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| Issue: December 2-6, 2024 |

## WA State GEAR UP Program Updates

* **Customizable** [**Quarterly Family Newsletters**](https://gearup.wa.gov/node/1433)**.** These templates provide college/career readiness information for students by grade level (7-12). They are available in English and Spanish*.*
* **The FAFSA is now Open for 2025-26!** In Washington State, there are two ways to [apply for financial aid](https://wsac.wa.gov/apply) for college or career training. U.S. citizens and eligible non-citizens can apply for federal and state aid with the FAFSA. People who can't file the FAFSA due to immigration status can apply only for state aid with the WASFA, as can people from mixed-status families who prefer not to file the federal form.
  + **Key Steps and Resources for First-Time Applicants:** 
    - Before starting, gather all necessary documents, create an account for the student and contributors, and use the [Parent Wizard Tool](https://studentaid.gov/fafsa-apply/parents) to determine required parent(s) information for dependent students.
    - [Creating Your Account](https://studentaid.gov/resources/prepare-for-college/creating-your-account) – Quick setup guide.
    - [Pro Tips for the FAFSA Form](https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/pro-tips) – Filing advice.
    - [Step-by-Step Guidance](https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out) – Learn the FAFSA process in detail.
    - The Federal Student Aid Information Center offers extended hours, including evenings and weekends, with [multilingual support.](https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out/request-interpreter) The [Financial Aid Toolkit](https://financialaidtoolkit.ed.gov/tk) provides additional tools for counselors and advisors.
    - [FAFSA Live Webinar Series](https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=FEVdvd6EKEmp_WrhC7rWd3ngWhoRlrdJtBmAowp9kZxUMThEUjFPQzlGSDVQQjcyNEpSQzQ2UUlRVy4u&route=shorturl&mc_cid=eab6ab115c&mc_eid=a2f060beda). Join Federal Student Aid **on Dec. 10** for a free, one-day virtual event to guide students, parents, and college/career professionals through submitting the 2025–26 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form. The live webinar series offers tailored sessions for independent and dependent students, featuring:
      * The Student Aid AccountOverview (10:30 AM)
      * Navigating the 2025–26 FAFSA Form for Dependent Students (1:30 PM)
      * Navigating the 2025–26 FAFSA Form for Independent Students (3:30 PM)

## Student Recruitment & Outreach Events

* [12th Year Campaign Financial Aid Information & Filing Events.](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oELovlvqYmCD7NY0nDw7A_b1Bbeoj4-M7VNBDaQfxoI/edit#heading=h.42fu3w63mb46) Most events are virtual. Spanish events are available.

## Optional Professional Development

* 3-Part Series: [School Counselors as Agents of Change](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XPK9lpxwa75EkZD5WHDCeyLyyt5JRfacEavpPKZicaQ/edit?tab=t.0). By OSPI. Dec. 4, 9 AM.
* Webinar: [McKinney-Vento: Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Panel](https://www.pdenroller.org/ospi/catalog/177685). By OSPI. Dec. 4, 1 PM.
* Webinar: [Ensuring Students Can Pursue Postsecondary Pathways](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2F458rl1jp.r.us-east-1.awstrack.me%2FL0%2Fhttps%3A%252F%252Fwww.ncan.org%252Fevents%252FEventDetails.aspx%253Fid%3D1899970%2526group%3D%2F2%2F0100019301236f25-ddedc30e-6dff-43d3-a42f-85ea71f7e8c5-000000%2FBCwJWxc1IOYwCCNsKbJKmxS1yKU%3D399&data=05%7C02%7CBethK%40wsac.wa.gov%7C1dd6b9c2b8f84671a2d108dd000ef4e7%7C11d0e217264e400a8ba057dcc127d72d%7C0%7C0%7C638666786420579706%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=fwP9rXKorEdSUvRZqd9gaP10lf2kzlRUI1pCITKcHBM%3D&reserved=0). By NCAN & Dr. Mandy Savitz-Romer. Dec 5, 11 AM.
* Discussion Lab: [Communication Tools](https://www.edpartnerships.org/nccep-events/2024/12-12-discussion-lab?mc_cid=e26c651d82&mc_eid=a2f060beda). For GEAR UP staff. Dec. 12, 11 AM.
* [WSCA Conference](https://www.wscaconference.org/). Mar. 5-7. Seattle. The call for proposals is now open!
* Virtual: [NCCEP GEAR UP Academy.](https://www.edpartnerships.org/academy) Feb. 3-6. Reg is now open!
* [NCCEP/GEAR UP Annual Conference](https://www.edpartnerships.org/annual). July 13–16, San Francisco. [Apply to present!](https://www.cvent.com/c/abstracts/0f5e9c32-85ce-490e-81d1-14a54a133ffa)

