



Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs

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Welcome Tamera Crisp

Tamera Crisp is SCC GEAR UP's new Administrative Assistant. Ms. Crisp was raised in Western North Carolina and is a graduate of SCC. For 18 years, she served as Director of the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Crisp was also a Planner & Economic Developer for the county and an Economic Developer with the NC Department of Commerce. During this time, she became acutely aware of the need to bridge the gap between education and workforce readiness.

Ms. Crisp is the proud parent of two adult daughters and two "lovely" grandchildren. Ms. Crisp commented, "I'm delighted to be part of GEAR UP's team of professionals. I believe in the mission, and celebrate the wonderful opportunities provided students, parents and teachers to develop a career plan for post secondary education. Our region, state and nation will greatly benefit from having students prepared for work in the global economy."

Macon Early College Goes To College!

GEAR UP helped Macon Early College coordinate two exciting college visits in Georgia in February. Reports are that students had a wonderful time. A visit to Young Harris College, a private liberal arts college in northern Georgia, included: an in-depth campus tour (including a visit with the Dean of Admissions), complimentary dinner in the cafeteria, planetarium show and special evening tour of the college's observatory.

A tour of SCAD, Savannah College of Art & Design, in Atlanta offered a very different experience. Many MEC students interested in the arts were unaware of such post-secondary opportunities as those offered by SCAD. Students toured the urban college's design studios and classrooms and enjoyed viewing displays of students' art and design projects

located throughout the building. A MEC junior, upon returning to school, typed "SCAD" as her computer screen saver and commented, "I want to go there; it's great!"



Macon Early College Students at Young Harris College in Northern Georgia.

High School Language Arts Class Puts iPods to Use

GEAR UP recently purchased 15 iPods for an Honors English class taught by Dawn Gilchrist-Young at Swain County High School. Ms. Gilchrist-Young requested the iPods so her students could create and film their own plays. The playwright Thornton Wilder wrote *Three Minute Plays for Three Persons* and likewise Ms. Gilchrist-Young assigned her students to write their own "Three Minute Play for Three Persons." Students chose their own subject matter, wrote a script, cast a set of characters and acted-out the play. One student in each group used an iPod to record the video. Students saved the video to a computer for viewing on the class Promethean Board. Junior Richie Sneed thought this was a great project. He stated, "This assignment was really fun. It was different than any other assignment I've ever done."

Special thanks to students Forrest Morton and Tim Boston who provided technical instruction.



Brandi Sutton filming from left to right: Tyler Bowman, Patty Clark, Kaitlyn Abels and Brandi Sutton.

**Colleges and
Universities High
School Students
Have Visited
This Year**

- Western Carolina University
- NC A&T State University
- Brevard College
- Southwestern Community College
- Savannah College of Art & Design in Atlanta
- UNC-Asheville
- Mars Hill
- University of Tennessee
- Georgia Tech
- Haywood Community College

**Ready, Set, Go to
College!**

This March, SCC GEAR UP hosts its first spring college tour to North Carolina's Research Triangle to visit **UNC-Chapel Hill, Duke University** and **NC State**. High School students from all four service areas will participate in this overnight college blast!

Social Studies Curriculum Night: Middle School Students and Families Sample History and Culture

As a part of an initiative to include parents and families in the celebration of learning, Smokey Mountain Elementary School hosted an Open House with Social Studies as the theme this February. In the middle school wing, students created projects and activities to reflect topics recently covered in their social studies curriculum. The 8th grade team presented a Black History Month Power Point containing a historical facts quiz. The 7th grade team invited visitors to take a virtual field trip through Africa, Asia and the Pacific Rim. 6th grade Language Arts teacher Rita Shuls had some students create a display board highlighting facts on the Mediterranean. Others, along with GEAR UP's Mary Mason, brought in samples of regional foods

they made at home with their families. The sampling of food included a variety of dishes from Italy, Portugal, Greece and Spain.



Left to right: College Readiness Coach Mary Mason, Avery Guy, Landon Barnes, Mrs. Reida Shull and Cole Saunooke.

Cherokee Middle School Students Enjoy Science Fair

The 7th grade science teachers from Cherokee Central Schools recently collaborated with the GEAR UP program to plan a college visit to the Western Regional Science Fair held on the campus of

Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, NC. Thirty-five students, who had demonstrated a keen interest in science, were chosen to attend. The students travelled to the college campus for the Charlotte Discovery Place's presentation called, "A Matter of Science." After the trip, several students commented on the experience. Kissie Mathis said her favorite part was, "When they shrank the balloons in liquid nitrogen." Sarah Dorr liked, "When the hydrogen balloon exploded." Shaderick Wolfe stated, "I want to go to college here." Cilina Murphy summed up her feelings with, "The whole experience was awesome!"



7th grade Cherokee Middle School Students gather with College Readiness Coach Liddell Shannon.

Article submitted by Cherokee Middle School teacher Carol West.

GEAR UP is a discretionary grant program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and is designed to increase the number of students who are prepared to enter and succeed in post-secondary education. Western North Carolina middle and high school students of Jackson, Macon, and Swain Counties and the Qualla Boundary are served through the Southwestern Community College GEAR UP grant.