

# NCCEP/GEAR UP CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOP

**CBW PRELIMINARY PROGRAM**  
**San Antonio, TX • Feb. 10–13, 2019**



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Join Us for the CBW!  
San Antonio, TX  
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# NCCEP/GEAR UP CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOP

**EXCEL • PROVE • MOBILIZE**

SUNDAY / FEB. 10	MONDAY / FEB. 11	TUESDAY / FEB. 12	WEDNESDAY / FEB. 13
<p><i>The 2019 Capacity-Building Workshop is coordinated by the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP), the national association of the GEAR UP program.</i></p> <p><b>4:00 pm - 7:00 pm</b> CBW Registration &amp; Information Booth Open</p> <p><b>5:00 pm - 6:30 pm</b> An Orientation to GEAR UP</p>	<p><b>7:00 am - 4:00 pm</b> CBW Registration &amp; Information Booth Open</p> <p><b>7:00 am - 7:45 am</b> Networking Breakfast</p> <p><b>8:00 am - 9:00 am</b> <b>WELCOME REMARKS &amp; BURST SESSION</b></p> <p><b>9:15 am - 10:30 am</b> <b>Workshops</b></p> <p><b>10:30 am - 11:00 am</b> Networking Break &amp; Raffle in Exhibit Corridor</p> <p><b>11:00 am - 12:00 pm</b> <b>Workshops (cont.)</b></p> <p><b>12:15 pm - 1:15 pm</b> Networking Lunch</p> <p><b>1:30 pm - 3:00 pm</b> <b>GEAR UP Skill-Building Seminars</b></p> <p><b>3:00 pm - 3:30 pm</b> Networking Break &amp; Raffle in Exhibit Corridor</p> <p><b>3:30 pm - 4:30 pm</b> <b>GEAR UP Affinity Groups</b></p>	<p><b>7:00 am - 4:00 pm</b> CBW Registration &amp; Information Booth Open</p> <p><b>7:00 am - 7:45 am</b> Networking Breakfast</p> <p><b>8:00 am - 9:00 am</b> <b>BURST SESSION</b></p> <p><b>9:15 am - 10:30 am</b> <b>Workshops</b></p> <p><b>10:30 am - 11:00 am</b> Networking Break &amp; Raffle in Exhibit Corridor</p> <p><b>11:00 am - 12:00 pm</b> <b>Workshops (cont.)</b></p> <p><b>12:15 pm - 1:15 pm</b> Networking Lunch</p> <p><b>1:30 pm - 3:00 pm</b> <b>GEAR UP Skill-Building Seminars</b></p> <p><b>3:00 pm - 3:30 pm</b> Networking Break &amp; Raffle in Exhibit Corridor</p> <p><b>3:30 pm - 4:30 pm</b> <b>GEAR UP Team Debrief</b></p> <p><b>5:00 pm - 6:00 pm</b> <b>GEAR UP Directors' Meeting</b></p>	<p><b>7:00 am - 1:00 pm</b> CBW Registration &amp; Information Booth Open</p> <p><b>7:00 am - 7:45 am</b> Networking Breakfast</p> <p><b>8:00 am - 9:00 am</b> <b>BURST SESSION</b></p> <p><b>9:15 am - 10:30 am</b> <b>Workshops</b></p> <p><b>10:30 am - 11:00 am</b> Networking Break</p> <p><b>11:00 am - 12:00 pm</b> <b>Workshops (cont.)</b></p> <p><b>12:15 pm - 1:15 pm</b> Closing Lunch &amp; Adjournment</p> <p><b>12:15 pm - 1:15 pm</b> <b>U.S. Department of Education/GEAR UP Directors' Meeting</b></p>

## Sunday | February 10

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4:00 pm – 7:00 pm                      **Registration and Information Booth Open**  
*Lone Star Prefunction Space*

5:00 pm – 6:30 pm                      **An Orientation to GEAR UP**  
*Lone Star C*

## Monday | February 11

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7:00 am – 4:00 pm                      **Registration and Information Booth Open**  
*Lone Star Prefunction Space*

7:00 am – 7:45 am                      **Networking Breakfast**  
*Lone Star Ballroom*

8:00 am – 9:00 am                      **WELCOME REMARKS AND EXCEL BURST SESSION**  
*Lone Star Ballroom*

**Speakers:**                              **Ranjit Sidhu**, President & CEO, National Council for Community and Education Partnerships



**Eduardo Briceño**  
Co-Founder & CEO, Mindset Works

Eduardo is the Co-Founder & CEO of Mindset Works, the leading provider of growth mindset advisory and training services and programs. He started it in 2007 with Carol Dweck, Ph.D., and Lisa Blackwell, Ph.D., to help people and organizations develop learning-oriented cultures and systems. Eduardo regularly speaks and facilitates workshops at industry conferences and in-house trainings for professionals and leaders. His TEDx talks have been viewed by millions of people. He has been featured and quoted in The Huffington Post, NPR, The Guardian, Education Week, MindShift, Entrepreneur, Inc., and others. Prior to Mindset Works, Eduardo was a Principal at the Sprout Group, a venture capital firm in Silicon Valley, where he was part of the technology investment team and served on several for-profit and non-profit boards. Before that he was an investment banking analyst with Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette. Eduardo grew up in Caracas, Venezuela. He holds bachelor's degrees in Economics and Engineering from the University of Pennsylvania, as well as an MBA and M.A. in Education from Stanford University. Most important, he continues to enjoy lifelong learning every day.

9:15 am – 10:30 am                      **WORKSHOPS**

10:30 am – 11:00 am                      **Networking Break and Raffle in Exhibit Corridor**  
*Texas Prefunction Space*



**EXCEL WORKSHOP E1: Parents That Show Up Have Students That Go Up: Best Practices for Effective Parent Engagement**  
Texas Ballroom A

**Speakers:** **Rene Diaz**, Parent Resource Coordinator, Chicago GEAR UP, Center for College Access & Success, Northeastern Illinois University  
**Betty Paugh Ortiz**, Vice President of Programs, National Council for Community and Education Partnerships  
**Wendy M. Stack**, Ph.D., Associate Vice President, Access, Innovation and Research & Executive Director, Chicago GEAR UP Alliance and Center for College Access and Success, Northeastern Illinois University  
**Rhonda Thomas**, Program Manager, Chicago GEAR UP, Center for College Access & Success, Northeastern Illinois University

**Overview:** Engaging parents in their children’s educational journey is a challenging but critically important endeavor. In this interactive workshop, participants will gain a variety of resources to explore best practices for effective parent engagement that leads to realistic college plans for children. Parent engagement beginners and veterans alike will have the opportunity to gain valuable insights during the workshop. Participants will engage in group discussions and activities about family-friendly and culturally-sensitive recruitment; analyze multi-faceted strategies that increase parent involvement, one parent at a time; learn about research in adult education and parent involvement; discover how data can drive parent activities; and engage in a practice-in-action session. There will be ample opportunity to network with other parent practitioners, and all will leave the session with replicable parent activities that maximize parent involvement which are adaptable to any program.

**Objectives:**

- Develop parent-friendly and culturally-sensitive strategies that improve communication between GEAR UP teams, families, and schools.
- Enhance the participation of parents in postsecondary education through a multi-faceted recruitment plan.
- Review the research and data points that support parent engagement and its relationship to student achievement.
- Leave the session with replicable parent activities that can be adapted to any GEAR UP program.



