AIM High Akron GEAR UP

GEAR UP 2024 / 2025

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GEAR UP Scholars Leading The Way

At the North East Ohio Youth Summit (NEOYS), GEAR UP students showcased remarkable leadership by delivering student-led presentations at this entirely student-driven conference. Held at the University of Akron, in partnership between GEAR UP and AVID, the summit brought together students from Akron Public Schools – Buchtel, East, Ellet, Firestone, Garfield, and North – as well as students from Cleveland. These young leaders guided sessions on key topics such as College Credit Plus (CCP), Community Engagement, Resilience, and Growth Mindset. their confidence, preparation, adn passion were on full display as they inspired tehir peers adn demonstrated the power of student voice in shaping educational experiences.



Celebrating Our Scholars

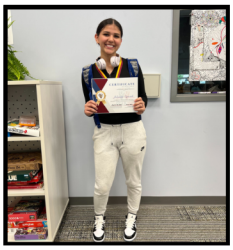
GEAR UP loves to celebrate the students who strive for greatness. To qualify Scholars had to achieve (through quarter 3):

9th Graders

- 90% attendance or above
- no OSS
- 5 days or less of ISS
- Pass Math with C or higher (Sem 1 & Q3)

10th Graders

- 90% attendance or above
- no OSS
- 5 days or less of ISS
- Pass core classes with C or higher (Sem 1 & Q3)

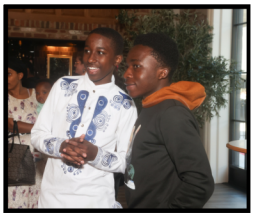
















AIM High Akron GEAR UP

1040






1040 Mentoring it Up!

Our **Leaders Inspiring Learners Program** is slowly winding down for the year. Our middle schoolers are benefitting from weekly exposure that helps better understand themselves and how to successfully navigate society, and the world in which we live.

The Brain Enrichment Institute (BEI) has been a smash hit! Our high school mentors have been masterfully engaging our middle school mentees with vital information that is helping them navigate the late stages of adolescence. It's beautiful to see the relationships that are being forged through this process.




Building Bridges

Currently, GU Club is building international unity with our international students. Through the the **1040 Unity Tree**, students born here in the United States, and students born in Africa, and elsewhere are learning that they have more in common than differences. It's beautiful to see social and cultural barriers literally disappear right in front of your eyes.

1040 on Campus

In conjunction with College and Career Academies, twenty freshmen were selected for the 2025 Historical Black College and University, or (HBCU) field trip. We visited Central and Wilberforce Universities. The trip was a great tie-in to the college and career pathways they chose this year. The trip allowed them to see the career opportunities available to them in college and the real world.

Our sophomores were also invited to visit one of our sister colleges, Kent State University for a day of exposure in order to help them understand that they belong at institutions of higher education, like KSU.





📣 GEAR UP at Buchtel: A Year of Growth, Achievement & Opportunity!

If we had to choose one word to define the 2024–2025 academic year for GEAR UP at Buchtel, it would be growth—and not just in numbers, but in student ambition, family engagement, and staff development.

🏫 Student Impact: More Than Just Numbers

This year, 337 students participated in GEAR UP activities, contributing a remarkable 5,724 hours of engagement! From college visits and summer programs to workshops, mentoring, and after-school sessions, our scholars seized every opportunity. A highlight? Our unforgettable overnight HBCU field trip to Central State University and Wilberforce College, where students explored the rich history and vibrant community of Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

👨‍👩‍👧 Family Engagement: Parents Showing Up and Showing Out

Family involvement remained strong, with 264 parents logging a total of 639 hours through family events, workshops, and direct contact. GEAR UP knows that student success starts at home, and we're proud of the way our Buchtel families continue to show up.

🎓 Professional Growth: Supporting Our Scholars Starts With Us

As a GEAR UP team member, I personally completed 18.25 hours of professional development this year—continuing to grow as a student advisor so I can better guide and advocate for our students. Because when we grow, our students thrive.

📘 College Credit Plus: Building College Pathways Early

In partnership with our amazing 10th Grade Academy Counselor, Marlise Ramsey, we successfully helped 18 rising sophomores enroll in College Credit Plus (CCP) courses for the upcoming school year. This initiative gives our students a head start on college credits—saving time and money while building college confidence.





