

## Beginning Again...

New York State's GEAR UP sites continued to challenge and inspire students throughout the winter and spring of 2008 with a wide variety of activities. Rochester Institute of Technology's NYGEAR UP students made a video about the attractions their city holds for tourists; St. John's University GEAR UP held a Youth Leadership Conference; and Yonkers City School District NYGEAR UP invited professionals in a number of different careers to speak to students during a Career Day. CUNY MGI GEAR UP students faced off in a math team competition, while Syracuse University NYGEAR UP students spent a day at the SUNY Upstate Medical University learning about careers in health care.

Even after the end of school, GEAR UP events occupied students during the summer. Rising sophomores from the City School District of Albany visited colleges in New York's north country, while SUNY Jamestown Community College held an "Exploring College Options" day on its campus. SUNY Binghamton University GEAR UP earned local media attention during a "Sidewalk Stories" event that raised money for cancer research.

These activities, along with many others that took place during the winter and spring of 2008, are featured in this issue. As a new school year opens, and the warm air of summer is gradually replaced by the coolness of fall, GEAR UP programs around the state will help to prepare students for the year ahead and inspire them to achieve and pursue their dreams.

— Susan Nesbitt Perez  
Vice President, Outreach Programs and Financial Aid  
Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities



Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) is a federal grant program that awards grants to states or to local partnerships consisting of at least one college or university, at least one low-income middle school and one high school, and a minimum of two other partners (such as community organizations or businesses). Each GEAR UP partnership provides services to a cohort of students at high-need schools, beginning no later than grade 7, and follows these students through high school. Services may include: academic preparation; tutoring and mentoring; admissions and financial aid awareness activities for students and parents; college visits; career awareness; and professional development for staff.

In 2005, New York State received its second federal GEAR UP grant, called "NYGEAR UP II." This new grant followed on the heels of the 1999-2005 GEAR UP grant, and is again administered by NYSHESC. After a competitive process, NYSHESC awarded its NYGEAR UP funds to 11 community partnerships. In September 2005, these partnerships began providing services to a cohort of 7,285 students. These students, in grade 9 in academic year 2007, will be followed through 2011 (contingent on federal funding).

The federal government also awarded six-year grants directly to five community partnerships in 2005. These "Federal GEAR UP" partnerships began providing services to more than 5,000 students in grades 6 or 7. In 2006, three additional partnerships received six-year federal GEAR UP grants to serve an additional 4,600 students in grades 6 or 7. Most recently, in the 2008 competition, two partnerships in the state were awarded new six-year grants. See pages 19-20 for a list of GEAR UP programs and contacts in New York State.

A group of key partners in the state's NYGEAR UP program provides additional services to GEAR UP in New York State. These "Sector" partners include: the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (CICU), the Association of Proprietary Colleges (APC), City University of New York (CUNY), State University of New York (SUNY), the College Board, and the New York State Financial Aid Administrators Association (NYSFAAA).

*In Gear II NY Alert* newsletter is published by the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities, a partner in NYGEAR UP, New York State's GEAR UP program. The editors have made every effort to ensure accuracy; errors or omissions are unintentional.

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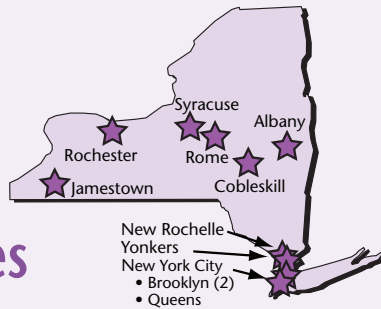
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# Sharing Ideas and Successes.

## The 11 NYGEAR UP Sites



### City School District of Albany (CSDA)

#### ► clcu College Quest to Northern New York Colleges and Universities June 30 – July 2, 2008

**Location:** Clarkson University, Paul Smith's College, St. Lawrence University, Lake Placid Olympic Museum

**Participants:** 28 rising 10th grade Albany HS NYGEAR UP students, 8 teachers and staff, 1 administrator, 2 Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (clcu) staff

**Purpose:** To provide an opportunity for CSDA NYGEAR UP students to visit college campuses, with the hope that the visits will inspire them to prepare for post-secondary education.

#### Agenda:

##### Day 1

- 7:00 – 10:00 am: Travel to Olympic Center, Lake Placid, NY
- 10:00 – 10:30 am: Olympic Museum visit
- 10:30 am – 12:45 pm: Olympic Center guided tour and lunch
- 12:45 – 3:00 pm: Travel to St. Lawrence University, Canton, NY
- 3:00 – 6:30 pm: St. Lawrence University visit and dinner
- 6:45 – 8:00 pm: Travel to Paul Smith's College, Paul Smiths, NY
- 8:00 – 8:45 pm: Check in and welcome at Paul Smith's College
- 8:45 – 9:30 pm: Team meetings
- 10:30 pm: Lights out

##### Day 2

- 7:00 – 8:00 am: Breakfast and team meetings
- 8:00 – 8:45 am: Welcome
- 8:45 – 9:45 am: Tour of campus
- 9:45 – 10:55 am: Library activity
- 11:00 – 11:45 am: Lunch and team meetings
- 11:45 am – 1:00 pm: Visit Visitor Interactive Center Bird of Prey show and Butterfly House
- 1:00 – 2:10 pm: Biodiversity class with Professor Curt Stager
- 2:10 – 2:30 pm: Prepare for hike
- 2:30 – 4:30 pm: Guided hike

- 4:30 – 6:45 pm: Dinner and team meetings
- 6:45 – 9:00 pm: Team Challenge presentations
- 9:00 – 9:45 pm: Bonfire at Lower St. Regis Lake
- 10:30 pm: Lights out; chaperone meeting

##### Day 3

- 7:00 – 8:00 am: Breakfast and team meetings
- 8:00 – 9:00 am: Pack, load bus, and collect room keys
- 9:00 – 10:30 am: Depart and travel to Clarkson University, Potsdam, NY
- 10:30 am – 2:00 pm: Clarkson University visit
- 2:00 – 6:30 pm: Travel; present Team Challenge posters
- 6:30 pm: Arrive Albany, NY

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Susan Nesbitt Perez, Vice President, Outreach and Financial Aid, clcu; Jennifer Lewis, Assistant Director, Outreach Program Services, clcu; Brenda Mahone, Albany HS South House Principal; Rhoda Faulkner, CSDA Security Officer; Josh Furman, CSDA Building Substitute; Sonji Greenaway, CSDA Library Media Specialist; Lionel Harris, CSDA Home School Coordinator; Therese Joyce, Harriet Gibbons HS Social Worker; Sonia Spence, CSDA Building Substitute; Thomas Vacanti, Albany HS Science Teacher; Tanya Whitehead, Home School Coordinator

#### ► Applebee's Flapjack Fundraiser March 8, 2008, 8:00 am – 11:00 am

**Location:** Applebee's, East Greenbush, NY

**Participants:** 10 NYGEAR UP students (as servers), 4 Harriet Gibbons HS staff, community members

**Purpose:** To raise money for 12 students to travel to Atlanta, GA to visit historically black colleges and universities.

*The students raised \$1,200 hosting and serving flapjack breakfasts to restaurant patrons.*

#### ► Career Exploration Workshop March 18, 2008 and May 1, 2008

**Location:** Albany HS, Albany, NY

**Participants:** 60 9th grade Albany HS seminar students on March 18, and 56 9th grade Albany HS seminar students on May 1

**Purpose:** To allow students to explore careers through [www.careercruising.com](http://www.careercruising.com). Students were assessed and then matched up with a career based on the results of that assessment.

#### Agenda:

- Students set up accounts at [www.careercruising.com](http://www.careercruising.com)
- Answer a series of career interest questions
- Discover what careers might interest them

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Noah Simon, Assistant Director, Career Services, SUNY University at Albany

*This workshop offered students insight into the kinds of work they might pursue; students enjoyed seeing how their interests matched up with particular careers.*

#### Business Sales Career Speaker

March 24 and 25, 2008  
May 1 and 2, 2008

**Location:** Albany HS

**Participants:** 9th grade Albany HS freshman seminar classes: 57 students on March 24; 41 students on March 25; 52 students on May 1, and 61 students on May 2

**Purpose:** To allow students to hear a working professional describe his career and work ethic.

#### Agenda:

- Speaker, a sales manager at an insurance company, had students introduce themselves and asked them about their career aspirations, then if their GPAs matched their ambitions
- Group then discussed the book *8 to Be Great: The 8 Traits That Lead to Great Success* by Richard St. John. The book is based on interviews with successful individuals and analyzes factors that led to their success

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Warren Mackey, Sales Manager, Combined Life Insurance, Latham, NY

*Students learned about how to excel and achieve their goals, and enjoyed the stories Mr. Mackey told about himself and his work.*

#### Additional Activities

#### ► Classroom College Quest/Financial Knowledge Workshop

On March 10, 2008, 4 Albany HS freshman seminar classes participated in a Classroom College Quest workshop with Kiersten Hall, clcu Assistant Director of Outreach Programs, and a Financial Knowledge Workshop with Timothy Strong from SEFCU Federal Credit Union.

#### ► Presentation on Finding a Career

On April 28 and 29, Kelly Mooney and Renee Belardo of Bryant & Stratton College gave a presentation to NYGEAR UP students about finding a career.

## CUNY Brooklyn College Community Partnership (BCCP)

### ► CUNY Brooklyn College Visit March 25, 2008

**Location:** Woody Tanger Auditorium, CUNY Brooklyn College Library; CUNY Brooklyn College Art Lab (BCAL); Roosevelt Hall Extension, CUNY Brooklyn College

**Participants:** 19 9th grade NYGEAR UP students, 2 NYGEAR UP staff, 1 CUNY Brooklyn College admissions staff, 2 CUNY Brooklyn College teaching artists, 4 CUNY Brooklyn College students

**Purpose:** To introduce students to the college admissions process, campus life, and artistic pursuits that can lead to various career opportunities.

#### Agenda:

- 10:00 – 11:00 am: Presentation by CUNY Brooklyn College staff and students
- 11:30 am – 12:15 pm: Campus tour
- 12:15 – 12:45 pm: Lunch on campus
- 12:45 – 1:45 pm: Art workshops

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Denise Paige, BCAL Site Director, CUNY Brooklyn College; Derrick Rada, Admissions Counselor, CUNY Brooklyn College

*Students completed a survey following their visit, and their feedback was positive. They also asked for other opportunities to visit the CUNY Brooklyn College campus. The teaching artists volunteered to participate in this event, and the students enjoyed interacting with all of the adults.*

### ► SUNY Study Skills Workshop April 9, 2008

**Location:** 3rd Floor Advisory Classroom, Bushwick HS Campus, Brooklyn, NY

**Participants:** 15 9th grade NYGEAR UP students, 1 BCCP staff, 1 SUNY GEAR UP outreach manager

**Purpose:** To introduce students to various study skills, including how to study effectively, take notes, organize notes, and form study groups.

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Kwasi Fenteng, SUNY GEAR UP Outreach Manager; Juliet Manragh, NYGEAR UP Staff Member, BCCP

*Students offered positive feedback, and the collaborative effort among the participants made this event a success.*

### ► SUNY Maritime College Visit April 30, 2008

**Location:** SUNY Maritime College, Throggs Neck, NY

**Participants:** 24 NYGEAR UP students, 1 NYGEAR UP staff, 1 SUNY GEAR UP outreach manager, 1 SUNY Maritime College professor, 1 SUNY Maritime College admissions counselor

**Purpose:** To introduce students to an atypical college that focuses on engineering, business, science, and maritime transportation, with a structured cadet life for undergraduates and an emphasis on the marine environment.

