



Washington Student Achievement Council

Weekly Bulletin

Washington State GEAR UP

Issue: October 27-31, 2025

WA State GEAR UP Program Updates

- **Reminder:** Parent surveys due by **Oct. 30**. Questions? Contact [Sandra](#).
- **Match Tip:** Are you including benefits for school staff? When you fill in the "Salary and Benefits per Hour" column on the In-Kind Match Form - School Staff, the rate should be the actual salary and benefits for the person who contributed the time. It should not be an estimate, standard rate, or a best guess. You must get the person's actual hourly rate plus salary from your HR/personnel department.
- **Fee Waivers for GEAR UP Students.** NCCEP has partnered with the Common App and NACAC to provide GEAR UP families with fee waivers for college applications. Access the Educator [College Application Fee Waiver Resource Guide](#) and the Student [Fee Waiver Flyer](#). Additionally, students who had SAT/ACT waivers automatically qualify for waivers. Information is available here: [Using SAT waiver](#) and [Using ACT waiver](#).

Financial Aid Updates

- **Updated FAFSA Guidance for Mixed-Status Families.** This NCAN guidance covers changes to the 2026-27 FAFSA and additional resources to support families with mixed-status backgrounds.
- **Virtual Fin. Aid Nights for Seniors & Juniors:** [Nov. 19, 5:30 PM](#). for Parents/Guardians: [Nov. 18, 5:30 PM](#)

Student Recruitment & Outreach Events

- **Fall NACAC College Fairs:** Nov. 9 (Virtual).

Optional Professional Development

- **Webinar:** [Empowering GU Success: Leveraging Everfi's Digital Resources for Student Impact](#). Oct. 28, Noon.
- **Discussion Lab:** [Continuing the Momentum of GEAR UP Week](#). By NCCEP. Oct. 30, 11 AM.
- **Webinar:** [NCCEP's Study Lab](#). Nov. 5, Noon.
- **Discussion Lab:** [Internal Team Communication](#). By NCCEP. Nov. 18, 11 AM.
- **Webinar:** [A Field Guide to Standardized Testing in 2025](#). By PNACAC. Nov. 20, 9 AM.
- **Webinar:** [An Introduction to QuestBridge](#). By PNACAC. Dec. 18, 9 AM.
- **Webinar:** [From Application to Audition: Getting Into Arts Programs](#). By PNACAC. Jan. 15, 9 AM.
- **Virtual:** [2026 National GEAR UP Academy](#). Feb. 2-6.
- **Webinar:** [Connecting Rural Students with College Opportunities](#). By PNACAC. Feb. 19, 9 AM.
- **WSCA Conference.** Mar. 4-6, Seattle. *Call for Proposals due Nov. 7.*
- **American Association of Community Colleges Annual Conference.** Apr. 10-14, Seattle.
- **2026 NCCEP/GEAR UP Annual Conference.** Washington, DC, Jul. 19-22. *The Call for Proposals is open!*

Resources

- **WAGU Featured Resource:** [How to Become an Apprentice](#). This handout accompanies the 12th Year Campaign Junior/Senior Student Workbook, which guides students through the college admissions and financial aid process.
- **Apprenticeships Lesson Plan.** From Accessing Union Apprenticeships. Use this free lesson plan and downloadable worksheets and posters to introduce students to apprenticeships.
- **The ACT Apprenticeship Toolkit.** Includes on-demand webinars, a framework for building apprenticeship programs, and other tools to help develop key partnerships to benefit your local workforce.
- **Compare Colleges Tool.** From the College Board's BigFuture. Compare up to 3 schools side-by-side.
- **CareerOne Stop's Get My Future.** Find youth-focused career exploration tools and resources from the US DOL.

In The News

Need help crafting a GEAR UP story for local media? Explore [NCCEP's tools](#) and don't forget to [Share Your GEAR UP Good News](#).

- [Experts Find Foster Youth Fare Better in College Than Once Thought— But Still Need More Support Than They Get](#)
- [Getting There Matters. How Transportation Barriers Can Derail College Dreams](#)
- [NYC School Cell Phone Ban Ushers in Shocking Reality: Kids Are Talking to Each Other](#)
- [Centering Community Voices in Education: A Forum That Listened](#)
- [WSU PhD Student Appointed to UNESCO Global Task Force for Indigenous Language Revitalization](#)
- [Student-Parents Belong on College Campuses. So Do Their Children](#)
- [How I've Sustained a Long Teaching Career](#)
- [15 Tips to Align Your Teaching with Brain Science](#)
- [Why Most Principals Say Cellphone Bans Improve School Climate](#)
- [Snohomish High School Students Launch Washington's First SkillsUSA Varsity Letter](#)
- [4 Ways to Use the Fresh Start Effect to Motivate Students](#)

Scholarships & Opportunities

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

- **Free and Safe: [Get Schooled Essay Review](#).** Submit your personal statement, supplemental college application essays, and scholarship essays for feedback. They provide actionable suggestions and feedback within one week.
- **[Washington State Volunteer Service Awards](#).** Honor the many acts of kindness that individuals, families, service groups, and organizations perform in communities across the state of Washington. Due Jan. 5.

