing student academic performance and supporting a college-going culture.

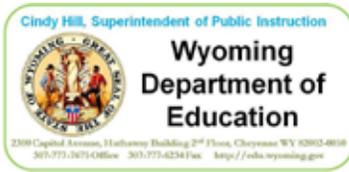
The grant will allow GEAR UP WYOMING to continue to build upon its accomplishments. Only 14% of low-income Wyoming students enrolled in college during 2008; however, 64% of GEAR UP students enrolled in college the semester after they graduated from high school, and 80% of GEAR UP students enrolled in college within three years.

GEAR UP WYOMING is looking forward to a successful seven years of providing eligible students and parents with academic support and college preparation, as well as providing educators with the necessary training to prepare these students for college.



2011 GEAR UP Award Letter

## Wyoming Department of Education Spotlight



This issue's featured GEAR UP WYOMING partner is the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE). The WDE

employs a GEAR UP Coordinator to serve as a liaison to coordinate partnership activities between the WDE and GEAR UP WYOMING.

The partnership between the WDE and GEAR UP WYOMING has been effective in serving the needs of GEAR UP WYOMING and GEAR UP students throughout the state. The WDE has made a commitment to provide a majority (67%+) of the match required by the GEAR UP grant. This match commitment has provided over two million dollars each year to GEAR UP WYOMING. It is made possible through statewide educational initiatives implemented by the WDE.

The WDE oversees two major Wyoming legislatively funded initiatives that serve to improve student academic performance with a focus on at-risk students. The Wyoming Bridges Summer School Program targets academically at-risk students by offering supplemental educational programs during the summer. GEAR UP WYOMING has provided professional development to secondary summer school teachers including Quantum Learning for Teachers, dropout prevention workshops, and other opportunities to enhance the skills of teachers to improve student performance and college readiness.



*Bob Bryant, the Wyoming Department of Education liaison with GEAR UP WYOMING, at Curt Gowdy State Park for Camp GEAR UP.*

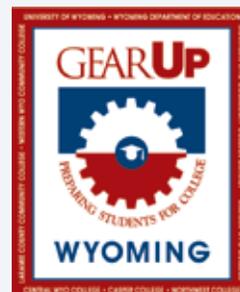
A second major Wyoming initiative is the Instructional Facilitators program that provides successful master teachers as coaches to classroom teachers in all Wyoming schools. These coaches work with classroom teachers to improve instruction that will lead to improved student performance. GEAR UP WYOMING collaborates with the WDE to provide professional development for Instructional Facilitators who coach 7th-12th grade teachers. Professional development activities have included the popular Quantum Learning for Teachers and Diane Sweeney's Coaching for Student Success.

GEAR UP WYOMING is working with the WDE to implement the WDE's 3+8 Reading initiative in schools around the state (see page 3 for details). The goal of the 3+8 Reading initiative is to improve Wyoming students' reading proficiency as measured on the 2012 Proficiency Assessment for Wyoming Students (PAWS). GEAR UP personnel will be working with GEAR UP students statewide to help reach this goal. 🇺🇸

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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## GEAR UP WYOMING Professional Development

The following professional development opportunities are available at no cost to schools with GEAR UP Students.

### aha!Process Workshops

aha!Process is the organization founded by Dr. Ruby Payne who is well known for her work regarding educating students from low-income backgrounds. There are several workshops offered by aha!Process that fit well with the GEAR UP WYOMING mission of helping students graduate from high school and succeed in college. Most of the workshops are six hours in length, presented in one day.

Some specific examples of aha!Process workshops include: School Improvement: Raising Achievement with 9 Systemic Processes, Engage and Graduate Your Secondary Students: Preventing Dropouts, The R Rules Facilitator Training and Under Resourced Learners. For more detailed information about these workshops and others visit <http://www.ahaprocess.com/>.

### A Framework for Understanding Poverty

This workshop provides an in-depth study of information and issues that will increase the participant's knowledge and understanding of the poverty culture. Lori Kimbrough, the GEAR UP WYOMING Professional Development Coordinator, is now a Framework Certified Trainer and can provide the six hour, one day workshop to GEAR UP school staff.

### ACT, PLAN and EXPLORE

#### Data Interpretative Workshops

In an ACT, PLAN or EXPLORE workshop, staff will learn how to interpret student and school ACT reports to improve student achievement. Workshops are typically three hours and include training with your own student data. The workshop can be customized to meet the specific training needs of your staff. October is ideal for scheduling an ACT interpretative workshop; February and March are good for reviewing EXPLORE and PLAN data.

