



NCCEP/GEAR UP ANNUAL CONFERENCE

THE POWER OF POSSIBILITY

July 16 - 19, 2023
San Francisco, CA



SCHEDULE AT-A-GLANCE

SUNDAY JULY 16	MONDAY JULY 17	TUESDAY JULY 18	WEDNESDAY JULY 19
<p>Join us in San Francisco, CA for the NCCEP/GEAR UP Annual Conference from July 16-19, 2023!</p> <p>For additional information regarding the conference, visit NCCEP's website: edpartnerships.org</p> <p>3:00 pm - 7:00 pm Conference Registration & Information Booth Open</p> <p>5:00 pm - 6:30 pm Pre-Conference Closing the Equity Gap: An Orientation to GEAR UP and NCCEP</p>	<p>7:00 am - 5:00 pm Conference Registration & Information Booth Open</p> <p>7:30 am - 8:45 am Networking Breakfast</p> <p>9:00 am - 10:15 am OPENING CEREMONY & ROLL CALL OF THE GEAR UP STATES</p> <p>10:15 am - 10:45 am Networking Break & Raffle in Exhibit Hall</p> <p>10:45 am - 12:00 pm Concurrent Sessions</p> <p>12:15 pm - 1:00 pm Networking Lunch</p> <p>1:00 pm - 2:00 pm LUNCHEON PLENARY</p> <p>2:15 pm - 3:30 pm Concurrent Sessions</p> <p>3:30 pm - 4:00 pm Networking Break & Raffle in Exhibit Hall</p> <p>4:00 pm - 5:15 pm Concurrent Sessions</p>	<p>7:00 am - 5:00 pm Conference Registration & Information Booth Open</p> <p>7:30 am - 8:45 am Networking Breakfast</p> <p>9:00 am - 10:15 am MORNING PLENARY</p> <p>10:15 am - 10:45 am Networking Break & Raffle in Exhibit Hall</p> <p>10:45 am - 12:00 pm Concurrent Sessions</p> <p>12:15 pm - 1:00 pm Networking Lunch</p> <p>1:00 pm - 2:00 pm LUNCHEON PLENARY</p> <p>2:15 pm - 3:30 pm Concurrent Sessions</p> <p>3:30 pm - 4:00 pm Networking Break & Raffle in Exhibit Hall</p> <p>4:00 pm - 5:15 pm Concurrent Sessions</p>	<p>7:00 am - 1:00 pm Conference Registration & Information Booth Open</p> <p>7:30 am - 8:45 am Networking Breakfast</p> <p>9:00 am - 10:30 am MORNING PLENARY Youth Leadership Summit Presentation</p> <p>10:45 am - 12:00 pm Concurrent Sessions</p> <p>12:15 pm - 1:00 pm Closing Lunch & Adjournment</p>

Sunday | July 16

3:00 pm – 7:00 pm **Conference Registration & Information Booth Open**

5:00 pm – 6:30 pm **Pre-Conference**

Closing the Equity Gap: An Orientation to GEAR UP and NCCEP

Are you new to your job with GEAR UP? Exploring ways to maximize the impact of GEAR UP in your community? Or simply looking for help implementing your grant? Attend this orientation to GEAR UP and the only GEAR UP member association, the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP)!

During the first part of the session, we will explore why communities across our nation need GEAR UP, how the money allocated from Congress ends up in your schools, and how to implement GEAR UP in your everyday work. During the last part, we will introduce you to the premier GEAR UP member association, NCCEP. We will share tools, resources, and programs to help you go from the new GEAR UP program on the block to the expert everyone goes to for advice.

This orientation is for anyone new to GEAR UP or interested in learning more about NCCEP.

Speakers:

Emily Crawford, Director of Government Relations, NCCEP

April Bell, Director of Constituent Relations, NCCEP

Kelly Pappas, Director of Career & College Clubs, NCCEP

Monday | July 17th

7:00 am – 5:00 pm **Conference Registration & Information Booth Open**

7:30 am – 8:45 am **Networking Breakfast**

9:00 am – 10:15 am **Opening Ceremony & Roll Call of the GEAR UP States**

Speakers:



Alex Chough, *President, NCCEP*

Dr. Nasser H. Paydar, *Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education*

Maria Ibarra Rodriguez, *NCCEP Board of Directors Member, Deputy Director for Data and Technology, United We Dream*

Nicholas Mathews, *Board President, GEAR UP Alumni Association*

Join us as we kick off the 2023 NCCEP/GEAR UP Annual Conference! In this energizing kickoff plenary, we'll celebrate how far we have come and how far we can go as a GEAR UP community. You'll hear from leaders in the community, who will set the context for our time together.

Be ready to represent your state during the Roll Call! Come prepared to cheer and celebrate as we begin two-and-a-half days of learning together.

10:15 am – 10:45 am **Networking Break & Raffle in Exhibit Hall**

10:45 am – 12:00 pm **Monday Morning Concurrent Sessions | Block 1**

1. A Year in Review: Meaningful and Memorable GEAR UP Programming

Building connections and learning our students' stories is key to implementing intentional programming to benefit students' college, career, and life readiness. CSUF GEAR UP utilizes Individual College and Career Success Plans as a tool to monitor students' academic progress, as well as their individual stories, interests, goals, and more.

The Individual College and Career Success Plans are instrumental in informing meaningful and memorable GEAR UP programs and practices tailored to the cohorts' needs and interests. Participants will learn the contents of the College and Career Success Plan and review a case study of a year of GEAR UP programming based on data gathered from the tool.

Learning Objectives: (1) Explore programming that prepares students for college, career, and life success. (2) Identify best practices for planning and implementing programming. (3) Determine strategies that are successful in recruiting and keeping students engaged.

Speakers:

Desiree Montes, Academic Coordinator, CSUF GEAR UP
Cynthia Ramirez, Academic Coordinator, CSUF GEAR UP
Evangelina Perez, Family Engagement Coordinator, CSUF GEAR UP
Evelyn Lucho, Family Engagement Coordinator, CSUF GEAR UP
Honee Herrera, Academic Coordinator, CSUF GEAR UP

2. Building Blocks: Envision, Craft, and Mobilize Year Seven Programming

Oh no! Our students are graduating from high school and we don't know where they are going!!! How do we reach them, what do they need, and how do we keep track of it all? Join the Indiana GEAR UP team in a collaborative learning space as we share how we created our year seven programming, communications, and data collection processes.

In this interactive session, participants will identify common data and program essentials for transitioning into year seven, explore content and communications based on student feedback, and develop year seven program components. With activities such as polling, guided reflection, and group discussion, participants will dig into ideas on how to transition from year six into year seven. We will use lectures, PowerPoint slides, real life examples, and handouts to provide resources to mobilize year seven programming.

Speakers:

Tabitha Cinowski, Director of Operations, Indiana GEAR UP/Purdue University
Brooke Stafford, College and Career Advisor, Indiana GEAR UP/Purdue University

3. Collaboration Works: GEAR UP/TRIO Best Practices to Enhance College Readiness Programming

This session will provide best practices for effective collaboration between GEAR UP, TRIO, and community partners to maximize resources and minimize duplication of services. Participants that will benefit from this session include GEAR UP/TRIO professionals, teachers, counselors, administrators, and community partners that work closely with any GEAR UP and/or TRIO program.

The session will be a mixture of information sharing, large/small group discussions, and interactive activities. Participants will walk away with valuable tools that can be modified and implemented within their respective programs.

Learning Objectives: (1) Summarize proven strategies used at several middle/high schools in a large urban school district to increase college awareness and participation among GEAR UP/TRIO participants. (2) Demonstrate the process of planning, implementing, and facilitating successful college awareness/participation activities to meet GEAR UP/TRIO objectives and minimize duplication of services. (3) Describe multi-program collaborative efforts with community partners and school administration to maximize programs' effectiveness.

Speakers:

Rebecca Rogers, Ph.D., Director, UNLV GEAR UP, The Center for Academic Enrichment and Outreach
Cicely Morgan, Assistant Director for Educational Talent Search, The Center for Academic Enrichment and Outreach

4. College, Career, Future Ready: Tools for Success

Need a few extra tools in your toolbox? Join this session to gain a few more tools to use at your school, as we highlight an event or activity at each grade level to prepare students to be future ready. These activities are intended to build relationships and establish a college-going culture.

In addition, this session will provide a simulation for participants to experience a senior-level family engagement event that can be used to kick off the school year. These tools are designed to give students and families the courage to take the next steps toward postsecondary success!

Learning Objectives: (1) Utilize and personalize the tools found in the College, Career, and Future Ready Toolkit. (2) Engage in a senior family event simulation. (3) Implement today's events and activities to establish a college going culture.

Speakers:

Denise El Habach, GEAR UP Coach, Buckeye Union High School District
Clara Pond, GEAR UP Coach, Buckeye Union High School District
KenJuan Lockhart, GEAR UP Coach, Buckeye Union High School District
Christina Taylor, GEAR UP Coach, Buckeye Union High School District

5. Designing Family Engagement: An Afterschool Success Story

Let's level-up the traditional family night showcasing STEM and postsecondary pathways. Learn how to reach families and develop a community of critical thinkers with Family Design Nights.

In this session, we start in May 2021 transcending the pandemic to reestablish community targeting 100 students and families. Follow our evolution from its origins to its current collaborative iteration.

Learn from the insiders, outlining what it takes to operationalize the model to serve more families for less. Conclude the session with participating in highlighted interdisciplinary challenges: STEM Pals, Racing Into Space, Adventures On The High Seas, Making Your Mark, and more.

Speakers:

Doug Thompson, Assistant Director- Curriculum and Instructional Design, Appalachian State University
Rachel Nave-Lewis, Academic Innovation Specialist, Appalachian State University

6. Developing Scholars, Leaders, and Community through a Near-Peer Mentoring Program

Engage and learn about our GEAR UP near-peer mentoring program in which our year six students serve as mentors and tutors to sixth graders in a nearby elementary school. This program is designed to mutually support and benefit both groups of students. Younger peers are given support through mentorship/tutoring from high schoolers, and GEAR UP student mentors develop leadership, communication, and social emotional skills such as listening, empathy and expression—essential skills for college and all careers.

During this interactive session, participants will hear presenters’ key takeaways and lessons learned to help other GEAR UP groups develop their own model. Participants will receive planning documents, obtain guidance around program logistics/details/challenges, and learn about support given to students as they serve as mentors. GEAR UP and school district partners will share relationship-building and skill development activities, as well as their experiences and reflections throughout the entire process.

Speakers:

Corazon Aguilar, Project Director, Austin Independent School District

Laura Fiore, Project Specialist, Austin Independent School District

Alberto Alonso, J. Houston Elementary School Principal, Austin Independent School District

7. Discussion Lab: Coordinating the Transition to High School

*Discussion Labs are an opportunity to share, learn, and problem-solve together. **Come ready to participate!***

The transition to high school can be tough when coordinating GEAR UP programs. In non-unified districts, it can feel like starting over once you get to the high school level.

Join this discussion-based session to share your experience and learn from others about what they have done to support the programmatic transition from middle school to high school. Get takeaways from the school perspective that participants can use to enhance and develop their GEAR UP program.

Speakers:

Jasmine Dean, Program Manager, Arizona GEAR UP

Jimmy Reinhardt, Assistant Director, Arizona GEAR UP

8. Education Redefined: Utilizing Partnerships to Create Opportunities for Students

Come learn how a school district is reimagining academic, college, and career pathways through developing and nurturing stakeholder partnerships. Bradley County Schools’ PIE (Partnerships in Industry and Education) Innovation Center through collaboration with postsecondary, business, industry, and nonprofit organizations creates an innovative student experience changing learning pathways, providing experiential learning in STEM, embedded work-based learning experiences, and promoting design thinking.

The purpose of the high school programming in this off-site academy is to collaborate with business, industry, and community partners to provide learning opportunities that include a combination of classroom instruction, skill development, on-the-job training, and the application of real work and life skills that employers demand and that students will need to be successful after graduation. Practical strategies and tips to rethink your partnerships and pathways. What’s your piece of the PIE?

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand the importance of developing a strong vision that will foster stakeholder engagement and “buy-in”. (2) Learn strategies to engage stakeholders in a meaningful

way. (3) Discover innovative approaches to early postsecondary opportunities and career connections.

Speakers:

Brittany Cannon, PIE Innovation Center Director, Bradley County Schools

Linda Cash, Director of Schools, Bradley County Schools

Arlette Robinson, CTE Director, Bradley County Schools

9. Empowering Families Together: Certifying Families through Partnership Opportunities

This session will highlight the collaboration and partnership between an IHE, Texas A&M, GEAR UP: Pathways to the Future!, and Operation College Bound to provide and facilitate free certification courses for families. This initiative works to highlight opportunities available in high-demand areas and the importance of providing certifications to our families just as we encourage and guide our students.

Making parents engaged and active in postsecondary education themselves models high expectations and delivers the message of a college and career-going culture much clearer for our students as they see their own parents and family members advancing in their education. This impacts the entire family! Certifications can open the path to employment and continuing education.

Learning Objectives: (1) Collaborate to share existing partnership experiences. (2) Implement a plan of action to include families in existing or new partnership opportunities. (3) Anticipate potential obstacles and identify solutions.

Speakers:

Angelica Gomez-Gonzalez, Education Specialist, Region One Education Service Center

Kristopher McKinney, GEAR UP Director, Region One Education Service Center

Esperanza Marie Rodriguez, Education Specialist, Region One Education Service Center

Amanda Cardoza, Education Specialist, Region One Education Service Center

10. Focusing on Student Strengths instead of Weaknesses: How to Create a Strengths-Based School Culture

Have you ever wondered what would happen if we thought about what is great about students rather than what is wrong about students? Every student has innate talents which help them to succeed in school and in life, but in education, we tend to focus on non-attendance, low grades, and low test scores.

In this presentation and learning activity, we explore how to see student strengths and how to transform a high school from a weakness-fixing model to a strengths-based school. Presenters will use the fish bowl technique to model a coaching session, and then you will participate in small group discussions and strengths awareness activities which can be applied back with your own students and staff.

Learning Objectives: (1) Gain awareness of student strengths. (2) Practice positive-psychology based mentoring and coaching skills. (3) Plan how to transform deficit thinking schools into strengths-based schools.

Speakers:

Allison Bailey, Director, GEAR UP GIPS

JerLene Mosley, Certified Strengths Coach, JerLene Mosley Consulting

11. From Receipts to Relationships: Using GEAR UP Funds with Fidelity

Programs vary widely, but there are two things we all must do: (1) build relationships; and (2) use funds according to federal regulations. Whether you are in your start-up year or a veteran project, this session will help you answer, “how do I ensure that program funds are spent with fidelity at the local level, while still leveraging funds to deepen relationships with stakeholders?”

Grant administration staff will share statewide and district-level budget planning, contract development, and expenditure reimbursement processes. Attendees will hear a case study of how GEAR UP Kentucky funds are leveraged in one district to enhance partnership & support sustainability. Leave with sample planning and process documents & fresh ideas on how to maximize GEAR UP funds & remain in compliance!

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand development of a budget aligned to proposal objectives and federal regulations. (2) Discuss strategies and tools for budget management and compliance at multiple project levels. (3) Receive templates for budget processes.

Speakers:

Laura Negron, Associate Director, Operations & Development, GEAR UP Kentucky

Autumn Bishop, District Program Manager, Augusta Independent Schools, GEAR UP Kentucky

Mason Doyle, Project Specialist, Operations & Development, GEAR UP Kentucky

12. GEAR UP Alumni Panel: Using Students’ Lived Experiences to Inform Programming

GEAR UP alumni hold an exceptionally unique perspective of how GEAR UP programming can hone its focus to produce better outcomes. Their lived experiences, challenges, and successes can be dramatically impacted by the people they meet and the programming they participate in.

Join the GEAR UP Alumni Association for a panel of alumni from across the country discussing the topic of mobilizing student voices to shape the services grants deliver.

In this session, attendees will: (1) Expand their understanding of what GEAR UP students need to be successful after the grant. (2) Collaborate with other GEAR UP professionals to brainstorm effective practices. (3) Engage directly with alumni in a candid format to hear honest feedback and suggestions about what grants can do to equip their students with lifelong tools.

