

"Climb College Mountain" with Stephen Koch | CEHS

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Utah State University STARS! GEAR UP brought motivational speaker and pioneering snowboard mountaineer, Stephen Koch, to USU Tuesday night. His talk, "Climb College Mountain" was enthusiastically received by the USU audience. As a mountaineer, Koch's ascents and descents include some of the world's most notable firsts. He is the first person to snowboard all major Teton Peaks and the first and only person to snowboard on all Seven Summits. As a veteran snowboard mountaineer, he shared many valuable lessons learned from his adventures on Mount Everest. After the talk, many audience members stayed to meet the speaker.

"Last year, 54% of our graduating seniors across ten high schools that we served in Utah identified as first-generation students" said Mary Ann Parlin, USU STARS! Program Director Cohort 1. "Stephen's many firsts parallel these tremendous efforts, and we want to motivate even more students to reach higher and climb farther than they ever thought possible."



Koch's visit is part of National GEAR UP Week 2018, Sept. 23-29, celebrating the continuing success of Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP). The program provides students and their

families the support and resources they need to prepare for college success. Locally, USU STARS! GEAR UP supports 7,400 middle and high school students statewide, and an additional 1,900 students pursuing post-secondary education.

USU STARS! GEAR UP is part of the School of Teacher Education and Leadership in the Emma Eccles Jones College of Education & Human Services at USU. Since its inception in 1999, GEAR UP has improved educational outcomes for millions of low-income, minority and disadvantaged students across the United States. For more information, about USU STARS! mission to enhance student readiness for college and support a college-going culture in Utah., visit [their website](#)