



WV GEAR UP Program Meeting

Tuesday, July 16, 2024





Welcome and Program Updates

Elizabeth Manuel, Senior Director of Student Services



GEAR UP Year 3 Successes

Jason Luyster, Interim Director of WV GEAR UP





State and Federal Financial Aid Updates

Brian Weingart, Senior Director of Financial Aid





GEAR UP Year 4 Workplan

Jason Luyster, Interim Director of WV GEAR UP



WV GEAR UP WORKPLAN

GRANT YEAR 4: October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025



SURVEY, RESEARCH & DATA

Student and Parent Surveys
Surveying 10th Grade Students
Surveying 10th Grade Parents
November 2024 - January 2025
Target: 80% Student | 50% Parent

HERO Interviews and Student Focus Groups
March – April 2025
Target: Cohort Students

School Personnel Surveys
Surveying 9th – 12th Grade Educators and Staff
April - May 2025
Target: 60% Response Rate



EVENT REGISTRATION

Required for all workplan activities. Regional PD's must approve all non-recurring events by email.
Event registration should be submitted two weeks in advance.



DATA COLLECTION

Activity Backup Documentation
All GEAR UP events and activities must be supported by backup documentation.
Due by the 15th of the following month to the regional program director for entry and validation.



REQUIRED ADMINISTRATIVE MEETINGS

WV GEAR UP Grant Program Meetings
September 12, 2024 (Year 3 Workplan)
November 14, 2024 | January 9, 2025 | March 13, 2025 | May 8, 2025
July 2025 (Date TBD) | September 2025 (Date TBD)

WV Student Success Summit
July 2025 | Team of 6

Year 5 Budget Planning Meeting
August 2025

Grant Administration Meetings
TBD



NATIONAL GEAR UP WEEK

Celebrate National GEAR UP Week
September 23-27, 2024 (Year 3 Workplan)



CLASSROOM ENHANCEMENTS

Technology Enhancements: 9th and 10th Grade Cohorts
Ordered by October 15th, Installed by December 1
Cumulative Classroom Enhancement Tracking Reports Due January 31, 2025



ADDITIONAL GRANT ACTIVITIES/SERVICES

Pending approval, additional activities, or services meeting GEAR UP goals and objectives may be provided during the academic year.
Requires WV GEAR UP administrative approval/coordination.



