



Connecting to the Big Picture: An Orientation to GEAR UP

2015 NCCEP/GEAR UP Capacity Building Workshop



About NCCEP

The National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP) is a national non-profit, non-partisan organization working to increase access to higher education for economically disadvantaged students. Confident that education paves the way to social equity, NCCEP advances college access through advocacy, training, and research.

- Professional Development
- Technical Assistance
- National Programs
- Research
- Public Policy
- Advocacy



Session Goals

- To orient new(ish) GEAR UP professionals to the national GEAR UP program
- To explore the rationale, objectives, and theory of action for GEAR UP
- To create a forum to discuss how you can further the goals of GEAR UP

What is this GEAR UP that Everyone is Talking About?



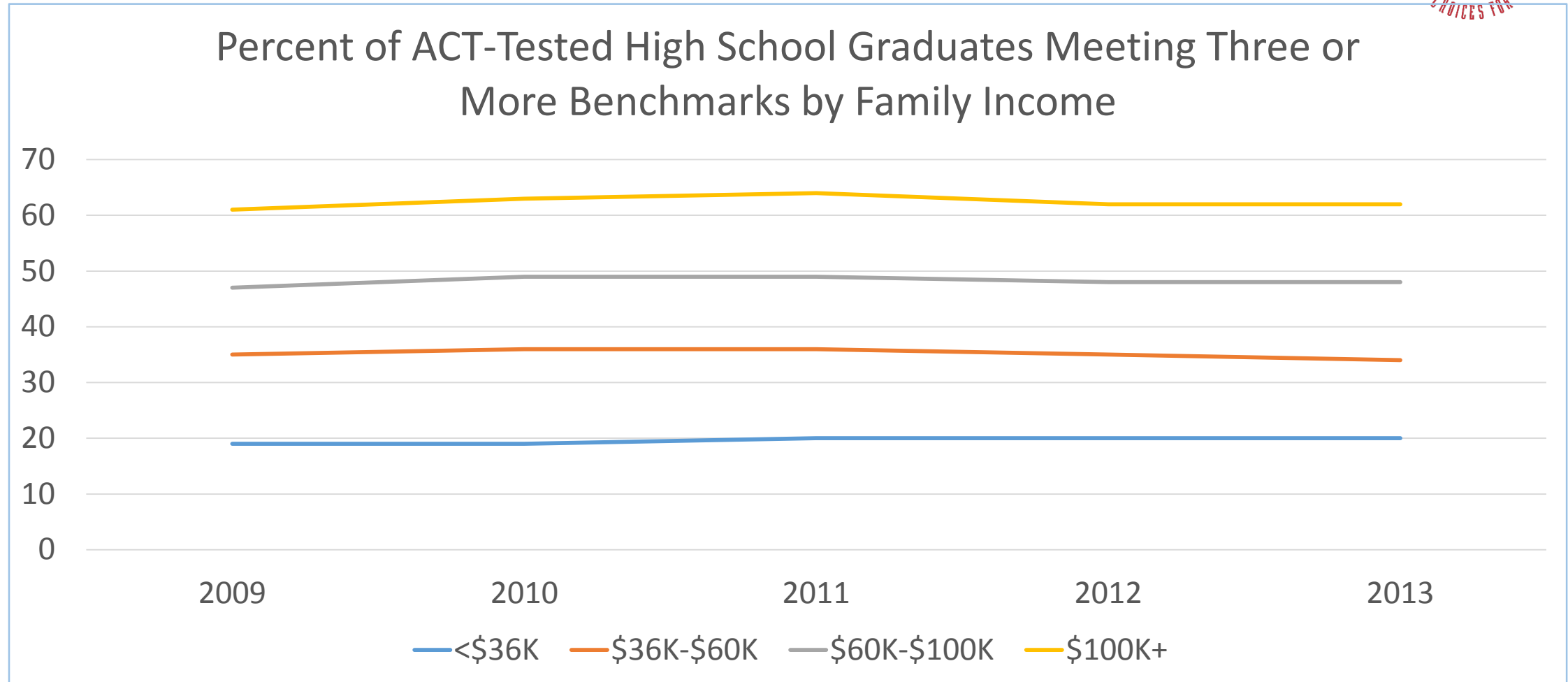
- **G**aining **E**arly **A**wareness and **R**eadiness for **U**ndergraduate **P**rograms
- A highly competitive, federally-funded initiative
- National in scope
- A key lever in our nation's strategy in improving college readiness and success for low-income students



Why Does GEAR UP
Exist?