Speakers:

Casey Weld, Executive Director, GEAR UP Alumni Association

Nicholas Mathews, Board President, GEAR UP Alumni Association

13. GEAR UP for Impact through Community Partnerships & Collaboration

“Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much.” Helen Keller got it right, and so can you. Your impact on your students can elevate by increasing community partnerships and collaborating with programs to help reach more students.

In this interactive session, you’ll uncover best practices for identifying the right partnership programs and participate in activities showing the impact collaboration can have on students. Together we’ll create your game plan that you can wash, rinse, and repeat-cultivating transferable implementation plans that can be useful for all partnerships.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify non-starters that project directors may experience in identifying the right partner for their desired activity. (2) Discuss GEAR UP Dougherty’s partnership with The Scholar Budget. (3) Identify and share resources that can assist new and seasoned project directors in determining whether the partnership is a good fit.

Speakers:

Rockell Bartoli, Professional Speaker, Author & Scholarship Coach, The Scholar Budget
Alana Simmons, Ph. D., Project Director, GEAR UP Dougherty

14. How to Mobilize School Partners and Create Meaningful Relationships

As members of the GEAR UP family, creating meaningful relationships is at the heart of what we do. We have uncovered a unique way to foster these relationships with key stakeholders in our building that help us create deep relationships with our students.

The key stakeholders that we involve in this strategy are administrators, teachers, students, and building partners. The strategy that we employ focuses on building relationships throughout the hierarchy within our building through establishing lines of communications with our stakeholders. Join us for this interactive session.

Learning Objectives: (1) Explore innovative ways to establish relationships with key stakeholders. (2) Create strategies that strengthen student relationships and improve GEAR UP's visibility within buildings. (3) Utilize digital media and social media to extend relationship building opportunities outside of the school day.

Speakers:

Justin Strickland, Site Coordinator, KU GEAR UP
Dominique Hampton, Site Coordinator, KU GEAR UP
Korri Hall, Director of Student Services, KU GEAR UP

15. Keeping it R.E.A.L.: A Framework for Mentoring and Engaging Male Scholars in GEAR UP

Participants will engage with Aim High Akron GEAR UP staff in a facilitated dialogue to learn about the program's unique mentoring model to assist our historically underserved male scholars in developing positive self-esteem and leadership skills and foster meaningful, supportive relationships to transform their lives and community.

The initiative has resulted in increased academic student achievement and attendance and decreased behavioral issues as scholars are instilled with the value of education. In partnership with Recognize Education And Learning Prep (R.E.A.L. Prep), an evidence-based practice / intervention that fosters an appreciation of how education in and out of the classroom contributes to an enhanced academic skill set and an attitude of life-long learning, we created a mentoring model to create safe spaces and cultivate equitable yet culturally-responsive learning environments.

Participants will walk away with tools and resources to aid in implementing culturally relevant mentoring practices.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify how to effectively collaborate with community and university partners to develop culturally relevant mentoring programs. (2) Engage in interactive exercises that will solidify/enhance collaboration and conversation skills with male students to elicit academic, personal, and social change. (3) Create an action plan that can be used and applied with participant's GEAR UP Program.

Speakers:

Jasmina Waters, Program Manager, Aim High Akron GEAR UP
Shayla Smith, Advisor, Aim High GEAR UP
Karrie Snavelly, Advisor, Aim High GEAR UP
Devon Carter, Ph.D., Professor, Special Education and Co-Founder, University of Akron, R.E.A.L.

16. No Excuses: Turning Stumbling Blocks into Stepping Stones

One can understand how students might adopt a fixed mindset while living and learning in a community known most for its struggles and shortcomings. Attendees of this facilitated discussion will learn how a top-performing school resides in the nation's second-poorest county and why serving the whole student can uplift the whole community.

In this interactive session, attendees will engage in case studies designed to facilitate innovative thinking and concept mapping, examine and apply the fluidity of STEM in the classroom, cultivate pride of place, and consequently enhance student aspirations and self-efficacy. Expect to collaborate and share ideas that push beyond the stigmatic limits placed upon communities, and reimagine the narrative long sought.

Learning Objectives: (1) Develop strategies to transform “stumbling blocks” into “stepping stones.” (2) Identify innovative partnerships to increase communal support. (3) Conceptualize plans that break barriers and serve the whole student.

Speakers:

Chelsea Harris, College and Career Navigator, GEAR UP Opportunity - Partners for Rural Impact
Tami Herrell, STEM Coordinator, GEAR UP Opportunity - Partners for Rural Impact
Lillian Norris, Program Manager, GEAR UP Opportunity - Partners for Rural Impact
Anita Anglin, Program Manager, GEAR UP Opportunity - Partners for Rural Impact

17. Planning an Immersive Summer Academy Experience: Create Your Own GEAR UP U!

Interested in planning a fun, engaging, and impactful summer experience for your students? Join us for a conversation about West Virginia GEAR UP's GEAR UP U!—our four day summer camp designed to give our students a meaningful replication of life on a college campus.

During this interactive workshop, attendees will hear about strategies for selecting programming and managing staff and a budget, all while balancing grant requirements and students' needs. After a session of open discussion and audience interaction, attendees will depart with workable ideas and a sample GEAR UP U! starter kit, including student and staff manuals, detailed schedules, a budget framework, staffing strategies, and more.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn how to design a summer academy for a grant. (2) Discuss planning and organization best practices and concrete tips for engaging students meaningfully. (3) Learn about leveraging campus and community partnerships to assist with programming.

Speakers:

Mallory Carpenter, College Access and Success Program Director, West Virginia GEAR UP
Casey Patterson, College Access and Success Program Director, West Virginia GEAR UP
Janine Coutu, Interim College Access and Success Program Director, West Virginia GEAR UP

18. Student Engagement Begins with ABC

Students who need the most support to access postsecondary education opportunities often do not participate in GEAR UP services. Many of these students also experience absenteeism, behavioral disruptions, and course performance challenges.

In this interactive session, we will share the process we use to identify and mentor cohort students who are less likely to participate in GEAR UP activities. We will also share the lessons we've learned in implementing and scaling up this approach to increase students' academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education.

Learning Objectives: (1) Use data to identify students that would benefit most from a targeted mentoring approach. (2) Practice using mentoring strategies through role-play of a problem-

solving process. (3) Determine how to implement targeted mentoring within the context of GEAR UP project.

Speakers:

Laura Buxton, GEAR UP OKC Project Co-Director, Oklahoma City Public Schools

Claudia Rivas-Taylor, GEAR UP College Coach, Oklahoma City Public Schools

Katawna Stephens, GEAR UP College Coach, Oklahoma City Public Schools

Brittany Bowens, GEAR UP Science Curriculum Specialist, K20 Center

19. Where Are they Now? Tracking GEAR UP Seniors and Graduates

In this interactive session, participants will learn about two tools designed to: (1) track milestones and outcomes for seniors; and (2) stay connected with and learn from youth after they graduate.

During the first half of the session, presenters will share a locally-developed Senior Tracker Tool, and will discuss lessons learned from using this tool in the schools. During the second half, the presenters will discuss the background, purpose, and content of the Life After High School survey.

Presenters will then facilitate a discussion around effective strategies and challenges in designing and administering these surveys, and provide examples of how these data can be used to enhance GEAR UP secondary and postsecondary services.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn about two tools designed to track senior progress and stay connected to youth once they graduate. (2) Discuss effective strategies, challenges, and potential solutions in using these tools with seniors and graduates. (3) Better understand how to use these tools to inform practical strategies to enhance GEAR UP programming.

Speakers:

Julia Alemany, Senior Associate, Metis Associates

April Alcaraz, Director, GEAR UP, School District of Philadelphia

Matt Klepfer, Research Analyst, Metis Associates

20. You Can't Have Equity Without Relationships

We live in a society attempting to erase the authentic history of our Black and Brown communities. Yet, equity remains at the center of our fight to eradicate injustice systems related to our students and the communities we serve.

In this interactive facilitated dialogue session, participants will engage in strategies for building student and family relationships through experiential learning. Our activities are designed to build community and relationships within any setting, focusing on equity. Equally, participants will experience a modified activity to demonstrate how equitable practices can be implemented in any college/career-related activity.

Learning Objectives: (1) Engage in authentic dialogue to model how to build high-quality relationships with students and families. (2) Articulate and define equity. (3) Experience a lesson related to building community and how one lesson modification can be used to ensure equitable practices are implemented for students and families.

Speakers:

Chameeka Smith, Ed.D., Associate Director, Winston-Salem State University

Michael Lane, Executive Director, Winston-Salem State University

12:15 pm – 1:00 pm

Networking Lunch

1:00- pm – 2:00 pm

Monday Luncheon Plenary: Unlocking the Power of Possibility



Alex Chough, President, NCCEP

Dr. Adolph Brown, Master Teacher & Motivator

Possibility is the spark that ignites success in our students and ourselves. Despite years of unique educational and social challenges, our students remain optimistic about achieving their goals. Yet research shows that even optimism is influenced by economics. Students from lower-income communities feel their future goals are further out of reach than their higher-income peers. As we convene this week, how can we elevate our work and turn the initial spark of possibility into a durable flame? How can we improve our work to expand access to opportunity and success?

Celebrated educator, clinical psychologist, and host of TV's *The Parent Test*, Dr. Adolph Brown will help us explore how our work in GEAR UP is a critical tool for unlocking the power of possibility.

2:15 pm – 3:30 pm

Monday Afternoon Concurrent Sessions | Block 2

21. **Be Heard: Unmuting Student Voices through Poetry and Personal Storytelling**

Using their student voice empowers students to advocate for themselves, express their opinions, share their hopes and dreams, or stand up for a friend. Post-COVID, many students are emotionally unable to hit the unmute button.

Students are struggling academically and socially – to find where they fit in, or to dream of a future. Being heard illuminates that they're not alone and reveals a vision for their lives.

Come and learn how GEAR UP GIPS used poetry classroom takeovers, slams, and after school writing workshops to empower students to unmute their voices and be heard. Participants can expect to engage in interactive writing activities to feel the student experience and discussions centered around best practices.

Learning Objectives: (1) Develop planning skills to implement initiatives to empower student voice. (2) Build understanding of the student perspective towards writing and speaking. (3) Connect GEAR UP literacy objectives to student engagement practices in and out of the classroom.

Speakers:

Allison Bailey, Director, GEAR UP GIPS

Carlos Ojeda, Jr., Creative Force & CEO, Coolspeak, the Youth Engagement Company

Natasha Carrizosa, Poet, Author & Coolspeaker, Coolspeak, the Youth Engagement Company

22. **Bringing 21st Century Skills and Dispositions to Life through a Capstone Program**

All students should graduate with knowledge and skills that enable them to successfully transition into higher education and beyond. AUHSD developed a structure centering 21st Century Skills, Technical Skills, and Voice into the educational experiences of all students.

The Capstone Program, developed by each school to operationalize its unique vision and values, helps schools deliver thoughtful, relevant, engaging experiences that prepare students for purposeful lives.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand components of a successful capstone program, including the development of Performance Task Assessments that allow students to develop technical skills, soft skills, and voice. (2) Understand how to implement strategies to bring 21st Century Skills and dispositions to life for every student and teacher in their own unique setting. (3) Develop a showcase structure that allows students to present their learning and growth to an authentic audience.

Speakers:

Amanda Bean, Director of Career Preparedness Systems Framework Implementation, Anaheim Union High School District

Jaron Fried, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, Anaheim Union High School District

Michael Matsuda, The Superintendent of Anaheim Union High School District, Anaheim Union High School District

Michael Switzer, ELA Curriculum Specialist, Anaheim Union High School District

Tim Nguyen, CSUF GEAR UP

23. Building Your Team's Effectiveness through Targeted Technical Assistance

All GEAR UP practitioners want strong results for their students...SUCCESS! Each grant has goals, objectives, and performance measures that outline how to get there. In this interactive session, learn how a large GEAR UP grant in rural Appalachia has developed processes, products, and professional development to increase the skills of school-based staff with diverse work and educational backgrounds. This technical assistance enables them to provide the services students and families need for postsecondary success.

In this session, the boots-on-the-ground experience and information will be presented. Presenters will share examples of training plans, work processes, and technical assistance documents.

Learning Objectives: (1) Explain how GEAR UP grant goals, objectives, performance measures, and service definitions form the basis for effective technical assistance. (2) Exchange proven ideas for training practitioners with other GEAR UP programs. (3) Examine the products presented and determine application to the needs of other grants.

Speakers:

Lillian Norris, Program Manager, GEAR UP Opportunity - Partners for Rural Impact

Rebecca Isaacs, Program Manager, GEAR UP Opportunity - Partners for Rural Impact

Vicki Dye, Project Director, Partners for Rural Impact

24. Co-Creating Learning Spaces: Levers for Sustainable Change

Listening, collaboration, and compassion: three words as complex and nuanced as human behavior itself. Practitioners and scholars agree that all are indispensable elements of successful school reform as levers for sustainable change. Yet, listening, collaboration, and compassion are inadvertently overlooked in today's fast-paced climate of remediation.

In this interactive workshop, we will model attributes of safe and inclusive learning spaces and what this looks like in practice.

Learning Objectives: (1) Engage in a mini-learning session focused on collaborative structures selected to enhance student college preparedness. (2) Analyze the implementation of a collaborative structure and ways to duplicate this process. (3) Unpack how the simulation was

facilitated using testimonials from learning partners who will describe the ups and downs of operationalizing the model. (4) Receive a digital toolkit (multimedia text set) curated with highlights from our CA GEAR UP case study, protocols, and guiding questions to cultivate healthy collaboration.

Speakers:

Sarah Peterson, Regional Director, California Reading & Literature Project at UC San Diego CREATE
Sonja Badu-Thompson, Literacy Instructional Coach, San Diego Unified School District
Carisa Barnes, Literacy Instructional Coach, San Diego Unified School District
Jayme Wynn, Secondary Literacy Resource Teacher, Associate Principal, San Diego Unified School District

25. College Tour Like a Rock Star!

An effective College Tour should Encourage, Impact, and Empower students as they explore the best environment to nurture their unique gifts. This carefully planned exploration can solve many of the problems that our students face in this changing higher educational landscape.

A purposefully planned college tour is an excellent opportunity to help students manifest the best version of themselves. Students should learn how to fall in love with learning. Students should learn how to navigate social landmines. Students should learn how to be intentional about selecting a major that will lead to a fulfilling future.

A great college tour should be the launching board for student success. A college tour should be an engaging workshop on wheels. Let us share with you some resources, tools, and strategies to help you College Tour Like a Rock Star!

Speakers:

Angele Hodges, Director, GEAR UP Grant, Cedar Hill ISD
Shaun Lain, President, College Campus Tours
Marquita Rollins-White, Site Coordinator, Cedar Hill ISD
Byron Mason, Site Coordinator, Cedar Hill ISD
Lisa Johnson-Hannah, Family and Financial Advocate, Cedar Hill ISD

26. Developing STEM Teachers' Identity for Culturally Relevant Teaching

In some cases, teachers might be underprepared for culturally relevant teaching. As a result, we designed and implemented professional learning for teachers to experience and reflect on how to implement this justice-based pedagogy in their classrooms. Professional learning, such as our model, via GEAR UP programming becomes essential to help initiate changes in teaching that create opportunities for students to feel a sense of belonging and agency in STEM.

This interactive workshop will explain the different components of our professional learning model that aims to develop teachers' equity knowledge, skills, and belief for culturally relevant teaching.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn about the components of the professional learning model to develop teachers' equity knowledge, skills, and beliefs for culturally relevant teaching. (2) Identify multiple ways that GEAR UP programs can implement this type of professional learning. (3) Conceptualize ideas on ways to implement, adapt, and enhance the professional learning model within the context of individual GEAR UP programs.

