



GEAR UP WEST

OCTOBER 17-19, 2021

BILLINGS HOTEL AND CONVENTION CENTER | BILLINGS, MT

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

ONWARD & UPWARD



WELCOME FROM MONTANA GEAR UP



Let me be the first to welcome you to beautiful Billings, Montana for GEAR UP West 2021! The conference theme, "Onward and Upward", reflects the many trials and tribulations we have faced personally and professionally over the past 18 months. We are excited to move forward as part of a national GEAR UP movement toward supporting students for success in their post-secondary education. The Montana GEAR UP team is thrilled for the opportunity to reconnect with old friends, meet new members of the national GEAR UP family and learn from each other. Our team put together a great conference


that will provide a quality learning experience for everyone. Thank you for coming, we are excited to have you as our guests in the Big Sky State!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Anderson".

Travis Anderson, Ed.D.
Director, Montana GEAR UP



AGENDA	SUN OCT 17	MON OCT 18	TUE OCT 19
 <p>GEAR UP West is an annual collaborative regional conference for college access and success practitioners primarily from the Western part of the United States. Attendees include GEAR UP and other college access program staff, evaluators, higher education professionals, and middle and high school teachers, counselors, and administrators.</p> <p>Select sessions will be recorded and made available online for all interested parties.</p>	<p>12:00-6:00 PM Registration Desk Open</p> <p>1:00-4:30 PM Pre-Conference: MSU-Billings Campus Visit</p> <p>5:00-6:30 PM Welcome Dinner & Keynote Speaker</p>	<p>7:00 AM Registration Desk Opens</p> <p>7:30-8:45 AM Networking Breakfast</p> <p>9:00-10:15 AM Breakout Sessions</p> <p>10:30-11:45 AM Breakout Sessions</p> <p>12:00-1:30 PM Keynote Luncheon</p> <p>1:45-3:00 PM Breakout Sessions</p> <p>3:15-4:30 PM Breakout Sessions</p> <p>4:30-6:00 PM Networking Reception & Native Dancers</p>	<p>7:00 AM Registration Desk Opens</p> <p>7:30-8:45 AM Networking Breakfast</p> <p>9:00-10:15 AM Breakout Sessions</p> <p>10:30-11:45 AM Breakout Sessions</p> <p>12:00-1:30 PM Keynote Luncheon & Adjourn</p>

CONFERENCE SPONSORS

Much gratitude to this years outstanding GEAR UP West conference sponsors!

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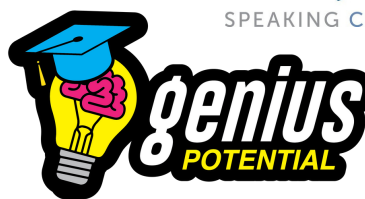
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EXHIBITORS:



CONFERENCE KEYNOTE - OCTOBER 17TH @ 5 PM



Justin “Mr. Fascinate” Shaifer

LinkedIn Top Voice in Technology, Science TV Show Host & STEM Educator

A rising star in STEM education and advocacy, Justin Shaifer is a LinkedIn Top Voice in Technology and popular science communicator with a talent for understanding and inspiring Gen Z. He is the Co-founder of the STEM Success Summit.

Growing up in a single-parent home on the south side of Chicago, Justin Shaifer spent his days goofing off, acting up, and excelling as the class clown. Although secretly fascinated with science, he never had the opportunity to express that excitement — it just wasn't cool. That was until his mom made him sign a contract at 14 years old promising he would figure out a way to

pay for college.

While searching for scholarships, Shaifer quickly realized there were pools of money around STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) Education. And he made good on that contract. Shaifer earned scholarships from NASA and NOAA that covered 100% of his tuition and room and board at Hampton University. He graduated with a degree in marine and environmental science, earning the department's highest GPA while also serving as student body president.

Today, Shaifer is so much more than cool. An entrepreneur, speaker, top voice in technology and STEM advocate, he travels the country as the role model he never had, making STEM dope, he says. Inspired to pay his success forward, Shaifer co-founded the STEM Success Summit, a large-scale conference for diverse STEM students that secured sponsorships from Best Buy and General Motors. He also co-founded Beyond: A gamified platform that helps diverse students learn tech skills while earning prizes from their favorite brands. Shaifer has hosted science TV shows with WGBH, the Travel Channel and Al Roker Entertainment.

Known as “Mr. Fascinate,” Shaifer has made it his life's work to bring his passion for STEM disciplines to the next generation, especially kids who are typically underrepresented in elite science-based careers. From his viral TEDx talk, “How to Speak Generation Z,” to his body of curriculum development work, Shaifer is a leading figure in STEM education and diversity. His energy never fails to get audiences interested in hearing what he has to say.