**EXCEL WORKSHOP E2: Preparing New GEAR UP Leaders for Success, Part 1: Compliance and Administration**  
Texas Ballroom B

**Speakers:** **Lois Bramwell**, Director, GEAR UP 4 LA  
**Linda Morgan**, Director, Eastern Oklahoma State College GEAR UP  
**Marcie Sample**, Associate Director for College Access & Support, Washington Student Achievement Council

**Overview:** Do you have administrative responsibilities for your GEAR UP grant at the program or site levels? Come hear from experienced GEAR UP leaders about the fundamentals of managing your GEAR UP program, key compliance issues related to the legislation and regulations, and join a forum to discuss

solutions to challenges you may be facing. This workshop will be packed with opportunities to take a deep dive into key issues related to grant management. Attendees will have a chance to reflect on their own practices, discuss practices with others, and leave with ideas to enhance their grant management practices. While this session is ideal for those who are new to GEAR UP, it can be a great refresher for seasoned professionals, too. This workshop is the first part of a two-part series to help new GEAR UP leaders succeed; part two will be during an afternoon seminar.

**Objectives:**

- Learn about key compliance issues in GEAR UP.
- Discuss key issues and solutions with peers.
- Complete exercises intended to help plan for enhancing grant management practices.



**EXCEL WORKSHOP E3: The Delivery Approach: Program Implementation as a Discipline**

*Texas Ballroom D*

**Speakers:** Ellyn Artis, Strategic Consulting Practice Director, Hobsons

**Overview:** Ideas and proven strategies to help students succeed are abundant, and more than ever, we have a plethora of tools and resources available. However, as practitioners we know that much of the work on the ground is about translating and implementing ideas into each program's context. In this interactive workshop, attendees will become familiar with tools based on the 'Delivery Implementation' discipline that can drive project planning and will learn how to move from an idea to execution. Presenters will share information to understand how to focus on prioritizing projects for implementation. This workshop is ideal for staff who manage projects or multiple initiatives and are ready for a new method of delivery.

**Objectives:**

- Practice applying implementation tools to help with your college access and student success implementation challenges, including activity-based planning and determining milestones.
- Reflect on how to apply these tools in your program's context and develop a real-time plan that will help participants excel.
- Understand the core tenets of 'Delivery Implementation' – the discipline of delivering results for students.



**PROVE WORKSHOP P1: GEAR UP Data and Evaluation: A Foundation**

*Republic A/B/C*

**Speaker:** Chrissy Tillery, Ed.D., Vice President of Research and Evaluation, National Council for Community and Education Partnerships

**Overview:** Understanding the core foundational aspects of GEAR UP research and evaluation are essential for effectively running a GEAR UP grant. Join NCCEP's vice president of research and evaluation for this beginner-level session that will cover an introductory overview of GEAR UP data management and evaluation practices which will include hands-on materials that you can use as a toolkit for your program. A synopsis of GEAR UP policy and data requirements will be provided, along with best practices for defining, collecting, and using data to measure performance indicators. Join this hands-on workshop to get your evaluation efforts underway and leave with knowledge of continuous data collection and strategies that will enhance your program.

**Objectives:**

- Gain an understanding of policy as it relates to GEAR UP evaluation.
- Expand your understanding of GEAR UP research and evaluation.
- Improve your knowledge of the Annual Performance Report and Final Performance Report requirements, as well as the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) performance indicators.
- Learn methods to collect data for the GEAR UP program.
- Understand the legal processes and protocols that need to be put in place for collecting and using data.



**PROVE WORKSHOP P2: How to Effectively Share Data with Schools: Building a Culture of Collaboration, Data Inquiry, and Effective Teaming**  
*Texas Ballroom E*

**Speakers:** **Carolyn Chen**, Vice President, Outreach and Partnerships, Koru Strategy Group  
**Robert Dais**, Statewide Director, GEAR UP Massachusetts

**Overview:** Keeping the focus on students and communities as well as to making decisions and taking steps that support our goals, requires a skilled, intentional approach to collaboration, data inquiry, and teaming. Often the important work we do in support of postsecondary access and success is in partnership with people and professionals across diverse settings and roles. We work with school-based teams, community-based practitioners, students, and families. How can we develop strong relationships, a shared sense of purpose, and productive ways for working together? How can we stay focused on students, grounded in evidence, and oriented toward action? In this workshop, we will provide a framework and process that can help education professionals clarify their purpose (WHY), articulate a shared vision for success (WHAT), and establish norms and practices for effective teaming (HOW).

**Objectives:**

- Learn key components of highly effective and productive teams.
- Explore a framework and process for collaborative data inquiry, including effective meetings.
- Identify ways you can establish a culture, norms, and practices that enable productive collaboration within and across diverse teams and contexts.
- Gain concrete strategies and takeaways that you can try in your setting and with your teams to improve collaboration, productivity, and evidence-based decisions.



**MOBILIZE WORKSHOP M1: Culture, Identity, and Experience: Building an Effective GEAR UP Brand**  
*Texas Ballroom F*

**Speakers:** **Dana Beck**, Program Manager—Communications Specialist, Oregon GEAR UP  
**Praveen Vajpeyi**, Creative Director, Mastery Transcript Consortium

**Overview:** Branding is more than a fancy logo or clever tagline. It is an opportunity to express your organization's mission, culture, and core values to build awareness, recognition, and trust among your stakeholders and the public. GEAR UP does amazing work, but without a strong brand it can easily go unnoticed. Join this interactive workshop to learn how to apply the art and science of branding to your work and have your organization reap the benefits. It is easier than you think. This workshop is suited

for any individual or team who is looking to strengthen their brand effectiveness for an activity or GEAR UP program.

**Objectives:**

- Gain an understanding of the underlying principles of branding.
- Learn principles to express your identity, stand out, and deepen relationships.
- Learn about practical approaches for developing, testing, and communicating your brand.
- Participate in hands-on exercises to begin developing your brand.



**MOBILIZE WORKSHOP M2: Cut the Jargon: Clear Strategies for Clear Communication**

*Texas Ballroom C*

**Speaker:** Eric Johnson, Director of Editorial Strategy, The College Board

**Overview:** Our work is complex, but our public communication should be clear and straightforward. The success of GEAR UP depends on simple, compelling information about college admission, financial aid, and the overall value of higher education. This workshop will offer advice and real-world case studies to bridge the gap between complicated topics and simple messaging. Designed for anyone who communicates with students, families, and the public, it's a great opportunity to bring fresh eyes to your writing and your messaging strategy.

**Objectives:**

- Bring simplicity and clarity to your communication using some very practical tools.
- Explore challenges in communicating about GEAR UP.
- Practice what you learn with hands-on exercises.

