



**IowaCollegeAid.gov**  
Your Financial Aid Connection

## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **GEAR UP Iowa Launches Video Challenge on Importance of College**

*Winning entry determined by panel of judges combined with the most YouTube views*

**Des Moines, IA., February 5, 2013** – GEAR UP Iowa, a program administered by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Iowa College Aid) and funded through a federal Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs grant, announced today video entries for its first video challenge on the importance of postsecondary education are ready for public viewing on its YouTube channel, <http://www.youtube.com/user/GEARUPIOWA>.

GEAR UP Iowa works to create a college-going culture through statewide and school-based services to a cohort of approximately 7,000 high school students and their families across the state. The ultimate goal is to increase the number of academically at-risk and economically disadvantaged students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. To help promote the importance of a college education and to increase educational attainment in Iowa, GEAR UP Iowa students were challenged with creating short videos covering a college-going topic of their choice. A total of 13 videos were submitted by teams of students from Columbus Junction High School, Davenport West High School, and Perry High School.

The public has until the end of the day on Monday, February 11 to view the student entries. The winning entries will be determined from the number of views each video receives combined with evaluations from a panel of judges from GEAR UP Iowa and Iowa College Aid. The video with the highest combined scores will be designated the winner, which will be announced on Tuesday, February 12, 2013. GEAR UP Iowa will award the winning team an all expenses paid trip to San Francisco, CA to attend the 2013 National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP)/Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) conference and participate in the Youth Congress. Students participating in the Youth Congress will have the opportunity to experience a professional conference, attend student-oriented training programs, and interact and learn with other students from around the country.

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More information on GEAR UP Iowa and the video challenge is available on the GEAR UP Iowa website, [www.GEARUPIowa.gov](http://www.GEARUPIowa.gov). In addition, families with questions on planning, preparing and paying for college can contact Iowa College at 877-272-4456 or by accessing Iowa College Aid's website, [www.IowaCollegeAid.gov](http://www.IowaCollegeAid.gov)

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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 plan, prepare and pay for college. Iowa College Aid also administers state scholarship, grant, work study, and loan forgiveness programs totaling over \$60.0 million annually; provides I Have A Plan Iowa™, the state-designated career information system, free to all Iowans; partners with financial institutions in the state to offer an online financial literacy platform free to all Iowa high schools; conducts research and distributes higher education data; and offers Iowans assistance in obtaining student financial aid and college-related information. Additionally, Iowa College Aid is the administrator of the Federal GEAR UP Grant, a multi-year state-wide grant which is being used to provide early awareness programming and outreach initiatives to thousands of Iowa's students and families. 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. Iowa College Aid is also responsible for registering postsecondary institutions and other instructional schools under Iowa Code Chapter 261B and sections of Chapter 714. More information is available at [www.IowaCollegeAid.gov](http://www.IowaCollegeAid.gov).*

***About GEAR UP Iowa***

*GEAR UP Iowa, administered by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission and funded by a \$16.8 million federal Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grant, to increase the number of academically at-risk and economically disadvantaged students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP Iowa works to create and sustain a college-going culture through statewide and school-based services provided to a cohort of approximately 7,000 high school students from the class of 2014 in more than 200 Iowa high schools. All students in the GEAR UP Iowa cohort will be eligible to receive a GEAR UP Iowa scholarship upon high school graduation to help pay higher education costs. More information is available at [www.GEARUPIowa.gov](http://www.GEARUPIowa.gov).*