Scholarship	Brief Description	Due
NCWIT Award for Aspirations in Computing	For 9th-12th-graders, it recognizes their computing-related achievements and interests, encouraging them to pursue their passions.	10/28
U.S. Bank Scholarship Program	Complete a series of Financial Genius for Life online learning modules for a chance to win. \$2,500-\$20,000	10/30
Voice of Democracy Scholarship.	(\$35,000) The Voice of Democracy audio-essay program offers high school students a unique chance to express themselves through a recorded essay that is both democratic and patriotic in theme.	10/31
Zombie Apocalypse Scholarship	(\$2,000) - In 250 words or fewer, submit a response to the question: "Imagine that your high school or college has been overrun with zombies. Your math professor, the cafeteria ladies, and even your best friend have all joined the walking dead. Flesh out a plan to avoid the zombies, including where you'd hide and the top-five things you'd bring to stay alive."	10/31
Elks Most Valuable Student Competition	\$1,000 to \$7,500 per year for full-time students (minimum 12 semester hours) pursuing a four-year degree at a U.S. college or university.	11/12
Jack Kent Cooke College Scholarship Program	For high-achieving high school seniors with financial need. It is aimed at those attending top four-year colleges. Each award covers a significant portion of educational expenses, including tuition and living costs, and varies based on individual circumstances and other financial aid received.	11/12
Odenza Marketing Group Scholarship	(\$500) Submit two small essays: one about travel and one on why you deserve the scholarship. Ages 16-25, must have a GPA of 2.5+ and be a US citizen.	11/15
10 Words or Less Scholarship	(\$500) - In 10 words or fewer, say why you deserve the scholarship.	11/15
The National Honor Society Scholarship	High school seniors who are active members of the National Honor Society (NHS) are invited to apply for the annual scholarship. Recipients are selected for demonstrating the four pillars of the NHS: Scholarship, Service, Leadership, and Character. Award amounts vary, providing recognition and support for students' academic and community achievements.	11/24
Governor's Scholarship for Foster Youth	(\$2,000-\$4,000) - Helps youth from foster care continue their education and earn a college degree.	11/30
Leadership 1000 Scholarship	Provides up to \$5,000 per academic year to high school seniors from eligible WA high schools planning to enroll in a college or university. This renewable scholarship also offers career guidance, financial aid support, and networking opportunities.	11/30

Education Matters	(\$5,000) - In 250 words or fewer, respond to: "What would you say to someone who thinks education doesn't matter or that college is a waste of time and money?" This award is for students aged 14+ who are legal residents.	11/30
Dell Scholars Program.	(\$20,000) - For students who have demonstrated grit, potential, and ambition in their quest for education.	12/1
Ron Brown Scholar Program	This program awards 20 or more college scholarships annually, each valued at \$40,000, to extraordinary African American high school seniors. Students must attend a four-year accredited college or university.	12/1
Point Foundation: The Point Flagship Scholarship	Empowers LGBTQ+ and ally students in pursuing undergraduate, graduate, & doctoral degrees at accredited colleges by offering financial support, community resources, and professional development opportunities. Financial award based on need, renewable for up to four years of support.	12/5
Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Scholarships	Teens in grades 7–12 (ages 13 and up) can apply in 28 art and writing categories. See link for local deadlines: http://www.artandwriting.org/the-awards/guidelines-deadlines/	12/5
Dirk Derrick Car & Truck Accident Injury Scholarship	\$1,000 – For any current or soon-to-be undergraduate student who has had their life altered due to an injury from a car or truck accident, be it their injury or that of a loved one, or an influential individual.	12/15
NASA Student Art Contest	This year's theme encourages students to recognize the relationships among art, science, and technology that exist all around them and to discover new ways to connect the dots. The contest is open to K-12 students who are residents of the United States.	12/31
Mann Lake Beekeeping Scholarship	For those who are currently enrolled in or about to be enrolled in an apiology program, majoring in agriculture & environmental sciences, or other related studies. Offers a one-time award of \$1,000 to cover educational-related costs, including tuition, books, computers, room and board, and other educational expenses.	12/31
Stromberg's Scholarship Program	Provides a one-time reward of \$1000 to pay for tuition, books, computers, accommodation, or any education-related expense. No GPA requirement and no application forms.	12/31
Top Ten List Scholarship	(\$1,500) - In 250 words or fewer, 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	(\$10,000) - Submit an online written response to the question: "2020 was a year to be remembered. What will you remember most about 2020 and why is it important to you?" (250 words or fewer)	12/31



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.

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