



# Wyoming Department of Education

Dr. Jim McBride, Superintendent of Public Instruction

2020 Grand Avenue, Suite 500

Laramie, WY 82070

Phone 307-777-5296

Fax 307-777-6719

Website [www.k12.wy.us](http://www.k12.wy.us)

## MEMORANDUM NO. 2009-094

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

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

**DATE:** June 12, 2009

**SUBJECT:** GEAR UP Wyoming Newsletter – Second Edition



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### INFORMATION TO SHARE

GEAR UP Wyoming has published the second edition of its state-wide newsletter, *GEAR UP Wyoming Matters*. An electronic version is attached to this memo. It will be published three times per year with a focus on the GEAR UP Wyoming program and its management at the University of Wyoming.

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 second issue features in-depth descriptions of a number of GEAR UP Wyoming programs including a new mentoring initiative, Casper College's GEAR UP program, Quantum Learning professional development opportunities for educators, and an interview with a GEAR UP Wyoming student scholarship recipient.

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 [rbryan@educ.state.wy.us](mailto:rbryan@educ.state.wy.us).

RB:al

Attachment

SPRING 2009

# 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/Trio/Gear-Up-and-ETS.htm>

Eastern Wyoming College

<http://ewc.wy.edu/instruction/gearup/index.cfm>

Laramie County Community College

<http://www.lccc.wy.edu/Index.aspx?page=439>

Northern Wyoming

Community College District

<http://www.sheridan.edu/gearup/>

Northwest College

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

Western Wyoming Community College

<http://www.wvcc.wy.edu/gearup/>

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## UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

1000 E. University Ave.

Laramie, WY 82071

(307) 766-1121, (800) DIAL-WYO

[www.uwyo.edu](http://www.uwyo.edu)

## Mentoring Program Implemented

Last fall the University of Wyoming (UW) Student Leadership and Civic Engagement (SLCE) program co-director, Dr. Brandon Kosine, in collaboration with GEAR UP Wyoming (GUWY) developed a mentoring program for GEAR UP alumni students who attend UW. Three students who are GEAR UP alumni and have been students at UW were trained as peer mentors by Chris Harnden, a graduate student intern.

In August of 2008 before the start of classes, the GEAR UP (GU) mentors hosted a day long college kick-off event for seventeen GU alumni students entering UW as freshman and one transfer student. A week later the mentor and mentee students participated in a ropes course at Colorado State University as a team building activity. During the year the mentor and mentee students communicated regularly and met on a monthly basis as a group. The monthly meetings were a combination

*continued on page 2*



GEAR UP WYOMING mentors, left to right: Saige Albert, Amanda Simpson, Hilary Hughes, and graduate intern, Chris Harnden

*Mentoring, continued from page 1*

of informative sessions paired with fun activities including a trip to the Denver Museum of Nature and Science to see the Museum and the IMAX as their final event of the year.

The purpose of the peer mentor program is to provide peer support to freshman students who participated in one of seven GU programs located at each community college across the state while they were in high school. Once former GU students enter college, the services they receive from the project end. The mentor program serves as a bridge from college entrance through a student's freshman year.

Throughout the year, whenever GU middle school and high school students visit UW, the GU mentors and mentees serve as ambassadors for those campus visits. GU mentors and mentees met with students at Campus Pass 2008 and each Discovery Days event during the school year. During the 2008-2009 school year, GU students from all seven community college programs visited the UW campus.

For more information about the program, please contact Lori Kimbrough, GEAR UP coordinator, at [lorik@uwyo.edu](mailto:lorik@uwyo.edu) or (307) 766-6736. 

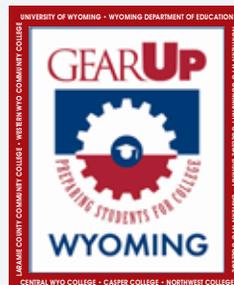


GEAR UP peer mentors and mentees at College Kick-off, August 2008

GEAR UP WYOMING is in the division of Student Affairs within the office of Student Educational Opportunity (SEO). For more information, visit the SEO website at <http://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/SEO/>

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.