## Resources

* **WAGU Featured Resource:** [College Knowledge Games & Activities for Students and Families](https://gearup.wa.gov/file/gear-college-knowledge-games-activities-students-and-families). Use this collection of college knowledge and cooperative learning games with students or during family events.
* [College Knowledge Games Toolkit](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Foregongoestocollege.us5.list-manage.com%2Ftrack%2Fclick%3Fu%3D2f8d5fa6686219d36cc349dfd%26id%3Df391300fd2%26e%3Dc4902e16a9&data=05%7C02%7Cbethk%40wsac.wa.gov%7Caa6e730288bf4ccc60d308dd0f04fd42%7C11d0e217264e400a8ba057dcc127d72d%7C0%7C0%7C638683236297003619%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=44t1do4qXk3TerEVaAdb60O9ouUcjYcU1G72kIboJLE%3D&reserved=0). From OR Goes to College. Engaging games and activities work well to introduce or reinforce college knowledge topics and can be used in classrooms, workshops, and meetings with students, parents, and educators.
* [GetMyFuture.org](https://www.careeronestop.org/GetMyFuture/) From U.S. Department of Labor’s CareerOneStop. Free interest assessments, career and job search resources, and occupation profiles for more than 800 careers.
* [Financial Aid Calculator](https://portal.wsac.wa.gov/a/aid-calculator). Students and families can use the calculator to estimate their potential WA Grant award, but applying for financial aid is the only way to know whether you qualify.
* [Financial Aid Myths.](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1oKTLyXjZK8OYKgaTCB6x7D8pQzA6jgR8) Schools and education advocates can download the Financial Aid Myths flyer in English, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese from WSAC's [Financial Aid Toolkit](https://wsac.wa.gov/fa-toolkit).

## In The News

* [‘Easy To Just Write Us Off’: Rural Students’ Choices Shrink As Colleges Slash Majors](https://hechingerreport.org/easy-to-just-write-us-off-rural-students-choices-shrink-as-colleges-slash-majors)
* [Happiness Calendar For Educators For December 2024](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/happiness_calendar_for_educators_for_december_2024)
* [Fewer 18-Year-Olds Enrolled In College This Fall](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/admissions/traditional-age/2024/12/03/fewer-18-year-olds-enrolled-college-fall)
* [4-Year Colleges Ride The Dual-Enrollment Wave](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/admissions/traditional-age/2024/12/02/four-year-universities-invest-courses-high-schoolers)
* [The Price America Paid For Its First Big Immigration Crackdown](https://www.npr.org/sections/planet-money/2024/11/26/g-s1-35805/chinese-expulsion-act-railroads-immigration-crackdown)
* [Our System Steers Most Students Toward Attending College, But It Is Not Realistic Or Even Desirable For Everyone](https://hechingerreport.org/opinion-our-system-steers-most-students-toward-attending-college-but-it-is-not-realistic-or-even-desirable-for-everyone)
* [‘An Overwhelming Feeling Of Guilt': Why Teachers Don’t Take Sick Leave](https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/an-overwhelming-feeling-of-guilt-why-teachers-dont-take-sick-leave/2024/11)
* [The SAT's Not-Quite-Comeback](https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/edcentral/the-sats-not-quite-comeback)
* [A Trend Colleges Might Not Want Applicants To Notice: It's Becoming Easier To Get In](https://hechingerreport.org/a-trend-colleges-might-not-want-applicants-to-notice-its-becoming-easier-to-get-in" \t "_blank)
* [Program Targets Support For Migrant Out-Of-School Youth](https://www.bellinghamherald.com/news/state/washington/article296327144.html)
* [Why There's A Shortage Of Staff To Work With Special Education Students](https://www.kuow.org/stories/why-there-s-a-shortage-of-staff-to-work-with-special-education-students)
* [Unlikely Trump Can Eliminate Education Department, Experts Say](https://washingtonstatestandard.com/2024/11/29/unlikely-trump-can-actually-eliminate-education-department-experts-say/)
* [Three Reasons Why So Few Eighth Graders In The Poorest Schools Take Algebra](https://hechingerreport.org/proof-points-eighth-grade-algebra/)
* [How Social-Emotional Learning Can Unify Your School Community: 7 Timely Tips](https://www.edweek.org/leadership/opinion-how-social-emotional-learning-can-unify-your-school-community-7-timely-tips/2024/11)
* [Ohio Governor Signs Bathroom Restrictions For Transgender Students](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/11/27/us/ohio-transgender-bathroom-law.html)

## Scholarships & Opportunities

*Find more opportunities at:* <https://gearup.wa.gov/educators/scholarships>.

