

## Four Steps to College.

It takes a united effort – on many fronts - to raise children and guide them to their potential. The messages and examples children see and hear as they grow are critically important. The “Know How 2 Go” campaign’s 4 Steps to College offers four important points that encapsulate what GEAR UP is all about. I encourage you to share these messages with the children in your life:

- *Be a pain.* Tell your students that they need to let everyone know – repeatedly – that they’re going to college and need help to get there.
- *Push yourself.* Help the children in your life see that working a little harder today will make getting into college even easier. The road to college and job preparation grows larger with each year in school, building knowledge through all levels of education: elementary – middle – high school.
- *Find the right fit.* Talk about finding out what kind of college is the best match for their career goals. Put simply, there is a college for everyone with the desire and motivation to attend.
- *Put your hands on some cash.* If the students in your life think they can't afford college, think again. There's lots of aid out there.

In this *In Gear* you'll notice that these same messages are at the heart of the efforts and hard work undertaken in guiding our GEAR UP and NYGEAR UP students on the path to college and career. These stories include: CUNY Brooklyn College NYGEAR UP students using digital technology to create projects on issues affecting their communities; a Dowling College GEAR UP 11th grade student chosen as a U.S. House of Representatives Page; a Rochester Institute of Technology NYGEAR UP student interning at RIT's internationally known Center for Imaging Science; SUNY Jamestown NYGEAR UP students earning college credits; Syracuse University NYGEAR UP students broadcasting a weekly radio program; and a Yonkers NYGEAR UP student discovering a possible future career at a summer computer camp.

— 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 11 in academic year 2009-10, 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 5,192 students in grades 6 or 7. Most recently, in the 2008 competition, three partnerships in the state were awarded new six-year grants. See pages 23-24 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 “State 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).

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### Inside: Learn about the inspiring activities at each of the GEAR UP programs in New York (listed by grant lead organization):

\* NYGEAR UP grantees. ^ Federal GEAR UP grantees.

Note: Some organizations received more than one grant, signaled by the type/number of symbols after their name.

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# Resources: Preparing for College

## College for Every Student (CFES)

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

College for Every Student is a nonprofit organization that grew out of a three-year study sponsored by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC). CFES has helped more than 100,000 students in 540 schools raise their academic performance, graduate from high school, and enter college. Their College Connect program is a national alliance of institutions, including 39 of New York State's private, independent colleges and universities, committed to developing programs for underserved students. The site offers links to resources for students and families that include quizzes on colleges in specific areas, forms for application fee waivers, mentoring programs, and service opportunities.

## Center for Student Opportunity (CSO)

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

The Center for Student Opportunity, a nonprofit organization, promotes a college-going culture and higher education opportunities for first-generation and other underserved college-bound students. The CSO online College Center is a clearinghouse of college programs and admissions information that offers a college guide, an "ask the experts", a database of information about CSO partner colleges, and a ConnectNow page to link students with partner colleges and universities.

## College Navigator

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

At this site, hosted by the U.S. Department of Education, students beginning a college search can learn about nearly 7,000 U.S. colleges and universities searching the databases to narrow down options, build a list of colleges to compare, and pinpoint locations with an interactive map.

## New York State Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC)

<http://www.hesc.com>

HESC's site offers links to information about saving for college, filling out applications for grants and loans, and up-to-date news about financial aid for college. A "quick reference" guide to grants, scholarships, and awards can be found at: [www.hesc.com/content.nsf/SFC/Grants\\_Scholarships\\_and\\_Awards](http://www.hesc.com/content.nsf/SFC/Grants_Scholarships_and_Awards).

## KnowHow2Go

<http://knowhow2go.org/>

A project of the American Council on Education and the Lumina Foundation, this site offers general advice, specific tips, free student newsletters, and links to online resources about college awareness and readiness for middle and high school students, and mentors. Topics covered include "Why College?" "Get Ready," "Find Help," "Talk to an Adult," "Explore Your Interests," "College Myths," "Talking to Your Teen," and "Success Stories," along with a quiz for each grade level that tests a student's knowledge of what is needed to prepare for college. The section for mentors is available in both English and Spanish.

## New York's Private, Independent 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.

## Pathways to College Network

<http://www.pathwaystocollege.net/>

The Pathways to College Network, directed by the nonprofit Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP), is an alliance of organizations that promotes college access and success for underserved students. The site includes a searchable database of research and publications, college access and success data by state, and an online directory of resources for students, families, educators, and mentors in conjunction with the KnowHow2Go campaign.

## Step-by-Step to College

<http://www.nacacnet.org/PublicationsResources/Marketplace/student/Pages/GuidingEducation.aspx>

This curriculum, developed by members of the National Association for College Admission Counseling, is presented in three manuals for middle school students (grades 7 – 8), early high school students (9 – first semester of 11), and late high school students (11 – 12). A *Guide for Parents* is available in English and Spanish, as is a downloadable PowerPoint presentation.



City School District of Albany NYGEAR UP students visit the Robert W. Woodruff Library at Clark Atlanta University during the 2010 African-American Heritage College Tour on June 28-July 1, 2010.



Attentive students participate in a session on financial aid at the May 4, 2010, cIcu/College Board PDW at Hartwick College.

# GEAR UP in New York State

## Program and Activity Highlights – Focus on GEAR UP Student Stories

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

#### ► BI GEAR UP Network's First College Graduates

Students from the Bronx Institute's 1999-2005 GEAR UP group are celebrating graduation from colleges and universities. The GEAR UP Class of 2006 was the first in the Bronx to complete this college-readiness program. Below are some of the GEAR UP graduates receiving their degrees this year.

*Featured GEAR UP graduate: Andrea Cabrera, B.S. in industrial management and engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute*

I would not have gone to RPI had I not been in GEAR UP. GEAR UP gave me the confidence to go to a school far from home. It helped me prepare for standardized tests, apply to college, and get recommendations. It was like a family and a support system.

*Featured GEAR UP graduate: Jorge Martinez, B.A. in communication from SUNY University at Buffalo*

When I was 14, GEAR UP helped me find a summer job that instilled a work ethic in me. That year, I was one of 30 students selected to attend the National GEAR UP Conference, where I gave a presentation to 2,000 people. That experience was so transforming.

*Featured GEAR UP graduate: Daniel Morales-Armstrong, B.A. in criminal justice and psychology from SUNY University at Albany; admitted to Harvard University's Graduate School of Education*

GEAR UP gave me a framework for improving the lives of the next generation. I learned that life skills — self-evaluation, self-improvement, and leadership — are just as important as academic skills.

*Featured GEAR UP graduate: Stacy Vargas, B.A. in mathematics education from CUNY Lehman College*

In high school I began to think seriously about teaching. I was always good at math, but GEAR UP helped me to improve in other subjects and that made a difference when I applied to the CUNY Teacher Academy, a competitive program.

#### ► Bronx GEAR UP 8th Grade Student Stories

*Bronx Institute GEAR UP Network's student stories were submitted by Iwan Notowidigdo, Director of Sustainability, BI GEAR UP Network at CUNY Lehman College.*

#### • Academic Enrichment Coursework "Promoting Social Action Through Literature"

*Featured Student: Moesha Clarke, 8th grade GEAR UP, Henry Hudson JHS 125*

As part of GEAR UP, I attend an after-school program. In the class, we read books and share our views on what is going on in the story. We also ask each other questions. It is really cool because we are learning about society and social justice through literature. In the story "Harrison Bergeron," Kurt Vonnegut uses humor to talk about the issues of equality and how forced equality is as unjust as inequality. I told friends about this class, and they started coming, too. It is fun to be in this class, and it makes me want to read more!

*Featured Student: Jeffrey Armstrong, 8th grade GEAR UP, West Bronx Academy for the Future, MS/HS 243*

The first story we read was all about social equality and making the athletic handicapped and the beautiful ugly so that we are all at the same level. If this came true, we would have no great basketball players, models, or intelligent citizens. We would probably end up with people who are not able to do well in anything. What makes our country great is that we all have different skills and interests. Differences in people do not make them unequal, differences just make people different.

*Featured Student: Lexus Serrano, 8th grade GEAR UP, Henry Hudson JHS 125*

When the class started, I didn't even know what "social action" meant. I have learned that "social action" means dealing with and facing issues in our society. We read short stories about people who want to change the world we live in to make it a better place. Before this class I didn't really understand how to have a discussion about literature, but now I am practically an expert.

*Featured Student: Victoria Beddoe, 8th grade GEAR UP, Henry Hudson JHS 125*

Even though we all read the same thing, we have very different ideas and opinions about what we are reading. The class is helping me to think about social justice issues in a totally different way. It is also helping me learn to ask critical thinking questions as I read. For example, after reading Vonnegut we discussed the issue of equality. I feel that this class has helped me become a better reader and student.

*Featured Student: Harold Sanchez, 8th grade GEAR UP, West Bronx Academy for the Future MS/HS 243*

We meet twice a week and read a story together and engage in lessons and activities the second session. The stories we read are definitely advanced because we have been reading things that kids in high school are reading. It feels good to be reading stories that

really make me think. Best of all, we get to keep the stories, so I can read my favorites over again!

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**"The GEAR UP program has helped me prepare for high school. They provide us with after-school programs that vary from math to science and even Spanish. They are making education more exciting with new and different opportunities. This is why I love GEAR UP."**

*– Nathaniel Velasquez, 8th grade BI at CUNY Lehman College GEAR UP student*

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#### • Lab Programs: A Bridge to High School

Classes include Living Environment, Earth Science and Microbiology

*Featured Student: Alex Garvin, 8th grade GEAR UP, Aspire Preparatory School MS 322*

In the Living Environment class I have particularly enjoyed learning about evolution, reproduction and how most life on Earth depends on the sun for its energy. GEAR UP is helping me prepare to do well in science in high school, and I look forward to taking Earth Science and astronomy.

*Featured Student: Victor Aza, 8th grade GEAR UP, Thomas C. Giordano MS 45*

In Biology this fall, we studied animals like cougars and bears. We also learned that in high school we will have to take science classes that include lab work, so we worked on improving our lab skills. This winter, we studied Earth Science to prepare for the 9th grade Regents. We learned about geological maps, different kinds of rocks, climate changes over time and about events like tornados, hurricanes and earthquakes.

*Featured Student: Ashley Castillo, 8th grade GEAR UP, Bronx School for Law, Government and Justice 505*

In our Introduction to Microbiology class, I've learned about cells and food chains. My favorite lesson was when we had to fill out a chart and draw the different organisms we saw under the microscope. I really believe this class is helping me prepare for high school because it is more advanced than our science classes and we get to do fun, hands-on experiments with our teacher.

*Bronx 8th Grade Student Stories,  
continued on page 4.*

### **Bronx 8th Grade Student Stories, continued from page 3.**

**Featured Student: Tara Gregory, 8th grade GEAR UP, Bronx School for Law, Government and Justice MS 505**

In our Introduction to Microbiology class, we learned how to use microscopes to look at bacteria. As an assignment, we had to read and present on different organisms. I chose the cockroach. I learned things about cockroaches that I never learned before, like the fact they can fly.

**Featured Student: David Polanco, 8th grade GEAR UP, Information and Technology Academy (In-Tech) MS/HS 368**

I am attending the Earth Science Regents after-school program. I would recommend it to those who are planning to take the Regents. Throughout the course, I have learned a lot about Earth and the different types of things that live on it. If you are going to take the Regents exam, you will not only be prepared for it, but you will also get high school credits.

**Featured Student: Tana Cambrelen, 8th grade GEAR UP, Edward R. Byrne MS 101**

I make my Earth Science Regents prep class a priority. I will be able to earn high school credit early, which may give me an opportunity to take college classes in high school. We are currently learning about Earth's electromagnetic field and how it helps to maintain an atmosphere suitable for life. I look forward to learning more about astronomy.

**Featured Student: Melanie Reyes, 8th grade GEAR UP, Aspire Preparatory School MS 322**

I enjoy being ahead of my peers, and the GEAR UP program provides us with after-school science classes that prepare us for high school level courses. For example, in a presentation on Our Dynamic Planet, we learned how to explore Earth by using a global microscope that showed three-dimensional projections of our planet. In addition to the challenge of taking a high school level course, I enjoy knowing that I will receive extra practice to make sure that I pass the NYS Regents Exam.

#### **• Transition Into High School**

With help from their school-based Project Associates, students write about preparing for high school.

**Featured Student: Bintia Drame, 8th grade GEAR UP, Thomas C. Giordano MS 45**

GEAR UP is helping me prepare for high school. For example, in algebra class we do high school level work to prepare us for the Algebra Regents. We took a GEAR UP class with our Project Associate, and learned that we will have to take many Regents Examinations to apply to good colleges.

**Featured Student: Emperatriz Osorio, 8th grade GEAR UP, Urban Assembly School for Applied Math and Science MS/HS 241**

My GEAR UP Project Associate has helped me prepare for high school. We have done activities to let us know what to expect in high school and to

help improve our skills in areas like time management. I know that it's important to plan ahead and set a schedule that I can stick to so that my academic life never becomes overwhelming.

