

GEAR UP VIRGINIA TIMES

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A Message to Our Students...

We hope that you enjoyed your summer break and that your school year is off to a great start. Senior year can be both exciting and sometimes stressful. It is a time to celebrate your successes, but remain focused on your academics. It is also a time for making important decisions; decisions that will impact the next phase of your life. You're almost there! High school graduation is right around the corner! Good luck as you work through the opportunities, challenges, and decisions the coming year has in store.

~ *The GEAR UP Team*



Nottoway GEAR UP students visited Longwood University.

My YLS Experience: Life Changing

By **Emily Matney**, GEAR UP Senior at Marion High School



When I learned I had been accepted to participate in the 2011 NCCEP/GEAR UP Youth Leadership Summit (YLS) I was extremely excited. Being the first student ever chosen from Virginia to take part in this leadership training was such an honor. I knew then that I would be flying in a plane for the first time and getting the chance to see San Francisco, California. I didn't know then that sightseeing would be the last thing I was concerned about, or that I would have such an emotional experience.

During my journey at YLS, I made many lasting friends. Just sitting here thinking about the people and the memories from the leadership summit brings tears to my eyes. YLS was designed to give students a right to be heard concerning areas of education. My peers and I were given the opportunity to break the communication barrier that sometimes exists between generations by working together to overcome our individual weaknesses and grow our strengths. By doing so, we could become a voice and advocates for our schools and our communities. Our challenge was to develop a presentation for the National GEAR UP Conference and compile a written report to be shared with the U.S. Secretary of Education and members of Congress in response to the question, "What do we as students need to be successful?".

Congressman Chaka Fattah, who authored the legislation creating the GEAR UP program, stopped by on the first day of the summit to challenge us to do our best and "blow the audience out of the water." (*Continued on page 3*)

ORDER NOW!

I am the One

ALL REQUESTS FOR FREE "I AM THE ONE" MATERIALS ACCEPTED STARTING FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2011.

You have shown interest in the "I am the One" campaign, and to thank you, we want you to be among the first to know about our fall 2011 offer for FREE campaign materials! Our website will be up and ready for your requests beginning Friday, September 23rd. We will be offering campaign favorites like T-shirts and student planners, as well as a few new items based upon your feedback.

Visit the www.i-am-the-one.com website and click the link for fall 2011 requests. Requests will be filled based upon supply.



ALL FALL ORDERS MUST BE PLACED BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 23RD AND OCTOBER 7TH.

College Application Fee Waivers

Most college application fees start at \$35 and go up from there. These fees can add up especially if students are applying to multiple colleges. The good news is that some students may qualify for an application fee waiver.

Check out these websites for more information:

www.collegeboard.com
www.nacacnet.org

Register Now!

VirginiaCAN Conference
December 7-9, 2011 • Charlottesville, VA
www.virginiacan.org

SAVE THE DATE

College Night in Virginia
November 7, 2011
www.collegenightinva.org

Order Now!

Opportunities Book
ECMC, SCHEV, VASFAA, and VirginiaCAN have partnered to create a step-by-step guide that helps students prepare for college. The book includes helpful tips, frequently asked questions, checklists, etc.

Visit www.ecmc.org for more information.

BE ON THE LOOKOUT!

More information about the GEAR UP VA Scholarship and Achievement Grant award application process will be coming your way this fall.

My YLS Experience: Life Changing *(Continued from page 1)*

The staff worked with us day in and day out for three days to make us better speakers and better motivators. We hoped the audience would not be able to resist listening to our problems. In identifying areas of education that needed improvement, I learned so much about the different cultures in America. In noticing the differences, I also noted similarities with my fellow participants. Each one was just like me: working hard to do something bold.

One of my peers at the YLS was the son of a Latino immigrant who came to this country to make a better life for his family. After hearing his stories, I realized there were teens who had been through so much more than I. When I need inspiration, I remember all he has been through and how well he is doing now, and I just work harder to accomplish the goals I have set

for my life.

There were so many teens at this training with hardships in their past that made them decide they want to be better so the next generation will have a better chance. This is exactly what GEAR UP is all about. I realized that GEAR UP had brought us all together from different parts of the country and enabled us to become leaders and a voice for change in our communities and beyond.