#### Agenda:

- 10:00 – 11:30 am: Introduction and presentation on SUNY Maritime College
- 11:30 am – 12:30 pm: College tour
- 12:30 – 1:00 pm: Lunch
- 1:00 – 2:00 pm: Q & A

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Marie de Angelis, Curriculum Supervisor, Marine Environmental Science and Associate Professor of Oceanography, SUNY Maritime College; Elizabeth Fonham, SUNY Maritime Admissions Counselor

*Students were exposed to SUNY Maritime College's unique majors and academic programs not offered at other colleges. Hands-on interaction also made this event successful.*

#### Additional Activities

### ► New Jersey Nets vs. Indiana Pacers

On February 23, 2008, 20 NYGEAR UP students and staff members attended a professional basketball game.

### ► SUNY College at Old Westbury Visit

On March 6, 2008, 21 NYGEAR UP students visited the campus of SUNY College at Old Westbury.

### ► HIV/AIDS Prevention Workshop

On March 20, 2008, 25 NYGEAR UP students participated in a workshop about serious health issues affecting teenagers and their families.

### ► CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) Workshop

On April 7, 2008, 8 NYGEAR UP students were shown how to administer CPR.

### ► Gang Awareness Workshop

On February 12, 2008, 28 NYGEAR UP students discussed the negative consequences of participating in unproductive social groups.

### ► New York Mets vs. Arizona Diamondbacks

On June 11, 2008, 10 NYGEAR UP students attended a professional baseball game.

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## Long Island University (LIU)/Brooklyn

### ► Using the Internet for Research January 17, 2008, Noon – 2:00 pm

**Location:** Long Island University, Brooklyn, NY

**Participants:** 24 NYGEAR UP students, 1 teacher, 2 tutors, 2 mentors, 1 guidance counselor

*Long Island University/Brooklyn  
continued on page 4*



*At Paul Smith's College on July 1, 2008, a group photo of Albany HS NYGEAR UP students on the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities' (CICU) College Quest to northern New York.*

*Long Island University/Brooklyn  
continued from page 3*

**Purpose:** To offer students in the NYGEAR UP cohort a workshop on how to use the Internet to do research.

**Agenda:**

- Distributed manual on effective ways to use the Internet for research
- Students learn how to recognize and identify reliable and authoritative sites
- Students shown how to eliminate undocumented or unreliable sites

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Jennifer Radtke, Adjunct Instructor, English, LIU

*Students reported that this workshop and the printed manual, which was later distributed to all members of our NYGEAR UP cohort, will help them do Internet research. Many reported spending hours online looking up information only to discover that they hadn't found what they really needed. The tutors said that they wished they had copies of the manual when they were in high school.*

► **Workshop on Healthy Relationships**  
March 19, 2008

**Location:** Benjamin Banneker Academy Library

**Participants:** 19 NYGEAR UP students, 2 teachers, 4 NYGEAR UP mentors

**Purpose:** To inform students about how to identify the signs of an unhealthy relationship and how such relationships can interfere with their progress in school.

**Agenda:**

- Discuss how to identify an unhealthy relationship;
- How such a relationship interferes with academic progress;
- How young people can extricate themselves from such relationships and the resources that are available to assist them

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Kim Lopez, NYGEAR UP staff member

*Students found the workshop informative, while mentors admitted that they had not been aware of some of the issues raised. One student mentioned that he would pass the information presented on to a friend who was involved in a bad relationship. The workshop was well received by participants, and we plan to repeat it once a semester so that all the students in our NYGEAR UP cohort can attend.*

► **NYMentor Workshop**  
May 21, 2008, Noon – 2:00 pm

**Location:** Long Island University, Brooklyn, NY

**Participants:** 40 NYGEAR UP students, 2 teachers, 1 guidance counselor, 2 tutors, 2 mentors, 1 NYGEAR UP staff

**Purpose:** To introduce students to NYMentor ([www.nymmentor.com](http://www.nymmentor.com)), a comprehensive online college and career planning guide sponsored by NYSHESC.

**Agenda:**

- Students learned how to log on and create a NYMentor account
- Students learned how to find out about high school graduation requirements, college admissions requirements, and financial aid
- Lunch, with presentations by former NYGEAR UP students now in college

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Richard Nau, Counselor, HEOP/LIU; Caroline Acavedo, former NYGEAR UP student; Jessica Wicksman, former NYGEAR UP student

*Students found the workshop interesting and indicated that they would use their NYMentor accounts. The teachers and guidance counselor also thought that the workshop was useful in making their students more aware of the value of a college education.*

**Additional Activities**

► **Internet College Search**

On May 12, 2008, 30 Benjamin Banneker Academy students learned how to research colleges on the Internet.

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## New Rochelle City School District

► **Tour of SUNY College at Old Westbury**  
February 20, 2008

**Location:** SUNY College at Old Westbury

**Participants:** 22 NYGEAR UP students, 2 siblings, 2 parents, 1 NYGEAR UP project director

**Purpose:** To promote college awareness while introducing students to a college campus.

**Agenda:**

- Tour of campus
- Meeting with college students
- Workshops on admissions and financial aid
- Workshop on EOP guidelines
- Lunch on campus

*Students enjoyed the college campus and the lunch, and were really engaged in their conversations with SUNY College at Old Westbury students. Parents also appreciated the tour of a college surrounded by woods. For many of the NYGEAR UP students, this was their first experience visiting a college outside their immediate community, and they discovered that they have much in common with the students at the college.*

► **Financial Literacy Workshop**  
March 26, 2008

**Location:** New Rochelle HS, New Rochelle, NY

**Participants:** 14 New Rochelle HS NYGEAR UP students, 3 college students

**Purpose:** To help students learn more about financial terms, credit, interest rates, saving and loans for college, including federal student loan programs, the 529 education savings plan, and much more. One of our grant partners, Services, Education, Resources, (SER) of Westchester, Inc., commissioned two representatives from Commerce Bancorp to provide this finance workshop for students.

**Agenda:**

- PowerPoint presentation
- Distribution of handouts by representatives of Commerce Bancorp
- Q & A session

*This was a good introduction to the world of finance. Although the students were not familiar with many financial terms, they clearly were interested in information on this subject and asked many questions.*

*New Rochelle  
continued on page 6*



*Albany HS NYGEAR UP students visit the Lake Placid Olympic Center on June 30, 2008.*

## The EDGE Program at Union College

by Millie Lin,  
Yonkers City School District NYGEAR UP student

I am glad I chose to attend the EDGE Program at Union College in Schenectady, NY. I got to find out about a career that I was considering and also experienced many new things, such as living in a dorm, experiencing college life, and trying to work more as a team.

At EDGE I was exposed to many new things such as robotics, bioengineering, physics and making toys for disabled children. I learned how to build a circuit, and to create our own ideas to make toys for the disabled kids. When I first came to EDGE I was basically clueless. I didn't even know anything about bioengineering. I didn't have a clue about circuits and all of the wires that came along with them. This was my first time learning how to make things work using wires. I learned how to make a light bulb work and created a speaker, and connected wires to it to make the LED function. I also learned how to make a motor run using the simplest things. Honestly, it was quite a challenge.

I really enjoyed being exposed to new things such as physics, bioengineering and making toys for the kids, and also enjoyed meeting new people and adapting to a new environment. I've always wanted to live in a dorm and be away from home for a while. I really think the campus is nice and clean with all the trees around it.

Before I came here, I thought that we were going to have science courses and communication courses. I didn't expect that we would have to work in teams that often. In the beginning I didn't realize that teamwork is very important to engineering. Now I realize that most of the time as an engineer it requires teamwork to be successful. Even though I didn't expect to have these classes, I really did enjoy them. I was ready for the part when we had to build a toy.

My ideas for engineering haven't changed as a result of my participation. I still want to be an engineer, but maybe a different type of engineer, maybe something more about the body system types of engineering. I want to learn how diseases start and how to find ways to keep kids from becoming disabled. It isn't the kid's fault that they became disabled. So, I want to find ways to help future children have less chance of being disabled.

Since I had a chance to live in a dorm I learned many things about college. If you are in a smaller college and need help on a topic you can ask the professors for help and if you have any questions you can ask them too. In a large college when you have a question the professors have many other questions to answer and he/she may not have as much time to spend with you. In college life you aren't forced to do things such as going to class. You have more freedom and have to be responsible for yourself.

The interesting people that I've met are Professor

Almstead and Professor Hedrick. They are such cool professors. When you have a problem or question you can ask them and they will come to help. They are very nice and funny. They are such smart and caring professors. Professors Almstead and Hedrick showed us that it is better to have two professors than having one. They get along very well, and work great as a team (something they are trying to get us to do). I am really glad I met them and all the other teachers and counselors over here. They did a great job taking care of us, getting us the food we wanted and teaching us as much as they could in a short period of time.

When I go back home the thing I want to say is that it doesn't hurt to try to see if you really want to go into a major. When you take this chance to experience the major you think you are interested in or just plan to take, you learn whether you like it or not.

I am glad I came to EDGE because I met many new people, teachers and counselors. It was truly a good experience getting to live on campus and having a taste of college life. I don't regret coming here and next time I will take more chances like this. I am thankful to all the professors, teachers, counselors, and the guest speakers for giving their time to help and teach us. Also I am very grateful to all of the teachers and staff that helped me to get into this program.

## My University of Rochester Experience

by Shaquille Bent,  
Bronx Institute at CUNY Lehman  
College GEAR UP student

During my stay at the University of Rochester I learned how it felt to live on campus and see if I would like to live on campus when I attend college. I also attended a science class. It was a great experience because I had a chance to do many fun experiments and activities which I learned a lot from. While I was in class I felt like a real scientist; every day we had to wear lab coats and goggles while we dealt with dangerous equipment. The people I met were really friendly and nice. My roommate was friendly and we bonded well because we had a lot in common. The people from the dorm were nice, funny and we enjoyed the time we spent at the university. When I went to class I had a chance to meet other scientists and they told us what they did for a living. They also told us how they became scientists and what they had to do to get there in their lives. One thing that stood out to me was how advanced the lab was because there was so much technology that I had never seen before. I loved the trip and there was nothing that I didn't like.



### ► Parents Leadership Institute Conference

May 19, 2008, 9:00 am – 2:30 pm

**Location:** Reid Castle, Manhattanville College, Purchase, NY

**Participants:** More than 12 New Rochelle HS NYGEAR UP parents, about 12 New Rochelle CSD elementary and middle school parents

**Purpose:** To inspire and empower Hispanic/Latino parents to help their children achieve academic success.

#### Agenda:

- 9:00 – 10:00 am: Breakfast and welcome
- 10:00 am – Noon: Presentations by speakers
- Noon – 12:30 pm: Lunch
- 12:30 – 2:30 pm: Breakout sessions on topics ranging from elementary to college education

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Richard Berman, President, Manhattanville College; Maria Hinojosa, host, "Latino USA," NPR, and Senior Correspondent, "NOW," PBS; Martha Lopez-Hanratty, Director, Westchester County Office for Hispanic Affairs; Elba Montalvo, Executive Director, Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc.; Dinorah Olmos, New York City Coordinator, Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth

*All of the parents felt that they had learned something new, enjoyed the experience of being on a college campus, and appreciated hearing Hispanic speakers address them in their own language. They would like to have more opportunities to find out how to help their children in school, how the school system works, and how to become better advocates for their children.*

### Additional Activities

#### ► Preparing for the SATs

From March to June 2008, 15 NYGEAR UP students attended a 10-week course, conducted by Dr. Angela Campbell, Executive Director of Academic Pathways, designed to prepare them for the SATs.

#### ► College and Career Exploration Workshop

On May 14, 2008, in the New Rochelle HS library's computer lab, 23 NYGEAR UP students were introduced to the school's Career Center and career research sites.

## Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT)

### ► RIT NYGEAR UP After School Program/Comics

March 25 – May 6, 2008,  
3:15 – 4:30 pm

**Location:** Bioscience and Health Careers School at Franklin HS, Rochester, NY

**Participants:** 7 Bioscience and Health Careers School 9th grade students

**Purpose:** To introduce students to the methods, tools, and techniques used by professionals in the comic book industry.

#### Agenda:

- Presentation of techniques and tools of comedy and comics
- Students write or draw their own original comic story or adaptation
- Students learn about careers in the comic book industry, and the kind of college and career readiness preparation needed to pursue these careers

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Kenneth "Tiny" Glover, professional comic and storyteller; Kenneth Wheaton, professional comic books artist

### ► 2008 NYGEAR UP Conference Campus Tour

April 14, 2008

**Location:** Bryant & Stratton College, Nazareth College, Rochester Institute of Technology, St. John Fisher College, SUNY College at Brockport

**Participants:** 20 RIT NYGEAR UP students, 2 teachers joined 80 other NYGEAR UP students, parents and chaperones

**Purpose:** To offer students the opportunity to visit and explore some of the Rochester area's colleges and universities. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner were funded by NYGEAR UP sector partners: the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (cicu), State University of New York (SUNY), the College Board, and the Association of Proprietary Colleges.

### ► A Video Presentation: Local Attractions of Rochester

February and March 2008

**Location:** Eastview Mall, P.F. Chang's China Bistro, Unkl Moe's BBQ and Catering, Nick Tahou Hots, George Eastman House, Dinosaur BBQ, Nazareth College, St. John Fisher College, SUNY Monroe Community College, High Falls, and other locations in Rochester, NY

**Participants:** 15 East HS and Franklin HS NYGEAR UP students, 3 NYGEAR UP staff, 1 camera person

**Purpose:** To produce a tourism video of Rochester, NY to present to those attending the 2008 NYGEAR UP Conference held in April at RIT. The students spent two days shooting the video and five weeks in production. The video depicted some of the city of Rochester's many shopping, dining, cultural, and entertainment venues.

#### Agenda:

- Students brain-storm video plan and form functional teams
- Draft a script, choose locations, and schedule shoot dates
- Shoot footage
- Produce studio voice-over
- Design video cover jacket
- Produce video on DVD, with Internet distribution

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Mike Despinzia, camera person; Ansi Fernandes, NYGEAR UP Coordinator, RIT; Kate Oakley, Center for Youth Services, RIT; Denise Lynn Smith-Oquendo, NYGEAR UP Program Coordinator, RIT

*Collaboration and teamwork helped to make this a successful project. Students and staff enjoyed the process and the actual work, and we all look forward to producing another video on a different theme. Parents and schools also received copies of the video.*

## Rome City School District

### ► A Day with Jack Canfield

April 8, 2008

Professional workshop: Noon – 4:30 pm

Presentation for the public: 7:30 – 9:00 pm

**Location:** Turning Stone Resort, Verona, NY

**Participants:** 10 Rome Free Academy students and their parents, 5 teachers, 3 administrators

**Purpose:** To educate staff, students, and parents on how to achieve success and their life goals. This event was sponsored by the Rome Chamber of Commerce and various partners, including Rome CSD NYGEAR UP.

#### Agenda:

- Professional workshop: "Mastering the Success Principles"
- Public presentation: "The Law of Attraction: Anything you desire is truly possible"

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Jack Canfield, co-author of the "Chicken Soup for the Soul" series and Founder and CEO, Chicken Soup for the Soul Enterprises, Inc.

The evening's hands-on sessions helped students and parents understand that they can achieve their dreams. Rome's NYGEAR UP students served as ushers at the evening event. They also received a tour of the entertainment business at Turning Stone, and met Jack Canfield.

► **Chicken Soup Extravaganza**

March 28, 2008

**Location:** Staley MS, Rome, NY

**Participants:** 9 Rome NYGEAR UP students served as volunteers; other students, parents, and NYGEAR UP staff attended

**Purpose:** To serve as a lead-up event to "A Day with Jack Canfield" at Turning Stone Resort. The theme was "Chicken Soup Extravaganza," and the event offered an opportunity for students in Rome to get out and have fun.

**Agenda:**

- Participants toured various "Chicken Soup" themed rooms throughout the school
- Additional activities included egg tossing, making cookies, painting eggs, and seeing live chickens

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Teresa D. Huggins, author and speaker, Leaders for Life; Rome CSD staff

Every student received a free book, and NYGEAR UP students had an opportunity to serve as role models and work with younger students. The NYGEAR UP students, along with Teresa Huggins of Leaders for Life, a teen summer camp held at Hamilton College, coordinated the "Chicken Soup" themed rooms, offering activities such as an egg toss and chicken walk races.

► **Visit to SUNY Institute of Technology (SUNY IT)**

February 29, 2008

**Location:** SUNY Institute of Technology, Marcy, NY

**Participants:** 45 NYGEAR UP students, 1 teacher, 1 guidance counselor, 1 NYGEAR UP coordinator

**Purpose:** To explore what SUNY IT has to offer, and to provide students with the experience of being on a college campus and sitting in a college class.

**Agenda:**

- Campus tour
- Students participate in 2 half-hour long "mock" college classes in technology and nursing
- College exercise class
- Lunch in cafeteria with SUNY IT students

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** SUNY IT professors and staff



Gary Owens, director of the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) at SUNY College at Brockport, talks to NYGEAR UP students from SUNY Cobleskill, Syracuse University, Rome City School District, and Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) sites on April 14, 2008.

Students were able to see the campus, sit in on college classes, and see what it's like to be a college student.

**Additional Activities**

► **Leaders for Life Workshop**

On March 20, 2008, 11 NYGEAR UP students and Matthew Holupko, Rome CSD NYGEAR UP Coordinator, attended a "Leaders for Life" workshop with Teresa Huggins, who provided students with valuable lessons and tools to help them develop their leadership skills. Students also learned about various study skills.

Participants completed evaluations following the conference; feedback was positive. Many parents indicated they would like to have more workshops like this.

**"We learned a lot, including information about Excel, which I intend to use at work."**

– M. Chang, parent of a St. John's University NYGEAR UP student

► **SAT Prep for Students/Computer Training Workshops for Parents**

March 8 – April 5, 2008, 9:00 am – Noon

**Location:** Long Island City HS

**Participants:** 40 NYGEAR UP and GEAR UP students, 20 parents, 1 computer professor, 1 English teacher, 1 math teacher

**Purpose:** To help students prepare for the SATs while at the same time offering their parents computer instruction classes.

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Woody Blanchard, part-time computer professor, St. John's University; Carole Cummins, English teacher, Long Island City HS; Kristen Gardina, math teacher, Long Island City HS

These workshops were successful because the teachers were very patient and enthusiastic. The SAT course was a great beginning for the 9th graders and made them more aware of the preparation needed to do well. The parents were grateful for the computer training workshops because they learned skills that are useful for work, school, and day-to-day tasks.

**St. John's University**

► **GEAR UP for Life Conference**

March 1, 2008, 9:00 am – Noon

**Location:** Long Island City HS, Long Island City, NY

**Participants:** 20 NYGEAR UP and GEAR UP students, 10 parents, 1 parent coordinator, 6 GEAR UP staff

**Purpose:** To inform students and their parents how to have success in high school and how to afford and pay for college.

**Agenda:**

- 9:00 – 10:00 am: Effective Communication Family Workshop
- 10:00 – 11:00 am: Summer Jobs and Internships Student Workshop
- 10:00 – 11:00 am: Paying for College Workshop for Parents
- 11:00 – Noon: IBM computer giveaway

St. John's University  
continued on page 8

► **Youth Leadership Conference**  
April 19, 2008, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

**Location:** St. John's University, Queens, NY

**Participants:** 60 NYGEAR UP and GEAR UP students, 3 parents, 8 GEAR UP staff

**Purpose:** To emphasize the importance of mental, social, and academic growth from adolescence to adulthood.

**Agenda:**

- "When Keeping It Real Goes Right"
- HIV awareness workshop
- "Becoming a Successful College Student" forum
- "Blast from the Past" student panel
- Mapping-Your-Future computer workshop
- Brother Box/Sister Circle
- "Am I a Leader?" self-esteem workshop
- Fraternity step show

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Jeffrey Dessources, poet and writer; Andre McKenzie, Vice President of Academic Support Services, St. John's University; Teens Helping Each Other (T.H.E.O.), SUNY Downstate Medical Center; Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

*Students felt that the discussions were effective and useful, and the skills taught both realistic and inspiring. They also benefited from the number of sessions offered, which provided them with a better perspective on how to be successful in life.*

**"I enjoyed learning how to do my best on the SATs. In addition to the workshops, I plan on getting a SAT prep book and taking more practice classes."**

– Jericho B., a St. John's University NYGEAR UP student

**Additional Activities**

► **College Tours to Columbia University and CUNY Hunter College**

On February 19, 2008, 40 St. John's University GEAR UP students visited Columbia University and CUNY Hunter College, and received information about the two colleges.

► **College for a Day**

On February 21, 2008, 28 St. John's University GEAR UP students shadowed an undergraduate for an entire day, getting an in-depth look at what it's like to be a college student.



SUNY Jamestown Community College (JCC) NYGEAR UP students from Jamestown HS and Dunkirk HS at the bedside of an interactive dummy "patient" at SUNY JCC's "Exploring College Options" day on June 25, 2008.

► **PSAT Administration**

On March 8, 2008, 30 GEAR UP students took the Preliminary SAT, a test designed to help students identify strengths and weaknesses as they prepare for the SAT.

► **Open School Night and Afternoon**

On April 3 and 4, 2008, St. John's University GEAR UP staff provided an overview of GEAR UP services and distributed registration forms and college preparation packets at Long Island City HS.

► **Creating a College-Going Culture**

On March 18, 2008, 8 Long Island City HS counselors, an associate principal of guidance, and 8 GEAR UP staff received information about paying for, getting into, and preparing for college.

► **Women in Need (WIN) Drive**

In 2008, during the entire month of March, students held a toiletry drive to collect needed items for women and children for WIN, Inc. in honor of Women's History Month.

► **Special GEAR UP Assembly**

On April 18, 2008, the St. John's University GEAR UP cohort was given an overview of GEAR UP activities and student recognition awards, and also participated in a quiz bowl.

**SUNY Cobleskill**

► **College Visits**

April 1 to May 6, 2008

**Location:** Bryant & Stratton College, Cornell University, Hartwick College, Ithaca College, Nazareth College, Rochester Institute of Technology, St. John Fisher College, SUNY Binghamton University, SUNY College at Brockport, SUNY College at Oneonta, Syracuse University

**Participants:** 167 SUNY Cobleskill NYGEAR UP students, 16 parents, 11 teachers, 9 tutors, 1 NYGEAR UP director

**Purpose:** To explore a number of different college campuses. Over the course of 6 weeks, SUNY Cobleskill NYGEAR UP students visited 11 colleges and universities.

**Agenda:**

- Typical campus tour
- Admissions presentation by college staff
- Lunch on campus

*Students researched each college or university before arriving at its campus so they were prepared for their visits. Actually being on campus helped them focus their thoughts about and impressions of each college.*

► **Introduction to Health Care Careers**  
Spring, 2008

**Location:** Cobleskill Regional Hospital/Bassett Healthcare, Covidien Pharmaceutical Facilities, St. Elizabeth College of Nursing, South Kortright CS

**Participants:** 62 SUNY Cobleskill NYGEAR UP students, 2 tutors, 4 teachers

**Purpose:** To educate students about careers in health care and medicine.

**Agenda:**

- At St. Elizabeth College of Nursing:
  - Classroom activities
  - Lunch
  - Research project and oral presentation of findings
- At Cobleskill Regional Hospital/Bassett Healthcare:
  - Tour of the hospital
- At Covidien Pharmaceutical:
  - Tour of the facilities
- At South Kortright CS:
  - In-school presentation on health care professions

# SUNY Jamestown Community College (JCC)

## ► Visit to Syracuse University March 7, 2008

**Location:** Syracuse University

**Participants:** 37 Jamestown HS NYGEAR UP students, 4 chaperones

**Purpose:** To introduce students to a large private university, where they learned about admissions, opportunity programs, financial aid, and Division I athletics.