12:15 pm – 1:15 pm

**Networking Lunch**

*Lone Star Ballroom*

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

**GEAR UP SKILL-BUILDING SEMINARS**



**SEMINAR #1: Leveraging Social Media Tactics and Data to Market Your GEAR UP Program**

*Texas Ballroom A*

**Speakers:** **Tonya A. Waller**, Ed.D., Director, University of Kansas GEAR UP: Topeka  
**Meghan Ecker-Lyster**, Ph.D., Director of Research & Evaluation, University of Kansas' Center for Educational Opportunity Programs  
**Dalton Allen**, Site Coordinator, University of Kansas GEAR UP: Topeka  
**Laura Kingston**, Communications Specialist, University of Kansas' Center for Educational Opportunity Programs

**Overview:** Social media is the most efficient and cost-effective marketing tool of our time. In order for GEAR UP programs to market themselves effectively to a wide audience of students, community members, and stakeholders, a strategic approach is necessary. In this interactive seminar, participants will explore strategies to leverage social media and data utilization to brand and market GEAR UP programs; create content that is interesting, fun, and engaging; and increase program visibility among all stakeholders. This seminar is ideally suited for GEAR UP leaders, and coordinators.



## SEMINAR #2: **More than Financial Literacy**

*Texas Ballroom B*

**Speakers:** **Melissa I. López**, Director, GEAR UP: Ready, Set, College! Partnership, Region One Education Service Center

**Angela Delamar**, Education Specialist, GEAR UP: Ready, Set, College! Partnership, Region One Education Service Center

**Overview:** A key tenant of our work with low-income students and families is financial literacy. Yet, an ongoing urgency remains to find ways to ensure that students and families have the financial experience and proficiency required to succeed in the pursuit of an education. If you are looking for a comprehensive financial literacy initiative that you can implement in your community, look no further. In this interactive session, you will learn the “how-to’s” from seasoned GEAR UP practitioners, gain new ideas, and explore ways to create or revamp your financial literacy programming. While this seminar is ideally suited for coordinators and advisors, directors and other GEAR UP leaders would benefit.



## SEMINAR #3: **Advanced Math For All Students**

*Texas Ballroom C*

**Speakers:** **Cathy Moak**, Professional Development Project Manager, University of Texas at Austin, Institute for Public School Initiatives

**Carrie Pullins**, Math Coordinator, Edgewood Independent School District – University of Texas—To College and Beyond GEAR UP

**Overview:** With the common goal to increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education, one GEAR UP strategy is to facilitate our students’ completion of a rigorous college preparatory curriculum. Join us as we zero in on collaborative efforts in mathematics, exploring the rationale and essential elements necessary for a successful advanced math initiative. We will share strategies to scale accelerated math curriculum and examine the supports put in place to ensure advanced math success. This seminar is ideally suited for GEAR UP Leaders, coordinators, counselors, and instructors.



## SEMINAR #4: **Integrating Social Emotional Learning to Promote Student Success**

*Texas Ballroom D*

**Speaker:** **Wade Leuwerke**, Ph.D., Research and Training Director, GEAR UP Iowa, Iowa College Student Aid Commission

**Erin Valerio-Garsow**, Program Facilitator, GEAR UP Iowa, Iowa College Student Aid Commission

**Overview:** Social emotional skills have a profound and unique impact on student success. This interactive session will highlight several skills (e.g., academic self-confidence, resilience, communication), describe the use of data to drive intervention plans, and examine classroom or small group interventions designed to bolster students’ social emotional attitudes. The presenter will incorporate specific data-driven intervention strategies

used by GEAR UP Iowa schools and demonstrate practical, engaging activities that build social emotional skills. This seminar is ideally suited for coordinators, counselors, and advisors.



**SEMINAR #5: The Heart of the Activity**

*Bowie A/B/C*

**Speakers:** **Carlos Ojeda Jr.**, CEO and Creative Force, CoolSpeak  
**Ernesto Mejia**, Vice President and Partnership Cultivator, CoolSpeak

**Overview:** Anyone can do an icebreaker, energizer, or fun activity, but how do we make them truly memorable and meaningful? By getting to the *heart* of the activity. During this hands-on session, participants will learn how to infuse their programming with energizers, icebreakers, and activities that have the energy and emotion needed to alter them from fun, physical experiences to transformative moments that are truly meaningful for students. Come to learn new approaches for planning, delivering, and implementing activities that will elevate your events from fun to unforgettable. This seminar is ideally suited for counselors, advisors, coordinators, and anyone helping students prepare for college.



**SEMINAR #6: Planning and Executing the Senior Year to Maximize Results**

*Texas Ballroom F*

**Speakers:** **Teena Olszewski**, Executive Director, Arizona GEAR UP, Northern Arizona University  
**Barbara Soby**, Associate Director, Arizona GEAR UP, Northern Arizona University  
**Andrea Gonzalez-Sotelo**, Program Manager, Arizona GEAR UP, Northern Arizona University

**Overview:** Increasing high school graduation, FAFSA completion, and college-going rates are key outcome measures of GEAR UP success, and unlike any year before it, the senior year is *show time*: students and parents must complete the FAFSA, submit college applications, consider financial aid packages, select a postsecondary institution, and enroll. Success in this critical year is about facilitating accomplishment of *individual* students' postsecondary goals and employing strategies to make that possible for *every student*. In this seminar, participants will reflect on their current practices in planning for and implementing a senior year plan with partner schools to achieve GEAR UP goals. Guided by Arizona GEAR UP's journey, attendees will discover and explore an approach to make the most of the senior year, and will receive planning documents, senior counseling guides, and a comprehensive *Launch Guide* – an innovative tool for maximizing outcomes. This seminar is ideally suited for GEAR UP leaders, counselors, coordinators, and advisors.



**SEMINAR #7: Using Qualitative Data to Add Richness in Evaluations**

*Republic A/B/C*

**Speaker:** **Janet Usinger**, Ph.D., Associate Professor, University of Nevada, Reno

**Overview:** Qualitative data describes whereas quantitative data defines—together they can add value to our work. GEAR UP evaluations capture student aspirations, participation in GEAR UP activities, as well as indicators of academic progress; however, these types of quantitative (or numeric) data seldom answer all the questions that our stakeholders want to know. Why do students participate in some activities, but not others—or not at all? How can we improve our program? How do parents, school personnel, and/or community members perceive GEAR UP? These types of questions are typically addressed with qualitative data. This seminar will focus on critical considerations when incorporating qualitative inquiry into your evaluations. Participants will learn about and plan the foundation of a qualitative component and/or study, using one of the following evaluation designs: case study, mixed methods, program improvement, and adding the “voices” of various stakeholders. This seminar is ideally suited for GEAR UP leaders, researchers, and evaluators.



**SEMINAR #8: College Admissions Mock Experience: Understanding College Application Essays**  
*Presidio A/B/C*

**Speakers:** **Roxanne Rosales**, Ph.D., GEAR UP Director, San Antonio Independent School District  
**Beverly Woodson Day**, Ph.D., Interim Associate Vice President of Strategic Enrollment and Director of Admissions, The University of Texas at San Antonio  
**Hillary Everts**, Assistant Director of Admissions, Trinity University  
**Shahrzad Sameri**, Senior Regional Advisor, Division of Academic Affairs, Office of Admissions, Texas A&M University

**Overview:** When supporting students with their college application packets, including their essays and additional supporting documentation, we often only see this process from the submitters (our students’) perspective. To gain a broader understanding of how students’ college admission applications are reviewed, analyzed, and scored, it is time to take a closer look at this process through the lens of the college admissions officer. In this session, join college admission experts as they guide participants through a mock committee review with analysis of sample student essays. In both small and large group discussions, participants will gain insight on the key components of a strong application essay, the approach to common essay questions, and strategies on how to support students with translating their experiences into content for an effective essay. This seminar is ideally suited for high school counselors, coordinators, and advisors.