**Featured Student: Lewis Gonzalez, 8th grade GEAR UP, In-Tech Academy MS/HS 368**

GEAR UP has given me a lot of information about high school and college. I attended a family event at CUNY Lehman College and learned a lot more about the high school application process and how to get comfortable in my new high school.

**Featured Student: Emely Lorenzo, 8th grade GEAR UP, In-Tech Academy MS/HS 368**

With all the things I have learned from GEAR UP, I now know I am ready and prepared for high school. I have been meeting with my Project Associate one-on-one to check on my grades and make sure everything is going well in my classes. GEAR UP has taught me things that I really didn't know about, such as high school requirements and the importance of doing well in 9th grade.

**Featured Student: Karina Dominicci, 8th grade GEAR UP, In-Tech Academy MS/HS 368**

I participated in a GEAR UP after-school program called "Math Acceleration" that helped me to improve my math skills and better understand high school math concepts. I now feel that I am ready for high school math, thanks to GEAR UP and our teacher. Our GEAR UP Project Associate has also helped me to prepare for high school by doing workshops on different topics, such as note taking and study skills.

**Featured Student: Nathaniel Velasquez, 8th grade GEAR UP, In-Tech Academy MS/HS 368**

GEAR UP talks a lot about setting yourself up to be a successful student in high school, and Regents classes are making it possible for us to have a chance to earn high school credit while we are still in middle school. GEAR UP provides us with after-school programs that vary from math to science and even Spanish. The program makes education more exciting with new and different opportunities. This is why I love GEAR UP.

#### **► South Bronx GEAR UP 9th Grade Student Stories**

##### **• Building Our Future: Using Technology**

Preparing homework, researching school projects, and learning about colleges are among the many ways students use the laptops they received this year through GEAR UP.

**Featured Student: Mohammed Awad, 9th grade GEAR UP, New World HS 513**

I received a laptop from GEAR UP. I use it a lot for homework. I research information when I don't know the answer to something and do research on topics assigned by my teachers for projects and reports. We have been talking a lot about financial aid for college during GEAR UP advisories, and having a laptop will help me research and apply for scholarships to pay for my college education.

**Featured Student: Kayla Chacon, 9th grade GEAR UP, Bronx HS for the Visual Arts HS 418**

It is very important for students to have access to a computer. I use my laptop in different ways. I look up information about summer internships and jobs in my neighborhoods. I go online to a college Web site and find out about the admission requirements and I do research for my homework assignments. I use my laptop to become a better student.

**Featured Student: Rosemarie Gervacio, 9th grade GEAR UP, Pablo Neruda Academy HS 305**

I'm using my new laptop in many ways. It is very helpful as a tool to learn new things. I get homework help online and find out more about what I'm learning in school. The more I learn and know, the better I do in school and thanks to getting a laptop, I'm better prepared and getting better grades.

**Featured Student: Giselle Gutierrez, 9th grade GEAR UP, Collegiate Institute for Math and Science HS 288**

Getting my GEAR UP laptop has made becoming a better student much easier. I can do lots of things I would have never been able to do before. Research projects where I have to use the Internet are a lot easier to complete. I use my laptop to find out about careers and colleges I'm interested in, and use my e-mail account to be in touch with colleges and summer programs I want to learn more about.

Before, when I had to do research for a school project, I had to go to the public library. That doesn't seem that bad, right? But every time I went to the library, either the computer wasn't working or all the computers were being used and I'd have to wait for hours to get a turn. Even then, my half hour time slot was usually too short a time for me to finish my assignment.

Having Microsoft Word is another great feature about my GEAR UP laptop. The program helps me with spelling, punctuation, and grammar and there is a dictionary, so I can look up words.

**Featured Student: Janai Whitley, 9th grade GEAR UP, Harry S Truman HS 455**

I don't think people ever really think about how useful it is to have a computer for schoolwork. I think my new laptop will open many doors for me because now I will be able to complete my homework consistently, especially writing assignments and research. I am able to look for colleges that are a good match for me. Having a laptop allows me to

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**"GEAR UP has taught me things that I really didn't know about, such as high school requirements and the importance of doing well in 9th grade."**

– Karina Dominicci, an 8th grade GEAR UP In-Tech Academy student

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communicate with my teachers more easily so that I have the ability to get help when I don't understand something in school.

### • Succeeding in 9th Grade

GEAR UP uses academic advising, mentoring, after-school enrichment programs, educational field trips, leadership conferences, and college and career workshops to help prepare students to succeed in high school and college.

*Featured Student: Iyesagie Aghahowa, 9th grade GEAR UP, Pelham Preparatory Academy, HS 542*

The GEAR UP program has helped me throughout my first year in high school. Ninth grade has been the hardest grade so far for me. GEAR UP has a variety of after-school programs that have helped me in classes such as algebra.

To me, algebra is math mixed with English. I didn't understand how you could multiply two numbers and get a letter until a friend of mine who went to GEAR UP algebra tutoring explained it to me. Since I have Living Environment lab during algebra tutoring sessions, I couldn't go myself.

The program I did go to, CollegeEd, helped me gain a better understanding of what colleges are looking for. As part of the program, we visited a few Web sites that help you figure out the types of colleges that are best suited for you.

*Featured Student: Angel Butron, 9th grade GEAR UP, Collegiate Institute for Math and Science HS 288*

My GEAR UP Project Associate is not only my mentor, he has become a person I can go to whenever I need help at school or want to talk about my future. One of the things my Project Associate helped me with was teaching me how to use Microsoft PowerPoint. I needed to create a presentation for my English class, and he showed me how to create one, including how to use animation and colors in the slides. He also taught me about font size and general rules of PowerPoint presentations. When I was struggling in geometry, my Project Associate placed me in a GEAR UP geometry tutoring session after school that helped me raise my grades and understand the class material better.

*Featured Student: Elvis Lizardo, 9th grade GEAR UP, Collegiate Institute for Math and Science HS 288*

Thanks to GEAR UP I've become more self-motivated, improved my work habits and have maintained a high grade point average. My GEAR UP Project Associate has taught me the value of doing well in high school so that when I graduate, I can go to college. That college is very important to succeed in life is a fact 9th graders need to understand. My Project Associate took us to a student conference about leadership at Fordham University and I realized that if I keep working hard, I could be one of the students who receives grants and scholarships to go to college.

*Featured Student: Kiana Gonzalez, 9th grade GEAR UP, Astor Collegiate Academy HS 299*

I took a GEAR UP after-school class about preparing for college that my Project Associate helped teach. I learned about different types of colleges, degrees, how much college costs and so on. This class encouraged me to start a college savings account ever since I found out the potential cost of college. My GEAR UP Project Associate has helped me understand what colleges will be looking for in students. He helped me improve my writing skills and recommended that I go to tutoring. I went to tutoring for my Living Environment class and now I'm getting better grades on quizzes and other classwork.

*Featured Student: Kerving Aly Jordan Chochette, 9th grade GEAR UP, New World HS 513*

GEAR UP has helped me in 9th grade in many ways. I go to GEAR UP after school to get help with my science, math and English assignments. I also go to an after-school ESL Literature to Life class, and it has helped to improve my speaking, reading and writing skills in English. I am from Haiti and find these after-school classes very helpful.

I also participate in the GardenWorks program at The New York Botanical Garden. When I first saw the garden, I thought it was very beautiful and I wanted to bring my family to see it. There are many ways my Project Associate has helped me. I am working with her to find a summer job or internship and a program to help me improve my academic skills. We have also been talking about careers and college preparation during GEAR UP advisories. I know that I want to be an engineer when I grow up. I have learned that I need to keep my grades up in high school to get into college, and that I need to do really well in math to be an engineer.

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**“Thanks, GEAR UP, for helping me learn about myself and helping me find my best fit in a college.”**

– *Natasha Quiroz, 11th grade In-Tech Academy BI at CUNY Lehman College GEAR UP student*

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### ► Bronx Institute GEAR UP Network 11th Grade Student Stories

#### • College Trips

In their junior year of high school, students researched colleges and prepared for a series of BI GEAR UP Network-sponsored college trips.

*Featured Student: José Pascual, 11th grade GEAR UP, Mott Hall HS 252*

Mott Hall's college trip to Boston produced many unforgettable moments. The admissions counselors were very helpful and offered valuable information.

The visit to Boston College was particularly enjoyable. For the first time in my life, I could truly see myself on a college campus. I walked away impressed with the academics and attracted to the culture, two essential keys when deciding on a school.

*Featured Student: Carlos Santiago, 11th grade GEAR UP, Mott Hall HS 252*

Visiting a college gave me a better understanding of colleges. In Boston, we had the choice of visiting Boston College, Brandeis College, Northeastern University, Tufts University, Wentworth Institute of Technology and Harvard University. The colleges that really caught my eye were Brandeis and Harvard. That was probably the first time I really felt excited about my own path, to move forward in my personal transition. Without this trip, I don't know if I would have experienced this kind of enthusiasm. My interest and dedication have never been stronger, and that's in great part due to an amazing few days learning about so much more than just a couple of colleges.

*Featured Student: Stephanie Diaz, 11th grade GEAR UP, In-Tech Academy MS/HS 368*

Going to Vassar College was a wonderful experience. At the college, I got the chance to talk with the admissions director. The best part of her speech was when she spoke about the life of a Vassar student. I also learned that the science department is extremely strong, as are the arts and humanities. Because Vassar doesn't have a major in engineering, Vassar has a dual degree program with Dartmouth College so that students majoring in engineering can spend one of their four years at Dartmouth. The student then has the option to go to Dartmouth for their fifth year. That student will not only have acquired a Bachelor of Arts from Vassar but can also get a Bachelor of Engineering from Dartmouth, thereby obtaining two degrees in five years. It was exciting to hear about a partnership like this, which fits my interests perfectly. Vassar has been an inspiration to me, and it is definitely on my college list.

*Featured Student: Nathasha Quiroz, 11th grade GEAR UP, In-Tech Academy MS/HS 368*

I visited Vassar College in February with my GEAR UP Project Associate and a group of students from the program. College visits are important because they help me realize what I'm looking for in a college. We were introduced to Vassar physics professors and some of their students. While doing an assignment for the physics class, I was able to explore the campus further. I got a feeling for what a college class and college professors and students are like. The experience made the idea of going to college much more real for me. While I met many different types of interesting students, I realized that I'd much prefer to study at a big university possibly in a city like Boston or Chicago. Thanks, GEAR UP, for helping me learn about myself and helping me find my best fit in a college.

*Bronx Institute GEAR UP 11th Grade Student Stories, continued on page 6.*

**Bronx Institute GEAR UP 9th Grade Student Stories, continued from page 5.**

**Featured Student: Jazmin Abreu, 11th grade GEAR UP, Bronx Leadership Academy HS 525**  
Visiting St. John's University was an insightful experience. What I liked best about the school was the study abroad program. It is a good example of the many academic and cultural opportunities offered at St. John's. The University is also socially diverse, and I liked seeing students from a variety of cultures on campus. I felt comfortable walking around its beautiful grounds and liked its location because it isn't too far from home. St. John's University is one of my top choices and I am looking forward to applying this fall.

**CUNY Lehman College Majors Fair**

The Lehman College Majors Fair provided an opportunity to meet CUNY Lehman College faculty members and learn about their departments, majors offered, and the Macaulay Honors College at Lehman.

**Featured Student: Calixto Mariano, 11th grade GEAR UP, Bronx HS for Medical Science HS 413**  
The college orientation event at CUNY Lehman College was motivating. The speakers made me want to work harder in my junior year to do my best. Some of the speakers were actual students who are in the Macaulay Honors program at CUNY Lehman College and their success stories were inspiring.

**Featured Student: Ashley Williams, 11th grade GEAR UP, Bronx Leadership Academy HS 525**  
When I attended the Macaulay Honors presentation at CUNY Lehman College, I was well informed about what the program has to offer and far more interested in that school than I was before. I left Lehman very excited about this opportunity.

**Featured Student: Monet Lewis, 11th grade GEAR UP, In-Tech Academy MS/HS 368**  
In mid-March we visited Lehman College, a part of the City University of New York, for a talk about the Macaulay Honors Program. We heard from school admissions representatives, heads of educational programs, and students. The stories made me realize the caliber of the students in the program. I realized that going to a rigorous college like Macaulay would help me achieve future educational goals and professional success.

**• Academic Enrichment and Test Prep Courses**

To prepare to meet the challenges of college-level coursework, students have participated in a variety of CUNY College Now and Advanced Placement classes as well as SAT and ACT preparation classes.

**Featured Student: Nejra Sabovic, 11th grade GEAR UP, DeWitt Clinton HS 440**  
My guidance counselor strongly recommended that we enroll in Advanced Placement courses beginning in freshman year. As a student who took AP Global



*Long Island University 11th grade NYGEAR UP students participate in a 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens workshop at Benjamin Banneker Academy on April 15, 2010.*

History and is currently taking AP English Language and AP American History, I believe I am more prepared for college. As juniors, we challenged ourselves by registering for College Now classes, such as philosophy and political science, taught at CUNY Lehman College twice a week. These classes give us a sense of the difficulty of college level courses, which are much harder than the typical classes.