CONFERENCE KEYNOTE – OCTOBER 18TH @ 12 PM



Trisha Seifert

Crash Course in College Readiness

Dr. Tricia Seifert is a professor in the Adult & Higher Education program at Montana State University. She also maintains a faculty appointment at the University of Toronto. Her research broadly investigates the relationship between college student experiences and postsecondary learning and success. Troubled by the number of students who withdraw from post-secondary education after their first year, Dr. Seifert has begun examining how to support students in the college transition. She currently is creating a suite of games to develop students' navigational knowledge of the post-secondary landscape and has launched Success Prints Crash Course for commercial purchase by households, high schools, and higher education institutions. She

recently co-authored *How College Affects Students*, vol. 3, published by Wiley and served a five-year term as Associate Editor for International Research & Scholarship for the *Journal of College Student Development*.



CONFERENCE KEYNOTE - OCTOBER 19TH @ 12 PM



Charlotte Green

Learning Leaps and Accelerated Skills Recovery

For more than 20 years, Charlotte Rainey Parham has been an educator in the Arkansas community. Dr. Parham served as an elementary teacher, gifted specialist, principal, and district administrator. She is a national consultant and author who currently serves as an Assistant Professor of Leadership Studies at the University of Central Arkansas. Her research focuses are systems of equity, parental involvement, academic achievement gaps, school readiness, and disruptive innovation.

Dr. Green is the executive director for Arkansas Imagination Library, the state's affiliate for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library book gifting program. She

is also the founder and CEO of Strategic Inc., a consulting firm that partners with schools and various organizations to support areas of equity and literacy.

Do you need to re-establish teacher agency – the connection between instruction and student impact? Do your schools need help with learning leaps and accelerated student learning?

A mix of historical practices and the difficulties of educating students during a pandemic poses a brand-new challenge for students and their teachers as no one is quite sure what students have learned and what they do not know. This 90-minute presentation will:

1. Illustrate how to accelerate students who may have been promoted to the next grade without a mastery of prior grade-level skills,
2. Give a 45-minute Academic Skills Recovery Assessment to decide how to meet your students at their current proficiency level in math, English, reading and/or science,
3. Restore teacher confidence that what they do in the classroom has a direct impact on their students' learning,
4. Show the best way to springboard your students to success with a focused, targeted review of the most needed core skills,
5. Provide a blueprint for increasing classroom engagement by focusing on mastering a subset of High School and Middle School college and career readiness skills,
6. Highlight a system of multi-year benchmarks to measure progress, and
7. Define what you want your students to learn and how you are going to celebrate their achievements.

Sunday, October 17th, 2021

Registration Desk Open | 12:00–6:00 PM (Open daily at 7 AM)

Exhibits Open | 12:00–6:00 PM (Open daily at 8 AM)

Pre-Conference | 1:00–4:30 PM

Campus Tour @ Montana State University Billings
Pre-registration for this event is required.

Welcome Dinner & Keynote | 5:00–6:30 PM

Keynote: Justin Schaifer
Location: Main Room

Monday, October 18th, 2021

Networking Breakfast | 7:30-8:45 AM

15 Minute Break

Breakout Sessions 1 | 9:00-10:15 AM

Option 1: Mission Impossible: Planning a Successful Summer Experience During a Global Pandemic

Presenter: Carlos Ojeda Jr of CoolSpeak

Room: Ballroom

Summary: Your mission, if you choose to accept it, is to plan a summer camp that students will actually want to attend and inspires them to overcome all obstacles, even a global pandemic. In this session, we will explore how to plan, prepare, market and execute a face-to-face summer camp (with virtual contingencies) that can bring your students together and provide an unforgettable and transformative experience. In this fun, interactive workshop, participants will discover techniques and activities that they can use to promote resilience and educational success. This description will self-destruct in five seconds.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the benefits of developing a common, shared culture and norms, even virtually, that ensure successful programming.
- Experience and participate in activities that can help foster individual and collective purpose, resiliency, and servant leadership in GEAR UP students.
- Learn the key elements and tools necessary to create a successful summer experience during the COVID era.

Option 2: Beyond the One-Time College Visit to a Sense of Belonging on Campus

Presenters: Heather Paton - GEAR UP Washington | Bridget Galati - Compass 2 Campus

Room: Madison

Summary: College visits are critical for the college selection process, but do traditional college tours truly serve first-gen students? The pace of these types of campus visits can be overwhelming and may very well lead to early-onset imposter syndrome. A sense of belonging is what so many first-generation college students will need in order to persist and overcome all the institutional hurdles that await them. We asked ourselves, "What if, rather than visit as many colleges as possible, our GEAR UP students experienced regular, weekly programming at our local University? How might this impact their sense of belonging on a college campus and their desire to pursue higher education as a result?" Come learn how we partnered with our local University's mentoring program to provide engaging on-campus and academic support services on a weekly basis.

Learning Objectives:

- How to partner with local universities.
- How to build impactful mentoring programs.
- How to structure weekly college visits.

Option 3: Mission to Mars LEGO Robotics Summer Camp

Presenter: Alma Guzman & Esmeralda Razo – WSI Tri-Cities GEAR UP | Diane Reid – Moses Lake

Room: Missouri

Summary: In this session, Moses Lake, Washington GEAR UP Middle Schools will share how they partnered together to provide a two week in-person Mission to Mars LEGO Robotics Summer Camp for GEAR UP middle school students. Students had the opportunity to engage in several hands-on activities involving coding and programming of EV3 LEGO robots, flying drones, searching for life using a digital microscope and a gas detector, building straw rockets and helicopters, and creating Ozobot stories. Join us as we discuss our innovative strategies in developing and implementing this fun-filled-themed summer camp for GEAR UP students.

