



Senator Specter, Rep. Fattah Announce \$3.8 Million Grant for GEAR UP Program in Philadelphia Schools

Successful College Readiness Program for Low-Income Students To Receive \$23 Million over 6 Years

**Washington, D.C.
Friday, July 17, 2009 -**

Senator Arlen Specter (D-PA), and Congressman Chaka Fattah (D-PA), strong supporters of the national GEAR UP program that provides college readiness and assistance for low income public school students, have announced that the School District of Philadelphia will receive a \$3,814,400 federal grant for GEAR UP for the 2009-2010 school year.

The grant from the U.S. Department of Education is the first installment on an anticipated \$22.9 million over the six-year life of the Philadelphia GEAR UP program covering students in the feeder systems of seven neighborhood high schools. The initial grant will fund the year beginning July 31, 2009.

Senator Specter has been a strong advocate for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR-UP) since the legislation written by fellow Philadelphian Fattah was signed into law by President Clinton. GEAR UP, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary, has served six million students in 48 states under federal appropriations of more than \$2 billion since its launch in September 1999.

"I am pleased that these much-needed dollars are coming to Philadelphia to support our poorest students in the pursuit of higher education," Senator Specter said. "Education is one of our nation's greatest assets and I applaud Congressman Fattah for his leadership in working to level the playing field for low income youngsters in our urban and rural public schools."

Congressman Fattah said: "This is good news, exceptionally good news, for the low income kids in Philadelphia and for their dreams of attaining higher education. We have been inspiring and preparing thousands of underserved young people each of the past 10 years in our poorest Philadelphia neighborhoods to stay in school, work hard, learn about college opportunities and keep moving up - and Senator Specter has been a true friend of GEAR UP from Day One. Young people need to know that college graduates, on average, earn \$1 million more over their lifetime than those who end their education with a high school diploma."

The Philadelphia GEAR UP Partnership includes Temple University, Community College of Philadelphia, College Board, White-Williams Scholars and Philadelphia Youth Network. The Partnership will conduct intensive academic acceleration efforts aimed at 4,773 students in 6th and 7th grades in 29 low-income schools, the entire cohort of students feeding into Audenreid, Edison, Frankford, Franklin, Olney East, Olney West, and University City High Schools.

GEAR UP serves and tracks these students as they advance toward high school graduation. This is the fourth GEAR UP grant designed to prepare Philadelphia students for educational attainment that they and their families may not have considered possible.