

## SERVICE HOURS

28,287 students have participated in GEAR UP, totaling nearly 755,000 service hours.

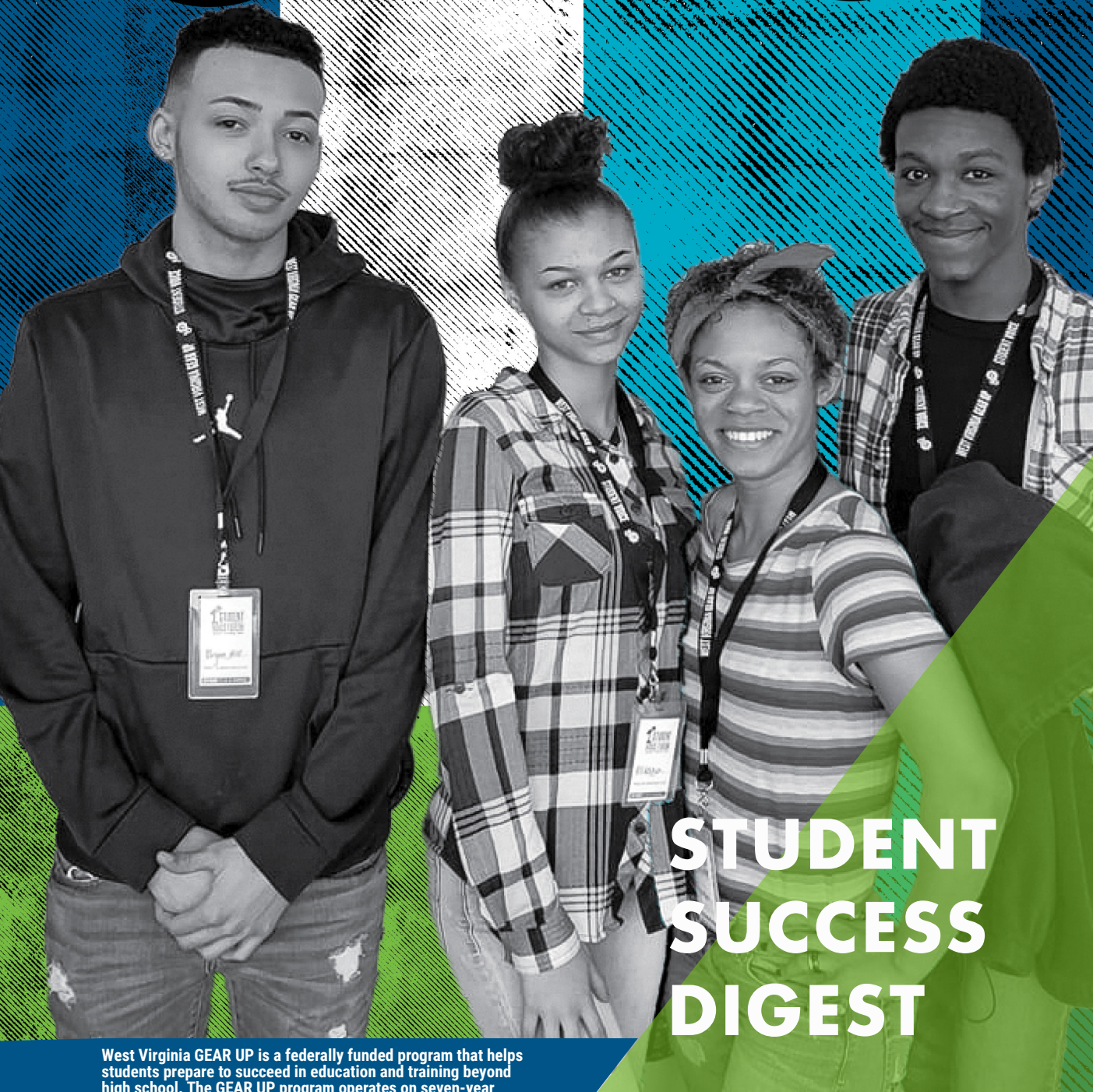
## ADVISING

19,156 students have participated in advising, totaling more than 117,000 hours.

## CAMPUS VISITS

More than 81,000 hours have been spent on college campuses.

