



STEPUP
TO HIGHER EDUCATION

2016-17
ANNUAL REPORT

STEPUP[®]

TO HIGHER EDUCATION

From StepUp Utah Scholars in 8th grade to Utah College Application Week during senior year, StepUp to Higher Education has the programs, tools, and information that help students successfully prepare for college—and the resources for school counselors to help guide them along the way.

StepUp to Higher Education—an initiative from the State of Utah—is Utah’s go-to source for college-readiness information, including resources for preparing and paying for college, searching and applying for scholarships, and earning college credit in high school. StepUp’s programs and outreach initiatives help students discover the higher education path that’s right for them—whether that means earning a one-year certificate, a two- or four-year degree, or more.

StepUp also provides grade-by-grade checklists, advice on taking the right classes in high school, and tools for researching college cost, institutions, majors, and careers. StepUp also offers open houses where students and parents can get expert help completing and submitting the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).

To learn more, visit StepUpUtah.com or email stepup@ushe.edu.

StepUpUtah.com



[@StepUpUtah](https://twitter.com/StepUpUtah)

2016-17 STEPUP FACTS & FIGURES

1 out of 3



of all high school juniors and seniors take at least one concurrent enrollment class



3,270

Regents' Scholarship
recipients in 2016

Number of college applications submitted during Utah College Application Week events

25,364

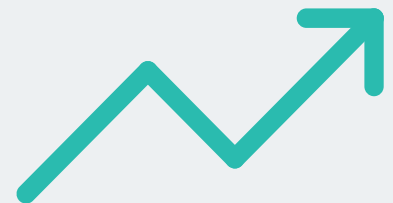
\$32.5 million



amount of tuition saved by high school students through taking **concurrent enrollment classes**

31,261

students reached during StepUp Utah Scholars 8th grade presentations



MORE THAN 70,000 college guides

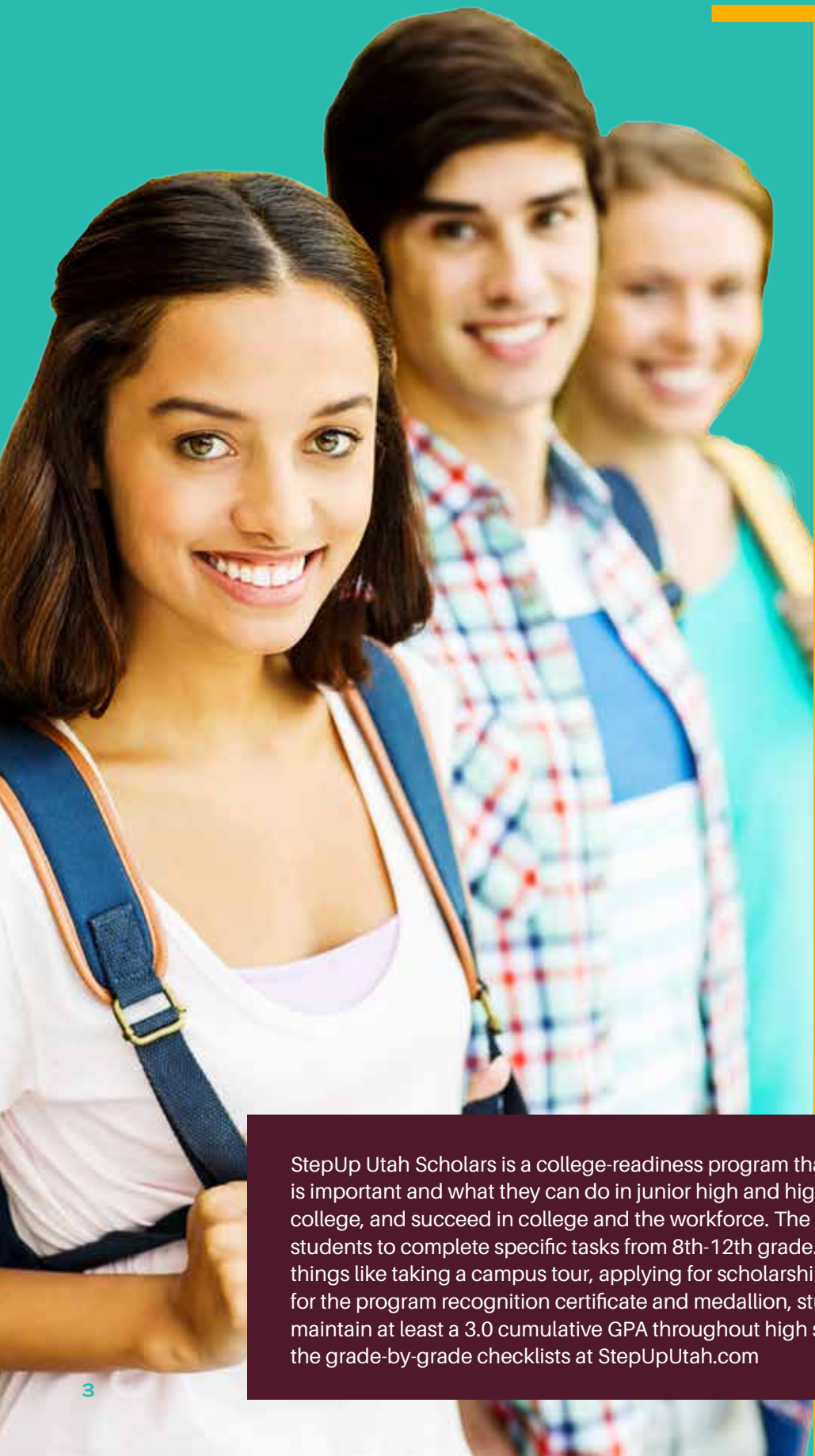
given to K-12 students, parents, and counselors

