



ASPIRATIONS

Official Newsletter of APSIRE, INC.

TRiO

September-December
2011

ASPIRE 2012 ♦ October 7-10 ♦ Holiday Inn ♦ Billings, MT

Unlocking Potential



The Montana Chapter of ASPIRE
invites you to the
2012 ASPIRE Conference
at the Holiday Inn
on October 7 - 10 in Billings, MT.



Message from the President



Dear ASPIRE,

Happy New Year! With a new year comes the opportunity for reflections from the past year about what ASPIRE did well and resolutions on how we can continue to excel. I am constantly amazed at the renewed expertise and energy of the regional board, committee chairs and members and I look forward to the continued work with you all.

First of all, let me say thank you to everyone who took a part, no matter how small, in helping TRIO get an increase in funding of \$13.4 million for a total funding level of \$839.9 million for FY 2012. This increase will provide funding for around 40 Upward Bound and McNair programs. As you may recall, President Obama had recommended an 8% increase for TRIO (\$920.1 million) to Congress and it is unfortunate they could not grant that request. Although the increase is a victory, given that we have to work within the tumultuous climate of Congress attacking discretionary spending, we are not out of the rapids by any means. I want to personally give a shout out to Montana TRIO who worked diligently with their Representative, Denny Rehberg, who was amongst the strong leaders in the House who pushed for this funding. This is an example that grassroots advocacy works and small states can be powerful.

Past President Dawn Eckhardt and President Elect Derek Sporbett and I attended the COE Winter Board Meeting in Miami in December where we had intense trainings and meetings for a week. At this meeting we met with Dr. Debra Saunders-White, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Higher Education Programs at ED, and she assured us that the Department is focusing on issues of college affordability, student debt and college completion. She also mentioned that 980 UB grants would be awarded. I wish all of you who are and will be writing your proposals the best of luck. As far as UBMS, VUB and McNair, the Department expects to announce awards in June/July 2012.

At our regional board meeting at the end of this month, the board will have much to discuss including revision and updating of our beloved operating guidelines and strategic plan. In addition, our work to engage our states and members to meet fair share is never done (just a forewarning). We will discuss our 2012 ASPIRE conference to be held in Billings, MT to make sure this is a premier opportunity for professional development and program capacity building. Please save the date. We will also talk about growing our leadership development activities and expanding state initiatives and government relations.

I extend an invitation, on behalf of the board and committee chairs, to please contact us with any suggestions, concerns or questions you may have. I look forward to visiting with the states and having dialogue about how we can continue strong TRIO advocacy for future sustained and improved funding.

ASPIRE Bigger, ASPIRE Better, ASPIRE Brighter, ASPIRE Higher!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Rachel Martinez'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rachel Martinez
ASPIRE President



ASPIRE Regional Meeting 2011





ASPIRATIONS





ASPIRE Awards and TRIO Achiever Nominations Due May 1, 2012

ASPIRE Awards and TRIO Achiever nomination requests will be sent out early March! Please watch your email or the ASPIRE website for the nomination forms. The DUE DATE to submit your nominations will be MAY 1, 2012! Start thinking now of your nomination for Rising Star, Friend of ASPIRE, Champion of TRIO and TRIO Achiever!



News from North Dakota

Dickinson State College

Student Support Services



Dickinson State University Student Support Services held its Summer Bridge Program the week before school started, with 31 students in attendance. The Summer Bridge Program helps students prepare for the demands of college. They meet other students, faculty and staff which helps ease their adjustment and increase their chance of success. The Bridge Program also included a trip to Medora for students to experience the “Old West.”

The SSS participants attended a Blackberry Bushes Concert. The “Bushes” are a band of songwriters with a strong Bluegrass and old-time blend. They were very entertaining and everyone that attended thoroughly enjoyed the concert.

DSU SSS advisory board meets this month to work out plans for a community service project they will be taking the lead on for TRIO Days.

