



# GEAR UP NEWSLETTER



*GEAR UP for College*

Volume 1, Issue 2

## Ta'ita'itama Kicks off GUAS Summer Camp

June 22, 2009 – First Lady Mary Ann Tulafono and seven department heads kicked off Gear Up's 3<sup>rd</sup> annual mini summer camps. Directors (including Acting Directors) of the Department of Parks and Recreation, Agriculture, Marine and Wildlife Resources, Education, Human and Social Services, Health and the ASCC President joined in a cross-agency effort to deliver a comprehensive summer program blending academic enrichment with sports and recreation to 300 youth participating each day of the three week Gear Up Camp.

The Department of Human and Social Services, in support of the First Lady's Ta'ita'itama Prevent Underage Drinking Initiative and the Department of Health's Health Educators, facilitated small group sessions each Monday, teaching kids about the dangers of underage drinking, the effects of alcohol on the developing brain and how to resolve conflict and resist negative peer pressure, as well as proper nutrition, physical fitness and teen health issues.

Youth participants, mostly 14-15 year old high school (Page #2)



(From left to right) Philo Jennings Deputy Director Dept. of Education, Peter Gurr Rep. Samoa Bowl, Director Samana Semo Ve'ave'a Dept. of Parks & Recreation, Director Tupua Roy Fua GEAR UP, Director of Agriculture Aomalo Manupo Turituri, Leusoga William Emmsley Dean Institute for Trades and Technology, Mr. Aufa'i Areta ASCC Land Grant Coord., First Lady Mary Ann Tulafono, Matamea Dr. John Tuitele Assistant Director Dept. of Health, Director Ufagafa Raymond Tulafono Dept. of Marine & Wildlife Resources, Dr. Seth Galeai President ASCC and Puni Vele Deputy Director Dept of Human. & Social Services.



AS Dept. Agriculture Camp field trip to Malota



Summer Camp closure July 2, 2009

July 2009

### Special points of interest:

- First Lady's Ta'ita'itama Initiative
- GEAR UP Summer Camp Partnership
- Autodesk Inventor 2009 Software
- Dept. Marine & Wildlife Resources
- Teacher Orientation
- Year-4 Academic Assistance
- GUAS SAT 10 Analysis

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Algebra Camp in the ITT Lab

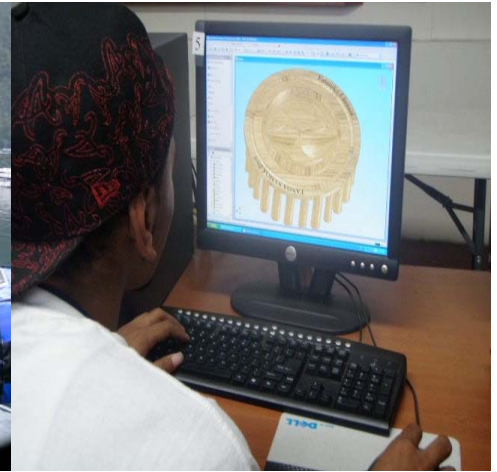
## Ta'ita'itama Starts GUAS Summer Camp



Autodesk Camp Inventor 2009 Software



Marine Science Camp Boat Tour



Autodesk Camp, Designing a Tanoa

freshmen, attended three different camps each week for the three-week session. Camp themes included Agriculture, Marine-Science, Sports (e.g. Volleyball, Basketball, Flag Football and Soccer) and a technology camp using Autodesk and Algebra software at the ASCC ITT computer labs.

Agriculture camps featured exploration tours of the ASCC Community Natural Resource/Land Grant Institute, the Department of Agriculture's plant and vegetation farms and a site visit to Malota floral farms. Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources (DMWR) joined forces with GEAR UP in sharing their knowledge and skills about protecting the various fish, marine species and wildlife such as local fruit bats (pe'a). DMWR wrapped up their camp with a boat-ride and a tour around Pago Harbor, a first experience for many of the GEAR UP students.