**Featured Student: Kimberly Morante, 11th grade GEAR UP, DeWitt Clinton HS 440**  
Advanced Placement courses are classes that actually made me work for my grades and gave me an idea of what college classes would be like. College Now provided me with something very similar, but was much more enriching by allowing us the opportunity to experience classes in a college environment. I feel excited and ready to start applying to college next year because I've challenged myself in high school and am ready for the next big step.

**Featured Student: Tasnim Chowdhury, 11th grade GEAR UP, DeWitt Clinton HS 440**  
Prior to junior year, I never really understood the importance of writing. AP English, however, was a rude awakening to how an English class was supposed to be. It showed me how underdeveloped my writing actually was. I have since developed a mature tone in my writing and believe I am writing at a college level this year. Overall, my skills have progressed and I can now take this approach to writing with me in my next step to college.

**Featured Student: Kevin Cabassa, International School for Liberal Arts (ISLA) HS 342**  
After completing the SAT prep class, I am better prepared to take the official exam. The program taught us strategies that you don't learn in school to improve your score. The teacher was excellent at explaining problems that we thought were almost impossible to answer. He showed us ways to break down hard math problems so that they became easier to solve.

**Featured Student: Adana Augustine, 11th grade GEAR UP, Bronx Leadership Academy HS 525**  
The SAT class with Princeton Review has helped me to prepare for the upcoming exam. I have learned many different techniques for answering the questions on the SAT. With each practice test we take in class, my scores go up! The class was interesting, too. I look forward to every class and I love learning new things. It has been really helpful.

**Featured Student: Sylvester Trevi, 11th grade GEAR UP, Urban Assembly School for Applied Math and Science**  
I knew that enrolling in GEAR UP's SAT prep class would be the smart thing to do, but I did not expect to enjoy it. Taking the course is both "smart" and enjoyable. Not only does the course help me build skills in specific subject areas, but I am learning time-saving strategies to enable me to do well on standardized exams. In addition, SAT prep has helped me see my academic strengths and weaknesses, and I've used the class as an indicator of where I need to improve.

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**"I feel excited and ready to start applying to college next year because I've challenged myself in high school and am ready for the next big step."**

*– Kimberly Morante, 11th grade DeWitt Clinton HS BI at CUNY Lehman College GEAR UP student*

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## 2010 Professional Development Workshops (PDWs)

The Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (clcu), in partnership with the College Board and with additional support from CUNY, organized two NYGEAR UP Professional Development Workshops (PDWs) this past spring, inviting GEAR UP staff, school personnel, and parents. The first PDW was hosted by Hartwick College on May 4, 2010; the second took place on the Bronx campus of Mercy College on May 11, 2010.

At the Hartwick College PDW, a plenary panel on “Sustainable Living and Learning” focused on Hartwick’s Pine Lake Institute for Environmental and Sustainability Studies, a community of students and faculty learning about the environment in a natural setting. Breakout sessions covered the SAT, Advanced Placement (AP), and Accuplacer; college admissions; transition and transfer; financial aid; and college opportunity programs.

At Mercy College, its unique PACT program, in which students are paired with mentors who help them create individualized plans for academic and personal success, was the subject of a plenary panel. The roundtable topics included college admissions; the SAT, AP, and Accuplacer; financial aid; opportunity programs; transition and transfer; “parent power” and the New York City Department of Education’s ARIS (Achievement Reporting and



*Judith Lorimer, Director of OPTIONS College Access Professional Development Institute, talks with GEAR UP professionals at the May 11, 2010 PDW, co-organized by the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities and College Board at Mercy College.*



*Costas Solomou from the University of Rochester and Keith Outlaw from St. Joseph's College “Speed Date” with GEAR UP professionals at the May 4, 2010 PDW, co-organized by the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities and College Board at Mercy College.*

Innovation System) program; and the challenges that face college-going immigrant students.

Both PDWs offered an “admissions speed dating” session, a popular session during which participants met college representatives and learned about their institutions and their requirements. At the Hartwick College PDW, attendees “dated” representatives of 8 colleges: Hartwick College, Canisius College, Daemen College, Keuka College, Mount Saint Mary College, St. John’s University, St. Joseph’s College, and the University of Rochester. At Mercy College, “speed daters” met representatives of 10 colleges and universities: Mercy College, Adelphi University, The College of New Rochelle, Metropolitan College, Mount Saint Mary College, St. John’s University, St. Thomas Aquinas College, Sarah Lawrence College, the University of Rochester, and Vaughn College of Aeronautics and Technology. Also participating in the workshops were experts from Marist College and The Sage Colleges. A College Board plenary panel offering a research and advocacy update concluded both PDWs.

Feedback from participants at both PDWs revealed that they found the sessions very rewarding and extremely inspiring.

# City School District of Albany (CSDA)

## ► NYGEAR UP Activities

### • After-school Tutoring

January through May, 2010

Tutors from SUNY University at Albany provided academic support services to NYGEAR UP students at Albany HS and Abrookin Vocational Technical Center.

### • College Club Mondays

January 2010

NYGEAR UP students participated in college preparatory workshops using the College Board's College Ed curriculum.

### • Trip to American Museum of Natural History

January 27, 2010

17 NYGEAR UP students visited the American Museum of Natural History where they participated in an Evidence of Evolution laboratory lesson and the Hayden Planetarium's Journey to the Stars. CSDA NYGEAR UP Program Coordinator Alexandra Guerrero, Liberty Partnership Director Candi Griffin Jenkins, and Sabra-Joi Dingman, Assistant Director of Outreach Programs at clcu, accompanied the students.

### • SAT Prep Course

February through March, 2010

NYGEAR UP students reviewed content and worked on test-taking strategies in preparation for the SAT.

### • The College of Saint Rose Ambassador Program

February through May, 2010

Students from The College of Saint Rose provided one-on-one tutoring and mentoring to NYGEAR UP students.

### • Motivational Speaker Series

The Motivational Speaker Series was designed to inspire and motivate students to set goals. The speakers used their own personal stories as an example, and also encouraged parents to persevere and overcome difficulties.

– March 5, 2010 – Coach D: Darrell “Coach D”

Andrews, the first speaker in this series shared stories to motivate students and parents drawing from his own experiences growing up in Syracuse, New York.

– March 30, 2010 – Professor Joe: Dr. Joe Martin,

author of *Good Teachers Never Quit, Let Your Leadership Speak* and columnist for national publications, spoke to Albany HS students, parents, and staff about leading by example and staying on the right track.

– April 21, 2010 – Aric Bostick: Aric Bostick, a former teacher and full-time motivational speaker, talked about how to make good choices, stay in school, be a role model to others, and realize one's potential. Before speaking to all Albany HS students at an assembly, Mr. Bostick led a student leadership workshop with 30 NYGEAR UP students. He also conducted a professional development session for Albany HS staff on building good relationships with students and educating them more effectively.

### • Help for Haiti

March 2010: NYGEAR UP students, along with NYGEAR UP Coordinator Alexandra Guerrero and Albany High School staff, organized a shoe drive to benefit victims of the earthquake in Haiti. The drive encouraged students to become involved in community service and assist others in need.

June 2010: NYGEAR UP students organized a clothing drive to benefit victims of the earthquake in Haiti.

### • SAT Prep Course for ESL Students

April through May, 2010

NYGEAR UP ESL students reviewed content and worked on test-taking strategies to prepare for the SAT.

### • 2010 College Quest

April 8 – 10, 2010

CSDA partnered with the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (clcu) to offer a “College Quest” tour of institutions in the Rochester area. 23 11th grade NYGEAR UP students were accompanied by 5 chaperones, including CSDA and clcu staff. Among the chaperones were Susan Nesbitt Perez, Vice President, Outreach and Financial Aid at clcu; Sabra-Joi Dingman, Assistant Director of Outreach Programs at clcu; Tonya Whitehead, CSDA Teacher; Kenny Griffin, CSDA teacher; and Alexandra Guerrero, NYGEAR UP Coordinator. The College Quest 2010 itinerary included Keuka College, Nazareth College, Roberts Wesleyan College, St. John Fisher College, and the University of Rochester. Before the tour, all students filled out a pre-survey that asked questions about their attitudes toward college, knowledge of college life, previous college visits, and where they saw themselves attending college. During the tour, student teams worked collaboratively on presentations and competed in team challenges. On the trip home, students completed a post-survey and also wrote comments about what they learned.

**“This year I was able to succeed ... I had to realize that my schoolwork is very important and take things more seriously. This meant focusing more on schoolwork, paying attention to lessons, doing my homework, etc.”**

– Janay Peterkin, A Discovery Institute/CUNY CSI GEAR UP student

### • Performance at Proctor's Theatre

April 15, 2010

To increase their appreciation of the arts, 28 NYGEAR UP students attended a performance of *South Pacific* at Proctor's Theatre in Schenectady, New York. Following the performance students debated the themes of the play over dinner. They were accompanied by NYGEAR UP Coordinator Alexandra Guerrero and Albany HS Librarian Sonji Greenaway. Before this event, all students received a lesson in etiquette and a dining etiquette guide.



City School District of Albany NYGEAR UP students pose on the front porch of the house where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was born and raised during the 2010 African-American College Tour on June 28-July 1, 2010.

- **Visit to Syracuse University and Crouse Hospital School of Nursing**  
*April 16, 2010*

27 NYGEAR UP students toured Syracuse University and Crouse Hospital School of Nursing where they learned about academic programs, majors, student life, and career opportunities. NYGEAR UP Coordinator Alexandra Guerrero and Sabra-Joi Dingman, Assistant Director of Outreach Programs at clcu, accompanied the students.

- **Visit to SUNY University at Albany**  
*April 23, 2010*

45 NYGEAR UP students and 1 NYGEAR UP coordinator visited SUNY University at Albany, where they learned about academic programs, majors, student life, and career opportunities offered by the university.

- **Girls' Empowerment Conference**  
*May 10, 2010*

40 NYGEAR UP female students, along with 1 NYGEAR UP coordinator and 1 Albany HS librarian, learned about date rape issues; the use of drugs and alcohol; the differences between healthy and abusive relationships; and how to protect themselves using self-defense techniques.

- **NYGEAR UP Movie Night:**  
*16 Summers*  
*June 10, 2010*

28 NYGEAR UP students, along with Alexandra Guerrero, NYGEAR UP Program Coordinator, and Cynthia Farmer, NYGEAR UP HESC Program Associate, viewed *16 Summers*, a film produced by the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCPEP) in which a family discusses the impact education has had on their lives.

- **2010 African-American Heritage College Tour**  
*June 28 – July 1, 2010*

37 NYGEAR UP students and 4 chaperones visited three Historically Black Colleges and Universities in Atlanta, Georgia: Clark Atlanta University, Morehouse College, and Spelman College. They also visited the King Center, founded by Coretta Scott King as a memorial dedicated to the advancement of the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr., the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, and Auburn Avenue, where Dr. King was born and raised.

**"During each college visit, I learn something new."**

– A City School District of Albany NYGEAR UP student during College Quest 2010

## CUNY Brooklyn College Community Partnership (BCCP)

- ▶ **CUNY Brooklyn College NYGEAR UP Student Stories**

*Submitted by Nate Klooster, Site Director, Bushwick Campus, CUNY Brooklyn College NYGEAR UP.*

*Featured Students: Stevenson Catul, 11th grade NYGEAR UP, Academy of Urban Planning; Alfonso Gonzalez, 11th grade, New York Harbor School; Bairon Guerrero, 11th grade NYGEAR UP, Academy for Environmental Leadership; Jonathan Roldon, 11th grade NYGEAR UP, Bushwick School for Social Justice*

Aspiring filmmakers Stevenson Catul, Alfonso Gonzalez, Bairon Guerrero, and Jonathan Roldon attended the 2010 Tribeca Film Festival where they viewed work by BCCP students and drew inspiration for their own films. The students are leaders of the Project Peace Media Collective, a group that learns how to use digital technology, including video, photography, and blogs, to create projects centered on social justice and community issues. Videos by BCCP students can be viewed at [bushwick.thebccp.org](http://bushwick.thebccp.org).

- ▶ **NYGEAR UP Activities**

- **College Pays Workshops**

*February 3 and 23, 2010; May 19 and 20, 2010*

80 11th grade NYGEAR UP students from Bushwick School for Social Justice and High School for Youth and Community Development participated in an interactive workshop highlighting the financial benefits of higher education. Students found out about the average annual incomes of high school dropouts, high school graduates, college graduates, and individuals with graduate degrees.

- **Visit to SUNY College at Old Westbury**

*March 3, 2010*

40 11th grade NYGEAR UP Academy for Environmental Leadership students toured the SUNY College at Old Westbury campus.

- **Tour of CUNY Baruch College**

*March 5 and May 14, 2010*

On two separate dates, 30 NYGEAR UP students from the Academy of Urban Planning and 5 from the High School for Youth and Community Development toured CUNY Baruch College.