MINIMUM REQUIRED ACTIVITIES		SITE LEVEL COORDINATION	CENTRAL OFFICE COORDINATION	HOSPITALITY	MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES	COMPLETION DEADLINE	COMMENTS AND WORKPLAN CLARIFICATION
Welcome to GEAR UP Day		●		●	●	September 2024	Host a welcome to GEAR UP awareness day for students as part of National GEAR UP Week. The event must include information about the federally funded GEAR UP grant and services for the 2024-25 academic year for 12th-grade students new to the GEAR UP program. Site Coordinators are asked to utilize the WV GEAR UP launch toolkit developed by the central office. Resources in the form of informational hand-outs are also available.
CFWV Txt 4 Success Opt-In (Target 75% of Senior Class)		●			●	October 2024	WV GEAR UP and College for WV provides college access and success counseling via text message. Provide all priority students and parents the opportunity to sign up for text messages through an organized in-school event/activity where students have access to a computer. Each school's goal is a minimum of 75% of senior class enrollment. Activity is a component of the 21st Century Scholars initiative.
College Application and Exploration Week Target: 75% Seniors		●	●	●	●	Oct 28 - Nov 1, 2024	Priority group activities MUST include computer lab time for students to submit college applications. Site coordinators must register their school as a participant in CAEW and are encouraged to scale this event as part of a school-wide effort involving other staff. All students are encouraged to participate and a minimum of 75% of seniors are required to submit at least 2 college or career/technical applications.
In-State College Campus Visits In-State Career and Technical Center Visits Target: 75% Seniors		●		●	●	December 15, 2024	Site coordinators will plan a minimum of one in-person college visit and one career and technical center. Priority group site coordinators are highly encouraged to couple this trip with other activities such as a job-site visit when possible. Additional college visits will be considered as funds allow. In unique circumstances due to geographical location, out-of-state college trips may be considered if they do not include overnight stays. Target: A minimum of 75% of seniors.
WV FAFSA Day		●	●	●	●	Fall 2024	West Virginia FAFSA Day stands as a collaborative effort spearheaded by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, the West Virginia Community and Technical College System, College for West Virginia (CFWV), West Virginia GEAR UP, and West Virginia TRIO Association. Site coordinators will support WV FAFSA Day within their GEAR UP schools and community to bring awareness to the importance of completing the FAFSA.
2 FAFSA Completion Workshops Target 62%		●		●	●	November 1, 2024 April 15, 2025	Host a minimum of two separate FAFSA completion workshops designed to help students and parents complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Efforts should be made to meet a GEAR UP goal of 62% FAFSA completions. Events may NOT take place prior to the opening of the FAFSA application. Activity is a component of the 21st Century Scholars initiative.
State Financial Aid and Scholarship Workshop		●		●	●	March 1, 2025	Coordinate a state financial aid and scholarship workshop designed to help students and parents apply for the PROMISE Scholarship, WV Invests Grant and other grants and scholarships. Events may NOT take place prior to October 1, 2024. Activity is a component of the 21st Century Scholars initiative.
Transition and College Readiness Family Event		●		●	●	May 15, 2025	Site coordinators will host one event focusing on educating students and parents about the successful transition from high school to postsecondary. The event must be associated with an activity that addresses the transition to college and first-year experience topic to help prepare priority students for matriculation.
College Decision Day		●	●	●	●	June 1, 2025	Site coordinators will host one College Decision Day event focused on honoring students who plan to pursue postsecondary education and training. The event must provide transition and college readiness materials to families. Site coordinators must register for the College Decision Day event as it is part of a statewide initiative. Site coordinators are strongly encouraged to invite GEAR UP parents and other students to witness the event.
Academic Enrichment: See Below							
Dual Credit Courses		●				September 2024 - May 2025	Beginning in fall 2023, (under recent legislation) GEAR UP seniors may be eligible for the funding of dual credit courses identified through institutional partners for certain pathways. In the event that a course is not covered under the program's provision and a course is listed on the 2024-25 General Studies and Course Equivalency Transfer Agreement, GU funds may be used to cover the course. Reporting of student enrollment in all dual credit courses will be need to be tracked for reporting purposes.
Program-wide SAT Test Prep Boot Camp/Other Academic Enrichment		●	●		●	TBD	Coordinated and funded by the central GEAR UP office, a SAT Test Prep Boot Camp will be scheduled at each GEAR UP high school. Additional academic enrichment funds (county budgets) may be used for other SAT/ACT prep, credit recovery opportunities (not already funded through other existing sources), AP exams, and in some cases partial funding for programs like Early College Academy (with approval from WV GEAR UP administration).

Note: All non-recurring (academic enrichment) events/activities are required to be approved by the regional program director through the event notification form. No event may take place unless it has been approved by the RPD. Event notifications should be submitted two weeks in advance when possible.

Note: Food expenditures not to exceed \$13/head for school-level events.