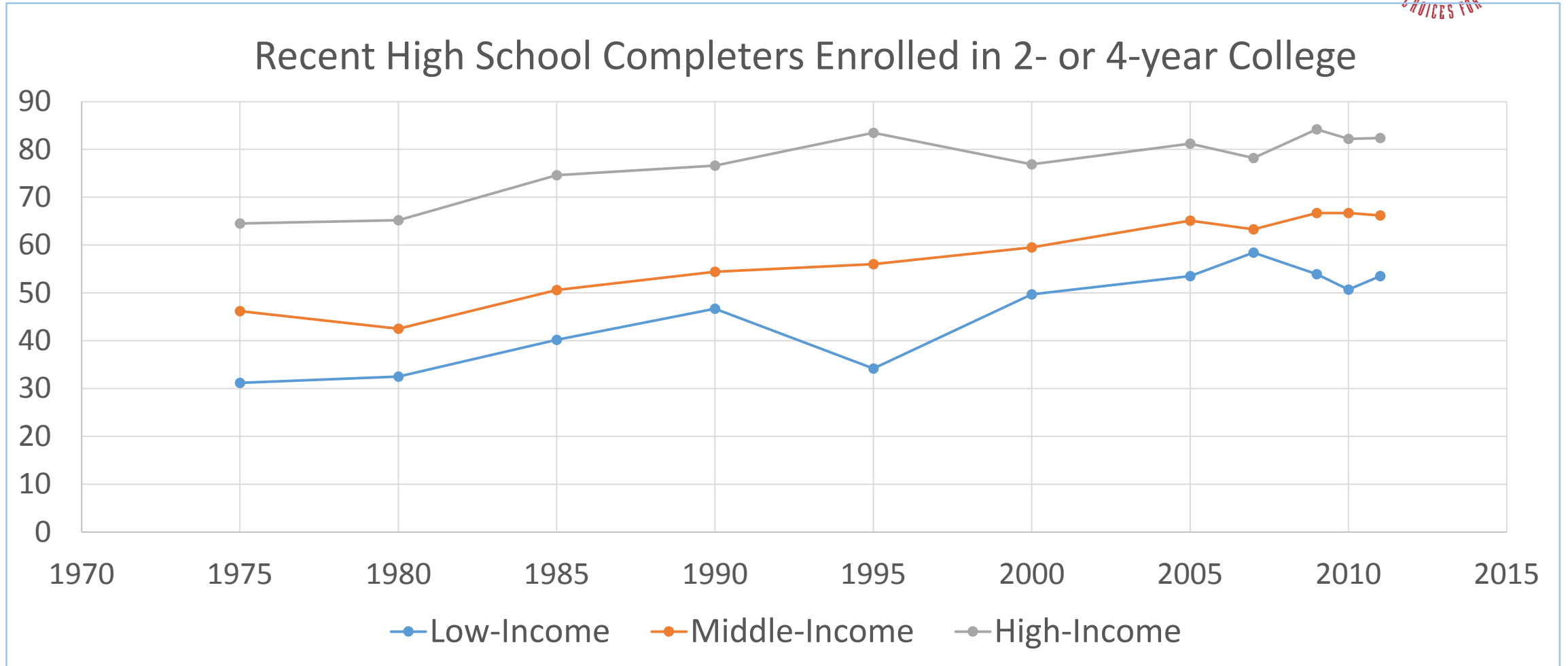


College Readiness



ACT, & National Council for Community and Education Partnerships [NCCEP]. (2013). *The condition of college & career readiness 2013: Students from low-income families*. Retrieved from <http://www.act.org/newsroom/data/2013/states/pdf/LowIncomeStudents.pdf>

College Enrollment



National Center for Education Statistics. (2012). Percentage of recent high school completers enrolled in 2-year and 4-year colleges, by income level: 1975 through 2011 *Digest of education statistics*. Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d12/tables/dt12_236.asp



College Completion

- **6-year** college completion rate for **low-income** students is **20%**, which is much lower than their **high-income** peers whose complete at **42%**. At **4-year institutions**, the gap is still wide at **40%** and **78%**, respectively.