**SEMINAR #9: Roundtable on the GEAR UP Match**  
*Texas Ballroom E*

**Speaker:** **Alex Chough**, Vice President for Government Relations, National Council for Community and Education Partnerships  
**Adam Green**, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission  
**Corinne Loftis Nilsen**, Executive Director, Kansas Kids @ GEAR UP, Wichita State University  
**Meghan Oakley-Henning**, GEAR UP Coordinator, School District of Lancaster

**Overview:** Operationalizing the GEAR UP match requirement is a persistent challenge for nearly every GEAR UP program. While the federal regulations describe the contours of what

qualifies as match, how to value match, and how to document match; the on-the-ground realities are not so cut and dry. Navigating the maze of compliance issues, questions about allowable sources, and implementation barriers is hard work. Given that there is no single document that satisfies all the various match scenarios, come join this roundtable seminar to discuss a range of issues with your like-minded peers. The seminar will begin with a brief overview of the match requirements, highlight common challenges and issues, and will spend most of the time in issue-based discussions with other GEAR UP leaders to find solutions to common problems. This seminar is ideally suited for GEAR UP leaders, coordinators, finance staff, or anyone who is asked to generate and document match.



### **SEMINAR #10: Preparing for the Momentum Year**

*Travis A/B*

**Speakers:** **Dawn Cooper**, Assistant Vice Chancellor of College Access Initiatives, University System of Georgia, GEAR UP Georgia

**Melissa Gattuso**, Director of Implementation, University System of Georgia, GEAR UP Georgia

**Jonathan Watts Hull**, Director of Student Success, University System of Georgia

**Overview:** Student success in the first-year of postsecondary education is a foundational goal that will have a profound influence on their experience. Are our GEAR UP students ready to make these decisions? With Complete College America, GEAR UP Georgia is working on preparing students for the “momentum year,” where students find their path, get on that path, and build velocity in the direction of their goals. Come join leaders from GEAR UP Georgia to learn about the evidence base behind the momentum year, explore how GEAR UP can help students make informed decisions well before enrolling on a college campus, and undertake some action planning to help propel your students towards success. This seminar is ideally suited for GEAR UP leaders, high school counselors and advisors, or anyone helping students prepare for college.

3:00 pm – 3:30 pm

### **Networking Break & Raffle in Exhibit Corridor**

*Texas Prefunction Space*

#### **Quad Squad 103: Quad Space Administrators Training (By Invitation)**

**Monday, February 11 | 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm**

As we enter our second full year of Quad engagement, Quad Space Administrators are taking the lead on inspiring GEAR UP individuals and programs across the country. Administrators are implementing and experimenting with concrete and creative ways to encourage, engage, and employ Quad utilization. Join your fellow Quad Space Administrators for an interactive session where we will discuss how to advance our Quad online efforts in the areas of expertise, project management, communication, and engagement.

3:30 pm – 4:30 pm

### **GEAR UP AFFINITY GROUPS**

Affinity Groups provide the unique opportunity to connect with like-minded colleagues who share your interests, curiosities, and challenges. With each group facilitated by seasoned education leaders, it is the

perfect time to come together to share ideas, insight, and recommendations on educational and institutional best practices and strategies.

**1. Academic and Non-Academic Skills and Programs**

*Texas Ballroom B*

Meet with colleagues for a lively discussion about dual enrollment, early college programs, and college entrance exams. You will also have a chance to share ideas about grit, social capital, and student aspirations.

**2. Family Outreach, Engagement, and Initiatives**

*Texas Ballroom E*

Meet with colleagues to share practices and approaches on innovative ways to outreach, engage, and empower families, mentors, and members of student support networks.

**3. Financial Aid Planning and Programs**

*Texas Ballroom D*

Have an interest in college affordability planning, financial literacy, and financial aid opportunities? Join this group of individuals who, like you, want to meet and discuss financial aid planning and programs.

**4. GEAR UP Scholarship Providers**

*Texas Ballroom F*

Scholarships are an essential component of GEAR UP programming. This group will share strategies on how to formulate a sustainable scholarship program and tips on how to build valuable relationships with higher education institutions.

**5. Peer-To-Peer Networking for District-Led and School-Led Grant Leaders**

*Texas Ballroom A*

Calling all GEAR UP leaders within district-led and school-led programs! In this group, you will be able to connect with peers to discuss the unique approaches to managing a GEAR UP program at the district and school levels.

**6. Peer-To-Peer Networking for Evaluators**

*Crockett C/D*

Calling all GEAR UP evaluators! Meet with colleagues to discuss analytic processes, methodologies, implementation models, and strategies on how to use data more effectively.

**7. Peer-To-Peer Networking for IHE-Led Grant Leaders**

*Bowie A/B/C*

Calling all GEAR UP leaders within institutions of higher education! Join this group to share strategic plans and collaborative approaches to managing GEAR UP programs within the college and university settings.

**8. Peer-to-Peer Networking for State Agency Grant Leaders**

*Texas Ballroom A*

Calling all GEAR UP leaders within state agencies! Meet with your peers to discuss the policies, plans, and procedures unique to managing GEAR UP programming at the state agency level.

## 9. Postsecondary Planning and Advising

*Texas Ballroom C*

Connect with colleagues to share the various approaches to advising students through the postsecondary planning processes. You will have the opportunity to discuss college search, match, and fit, with ample time to share tips on career exploration techniques.

## 10. Special Student Populations

*Republic A/B/C*

Join this group to share recommendations for working with various student populations, including students who may be homeless, undocumented, or in need of specialized support services.

# Tuesday | February 12

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7:00 am – 4:00 pm

### Registration and Information Booth Open

*Lone Star Prefunction Space*

7:00 am – 7:45 am

### Networking Breakfast

*Lone Star Ballroom*

8:00 am – 9:00 am

### PROVE BURST SESSION

*Lone Star Ballroom*

### Speakers:

**Ranjit Sidhu**, President & CEO, National Council for Community and Education Partnerships



### John N. Friedman

Associate Professor of Economics and International and Public Affairs, Brown University

John N. Friedman is an Associate Professor of Economics and International and Public Affairs at Brown University, as well as a founding co-Director of Opportunity Insights, a research and policy center dedicated to developing scalable policy solutions that will empower families throughout the United States to rise out of poverty and achieve better life outcomes. John's work seeks this goal by studying the causes and consequences of inequality for kids, as well as policies to improve opportunity for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. His research brings together theory and data and harnesses the power of large administrative datasets to yield policy-relevant insights on a wide range of topics, including taxation, education, retirement, and healthcare. John's work has appeared in top academic journals as well as in major media outlets, and his work was cited by President Obama in his 2012 State of the Union Address. From 2013-2014, Prof. Friedman worked as Special Assistant to the President for Economic Policy at the National Economic Council in the White House. He holds a Ph.D. in Economics, an A.M. in Statistics, and a B.A. in Economics, all from Harvard University. He is also a Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research.