33%



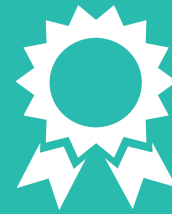
increase in **FAFSA completions** in Utah between June 2016 and June 2017

STEPUP UTAH SCHOLARS



Students that signed up to be in the program in 2016-17:

8,925



1,441 students earned the Step Up Utah Scholars Recognition

753

8th grade presentations given

97

junior high/middle school partners

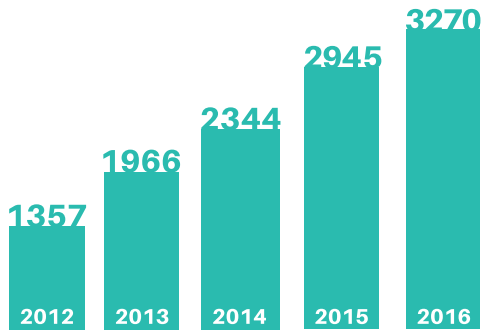
59%

engagement rate for texts sent by StepUp Utah Scholars

StepUp Utah Scholars is a college-readiness program that helps students understand why college is important and what they can do in junior high and high school to prepare for college, pay for college, and succeed in college and the workforce. The updated program is designed to motivate students to complete specific tasks from 8th-12th grade. These tasks, called "Next Steps," include things like taking a campus tour, applying for scholarships, and submitting the FAFSA. To qualify for the program recognition certificate and medallion, students must complete 20 Next Steps and maintain at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA throughout high school. Students can find Next Steps on the grade-by-grade checklists at StepUpUtah.com

REGENTS' SCHOLARSHIP

The Regents' Scholarship encourages Utah high school students to prepare for college academically and financially by taking a core course of study and saving for college. The scholarship may be used at any public college or university in the Utah System of Higher Education, as well as at Brigham Young University—Provo, LDS Business College, and Westminster College.