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As we reflect on this impactful year, we look ahead with excitement to what next year has in store for our GEAR UP family. Together, we AIM HIGH with GEAR UP!

GEAR UP: Kicking Off The Year

This year has been an incredible journey for our GEAR UP scholars! We kicked off with our annual Grill and Chill and GEAR UP College Access Week, building excitement and preparing for a successful school year ahead.








Hatching The Next Gen & Peer Leaders

This year, GEAR UP introduced Peer Mentoring with two outstanding programs: BEI (Brain Enrichment Initiative) & GEAR UP L.I.L.'s (Leaders Inspiring Learners)





BEI was a 12-week program aligned with the Ohio Department of Education's Social Learning Standards, fostering emotional resilience, peer mentorship, and academic motivation among our 10th-grade scholars.





GEAR Up LIL was a partnership with the I CARE Connection Program to build students' social-emotional toolboxes, equipping them with skills to navigate life and relationships more confidently.




Leadership Lunches

This year, our lunchtime GEAR UP groups provided meaningful spaces for growth, reflection, and connection. Our 10th-grade scholars participated in a 12-week lunchtime group designed to empower them as young leaders. Throughout the sessions, students explored how to balance school, friendships, and everyday life challenges while developing confidence and essential leadership skills.

We launched our first-ever GURLL program – GEAR UP's Remarkable Leading Ladies. This special group gave our young ladies a platform to express the issues that mattered most to them, share their voices, and build each other up as leaders in their schools and community.

Inspiring Scholars

Our scholars were further inspired by Mr. Maurice F. Martin, who shared powerful motivational insights on the importance of FOCUS as they approached the final stretch of their high school journey. His words reminded us all that we must focus and finish strong.




Dragons In the Wild

Throughout the year, our scholars excelled both in the classroom and in the community. They had the opportunity to meet with Mayor Malik, sharing concerns that directly impact every Akron Public Schools student and their families, showcasing their leadership and advocacy skills.

Our students also toured TRG Studios, a multi-media content creation studio, where they experienced hands-on learning in video production, commercial photography, and CGI. This experience opened their eyes to creative career pathways they may not have previously considered.

One of our memorable academic field trips was to the Summit County Metro Parks, where students explored diverse career opportunities within the parks system and experienced the variety of roles available in their community.









AIM High Akron GEAR UP

Ram Nation

Helping Them Up The Mountan

Over the 2024-45 academic year, GEAR UP worked with building staff to provide extra help for retained freshmen. Garfield GEAR UP provided student and parent advising, as well as a weekly lunch intervention to help scholars catch up on missing work.

In the spring, GEAR UP also piloted restorative, bi-monthly Saturday school at Garfield, to serve as an alternative to Out-of-School Suspensions. This program, called Ram RESET (Reflect. Engage. Support. Educate. Transform.), provided students with the structure, support, and concentrated time to reflect upon behaviors, to learn and practice alternative methods of dealing with conflict, and to increase their academic success.





Metis Parent Focus Group

Each spring, the GEAR UP data tracking company, Metis & Associates, visits two of the Akron GEAR UP schools to interview staff and stakeholders. This year, Garfield CLC was able to host a parent/guardian focus group to help us understand how GEAR UP is impacting our students and their families. The feedback from the focus group will directly inform upcoming adjustments to the program and will be included in future grant reporting. By centering parent voices, we ensure that our programs reflect the lived experiences of the families we serve.

HBCU Fair

On a frigid Saturday in late November, nearly 100 students (GEAR UP 10th graders and APS seniors) reported to 10 North Main at 7:00 a.m. to attend an HBCU Fair in Warrensville Heights. Yes, you read that right–7 am on a Saturday morning.
The sleet and cold did not deter our students from enjoying an HBCU-style pep rally, meeting with representatives from over 40 historically Black colleges and universities, and attending seminars related to college life. Next year we aspire to bring even more students to this event (unless, of course, we can bring the event to Akron).