GEAR UP WYOMING  
SEO, University of Wyoming  
Dept. 3808  
1000 E. University Ave.  
Laramie, WY 82071  
(307) 766-6189  
email: [seo@uwyo.edu](mailto:seo@uwyo.edu)  
[www.uwyo.edu/gearup/](http://www.uwyo.edu/gearup/)

## Community Colleges



This issue's featured community college is Casper College (CC) which is located in Casper, near the geographic center of the state.

Currently serving 280 students, CC GEAR UP is housed in Student Services. The CC GEAR UP district includes Natrona County which covers 5,340 miles.

CC GEAR UP works with twelve schools in their district. They visit the schools monthly and hold weekly tutoring sessions at the LINK, a community partner in the GEAR UP program.

Community partnerships play a vital role in Casper College's GEAR UP program. Strategic partnerships such as the Link, the Boys and Girls Club, and The Bus help with the tutoring program by providing free bus rides for students and a safe place with snacks for after school tutoring. This partnership gives students something constructive to do from the time school lets out until 8 pm every Monday-Thursday.

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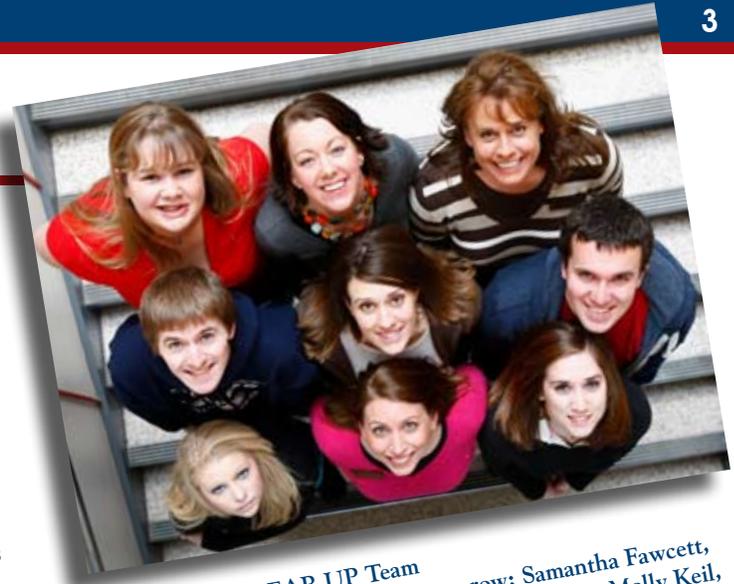
**"GEAR UP is for college as the Holy Grail is for eternal life." – Samantha Fawcett, Work Study Student**

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In addition to programs such as after school tutoring, Casper College offers a variety of activities to involve GEAR UP students and their parents. Close relationships with parents are built through various forms of communication. Chelse DePaolo, GEAR UP Coordinator at Casper College, says, "Our parents love their students. Therefore, when we offer activities in the best interest of our students, parents become interested. We share relevant information which they can put to use immediately."

One of the most popular activities is robotics. Each season, volunteers coach the students during fall semester. By the beginning of December, the GEAR UP robotics team competes in a huge, statewide competition at the Events Center. The students have a great time and learn a lot about math, science, teamwork, and competition.

A similar activity in the spring is the 2+2=5 Leadership Academy. Casper College students



**Casper College GEAR UP Team**  
From left to right, top row to bottom row: Samantha Fawcett, Carrie Corrigan-Maki, Natalie Pique Tim Moffett, Molly Keil, Tyler Faber Mandy Spriggs, Chelse DePaolo, Afton Cochran  
(not pictured: Stephanie Marker)

facilitate leadership training for the GEAR UP student to fulfill of their own Service Learning projects.

