

# WEST VIRGINIA GEARUP

ADMINISTERED BY THE WEST VIRGINIA HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY COMMISSION

West Virginia GEAR UP is a federal grant program aimed at assisting students in "Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs."

The Commission's first GEAR UP project launched in 2008 and continued through the 2014-15 academic year.

The Commission received its second GEAR UP grant in fall 2014. This new project will serve upwards of 13,000 students and will continue through 2021.



## TARGET AUDIENCES:

- First-generation students
- Low-income students
- Parents of these students
- Educators, counselors, administrators, and community leaders working with these students

## COUNTIES SERVED:

The Commission's current GEAR UP project (2014-21) provides services in **Boone, Fayette, Mason, Mercer, Mingo, Nicholas, Summers, Webster, Wirt, and Wyoming** counties.

## KNOWLEDGE & SUPPORT

# 95%

Ninety-five percent of GEAR UP students reported having spoken with someone regarding college admissions requirements, compared to only 77 percent of non-GEAR UP students attending comparable WV high schools.

And 70 percent of GEAR UP students reported receiving direct help from a college representative, while fewer than half of non-GEAR UP students said they had received help.<sup>1</sup>



## APPLICATIONS

A recent survey showed that more than 81 percent of GEAR UP students applied to at least one college or university, while only 71 percent of students from comparable WV high schools completed at least one college application.<sup>2</sup>

## JOB SITE VISITS



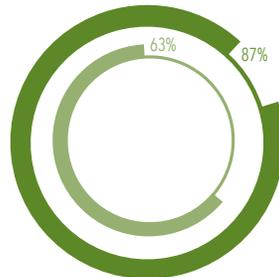
Nearly 2,500 students have participated in job site visits through the WV GEAR UP program.<sup>3</sup>



## FINANCIAL AID

Since 2012, GEAR UP schools have made major gains in increasing the number of students applying for financial aid. FAFSA completion rates among GEAR UP 12th graders jumped eight percentage points – from 50% to 58%.<sup>5</sup>

## ASPIRATIONS

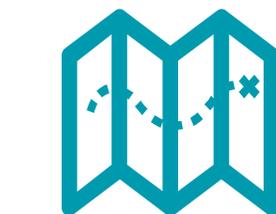


When the GEAR UP program first started in 2008, only 63% of parents of students in the class of 2014 expected their child to earn a two-year degree or higher. By the time those students graduated high school, 87% of those same parents said they expect their child to earn a degree.<sup>1</sup>



## COLLEGE-GOING

The college-going rate in WV GEAR UP schools increased by 3.7% over the course of the Commission's first GEAR UP project – in spite of slight decreases in the statewide rate during the same time period.<sup>6</sup>



## COLLEGE VISITS

# 10,000

Since WV GEAR UP began in 2008, the program has helped more than 10,000 students visit a college by coordinating free campus tours.<sup>3</sup>

WEST VIRGINIA HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY COMMISSION, DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS • (304) 558-0655 • WVGEARUP@WVHEPC.EDU

1. West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, GEAR UP Annual Survey (2014)  
2. West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, Senior Opinion Survey (2014)

3. West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, GEAR UP Participation Data (2016)  
4. West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, GEAR UP Annual Survey (2014)

5. West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, FAFSA Completion Data (2012-2016)  
6. West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, College-Going Rate Data (2014)