



Dreams Come True

GEAR UP University of Arizona & Amphi High School

Amphi High School
125 W. Yavapai
Tucson, AZ 85705

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GEAR UP Program & Student Recognized

Arizona Daily Star Articles Highlight Program

Recent articles in the Arizona Daily Star have highlighted accomplishments the GEAR UP program is having on AHS and the students they are serving.

In April 2004 GEAR UP was recognized for the after school English as a Second Language program it has made available to students that are seeking to improve their English speaking skills. In October 2004 Lexxie Escalante, a AHS junior, was recognized by the Daily Star for her continued involvement with the GEAR UP sponsored MEC (Metropolitan Education Commission) and her role as Vice-President of the Youth Advisory Council/Tucson Teen Congress.

Both the after school ESOL classes, and MEC are activities directly funded and sponsored by GEAR UP and are positive examples of what benefits are available to students at AHS.

Escalante recently attended the MetLife Foundation Youth-City Connection Project Leadership

Academy in San Jose, California along with MEC Executive Coordinator June-Webb Vignery who said "Lexxie will project a positive image for Tucson and the rest of the U.S." She also applauded Lexxie for her recent work with the GEAR UP Youth Advisory Board, and her assistance to MEC for speaking out against Prop. 200 in the recent election.

Lexxie also is involved with the AHS band and says "music is her first love" but many have her pegged as a politician. "She's definitely going to be one of our future leaders in the community," Webb-Vignery said.

Beto Reyes is a U of A senior who currently works for GEAR UP as an Academic Liaison and teaches the ESOL classes after school. Reyes is one of roughly 100 U of A students taking part in the \$2.7 million federal funded program run by the U of A to help low-income students at AHS make it to college, teaching



TOP: Lexxie Escalante was recognized by the AZ Daily Star as "one of our future leaders"
BOTTOM: Beto Reyes teaches English as a Second Language to GEAR UP students.

them everything from how to pay for college to how to pick a major. Reyes tries to spur students "to continue their education" like he has at the U of A.

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- AIMS Test Taking Strategies & What Results Mean for Your Student
- College Financial Aid & Important ACT/SAT Dates to Remember
- End of the Year Report on GEAR UP

La Casa Caters to Students

Deep in the heart of the AHS campus is La Casa; a supervised learning environment where students can access information before, after, and during school hours.

The facility, staffed by GEAR UP personnel, provides a place where students can use computers, receive tutoring, or take

advantage of the many opportunities GEAR UP provides for AHS students. Before, after, and during school, students are encouraged to use these many resources. However, students coming to La Casa during class time must have a La Casa pass issued by their teacher.

Students wishing to sign up for

programs offered through GEAR UP should go to La Casa and fill out the proper paperwork.

La Casa is located at the west end of the 300 hall. From the bookstore, follow the sidewalk south, then go left into the first hallway. To speak with the GEAR UP staff call 696-5504.



The new attendance policy has AHS students getting to school and class on time and is holding students accountable when they are tardy or absent.

Attendance Policy Effective 1st Semester

Decrease in Absences and Tardies Helps AHS Students Succeed in the Classroom

In an effort to reduce absences and increase the academic performance of students at AHS, a GEAR UP teacher led committee has developed a more stringent attendance policy that is in place for the 2004-2005 school year.

The new school year brought us the new attendance policy at AHS. To put it simply, if you miss eight (8) class periods, you will lose credit for the class, or classes, in which the absences occurred.

Students reaching the maximum number of absences would then be able to petition to a panel to receive credit for the class based on extenuating circumstances and consequent attendance records. In

short, you may appeal the no credit and regain the opportunity to earn credit if the panel sees the situation to be extremely rare or difficult.

To help institute this policy, AHS created a homeroom period. Students are advised of their attendance and the policy is reinforced throughout the semester by their homeroom teacher. Next semester (Spring), all attendance matters will be handled in the homeroom. Students will be informed of their 3rd, 5th, and 8th absences during this homeroom period.

Bill Walther, AHS Assistant Principal said, "Regular attendance is a primary factor in a students aca-

ademic success. In order to help our students, we, as a school community, are working together to reduce absenteeism and tardiness."

AHS has compared data from the 1st semester last school year and this school year, and found that tardies have fallen 33% while attendance in class on time has risen 44%. In every class period, absences and tardies have decreased by at least 100. After the Winter Break, AHS will examine grades to see if there is a correlation between attending class and semester grades.