DSU SSS will be conducting a workshop for the seniors in the program called, “Backpack 2 Briefcase.” Students attending the program will gain skills in job searching, resume and cover letter writing, interviewing, professional social networking, budgeting, navigating the complexities of employer benefits, wearing appropriate attire for work and business etiquette.



North Dakota State University

Student Support Services

Ray Smith, Student Support Services (SSS) Science and Math instructor was selected to present at the 35th Annual ASPIRE Conference in Salt Lake City, UT October 8-12. Smith presented on his Math Study Strategies Course (EDUC 291), which helps SSS students develop the skills necessary for success in math. Course topics included: learning styles, attitudes, reducing math and test anxiety, memory, reading math, note taking, test taking and motivation. Students enrolled in this course must be in a math course and actively working with an SSS tutor.

Smith notes that “most of the tutoring that we do in SSS is Math. Research indicates that if students can



pass their required math classes, they can go on to receive their degrees. It only seems logical that we offer a class to show students how to study math more effectively.”

In addition to our courses receiving regional recognition, we hosted the first annual TRIO Programs Night on Friday, November 11 (Veteran's Day) at the Bison Women's Volleyball against South Dakota. This was an exciting opportunity to not only celebrate our veterans but also highlight the history and presence of TRIO at NDSU. We shared this evening with our students, families and guests! Thank you to our women's volleyball team for their commitment to our mission.



Last but not least, our SSS tutors are gearing up for another successful semester. The group completed their spring semester training and will begin working with students January 17. Thanks to all of our tutors and students for inspiring us all to serve others. Have a wonderful semester!

Veteran's Upward Bound

Student Prospective

Harry Feilen, Class of 2013

I am an “older than average student” or “nontraditional student”. I was born in Drayton ND (a little town an hour north of here). I graduated from Red River High School, Grand Forks, ND in 1987. I joined the United States Marine Corps in February 1989. I was a Military policeman in the beginning, became an Traffic Accident Investigator and completed my service as the Chief Traffic Accident Investigator of Barstow California. I traveled to several places around the world while in the Marines. I was in the first gulf war for 9 months. I decided to return to civilian life in December 1996. I completed the University of Mary core curriculum for their Bachelor of Science Degree in Management in 2008 and I needed to complete some general education requirements to achieve the degree from U-Mary. I started at UND in the spring of 2009 with a light class load of 9 credits to see how I would adjust back into a classroom setting as a student. I was 40 at that time. I had decided to continue my education in the discipline of Mechanical Engineering. I have always been mechanically inclined and a good fabricator. I have had some challenges and failures along the way, but I have learned from them, pushed harder and have been successful





to this point. I sought out help from Veteran's Upward Bound to get back in the swing of things. I had Frank Jones as a tutor for math and Chemistry. I earned an A in Chem 121 that first semester at UND, Mr. Jones did well. I was offered a position as a Chemistry 121 Lab T.A. for the spring 2010 semester. I was also offered a position in the Chemical Engineering Department as a lab tech, assisting with fabricating and applying Mechanical Engineering processes toward Chemical Engineering grad student experiments during the same spring semester.

As of December 24, 2011 I have been hired by The Institute for Energy Studies as a full time benefited employee. This semester will be the first semester I am not a full time student. I have eight classes remaining to complete the Mechanical Engineering curriculum here at UND. I intend to complete these classes while I am a full time employee here. The last few semesters I did have a large credit load and worked 30 to 35 hours a week, so not too much of a change. I also have a very supportive wife and my 17 year old son who is at home with us. I earned a Bachelorette of Science Degree from the University of Mary August 19, 2011 in the discipline of management. I hope to finish a second Bachelor of Science Degree from UND spring 2013 in Mechanical Engineering. However, I plan to continue on, earn a master's degree and maybe a doctorate before I am done. My time here at UND has been an enlightening and fulfilling experience. I have enjoyed most of the classes here, not all but most. The Professors have related the material to a real world experience, which has made it more enjoyable and understandable. I have and will continue to use the education gained here at UND during my current job at The Institute for Energy Studies.