# West Virginia GEAR UP



## STUDENT SUCCESS DIGEST

West Virginia GEAR UP is a federally funded program that helps students prepare to succeed in education and training beyond high school. The GEAR UP program operates on seven-year cycles. The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission serves as the fiscal agent for the project.

# GEAR



# UPU

2019

# WVSU





## GEAR UP U



ARTS

Since 2010, there have been 8 GEAR UP U summer camps. 396 students have participated since its inception. Parent/guardians were asked to celebrate their students' achievement and dedication to receiving a higher education.

These students stayed on the campus and were exposed to aspects of college life, like spending the nights in residence halls, eating in the campus dining hall, and attending college classes.



BUSINESS

GEAR UP U participants were exposed to fundamental aspects of college life - like campus dining and college classes.



MATH & SCIENCE

During GEAR UP U, students had the option to attend courses in one of the following areas: Arts, Forensic Sciences and Criminal Justice, Business, Computers, Music, Health Sciences, Education, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). Also, students had the opportunity to sharpen their leadership skills, participated in team-building activities and in near-peer mentoring sessions.

## CELEBRATING A DECADE OF GEAR UP

In 2018, West Virginia GEAR UP celebrated its 10th consecutive year serving students in the Mountain State. From the program's implementation to the present academic year, over 28,000 students have been served by GEAR UP.

A black and white photograph of two young women sitting at a desk, looking at a laptop screen. The woman on the left is wearing a dark hat and has long dark hair. The woman on the right has shoulder-length dark hair and is wearing a light-colored jacket over a white turtleneck. They both appear to be smiling and engaged with the content on the screen. A coffee cup is visible on the desk to the right.

**SINCE 2008, OVER 28,000 STUDENTS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN AT LEAST ONE GEAR UP ACTIVITY.**



# Transition to College

Partner institutions provide services to support GEAR UP students' transition to and success through their first year of college. Services are designed to include individualized success advising, counseling and case management, development of an Individual Success Plan (ISP) for each student, and ongoing monthly academic, career, and other counseling. Transition Coordinators host student success events and encourage students to partake in enrichment opportunities and campus-wide activities. These activities include, but are not limited to, guest speakers, student success workshops, and family events.

Mentoring services are also available to provide students with the resources that they need to build relationships throughout their first year of postsecondary education. 8 campuses currently have Transition Coordinators.

In the spring of 2020, GEAR UP had their inaugural College Commons Week, where students across the state had the opportunity to connect with representatives from colleges and universities to learn about the next steps after the college applications process.





## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT:

# Taylor Raby

Having completed both bachelor's and master's degrees in Psychology, Taylor Raby is now currently pursuing her Ed.S. degree from Marshall University. When she graduates in May, she plans on turning her career dreams into a reality by working as a school psychologist. Taylor shares a little about her journey I hopes that it will encourage others.

"I knew college was the right decision for me at a very young age. When I was growing up, I remember my father getting his master's degree and my mother finishing both her bachelor's and master's degrees. Seeing them continue their education and having both instill a love of learning in me really made me want to continue my own education, said Taylor.

Taylor credits WV GEAR UP, a college access program, for helping her select Fairmont State University. Taylor stated, "Through WV GEAR UP, I had the opportunity to explore a variety of campuses, both large and small. After finishing a tour of Fairmont State University, I knew it was the perfect college choice for me. After arriving on campus during freshman year, I knew I had an interest in helping others. It wasn't until I took a Psychology class at Fairmont that I realized a career in Psychology was the choice for me."

Taylor's long-term plans are to enjoy the career she's worked so hard to pursue. Later down the road, she admits she may continue her education by pursuing a doctoral degree.

For students interested in pursuing a postsecondary education, Taylor urges them to step out of their comfort zones. As she stated, "Much of what I have learned, not only in school but in life, was when I made myself move out of that comfortable place and simply step out. Students should join a club or organization, talk to the person that sits beside of them in class, or apply for the job they think might be impossible. Even if it is uncomfortable or even if it didn't go as you had hoped, at least you know you've tried."



## COLLEGE VISITS

Over 81,100 hours were spent on campuses across West Virginia since GEAR UP's inception in 2008.



## HEROS

HEROs is an acronym for **H**igher **E**ducation **R**eadiness **O**fficers. The HEROs effort focuses on helping more students plan, apply, and pay for college.

HEROs is a school organization made up of students who want to help their classmates achieve success in their futures. They work to aid in the creation of a college-going culture in their schools and communities.

