



ASPIRATIONS

Official Newsletter of APSIRE, INC.

TRiO

September—December
2008



Mark your calendars for October 3-7, 2009

2009 Conference highlights ...

- ✓ *Crazy Horse Memorial
Experiential Learning Excursion*
- ✓ *Many relevant sessions and speakers*
- ✓ *Wild West President's Reception in Deadwood*
- ✓ *All the ASPIRE Conference tradition
... Trio-Achiever Luncheon, Awards Banquet, Fun Run and networking*



Message from the President

Happy New Year friends and colleagues! I hope that the new year will bring each of you good health and prosperity. I know many of you receive the COE updates, so I do not want to rehash the same information that you have already heard. However, there are some key points that I think need to be restated as we begin 2009 under new executive and legislative leadership in Washington, D.C.



COE has been invited to participate with the Obama Transition Team as it relates to education related issues. It is a significant for the Council to be viewed by the new leadership as a key player in this dynamic time in history. COE will advocate for program enhancements to help our students become increasingly competitive in the global economy as well as increased funding to support these initiatives while working to erase level funding that TRIO has endured over the past five years.

To speak intelligently on behalf of our programs, I believe it becomes increasingly important that the TRIO community begins to gather performance data on a regional and national level. Several states have compiled incredible fact books to share information with constituents, policy makers, school officials, etc. However, I have witnessed very few fact books that offer outcome data from our annual performance reports to directly illustrate the effectiveness of the TRIO programs. I hope that ASPIRE will be the first to lead this charge and create a model that can be assimilated by other regions.

The COE Leadership Summit and Policy Seminar are scheduled to begin on Saturday, March 21, in Washington, D.C. It is critical that our voices are heard on Capitol Hill, especially since there will be many new congressman, senators and aides to educate about TRIO. If you have the support and ability to attend, please do so. This is a critical time for TRIO professionals to define the new landscape of college access and opportunity for congressional policy makers.

This past year the ASPIRE Board has brought the organization back into financial solvency. This was accomplished two ways. First, the board instituted cost savings measures and second you contributed to ASPIRE. This year your support is equally important. I urge you to pay your project and professional memberships to ASPIRE and if possible make a personal donation. It's not important how much you give, just that you give.

Also, we also need to remember our commitment to COE. Institutional memberships, subscriptions to Equality, and personal donations allow COE to continue to represent us in Washington, D.C. Your support of COE helps it protect our programs; some of the recent accomplishments include dissolving the Absolute Priority, terminating the UB Evaluation, five year grant cycles and a formal appeals process through HEOA, and helping to fund 187 additional UB programs after the last grant UB competition. The list goes on. COE is crucial for our success!

Lastly, I want to offer my condolences to 2008 National TRIO Achiever Dr. David Yarlott. His wife Deborah, SSS TRIO Director at Little Big Horn College, passed away unexpectedly in December. Deborah will be missed by her colleagues and those she served. She was a good friend and passionate advocate. I know many in our region will miss her leadership and support.

I hope that the New Year is a good one for TRIO and the ASPIRE region.

Warmest Regards,

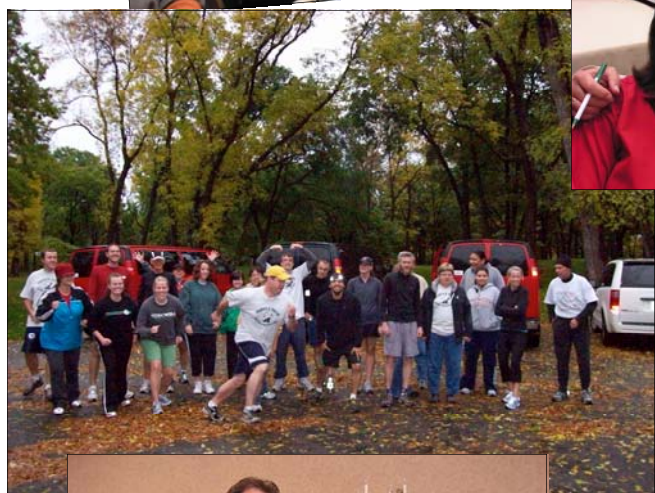
Dan



ASPIRE Regional Conference 2008 - Fargo, ND



TRiO



News from South Dakota

Two South Dakotans Honored at the Regional ASPIRE Meeting in Fargo, North Dakota

Tina Hartley, Assistant Director of TRIO Student Support Services, was honored with the ASPIRE Rising Star Award. Ms. Hartley was nominated by TRIO Director Yolie Kernes who presented the award at the Regional Aspire conference in Fargo October 7, 2008. Tina joined the TRIO Student Support Services Team at Dakota Wesleyan University in the Fall of 2005. During her time at DWU she has not only provided her SSS students with individual professional, caring, emphatic support but she has assumed a vast number of additional responsibilities that have helped excel the program. She coordinates both the peer-mentoring and peer-tutoring program. DWU tutoring program is now CRLA certified, due solely to her dedication to providing tutors with professional development mandated by certification. DWU Mentors have described their experience as “the best job I’ve ever had”, they express receiving as much from the program as they have investing in teaching their mentees. Ms. Harley received a Bachelor of Science Degree from South Dakota State University and a Master of Science in Counseling and Human Resource Development from South Dakota State University.