### Agenda:

- Meeting with Syracuse University department representatives
- Campus tour
- Lunch in a campus dining center
- Presentation by an associate director of athletics at the Manley Field House

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Syracuse University campus staff; Kenneth Miles, Associate Director of Athletics, Syracuse University

*Many students returned from this campus visit planning to attend Syracuse University. They were not only able to visit a popular campus, but also to discuss realistic opportunities available to them at that institution. Student athletes learned what it takes to compete at the Division I level, and about what role sports should play in their educational plans. The meeting with Mr. Miles was especially important, where role playing and the Q & A session opened the students' eyes to the realities of college sports.*

## ► Overview of HEOP and EOP Programs June 9 and 10, 2008

**Location:** Dunkirk HS (on June 9),  
Jamestown HS (on June 10)

**Participants:** 95 9th graders (all of the Dunkirk HS freshman seminar classes), 6 Jamestown HS students, 8 parents

**Purpose:** To offer students and parents an overview of HEOP and EOP programs in New York State. The event was aimed at students who, because of academic and economic circumstances, would otherwise be unable to attend college.

### Agenda:

- PowerPoint presentation on history of opportunity programs in New York State
- Discussion of financial and academic eligibility requirements
- Survey of participating colleges and universities
- Q & A

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Nadine Shardlow, Director, HEOP and EOP, Alfred University

*Students and parents were able to find out about available opportunity programs and to ask questions of an expert in the field. The success of both the classroom and evening presentation formats has prompted requests for more such informative sessions on a regular basis.*

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**"I cannot thank you enough for inviting my daughter and me to the HEOP program on June 10th at Jamestown High School. I was amazed at how much information was available to us. I had never heard of the EOP and HEOP programs. My daughter is now excited about college and feels she has a choice as to where she can go to obtain a college degree. Before attending this program she felt that our finances would keep her from attending a college of her choice. Again, I can't thank you enough for hosting this program. It has given both of us great hope and excitement as we make choices about her college career."**

*— Laura H., parent of a high school junior and SUNY JCC NYGEAR UP student*

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## ► Exploring College Options at SUNY Jamestown Community College June 25, 2008

**Location:** SUNY Jamestown Community College

**Participants:** 32 Dunkirk HS and Jamestown HS students, 5 chaperones, 7 SUNY JCC faculty, 3 SUNY JCC admissions and recruitment staff

**Purpose:** To encourage students to explore college options by showing them areas they might explore at SUNY JCC or at other institutions of higher education. This event was planned specifically for the current top 20 percent of the NYGEAR UP cohort, and provided a hands-on introduction to college work by SUNY JCC faculty members. The focus of the day's activities was on college and career choices, gathering information,

and answering questions students should ask at any college they are interested in attending.

### Agenda:

- Sessions for students: Each student chose 3 sessions from the following 8 topics:
  - Athletic training
  - Chemistry
  - Creative writing
  - Engineering
  - Finding a career that fits
  - Nursing
  - Politics and history
  - Three-D visualization theater (anatomy and physiology)
- Lunch, with a presentation about the Unified Student Assistance (USA) Scholarship offered by SUNY JCC and opportunities for students who qualify for this scholarship

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Aimee Brunelle, Athletic Trainer; Nelson Garifi, Executive Director of Marketing; Colette Haight, Academic and Career Counselor; Traci Langworthy, Instructor, History; Ellen Lehning, Associate Professor, Biology; Taylor Pancoast, Professor, Chemistry; Mike Weaver, Director/Instructor, Engineering and Technology; Karen Weyant, Assistant Professor, Writing and Developmental English; Kelly Whitver, Instructor, Nursing; Marilyn Zagora, Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, SUNY JCC

*SUNY JCC offers the USA Scholarship to students who graduate in the top 20 percent of their high school class. This event recognizes such high-performing students for their academic accomplishments, reinforces the fact that they have options, including applying to SUNY JCC, and encourages them to plan for college.*

## Additional Activities

### ► PSSS Exam

On January 23 and 25, 2008, 124 Dunkirk HS and 197 Jamestown HS students were exposed to the PSAT, learned about useful resources and preparation tools, and received specific information on the skills they need to develop for future exams.

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**"The Yonkers CSD NYGEAR UP workshop on 'First Impressions' was really helpful. We role-played what it was like to go to a college interview, and now I have a better idea of what to expect."**

*— A Yonkers CSD NYGEAR UP student*

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# Syracuse University

## ► CollegeEd

January – May 2008

**Location:** Corcoran HS, Fowler HS, Henninger HS, Institute of Technology HS, Nottingham HS

**Participants:** About 1,500 9th grade students

**Purpose:** To introduce students to CollegeEd, a curriculum developed by The College Board to prepare students for the college admissions and financial aid process.

### Agenda:

CollegeEd sessions included:

- How to be successful in high school
- The value and meaning of a good education
- Creating a personal network of supportive adults
- The diversity of college options
- How different institutions can affect career decisions
- Costs of college, financial aid, and planning for college expenses

*CollegeEd gives students the opportunity to start planning early for the overall college admissions process. These sessions were further reinforced with visits to colleges and presentations on the different forms of financial aid.*

## ► Teacher in the Workplace

January 23 and 24, 2008  
February – May 2008

**Location:** Businesses in Onondaga County

**Participants:** Nottingham HS 9th grade teachers enrolled in the GEAR UP In-Service class

**Purpose:** To provide teachers with opportunities to find out about the

particular skills and traits employers require so that teachers can integrate and reinforce these skills in the classroom.

### Typical Agenda:

- Tour of business
- Presentation
- Observation of employees working at specific tasks

*Teachers indicated that they can use this "Teacher in the Workplace" experience to stress the importance of developing good listening, reading, and writing skills, which are valued by employers. They also had a chance to see the relevance of their subject areas to the workplace, enabling them to incorporate this in their lessons.*

## ► Career Exploration with the Virtual College and Career Center Program (VCCC)

January – June 2008

**Location:** Fowler HS, Nottingham HS

**Participants:** 600 9th grade students

**Purpose:** To help students explore careers using the VCCC program, a computer-based curriculum that allows them to assess their qualifications for specific jobs.

### Agenda:

- Diagnostic test to assess current skill levels
- Review of qualifications for specific jobs
- Computer exercises to help students learn how to meet requirements for certain jobs

*This program allows students to obtain a first-hand look at what skills and preparation are actually required for specific jobs. The program was implemented in collaboration with the staff from Partners for Education and Business, Inc. Teachers from Fowler HS and Nottingham HS were also trained in the VCCC program so that they can use it in their classrooms.*

## Additional Activities

### ► College and Career Fair

At Nottingham HS on March 3, 2008, and at Henninger HS on April 3, 2008, local employers and representatives of colleges and universities provided 9th grade students with information on employment and educational opportunities.

### ► Forensics

On January 16, 2008, at the Institute of Technology at Syracuse Center, speakers from the Onondaga County Medical Examiner's office presented students with information about employment and the required qualifications for positions in the field of forensic science.

### ► Health Professions Job Shadow Day

On April 8, 2008, 9th grade students from Corcoran HS, Fowler HS, Henninger HS, Institute of Technology HS, and Nottingham HS found out about careers in health care at the SUNY Upstate Medical University.

### ► Job Shadow Day

On February 5, 2008, Fowler HS 9th graders were able to spend a day with various local employers to learn more about specific careers.

# Yonkers City School District

## ► Mercy College NYGEAR UP College Exploration Day

March 28, 2008

**Location:** Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY

**Participants:** 180 Gorton HS, Lincoln HS, Riverside HS, Roosevelt HS, Saunders HS, and Yonkers HS NYGEAR UP students, 18 9th grade teachers and guidance counselors, 11 Mercy College staff, 15 Mercy College students

**Purpose:** To increase college awareness by having students spend half a day on a college campus meeting with professors, admission counselors, and college students.

### Agenda:

- Welcome and Introduction
- College Exploration Workshops
  - The Importance of a Résumé
  - First Impressions: The College Interview
  - College Life: The Party Game
- Lunch on campus
- Panel discussion with professors on college majors
- Panel discussion with college students and dorm residents on college life
- Panel discussion with college admissions counselors



*A display of a CUNY College of Staten Island (CSI)/Discovery Institute GEAR UP student's project during "Discovery Evening" on March 13, 2008.*

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Carolyn Tragni, Assistant Vice President for Academic Support Services, Mercy College; Mercy College staff

*Students had the opportunity to speak to admission counselors in small groups, heard about a variety of college majors and extracurricular activities, learned how to write a résumé, and found out how to act during a college interview. They also worked in groups, led by professional staff and college students, to complete a career exploration booklet.*

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**“The trip to Mercy College not only helped prepare us for college, but also offered general knowledge about careers. They informed us about making a good impression and how to create a powerful and efficient résumé.”**

– A Yonkers City School District NYGEAR UP student

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► **Yonkers High School Career Day**  
April 2, 2008

**Location:** Yonkers HS, Yonkers, NY

**Participants:** 250 9th grade NYGEAR UP students, 3 administrators, 35 teachers and counselors

**Purpose:** To acquaint students with professionals representing more than 20 different careers in a workshop format that allowed students to find out about the educational requirements for each career, the types of internships that would be helpful, and the salary scale.

**Agenda:**

- Welcome by Bernard P. Pierorazio, Superintendent of Schools, Yonkers CSD
- Introduction by Ralph M. Vigliotti, Principal, Yonkers HS
- Career Workshops, I-IV, with students choosing a workshop to attend

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Dave Ashton, Disk Jockey, WFAS Radio; Larissa Bell, Associate Scientist, PepsiCo; Steve Borzoni, Product Leader, MasterCard; Howard Bricker, Dentist; Bob Buchanan, Photographer; Matthew Byrne, Village Justice, Suffern, NY; Rod Calarco, General Manager, WFAS Radio; Sobeida Cruz, Director of Public and Government Affairs, New York Power Authority; Nicholas S. DeCicco, Assistant County Attorney, Westchester County; Giselle Feliz-Hudson, Community Health Educator, Planned Parenthood; Walt Fowler, Sports Director, News 12 Westchester;

Phyllis Greco, Director, Institute of Allied Medical Professions; Toni Kavanaugh, Director, Project Rewind; Steve Kerner, Police Officer, Yonkers Police Department; Deborah Mayer, Assistant United States Attorney, Eastern District of New York; Nancy McDonald, Marketer; Helen Ogrinz, Landscape Architect; David Rosen, U.S. Marshal; Lynda Ruggiero, Vice President, Capitol One Bank; Gus Scharr, Actor; Andrew Seligson, Pilot; Pat Slaven, Senior Project Director, Consumer Reports/Consumer Union; Gilbert Stanzone, Veterinarian; Alice Wang, Pastry Chef

*Students were able to choose four careers and participate in workshops with professionals representing those fields. For most of the students, this was their first opportunity to hear a variety of speakers discuss their educational backgrounds, internships, early job experiences, and current job activities.*

► **Performance at SUNY Purchase College Performing Arts Center**  
January 28, March 4, and March 14, 2008

**Location:** SUNY Purchase College, Purchase, NY

**Participants:** 180 students from Gorton, Lincoln, Riverside, Roosevelt, Saunders, and Yonkers HS, 6 teachers

**Purpose:** To provide students with an opportunity to attend a performance at SUNY Purchase College's Performing Arts Center, meet the performers, tour the campus, and have lunch with college students.