Speakers:

Nicholas Bell, Ph.D., Instructor and Researcher, BRAIN STEM
LaCretia Wooten, Director of GEAR UP University of Kansas, Kansas City, KS, GEAR UP University of Kansas, Kansas City, KS

27. Discovering the GEAR UP STEM Toolkit - Take #2: In-Person!

Underserved students are less likely to major in or have a career in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields. Therefore, a group of GEAR UP professionals came together and created the GEAR UP STEM Toolkit.

During this workshop-style session, you will be able to learn more about the STEM Toolkit and complete one of the activities with the resources provided. You can expect to discuss the connection of STEM to colleges and careers, while engaging with peers to complete the hands-on activity. To conclude, you will have the opportunity to share your thoughts and feedback with others.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn about the significance of STEM and strategies to integrate STEM into GEAR UP programs. (2) Participate in engaging hands-on STEM activities that can be done with students. (3) Increase confidence in knowledge of STEM information and programming that can be shared with students.

Speakers:

Jana Burd, GEAR UP College Coordinator, Nevada System of Higher Education

Laura I. Saavedra, GEAR UP Program Director, University of Michigan Center for Educational Outreach

28. Discussion Lab: What Can We Do to Encourage and Amplify Student Voice?

*Discussion Labs are an opportunity to share, learn, and problem-solve together. **Come ready to participate!***

Students are at the heart of GEAR UP—ultimately, it’s why we do what we do. Therefore, it’s critical that we provide opportunities for students to be engaged, empowered, and celebrated in our programs.

Join your GEAR UP colleagues in this discussion-based session to share programmatic and communication strategies that encourage and amplify the voices of our students.

Speakers:

Adriana Eldred, Outreach and Communications Specialist, VSAC GEAR UP Program

Jessica Lilly, Communications Manager, GEAR UP South West Virginia

29. Facilitating an Effective 2-Generational Approach to College Success

Why has the family engagement aspect of college readiness been the elusive missing piece to the puzzle? Research studies show that students are more likely to attend college, make the appropriate match and fit, choose the right field of study, and ultimately succeed in college and beyond with an intentional approach to parent involvement.

The key is to meet both students and parents where they are with the content delivery. What if college access practitioners effectively facilitated a two-generational approach to guiding college-bound families to, and through, postsecondary education that is culturally responsive to the needs of students and families? Impactful content delivery to our two target audiences can be accomplished with a nuanced and strategic approach.

In this interactive session, you will engage in discussions surrounding the strategic implementation of an effective two-generational approach to college access programming. You can expect to collaborate with your peers on best practices and common pitfalls when educating the entire household as students progress through the high school to college transition. Lastly, you will build a skeleton of your education plan for parent programming.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify common disconnects with family information sharing and college preparatory programming for students. (2) Build contingencies for engaging subgroups. (3) Effectively scaffold content delivery.

Speakers:

Brannon Jones, President & Founder, College Readiness 101

Dawn Cooper, Assistant Vice Chancellor of College Access Initiatives GEAR UP Georgia Project Director, University System of Georgia

30. GEAR UP “Rookies” Survivor’s Guide: How to Transform Student Needs and Challenges into WINS!

Being new to GEAR UP can be daunting with so many students to serve and a limited time to make a lasting impact. Join us for an engaging, collaborative discussion regarding what new GEAR UP administrators want to know and learn how leaders and providers can work together to use evidence-based services that result in positive change for students.

This session is intended for all new GEAR UP directors and supervisors to provide them the tools and resources needed to best identify the services that will most effectively meet students where they are at and set them up for success.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify the concerns and challenges of new GEAR UP professionals by reviewing the survey results of new GEAR UP directors, supervisors, and coordinators. (2) Understand how to identify programs, services, and activities that have a strong foundation of success that can make a lasting impact on students’ lives. (3) Learn how to demonstrate the alignment between student needs and challenges, GEAR UP services and activities, and student success.

Speakers:

Jonathan Bennett, GEAR UP Program Director, Seminole State College GEAR UP in Oklahoma

Nakisha Watts, Ph.D., Executive Director, Delta State

Shawn Bergman, Ph.D., Director of Research / K/C Distinguished Professor, The Vela Institute / Appalachian State University

LeAnna Wilson, Ed.D., Vice President of Partnerships & Staff Development, Student Success Agency

31. Helping Students Trail-Blaze Paths to College and Career Success

Students in middle school are developing a strong sense of self, thinking about careers, and looking for connections between their education and future career aspirations. However, few young people have access to the information, guidance and experiences that will open many possibilities for their futures.

This session will focus on the research around the positive effects of middle grades career exploration programs and will incorporate best practice examples of the components of robust, high-quality career navigation programs as well as implementation models and Arizona-based resources.

Participants will learn about how over 40 Arizona classrooms are implementing quality career exploration programs, using the Possible Futures Career Exploration Curriculum and MyFuture AZ, Arizona’s online graduation and career planning tool. These resources align labor market information, career pathways information, and postsecondary program options and are designed to support students to take ownership of their own personal career journey.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand how to implement a career exploration program designed to support all students in college and career exploration. (2) Engage with Career Exploration

Curriculum that helps learners in grades 6 through 10 develop essential employability skills, explore STEM occupations, and better understand themselves and the world of work. (3) Learn how an online platform supports students to take ownership of their own graduation, college, and career planning.

Speakers:

Cindy Erwin, Director of College and Career Pathways, Center for the Future of Arizona

Aaron Ball, Ed.D., Director of College and Career Pathways, Center for the Future of Arizona

Maya Watts, Project Manager, Career Navigation, Center for the Future of Arizona

32. How to Effectively Use Your Story as a GEAR UP Alumni to Advocate for Your Students in the Community

In this interactive session, GEAR UP Alum currently working for GEAR UP programs will discuss effectively using their experience as program students to advocate for student success. Alums will discuss strategies to initiate and build effective relationships, provide ways to collaborate with the community, and demonstrate the impact that successful programming has.

Learn about the power behind sharing your story to increase student motivation. Through numerous programs and collaborations with other resources in your school, GEAR UP staff members can inspire students, staff, and the community to support students' academic needs.

These GEAR UP alumni are giving back to the communities who invested in them. Hear their stories, share your ideas, and collaborate with other GEAR UP staff members.

Learning Objectives: (1) Introduce various effective resources for students, parents, and staff. (2) Discuss strategies to initiate and build effective relationships. (3) Learn how to use your personal story to motivate students and increase program participation.

Speakers:

Rosa Valdivia, Student Achievement Specialist, Washington State University GEAR UP

Kimberly Morales, Academic Specialist, Washington State University GEAR UP

33. How to Use Subgroup Analysis to Develop Targeted Interventions

Have you ever wondered if all of your students benefit from GEAR UP services? Do you know if male and female identifying students engage with services in the same way?

In this demonstration session, you will discover how you can leverage subgroup analysis to uncover the differential experiences of the many groups of students your grant serves. Once you know how students are responding (or not) you can make more informed and strategic decisions about your service delivery model. The presenters are bringing together their experiences as an evaluator and program providers to help audiences excel at service delivery and better prove that GEAR UP works!

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn about subgroup analysis in detail, including the benefits and limitations. (2) See a demonstration on how to conduct subgroup analysis using a case study example. (3) Translate findings from a subgroup analysis into strategic, tailored GEAR UP services.

Speakers:

Meghan Ecker-Lyster, Ph.D., Director of Research, Evaluation & Dissemination, Nashville GEAR UP

John-Paul Gray, Project Director, MNPS GEAR UP

Deborah Osborne, GEAR UP Specialist, MNPS GEAR UP

Amanda Dardy, GEAR UP Specialist, MNPS GEAR UP

34. Is College Still Worth It? Examining & Applying Research Based College Value Messaging

The college-going rate is declining in Indiana and nationwide. This prompted the Indiana Commission for Higher Education to research and evaluate how we currently talk about college, what student and parent reactions are to the messaging, and what can be changed to have more impact.

In this interactive presentation, participants will learn about the research on the perceived value of college, challenge common misconceptions about college and how we communicate about it, and practice incorporating these strategies and messages. The session will include information about the research, activities including role play scenarios, and group discussion.

All GEAR UP programs can benefit from this messaging and will take away additional training and resources for strategies and talking points that can be immediately applied.

Speakers:

Tabitha Cinowski, Director of Operations, Indiana GEAR UP/Purdue University

Steve Heinold, Associate Director, Director of School Programs, Indiana GEAR UP/Purdue University

35. Oh, the Professions They'll Know!!

In underdeveloped regions such as those serviced by GEAR UP grants, career goals and the lack of opportunities often pose a challenge for students and community members. Such challenges include guiding students to make informed educational choices, identifying in-demand careers in their area, and developing the skills that will lead to postsecondary success.

Thanks to the partnerships and collaboration between Region One Education Service Center CTE Coordinator and the Education Relations Specialist for Workforce Solutions, the educators are provided with the tools and resources necessary to provide impactful opportunities for the students of our region.

In this interactive session you will learn how to utilize existing resources, partnerships and activities that have been developed for educators to enhance student awareness for long term success.

Learning Objectives: (1) Receive online resources and activities. (2) Obtain hands-on cooperative learning activities directly correlated with career exploration. (3) Create a plan of action to implement these strategies that will increase job awareness that will ultimately lead students to be college, career, military, and life ready.

Speakers:

Beatriz Valenzuela, Education Specialist, Region One Education Service Center

David Gutierrez, Education Relations Supervisor, Workforce Solutions

Leo Saenz, CTE Coordinator, Region One Education Service Center

Amanda Cardoza, Education Specialist, Region One Education Service Center

36. Road Trip to the Future: Exploring Minority Serving Institutions

As students near graduation, how does GEAR UP provide equitable support in choices for their higher education opportunities? Students must be made aware of collegiate learning environments that embed culture and historical experiences.

In this session, participants will learn the history, culture, and importance of Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs).

While researching these institutions, participants will create an implementation plan to expose their students to MSIs that benefit their personal and academic goals. By the end of the session, participants will leave with resources and new knowledge to support their implementation plan.

Speakers:

Mariana DeLoera, Lead Social Studies Curriculum Specialist, The K20 Center

Patricia McDaniels-Gomez, Professional Development Coordinator, The K20 Center

Lisa Loughlin, ELA Curriculum Specialist, The K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal

Samaya Williams, Lead Math Curriculum Specialist, The K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal

37. The 2024-25 Better FAFSA Part 1: An Introduction

Have you heard the 2024-25 FAFSA is changing? The Better FAFSA (simplified FAFSA) is almost here. Whether you fill out hundreds of FAFSA every year or help with other parts of the postsecondary process, it will be essential to understand how students and families will experience and be impacted by changes to the 24-25 FAFSA.

This session will introduce the timeline and the expected changes to the FAFSA and FAFSA process that will take place in early winter 2023. We'll start with the FSA ID, reviewing who should create one and why creating an FSA ID is even more critical to successfully submitting the FAFSA. Then we'll review the changes to the FAFSA form. Lastly, we'll discuss FAFSA submission and how the Student Aid Index (SAI) will replace Expected Family Contribution (EFC).

We'll share information about resources and upcoming training for practitioners and hold time for your questions.

Speakers:

Emily Wolfson, Senior Manager of Training and Support, uAspire

Heather Adams, Training Specialist, California, uAspire

38. The Impact of GEAR UP Services on Students' College Pathways and Math Performance

College-going aspiration and math performance are critical indicators in GEAR UP when predicting high school graduation and college enrollment (Morgan et al., 2015). It is imperative that GEAR UP works to enhance high school freshmen's college-going aspiration and math performance and to study the effectiveness of each GEAR UP learning service on these students' college-going aspiration and math performance so we can better leverage sustained growth in students and the quality of service.

In this interactive session, attendees will explore the impact of GEAR UP services on college-going aspiration and math performance of ninth graders; these student services are well-defined by the College and Career Readiness Evaluation Consortium (CCREC). We will interactively discuss two questions: (a) did ninth graders in GEAR UP cohort have higher college-going aspiration and math performance than those in non-GEAR UP cohort?; and (b) if so, which learning services could bring more positive impacts to college-going aspiration and math performance?

Attendees will have a chance to participate in peer engagement activities to reflect on their services for students and redesign or plan future learning services for students.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify the impact of various learning services, as defined by CCREC, on students' college-going aspiration and math performance. (2) Differentiate the impact of each service on students' college-going aspiration and math performance. (3) Investigate and reconstruct learning services the GEAR UP project has provided or plans to provide to their ninth graders.

Speakers:

Jui-Teng Li, Assistant Director for Research & Evaluation, Appalachian State University

Corinne Smith, Director of GEAR UP, Appalachian State University

James Beeler, Ed.D., Senior Director of College Access Partnerships, Appalachian State University

39. The Power of Parent Connection and Community Culture

Families play a powerful and impactful role in supporting students' college and career goals. Learn how to cultivate a culture of community by hearing how to effectively collaborate with parents, strengthen partnerships, and promote a college and career atmosphere.

In this interactive session, participants will not only learn about high touch programming for parents/families, but will also co-construct individualized annual plans that can meet their grant goals and objectives. Through video recordings, parents will share personal experiences and the benefits of taking part in their students' education.

Learning Objectives: (1) Hear about family/parent engagement efforts and how to cultivate relationships between communities and schools. (2) Learn how successful parent engagement strategies depend on the school and community culture. (3) Plan ongoing engagement opportunities for families/communities to connect, interact, and collaborate, and develop an outline for communication efforts to implement throughout the year.

Speakers:

Crystal Martinez, GEAR UP Parent and Family Project Specialist, Austin Independent School District, Advanced Academics

Treshayla Wilson, GEAR UP Project Specialist, Austin Independent School District, Advanced Academics

40. Unpacking the College Readiness Process for First-Generation Gen Zers

Research suggests that Gen Zers are highly collaborative, self-reliant, and pragmatic. Couple this with students who are also the first in their families to go to college and it is clear we should invest the time and resources to help unpack the college readiness process for them, but how do we approach it?

Join our team for this interactive session as we collectively share more than a decade of GEAR UP programming aimed at supporting students through this process. From cradle to college, we have information to share. No need to reinvent the wheel! Presenters will provide a toolbox full of materials, resources, and toolkits as takeaways to assist GEAR UP program practitioners in their efforts.

Learning Objectives: (1) Explore the characteristics of first-generation Gen Z students and the barriers they face to higher education. (2) Examine successful college readiness interventions to support first-generation Gen Zers. (3) Discover opportunities to integrate best practices into existing grant program models.

Speakers:

Elizabeth Manuel, Senior Director of Student Services, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

Jason Luyster, Assistant Director of West Virginia GEAR UP, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

3:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Networking Break and Raffle in Exhibit Hall

4:00 pm – 5:15 pm

Monday Afternoon Concurrent Sessions | Block 3

41. 3 Paths to Higher Outcomes in Anxious Times with SEL Peer Mentoring

Growing anxiety is getting in the way of learning, achievement, and college success. So in this session, we'll learn 3 ways that schools are using this peer mentoring model to improve behavior, attendance, grades, test scores, and college achievement by 10% or more.

We'll get insights from a panel of practitioners and partners. We'll discover how WSU Tri-Cities GEAR UP staff have overcome hurdles to get results. And we'll hear lessons learned from the founder of the nonprofit EduGuide who created this unique peer mentoring model that has now been recognized as a top-tier evidence-based program. Includes tools you can walk away with to get started.

Learning Objectives: (1) Gain a new method to address Wellbeing, Social Emotional Learning, PBIS, Trauma Informed Education and Restorative Practices in your schools. (2) Learn a simple activity you can use with your staff and students. (3) Choose an option for how to incorporate strategies in your schools.

Speakers:

Bryan Taylor, President & Founder, EduGuide

42. A JEM of a Program: Supporting Math Advancement

Are you interested in exploring how to re-engage and support students while helping them master mathematics? Through the Jaime Escalante Math (JEM) enrichment program, GEAR UP 4 LA motivates and supports students to advance in math in the summer.

The audience will engage in a presentation about JEM implementation, student testimonials, and recent evaluation findings, as well as guided discussions about supporting students through their math pathways.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn how GEAR UP 4 LA's support of, and involvement with, JEM has progressed over time. (2) Explore how GEAR UP 4 LA's model might enhance math support programs. (3) Examine results of a quasi-experimental evaluation of JEM participation.