Learning Objectives:

- Introduce various STEM activities and equipment to students.
- Strategies to promote summer programs, increase parent outreach and student recruitment.
- Captivating program themes to enhance the promotion of summer programs.

15 Minute Break

Breakout Sessions 2 | 10:30-11:45 AM

Option 1: Transitioning from Parent Engagement to Family Engagement

Presenter: Ernesto Mejia of CoolSpeak

Room: Ballroom

Summary: What if we could transition some of our parent engagement to family engagement. What if we could deliver sessions for both our parents and their students, together? What if we could improve their communication, relationships, and overall educational support by allowing our families to speak directly to one another? What if we removed all the “what if’s” and created effective, fun-filled, engaging family programming? During this session, participants will learn how to engage both parents and students in sessions that enable them to communicate more efficiently about education, their dreams, their goals, and yes, even their feelings.

Learning Objectives:

- Participants will learn how to establish their own Family Engagement programming.
- Participants will better understand the difference between parent and family engagement.
- Participants will discover how to better engage the family as a whole.

Option 2: The Urgency of Middle School

Presenter: Karen Wilson – Montana GEAR UP

Room: Missouri

Summary: This workshop grew out of an effort to identify the grade when services would be most effective. The question became, “How do we identify risk for dropout and prevent it?” This workshop will examine the urgency of interventions during the middle grades. We will review research on risk factors and effective interventions schools can implement before the student enters high school.

Learning Objectives:

- Participants will be able to identify 3 risk factors for dropout.
- Participants will be able to identify 4 key recommendations for preventing dropout.

Option 3: Bright Future: Highlighting Student Success

Presenter: Kyra Kronberg – Montana GEAR UP

Room: Madison

Summary: Kyra Kronberg, Communications and Operations Manager of Montana GEAR UP, collaborated with Montana College Access team to create the “Bright Futures” magazine as a way of displaying GEAR UP student stories and the barriers they’ve overcome on their way to success. We’ve all seen the data and the positive impact that GEAR UP has in students’ lives. How do we celebrate these stories? In this session, we will explore how to put faces to the data, share stories of success, and communicate within the GEAR UP community.

Learning Objectives:

- What is storytelling and why is it so effective?
- Learn the power of storytelling and giving a voice to the numbers.
- How to celebrate success and effectively communicate within a GEAR UP community.

15 Minute Break**Keynote Luncheon | 12:00-1:30 PM**

Keynote: Tricia Seifert

Location: Main Room

15 Minute Break**Breakout Sessions 3 | 1:45-3:00 PM****Option 1: Success Prints Crash Course Game Play**

Presenter: Tricia Seifert – Montana State University

Room: Main Room

Summary: Set at the mythical Tabletop University, Success Prints Crash Course is the board game that challenges players to manage their time strategically between academic performance and social connections, all while handling stress, earning enough money to pay tuition, and responding to unforeseen life events. You’ve probably heard students ask, “How do I balance it all?” as they transition to higher education. So much to juggle: class, work, social life, family responsibilities, and a large number of unknowns— there’s a lot to keep in play. Success Prints Crash Course uses the experimental nature of ‘Game-based learning’ to let students explore college life, helping them discover the unknowns in an environment where it’s okay, even fun, to fail!

Learning Objectives:

- Learn how to play Success Prints Crash Course

Option 2: Deck the Halls - GEAR UP Advisory Card Games

Presenters: Jacque Deahl - Director, GEAR UP Idaho | Jaycee Atkins - GEAR UP Idaho School Counselor | Jules Isaacs - GEAR UP Idaho School Counselor

Room: Missouri

Summary: GEAR UP Idaho created a set of advisory card decks to help teach college and career terminology and key concepts in a fun and engaging way. These card games are life savers when it comes to short advisory sessions, downtime on field trips and campus tours, and those times when you are feeling “less than prepared” to teach a lesson. Learn how we recreated familiar games into helpful tools that are sure to engage and challenge students and how you can do the same! A few lucky attendees might even leave with their own set of cards!

Learning Objectives:

- Demonstrate how pre-made advisory games can be used in GEAR UP programs.
- Test out and reflect on games that have already been made.
- Brainstorm ideas for gamifying key GEAR UP concepts.
- Learn about free or cheap resources that are available to gamify the GEAR UP classroom.

15 Minute Break

Breakout Sessions 4 | 3:15-4:30 PM

Option 1: Success Prints Crash Course Game Play

Presenter: Tricia Seifert - Montana State University

Room: Main Room

Summary: "Set at the mythical Tabletop University, Success Prints Crash Course is the board game that challenges players to manage their time strategically between academic performance and social connections, all while handling stress, earning enough money to pay tuition, and responding to unforeseen life events. You've probably heard students ask, "How do I balance it all?" as they transition to higher education. So much to juggle; class, work, social life, family responsibilities, and a large number of unknowns— there's a lot to keep in play.

