



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

*Contact:* John Gilman  
877-272-4456  
john.gilman@iowa.gov

**GEAR UP Iowa Sponsors National GEAR UP Week Events**  
*Sept. 28 Perry High School and Sept. 29 Des Moines East High School Events*  
*to Celebrate Preparation for Postsecondary Success*

**Des Moines, IA., September 26, 2011** –GEAR UP Iowa today announced plans to celebrate National GEAR UP Week at two events scheduled for September 28 – 29, 2011. National GEAR UP Week commemorates the many successes of GEAR UP Iowa, Des Moines Public Schools GEAR UP, and all of the Gaining Early Awareness and Education for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) across the nation. GEAR UP Iowa is working to create a “college-going culture” in Iowa through statewide and school-based services to a cohort of approximately 6,000 sophomores at more than 150 high schools across the state. Unique to GEAR UP Iowa is a \$16.8 million scholarship fund for GEAR UP Iowa students to help finance their dreams of postsecondary educational success.

Students, families, community members, legislators, as well as anyone interested in learning more about how GEAR UP Iowa helps students recognize the value of higher education are invited to attend one of the following events:

**When:** Wednesday, September 28, 2011  
**Time:** 9:30 a.m.  
**Where:** Perry High School Auditorium, 1200 18<sup>th</sup> St., Perry, IA  
**Speakers:** Omar Padilla, Staff Assistant in the office of Senator Tom Harkin  
Dan Marburger, Perry High School Principal  
John Gilman, GEAR UP Iowa Project Coordinator  
Isbelia Arzola, Chol Chagai, Erma Mujic, GEAR UP Iowa

**When:** Thursday, September 29, 2011  
**Time:** 1:30 p.m.  
**Where:** Des Moines East High School Auditorium, 815 E. 13<sup>th</sup> St., Des Moines, IA  
**Speakers:** Omar Padilla, Staff Assistant in the office of Senator Tom Harkin  
Dolph Pulliam, Drake University Director of Community Outreach  
Steve Johns, Des Moines East High School Principal  
Dr. Nancy Wright, DMPS GEAR UP Project Coordinator  
John Gilman, GEAR UP Iowa Project Coordinator

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“The success of GEAR UP Iowa is a combined effort of many individuals and organizations, including the Iowa College Student Aid Commission, the Iowa Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Education, GEAR UP Iowa school districts, local governments, colleges and universities, state and community-based organizations and businesses, as well as volunteers,” explained Karen Misjak, executive director of the Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Iowa College Aid). Iowa College Aid is the administrator of the six-year federal GEAR UP grant for the state of Iowa.

Several Iowa colleges and universities have partnered with GEAR UP Iowa, including AIB College of Business, Buena Vista University, Central College, Clarke University, Drake University, Graceland University, Grand View University, Hawkeye Community College, Iowa State University, Iowa Wesleyan College, Iowa Western Community College, ITT Technical Institute, Kirkwood Community College, La’ James International College, Muscatine Community College, Simpson College, University of Iowa, University of Northern Iowa, and Western Iowa Tech Community College. Corporate sponsors, including 7 Flags Fitness, Bankers Trust, Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines Public Schools GEAR UP, Institute for Character Development, Iowa Association of Community Colleges, Iowa Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Department of Human Services, Iowa Energy, Iowa Jobs for America’s Graduates, Iowa State Treasurer’s Office, Iowa Workforce Development, KCRG-TV Channel 9, MidAmerican Energy, Midwest Speaker’s Bureau, Principal Financial, Scholastic Books, Trans Iowa Charters, Tyson Foods, Veridian Credit Union, WHO TV, YMCA of Marshalltown, and the Governor’s Office also have partnered with GEAR UP Iowa to provide program resources.

To become a GEAR UP Iowa partner, or to learn more about the program, go to the GEAR UP Iowa website at [www.gearupiowa.gov](http://www.gearupiowa.gov) ; find GEAR UP Iowa through social media at [www.facebook.com/gearupiowa](https://www.facebook.com/gearupiowa) ; [www.youtube.com/user/GEARUPIOWA](https://www.youtube.com/user/GEARUPIOWA) ; [http://twitter.com/#!/gearup\\_iowa](http://twitter.com/#!/gearup_iowa) ; or call Iowa College Aid at 877-272-4456. More information about the national GEAR UP program is available online at [www.edpartnerships.org](http://www.edpartnerships.org).

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***About the Iowa College Student Aid Commission***

*Iowa College Aid provides college access, financial literacy, and outreach services to Iowa’s students and families as they prepare, plan and pay for college. Iowa College Aid also administers state scholarship, grant, work study, and loan forgiveness programs totaling nearly \$60.0 million annually, administers the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) program, provides borrowers with assistance to avoid the serious consequences of default, conducts research and distributes higher education data, and offers Iowans assistance in obtaining student financial aid and college-related information. Through its role, Iowa College Aid also serves as the state-designated administrator of the U.S. Department of Education’s College Access Challenge Grant, which is designed to increase the college-going culture in Iowa. Additionally, Iowa College Aid is the administrator of the Federal GEAR-UP Grant, a multi-year state-wide grant which is being utilized to provide early awareness programming and outreach initiatives to thousands of Iowa’s students and families. More information is available at [www.IowaCollegeAid.gov](http://www.IowaCollegeAid.gov).*