Speakers:

Danny Tran, Program Manager, Internal Evaluation, Los Angeles Unified/GEAR UP 4 LA

Janicia Centeno-Castillo, Project Director, Los Angeles Unified/GEAR UP 4 LA

Daisy Alvizo, Site Coordinator, Los Angeles Unified/GEAR UP 4 LA

Keren Brooks, Director of Evaluation, CoBro Consulting

43. Animate Student Voice and Choice

In this interactive session, we'll examine a few principles of animation and how you can apply them to promote student-driven postsecondary education exploration and planning.

We'll demonstrate fun and creative strategies to help students envision their goals, map a plan, and reflect on their progress. You'll then have an opportunity for hands-on exploration of each strategy and how they work in conjunction with the principles of animation to promote student agency.

You'll walk away with the practice and resources needed to help your students prepare for postsecondary education opportunities.

Speakers:

Jared Whaley, Professional Development Specialist, K20 Center
Keiana Cross, Online Learning Designer, K20 Center
James Doyle, Electives Curriculum Specialist, K20 Center

44. Classroom to Career: Leveraging Local Partnerships to Develop Professional Pathways

Do you have schools in your community? Do you have medical professionals nearby? If the answer is yes, then you have the tools to create unique career exploration opportunities that will take your students from the science lab to the operating table! In this interactive session, you will engage in discussions on how to establish and maintain constructive partnerships that provide students with academic and professional growth experiences.

Hear from Region One GEAR UP about collaborating with its local hospital system (Doctor's Hospital at Renaissance) to create the Junior Clinical Research Internship (JCRI), a two-week summer program with the objective of engaging students in clinical research, critical thinking, reinforcing life-long learning, and fostering a better understanding of the various disciplines in health sciences. Lastly, you will have a chance to hear from JCRI participants about the importance and impact of programs such as this on the post-secondary readiness of students.

Learning Objectives: (1) Define partnerships. (2) Identify program needs to determine what partnerships are necessary. (3) Plan strategies to develop a partnership plan.

Speakers:

Ricardo Lee Lopez, Jr., GEAR UP Director, Region One GEAR UP: College Now-Career Connected!
Rosa Isela Herrera, Education Specialist, Region One GEAR UP: College Now-Career Connected!

45. Collecting and Using Real-Time Data for Real-Time Improvement of GEAR UP Services

In GEAR UP, we collect internal and external data from a variety of places. However, beyond federally-required reporting, many GEAR UP grantees do not have a centralized way to collect, manage, nor utilize data for real-time continuous improvement.

In this interactive session, attendees will engage in discussions using GEAR UP case studies that illustrate data collection and management challenges and solutions. Attendees will also have the chance to see how one state GEAR UP grant has developed their own data collection and management system and utilizes real-time data for real-time continuous improvement and strategic planning. Lastly, attendees will explore the value-add and opportunity for programmatic change with a real-time data collection and management system.

Speakers:

Cody Davidson, Ph.D., Associate Director, Project Reporting and Evaluation, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
Kim Welch, Executive Director, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
Sarah Jones, Student & Family Services Specialist, GEAR UP Kentucky

46. Creating a College & Career Going Culture through 1:1 College and Career Success Plan Advising

In this session, you will learn about best practices for implementing and conducting successful College and Career Success Plan (CCSP) sessions at your school site. You'll have time to reflect on your own advising strategy and brainstorm with other professionals.

Creating a college and career-going culture post-distance learning means navigating challenges such as motivation and college and career knowledge gaps. By tailoring 1:1 advising sessions and creating individualized student information packets, we can re-ignite students' interest and co-create post-high school plans. By discussing topics such as high school graduation requirements,

college fit and college match, career exploration, and navigating 2-year and 4-year pathways, we can meet grant goals while creating meaningful relationships with our students.

Speakers:

Leslie Quinto, Lead College Facilitator, University of California, Santa Cruz

Osiris Ortiz, Assistant Director, University of California, Santa Cruz

47. Data Into Practice: An Iterative Mixed Methods Approach to Using Evaluation Findings for Practice

All too often, evaluation findings are delivered after they are relevant. Once delivered, they wind up sitting on a shelf leading to missed opportunities to apply findings to practice.

During this facilitated dialogue, learn about the partnership between GEAR UP New Mexico and Xcalibur to turn data into practice in a timely and relevant way. We collect both quantitative and qualitative data that allow for on-going calibration around our understanding of what is working and what needs adjusting. Our participatory and mixed methods approach leverages the voices of participants, evaluators, and practitioners to review data and apply findings ensuring relevance and utilization.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand the evidence behind our evaluation model. (2) Express the practices that foster quick data collection and reporting cycles. (3) Identify ways to ensure implementation of evaluation findings.

Speakers:

Corine Frankland, Ph.D., Project Director, GEAR UP New Mexico, New Mexico Higher Education Department

Julie Jaramillo, Director of Data Insights and Evaluation, Xcalibur

Comfort Afolabi, Ph.D., Evaluation Specialist, Xcalibur

48. Discussion Lab: How Can We Ramp Up Family Engagement?

*Discussion Labs are an opportunity to share, learn, and problem-solve together. **Come ready to participate!***

We know that family engagement is a key factor in student success and a core component of our GEAR UP programming. Yet, family engagement work takes huge amounts of effort, energy, and strategic planning that does not always garner the engagement we aim to achieve.

Join members of NCCEP's Family Engagement Advisory Committee and your peers from across the country as we explore ways to creatively engage families into our GEAR UP work and share ideas across programs.

Speakers:

Katie Hill, Ph.D., Director of Programs, NCCEP

49. GEAR UP and the College Advising Corps: Partnering for Greater Impact

In this lecture and workshop, GEAR UP Virginia (GUV) and the Virginia College Advising Corps (VCAC) will discuss how they created a state-wide partnership, how schools participate, and how student outcomes are improving through near-peer college advising.

Participants will learn the steps to create their own GEAR UP/CAC partnership.

The College Advising Corps (CAC) currently operates with university partners in CA, GA, IL, IN, KS, MA, MI, MO, NC, NJ, NY, PA, RI, SC, TX, UT, and VA. If you are from one of these states, come learn what GEAR UP and CAC can do together!

Speakers:

Rebecca Lystash, GEAR UP Virginia Director, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia
Joy Pugh, Virginia College Advising Corps Director, Virginia College Advising Corps

50. GEAR UP from the Ground Up

This session is designed to provide a transparent view of the implementation of GEAR UP at Title 1 middle schools in an urban school district. We will share a list of “do’s and don’ts” while the conversation will revolve around what we perceive to be our best practices, critical pieces, and areas of improvement going forward.

This session will allow attendees time to interact with the presented data and reflect on how these data points can be used to enhance their GEAR UP administrations. Key to this session will be: (1) our focus on navigating the “red tape” involved with program implementation; (2) securing a district and building a presence for the GEAR UP program; (3) aligning GEAR UP’s objectives and functions to those within a district/building; and (4) identifying stakeholders within a GEAR UP environment to close gaps and assist in program implementation and monitoring.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn how to navigate district policies and procedures, and plan for possible “pitfalls”. (2) Perform a SWOT analysis of a program in order to better align program initiatives with district goals. (3) Create an action plan for implementing GEAR UP programming at both the district and building levels. (4) Identify strategies for leveraging community partnerships in GEAR UP and college/career readiness programming. (5) Identify best practices and resources used to help students excel academically and socially. (6) Learn effective collaboration strategies with college and career.

Speakers:

Shayla Smith, Advisor, Aim High Akron GEAR UP
Jasmina Waters, Program Manager, Aim High Akron GEAR UP

51. Leveling Up Access to Success with Coaching

The path to success for first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented students does not stop at access to postsecondary enrollment; the success of our students has just begun.

During this engaging session, attendees will learn strategies for how to implement a coaching model that is framed to suit institutional needs and to serve and meet students where they are. GEAR UP North Carolina staff and success coaches at the postsecondary level will lead a rich discussion and panel highlighting the unique needs of GEAR UP students and how InsideTrack’s evidence-based coaching methodology can be used to aid in student success.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn about the coaching framework and strategies to increase student retention. (2) Identify target student needs and assess current student engagement model. (3) Strategize how a coaching framework can fill gaps and fit your program.

Speakers:

Patti Harris, Director, GEAR UP North Carolina
Estefane Santiago-Lopez, Access & Success Manager, GEAR UP North Carolina
Kai Drekmeyer, Co-Founder & Chief Development Officer, InsideTrack

52. Leveling-Up! Incorporating Engaging, Culturally-Resonant, Research-Based, Mobile-First Advising

Ready to take your college & career advising materials to the next level? Get Schooled is a national college & career readiness nonprofit with deep expertise in digital communications and youth engagement. We produce youth-centered, research-based, culturally-relevant material that you can

easily integrate into your program at no cost, and we advise tens of thousands of primarily Black, Brown, immigrant, and first gen youth.

Session participants will receive actionable resources and toolkits that you can use right away. We'll discuss the barriers in traditional college and career materials, and share the youth feedback we've collected from thousands of youth about what moves them to action and what captures their attention.

We'll also share low-barrier partnership opportunities plus a pilot site opportunity to help shape content and programming for your and other GEAR UP programs around the country - including short-form videos, social media, accessible web-based content, online course curriculum, and more. Join us!

Speakers:

John Branam, Get Schooled

Eric Lopez, Senior Program Manager, Get Schooled

Micaleah Parker, GEAR UP Site Coordinator at Bradley Central High School, GEAR UP Tennessee

53. R.A.M.P. Up to College: Opening the Mathematics Gateway for All

The recent global health and social pandemics revealed and exacerbated deeply seeded, persistent, and inequitable teaching and learning conditions that greatly impacted all students. Despite valiant efforts from the collective educational community, achievement and opportunity gaps, especially for our most vulnerable students, widened and for many, Mathematics remains a gate keeper to college attainment.

To address these disparities, attendees will be immersed in the application of the Rigorous Application of Mathematical Practices (R.A.M.P.) Up! model. In addition, participants will assess their own cultural assumptions, leaving better equipped to design and apply mathematical ideas that will nurture student excellence.

Learning Objectives: (1) Utilize data to identify student misconceptions and strategically intervene “just in time.” (2) Apply practical replicable and scalable materials, tools, and strategies. (3) Strengthen teacher instructional practices that meet individual student needs. (4) Create real-world, positive, and conducive learning environments and experiences.

Speakers:

Robyn Fisher, Ed.D., Professional Learning and Intervention Design Specialist, Alliance for Collaboration to Heighten Educational Success ACCESS

Sharon Twitty, Executive Director, Alliance for Collaboration to Heighten Educational Success

Jari B. Stokes, Site GEAR UP Coach, Corcoran Joint Union School District

Enchantee Minor-Dorsey, ACCESS Leadership Team Member / Regional Implementation Coordinator, Beaumont, ARCHES ACCESS/UCOP

54. Student Learning Outcomes: From Programming to Assessment

Student learning outcomes are the heart of GEAR UP, functioning to connect grant objectives to programming, practice, evaluation, and assessment. Student learning outcomes connect GEAR UP directors, site staff, and research staff as they work, in various respective capacities, towards grant objectives.

In this interactive session, we aim to promote a discourse of how student learning outcomes can be intentionally crafted to be both aligned with grant objectives and also be measurable so that they can yield data.

Learning Objectives: (1) Create a hypothetical GEAR UP event. (2) Engage in critical thinking and discussion to develop a set of student learning outcomes based on both event plan and specific grant objectives. (3) Construct survey questions based on student learning outcomes to evaluate and assess programming.

Speakers:

Joshua R. Bilbrew, Director, CSUF GEAR UP

Cynthia Lazo, Academic Coordinator, CSUF GEAR UP

55. The 2024-25 Better FAFSA Part 2: Navigating the Changes

You've heard about all the changes coming to the 24-25 FAFSA and are now wondering how you can prepare to support students and families once the Better FAFSA opens.

This session will dive deep into the changes that we expect to be the most challenging, provide time to brainstorm with colleagues, and hear how we plan to tackle these changes with the students we serve and the practitioners we train. The topics will include the change from Expected Family Contribution (EFC) to the Student Aid Index (SAI), creating FSA IDs for multiple parents, giving consent to use federal tax information, and more.

If we plan for the challenges early, we can provide valuable support to students once the 24-25 FAFSA goes live. We will hold time to answer questions, discuss scenarios, and identify helpful resources. This session will most benefit individuals who attended Part 1 or have been keeping current on all the simplified FAFSA changes.

Speakers:

Emily Wolfson, Senior Manager of Training and Support, uAspire

Heather Adams, Training Specialist, California, uAspire

56. The Guides to GEAR UP Success

Learn about Arizona's Guides! (1) Discover Guide – provides middle-grade students an interactive way to explore how their interests, passions, abilities, and cultural influences can influence life after high school. (2) Parent Guide – provides middle grade parents a resource they can use to support their students' post-secondary plans. (3) Facilitator Guide – provides teachers an interactive resource to use with middle school students to explore their interests, passions, abilities, and influences. (4) Senior Launch Guide – provides a wealth of information about career exploration, FAFSA help, scholarship and job tips, selecting and applying for colleges, and more! Whether headed to a 4-year university, community college, technical school, the workforce, or the military, the Senior Launch Guide helps your students with every step along the way.

Learning Objectives: (1) Apply knowledge of the Guides and learn how to create/tailor and utilize similar resources in your program and schools. (2) Identify how the Guides can be used to increase school's college-going rates, address equity gaps, and provide postsecondary access to students in underserved communities.

Speakers:

Jasmine Dean, Program Manager, Northern Arizona University

Daniel Pulu, GEAR UP Program Manager, Northern Arizona University

57. Thinking Outside the Box: Student & Family Engagement

It is a common struggle to get high engagement in GEAR UP/school events. We try to increase engagement with parent outreach, canvassing, phone calls, and even free food, but we still have low engagement from students and parents.

To reach the GEAR UP grant goals, engagement is imperative. It's not that parents and students don't want to be involved necessarily, there are several other factors that can affect engagement that need solutions. Join us for this collaborative workshop.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify and discuss the challenges that come with family and student engagement. (2) Learn the steps created for developing a valuable, entertaining, and interactive event, along with learning ways to hear and implement student and parent voices into GEAR UP events/activities. (3) Work in groups to create a fun and new event or activity that you can apply to your GEAR UP program or school.

Speakers:

Noelle Sollman, Site Manager, WSU GEAR UP

Erin Allen, Special Education Teacher, Soap Lake School District

Tuesday | July 18th

7:00 am – 5:00 pm **Conference Registration & Information Booth Open**

7:30 am – 8:45 am **Networking Breakfast**

9:00 am – 10:15 am **Tuesday Morning Plenary:
Preparing for the New Frontier**



Dr. Chrissy Tillery, Vice President of Research and Evaluation, NCCEP
Dr. Ellen Ochoa, Astronaut, Inventor & Former NASA Director

There are times when we must go beyond what seems possible. As a young woman, Dr. Ellen Ochoa dreamed of becoming a scientist but found the lack of role models and the many challenges to be daunting. Through her pioneering journey, Dr. Ochoa became the first Latina in space. She has blazed a trail to expand access for women and students of color in two important frontiers: STEM and space exploration.

As an inventor, veteran astronaut, and former director of the NASA Johnson Space Center, Dr. Ochoa will share her unique perspective on adversity, the importance of inclusion, and what steps we can take to support our students as they reach for the stars.

10:15 am – 10:45 am **Networking Break & Raffle in Exhibit Hall**

10:45 am – 12:00 pm **Tuesday Morning Concurrent Sessions | Block 4**

58. **4, 3, 2, 1...Countdown to our Future! Financial Literacy Edition**

In the fall of 2022, four school districts, participants of three different GEAR UP grants came together with one goal in mind: raising financial literacy awareness within our county. As GEAR UP cohorts, the communities we serve tend to be of lower socioeconomic status, therefore, our focus is to educate the community on making sound financial decisions.