MINIMUM REQUIRED ACTIVITIES	SITE LEVEL COORDINATION	CENTRAL OFFICE COORDINATION	HOSPITALITY	MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES	COMPLETION DEADLINE	COMMENTS AND WORKPLAN CLARIFICATION
Welcome to GEAR UP Day	●		●	●	September 2024	Host a welcome to GEAR UP awareness day for students as part of National GEAR UP Week. The event must include information about the federally funded GEAR UP grant and services for the 2024-25 academic year 9th and 10th grade students. Site Coordinators are asked to utilize the WV GEAR UP launch toolkit developed by the central office. Resources in the form of informational hand-outs are also available.
Student Leadership Academy	●	●	●	●	October 7, 2024	WV GEAR UP's central office team will coordinate the 2024 Student Leadership Academy held in Charleston, WV at the Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences (lunch provided). Site Coordinators are asked to register to bring 9th and 10th grade students. Only students from the cohorts are eligible to attend. Schools will budget for buses and substitutes from their county grant budget.
Mentor Summit		●	●	●	October 8, 2024	Student Success Society sponsors will attend the 2024 Mentor Summit in Charleston, WV. Mileage reimbursement and/or funding for a substitute teacher, while sponsors are out of the building, will be available through the GEAR UP county grant agreement. Sponsors will receive training and program details that will enable them to begin working with their SSS members beginning in October through May of the academic year.
College Application and Exploration Week	●	●	●	●	Oct 28 - Nov 1, 2024	Cohort activities MUST include computer lab time for students to explore colleges and careers, and college planning resources. Site coordinators must register their school as a participant in CAEW. Toolkits full of CAEW resources will be provided to staff. Site coordinators are encouraged to scale this event as part of a school-wide effort involving educators and other staff.
Family Action Network	●	●		●	Ongoing	The WV GEAR UP grant includes the creation of the Family Action Network team to build capacity for the mission of GEAR UP. The WV GEAR UP central office will coordinate the FANs leadership initiatives. This effort will coincide with the parent engagement component of the grant.
Higher Education Readiness Officers	●	●		●	Ongoing	Implement and oversee school-level HEROs student leadership group. Implement HERO workplan/challenges. A minimum of 8 meetings with HERO students throughout the academic year is required. Additional details to be shared during GEAR UP staff meetings.
Student Success Society	●	●		●	Ongoing	WV GEAR UP will continue to implement the Student Success Society. Student Success Society members are identified and paired with a group mentor. Site coordinators will coordinate the participation among SSS members and identify SSS sponsors. SSS sponsors will attend the Mentor Summit in October 2024. Regional program directors will coordinate SSS sponsor contracts.
WV GEAR UP/Postsecondary Readiness Awareness Project	●			●	December 15, 2024	In collaboration with the WV GEAR UP central office, site coordinators will lead a GEAR UP/postsecondary awareness campaign allowing the distribution of important information/materials to be provided to staff school-wide. Additionally, faculty and staff will be made aware of opportunities available for them to assist and participate in WV GEAR UP events and activities as addressed during the annual personnel survey.
Career Academy	●	●	●	●	April 30, 2025	The WV GEAR UP central office will coordinate the GEAR UP Career Academy which will take place in Charleston, WV at the Charleston Coliseum and Convention Center. Schools will be responsible for bringing buses of students to the event, securing permission forms. Food will be provided by the central office, but school budgets will cover the transportation costs.
1 In-State College Campus Visit 1 Career and Technical Center Visit <i>Target: 50% Cohort Students</i>	●		●	●	April 1, 2025	One in-person college visit for 9th/10th grade students at a WV college or university. One in-person career and technical center site visit for 9th/10th grade students. Site coordinators are highly encouraged to strategically target students so that a minimum of 50% of all GU cohort students attend at least one visit. Regional WV GEAR UP Days on college campuses in conjunction with the three partner institutions may be planned through the regional program director.
GEAR UP U Summer Academy	●	●	●	●	June 25-28, 2025	Hosted by the Southwestern Region Program Director at Marshall University. The GEAR UP U Application process will launch during the staff meeting in January 2025. The GUU application deadline will be announced at that time. Additional information regarding the number of participants per school, the registration/enrollment process, transportation, and much more will be provided.
Academic Enrichment: See Below						
Program-Wide SAT Boot Camp Project	●	●		●	TBD	Coordinated and funded by the central GEAR UP office, a SAT Test Prep Boot Camp will be scheduled at each GEAR UP high school. Additional academic enrichment funds (county budgets) may be used for other SAT/ACT prep, credit recovery opportunities (not already funded through other existing sources), AP exams, and in some cases partial funding for programs like Early College Academy (with approval from WV GEAR UP administration).
Other Academic Enrichment	●	●		●	Ongoing	Academic enrichment funds may be used for additional math support for the 9th/10th cohorts. To meet the GEAR UP Grant Goal: The percentage of GEAR UP students who pass Algebra 1 or its equivalent by the end of ninth grade, WV GEAR UP central office will continue to provide 24/7 online tutoring access through Brainfuse. A minimum target of 10% of GEAR UP cohort 1 and 2 students must receive academic enrichment support. Site-level funds may be used for software, tutors, or other approved initiatives.