The Casper College GEAR UP program has a dedicated team which makes it a successful program. Along with the students, parents, and partners, Casper College has created a truly a unique GEAR UP program.

**For more information, contact** Chelse DePaolo at (307) 268-3036 or [cdepaolo@caspercollege.edu](mailto:cdepaolo@caspercollege.edu)

**CC Website:** <http://www.caspercollege.edu/index.html> 



**Casper College GEAR UP Summer Academy**

## GEAR UP Wyoming Student and Parent Services

Casper College's GEAR UP program has discovered a way to open communication between parents and students through a program called "Picture Yourself a Graduate." The program, which was implemented three years ago, is immensely popular. Students look forward to participating and often ask when they will be able to "graduate."

The Casper College GEAR UP team holds a programming night with parents and students. Students are asked to choose their goal in life. Many choose going to college or working within a specific career.

After the students have chosen a goal, they fill in the blanks on what is needed to reach that goal. More often than not, that goal can only be reached through maintaining good grades and working toward college.

The students participate in a mock graduation. They line up as graduates in caps and gowns. "Pomp and Circumstances" is played, and they cross a stage to receive



*Casper College GEAR UP parents and students*

their "diplomas." Afterwards, a photo is taken for them as graduates to encourage them to reach their goal. They get to keep the photo as a reminder of their goals.

Parents also participate by setting goals, focusing on what they want their child to achieve. Often, they have the same goals as their child, and this opens the lines of communication between them. They are encouraged to discuss their goals and ways to reach them. 



*Casper College "Picture Yourself a Graduate" GEAR UP students*

## GEAR UP Wyoming Professional Development

### GUWY Quantum Learning Site License

Two Wyoming facilitators-in-training recently completed the first phase of the certification process and are now qualified in Quantum Learning for Teachers Levels 1 & 2. We are very proud of Dr. Jeanie Barent and Ms. Christine Olson, the first qualified Quantum Learning facilitators in our state. By the end of summer, Jeanie and Chris should be qualified to offer all five levels of Quantum Learning. As Wyoming facilitators, Chris and Jeanie can now provide Quantum Learning training in their districts or other districts as time allows for them to do so.



Quantum Learning for Teachers, April 20-24, 2009,  
Cheyenne, Wyoming

GUWY has coordinated with two host school districts to provide professional development support for summer program teachers. There will be two workshops in June that were arranged specifically for summer program educators. On June 2 and 3, Sheridan County School District No. 2 will host Quantum Learning Reading and Math for Teachers at Parish Hall in Sheridan. On June 8 and 9, Sweetwater County School District No. 1 will host Quantum Learning for Teachers Levels 1 & 2 at the central administration building in Rock Springs.

GUWY has also coordinated with two school districts to provide collaborative workshops this summer. The workshops are scheduled for the week of July 27 and will be sponsored in part by GUWY. School districts will pay for course materials for their staff who attend and the host

sites will provide a location for the training and break refreshments. Teton County School District No. 1 and Laramie County School District No. 1 will each co-host Quantum Learning for Teachers Levels 1 through 5 with GUWY in Jackson and Cheyenne respectively.

### Educator Professional Development Stipend

The GUWY applications for the Educator Professional Development Stipend are currently being accepted from school districts serving GEAR UP students. The stipends offer an opportunity for schools to provide staff development specific to their needs in better serving students. Stipends are directed at improving academic performance, retention and increasing college awareness and preparation. The professional development activities of successful applicants will be completed during the 2009-2010 school year.

### Upcoming Professional Development Events

June 2 & 3, Sheridan

Quantum Learning Reading and Math for Teachers

June 6, Casper

Wyoming Teacher Policy Institute Final Presentations

June 8 & 9, Rock Springs

Quantum Learning for Teachers Levels 1 & 2

July 27-31, Jackson

Quantum Learning for Teachers Levels 1-5

July 27-31, Cheyenne

Quantum Learning for Teachers Levels 1-5

Contact Lori Kimbrough at [lorik@uwyo.edu](mailto:lorik@uwyo.edu) or (307) 766-6736 for more information about the GUWY professional development activities. 