University of North Dakota

Educational Opportunity Center

EOC will be partnering with the Grand Forks Adult Learning Center to offer a reunion opportunity for recent GED graduates. This event will reach out to students who attended the Adult Learning Center, and are in the Grand Forks area still. The event will give GED (and EOC) alumni the chance to catch up with what their fellow classmates have accomplished in the past year. Students will be able to share their success in employment and college enrollment with peers and educators. Alumni will also be presented with information on college exploration, admissions, and financial aid. EOC staff will be on hand to answer any questions students have as well. EOC looks forward to partnering with Adult Education in the state of ND to provide opportunities like this to our participants!

McNair

The UND McNair Program is off to a roaring start. We started the academic year with a gathering at a local restaurant where McNair scholars gave informal presentations on their summer research projects. It went very well, with six faculty mentors also attending and giving input regarding presentations and research. The semester monthly seminars are planned, with a wealth of information to be presented to the scholars. The fall GRE Saturday classes have been well attended, and the fall "Orientation to the Graduate School Process" class has also started. The recruitment process is ongoing to fill the slots of our 2011 graduates.

University of North Dakota McNair 2011-2012 Graduate School Attendees



Julia Beard began her Master's Degree program in Biology at the University of North Dakota this summer semester of 2011. Under the direction of the Biology faculty and McNair mentor, Dr. Brett Goodwin, she is undertaking a statewide invertebrate survey of North Dakota as her graduate research. Financial support will be provided from UND in the form of a tuition waiver (given by the UND Graduate School for one year to all McNair scholars) and GTA responsibilities. Research expenses and GRA position will be provided from a SWiG grant through North Dakota Game and Fish.



Jason Champagne, a member of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa, double majored in community nutrition and Indian studies. As a McNair scholar, he conducted research pertaining to the American Indian diet in relation to diabetes complications, under the supervision of his mentor Jacque Gray, Ph.D. In September, 2011, he began a Master of Public Health (MPH) degree program in Public Health Nutrition in the Division of Epidemiology and Community Health within the University of Minnesota's School of Public Health. He will also complete the Coordinated Masters Program (CMP) track, which will make him eligible to take the national registration examination for dietitians as well as complete the MPH degree. He received a NARCH scholarship for \$21,000 through Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board. This scholarship is funded by the Indian Health service and NIH.



Sierra Davis, an enrolled member of the Mandan, Hidatsa, & Arikara Nation, worked with Dr. Jacque Gray over the past three years as a McNair and REFUNDU Scholar, working on the Good Health TV evaluation project and continued research with Dr. Gray through the summer. She graduated in May with a B.A. in Psychology and minor in Nonprofit Leadership, and was accepted to the University of North Dakota's graduate program in Public Administration with an emphasis in Public Health. Along with the (Graduate McNair) tuition waiver, she was awarded a GSA in the Health & Wellness office.



Matthew Fahrenbruch's (Geography major) research topic looked at how a shift from a traditional economy (in the case of his research, shipping and fishing) to a tourism based economy affects the vulnerability of a community to hazards, both natural and man-made. He traveled to his study site in the small Southwest Nicaraguan community of San Juan del Sur in January 2011. Matt accepted a teaching assistantship position at the University of Southern Mississippi in their Geography Masters of Science program. The program appears to be an excellent fit as half of the faculties do work in Latin America and at least three do research related to hazards. He hopes to continue his work on San Juan del Sur at USM and is looking forward to the opportunity.



Enoch Hankerson graduated in August with a major in Interdisciplinary Studies (concentrating on Multi-cultural Studies, Social Justice, & Peace Studies) and a minor in Geography. Working with his mentor, Dr. Sagini Keenwe, he conducted research on faculty diversity in higher education throughout the summer. Enoch was accepted into the UND Masters in Education/General Studies program. He will be receiving the graduate McNair tuition waiver and is in the process of working on a grant for funding from the USDA.



