



Wyoming Department of Education

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MEMORANDUM NO. 2010-146

TO: School District Superintendents
School Principals
Curriculum Coordinators
Counselors

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

DATE: August 27, 2010

SUBJECT: GEAR UP Wyoming Newsletter – Fall 2010 Edition

BB

INFORMATION TO SHARE

GEAR UP Wyoming has published the Fall 2010 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 wind energy program developed for GEAR UP students in Eastern Wyoming College's (EWC) region,
- a focus on GEAR UP Summer Academies offered around the state,
- some highlights of Northwest College's GEAR UP program,
- an overview of professional development for GEAR UP and public school educators so they can better assist students with interpretation and use of their EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT results, and
- an interview with a GEAR UP Wyoming student scholarship recipient and graduate from Northwest College.

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: lh:al
Attachment

FALL 2010

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/money.cfm>

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.wvcc.wy.edu/gearup/>

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OF WYOMING

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GEARed UP for Renewable Energy

Wind is a constant in Wyoming, so creating renewable energy with wind turbines is a logical choice. Eastern Wyoming College (EWC) must have thought so too when they created their wind turbine program for GEAR UP students.

Aaron Wolfe, EWC GEAR UP Coordinator, designed the program after attending a renewable energy conference and learning that Laramie County Community College (LCCC) had started a wind energy program. Both Aaron Wolfe and Judy Brown, the director of EWC's GEAR UP program, thought it seemed like a good opportunity to begin working on ways to introduce GEAR UP students to renewable energy as a future career option. The result was an amazing program filled with learning through hands-on activities and a visit to a wind farm.

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EWC GEAR UP students visiting a wind energy farm

Ninety-six students from Torrington Middle School, Torrington High School, and Wheatland Middle School joined the wind energy program. After completing the necessary coursework, they broke up into 32 teams to build model turbines from a kit.

The model turbines were judged by local wind energy professionals. The judging was based on the overall design, the proposed location for the turbine, and the ability of each model to store and release energy. The judges tested the energy storage capability of each turbine by using a fan and the output of each by wiring them to a variety of light bulbs. Teams from Torrington Middle School were awarded first and third places, and a team from Wheatland Middle School was awarded second place.

“Each model looked totally different. They were awesome!”
— Judy Brown, Director of EWC’s GEAR UP program

In addition to building the models, students visited LCCC to learn about their wind energy program and to tour a wind farm. At the wind farm, students viewed the inside and outside of a wind turbine and shadowed professionals to learn about the daily operations of a wind farm. The students were very impressed with the power of the turbines. Wind energy professionals were available to answer student questions.

The program was so successful that EWC hopes to include solar energy and biomass fuel into the GEAR UP renewable energy program next year. 

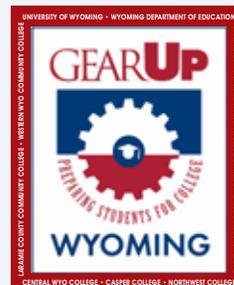


EWC students
building wind
turbine models

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

 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 Northwest College (NWC) which is located in Powell, Wyoming. NWC serves a large area with 18 high schools and middle schools in the counties of Big Horn, Park, and Washakie. Staff members meet with students twice a month throughout the school year to conduct academic workshops, check on grades, and organize tutoring if a student requires it.

In addition to these meetings, NWC holds other events throughout the year including four Saturday academies in which students come to the college campus for career workshops, team building, goal setting, outdoor leadership, and ACT and Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) preparation.

Students are also encouraged to participate in college visits where they are given an official tour. The admissions and financial aid offices hold discussions to help answer their questions. Afterwards, students are able to attend a college sporting event.



Dana Gillett, Assistant Coordinator, and Robert Hill, Coordinator of Northwest College GEAR UP

Summer is one of the busiest times for the NWC GEAR UP program with many different events. This year, the 21st Century Certificate financial aid night was attended by 127 students and their families. They received information on the college application process and financial aid possibilities.

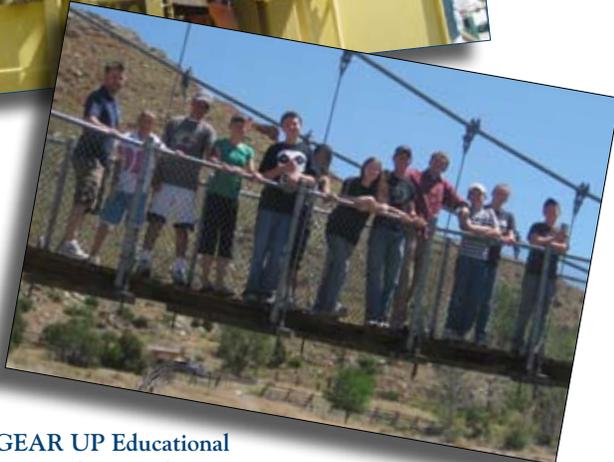
Also this summer, 18 students attended a cultural day in Billings, Montana. They visited the Western Heritage Center, the Yellowstone Art Museum and the Billings zoo. While visiting the zoo, students learned about the various careers available in botany and zoology.