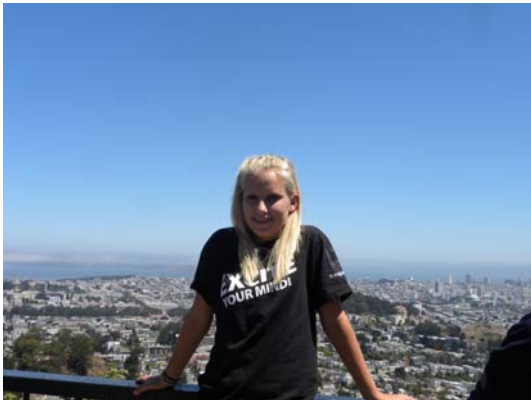
The Youth Leadership Summit changed my life. It provided me with many lifelong lessons that I look forward to sharing with my friends, family, and my community. I also look forward to seeing many more Virginia students

become a part of this experience. I encourage all GEAR UP students to take advantage of this and the many other opportunities that the program provides. The YLS was a small step to change the world, and I feel blessed to be a part of the GEAR UP program at Marion Senior High School. I am truly appreciative of GEAR UP Virginia for all the opportunities I have received to help prepare for college and a successful future. 🐦

Emily was selected as a National Youth Scholar—one of only 25 across the nation—by the National Council for Community and Education Partnership (NCCEP). She participated in the National Youth Leadership Summit held in San Francisco, California, July 17-20, 2011. Thousands of students apply from across the country to attend this summit each year. The selection process is based on academic achievement, community and school involvement, letters of reference, and submission of an essay and PowerPoint presentation. Emily's presentation was titled "What Could Help Us," and focused on how drug abuse has impacted education in the rural areas of Virginia.



Emily Matney (center) with other student participants at the NCCEP/GEAR UP Youth Leadership Summit.



(Left) Emily with southwest GEAR UP regional manager, Alice Funk, and one of her school GEAR UP coordinators, Susan Lawson.

(Right) Emily visiting the famous Golden Gate bridge in San Francisco.



▶▶▶ Regional Highlights



Sussex students participated in a College 101 Preparation workshop.



Pulaski GEAR UP students and parents attend Next Steps to College meeting.



GEAR UP students and parents from E.C. Glass and Heritage participated in an end-of-year dinner celebration.



Randolph Henry students take a tour of the VCU campus in Richmond.



GEAR UP students at Gretna High attended a College Fair with more than 60 colleges and universities participating.



GEAR UP students at Washington and Lee interacted with a panel of college students who are alumni of the high school. Following the panel, GEAR UP students received their Certificates of Excellence.



Patrick Henry GEAR UP students toured the campus of Virginia Tech and learned about the college's admissions requirements and campus life. After their college visit, they also toured the caves at Dixie Caverns in Salem, VA.



Eleven seniors—all GEAR UP students—are the leaders of the Northwood High School Student Council Association.



Because you'll be ahead of the game—it's estimated that by 2014, 90% of the fastest-growing jobs will require some level of education beyond high school.

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Fall 2011 Open Houses For Virginia College & Universities

Bluefield College	October 10; November 12
Bridgewater College	October 22; November 12
Christopher Newport University	October 22, 29; November 19
Emory and Henry College	October 8, 10, 29; November 8
Ferrum College	October 8; November 12; December 3
Hampden-Sydney College	September 17; October 8; November 5
James Madison University	September 24; November 12; December 3
Longwood University	October 16; November 19
Liberty University	September 9, 16; October 14, 21; December 2
University of Mary Washington	September 31; October 10, 29; November 11
Norfolk State University	November 19
Old Dominion University	October 10, 22; November 12
Randolph-Macon College	September 17; October 15; November 19
University of Richmond	November 13, 14
University of Virginia at Wise	October 22
Virginia Commonwealth University	October 15; November 5
Virginia State University	November 5
Virginia Tech	October 15, 16; November 12, 13
Virginia Wesleyan College	November 12; December 3

Visit school websites or call for more information about open house events. Many schools require that you register for the event and some open houses offer opportunities to stay in a dorm overnight. Please be aware that some event dates and times may be subject to change.

For a complete list of Virginia schools, visit www.schev.edu.

GEAR UP VA Schools

Charlottesville High School
 Council High School
 Cumberland High School
 E. C. Glass High School
 Freedom High School - Prince William
 Galileo Magnet High School
 Gate City High School
 George Washington High School
 Grayson County High School
 Grayson Highlands School
 Greensville County High School
 Gretna Senior High School
 Grundy High School
 Heritage High School - Lynchburg
 Holston High School
 Hopewell High School
 Hurley High School
 J. I. Burton High School
 Central High School - King and Queen
 Marion Senior High School
 Martinsville High School
 Meadowbrook High School
 Northwood High School
 Nottoway County High School
 Patrick County High School
 Patrick Henry High School - Washington
 Petersburg High School
 Prince Edward County High School
 Pulaski County Senior High School
 Randolph Henry High School
 Rye Cove High School
 Sussex Central High School
 Twin Springs High School
 Twin Valley High School
 Washington and Lee High School
 Woodbridge Senior High School