1,190 students engaged in nearly 9,400 hours since 2008.





# VITIES GALORE!!



## STUDENT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

During the annual Student Leadership Academy, students were informed of their college options and were empowered to take charge of their futures. During the events, some students were **awarded \$1,000 scholarships**. Over 2,360 students participated across the events.

# Career Academy

More than 80 career representatives showcased career opportunities available in West Virginia during the 2017 Career Academy. The event gave more than 740 ninth graders the opportunity to learn about different careers, from construction and aviation management to wildlife biology and corrections.

Two nationally recognized speakers known for their contributions to the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) fields served as keynote

speakers: Dr. Diane France, a forensic anthropologist known for her work on the TV show "Body of Evidence," and Dr. Steve Schlozman, a scientist at Harvard Medical School who discussed the real-life science behind zombie apocalypse scenarios.

Senator Joe Manchin attended the event and discussed with students the importance of postsecondary education, and Senator Shelley Moore Capito offered remarks via video.

## STUDENT/PARENT PERCEPTIONS (for 2019-2020 school year)



- 71% of students expect to get a postsecondary degree.
- 76% of students are confident or very confident in their ability to do well in college-level courses in the future.
- 83% of students plan to continue their education after high school.
- 80% of students were extremely or moderately aware of the FAFSA.
- 81% of students were extremely or moderately aware of the importance/benefit of a college education.
- 70% of parents said that GEAR UP staff have been important in gathering information about their child's options for college.



# Alumni Spotlight:

## Kristyn Johnson

Kristyn Johnson graduated from Mingo Central High School in 2014. She completed undergraduate programs for Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at West Virginia University, then stayed on to work on her Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering.

When asked why she chose the field of Mechanical Engineering, Kristyn responded, "I was fortunate enough to complete the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Pre-Engineering Program in high school before heading off to college. Those classes and projects showed me just how much I could love aviation and mechanical concepts, and ultimately served as the basis of my degree choice."

Kristyn continued, "Our PLTW teacher, Mr. Bane, made everything so exciting as we were always given the guidance and materials needed to build each project, but also an autonomy to design and explore in whatever way satisfied our curiosity. Also, my parents encouraged me to enjoy the college experience, work hard, find a career that I would love, and always take pride in my work."

As she began high school, going to college was already Kristyn's goal and WV GEAR UP helped her achieve it. She said, "College visits made my goals feel more attainable. All the information given to us over the years made applying and getting to college so practical. At the end of the day, my GEAR UP Site Coordinator, Lesia Sammons, made all the difference in the years leading up to college and helped with the path I'm on now. Mrs. Sammons signed me up for every scholarship she could find, coached me through the application process, and worked out the cost of each school."

For students interested in furthering their education, Kristyn has some advice, "College is an investment of time and effort, usually over the span of four or five years, that pays off for the rest of your life. The ability to learn and develop the skills necessary to pursue a career that you find to be worthwhile, both intellectually and financially, far outweighs the time and work needed to finish a degree. Taking a step toward your goals is something no one else can do for you."



# STUDENT VOICE FORUM

During a two-day event in April 2019, more than 300 high school juniors collaborated and positioned students to use their voice to improve their community and take responsibility for their future.

Students participated in round table discussions to share their hopes and fears. 10 scholarships were awarded. Findings from the student responses were shared with educational stakeholders during the 2019 Student Success Summit.



**AMPLIFYING STUDENTS' VOICES**



# STUDENT-LED SOLUTIONS

## STUDENT SUCCESS SOCIETY

The Student Success Society provides students with the resources they need to build strong relationships throughout their academic experience. The goals of the program are to help students increase their self-awareness and level of confidence, to promote responsibility and to encourage personal and academic success.

