To gather information about students' and teachers' perspectives on the GEAR UP program, GEAR UP evaluators conduct focus group interviews with both students and Students reported GEAR UP facilitators were supportive and caring. All student participants across five G AR UP campuses reported appreciation for their G AR UP facilitators. Participants reported G AR UP facilitators cared a out how they were doing at school and encouraged them to improve. Students reported that G AR UP facilitators offered help with their school work personal issues and college visits. xamples of a out their facilitators include

College visits were most helpful. Student participants reported college visits were the most helpful G AR UP activity in preparing them for college. Students indicated college visits informed them of college options. Through college visits participants developed a etter understanding of college culture.

Additionally participants descri ed a wide range of G AR UP activities including college visits high school visits jo site visits classroom activities to explore college and career options visits from professionals counseling with G AR UP facilitators tutoring ook clu and tournaments. elpful G AR UP activity include



APIE tutoring provided academic support for GEAR UP students. Focus group participants who participated in API tutoring reported API tutoring was helpful in increasing their grades. Some participants reported the small group tutoring was effective in helping them understand concepts more easily than they could do with whole class instruction. xamples of p

support API tutoring provided include

It helps us. If you

something, you can ask them.

When I was failing in math in 7<sup>th-</sup> grade, a tutor actually came to help. I think my final grade when they helped was either A or A+.

Help us understand in a small group. It is easier to understand than in the whole class.

Career goals contributed to college aspiration. Almost all student participants indicated they planned to attend college ased on their career goals. Participants descri ed various professions they wanted to pursue including engineering law animation cardiology usiness and law enforcement. Some participants indicated that college opened up opportunities for etter education etter jo s and higher pay. xcerpts of eir college aspirations include

I want to be an immigration lawyer. To be a lawyer, we have to go to law school. You need college to get you jobs that pay you more, and you can focus more on things you like.

> Because the career I want to do in the future, you need to go to college. College has resources there.

I always want to be a biorobotics engineer.

from high school, but

Teachers supported students' college preparation.

## References

Gaining Early A wareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) A ustin: 2018 fall student focus group results summary

Gaining Early A wareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) A ustin: 2019 spring staff focus group results summary

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