Option 2: The WSECU Reality Fair

Presenter: Suzanne Klenk – Washington State Employee's Credit Union (WSECU)

Room: Missouri

Summary: The WSECU Reality Fair

is an "After College Life Simulation"

Students are told that in the simulation, they have just graduated from College and have landed their first "entry level" position.

At that time we give each student information on their entry level career:

*Salary

*Taxes

*Insurance

*Credit Score

...and their debt!

*Student Loan

*Credit Card Balance

Then...They enter the simulation. They are prefaced that they own nothing but the clothes on their back and they must "Purchase their Life". Then the fun begins!

Join us for this innovative, interactive experience that will engage your students and get them thinking about the life they want to live and how to get there.

Option 3: Helping Your Students Determine What's Next and Launch their Futures

Presenter: Duane Gregg – THEC | Daniel Pulu – Arizona GEAR UP

Room: Ballroom

Summary: Arizona GU first created the Launch Guide for the Class of 2018 and GU TN used the Guide to create the first Senior Next Guide for the Class of 2020. These college and career handbooks provide information and activities for students as they decide their next steps and launch their postsecondary goals. These resources cover topics including career exploration, financial aid, types of colleges, college fit, and preparing for the workforce and the military. Join this session as we review the content, development, and impact of these resources that now reach over 40,000 students each year.

Learning Objectives:

- Attendees will be able to describe the content in the Next and Launch Guides.
- Attendees will collaboratively discuss activities within the Next Guides and brainstorm how these could be used in their school settings.
- Attendees will identify how these resources can be used to increase their college-going rates, address equity gaps, and serve some of their most at-risk students.

Networking Reception | 4:30-6:00 PM

Sponsor: iTutor

Special Guests: Hardin Middle School Native Dancers

Location: TBD

Summary: Experience an evening of entertainment and refreshments sponsored by iTutor. Network with colleagues, dine on scrumptious appetizers and enjoy the passion and skill of a special local student dance group from Hardin Middle School (a Montana GEAR UP school).

Tuesday, October 19th, 2021

Networking Breakfast | 7:30-8:45 AM

15 Minute Break

Breakout Sessions 5 | 9:00-10:15 AM

Option 1: Being There for Students (When You Can't Literally Be There): The Impact of Virtual College Advising in Rural Oregon & Beyond

Presenter: Danielle Gunder & Taylor Munoz – Get Schooled

Room: Ballroom

Summary: Join this interactive session about a virtual research-based college advising campaign in rural Oregon, including a personalized textline, customized digital content and social media, and partnerships to ensure students receive meaningful and timely access to the information they need on their college journey. Participants will hear transferable campaign learnings to inform virtual advising efforts and engage in facilitated small group conversations to identify elements of this work to implement in your own school. We will also share free partnership opportunities for GEAR UP programs to develop, expand, and support your virtual advising support.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn about the core components and goals of Get Schooled and our rural Oregon campaign.
- Understand the benefits and challenges of an all-digital college access model to support rural young people.
- Be equipped to replicate or utilize elements of Get Schooled's digital library in their community.

Option 2: Montana Seventh Year Services in Action

Presenters: Judi Haskins & Emma Hill – Montana State University | Maria Lillrose – Montana GEAR UP

Room: Missouri

Summary: Montana GEAR UP has partnered with five Montana campuses to support GEAR UP 7th-year students as they transition from high school to college. Come join Montana State University's First Year Service Coordinator, Judi Haskins, and Emma Hill, and Montana GEAR UP's College Access Manager, Maria Lillrose, as they share about implementing 7th-year services programs in the midst of a pandemic. We'll discuss what we learned, the challenges that were overcome, and what we are doing now as we move forward into our second year of implementation.

Learning Objectives:

- Share insights and lessons learned from implementing 7th-year service programs on 5 campuses.
- Discuss obstacles and challenges that were encountered.
- Share next steps for our partnerships.
- Facilitate an exchange of ideas for other states/grants that are doing the same thing or want to.

Option 3: Adding Depth to Your Program Through College & Career Competency

Presenter: Jacque Deahl - GEAR UP Idaho

Room: Madison

Summary: The NACE (National Association of Colleges and Employers) College and Career Readiness Competencies provide an amazing framework for the skills that students need to be successful after high school. These student-centered competencies provide direct and demonstrable objectives for students that can help clear up that question we have all heard "What is the point of this?". Learn about the competencies and how Idaho is using them to increase buy-in from stakeholders and add depth and consistency to our program.

Learning Objectives:

- Introduction to the NACE competencies and how Idaho is using these competencies in our program.
- Benefits of working through a national model with performance indicators.
- Brainstorming and planning time for participants.

15 Minute Break

Breakout Sessions 6 | 10:30-11:15 AM

Option 1: Virtual Credit Recovery: An Equitable Response to Our Covid Grading Conundrum

Presenter: Heather Paton & Sam Wasson - University of Washington GEAR UP

Room: Ballroom

Summary: In this interactive session, we will share our experience designing and implementing a virtual program for the last two summers. Our collaborative, proficiency-based approach gives GEAR UP students an opportunity to learn alongside college student mentors from our local University and has offered them an effective way for students to retrieve credits lost as a result of three Covid-impacted grading periods.