GEAR UP WYOMING team members wish Donna Regan the best in her retirement. As author of the GEAR UP WYOMING grant, Donna was instrumental in the startup and growth of the GEAR UP program.

GEAR UP WYOMING team members, also, wish to extend their gratitude to Dori Benavides for her years of service with GEAR UP WYOMING. We wish her the best in her new position.

## Scholarship Corner

Institutional scholarships are awarded to GEAR UP WYOMING students by the partner institution where the student attends college. Criteria is determined by the host institution. Last year approximately \$450,000 was awarded to GEAR UP students from the partner institutions.

GEAR UP Wyoming Matters recently spoke with Sean Moran, a first-year student at the University of Wyoming (UW) who participated in the GEAR UP program during high school and received a scholarship from UW.

**GUWY:** I'd like to start with where you went to high school.

**Sean:** Well, I went to high school in Gillette, and so that was Campbell County High School. Right now, I'm a sophomore by credits, and I am actually majoring in psychology, sociology, and, soon to be, criminal justice.

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

**Sean:** I actually learned about GEAR UP with one of my counselors, and she introduced me to the representative, Jamie Chacon, from the Sheridan outreach on the campus with GEAR UP. Jamie Chacon and the counselor helped me get into the program. Jamie Chacon was like really, really supportive of every individual in our program chapter in high school, and without GEAR UP, I think it would have been a lot more difficult getting into college.

**GUWY:** Was that in high school?

**Sean:** Yes, that was in my junior year of high school.

**GUWY:** What type of scholarship were you awarded?

**Sean:** My understanding of the scholarship for GEAR UP is that it pays for your cost of attendance, so what happens is it pays for your tuition for fall and spring semesters and gives you \$500 dollars for books and \$1,000 for expenses and pays for your board. I, also, had the Hathaway Scholarship. The merit which is \$3,200 and the President's Promise which is \$1,000 extra each semester, but it just adds into it, so for instance, what these two scholarships wouldn't pay, GEAR UP pays for the remainder.



Sean Moran, a graduate of GEAR UP, attends the University of Wyoming.

**GUWY:** Was it difficult to apply for the scholarships?

**Sean:** Actually, it was really easy. Jamie Chacon and the rest of the GEAR UP representatives that I had met at that point in time aided me so much. They had encouraged a community college first, but I made the decision to go to the University, and I think that the first semester, they did the pay-for-all of it. I actually had thought about the community college. There would have been some extra money because of my GPA and ACT scores, but I felt the University had so many more options.

**GUWY:** Is the scholarship meeting your financial needs?

**Sean:** For me, definitely. I actually don't really have many other expenses, so in the summer, I work, and then for fall and spring, I just use the grant. Personal expenses of \$1,000 is really easy for me, and I get my books used if possible so it's under \$500, so I think the scholarship is doing great for what's needed.

**GUWY:** How does the scholarship meeting your financial needs affect your social and academic life?

**Sean:** It gives me a lot more time. Instead of working, I am able to become active on campus and get involved in different organizations and have the opportunity to meet a wide variety of individuals. I was able to participate and campaign in the Associated Students of University of Wyoming (ASUW), the student body government. I'm able to volunteer my time to things I'm passionate about. It's given me a lot more variety of experiences that I think I could not have had without these financial means met.

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**“I think it's important to join GEARUP as early as possible. It's very good to start it in high school, and maybe in junior high, and continue through college.”**

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**GUWY:** We've talked about what kind of opportunities the scholarship has opened up for you, like allowing you to do extracurricular activities and work in areas that interest you. Anything else?

**Sean:** I think it's given me a little bit more relief, because I know a lot of people on campus who worry about finances constantly. It makes it so that you can have that safety, that security which makes it so your social life, your academic life, your extracurricular life are all set, and you don't have to worry constantly.