Charlie Leucke, Manager of the Upward Bound program at the University of South Dakota received the ART QUINN award at the regional Aspire conference in Fargo October 7, 2008. The award is the most prestigious award ASPIRE presents each year. The award recipient is selected by the Executive Board and is based on the following criteria: The recipient is an ASPIRE member or retiree who has worked in TRIO for ten years or more; has excelled in providing services and or support to TRIO and or ASPIRE at the local, state, or regional levels; and demonstrates an unselfish and sincere desire to assist students beyond the general expectations of the project guidelines. Charlie also received his 30 year membership award in Fargo.



Charlie Leuke with ASPIRE President Michael Wade and President-Elect Dan Bengt.

News from South Dakota continued

South Dakota State University

SDSU Upward Bound Students Give Back During Goodwill Shoe Party

Each year during the holiday season, the Upward Bound students at South Dakota State University can be found out in the community taking part in community service activities. For the last two years the group has volunteered at the largest Christmas Shoe Party for area children. The students volunteered at the Goodwill Shoe Party where they helped give over 1,000 new shoes, socks and knitwear to local children. The day wasn't all about the shoes; for one student it was giving back to an organization that once provided her with new shoes. "I remember coming to the Shoe Party each year to get my new shoes and how great I felt when I received them. I am very happy to be able to give back," said one Upward Bound student. During the shoe party the children had the chance to get their face painted, decorate holiday cards, play elf bowling and pin the nose of Rudolph, make reindeer food, and of course sit on Santa's lap. "The Goodwill Shoe Party is always a huge success. It's great to watch the Upward Bound students have enthusiasm about day of service," said Upward Bound Director Carla Anderson.



Dakota Wesleyan University

Fall 2008 for Dakota Wesleyan University TRIO Student Support Services in Mitchell South Dakota was a very busy, productive semester. Here are just some of the activities our staff and students were up to.

The TRIO staff welcomes a new Associate Director and Disability Services Coordinator.



Kate Miller brings to DWU a background in student support services; working as a school counselor in a K-12 setting for 7 years. She also has several years of experience working in disability services in school and agency settings. Kate Miller received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Communication Disorders and Psychology and her Master of Arts in Counseling from the University of South Dakota.



Dakota Wesleyan University continued

Salsa Salsa

On September 25th, in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month the Multicultural Committee sponsored Salsa/Salsa! Students faculty and staff enjoyed sampling homemade salsa that ranged from mild to blistering hot. MCC members had a great time teaching salsa dance moves to anyone who was willing to give it a try.



TRIO Book Loan Program

New for 2008-2009 the TRIO book loan program was expanded to include access to a limited supply of general education text books. Active participants of the TRIO program are be able to borrow the books for one semester allowing them to save some money for other expenses.

Calle Sur Concert

In honor of Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15-October 15) The Multicultural Committee celebrated and shared a little Hispanic culture by sponsoring, *Calle Sur* on Tuesday, October 14 in the Sherman Center. *Calle Sur* is a charismatic Latin American music group with roots in Central and South America. Although they both originate from the Latino and Hispanic cultures, their life experiences are vastly different. Ed is from urban Panama City and Karin is from rural Columbia. Ed and Karin live in Iowa, but they perform all over the world including New York, Colorado, Costa Rica and Malaysia. This event was sponsored by the Multicultural Committee, TRIO Student Support Services and Campus Life.



Powwow Dancing, Music and Song

Denise One Star and several other traditional powwow dancers performed in the Sherman Center on Tuesday, Nov 18 from 11 am to 1 pm. The event was free and open to the public. The Red Leaf Singers provided the live music and song. The performance was part of the activities honoring Native American Month and

Dakota Wesleyan University continued

was sponsored by TRIO Student Support Services, Oyate Ho Waste and the Multicultural Club. Pictured below are dancers wearing elaborate clothing and dancing traditional dances.



“If You Can Dodge a Ball, You Can Dodge a Cold!”

The TRIO Peer Mentors sponsored a rousing game of dodgeball on December 12th from 8-10pm in the CWC. They also supplied many helpful hints on staying healthy during this cold and flu season.



De-stress Before Finals with Elf



The TRIO Peer Mentors and TRIO students gathered at Dayton Hall on December 10th for a fun evening of watching the movie *ELF* starring Will Farrell and learning de-stressing techniques. The event was not only educational but it was also relaxing for students to enjoy an evening of socializing and laughter before the start of the final week of the fall semester.



For those who have not had the opportunity to watch the movie *ELF*, Pictured is a scene in which Will Farrell's character is making breakfast of spaghetti noodles, maple syrup, chocolate syrup, pop-tarts, marshmallows and other various candies. Peer Mentor John Olson, pictured right, not only re-created the peculiar and exotic meal but also proceeded to eat it like a champ! It's entertaining to watch the movie, but it's completely different to witness in person.

News from South Dakota continued

University of South Dakota

Me and My Shadow....

