

*Proclamation Declaring September 21-25, 2026  
as National Gear Up Week*

*Whereas* The Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) is a federally funded, competitive grant program designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education; and

*Whereas* September 21- 25, 2026 is recognized as GEAR UP week, this serves as an opportunity to highlight the positive impact of GEAR UP and the invaluable resources they provide to students and families in our communities; and

*Whereas* GEAR UP serves low-income, minority, and disadvantaged students and their families from underserved communities who might be the first person in their family to go to college; and

*Whereas* GEAR UP provides six or seven-year grants to states or partnerships to deliver support and resources to students and their families, starting in middle school, continuing through high school and onward to fulfill their dreams of attaining a postsecondary education; and

*Whereas* GEAR UP includes interventions such as tutoring, mentoring, rigorous academic preparation, financial education, and college scholarships to improve access to higher education for low-income, disadvantaged first-generation students; and

*Whereas* GEAR UP is built around public-private partnerships, enlisting the formidable resources of government, business, and community groups to support low-income students as they prepare to enter college; and

*Whereas* The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley College Bound-Career Linked! GEAR UP program is a partnership of McAllen ISD, Mission CISD, Edinburg CISD, Donna ISD, Weslaco ISD, and The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley; and

*Whereas* The UTRGV College-Bound Career Linked! GEAR UP program serves 5,269 students in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and since 1999, has served over 25,000 student in our community.

*Now, therefore, be it proclaimed* that the Hidalgo County Commissioners Court hereby declares September 21-25, 2026 as National GEAR UP week, the county values academic excellence and remains committed to providing quality education and expanded opportunities for all students so they can achieve their fullest potential.

***Approved this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of September 2026.***

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**RICHARD F. CORTEZ**  
County Judge

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**DAVID L. FUENTES**  
County Commissioner, Pct. 1

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**EDUARDO "EDDIE" CANTU**  
County Commissioner, Pct. 2

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**EVERARDO "EVER" VILLARREAL**  
County Commissioner, Pct. 3

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**ELLIE TORRES**  
County Commissioner, Pct. 4

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
**ARTURO GUAJARDO, JR.**  
County Clerk