

PROGRAM:

The Signature Project – How will YOU make your mark?

OBJECTIVES:

Introduce 6th grade students to a college campus and possible career options. Event objectives include motivating students to succeed in their current studies, providing students the opportunity to see three different campus programs or training opportunities and connecting relevance of their current school work with their future as an adult.

LOCATION:

College Campus

DESCRIPTION:

580 sixth grade students, in addition to teachers and other guests, visited and participated in Walla Walla Community College’s Signature Project event. Students visited a college campus, many for the first time, and explored possible career options. Students were challenged with the question: “How will you make your mark in life?”

To accommodate the large number of campus guests while college was in session, two itineraries were created for the day, an Early Morning Itinerary and Late Morning/Early Afternoon Itinerary. The two itineraries (accommodating just fewer than 300 guests per itinerary) did have a two-hour overlap, when all 580 guests were on campus. The itineraries impacted WWCC Campus as follows:

“EARLY MORNING” GROUP	“LATE MORNING” GROUP
9:15 am: 6 Busses arrived at WWCC Health Science & Performing Arts (HS & PA) Building	10:45 am: 7 more busses arrived at WWCC HS & PA Building
9:30 – 10:30 am: Welcome and Motivational Presentation in HS & PA Auditorium	11:00 – Noon: “Late Morning/Early Afternoon” guests were welcomed by WWCC Recruiters J.J. and Melissa Harrison and then enjoyed the Motivational Presentation in the HS & PA Auditorium
10:30 – 10:45 am: 6 th Grade Students were introduced to their WWCC Student Leaders/Day Mentors and began Small Group Break Outs/Campus Tour.	Noon to 12:15 pm: “Late Morning/Early Afternoon” 6 th Grade Students were introduced to their WWCC Student Leaders/Day Mentors and began Small Group Break Outs/Campus Tour.
10:45 – 12:45 pm: “Early Morning” guests visited three programs, ate lunch in the Conference Center and concluded their visit with a wrap-up session in the gymnasium (wrap-up led by WWCC Recruiters, J.J. and Melissa Harrison)	12:15 to 2:15 pm: “Late Morning/Early Afternoon” guests visited three programs, ate lunch in the conference center and concluded their visit with a wrap-up session in the HS & PA Auditorium (wrap-up led by Gretchen Hormel-Tomkins, Event Coordinator)
12:45 p.m.: “Early Morning” guests loaded busses alongside gymnasium	2:15 pm: “Late Morning/Early Afternoon” guests loaded busses at HS & PA Building

Both itineraries began with an exceptional keynote presentation. This was possible, because the six participating middle schools were able to pool their GEAR UP resources and pay for “The Signature Project with Patrick Dunning”. Sixth grade students, middle school staff, and WWCC volunteers were mesmerized by the motivational presentation.

Small Group Break Outs were then led by WWCC student volunteers, which included four 20-minute breakouts (one session was set aside for lunch at the Conference Center). Breakouts included: Art, Auto Repair, Commercial Truck Driving, Computer Technology, Corrections & Law Enforcement, Cosmetology, Culinary School, Diesel Mechanics, Ferrier School, John Deere Technical Training, Library Services, Nursing, Precision Machining, Professional Golf Management, Small Business Center, Small Equipment & Turf Equipment Repair, Psychology, Physics, and Water & Environmental Education.

Thirty-six community college instructors and staff led sessions and tours, while 36 community college students were recruited to assist in the following ways:

1. Serve as a Day Mentor/Tour Guide
2. Student club members served lunch
3. College Instructors solicited student leaders to help with program information sessions/program demos/program tours

WWCC Marketing & Communications, along with WWCC Student Services and WWCC Workforce Training Programs provided tremendous support. The following departments were also essential for a successful event:

Facilities and Maintenance—reserve use of rooms, detail room set-up and custodial support.
Graphics—helped create a magnificent workbook and contributed to creative ideas.
Campus Recruiting Office—led Campus Welcomes and Wrap-Ups, as well creative contributions during event planning.
Technical Support Services—Always available to provide tech support, as well as AV set-up, throughout campus for speakers/presenters.