Computer techies enjoyed using Autodesk software to design Inventor 2009 curriculum assigned

projects. Some students went on to design their own projects such as a coconut scraper, a Samoan traditional kava bowl, traditional fashion ware, and automotive designs. Autodesk teaches drafting, mechanical engineering, architectural design and animation 3D designs. Autodesk is the high school prerequisite for the professional college-based AutoCAD, complex software used by architectural and engineer professionals being certified at the ASCC ITT.

The site for each camp depended on the activity and the partner agency hosting. Kids rotated through different camps over the three weeks ending Thursday, July 2nd. Camp participation was free. All costs were covered through local and federal resources provided by participating agencies and community partners. This year's GEAR UP mini camps offered a great variety of focus areas accommodating a range of interests and skills of participating students. The partnership, supported by seven major government agencies and the



Dept of Health Aerobics Session's



Ta'ita'itama Monday morning session's

First Lady of American Samoa, has proven very successful in leveraging resources and maximizing the benefit for our young students.

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## Partners Appreciation

### SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS TO

*Ta'ita'itama Prevent Underage Drinking Initiative*  
 Department of Education  
 American Samoa Community College  
 Department of Human & Social Services  
 Department of Public Health  
 Department of Agriculture  
 Department of Marine and Wildlife Resource  
 Department of Parks and Recreation  
 ASCC Institute for Trades and Technology  
 ASCC Community and Natural Resources  
 Sodexo – School Lunch Program



## Teacher Orientation & Professional Development

In August 2009, GUAS will meet with ASDOE District leaders, private school administrators and all cohort 10<sup>th</sup> grade teachers to introduce everyone to the goals and objectives of the GUAS program. GUAS will work together with ASDOE District Leaders to coordinate the GUAS Teacher Orientation scheduled for August. Through our partnership during the past three years GUAS has learned valuable lessons while engaging students and teachers with innovative teaching strategies.

The GUAS Teacher Orientation will cover areas of classroom management, lesson planning, and English and Math classroom activities while training teachers in using assistive technology learning software.

GUAS will conduct Professional Development (PD) sessions for all cohort staff. PD sessions will be scheduled for both the first and second semesters and will include Pre-Praxis training sessions.

**GEAR UP**  
 <[www.gearup.as](http://www.gearup.as)>

The GUAS website is a resource for students, parents, and teachers. Students accessing the website can find information on academics, college, and social issues as well as links to the GUAS partners.

## Year-4 GEAR UP Academic Assistance

**Reading and Language Achievement:** SAT 10 scores demonstrate student improvement in math while language scores remain stable, indicating progress as normal.

Among those students performing below average in reading (80.7%), there is a positive trend of improvement in scores. However there was a shift in students who performed at average in Year Two, with 46.3% moving into the below average category in Year 3. GUAS staff recognizes a need to focus more intensively on reading and language skills to further improve the scores of students performing below average and to raise the scores of the cohort as a whole.

**Math:** GUAS students showed a statistically significant improvement in their national percentile ranks (NPR) and Stanine scores. For all students, the average NPR's improved from 32.57 to 39.42, and their Stanine improved from 3.93 to 4.40. This improvement in Stanine scores indicates that students improved from below average academic performance levels to average academic performance levels. A student progressing normally would maintain the same Stanine as they moved up grade levels. The early impacts of GUAS on the high schools are expected to continue through Year Six of the project. Process findings indicate that teachers already observe academic improvement in their students.

This may encourage individual schools or ASDOE to continue to expand after school tutoring to include non-GUAS students, or to continue tutoring after the GUAS cohort graduates, as was done in the elementary schools.