Dupree High School Students Shadow Career Paths of Interest

On Sept 23rd, Marion BlueArm-Goldsmith, Asst Director of USD Talent Search and Talent Search Advisor on Cheyenne River and Patty Peacock, the school guidance counselor, took the Dupree High School seniors and participants of the Talent Search Program on a TS arranged job shadowing experience in Rapid City, SD.

Each student had chosen the profession they were interested in and wanted to shadow. Initial contacts were made with the businesses and a one day job shadowing experience was arranged.

Businesses in the following fields participated: mechanic/auto body, baker, beauty salon, hospital - nursing, music store, engineering, carpentry, coaching, telecommunications, and natural resource management. Students did what was asked of them which varied from vacuuming and dusting to observing various health procedures, and from getting right to work with the mechanics to learning a lot about what goes into multi-million dollar home construction. It was pretty 'real life' too in that some of them had long tasty lunches with a good break while others had a quick fast food meal or were too busy to eat and missed lunch all together!



Students wrote a report after returning to the school, discussing their experiences and highlighting what they liked best as well as suggestions for improvement. An unexpected outcome of the experience is that a few students continue to be in touch with their job shadowing places and at least one was offered to apply for



Me and My Shadow continued

employment with the business.

Students wrote a report after returning to the school, discussing their experiences and highlighting what they liked best as well as suggestions for improvement. An unexpected outcome of the experience is that a few students continue to be in touch with their job shadowing places and at least one was offered to apply for employment with the business.

All in all, the students had a wonderful time and really learned a great deal. Some students realized that they may need to think some more before going into what they thought was the field of their choice or at least research the career some more, while others felt that the experience helped them finalize their decision as to which educational path and career to pursue.



Jesika Garret with the nurse she job shadowed



Cody Holmes learning about professional coaching



Daryl Henderson with a carpenter from the construction business he visited.



News from North Dakota

North Dakota ASPIRE hosted the 2008 ASPIRE Regional Conference in Fargo, ND this past fall. The conference was an overwhelming success thanks to conference chairs Cheryl Kingsbury and Dawn Eckhardt, as well as conference committee members, and countless ASPIRE members. Some highlights of the conference included:

- A keynote address by Dr. Russ McDonald, a national TRIO Achiever and UND TRIO alumna
- Plenary session and update from Heather Valentine, Vice President of Governmental Relations, COE
- COE update from Dave Megquire, COE Board Chair
- A hoop dance performed by Wayne Fox
- A fun run/walk (swim?)
- TRIO Achievers Luncheon
- Several professional development breakout sessions and idea shares

North Dakota ASPIRE would like to thank all those who made the event possible, and we look forward to ASPIRE 2009 in South Dakota!

Mary Fredricks, and the State Initiative Committee have been very busy. With the help of COE's State Initiative grant program, they launched the Legislative Education Action Plan, LEAP in 2008. The goals of the LEAP initiative were to build a TRIO student database to document our programs' effectiveness and to share this information with North Dakota legislators. State Student Support Services directors provided the committee with statistics on student retention and graduation for 2006-2007. An SSS database has been developed, and data from the 2007-2008 project year for SSS, Talent Search, and EOC is now being collected and analyzed by our consultant. Data for Upward Bound, McNair, and Veteran's Upward Bound will be collected and analyzed after those programs submit their APR's at the end of January.

The State Initiative Committee has received another COE Outreach Grant for 2009. Funds from this new grant will be used to develop the Legislative Action Alert System, modeled after COE's Action Alert System.

Since fall 2007, the State Initiative Committee has been following the work of key interim legislative study committees, including Higher Education, Education, Human Services, Tribal and State Relations, and Workforce. State Initiative members spoke personally with committee members, and attended a number of their meetings. As a result of their efforts, they were invited to testify before the Interim Higher Education Committee on September 9th, 2008 to present information about North Dakota TRIO Programs, and to comment on the strategic plan adopted by that committee for the improvement of higher education.

Another highlight of our State Initiative Committee work in 2008 was the relationships we established with the Governor's Office, and with the North Dakota State University System administration. As a result of these contacts, North Dakota Aspire was included as a stakeholder in the state's successful application for the College Access Challenge Grant, a U.S. Department of Education grant designed to increase the postsecondary access and completion rates of low income students.



News from North Dakota continued

Around the State

Greetings from Dickinson State TRIO SSS

It has been quite a year for the TRIO SSS program at Dickinson State University. We have had to come a long way in a very short period of time. Our entire staff is fairly new in the TRIO program. I came on board as the Program Coordinator in July after serving as the Student Support Specialist. We have two new Support Specialists, one, **Josh Nichols**, who started last year in July and the other **Sandra Brown** began this past October. Our Administrative Secretary, **Jami Arnold** came on board in May of this past year. We have also hired a student who will do full time tutoring for our participants as well as working with students on time management, test taking, note taking and study skills.

Our office has been busy working on updating all our forms and writing policy and procedures for everything that gets done in the office. We have also been busy working on the workshops and social culture events we will be offering this spring as well as working on the recognition banquet for this spring.

We are excited about the following events we have scheduled for the spring. The following is a list of our events we have planned for this spring:

Workshops:

How To Research.Com: Basics of Researching Online

Show And Tell Employers You've Got What It Takes: Building a great resume and learning how to interview effectively.