Through this interactive session, you will engage in conversation about the importance of financial literacy and the implications in the overall economy within low-income rural communities. You can expect to learn about how we collaborated as four different rural school districts in one county to develop, plan, and execute a Financial Literacy Expo. Our team will share with you the resources we compiled and the outline we developed so that you may in turn plan your own Financial Literacy Expo.

Learning Objectives: (1) Obtain an outline and steps to follow to organize and execute a successful Financial Literacy Expo at home campus. (2) Have a list of ideas of various financial institutions, community partners, institutions of higher education for an event. (3) Secure activities you can use at your own Financial Literacy Expo.

Speakers:

Beatriz Valenzuela, Education Specialist, Region One Education Service Center

Yesica Castillo, GEAR UP Facilitator, Lyford ISD

Rosanna Gomez, GEAR UP Facilitator, San Perlita ISD

Joanna Gomez, Facilitator, Lasara ISD

Yvette Mendoza, Facilitator, Raymondville ISD

Alejos Salazar, Superintendent, Lasara ISD

59. Beyond GEAR UP: Tracking Postsecondary Enrollment and Persistence

GEAR UP was “designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education.” However, minimal research has been conducted on the effects of GEAR UP on student’s postsecondary enrollment and persistence. Using National Student Clearinghouse records and GEAR UP participation data, we will explore the extent to which services increased postsecondary enrollment and persistence of Pennsylvania State GEAR UP’s 2020 graduating class.

During this session, we will present preliminary findings regarding postsecondary enrollment and persistence, alongside participation data, and provide initial highlights from descriptive and correlational analyses. Through a panel presentation, group discussion, and a data activity, participants will explore preliminary findings from PA’s supplemental grant.

Together, evaluators and program staff will share highlights from initial descriptive and correlational findings, identify key takeaways and interpretations of data, and discuss how preliminary findings are informing and excelling PA’s current grant efforts.

Speakers:

Christy King, Ed.D., Internal Evaluator/Associate Director, PA State GEAR UP

Felix Fernandez, Ph.D., Principal Research Scientist, FHI 360

Tamara Pacowski-Ferrizzi, District Manager, Pottstown School District

Saori Iwamoto, Research Associate, FHI 360

60. Beyond Service Delivery: Shifting Mindsets from Supportive Services to Systemic Change

Deepening the capacity of effective leaders for postsecondary success, the Appalachian Postsecondary Strategy Network, established in 2020, is a partnership between nine rural school districts, Appalachian State University GEAR UP, and the National Postsecondary Strategy Institute. District leaders, alongside GEAR UP staff, worked to weave the supportive GEAR UP services into a broader strategy for systemic change. Districts have established postsecondary leadership teams that have strengthened the relationship between all key stakeholders.

This session supports GEAR UP staff looking to closely align with their districts, enhance the effectiveness of GEAR UP services, and build stronger relationships with district leadership. Participants will plan their own pathway to move from supportive services to systemic change. Come ready to engage through various discussions and templates.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn best practices to establish a postsecondary network. (2) Create a stakeholder map to establish a postsecondary district leadership team. (3) Strategize how to embed and align GEAR UP into district strategic plans.

Speakers:

Corinne Smith, Director of GEAR UP, Appalachian State University

Kelly Sparks, Partner, National Postsecondary Strategy Institute

James Beeler, Ed.D., Senior Director of College Access Partnerships, Appalachian State University

61. **Can My Background Get Me to and through College? How Enrollment Trends Are Changing**

Educators have noted that college enrollment is declining, but often struggle to articulate how and what to do about it. This interactive session showcases how enrollment patterns and the profile of enrolling students have changed and highlight the variability in the average postsecondary completion rates of the institutions to which students enroll.

Presenters and attendees will share their experiences and identify how best to support students to get to and through college during these changing times. This session is for GEAR UP professionals who want to learn more about declining college enrollment and how to help reverse the trend.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify the extent to which college enrollment trends are changing and how the profile of students who are enrolling in college are changing along with them. (2) Understand the importance knowing the average postsecondary completion rates of institutions can help inform students postsecondary decisions and improve persistence and completion rates. (3) Explore and determine the various support services and activities that can be leveraged to help get students college-ready and select institutions for which they have the best chance of success.

Speakers:

Shawn Bergman, Ph.D., Director of Research / K/C Distinguished Professor, The Vela Institute/ Appalachian State University

Jennifer Garrison, Ed.D., Superintendent, Vandalia Community School District

Ana Moya, Professional Development Specialist, Illinois Student Assistance Commission

62. **Creating College-Going Champions: Strategies to Boost College Applications & FAFSA Completion Rates**

Students don't apply to college or complete the FAFSA on their own. Schools that have high college applications and FAFSA completion rates create a culture of college-going.

In this facilitated dialogue, we will share our Champions of College Access and Success framework and promising practices that have created college-going cultures in schools throughout West Virginia. Participants will share how they can incorporate these strategies into their programs and will be provided with tools for implementation.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn promising practices for college applications and FAFSA completion. (2) Identify and discuss strategies with peers to effectively create college-going champions. (3) Receive resources to implement within programs.

Speakers:

Heather McChesney, Coordinator of Curriculum, Professional Development and Education Initiatives, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

Jennifer Grossman, Ph.D., Director of Research and Analysis, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

63. **Cultivating Early College Awareness to Reduce Risk Factors for Students**

The overarching goal of cultivating a college-going culture is for all students to be prepared for a full range of post-secondary options through structural, motivational, and experiential college preparatory opportunities.

As a result, this session will focus on the fundamental precursors to creating this school culture as it relates to Patricia McDonough's nine critical principles. Together, we will also unpack the interconnectedness of language choices and building a college-going identity (an often overlooked critical first step).

Learning Objectives: (1) Reflect on own educational journeys. (2) Learn the fundamental precursors to creating a college-going culture as it relates to Patricia McDonough's nine critical principles. (3) Identify practical next steps to strengthen college ready communities.

Speakers:

Laura I. Saavedra, GEAR UP Program Director, University of Michigan Center for Educational Outreach

Da Jauntey  Cooper, GEAR UP Program Manager, University of Michigan Center for Educational Outreach

64. Discussion Lab: What Are Your Administrative Processes with K12 Schools?

*Discussion Labs are an opportunity to share, learn, and problem-solve together. **Come ready to participate!***

We can't do great work with students if we don't have the right GEAR UP administrative processes in place with our partner K12 schools. This Discussion Lab is designed to create a forum where attendees can share and learn how programs address core administrative processes with K12 school partners, including (1) the annual budgeting process, (2) policies and procedures for funding and reimbursement, and (3) subrecipient monitoring and risk assessments.

Who should attend? Individuals who are responsible for grant administration at the program or site level, finance and budget planning, operations, compliance, and other related functions. GEAR UP programs of all experience levels welcome. We encourage you to have access to relevant materials, policies, and resources from your grant to help inform the discussion.

Speakers:

Alex Chough, President, NCCEP

65. Effective High School Transitions through Play!

Why does transition into high school matter? Ninth graders are the largest at-risk population. More students fail ninth grade than any other grade (National High School Center, 2007). Most high school dropouts fail at least 25% of their ninth-grade courses, while 8% of high school completers experienced the same difficulty (Letgers & Kerr, 2001).

Student-led transition programs foster safety, information, connection, and structure for ninth graders while developing leadership attributes among their peers. After a brief introduction on the importance of equipping ninth grade students with the tools they need to succeed, conference participants will partake in a mini-orientation that is hands-on, engaging, energetic, and reflects the value of an exemplary transition program.

Learning Objectives: (1) Investigate why transition programs are essential. (2) Analyze elements of successful student-led transition programs. (3) Apply effective engagement concepts for transitioning students.

Speakers:

Lori Talavera, GEAR UP Coordinator, Eastern Arizona College

Stasha Barlow, GEAR UP Coordinator, Eastern Arizona College

Jackie Wallace, GEAR UP Coordinator, Eastern Arizona College

Rena  Short, Lead Teacher/Administrator for Payson High School, Payson Unified School District

66. Family Conversations: Strengthening the Relationship, One Conversation at a Time

Encouraging families to share their narrative using tools that work to build their financial, career, and college-going knowledge puts them in the driver's seat with their kids. Through prompted

family conversations, highlighting family history, career and college-readiness, and financial literacy, families gain more understanding of their student's goals, skills, values, and interests.

Using the Vermont GEAR UP "Yack Stack", we will demonstrate how to encourage deeper reflection and offer support for fun and engaging conversations. Through presentation and group interaction, we will model and practice family conversations that have potential for strengthening relationships and understanding the depth of our family stories. Attendees will receive both decks and materials.

Learning Objectives: (1) Build more open and authentic conversation skills with families. (2) Create opportunities to learn more about family history, challenges, and successes. (3) Share aspirations and family resiliency through family stories.

Speakers:

Cathy Printon, School Partnership and Parent Program Coordinator, Vermont Student Assistance Corporation

Dianne Griggs, GEAR UP Director, Vermont Student Assistance Corporation

67. Family Engagement: It's All Fun and Games

Partnering with parents to support their child's postsecondary education pathway is a critical component of an effective GEAR UP project. While it is necessary to provide information on financial aid and college admissions, those topics can be a little dull.

In this interactive session, we will demonstrate how our GEAR UP O+K=C team engages parents in learning important college-readiness concepts through activities that provide fun for the entire family.

In this session, participants will: (1) experience a modified version of The Path is Right game for families; (2) understand the planning and communication processes used to create engaging and effective GEAR UP family events; and (3) use the activity templates provided in English and Spanish to develop family events for their unique GEAR UP contexts to help parents and students learn about postsecondary options, preparation, and financing.

Speakers:

Claudia Rivas-Taylor, GEAR UP College Coach, Oklahoma City Public Schools

Rebecca Cabrera, GEAR UP College Coach, Oklahoma City Public Schools

Deontre Price, GEAR UP College Coach, Oklahoma City Public Schools

68. Finding More Time! Creative & Innovative Ways to Engage Students with GEAR UP Services

The school day is hectic, and one of the most complex parts of being a GEAR UP professional is collaborating with district leaders and school staff to engage students. This panel includes GEAR UP vets and experts who found innovative and creative ways to engage students and provide solutions that meet students where they are.

This session will be powerful because it will be an open dialogue about how the pandemic changed some panelists' mindsets and strategies to reach students. Learn what they are returning to, keeping, and adding as we all revitalize our approach to building future forward programs for our students.

Speakers:

Efrin Carrion, Co-Founder & CEO, Student Success Agency

Chrystal Abernathy, Project Director, GEAR UP Jefferson County

Andrea González Sotelo, GEAR UP Assistant Director, Arizona GEAR UP

Amanda Tapia, Nevada GEAR UP Specialist, Clark County School District/Nevada Department of Education

69. From Idea to Execution: Designing Impactful Student Experiences, Navigating Institutional Obstacles

This session equips participants with strategies to increase institutional stakeholder buy-in to support your program, community, and campus. During this interactive session, participants will engage in an activity to help demonstrate the importance of storytelling, leveraging data, and strategic event planning. Additionally, this session addresses the importance of building strong relational capacity within teams to bring an idea to execution.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn how to increase student participation, enhance experiences, and build staff capacity to plan successful events. (2) Identify and discuss institutional obstacles that interfere with program implementation and event planning. (3) Strategic planning for leading a multi-faceted state funded grant for rural and urban regions ensuring all student needs are met.

Speakers:

Ebony Grice, Director of WEOP, Wisconsin Educational Opportunity Programs, DPI

Demetri Beekman, Executive Director for Equity and Inclusion, Wisconsin Department of Instruction

70. GEAR UP Gamified: The New Wave to Student Engagement in Career Exploration

Let's talk CAREERS with DeSoto ISD NXT Generation GEAR UP! Get your students in the competitive spirit and embark on their career discovery journey with ChatterHigh. This high-level career exploration platform creates accessibility to many postsecondary pathways and possible career goals.

ChatterHigh makes this gamified experience fun and creates a sense of community as students explore their opportunities. Integrating this program into the classroom as a data-driven resource helps contribute "hope" in students by building authentic career interest profiles. This session will be primarily a facilitated dialogue and participant engagement with a small percentage of lecturing.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn how ChatterHigh's divergent exploration, self-reflection, and convergent thinking algorithm creates authentic career interest profiles for each student. (2) Learn the connections between hope-action theory, vocational identity, and student engagement in the context of career development classes (3) Discover a resource that allows for successful delivery of various supplemental curricula in any learning environments (i.e., remote, blended, or face-to-face).

Speakers:

Hadiyah Elder, Site Coordinator, DeSoto Independent School District

Shanta Duren, Project Director, DeSoto ISD

Lee Taal, CEO, ChatterHigh

Chanel Truitt, Site Coordinator, DeSoto ISD

71. Planning and Creating Engaging Student Activities and Camps Utilizing Project Partners

Think outside the box to utilize your partners to help create STEAM camps for student engagement and meeting grant objectives.

Learning Objectives: (1) Discuss which partners can be used to help create camps. (2) Identify ways partners can be used. (3) Articulate and create a plan for an upcoming camp.

Speakers:

Ruby Aguilar, GEAR UP Coordinator, Vanguard Academy

Barbara Gonzales, Ed.D., Director of GEAR UP, Vanguard Academy

72. **Ready, Set, Go: Preparing for Student Success in Year 6!**

Preparing students to transition from high school to college is a goal of all college access programs. Collaboration between key parties and a well-documented plan is imperative for successful college admission.

This session will provide participants with information necessary to create effective postsecondary transition plans. Participants will receive a list of key partners essential for successful postsecondary transition, a transition planning guide, and sample transition plans.

In this interactive session, you will engage in discussions about different types and components of transition plans. You will collaborate about activities and resources that reinforce student transitioning. Lastly, you will participate in an exercise allowing you to create a transition plan.

In this session, participants will receive: (1) essential components of transition plans; (2) resources to aid in the development of effective transition plans; (3) participate in an exercise to create your own sample transition plan.

Speakers:

Elvin Browne, GEAR UP TN Regional Coordinator, Tennessee Higher Education Commission

Debbie Brown, GEAR UP TN Regional Coordinator, Tennessee Higher Education Commission

73. **STEM and GEAR UP: Possibility, Purpose & Plan**

This presentation will cover the importance of Next Generation Science Standards and practical, real-life application as a lasting legacy of a GEAR UP grant in a school. A slideshow showing how teachers and students are actively involved in science and engineering design.

The participants will guide the presenters in creating the most effective resolution to the lesson. The PowerPoint used will be shared with the participants.

Learning Objectives: (1) Increase the ability of students to develop their critical thinking skills to help them become better science, engineering, technology-related problem-solvers now and in the future. (2) Create and present STEM (science) lessons in a manner that a classroom teacher will be able to continue to use them after the grant is completed. (3) Reach the GEAR UP population of students to spark an interest in STEM careers, thus encouraging them to pursue higher education. (4) Discuss how changes made in how teachers present science standards will have a lasting impact for a generation, making your GEAR UP grant have a true legacy.

Speakers:

Terry Sullivan, GEAR UP Project Director, West Kentucky Educational Cooperative

Susan Beatty, Ed.D., STEM Consultant, West Kentucky Educational Cooperative

Susan Barton, STEM Consultant, West Kentucky Educational Cooperative

74. **Supporting the Distressed Student: Stress, Anxiety, Mental Health, and a Pandemic**

The coronavirus pandemic, current national and world events, and the use of technology have had an irrevocable impact on education and the needs of today's students. National surveys show steady increases in teenage trauma, stress, anxiety, and mental health issues. But what does this mean for student success and college preparation, and how can we utilize data and brain science to best support our students now and in years to come?

In this session, participants will take a closer look at the post-COVID student and dive deeper into how stress and anxiety impact the teenage brain and student success.

Speakers:

Candy Vera, Educator Outreach Coach, University of Texas at Austin IPSI
Kelli Taylor, Educator Outreach Coach, University of Texas at Austin
Cathy Cantrell, Senior Project Manager, University of Texas at Austin IPSI

75. The Secret to Student Engagement is...J/K. There Is No Secret, But You Can Do It!

Wouldn't it be great if there was a secret to student engagement? But what if you had ready-to-go ways to engage students? We all know how difficult it can be, but student engagement is crucial to college and career readiness.