9:15 am – 10:30 am

**WORKSHOPS**

10:30 am – 11:00 am

**Networking Break and Raffle in Exhibit Corridor**

*Texas Prefunction Space*

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

**WORKSHOPS (cont.)**



**EXCEL WORKSHOP E4: Building and Sustaining Community through Personal Narratives**

*Texas Ballroom A*

**Facilitator:** **Lynda Tredway**, Senior Associate for Leadership and Equity, Institute for Educational Leadership

**Overview:** Taking the time to focus on how we care for each other by knowing each other's stories is a necessary component of successful collaboration. Whether you work directly with students, families, community partners, or other constituents, you can use personal narratives to build and sustain relationships based on trust and common values. During this interactive workshop, you have the opportunity to pause and reflect on your own stories, discover common values with others, and draw on the collective wisdom of your peers. Learn how this type of personal and group reflection supports relational trust, a necessary precondition for working in schools and communities.

**Objectives:**

- Explore personal narratives that drive and sustain your work.
- Analyze the ways in which personal narratives play a role in our communities of practice within GEAR UP and our local communities.
- Commit to using personal narratives in your community.



**EXCEL WORKSHOP E5: GEAR UP Action Planning for All**

*Texas Ballroom B*

**Speakers:** **Stephanie Carnahan**, Project Director, Oregon GEAR UP  
**Maddy Anderson**, School Liaison, Oregon GEAR UP  
**Susie Snelling**, School Liaison, Oregon GEAR UP  
**Jennica Vincent**, Research and Evaluation Specialist, Oregon GEAR UP

**Overview:** Using data to inform practice sounds easy enough, but is it? Every year, we learn more about strategies that help students succeed, but what works in one GEAR UP program does not necessarily work in another. How can intentional planning and data help us be more successful? Oregon GEAR UP has been refining their process for the past decade and designed an interactive workshop to share their research-based model for change and planning, along with tools that can be easily adapted by any GEAR UP program. This annual process is relevant to both GEAR UP programs and individual GEAR UP schools. Whether you have a plan in place or need help getting started, this workshop will help you improve the quality of your GEAR UP planning.

**Objectives:**

- Gain an understanding of the five principles that comprise the Oregon GEAR UP model and process.
- Explore the effective use of data when planning GEAR UP activities.

- Participate in hands-on activities to begin developing a plan for your program.



## **EXCEL WORKSHOP E6: GEAR UP in the First Year of Postsecondary Education**

*Texas Ballroom C*

**Speakers:** **Juliette Caire**, GEAR UP Executive Director, University of Texas at El Paso-University Towers  
**Katie Hill**, Associate Director of Programs, National Council for Community and Education Partnerships  
**Angela Jackson**, Project Director, GEAR UP Hawai'i  
**Tenya Moravec**, Associate Director, University of Washington GEAR UP

**Overview:** The first year of postsecondary education is a critical juncture for students. The role that GEAR UP plays during that year should be carefully planned far in advance, well thought out, and effectively prepared for stakeholders. In this workshop, join colleagues to learn best practices based on grantee experiences, engage in thoughtful discussions, and begin planning your postsecondary services early. Attendees will learn what has worked and discuss common challenges about designing, staffing, building a service model, and finding match opportunities during students' first year of postsecondary education. While many questions remain unanswered in this relatively new GEAR UP field, this workshop will focus on what we know and attempt to address unresolved issues through peer interaction.

### **Objectives:**

- Learn best practices about first-year postsecondary education services from other grantees.
- Engage in rich discussion with peers about issues GEAR UP faces in providing postsecondary education services.
- Use planning tools and exercises to design postsecondary education services.



## **PROVE WORKSHOP P3: School-Based Data: How to Tie Program Services to Outcomes**

*Texas Ballroom D*

**Speaker:** **Chrissy Tillery**, Ed.D., Vice President of Research and Evaluation, National Council for Community and Education Partnerships

**Overview:** GEAR UP has many unique components and the core of these are services to students and families. Most often, staff who provide these services are versed in student development and engagement. However, there is often a disconnect between the services provided and the change in outcomes over time. Join this session to learn how programmatic staff can better understand the process of connecting services to outcomes, as well as how leadership staff can better understand how to use data to strategically align services. If these two critical components—services and outcomes—are not working together, you should reframe your core focus and this workshop can help you do that. Once these areas are working together—and not in silos—your students will reap the benefits.

### **Objectives:**

- Learn ways to integrate service programming to outcomes.
- Discover how connecting programming and data can increase your effectiveness and impact.
- Engage with GEAR UP professionals in strategic discussion about the alignment of services and outcomes.



## **PROVE WORKSHOP P4: Early Warning Program Supports for College Readiness**

*Texas Ballroom E*

**Speakers:** **Jenny Scala**, Senior Researcher, American Institutes for Research  
**Kelle Parsons**, Senior Researcher, American Institutes for Research

**Overview:** Early warning systems can alert educators that students are struggling well before they fail to meet learning outcomes, but how do you then provide the needed supports to ensure students stay on track? The American Institutes for Research (AIR) has paved the way in validating early warning indicators to identify those at-risk students—and in supporting educators to use data to provide appropriate interventions to ensure that students are on track. This interactive session will connect research and evidence to actionable guidance and tools, including an implementation process for supports for college readiness. Program directors, staff, and evaluators need early information to boost the effectiveness of their GEAR UP program to ensure that students are on-track to meet the critical milestones of high school graduation, as well as enrollment and persistence in postsecondary education. When these indicators are used to drive programming, they can provide critical direction for program improvement and refinement. Find out how to map engagement opportunities and your existing data to these indicators to support college readiness outcomes for your students.

**Objectives:**

- Understand how to identify early warning indicators.
- Learn about program supports to keep students on track for success.
- Discuss what programming decisions are appropriate to make with your data.
- Discover how to strategically boost your program's impact.



## **MOBILIZE WORKSHOP M3: No More Secrets: Getting the Right GEAR UP Message Out!**

*Texas Ballroom F*

**Speakers:** **Jeanine L'Ecuyer**, President, L'Ecuyer Communications  
**Lesli Yogi**, Business and Community Outreach Specialist, Hawai'i P-20 Partnerships for Education

**Overview:** How often have you heard a colleague (or yourself) say something like, "GEAR UP is the best-kept secret in our community"? We know that building awareness among our stakeholders and the public is important for our work, yet, it is hard to get the word out when media—even social media—is not always paying attention. Compounding the problem, few of us have a full-time communications specialist on-staff, nor enough hours in the day. So, what are we to do? By learning how to create memorable messages and activating all your networks in a smart and strategic way, you can create a cadre of brand ambassadors who will help you achieve the right kind of attention focused on the goals that matter most to your team. This workshop is suited to any GEAR UP professional or partner wanting with expanding the reach, awareness, or appreciation of your GEAR UP activities or overall program.

**Objectives:**

- Experience a mapping process to help you identify and refine key messages.
- Uncover the 'why' that will drive those messages and link them to your goals.
- Learn effective practices for disseminating those messages to important audience groups.



