



NEWS & INFORMATION ABOUT  
PLANNING FOR AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

# The GEAR UP Gazette

JUNE

FOR PARENTS OF 9<sup>TH</sup> & 10<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENTS

## COMBAT THE 'SUMMER SLIDE'



Research shows that students lose ground academically over the summer – up to two months' worth of reading and math skills! In addition, students typically score lower on standardized tests at the end of summer vacation than they do on the same tests at the beginning of the summer. Help your student stay on track this summer with these four suggestions:

- **Summer Learning Programs** Check out camps and programs at the school or library or in the community. Many colleges and universities also offer day or residential programs – and scholarships are usually available.
- **Volunteer Opportunities, Internships or Job Shadowing** Students can get a taste of a career experience while adding activities to their college applications.
- **Summer Jobs** Even if it's just mowing lawns, a summer job builds work ethic and skills. Set up a college savings plan that your student can contribute to each paycheck.
- **Read!** Whatever students decide to do this summer, encourage them to read. Reading opens students' minds, while sharpening important skills such as comprehension and vocabulary. Have your student join a book club at the local library or start their own with friends. Whether it's the news, graphic novels, or the latest teen fiction series, reading is an important activity.

Sources: [SummerLearning.org](http://SummerLearning.org), [BigFuture](http://BigFuture), [College Board](http://College Board)

### DID YOU KNOW?

More than half of the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities.

Source: [SummerLearning.org](http://SummerLearning.org)

## COLLEGE MYTHS (AND REALITIES)

**MYTH:** All freshman gain 15 pounds during their first year of college.

**REALITY:** Although college students gain some weight in the first year (about 2.4 pounds for women and 3.4 pounds for men), the “Freshman 15” is largely a media myth. However, the college lifestyle can encourage weight gain with unlimited (and sometimes unhealthy) food at dining halls, free pizza offered as incentives, and long sedentary sessions at the library. Most college campuses have resources to help keep students fit – free gyms and student recreation centers, physical education classes and sports, and healthy alternatives at the dining hall.

Source: [Time.com](http://Time.com)

## PARENT CHECKLIST

- Help your student stay involved this summer with camps, programs, volunteering or even a job.** Combat boredom and prevent learning loss by insisting your student stay on a (somewhat) regular schedule and participating in summer programs, volunteering or finding a job like mowing lawns or babysitting.
- Set up a college savings plan, if you haven't already.** Talk to your local bank or credit union about setting up a college savings account for your student. Encourage your student to contribute a percentage of any summer earnings to the account.
- Visit college campuses.** If you're going on vacation and travelling near a college, stop by to walk around and have lunch at a dining hall or near campus. Many schools offer free tours even in summer.

## EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



GEAR UP stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs and is a federally-funded program that helps rural, low-income middle and high schools prepare students for education after high school.

Visit [oregongearup.org](http://oregongearup.org) to learn more and access resources to help your students make a plan. © 2016 Oregon GEAR UP

**COLLEGE.** It's not a dream, it's a plan.