REGENTS' SCHOLARSHIP
NEW RECIPIENTS

70%

of students from the 2016 cohort felt the classes completed for the scholarship prepared them for college either "very well" or "well"

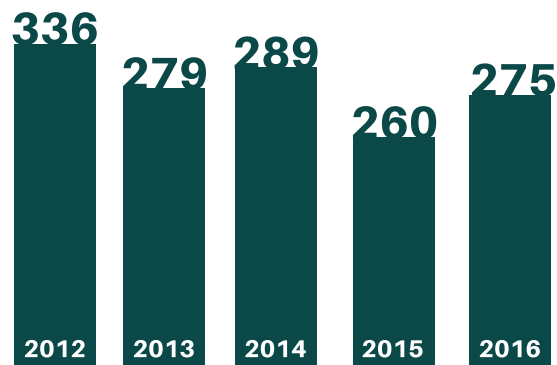


3/4

of students who received the scholarship from the 2009 cohort graduated within 6 years

NEW CENTURY SCHOLARSHIP

The New Century Scholarship encourages Utah high school students to accelerate their education by earning an associate degree in high school from an institution within the Utah System of Higher Education or completing a specific math and science curriculum. The scholarship may be used at any four-year public college or university in the Utah System of Higher Education, as well as at Brigham Young University—Provo, and Westminster College.



NEW CENTURY SCHOLARSHIP
NEW RECIPIENTS

UTAH COLLEGE APPLICATION WEEK

Utah College Application Week (UCAW) gives Utah high school seniors the opportunity to apply to college during the school day, with assistance from volunteers.

In 2016, UCAW partnered with 117 schools and community sites in 32 districts, reaching 19,519 students who submitted 25,365 applications. Also, Utah Governor Gary Herbert declared November as "Utah College Application Month."

Nearly 99% of students who participated in UCAW applied to a Utah institution. Of those, 87% were submitted to a Utah public college or university.

UCAW is part of the American College Application Campaign, a national initiative of the American Council on Education (ACE) to increase the number of first-generation and low-income students who pursue a postsecondary education.

25,365+

college applications submitted
by students who participated in UCAW 2016

UCAW participants who identified as
first-generation college students

28%

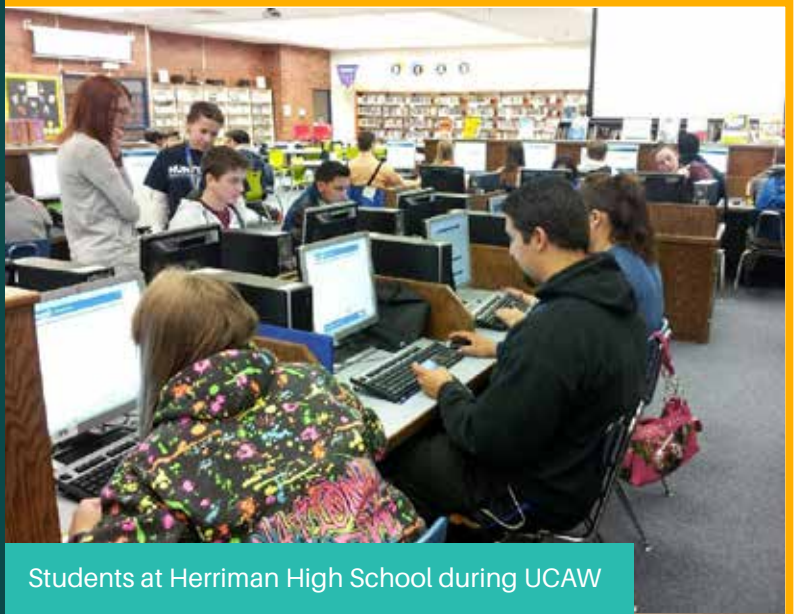


Students at Ben Lomond High School answering "Who wants to go to college?"