College of Law Mock Trial

Academic Liaisons show AHS GEAR UP Students "Real Life Justice"



Luis Valdez (seated grey shirt) sits with Prosecuting Lawyer Rona Nichols, while Jesus Robles-Pinon (seated black shirt) sits with Defense Lawyers Megan Nielsen and Obinna Ogbunamiri. The Presiding Judge is Ashleigh Chase and Tamara Mulembo. On the witness stand is Jocelyn Cortez being questioned by Ciara Lewis (standing).

On November 19th, the Project SOAR Academic Liaisons from the James E. Rogers College of Law hosted a Mock Trial for AHS GEAR UP students. Using a brief hypothetical legal problem that one law student provided, The UofA Law School students argued the mock criminal case as prosecutors and defense attorneys. Dr. Jordan Curtis presided as judge over the trial, during which she invited numerous AHS students to come down and

the questioning of witnesses.

The AHS students, some of whom were participants on Amphi's own Mock Trial, did an outstanding job. The College of Law plans to host the Mock Trial again this Spring, and looks forward to the excellent contribution of AHS students again.

If you have any questions regarding the spring Mock Trial contact Patricia Helgeson at 696-5505.

Parent ESOL Classes Have Large Turnout

Evening Classes Fit Well Into Parents' Schedules



Parents in the evening ESOL classes working hard. GEAR UP sponsors these classes to benefit the families of AHS students.

GEAR UP parents, along with their AHS students have been working continuously over the past few months in the ESOL evening classes to further their knowledge of the English language.

In addition to working jobs during the day to support their families, many parents are committing their time one night a week to further their knowledge of the English language and the

country they are now living in. Parents see attending classes as a positive way to model for their students the importance of learning the English language and customs here in the U.S.

The evening ESOL classes took place Wednesday evenings from 6-8 p.m. and were held on campus in both La Casa and the Commons. There were two levels offered in the fall to parents. There was a beginner

course and also an intermediate level for parents who were continuing from last school year. GEAR UP is once again offering these classes during the spring for both parents and students.

If any further information is needed concerning the parent component of GEAR UP, please feel free to contact Rebecca Aguirre at 696-5343.



Jay Johnson

AHS GEAR UP Program Coordinator

Jay Johnson is the AHS GEAR UP Program Coordinator. His daily duties include the planning and implementing of student oriented activities and working with the AHS staff to incorporate the resources that GEAR UP offers. Jay works directly with the GEAR UP Project Director, Dr. Eugenia Bas-Isaac.

Jay has been leading teachers, administrators, and students through educational programming in business, K-12 schools, and at the Community College for over 10 years.

He holds degrees in elementary education, special education, and educational leadership. Jay has a high energy that is absorbed by his colleagues.

Jay has two children who are ages 9 and 3. He volunteers at his daughters' school and daycare whenever possible and uses his educational training at home to affect positive change with his children.

Jay's view on his work environment is that it should be a family affair and he has included his children in his work as often as possible.

To speak with Jay directly by phone, call 696-5503. Or via e-mail at:

jjohnson@amphi.com



Jay e-mails faculty and staff about upcoming GEAR UP events and programs.

Christina Sandate

AHS GEAR UP Secretary

Christina Sandate's role at La Casa is to be the smiling face to all who enter, and the most important person behind the scenes. Chris is the GEAR UP Secretary. Whether you are signing up for a program, or visiting La Casa to use the computer lab, Chris is there to help. Chris is a married mother of two. She was born in Augsburg, Germany and later moved to Tucson with her parents who were in the Armed Forces. She graduated from AHS in 1986.

A volunteer at her daughters' elementary school, she also volunteers in the community and has been a clerk typist for GEAR UP since January 2004.

Her experience includes attendance at Pima College for Business and Accounting, and four years of performing duties as office manager for Wal-Mart.

Chris enjoys working in La Casa because it gives her a chance to work with the children of the community where she lives. Chris

is dedicated to her community and it shows through her dedication to AHS students, and her hard work to keep things at La Casa running. To speak with Christina directly by phone, call 696-5504. Or via e-mail at: csandate@amphi.com



Chris prepares the monthly GEAR UP reports and documentation.

Rebecca Aguirre

AHS GEAR UP Bilingual Parent Outreach Coordinator

Hi! My name is Rebecca Aguirre and I am the new Bilingual Parent Outreach Coordinator for GEAR UP at AHS.

