

Vermont GEAR UP

Fall 2024
News for GEAR UP Families

GEAR UP Outreach Counselors

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Find your student's OC
profile and assigned
schools by going here:
www.vsac.org/about/our-outreach-programs/gear-up

Reach us toll free
877-961-4369
Burlington Area
802-654-3793

GEAR UP is a federally
funded program
supported in part through
grants from the U.S.
Department of Education.

It's time again for our newsletter! When we send this newsletter out to families, we're including every adult who takes the time to be a part of the lives and growth of students. We're grateful for all the adults who care for and about youth. Contact us anytime with questions or concerns. Thank you for being a youth champion!

GEAR UP Staff Updates

We've been very busy welcoming new staff and saying goodbye for now to part of our GEAR UP family. **Dianne Griggs**, our GU Director retired in June after 29 years of dedicated work and leadership. We are forever grateful for her stewardship and commitment to Vermont students, families, partners, and GEAR UP nationally.

We welcomed **Kristin Hubert** in July to lead GEAR UP as director, into the next grant and are delighted to have her join our team. Kirstin has served many years in Vermont education, most recently as the Superintendent in Rutland (RNESU). We are thrilled to have Kristin leading Vermont GEAR UP!

Tia Stillman, formerly the Outreach Counselor at Fair Haven Middle and High schools has transitioned to a fulltime GEAR UP After High School (GUIDE) position and works directly with GU students and families in their transition into careers or college.

Rachel Casey has stepped into the Outreach Counselor position at Fair Haven Middle and High schools from Upward Bound at VTSU Castleton. She has quickly become a valuable and joyful addition to our team!

We have partnered with CCV to support GEAR UP students in their transition to CCV with the appointment of **James Wolfe** as Coordinator of Student Advising. James works with our Outreach Counselors and GEAR UP After High School (GUIDE) team on supporting students and families as they begin studies at CCV. You can reach James at James.Wolfe@ccv.edu to talk about the transition to CCV and to schedule a conversation on line.

Financial Aid, the FAFSA, and other Financing Opportunities

- **Vermont Guarantee** is a partnership agreement between the Community College of Vermont (CCV) and participating colleges and universities in Vermont. Students interested in transferring to a participating institution can now take advantage of this option for a seamless transfer of credits. Learn more at www.ccv.edu:
 - **Key features include**; no application fee, guaranteed admission, guaranteed transfer of credits, junior status upon enrollment, and scholarships and incentives (vary by receiving college)
- The **U.S. Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA)** will launch the **2025-26 FAFSA** through a new process starting October 1, with initial testing involving a limited group of students and institutions. This phased rollout is designed to identify and address any system issues, with more details on the testing process to come. The application will be **fully accessible for all applicants by December 1, 2024**.

2025-2026 FAFSA information,
application, and guidelines



Find more resources online at vsac.org Email info@vsac.org
Facebook: [@VermontStudentAssistanceCorporation](https://www.facebook.com/VermontStudentAssistanceCorporation) Instagram: [@gearupguide.vt](https://www.instagram.com/gearupguide.vt)

Vermont GEAR UP Parents

Middle School Parent Tips

- GEAR UP students get the most from our program when they regularly **meet with their Outreach Counselor**. Encourage your student to check in regularly and **stay updated on field trips, career and college programs, and enrichment programs**.
- The **GEAR UP Discover Parent Guide** is jam packed with resources! You can find it with other GEAR UP resources at www.vsac.org on the Outreach GEAR UP page or follow this code!



There's a lot to take in during these years - your teen is learning more independence and autonomy and they still need your guidance and attention. **Let GEAR UP be your partner!** We have multiple methods to support you!

11th Grade Parent Tips

- **What's next?** Is your student starting to think about life after high school? What are the jobs available in your community? What are they interested in finding out more about? Now is a good time to talk about plans -- not all at once -- but in bits and pieces. **What steps need to be taken now for readiness later?** Your OC can help and they **love to connect with families!** You can **contact them via their email on the cover page** of this newsletter.
- Now is the time for your student to get started if they're interested in **Dual Enrollment** or **Early College**. Encourage your student to **check in with their OC** about getting started.
- **Junior year can often be the most challenging.** Making big decisions, testing for future goals, touring colleges and program sites, and getting ready for life after high school. **VSAC GEAR UP is here to help! Keep the conversation going and work with your student's OC.**

9th/10th Grade Parent Tips

Mark Your Calendars:

- Tentatively scheduled for **March 8, 2025**, families are invited to join us at our **College and Careers Pathways Program** held at **UVM Davis Center or online via Zoom** - take part in live workshops, discover free resources, and connect with local experts to help prepare for education or training after high school.
- **Sign up for registration notification here:** <https://www.vsac.org/ccp>

Senior Parent Tips

- Is your student looking at **options for plans after high school?** Stay in contact with your child's outreach counselor as they explore what's next!
- Have a quick **FAFSA question?** Call **833-802-8722** with your questions Monday-Friday between 8:00am - 4:30pm. Our experts are available to help families! **Find our schedule of FAFSA Events at our website www.vsac.org/events**
- Want to **stay connected** with us and receive valuable information and resources? **Sign up** to receive text messages from GEAR UP OCs that inform and support you and your senior. **Send a text with your name and your student's name to [802-441-6040](tel:802-441-6040)** and you're ready to go! You can opt out anytime, but we don't think you will!

GEAR UP Week 2024

Every year we celebrate being a part of GEAR UP with programs across the country. This year, we are celebrating **25 years of GEAR UP** with our students, families, and partners **September 23-27!** Check in with your student's OC to celebrate with your school!



Follow this QR code for comprehensive information on GEAR UP after high school (GUIDE) including book and materials financial support, decoding financial aid, online tutoring, Instagram link, and more!

SEEDS Leadership Program 2024:

40 Rising Freshmen and Sophomores participated in the Summer 2024 SEEDS overnight Leadership program at VTSU Randolph. **SEEDS Leadership** is an impactful program bringing GEAR UP students together from around the state to build confidence, leadership skills, and have some fun! Your outreach counselor will help identify students for this program -- if you think your student might be interested and benefit from this program please **encourage them to talk with their VSAC Outreach Counselor!**