*CUNY Brooklyn College NYGEAR UP 11th grade students Barion Guerrero, Stevenson Catul, Alfonso Gonzalez, and Jonathan Roldon walk the red carpet at the Tribeca Film Festival with NYGEAR UP Bushwick Campus Site Director Nate Klooster in the spring of 2010.*

- **Dance Group Trip to CUNY Hunter College**

*March 5 and May 14, 2010*

The Bushwick campus after-school dance group toured CUNY Hunter College and enjoyed a performance by the Hunter College Dance Company; the students also learned about studying dance in college.

- **CUNY Brooklyn College Shadow Day**  
*May 7, 2010*

25 11th grade NYGEAR UP students from Academy for Environmental Leadership, Academy of Urban Planning, Bushwick School for Social Justice, and High School for Youth and Community Development joined other students at CUNY Brooklyn College's biannual Shadow Day. This event pairs a small group of high school students with a college student whom they follow for the day in order to experience what college has to offer. The high school students attended college lectures, ate in the college cafeteria, and toured the campus.

- **BCCP Project Peace Video Screening**  
*June 8, 2010*

40 NYGEAR UP students joined 100 other students from all over Brooklyn for a screening of videos covering such issues as sustainable food, the earthquake in Haiti, and the threatened cancellation of free MetroCards for New York City students.

# CUNY Middle Grades Initiative (MGI) GEAR UP

## ► CUNY MGI Student Stories

Submitted by Sarah McConnell, Assistant Director, CUNY MGI GEAR UP.

Featured Student: **Mary Acheampong**, 10th grade GEAR UP, Hostos-Lincoln Academy of Science

Mary Acheampong, a bright and amiable sophomore at Hostos-Lincoln Academy, is no stranger to hard work. Active in her school and in the CUNY MGI/GEAR UP program, she knows how important it is to start thinking about college while still in high school. She is a familiar face at the GEAR UP office in her school and consistently takes advantage of the tutoring and advice available to her and fellow students, which has helped her to succeed in her math and English classes.

With college a couple of years away, Mary has already begun to prepare for the experience by taking college-level classes and participating in extracurricular activities such as Leading Ladies (a program headed by CUNY MGI/GEAR UP to motivate and empower female students to take charge of their futures), the STEP Team, Peer Leaders, and more. Next year, she'll be ready to take College Now courses, which will not only help her earn college credits while still in high school, but also give her a sneak peek at what college classes are really like.

Fiercely independent, Mary looks forward to going away to college where she is hoping to discover herself and experience living in a dorm with other college students. Meanwhile, she is content to immerse herself in the college-going culture that surrounds her high school — literally — as Hostos-Lincoln Academy is housed within CUNY Hostos Community College.

A fan of the Crime Scene Investigations (CSI) TV programs, Mary has not yet decided if she will be pursuing a career in medicine or in criminal justice. Whatever she chooses, she will bring to her chosen field the same enthusiasm and search for excellence that she has shown so far.

## ► GEAR UP Activities

### • College Now: Hip Hop Poetry and Literature Course at CUNY Hunter College Spring 2010

CUNY MGI GEAR UP students earned college credit by successfully completing this college-level course.



Mary Acheampong, CUNY Middle Grades Initiative 10th grade GEAR UP student at Hostos-Lincoln Academy of Science.

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

### ► CUNY CSI Student Stories

Submitted by Sherina Peterkin, Parent and Community Assistant, Discovery Institute/CUNY CSI GEAR UP.

Featured Student: **Crystal Cowhig**, 6th grade GEAR UP, Dreyfus IS 49

### Arista

by Crystal Cowhig

I have worked very hard to be in Arista. I have experienced the Ceremony and becoming a member of Arista. I am happy to be part of IS 49. It is a nice experience, and I will continue working hard. I want to be in Arista for the next two years also.

Featured Student: **Janay Peterkin**, 7th grade GEAR UP, Dreyfus IS 49

### Meeting Arista's Standards

by Janay Peterkin

My name is Janay Peterkin. I am in the seventh grade. Recently I have become one of the newly selected Arista Honor Society members with an overall average of 89.62. To be in Arista you must have an average of at least an 85.5. Also, you should not have any N's or U's, meaning "not meeting the academic standards" and "unsatisfactory." This year I was able to succeed by meeting those standards. I had to realize that my schoolwork is very important and take things more seriously. This meant focusing more on schoolwork, paying attention to lessons, doing my homework, etc.

I felt very accomplished when I discovered that I made it into Arista. Finally I felt that all my hard work had paid off. We had a ceremony where all the members of Arista got beautiful certificates and pins. It was a lot of fun walking down to receive what came with the honor of being in Arista.

So far, being in Arista has been a wonderful experience. I can't wait for the next school year to come around, so I can participate in all the activities Arista has by helping my community. Arista gives me the opportunity to be a help any way possible. Great values are instilled in you and encouraged.

## ► GEAR UP Activities

### • Parent Leadership Program Meeting January 21, 2010

This group informs parents and guardians about resources that are available at their children's schools. Parents of students at Dreyfus IS 49, Curtis HS, and New Dorp HS attended this meeting. They learned about how to help their children succeed in school and where to go for help with problems that need to be addressed.

### "The Parent Leadership Program is exactly what I need for my child."

— A Discovery Institute/CUNY CSI GEAR UP parent

### • Pasi3n Flamenca March 11, 2010

Through the New York Center for Performing Arts/Arts Flamenco, Jorge Navarro and his dance company, the Pasi3n Flamenca, taught and performed flamenco dance at CUNY CSI's Williamson Theatre. Two dancers, a singer, a guitarist, and a percussionist demonstrated the beauty and precision of flamenco while teaching GEAR UP students about the culture and history of Spain. A highlight of the performance was when several students volunteered to go on stage to learn and perform the dance for the rest of the audience. 96 Dreyfus IS 49 students, 4 teachers, and 3 parents enjoyed this inspiring experience.

### • Parent Leadership Program Meeting at South Beach May 11, 2010

Spanish-speaking parents of Curtis HS and New Dorp HS students attended this meeting, designed to give them college access information in their native language. Idamiss Arroyo of the GEAR UP/Discovery Institute office translated.

- **A Gift of Life at Parent Appreciation Day**  
May 11, 2010

Dreyfus IS 49 PTA members attended GEAR UP's annual Parent Appreciation Day where parents of Dreyfus students received a plant in honor of their dedication and commitment to GEAR UP and their community.

- **Computer Workshop for Parents**  
May 13, 2010

Parents of Dreyfus IS 49 and PS 57 Hubert H. Humphrey students were introduced to computer technology. Jane Mosquera, a computer instructor at PS 57, taught parents how to use the computer and protect their children from Internet dangers; parents also learned computer terminology. Each parent had a laptop to work on and received an e-mail address at the end of the workshop. PS 57 Parent Coordinator Patricia Ham and GEAR UP Senior Parent Coordinator Sajdah Um'rani-Mansur coordinated the event.

- **Transition to High School**  
May 14, 2010

Parents of Dreyfus IS 49 8th grade students attended this meeting. They learned about high school graduation requirements and how to prepare their children for the transition to high school. Presenters included Parent Coordinators Ruthie Jusino of Dreyfus IS 49, Tom Hepworth of Curtis HS, and Donna LeChillgrien of New Dorp HS.

## Dowling College

- **Dowling College GEAR UP Student Stories**

*Submitted by Frank Pomata, Assistant Director of Dowling College GEAR UP.*

*Featured Students: **Destiny Carter, Diana Edouard, Deanique Phillips, Keith Stewart, 11th grade GEAR UP, Wyandanch Memorial HS; Azarria Lovelady, 10th grade, Wyandanch Memorial HS***

To commemorate the 50th graduating class at Wyandanch Memorial High School, GEAR UP has organized the Wyandanch Warriors Class of 1962 documentary project. Students are helping to interview members of that first graduating class, thus learning about and documenting the history of their school, its alumni, and their community. This project began in March; once the interviews and editing are completed this summer, a DVD will be created and sold to raise money for the Class of 2011 Scholarship Fund, established by GEAR UP at Suffolk County National Bank.

*Featured Students: **Destiny Carter, Lasheca Lewis, Earl Taylor, 11th grade GEAR UP, Wyandanch Memorial HS***

On April 1, 2010, students who achieved Honor Roll status for all four quarters of the 2008-09 academic year went on a "Harlem Experience" field trip sponsored by GEAR UP. One parent, Ms. Dana Carter, accompanied the group. They visited the Apollo Theater, the National Guard 369th Regiment Armory, and the New York Public Library's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.

*Featured Student: **Lasheca Lewis, 11th grade GEAR UP, Wyandanch Memorial HS***

U.S. Representative Steve Israel, representing New York's 2nd Congressional District, selected Lasheca Lewis as a U.S. House of Representatives Page because of her academic achievements, student leadership, and compelling application essay. Her essay, which Congressman Israel read in part when he visited Wyandanch Memorial HS for a press conference, spoke about how overcoming adversity had shaped her character and strengthened her resolve to succeed.

Lasheca, a GEAR UP student since 2005, plans to attend CUNY John Jay College of Criminal Justice and pursue a career in public service, possibly as a Supreme Court Justice. She lists Justices Thurmond Marshall and Sonia Sotomayor as two people who have inspired her.

## Long Island University/Brooklyn

- **NYGEAR UP Activities**

- **Tutoring in Chemistry and Physics**  
January 19 – June 11, 2010

More than 100 Science Skills Center HS 11th grade students, along with 1 NYGEAR UP director, 1 NYGEAR UP assistant, and 2 tutors participated in an after-school Regents prep course with tutoring in physics and chemistry.

- **Homework Assistance**  
January 20 – May 25, 2010

80 11th grade students from Science Skills Center HS and Benjamin Banneker Academy received assistance in completing homework and class assignments from 7 college tutors and 2 college mentors.

- **Brothers for Change**  
January 22 – May 7, 2010

The Brothers for Change male mentorship program provides guidance and workshops for students to help them improve their social, academic, and interpersonal skills while assisting in the transition from high school to college. The program offered one-on-one counseling, group counseling, recreational activities, academic workshops, social workshops, a book club, and mentoring by current college students and graduates. 20 Science Skills Center HS 11th grade students, 1 NYGEAR UP assistant, and 2 graduate assistants participated in the program.

- **Saturday Academy**  
January 23 – May 22, 2010

73 students from Benjamin Banneker Academy and Science Skills Center HS received classroom



*From left to right: Earl Taylor, Wyandanch Memorial HS GEAR UP student; Frank Pomata, Assistant Director, Dowling College GEAR UP; Destiny Carter, Wyandanch Memorial HS GEAR UP student; Brigadier General George A. Jones, U.S. Army (Ret.); Lasheca Lewis, Wyandanch Memorial HS GEAR UP student; and parent Dana Carter tour the National Guard 369th Regiment Armory during a "Harlem Experience" field trip on April 1, 2010.*

*Long Island University,  
continued on page 12.*

instruction and prepared for the SAT using the College Board's official SAT Online Course. 1 college instructor, 2 graduate students, and 3 college tutors assisted the students.

• **Sister to Sister**

January 29 – March 5, 2010

The Sister to Sister mentorship program empowers NYGEAR UP students, educates these young women about issues that affect them, and helps prepare them for college and the work force. 4 Science Skills Center HS NYGEAR UP students, 1 Benjamin Banneker Academy NYGEAR UP student, and 2 NYGEAR UP tutor/mentors took part in the spring program, which included presentations by professional women, art projects, educational workshops, and a film.

• **Parent Empowerment Series**

February 22 – June 24, 2010

Parents of 11th grade Benjamin Banneker Academy and Science Skills Center HS students, along with 1 NYGEAR UP director and 1 consultant, participated in sessions designed to help parents build better relationships with their children, families, and communities. Led by Dr. Mzuri Hudson, the series covered such topics as nutrition, stress management, healthy relationships, self-defense, and motivating young people.

• **Tours of SUNY University at Albany and SUNY College at Old Westbury**

March 12 and March 16, 2010

24 11th grade students from Benjamin Banneker Academy and Science Skills Center HS attended an information session and campus tour of SUNY College at Old Westbury. 34 NYGEAR UP students toured SUNY University at Albany. 1 Science Skills Center HS guidance counselor, 2 Benjamin Banneker Academy guidance counselors, 1 NYGEAR UP assistant/HEOP counselor, 1 NYGEAR UP director, and 1 NYGEAR UP mentor accompanied the students during these visits.

• **Financial Literacy for Teens**

March 15, 2010

In this workshop, led by a consultant from SUNY, 21 NYGEAR UP students learned effective money-management skills.

• **7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens**

April 15, 2010

30 Benjamin Banneker Academy students participated in a 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens workshop where they learned about life and leadership skills. 1 Franklin Covey consultant, 1 NYGEAR UP director, 1 assistant principal of guidance, 1 guidance counselor, 1 social work intern, 1 technology teacher, and 1 NYGEAR UP HESC associate were also present and helped to conduct the workshop.

## New Rochelle City School District

► **New Rochelle City School District NYGEAR UP Student Stories**

Submitted by Camille Edwards-Thomas, Program Director of New Rochelle City School District NYGEAR UP.

Featured Students: **Emily George and Aneesa Raja**, 11th grade NYGEAR UP, New Rochelle HS  
Emily George and Aneesa Raja were inducted into the National Honor Society.