GEAR UP staff also provided invaluable support, which included reviewing the “Student Supervision & Safety Plan” with middle school staff as part of event preparation. Broetje Orchards donated six boxes of Fuji apples for lunch.

Between 75 and 85 guests were scheduled for each lunch session. As a result, some guests were scheduled for an early lunch at 10:40 a.m. and some guests were scheduled for a late lunch at 1:30 p.m. Many middle school staff were concerned that the late lunch would be difficult for the sixth grade students, since they were accustomed to eating lunch at around 11:00 a.m.

At the conclusion of the day, however, staff did say that the quieter lunchtime was a terrific break that was appreciated by both students and adults. These quieter lunches provided an opportunity for sixth grade students to interview their WWCC Student Leader/Day Mentor and complete the interview page included in their event workbook. Middle school students and WWCC day mentors enjoyed their time together immensely.

An e-mail from a middle school parent sums-up the general response received for this event:

I wanted to thank you for giving my sixth grader, Reed, the opportunity to attend the GEAR UP field trip yesterday. He had a great time. He said he learned a lot about college, and he especially liked the Signature Project by Patrick Dunning. I haven't heard him speak so passionately about anything except for sports. Thank you again for the opportunity. It is so valuable and much appreciated.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE:

GEAR UP Site Directors from this event’s participating schools had worked together for a number of years. Therefore, a quick TIMELINE (September and October) was doable. Also, Fall Quarter is an optimum time to recruit student help on most college campuses. WWCC’s Office of Service Learning was also a tremendous help. This event’s coordinator does not recommend this short TIMELINE for an event of this size, unless the event team has experience working with each other and experience working with their institutions’ purchasing and contracts protocol.

PREPARATION ACTIVITIES:

A webpage was developed and used to provide event resources. The webpage was provided in lieu of printing prep worksheets and delivering or shipping these worksheets to participating schools. The webpage provided a link to the following resources:

<i>Event Kickoff Presenter</i> – provided introductory information about “The Signature Project by Patrick Dunning”.
<i>About the Day’s Student Activity</i> – provided workbook overview.
<i>Day’s Student Activity</i> – allowed middle school staff an opportunity to preview the Student Event Workbook.
<i>PowerPoint for Event Preparation</i> – a tool that could be easily revised to suit teachers’ teaching styles in order that they could help prepare sixth grade students for the campus experience.
<i>About the PowerPoint</i> – provided PowerPoint overview.
<i>Schedule for Dayton, Garrison, & Prescott</i> – another tool to assist middle school staff in preparing themselves and the students for the day.
<i>Schedule for Meadow Brook, Pioneer & Touchet</i> – assisted middle school staff in preparing themselves and their students for the college campus visit.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES:

386 surveys were delivered to GEAR UP at WSU Tri-Cities on Friday, December 5th, for tallying. This event’s web resources continue to be maintained on WWCC’s website and can be accessed by clicking the Faculty and Staff tab and accessing Gretchen Hormel-Tompkins’ webpage. GEAR UP staff held a debrief/post-event session, reviewing what worked and ideas for future improvements.

COSTS OR COST CONSIDERATIONS:

The costs listed below are the basic costs to run an event for 600 to 650 participants (participants include: middle school students, middle school teachers and staff, college staff and volunteers). Expenses not included in the budget provided below include: event facility costs, technical services, event maintenance/cleaning, student supervision by GEAR UP staff and middle school teachers.

<i>Signature Project Budget</i>	
Event Coordinator (208 hours)	\$3,308.00
Lunch	3,000.00
Keynote Presentation & Accommodations	2,100.00
Stipends to College Student Organizations	500.00
Event materials, signage and supplies	1,500.00
TOTAL	\$10,408.00

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