When I Grow Up I Want To Be A....: The Process of Deciding a Major

Understanding DSU's Academic Policies and Procedures

Staying Connected to DSU via the Web

Social Cultural Events:

Cirque Performance at the Bismarck Civic Center in February

DSU Fine Arts – Form and Fusion Dance Performance in February

DSU Theatre Production “The Good Person of Sezuán” in March

DSU Theatre Production “ Out of Order” in April

Banquet

Leading by Example – EES Recognition Banquet in May

Students were very excited with our purchasing of laptops, TI89 calculators, and USB flash drives for them to check out this fall.



News from North Dakota continued

Turtle Mountain Community College

Upward Bound

Our recruitment efforts are still going and we currently have 59 students from our target schools. TMCC now offers tutors at all target schools, which participants can utilize. Our weekend academy topics have included session on Time and Study Management skills, ACT testing and preparation, and Community Service. Students were engaged in making out a schedule of each day and were given a daily appointment calendar to keep track of their daily schedule. We did set up NDSA (North Dakota State Assessment) prep classes at TMCHS to encourage students to participate.

In November, the UB Director and Academic Advisor had a meeting with North Dakota Department of Instruction (NDDPI) officials about accreditation for UB students. We are looking at offering UB students partial credits through the target schools for our 6 week summer program.

University of Mary

The SSS Program at the University of Mary conducted an experiment this past semester with its one credit freshman orientation and transition class for new SSS freshman. In previous years, our five SSS advisors held class once a week throughout the fall semester, covering the typical orientation and transition topics and activities such as study skills, learning skills inventories, curriculum awareness, academic requirements, financial aid, college policies and procedures, career awareness/inventories, and leadership/volunteerism. This year, we changed our course guide and condensed some of our usual topics and activities and instead of having class during the last four weeks of the semester we held individual advisor/advisee conferences. One of our goals for our individual conferences was to establish stronger rapport and give our students an opportunity to review topics that they didn't quite understand and were afraid to ask in class. We also conducted a final evaluation of achievement and transition to college and gave each student an opportunity to rate themselves in regards to their effort toward their coursework. One last outcome that we wanted to achieve from our four weeks of advisor/advisee conferences was to reduce any barriers and/or fears about meeting with teachers/advisors. The weekly conferences gave our students practice and confidence in scheduling appointments and meeting with a professional.

All of our SSS advisors reported positive results by combining classroom instruction with individual mentoring. Our SSS advisors felt they got to know their students better and many students commented that the conferences were a good followed-up to the topics and activities covered in class.

University of North Dakota

During the past months, two new advisors have been welcomed to UND TRIO Programs. **Erika Gilbertson** was hired by the Educational Opportunity Center to work in the outreach office housed at Lake Region State College in Devils Lake, North Dakota. Erika is coordinating networks with schools and agencies in the Devils Lake area to provide EOC services as well as traveling to Turtle Mountain Community High School to provide career/college exploration and enrollment assistance to the students there. **Cara Davis** came on board with the UND Upward Bound Program this fall and serves as Instructor Coordinator/Advisor. Cara has



News from UND continued

been spending time during this academic year with the UB students and now will be preparing academic materials and recruiting teachers for the UB summer program.

The TRIO Programs staff are also involved in TRIO Committees, which are formed to further expand services into specific areas that will be of benefit to the programs. One of those is the UND TRIO Alumni Committee, which has been working on planning a mentoring project in conjunction with the TRIO Day celebration that involves alumni from specific career fields speaking to current TRIO students about their occupations. The committee is also planning for a TRIO alumni reunion in the Ft. Berthold Reservation area this spring. There are many former TRIO students still living in that area and we look forward to reconnecting with them! Once again, a UND TRIO alumni will also be attending the annual Council for Opportunity in Education Policy Seminar to attend seminar sessions and advocate so that future generations of TRIO students will be able to achieve their educational goals.

UND TRIO will again be sponsoring a TRIO Day celebration with student and alumni speakers and awards. A speaker for our TRIO students in conjunction with that event, will give a presentation titled "Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover", dealing with interpersonal relationships and communications.

News from Montana

Welcome Mary Ulrich and Terra Cusack to MSU TRIO SSS

By Florence Garcia

Mary Ulrich recently joined the staff in TRIO/Student Support Services at Montana State University as an academic counselor and learning strategies coordinator. Mary has worked in adult and higher education since 1995 as an instructor, tutor and administrator, both in the United States and abroad. Mary has a Masters in Communication from the University of New Mexico and a B.A. in History and Spanish from the University of Montana. For the MSU TRIO program, Mary will be teaching an Applied Learning Strategies seminar, presenting various workshops for TRIO and MSU students, conducting individualized study skills sessions, and providing academic counseling.



Terra Cusack, currently beginning her 8th year working in higher education, has also joined the TRIO/Student Support Services office as an academic counselor. Terra holds a B.S. in Communications Sciences and Disorders from Emerson College. Terra is completing a Masters in Adult and Higher Education at MSU. Terra brings to the TRIO office a diverse background in post-secondary level disability support and learning skills. Terra most recently served as the Learning Skills Specialist at Georgetown University. As a member of the TRIO/SSS team, she will be responsible for conducting intake meetings, providing academic counseling and one-on-one study skills with students.