**GUAS Student Learning Programs**  
 Before & After-School Homework Sessions  
 Technology Assistive Learning Software  
 Pre/Post GUAS Assessment  
 Read for Tickets Programs  
 Pre-SAT Learning Sessions  
 Wrap Around Services  
 Poetry Writing Program  
 VFW Essay Contest  
 Autodesk After-School Sessions  
 ASCC TALL After-School Sessions  
 Cohort School Newsletters  
 Cohort School Websites

# After-School Homework Sessions

**GEAR UP Am. Samoa  
Am. Samoa Community  
College  
P.O. Box 2609  
Pago Pago, Am. Samoa  
684, 699-9166 Office  
684, 699-9165 Fax  
rfua@gearup.as**

After-school sessions provide students the opportunity to seek one-on-one assistance from their teachers, engage in group work with their peers, and build teamwork skills. Of the 400 students that attended at least one session, the average student attended 66% of the offered sessions and received 75 hours of assistance (including tutoring, computer assistance, and mentoring).

GUAS also offers these services to non-GUAS students, 153 of whom have participated this year. The after-school sessions provide a needed level of extra support and assist students in improving their academic skills.

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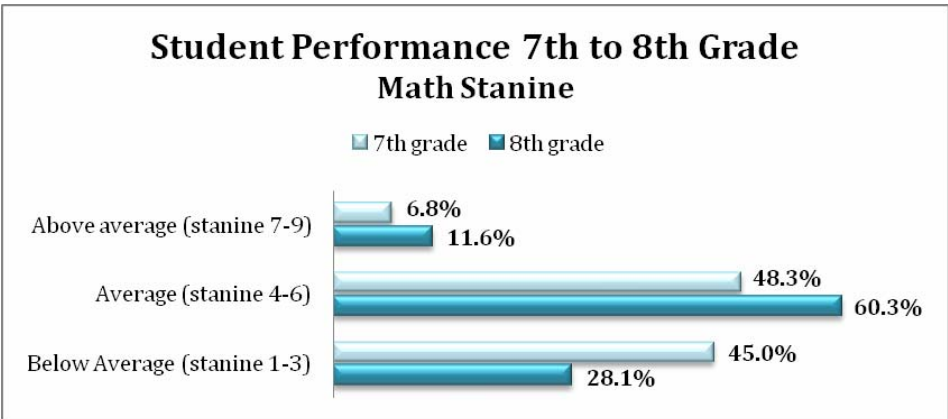


## GUAS SAT10 Analysis Shows Improvement

This report uses results from the SAT 10 exam to assess academic progress, comparing student results from the seventh and eighth grades to see if there was any change in scores between the two years. The GUAS cohort students are currently in the ninth grade; as they progress the project will continue to compare their test scores over time to those of non-GUAS students. Since scores are available from only two points in time, they may or may not demonstrate a trend. As more data becomes available, GUAS will be better equipped to assess the strength of student progress.

The SAT 10 assessment is just one tool currently being used by GUAS to assess student academic progress. GUAS also uses grades, the GUAS Math and English assessment, and teacher feedback to measure academic progress.

This report uses both the National Percentile Rank (NPR) and the Stanine to measure progress. These scores provide a view of how the individual student compares to the norm (measured using the scores of a group of other students who took the test). The NPR shows in percentage form how many of his/her peers the individual stu-



**GUAS SAT10 Math 2007-2008 Student Performance**

dent surpassed in performance. A student who received a 75 NPR performed better than 75% of the other students who took the same test.

The analysis of the SAT 10 data indicates that GUAS students are improving in math, and progressing normally in language, however they also showed a slight decline in reading. While students are performing at average in math, they are performing below average in reading and language.

Overall, looking specifically at at-risk students, (those who scored below average in the seventh grade), these students

showed statistically significant improvement in math, reading, and language, even though their scores remained below average in the eighth grade. These scores show that continued focus is needed for students performing below average in all subjects, and for all students in reading and language. Continued effort is needed especially in reading where scores declined slightly between the seventh and eighth grade.

*Special acknowledgement to Pima Prevention Partnership (PPP) Research & Evaluators for their SAT10 Evaluation and Analysis.*