

GEAR UP

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs

“The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.”

-- Alvin Toffler

GEAR UP Provides Books to Rising 7th Graders

GEAR UP is proud to announce the FUNtana Reading Program! GEAR UP has partnered with the Fontana Regional Library System, Qualla Boundary Public Library and the Scholastic Literacy Partnership to provide books to all rising 7th grade students in the GEAR UP cohort. The students have chosen three books that are personally interesting and in the student’s targeted Lexile range. These books will be for the students to keep. The first round of books was distributed during the last week of school, and the second round of books was distributed in June. The third round of books will be distributed this month. The students should go to their preferred public library to pick up the books. If the books are not picked up, the books will be mailed to the students. “This will help ensure that throughout the summer, every 6th grade student has access to high interest books with an appropriate level of difficulty,” explained GEAR UP College Readiness Coach Cindy Thompson.

In the weeks that the students do not receive the free books, they will receive postcards encouraging them to visit their local library for special events and help finding personally interesting books in their Lexile range. For more information, contact Cindy Thompson at c_thompson@southwesterncc.edu.



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Serving Cherokee, Jackson County, Macon County, and Swain County

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Junior Beta Travels to Louisville, Kentucky

Five Cherokee Middle School students traveled to Louisville, Kentucky to attend the Junior BETA National Convention. Each morning, students attended BETA meetings, listened to guest speakers, heard speeches from students running for national seats, and attended several performances by groups and individuals who had won their state's competitions for talent. "Students visited Churchill Downs, the Louisville Sluggers Museum and bat factory, MEGA Caverns, and traveled across the Ohio River into Indiana – just because we could," said Cherokee Coordinator Susan Lanier.

"The race was great and we did a lot of screaming!" said Justin.

Students received miniature replicas of the Louisville Bat to take home as a souvenir.



Bradey Brady, Tagan Crowe,
Justin Buchanan and
Dylan Thompson

GEAR UP Students Visit CNN in Atlanta



Front: Chaperone Julie Phillips, Zack Bartel, Germaine Fuentes-Ornelas, Scott Hill, Melissa Franks, Cindy Scott, Autumn Milligan, Elizabeth Seitz, Teacher Mary Henson; Back: Chaperones Angie Dills & Si Simmons, Scott Medford, Jacob Hughes, Sam Lopez, Jesse Walker, Luke Bauknecht, Jackson Simmons, Bryan Johnson, Ameer Herring and Carly Buchanan.

Sixteen students from Smoky Mountain High School's Digital Media and Computer Applications classes embarked on a GEAR UP-sponsored journey to Atlanta to visit the CNN studio. These students were among the first to see the new HD studio and they experienced the use of many of their classroom technologies on a larger scale. "Many of the students said that it was really cool to see how the technology we have in class is really used," said Jackson Coordinator Robin Hall.

Students experienced a live broadcast, visited the news-gathering rooms, and were involved in a demonstration of the chromakey and teleprompters and weather-reporting. The tour ended with a short video of news anchors explaining their reasons for entering the field. Plus, an anchor for the Student Edition of CNN news interviewed Si Simmons and Mary Henson, the group's chaperones and teachers, about inspiration for teachers for Teacher Appreciation Week.

Digital Media teacher Mary Henson said, "The whole day was incredible! Without GEAR UP, this would have only been a dream. As a teacher, I have never seen a group of kids more appreciative of having such a wonderful opportunity."

Kid's Day Out



Macon Middle Conservation Field Day

What do you do when the end of grade tests are held three weeks before school is out? It's a challenge to keep the students interested. Scot Maslin, principal of Macon Middle School, asked his teachers and GEAR UP staff to plan learning activities outside of the building.

Beginning the week after tests were given 7th and 8th grade students were taken to the Greenway where they learned about pollinators and caught butterflies. Students also took nature hikes on the Appalachian Trail lead by members of the Nantahala Hiking Club. Sixth and seventh graders visited Highlands Nature Center and Sunset Rock. Seventh grade students explored the galaxy at Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute in Rosman.

One hundred eighth grade students took a trip to Western Carolina. The staff there emphasized to the students how important it is to keep in mind the high school classes that will be required upon entry into college. They toured the TV production studios, the prototyping lab, and the WCU art museum. Everyone enjoyed the wonderful food at the new cafeteria on campus and took a short tour of the campus. While the eighth graders were experiencing WCU, the entire seventh grade was at school dissecting frogs.

Macon Coordinator Sherry Tilson said, "The students came back tired and happy from all of their experiences."

GEAR UP Students Published in Young Voices of the Mountains



Young Voices of the Mountains Poets at the Evening of the Arts: Austin Dyer, Jake Marr, Shannon Stoltzfus, Matt Mordhorst, Laura Booth, Trent Wright, Caylen Key, Madison York, Jamie Fuller, Gabrielle Lane, Sadie Donovan, Ashlee McMahan

Eighty students from Swain Middle School have poems or artwork published in the book Young Voices of the Mountains, produced by GEAR UP and Lisa Fisher of SCC, with the help of sixth grade English teacher DeAnna Booth. Sixth, seventh, and eighth graders submitted work to GEAR UP and members of the Creative Writing Class at Swain High taught by Honor McElroy helped choose submissions. "The students are actually published poets and artists," said Erin McCully, GEAR UP college readiness coach. "The book has an International Standard Book Number like any other published book and was published by WayaMedia, thanks to Lisa Fisher."

Some of the student poets participated in the Evening of the Arts, held at the Swain County Center for the Arts, which showcased middle school musicians and artists. The students read their poetry and all enjoyed a reception afterwards. To purchase Young Voices of the Mountains, please contact Ann Rickman at 828-488-5747 or arickman@southwesterncc.edu.

Summer Tips for Teens

Summer Tips for Teens!

What are you doing this summer to prepare for college? Preparation can actually be fun, which is what summer is all about. Are you interested in becoming a veterinarian? Volunteer at the local animal clinic. Are you more inclined to cooking? Explore job-shadowing for a day at a bakery or restaurant. If you're more mechanically minded, ask about part-time work at the auto mechanic or bike repair shop. Be creative; the possibilities are endless. Visit CFNC.org/MS for more suggestions.

You don't have to leave home to set and achieve other summer goals. Try these suggestions from CFNC!

- Exercise 30 minutes each day—ride your bike, get a physical job, go for a walk with a friend.
- Take a tour of one college a week at CFNC.org.
- Read the newspaper every day—find an article about your favorite college or job or find out about a fun event happening in your community.
- Keep a daily journal—note events, goals, and successes.

Now for your first fun summer assignment: write three interesting possibilities for volunteering or recreation that you can do this summer.

Source: CFNC.org

Southwestern Community College GEAR UP

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