This is troubling, because low-income students are **5x** more likely to get **out of poverty** with a **college degree**.



College Knowledge

Applying to **2** colleges instead of **1** increases college enrollment by **40%**

Applying to **3** instead of **2** increases possibility of enrollment by **10%**.

This is particularly important for **low-income students**, who tend to submit significantly **less** college applications than their **high-income** peers.



College Knowledge

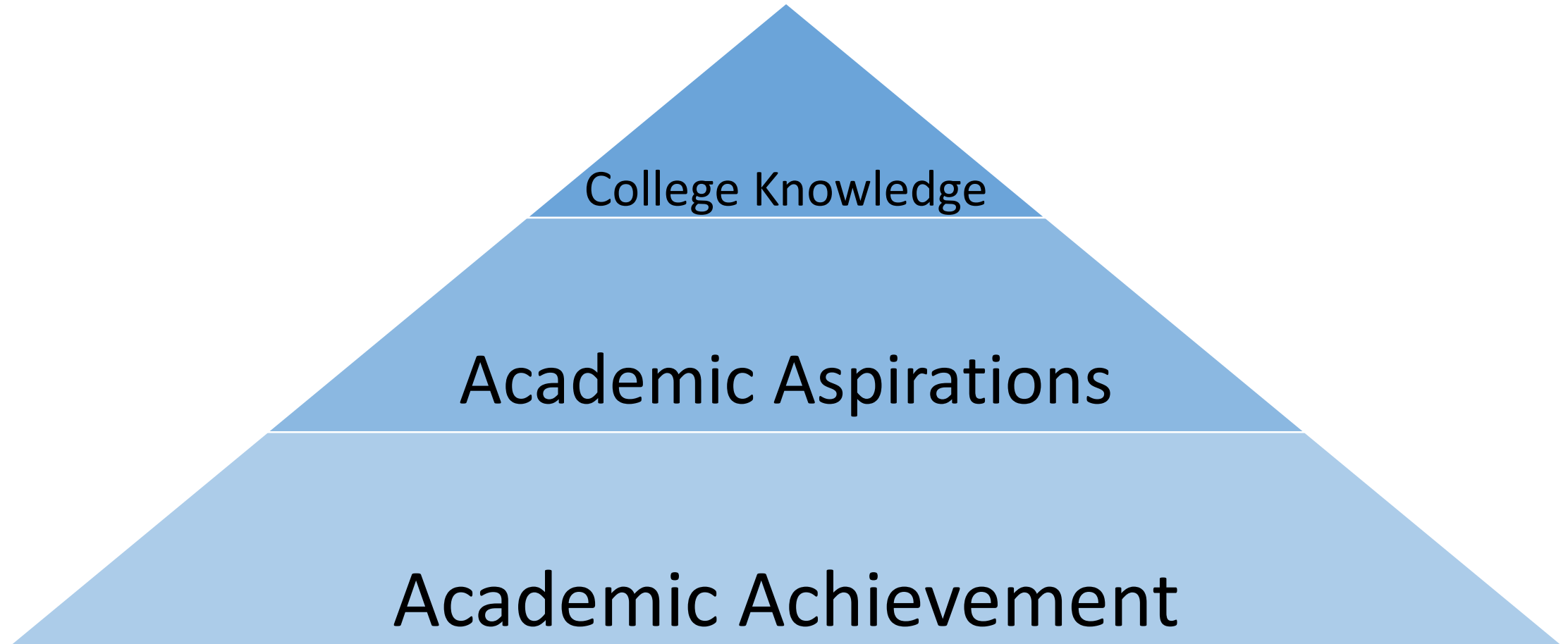
Although **low-income** students are **most** likely to qualify for financial aid, they are **less** likely to know about it

Without *basic college knowledge*, parents overestimate cost by **228%**

Parents' estimation of college cost correlates with income
(**Lower-income = More inaccurate estimation of cost**)



The Need for a Unified Approach





How does GEAR UP
Improve College
Readiness & Success?