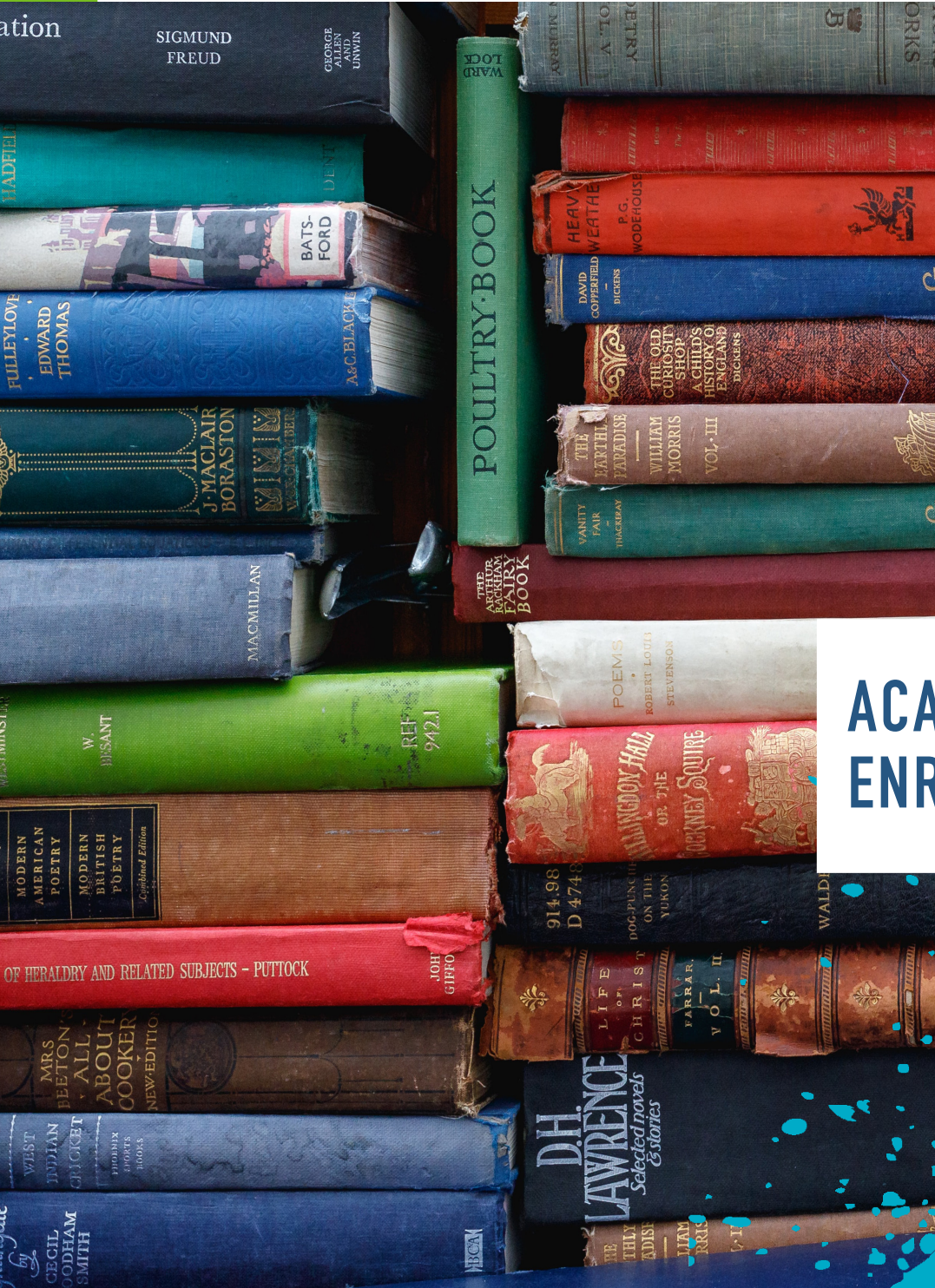
Through a number of deep dive sessions that bring continuity to the meetings, booster sessions which focus heavily on college and career readiness, and growth projects that members work on throughout the entire academic year.

Student Success Society groups help students bond with one another as well as their sponsors, who are trusted adults within their schools.

A Student Success Society group exists in each of the West Virginia GEAR UP high schools. 927 students have participated since 2008, totaling 16,620 service hours.



“**The goals** of the program are to help students increase their self-awareness and level of confidence, to promote responsibility and to encourage personal and academic success.



- Since 2008, students spent **71,411 hours** of rigorous academic curricula.
- Since 2008, students completed **191,713 hours** of tutoring/homework assistance including SAT/ACT test prep.
- During the 2018-2019 school year, **716 GEAR UP students** completed at least 1 AP or dual credit course.
- Since the current grant's beginning in 2014, GEAR UP students have had **39,570 tutoring hours** and engaged in **9,045 hours** of educational field trips.

## ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT





# West Virginia GEARUP



WVGEARUP.ORG