Learning Objectives:

- Proficiency-based curriculum.
- Virtual tutoring summer programming.
- Creative ways to partner with higher ed.
- Successful mentoring partnerships .

Option 2: An Exploratory Review of Key GEAR UP Impacts and Outcomes for the Dean's Future Scholars Program

Presenter: Jafeth Sanchez & Manuel Ortiz - University of Nevada, Reno

Room: Missouri

Summary: In partnership with Nevada State GEAR UP, the Dean's Future Scholars program uses near-peer mentoring to foster long-term relationships and equip students with the knowledge, skills, and other supports to be successful. With 20 years in progress, programming efforts will be shared along with our recent exploratory review of data for students expected to have attained a college/university degree by 2016. We will discuss key GEAR UP data findings (i.e., What made a difference and how do we know?) to identify strengths and opportunities to target within current GEAR UP efforts to better support programming success and student outcomes.

Option 3: Foundations in Finance

Presenter: Suzanne Klenk and Karen Zukaitis – Washington State Employee's Credit Union (WSECU)

Room: Madison

Summary: Foundations in Finance addresses the connection between Student's Mental Health and Financial Health and how to move forward in a healthy way.

15 Minute Break

Keynote Luncheon | 12:00-1:30 PM

Keynote: Charlotte Green

Location: Main Room

Adjourn

PRESENTER BIOS

Atkins, Jaycee

Jaycee Atkins is the GEAR UP Coordinator for Bonners Ferry School District in Bonners Ferry, Idaho. Though she works in a small and isolated community, Jaycee leaves no stone unturned when it comes to seeking out resources and opportunities for her students. Jaycee attacks every challenge with a contagious enthusiasm that is evident in the way she inspires and engages her school community.

Deahl, Jacque

Jacque Deahl has been the GEAR UP Idaho State Project Director for just over 5 years. Prior to her time with GEAR UP, Jacque ran a college readiness initiative for two community colleges and worked in program management, marketing, and development for multiple youth-focused nonprofits including: CASA, Boys and Girls Clubs, and Junior Achievement. Working to raise funding and support for critical services in her community, Jacque came to appreciate the power of data, storytelling, and collaboration as instruments for cultivating buy-in from stakeholders. Though she uses them often, Jacque has failed to master the art of the common idiom and will mess one up in almost any conversation, but that's the way the cookie stumbles.

Dr. Hernandez, Jose

Jose Hernandez is a Lead Data Scientist on the WeBe project. He earned his Ph.D. in Measurement and Statistics and Masters in Education Policy from the University of Washington. His doctoral research assessed the causal inference methodology in the absence of randomization on complex data structures. He works as a Senior Data Scientist at the University of Washington's eScience Institute and a Data Science Senior Fellow at the Center for Education in Seattle. He also serves at the College and Career Leadership Institute as a facilitator. As a first-generation college graduate raised in a Mexican immigrant community, Jose intimately understands how race, ethnicity, gender, and income remain barriers to mentoring a sense of belonging.

Galati, Bridget

Bridget Galati has over 10 years of experience in secondary education, first as a middle school teacher in Camden, New Jersey, and later as an English Learner specialist in Denver. As a first-gen college student herself, she is passionate about access to higher education for all students.

PRESENTER BIOS

Gregg, Duane

Duane is the Project Director for GEAR UP Tennessee at the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC), where he has worked for the past 9 years. Duane spent 6 years as the East Tennessee Regional Coordinator for GEAR UP TN prior to assuming the position as the Director. Prior to joining THEC, Duane worked for 12 years in business and over 6 years in education and college access. His experiences include serving as an Upward Bound Director, Educational Talent Search Coordinator, academic advisor, college instructor, and juvenile justice counselor. He served in the U.S. Army for 17 years, including 6 years as an instructor with the U.S. Army Reserve. Duane holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Florida, a Master of Public Administration from the University of Tennessee, and a Doctorate in Higher Education Administration from the University of Memphis. His doctoral dissertation focused on the student retention practices of community colleges in Tennessee, and Duane's focus in higher education has been in access, equity, and persistence. Besides their common interests and careers in education, Duane and his wife Nancy spend their time traveling, participating in local and foreign mission trips, attending UT football games, and supporting music events and theatre.

Gunder, Danielle

Danielle Gunder is a Senior Program Manager at Get Schooled directing programs and campaigns to support young people getting to, and succeeding in, college. Prior to Get Schooled Danielle was a high school teacher in Phoenix where she also served as the college advisor. For 6 years she worked at University of Washington School of Medicine as the first Education Specialist for the newly created Office of Rural Programs. In this role, Danielle established clinical teaching sites across 5 states to create highly trained doctors for rural America. Danielle is an AmeriCorps Alumni and first generation college student. She earned her Master of Secondary Education from Arizona State University and two BA's in Biology and Psychology from Gonzaga University.