“The students had an incredible time and embraced what a college life really is like!”

— Robert Hill, Coordinator, NWC GEAR UP

At the end of June this year, NWC hosted a summer academy for 18 middle school students for two days and 44 high school students for three days. These students experienced college life by staying in the dorms and eating at the cafeteria. During their visit, students attended college lectures from campus professors. They also received information on FAFSA, scholarships, Advance Placement classes, and goal setting. Robert Hill, coordinator of NWC GEAR UP, summed up the visit by stating, “The students had an incredible time and embraced what a college life really is like!”

For more information, visit the NWC website at www.northwestcollege.edu/gearup/ 



**NWC GEAR UP Educational
Field Trip to Thermopolis**

GEAR UP WYOMING Summer Academy Programs

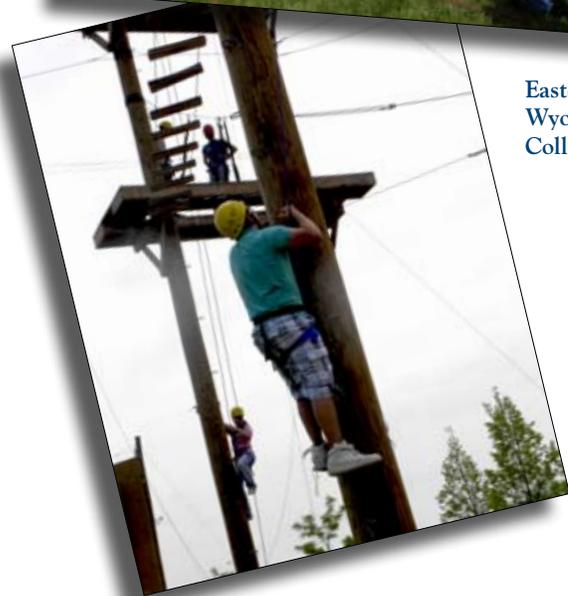
Each year GEAR UP students participate in summer academies around the state. In many cases, this incredible programming opportunity allows students to experience life on a college campus including residence halls, cafeteria, classrooms, libraries, and research facilities. Summer academies also engage students in advanced curricula, mentoring opportunities, and active learning exercises. Summer academies are a mandatory activity for students to be eligible for the GEAR UP WYOMING Federal Scholarship. GEAR UP students are able to connect with each other while taking part in these multi-day summer academies and come away from the experience with new information about college admission qualifications, college academic readiness, and new friends. 🇺🇸



Central Wyoming College



Eastern Wyoming College



Casper College





Laramie County Community College

Western Wyoming Community College



Northern Wyoming Community College District



Northwest College



Scholarship Corner

GEAR UP WYOMING Matters interviewed Lauren Winterholler, a recent graduate of Northwest College (NWC). Lauren received a GEAR UP NWC institutional scholarship which covered all unmet college costs.

GUWY: Where did you attend high school?

Lauren: I attended Lovell High School. It's located in Lovell, Wyoming and has about 200 students.

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

Lauren: My high school counselor told me about the qualifications needed to be in the GEAR UP program. After learning that I qualified, I attended an informational meeting and signed up.

“Knowing that my financial needs were met while I was at school relieved so much stress.”

GUWY: What type of scholarships were you awarded?

Lauren: I received scholarships from foundations and organizations all over Wyoming, including the Hathaway and the Wyoming Community Foundation. GEAR UP staff at NWC worked with me in order to make up the difference between what I was being awarded and what I would owe. Because of the GEAR UP NWC institutional scholarship, I was able to attend my first two years of school for free.

GUWY: What college did you attend and why did you choose it?

Lauren: In May, I graduated from Northwest College in Powell, Wyoming. There were a lot of reasons I chose Powell. The cost of tuition, fees, room and board was outstanding, and the fact that I could attend college for free was very appealing! Also, the professors at NWC are very easy to work with. There were a ton of opportunities that were available to me through my professors and their classes. For me, the list is endless as to why I chose to go to NWC, and I have no regrets about attending and graduating from NWC.

GUWY: Was it difficult to apply for the scholarships?

Lauren: Not at all. The people I worked with in NWC Financial Aid were amazing! They were very friendly and helpful, and they helped me through the process of



Lauren (right) with her sister, Leanne, at graduation this past May from Northwest College

applying for and receiving scholarships. Even when I was a sophomore they were notifying me of new financial opportunities that were available to me. It was great!

GUWY: Did the scholarships meet your financial needs?

Lauren: Yes. All of my financial needs were met.