Featured Students: **Capriaty Alexandre, Martha Arteaga, Stephanie Cisneros, Naja Innis, Mary Carmen Perez, Aneesa Raja, Cristina Valencia**

Through GIOLAI, a Westchester-based nonprofit that helps girls of 11-18 years of age become self-reliant and successful adults, these students attended a two-week Leadership Summit in March 2010 with Pamela Minyard, founder of GIOLAI. Civic responsibility, personal growth, budgeting, entrepreneurship, time management, and applying to college were among the topics covered at the summit. The event ended with a private performance by Usher Raymond at Good Morning America in New York City.

► **NYGEAR UP Activities**

• **English Regents Prep Course**

January 2010

NYGEAR UP 11th grade students prepared for taking the Regents Exam in English.

• **Math and Science Academies**

February through June 2010

NYGEAR UP 11th grade students were tutored in math and science at these after-school sessions.

• **Family Conference**

March 20, 2010

NYGEAR UP 11th grade students and their families attended this conference and met with representatives of the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities, SUNY, the NAACP, Academic Pathways, and the Association of Proprietary Colleges.

• **New Rochelle High School College Night**

March 24, 2010

NYGEAR UP 11th grade students and their families attended this college fair, held at New Rochelle High School, with opening remarks in the Daniel F. O'Brien Gymnasium. Over 60 colleges and universities were represented. Students also attended panel discussions on finding the right fit in a college; public and private colleges; the admissions process at highly selective colleges; STEM colleges and universities; and resources for college-bound students with disabilities.



Long Island University NYGEAR UP 11th grade students from Benjamin Banneker Academy and Science Skills Center High School enjoy a tour of SUNY College at Old Westbury on March 12, 2010.



Rochester Institute of Technology NYGEAR UP 11th grade student Seante Wright shows off the Wii, donated by RIT, that he won during a raffle for students who completed a GEAR UP survey in May 2010.

## Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT)

### ► Rochester Institute of Technology NYGEAR UP Student Stories

Submitted by Denise Lynn Smith-Oquendo, Coordinator, RIT NYGEAR UP.

**Featured Student: Rayquanna Wright, 11th grade NYGEAR UP, East HS**

Rayquanna Wright was one of the NYGEAR UP student awardees at this year's NYGEAR UP conference at the Buffalo Niagara Marriott in Amherst, New York. She also earned enough credits to graduate from high school early and did so at the end of her junior year in June 2010.

**Featured Student: Jason Blake, 11th grade NYGEAR UP, Global Media Arts HS at Franklin**  
Jason Blake earned enough credits to graduate from high school at the end of his junior year and will attend RIT in the fall of 2010.

**Featured Students: Diego Brown and Devante Cox, 11th grade NYGEAR UP, Global Media Arts HS at Franklin; LaTasha Nugent, 11th grade NYGEAR UP, International Finance & Economic Career School at Franklin; Octavia Rehm and Gabriel Yelez, 11th grade NYGEAR UP, Bioscience and Health Careers School at Franklin**

All of these students were inducted into the National Honor Society in 2010. Octavia Rehm was also a paid summer intern in the 2010 high school summer internship program at RIT's Center for Imaging Science, a program that offers highly qualified students the opportunity to work with scientists as members of a research team.

### ► NYGEAR UP Activities

#### • NYGEAR UP Survey Contest May 2010

NYGEAR UP students were asked to complete a GEAR UP survey and to give a parent a copy of the survey to fill out. Those students who completed the survey and also returned surveys from their parents received a raffle ticket. NYGEAR UP 11th grade student Seante Wright won the Nintendo Wii that RIT donated for the raffle; students Shanice Crews, Rayquanna Wright, Chavon Thomas, and Chantel Garrett won two movie tickets each.

#### • Tour of New York State Colleges and Universities Week of July 5, 2010

NYGEAR UP students toured SUNY Cortland, Cornell University, SUNY Schenectady County Community College, Bryant & Stratton College (Albany campus), Utica School of Commerce (USC) Business College, and SUNY Oswego. RIT NYGEAR UP sponsored the tour through a partnership with the State University of New York and the Association of Proprietary Colleges.

#### • Tour of Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week of July 26, 2010

During RIT NYGEAR UP's first tour of Historically Black Colleges and Universities, students visited Morehouse College, Spelman College, South Carolina State University, Hampton University, Norfolk State University, and Howard University. The tour, sponsored through a partnership with a College Access Challenge Grant and STEP, also included a visit to the Georgia Aquarium in Atlanta and an American Heritage Tour in Washington, D.C.

## Rome City School District

### ► Rome City School District NYGEAR UP Student Stories

Submitted by Tiffany Martin, Safe Schools/Healthy Students Coordinator, Rome Free Academy

**Featured Student: Brittany Westcott, 11th grade NYGEAR UP, Rome Free Academy**

Brittany Westcott was in the NYGEAR UP SAT Prep Course when it was discovered that she needed surgery to relieve pressure on the brain. She missed the last few classes but continued to work at home with the materials, and also met with the teacher after school to work on SAT Prep. She took the SAT on June 5 and reported that she thought she had done really well and that she couldn't have done it without the course. The course certainly helped, but it was Brittany's motivation to do well that really made her successful.

### ► NYGEAR UP Activities

#### • Visit to Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences and The College of Saint Rose May 19, 2010

Nearly 50 NYGEAR UP students toured the Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences and The College of Saint Rose.

#### • Visit to SUNY Herkimer County Community College and SUNY Institute of Technology (SUNY IT) May 25, 2010

Nearly 50 NYGEAR UP 11th grade students visited the campuses of SUNY Herkimer Community College and SUNY IT.

**"I am glad that I went to visit The College of Saint Rose. They have state-of-the-art technology at the school."**

– A Rome City School District NYGEAR UP student

# St. John's University

## ► St. John's University NYGEAR UP and GEAR UP Student Stories

Submitted by Yvette Morgan, Co-Director, St. John's University GEAR UP and NYGEAR UP.

Featured Student: **Sharon Villar**, 11th grade GEAR UP, Long Island City HS

With a 96.74 GPA, Sharon Villar is an exceptional student who has dedicated her time and efforts toward her academics and her school community. As a junior enrolled in Long Island City High School she represents the perfect example of a well-rounded student by constantly setting a good example for her peers. For the past three years, Sharon has been recognized for her academic achievement by being on the Gold Honor Roll, acquiring a noteworthy GPA, and receiving high scores on her Regents examinations. Recently she was honored for her winning essay in the 2009 Queens Con Edison Yankee Kid competition. This 43-year-old company tradition selects seven students, one from each New York City borough and from Westchester, Orange, and Rockland Counties, for their academic excellence, leadership, and sportsmanship. Outside of academics, Sharon is involved in extracurricular activities, among them softball, concert choir, the school newspaper, and volunteer work. Most important, she serves as a GEAR UP senator.

Featured Student: **Nazifa Mahbub**, 11th grade GEAR UP, Long Island City HS

For Nazifa Mahbub, fulfilling the many expectations colleges have of their applicants is extremely important. She chooses to accomplish this task by being an active student in her school. As a junior with a 90.82 GPA, Nazifa has demonstrated academic excellence and rigor by taking honors physics, advanced theatre, senior physics, senior economics, and a College Now course offered by CUNY LaGuardia Community College. In her spare time, Nazifa is a member of the Long Island City High School Leadership Program, the English Honor Society, a student mentor for incoming students, and a Fidelity Future-Stage contestant. She has been recognized for her accomplishments with honors such as the DRUM Leadership Award, a Best Attendance Award two years in a row, and an Honor Roll Achievement Award for the past three years. She also serves as a GEAR UP senator.



St. John's University GEAR UP students visit the campus of Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. on March 31, 2010.

## ► NYGEAR UP and GEAR UP Activities

### • SAT Prep

January 9 – March 6, 2010

106 students from Long Island City HS and other high schools, 2 GEAR UP graduate assistants, and 2 SAT facilitators participated in this program. For many high school students, preparing for the SATs is both stressful and expensive, so GEAR UP created an SAT Prep program that would enhance students' skills and familiarize them with the exam's content. Each week, students prepared for the SATs by practicing sample questions and noting the time they took to answer them. Most important, the students received one-on-one attention in a small classroom atmosphere, making the learning process less intimidating.

### • College Readiness Workshops

January 9 – March 6, 2010

The College Readiness Program was designed to prepare students for the junior-to-senior-year transition. 41 GEAR UP students and 2 facilitators participated in these workshops. Yvette Morgan and Mona Prophete explained the college admissions and financial aid application process. Each week, students researched what their preferred colleges were looking for in applicants; they were also expected to begin the application process by writing their college essays and applying for scholarships. With that foundation, applying and preparing for college was made easier.

### • Financial Aid Night

January 28 and February 25, 2010

This financial aid workshop, attended by 42 GEAR UP students, 32 parents, and 2 presenters, offered students an opportunity to learn about how to finance their college education. During the two workshop sessions, participants learned how to fill out the FAFSA and found out about grants, scholarships, and loans.

### • Tour of Five Towns College

February 1, 2010

23 GEAR UP students interested in music and the entertainment field, along with 7 GEAR UP staff, visited Five Towns College, an institution that offers more unconventional majors. The students saw professional studio audio equipment, experienced a small classroom environment, and learned about majors such as music media, music business, mass communication, audio recording, composition and songwriting, and much more.

**“The computer workshop for parents was excellent and every day there was always something new taught. The entire workshop was educational, especially now that I know how to monitor my children and the Web sites they visit.”**

– Adeline Torres, St. John's University GEAR UP parent

• **Tour of SUNY Farmingdale State College**

February 17, 2010

12 GEAR UP students and 7 GEAR UP staff visited SUNY Farmingdale State College, a small college that offers majors in nursing, architecture, visual communications, mechanical engineering technology, dental hygiene, and more. An EOP representative talked with the group about resources available at SUNY Farmingdale. Students asked questions about admissions, financial aid, tuition costs, transportation costs, and internship opportunities.

**“I enjoyed touring SUNY Farmingdale and seeing things with my own eyes. I learned a lot from the tour guide, visited the dorms, and the food was delicious!”**

– Tenzin Phentok, St. John’s University GEAR UP student

• **Youth Venture Initiative Community Service at New Life Food and Clothing Pantry**

March 20, 2010

17 GEAR UP students and 4 GEAR UP staff helped with various duties during this day of community service at the New Life Food and Clothing Pantry. They served as guides, handed out clothing, packed up food, and supervised donations.

• **Tour of Five Universities and Washington, D.C.**

March 30 – April 1, 2010

40 GEAR UP students and 5 GEAR UP staff enjoyed a 3-day weekend of college tours and historical sightseeing. The group visited Georgetown University, Howard University, Rutgers, Towson University, and New Jersey City University, and also toured a number of historical sites.

**“I enjoyed seeing beautiful views of nature, the difference between New York City and other cities, as well as the historical sites of D.C.”**

– Niurka Gonzalez, St. John’s University GEAR UP student

• **Computer Workshops for Parents**

April 10 – May 1, 2010

25 GEAR UP parents and 1 facilitator participated in this much-requested workshop. Attendees enjoyed learning essential skills such as how to use Microsoft programs, techniques to supervise their children online, and how to get the most out of browsing the Web.

**“I enjoyed touring Five Towns College’s music studio and seeing technology being created.”**

– Monzer Abouelnaga, St. John’s University GEAR UP student

• **Long Island City Unites for Haiti Relief**

April 29, 2010

300 students from Long Island City HS and other high schools, moved by the devastation caused by the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, decided to raise funds for the people affected. The GEAR UP staff, in collaboration with the Long Island City HS music department, helped to organize a student talent show. The students displayed their talents through music, dance, and poetry, each performance commemorating Haiti in some way. The audience, inspired by the program, made generous donations totaling over \$1,500 to the Haiti Relief Fund.

• **GEAR UP College Fair**

May 6, 2010

50 GEAR UP students attended a college fair at Long Island City HS and met with more than 30 college representatives who informed them about admissions criteria, affordability, financial aid, scholarships, residential life, majors, and the probability of finding a job after graduation.

• **Community Service with Meals on Wheels**

May 29, 2010

12 GEAR UP students, 1 parent, and 4 GEAR UP staff served their community by teaming up with Meals on Wheels to pack meals and deliver food. The Meals on Wheels staff were impressed by the speed of the students, who packed two days’ food in only a couple of hours.

**“I thought working with Meals on Wheels was not going to be interesting, but it was very interesting, fun, and it changed my perspective.”**

– Estefany Miranda, St. John’s University GEAR UP student



St. John’s University GEAR UP students visit the Lincoln Memorial during a trip to Washington, D.C. on April 1, 2010.

## ► SUNY Binghamton University GEAR UP Student Stories

Submitted by Karen Whalen, Parent and Activity Coordinator, and Ali Phinney, Senior GEAR UP Coordinator, Binghamton HS, SUNY Binghamton University GEAR UP.

**Featured Student: Tarikue Manago, 11th grade GEAR UP, Binghamton HS**

Tarikue wrote a rap about GEAR UP to demonstrate how GEAR UP has influenced him to go to college.