Guzman, Alma

Site Manager at Chief Moses Middle School located in Moses Lake, WA. She started working with GEAR UP in January 2021 but has prior experience serving students in non-profit organizations to reach their academic and career goals. As a student advocate, she is very passionate about providing students with opportunities to grow in their future academics and careers.

Haskins, Judi

Judi Haskins has worked at Montana State University since 2004 in various capacities including academic advising, student success coordination, peer mentor program director, and first-year seminar instructor. She holds a B.S. in Psychology with a minor in Creative Writing, and an M.S. in Counseling and Human Services, both from the University of Idaho. Originally from Plains, Montana, Judi is married to Superior, Montana native Ryan Haskins, and they have three young daughters. Outside of work, Judi enjoys family time and her many kids activities as well as camping, boating Montana's beautiful lakes, hiking, and gardening. Judi is also a recent breast cancer survivor and works to raise awareness of breast cancer detection and support.

PRESENTER BIOS

Hill, Emma

Emma Hill is a student at Montana State University in her third year of college. Emma grew up in St. Regis, MT, where she participated in GEAR UP as a high school student. Emma is the Program Assistant in the GEAR UP MSU office, where she enjoys helping students from Montana's GEAR UP schools. She loves to make others feel welcome and help those around her succeed. Emma enjoys hunting, fishing, hiking, and other outdoor activities. She is an active member of her college ministry "Crosslife" in Bozeman. Emma hopes to graduate from MSU in 2023 with her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education. One of her long-term goals is to move to a rural area in Montana to teach while also working with a GEAR UP program to encourage students to pursue post-secondary education.

Hodge, Carrie

Carrie Hodge holds an EdD in Higher Education Leadership at Appalachian State University in Boone, NC. She earned her B.A. and M.A. in English from Clemson University in Clemson, SC. Carrie has over five years of experience teaching English at the community college level and ran the Writing Center at Pitt Community College in Greenville, NC, for three years. Currently, she is working as a Senior Associate in Data & Advanced Analytics at the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education. Her dissertation focused on how North Carolina high schools create a college-going culture during COVID.

Isaacs, Jules

Jules Isaacs is the GEAR UP Coordinator for the Twin Falls School District in Twin Falls, Idaho. With over 700 students in her cohorts, Jules is a pro when it comes to quality and efficiency. Jules' strengths include navigating school partnerships, maximizing project resources, and adding the perfect level of weird and cool into everything she does.

Kronberg, Kyra

Kyra was born and raised in Plymouth, WI and graduated from St. Norbert College in the Spring of 2020 with a BA in Communication and Media studies and Graphic Design. After, she moved to Montana to serve an Americorps VISTA term with the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) College Access team, where she rediscovered a passion for storytelling and higher education. She is now the Communications and Operations Manager for OCHE. Outside of work she loves travel, digital art, soccer and picking up as many other random hobbies as possible.

Lillrose, Maria

Maria Lillrose is the College Access Senior Program Manager for GEAR UP and the Montana Educational Talent Search program, seeking to support Montana students in accessing higher education. Maria has a BA in education and a TEFL certificate. She has over 10 years of teaching experience in a variety of settings, including the Peace Corps and the Indian Education For All program within the Helena School District. Maria is passionate about helping students to discover and achieve their potential in all areas of life. She is also a mom to 3 kids of her own, 2 foster kids, 2 cats, and dog.

PRESENTER BIOS

Mejia, Ernesto

Ernesto Mejia, the proud son of Mexican immigrants, is a true example of the American dream. Diagnosed with the rare disease of Guillain-Barré Syndrome at the age of 16 that left him temporarily paralyzed, he was not supposed to be a successful student, much less a College Dean of Students. Through his hardships, Ernesto learned to never give up on life, he now speaks to students, parents, and teachers about overcoming obstacles and never giving up on the American dream: education. As a member of the CoolSpeak family, Ernesto focuses most of his efforts on parent/family engagement.

Munoz, Taylor

Assistant Program Manager at Get Schooled. Her work lives at the intersection of tech, education, and student success – creating engaging digital content, outreach strategy, and operating Get Schooled's website. She has a BA in Journalism from Seattle Pacific University, and, as a first-generation college graduate, is passionate about making higher education more equitable for underserved students.

Ojeda Jr, Carlos

Carlos Ojeda Jr. has been called one of the most dynamic speakers in America today. A former university administrator, professor and small business development center director, he now focuses his energy on empowering students to succeed by teaching them that their voice is their power. Combining his entrepreneurial spirit with his passion for changing the lives of youth across the country, he started CoolSpeak. The Youth Engagement Company. CoolSpeak provides youth motivational speakers, programs, and events designed to keep students inspired, parents involved and teachers engaged.

Ortiz, Manuel

Manuel "Manny" Ortiz, M.A., was a GEAR UP student himself; he has continued to be involved in supporting GEAR UP efforts through the Dean's Future Scholars (DFS) program as a mentor, graduate assistant, and summer coordinator. He's also served as a teacher assistant, after-school programming site coordinator, and a specialist for the district's Equity and Diversity Office and is currently the GEAR UP/DFS program's Assistant Director at the University of Nevada, Reno.