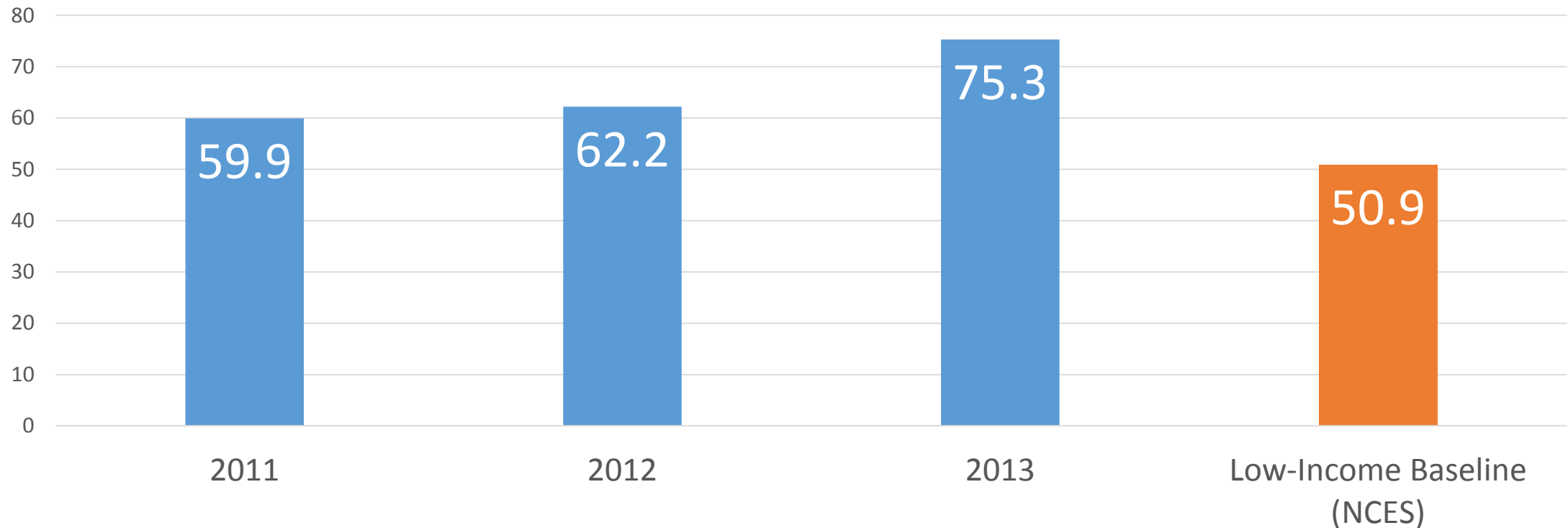
National Objectives for GEAR UP

1. To increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education of participating students;
2. To increase the rate of high school graduation and participation in postsecondary education of participating students; and
3. To increase educational expectations for participating students and increase student and family knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing.