### Tarikue's Rap

by Tarikue Manago

Yo, I got to GEAR UP every week for about 2 times.

Girls like to mess with me and Ant, but we don't pay them no mind.

Yeah, but when we we're there we do our work sometimes 2 tell you the truth I think Mr. Andre's blind.

But they do help, they help us yeah; if it wasn't for them I would have failed this year.

Going to summer school that's not cool; they helped me with my work when I wasn't in school.

Ms. Phinney's back – she's mad funny yeah. She forces kids 2 do their work or "you have to go dear."

It be so crazy, we have mad fun, they worry about me as if I'm the stars their sun.

They make sure I'm never cutting in any of my classes. They have a student stalker name Alandra, she has a weird laugh.

We got Ms. B too; she also crazy with it; she makes me pull up my pants and take off my fitted.

Ms. Whalen's there, but she's never here. She helped me when I got in trouble – 1 of the best yeah.

We have 1 more it's the Spanish 1. I called her loco yesterday then I had to run.

If it wasn't for them where would I be? I might be failing with a 23.

So thank you 4 everything – this is the first of many singings of Tarikue the king.

**Featured Student: Ryan Jenks, 10th grade GEAR UP, Binghamton HS**

Ryan is a frequent visitor to the GEAR UP office. He spends free periods working with our college tutors to improve his grades. He is always present in our office at lunch and at our after-school program. All of Ryan's hard work has paid off. Out of the approximately 50+ students who attend our after-school program, Ryan's grades were most improved.

**Featured Student: Anthony Stroman, 11th grade GEAR UP, Binghamton HS**

Anthony wrote an interesting passage about how GEAR UP has helped him with his goal of attending college.

#### How did GEAR UP inspire me to do better?

Get ready for the real world

Learn right from wrong

To be more dedicated

To pay attention

Communication

Never give up

Follow my dreams

Help people

Study more

Work hard

**Featured Student: Tausha Bush, 11th grade GEAR UP, Binghamton HS**

Tausha is a very artistic student. She is frequently creating comics and sharing them with the GEAR UP staff and college students. Tausha created a comic strip to show how GEAR UP influenced her to go to college.

## ► GEAR UP Activities

### • GEAR UP After School

October 2009 – June 2010, every Tuesday and Wednesday

SUNY Binghamton students and community volunteers tutor 10th and 11th grade GEAR UP students during this after-school program. Several times during the school year, speakers were

invited to discuss their professions. Speakers from community support programs who work with youth also spoke with the students.

### • College Visits

– March 23, 2010: Alfred University and SUNY Alfred State College

– April 22-23, 2010: Overnight College Trip to 4 colleges: The College of Saint Rose, SUNY Cobleskill, SUNY University at Albany, and SUNY Institute of Technology (SUNY IT)

### • Financial Aid Information Night for Parents of Juniors

March 24, 2010

11th grade GEAR UP students and their parents enjoyed a dinner of Italian food and then heard a presentation from Binghamton High School's College Connection staff about college admissions and financial aid.

### • Career Fair

March 30, 2010

10th grade Binghamton HS GEAR UP students had the opportunity to listen and speak to nurses, X-ray technicians, police forensics experts, and ID specialists about their professions.

### • Earth Science Field Trip to Buttermilk Falls

May 17 and 18, 2010

All 10th grade Binghamton HS students taking Earth Science reinforced what they learned with a hike and lunch at Buttermilk Falls State Park in Ithaca, New York.



SUNY Binghamton 10th and 11th grade GEAR UP students pose in front of Alfred University's Harder Hall on March 23, 2010.

## SUNY Cobleskill

### ► NYGEAR UP and GEAR UP Activities

Submitted by Laura M. Lynch, Associate Director, and Paul Turner, Principal Investigator, SUNY Cobleskill GEAR UP and NYGEAR UP.

### • Online Financial Aid Workshops

February 3, 4, 6, and 16, 2010

Parents and guardians of high school seniors had a place and an opportunity to submit their FAFSA forms online during these workshops, sponsored by a College Access Challenge Grant. Several NYGEAR UP students from Charlotte Valley CS, Jefferson CS, Laurens CS, and Stamford CS attended these events and also came to the online FAFSA workshops. These workshops were "part 2" of the Financial Aid Information Nights held in November and December 2009 and followed several similar workshops held in January at Charlotte Valley CS, Fort Plain CS, Jefferson CS, Middleburgh CS, Owen D. Young CS, Richfield Springs CS, St. Johnsville CS, South Kortright CS, and Stamford CS.

### • College Visits

- March 5, 2010 Morris CS visited: Bryant & Stratton College
- March 25, 2010 Richfield Springs CS visited: Siena College
- April 19, 2010 Fort Plain CS visited: SUNY IT
- May 12, 2010 Charlotte Valley CS and South Kortright CS visited: SUNY New Paltz and SUNY Purchase College

### • College Classes at SUNY Cobleskill

March 3, 10, and 31; April 7, 2010

GEAR UP students from Laurens CS, Morris CS, Richfield Springs CS, and Stamford CS were given the opportunity to sit in on two college classes to get a sense of what college would be like. Many students chose to sit in on a chemistry class and

most felt that they would be successful in the course. Students interested in culinary arts attended a culinary class, while other students enjoyed classes in music, computer graphics, marketing, and social science.

### • 2010 Syracuse National College Fair/Visit to SUNY Institute of Technology (SUNY IT)

March 22, 2010

Richfield Springs CS GEAR UP students and a school counselor attended the 2010 Syracuse National College Fair at the Oncenter Complex, sponsored by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC). After making connections with college reps at the Fair, the group traveled to SUNY IT, toured the campus, and had an admissions presentation and lunch in a campus dining hall.

### • Visit to Clark Sports Center

April 8, 2010

28 GEAR UP students from Laurens CS traveled to the Clark Sports Center in Cooperstown, New York, where they completed the high ropes course and strengthened their teamwork skills.

### • SUNY Cobleskill Welcomes SUNY Binghamton University GEAR UP Students

April 22, 2010

SUNY Binghamton University GEAR UP students toured SUNY Cobleskill's facilities including the dining hall, grazing cows, a fish hatchery, meat processing labs, and the John Deere agricultural technology program. They marveled at a rural campus with no bus systems.

### • Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (CICU) Professional Development Workshop

May 4, 2010

All SUNY Cobleskill NYGEAR UP personnel attended this fast-paced and informative day of presentations, roundtables, and panel discussions at Hartwick College.

## SUNY Jamestown Community College (JCC)

### ► SUNY Jamestown Community College NYGEAR UP Student Stories

Submitted by Faith Graham, NYGEAR UP Coordinator, SUNY Jamestown Community College NYGEAR UP.

Featured Student: **Miranda M. Gill**, 11th grade NYGEAR UP, Dunkirk HS

Miranda is a member of JROTC, color guard, musical stage crew, drill team, Leap 2 Success, NEA Big Read Project, and National Honor Society. Her future plans are to attend college and pursue a career in veterinary medicine.

Featured Student: **Joseph F. Champion**, 11th grade NYGEAR UP, Jamestown HS

Joseph is a member of the junior varsity soccer and the varsity basketball and football teams at Jamestown HS. He also belongs to the National Honor Society and is an altar server at St. Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church. His future plans are to study math, physics, and engineering in college and to travel across Europe.

Through its College Connections concurrent enrollment program, one of only 43 accredited programs in the U.S., SUNY Jamestown Community College has offered thousands of students the opportunity to enrich their high school curricula while earning free or greatly-reduced-in-cost college credits at the same time. High school instructors are trained to teach college courses within the high school curriculum. Students complete general college requirements, thus allowing for early graduation from college and greater enrichment opportunities.

In May of 2010, SUNY JCC honored students from each participating school with a Student-Of-The-Year Award. Two SUNY JCC NYGEAR UP students, Miranda M. Gill of Dunkirk HS and Joseph F. Champion of Jamestown HS, were selected as winners. Students selected to receive the award at each high school were students who embraced the added challenges of completing college work while still in high school; demonstrated a positive attitude toward learning; were resourceful and showed perseverance and integrity inside and outside the classroom; understood the importance of higher education and appreciated the opportunity College Connections provides, and displayed resolve and dedication to the learning process.



St. John's University GEAR UP students pose in front of the White House during a trip to Washington, D.C. on April 1, 2010.

SUNY Jamestown Community College,  
continued on page 18.

*SUNY Jamestown Community College, continued from page 17.*

### ► NYGEAR UP Activities

#### • Summer College Access Academy *June 28-29, 2010*

SUNY JCC NYGEAR UP hosted an on-campus summer program for 51 students, including 17 NYGEAR UP students. Attendees developed portfolios that identified steps to academic success and preparation for post-secondary education. Students also attended presentations on the college application and financial aid processes, and on writing admissions and scholarship essays. Exploratory classes in several subject areas were offered. Students also participated in workshops designed to teach them how to use their personal intelligence styles to build their confidence in both academic and social settings.

## SUNY Nassau Community College (NCC)

### ► GEAR UP Activities

*Submitted by Marilyn Monroe, Director, and Donntoya Bailey, Parent Coordinator, SUNY Nassau Community College GEAR UP.*

#### • Rite of Passage (ROP) Students Visit the United Nations *February 16, 2010*

The Nguzo Saba are the Seven Principles celebrated during Kwanzaa; they are also the founding principles of SUNY Nassau Community College's GEAR UP Rites of Passage (ROP) program. ROP teamed up with the Long Island chapter of The Links, Inc., an international nonprofit organization of women committed to leadership, friendship, and service, to introduce

GEAR UP students to the LIFE Program, which offers information on international culture, the mission of the United Nations, and the 192 countries that belong to the UN. After exploring and identifying international policies and global issues, the students visited the United Nations, where they experienced first-hand what they had learned during the program sessions.

#### • Making Global Connections *March 25, 2010*

Lawrence Road Middle School GEAR UP students participated in a video conference during which they conversed with middle school students in Ghana. The conversation covered a number of topics, among them recreational activities, clothing styles, academic interests, popular music, family life, and career goals. Students uncovered differences and similarities of both cultures, but all students had a desire for a college education in common.

#### • Hail, Yale! Visit to Yale University *April 10 and 17, 2010*

7th and 8th grade GEAR UP students from Lawrence Road MS and Turtle Hook MS participated in two visits to Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. On the first visit, along with a tour of Yale's campus, students attended a debate between teams of students from Yale and Howard Universities, culminating in the GEAR UP students holding a mock debate of their own. During the second visit, GEAR UP students cheered from the bleachers as Yale football players competed in an exhibition game; the day's activities also included a college tour and sports clinics.

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**"I think Yale University is a very beautiful place, and I plan on going there for college!"**

– A SUNY Nassau Community College GEAR UP student

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*In spring of 2010, St. John's University GEAR UP students attend a College Readiness workshop to learn about the applications process and financial aid at Long Island City HS.*

## Syracuse University

### ► Syracuse University NYGEAR UP Student Stories

*Submitted by Marissa J. Mims, Director; Nikolas Allen, Office Coordinator; and Kelina Imamura, Publications Editor, Syracuse University GEAR UP.*

*Featured Students: Tessah Acevedo, Seth Colton, Julia Huff, Dwayne LaBritt, Korey McGann, Miles Miniati, Angel Santana, Yasmeine Shebehadah, Alexis Tesiorowski, Myah Thompson, 11th grade NYGEAR UP at Henninger HS, Nottingham HS, and Fowler HS*

In March 2010, NYGEAR UP at Syracuse University, in partnership with Clear Channel Radio, launched *Step It Up!*, a weekly radio program on Power 106.09 FM.

A group of NYGEAR UP 11th grade students brainstormed the name for the program and what content would be featured. Each broadcast delivers NYGEAR UP news, a college of the week, and teen issues that affect students such as teen violence and technology addiction.

"The goal was to create an innovative radio show that provided students and parents in the cohort and partners with information about college readiness and NYGEAR UP," says Marissa Mims, Director of Syracuse University NYGEAR UP. "This has never been done before with GEAR UP. It goes beyond the usual flyers, programming, and mailing to get information to parents."

The show is entirely student-run, with assistance from NYGEAR UP and Clear Channel staff. Each student fulfills a different role on the program. Some are on-air DJs, while others work behind the scenes on the technical side and updating the *Step It Up!* Facebook page.

NYGEAR UP at Syracuse University will continue the partnership with Clear Channel Radio throughout the summer. *Step It Up!* broadcasts on Saturday nights from 7-9 pm on 106.09 FM. For more information, go to <http://www.wphrfm.com/pages/stepitup.html>.

