Minimum Expectations for Selection of Students for GEAR UP-Paid Scholarships for Summer Enrichment Programs

**Purpose:** Research has shown that participation in summer enrichment opportunities can benefit students in a variety of ways, academic, social and personal such as increasing academic motivation, continuing learning momentum, previewing the college experience, enhancing self-confidence. Among the ‘multiple overlapping services’ Arizona GEAR UP provides are opportunities for Summer Enrichment that support GEAR UP objectives to increase students’ college knowledge, academic performance, and high school graduation and college-going rates. These opportunities may include the AZ GEAR UP-sponsored GEAR UP Summer Leadership Academy (GUSLA) on the NAU campus as well as ‘other’ college preparatory programs/camp experiences hosted by a college/university/community organization.

**Programs Eligible for GEAR UP Funding:** Programs must support the GEAR UP mission to prepare students to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. They may focus on academics, leadership, master student skills, careers, STEM, etc. Programs that focus solely on sports activities are not eligible for funding. GEAR UP Coordinators may recommend specific programs, or encourage students to research summer programs of interest. Descriptions of programs recommended or chosen by students must be sent to the NAU Office for approval before the application process.

**Summer Program Scholarship Value:** Schools/Districts must decide on a scholarship amount that is equitable, taking into consideration the amount budgeted for such scholarships, the number of GEAR UP students at the school(s) and the cost of the programs students might attend. For example, if your budget includes $5,000 for ‘other’ summer enrichment, you may decide to offer 5 scholarships for $1000 each; or 10 scholarships for $500 each. Since some programs may cost less, you may consider establishing a “maximum amount,” e.g. “up to $500 each.” The benefit of establishing an equitable scholarship amount is that it promotes confidence that funding amounts are not based on favoritism or partiality.

**Student Recruitment & Selection:** It is important that student recruitment for GEAR UP funded ‘other’ summer enrichment is fair, that is, every student in the cohort has equal opportunity to learn about and apply for the opportunity. It is equally important that student selection among those who apply for these programs is accomplished according to a transparent and equitable process developed by the school and approved by the NAU State Office. The benefit of fair requirement and transparency in selection is that it promotes confidence that selection is not based on favoritism or partiality.

To achieve the goal of designing a transparent, fair, equitable and transparent recruitment and selection process for students to receive full or partial funding for summer enrichment programs other than GUSLA, GEAR UP Coordinators and Task Forces bear in mind the following guidelines:

- Notify all GEAR UP students of the opportunity, the eligibility requirements, and the process for applying (e.g. during PEPS, flyers, school announcements, etc.)
- Establish and communicate clear criteria for types of programs that will be funded
- Give students/parents information about the number of scholarships available, and the maximum amount for each scholarship
- Specify that transportation to and from the program is the responsibility of the family

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1 http://www.davidsongifted.org/db/Articles_id_10786.aspx
• Develop application materials and a process for evaluating applications for selection (send to NAU Office for approval)
• Communicate the ‘rating plan’ for selection to students and families
• Decide upon a distribution process for applications (e.g. interested students pick up applications in the GEAR UP Office)
• Communicate a deadline for application submission
• Establish a selection committee and explain ‘rating plan’ to committee members
• Develop a plan for notifying students of selection or non-selection