



## Director's Message

*Although I like every season in the NC mountains, fall is my favorite. I like the cool nights and warm days and the spectacular gift of color from mother nature. I especially like the eagerness with which those I encounter seem to step toward their future. Teachers establish patterns and apply new strategies with their classes, students fill their days with learning, friends, and extracurricular activities, and families adjust schedules to meet new needs and embrace the opportunities. At CAP, we implement the plans and programs we've put in place for the school year, learning and adjusting as we go. It's an exciting time!*

*Check out this newsletter to learn about some of the goings on and ask your CAP colleagues to tell you more about their work. Ask about who is participating in this year's cohort for EPFP or what's up with year two of the Counselors' Network. Learn about our evolving strategies for campus visits and family design nights. Find out more about this year's incredible group of CAC advisers. Get to know the new ETL navigators and their very broad experiences and backgrounds. Find out how frisbee golf plays into UB team strategy. Ask Susan to share more about YES scholars visiting some of the best colleges in the country. Most of all, share in the joy we find in being able to do this work.*

- Jim Beeler,  
Executive Director- College Access Partnerships

## Newsletter Highlights

### Welcome

Director's Message

### GEAR UP

GEAR UP Services Heating Up  
Studying the Impact of Tutoring Services  
Counselor Network Launches 2nd Year

### Upward Bound

Fullbright TEA Fellows

### ETL

ETL Growth  
Teacher Spotlight  
Employee Spotlight

### CAC

What's New

### YES

YES Across the Country





## **GEAR UP Services Heating Up**

As the fall chill settles across western North Carolina, GEAR UP services are heating up! Our Service Team is hard at work delivering amazing experiences to families, students and professionals within our GEAR UP community.

**Math 1 RIPTIDE**- Research intervention project serving Math 1 teachers across 8 districts.

**Texas Instruments**- Calculator and robotics professional development serving math teachers.

**Global Leaders Fellowship**- A teacher cohort focused on identifying global issues and tackling them through the context of the classroom and community.

**Counselor Network**- A cohort of school counselors deepening their understanding of their role, skillset and leadership through the ASCA national model. Read more about this exciting program on the next page!

**Education Policy Fellowship Program**- Education Policy Fellowship - An annual program that empowers education professionals through strengthening of advocacy skills and deepening awareness of the local, state, and national education policy landscape.

**Mountaineer Expeditions**- Students visiting App State's campus where they engage with faculty and staff from various departments sharpening their college access acumen from various departments and increasing college aspirations.

**Rural Teacher Leader Network**- A collective of educators who seek to improve their practice, foster change through equity and strengthen their leadership skills.

**Family Design Nights**- A hybrid event that engages students and families in STEM education challenges with a focus on computer science and computational thinking.

**Partnering Institutions of Higher Education**- Serving student populations through a variety of means ranging from campus visits, faculty led programs, collaborating with student clubs, parent nights, and providing leadership luncheons.

**External Partnerships**- Organizations such as Tutor.com and MasteryPrep continue to provide targeted services to address the individual student needs as well as the school's needs through tutoring, professional development, and student bootcamps all through the lens of college access.

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## **Studying the Impact of GEAR UP Tutoring Services**

The GEAR UP research team is thrilled to report preliminary results which show GEAR UP tutoring services could help all students improve their academic performance. The preliminary results also reveal that tutoring could bridge the achievement gap for low-performing students. Furthermore, the initial analysis reveals that when immersed in both learning modes (face-to-face and virtual) as opposed to just one, students' learning performance is greatly enhanced. This is an active analysis in partnership with the Appalachian State CARE Team with intent to publish and share findings in a peer-reviewed journal. Stay tuned for more great results!



"I really like how they were very patient and understanding of me and I liked how they went step by step to teach me."

*-Heritage Middle School Student*

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"He made me feel very confident and didn't make my questions feel stupid."

*- Swain High School Student*



## **Counselor Network Launches Second Year**

School counselors play a critical role in the postsecondary process, a key goal for GEAR UP, and collaboration with Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) also plays an important role in advancing positive student results. One of the challenges in this region is that the majority of the counties have one small public high school. A small student population means counselors likely have no one within the county in a job-alike role. This hampers the collaborative practices that educators know are critical.

In the 2022-23 school year, Appalachian GEAR UP established the Counselor Network as a means to connect counselors in rural districts where they may feel isolated from others in similar roles. GEAR UP hosted professional development centered around the creation of a Postsecondary Equity Plan for the school. The counselors analyzed school data, gaps in services, and in partnership with their GEAR UP coordinators, created an annual plan. The purpose of the plan was to make sure there was equity of access to postsecondary information and support within their schools. GEAR UP also hosted online collaborative meetings focusing on topics selected by the participating counselors such as leveraging community resources, using instructional time effectively, and utilizing data.