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**"The thing I like most about the radio show is that it gives young kids an opportunity to tell people what's going on in their lives and in the community. It will also help with getting a job and getting into college."**

– Dwayne LaBritt, Syracuse University NYGEAR UP student

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## ► NYGEAR UP Activities

### • College Visits

- *March 10, 2010:* Nottingham HS visited: SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry
- *March 19, 2010:* Institute at Central Technical Vocational Center (ITC) visited: SUNY Institute of Technology
- *March 30, 2010:* Corcoran HS and Henninger HS visited: SUNY Morrisville State Colleges
- *March 31, 2010:* Fowler HS and Nottingham HS visited: SUNY Onondaga Community College
- *April 1, 2010:* Corcoran HS and Fowler HS visited: SUNY University at Buffalo
- *April 6, 2010:* Fowler HS and Nottingham HS visited: SUNY Oswego
- *April 7, 2010:* Fowler HS and Nottingham HS visited: SUNY Delhi
- *April 12, 2010:* Fowler HS and Nottingham HS visited: SUNY College at Oneonta
- *April 14, 2010:* ITC visited: SUNY Cobleskill
- *April 16, 2010:* Corcoran HS, Fowler HS, and Nottingham HS visited: St. John's University
- *May 4, 2010:* Fowler HS and Nottingham HS ESL students visited: SUNY Herkimer County Community College

### • 2010 Syracuse National College Fair

*March 22, 2010*

11th grade NYGEAR UP students from Nottingham HS, Fowler HS, Corcoran HS, Henninger HS, and ITC attended the National College Fair at the Nicholas J. Pirro Convention Center at the Oncenter Complex in Syracuse.

### • The Story Project

*April 15, 2010*

The Story Project is a group of Syracuse University students who share their experiences about being first in their family to attend college. This event, held at Nottingham HS, was organized for NYGEAR UP students. College students shared their experiences and engaged the NYGEAR UP students in a discussion about succeeding in college.

### • 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens

*May 20-21, 2010*

Syracuse University NYGEAR UP staff members Marissa Mims, Lynn Dew, Tammy Toelner, and Christopher Perrello participated in a *7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* training workshop, led by Robert James from SUNY.

### • Syracuse Family Leadership Conference

*May 28, 2010*

Marissa Mims, Director of Syracuse University NYGEAR UP, was a guest lecturer at the Syracuse Family Leadership Conference, held at Syracuse



*Wyandanch Memorial HS alumna and valedictorian Corrine Doran, left, is interviewed by Dowling College 11th grade GEAR UP student Deaniqua Phillips for the Wyandanch Warriors of 1962 documentary project in the spring of 2010.*

University's Life Sciences Complex and attended by more than 200 Syracuse Central School District (CSD) parents. The conference, sponsored by the Syracuse CSD Parent Partnership Network, Say Yes To Education, and Prevention Network, offered more than 30 workshops on student achievement, building stronger families, and parent/child communication.

### • Summer Writing and Research

*Summer 2010*

NYGEAR UP students placed with CNY Works will take part in a summer writing program that aims to elevate their written and verbal communications skills. They will also have the opportunity to learn research skills from librarians at Syracuse University's E.S. Bird Library and media skills from professors at the University's S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications. As part of the summer curriculum, students will produce long-form content for the radio program and write articles for the existing NYGEAR UP page at the *Syracuse Post-Standard* (see *In Gear II*, Vol. 5, No. 1, page 15, for more about this newspaper project).

**“NYGEAR UP has shown me how the college process works and how important and demanding college admissions can be.”**

– *Janiris Vasquez, 11th grade NYGEAR UP, Lincoln HS*

## Yonkers City School District

### ► Yonkers City School District NYGEAR UP Student Stories

*Submitted by Nona Donovan, Yonkers CSD NYGEAR UP Project Coordinator.*

#### The APEX Program

*by Janiris Vasquez, 11th grade NYGEAR UP, Lincoln HS*

My name is Janiris Vasquez. I am a junior at Lincoln HS and am a member of APEX (a mentoring program that is part of Yonkers' NYGEAR UP program). APEX stands for Advancing Potential for Excellence.

Being part of APEX has totally changed my perspective about college and my future. As a tenth grader, I was an average student. After working with APEX I realized that my junior year was going to be my most important year and I couldn't slip up on hard work and determination. Now I am proud to tell you that my average this year is a 94 and I am on the Principal's List.

NYGEAR UP has shown me how the college process works and how important and demanding college admissions can be. I have gone on several college trips with NYGEAR UP.

*Yonkers City School District continued on page 20.*

*Yonkers City School District  
continued from page 19.*

Two of the colleges that I visited were Marist College and SUNY Purchase College. They were good schools, but I didn't think they were right for me. After several conversations with my APEX mentor, Mrs. Vitulli, we started to talk about schools that would be a good fit for me. She suggested St. Thomas Aquinas College in Rockland County and called and set up an appointment for me and my mom to visit the school. I spent the day and fell in love with it. It is now my first choice. However, I am still looking for colleges that I may want to visit and apply to.

I am very excited and looking forward to my senior year. I feel that I am ready and prepared for making my college choice. Thanks to APEX and NYGEAR UP I now have opportunities that I never thought were possible.

### **The NYGEAR UP Family**

*by Genny Nunez, 11th grade NYGEAR UP,  
Gorton HS*

The NYGEAR UP program has helped me realize that college is possible for anyone who wishes to attend. Being a part of NYGEAR UP has been an amazing experience and quite the journey. Throughout my sophomore and junior years, this program has provided the opportunity for me to visit over 20 colleges and universities. These experiences have helped me narrow my college selections. This program has prepared me to thoroughly research each college that I would like to attend. My selections are based on the location of the college, size, majors, programs, and financial aid/scholarship awards.

I greatly appreciate my mentor, Ms. Vasquez-Santiago. She has helped me prepare for the upcoming year as a senior. As a result, I am ready to apply to certain colleges as an early admission applicant. The NYGEAR UP students have been introduced to and completed registration on Naviance. Naviance is a very helpful program that supports and guides students' awareness of the college process. Through this program, I am accomplishing numerous tasks including completing an interest survey, writing a résumé, researching various colleges, researching scholarships, and comparing SAT, ACT and GPA scores against other students competing for the same college.

The NYGEAR UP students at Gorton are like a family. As a team, we decided to collect various items for our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan as our community project for this school year. We made flyers, collected items before and after school, raised money to help pay for the postage for 20 boxes, and wrote letters to the soldiers. This project started in December and continued to the end of April. By April, staff, students and community partners contributed numerous items. The NYGEAR UP students worked together filling 20 boxes. Then, each student wrote a special letter to be included in each box. We are hoping that our letters will lift the hearts and spirits of our

brave soldiers. I wrote more than one letter because I wanted the soldiers to realize how important their service is to me and my family. This was a wonderful project, which I am glad to have been a part of.

Being part of NYGEAR UP has been a great learning experience. My mentor has been such a positive and influential role model for me. Ms. Vasquez-Santiago and Ms. Piacente, the assistant principal responsible for the success of NYGEAR UP at Gorton, have taught me how to work hard and prove my potential as a student. I have matured in so many ways, thanks to them. I am very proud of my accomplishments.

### **A Summer to Remember**

*by Charlie Cruz, 11th grade NYGEAR UP,  
Riverside HS*

When I was first introduced to NYGEAR UP, the idea of college was exciting. Just to know that I was part of an elite group of students who would be given the opportunity to start the college process early was amazing. So it was no surprise that I jumped at all the opportunities NYGEAR UP offered, including SummerTech at SUNY Purchase College. SummerTech Computer Camp is a summer program that gives students ages 10-16 the chance to explore all types of computer-related fields such as animation, graphic design, Web design, coding, and more. For as long as I can remember, computers have interested me. Call me a nerd, call me a geek, but there is just something fascinating about the way computers run and the programming that goes into it.

It was 2008 and my first year in high school was coming to an end. Mrs. DeMarco, my guidance counselor, began reminding us that NYGEAR UP had all these opportunities for us during the summer and it would be great to take advantage of them. She literally would go around class to class reminding students. Many of my

classmates had this mindset of not wanting to give up their summer. This was their time to enjoy life without worrying about school. I had the same mindset; I wasn't going to "waste" my summer. Plus, I would die waking up to go to school during the summer. But Mrs. DeMarco knew my love for computers and pulled me aside to speak to me about SummerTech. She told me that NYGEAR UP would pay for me to spend one week at the camp and it would give me a real insight into the computer science/art field. I quickly jumped on board with no hesitation and was excited. She then set up a meeting with Ms. Donovan and in no time she had me registered.

My week at SummerTech was definitely one to remember. I loved every waking moment there. I wasn't too nervous when I arrived that Sunday afternoon, but I had the same feeling in my stomach I had when I started pre-school. I think I could feel my sandwich rolling around in my stomach. Okay, okay, I admit I was nervous but I was determined to make the best of it. Before I knew it, classes began and I was learning the fundamentals of Web design. About a half-hour into the class, Chris and Tommy, my teacher and the camp director, pulled me aside.

I was nervous. What could I have possibly done? They began with the words, "Dude, what are you doing?" I looked puzzled and they both laughed. Chris went on to explain that he didn't think the Fundamentals of Web Design class was for me; he said I needed something challenging. Tommy went on to say that he wanted me to sit in on Advanced Web Design with Ethan and see how I liked that.

I loved it. I really loved it. It was something new, something exciting. For the next week I was doing what I loved and by the end of the week I had a fully functioning Web site. By the time the week came to an end, I made new friends,



*Long Island University NYGEAR UP 11th grade students from Benjamin Banneker Academy and Science Skills Center High School gather in a SUNY University at Albany classroom during a tour of the campus on March 16, 2010.*



Parents of St. John's University GEAR UP students learn about computers during a workshop at Long Island City HS in the spring of 2010.

experienced living on a real college campus, gained more knowledge about Web design than I could ever imagine, but most of all, I gained the experience of a lifetime. I was awarded two awards, one for my Web site and one for camper of the week.

The following year, as my 10th grade year was coming to a close, Mrs. DeMarco was back at it again trying to get everyone on board with NYGEAR UP's summer programs. I began telling a few people of my experience so they would understand that these weren't just any old programs, they were beneficial programs and they would be dumb not to take advantage of them. I popped into Mrs. DeMarco's office and asked about SummerTech, but she told me I probably wouldn't be able to attend since I had the previous year. I got a summer job in an office.

This spring, I received a message from Ms. Donovan asking me if I would like to attend SummerTech this year because someone pulled out. (Whoever that someone is, I thank you.) I quickly jumped on board and in the blink of an eye was back at SUNY Purchase College. When I got there, Tommy said he wanted me to join the staff team and shadow Chris in the Web design class. What, me? I was beyond excited. Chris gave me my own student and we spent the next week building a Web site. This time around it was different, *better*. I really enjoyed working with the students and giving my opinions. Some of my friends were campers that week and it was really great to have them there and witness me doing what I loved to do, doing something that I was proud of.

The week came to an end and I was packing my stuff to head back home. Tommy and Kate, the directors of the camp, had come over to me and thanked me and then something truly amazing happened. They offered me a paying job

as part of their staff for the following summer for all four weeks.

I'm excited and counting down the days. So once again NYGEAR UP was there for me. If it wasn't for the summer programs, I would be sitting in an office bored out of my mind. Instead, I'm given the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to spend the summer doing what I plan on doing for the rest of my life. Not only do I want to get into the field of computer arts, but because of NYGEAR UP I'm really considering a career path in teaching. From my counselor to Ms. Donovan to everyone over at NYGEAR UP, I sincerely thank you for everything you have done.

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**"Thanks to APEX and NYGEAR UP I now have opportunities that I never thought were possible."**

– Jandris Vasquez, 11th grade Yonkers Public Schools NYGEAR UP student

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### ► NYGEAR UP Activities

#### • Kaplan SAT Prep Program January – May 2010

213 NYGEAR UP students from Gorton, Lincoln, Riverside, Roosevelt, Saunders, and Yonkers High Schools, on full or partial scholarships, participated in the 10-week Kaplan SAT Prep Program to prepare themselves for the SAT exam in June. This program was funded by Yonkers Partners in Education and Kaplan.

#### • Visits to SUNY University at Albany February - April 2010

145 NYGEAR UP students from Gorton, Lincoln, Riverside, Roosevelt, Saunders, and Yonkers High Schools toured the campus of SUNY University at Albany, met with admissions and financial aid counselors, and had lunch on campus.

#### • College Essay Writing Workshop at SUNY Purchase College February 24, 2010

40 NYGEAR UP students from Gorton HS and Roosevelt HS attended a college essay writing workshop at SUNY Purchase College where they received guidelines for writing an effective college essay, talked with college students about how to write an essay that impresses the reader and had an opportunity to speak with admissions counselors.

#### • CUNY College Fair March 23, 2010

180 NYGEAR UP students from Gorton, Lincoln, Riverside, Roosevelt, Saunders, and Yonkers High Schools met with representatives from CUNY colleges to discuss admission requirements, academic majors, and financial assistance.

#### • Cultural Experiences at SUNY Purchase College April 14 and 15, 2010

120 NYGEAR UP students from Gorton HS, Riverside HS, and Roosevelt HS attended the Latin Jazz Festival and an opera performance at SUNY Purchase College's Performing Arts Center.

#### • College Application Workshops and Tours of Mercy College April - May 2010

175 NYGEAR UP students from Gorton, Lincoln, Riverside, Roosevelt, and Saunders High Schools attended college application workshops where admissions counselors discussed all aspects of the college application, offered ideas about what makes an application stand out, took the students on a tour of the Mercy College campus, and provided lunch.