News from Montana continued

MSU Billings UB and ETS Reach Out to Those in Need

By Jacee Martin

Last fall, over 70 Billings Upward Bound and Educational Talent Search students reached out to others in the Billings community who needed an extra hand during the holiday season. Our students participated in two community service projects. In addition to the volunteer opportunities, our students also participated in the decorating of a holiday tree at the Moss Mansion.



The first volunteer opportunity was an annual Thanksgiving basket assembly project, "Flakesgiving", sponsored by two local disc jockeys known as "The Breakfast Flakes". On a cold November Friday our students, and other community volunteers, braved the winter weather, some in shorts and light sweatshirts and others in heavy parkas and moon boots, assembled more than 1,500 complete boxes that included the "fixin's" for a wonderful Thanksgiving meal. The boxes were packed, in an assembly style, with a frozen turkey, potatoes, macaroni and cheese, gravy, celery, corn, stuffing, and olives. Our students look forward to this event each year, not only because they are excused from several class periods, but also because they know that they are helping to make a difference for many area families. The boxes are assembled to feed approximately 5-7 people which means that with the help of our TRIO students, this event was able to provide over 10,000 people in Billings with a warm Thanksgiving meal! To end a great day of resume building activities and of giving, the students were treated to the infamous teenage meal of pizza and pop!



The group of Flakesgiving volunteers including 41 TRIO students.



MSU Billings UB and ETS continued

Never ceasing to amaze us with their motivation for volunteering, our students showed up in great numbers to help on a Saturday morning in December to lend a hand to the local Toys for Tots effort. Walking into the large warehouse building where the toys were being stored one couldn't help but be a bit overwhelmed by the number of donated toys and clothing. Our students jumped right into their assigned job of sorting the toys into large boxes marked appropriately for the different age groups; infants to 18 years old. The director of Family Services and his crew were greatly surprised at how fast the students sorted through the bundles of toys.



After a quick pop break, the students were given the opportunity to choose a family and "shop" for each of the eligible children listed. This activity proved to be a quick favorite among the students. Many pairs of students took great pride and attention to the gifts that they were choosing for each family. Over the past few years that ETS and UB have volunteered with Family Services, our students have become well respected and our group of teenagers is now welcomed with open arms rather than with uncertainty and fear!



As an annual "In the Spirit of Community" event, ETS and UB adopt a holiday tree at the Moss Mansion. Our programs are then responsible for brainstorming and creating ornaments for the tree that flow with the theme chosen by the mansion staff. In years past, themes have included, a cowboy Christmas, 1960's retro, and Victorian. This years theme was "A Literary Christmas". Our students gathered on an early Saturday morning to construct decorations related to our chosen story, "Twas the Night Before Christmas". Our decoration palate included grey painted Styro-foam mice, felt stockings, wrapped presents, glittery purple sugar plums, small decoupaged book covers, reindeer, and Santa sleighs. The tree was decorated by the students one day after school and stood on display through the month of December. We were honored to be able to decorate the tree in the nursery. As part of the fun, the community can tour the trees throughout the museum and vote for their favorite. In January, our programs were notified that the UB/ ETS tree was the winner of the "Best Theme Interpretation" award for 2008! We received a check for \$150.00 and bragging rights for next year! Our decorating confidence is building and maybe in the years to come, we will be brave enough to compete with the "corporation" trees on the main floor of the museum!



Happy New Year from the Billings ETS/ UB crew!



News from Montana continued

Montana Veterans Upward Bound By Joe P. Cobos, MSU Billings

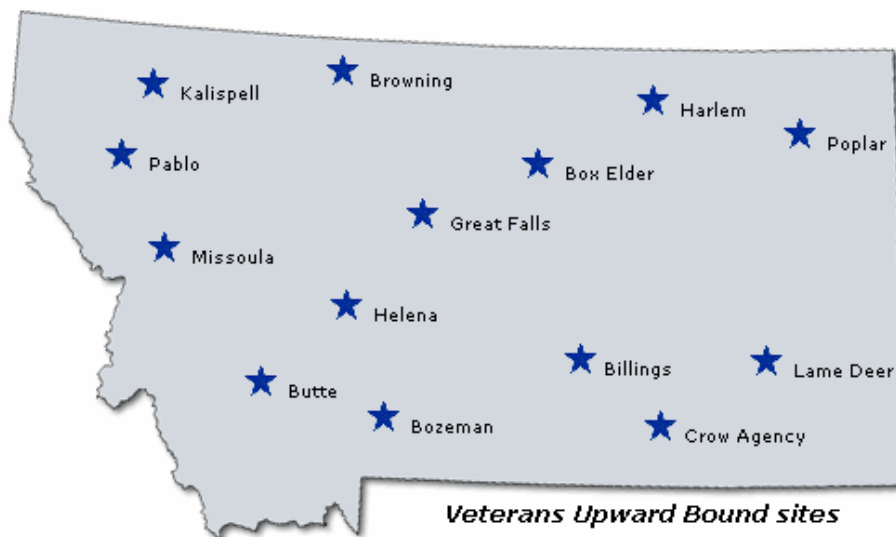
Veterans Upward Bound (VUB) is a free U.S. Department of Education program designed to help eligible U.S. military veterans refresh their academic skills so that they can successfully complete the postsecondary school of their choosing.

