

Oregon GEAR UP in 2019-20

September 21, 2020

“There is no way to express how much GEAR UP was critical in helping our school become a ‘turn around’ school. [GEAR UP] was the turning point. We started out with a 50% graduation rate...now we are one of the top schools in the state.”



Photo by Annaliesa Casson, Klamath Union High School

Photo: A [Klamath Union High School](#) 2020 graduate

We served 8,322 students in grades 7-12 and the first year of college.

We primarily worked with 38 [schools](#) in 21 rural communities but served additional schools through our [Affiliate program](#) and our [statewide initiatives](#).

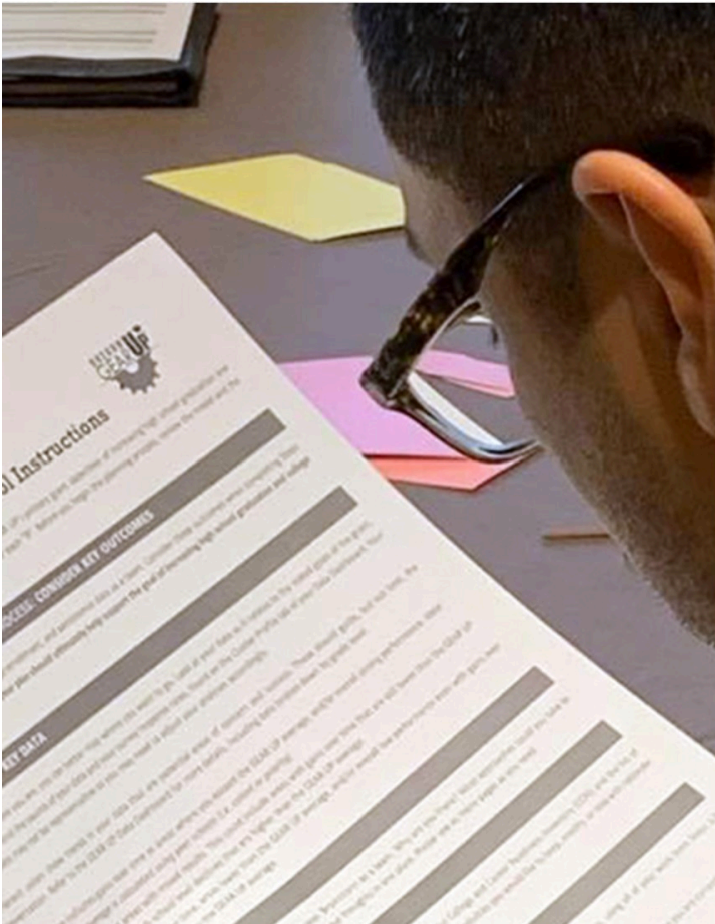
- A GEAR UP Team of [educators](#) implemented school-specific plans focusing on [five key areas of college and career readiness](#).
- Schools focused on key transition points like the [ninth grade](#) as well as preparing, applying, and [paying for college](#).



Photo: [Bandon High School](#) students visit Western Oregon University

“Students have the opportunity to learn their pathways and gain real life perspective about postsecondary options. GEAR UP is helping students and families gain the knowledge and tools they will need to continue after grade 12.”

Educators received an average of 12 hours of professional development.



Schools received one-on-one coaching from GEAR UP staff as well as opportunities from experts.

- Oregon GEAR UP staff and educators led sessions at the [GEAR UP West Conference](#), including the opening half-day session on college fit.
- Almost 100 educators participated in our virtual [Summer Institute](#) on trauma-invested practices to help learners thrive.

“I found the Summer Institute to be very applicable. This learning experience was spot on with what is happening in my district and will be incredibly beneficial to all of my colleagues who also took the course. [GEAR UP does] a great job and it is usually the best professional development I get all year.”

98% of schools said that GEAR UP has had an impact on creating a college-going culture.

We ramped up our efforts to focus on [sustaining programs and activities](#) beyond the grant.

- Educators toured [Hermiston High School](#), who leveraged GEAR UP's resources to create hands-on, real world learning and build a supportive college-going culture.
- [We shared our planning process](#) that focuses on data-driven decision-making and continuous improvement at a national GEAR UP conference.



Photo: [Cottage Grove High School](#) alumni share their college experiences.

“GEAR UP is by far the best grant I have worked with in my 30 years in education. I love that the grant always made us focus on how we could sustain our improvements and it lasts long enough to institutionalize the changes.”

8 out of 10 graduates surveyed planned to enroll in college.

And GEAR UP will help support them through the first year of college.

- Our [Postsecondary Success Initiative](#) funded seven community colleges in GEAR UP communities to focus on student success and persistence.
- [High school staff](#) reached out to alumni to provide additional help in the transition.
- We [surveyed the class of 2019](#) to find out their experiences after high school and how they can better be supported.