As a result of their involvement in the program, many participating counselors exceeded their goals! Counselors met 87% of their established goals with the majority of those being in the *Accomplished* and *Distinguished* categories. Further analysis using a pre- and post-assessment also showed significant growth amongst counselors in the areas of *Knowledge Related to Systems and Advocacy* and *Self-Efficacy in Using Data and Understanding Systemic Change*.

Year two will expand upon previous topics and will add the [American School Counselor Association \(ASCA\)](#) as a partner. ASCA developed the national model of school counseling which has been adopted by North Carolina and most other states. With ASCA's guidance, GEAR UP school counselors will create a comprehensive school counseling plan using a tiered approach to counseling services that addresses academic, mental health, and postsecondary domains. This plan will use school data to identify needs and put a measurement system in place to capture progress.

We are excited to see how this project continues to accelerate the achievements of our students across GEAR UP!!



Participants engage in various Counselor Network events throughout the year



## **Fulbright TEA Fellows**

Each year, the collaboration of the Fulbright TEA Fellows and the Upward Bound Program is a unique experience for all. The Fulbright TEA Fellows (Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program) are master teachers of English, English as a foreign language, science, mathematics, and social studies, and the highly competitive program is sponsored by the US Department of State. Twenty-two fellows arrived at the Appalachian State Campus for a six-week program. The Fellows took academic seminars for professional development, observed classrooms, and shared their expertise with teachers and students at university and at local secondary schools. UB's collaboration with the Fellows provides our students with cultural and inspirational activities that enrich their lives.

The fellows who represented twenty countries engaged with the UB students throughout the day during our Monthly Academic Saturday in September. Students were invited to travel around the world for fascinating and experiential sessions that focused on the following countries: Kyrgyzstan, Egypt, India, Croatia, Vietnam, and Ukraine. Later in the day, students could choose a lesson from various subjects taught by the TEA Fellows to experience. These engaging and hands-on lessons included art, science, and English. "The greatest experience ever," said one student about the event. One of the students was excited to learn more about Croatia since his favorite soccer player is from that country. The UB staff is honored to have the TEA Fellows as part of their yearly programming and appreciates the time and effort the fellows put into planning this incredible event.



*TEA Fellows engage with the UB students this fall*

## **Latest Feature Stories**



### For the Women Who Hold Me Up

"We mothers stand still so our daughters can look back to see how far they've come." - quote from Barbie Co...

[READ MORE](#)



### Upward Bound Disc Golf Exploration

"My hope was that this would be an experience that they bring back home with them to encourage them to get outside and be active while playing a new activity." Thank you to Upward ...

[READ MORE](#)



### Celebrating GEAR UP During National GEAR UP Week

Each year, GEAR UP programs across the country celebrate...

[READ MORE](#)

### **Have an idea for a CAP news story?**

We are always looking for new content to include on our [Features Page](#), and we welcome your input. Please share story ideas from your program with Elyssee Gibson ([gibsonse@appstate.edu](mailto:gibsonse@appstate.edu)), and we will work together to spread the news of your great work!



## **ETL Growth**

Last year, the ETL project partnered with 31 schools in western North Carolina and provided over \$190,000 in stipends to both schools and individual teachers. When given the opportunity to direct their own learning, teachers are saying "yes, please!"

This fall marks the second full year of the program. Fifty-two new teachers joined the cohort of teachers, and the ETL team continues to grow as well.

Three new navigators have joined the team helping to guide teachers on their self-directed learning journey: Heather Childress-Custer, Sherry Paddie, and Erin West. Along with veteran navigator, Holly Weaver, the ETL team supports every teacher in the creation and progress towards reaching their self-directed learning goals.

## **Employee Spotlight:**

Let's get to know **Tyrel Winebarger**, our ETL (Empowering Teacher Learning) Assistant Director - Research and Evaluation!

### **1. How long have you worked with CAP?**

*I have worked for CAP for 2 years now.*

### **2. What's your favorite book/movie/album/song?**

*My favorite album is Operation Ivy's Energy!*

### **3. What would your perfect/ideal day look like?**

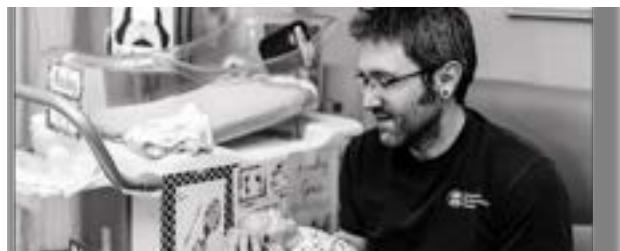
*A perfect/ideal day for me would be one where I'm relaxing on a nice beach with my wife, daughter, and our dogs.*

### **4. What fictional place would you like to visit?**

*The Shire from Lord of the Rings.*

### **5. What's something you'd like to do that you've never done?**

*Something I'd like to do that I've never done: fly a plane!*



*Tyrel holding his newborn daughter.*

## **Teacher Spotlight**

Our project is one of teacher advocacy, and we love to recognize our teachers and everything they have accomplished. Here are some highlights:

### **Patti Elkin named NCCTM Outstanding Secondary Mathematics Teacher**

We are proud to spotlight our very own Patti Elkin, who was recently selected as the North Carolina Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCCTM) Outstanding Secondary Mathematics Teacher for 2022-2023 in Macon County! Finalists are selected by their principal and voted on by their district. Congratulations on this noteworthy achievement, Patti!