### Ignition

Ignition, developed by FOCUS Training, is a comprehensive, research-based transition to high school and peer mentor program for freshman students. FOCUS Training

works with administrative teams within a school to build a program that fits a school's unique needs. Upperclassmen and advisors receive the training and curriculum needed to develop a sustainable program that has a positive impact on the entire school. Fall is a good time to plan for implementing an Ignition program with training beginning in the spring. (Page 7 lists GEAR UP schools implementing Ignition.)

### Quantum Learning for Teachers (QLT) Levels 1-5 (Each level is a one-day, 6 hour workshop)

This professional development program for educators provides proven strategies that motivate students and boost achievement. Under the GEAR UP WYOMING site license, QLT can be offered at any Wyoming school or district where at least 50% of the staff attending are secondary educators. The workshops are delivered by one of the fully certified Wyoming Quantum Learning Facilitators at a rate that is far less than the typical Quantum Learning Network charge. GEAR UP WYOMING does not sponsor this workshop but instead coordinates the booking with a Wyoming facilitator so that schools and districts can receive the greatly reduced site license rates.

For more information about workshops sponsored by GEAR UP WYOMING or the Quantum Learning for Teachers workshops, contact Lori Kimbrough at (307) 766-6736 or [lorik@uwyo.edu](mailto:lorik@uwyo.edu). At least thirty days advance booking is required for most workshops. 

### Wyoming Department of Education 3+8 Reading Success Institutes

In August the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) implemented the 3+8 Reading Success Institutes. The 3+8 teacher-to-teacher training aimed at improving reading achievement on all assessments will continue into the fall. GEAR UP Wyoming supports the WDE in this statewide initiative and encourages secondary teachers to attend the training.

October		November	
7-8	Gillette	4-5	Douglas
14-15	Cheyenne	11-12	Wheatland
21-22	Buffalo		
28-29	Laramie		

# CAMP 2011 GEAR UP

*Experience the Possibilities*

Over 170 students “Experienced the Possibilities” at Camp GEAR UP this summer. From July 25 - July 29, students in 9th through 12th grades stayed in the dormitories at the University of Wyoming and participated in academic activities at three locations: the University of Wyoming, Curt Gowdy State Park, and the Snowy Range Mountains.

Activities included microbiology labs, canoeing experiences, team-building ropes courses, and college information presentations. 



Students learned teamwork through a canoeing experience at Curt Gowdy State Park.



Students learned about college curriculum through a microbiology lab and planetarium visit.





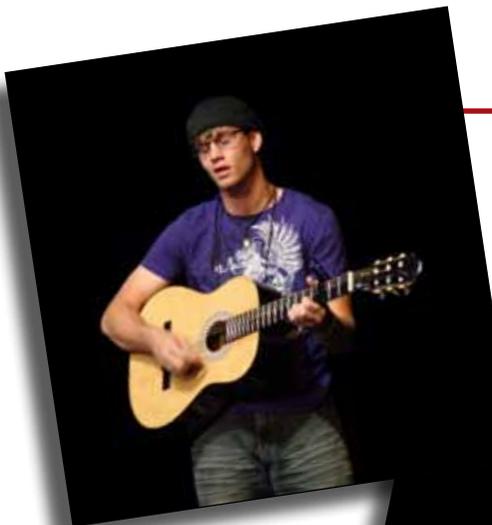
Students learned teamwork and leadership skills on the ropes course in the Snowy Range Mountains.



Groups of students worked together to build the highest spaghetti and marshmallow tower during a nightly team challenge activity.



Students attended a college fair featuring the University of Wyoming and Wyoming's community colleges.



"GEAR UP's Got Talent" — On the final night of Camp GEAR UP, students and team leaders took the stage for an evening of entertainment.



## Interview

Hilary Anne Hughes served as a team leader at Camp GEAR UP this summer. *GEAR UP Matters* interviewed her about her experiences as a former GEAR UP student and as a Camp GEAR UP team leader.

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

**Hilary:** I learned about it near the end of my senior year in high school. I believe the program was still new at that point. One of my teachers, Mr. Heltzel, knew that I had the makings for college, but he also knew the path ahead of me was rocky. He connected me with the GEAR UP coordinator, and I was in. Looking back makes me want to send Mr. Heltzel a thank you card, because without him I might not have made it this far.