## MOBILIZE WORKSHOP M4: Securing Buy-In through Effective Advocacy

*Republic A/B/C*

**Speakers:** **Alex Chough**, Vice President for Government Relations, National Council for Community and Education Partnerships  
**Emily Jeffries**, Associate Director for Government Relations, National Council for Community and Education Partnerships

**Overview:** Since we know that GEAR UP works, why is it so tough to garner enthusiastic support for our program? Unfortunately, great work and outcomes are not enough to gain the support you need to successfully implement, sustain, and grow the GEAR UP college readiness agenda. From the schools we serve to the U.S. Capitol, we need to proactively persuade those who can facilitate or inhibit our long-term success. Fortunately, advocacy work is easy if you are prepared and have a plan. Come learn how to better understand the factors that influence decision-making, the principles of sound advocacy, and develop strategies you can use to advocate for your program locally. This workshop is suited for any individual who wants to be a better advocate for their activity, program, or GEAR UP as a whole.

**Objectives:**

- Better understand the principles that support decision-making and effective advocacy.
- Participate in hands-on exercises that will help you identify your strengths, weaknesses, and weave effective strategies into project or program.
- Apply your knowledge to develop a one-year advocacy strategic plan.

12:15 pm – 1:15 pm

**Networking Lunch**

*Lone Star Ballroom*

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

**GEAR UP SKILL-BUILDING SEMINARS**



**SEMINAR #11: Integrate it ALL! Low-Cost STEM Activities: Ignite Creativity and Inquiry**

*Texas Ballroom A*

**Speakers:** **Daniela Assenato**, STEM & Data Specialist, Chicago GEAR UP, Center for College Access & Success, Northeastern Illinois University  
**Kenneth Boyd**, STEM and Match Specialist, Chicago GEAR UP, Center for College Access & Success, Northeastern Illinois University  
**Syreeta Brown**, Science Coordinator, Chicago GEAR UP, Center for College Access & Success, Northeastern Illinois University  
**Daniel Laubacher**, Evaluation & Professional Development Coordinator, Chicago GEAR UP, Center for College Access & Success, Northeastern Illinois University

**Overview:** Intentional, hands-on exploration of the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fields is too often left out of everyday curriculum and instruction. One solution to this problem is to integrate low-cost STEM activities to help students explore interests in a meaningful way. In this activity-based seminar, participants will explore hands-on, low-cost STEM activities that can be used as a creative mechanism for learning across disciplines. Participate in National Generation Science Standards and Common Core Mathematics Standards standard-based, hands-on activities that

will open up a realm of inquiry-based questions leading to rich and rigorous student learning. This seminar is ideally suited for instructors and coordinators.



**SEMINAR #12: The Ins and Outs of Federal GEAR UP Reporting: Lessons and Tips**

*Texas Ballroom B*

**Speakers:** **Robert Dais**, Statewide Director, GEAR UP Massachusetts  
**Wendy M. Stack**, Ph.D., Associate Vice President, Access, Innovation and Research & Executive Director, Chicago GEAR UP Alliance and Center for College Access and Success, Northeastern Illinois University

**Overview:** GEAR UP grants have two federal reporting requirements—the Annual and Final Performance Reports. Join this engaging seminar to participate in a high-level overview of the reports and planning process. If you are new to GEAR UP or need a refresher, join this state and partnership director co-led seminar that will provide an overview of the federal requirements, along with tips for planning throughout the year so you are not scrambling at the last minute. These reports require data, school collaboration, budget management, and forethought. Learn tips on pre-planning, assigning tasks, and how to get answers to your questions during the report process. The presenters will also provide insight from many collective years of federal reporting on some do’s and don’ts so you are adequately prepared. There will be time for questions and discussion. This seminar is ideally suited for GEAR UP leaders and evaluators.



**SEMINAR #13: Roundtable on GEAR UP College Visits: Exploring Practices**

*Crockett C/D*

**Speakers:** **Tireka Cobb**, Ph.D., Field Outreach Services Director, Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance  
**Mary Cobb-Marshall**, Regional Coordinator, Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance  
**Thomas Rudd**, Career Transition Specialist, Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance  
**Timenee Thomas**, Program Coordinator, Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance

**Overview:** GEAR UP programs all over the country are inspiring students and families through college visits that range from quick trips to complex, multi-day itineraries. With so many versions of the “college visit” occurring within the GEAR UP community, it is time for us to join forces and share our challenges, barriers, insights, and best practices. Join this facilitated roundtable discussion and team up with colleagues from across the country to explore, review, and discuss your most promising practices for college visit initiatives and itineraries. Participants will work in collaborative teams to craft, document, and share feedback and recommendations. This seminar is ideally suited for coordinators, advisors, GEAR UP leaders, and anyone helping students prepare for college.



**SEMINAR #14: Digging Deep into What Really Works (and What Doesn't) with Mentoring**  
*Texas Ballroom D*

**Speakers:** **Jennie Cha**, GEAR UP Coordinator, Portland GEAR UP  
**Deanna Delgado**, High School Language Arts Teacher, Portland GEAR UP  
**Graciela Quinto Alfaro**, College Advocate Mentor, Portland GEAR UP  
**Jonathan Perez-Carrasco**, College Advocate Mentor, Portland GEAR UP  
**Angela Nusom**, Ed.D., Director of Mobilizing for College and Engage, Empower, Elevate, Portland GEAR UP  
**Celeste Janssen**, Director, Institute for Youth Success, Education Northwest

**Overview:** Mentoring is about building skills in struggling students, right? What if mentoring was reframed—what if mentoring was the solution to helping schools make classrooms more relevant, real-time, and community-connected? Join a GEAR UP program leader and a mentoring technical assistance provider as we strategize with you about how GEAR UP can unleash the power of relationships to transform systems. Come ready to talk, learn, think, and bring plenty of questions. We will share evidence-based mentoring resources, concepts on the emerging topic of “critical mentoring,” and ways to connect with local technical assistance to support you back in your community. This seminar is ideally suited for coordinators, advisors, GEAR UP leaders, and anyone helping students prepare for college.



**SEMINAR #15: How to Support Literacy Success through a Coaching Model**  
*Travis A/B*

**Speakers:** **Tricia Perez**, Educator Outreach Coach, University of Texas at Austin, Institute for Public School Initiatives  
**Joanna Oliver**, Educator Outreach Coach, University of Texas at Austin, Institute for Public School Initiatives  
**Ashley Balagia**, Campus Instructional Coach, Brentwood Middle School, Edgewood Independent School District, University of Texas—To College and Beyond GEAR UP  
**Eva Beniflah Reyna**, Principal, Brentwood Middle School, Edgewood Independent School District, University of Texas—To College and Beyond GEAR UP

**Overview:** In this session, we will identify ways to support literacy growth and success through a well-designed coaching model. We will highlight a GEAR UP campus that is using professional learning communities as well as coaching in the classroom to build teacher capacity and improve student literacy performance. Strategies, protocols, and exemplar agendas/support schedules will be shared. Time to collaborate and problem solve will also be included in this session. This seminar is ideally suited for instructors, coordinators, and counselors.