* [Get Schooled’s Scholarship Finder](https://getschooled.com/scholarships/).Thisfree scholarship search database for students is safe and legit and will never sell or share their personal information.
* The Attorney General’s Office is recruiting youth to serve on a statewide [Youth Advisory Group for the HearMeWA Program.](https://www.research.net/r/youthadvisorygroupapplication) [HearMeWA](https://stateofwa.sharepoint.com/sites/WSAC-gearup/Shared%20Documents/GEARUP/Grant%20IV/Weekly%20Bulletins/HearMeWA.org) is a free statewide program for youth up to age 25 who are dealing with a range of challenges, from stress and anxiety to threats and abuse.

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| **Scholarship** | **Brief Description** | **Due** |
| [Point Foundation: The Point Flagship Scholarship](https://www.pointfoundation.org/point-apply/apply-now/) | The Point Flagship Scholarship empowers LGBTQ students to earn their undergraduate, graduate, & doctoral degrees at accredited colleges in the United States. Amount: Financial award based on need, renewable for up to four years of support. | 12/5 |
| [Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Scholarships](https://www.artandwriting.org/scholarships/) | Teens in grades 7–12 (ages 13 and up) can apply in 28 categories of art and writing. See the link for local deadlines: http://www.artandwriting.org/the-awards/guidelines-deadlines | 12/5 |
| [Dedication to Education](https://getschooled.com/dedication-to-education-scholarship/) | From Get Schooled. Who’s Eligible?: Current High School Juniors and Seniors (Classes of 2025 & 2026). Award: $2,000 Scholarship (Five (5) Scholarships in Total) | 12/8 |
| [Reach For Your Peak](https://getschooled.com/peak-scholarship/) | A $2,500 scholarship for a high school junior or senior living in Oregon or Washington. | 12/8 |
| [Equitable Excellence Scholarship](https://equitable.com/foundation/equitable-excellence-scholarship) | $5,000 renewable scholarship for students who show potential by demonstrating leadership, determination, and resilience as critical enablers of their future success. | 12/18 |
| [NASA Student Art Contest](https://artcontest.larc.nasa.gov/) | This year’s theme encourages students to recognize the relationship between art, science, and technology around them and discover new ways to connect the dots. NASA’s Langley Research Center in Hampton, Virginia, invites students in grades K-12 to participate in the 2024 NASA Langley Art Contest, using the theme “Connect the Dots.” The contest is open to all children who are residents of the United States and currently in grades K-12 | 12/31 |
| [Top Ten List Scholarship](https://www.unigo.com/scholarships/our-scholarships/top-ten-list-scholarship) | ($1,500) - In 250 words or less, submit a response to the question: "Create a Top Ten List of the top ten reasons you should get this scholarship." | 12/31 |
| [Unigo $10K Scholarship](https://www.unigo.com/scholarships/our-scholarships/unigo-10k-scholarship) | ($10,000) - Submit an online written response to the question: "Would you rather be smart, funny, or rich? Why?" (250 words or less) | 12/31 |
| [Mann Lake Beekeeping Scholarship](https://www.mannlakeltd.com/scholarship/) | Mann Lake’s scholarship is for college students who aspire to be outstanding and extraordinary. We are looking for academically excellent students pursuing a better education who are currently enrolled in or about to enroll in an apiology program, majoring in agriculture and environmental sciences or related studies. | 12/31 |
| [Stromberg’s Scholarship Program](https://www.strombergschickens.com/scholarship/) | The Stromberg’s Chicken scholarship provides a one-time reward of $1000 for tuition, books, computers, accommodation, or any education-related expense. There’s no GPA requirement and no application forms. | 12/31 |
| [American Fire Sprinkler Association High School Senior Scholarship Contest](https://www.afsascholarship.org/) | Open to HS seniors. Citizenship/legal residency is required. A total of $20,000 is awarded. Ten (10) winners will receive a scholarship of $2,000 each. | 1/1 |
| [GE-Reagan Foundation Scholarship](https://www.reaganfoundation.org/education/scholarship-programs/ge-reagan-foundation-scholarship-program/) | For college-bound students who demonstrate exemplary leadership, drive, integrity, and citizenship with financial assistance to pursue higher education. Through the generous support of GE, this national program annually awards numerous students $10,000 in renewable scholarships - up to $40,000 total - for tuition, school fees, books, supplies, and on-campus room and board | 1/4 |
| [Washington World Fellows Domestic Advocates](https://waworldfellows.org/) | WWF Domestic Advocates is a leadership and future preparation program that develops leadership skills through cross-cultural connection and state-wide advocacy. Fellows will participate in our Domestic Program in Eastern Washington during the summer between their sophomore and junior years. This immersive experience includes studying Spanish history and language, cultural integration through living with Spanish peers and engaging in various activities related to academic and college preparation and cross-cultural exchange.  Between their junior and senior years, fellows will engage in a local advocacy project and participate in our College boot camp. This boot camp offers crucial elements such as college application assistance, insightful college tours, and preparation for financial aid consideration. The fellows will also have access to leadership opportunities, including civic engagement activities, internship/externship experiences, and international student forums. | 1/6 |
