

**ARIZONA GEAR UP**

**15451 N. 28th Avenue Suite 216**

**Phoenix, AZ 85053**

**Phone: 602.776.4616**

**Fax: 602.776.4619**

To whom it may concern:

My name is John Acedo and I direct the Summer Program component of the **G**aining **E**arly **A**wareness & **R**eadiness for **U**ndergraduate **P**rograms (**GEAR UP**) Grant, administered by Northern Arizona University (NAU). GEAR UP, funded though the U.S. Department of Education, aims to significantly increase the number of students in economically challenged areas who graduate from high school, and are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. Arizona GEAR UP is successful because it is unique. It differs from other college access programs by:

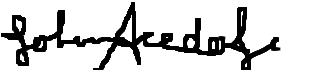
* Catching the attention of students early in their academic lives, starting in 7th grade.
* Raising the academic aspirations of an entire group (cohort) of students. Rather than working just with selected individual students, we work with an entire grade level at each partner school. The group learns to dream together, cultivating the motivation, knowledge and skills needed to succeed along the pathway to college.
* Keeping these groups of children together all the way through high school.
* Working with parents to alleviate fears and elevate expectations.
* Enlisting the support of parents, teachers, guidance counselors, school administrators and community groups.

Each summer we recruit approximately 240 students from our nine partner school districts across Arizona to attend the GEAR UP Summer Leadership Academy (GUSLA), a weeklong experience on the NAU Flagstaff Campus. Students live in the dorm and take part in carefully planned activities throughout the week. This year, GUSLA is scheduled to take place **June 11-16, 2017**. This summer, our GEAR UP students will be rising high school seniors – a critical time to become more familiar with the college campus environment and expectations. We are seeking volunteers for ‘College Panels’ to prepare students for their futures. We would like the ‘College Panels’ to be comprised of faculty, staff and students. Sample panel questions will be emailed to volunteer panel members in advance, to ensure there is time to review and become comfortable with the materials. College Panels are scheduled on June 12, 13 and 14, 2017 at the Flagstaff NAU Campus in the College of Education.  Each session is 90 minutes long - the first 30 minutes will be a general student orientation that includes developing and collecting questions to ask the panel.  While students are participating in the 30-minute ‘orientation’, volunteer panelists will attend an orientation by GUSLA staff to explain the process and answer any questions you may have. We need four adult volunteers for each session, **two NAU staff and/or faculty and two students for each session**, and we are hoping some volunteers may be able to stay for the afternoon sessions on 6/13 and 6/14. The sessions are scheduled as follows:

* **Monday, June 12, 2017**
* 10:00am - 11:30am
  + 3:30pm -5:00pm
* **Tuesday, June 13, 2017**
  + 8:00am - 9:30am
  + 2:00pm 3:30pm
  + 3:30pm-5:00pm
* **Wednesday, June 14, 2017**
  + 10:00am -11:30am
  + 2:00pm 3:30pm
  + 3:30pm -5:00pm

If you would like to sign up for a time block (or blocks), please email me at ***john.acedo@nau.edu*** with your name, contact information and the time block(s) you are available and I will send you the information and materials. Also, if you have any friends or colleagues that you think would be interested in volunteering, please forward them this information. Thank you in advance for your support in providing our students with this opportunity.

Take Care,



John ‘Tie Guy’ Acedo