**SEMINAR #16: Preparing New GEAR UP Leaders for Success, Part 2: Foundational Issues in GEAR UP Implementation**  
*Texas Ballroom F*

**Speakers:** **Lois Bramwell**, Director, GEAR UP 4 LA  
**Linda Morgan**, Director, Eastern Oklahoma State College GEAR UP

**Marcie Sample**, Associate Director for College Access & Support, Washington Student Achievement Council

**Overview:** The second session focused on helping new GEAR UP leaders will highlight overcoming the challenges that every GEAR UP leader faces when implementing a high-quality program. Whether you are a new GEAR UP director, central staff administrator, or site coordinator, your ability to navigate a complex set of relationships, requirements, and issues related to GEAR UP implementation will substantially influence your grant's overall success. Come join experienced GEAR UP leaders in an interactive seminar to learn, explore, and discuss important lessons learned over many years of GEAR UP. This is the second part of a two-part series to help leaders succeed.



**SEMINAR #17: FAFSA® Updates, Mobile App Feedback, and Strategies for Solving Application Challenges**

*Republic A/B/C*

**Speaker:** **Claire Bucknor**, Awareness and Outreach Specialist, Office of Federal Student Aid, U.S. Department of Education

**Overview:** Looking for updates on the 2019-2020 FAFSA® form? Want to learn more about the features of myStudentAid mobile app? Interested in an online tour of the redesigned fafsa.gov website? Join a financial aid expert from Federal Student Aid (FSA) to obtain answers to these and more of your probing financial aid questions. Participants will receive federal guidance on navigating the financial aid application and verification processes. Through real-life student and family scenarios, participants will collaborate in teams to review, discuss, and analyze common barriers and best practices related to the FSA ID, FAFSA® form, and Student Aid Report (SAR). This seminar is ideally suited for coordinators, advisors, counselors, and GEAR UP leaders.



**SEMINAR #18: Implement Social and Emotional Learning Now!**

*Bowie A/B/C*

**Speaker:** **Greg Evans**, Founder and CEO, Seeds Training

**Overview:** Studies show that 99% of school principals believe social and emotional learning (SEL) skills are teachable. Further, 82% of teachers want training to learn how to effectively implement SEL. Yet, only 22% of schools are implementing practices to address the SEL needs of students. This is a problem, but also a tremendous opportunity. It is time to try something new, develop critical skills, and launch SEL initiatives. In this hands-on workshop, attendees will experience research backed, proven methodology for developing SEL capacities. Come ready for action and leave with strategies to increase student engagement, empathy, responsibility, and self-awareness in a session with tons of take-away value. This seminar is ideally suited for coordinators, advisors, and anyone supporting educators.



**SEMINAR #19: Best Practices in College Access and Success Program Implementation for GEAR UP Site Coordinators**

*Texas Ballroom C*

**Speakers:** **Elizabeth Manuel**, College Access and Success Program Director, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission  
**Duane Gregg**, Director, GEAR UP Tennessee

**Overview:** Coordinators, join us for a roundtable discussion among peers and colleagues designed as a framework for best practices for program implementation. Through a facilitated process, we will explore promising practices to common programmatic challenges site coordinators face and discuss how these best practices can be applied to strengthen our work within the GEAR UP community. Participants will share how to maintain the delivery of multiple, high-quality services, shape school cultures, and make an impact on overall student success. This seminar is ideally suited for program coordinators.



**SEMINAR #20: Building College and CAREER Readiness**

*Texas Ballroom E*

**Speakers:** **Monica Lee**, Executive Director, Robert and Janice McNair Educational Foundation  
**Sarah McKinney**, Operations Manager, Robert and Janice McNair Educational Foundation

**Overview:** There is more to college and career readiness than meets the eye. Building and emphasizing *career* readiness can be convoluted in *college* readiness initiatives. Yet, we must strategically integrate the two so that students can find the best postsecondary match and fit based on their career goals. In this interactive seminar, attendees will receive access to a toolkit to implement career programming for middle and high school students and explore the toolkit in depth. If you work directly with students and are seeking ways to enhance career readiness programs, this seminar is for you.

3:00 pm – 3:30 pm

**Networking Break & Raffle in Exhibit Corridor**

*Texas Prefunction Space*

3:30 pm – 4:30 pm

**GEAR UP TEAM DEBRIEF**

AL, AK, AR, AZ, CO, CT, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID  
IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MA, ME  
MD, MI, MN, MT, NC, NE, NH  
NJ, NM, NY, NV, OH  
OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD  
UT, VA, VT, WV, WI, WY  
CA  
TN  
TX  
WA

*Texas Ballroom A*  
*Texas Ballroom B*  
*Texas Ballroom C*  
*Texas Ballroom D*  
*Texas Ballroom E*  
*Texas Ballroom F*  
*Republic A/B/C*  
*Bowie A/B/C*  
*Crockett C/D*  
*Travis A/B*

5:00 pm – 6:00 pm

**GEAR UP DIRECTORS' MEETING**

*Texas Ballroom A*

Due to space constraints, this meeting is exclusively for GEAR UP directors and/or principal investigators along with one guest at the director's discretion. This special meeting is designed to create a forum for GEAR UP directors to network, learn, and discuss a range of issues related to GEAR UP advocacy, public policy, and NCCEP initiatives.

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## Wednesday | February 13

7:00 am – 1:00 pm

**Registration and Information Booth Open**

*Lone Star Prefunction Space*

7:00 am – 7:45 am

**Networking Breakfast**

*Lone Star Ballroom*

8:00 am – 9:00 am

**MOBILIZE BURST SESSION**

*Lone Star Ballroom*

9:15 am – 10:30 am

**WORKSHOPS**

**Speakers:**

**Ranjit Sidhu**, President & CEO, National Council for Community and Education Partnerships



**Sarah Lewis**

Assistant Professor of History of Art, Architecture, and African and African American Studies, Harvard University

Sarah is an Assistant Professor at Harvard, in the Departments of History of Art and Architecture and African and African American Studies. She has spoken on the TED main stage, at SXSW, appeared on Oprah's "Power List," served on President Obama's Arts Policy Committee, and been profiled in Vogue. She has held positions at Yale's School of Art, the Tate Modern, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Sarah Lewis is the guest-editor of Aperture magazine's instant classic "Vision & Justice" issue, which has received unprecedented press coverage and accolades, including the prestigious Infinity Prize from the International Center of Photography and it is required reading at New York University's Tisch School. Sarah is equally known for her book, *The Rise*, which is the biography of an idea—a big idea—that no current term yet captures. In keynotes, she discusses creative human endeavor, and how innovation, success, and new concepts are found in unlikely places. Sarah's essays have been published in Artforum and The Smithsonian, and her book on Frederick Douglass is forthcoming from Harvard University Press. She received her B.A. from Harvard, M. Phil from Oxford, and Ph.D. from Yale.

10:30 am – 11:00 am

**Networking Break**

*Texas Prefunction Space*

**EXCEL WORKSHOP E7: Pairing Rigor and Engagement for Meaningful Learning***Texas Ballroom A*

**Speakers:** **Lindsay Williams**, Professional Development Coordinator, GEAR UP for the Promise at University of Oklahoma K-20 Center  
**Lindsay Hawkins**, Professional Development Writer and Editor, GEAR UP for the Promise at University of Oklahoma K-20 Center

**Overview:** Have you ever experienced an engaging activity, only to walk away wondering what you were supposed to learn? Have you sat through important information, wishing someone had made it a little more interesting? Engagement does not always mean fireworks or tap dancing, but it can include purposeful activities that support learner interest and motivation. In this highly interactive workshop, attendees will participate in specific techniques and strategies that they can infuse into their next meeting, session, or lesson to facilitate deep thinking, while also creating a fun, engaging environment. Come ready to learn best practices and leave with ideas, tools, and real examples of how to create an environment for meaningful learning.