**Agenda:**

- Campus tour
- Cultural performance
- Lunch

*Each of the programs provided students with a look at different cultures, an examination of history through drama, music and dance, and a chance to discuss the meaning of each performance with the performers. On January 28, “Peru Negro” featured traditional Afro-Peruvian dancing and music from the 16th century to the present. On March 4, the presentation was “My Heart in a Suitcase,” a dramatic true story recreated through letters about Anne Lehman, one of 10,000 Jewish children who fled Nazi Germany for England via an organized effort called the Kindertransport. On March 14, “The Spirit of Uganda” offered students a look at civil war and the AIDS crisis in this African country.*

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**Additional Activities**

► **African American Men of Westchester Assembly**

On January 14, 2008, 120 NYGEAR UP male students were introduced to this organization, which motivates young people to get a college education and pursue careers in technology and business.

► **Barnard College Trip**

On February 7, 2008, 30 Yonkers HS NYGEAR UP students and 3 teacher/chaperones toured Barnard College and met admission counselors.

► **Berkeley College Trip**

On February 12, 2008, 13 Roosevelt HS NYGEAR UP students and 1 teacher visited this local college that specializes in business training.

► **Yale University Trip**

On March 3-12, 2008, 180 NYGEAR UP students, 18 teachers, and chaperones from the Greystone Foundation, along with Barbara Nangle and Nadia Ward of the Consultation Center at Yale University, spent a day at Yale, met with students and counselors, and participated in a series of activities.

► **Sarah Lawrence Dance Program**

On March 6, 2008, 60 NYGEAR UP students and 4 teachers were introduced to dance and arts programs at Sarah Lawrence College.

► **Trips to CUNY John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Princeton University, Pace University, St. John's University, Quinnipiac University, and SUNY Westchester Community College**

During March and April, 2008, 125 NYGEAR UP students toured these college campuses.

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**“I never thought about a career in marketing, but after taking a personality quiz related to this kind of work, I learned that I’m very amiable and relationship-oriented, and these are two qualities that match up well with marketing.”**

– A Yonkers CSD NYGEAR UP student

# Sharing Ideas and Successes.

## Federal GEAR UP Sites in New York State



### Bronx Institute (BI) GEAR UP Network at CUNY Lehman College

#### ► The Salamander Project

May 24 and 31 and June 7 and 14, 2008;  
4 Saturdays, 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

**Location:** Riverdale Park, Bronx, NY

**Participants:** 30 7th grade GEAR UP students from Frederick Douglass Academy V (JHS 273), Kappa III (MS 316), and Mott Hall V (IS 242)

**Purpose:** To introduce students to biological science and encourage them to become “citizen scientists” as they learn about their environment and the scientific method. Salamanders are biological indicators of environmental health because of their unique way of breathing. Students worked with the Wave Hill garden and cultural center and BI staff to conduct an ecological survey of redback salamanders in Riverdale Park. All data found will be submitted to the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation for the ongoing Woodland Salamander Monitoring Program.

#### Agenda:

- Day 1: The role of salamanders in ecosystems
- Day 2: The salamander die-off: perspectives from genetics, ecology, modeling, virology, mycology, and bacteriology
- Day 3: Scientific observation and monitoring living things in their natural environment
- Day 4: Scientific reporting using field notes

**“The students were wonderful to dedicate four of their Saturdays to participating in the Salamander Project. They were inquisitive, thoughtful, and eager to work.”**

– Amanda Bickerstaff, Project Associate, BI GEAR UP

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Amanda Bickerstaff, Project Associate, BI GEAR UP Network at CUNY Lehman College

*The 30 students were unanimous in their support of this program, and provided positive feedback on all 4 sessions. They increased their scientific knowledge and gained experience in scientific field work. Each of the sessions was aligned with the 8th grade science Exit Project curriculum, which all 8th graders are required to complete; students will continue to work with BI on their Exit Projects while developing the spirit of inquiry the Salamander Project instilled in them.*

**“Ms. Bickerstaff taught us how to think like scientists and also to think about becoming scientists ourselves.”**

– A BI GEAR UP student

#### ► Specialized High School Examination Test Prep

October 13 – December 8, 2007 and  
January 12 – March 8, 2008, Saturdays  
(reading and mathematics)

April 8 – May 6, 2008, after school  
(reading and mathematics)

September 18, 2007 – June 26, 2008,  
during school day (accelerated  
mathematics course)

**Location:** Albert Einstein MS (MS 141), Pablo Casals MS (MS 181), and Mott Hall V (IS 242), Bronx, NY

**Participants:** 33 7th grade Albert Einstein MS students (in reading and math sessions), 29 Pablo Casals MS 7th grade students (in reading and math sessions), and 11 Mott Hall V 7th grade students (in accelerated math course)

**Purpose:** To increase the number of Bronx students entering New York City’s specialized high schools, reversing a trend where few of them qualify for these schools. In an August 18, 2006, article in the *New York Times*, Elissa Goodman wrote: “More

than a decade after the city created a special institute to prepare black and Hispanic students for the mind-bendingly difficult test that determines who gets into New York’s three most elite specialized high schools, the percentage of such students has not only failed to rise, it has declined.” Christine Kiernan, in the *Gotham Gazette*, concluded that “students in low-income community schools are not given the resources in junior high that prepare them to take and pass the test necessary to get them into specialized high schools.” BI GEAR UP held a series of test prep sessions during the school day, after school, and on Saturdays in an intensive effort to prepare students for that rigorous exam.

#### Agenda:

- Introduction to a specialized high school admissions test
- Test taking strategies
- Practice tests
- Foundations of math and reading
- Homework
- Scrambled paragraphs
- Logical reasoning
- Arithmetic and algebra
- Geometry
- Word problems
- Getting ready for test day

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Amanda Bickerstaff, Ray Coplin, and LaRae Snoddy, BI GEAR UP Project Associates; teachers from Albert Einstein MS, Pablo Casals MS, and Mott Hall V

*This project was successful because students dedicated themselves to the work. They found the sessions extremely demanding, but also understood that they needed to make the effort to have a chance of entering a specialized high school.*

**“The Lehman College Bronx Institute courses are much harder than my regular math courses. I learned so many new things that I wouldn’t have.”**

– A BI GEAR UP Network at CUNY Lehman College student

#### ► An Evening with Ishmael Beah March 13, 2008

**Location:** CUNY Lehman College, Bronx, NY

**Participants:** 133 BI GEAR UP 9th grade students from HS 252, HS 342, HS 413, HS 437, HS 440, MS/HS 141, MS/HS 241, MS/HS 243, MS/HS 368, and MS/HS 505

**Purpose:** To introduce students to the memoir form. Ishmael Beah, who was a

child soldier in his former country of Sierra Leone, is the author of *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*. Students read the book before attending the event, and participated in other activities, including discussions of the book and writing autobiographical essays.

**Agenda:**

- At HS 252: From February 25 to March 13, 2008, students met every day to discuss the book and wrote their own short memoir
- At HS 525: On February 25 and March 3, 2008, students met after school to discuss the book
- At MS/HS 141: From February 26 to March 13, 2008, students met during the school day to discuss *A Long Way Gone*
- At MS/HS 243: From March 3 – 14, 2008, students met during the school day to discuss the book
- Students met the author, who gave a lecture on his experiences as a boy soldier and answered students' questions about his life and how to become a writer

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Ishmael Beah, author and member of the Human Rights Watch Children's Rights Advisory Committee

*Students found Mr. Beah's story fascinating and motivating. They described different activities they conducted in their classrooms and after school to increase their understanding of the memoir form and created their own autobiographical essays.*

**"With the year's worth of preparation these workshops gave me, I have to get into the high school I want."**

— A BI GEAR UP Network at CUNY Lehman College student

► **Saturday Academy**

March 8 – June 14, 2008

**Location:** CUNY Lehman College and Fordham University, Bronx, NY

**Participants:** 411 BI GEAR UP students from 13 Bronx high schools

**Purpose:** To offer students a wide variety of enriching activities to improve their academic skills and help prepare them for college. The students could choose from the following activities:

- Computer Graphics Design Class, to explore graphic design as a profession and as an art form.

- CSI Club, to learn how forensic detectives use science and crime scene evidence to solve crimes and work as a team to find out about collecting evidence, fingerprinting, ballistic testing, and drug and blood analysis.
- English Composition 101, to study the structure of essays while developing their own academic writing style and also read both fiction and nonfiction to strengthen their critical reading skills.
- Film Theory and Video Production Class, to introduce students to the language of cinema and the dynamics of visual storytelling.
- Integrated Algebra Class, to help students hone math skills and prepare for the Regents exam.
- Living Environment Regents Prep, to review science content for the Regents exam in a class taught by Kaplan, Inc.
- U.S. History Regents Prep, to help students prepare for the Regents exam with a content review and a focus on essay skills and historical documents.
- Literature Course, to read and discuss American and English literature.
- Mathematics Course, to develop math skills.

**Agenda:**

- Introduction to topic
- Linking of topic to New York State Learning Standards, classroom curriculum, and testing requirements
- Hands-on learning activities
- Assessment of students through tests and demonstration projects
- Connecting activities to career skills and college degree requirements

*Evaluation forms from the students showed a high level of satisfaction. The Saturday Academy became the choice of many highly motivated BI GEAR UP students to expand their horizons and strengthen their academic prowess.*

► **Choosing a High School**

April 30, 2008

**Location:** CUNY Lehman College, Bronx, NY

**Participants:** 61 7th grade students and 61 parents from MS 101, JHS 131, JHS 142, MS 144, MS 180, MS 181, IS 242, JHS 273, MS 316, MS 322

**Purpose:** To inform students and parents about New York City's high school selection process.

**Agenda:**

- Understanding the high school selection process
- How to choose the best school
- New and specialized high schools
- High school programs

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Francis Echevarria, BI GEAR UP Project Associate for Parental and C.B.O. Engagement

*A number of interested parents from different schools were willing to come to CUNY Lehman College to learn about high school choice. Much of the information was new to them; they were uniformly pleased to find out more about the high school selection process and are likely to pass on what they discovered to other GEAR UP parents.*

**"Thank you, Bronx Institute GEAR UP, for giving us all this useful information. I now know more about how we as a family need to talk about the future and make the right decisions now instead of later."**

— A BI CUNY Lehman College GEAR UP parent

► **Home Laptop Loan Program**

May 20 – June 20, 2008, 1–2 hours in the evening

**Location:** CUNY Lehman College, Bronx, NY

**Participants:** 500 BI GEAR UP 9th grade students, 500 parents

**Purpose:** To offer students and their families laptops for use in GEAR UP activities and other academic enrichment initiatives. BI GEAR UP project associates met with students to congratulate them on being recommended to receive laptop computers, and informed them and their families about the terms and conditions of their use.

**Agenda:**

- Students and families learned laptop loan program conditions of use
- Briefing on security and Internet safety
- Discussion of service contracts provided for the computers

*Bronx Institute continued on page 14*



*Mr. Kester Hodge, Principal, Wyandanch Memorial HS; Dr. Rhoda Miller, Director, Student Support Services, Dowling College GEAR UP; and Dr. Clyde Payne, Dean, Dowling College School of Education, at "Parents as Heroes" conference, May 10, 2008.*

**Bronx Institute**  
*continued from page 13*

*The home laptop loan program is a great achievement in organization, and the feedback has all been positive. Participants, most of whom have limited or no access to computers at home, learn how to use computers for schoolwork and increase their potential to enter college.*

**Additional Activities**

► **Certificates for 21st Century Scholars Ceremonies**

During April and May, 2008, 21st Century Scholars Certificates were distributed to 763 7th grade students from IS 242, JHS 142, MS 144, MS 180, MS 181, MS 301, and MS 316 as part of BI's college awareness and academic enrichment efforts. Students learned about resources available from the U.S. Department of Education to help them successfully attain postsecondary education.