Seinquis Slater graduated in August with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology. In August, she began working for the University of North Dakota Enrollment Services department as a Program Coordinator for Multicultural Recruitment and Retention. Seinquis plans to hold this position for one year taking graduate school courses in the Educational Leadership department at the same time and then, in 2012-13, begin full time graduate work on her Master of Science degree in Educational Leadership. Her career goal is to become a Vice President of Student Affairs at a respected college or university.



Shea Thomas graduated with honors in December with her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. During her semester off in the spring, she focused on her research with Dr. Cheryl Terrance, presented at the Midwestern Psychological Association Conference in Chicago and was also published in the Journal of Partner Abuse. This fall, Shea will be attending William Mitchell School of Law where she plans on receiving her Juris Doctor by 2014. Shea plans on continuing to do research in domestic violence and stalking.

Student Support Services

TRIO Students receive awards for Civic Engagement

Reginald Tarr, a Student Support Services student, and EOC alum, received the Undergraduate Student Civic Engagement Award. Tarr, a social work major, was cited as an effective leader, educating members of the Grand Forks community about refugee resettlement.

Reginald Tarr, Global Friends Coalition Board Member and leader of the Organizing Committee for People of Liberian Origin in Grand Forks will speak to his personal experience as a refugee and new American. Reginald Tarr was born in Liberia, West Africa. At age seventeen he fled the Liberian civil war to Ivory Coast, a neighboring country. He spent thirteen years seeking refuge in the Ivory Coast where he learned to speak French. After graduation



from high school, he learned rural building construction in a technical school and taught as assistant instructor. He also worked as assistant pastor of a church and a social worker with a local community based organization called WISTAFA. In this role, he helped implement family tracing and reunification efforts for Save the Children UK. When civil war erupted in the Ivory Coast, he moved to United States. He is now a US citizen and leader of the Organizing Committee for people of Liberian origin in Grand Forks, North Dakota. He is currently pursuing a Social Work degree from UND and is a participant in the Student Support Services Program.

Enoch Hankerson, a McNair Scholar as well as a Student Support Services and EOC alum, graduated in August with a major in Interdisciplinary Studies (concentrating on Multi-cultural Studies, Social Justice, & Peace Studies) and a minor in Geography. Working with his mentor, Dr. Sagini Keenwe, he conducted research on faculty diversity in higher education throughout the summer. Enoch was accepted into the UND Masters in Education/General Studies program. He will be receiving the graduate McNair tuition waiver and is in the process of working on a grant for funding from the USDA.



Hankerson was also the recipient of the Graduate Civic Engagement Award at the Stone Soup awards luncheon.

News from Colorado

Opinion-Editorial (Op-Ed)

Laurie Marano, Colorado Mountain College (CMC) TRIO Success Director and Debra Crawford, CMC Public Information Officer published an editorial in the Denver Post, "At-Risk Students Deserve Support." Also contributing to this commentary was Nate Adams, Director of Student Support Services at the college's campuses in Rifle and Edwards.

Guest Commentary: At-risk Students Deserve Support

http://www.denverpost.com/opinion/ci_19610664

Printed in the Denver Post - Posted: 12/27/2011

We know from recent news reports that close to 200,000 children in Colorado are living below the poverty line: That's less than \$20,650 for a family of four. Time and again evidence has shown that access to education and job training can help people break the cycle of poverty. By learning new skills and broadening their education, everyone has the ability to transcend the conditions into which they're born, whether facing extreme hardship or physical, cultural or other challenges. Parents of children living beneath the poverty line can get a fair shot at the American dream by improving their earning power.