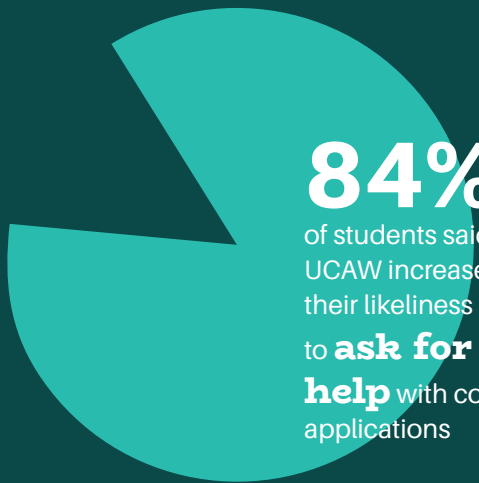


86%

of students said UCAW increased their **interest in going to college** after high school graduation



Students at Herriman High School during UCAW



84%

of students said UCAW increased their likeliness to **ask for help** with college applications



President Holland speaking to Provo High School students

90%

of students said UCAW increased their **comfort level** with the college application process



Payson High School students filling out college applications

CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT

Concurrent enrollment (CE) provides high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to take college classes and earn both high school and college credit. Over one-third of all high school juniors and seniors in Utah participate in CE, saving students \$32.5 million in future tuition expenses.

Students earned over 200,000 college credit hours through CE, with 80% of CE students taking 1-3 classes per year. Over their high school career, 85% of students who take concurrent enrollment take 1-6 CE classes (52% of seniors take at least one class).

Students taking a CE class are more likely to go to college than similar students who do not participate.

- CE students are nearly three times more likely to go to college.
- Among low-income students, concurrent enrollment increases the likelihood of going to college by an additional 30%.
- College credit in high school leads to better college performance and more timely completion.

Nearly 84% of concurrent enrollment classes were taught by adjunct high school teachers face-to-face in a high school during the regular school day. The remaining CE classes were taught by Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) faculty: 10% in distance learning situations, 6% involving high school students attending class on a USHE campus or, in one instance, campus faculty traveling to a high school campus.

On average, 36% of students attend the institution from which they took concurrent enrollment classes.



80%
of CE students take
1-3 concurrent
enrollment classes
per year

3X

CE students are
nearly three times
more likely to go to
college



\$32.5 mil.

amount of tuition saved by high
school students by taking concurrent
enrollment classes



1/3

of all high school juniors
and seniors take at least one
concurrent enrollment class

FAFSA COMPLETION

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) provides students access to millions of dollars in federal grants, work-study funds, and student loans. These funds can help remove financial barriers to higher education.

Historically, Utah has lagged the nation in FAFSA completion. In 2014-2015, 70% of eligible Utah high school graduates did not complete a FAFSA, limiting their access student financial aid. In 2016, the FAFSA became available on October 1 rather than January 1. This change in the filing season of the FAFSA contributed to improvements in FAFSA completion in Utah. In fact, between June 30, 2016 and June 30, 2017, Utah showed an increase in FAFSA completion of 33%, more than any other state in the nation. As of July 21, 2017, there were 17,171 FAFSA completions for the graduating class of 2017.

Several StepUp initiatives, including FAFSA Completion Open Houses, the FAFSA Data Site, the FAFSA Cup, and FAFSA completion training for counselors and mentors have contributed to improved FAFSA completion in the state.

33%

increase in **FAFSA completions** in Utah between June 2016 and June 2017



2/3

public high schools use **StepUp's FAFSA Data Site**

FAFSA Data Site

About 67% of Utah public high schools utilize StepUp's FAFSA Data Site (fafsa.stepuputah.com), available via a data sharing agreement between high schools and the Utah System of Higher Education. Through this agreement, the designated Data Steward at each school is able to view a list of students at their school who have completed the FAFSA, who have been selected for verification, or who have not completed the FAFSA at all. This way, schools and college access partners are able to encourage students who have not yet completed the FAFSA and support those who have been selected for verification by using intervention strategies.