| [FFA Scholarships](https://www.ffa.org/scholarships) | Over 1,000 scholarships with/ just one application available to FFA members. | 1/9 |
| [Jackie Robinson Foundation Scholarship Award](https://jackierobinson.org/scholarship/) | ($35,000) - The JRF scholarship awards outstanding high school graduates who plan to earn a baccalaureate from an accredited four-year college or university. Additional Scholars are given JRF fellowships to pursue opportunities to work and study abroad and for post-graduate education. | 1/9 |
| [GSBA Scholarship Fund](http://www.thegsba.org/scholarship-home) | ($8,000) - The GSBA Scholarship Fund awards educational scholarships to Washington State LGBTQIA+ and allied students who exhibit leadership potential, demonstrate strong academic abilities, and are actively involved in school and community organizations. | 1/10 |
| [Paid, Multi-Year Summer Fellowship For Minority Student- Emma L. Bowen Foundation](http://www.emmabowenfoundation.com/) | Minority HS seniors & first-year college students with a min. 3.0 GPA & an interest in media careers (business, creative, journalism, technology, or sales) are eligible to apply. During this multi-year internship, students in the program receive an hourly wage & matching scholarship. We recommend that students apply early in the application season to maximize consideration for opportunities. | 1/10 |
| [Pride Foundation Scholarship](http://www.pridefoundation.org/what-we-do/scholarships/) | For current and future leaders in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ), and straight ally community from Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. Open to 1079 students. Applicants must pursue post-secondary education in the coming school year. This includes community college, four-year public or private college or university, certificate programs, vocational/technical/trade programs, law school, medical/dental/veterinary school, or graduate education. | 1/10 |
| [Foot Locker Scholar Athletes](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarships/foot-locker-scholar-athletes) | ($20,000) - The Foot Locker Scholar Athletes program recognizes student-athletes who demonstrate academic ability and strong leadership skills in sports, school, and the community. Students participating in high school, intramural, or community-based sports and seeking an associate or bachelor's degree are welcome to apply. | 1/13 |
| [APIASF Scholarship Program](https://apiascholars.org/scholarships/) | ($2,500-$20,000) - APIA Scholars provides scholarships to underserved APIA students with a special focus on those who Live at or below the poverty level or are otherwise of low socioeconomic status; Are the first in their families to attend college; Are representative of the APIA community’s diversity (geographically and ethnically), especially those ethnicities that have been underrepresented on college campuses due to limited access and opportunity; and have placed a strong emphasis on community service, leadership, and solid academic achievement. | 1/15 |
| [John Lennon Scholarship - BMI Foundation](https://bmifoundation.org/by-application/johnlennonaward) | ($20,000) - The John Lennon Scholarships are an annual competition open to student songwriters and composers of contemporary musical genres, including alternative, pop, rock, indie, electronica, R&B, and experimental. Three scholarships are presented annually for the best original songs submitted to the competition. | 1/15 |
| [Bezos Scholars Program](https://www.bezosscholars.org/apply) | Successful applicants are public high school juniors and staff members from their school who serve as educators and participate fully in the program. Successful applicants have a strong drive and commitment to their education and demonstrate maturity, curiosity, resilience, and leadership. | 1/21 |
| [The UW DO-IT Scholars Program](http://www.washington.edu/doit/Programs/scholar.html) | DO-IT Scholars are Washington State high school students with disabilities planning to continue their education after graduation. Scholars prepare for their transition to college—which includes exploring careers, independence, self-advocacy, and leadership. It is open to high school sophomores or juniors. | 1/30 |
| [Mas Family Scholarship](http://jmcff.org/#apply) | ($32,000) - Applicants must be of Cuban descent and have min. 3.5 GPA, & be financially needy. | 1/31 |
| [Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps Scholarship](https://www.netc.navy.mil/Commands/Naval-Service-Training-Command/NROTC/Apply/) | Selected Navy ROTC Scholarship Program applicants are awarded scholarships through a highly competitive national selection process and receive full tuition, book stipend, educational fees, and other financial benefits at many of the country's leading colleges and universities. Upon graduation, midshipmen are commissioned as officers in the unrestricted line Naval Reserve or Marine Corps Reserve. | 1/31 |
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| The opinions expressed in these articles do not necessarily represent those of Washington State GEAR UP, the Washington Student Achievement Council, or the Department of Education. You should not assume endorsement by these entities. | | |