GEAR UP College Enrollment 2011-2013

The percentage of former GEAR UP high school graduates who immediately enrolled in college



Source: U.S. Department of Education, FY 2016 Budget Justification



Improving College Readiness

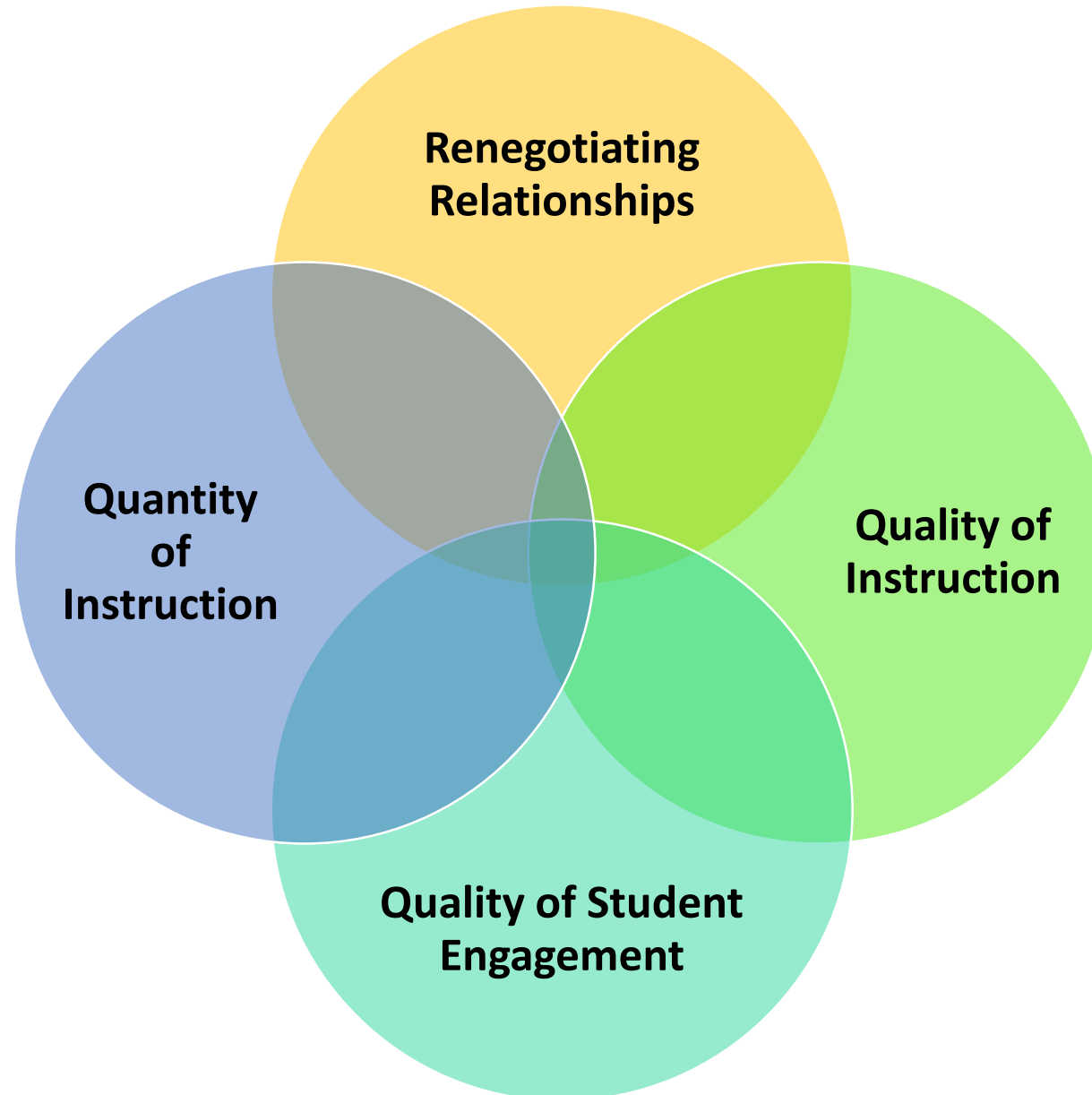
- GEAR UP addresses these needs by:
 - diagnosing the root causes of student barriers to higher education;
 - facilitating the completion of a rigorous college preparatory curriculum;
 - providing intensive academic and social support to students;
 - engaging students and families about the value of education; and
 - guiding students and families through the college search, application, and enrollment process



What Makes GEAR UP Unique

- Holistic program rooted in early intervention
 - *Beginning no later than 7th grade*
- Provides whole grades with sustained programs
 - *Programs typically follow students as they progress (cohort approach)*
- Applies research-based practices to local efforts
 - *Applications require deep analysis of local needs and resources*
- Community and education partnerships
 - *Legislation requires K-12, postsecondary, and community partners to work towards common goals*
- Leverages local assets and resources for sustainability
 - *Dollar-for-dollar match requirement*

What Makes GEAR UP Unique?