I am married with two young daughters and have been a homemaker for the last four years. I was born and raised in Nogales, AZ and graduated from Nogales H.S. in 1995 and moved to Tucson six years ago.

As the Bilingual Parent Outreach

Coordinator I am going to be running all of the evening Parent ESOL classes here in La Casa. In addition I am also the translator for the Voices for Education Program that is held here at AHS in La Casa. I also will be doing all of the translations for all GEAR UP events and publications.

I am very excited to be working with GEAR UP and if you should ever have any questions or com-

ments please don't hesitate to call me.

Thank you for your time and have a happy holiday season and a prosperous New Year.

To speak with Rebecca directly by phone, call 696-5343. Or via e-mail at: raguirre@amphi.com



Rebecca Aguirre on the phone with a GEAR UP parent explaining the evening ESOL classes.

John Carbajal

AHS GEAR UP Program Facilitator



John Carbajal works with students and their parents on ways to receive a "quality education" at AHS.

John advises the student leadership component of GEAR UP and provides opportunities for AHS students to be effective contributing members in the community. The results of John's labors are shown through this year's leadership growth, and next year's improved leaders.

Originally from Watsonville, California, John has lived in Tucson for nearly 4 years now. He has one sister who graduated from the UofA and now works for FOX Sports in Los Angeles. John moved here from Colorado where he taught P.E., Health/

Fitness, and Career Education for 5 years at Greeley West H.S. In addition to teaching, he also coached football and sponsored Student Government.

John moved to Tucson and operated a small business for 2 years before deciding to get back into education. He is currently pursuing his Master's Degree in Educational Leadership through NAU.

This is John's second year with the Amphi School District. Last year he worked at Walker Elementary and La Cima M.S. John and his wife, Brenda have 5 children who are ages 11, 9, 7, 2,

and 13 months! They are always extremely busy with sports for their children, and John coaches both of his daughters' softball teams and helps with his sons football team. They spend an average of 10 hours during the week at practices and then all weekend at softball tournaments in places like Tucson, Phoenix, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, and Flagstaff.

If you have any questions about student activities through GEAR UP feel free to call or write me.

To speak with John by phone call 696-5504. Or via e-mail at: jcarbajal@amphi.com

UA Presents Performances Excite Students

GEAR UP & AHS Fine Arts Department Team Up on Year Long Project



During the course of the 2004-2005 school year GEAR UP has provided the AHS Fine Arts Department with 75 tickets to each UA Presents performance held at Centennial Hall as part of the "School Matinee Program".

Students have been rewarded for outstanding attendance and classroom performance by being able to attend the UA Presents performances.

Demand has been high among

students thus far to attend the performances, and interest continues to rise as Fine Arts teachers promote the events for the upcoming spring semester. Performances include: The Peking Acrobats, Pilobolus Dance Theater, Kevin Locke (flute), and MOMIX (baseball).

If you have any questions feel free to contact John Carbajal at 696-5502.



The Peking Acrobats are just ONE of SIX performances AHS students can see this year.

Patricia Centeno-Helgeson

AHS GEAR UP Academic Outreach Coordinator



Academic Outreach Coordinator Patricia Helgeson working with Inez Duarte a UofA Academic Liaison.

Patricia is the GEAR UP Academic Outreach Coordinator. It is her job to bring motivated, dedicated people onto the AHS campus from the U of A and other institutions to provide positive role models for AHS students. Her efforts greatly impact student performance at AHS.

Patricia came to the GEAR UP program from the workforce development field where she provided career guidance and aca-

ademic support to adults re-entering the workforce, and to high school students pursuing on-the-job training opportunities.

Patricia's background in social services includes involvement with programs providing services to children and families, such as PCJC Court Appointed Special Advocate Program, TUSD Amigo Program, and Head Start Centers in the Amphi School District. She enjoys providing services to families, with

a focus on education and workforce needs.

Patricia earned her Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from NAU, and is continuing her education through NAU by pursuing a second Master's Degree in Career & Technical Education.