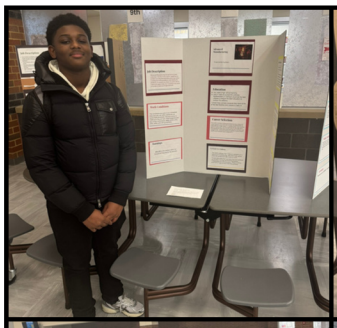


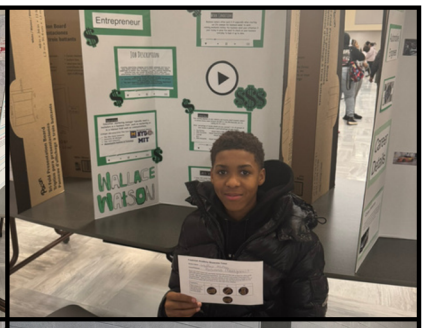




Freshman Academy Career & Pathway Showcase

After rescheduling (twice) because of bad weather, we finally held Garfield's first Freshman Academy Career & Pathway Showcase on Wednesday, February 12th.
This GEAR UP-sponsored event featured motivational speaker, Maurice F. Martin, with an inspiring keynote message, followed by a student-centered Career & Pathway Showcase, a fair-type of event where our 9th graders presented their Freshman Seminar semester one exam projects to their families, as well as building and district-level staff. For their projects, students had to identify and research their ideal career and then consider which of the eight Garfield academy pathways will best prepare them for their future plans.
After the showcase, students and families enjoyed a meal together, thanks to the hard work of Mr. Clayton Cundiff, our CCAA Coach, and Chef Jennifer Morales, who heads up our Culinary pathway.











Rams on the Rise

Because of the rigorous requirements and lengthy application process, most NHS inductees are upperclassmen. Because of this, we are thrilled to have three Sophmores (now rising Juniors) be inducted into the National Honor Society. Let's give a big round of applause to Giyanna Boware, Massagy Toure, Braxton Reynolds!





Rams at the Round Table

This past school year, Garfield GEAR UP had two opportunities to escort students to the Akron Round Table Signature Series luncheons at Quaker Station. On February 20, 2025, we heard about food scarcity from Lisa Nageotte, President and COO of Feeding America. On May 15th, another group of GEAR UP students heard from Maribel Perez Wadsworth, President and CEO of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, who spoke about the power and influence of local community-based organizations. Attending events like this forces our students out of their comfort zones and allows them to start thinking about their place in the community beyond the school doors.

AIM High Akron GEAR UP

TRUE NORTH

GEAR UP @ True North

What an amazing school year GEAR UP has had at North this year! Whether it was our successful after-school club that kept students engaged and empowered to hosting the GEAR UP Young Scholars (G.U.Y.S.) lunch group that built community and connection. It's been a year full of growth and imapct and I couldn't have done it without the incredible support from the freshman staff – thank you for showing up and helping make GEAR UP a success this year and welcoming us to the building last year!

Growing Bright Minds Summit

60 North GEAR UP Students spent the day downtown at the main library to learn about mental health and ways to build resiliency. Students went through 3 break outs led by Richard Robinson MSW, LSW, Xiomara Valentin MSW, LSW, and North's very own Caitlin Bradley. They learned about :

- -Identifying Emotions & How to Regulate Them
- -Overcoming Hardships & Staying Resilient
- - Yoga: Moving with Intention

Students also experienced keynote speaker, Maurice F. Martin, who spoke about the power of kindess, to themselves and to others.





In The Clurb, We All Fam










GEAR UP Young Scholars

This year, a combined twenty-one students in our North 9th and 10th grade classes spent one lunch period a week to work towards breaking down barriers and building community amoung themselves.

The photos below highlight our end of the year trip to Camp Y-Noah where the G.U.Y.S. challenged themselves with team building activities, conquered their fears on a 55-foot climbing tower, and explored new skills like archery. We look forward to offering a group to our young women next year as well!











Summit Metro Parks

Career Exploration

Here at North we took a total of 20 freshman and sophmore students to the event where they got to learn about careers in the parks that involved Wildlife Conservation, Education & Recreation, Operations & Maintenance, Park Planning, Law Enforcement, and Archaeology.