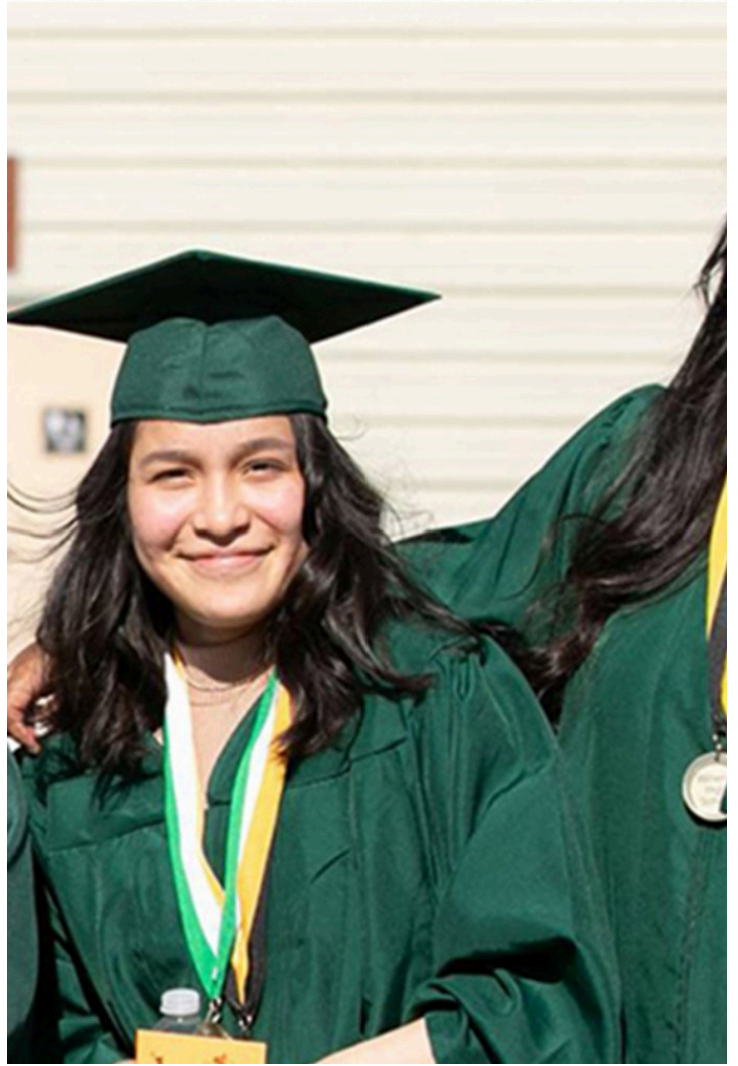


Photo: [Umpqua Community College](#)

“[Students] really credit GEAR UP a lot in their success with being able to navigate the financial aid process, being able to step onto college campuses. They wouldn't have had those opportunities without GEAR UP.”

139 schools celebrated Oregon Goes To College Month.

[Oregon Goes To College](#) is our statewide initiative that provides a one-stop shop for students, families and educators.

- In partnership with state agencies, we helped lead the state's first FAFSA/ORSAA Challenge to increase financial aid application completions.
- We co-hosted a series of [virtual workshops on paying for college](#).
- Schools creatively celebrated [students' decisions for after high school](#).



Photo: [Wilsonville High School](#) students participate in College Application Week.

“Oregon Goes To College is one of my favorite tools to use with students. So much valuable information is in one spot, easily accessible and available in both English and Spanish.”

We were flexible and responsive to changing needs.

As coronavirus changed daily life as we know it, Oregon GEAR UP and our schools provided resources to keep students informed and on track.

- Our schools [virtually supported students & families](#) and [celebrated the class of 2020](#) in creative and personal ways.
- We provided critical [updates for juniors, seniors and current college students](#).

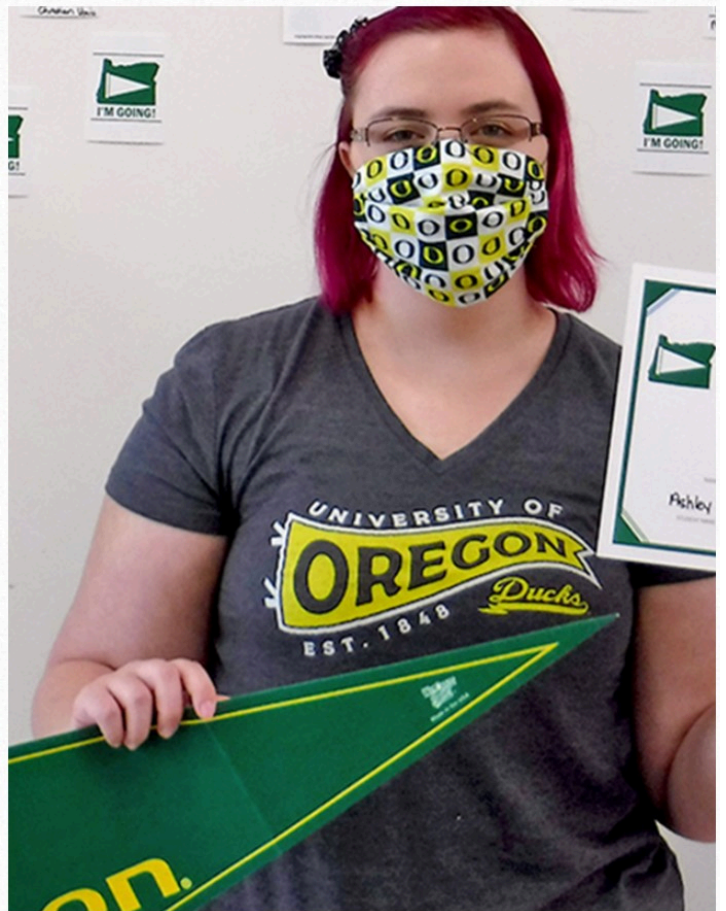


Photo: A [Lowell Junior/Senior High School](#) senior safely celebrates her college choice.

“Our school has been incredibly proactive with making sure students are fed, classes are ongoing, virtual check-ins throughout. It has been amazing! Everyone is so incredibly grateful we were already set up with 1:1 technology from 6th-12th grade. This would not have been possible without GEAR UP!”