**Objectives:**

- Explore research regarding the characteristics and outcomes of rigor and engagement.
- Participate in strategies that can be implemented in multiples settings to support rigor and engagement.
- Apply research and strategies to relevant scenarios.

**EXCEL WORKSHOP E8: GEAR UP as a Tool for Equity Warriors***Texas Ballroom B*

**Speakers:** **John Barker**, Ph.D., Senior Advisor, National Council for Community and Education Partnerships  
**Alan Ingram**, Ed.D., Senior Advisor, National Council for Community and Education Partnerships

**Overview:** The concept of educational equity is one long overdue in our collective consciousness. Until, and unless, programs like GEAR UP realize their full potential to provide essential opportunities for low-income students, disparity gaps of all kinds will continue to persist in schools and throughout society. Veteran educators and GEAR UP practitioners, Drs. Alan Ingram and John Barker, have explored their ideas about equity as co-leaders of the NCCEP District Leadership Institute and, in this session, offer a full-length interactive workshop on the topic. This workshop incorporates ideas drawn from a wide array of college and career readiness experiences and introduces participants to an Equity Lab framework, a systematic process for examining bias, privilege, and the power of diversity.

**Objectives:**

- Increase participants' self-awareness of how their various social identities related to race, class, gender, language, etc. shaped not only their own educational experiences but also their definitions of success.
- Build participants' knowledge of the history of race, racism, and exclusion in the United States and explore authentic, sensitive ways for discussing this history with others.

- Introduce participants to the concept of educational inequities that exist across the United States, with particular focus on inequities in the GEAR UP community.
- Explore data, identify root causes, and develop strategies for ensuring that all students have access to college and career opportunities.
- Provide a framework to help systematically address identified inequities in support of GEAR UP programs nationally.



## **EXCEL WORKSHOP E9: Nurturing a College-Going Culture that Ignites Engagement, Involvement, and Buy-In**

*Texas Ballroom C*

**Speakers:** **April Bell**, Director of Constituent Relations, National Council for Community and Education Partnerships  
**Willie Castrejon**, College Preparation Specialist, Texas GEAR UP  
**Reshaud Rich**, Regional Manager, GEAR UP Virginia

**Overview:** When you walk through the doors of your middle and high schools, do you immediately get the sense that you have entered a school that is deliberately developing and sustaining a college-going culture? Beyond college banners and bulletin boards, is there a clear sign that the students, teachers, counselors, and administrators are collectively embracing and executing the mission that supports college and career readiness for all students? Join this workshop, as an individual or a team, to participate in a highly interactive working-group style session, where we will dissect and reconstruct the college-going culture of a school community. Participants will review, discuss, and analyze the research-based non-negotiables deemed essential for ensuring that all students experience a school environment that inspires, nurtures, and supports their college and career readiness goals and aspirations.

### **Objectives:**

- Define a shared understanding of a college-going culture within the GEAR UP community.
- Establish a framework for understanding how to affect culture.
- Assess our progress towards common GEAR UP strategies.
- Complete an action-planning process for the academic school year and summer programs.



## **PROVE WORKSHOP P5: Storytelling through Data: Engaging Stakeholders and Improving Data Literacy**

*Texas Ballroom D*

**Speakers:** **Shawn Bergman**, Ph.D., Professor and Director, Appalachian State University and Vela Institute  
**Meghan Ecker-Lyster**, Ph.D., Director of Research & Evaluation, University of Kansas' Center for Educational Opportunity Programs  
**Jennica Vincent**, Research & Evaluation Specialist, Oregon GEAR UP

**Overview:** While the contexts, inputs, resources, and activities may vary, the goal of GEAR UP is the same—advocating for students and improving educational opportunities and outcomes. Effecting sustained change in economically and otherwise marginalized communities requires an understanding of program outcomes. Strategically using data can provide grantees opportunities to: (1) promote team-based strategic planning, data literacy, and stakeholder engagement; (2) maximize your ability to be responsive to students' needs, and; (3) provide policymakers and key stakeholders results on the grant-specific successes of promising practices. This workshop will engage participants in activities focused on

using data to tell the story of their impact. Participants will have the opportunity to share their own strategies, as well as learn new ways to engage stakeholders in understanding outcomes. Key topics will include: why being goal-centered is beneficial; using effective data visualizations; simplifying reports for stakeholders; simplifying and streamlining the planning process using data; and two-way data communication methods. Ultimately, this workshop will provide a forum where participants will collaborate, consult with, and learn from their peers, and leave with data storytelling tools and ideas that can be easily integrated into your program.

**Objectives:**

- Learn how to tell a story using data that easily translates to constituents.
- Discover how to transform data into your GEAR UP story.
- Learn to create visualization tools that encourage stakeholder engagement.
- Identify potential barriers to using data and ways to overcome those challenges.
- Collaboratively strategize to enhance understanding of communicating data.



**MOBILIZE WORKSHOP M5: Igniting Imagination: Harnessing Story, Play and Design to Create Transformative Learning**  
*Texas Ballroom E*

**Speaker:** Lance Weiler, Director, School of the Arts' Digital Storytelling Lab, Columbia University

**Overview:** Who says collaboration and learning cannot be imaginative and productive? Learn from a nationally recognized expert as he pulls back the curtain on methods that can be harnessed to ignite the imagination of students, engage stakeholders, and foster collaboration among co-workers. Join in hands-on activities that demonstrate how storytelling, play, and human-centric design can establish safe and transformative learning experiences. Step into an interactive session that mixes theory and practice in a fun and inspiring way that is designed to give you tools that you can directly apply to your work. This workshop is suited for any individual wanting to create more impactful learning and collaboration experiences.

**Objectives:**

- Appreciate the value of embracing ambiguity.
- Learn how to design “with” and “for” your audience.
- Develop a shared language for productive collaboration.
- Learn how to craft shared narratives of learning and transformation.

12:15 pm – 1:15 pm

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION/GEAR UP DIRECTORS' MEETING**

*Texas Ballroom D*

This is an invitational meeting between GEAR UP Project Directors and GEAR UP Program Officers from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). ED will be providing directors with administrative updates and will create a forum to discuss issues of concern to GEAR UP Project Directors. Due to space limitations, attendance is limited to the GEAR UP Project Director for each grant's fiscal agent only, although substitutions will be accepted. Lunch will be provided at the meeting.

12:15 pm – 1:15 pm

**Closing Lunch & Adjournment**

*Lone Star Ballroom*



**EXCEL • PROVE • MOBILIZE**

## **NCCEP: GEAR UP'S NATIONAL ASSOCIATION**



**NCCEP**

NCCEP offers a variety of programs and services to help the GEAR UP community reach (and exceed) their strategic goals. Save these dates!

NCCEP/GEAR UP Annual Conference | San Francisco, CA | July 14-17, 2019

National GEAR UP Week | September 23-27, 2019

NCCEP/GEAR UP Capacity-Building Workshop | Orlando, FL | February 23-26, 2020

[www.edpartnerships.org](http://www.edpartnerships.org) | 202-530-1135