

## PROGRAM:

GEAR UP College Preparation Assistants (CPAs) Work Side-by-Side with Middle and High School Teachers

## OBJECTIVES:

- Provide direct student service.
- Provide nurturing relationships/mentorships.
- Provide College-Going identifier, building a college-going school culture.
- Support academic achievement.

## LOCATION:

Rural and urban secondary schools.

## DESCRIPTION:

Evergreen GEAR UP's College Preparation Assistants (CPAs) work with students individually and in small groups during class and after school. CPAs offer academic assistance to students primarily in mathematics, science, reading and writing. Evergreen GEAR UP created the program and has proudly supported it and invested \$135,000 a year with its first grant and will continue to dedicate tremendous resources to this program.

CPAs assist teachers with student learning in many ways:

- Keep students on track as they work on their assignments.
- Meet with students one-on-one to work on specific skills.
- Help students organize their work.
- Listen to students read their assigned writing aloud to help students make corrections and edit their work.
- Help students understand math errors and suggest strategies to address them.
- Lead literature circles or reading groups.
- Take small groups of students to the library to work on projects.
- Help students understand how their work applies to the real world and to college.

GEAR UP staff work with school administrators and teachers to place CPAs in classrooms where they can most effectively interact with students and serve as resources and role models for youth. CPAs are matched by skill and need, based on specific classroom requirements. For example, Spanish speaking CPAs are placed in classrooms with English Language Learners. Because Math is a current focus for Clover Park School District, CPAs are placed first in math classes; then English, science and then social studies.

Outside of the classroom, CPAs support students in the following ways:

- Work with students in academic, leadership or community service clubs after school.
- Help chaperone GEAR UP field trips and other cultural enrichment experiences.
- Assist GEAR UP staff in preparation for GEAR UP activities and workshops.
- Provide a variety of after-school programs.

Evergreen GEAR UP's CPA Program is dedicated to promoting college to students who may not consider it an option:

William Saguil was a College Preparation Assistant (CPA) in school years 2005 – 2006 and 2006 – 2007 at Woodbrook Middle School and Lakes High School. Saguil is quoted, "College is not just a dream. It can be a reality for everyone. CPAs work with teachers and students tutoring and offering college visits and college knowledge workshops."

A self-described low-income and first-generation college student, Saguil's path has had many obstacles. "There was not much support in my community," he says. Despite the hardships, he graduated from Evergreen in Spring 2007 with a B.A. emphasizing psychology. He graduated from college with the goal to make sure the kids he works with have it easier. "It is my privilege to walk the path with them and prepare them for the challenges and benefits of a college education. Working with students has made me a better student... It is phenomenal to see the progress my students made in one year," he says. "They have become more attentive, more socially engaged and more confident. GEAR UP plants seeds of determination and hope. I am proud to water and care for these seeds, knowing that they will blossom."

[<http://www.evergreen.edu/gearup/docs/emagspring07pg5.pdf> - 2007  
<http://www.evergreen.edu/gearup/academicssupport.htm>]

CPAs are considered paraprofessionals as opposed to tutors. Evergreen GEAR UP Education Specialists monitor CPA's working relationships with teachers closely, so that they don't just work with disruptive students. Evergreen GEAR UP adheres to a systematic approach and uses the Classroom Based Model as opposed to the Pull Out Model. Evergreen GEAR UP Education Specialists dedicate time with teachers, providing clear expectations as to how CPAs can benefit their classroom.

This program also pays special attention to professional growth opportunities for CPAs, providing them the building blocks to become teachers or build skills for other professions. Since 2003, 12 CPAs have earned their teaching credentials!

CPA professional development begins with a comprehensive orientation. A sample training agenda is provided as an attachment.

## IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE:

**Summer** – Evaluate upcoming school year's budget and determine priorities with school administration

**Mid-Summer** – Working with school administration, determine how many CPAs can be hired for the school-year

**End of Summer** – Begin to recruit for new hires, gather applications, interview applicants and hire CPAs

**Fall** – CPA Orientation

Throughout a CPA’s tenure, GEAR UP Education Specialists reinforce the CPA Program’s:

- Job Skill Components (see attachment)
- The Evergreen State College GEAR UP Tutoring Model (see attachment)
- The CPA Rubric, “Becoming an Effective College Preparation Assistant” (see attachment)

**FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES:**

Evergreen GEAR UP’s CPA Program has been the primary support mechanism in Evergreen GEAR UP schools since 2003. This program is continuously evaluated in order to fit the diversity of the schools served with this program. Changes have primarily been made to the CPA Orientation and continued education program. Recent additions to CPA training include: ELL, Math, and sharing of best practices.

**PROJECT COSTS OR COST CONSIDERATIONS:**

(Includes summer school) } \$12.00 hourly rate (19 x 10hr/wk x 36 wks)  
Lochburn - 8 CPAs }  
Oakville - 4 CPAs } \$82,080 plus benefits, total annual budget  
Woodbrook - 7 CPAs }  
\$1,000.00 - Annual budget for CPA Professional Development and Training

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**ATTACHMENT:**

- Sample CPA Training Agenda (down below)

**RESOURCES:**

- Job Skill Components
- The Evergreen State College GEAR UP Tutoring Model
- The CPA Rubric, “Becoming an Effective College Preparation Assistant”

College Preparation Assistant (CPA) Training
Sample Agenda
• Overview of The Evergreen State College GEAR UP Program
• Roles and Responsibilities of a CPA
• Data Collection
• Dress Code
• What if Scenarios
• Military Language
• Professionalism
• Confidentiality
• Five Minute Tutoring Model
• Time Sheets
• Confidentiality and FERPA
• Communicating with Teachers
• Administrative Responsibilities
• Future Training Schedule