To speak with Patricia by phone call 696-5505. Or via e-mail at: phelgeson@amphi.com



GEAR UP Spring Calendar

Upcoming AHS GEAR UP Events and Activities

2005 Spring Calendar
of Events

ESOL Parent Classes: Beginner/Intermediate Wednesdays 6-8 p.m. (start date January 5, 2005)

Computer Classes: Beginner/Intermediate Tuesdays 6:00-8:00 p.m. (start date January 4, 2005)

Greater Tucson Youth Leadership: Saturdays 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. (dates are: 1/22, 1/29, 2/5, 2/12, 2/19, 3/5)

Voices for Education/Parent Leadership Institute: Tuesdays 5:30-8:30 p.m. (dates are: 1/18, 2/1, 2/15, 3/1, 3/22)

ESOL Student Classes: Beginner/Intermediate Tuesdays 3:45-5:15 p.m. (start date January 11, 2005)

Tucson Writers' Project @ Woods Library: Thursdays 2:30-5:00 p.m. (start date January 20, 2005/Training 1/6 & 1/13)

UA Presents School Matinee Program @ Centennial Hall: 10:00 a.m. (dates are: 2/2, 2/15, 3/4, 3/22)

GEAR UP After School Tutoring: Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays 3:45-5:15 p.m. (start date January 10, 2005)

ONE DAY WORKSHOP: Who Are These People Called Teenagers? 5:00-8:00 p.m. Wednesday, January 19, 2005

ONE DAY WORKSHOP: Who Moved Your Cheese! 5:00-8:00 p.m. Wednesday, February 16, 2005

MEC Key to Employment for the 21st Century: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Saturday, February 5, 2005

Arts Bridge America GALA (w/ UofA College of Fine Arts): Friday, April 29, 2005 Time TBA

GEAR UP End of the Year Celebration & Recognition: Thursday, May 12, 2005 Time TBA

After School Tutoring Attendance on the Rise

Regular Attendance Helps Students Succeed in Classroom

After School Tutoring, which is sponsored by the GEAR UP program, is a huge success. It is great to see AHS students taking the initiative to improve their grades.

With the aid of Ann Faulkner and Bill Pike, we have the now famous "MATH TABLE" that solves problems that any parent would be proud of. Also, with the help of Marco Arredondo (After School Tutoring

Supervisor) and other UofA Academic Liaisons, we are able to create an educational and helpful environment.

After School Tutoring started on August 30th and ended on December 13th. It was held in the Commons (next to La Casa) from 3:45-5:15 on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

Hopefully this semester will be even greater than the last, and

we are expecting even more students to attend. The start date for spring semester tutoring will be Monday January 10th at 3:45!

If you have any questions regarding After School Tutoring Please feel free to call La Casa at 696-5504 and one of the GEAR UP staff will be more than happy to answer your question.

Spring Schedule*

Monday 3:45-5:15
Tuesday 3:45-5:15
Wednesday 3:45-5:15

**Keep an eye and ear open during the spring semester GEAR UP may be adding even more days & times for tutoring!*

U of A Men's Basketball a Hit With Students

GEAR UP Students Rewarded for PSAT Attendance

In October GEAR UP took 20 students to the UofA Men's Basketball Team practice as a reward for signing up and attending the PSAT test held at AHS.

Students who signed up for the PSAT and were in attendance for the test were given the option to attend this function at McKale Center. Students were able to watch the team practice, and were given a tour of McKale

Center and the Men's Basketball locker room. This included seeing the National Championship Trophy and numerous other trophies and awards given to former teams and players.

At the end of the practice session students were given 2004-2005 UofA season schedule posters and media guides that they were then able to get autographed by the entire team. Players like Channing Frye, Salim

Stoudamire, Hassan Adams, and the rest of the UofA team were extremely friendly to AHS students and made this a wonderful experience.

Future trips to the UofA in the spring are in the works to see a Women's Basketball game, Softball game, and UofA Baseball game(s). These trips are great for students to see the UofA in action!



AHS students get UofA Men's Basketball team autographs.



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AMPHI HIGH SCHOOL



Letter from the Coordinator

I would like to extend an invitation to everyone to stop by and see the programming that GEAR UP has to offer Amphi HS. Our staff is here to assist you and your children to help them seek out their next step after high school. On behalf of the entire GEAR UP/La Casa staff thank you for supporting our programs.

Please feel free to contact my office if you have suggestions, concerns, or comments about the GEAR UP Program at Amphi HS.

Sincerely,

Jay Johnson
520-696-5503

Letter from the Director

I want to send a special "Thank You" to everyone for making 2004 a very successful one for GEAR UP. It has been a pleasure to work with the students, parents, teachers, and staff at AHS. The GEAR UP Team in La Casa has worked very hard creating a positive learning environment.

As this year draws to a close we extend special wishes for the coming year. Please let us know how we can help you and continue to make GEAR UP a positive experience for everyone.

Sincerely,

Dr. Eugenia Bas-Isaac
520-626-3078