Common Activities: Academic

- Professional development for teachers, counselors, administrators, and school staff
- Curriculum development and alignment
- Supplemental academic offerings
 - after-school, weekend, and summer academic programs
- Concurrent enrollment, Advanced Placement, and Early College
- Academic advising, mentoring, and tutoring
- Drop out prevention



Common Activities: Aspirations

- Student, family and community engagement programs
- College visits and tours
- Career counseling, mentoring, and internships
- Student leadership, service learning, and motivational programs
- Non-cognitive development
- Scholarships, financial awards, and reduced tuition



Common Activities: College Knowledge

- Creating college-going cultures in schools
- Student, family, and community educational programs about the college search, application, and enrollment process
- College admissions advising, mentoring, SAT/ACT prep, and college application assistance
- Financial literacy activities for students and families
- FAFSA completion



Common Activities: Partnerships

- Establish and sustain partnerships among K-12, higher ed, CBO's, business and civic leaders
- Development of shared agenda and action plan to improve college readiness at the systems level
- Increased collaboration, joint programming, and local policy initiatives among partnership members
- Collaborating with community-based partners to provide a wealth of supplemental services to students and families outside of “school time”



The Truth About GEAR UP Success

- While the strategies that GEAR UP provide are essential . . .
 - GEAR UP is about people
 - GEAR UP is about leadership
 - GEAR UP is about relationships



The Evolving Role of the GEAR UP Professional

- GEAR UP requires skill sets above and beyond content expertise:
 - Program Administration and Grant Compliance
 - Change Management
 - Advocacy and Public Policy
 - Community Relations and Communication
 - Fundraising and Partnership Building



How is GEAR UP
Administered?



From National to Local: Resource Distribution

Congress

- Works with administration to determine total GEAR UP allocation
- Appropriates the funds to the U.S. Department of Education

US Dept. of ED

- Hosts a grant competition
- Makes awards based on peer review recommendations
- Provides oversight and accountability

GU Fiscal Agent

- Designs program, applies for the grant, and manages overall resources
- Provides leadership and oversight to project implementation
- Provides capacity building, technical support, and partnership management

Partner Schools

- Receive and manage their portion of GEAR UP resources
- Implement comprehensive programs & interventions
- Collects and reports student, school, and/or district data



GEAR UP Program Requirements

- Schools served by the program must enroll 50% or more students eligible for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program
- Must serve students through HS Graduation, with the option of going through 1st year of postsecondary education
- Must implement a set of mandatory programs, augmented by a wide variety of “permissible” activities
- Must establish a deep community and education partnership
- Every federal dollar must be equally matched with non-federal resources (1:1)
- Application process is extremely complex, competitive, and requires substantial planning
- Data and reporting obligations



Two Grant Programs: State & Partnership

State Grants

- Competitive, 6/7-year grants
- Awarded to a organization appointed by Governor
- Must provide scholarships to GEAR UP students, or obtain a waiver
- Provide early intervention and services to cohorts of students, or alternatively, priority students
- Annual budget is limited--new applicants were limited to \$3.5M