As of July 31, 2017, 105 educators in the state of Utah have agreed to become the data site account steward for their school.

90+

number of StepUp-sponsored **FAFSA Completion Open Houses** at high schools and community centers



A senior attending a StepUp financial aid event at Granger High School

FAFSA Completion Open Houses

During the 2016-2017 school year, StepUp partnered with Utah colleges and universities to sponsor over 90 FAFSA Completion Open Houses at high schools and community centers throughout the state. Over 2,200 students and parents received help from StepUp’s paying for college experts as well as college and university financial aid officers. Beyond expert help to facilitate FAFSA completion, students who attended these open houses were also eligible to receive one of several StepUp FAFSA Scholarships (\$500 and \$1,000 scholarships).

FAFSA Boot Camps

StepUp also sponsors in-depth training for Utah high school counselors and mentors about financial aid and FAFSA completion. These four-hour FAFSA Boot Camps take place in-person and online. In the 2016-2017 school year, StepUp trained over 130 people in person and many more in the online training.



FAFSA Cup

StepUp rewards school counseling teams who make a concerted effort to help their students navigate the path to financial aid, from completing the FAFSA to following up with college and university financial aid offices. In the 2016-2017 school year, StepUp created the FAFSA Cup to encourage school counseling teams to work to improve FAFSA completion throughout the state. Eleven schools submitted applications highlighting their longitudinal, comprehensive programs to promote FAFSA completion and foster a college-going culture at their school.

This year’s winner, Utah County Academy of Science, earned the FAFSA Cup, a \$750 professional development grant, and lunch with the StepUp Outreach team. Jordan High School took home the FAFSA Runner-Up Cup.



“Because of the scholarships I was able to receive, I have successfully accomplished getting my associate’s degree as of yesterday! I am very grateful for the opportunities I’ve had thus far with college, and I’m excited to keep going to school to continue my education!”

