

College Week at Vista Verde Middle School

By GINNIE WEATHERWAX

Local middle school students had the opportunity to learn more about the possibilities for their futures last week, as Vista Verde Middle School held its first-ever College Week, which was put on by GEAR UP (UC Santa Cruz).

GEAR UP is a grant program that was designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter college. The program targets both middle schools and high schools.

According to College Facilitator Silviana Sanchez, students learned about different issues related to college during their social studies classes all week last week. Topics included general education requirements, financial aid, average incomes of a high school dropout versus someone with a bachelor's or master's degree, and budgeting concepts.

College Week also included a series of lunchtime activities, with each activity coordinating with the daily



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Students listen intently as Silviana Sanchez, the middle school's college facilitator, asks a question related to general education courses in areas A through G (based on the UC system).

topics. Last Friday, students, interns, and school staff participated in the last activity of the week: A-G Fear Factor.

Students were asked questions related to the general education requirements under the UC system, which are divided

into areas A through G. After the questions were asked, groups of students competed against the GEAR UP interns in a food relay. The interesting mixtures were strawberry jam, applesauce, and bread; juice, hot sauce, lemon juice, tomato

juice, and chopped onion; and guacamole, chocolate syrup, whipped cream, sun dried tomatoes, and marshmallows.

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Interns from the GEAR UP program at UC Santa Cruz participate in A-G Fear Factor, the last lunchtime activity during College Week at Vista Verde Middle School last Friday, Feb. 1.



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Vista Verde students race to consume the mixtures of food during an A-G Fear Factor relay.