Note: All non-recurring (academic enrichment) events/activities are required to be approved by the regional program director through the event notification form. No event may take place unless it has been approved by the RPD. Event notifications should be submitted two weeks in advance when possible.

Note: Food expenditures not to exceed \$13/head for school-level events.



Communications Update

Emily Hammond, Assistant Director of Communications and Outreach

West Virginia GEAR UP

Identity and Branding Guidelines

GEAR UP is Acronym

- “GEAR UP” stands for **G**aining **E**arly **A**wareness and **R**eadiness for **U**ndergraduate **P**rograms
- NEVER refer to the program as Gear Up



Where to find Branding Files and Communications Resources

Program Branding and Identity Materials

- Logos, stationary, and identity guide
- wvgearup.org > Resources > Partner Toolkit > Program Branding and Identity Materials

Communications and Outreach Resources

- Flyer templates, website banners, Canva templates, and example social media posts
- wvgearup.org > Resources > Partner Toolkit > Communications and Outreach Resources

Using the GEAR UP Logo

Acceptable Uses

Preferred Use:
Horizontal Color Logo ↴



Clear Space: The "E" in the logo can be used as a relative guide for spacing. Allow at least the same width as the "E" between the logo and any other graphics, borders or text. ↑



Using the GEAR UP Logo

Unacceptable Uses



↑ Do not "squish" or "stretch" the logo.



↑ Do not apply effects, such as drop shadows or 3D filters.



↑ Do not print the logo in any color scheme, other than those shown in the acceptable use section. Do not "ghost" the logo or use it as a "watermark."



Appropriate Typefaces and Colors

GEAR UP Fonts

- Headings
 - Montserrat Bold
 - Raleway Bold
- Body
 - Arial
 - Helvetica

Color Guide

<p>PMS: 7692 C=100 M=69 Y=24 K=7 R=0 G=84 B=135 HEX: 005487</p>	<p>PMS: 368 C=59 M=2 Y=100 K=0 R=118 G=188 B=33 HEX: 76bc21</p>	<p>PMS: 3125 C=95 M=2 Y= 22 K=0 R= 0 G=71 B=200 HEX: 00abc8</p>	<p>PMS: 7662 C=59 M=88 Y=18 K=3 R=125 G=64 B=129 HEX: 7d4081</p>
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↑ Primary Color Palette



↑ Secondary or "Accent" Color Palette - use sparingly.

Communications or Identity Questions?

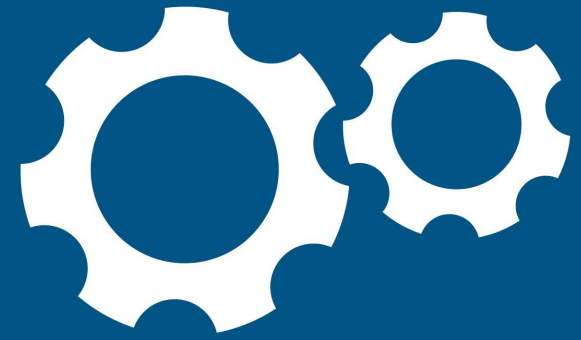
Emily Hammond

Assistant Director of Communications and Outreach

Emily.Hammond@wvhepc.edu

Welcome to GEAR UP Toolkit

Welcome to GEAR UP Toolkit



- wvgearup.org > Resources > Partner Toolkit > Welcome to GEAR UP Event Files
- Toolkit for both Priority and Cohort groups