Rachel Nielson Gold
StepUp FAFSA scholarship recipient

Seniors learning about financial aid at Granger High School

DIGITAL OUTREACH

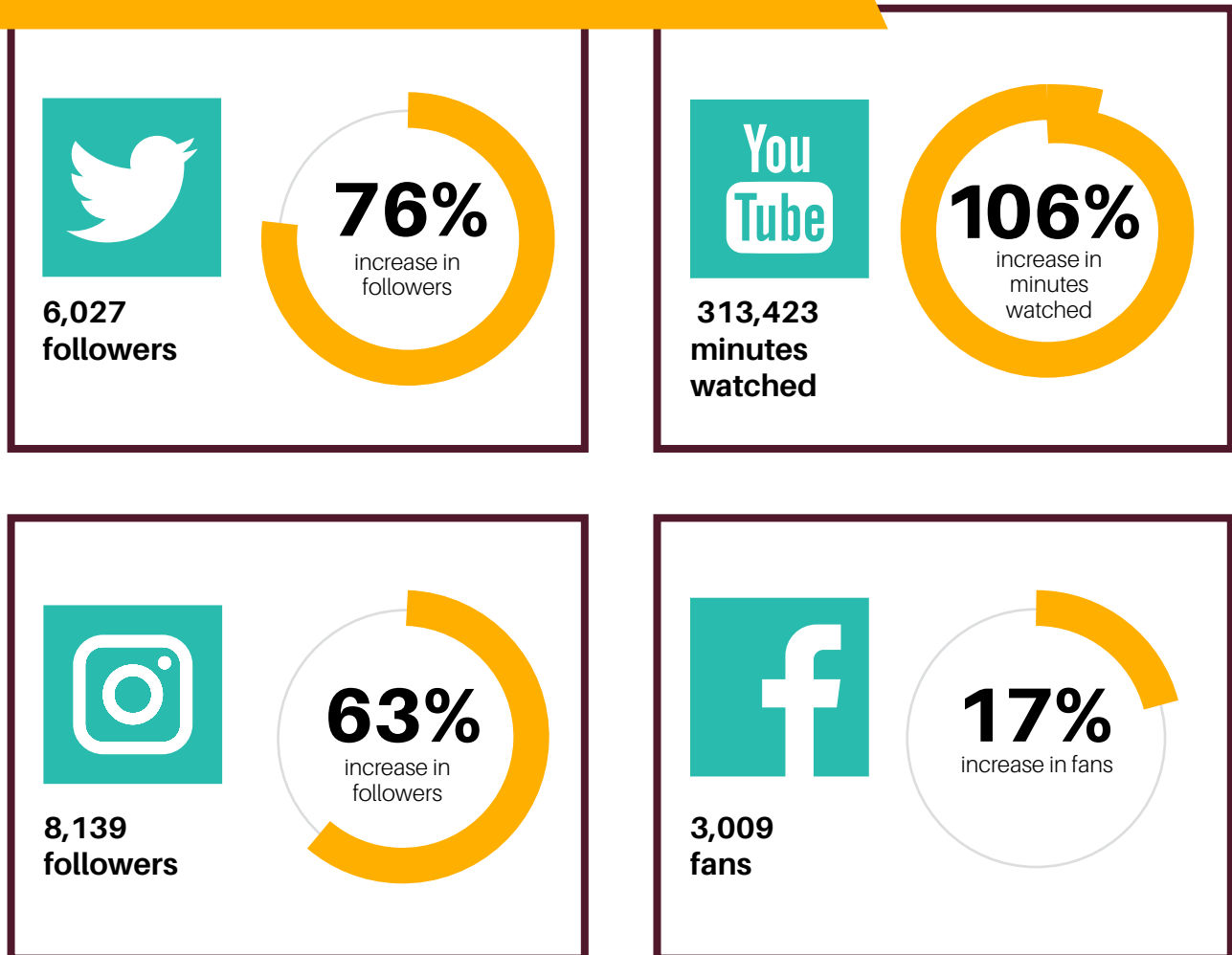
Social Media

Our social media channels have been experiencing consistent growth and engagement over the past year.

The Facebook page, Instagram feed, YouTube channel and Twitter feed all provide timely information and helpful resources to Utah's students, parents, and counselors in a variety of formats ranging from blogs, photos, and infographics to videos and animated shorts.

StepUp Outreach Officers, Katie Wornek and Jacob Newman, both have their own outreach officer social media accounts as well in an effort to provide a direct contact point and connection with the people they meet during their travels and outreach events. You can follow them at @StepUpKatie and @StepUpJacob on Instagram and Twitter.

2016–2017 @StepUpUtah Social Media Stats

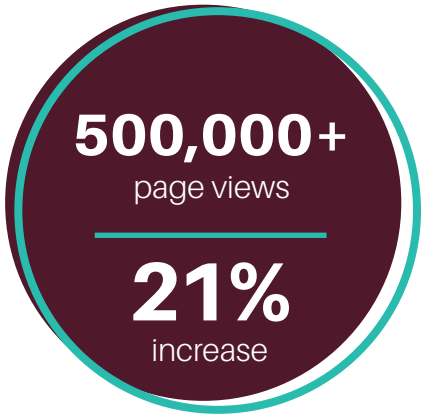
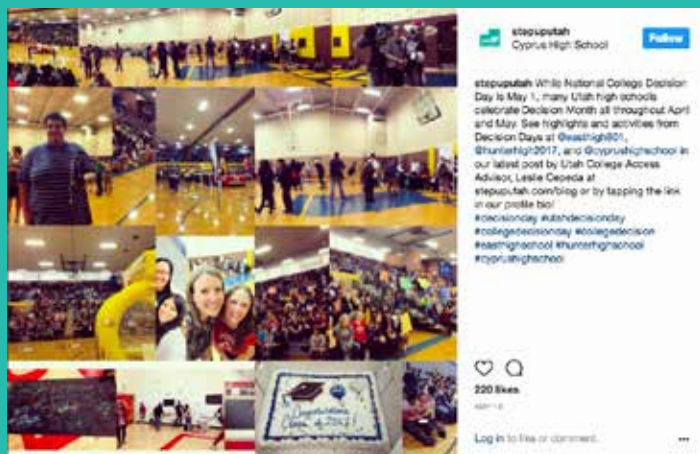