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**"[O]nce again NYGEAR UP was there for me."**

– Charlie Cruz, 11th grade Yonkers Public Schools NYGEAR UP student

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## GEAR UP in New York 2010-11 Events.

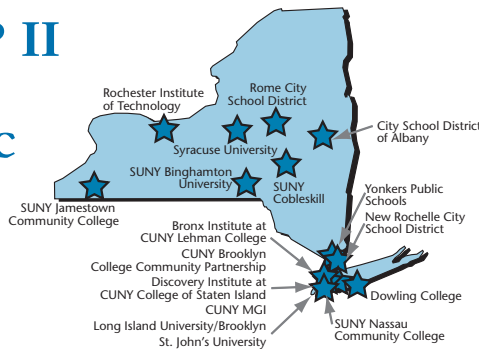
(as of August 2010)

- ▶ **NYGEAR UP Technical Training**  
Century House, Latham, NY  
September 29-October 1, 2010
- ▶ **New York State Financial Aid Administrator's Association (NYSFAAA) Annual Conference**  
Adam's Mark Hotel,  
Buffalo, NY  
October 19-21, 2010
- ▶ **New York State School Counselor Association (NYSSCA) Conference**  
The Doubletree Tarrytown,  
Tarrytown, NY  
November 5-6, 2010
- ▶ **Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (clcu) Latino College Fair**  
TBA
- ▶ **Annual NYGEAR UP Conference**  
Saratoga Springs, NY  
April 10-13, 2011
- ▶ **Higher Ed Day at the State Fair**  
NYS Fair Grounds,  
Syracuse, NY  
September 3, 2010  
10:00 am – 10:00 pm
- ▶ **College Fairs:**
  - **Rochester Counselors College Fairs:**  
Eastview Mall, Rochester, NY  
September 21, 2010  
6:30 pm – 8:30 pm  
  
Marketplace Mall,  
Rochester, NY  
September 22, 2010  
6:30 pm – 8:30 pm  
  
Greece Town Mall,  
Rochester, NY  
September 23, 2010  
6:30 pm – 8:30 pm
  - **Nassau Counselors College Fair**  
SUNY College at Old Westbury,  
Old Westbury, NY  
September 26, 2010  
Noon – 3:00 pm
  - **Community Action Organization of Erie County College Day**  
SUNY Buffalo State College,  
Buffalo, NY  
September 27, 2010  
10:00 am – 11:00 am;  
Noon – 1:00 pm
  - **Rochester Educational Opportunity Center**  
Rochester Convention Center,  
Rochester, NY  
September 28, 2010  
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm
  - **Capital Area School Development Association College Fair**  
SUNY Hudson Valley  
Community College, Troy, NY  
September 29, 2010  
9:00 am – Noon;  
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm
  - **NACAC National College Fair/Long Island**  
Nassau Veterans Memorial  
Coliseum, Uniondale, NY  
October 3, 2010  
11:00 am – 4:00 pm
  - **1199 SEIU Child Care Corp./Child Care Funds College Fair**  
1199 SEIU Child Care  
Corporate Office in Manhattan,  
New York, NY  
October 7, 2010  
5:00 pm – 8:00 pm
  - **Big Apple College Fair**
    - **Manhattan**  
CUNY City College,  
New York, NY  
October 13, 2010  
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
    - **Brooklyn**  
CUNY Medgar Evers College,  
Brooklyn, NY  
October 14, 2010  
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
    - **Bronx**  
CUNY Lehman College,  
Bronx, NY  
October 15, 2010  
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
    - **Staten Island**  
CUNY College of Staten  
Island, Staten Island, NY  
October 16, 2010  
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
  - **Queens**  
St. John's University,  
Queens, NY  
October 17, 2010  
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
  - **Southern Westchester Guidance Expo and College Fair**  
White Plains County Center,  
White Plains, NY  
October 18, 2010  
9:00 am – 2:00 pm  
(Guidance Expo)  
6:30 pm – 9:00 pm  
(College Fair)
  - **North Westchester College Fair**  
Yorktown Heights HS,  
Yorktown, NY  
October 19, 2010
  - **Greater Binghamton College Day**  
Broome County Veterans  
Memorial Arena, Binghamton,  
NY  
October 20, 2010  
11:00 am – 2:00 pm;  
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm
  - **East End Counselors College Fair**  
Southampton High School,  
Southampton, NY  
October 20, 2010
  - **Western Suffolk Counselors College Fair**  
SUNY Suffolk County  
Community College, Selden, NY  
October 21, 2010  
8:30 am – 11:30 am;  
6:00 pm – 8:30 pm
  - **Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga (SCT) Corning Counselors Association Regional College Fair**  
Arnot Mall, Horseheads, NY  
October 21, 2010  
11:00 am – 2:00 pm;  
4:30 am – 7:00 pm
  - **New York Urban League College Fair**  
Riverbank State Park,  
New York, NY  
November 13, 2010



City School District of Albany NYGEAR UP students at Morehouse College during the 2010 African-American Heritage College Tour.

# GEAR UP II 2009-10 Academic Year



## ► Bronx Institute at CUNY Lehman College

**Contact: Dita Wolf**  
Director of Bronx Institute GEAR UP Network (2005-2011) and Bronx GEAR UP (2008-2014)  
(718) 960-6099  
fax (718) 960-7219  
dita.wolf@lehman.cuny.edu

**Kevin Anthony**  
Director of South Bronx GEAR UP (2007-2013)  
(718) 960-8404  
fax (718) 960-7219  
kevin.anthony@lehman.cuny.edu

**Iwan Notowidigdo**  
Director of Sustainability  
(718) 960-5619  
fax (718) 960-7219  
iwan.notowidigdo@lehman.cuny.edu

**Cohort size:**  
2,500 8th graders  
2,500 9th graders  
3,800 11th graders

**GEAR UP schools:**  
7th grade: Aspire Preparatory School MS 322, Bronx School for Law, Daniel Hale Williams MS 180, Frederick Douglass Academy MS/HS 517, Government and Justice MS/HS 505, Henry Hudson JHS 125, Information and Network Technology School (In-Tech) MS/HS 368, Isobel Rooney MS 80, Jonas Bronck Academy MS 228, Mosholu Parkway PS/MS 280, MS 254, MS 390, P.O. Edward R. Byrne MS 101, Pablo Casals MS 181, Thomas C. Giordano MS 45, Urban Assembly School for Applied Math and Science MS/HS 241, West Bronx Academy for the Future MS/HS 243

8th grade: Albert Einstein JHS 131, Aspire Preparatory School MS 322, Daniel Hale Williams MS 180, Frederick Douglass Academy V JHS 273, Henry Hudson JHS 125, John Philip Sousa JHS 142, Kappa III MS 316, Michelangelo MS 144, Mott Hall V IS 242, P.O. Edward R. Byrne MS 101, Pablo Casals MS 181, Paul Dunbar MS 301

11th grade: Bronx High School for Medical Science HS 413, Bronx Leadership Academy HS 525, Bronx HS for Law, Government and Justice HS 505, Celia Cruz Bronx High School for Music HS 442, DeWitt Clinton HS 440,

Fordham High School for the Arts HS 437, Frederick Douglass Academy MS/HS 517, Government and Justice MS/HS 505, Information and Network Technology School (In-Tech) MS/HS 368, International School for Liberal Arts (ISLA) HS 342, Mott Hall HS 252, Riverdale/ Kingsbridge Academy MS/HS 141, Urban Assembly School for Applied Math and Science MS/HS 241, West Bronx Academy for the Future MS/HS 243

## ► City School District of Albany

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

**Cohort size:**  
650 11th graders

**NYGEAR UP schools:**  
Abrookin Vocational Technical Center, Albany HS

## ► CUNY Brooklyn College Community Partnership

**Contact: Diane Reiser**  
(718) 951-5015  
fax (718) 951-5927  
diane@thebccp.org

**Cohort size:**  
400 11th graders

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

## ► CUNY Middle Grades Initiative GEAR UP

**Contact: Ciji Gardner**  
(646) 344-7354  
fax (646) 344-7329  
ciji.gardner@mail.cuny.edu

**Cohort size:**  
1,000 10th graders

**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: Sherina Peterkin**  
(718) 982-2325 or 2369  
fax (718) 982-2327  
sherina.peterkin@csi.cuny.edu

**Cohort size:**  
285 6th graders  
279 7th graders  
335 8th graders  
181 9th graders

**GEAR UP schools:**  
Curtis HS, Dreyfus IS 49, New Dorp HS

## ► Dowling College

**Contact: Rhoda Miller**  
(631) 244-3335  
fax (631) 244-1035  
millerr@dowling.edu  
**Frank Pomata**  
(631) 447-0698 x113  
fax (631) 447-0693  
fpomata@snapinc.org

**Cohort size:**  
125 11th graders

**GEAR UP schools:**  
Wyandanch Memorial HS

## ► Long Island University/Brooklyn

**Contact: Kemoy A. Briscoe**  
(718) 488-1029  
fax (718) 780-4045  
kemoy.briscoe@liu.edu

**Cohort size:**  
455 11th graders

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

## ► New Rochelle City School District

**Contact:**  
**Camille Edwards-Thomas**  
(914) 576-4233 before 2pm  
(914) 576-4273 after 2pm  
cedwardstthomas@nred.org

**Cohort size:**  
400 11th graders

**NYGEAR UP schools:**  
New Rochelle HS

## ► Rochester Institute of Technology

**Contact: Dianne L. Spang**  
(585) 475-2984  
fax (585) 475-2888  
dlspop@rit.edu  
**Denise Smith-Oquendo**  
(585) 259-0893  
dlok12@rit.edu

**Cohort size:**  
746 11th graders

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

## ► Rome City School District

**Contact: Ric Ripa**  
(315) 334-7287  
fax (315) 334-7236  
rripa@romecsd.org  
**Tiffany Martin**  
(315) 334-7226  
tmartin@romecsd.org

**Cohort size:**  
413 10th graders

**NYGEAR UP schools:**  
Rome Free Academy

## ► St. John's University

**Contact: Yvette Morgan**  
(718) 990-2532  
fax (718) 990-2383  
morgany@stjohns.edu  
**Andre McKenzie**  
(718) 990-1893  
fax (718) 990-2383  
mckenzia@stjohns.edu

**Cohort size:**  
805 GEAR UP 8th graders  
355 GEAR UP 11th graders  
300 NYGEAR UP 11th graders

**GEAR UP and NYGEAR UP schools:**  
8th grade: IS 145, IS 126  
11th grade: Long Island City HS

## ► SUNY Binghamton University

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

(607) 727-1128  
fax (607) 762-6068  
bhsgearup@gmail.com or  
whalenkl@binghamtonschools.org

**Cohort size:**  
500 10th graders  
500 11th graders

**GEAR UP schools:**  
Binghamton HS

► **SUNY Cobleskill**

Contact: Paul Turner  
(518) 255-5360  
fax (518) 255-5365  
liberty@cobleskill.edu

Cohort size:  
480 11th graders  
562 10th graders

NYGEAR UP and 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 Jamestown Community College**

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

Cohort size:  
550 11th graders

NYGEAR UP schools:  
Dunkirk HS, Jamestown HS

► **SUNY Nassau Community College**

Contact: Marilyn Monroe  
(516) 572-3573  
fax (516) 573-3577  
marilyn.monroe@ncc.edu

Cohort size:  
516 7th graders  
514 8th graders

GEAR UP schools:  
Lawrence Road MS,  
Turtle Hook MS

► **Syracuse University**

Contact: Marissa J. Mims  
(315) 443-1799  
fax (315) 443-3976  
mjmims@syr.edu

Cohort size:  
1,476 11th graders

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

► **Yonkers Public Schools**

Contact: Nona Donovan  
(914) 376-8213  
fax (914) 423-0518  
ndonovan@yonkerspublicschools.org

Cohort size:  
936 11th graders

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

**NYGEAR UP II Sectors and Partners.**

► **Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (CICU)**

Contact:  
Susan Nesbitt Perez  
(518) 436-4781 x30  
fax (518) 433-8825  
susan@cicu.org

Sabra-Joi Dingman  
(518) 436-4781 x23  
sabra@cicu.org

Jennifer Lewis  
(518) 436-4781 x31  
jen@cicu.org

► **Association of Proprietary Colleges**

Contact: Sandra LoPresto  
(518) 758-2879  
slopres1@nycap.rr.com

► **CUNY**

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

► **SUNY**

Contact: Robert James  
(518) 320-1326  
robert.james@suny.edu

► **College Board**

Contact: Matt Zarro  
phone (518) 541-3515  
cell (518) 257-2237  
mzarro@collegeboard.org

► **NYS Financial Aid Administrators Association**

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



NYGEAR UP students from City School District at Albany tour Keuka College on April 9, 2010, during the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities' College Quest.

**NYS Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC).**

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

Contact: Alice Roberson  
(518) 473-5667 office  
fax (518) 402-3257  
aroberson@hesc.com  
Contact: Cynthia Farmer  
(518) 486-7482  
cfarmer@hesc.com



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 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.