In this interactive session, learn what student engagement is, why student engagement is important to college and career readiness, and how to increase student engagement using games, strategies, and tactics. Leave with take-home activities from the Career & College Clubs program to use with your students! Learning Objectives: (1) Connect the importance of student engagement to college and career readiness. (2) Conduct a self-check-in to ensure students are truly engaged. (3) Learn and apply specific games, tactics, and strategies to increase engagement with students.

Speakers:

Kelly Pappas, Director of Career & College Clubs, NCCEP

76. Unlocking Bright Futures: Building Students' Career Readiness through Mentoring & Internships

Participants will learn how the Anaheim Union High School District is increasing students' career readiness by linking career pathways and classroom learning with career mentoring and internships developed in partnership with CSUF GEAR UP to create bright futures for students. In addition, participants will learn how the district is helping students take the lead in their own career exploration journey.

Participants will leave with ideas for developing high-quality career mentoring and internship programs aligned with industry needs, as well as materials such as partner recruitment letters, internship agreements, and more.

Learning Objectives: (1) Develop strategies for collaborative educational planning that integrate career pathway completion, content-area learning, as well as career mentoring and internships. (2) Identify and discuss strategies for developing a work-based learning program, including business outreach, career event planning, and implementing internships. (3) Explore curriculum to help students seek their own career conversations and internship opportunities.

Speakers:

Adilene Ayala, Academic Coordinator, CSUF GEAR UP

Alejandra Huerta, Academic Coordinator, CSUF GEAR UP

MaryJo Cooke, AIME Director, Anaheim Union High School District

Scott Reindl, Coordinator of 21st Century Career Readiness, Anaheim Union High School District

77. Using Storytelling to Support College Readiness and Year 7 Success

Getting students to college is the goal. Helping students stay in college, graduate, and successfully navigate life after college is the mission. This interactive session demonstrates the power of storytelling and how sites can use recorded videos of alumni to support college readiness and student success in year seven.

During this interactive session, we will share videos and projects from multiple sites created in partnership with NY Times bestselling author and journalist, Harlan Cohen. This student-focused initiative captured the voices of alumni from schools across the grant. Topics included imposter

syndrome, academic success, financial literacy, scholarships, homesickness, stress management, self-care, family issues, first-generation challenges, culture, community, and careers.

Learning Objectives: (1) Demonstrate the power of storytelling and using student stories to help middle school and high school students prepare, plan, and navigate life in college. (2) Deliver a framework to help current high school students tell their stories and practice developing life skills that will help them navigate their first year in college. (3) Provide a transition plan to guide graduating seniors and help them identify people, places, and resources to find connection, community, and support.

Speakers:

Harlan Cohen, Author, Help Me Harlan LLC

Diana Castillo-Paul, Sunnyside High School, University of Washington GEAR UP

12:15 pm – 1:00 pm **Networking Lunch**

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm **Tuesday Luncheon Plenary:
The Art of Changing Minds**

Alex Chough, *President, NCCEP*
Anand Giridharadas, *Author & Journalist*



GEAR UP's success stems from the shared belief that it is possible and worthwhile to nurture student success for all students, leading to stronger education, workforce, and civic outcomes. In our polarized political and social climate, our work in pursuit of equity is even harder. Many of the values, goals, and strategies that are the bedrock of our work are challenged by those who remain unpersuaded that our work matters. As we seek to expand our opportunity agenda, the truth is that we cannot change the world without changing minds.

As an internationally bestselling author and journalist, Anand Giridharadas is one of our foremost voices on overcoming division and how to make meaningful change. His research shows how we can become better persuaders, helping us bring more people along towards our shared vision for what GEAR UP can be.

2:15 pm – 3:30 pm **Tuesday Afternoon Concurrent Sessions | Block 5**

78. A Story Worth Telling: How to Use Storytelling to Cultivate Parent Engagement

Building relationships with families to support student success takes time. Storytelling can be a tool that helps parents, along with GEAR UP staff, to strengthen communication skills, to provide new learning opportunities, and to create meaningful community.

In this session, you will learn how to empower parents through various storytelling techniques offered by PLUS ME Project. Long Beach GEAR UP successfully implemented their storytelling programs with parents and witnessed transformative growth. By sharing their challenges, happiest memories, and aspirations for their child's future, parents connected more deeply with themselves, each other, the school, and GEAR UP.

Speakers:

Richard Reyes, Executive Director, PLUS ME Project

Dominica J. Scibetta, Project Director, Long Beach GEAR UP

Ariella Jimenez, Family Involvement Coordinator, UC Santa Cruz, Educational Partnership Center

79. Ain't No Party Like a GEAR UP Party, Cause A GEAR UP Party Don't Stop: Strategies for Celebrating

There's nothing worse than a dead party. GEAR UP Fort Wayne believes it's vital for all students to have an impactful and high energy GEAR UP Week celebration.

GEAR UP Week is an opportunity to celebrate student success, increase brand awareness, improve morale, and strengthen partner school relationships. All while having a good time!

In the spirit of supporting students to have a meaningful and impactful GEAR UP Week, GEAR UP Fort Wayne will share their ideas and strategies for the planning and implementing a true

celebration GEAR UP Week. Participants will walk away with tools that can be tailored to fit their own school or district because Ain't No Party Like a GEAR UP Party, Cause A GEAR UP Party Don't Stop!

Speakers:

Shenita Bolton, Director of PreK-12 College and Career Readiness, Fort Wayne Community Schools

Amelia Pflieger, High Ability, Dual Credit, Advanced Placement and Internship Manager, Fort Wayne Community Schools

Carlos Ojeda, Jr., Creative Force & CEO, Coolspeak, the Youth Engagement Company

80. Amplify Your Data: Using Excel Dashboarding to Visualize and Communicate Real-Time Progress for All

While many organizations frequently collect data, their real-time utilization of collected data remains lacking. This session presents a solution to bridge the gap between data collection and utilization by demonstrating how to use a widely accessible tool (Excel) to visualize and communicate real-time data with key stakeholders.

In this interactive session, attendees will hear how Excel dashboarding was used to communicate program participant data with internal and external stakeholders to monitor and adjust program implementation. Attendees will also learn how to use Excel dashboarding to connect and communicate their own data set(s) for effective, real-time data utilization.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand the importance of using formative data to drive key program decisions. (2) Follow a data visualization decision tree to determine what data is most important to which stakeholders. (3) Create an interactive data dashboard using Excel. (4) Develop a plan for implementing data-centered progress monitoring.

Speakers:

Kristen Mosley, Ph.D., Program Evaluator, Austin Independent School District

Corazon Aguilar, Project Director, Austin Independent School District

81. Bridging the Engagement Gap through A STEM-Based Drone Sport

Students' total engagement and drive to pursue postsecondary education can be difficult virtues to inspire among a generation that's constantly distracted by social media, peers, stressful home and school life, and pressure to make life-altering academic decisions. In order to maintain interest both within the classroom, and help increase engagement between students and GEAR UP educators, the Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC) GEAR UP team has started a collaboration with CNY Drones to bring U.S. Drone Soccer to their classroom as a STEM-based drone sport.

During this visually interactive presentation, we will show both the Drone Soccer technology and MVCC GEAR UP's implementation of CNY Drones' Sports Model within their own classroom. We will also talk about how it's helped increase student engagement and interest, particularly within the STEM fields.

Speakers:

Daniel Michaels, STEM GEAR UP Program Specialist, Mohawk Valley Community College

Lisa Payne, CNY Drones Administrator & Co-Founder, CNY Drones

Robert Payne, CNY Drones Co-Founder & Volunteer Coordinator, CNY Drones

Steffani DiPierro, Program Coordinator, Mohawk Valley Community College

Todd Kubica, Director of College Pipeline Programs, Mohawk Valley Community College

82. CCREC: Postsecondary Enrollment and Persistence Results

In 2012, a group of GEAR UP grantees formally established the College and Career Readiness Evaluation Consortium (CCREC). Over the last decade, these grantees have collected and reported student-level service data following students from middle school through college.

Join us for an in-depth discussion of postsecondary enrollment (previously reported) and postsecondary persistence results for the high school graduation classes of 2017 and 2018. Results of postsecondary outcomes, as well as how they relate to student and family services will be discussed. Join us for a dynamic conversation about these longitudinal evaluation results and implications for the GEAR UP program.

Speakers:

Chrissy Tillery, Vice President of Research and Evaluation, NCCEP

Jackie Mania, Director of Research and Evaluation, NCCEP

Thomas Cech, Senior Data Scientist, NCCEP

83. Creating Sustainability: Subject Area Departments as the Unit of Change

Effective learning communities focus on equity and create learning opportunities for themselves, with students in mind. How do they get there? Support partners can consider the entire learning community or department as the unit of change when creating professional learning opportunities.

Join in learning how a new GEAR UP support partner took this approach to support three mathematics departments with promising results. In this session, you will engage in discussions and activities in considering your program's context and how these approaches, structures, and language can attend to the learning community or department as the unit of change.

Learning Objectives: (1) Leave with an understanding of how to approach multiple professional supports with the learning community as the unit of change. (2) Consider your context and leave with ideas of how to place departments at the front of your mind as you plan and implement learning for the whole community.

Speakers:

Angela Torres, Professional Learning Coordinator, UC San Diego Mathematics Project

Oswaldo Soto, Ph.D., Director, UC San Diego Mathematics Project

84. Cruising with GEAR UP: Preparing Students to Captain Their Own Ship to Postsecondary Success

Come sail away with San Marcos CISD and learn how we have utilized sustainable practices to make GEAR UP not just a partner but an integral part of our students' preparation for postsecondary education. Our practices successfully support equity and access through the implementation of instructional keys to support our historically underserved populations, including Emerging Bilingual, Special Education, and Economically Disadvantaged students.

See how SMCISD has leveraged stakeholders to magnify GEAR UP's influence district-wide through our three anchors: leadership, instruction, and culture. Come and design your action plan as we share helpful practices, resources, and partnerships to create sustainability.

Learning Objectives: (1) Distinguish the three anchors to implement a successful and equitable GEAR UP program. (2) Collect and evaluate a variety of resources, supports, and examples to implement immediately. (3) Design an action plan to apply to GEAR UP programs, including innovative match opportunities.

Speakers:

Brittney Posey, GEAR UP Coordinator, San Marcos CISD

Dana Linebarger, Innovative Learning Coordinator, San Marcos CISD

David Coronado, Coordinator of Innovative Learning and ESL Education, San Marcos CISD

85. Discussion Lab: How Do We Help Students Explore STEM Careers and Education Pathways?

*Discussion Labs are an opportunity to share, learn, and problem-solve together. **Come ready to participate!***

You've probably heard students say they want to be a forensic scientist (thanks CSI!) But even though career opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) are growing, students from underrepresented backgrounds are less likely to pursue degrees in STEM fields.

In this discussion-based session, we'll consider why this challenge exists and brainstorm ways to help students explore the full range of STEM careers and education pathways.

Speakers:

Nicole Stella, Director, GEAR UP ASPIRE Scholars Program, Nevada GEAR UP

Joshua Faith, Regional Director, Indiana GEAR UP

86. Getting a Head Start: Earning College Credit by Examination

Earning college credit in high school can significantly accelerate academic and economic growth for underserved students. While we typically think of dual enrollment or Advanced Placement, the College Board's College-Level Examination Program® (CLEP) program provides an additional avenue for high school students from a variety of backgrounds to earn college credit.

This session will highlight best practices that high schools use to expand college credit opportunities for GEAR UP students by utilizing CLEP. We will also meet Elián, who shares via video how he earned 12 college credits in high school for his heritage Spanish speaking skills, which catapulted him into entering college with boosted confidence, while saving thousands of dollars in college tuition.

Attendees will discover practical methods for increasing access to college and how to successfully integrate CLEP into GEAR UP programming to help students get a head start on success.

Speakers:

Gini Beran, Director, College Board

Kathie Montognese, Senior Director, College Board

87. Leveling Up into Year 7

GEAR UP-Level Up, CSUF GEAR UP's 7th Year program, was developed amidst a global pandemic requiring an innovative shift in programming and practice different from GEAR UP's Years 1-6. GEAR UP-Level Up was designed to support students and families through high school graduation and the transition to higher education in a distance-learning environment.

During this period, we addressed individual student basic needs, coordinated services for students across the country, and maintained a caseload to monitor and support GEAR UP students through their first year in college.

Speakers:

Clarissa Rodriguez, Special Projects Coordinator, CSUF GEAR UP

Alejandra Huerta, Academic Coordinator, CSUF GEAR UP

Rachel Nankervis, Assistant Director, CSUF GEAR UP

Sandra Cheng, Coordinator, Digital Media and Branding, CSUF GEAR UP

88. Light Up the GEAR UP Network: Activating Your GEAR UP Alumni

What does a nationwide GEAR UP alumni network need to look like? Do all alumni have the same needs, or are they particular to region, setting, and background?

The GEAR UP Alumni Association (GUAA) invites GEAR UP professionals to come together to collectively brainstorm how the expansion and mobilization of the GUAA across the country can best service students and alumni from different corners of the country. Join this session to be a part of a groundbreaking network of GEAR UP influencers and bring a community to your GEAR UP alumni.

Learning Objectives: (1) Contribute to the vision of the GEAR UP Alumni Association through intimate discussion. (2) Collaborate with other other GEAR UP programs to identify cross-regional best practices. (3) Establish goals for an expansion of the GEAR UP alumni network into every GEAR UP community!

Speakers:

Casey Weld, Executive Director, GEAR UP Alumni Association

Nicholas Mathews, Board President, GEAR UP Alumni Association

89. Native American Culture Supported Through GEAR UP

There is a need to preserve the relevancy of cultural identity among Native American students and families. In particular, a need to emphasize increasing student engagement through culturally relevant curriculum and activities.

In this interactive session, you will gain knowledge of traditional Native American philosophies and strategies. You will participate in small group discussions to help integrate the Navajo Life Philosophy used in the Native American educational systems and community organizations into effective GEAR UP activities and individual advising techniques.

Learning Objectives: (1) Obtain knowledge, skills, and understanding on how to support students and families in cultivating a Native American culture as it relates to the educational field. (2) Engage in a discussion about the relevance of maintaining culture, identity, and perseverance as students transition into postsecondary options. (3) Acquire strategies built around the Navajo Philosophy of Life that can be used to incorporate GEAR UP initiatives.

Speakers:

Tovarai Tenorio, EAC GEAR UP Coordinator Chinle, Eastern Arizona College

Roshelle S'Gleason, EAC GEAR UP Coordinator Window Rock, Eastern Arizona College

Jinger Stephenson, Site Coordinator Ft. Thomas HS, EAC GEAR UP

90. Playing The Game of Life: Engaging Students in a Simulation to Illustrate Critical Life Choices

How do we prepare students to make choices today towards future goals while considering current family and financial situations? Adolescents are often unaware of how critical certain decisions are at this time in their lives. These decisions, if left unmade or allowed to be made by others, can dramatically affect one's future quality of life. However, no matter how much we "experienced" adults lecture, scold, and warn, this is a point not easily made with students.

This session outlines GEAR UP Manoa's creation of a detailed, engaging "Game Of Life" to teach this lesson to students in a way that allows them and their peers to make discoveries for themselves through a fun and appealing simulation.

Learning Objectives: (1) Play the game. (2) Understand how and why the team adapted the materials for different sites and scenarios. (3) Adapt the materials and concepts for local site.

Speakers:

Katelyn Onaga, Program Coordinator, GEAR UP Mānoa
Jaime Rosas, Jr., Program Coordinator, GEAR UP Mānoa
Allison Lee, Program Coordinator, GEAR UP Mānoa
Angelina Martinez, Program Coordinator, GEAR UP Mānoa

91. Ready, Set, Apply: Using Common App to Connect Students with College Opportunities (Part 1)

The Common App is accepted by more than 1,000 public and private colleges worldwide. Each year, more than one million students, one-third of whom are first-generation, apply to college through Common App. We are committed to helping all students access, afford, and attain higher education. Common App aims to close our applicant pool equity gap by 2030.

