



*Maine Parent Federation*  
Empowering families and increasing  
parent involvement for 25 years.

# GEAR UP

## PARENT NEWS

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### What's next for Your GEAR UP Student? By Ray Cook

The GEAR UP Parent Survey asked you **"What is the highest level of education you think your child will achieve?"** (Question #4)

More than 90% of you expect your child to go on to some higher education after high school! That's a good sign for your children and for Maine's economy. Maine needs more people with higher education if our businesses are going to be able to compete in the modern economy.

While there are some people who have become very successful without higher education, the best chances for good, steady, well-paid careers are in jobs that require higher education.

If you answered: "High school or less" to Question #4, you may be thinking your family just can't afford higher education for your child, or that your child's grades aren't good enough to get admitted to a higher education program; or maybe your child is interested in the kinds of jobs that have never required a degree before.

Some old jobs are disappearing and others are being upgraded to require certificates, licenses or degrees.

We encourage all parents to talk often with their children about life after high school.

Colleges today realize that grades don't always give the whole picture of a student's abilities and many have developed ways for students with weak high school grades to succeed.

Nearly all the financial aid available from the federal government (over \$100 billion this year) is awarded based on who needs it the most. *The students with the least are awarded the most!* Call or email us (1-800-870-7746 or [rcook@mpf.org](mailto:rcook@mpf.org)) to get information that may change your child's plans.

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For more information on GEAR UP: [www.mpf.org/projects/gearup.htm](http://www.mpf.org/projects/gearup.htm)

### Western Maine Highlights: Carrabec High School by Ann Long

Carrabec High School, in North Anson, has been busy involving GEAR UP students and parents in a variety of activities and opportunities this past year. This month we are highlighting some of the events and honors which have taken place at this western Maine high school.

During Financial Aid night, hosted by the high school, over 60 parents and students listened to a two-hour presentation by the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME). This presentation provided the parents and students with step by step directions for completing the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)*.

A student from Carrabec High School was one of the winners of a \$500 scholarship awarded by FAME for attendance at "College Goal Sunday", held on January 25 this year. College Goal Sunday is a national event to help parents and students complete their FAFSA as early as possible in the college application process. Submitting a FAFSA *as early as possible after January 1* gives a student the best chance to receive all the financial aid he or she needs to pay for higher education.

Several parents and students attended the Maine Parent Federation workshop for parents of 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students, **Sophomores & Juniors: Get 'em Ready for Higher Ed**. This workshop enables parents and students to work together on higher education plans *before their senior year* and provides families with a variety of useful handbooks and resource lists.

Carrabec High School has accomplished the unusual and distinguished achievement of being awarded the MELMAC grant for the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive time. The MELMAC grant is a 4 year grant given by the MELMAC Education Foundation. The MELMAC Education Foundation "is committed to supporting high-quality initiatives that serve the purpose of increasing educational opportunities for Maine people". The open ended grant allows the Guidance Department to specially tailor plans and events for Carrabec's students to explore higher education. Together, GEAR UP and MELMAC provide students and parents with a wide variety of opportunities to make higher education a reality.

# Downeast Highlights: Jonesport-Beals High School

by Sherrie Metcalf

In this issue, we would like to congratulate four Washington County schools and the parents of: Jonesport-Beals High School (JBHS), Machias High School, Lubec Consolidated School and Shead High School in Eastport for helping their senior students complete the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)*.

Though all these schools deserve recognition for their achievements, this article focuses on JBHS. Jonesport-Beals High School is located in a small fishing

community on the southern border of Washington County. Like many small Maine communities, Jonesport and Beals Island have had their share of economic challenges.

Challenging economic times and the struggles of the fishing industry have tested the communities as they work together to meet the educational needs of their children.

Through all their uphill battles, Jonesport-Beals High School has done a wonderful job preparing their students for higher

education. *Not only did 100% of the GEAR UP students complete their FAFSA, the entire senior class did as well!*

Barbie Cirone, the GEAR UP Liaison at JBHS, states that she "is very proud of the class of 2009". Barbie notes "that each student is an individual. However, the entire class is extremely goal oriented. The class of 2009 is a group of students who constantly encourages and motivates each other to strive for their goals. They are all go-getters and they know what they want for their futures."

In this year's class of sixteen seniors, fourteen will be attending college in the fall and the remaining two seniors are enlisting in the military. *100% of the JBHS class of 2009 is moving on to higher education!*

Maine Parent Federation wants to take this opportunity to send heartfelt congratulations to the JBHS graduating class of 2009, their parents, and their high school educators for their exceptional performance.