What is in the Toolkit



- Program informational flyer for both students and parents
- Welcome to GEAR UP Event PowerPoint presentation
- My College Plan Resources
 - Get There
 - Know the Lingo
 - Learn More Earn More
 - West Virginia College Map
 - What is GEAR UP





Research & Evaluation Update

Lesli Taylor, Assistant Director of Research & Evaluation

Data Collection – Your Responsibility as Site Coordinators

- Event Request – At least two weeks before your event
- Sign In Sheet
- After event – Upload sheet to GoAnywhere
 - Do not email

ACTIVITY SIGN-IN SHEET

County: _____ School: _____ Site coordinator: _____

Title of event/activity: _____ Start time: _____ End time: _____

Limit one activity per sign-in sheet

Date: _____ How much time did **each participant** spend engaged in the activity? _____ hours and _____ minutes

Activity category: tutoring *subject area:* _____ rigorous academic curricula comprehensive mentoring financial aid counseling career exposure *(job site visit/job shadowing)*
 college exposure *(college visit/college student shadowing)* summer programs educational field trips workshops family/cultural events counseling/advising/academic planning/career counseling

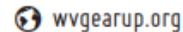
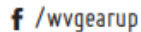
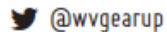
Delivery type: in-person email phone text web-conferencing live web-conferencing recorded

Note: Please only include phone calls, texts and emails for which you had a two-way communication with the student/parent (for example a response to your email or a response to your text message).

WRITE NAME, GRADE AND WVEIS (LUNCH) # *Only West Virginia GEAR UP students need to sign in. Students should indicate how many parents/guardians are attending with them.*

Student name	Grade	WVEIS (lunch) #	# Parents/legal guardians <i>with you</i>		
Ex. Sarah Ann Doe	12th	901111234	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
1. _____	_____	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
2. _____	_____	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
3. _____	_____	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
4. _____	_____	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
5. _____	_____	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
6. _____	_____	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
7. _____	_____	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
8. _____	_____	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
9. _____	_____	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
10. _____	_____	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
11. _____	_____	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
12. _____	_____	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
13. _____	_____	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
14. _____	_____	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
15. _____	_____	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
16. _____	_____	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more

SCRIBE data entry person: _____ SCRIBE data entry date: _____ Validated by initials: _____ Validated by date: _____



ACTIVITY SIGN-IN SHEET

County: _____ School: _____ Site coordinator: _____

Title of event/activity: _____ Start time: _____ End time: _____
Limit one activity per sign-in sheet

Date: _____ How much time did each participant spend engaged in the activity? _____ hours and _____ minutes

Activity category: tutoring subject area: _____ rigorous academic curricula comprehensive mentoring financial aid counseling career exposure (job site visit/job shadowing)
 college exposure (college visit/college student shadowing) summer programs educational field trips workshops family/cultural events counseling/advising/academic planning/career counseling

Delivery type: in-person email phone text web-conferencing live web-conferencing recorded
Note: Please only include phone calls, texts and emails for which you had a two-way communication with the student/parent (for example a response to your email or a response to your text message).

WRITE NAME, GRADE AND WVEIS (LUNCH) # *Only West Virginia GEAR UP students need to sign in. Students should indicate how many parents/guardians are attending with them.*

Student name	Grade	WVEIS (lunch) #	# Parents/legal guardians <i>with you</i>		
Ex. Sarah Ann Doe	12th	901111234	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
1. _____			<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
2. _____			<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more

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 college exposure (college visit/college student shadowing) summer programs educational field trips workshops family/cultural events counseling/advising/academic planning career counseling

Delivery type: in-person email phone text web-conferencing live web-conferencing recorded

Note: Please only include phone calls, texts and emails for which you had a two-way communication with the student/parent (for example a response to your email or a response to your text message).



