Philadelphia Education Fund
GEAR UP Lead Specialist
Job Description

PEF’s mission is to drive exceptional outcomes for all students by developing great teachers and building paths to college and career success. PEF began in 1985, when local business and civic leaders formed the Philadelphia Alliance for Teaching Humanities in the Schools/Philadelphia Renaissance in Science and Mathematics. Later, the School District launched the Philadelphia Schools Collaborative to focus on high school reform. In 1995, these entities merged to form PEF. Today, as the city’s most comprehensive, full-service education organization, PEF works tirelessly to expand and improve educational opportunities available to local youth, and envisions a Philadelphia where all young people have the skills, knowledge, opportunity, and access to the resources they need to succeed in college and careers. Please see: www.philaedfund.org. Through a three year contract with the School District of Philadelphia/GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs), the Philadelphia Education Fund will deliver college and career supports across twelve schools.

This is a professional direct student-support position responsible for managing the delivery and implementation of core interventions and services, for students and their families, as outlined in annual school-specific GEAR UP work plans and budgets. Specialists execute the plans and develop the types of trusting relationships with students and families that have been shown to foster student success.

This position will report to the Vice President of Programs and work collaboratively with other programs within the Philadelphia Education Fund. A team of three, the GEAR UP Lead Specialist, will work across 4 assigned schools in achievement of all GEAR UP objectives and will supervise two GEAR UP Specialists and ensure project deliverables are met successfully.

General Responsibilities:

The GEAR UP Lead Specialist will be responsible for:

- Developing and implementing a comprehensive plan with identified strategies and timelines that are grade-specific to increase the number of GEAR UP students planning and preparing to attend college and other postsecondary educational institutions and increase the number of GEAR UP high school graduates who enroll in college and other postsecondary educational institutions directly from high school;
- Partnering proactively with school personnel, community groups, universities and businesses to coordinate college awareness programming and activities for students and families;
- Collaborating with teachers, counselors and other school staff in long-term plans to create a college-going culture and render postsecondary education an option for all students in the GEAR UP cohort;
- Developing daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly work schedules based upon established priorities that maximize services to GEAR UP students (by addressing the greatest needs of the greatest number of students);
• Designing and implementing a variety of instructional activities, materials, and strategies related to college awareness and access for use with individual students, small groups, classes, and large groups in assembly, classroom, workshop, and other appropriate settings;
• Designing and implementing programs and strategies that help to encourage student participation in GEAR UP and other academic enrichment programs;
• Conducting postsecondary and career workshops, group and one-on-one support to cohort participants and their families;
• Providing GEAR UP students with assistance in areas of academic achievement, school success (attendance, behavior, personal, and social issues), and life-skills (e.g., organization skills, time management, individual and social responsibility, and work ethic) that impact school performance and college access, readiness, enrollment and success;
• Delivering a wide range of direct parent activities and services including – but not limited to- in-service, training, and workshop sessions related to college awareness and access topics, e.g., college applications/admissions, financial aid, and career/college/life choices;
• Promoting, supporting and encouraging both parent and student participation in appropriate GEAR UP activities and services;
• Working alongside GEAR UP Specialists to support the implementation of a successful recruitment plan for GEAR UP activities and initiatives;
• Maintaining accurate data, records, and files to document and track the activities, achievement, participation, progress and of individual GEAR UP students;
• Reporting daily in the designated database/data collection system all activities conducted and services delivered to /for GEAR UP parent/guardians and students;
• Compiling and submitting accurate, complete and timely data and team performance reports on a weekly, quarterly, semester, and annual basis as required;
• Maintaining active and updated knowledge of the college access and success field through professional development and individual initiative;
• Working a schedule of hours which includes some evenings and weekends;
• Other related responsibilities as assigned.

Supervisory Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

• Developing a comprehensive work and operational plan to ensure successful execution of GEAR UP contract deliverables.
• Training, supervising and evaluating professional GEAR UP staff;
• Working closely with school-based GEAR UP Managers to ensure open lines of communication;
• Monitoring and accounting for daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly work schedules of all GEAR UP Specialists
• Monitoring expenditures relative to budget and grant commitments;
• Developing operational systems and processes to establish good management reporting, information management and flow, service delivery, and program planning;
• Executing and compiling event evaluations;
• Developing a continuous evaluation of processes for improvement and increased program effectiveness;
• Overseeing participant and project record keeping and database to ensure compliance with grant
deliverables;

- Developing, evaluating and refining data collection methodologies and practices to improve quality of data and overall program evaluation;
- Evaluating program performance indicators to convey progress on meeting goals. Advise, inform and coordinate with Vice President and staff on programmatic changes and improvements;
- Planning and managing staff professional development;

**Qualifications:**

The ideal candidate will possess a minimum of a bachelor’s degree in Education, Sociology, Psychology, Business or related field. The candidate should have successful experience working independently in the college preparation field and be able to demonstrate the following characteristics:

- At least five years experience providing direct service to high school aged students and families in the college awareness/access or related field;
- Experience in educational program management, program data management and evaluation
- Superior knowledge of college preparation and readiness, secondary education requirements to include admissions and financial aid;
- Experience working with students, families and/or community, especially those who are low income and potential first generation college attendees;
- Ability to work effectively with diverse constituencies, such as school staff, university staff, parents and community groups, as well as with diverse racial and ethnic groups.
- Excellent organizational skills; ability to manage multiple tasks and projects simultaneously to produce high quality results quickly and on time;
- Superior problem-solving skills
- Self-propelled with the ability to work independently and as part of a team with great energy, persistence, and dedication;
- Engaging presentation skills. Experience and comfort presenting and facilitating large groups;
- Critical thinking, problem solving, accuracy, and attention to detail;
- Ability to utilize data in evaluating program structure and effectiveness.
- Excellent communications skills, both oral and written, supported by a strong facility in using technological skills;

**Reporting:**

This position reports to the Vice President of Programs

**Applying:**

Please submit cover letter, resume and contact information for three professional references to: applications@philaedfund.org.