Paton, Heather

Heather Paton came to GEAR UP with 10 years of secondary teaching experience in rural and urban settings. Though she grew up in Bellingham (the community where Western Washington University is located), as a first-gen college student she was unfamiliar with the campus and all things related to college. Because of this, she loves bringing her students to campus on a weekly basis.

Pulu, Daniel

Daniel came to Arizona GEAR UP by way of Alaska in March 2020 as the Program Manager of Senior Year Services. He brings a wealth of experience in helping underserved students achieve postsecondary success. His roles included supervising day-to-day operations for a Success Center in Alaska for the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education, counseling students regarding postsecondary access, and assisting students during the postsecondary admission process. Daniel also brings 10 years of experience working with diverse populations. Daniel earned a Master's in Business Administration from Wayland Baptist University, a Master's in Human Services and a Bachelor's in Sociology from the University of Alaska Anchorage.

PRESENTER BIOS

Razo, Esmeralda

Current Site Manager at Frontier Middle School in Moses Lake, WA. She has worked with GEAR UP since 2017 – serving as a Tutor, Academic Specialist, and Site Manager under two different grants. As a first-generation college graduate, she is excited in helping students become interested in higher education by providing academically enriching and engaging programs.

Reid, Diane

Diane Reid – National Board Certified Teacher/EA Science, has taught over 30 years in science, math, and highly capable programs. She has enjoyed working with her school's GEAR UP Site Manager in after-school and summer programs opportunities to expand the students' school experience, particularly in areas of science and engineering.

Sanchez, Jafeth

Jafeth E. Sanchez, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor at the University of Nevada, Reno. Her research centers on school leadership practices with a P-20 focus on student outcomes. She has served as a GEAR UP evaluator and grant principal investigator for approximately 15 years. She has been involved in GEAR UP data analysis for four Nevada State GEAR UP grant cycles (Class of 2007, Class of 2012, Classes of 2018/2019, and the current grant).

Wasson, Sam

Samantha Wasson is a math, science, AVID, and leadership teacher who has worked with students in alternative and general education settings. The alternative school work helped Sam develop her skills around proficiency-based curriculum writing and differentiated instruction. Her passion, though, is helping students see their passions and potential. This is her twelfth year teaching and she loves how her students have stretched her and grown her. Her big hope is that she can do the same for them!

Wilson, Karen

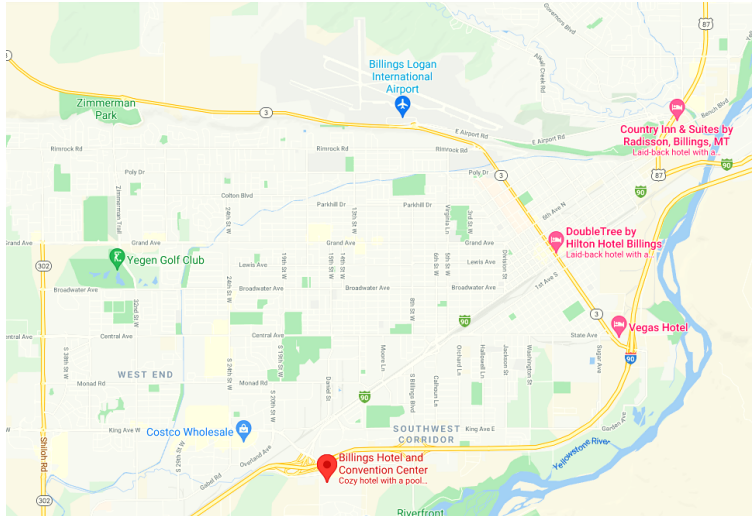
Karen Wilson has 16 years of experience in K-12 and higher education. During her K-12 experience, Karen worked with high-risk students from some of the poorest communities in Arizona. Students were predominantly indigenous and the children of migrant workers. In higher education, Karen observed the struggles students faced when they were not prepared academically, lacked an end goal, switched majors, and racked up debt. In her current role as a school grant manager for Montana GEAR UP, Karen provides training and oversight to GEAR UP Schools across Montana. Karen is interested in what works and when services can have the most impact on students. As a first-generation college graduate, Karen believes every student can be prepared for college and will benefit from obtaining a degree.

Zukatis, Karen & Klenk, Susan

Suzanne and Karen are seasoned Financial Educators with Washington State Employee's Credit Union(WSECU). Backed by over 45 years of industry experience between them and a passion for serving youth and their communities, these Master Financial Coach's approach to Financial Education is both innovative and refreshing.