If you know there are going to be no parents at your event, PLEASE do the following before you allow your students to sign the sign-in sheet.

8.	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
9.	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
10.	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
11.	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
12.	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
13.	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
14.	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
15.	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more
16.	_____	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2 or more

SCRIBE data entry person: _____ SCRIBE data entry date: _____ Validated by initials: _____ Validated by date: _____

@wvgearup

/wvgearup

/wvgearup

wvgearup.org





Student Interviews

Recommendations for Implementation

- Target college campus visits to **students' interests**
- Include **job shadowing opportunities** and hands-on experience
- **Invite professionals** to share their career paths and experiences
- **Invite alumni** to share lessons learned in high school
- Promote collaboration with **other programs and classes**
- Encourage students to reach out when they have **doubts**



Year 4 Site Coordinator Contracts

Joanne Rutherford, Coordinator of Fiscal and Administrative Services



Lunch Break



GEAR UP Networking Break

Mallory Carpenter, College Access and Success Program Director

West Virginia GEAR UP Mission Statement:

“GEAR UP” stands for “Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs,” and the program’s goal is to help more students pursue their dreams of earning a college diploma or skillset certificate.



Mentor Summit and Student Success Societies

Janine Coutu, College Access and Success Program Director

Mentor Summit and the Student Success Societies

- Tuesday, October 8, 2024
- David Hendrickson Conference Center
- 10:00 AM – 3:30 PM
- @40-45 total mentors (average of 2 per GU high school)
- \$1,000 payment in two installments (\$500 for 20 hours each term)
- Minimal paperwork involved (2 timesheets and sign-in sheet for each meeting)
- Integrating the WhyTry platform



HEROs group and Workplan

Mallory Carpenter, College Access and Success Program Director

HEROs Group and Workplan

West Virginia GEAR UP

HEROs Peer-to-Peer Outreach Groups

PAGE 1 of 2

Overview: West Virginia GEAR UP aims to fuel a college-going culture at each high school through the creation of peer-to-peer outreach groups led by students within the GEAR UP cohort. Select 8 to 20 students at each school will be identified as HEROs (Higher Education Readiness Officers).

These students will be charged with organizing their HEROs unit in order to assist the GEAR UP site coordinator with the GEAR UP workplan, encourage student, family and community involvement within the school and in the college-readiness process, and serve as peer mentors for their fellow students. In addition, HEROs will also have a voice in the overall direction of the GEAR UP program, particularly concerning program-wide outreach initiatives.

The GEAR UP site coordinator will serve as the group advisor in each school, and the site coordinator is responsible for organizing the HEROs unit, establishing the group's legitimacy as a student group within the school, and ensuring that HEROs students meet on a regular basis and accomplish their annual goals.

Selection of Students: Site Coordinators may recruit students to serve as HEROs as they see fit (nomination, election, etc.). A list of students who attended the 2024 GEAR UP U! summer academy is included as a starting point for identifying students who may be interested in the mission of the group. The ideal HERO is:

- Dedicated to utilizing their potential to the best of their ability and helping other students do the same;
- Positive, supportive, approachable and tolerant;
- Dedicated to pursuing some form of postsecondary education;
- A strong believer in the power of education;
- Someone who could benefit from being part of a supportive, engaging group; and
- Someone who could benefit from the opportunity to improve their leadership skills, self-confidence and high school resume.

It may be a good idea to select a few students to begin with, and then allow those students to grow the group through additional recruitment, nomination or election processes.

Organization: The GEAR UP site coordinator will serve as the advisor for the group, but the students should take full ownership of the organization and its responsibilities. HEROs units should be made up of 8 to 20 student members. Each group should then elect the following Directors:

- Director of Educator Support and Appreciation
- Director of Family Support and Engagement
- Director of Community Support and Engagement
- Director of Student Support and Engagement

Each director will be responsible for leading their committee (charged with the topics of educator support and appreciation; parent and family support and engagement; community support and engagement; and student support and engagement). Every HEROs unit member should serve on a committee. Committees should be relatively equal in size.