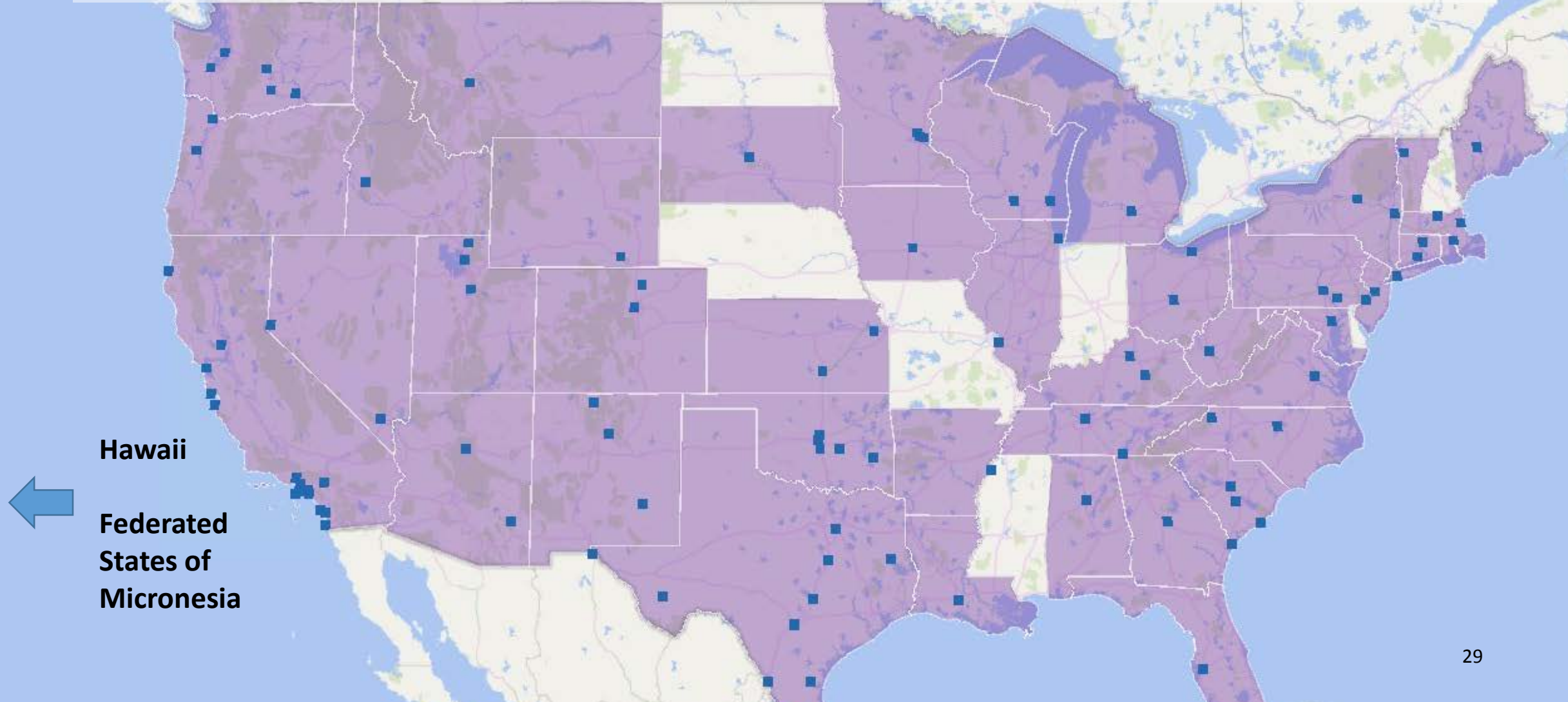
Partnership Grants

- Competitive, 6/7-year grants
- Awarded to a school district or college/university
- Provide early intervention and services to cohorts of students, in specific feeder patterns
- Annual budget is limited to \$800 per student served

GEAR UP in 2015

State Grants		Partnership Grants	
Total # of Awards	37	Total # of Awards	91
# of New FY14 Awards	27	# of New FY14 Awards	31
# of Continuing Awards	10	# of Continuing Awards	60
Total Funding this Year	\$136,247,910	Total Funding this Year	\$158,688,686
Funding for New Awards	\$31,264,008	Funding for New Awards	\$51,420,120
Avg. New Award (Annual)	\$3,126,401	Avg. New Award (Annual)	\$1,658,714
Avg. Continuing Award (Annual)	\$3,888,293	Avg. Continuing Award (Annual)	\$1,787,809

