

GEAR UP Gazette

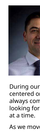
UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 21-25
2025 National GEAR UP Week

OCTOBER 5-7
ACAC NCAN Conference
Las Vegas, NV

OCTOBER 18-20
2025 GEAR UP West Conference
Los Angeles, CA

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Welcome to a new GEAR UP year!

As we begin another year together, I want to take a moment to welcome each of you and thank you for the work you do every day to support our students. Each new school year brings new opportunities, new challenges, and new possibilities for the students and communities we serve.

During our statewide meeting, I shared the concept of **Kaizen**, a Japanese philosophy centered on continuous improvement. Kaizen reminds us that meaningful progress doesn't always come from making huge changes all at once. Instead, it comes from consistently looking for small ways to improve—one step, one process, one student, and one interaction at a time.

As we move into this new year, I encourage all of us to adopt a **Kaizen mindset**. Ask yourself:

- What is one thing I can do better this year?
- What is one process we can improve for our students or our teams?
- What is one small change that could make a meaningful difference?
- What can I learn from this year's challenges and successes?

Continuous improvement doesn't mean that what we are doing isn't good enough. It means we recognize that we can always learn, grow, and find better ways to serve our students.

Our work matters. Every conversation with a student, every college application completed, every FAFSA submitted, every campus visit, and every moment we spend helping a student see a future they may not have thought possible contributes to something much bigger.

Let's make this year about **progress, not perfection**. Let's celebrate our successes, learn from our challenges, support one another, and continue looking for those small improvements that, over time, create lasting impact.

Thank you for your dedication to GEAR UP and, most importantly, to our students. I am excited about what we will accomplish together this year.

Ruben Rocha
GEAR UP Utah Program Director

THIS MONTH AT A GLANCE

STATEWIDE
Labor Day Holiday-Sept 7
Statewide Training-Sept 9

UVU REGIONS
Staff Meeting-Sept 2
Campus Closure-Sept 10

WEST-Birgitte Klement
College Access Committee Meeting
Welcome Back Open Houses
GEAR UP Week - Goal Setting Workshop
GEAR UP Week - Mocha Motivation PECP Check-in

ALPINE-Candy Castillo
School Workshops

NEBO-Krystal Yorgason
One Piece at a Time with GEAR UP
Attendance Matters Plinko

WEBER-Shironda Culpepper
GEAR UP Week Events
GEAR UP Family Night

WASATCH-Vanessa Neal
Welcome Week-Sept 1

Got Something to Share?

Help us keep GEAR UP in the loop! Use the submission form to share **upcoming events, staff updates, student success stories, photos, helpful resources, or ideas** you'd like featured in the newsletter. Submissions are due by the **20th of each month** to be considered for the following month's newsletter.

Submission Form

REMINDERS

UVU Compliance Training and site-specific training: Title IX, FERPA, Workplace Conduct, Freedom of Speech, and Cybersecurity trainings; Vehicle Rental/Driving Safety Certification, Active Shooter training and Stop the Bleed. *Due Nov 1*

Plan student events: Plan events for National GEAR UP Week and recruitment events to bring in new students. Take pictures of every student event but check the social media permissions for your students before posting anything on social media.

Email Reminder: GEAR UP staff should use their organization-issued UVU, San Juan Foundation, Weber State, or USU email address for all program-related communications. Personal email addresses should not be used.

Start gathering Cost Share documentation
Oct 15th - All Year 2 Year-Ending Forms Due
Oct 30th - All Year 3 Year-Beginning Forms Due

Update returning and new employee contact information

Track and submit student and parent contact data

Prepare Seniors for FAFSA

Remind Students of ACT Registration

SUMMER HIGHLIGHTS



Students put their skills to the test at the **Thanksgiving Point Academic Dash**, explored marine life at **Loveland Living Planet Aquarium**, and discovered new possibilities through **MAD Learn** and **Texas Instruments Rover** STEM activities.

Students also traveled beyond Utah for two incredible college access experiences. At the **Youth Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C.**, students developed leadership skills and connected with other GEAR UP students from across the country. On the **California College Tour**, students visited colleges and universities throughout Southern California and the Bay Area, giving them a firsthand look at campuses and college life.

WELCOME TO THE TEAM!

FYS Region

Christy Grant
Outreach Mentor

Fatima Alcantar
Outreach Mentor

West Region

Steven Schmidt
Outreach Mentor

Shantel Domingues
Outreach Mentor

Nebo Region

Jessica Martin
Outreach Mentor

Angela Stevens
Outreach Mentor

Provo Region

Emily Gibson
Outreach Mentor

Sheila Miranda
Assistant Coordinator

Adam Petrucka
Outreach Mentor

Isaac Rogers
Outreach Mentor

McKay Petersen
Outreach Mentor

Eliza Unrau
Outreach Mentor

Jared Munanui
Outreach Mentor

DATA DOWNLOAD

Do you know how many students we are serving and how many more we hope to serve this year?

2,462
Currently

4,500
Goal

Work with your community and schools to build enrollment in your region. Recruit siblings, cousins, and friends of current students to help bring up our numbers throughout the state.

MONEY MATTERS

GEAR UP UTAH SCHOLARSHIP

Reminder!
To be eligible for the GEAR UP Utah Scholarship, students must enroll in GEAR UP Utah **by October 1st of their senior year**

NATIONAL GEAR UP WEEK

SEPTEMBER 21-25

This is our opportunity to shine a spotlight on the impact GEAR UP Utah is making for students, families, and communities across the state.

Advocate

Led by the Leadership Team
Help tell the GEAR UP story to community leaders, partners, and decision-makers. We'll provide you with materials to help raise awareness about the importance of college access and the difference GEAR UP makes.

Activate

Get your students and schools involved!
Bring GEAR UP to life through fun activities, social media, college-going activities, and opportunities that get students talking about their futures.

Celebrate

Share the impact!
Celebrate students, staff, and the moments that make this work meaningful. Share student successes, photos, stories, and the many ways GEAR UP is helping students see themselves in a future beyond high school.

POST-IT OF POSITIVITY

MINDFULNESS MINUTE

Stretch and Reset-It only takes a minute!

Try These Stretches!

RESOURCE ROUNDUP

ACT Student Fee Waiver
Helps eligible students cover ACT costs and access free test prep and score reports.

QuestBridge
Connects high-achieving, low-income students with full four-year scholarships at leading colleges.

Keys to Success
Connects students with scholarships, internships, careers, CTE pathways, and other opportunities.

Utahmajors.org
Helps students explore Utah college majors and connect interests to future careers.

IGSIE
Provides support to help students with college admissions, financial aid and scholarship opportunities, FAFSA, and concurrent enrollment resources.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

View email in browser
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