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## CUNY College of Staten Island (CSI)/Discovery Institute

► **Science Lab and CUNY CSI Campus Tour**

March 26, 2008, 9:00 am – Noon

**Location:** Science Lab Building, CUNY CSI

**Participants:** 100 Dreyfus IS 49 7th grade students from 5 classes, 4 Dreyfus IS 49 teachers, 4 CUNY CSI students, 2 Discovery Institute staff

**Purpose:** To have students experience a fascinating "dry ice" science activity and take a tour of the college.

**Agenda:**

- Students separated into 4 groups
- Groups of students took turns participating in the science activity and touring the CUNY CSI campus

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Ivin Doctor, Teaching Scholars Program Coordinator, Discovery Institute; Peter Lytell, Laboratory Instructor, Discovery Institute

*The "dry ice" lab is especially dramatic, and Peter Lytell and Ivin Doctor are master teachers. The campus tours were led by GEAR UP Teaching Scholars from Dreyfus IS 49 and college students involved with the CUNY CSI Black Male Initiative (BMI) program. The Dreyfus IS students asked "Are there bullies here?" and "How can you afford to come here?" among other questions. The BMI students showed them the campus through their own eyes and both groups enjoyed the experience.*

► **Discovery Evening**

March 13, 2008, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

**Location:** Dreyfus IS 49

**Participants:** 119 6th, 7th, and 8th grade Dreyfus IS students, 119 parents, 10 teachers and staff, 5 Discovery Institute staff

**Purpose:** To exhibit students' science and technology projects.

**Agenda:**

- Exhibition of students' science and technology projects
- Announcement of award winners

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Linda Hill, Principal, Dreyfus IS 49

*This successful event gave students a chance to display their hard work to parents and fellow students.*

► **College Awareness and Photo Essay Challenge Assembly**

May 14, 2008, 9:00 am – 11:00 am

**Location:** Center for the Arts at CUNY CSI

**Participants:** 38 Dreyfus IS 49 students, 2 Dreyfus IS 49 teachers, 1 Dreyfus IS 49 staff, 4 Discovery Institute staff, 2 former Dreyfus IS 49 students, 1 CUNY CSI staff

**Purpose:** To spread the message to students that college is important and accessible, and also to explore the opportunities available at colleges, careers that require a college degree, local success stories, and choices that students need to make. Teachers worked with students in Dreyfus's computer labs to produce photos related to college. Each class's photos were submitted for the group photo essay.

**Agenda:**

- Welcome by Barbara Goldstein
- Introductory remarks by Linda Hill and Richard Rimici
- Guest speakers Robert Kee, Tatiana Boyd, and Jowell Mowatt
- Photo essay introduced and moderated by Rachel Leininger
- Presentation of gifts from the Discovery Institute by Barbara Goldstein

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Tatiana Boyd, graduate of Dreyfus IS 49 and student at St. John's University; Barbara Goldstein, Special Events Coordinator, Discovery Institute/CUNY CSI; Linda Hill, Principal, Dreyfus IS 49; Robert Kee, Student Life Office, CUNY CSI; Jowell Mowatt, graduate of Dreyfus IS 49 and student at Curtis HS; Richard Rimpici, Executive Administrator, Discovery Institute/CSI

*This event was positive and informative. The students and speakers were inspiring, and students were urged to make the most of their high school years. Students were also presented with gifts, including award certificates and GEAR UP pins and tote bags, from the Discovery Institute.*

**Additional Activities**

► **Poetry Jam**

On May 13, 2008, as part of a language arts activity, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade Dreyfus IS 49 students recited poems at a special assembly.

► **"Western Night" Parent/Teacher Dinner**

On May 30, 2008, Dreyfus IS 49 students, parents, families, and teachers enjoyed a Western-themed dinner with the purpose of bringing them together for an evening of fun and food.



CUNY MGI GEAR UP Math Team teachers pose at CUNY Macauley Honors College on June 17, 2008. From left to right, top: Giselle George, East Side Community HS; Kelsey Jones, Frederick Douglass Academy II; Nikki White, Henry Street School for International Studies; Jason Lee, Queens Gateway to Health Sciences HS. Bottom: Mark Cheng, Henry Street School for International Studies; Tyrone John, Queens Gateway to Health Sciences.

## CUNY MGI GEAR UP

### ► CUNY Middle Grades Math Team Final Competition June 17, 2008

**Location:** Macauley Honors College at CUNY

**Participants:** 6 students, 1 math teacher, and 1 math tutor from Henry Street School for International Studies; 6 students and 1 math teacher from East Side Community HS; 6 students, 1 math teacher, and 1 math tutor from Queens Gateway to Health Sciences HS; 6 students and 1 math teacher from Frederick Douglass Academy II

**Purpose:** To encourage students to develop mathematical skills; the CUNY Middle Grades Math Team students met two days a week after school to practice math problems and hone their skills. Each week, the math teams solved problems given to them by the math team leader and CUNY Brooklyn College faculty member Laurie Allen and then posted their solutions on a Web-based bulletin board. Their hard work was celebrated in a final competition at CUNY Honors College, where students displayed their math skills as individuals and in teams of three.

#### Agenda:

- Students arrive at CUNY Macauley Honors College
- Lunch in student cafeteria
- Competition begins with elimination challenge; students with incorrect answers eliminated
- Rounds continue until only 2 students remain
- Tie-breaking math problem decides 1st and 2nd place winners
- Team competition begins with groups of 3 to 4 students solving series of math problems
- Team competition ends with 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners decided by a score based on how they showed their work, their computational skills, and a final correct answer

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Laurie Allen, CUNY Brooklyn College

*All math team students received a medal for participating in the event. Individual and team first, second, and third place winners received trophies to celebrate their accomplishments. Laurie Allen provided and scored the math problems during practice weeks and for the final competition. She also facilitated three professional development sessions for the participating math teachers to offer technical assistance on how to build and support a successful student math team. Students and staff alike were very excited about the event, looked forward to it all year long, and felt it was a huge success. We plan on expanding the math team next year to include even more schools and more students.*

### ► Thurgood Marshall Academy Guest Speaker Series

April 28, 2008

**Location:** Thurgood Marshall Academy, Harlem, NY

**Participants:** 200 7th, 8th, and 9th grade students, 6 guest speakers, 5 CUNY MGI GEAR UP staff

**Purpose:** To help students recognize that the choices they make today in school will affect their future. By inviting individuals to discuss their professions and share their college and career experiences, students can broaden their views of possible careers and may also come to understand that their own interests and abilities may lead them in positive directions. Offering students a chance to talk with adults about their college and career journeys can help young people create more concrete and relevant goals for themselves, and contribute to making college a realistic goal.

#### Agenda:

- Breakfast for speakers in the school library, hosted by Thurgood Marshall Academy and CUNY MGI GEAR UP
- Speakers supplied with questions to prepare for students' visits
- Speakers go to 7th, 8th, and 9th grade classrooms in pairs, introduce themselves, discuss their college and career paths, and answer students' questions
- Teachers in classrooms guide the discussion

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** LaShann DeArcy, Associate, Litigation Department and Chair of Subcommittee on Ethnic and Racial Diversity, Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP; Pete DiBari, music promoter, currently working with Kanye West; Ron Lawson, Senior Director of Business Affairs, Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation; Armando Nazario, project architect and expert in computer drafting, graphic, and 3-D modeling programs; Terry Nelson, Founder and Executive Director, Global Artists Coalition and Co-Founder, Hip Hop Culture Center in Harlem; Penny Wrenn, freelance writer and editor for *Esquire*, *Essence*, *Glamour*, *Redbook*, *O: The Oprah Magazine*, and other publications

*The students asked the speakers very pointed questions about what kinds of students they were in high school, the roles of mentors in their lives, and advice on overcoming life's challenges. Students also inquired about summer internship opportunities at their organizations.*

## Dowling College

### ► "Parents as Heroes" Conference May 10, 2008, 8:30 am to 2:00 pm

**Location:** Wyandanch Memorial HS

**Participants:** 22 Wyandanch HS/Dowling College GEAR UP students, 32 parents, 34 staff, guests, and vendors, including JROTC student volunteers, GEAR UP staff, Wyandanch HS faculty and staff, vendors, and exhibitors

**Purpose:** To recognize parents in the Wyandanch school district for their heroic acts as parents, to inspire them to continue their involvement and positive efforts, and to provide them with the information and tools they need to help their children succeed in school and in life. Parents are the most important factor in their children's success; the "Parents as Heroes" conference was hosted in order to help parents become meaningfully engaged in the education of their children.

#### Agenda:

- Breakfast, provided by Fidelis Care
- Registration
- Welcome by Kester Hodge, Principal, Wyandanch Memorial HS
- Keynote address by Dr. Clyde Payne, Dean, Dowling College School of Education
- Thanks to planners and overview of agenda by Dr. Rhoda Miller, GEAR UP Director
- Workshop sessions:
  - Homework is Important
  - College Opportunity Programs/Parents as Financial Warriors
  - What Parents and Teens Need to Know
  - Viewing and discussion of the National Council for Community and Educational Partnerships' (NCCEP) "Exitto Esolar" telenovellas (with Spanish/English subtitles) about going to college
- Lunch, provided by Compare Foods Supermarkets
- Visits to vendor and exhibitor tables; vendors and exhibitors included The College Board, Dowling College Admissions, Dowling College Center for Minority Teacher Training and Development, GEAR UP, Long Island Parent Center, SNAP Long Island, Suffolk County Bronze Shield, UPromise/NY 529 College Savings Plan, Urban League of Long Island, and Wyandanch Youth Services, Inc.
- Awarding of raffle prizes by Sabrina Fearon, Project Coordinator, SNAP Long Island
- Closing remarks

*Dowling College  
continued on page 16*

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Barbara Adams, ELA teacher and GEAR UP advisor, Wyandanch HS; Liz Custodio, Urban League of Long Island Young Professionals/HSBC Bank; Christine Custodio, Urban League of Long Island Young Professionals/HSBC Bank; Sabrina Fearon, Project Coordinator, SNAP Long Island; Alex Guzman, Manager, Compare Foods Supermarkets; Diana Hernandez, representative, Fidelis Care; Evelyn Molina, GEAR UP classroom tutor; Clyde Payne, Dean, School of Education, Dowling College; Kaitlin Stanley, GEAR UP classroom tutor; Gina Talbert, Principal, Milton S. Olive MS; Geri Vincent, Assistant Director, HEOP Dowling College; Dexter Ward, Guidance Counselor, Wyandanch HS

*Evaluations from parents, school staff, and vendors were overwhelmingly positive. Lorraine Boston, an Advisory Council member and parent, said that she enjoyed the day and appreciated all that GEAR UP does; she also pointed out that providing buses enabled families to come that otherwise might not have attended. JROTC volunteers, along with guidance counselor Dexter Ward, provided child care services in the gym, which was also helpful. Our Advisory Council has encouraged us to repeat this program in the future.*

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## St. John's University

See page 7.

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## SUNY Binghamton University

### ► Summer Service Learning July 7 – 31, 2008

**Location:** Binghamton West MS; Binghamton HS

**Participants:** 70 GEAR UP 8th and 9th grade students, 45 parents, 19 teachers and school staff from Binghamton West MS and Binghamton HS

**Purpose:** To show students that giving back to their community is a part of the educational process. Each year, the Summer Service Learning Program raises money for a cause; this year, students raised more than \$2,200 for the Michael Connolly Endowment for Lung Cancer Research at the SUNY Upstate Medical University. Bake sales, bottle drives, and car washes were held during July.