**GUWY:** When did you become involved in GEAR UP and what was it like?

**Hilary:** I didn't become involved until the last few months of my senior year at Evanston High School. It was helpful because it paid for my ACT fee and my college application fees. I had a lot of the support. I remember I used the GEAR UP coordinator's computer to fill out the applications. That was especially helpful because I didn't have a computer at home, and she was sitting right next to me in case I had any questions about how to fill out the forms correctly.

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**"In my heart, I know I am called to help people. That is how I need to spend my life."**

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**GUWY:** Did your experiences in GEAR UP play a part in your decision to become a Camp GEAR UP team leader?

**Hilary:** Over the years that I have been involved in the GEAR UP program, I have seen some wonderful things. I see the opportunities it creates. If I were to simplify the circumstances in my life drastically, I would say that GEAR UP is the reason I came to college. Knowing this absolutely played a part in my decision to become a Camp GEAR UP team leader. In my heart, I know I am called to help people. That is how I need to spend my life. Becoming a team leader for Camp GEAR UP was a way for me to "pay it forward" and to live out this call to help the students that came to Laramie.



*Photo courtesy of Hilary Hughes*

**Hilary Anne Hughes, a former GEAR UP student and Camp GEAR UP team leader.**

**GUWY:** What was Camp GEAR UP like for you as a team leader?

**Hilary:** There were thirty other counselors and staff for any of us to lean on, which made the camp a huge success. The team work I was able to witness was incredible. Plus, on the last day when my students were getting ready to go home, they made it clear that their experiences with Camp GEAR UP had been positive, and they had been inspired and motivated. I got to know each member of my team very well, and I know that each of them has immeasurable potential. Being able to participate in this camp as a team leader was a privilege. This experience is something I will treasure for the rest of my life.

**GUWY:** What do you think the students learned by attending?

**Hilary:** If I had to guess, I would say the students learned how deeply true it is that GEAR UP can be used as a network of support. I hope they were instilled with motivation and hope for the future. At the very least, they definitely learned how awesome Laramie and the surrounding areas are, given all the fun activities we did while they were here.

**GUWY:** Were there any special moments that were memorable for you or the students attending?

**Hilary:** At camp, cheap, "24-karat" plastic gold medals were given away as prizes for winning the nightly competitions. The first competition was "Name that Movie

Tune.” A tune would play, and the team had to guess which movie it was from and write it down. During the competition, my team was actually getting excited. They were working together and taking each others’ input in order to win. It was incredible to see their excitement. It was even more incredible when we were the last team standing. We got up in front of the entire camp, and we were presented with the plastic medals as though we were Olympic winners. The best part of that was being able to observe the process of my team becoming a cohesive unit.

**GUWY:** Is there anything else you’d like to discuss?

**Hilary:** The coordinators, Chris and Kathy, picked only the best people for this job. I am very lucky to have had this experience, and I’m appreciative of the opportunity to work with and get to know all of the team leaders and staff that were involved. Camp GEAR UP was an astounding success, and if any of these pieces had been missing, it would have been impossible. 🇺🇸



Hilary and her team receiving a “24 karat” plastic medal at Camp GEAR UP.

### Best Wishes!

The GEAR UP WYOMING staff extends its best wishes to Mandy Simpson and Chris Harnden, both of whom have accepted new positions and are no longer with GEAR UP.

## Student Services

### GEAR UP WYOMING Scholarships

Questions concerning scholarships for GEAR UP students served under the August 2005 through August 2011 GEAR UP WYOMING grant cycle should be directed to Barbara Marino in Student Financial Aid at the University of Wyoming.

Barbara Marino  
Financial Aid Specialist  
Knight Hall 174  
University of Wyoming  
Dept. 3335, 1000 E. University Avenue  
Laramie, WY 82071  
(307)766 – 3393  
bmarino1@uwo.edu  
Hours: Monday thru Friday 8AM – 12PM

### Ignition Training

GEAR UP WYOMING sponsored Ignition training this summer for the following schools which have each implemented the peer mentor program this fall:

- Douglas High School
- Horizon Alternative School
- Kaycee High School
- Powell High School
- Riverton High School
- Wheatland Middle School
- Wheatland High School



Ignition freshman orientation day at Riverton High School (RHS). Ignition training at RHS was sponsored by GEAR UP WYOMING.

Photo courtesy of CWC GU.



# UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

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*GEAR UP WYOMING staff at Camp GEAR UP.*

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GEAR UP Wyoming is funded 50% through a grant from the U.S. 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.