**2023 GEAR UP Partnership Abstracts**

**The University of Oklahoma GEAR UP for LIFE**

**Abstract**

The *K20 GEAR UP for LIFE (Learning and Investigating Future Education)* project is a partnership between the K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal (K20 Center) and 33 high-poverty, low-academic readiness, mostly rural schools located in 27 Oklahoma school districts. The partnership seeks to directly impact 8,258 students through a 7-year, dual cohort project beginning with 6th and 7th grades in FY2021. The goals and objectives will guide its services to increase: 1) the percent of cohort students who report engagement within their school community and classrooms; 2) the percent of cohort students who are academically prepared for postsecondary education (PSE) upon graduation from participating schools; 3) high school graduation rates and PSE enrollment rates of participating schools; and 4) GEAR UP students’ and families’ knowledge of PSE options, preparation, and financing, which will increase the percent of the cohort and their families who know about PSE options, develop plans for meeting entry requirements, complete FAFSA, complete college applications, and make financial plans for going to college. *LIFE* addresses both of the Competitive Preference Priorities (1. Flexible & Affordable Paths & 2. Promising Evidence) and all three of the Invitational Priorities (1. Building Capacity for Remote Learning, 2. Addressing the Impact of COVID-19, and 3. Providing Services to Rural Schools).

The partnership includes 33 schools from elementary (ES; grades PK-8), middle (MS; grades 6-8), and junior high (JHS; grades 7-8) schools: Anadarko MS, Caney Valley MS, Wells MS (Catoosa, OK), Checotah MS, Chickasha MS, Chouteau-Mazie MS, Davis MS, Dewar MS, Virgil Cooper MS (Drumright, OK), Etta Dale JHS (El Reno, OK), Elk City MS, Elmore City JHS, Dewitt Waller MS (Enid, OK), Emerson MS (Enid, OK), Longfellow MS (Enid, OK), Fairland MS, Frontier ES, Glencoe ES, Central JHS (Guymon, OK), Central MS (Lawton, OK), Eisenhower MS (Lawton, OK), MacArthur MS (Lawton, OK), Tomlinson MS (Lawton, OK), Del City MS, Midwest City MS, Ben Franklin Academy (Muskogee, OK), Nowata MS, Dunbar ES (Okmulgee, OK), Quapaw MS, Sallisaw MS, Sayre MS, Vian MS, and Wagoner MS. Other partners include a group of PSE organizations (Cameron University, Carl Albert State College, Eastern Oklahoma State College, K20 Center, Oklahoma City Community College, Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology, Rose State College, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, The University of Oklahoma, & the University of Central Oklahoma), businesses (eKadence & Student Success Agency), a philanthropic organization (Oklahoma Educational Technology Trust), and a state agency (Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education). Additional partners will be added throughout the life of the project.

Through these partnerships, *LIFE* will increase the capacity of each the partnering schools to promote student engagement, rigorous and relevant instruction, meaningful academic supports, and the realization of a college-going culture within each cohort school. *LIFE* follows a three-tiered model and employs practices that have met the Department of Education’s What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) definition of strong theory. Activities and interventions include tutoring, micro-credential-based learning, school-based action plans, college and career readiness events, mentoring, dual enrollment, and interactive game-based learning. *LIFE* will prepare students to (1) take rigorous courses throughout their middle and high school careers; (2) graduate high school; (3) make use of available financial aid for PSE; (4) enroll in PSE; and (5) reduce their need for remediation once enrolled in PSE.

FY2021 GEAR UP Partnership Grant (CFDA Number 84.334A)

**Weld County School District 6**

**Project Abstract**

Weld County School District 6 (D6) in Greeley, Colorado will implement the 7-year Greeley GEAR UP (G2U) grant to **prepare students (especially low-income students) to obtain a high school diploma and prepare for and succeed in postsecondary education (PSE)**. We will implement a dual cohort model, serving all 1,899 students in grades 6 and 7 (79% of which are low-income) attending five schools with a 7th grade (Bella Romero Academy and four middle schools - Brentwood, Franklin, Heath, and Prairie Heights) that feed into five high schools (Central, West, Jefferson, Northridge, Early College Academy). Our partners in this effort below include five institutions of higher education and 10 businesses/community agencies that have pledged significant matching contributions to ensure the success of G2U.