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

Lauren: Knowing that my financial needs were met while I was at school relieved so much stress. It allowed me to focus on my school work and enjoy the social life of college. The students that had to work would get home from work and have to do homework while I was able to do fun things, make new friends, and create college memories.

GUWY: What did having a scholarship open up for you? Did it allow you to participate in extracurricular activities?

Lauren: Most definitely. Because I didn't have to work as much as others, I was able to participate in intramurals, religious groups, residential life, and many other things. Sometimes after being in school all day, just having the option to sit in my dorm was very rewarding.

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

Lauren: Take advantage of everything while you can! Don't be afraid to ask questions and talk to people. I learned that a huge part of college is networking. The people you meet and interact with (students, bosses, professors) are people that you will be in contact with, and they can be good resources in your future. Take advantage of that now.

GUWY: Now that you've graduated, what are your plans?

Lauren: I will be traveling with the International Language Programs to Russia for the Fall semester to teach English to primary aged children. 

GEAR UP WYOMING Professional Development

EXPLORE, PLAN, and ACT

EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT are college readiness tests provided by ACT, Inc. ACT, Inc. is an independent, not-for-profit organization that provides a wide variety of college testing services. Each of the EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT tests have English, math, reading and science components as well as a career interest survey.

EXPLORE is the first part of the college entrance testing system that goes on to include PLAN and ACT. In 2009, the Wyoming legislature voted to administer the EXPLORE to all eighth-grade students in the state. The results of the EXPLORE help educators, parents and students identify academic areas a student may need to improve to increase their PLAN and ACT scores.

PLAN is the second part of the testing system and is provided to most Wyoming tenth-graders through their school district. Some schools offer the test to all students while some reserve it for students to take on an elective basis. The results of the PLAN indicate the score a student is likely to receive on the ACT and reveals academic areas they should work on to get the best possible ACT score.

ACT is the third and final step in the testing system. Since 2006, the Wyoming legislature has provided funding to the Hathaway Scholarship Program to administer the ACT to all eleventh-grade students. ACT scores are used as part of the admissions requirements at each Wyoming postsecondary institution. If a student does not score high enough on the ACT for college admission the first time they take it, they may complete additional test preparation and retake the test for an improved score. GEAR UP WYOMING

students may contact their GEAR UP coordinator to receive an ACT fee waiver to retake the test.

EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT data interpretative workshops will be offered to educators throughout the state on a regional basis during the 2010-2011 school year. The workshops will aid educators in understanding the meaning of the EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT scores and how those scores serve as a direct link between what students have learned and what they are ready to learn. 

Upcoming Professional Development

September 27-28, Cheyenne

Quantum Learning for Teachers Levels 1

This workshop will be a strand offered at the Fall School Improvement Conference at the Little America in Cheyenne. To register, go to <http://guest.cvent.com/d/gdq11s> and select "Quantum Learning Workshop" as your "Registration Type" in the drop down menu. Contact Karan Wright at kwright@ncacasi.org for 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.

ACT College Entrance Exam 2010-2011 Test Dates

Test Date	Registration Deadline	(Late Fee Required)
September 11, 2010*	August 6, 2010	August 7 – 20, 2010
October 23, 2010	September 17, 2010	September 18 – October 1, 2010
December 11, 2010	November 5, 2010	November 6 – 19, 2010
February 12, 2011**	January 7, 2011	January 8 – 21, 2011
April 9, 2011	March 4, 2011	March 5 – 18, 2011
June 11, 2011	May 6, 2011	May 7 – 20, 2011

All Wyoming eleventh-grade students will take the ACT in April at their schools. Students who want to take the test again can visit the following ACT website to register for the test and to locate testing centers:

<http://www.actstudent.org/regist/dates.html>

GEAR UP WYOMING students may contact their GEAR UP coordinator to obtain an ACT test fee waiver.

Give it Your Best Shot!

Enter the *GEARing UP for College in Wyoming* Digital Photo Competition and you could win a Canon Powershot SD960-IS Digital Camera

Who is eligible?

The contest is open to GEAR UP WYOMING students in grades 7-12.

Deadline

Entries are welcome anytime between September 1 and November 15 of 2010.

Entries are limited to 2 photos per student.

Rules or Questions

For more information, contact Vicki Henry by e-mail at vickis@uwyo.edu

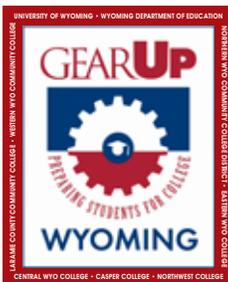
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GEAR UP Wyoming is funded 50% through a grant from the US Dept of Education totaling \$3.5 million annually with an additional \$3.5 million provided by in-kind and scholarship contributions from Wyoming's community colleges, the University of Wyoming,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



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