StepUpUtah.com

Over the 2016-2017 year, StepUpUtah.com had over 150,000 unique visitors resulting in over 200,000 sessions (lasting 2 minutes on average) and more than 500,000 total page views.

The StepUpUtah.com blog covers all topics in the preparing and paying for college realm and provides a more personal, practical, and real-life approach when it comes to helping students and parents prepare for college.

Visit StepUpUtah.com/blog to learn more.



Prepare + Pay E-newsletter

The 2016-2017 year was the inaugural year for the monthly StepUpUtah Prepare + Pay e-newsletter.

In just one year, it has already reached an audience of over 190,000 Utah students, parents, educators, counselors, and administrators.

StepUp has partnered with UtahFutures, the Utah Educational Savings Plan, the Utah Education Network, faculty and staff at several institutions across the state, and other Utah outreach and nonprofit organizations to help contribute and create helpful and timely content for Utah's students and their families.

STEP UP[®]

TO HIGHER EDUCATION

ANNUAL COLLEGE GUIDE

The largest StepUp publication is the annual college guide, which includes information on preparing and paying for college as well as information on all nonprofit colleges in the state.

Over 70,000 college guides were distributed to Utah K-12 students, parents and counselors in 2016-2017. Most guides are distributed through Higher Ed Days (formerly the Utah High School Tour), which are events held at participating high schools that allow student to connect with different colleges and universities throughout the state.



1

PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

Take the right classes.

5

GRADE-BY-GRADE CHECKLIST

What to do, and when to do it.

7

CHOOSING A COLLEGE

See what current students are saying.

21

PAYING FOR COLLEGE

It's possible.

College Guide

USHE CONFERENCE FOR SCHOOL COUNSELORS & ADMINISTRATORS

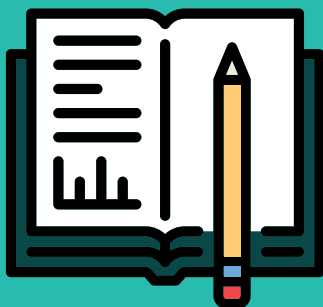


The annual conference is a free training event for high school, junior high, and elementary school counselors and administrators and allows them to earn professional development credits for attending.

It is designed to provide tools to help create a college-going culture in their schools, support college preparation, and increase students' access to higher education.

The 8th annual USHE Conference for School Counselors and Administrators was held in September 2016 at the Salt Palace Exposition Center. The conference theme was "College Knowledge: Start Now" with keynote speaker Dr. David Conley, author of the bestselling book *College Knowledge* and Director of the Center for Educational Policy Research at the University of Oregon. Over 650 people attended the conference from all over the state of Utah.

Participants could choose from 28 sessions with multiple topics including: training on changes to federal financial aid, Title VII programs for American Indian students, the new concurrent enrollment math pathways, changes to the Utah Scholars Program and the Regents' Scholarship application, and tools for parental engagement.



**28
breakout
sessions**

650+

conference attendees including
school counselors and administrators
from all over Utah

StepUp to Higher Education is an outreach initiative of the State of Utah that empowers 8th through 12th grade students and their families to prepare for college.

StepUp believes every Utah student should pursue education after high school, whether that be a one-year certificate, two-year degree, four-year degree, or more.

StepUp provides programs and resources to encourage college preparation and success, as well as training and materials for school counselors.



StepUpUtah.com