• Aims Community College

• Metropolitan State Univ. Denver

• University of Colorado Boulder

• University of Northern Colorado

• Western Colorado University

• City of Greeley

• CoolSpeak

• High Plains Library District

• Job Corps

• National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP)

• North Range Behavioral Health

• Paradigm Shift

• The Greeley Dream Team

• The Success Foundation

• Weld County Bright Futures Program

Our 3 goals are to increase G2U student academic performance and preparation for PSE, increase G2U student graduation rates and participation in PSE, and increase G2U student educational aspirations and student/family knowledge of postsecondary options, preparation, and financing. Six measurable project objectives and 16 performance measures (PMs) will guide G2U and help D6 measure progress toward accomplishing our goals. Objectives/PMs address the impact of G2U on academic achievement [grades 6-10]; college preparedness [grades 9-11]; G2U staff and Cohort teacher skills; high school graduation; enrollment/persistence in PSE; student educational aspirations; and student/parent knowledge of PSE options, preparation, and financing. G2U will implement both Competitive Preference Priorities and two of the Invitational Priorities.

Key activities include comprehensive mentoring, outreach, and support provided by G2U Student Success Specialists (Mentors), counselors, near peers/high school peers, and partners; providing G2U students with access to rigorous instruction, extended learning opportunities, preparation and support for advanced coursework, and early college credit options/advanced coursework; staff coaching and professional development; student/parent training, events, and information on PSE options, preparation, and financing; student scholarships; and mentoring and support during the 7th Grade Cohort’s first year of college.

GU funds will support a Project Director (1.0 FTE), five Mentors (5.0 FTE), a Family Engagement Specialist (1.0 FTE), and a Data Specialist (1.0 FTE). Explicit data-driven services and progress monitoring will occur regularly using valid and reliable assessments and external evaluators with experience evaluating GU will conduct a rigorous formative and summative evaluation using a quasi-experimental design to assess the impact of G2U and use results to ensure continuous improvement, produce promising evidence, and inform sustainability.

G2U Contact: Jennie Schilling, jschilling@greeleyschools.org; (970) 348-6388

Greeley GEAR UP (G2U) Project

**San José GEAR UP Community Achievement Project**

**San Jose State University Research Foundation**

**Abstract**

The mission of the San José GEAR UP Community Achievement Project is to substantially increase the number of low-income students who graduate from high school and are prepared to enter and succeed in higher education. San José State University is the designated fiscal agent for the local

partnership, which includes Alum Rock Union Elementary School District, Franklin-McKinley

School District, the East Side Union High School District, San José-Evergreen Community College

District, De Anza College, West Valley College, and community partners - Silicon Valley Education

Foundation, East Side Education Foundation, City of San Jose, and the California Student

Opportunity Access Program (Cal-SOAP)**.** The 14 target schools include Adelante Dual Language

Academy (K-8), Aptitud Community Academy at Goss (K-8), O. S. Hubbard Elementary (K-8),

Joseph George Middle School (6-8), Ocala STEAM Academy (7-8), Lee Renaissance Academies at

Fischer and Mathson campuses (6-8), Sheppard Middle School (6-8), Bridges Academy (7-8),

George Shirakawa Sr. School (K-8), Stonegate School (K-8), Lairon College Preparatory Academy

(4-8), Sylvandale Middle School (7-8), and Windmill Springs School (K-8). The five target high

schools include Andrew P. Hill High School, Independence High School, James Lick High School,

William C. Overfelt High School, and Yerba Buena High School.

The targeted population consists of 1,906 multicultural, multilingual, low-income 7th-grade students who score well below the state and national averages in math and English Language Arts.

The average free and reduced lunch rate across the project schools is 82% (55%-94% range). A high

percentage of students are English Learners and would be first-generation to go to college. San José

GEAR UP will serve the cohort of students from 7th grade (Year 1) through high school graduation and the first year of college (Year 7) with proposed federal funding of $1.5 million per year for each of seven years and an equal amount of matching funds.