**GUWY:** What types of support are you receiving and does it help? Do you come to the GEAR UP offices and talk with people?

**Sean:** Oh yeah, I've actually asked the GEAR UP representatives about what is going on when I was having trouble with understanding the scholarship, like if I lived off campus, what would happen to the scholarship? They gave me reassurance that it's not like it will just vanish if you move off campus, which I was very worried about. But, it provides me with reassurance. I've, also, actually met some people from SEO. I've talked to McNair Scholars about interest in that program. It's just opened up a wide variety of people that are all connected in ways to GEAR UP.

**GUWY:** So, it's sort of a place where you come, and it leads you to other things. And the people here are easy to talk to and are open-minded?

**Sean:** Yes, definitely.

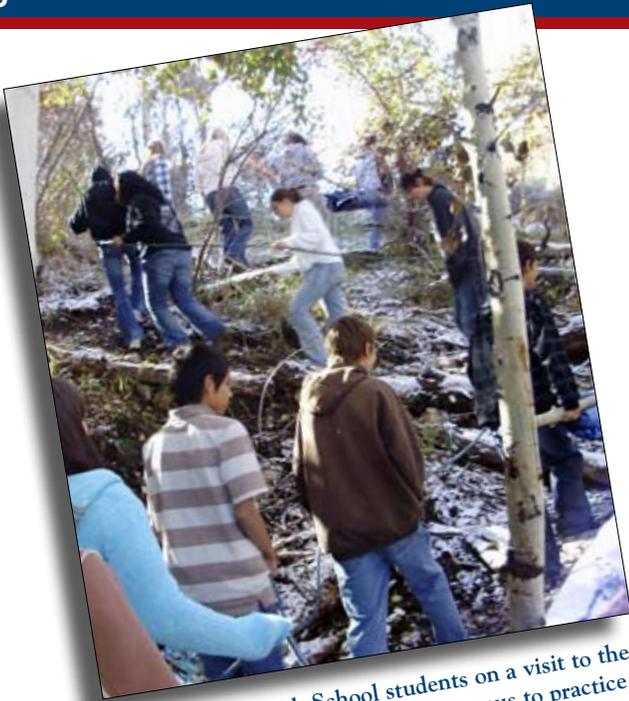
**GUWY:** And the mentors, have you worked with them? Have you been a mentee? Are you going to be a mentor?

**Sean:** I'm a mentee. I actually can't be a mentor for a few semesters because of my involvement with ASUW. I'm hoping maybe in my junior year possibly or senior year, but now my goals are to do the best I can. With mentors, it really did help. It was nice having the activities, so you met other GEAR UP students, and so you realized “Oh, I'm not the only one with a scholarship. Yea!” It can be kind of odd not knowing so many people from your program, and this opens up a variety of people which is the awesome thing about it.

**GUWY:** Anything else you'd like to discuss?

**Sean:** Another good thing is that with GEAR UP, especially in high school, by becoming active in it, you are able to go to camps and institutes. These are places to go over the summer, which makes the summers better. You learn so much. I remember I did Quantum Learning Camp, which was promoted by the GEAR UP program. And I know a lot of people from GEAR UP statewide, and it was just an amazing experience to be able to learn all these different things. I think it's important to join GEAR UP as early as possible. It's very good to start it in high school, and maybe in junior high, and continue through college. 





Starrett Junior High School students on a visit to the Central Wyoming College Sink's Campus to practice teambuilding techniques while learning about the history of the Wind River Mountains.

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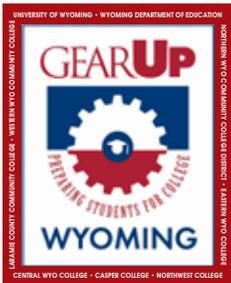
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## UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

GEAR UP Wyoming  
 SEO, University of Wyoming  
 Dept. 3808  
 1000 E. University Ave.  
 Laramie, WY 82071