Veterans Upward Bound is part of The Federal TRIO Programs funded through the U.S. Department of Education providing educational services to veterans throughout the state of Montana by offering five programs; the Tribal College Academic Bridge Program, the Cohort Program, the College Transition Assistance Program, the Distance Learning Program, and the Reserve Program.

Veterans Upward Bound began services in Montana in 1992. Since that time, it has expanded services to over 14 sites statewide and has provided educational services to over 2,000 low-income and first-generation college bound veterans. Our veterans represent all eras of our nation's military history.

Veterans Upward Bound provides intensive basic skills development in those academic subjects required for successful completion of a high school equivalency program and/or admission to postsecondary education programs; short-term remedial or refresher classes for veterans who are high school graduates but have delayed pursuing a postsecondary school education; assistance with applications to the postsecondary school of choice; assistance with applying for financial aid; personal counseling; academic advice and assistance; activities designed to acquaint veterans participating in the project with the range of career options available to them; assistance in securing veterans services from other locally available resources; exposure to cultural events, academic programs, and other educational activities not usually available to disadvantaged people. For more information about our program please visit our website at www.vubmt.com or call our office at 406-657-2075. Our offices are located on the MSU-Billings main campus and the following is the address:

Center For Veterans' Education and Training
Cisel Hall Room 109
1500 University Drive
Billings, Montana 59101



News from Wyoming

AFA Adventures By Athena Kennedy

Advocates for Achievement (AFA), the newly formed UW SSS recognized student organization, had an award winning fall semester! AFA kicked off the year by enjoying a barbecue where students painted a one-of-a-kind masterpiece entitled “Futuristic Connections.” Each student shared a personal goal with fellow students, and then painted a line on a board to other students with similar goals; these lines represent the common goals among the students. The painting will be on display on the third floor of Knight Hall in the SSS hallway.

AFA conducted its first fundraiser this fall as well. The students raffled prizes to UW staff, faculty, administrators, students, and residents of Laramie. AFA used the funds to design and build a UW Homecoming Parade float. An 11-foot tall Pistol Pete rendition, adorned with pink attire, jewels, balloons, and streamers was main stage on the float, which was courtesy of Big T’s Trucking of Casper. The students wore pink to represent their support of the Parade’s theme, Breast Cancer Awareness. The AFA float was awarded “Best Use of Theme” for the 2008 competition. Along with a traveling trophy, the organization was awarded \$100, which AFA donated to the Susan G. Komen for the Cure Foundation.

Hispanic Heritage Month allowed AFA to celebrate Hispanic culture with another student organization, Movimiento Estudiantil de Chicanos de Atzlan (MECHA), through a sugar skull painting activity that commemorated El Dia de Los Muertos (Day of the Dead). Also, AFA celebrated Halloween by serving the Laramie community through the Wyoming Union’s Safe Treat adventure. Students and staff dressed in costumes, donated candy and prizes, and hosted a large game of *Tic Tac Toe* for local children.

In November, AFA students attended a belly dance workshop hosted by Aylin Marquez. She taught AFA members about the history, music, and dress of Egyptian Belly Dance. She then taught the students basic belly dance steps while they enjoyed homemade Turkish Baklava. AFA also sponsored a canned food drive to participate in *Kans of Kindness*. They built a can structure in the Wyoming Union to be entered in a competition to win a gift certificate.

In December, AFA hosted their holiday party at the Laramie Ice Arena where they enjoyed ice skating and a cultural holiday gift exchange.

AFA students enjoy the fall barbeque at their advisor’s home.



News from Wyoming

Etiquette Enthusiasm: UW President's Office Sponsored Etiquette Dinner

By Bill Anderson

The second Etiquette Dinner, sponsored by the University of Wyoming Office of the President and hosted by Jacque Buchanan for Student Success Services students, was held November 11, 2008, in the Foundation House. The purpose of the event was to help students feel comfortable interacting in a social and professional setting. Jacque Buchanan created an atmosphere for students in which they could network during the "mocktail" hour, have conversations with new people, and enjoy unique food. An etiquette guidelines sheet was sent to the students prior to the event; it contained information on business attire and general etiquette guidelines.

To begin the event, Jacque addressed the group during the "mocktail" hour and expressed her thoughts about the high quality of the Student Success Services program. Jacque mentioned that if funding were available, it would be great to provide all UW students the kind of support that is given through the SSS program. Students were then encouraged to mingle with Sara Axelson, VP of Student Affairs; Susan Bury and Nathan Capron from UNIWYO Federal Credit Union; as well as other students and UW staff.

After the "mocktail" hour, guests moved into the dining room where they located their designated seats at three round tables. The tables were elegantly adorned with beautiful rose centerpieces. UW Chef, David Asmuth, greeted the guests, told them about his background, and then provided guidance on how to use the silverware (from the outside in). He announced each course and how it was prepared. The guests enjoyed his descriptions as well as his humorous commentary. The first course was sweet potato bisque followed by niçoise salad. Raspberry sorbet was served to cleanse the palate before the main course, stuffed salmon fillet with wild rice and candied beets. The grand finale was the dessert, flan with blood red orange sauce.