The program design is informed by Community Cultural Wealth theory (Yosso, 2005) and grounded within the American School Counselor Association (ASCA, 2019) and Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) models. These frameworks are data-driven and equity-minded with a

focus on improving academic, college and career readiness, and personal/social outcomes for all students while acknowledging and honoring students’ and their families’ cultural and linguistic diversity. This frameworks also guides the project’s design and the implementation of the project’s

activities and services to ensure students receive a rigorous academic curriculum, structured college and career readiness opportunities, and the development of non-cognitive skills, including support for personal/social development, to ensure their success in middle school, high school, postsecondary education, and beyond. The focus for students and parents/guardians will be to receive academic support (i.e., tutoring and advising); increase college and career awareness and preparation to achieve the best postsecondary “fit” (through After School and Summer Academies, virtual and work-based

learning, dual-credit enrollment and first-year college experience courses); receive extensive financial aid information to expand postsecondary options (through *Cash for College* events); and

receive support with personal/social development (from SJSU Counselor Education Department

faculty and Counselor interns) to address mental health needs that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for low-income, ethnic minority, and homeless and foster youth.

To ensure the program’s success, project staff will implement a comprehensive evaluation design that incorporates qualitative, quantitative, and summative components that inform continuous program improvement and provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication in

other settings. San José GEAR UP project is well-aligned with SJSU’s Transformation 2030 goals,

particularly goal 4 -- Connect and Contribute – by developing partnerships with K-14 educational institutions within the SJSU local community to support low-income students’ access to and transition into postsecondary education.

Contact information: Dr. Dolores Mena, PI, Chair, Department of Counselor Education, San Jose

State University, San Jose, CA, dolores.mena@sjsu.edu,(408) 924-3627

**Applicant name:** Montgomery County Schools

**City and State:** Troy, North Carolina

**Contact information:** Wade Auman, Wade.Auman@montgomery.k12.nc.us, (910) 576-6511

**Abstract**

**Project goals and objectives:** *PATHWAY,* ***P****ostsecondary* ***A****ccess through* ***T****argeted,* ***H****ands-on, and* ***W****ork-based learning for* ***A****t-risk* ***Y****outh,* has the following project goals and objectives Increase academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education; Increase the rate of high school graduation and enrollment in postsecondary education; and Increase GEAR UP students’ and their families’ knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing.

**Activities and services:** *PATHWAY* features five core program strategies addressing the GEAR UP competitive preference and invitational priorities and required activities. Comprehensive mentoring, outreach, and supportive services: College Success Planning, Rigorous Curriculum Sequence, AVID, Dual Enrollment, AP Courses, Instructional Design Teams, and Professional Development. In-demand Industry and Project-Based Learning (PBL): STEM Curricula, Scratch Coding, Open Up Math, Carnegie MATHia, Afterschool and Summer Programming, and Professional Development. Technology and Wraparound Supports: MTSS, Check & Connect, Mental Health Services, Social Emotional Learning, Classroom Academic Interventions, Online/Remote Learning Access and Enrichment, Afterschool Tutoring and Mentoring, Summer Institute, Virtual College Tours, and Professional Development. Work-Based Learning (WBL) and Career Exploration: Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship Programs, MajorClarity, Afterschool Mentoring, In-person and Virtual Field Trips, Soft Skills Training, College and Career Workshops, and Career Exploration. College Preparation Support: ACT Prep, College Tours, Career Management and Financial Literacy Course and Workshops, FAFSA and College Application Support, Reality Store, 21st Century Scholar Certificate, College Transition Support, Postsecondary Support, and Professional Development.

**Applicant Name:** California State University, Fullerton

**City and State:** Fullerton, California

**Contact Information:** Myrna Weber, Director, Grants and Contracts

**Telephone Number:** (657) 278-7679

**E-mail Address:** ogc1@fullerton.edu

**Year One Funding:** $618,400

**Project Goals/Objectives:** (1) increase the academic performance and preparation for

postsecondary education; (2) increase the rate of high school graduation and enrollment in

postsecondary education; (3) increase the educational expectations and family knowledge of

postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing, for GEAR UP participants.

**Services/Activities:** Academic Services and Work-Based Learning; College and Career

Development Counseling; Postsecondary Ready without the Need for Remediation Services;

Financial Literacy, Financing & Repayment Planning for College; Summer Bridge and the First

Year of Post-Secondary Education; Parent Engagement; and Professional Development.