Join us to learn about initiatives to address systemic inequities in the college admissions process. We will discuss data insights, key partnerships, and ways you can join our efforts.

This overview session is for program managers, site coordinators, college access professionals, and anyone looking for strategies and best practices for using Common App to connect students with college opportunities and meet college application completion goals.

Speakers:

Meredith Lombardi, Director, Education and Training, Common App
Michaela Alcorn, Manager, Counselor Engagement, Common App
April Bell, Director of Constituent Relations, NCCEP

92. So, You Want to Talk To Families

You want to engage families but aren't sure where to start? GEARUP4LA will share how we use data to deliver targeted services to our families to ensure the largest reach possible.

Virtual, in person, hybrid, we aim to meet our families where they are with information that they need to make informed decisions about their future and hope this session will give you the tools to do the same.

Speakers:

Jill Manning, Ed.D., Program Coordinator, GEARUP4LA
Frida Samayoa, Family Engagement Specialist, GEARUP4LA
Lorena Almaguer, Family Engagement Facilitator, GEARUP4LA
Maria Cortez, Family Engagement Facilitator, GEARUP4LA

93. Staggering Integration of Technology to Build Sustainability

GEAR UP grants create sustainability from one grant to another by staggering the integration of technology. The Ignite Belief grant has integrated T.I. technology over three grants and will share how this benefits the schools and teachers.

Through presentations, guided group discussions and Q & A, we will focus on three main sections: (1) implementing new technology each cycle; (2) sharing teachers' first-hand experience; and (3) creating opportunities in future grants. Program Directors and Curriculum Designers can see how this forward planning benefits schools, teachers, and students long term.

Speakers:

Marco Gonzalez, Education Technology Consultant, Texas Instruments
Dara Self, Project Director, Eastern Oklahoma State College GEAR UP

94. Stop, Collaborate, and Listen: Turning Your GEAR UP Network into Collaborations

In evaluation, collaboration is lauded but often difficult to achieve. Data exists in silos with concerns about how results can be used. In this facilitated dialogue, recipients of ED’s research supplement award discuss their collaboration strategy of aligning independent research to synthesize insights.

Attendees will engage in a speed dating type activity, matching them with others who share collaboration priorities. Attendees leave with a plan for future collaboration with their new network.

Learning Objectives: (1) Reflect on and engage in a prioritization to identify reasons for collaboration and anticipated challenges. (2) Identify potential collaborators based on common priorities. (3) Develop a plan to collaborate beyond the conference.

Speakers:

Julie Jaramillo, Director of Data Insights and Evaluation, Xcalibur
Jennifer Grossman, Ph.D., Director of Research and Analysis, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

95. Tennessee’s Momentum Year: Addressing the Education Crisis and Issuing a Call-to-Action

In May 2021, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) released a statewide college-going report (CGR) that shows college-going among Tennessee’s high school graduates has been trending downward, from 63.8% in 2017 to 52.8% in 2021. Most of this decrease occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In response, THEC announced three big goals for 2023 to serve as a momentum-building year to renew and articulate the value of education in Tennessee and increase enrollment in education and training beyond high school.

We then embarked on a series of regional meetings across Tennessee to share state-level goals, garner buy-in, and discuss localized CGR data with local education, business, and community leaders. Their feedback was then implemented into our college access and success work.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn more about “Momentum Year” initiative and its conception. (2) Discuss implementation and outcomes. (3) Reflect on best practices learned.

Speakers:

Jessie Greene, Coordinator of College Access Communications, Tennessee Higher Education Commission
Suzette Telli, Statewide Services Coordinator, Tennessee Higher Education Commission

96. “You Can’t Be What You Can’t See.” What Rural Students Need to Succeed

In this collaborative learning experience, participants will develop an understanding of the importance of exposing rural students to college and careers early and often. Participants will review research and identify essential skills necessary to overcome the equity and access disparities rural students encounter.

Participants will have the opportunity to explore services provided by the GEAR UP for MY SUCCESS partnership with 24 rural school districts and collaboratively generate solutions relevant to their unique student population.

Learning Objectives: (1) Develop an understanding of the importance of exposing rural students to college and careers early and often. (2) Explore essential skills needed to address the disparity in equity and access experienced by rural students. (3) Generate relevant solutions to combat barriers unique to rural students.

Speakers:

Melissa Burks Smith, Mentoring Coordinator, K20 Center/University of Oklahoma

Shelby Blackwood, Professional Development Coordinator, K20 Center/University of Oklahoma

3:30 pm – 4:00 pm **Networking Break and Raffle in Exhibit Hall**

4:00 pm – 5:15 pm **Tuesday Afternoon Concurrent Sessions | Block 6**

97. #GEARUPWorks: Identifying High Impact Services and Dosage for Program Planning

Washington State GEAR UP builds on the legacy of the College and Career Readiness Evaluation Consortium (CCREC) in exploring program longitudinal data to understand what works. Using six years of student-level data, Washington State GEAR UP investigated the impact of GEAR UP services on student postsecondary enrollment.

This interactive session will present evaluation findings linking GEAR UP services to student outcomes and discuss how Washington State GEAR UP is using evaluation results to refine program service delivery. This session is for GEAR UP professionals who want to learn what GEAR UP services, and how much of a service, made a meaningful impact on student outcomes.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn which GEAR UP services and what service dosages had meaningful relationships with students' postsecondary outcomes. (2) Explore the implications of results from the evaluation and diagnostic and predictive analytics on GEAR UP programming. (3) Identify the benefits and needed components of a longitudinal student-level program evaluation.

Speakers:

Marcie Mills, MIT, GEAR UP Director, Washington Student Achievement Council

Shawn Bergman, Ph.D., Director of Research / K/C Distinguished Professor, Appalachian State University / Vela Institute

98. A Model for Successful Collaboration: Sustained Impact of the CSUF GEAR UP and AUHSD Partnership

In collaboration with GEAR UP, Anaheim Union High School District's Family and Community Engagement implemented successful high-impact practices that are maximized for sustainability after GEAR UP support is gone. There are various family engagement opportunities that are sustainable and implemented district-wide.

Our partnership has a shared leadership framework, which all district schools use, to help empower families to become co-creators, which has led to authentic engagement. In this session we take you through our journey and highlight key practices that led to our work around Family and Community Engagement.

Learning Objectives: (1) Participants will be able to identify and discuss district-wide systems that lead to sustainable Family and Community Engagement practices. (2) Participants will be able to understand how to align district vision and core values to the family and community engagement scope and sequence. (3) Participants will be able to examine the impact of shared leadership on parent empowerment and student success.

Speakers:

Adriana Badillo, Director, Center for Educational Partnerships, CSUF GEAR UP

Araceli Chavez, Family and Community Engagement Manager, Anaheim Union High School District

Carlos Hernandez, Director of Family and Community Engagement, Anaheim Union High School District

Michael Matsuda, The Superintendent of Anaheim Union High School District, Anaheim Union High School District

Robert Saldivar, Executive Director of Educational Services, Anaheim Union High School District

99. **Bypassing the Firewall: Creating a Cybersecurity Movement**

Region One GEAR UP: College Ready, Career Set! in partnership with South Texas College developed a cybersecurity pathway for cohort students to increase awareness of this global industry, which desperately lacks a skilled workforce.

Through this collaboration, students are immersed in this cyber movement through camps where they network with industry professionals, engage in hands-on activities such as hackathons, capture the flag competitions, and earn industry recognized certifications. Session participants will gain access to resources that will allow them to replicate these efforts and respond to the needs of this thriving industry.

Speakers:

Ernesto Gonzalez, Education Specialist, Region One Education Service Center

Jose Gonzalez, Chief Information Security Officer, South Texas College

100. **Climbing the “Ladder of Inference”: Utilizing Data to Build Scalable and Equitable GEAR UP Programs**

This interactive session will showcase the Ladders of Inference (LOI) framework, an effective tool for data inquiry, objectivity, and equitable interpretation.

Participants will develop their own LOI to examine their data from both a narrow and wider lens. Long Beach GEAR UP and Study Smart Tutors will share how they utilized this framework when designing evidence-based push-in, afterschool, and individualized interventions.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand potential challenges when examining multiple data sets. (2) Develop plans for integrating a ladder of inference framework to create and deliver GEAR UP programming. (3) Examine biases that may exist within our data.

Speakers:

Dominica J. Scibetta, Project Director, Long Beach GEAR UP

Jordan Vargas, Director of Education, Study Smart Tutors, Inc.

101. **Create a GEAR UP Alumni Advisory Committee Today!**

The best way to measure how students feel about their GEAR UP experience is to simply ask – but that can be easier said than done. By creating an Alumni Advisory Committee, we can ask the most invested and motivated former participants what their experience was like and how we should improve our programming.

In this interactive workshop, learn how VT GEAR UP was able to not only keep students engaged beyond their seventh year, but foster a group who has paved the way for meaningful student involvement that has improved our programming – and learn how you can too!

Learning Objectives: (1) Build a toolkit for continuing alumni engagement. (2) Identify realistic objectives for a successful committee. (3) Create an action plan on how to get started.

Speakers:

Adriana Eldred, Outreach and Communications Specialist, Vermont Student Assistance Corporation

Jahirah Thurber, GEAR UP Social Media Intern, Vermont State GEAR UP

102. **Discussion Lab: Coordinator Q&A**

*Discussion Labs are an opportunity to share, learn, and problem-solve together. **Come ready to participate!***

Do you lead or oversee a GEAR UP program at one or more school sites? Coordinators have one of the most challenging jobs in GEAR UP, responsible for developing and/or delivering activities to students and families, obtaining school and administrator buy-in, collecting data, and much more.

Whether it's your first year with GEAR UP or you're a seasoned pro, join this discussion-based session to meet other GEAR UP professionals in similar roles. Share your successes, get support with challenges, and grow your network with coordinators across the country.

Speakers:

Dana Beck, Director of Practice, NCCEP

Jamie Porter, GEAR UP Virginia Regional Manager, State Council of Higher Education

Sarabeth Dreis, Regional Manager, GEAR UP Virginia

103. Get On-Board! Building Strong GEAR UP Teams

Get On-Board! Building Strong GEAR UP Teams is a session to help program administrators and leaders design a framework and system for onboarding GEAR UP staff to build a strong unified team culture.

Onboarding is important to strong teams with high retention: it acclimates staff to their role, provides an overview of GEAR UP and organizational culture, and begins to underscore the importance of their role.

Speakers:

April Alcaraz, Director, GEAR UP, School District of Philadelphia

Katherine Cappetta, GEAR UP Assistant Director, School District of Philadelphia

Latisha Avery, GEAR UP Program Manager, School District of Philadelphia

Nisser Jimenez-Figueroa, Program Manager, GEAR UP Philadelphia, School District of Philadelphia

104. Igniting Social Mobility: Supporting First-Generation and Low-Income Students with AI

Can emerging technology like AI help more first-generation college students navigate the path to graduation? In this session, participants will experiment with the use of the Comet Chatbot developed by Palomar College with Mainstay.

Join us for this panel presentation: Joe LeDesma, GEAR UP Project Director and President of Administrative Association, will inform attendees about Palomar's collaborative use of the chatbot on the college website and the text bot that interacts with GEAR UP students. Rebecca Hebert, Associate Partnership Director at Mainstay, will help attendees learn about the role artificially intelligent (AI)-enabled chatbots and texting can play in providing first-generation students with on-demand support throughout the admissions and enrollment process as well as throughout the transition to college and through the first year of college.

Learning Objectives: (1) Explore the ways in which GEAR UP and Palomar College are using AI chatbots to serve first-generation students through the college application, FAFSA, and enrollment processes. (2) Learn how to use collaborative relationships (high school, college, financial aid agency) to leverage the power of GEAR UP to serve students through AI and other emerging technologies in ways that maximize engagement for students and families. (3) Discover current research and best practice for using AI effectively and discuss potential paths forward for future initiatives to more effectively serve GEAR UP students.

Speakers:

Rebecca L. Hebert, Associate Director of Partnerships, Mainstay

Joe LeDesma, Program Director, Palomar College

105. Learner Experience Design: Equipping Students for College & Career through Interactive Storytelling

In this session, participants will engage with fundamental concepts from learning experience design and how to harness those tools using interactive storytelling. Several resources developed by the K20 Center will be showcased, and attendees will explore how interactive storytelling benefits learners across grades and content areas.

Participants will have the opportunity to collaboratively create an interactive story by utilizing the design thinking process. Finally, this session will explore LXD and interactive storytelling's applications to GEAR UP goals.

Learning Objectives: (1) Reflect on the values of interactive story to maximize engagement. (2) Identify learner experience design strategies for implementing interactive storytelling into your GEAR UP program. (3) Explore Twine as a tool for interactive storytelling.

Speakers:

Dewey Hulsey, Web Developer UI/UX Designer, K20 Center - The University of Oklahoma
Shayna Pond, Adult Learning Designer, K20 Center - The University of Oklahoma
William Jay Markham, Mentoring Coordinator, K20 Center - The University of Oklahoma

106. Mitigating the Impact of Trauma on the Postsecondary Application and Entry Process

Multiple studies indicate that childhood trauma has a lasting effect on physical health and executive functioning. Deficits in executive functioning can, in turn, be obstacles to the postsecondary entry process.

In this session, we will “connect the dots” between research on trauma and how it can interrupt the postsecondary entry process. We'll examine how traumatic experiences impact students at three phases of the postsecondary process: application, financing, and enrollment. Each section will include lecture, large group sharing, and small group discussion. Handouts will include templates to plan for systemic change at the school, classroom, classroom/group, and individual level.

Learning Objectives: (1) Apply existing research on the impact of trauma to the 3 phases of the postsecondary entry process. (2) Develop practices that create an environment for student disclosure. (3) Plan for systemic change.

Speakers:

Weston Calbreath, Assistant Director, Appalachian State University-GEAR UP
Mary Cothren, GEAR UP Coordinator, Clay County Schools
Jody Freeman, GEAR UP Coordinator, Wilkes County Schools

107. National GEAR UP Week the NCCEP Way (Hint: #GEARUPworks)

We know that #GEARUPworks; we see it in our communities and schools every day. So, if it's working, why aren't more leaders supporting it?

Enter: National GEAR UP Week, the GEAR UP community's week of advocacy.

The biggest misconception about advocacy is that it simply means calling your Member of Congress. Advocacy is tweeting out photos from college visits. Advocacy is hosting an event to celebrate the success of your GEAR UP students. Advocacy is informing leaders that GEAR UP is important to your community. Advocacy is celebrating National GEAR UP Week!

Attend this session to learn more about how to align your GEAR UP Week programming with national advocacy efforts and get your leaders (locally and nationally) to become GEAR UP champions. This session is for anyone planning to celebrate National GEAR UP Week.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify ways to celebrate GEAR UP in your communities. (2) Explore techniques to share the #GEARUPworks message. (3) Align your local programming to the national event.

Speakers:

Emily Crawford, Director of Government Relations, NCCEP

Alexandra Loreta Alder, Communications Manager, Northern Arizona University GEAR UP

108. National Student Clearinghouse – What’s New?

The Clearinghouse is your go to source to learn about your students’ postsecondary pathways, but the Clearinghouse offers much more.

In this session, you’ll learn about important resources like the Clearinghouse’s Research Center and their publications, the DEI Data Lab, customizable research and reporting, StudentTracker, and a sneak peak into StudentTracker 3.0.

Speakers:

Josh Leake, Manager, Research Operations, National Student Clearinghouse

Michele Gralak, Senior Product Manager, Learner Insights, National Student Clearinghouse

109. Passion-Based Learning: Connecting Gen Z “Sneaker Heads” to Innovative Careers of the Future

From design and engineering, to metaverse fashion and sports medicine, the sneaker industry is a pathway to innovative business, creative, and STEAM careers. In this highly engaging session, you will learn about passion-based learning, explore careers of the future at companies like Nike, and experience a Sneaker Lab demo.

Your Gen Z students will be equipped to connect the dots between their passions, Career & Technical Education (CTE) pathways, and their future careers. This session will primarily be a facilitated dialogue followed by participant engagement.