Note: In the case of a smaller group of students (i.e. eight), it may be best to elect a Director and an Associate Director for each of the four project topics, rather than having a Director and one committee member.

Students may decide their own forms of governance, but it is recommended that students make major decisions by voting either as a unit or as a committee.

To become an official HERO, students must register with the West Virginia GEAR UP central office so that they can receive updates on program-wide activities and initiatives. To register, visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HEROregistration>.

WVGEARUP.org



West Virginia GEAR UP

HEROs Peer-to-Peer Outreach Groups

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Projects and Duties:

The HEROs unit should meet at least once per month with the advisor. Each month, the HEROs should tackle the projects outlined below. When possible, all four committees should look for ways to accomplish their goal and reach their target audience through the activities associated with each project. However, it will likely be appropriate for one particular committee to play a larger role than the others (ex. the Student Support and Engagement Committee may want to take the lead in October).

August/September: Build your team! We encourage the current team to organize a HEROs recruitment event to attract new members. They may choose to host this event in conjunction with your school's Welcome to GEAR UP Event or National GEAR UP Week activities.

October: Apply yourself! Utilize CFWV.com to gain awareness and promote your school's College Application and Exploration Week. In addition, HEROs should develop and implement at least one additional marketing idea to help promote either the activities of College Application and Exploration Week, or to inform students about the various colleges and universities throughout the state.

November: First Gen Day is November 8th. We challenge HEROs to organize a First Gen Campaign in their school to help raise awareness and support for First Gen students. It's a great opportunity to feature state-level financial aid programs, student support services or academic support services.

December: Join the West Virginia GEAR UP program for a HEROs Virtual Christmas Networking Party. The date, login details, and more information will be provided in advance.

January: Ring in the new year by promoting and applying for GEAR UP U! This year's GEAR UP U summer academy will take place June 25-28 at Marshall University. Help your site coordinator spread the word and encourage your peers to apply for GEAR UP U 2025! January is also Mentor Appreciation Month!

February: Happy Valentine's Day! Show the senior class some love by celebrating those who have already completed their FAFSA and reminding others to apply for financial aid by inviting them to attend one of their school's FAFSA completion events.

March: Spring into action by creating your own HEROs project! Work with your site coordinator and school administration to choose a special project within your school or community that benefits all students and families (especially as it pertains to planning for your future educational and career goals). And plan to join the second WV GEAR UP virtual networking event to talk to other HEROs groups. More information and details to come.

April: Help your site coordinator recruit students to attend the GEAR UP Career Academy at the Charleston Convention Center and assist those students with the registration and planning process for the event. Students will hear from keynote speakers and make selections from nearly 80 unique and exciting West Virginia based employer booths.

May/June: Create your own Family Engagement Event! Highlight the mission of GEAR UP by showcasing all of the amazing work that your HEROs group has accomplished throughout the year. Organize and strategize! Showcase the work of your HEROs unit this year by putting together a recap —this can be a newsletter, one-pager, video, collage, online presentation, magazine —or anything else you can think of to show off all you've accomplished. May is also Educator Appreciation Month!

Questions about HEROs? Call (304) 558-0655 or email jason.luyster@wvhepc.edu.

WVGEARUP.org





Welcome to GEAR UP Event

Jason Luyster, Interim Director of WV GEAR UP



Welcome to GEAR UP Event

- By the end of September
- Will you host a combined event or separate ones for the cohort and priority groups?
- Is there an opportunity to join an existing event?
- How will you target and market the event to families?
- Why should your students and families want to participate?
- What information and resources should be shared during this event?
- Collect the data!!



Regional Breakout

College Access and Success Program Directors



Thank you!!!