**Target School(s):** Buena Park Junior High School, Imperial Middle School, Washington

Middle School, Buena Park High School, La Habra High School

**Partners:** Buena Park Elementary School District, La Habra City Elementary School District,

Fullerton Joint Union High School District, Fullerton College, North Orange County Regional

Occupational Program,TGR Learning Lab

**Students Served (1st year):** 773

**Performance Period:** 84 months

**University of Washington**

Washington State, Contact: Conan Viernes, viernes@uw.edu, Ph 509.790.7700

*University of Washington – RISE UP Partnership i*

**Abstract**

The Skagit and Yakima Valleys in Washington State encompass many small rural agricultural communities, home to many immigrant and migrant farmworkers. These two valleys have large populations of Hispanic, American Indian and/or limited English-speaking students. The target schools in these valleys have some of the highest Hispanic and immigrant-migrant student enrollment rates in the state and a poverty rate of **85%**. Schools are located in the Yakima/Skagit Valleys and on the Yakama Indian Reservation. Students have low academic achievement rates, low graduation rates, low aspirations about going to college and low college-going rates.

Thirteen rural school districts, the Yakama Indian Nation, 4 higher education institutions and 20 community and business organizations came together to develop the **Rural Initiative in STEM Education and Undergraduate Preparation (RISE UP) GEAR UP Partnership** to address the severe needs of low-income, at-risk students in the Yakima/Skagit Valleys and on the reservation. The Strategic Partners are: **1) Higher Education Institutions:** University of Washington (UW), Heritage University, Yakima Valley College and Skagit Valley College. **2) School Districts:** Burlington-Edison, East Valley, Goldendale, Grandview, Granger, Mt. Adams, Mt. Vernon, Royal, Sunnyside, Toppenish, Wahluke, Wapato and Zillah; **3) Community Organizations:** Project Lead The Way, Boeing, Microsoft, NASA, Museum of Flight, Pacific Science Center, , Yakima Valley Farmworkers Clinic, Yakama Nation Behavioral Health Services, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research, College Board, Yakama Indian Nation, Educational Service District 105, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, ALVA, uAspire, Help Me, Harlan! Productions (Best First Year), Signal Vine, Junior Achievement World, Robotics Education & Competition Foundation and RGI Research Corporation.

The **RISE UP GEAR UP Partnership** will serve **5,979** students annually for 7 years through their first year of college. Using a strong theory supported by a logic model, the **RISE UP** Partners selected culturally appropriate, evidence-based strategies and services that respond to the identified needs of the target students, parents and schools. **RISE UP** will address Competitive Preference Priorities 1 & 2 and all 3 Invitational Priorities. **RISE UP Partners** have selected a range of evidence-based programs to increase the percentage of students taking rigorous and challenging courses. The partners will implement Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) and Project Lead the Way, STEM focused programs offering advanced courses for students. After School, Summer Bridge and Tutoring Programs will also be offered to support students’ academic achievement in Math and Science. Partners will provide mentoring and a range of college-readiness activities including information, assistance and workshops for students and parents on financial aid, scholarships, admission applications, SAT, financial literacy, campus visits and career exploration.

The measurable outcomes for the **RISE UP GEAR UP Partnership** are: **1a)** Increase students completing Algebra I to **61%**; **1b)** Increase % of students passing the 8th grade exam in **Science** to **44%; 1c)** Increase % of students passing the 8th grade exam in **Math** to **55%**; **1d)** Increase % of students completing **advanced Science** to **55%; 1e)** Increase % of students completing Advanced **Math** courses to **51%**; **1f)** Increase % of students who complete a dual enrollment course to **40%**; **1g)** Increase the % of students taking college admissions tests (SAT) to **70%; 2)** Increase students’ knowledge of financial aid by **25%** each year; **3a)** Increase % of students passing the state **Math** exam to **55%**; **3b)** Increase % of students passing the state **Science** exam to **65%**; **3c)** Increase % of students participating in a work-based learning experience to **50%; 3d)** Increase % of students graduating high school to **95%**; **4a)** Increase % of graduates enrolling in higher education to **80%; 4b)** Increase % of students completing their first year of college to **85%**.

*University of Washington – RISE UP Partnership*