Learning Objectives: (1) Understand the innovative jobs of the future in tech, gaming, fashion, and more. (2) Learn about GEAR UP programming that blends project-based learning, career exploration, and STEAM into the classrooms with executives and innovators from Nike. (3) Excite students about the connection between CTE pathways, college & career readiness, and their dream careers.

Speakers:

Nathan Jenkins, Family & Financial Advocate, DeSoto ISD

Gabrian King, Site Coordinator, DeSoto ISD

Erica Molett, CEO, Expansion Solutions

110. Ready, Set, Apply: A Hands-On Common App Workshop (Part 2)

Applying to college, particularly for first-generation and low-income students, can feel daunting. But it doesn’t have to.

Would you like to better understand the student experience of applying to college using the Common App? Want to explore the data and tools available to counselors, teachers, and advisors using Common App’s recommender system?

This interactive session will walk participants through the ins and outs of the Common App application and recommender systems, from accessing fee waivers to submitting letters of recommendation. We’ll review Common App Ready and other free resources that provide tips to help students complete their college applications.

After attending this session, you'll feel ready to use Common App to advise and celebrate students' postsecondary journey. Come with your laptop and questions.

Speakers:

Meredith Lombardi, Director, Education and Training, Common App

Michaela Alcorn, Manager, Counselor Engagement, Common App

April Bell, Director of Constituent Relations, NCCEP

111. Recreating School Culture through GEAR UP: A Local and Holistic Approach to Postsecondary Access

GEAR UP is most successful when administrators are committed to the mission, goals, and objectives of the program; communicate that commitment to faculty and staff; and ensure their schools have the college and career resources, support, and services to be successful.

In this interactive session, learn how district leaders in Johnson County and Polk County, Tennessee shifted the focus of their districts, students, and families beyond high school graduation by drastically expanding dual enrollment / dual credit courses, establishing community-based college steering committees, increasing CTE programs and business partnerships, investing in technology and equipment, and redesigning curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of today's students.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify strategies and resources that enhance a postsecondary-going culture. (2) Discuss best practices for school leaders to create buy-in and collaboration from the faculty and community. (3) Develop a plan to address the greatest barriers to college access in schools.

Speakers:

Duane Gregg, Project Director, GEAR UP TN, Tennessee Higher Education Commission

Jason Bell, Secondary Supervisor, Polk County Schools

Ryan Goodman, CTE Director, Polk County Schools

Stephen Long, Supervisor of 7-12 Curriculum & Instruction, Johnson County Schools

112. STEM Toolkit SnAPPshot: Mobile App Development for Career Readiness

In this hands-on workshop, learn how you can use the GEAR UP STEM Toolkit to bring mobile app development to any classroom. Participants will experience how to turn ideas into real products and BYOA – Build Your Own App.

Learn how to empower students while you participate in a rapid-fire round of design-thinking and mobile app development. Alefya Master, an educator turned entrepreneur, and Pennsylvania GEAR UP Manager Amber Kelly will show you how to integrate STEM standards and 21st Century Skills for career readiness in ANY classroom while still teaching your current content and curriculum.

Speakers:

Alefya Master, Founder & CEO, MAD-learn

Amber Kelly, PA State GEAR UP Program Manager, GEAR UP

Gregg Stone, Director of Curriculum & Implementation, MAD-learn

113. We've Played the Game of Life. Now What?

In this experiential learning session, participants explore how a Game of Life event can promote a college and career culture and the impact on students and their community. They explore booths through the eyes of students, then reflect on the possible outcomes.

First-hand accounts will be presented from participating school and community members as they share their thoughts on the benefits of the event and how they can continue support of the school

and students. Finally, participants will discuss what the possible next steps could be for the students, schools, and community to continue the momentum after the event.

Learning Objectives: (1) Explore how the Game of Life event promotes a college and career culture. (2) Experience a modified version of the Game of Life. (3) Reflect on the impact the Game of Life event has on students and the surrounding community.

Speakers:

Shelby Blackwood, Professional Development Coordinator, K20 Center/University of Oklahoma

Melissa Burks Smith, Mentoring Coordinator, K20 Center/University of Oklahoma

114. “Surviving College”: A Hip Hop Edu’tainment Stageplay Bridging the Cultural Gap

Engagement has been the most significant challenge to post-pandemic college preparation. Through an interactive stageplay, you’ll see why edu’tainment approaches produce significant improvements in student success and college preparation. Students who are engaged, genuinely interested, and see cultural relevance and connection to their everyday experiences show up proactive about learning and taking action.

Conversely, students who cannot bridge the gap between core educational content and its relevance to their own experiences, goals, culture, and identity continue to underperform, despite the overwhelming availability of educational resources, tutorials, and empowerment speakers.

Learning Objectives: (1) Use proven cultural engagement tools like social media & pop culture to make college prep relevant, engaging, and interesting. (2) Facilitate student voice to increase buy-in. (3) Explore edu'tainment, such as incorporating TikToks, hip hop, and culturally relevant pedagogy (as well as Karl Kapp’s “gamification of learning” theory), which offers research-based evidence supporting higher engagement and improved college preparation amongst GEAR UP participants.

Speakers:

David Horne, Co-Founder, Genius Potential Inc

Bertrand Gervais, Co-Founder, Genius Potential Inc.

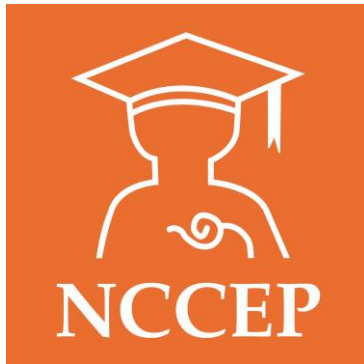
Tenya Moravec, Associate Director, University of Washington GEAR UP

Wednesday | July 19

7:00 am – 5:00 pm **Conference Registration & Information Booth Open**

7:30 am – 8:45 am **Networking Breakfast**

9:00 am – 10:15 am **Morning Plenary: 2023 Youth Leadership Summit Presentation**



Betty Paugh Ortiz, Vice President of Programs, NCCEP

During the conference, 150 students were gathered to gain leadership skills, explore the issues that affect them most, and build a national community among #GEARUPworks students.

In this morning plenary, we will hear from these students on what they discussed over the last two days. How do our students see the future? What are their priorities and concerns? How can we support them as they navigate the world today?

Join us as we welcome these leaders to the stage!

10:45 am – 12:00 pm **Wednesday Morning Concurrent Sessions | Block 7**

115. Collecting and Using Equity-Focused Data to Inform Systemic Change: Understanding Progress

How do you monitor whether positive systemic shifts in college-going culture and educator data literacy on campuses have occurred? To get to the answer, this session will provide and engage you in the School Equity Assessment Rubric tool that was developed and implemented in 34 schools across California. The tool is used to assess and monitor instructional, cultural, and collaboration indicators with an equity lens to understand systems change and build school-centered data literacy.

Come engage with us in the tool through think-pair-share activities, data guessing, and small and whole group discussions. We will provide a snapshot of the data this tool provides and demonstrate how data from this tool can inform evaluation and continuous improvement across various levels of the system (GEAR UP program level, regional level, district level, and school level). Join us to reflect on ways this tool or tools like this can promote equity-centered data literacy in your program.

Learning Objectives: (1) Engage with a concrete tool to assess and monitor instructional, cultural, and collaboration indicators with an equity lens to understand systems change and build site-based data literacy. (2) Unpack a snapshot of the data this tool provides to inform evaluation and continuous improvement across various levels of the system (GEAR UP level, regional level, district level, school level). (3) Reflect on ways this tool or tools like this can promote equity-based data literacy.

Speakers:

Ashley Boal, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate, WestEd

Ann Trescott, Ph.D., CA GEAR UP Assistant Director, California GEAR UP

116. Desarrollando Una Cultura de Familia/Cultivating a Welcoming Family Culture

Sustainability is a key component in defining the success not only of our campus family program, but also of our community. Establishing a sustainable program for our future generations takes several key factors. Making connections with our families, conveying the proper messaging to all stakeholders, and networking with community partners are all deciding factors in this process.

In this interactive session, participants will engage through discussion as presenters share practical strategies for establishing a sustainable community program that includes collaborations between schools and parent leaders.

Learning Objectives: (1) Engage in open discussion on the importance of establishing a sustainable family and community program. (2) Strategize ways of improving the methods of a program. (3) Learn to reinforce the importance of building connections with families.

Speakers:

Claudia Zebadua, GEAR UP Facilitator, Region One GEAR UP: College Now-Career Connected!

Nancy Ramirez, GEAR UP Facilitator, Region One GEAR UP: College Now-Career Connected!

Francisco J. Palacios Jr., GEAR UP Facilitator, Region One GEAR UP: College Now-Career Connected!

117. Discussion Lab: Making Time for Reflection

*Discussion Labs are an opportunity to share, learn, and problem-solve together. **Come ready to participate!***

After three days of sharing and learning new ideas, come make your plan to turn “one day” into “day one”. We’ll start by reminding ourselves of why we do our work, followed by a reflection on what we’ve learned at the conference. Finally, we’ll map out our goals to put our learning into action after we’ve returned home.

All roles and experience levels welcome!

Speakers:

Dana Beck, Director of Practice, NCCEP

Kelly Pappas, Director of Career & College Clubs, NCCEP

118. Disrupting Traditional Education by Centering Student Voice and Civic Engagement

Learn how AUHSD has disrupted traditional education by centering student voice and civic engagement to enhance 21st century skills and technical skills. Student voice and civic engagement equips students to be aware of their aspirations, identify life goals, and work with others to obtain further skills and knowledge that prepare them for meaningful, productive lives.

Empowering students to use their voice and take action in their community helps build students’ civic identities and workplace skills which is the ultimate preparation for college, career, and life.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify instructional shifts that center student voice and civic engagement and enhance 21st century and technical skills. (2) Understand how student voice and civic engagement prepares students for college, career, and life success. (3) Understand how student voice and civic engagement is a key driver in increasing student achievement and engagement.

Speakers:

Adilene Ayala, Academic Coordinator, CSUF GEAR UP
Amy Kwon, Director of Innovative Programs and Instructional Systems, Anaheim Union High School District
Diana Fujimoto, Coordinator of Professional Learning, Anaheim Union High School District
Reuben Patino, Curriculum Specialist for Education Technology and Social Science, Anaheim Union High School District
Tim Nguyen, CSUF GEAR UP GEAR UP

119. Generation Z: Technology and the Brain

Generation Z (aka “iGen”, aka “zoomers”) were born in the late 1990s through 2012; they are the most diverse generation and have lived almost their entire lives in a digital era. Their childhood was also spent, in some part, in the COVID lockdown. This generation is in our classrooms and is the future of our society.

In this interactive session, participants will identify the characteristics that define Generation Z, the role that technology has played in defining them, and what this means for the adults that interact with them. Participants can expect to dive into data, have engaged discussions, and strategize on how to support their learning and development.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify the characteristics that define Generation Z and how they are different from previous generations. (2) Discuss the role that technology is playing in Generation Z’s social and brain development. (3) Explore strategies to re-engage students in meaningful social and academic situations.

Speakers:

Kelli Taylor, Educator Outreach Coach, The University of Texas at Austin IPSI
Candy Vera, Educator Outreach Coach, University of Texas at Austin IPSI
Cathy Cantrell, Senior Project Manager, University of Texas at Austin IPSI

120. START Augmented Reality Campus Tours

START (Students Taking Augmented Reality Tours) is an augmented reality application that provides immersive tours of participating colleges and universities. Students and parents learn about college through a fun, gamified approach. The app features 3D maps, live-action videos, engaging dialogue, and colorful items and badges.

In this session, we will explore START and demonstrate how to facilitate self-guided campus tours. We will also discuss how to combine the app with classroom activities to enhance student experience.

Speakers:

William Thompson, Instructional Game Designer, K20 Center at the University of Oklahoma
Amber Stokes, Student Experience Coordinator, K20 Center at the University of Oklahoma
Laura Halstied, Social Studies Curriculum Writer, K20 Center at the University of Oklahoma
Braden Roper, Technical Lead, K20 Center at the University of Oklahoma

121. Strengthening Student Employability with Free Digital SEL Resources

Today’s workforce demands employees with the ability to both master job skills and to navigate interpersonal and social dynamics. Whether coping with job stress, resolving interoffice conflict, or building positive team culture, social and emotional intelligence is pivotal for GEAR UP students to succeed in the modern economy.

EXCEL: In this session, attendees will learn how to utilize digital resources from the EVERFI platform to build a virtual training ground for GEAR UP students to sharpen their SEL skills.

PROVE: EVERFI delivers comprehensive and evidence-informed digital programs, free of charge so GEAR UP can equip students with real-world skills for success beyond the classroom. Attendees will learn how EVERFI's course data can play a pivotal role in informing their own grants ongoing SEL efforts.

MOBILIZE: Attendees will have an opportunity to explore the EVERFI platform, hear from GEAR UP members who are currently implementing EVERFI in their grants, and will be provided with the opportunity to connect with their local implementation specialists to cater programs to their current grant needs.

Learning Objectives: (1) Examine the changing nature of the workforce and the role soft-skills have in employability and career success. (2) Strategize on how to use SEL resources aimed at increasing student outcomes. (3) Learn how technology can empower and engage students in the development of SEL skills.

Speakers:

Kassandra Soulis, Senior Implementation Specialist, EVERFI from Blackbaud
Lance Burbank, Director of Implementation, EVERFI from Blackbaud

122. Use Student Data to Drive Student Success: Building a Strategy for Continuous Improvement

GEAR UP programs provide multiple strategies and annual objectives to help students build their postsecondary plans. Many times, it's challenging for school staff to keep up with the status of all the objectives in implementing their program.

In this session, learn strategies to monitor program implementation and use student data to drive student success using CoPilot data management system. Through access to timely student data, coordinated communication systems, and regular planning sessions, we are building systems to support student-centered success. In this session, we will help you identify key program data points, establish structured view cycles, and draft a dashboard to monitor program status and identify student interactions.

Learning Objectives: (1) Identify key timely student data points which drive student success. (2) Develop a coordinated communication strategy to aid in collaborations between staff (counselors, advisors, GEAR UP administrators, etc.) in assisting students with postsecondary planning. (3) Build a student-centered dashboard to support assessing program impact and identify students for interventions.

Speakers:

Logan Minshew, Ed.D., Director of Counseling, Advising, and Student Supports, College, Career & Military Preparation Division, Office of School Programs, Texas Education Agency
Sarah Villarreal, Customer Success Manager, College Possible
Stephanie Dotson, College & Career Readiness Advisor, CFES Brilliant Pathways
Alisha Broom, College & Career Readiness Advisor, C.E. King High School

123. Virtual APPrenticeships

As a company with a global team and business model, MAD-learn has made virtual internships available to students around the world. We believe in connecting students to learn from each other, expand their view of the modern workplace and acquire new skills for future careers and employability.

In this session, participants will learn how to collaborate and partner with community stakeholders and businesses to develop their own virtual internship program.

Learning Objectives: (1) Learn how a virtual internship program works, including how to run and manage it. (2) Acquire outreach strategies for partnerships with community organizations, businesses and stakeholders. (3) Create an outline for your own virtual internship program.

Speakers:

Alefiya Master, Founder & CEO, MAD-learn

Doreen Frempong-Baah, Project Manager/Marketing Coordinator, MAD-learn

Traci Zamor, Specialist/Counselor- Grant A, GEAR UP

124. State Directors' Meeting

This peer-to-peer meeting is entirely led and organized by GEAR UP State Directors. Due to space constraints, this meeting will be limited to only a GEAR UP Project Director and/or Principal Investigator from each grant's fiscal agent (no guests).

125. Partnership Directors' Meeting

This peer-to-peer meeting is entirely led and organized by GEAR UP Partnership Directors. Due to space constraints, this meeting will be limited to only a GEAR UP Project Director and/or Principal Investigator from each grant's fiscal agent (no guests).

12:15 pm – 1:00 pm **Closing Lunch and Adjournment**



**National Council for Community
and Education Partnerships**

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