### Agenda:

Events included:

- Painting a mural for a special education room
- Making dolls for children in hospitals and putting together a book about them
- Helping care for children at a day care center
- Presentation by the Crime Victims Association about cyberbullying and Internet safety
- Puppet show for small children about how to keep the planet green
- Work with a group of developmentally challenged young people
- Dinner for parents to showcase students' learning projects
- Field trips to Tremain State Park and Cornell University in Ithaca, NY and to the American Museum of Natural History and South Street Sea Port in New York City

*The response from parents, students, and staff was overwhelmingly positive. Several expressed a desire to have such programs throughout the year.*

### ► Sidewalk Stories

July 23, 2008

**Location:** Binghamton West MS

**Participants:** 70 GEAR UP 8th and 9th grade students, community members

**Purpose:** To create an enjoyable and original activity to raise money for a worthy cause. The "Sidewalk Stories" event was the highlight of the Summer Service learning program (see above); students "sold" sidewalk squares on which those donating money could write down their thoughts and memories or draw pictures with colored chalk.

*During the "Sidewalk Stories" activity, students provided games for small children, raffled baskets they had made, and sold food they had prepared. They were interviewed by the news media, so GEAR UP got much attention in Binghamton.*

### Additional Activities:

#### ► Tours of SUNY Cortland

During May 2008, groups of GEAR UP 9th grade students and their teachers visited SUNY Cortland to acquaint students with a college campus.

#### ► Tour of SUNY Cobleskill

In March 2008, 8th grade GEAR UP students visited SUNY Cobleskill and learned about its agricultural, culinary, and horticultural programs.

### ► Visit to College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University

In April 2008, 8th grade GEAR UP students visited Cornell University to find out about the field of veterinary medicine.

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## SUNY Cobleskill

### ► Bassett Hospital In-School Presentation

May 8, 2008

**Location:** Jefferson CS, Stamford CS

**Participants:** 34 Jefferson CS Cobleskill GEAR UP students, 2 Jefferson CS teachers, 1 Jefferson CS tutor, 33 Stamford CS Cobleskill GEAR UP students, 3 Stamford CS teachers, 1 Stamford CS tutor, 3 health care professionals

**Purpose:** To inform students about careers in health care and the educational requirements for a career as a physical therapist, speech therapist, or social worker.

### Agenda:

- PowerPoint presentations on health care careers
- Hands-on activities
- Q&A

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Sue Cimino-Cary, Social Worker, Cobleskill Regional Hospital (CRH); Patricia Cleary, Director of Rehabilitation Services, CRH; Melissa Yalden, Social Worker, CRH

### ► Rochester Area College Visits

April 13 – 15, 2008

**Location:** Bryant & Stratton College, Nazareth College, Rochester Institute of Technology, St. John Fisher College, SUNY College at Brockport

**Participants:** 30 SUNY Cobleskill GEAR UP students, 14 parents, 2 tutors, 3 GEAR UP staff joined 80 students, parents, and chaperones from NYGEAR UP programs around the state

**Purpose:** To introduce students to college campuses, offer them admissions and financial aid presentations, and allow them to interact with 70 other students, parents, and chaperones from the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), Rome City School District, and Syracuse University NYGEAR UP programs.

### Agenda:

*Day One*

- Breakfast at RIT, campus tour
- Visit to Bryant & Stratton, tour and presentation
- Lunch at St. John Fisher College, campus tour
- Visit to Nazareth College, campus tour
- Dinner at SUNY College at Brockport

### Day Two

- Low ropes and team building activities

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Ansi Fernandes, Coordinator, NYGEAR UP, RIT; John R. Halstead, President, SUNY College at Brockport; Brandin Jones, Student Ambassador, Nazareth College; Erin Kane, Assistant Director of Admissions, RIT; Gabriel Marshall, graduate student, SUNY College at Brockport; Gary O. Owens, Director, Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), SUNY College at Brockport; Libby Pinti, Special Events Coordinator, St. John Fisher College; David Roberts, Assistant Director of Admissions, St. John Fisher College; Maria Scalise, Market Director of Admissions, Bryant & Stratton College; Dianne Spang, Director, NYGEAR UP, RIT; Robyn Winstanley, Admissions Counselor, Nazareth College

*These visits took place during spring break, so the students were really committed to being there. Surveys indicated that these upbeat and fast-paced trips were one of our most successful college events. The parents were especially excited, and we feel that this can only encourage more parents to participate in the next such trip. A 30-minute DVD of the visits was made by two SUNY Cobleskill communications students and will be distributed to all participants.*

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**"I never thought that so many colleges could be so affordable."**

– A Cobleskill NYGEAR UP parent

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### ► SUNY Delhi College Visit

March 29, 2008

**Location:** SUNY Delhi

**Participants:** 15 Laurens CS SUNY Cobleskill GEAR UP students, 1 tutor, 1 teacher, 1 GEAR UP staff

**Purpose:** To increase college awareness.

#### **Agenda:**

- Campus tour
- Admissions presentation
- Lunch in a campus dining hall

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Pam Hilton, Enrollment Counselor, SUNY Delhi

### Additional Activities

#### ► School Assembly/Miss New York

On April 9, 2008, Charlotte Valley CS students heard an uplifting presentation about staying in school and following their dreams by Elisabeth Baldanza, Miss New York 2007, who also spoke about what life is like for Miss New York.



*NYGEAR UP students from the SUNY Cobleskill, Syracuse University, Rome City School District, and Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) sites visit St. John Fisher College on April 14, 2008.*

#### ► College Success

On May 19, 2008, Bob Hage of The College Board offered Charlotte Valley CS students a motivational presentation about how to be successful in school and prepare for college.

#### ► Covidien Pharmaceuticals Facilities Visit

On April 28, 2008, 23 Jefferson CS 9th grade GEAR UP students, accompanied by 1 tutor and 1 teacher, visited the Covidien Pharmaceuticals Outsourcing plant in Hobart, NY and were offered lunch in one of the conference rooms and a lively tour of the facility by Frank Molinaro, Human Resources Manager at Covidien. Covidien (formerly Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals Outsourcing) is a partner in the SUNY Cobleskill GEAR UP grant and one of the largest employers in the area.

#### ► Rick Stoddard/The Burning Truth

On March 28, 2008, anti-smoking and anti-tobacco crusader Rick Stoddard spoke to students at Fort Plain CS about how the tobacco industry targets youth in advertising. 61 students attended his presentation.

#### ► Hartwick College and SUNY College at Oneonta Campus Visits

On March 31, 2008, 17 Middleburgh CS GEAR UP students, 1 tutor, and 1 teacher visited SUNY College at Oneonta and Hartwick College where they toured the colleges and heard admissions presentations.

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## Syracuse University

#### ► 2nd Annual Museum of Science and Technology (MOST) Career Day

May 13, 2008

**Location:** Milton J. Rubenstein Museum of Science and Technology, Syracuse, NY

**Participants:** 186 Danforth MS 8th graders, 226 Grant MS 8th graders

**Purpose:** To expose students to careers in math, science, and technology.

#### **Agenda:**

- Students viewed IMAX movies entitled "The Living Sea" and "Ocean Oasis"
- Students visited tables with displays sponsored by local businesses, colleges, and universities and received information about careers in math, science, and technology; students also met representatives from the businesses and colleges listed below.

**Speakers/Leaders/Guests:** Representatives from: Bryant & Stratton College; C & S Companies; Cornell University, Department of Food Science and Technology; General Electric Inspection Technologies; ITT Technical Institute; King & King, Architects, LLP; Laboratory Alliance of Central New York, LLC; Lockheed Martin; Parsons Corporation; SUNY Cayuga Community College; SUNY Cortland; SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry; SUNY Upstate Medical University; Syracuse University, L.C. Smith College of Engineering and Computer Science; United Radio, Inc.

*More than 60 percent of the students rated this event very good or excellent. They were impressed by how many of the people they met loved their work.*

#### ► Visits to Rosamund Gifford Zoo

Spring 2008, various dates

**Location:** Rosamund Gifford Zoo at Burnet Park, Syracuse, NY

**Participants:** 77 Edward Smith School 7th graders, 69 H.W. Smith School 7th graders, 91 Huntington MS 7th graders, 42 Roberts MS 7th graders

**Purpose:** To provide students with a learning experience beyond the classroom that heightens awareness of the challenges facing our natural environment.

*Syracuse University  
continued on page 18*

*Syracuse University  
continued from page 17*

#### Agenda:

- Tour of the zoo
- A guided visit with hands-on learning experiences at biofact stations, where students viewed artifacts such as skulls, feathers, and antlers

#### Additional Activities

##### ► CollegeEd Presentation

From January through May, 2008, 1,500 8th grade GEAR UP students from all 13 of the Syracuse CSD middle schools participated in the CollegeEd program and curriculum.

##### ► Le Moyne College Summer Institute for Science and Math Teachers

From July 7 through July 18, 2008, Syracuse CSD science and math teachers participated in Le Moyne College's unique Summer Institute program designed to enrich their knowledge of the subjects they teach and to provide them with new strategies to reach their students.

##### ► 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens

During the spring of 2008, the "7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens" program was presented to 7th grade students at all 13 of the Syracuse CSD's middle schools to provide them with a set of tools for success.

##### ► Career Presentations by Guest Speakers

Throughout the spring of 2008, guest speakers spoke to 7th and 8th graders about various careers and the education and skills needed for those careers. Among the businesses represented by speakers were Finkelstein & Partners, a law firm; Laboratory Alliance of Central New York; O'Brien & Gere, an engineering firm; SUNY Upstate Medical University; and WSTM/NBC 3.

## Resources. FOCUS ON PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

### Career Voyages

<http://www.careervoyages.gov/>

<http://www.explorandoprofesiones.gov/>

Before looking at colleges, it's helpful to explore possible careers. At this site, also available in Spanish, students can learn about various occupations and the education needed to pursue them.

### Choosing a College

<http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/choosing.jsp>

<http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/spanish/index.jsp>

This portal, part of the U.S. Department of Education's Web site, is a place for students to begin a search for a college or university that is right for them.

### College Navigator

<http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

At this site, students can find out about different colleges and universities as they begin a college search, and can refine their searches in order to narrow down options, build a list of colleges to compare, and pinpoint locations with an interactive map. There are links to nearly 7,000 colleges and universities in the U.S.

### HEATH Resource Center

[http://www.heath.gwu.edu/node/15\\_](http://www.heath.gwu.edu/node/15_)

The George Washington University HEATH Resource Center is an online source of information on postsecondary education for people with disabilities. One of its

resources is a "Guidance and Career Counselors' Toolkit" for advising high school students with disabilities on their college options (<http://www.heath.gwu.edu/files/active/1/Toolkit.pdf>). Among the subjects covered are strategies for dealing with the transition from high school to college, encouraging and training students and their parents to be their own advocates, informing students of their rights, and how to request necessary accommodations. Visits to college campuses are strongly recommended to students with disabilities so that they can assess the layout of the campus and facilities. A list of questions to ask while visiting is provided.

### New York's Private Colleges and Universities

<http://www.nycolleges.org/>

This site, part of the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities' Outreach Programs, has information about more than 100 independent, private, not-for-profit colleges and universities in New York state, including locations, information about financial aid, lists of academic programs, demographic information, and detailed profiles of each campus.

### Preparing for a College Visit

<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/csearch/college-visits/73.html>

Guidance on how to prepare for a college visit, with the first piece of advice being: Research the college. From this site, students will also

find links to "When to Visit", a "Campus Visit Checklist", and "Ten Tips for Surfing College Websites".

