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Contact: Heather Doe
515-725-3417
515-229-6377 cell
heather.doe@iowa.gov

Governor Branstad Proclaims September 23-27 GEAR UP Iowa Week
Sept.24 event in Davenport to celebrate preparation for postsecondary success

Des Moines, IA., September 17, 2013 – The Iowa College Student Aid Commission announced today that Governor Terry Branstad has declared the week of September 23-27 as GEAR UP Iowa Week in the state. National GEAR UP Week commemorates the many successes of GEAR UP Iowa and all of the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) across the nation as they provide students and families support and resources for college success. Since its inception in 1999, GEAR UP has provided educational outcomes for millions of low-income, minority and disadvantaged students across the United States, including the approximately 7,000 high school seniors currently served by GEAR UP Iowa.

GEAR UP Iowa will celebrate National GEAR UP Week 2013 at an event to be held at one of the GEAR UP Iowa partner schools, Central High School in Davenport, Iowa. 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 the event in Davenport:

When: Tuesday, September 24, 2013

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Where: Central High School – Davenport

1120 Main Street

Speakers: Davenport Mayor Bill Gluba, Freedom Writer Tony Becerra, and
GEAR UP Iowa Project Coordinator John Gilman

“The mission of GEAR UP Iowa is to significantly increase the number of students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education,” explained John Gilman, GEAR UP Iowa Project Coordinator. “GEAR UP Week provides us the opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of our students in Davenport as well as in all of our GEAR UP Iowa communities across the state.”

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GEAR UP Iowa is administered by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission, a state agency that helps Iowans achieve education beyond high school. The program began serving a cohort of seventh grade students during the 2008-2009 academic year. The program is now entering its 6th year with nearly 7,000 students, many of whom are from economically disadvantaged and/or at-risk backgrounds. This fall the students entered their senior year in more than 150 high schools across the state.

For more information about GEAR UP Iowa, please contact Iowa College Aid at 877-272-4456 or go to www.IowaCollegeAid.gov. To learn more about the national GEAR UP program, please contact the National Council for Community Education Partnerships at 202-530-1135 or go to 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 over \$68.0 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.

About GEAR UP Iowa

Funded by a \$16.8 million Federal grant, GEAR UP Iowa (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) is charged with significantly increasing the number of students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP Iowa works to create a college-going culture through statewide and school-based services to a cohort of approximately 6,000 high school students and their families in 18 communities across Iowa. The [Iowa College Student Aid Commission](http://www.IowaCollegeAid.gov) administers GEAR UP Iowa in partnership with the Iowa Department of Education and other state agencies; local school districts; postsecondary educational institutions; and community organizations, businesses, and industries.