Students who attended enjoyed the dinner. Jeremy Guzman, a student majoring in psychology, stated, "I was foremost impressed with the food. WOW! I haven't had salmon that was prepared that well in a very long time. We enjoyed a five course meal and between each course the chef described how each plate followed the fall theme."

Lisa Abeyta, also a student majoring in psychology, said, "The dinner was so much fun. It started off with drinks and everyone mingling. It was nice to meet other students, faculty, and staff. The setup was amazing. I was able to learn about the different silverware and what it was used for. I loved how we were assigned to a seat because it made everyone interact with new people. The food was different than what I am used to, but I did have an open mind and I tried everything. It was a great experience."

Host Jacque Buchanan said, "I certainly learn more from the students than they do from me. The students in Student Success Services are a remarkable group of people. I really enjoyed the evening."

SEO/SSS students and staff extend a warm thank you to the President and Jacque Buchanan for providing us with an extraordinary experience.



SSS Students and staff, with Jacque Buchanan, at the fall Etiquette Dinner.



News from Colorado

Colorado TRIO Alumni Association *By Andrea Fortney*

New connections are being established in the state of Colorado between alumni and TRIO programs. This fall Brian Rauscher, Director of SSS at Adams State College and Andrea Fortney, Retention Specialist at Colorado State University's SSS program started the Colorado TRIO Alumni Association. This committee intends to encourage local TRIO programs to build relationships with alumni from their program, as well as establish a statewide collaboration of TRIO programs and TRIO alumni.

The Colorado TRIO Alumni Association is in the initial planning phase and looks forward to establishing the following possibilities:

- College student to pre-college student mentoring
- Professional alumni to college or pre-college student mentoring
- TRIO/Higher Education advocacy
- Social events (regional gatherings, networking nights, on-campus activities)
- Alumni at TRIO Day/Other Conferences
- Alumni-funded scholarships
- New member recruiting
- Creating local alumni chapters
- Regular Newsletters

Colorado TRIO staff are encouraged to learn more at the alumni break-out session on Friday, February 20th, 2009 at the TRIO Day & State Meeting in Denver. Colorado State University TRIO Student Support Services alumni Jessica Andersen and Mark Kington will present strategies for creating relationships with alumni programs at institutions, developing a mentoring program with participants, recruiting alumni and more. Brian Rauscher and Andrea Fortney will lead a brainstorming session about collaborating statewide through the Colorado TRIO Alumni Association.

As a new alumni association, feedback from other states would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Brian Rauscher at (719) 587-8176 or brauscher@adams.edu or Andrea Fortney at 970-491-6129 or andrea.fortney@colostate.edu to share what your state is doing to connect with alumni.



News from Utah

Snow College Upward Bound is Busy, Busy, Busy *By Diane Gardner*

Busy, busy, busy! Those are three words to describe our participants. Snow Ubers have been on several state-wide college tours. We have been to see a wonderful outdoor production of Les Miserables and we drove to Utah's "Dixie" to see a performance of Christmas in the Canyons.

We have had several workshops with great attendance. These workshops are held on Wednesdays and Saturdays. We have learned: Study Skills, Fa'a Samoa, Advising, College Vocabulary and Terms.

We will be leaving soon to revisit Yellowstone National Park. We were there in summer and plan to return the first week of February to look at the migratory patterns of the birds and the predator and prey relationship. This trip will involve a snow shoe hike to get up close and personal with the winter aspects of Yellowstone.

Student Aid Information

House American Recovery and Reinvestment Bill of 2009 includes Significant Student Aid Investments

Submitted by Cody McMichael, ASPIRE Financial Aid Committee Chair

An economic stimulus bill introduced in the House would increase the maximum Pell Grant by \$500, increase unsubsidized Stafford Loan limits by \$2,000 and provide an additional \$490 million for federal work-study.

In addition the bill provides billions in additional funding to help ease the budgets of higher education institutions and states.

According to the summary released by the House Appropriations Committee, the bill would provide the following additional funding for student aid.

- Pell Grants: \$15.6 billion to increase the maximum Pell Grant by \$500, from \$4,850 to \$5,350 for the 2009-10 academic year.
- Federal Work-Study: \$490 million to support undergraduate and graduate students who work.
- Student Loan Limit Increase: Increased limits on unsubsidized Stafford loans by \$2,000.
- Student Aid Administration: \$50 million to help the Department of Education administer surging student aid programs while navigating the changing student loan environment.

The bill also provides additional funding that will benefit higher education institutions, including:



Student Aid Information continued

- \$20 billion for school renovation and modernization, including technology upgrades and energy efficiency improvements: \$14 billion for K-12 and \$6 billion for higher education.
- \$1 billion for 21st century classrooms, including computer and science labs and teacher technology training.
- \$79 billion in state fiscal relief to prevent cutbacks to key services, including \$39 billion to local school districts and public colleges and universities distributed through existing state and federal formulas, \$15 billion to states as bonus grants as a reward for meeting key performance measures, and \$25 billion to states for other high priority needs such as public safety and other critical services, which may include education.

