



Washington Student Achievement Council

Weekly Bulletin

Washington State GEAR UP

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WA State GEAR UP Program Updates

- It's the start of **HSI Week**, recognizing all 615 Hispanic-Serving Institutions across the nation! In WA, HSI include Big Bend CC, Columbia Basin College, Heritage University, Wenatchee Valley College, and Yakima Valley CC.
- **Customizable [Quarterly Family Newsletters](#)**. These templates provide college and career readiness information for 7th—12th-grade students and are available in *Arabic, Chinese, English, Korean, Marshallese, Punjabi, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese*.
- **Match Tip:** When you complete your Staff Orientation & Match Training (required annually), be sure to collect match forms from all the participants. Use Code 1 on the In-Kind Match Form (School Staff).
- **[NGUW Toolkit](#)**. Mark your calendar for the nation's largest celebration of all things GEAR UP! [National GEAR UP Week](#) will take place from Sept. 22-26, with the theme "Planting Seeds, Growing a Nation." Get ideas and tips on how to celebrate National GEAR UP Week in your school!

Financial Aid Updates

- **Sign Up! [12th Year Campaign](#)**. This campaign includes the American College Application Campaign and College Goal Washington (Financial Aid Filing). Sign up to receive free training, printed materials, and other resources.
- **Virtual Fin. Aid Nights for Seniors & Juniors:** [Sept. 30, 5:30 PM](#), and [Nov. 19, 5:30 PM](#).
- **Virtual Fin. Aid Nights for Parents/Guardians:** [Sept. 25, 5:30 PM](#), and [Nov. 18, 5:30 PM](#)

Student Recruitment & Outreach Events

- **[Bring AJAC To Your Classroom!](#)** From AJAC Advanced Manufacturing Apprenticeships. AJAC prefers in-class presentations over career fairs. See [AJAC Class Presentation Application](#)
- **[My Journey](#)**. ACT hosts free virtual events to help students and families navigate the college admissions process. Topics include college knowledge for parents and college pathways for athletes. Aug. 27- Oct. 15, 4:30 PM.
- **[Fall NACAC College Fairs](#)**: Virtual and in-person events. Dates: Sept. 14 (Virtual), Oct. 9 (Performing and Visual Arts, Seattle), Oct. 12-13 (PDX), Oct. 15 (Spokane), Oct. 17-18 (Seattle), Oct. 19 (Virtual), and Nov. 9 (Virtual).
- **[Fall PNACAC College Fairs](#)**: Thurston County Fair – Oct. 13 (SMU) and Pierce County Fair - Oct. 16 (TCC).

Optional Professional Development

- **[Fall Counselor Virtual Workshops](#)**. By College Board. For new and experienced counselors. Various times and dates: Aug. 26-Sept. 11.
- **[WCHSCR Fall Counselor Tour](#)**. Sept. 10 (CPTC), Sept. 11 (CBC), Sept. 12 (EWU), Sept. 16 (Virtual).
 - **[2025 WCHSCR Handbook](#)**. It is now live! Dates, data, and contacts are all at your fingertips.
- **Webinar: [Supporting Unaccompanied Students](#)**. By SchoolHouse Connection. Sept. 17, Noon.
- **Webinar: [Expanding College Access with the Common App](#)**. By SchoolHouse Connection. Sept. 30, 10 AM.
- **Discussion Lab: [Launching Family Engagement this School Year](#)**. NCCEP Discussion Labs provide an opportunity for GU staff to share, learn, and collaborate on problem-solving together. Sept. 18, 11 AM.
- **[GEAR UP West](#)**. Oct. 26-28, Portland.
- **Virtual: [2026 National GEAR UP Academy](#)**. Feb 2–6, 2026

Resources

- **WAGU Featured Resource: [Getting Ready for Campus Visits](#)**. Includes best practices and resources to help plan meaningful on-campus experiences. See also: [Grade-Level Campus Visit Benchmarks](#)
- **[The College & Career Knowledge Project](#)**. WSAC and partners created digital handouts that can be used independently or compiled into a workbook to support post-high school planning.

