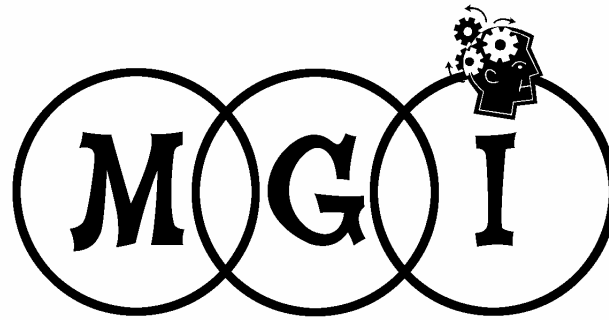




NYC  
Department  
of Education



## Middle Grades Initiative/GEAR UP Monthly News

January/February 2007

**MGI/GEAR UP Program**  
Lehman College, CUNY  
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Program Coordinator  
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**Kelly McCracken, Advisor**  
College Office  
Tues, Wed, & Fri

**Paul Campbell, Math Tutor**  
Ms. Arenas' Class  
Mon, Tues, & Thurs

**Barbara Castillo, ELA Tutor**  
Ms. Cherry's Class  
Mon, Tues, & Thurs

**Deb Schaeffer, ELA Tutor**  
Ms. Knopfel's Class  
Mon, Tues, Wed, & Thurs

**Juleika Solano, Math Tutor**  
Ms. Lee's Class  
Mon, Wed, & Fri

## Students Complete Homework; Get Pizza!

The MGI/GEAR UP program at South Bronx Prep held its first Homework Countdown Challenge this winter. To encourage students in 6th & 7th grade to complete their math and ELA homework every night, we posed a challenge to students: complete every assignment for two weeks (January 22 – February 2), and you earn the right to attend a pizza party!

The response to the challenge was overwhelming: teachers reported that they had very high homework

completion rates from the students, and the tutors reported that students were prodding each other to complete their work so they could take part in the pizza party.

We had over 75 students enjoy pizza and soda during the celebration party on February 8, 2007. And, over 30 students in 6th & 7th grade completed their homework in *both* ELA and math every night for two weeks. These students received a special MGI/GEAR UP bag and pen for their efforts.

In addition to the pizza

party, students competed as a class to see which class had the highest homework completion percentage; the winning classes received a special treat from their teacher.

Didn't get to have pizza this time? No problem! We will be sponsoring another Homework Countdown this spring – but watch out, because this time you will have to complete your homework every night for a longer period of time than two weeks! Ask your MGI/GEAR UP tutors for more details.

## Saving for College just got easier: Upromise & NY State 529 Plans

We all know that college is expensive, and we know that financial aid is available to help pay for it. But have you heard about Upromise and the NY State 529 Plan? These plans help *you* save money for college so you are ready when it comes time to go. Through 529 plans, parents and families can save money for college, tax free, while

saving money on their income taxes. It's free to sign up for these savings accounts, and you can do so over the phone or online.

The Upromise program lets students and families earn money for the things they buy anyway at stores like CVS and Stop & Shop, just by signing up their store cards with the

program.

For more information about these great programs, contact:

**NY State 529 Plan**  
1-877-NYSAVES  
[www.nysaves.org](http://www.nysaves.org)

**Upromise**  
1-888-434-9111  
[www.upromise.com](http://www.upromise.com)

## **PARENTS: Become a part of the CUNY MGI/GEAR UP Parents Committee**

Join other parents of MGI/GEAR UP students across New York City to plan parent events and make decisions about CUNY MGI/GEAR UP!

### **Dinner Meeting: Friday, March 9**

For more info, contact:

**Rosa Cruz-Cordero**  
MGI/GEAR UP  
Parent Services  
Coordinator  
(646) 344-7332  
[Rosa.Cruz-Cordero@mail.cuny.edu](mailto:Rosa.Cruz-Cordero@mail.cuny.edu)

## **College Myths — Debunked!**

**College Myth #2:  
College isn't really  
necessary because  
you can get a job  
right after high  
school and start  
earning a living.**

Yes, that's true; you *can* get a job right after high school. However, it's a proven fact that college graduates earn more money than high school graduates over the course of a lifetime — if you have a college degree, you will earn almost \$1,000,000 MORE in your lifetime than someone with a high school education only!

# RESOURCES

## Know How 2 Go: An Online Resource

Have you seen this television commercial? Paper airplanes fly high in the air all over the city while adults watch them fly by. Who sent these airplanes? Kids on the school bus, kids standing on a bridge, and kids sitting in class. When adults get a hold of these airplanes, the simple message written by the kids on the planes is clear: **"Can you help me go to college?"**

This television ad, along with accompanying radio ads, billboards, and bus shelter ads, send viewers and listeners to the website

[knowhow2go.org](http://knowhow2go.org). A project of American Council on Education, Lumina Foundation for Education, and the Ad Council, this site offers tips for anyone who wants to go to college. The site offers specific sections for Middle Schoolers, Freshmen, Sophomores, Juniors, Seniors, and Adults, as well as Resources for people who help others get into college.

This is not your typical college awareness website. This site offers off-beat but practical commands for everyone who wants to go to college:

1. **Be a pain.**
2. **Push yourself.**
3. **Find the Right Fit.**
4. **Put your hands on some cash.**

Check out this site to find out more about going to college. You can also view the television commercial online and listen to the radio ads. As the site tells us:

**"You know *why* to go to college; we're here to tell you *how*."**

Take the first step by visiting the site today:

**[knowhow2go.org](http://knowhow2go.org)**

## Community Resources in the Bronx

Looking for other services for your student or your family, like college counseling, after school programs, or parent involvement programs? Following is a list of community organizations here in the Bronx. Please contact each organization individually to see what types of programs and services they offer:

### **East Side House Settlement**

718 665-6499  
337 Alexander Avenue  
Bronx, N.Y. 10454  
718 665-5250

[www.eastsidehouse.org](http://www.eastsidehouse.org)

Services: English Language Learners, GED, translation, literacy, computer center, immigrant services, parent involvement, counseling, drop out prevention, community service

### **New Settlement Apartments**

1512 Townsend Avenue  
Bronx, N.Y. 10452  
718 716-8000

College Access Center: 718 294-3870

Services: drop-out prevention, literacy, parent involvement.

### **Educational Counseling Center of the Mosholu Montefiore Community Center**

3150 Rochambeau Avenue  
Bronx, N.Y. 10467  
718 652-0282

[www.mmcc.org](http://www.mmcc.org)

Services: early childhood, after school, parent involvement

### **Pathways for Youth**

625 Castle Hill Avenue  
Bronx, N.Y. 10473  
718 828-4518

[www.pathwaysforyouth.org](http://www.pathwaysforyouth.org)

Services: after school, community service, computer center, counseling, English as a Second Language, GED