A detailed report on the bill is available on the House Appropriations Committee web site (<http://appropriations.house.gov/>).

Gilman Scholarships Available to Fund TRIO Students' Study Abroad

By Michael Wade – ASPIRE International Access Committee Chair

SSS and McNair programs with participants interested in studying abroad can assist their students in applying for a Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. Over 1,200 scholarships of up to \$5,000 will be awarded this academic year for U.S. citizen undergraduates to study abroad. Award amounts will vary depending on the length of study and student need with the average award being \$4,000. These awards are ideally suited for TRIO students, as they are limited to undergraduates who are receiving federal Pell Grant funding at 2-year or 4-year colleges or universities.

Students who apply for and receive the Gilman Scholarship to study abroad are now eligible to receive an additional \$3,000 Critical Need Language Supplement from the Gilman Program for a total possible award of up to \$8,000. Fifty Critical Need Language Supplements were offered to Gilman Scholarship recipients during the 2007-2008 academic year. There will be an increased number of Supplements this academic year.

Critical Need Languages include:

- Arabic (all dialects)
- Chinese (all dialects)
- Turkic (Azerbaijani, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Turkish, Turkmen, Uzbek)
- Persian (Farsi, Dari, Kurdish, Pashto, Tajiki)
- Indic (Hindi, Urdu, Nepali, Sinhala, Bengali, Punjabi, Marathi, Gujarati, Sindhi)
- Korean
- Russian

This congressionally funded program is sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State and is administered by the Institute of International Education -- Southern Regional Center in Houston, Texas.

The timeline for students to apply for Gilman awards for the fall 2009 study abroad semester are detailed on the Gilman website at: <http://www.iie.org/programs/gilman/apply/fall.html>.



Student Aid Information continued

When it Comes to Your Student Debt, Don't Count On A Government Bailout

By Charlie Luecke, Upward Bound Manager The University of South Dakota

Everyone talks about encouraging students to pursue scholarships for the purpose of reducing student personal debt. Unfortunately many students fail to submit applications because of a lack of preparation and organization. Forms, transcripts, ACT test scores, teacher recommendations, and written descriptions of goals, service, leadership & educational achievements are often not centralized or summarized for easy access. For some students they simply start the process too late.

Thus, it's easy to get discouraged and students then often resign themselves to loan applications and/or excessive employment. The later often results in an undergraduate debt load comparable to a small home mortgage.

One useful tool for facilitating the completion and submission of scholarship applications is the Postsecondary Portfolio. Within a binder and plastic sheets (some prefer a computer based system), a student can keep the key documents and summary statements that are often requested in scholarship applications. The key, of course, is introducing and reviewing with students the information that scholarships are looking for and then periodically updating the portfolio - particularly the summary pages:

- Career & Postsecondary Goals & Aspirations
- Academic & Educational Achievements – Examples of Intellectual Curiosity
- Service & Leadership Experiences
- Lessons learned from Extracurricular Activities and Involvement in one's Culture
- Summer Achievements - including Upward Bound.

Although the summary pages facilitate the creation of the scholarship essays, students should also learn to identify key school and/or TRIO support people who can give feedback on the content and writing.

So, when a student enters your project, what key documents, achievements, and activities do you want them to know that can produce scholarships - the "free money?" Likewise, what system will you recommend for collecting and updating the contents? Regardless, remind your participants that when it comes to student loan repayment, they shouldn't count on a government bailout.



Important Dates and Upcoming Events Courtesy of Amy Verlanic

February 20	Colorado State Chapter of ASPIRE State Meeting
February 26	National TRIO Day
March	COE's Legislation and Regulations Training for UB TRIO Managers (exact date and location TBA)
March 11-13	Utah State Meeting
March 21-22	COE Leadership Summit, Washington, DC
March 22-24	COE Policy Seminar, Washington, DC
March 25	Seminar on Relations with Dept. of Education, Washington, DC
April	Legislation and Regulations Training for TRIO Managers (exact date and location TBA)
April	North Dakota State Meeting (exact date and location TBA)
April 6 and 7	South Dakota State Meeting, South Dakota ASPIRE, Mitchell, SD
April 20-21	Wyoming State Meeting
April 20-24	National Veterans Upward Bound Annual Conference, South Padre Island, TX
April 30	Deadline for state associations to submit nominations for the COE State Excellence Awards
May	ASPIRE Board Meeting (exact date and location TBA)
May	COE's Legislation and Regulations Training for UB TRIO Managers (exact date and location TBA)



(Important Dates and Upcoming Events continued)

May 19-22

COE Board Meeting, Washington, DC

June 30

End of COE 2009 Fairshare Year (Last day to make personal contributions)

July 1

Start of COE 2010 Fairshare Year (Time to renew Institutional Memberships, Subscription Packages and make personal contributions.)

September 9th-12

COE Annual Conference Grand Hyatt, San Antonio, TX

September 30

End of ASPIRE 2009 Fairshare and Membership Year (Last day to make personal contributions or renew personal and project memberships)