

FY 2009 GEAR UP State Abstract

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Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius has designated Wichita State University (WSU) as the lead agency to implement a Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) project entitled, "Kansas Kids @ GEAR UP" (KKGU). The project assists 2,500 students from fourteen offices statewide. KKGU provides early intervention services and scholarships to individuals in foster care as "priority students." Rather than targeting individual schools, KKGU targets foster care agencies and families with low-income children.

The State of Kansas and WSU are proposing three outcome objectives to offer services to meet objectives, evaluate the project, and document success stories of target students. The KKGU goals are:

Increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education for GEAR UP students;

Increase the rate of high school graduation and participation in postsecondary education for GEAR UP students; and

Increase GEAR UP students' and their families' knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing.

Services and activities supported by partners include early intervention activities such as tutoring, mentoring and study/life skills workshops which will help keep students from falling behind. Additional student support services will include: (1) orientation to the program, a resource clearinghouse, and educational and cultural enrichment activities to supplement academic learning; (2) professional development workshops designed for teachers, service providers and parents to help facilitate college awareness in many areas of the students' lives; (3) end-of-school-year recognition ceremonies where all GEAR UP participants receive a personalized *21st Century Scholar Certificate*; (4) career awareness workshops, college and financial aid counseling, and campus visits to help students begin to realize the dream of attending postsecondary education; and (5) college scholarships are provided to high school seniors who complete secondary education to help with the cost of higher education.

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