### University and College Accountability Network

<http://www.UCAN-Network.org>

Developed by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, a nonprofit organization that represents almost 950 private institutions, the UCAN site features profiles of over 700 private colleges and universities, including over 50 in New York State. Students can browse alphabetically, by state, or by religious affiliation, and can also check out UCAN-Network.org on Facebook and YouTube. Each profile of a college or university includes data about admissions, graduation rates, class size, diversity of the student body, cost of tuition, financial aid, campus safety, and much more.

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**"I am glad I chose to attend the EDGE Program at Union College ... I got to find out about a career that I was considering and also experienced many new things, such as living in a dorm, experiencing college life, and working as a team."**

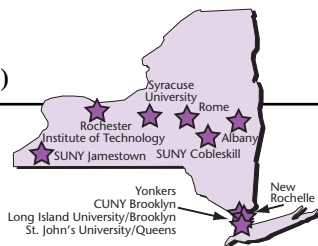
*– Millie Lin, a Yonkers CSD NYGEAR UP student*

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# GEAR UP II 2005/06/08 – 2011/12/14 Sites and Contacts.

## NYGEAR UP

(8th or 9th grade in 2007-2008)  
(9th or 10th grade in 2008-2009)



### ▶ Albany City School District

**Contact: Alexandra Guerrero**  
(518) 454-3987 x990  
fax: (518) 453-9817  
aguerrero@albany.k12.ny.us

*Cohort size: 814*

NYGEAR UP schools:  
Abrookin Vocational Technical Center, Albany HS, Harriet Gibbons HS

### ▶ CUNY Brooklyn College Community Partnership

**Contact: Diane Reiser**  
(718) 951-5015  
fax (718) 951-5927  
dreiser@brooklyn.cuny.edu

*Cohort size: 440*

NYGEAR UP schools:  
Academy for Environmental Leadership, Academy of Urban Planning, Bushwick HS for Social Justice, HS for Youth and Community Development

### ▶ Long Island University/Brooklyn

**Contact: Pia Stevens Haynes**  
(718) 488-3313  
fax (718) 780-4045  
pia.haynes@liu.edu

*Cohort size: 420*

NYGEAR UP schools:  
Benjamin Banneker Academy, Science Skills Center HS

### ▶ New Rochelle City School District

**Contact: Gregoria Feliciano**  
(914) 576-4273  
fax: (914) 576-4273  
gfeliciano@nred.org

*Cohort size: 383*

NYGEAR UP schools:  
New Rochelle HS

### ▶ Rochester Institute of Technology

**Contact: Dianne L. Spang**  
(585) 475-2984  
fax (585) 475-2888  
dlspp@rit.edu

*Cohort size: 746*

NYGEAR UP schools:  
Bioscience and Health Career School at Franklin, East HS, Global Media Arts HS at Franklin, International Finance & Economic Development Career School at Franklin

### ▶ Rome City School District

**Contact: Matt Holupko**  
(315) 334-7200  
fax (315) 334-7285  
mholupko@romecsd.org

*Cohort size: 413*

NYGEAR UP schools:  
Rome Free Academy

### ▶ St. John's University

**Contact: Yvette Morgan**  
(718) 990-2532  
fax (718) 990-2383  
morgany@stjohns.edu

**Contact: Andre McKenzie**  
(718) 990-1893  
fax (718) 990-2383  
mckenzia@stjohns.edu

*Cohort size: 308*

NYGEAR UP schools:  
Long Island City HS, Albert Shanker School of Visual and Performing Arts

### ▶ SUNY Cobleskill

**Contact: Linda Carpenter**  
(518) 255-5362  
fax (518) 255-5365  
lcarpenter3@yahoo.com

*Cohort size: 480*

NYGEAR UP schools:  
Charlotte Valley CS, Fort Plain CS, Jefferson CS, Laurens CS, Middleburgh CS, Morris CS, Owen D. Young CS, Richfield Springs CS, St. Johnsville CS, South Kortright CS, Stamford CS

### ▶ SUNY Jamestown Community College

**Contact: Faith Graham**  
(716) 338-1101  
fax (716) 338-1466  
faithgraham@mail.sunyjc.edu

*Cohort size: 524*

NYGEAR UP schools:  
Dunkirk HS, Jamestown HS

### ▶ Syracuse University

**Contact: Bernice Bradway**  
(315) 443-1799  
fax (315) 443-3976  
bbradway@syr.edu

*Cohort size: 1,747*

NYGEAR UP schools:  
Central Technical Vocational Center, Corcoran HS, Fowler HS, Henninger HS, Nottingham HS

### ▶ Yonkers City School District

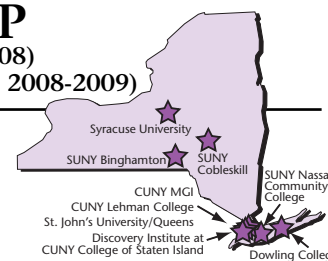
**Contact: Fern Eisgrub**  
(914) 376-8213  
fax (914) 423-0518  
feisgrub@yonkerspublicschools.org

*Cohort size: 920*

NYGEAR UP schools:  
Gorton HS, Lincoln HS, Riverside HS, Roosevelt HS, Saunders HS, Yonkers HS

## Federal GEAR UP

(7th, 8th, 9th grades in 2007-2008)  
(Between 7th and 10th grade in 2008-2009)



### ▶ Bronx Institute at CUNY Lehman College\*

**Contact: Elsie Padilla-Ayala**  
(718) 960-5782  
fax (718) 960-7219  
elsie.padilla-ayala@lehman.cuny.edu

**Contact: Kevin Anthony**  
(718) 960-8404  
fax (718) 960-7219  
kevin.anthony@lehman.cuny.edu

*Cohort size: 3,410*

GEAR UP schools:  
Bronx School for Law, Government and Justice, Celia Cruz Bronx HS of Music, DeWitt Clinton HS, Frederick Douglass Academy III, Information and Network Technology Academy, Mott Hall Bronx HS, Riverdale/Kingsbridge Academy, Urban Assembly School for Applied Math and Science, West Bronx Academy for the Future

### ▶ CUNY MGI GEAR UP

**Contact: Sarah McConnell**  
(646) 344-7353  
fax (646) 344-7329  
sarah.mcconnell@mail.cuny.edu

*Cohort size: 1,000*

GEAR UP schools:  
East Bronx Academy for the Future, East Side Community HS, Frederick Douglass Academy II, Henry Street School for International Studies, Hostos Lincoln Academy of Science, IS/HS 10 Frederick Douglass Academy, MS/HS 368 Information Network and Technology Academy, Queens Gateway to Health Sciences School, Renaissance Charter School, South Bronx Preparatory, Thurgood Marshall Academy

### ▶ Discovery Institute at CUNY College of Staten Island

**Contact: Sajdah Um'rani-Mansur**  
(718) 982-2325  
fax (718) 982-2327  
umrani-mansur@mail.csi.cuny.edu

*Cohort size: 772*

GEAR UP schools:  
Dreyfus IS 49

### ▶ Dowling College

**Contact: Rhoda Miller**  
(631) 244-3335  
fax (631) 244-5088  
miller@dowling.edu

*Cohort size: 123*

GEAR UP schools:  
Wyandanch Memorial HS

### ▶ St. John's University

**Contact: Yvette Morgan**  
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morgany@stjohns.edu

**Contact: Andre McKenzie**  
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mckenzia@stjohns.edu

*Cohort size: 327*

GEAR UP schools:  
Long Island City HS, Albert Shanker School of Visual and Performing Arts, Oliver Wendell Holmes MS

### ▶ SUNY Binghamton University

**Contact: Idalmis Batista-Blair**  
(607) 777-6232  
fax (607) 777-4187  
ibatista@binghamton.edu

*Cohort size: 905*

GEAR UP schools:  
Binghamton HS, East MS, West MS

### ▶ SUNY Cobleskill

**Contact: Paul Turner**  
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fax (518) 255-5365  
liberty@cobleskill.edu

*Cohort size: 480*

GEAR UP schools:  
Charlotte Valley CS, Fort Plain CS, Jefferson CS, Laurens CS, Middleburgh CS, Morris CS, Owen D. Young CS, Richfield Springs CS, St. Johnsville CS, South Kortright CS, Stamford CS

### ▶ SUNY Nassau Community College\*\*

**Contact: Marilyn Monroe**  
(516) 573-3575  
fax (516) 573-3577  
monroem@ncc.edu

*Cohort size: 1,100*

GEAR UP schools:  
Turtle Hook MS, Lawrence Road MS

### ▶ Syracuse University

**Contact: Phillip Haddix**  
(315) 443-1166  
fax (315) 443-3976  
lphaddix@syr.edu

*Cohort size: 3,400*

GEAR UP schools:  
Beard School, Bellevue Academy, Blodgett MS, Clary Magnet School, Danforth Magnet School, Frazer MS, Grant MS, Huntington MS, Levy MS, Lincoln MS, Roberts MS

\* Additional new GEAR UP award/cohort beginning in 2008-09 academic year.

\*\* New GEAR UP award/cohort beginning in 2008-09 academic year.

## NYGEAR UP II Sectors and Partners.

### ► Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities

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(518) 436-4781 x30  
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Contact: Kiersten Hall  
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### ► Association of Proprietary Colleges

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### ► CUNY

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### ► SUNY

Contact: Robert James  
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### ► College Board

Contact: Matt Zarro  
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mzarro@collegeboard.org

### ► NYS Financial Aid Administrators Association

Contact: Cathleen Patella  
(315) 364-3289  
fax (315) 364-3227  
cpatella@wells.edu

## NYS Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC).

### ► NYS Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC)

Contact: Alice Roberson  
(518) 473-5667 office  
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aroberson@hesc.com

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The New York State Higher Education Services Corp. (HESC) is the state agency that has been designated to administer NYGEAR UP. HESC helps people pay for college by providing a comprehensive range of financial aid services, including the Tuition Assistance Program, guaranteeing student loans, offering guidance to students, lenders and colleges, and administering the nationally-recognized New York's College Savings Program. New York State is a leader in the national financial aid community, providing more grant money to college students than any other state in the nation.



A display of a CUNY College of Staten Island (CSI)/Discovery Institute GEAR UP student's project during "Discovery Evening" on March 13, 2008.

**"I always thought that being a disc jockey was easy, that all you needed to do is pick out music to play. I found out that most successful disc jockeys go to college and major in broadcast journalism."**

– A Yonkers City School District NYGEAR UP student

## NYGEAR UP 2008 Events.

(as of August 2008)

### ► HESC Fourth Annual Loan Symposium

The Saratoga Hilton, Saratoga Springs, NY  
September 17 – 18, 2008

### ► NYGEAR UP Technical Workshop

The Century House, Latham, NY  
October 1 – 3, 2008

### ► New York State Financial Aid Administrators Association (NYSFAAA) Annual Conference

Adams Mark Hotel, Buffalo, NY  
October 21 – 24, 2008

### ► Latino College Fair

Sponsored by clcu, the Sallie Mae Fund, and the Bronx Assembly Delegation at College of Mount Saint Vincent, Riverdale, NY

October 25, 2008

For more information contact Jen Lewis at [jen@cicu.org](mailto:jen@cicu.org)

### ► Fall College Fairs

NYSHESC maintains a calendar of upcoming college fairs at

[http://www.hesc.com/content.nsf/SFC/1/College\\_Fair\\_Calendar](http://www.hesc.com/content.nsf/SFC/1/College_Fair_Calendar)

This publication is part of a federal grant project that provides the majority of the project's total budget. The remaining funds come from the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities' Outreach Program.

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