128 GEAR UP Grantees

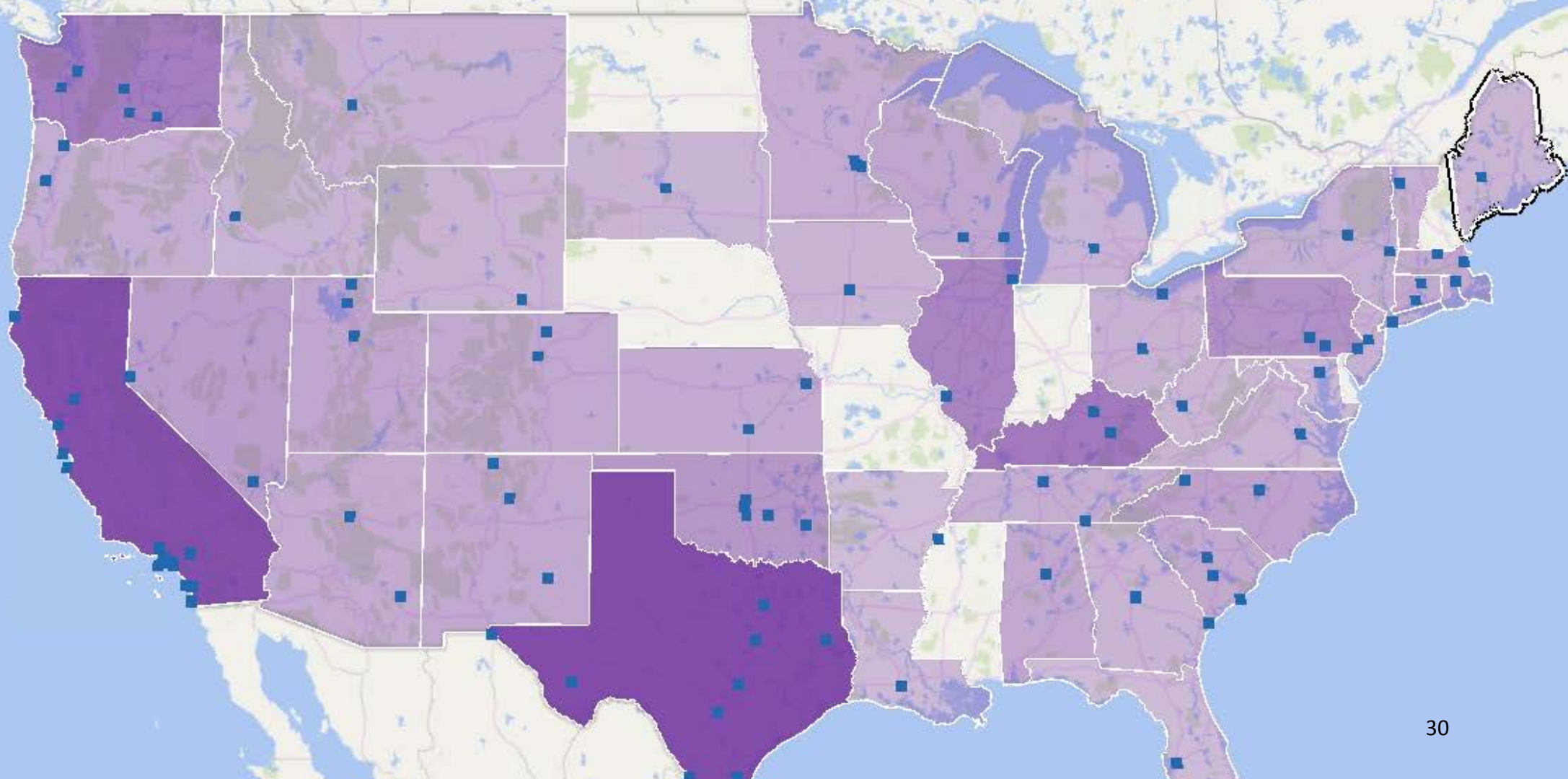


Hawaii



Federated
States of
Micronesia

GEAR UP Funding Density by State





Questions & Answers



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