### **Julie Colglazier's class wins 3rd place in the NC Coding in Minecraft contest**

Julie Colglazier, the computer science teacher at Central Wilkes Middle School, won 3rd place in the North Carolina 'Coding in Minecraft' contest for the 2022-2023 school year!

### **Assistant Principal Takiyah McCathern, RITASEE Scholar, begins doctoral program**

Central Wilkes Middle School Assistant Principal Takiyah McCathern enrolled in a doctoral program in December 2022. She is a Rural Initiative for Training Administrators in Special Education Expertise (RITASEE) Scholar.

While we're well on our way into a new school year, we ask that everyone take a moment and thank a teacher. We certainly can't do our work without them!





# College Advising Corps

Appalachian State University

## What's New with CAC

The advisers are already doing amazing work in our schools!

- To date, they have engaged with an average of 13% of their seniors' families, nearly double the national CAC average of 7%.
- Advisers have met 1:1 with an average of one-third of their senior caseloads so far.

October 16-20 was NC College Application Week (CFNC). Advisers hosted a variety of fun events at their schools to encourage students to take advantage of the NC colleges that waive their application fees during this week.

We recently welcomed two new advisers to our team - Kiersten Proctor, who will be serving McDowell High School and Samad Ansari, who will be serving Brevard High School. We now have 21 advisers on our team!

We will be welcoming our second Assistant Program Director, Nathan Kosmicki, to our team on November 6!

We are still hiring for two adviser positions - Swain County High School and Hayesville High School. Please help us spread the word to those who might be interested!



Advisers host multiple events at their schools during CFNC's College Application Week

There's been a lot of work done this summer by all of our teams! We are ready for this new school year! Who's excited? 🌟



Molly O'Donnell (She/Her) • 1st

Assistant Program Director, Appalachian College Advising Corps

3mo • 0

Been spending LOTS of time with some really amazing people these last few weeks!

We brought all our **Appalachian College Advising Corps** Advisers to campus for two weeks of in-person training. During that time we brought in numerous amazing guest speakers, traveled to 7 different colleges in NC for tours, and did as much hands-on learning and prepping for the school year as possible.

I have to say that my time at **Brevard College** is really what prepared me to create a training schedule for our advisers that was truly what I would consider "experiential"! It felt great to really be able to put that knowledge to work.

I love these people and this work.



Advisers participate in a rigorous training each summer and ongoing PD throughout the year to help prepare them for their work in the schools they serve.



Appalachian College Advising Corps

160 followers

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What an AMAZING week we had at Assemble NC connecting with all of the North Carolina College Advisers! Our very own **Geneva Watson, Ashley Bingman, and Brenda Valdez** shared their knowledge and best practices through breakout sessions and absolutely crushed their presentations. The icing on the cake? Going to see the Barbie movie! Huge shout-out to the event planning team - it was a wonderful event! **College Advising Corps**





## YES Across the Country

This has been a season of applying to and attending Fly-in programs for YES.

NCSSM Class of 2024 YES Scholar, Whitley, applied and was accepted to have an all-expense paid trip to visit Washington University, Swarthmore College, and Johns Hopkins University. As a student who wants to pursue Anesthesiology, Whitley is looking at undergraduate schools that will provide 100% financial need to attend their schools. It's been a fantastic way to experience campuses to determine if she would thrive there. Of the three, Johns Hopkins was the best fit so far. They even flew her mom to go with her to campus!

YES Program Director Susan Saule applied and was accepted to two counselor tours. She was able to do a Maine tour of Colby, Bates, and Bowdoin. During a student presentation at Bates College, she was able to meet the Co-President of the student government who is a Watauga High School alum! Susan next went to Rice University in Houston, Texas with a YES colleague from Los Angeles to get to know Rice University. Both fly-in programs are hosted by universities that want to encourage applications from underrepresented populations which includes the rural students we serve. Susan was able to catch up and check-in with YES Scholars who are currently studying at Bates, Bowdoin, and Rice. It's always great to get the student perspective on how students are growing, struggling, and navigating their higher education environments.

Finally, Abby, a current 9th grader from Ashe County is considering applying to boarding schools. She was nominated and selected to bring a family member along to visit St. Paul's in Concord, New Hampshire. After attending a summer accelerator course at NCSSM this summer, Abby is considering all her options for high school.



*Bowdoin polar bear, Current YES Scholar, and Susan Saule*



*Whitley at John's Hopkins*



*YES counselor tour of Rice University (left) and Abby at St. Paul's (right)*