- [Download Digital Workbooks: English | Spanish | Vietnamese | Ukrainian | Somali | Russian | Arabic](#)
- Find new [Lesson Plans](#) for each chapter of the workbook.
- [Order](#) paper copies of the workbooks through the 12th Year Campaign.
- [Create Your Future Student and Educator materials](#). From WCAN and WSAC. Each activity includes educator notes for facilitation and student activity worksheets.
- [Construction Apprenticeship Guidebook](#). Building trades (also called crafts) include laborers, ironworkers, cement masons, carpenters, heavy equipment operators, plumbers, sheet metal workers, painters, and many more. This book will help you become one of these skilled professionals.
- [WSECU's Digital Financial Reality Fair](#). Access many modules and simulators to learn about finance, retirement, investing, and more. Each module has been created to accommodate any skill level. To get started, search for your school or use the default account.
- [U.S. Department of Ed Net Price Calculator Center](#). Prospective students enter information about themselves to determine what students, like them, paid to attend the institution the previous year.
- [Career Bridge Washington](#). WA's one-stop source for career and education planning.
- [Career Explore NW](#). Provides educational and career resources to explorers in and outside the classroom.

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](#).

- [How To Start Your College Search](#)
- [South Seattle College Program Could Help Sea-Tac Fill Workforce Gap](#)
- [Education Department Promises On-Time FAFSA Launch After Years Of Delays](#)
- [New Survey Reveals Incoming College Students Prioritize Mental Health And Connection Over Academic Concerns](#)
- [SCOTUS Tells ICE It Can Target People Based On Race](#)
- [Education Dept. Revamps Ombudsman Office To Focus On Financial Literacy](#)
- [Here They Are: The Best Student Podcasts In America](#)
- [Supporting Student-Parents At Two-Year Colleges: Addressing The Affordability Gap](#)
- [Half Of The States Won't Comply With Trump's Push To Defund Schools Over DEI](#)
- [Schools Alone Can't Be The Great Equalizer. So What Now?](#)

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.
- **[BigFuture Scholarship](#)**. Class of 2026 and '27, take steps on BigFuture.org in September to earn entries for monthly \$500 and \$40,000 scholarships.

Scholarship	Brief Description	Due
Home Depot Path to Pro Scholarship	A \$2,500 scholarship is available to students attending an approved trade-related program (Carpentry, Electrical, HVAC, Plumbing, or Construction Management) at an accredited two-year institution.	9/30
College JumpStart Scholarship: Pay It Forward Scholarship	The College JumpStart Scholarship is an annual, merit-based competition—financial need is not considered—that is open to 10th-12th graders, college students, and non-traditional students.	9/30
Scholarship Poetry Contest	Open to all U.S. HS students. The applicant must submit an original poem of 20 lines or fewer. Up to \$500.	9/30
Coca-Cola Scholars Scholarship	(\$20,000) - HS seniors with a minimum 3.0 unweighted GPA may apply on our website in August of their senior year until the September 30 deadline. Each year, 150 Coca-Cola Scholars are selected to receive a \$20,000 scholarship.	9/30
Dr. Pepper Tuition Giveaway	(\$2,500-\$100,000) - Make and submit a video that helps us get to know you. Tell us about your academic goals, professional aspirations, or even personal dreams. Your video will be judged on the following four criteria: career goals, need for tuition assistance, impact of tuition assistance, and overall presentation quality and delivery. It must be 60 seconds or less and in MP4, MOV, or WMV format. Be passionate, be creative, be you.	9/30
Don't Text and Drive Scholarship	(\$1,000) - Complete the application form, including a 140-character message about texting while driving. The top 10 applications will be selected as finalists.	9/30

	The finalists will be asked to write a full-length essay of 500 to 1,000 words about texting while driving.	
Shout It Out Scholarship	(\$1,500) - In 250 words or fewer, submit an online written response to the question: "If you could say one thing to the entire world at once, what would it be and why?"	9/30
National YoungArts Foundation Scholarship	Up to \$50,000 for young artists in grades 10-12 or ages 15-18 with talent in cinematic arts, dance, design arts, jazz, music, photography, theater, visual arts, voice, and writing.	10/8
NSHSS Foundation STEM Scholarship	\$1,000 scholarships for underrepresented students with a 3.0 GPA or higher who plan to study a STEM field.	10/15
WSOS Career & Technical Scholarship (CTS) 101	This scholarship provides up to \$1,500 per quarter, every quarter, toward eligible associate degrees, certificates, or apprenticeships at eligible community or technical colleges. CTS funding can also be used at two apprenticeship sponsors, AJAC Advanced Manufacturing Apprenticeships and Evergreen Rural Water. Search the sponsor name in the eligible programs list . WSOS can cover costs beyond tuition, such as housing, transportation, food, and more.	10/16
NCWIT Award for Aspirations in Computing	For 9th - 12th-grade students, 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 opportunity to express themselves through a democratic and patriotic-themed recorded essay. The national first-place winner receives a \$35,000 scholarship paid directly to the recipient's American university, college, or vocational/technical school.	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



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