ACCOMMODATIONS | ACTIVITIES

BILLINGS HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER



Billings-Logan International Airport

1901 Terminal Cir, Billings, MT 59105

- ↑ 1. Head south toward E Airport Rd
0 s (13 ft)
- Drive along MT-3, Virginia Ln, 5th St W and Laurel Rd
14 min (5.6 mi)
- ➡ 2. Turn right onto E Airport Rd
0.2 mi
- 📍 3. At the traffic circle, take the 3rd exit onto MT-3
0.7 mi
- ➡ 4. Sharp right onto Rimrock Rd
0.3 mi
- ↩ 5. Turn left onto Virginia Ln
1.0 mi
- ↑ 6. Continue onto 5th St W
1.0 mi
- ➡ 7. Turn right onto Montana Ave
0.4 mi
- ↑ 8. Continue onto Laurel Rd
1.4 mi
- ⤴ 9. Use the middle lane to turn slightly right onto the ramp to King Ave West/S Frontage Rd
0.2 mi
- ↩ 10. Turn left onto Mallowney Ln
0.4 mi
- ↩ 11. Turn left
Destination will be on the left

ACTIVITIES IN BILLINGS

Parks & Recreation

- Float/fish/walk the Yellowstone River.
- Hike the Rimrocks north of town.
- Relax at River Front Park.
- Visit Montana's largest Zoo at ZooMontana.
- Play Disc Golf (Pioneer Park, High Sierra, The Rims).
- Travel the Downtown Museum Crawl: Western Heritage Center, Yellowstone County Museum, Yellowstone Art Museum, and Moss Mansion.

Dining/Nightlife

- Yellowstone Cellars & Winery.
- West Park Promenade.
- Explore the Billings Brew Trail: <https://www.visitbillings.com/billings-brew-trails>

Uniquely Montana

- Pictograph Cave State Park.
- Little Big Horn Battlefield.
- Pompey's Pillar National Monument.

AGENDA AT-A-GLANCE

GEAR UP West 2021 Updated Schedule

Sunday, October 17th, 2021				
12:00 pm - 5:00 pm		Exhibits Open		
12:00 pm - 6:00 pm		Registration Desk Open		
1:00 pm - 4:30 pm		Pre-Conference Session: MSU-Billings Campus Visit		
5:00 pm - 6:30 pm		Welcome Dinner and Keynote Speaker: Justin Shaifer		
Monday, October 18th, 2021				
8:00 am - 5:30 pm		Exhibits Open		
7:00 am - 3:00 pm		Registration Desk Open		
7:30 am - 8:45 am		Networking Breakfast		
8:45 am - 9:00 am		Break		
Breakout Session 1				
9:00 am - 10:15 am	Mission Impossible: Planning a Successful Summer Experience During a Global Pandemic	Beyond the One-Time College Visit to a Sense of Belonging on Campus	Mission to Mars LEGO Robotics Summer Camp	Director's Meeting
	Carlos "Chu" Ojeda, Jr.	Heather Paton & Bridget Galati	Alma Guzman, Esmeralda Razo, Diane Reid	
	Ballroom	Madison	Missouri	Board Room
10:15 am - 10:30 am		Break		
Breakout Session 2				
10:30 am - 11:45 am	Transitioning from Parent Engagement to Family Engagement	Bright Futures: Highlighting Student Success	The Urgency of Middle School	Director's Meeting
	Ernesto Mejia	Kyra Kronberg	Karen Wilson	
	Ballroom	Madison	Missouri	Board Room
11:45 am - 12:00 pm		Break		
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm		Keynote Luncheon: Tricia Seifert		
1:30 pm - 1:45 pm		Break		
Breakout Session 3 (two options)				
1:45 pm - 3:00 pm	Success Prints Crash Course Game Play	Deck the Halls - GEAR UP Advisory Card Games		
	Tricia Seifert	Jacque Deahl, Jaycee Atkins, Jules Isaacs		
	Main Conference Area	Missouri		
3:00 pm - 3:15 pm		Break		
Breakout Session 4				
3:15 pm - 4:30 pm	Success Prints Crash Course Game Play	Helping Your Students Determine What's Next and Launch their Futures	The WSECU Reality Fair	
	Tricia Seifert	Duane Gregg & Daniel Pulu	Suzanne Klenk	
	Main Conference Area	Ballroom	Missouri	
4:30 pm - 6:00 pm		Networking Reception		
Tuesday, October 19th, 2021				
8:00 am - 12:00 pm		Exhibits Open		
7:00 am - 10:45 am		Registration Desk Open		
7:30 am - 8:45 am		Networking Breakfast		
8:45 am - 9:00 am		Break		
Breakout Session 5				
9:00 am - 10:15 am	Adding Depth to Your Program Through College and Career Competencies	Being There For Students (When You Can't Literally Be There): The Impact of Virtual College Advising In Rural Oregon & Beyond	Montana Seventh Year Services in Action	
	Jacque Deahl	Danielle Gunder & Taylor Munoz	Maria Lilrose & Judi Haskins	
	Madison	Ballroom	Missouri	
10:15 am - 10:30 am		Break		
Breakout Session 6				
10:30 am - 11:45 am	Foundations in Finance	Virtual Credit Recovery: An Equitable Response to Our Covid Grading Conundrum	An Exploratory Review of Key GEAR UP Impacts and Outcomes for the Dean's Future Scholars Program	
	Suzanne Klenk & Karen Zukaitis	Heather Paton & Sam Wasson	Jafeth Sanchez & Manny Ortiz	
	Madison	Ballroom	Missouri	
11:45 am - 12:00 pm		Break		
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm		Keynote Luncheon: Charlotte Green		

ONWARD & UPWARD ↑