But making the change is hard. It can be expensive. And people from disadvantaged backgrounds are at



greater risk of not graduating from college, for numerous reasons. Services through federally funded programs of the TRIO Success Center at Colorado Mountain College have provided thousands of Coloradans the support they've needed to lift themselves up, to change the lives of their families and the dynamics within their communities. Last year, TRIO programs helped improve the lives of 17,240 students in Colorado, resulting in high school and college graduation rates higher than for the state's general student population.

TRIO programs under the U.S. Department of Education include Student Support Services, Upward Bound, Math-Science Upward Bound and Veterans Upward Bound. At Colorado Mountain College, the Student Support Services program, or SSS, has surpassed federal grant goals for helping students remain in college, stay in good academic standing, and graduate or transfer to a four-year college or university. The idea behind SSS is powerful: With the right information early, and tailored advising, students from disadvantaged backgrounds can overcome financial, academic, cultural or other barriers. We provide an array of services, from coordinating other resources, to free tutoring, to transfer and career assistance. According to the Council for Opportunity in Education, more than 40 years of data show SSS students are more than twice as likely to remain in college as students from similar backgrounds who do not participate in the program. Our persistence and good academic standing rates are excellent, especially when you consider that these students are coming from a group that is at great risk of dropping out. Data at our three residential campuses show that our students in this program succeed at a higher rate than do our average students.

Based on this demonstrated success in helping at-risk students, we received a grant last spring to expand Student Support Services to several of our commuter campuses. And already our students there are beating the odds: At our campuses in Rifle and Edwards, in this first year SSS reached more than 600 eligible students in person, by phone or by letter. We directly served more than 100 of those students with over 1,000 hours of advising, counseling and workshops, distributed almost \$19,000 in direct aid, and provided more than 400 hours in free tutoring. Our retention rate from last school year to this year is 75 percent, far higher than the rate for at-risk students throughout our 11 locations.

In other words, these programs are working: to help educate those who most need our help through these difficult times. It's hard to go to school. It's particularly hard if you're the first person in your family to attend college, or if you're a working parent, or if you face other barriers that can make it seem possible to build a better life for your family. Student Support Services, Upward Bound and other TRIO programs are some of the best tools we have to empower people to improve their own lives.

University of Colorado Denver, TRIO Student Support Services Program and Metropolitan State College of Denver, TRIO High School Upward Bound Program

Denver Feed A Family: Thanksgiving 2011 Event



On November 19, 2011, the Society of TRIO Students Club at the University of Colorado Denver and the TRIO High School Upward Bound Program at Metropolitan State College of Denver participated in the Denver Feed A Family Thanksgiving event sponsored by the Epworth Foundation. The event theme was, "Giving Thanks One

the event successful. Over 8000 families received food boxes. TRIO participants helped pack and distribute the boxes. The local Metro Cab helped deliver the boxes to the elderly and shut-ins. TRIO participants helped families carry their boxes to homes and vehicles and helped pack coupons and flyers. The Society of TRIO Students Club plans to participate in next's year event. This is the second year that Upward Bound students have participated in this annual event.



University of Colorado Denver

TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) Program

Anschutz Medical Campus (AMC) Visit



On November 18, 2011, the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, Office of Diversity and Inclusion hosted a campus visit for sixteen TRIO SSS participants and staff. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion provides informative courses and workshops/events for individuals who are interested in health care professions. The mission of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion is to instill diversity into the institutional consciousness; reinforcing equity and inclusion through policies, practices, and programs that prepare all faculty, students, and staff for a multicultural world. Participants

met with representatives from the School of Medicine, College of Nursing, and the Colorado School of Public Health to discuss admission requirements for the various programs offered on the AMC campus. The group also participated in a campus tour, which highlighted the campus architecture and state-of-the-art technology. The students had the opportunity to meet with four UC Denver TRIO SSS Alumni who are currently attending medical school on the AMC campus. The campus visit was a great success!



News from South Dakota

Dakota Wesleyan University

Mixed Blood Theatre to perform at DWU on Martin Luther King Jr. Day

MITCHELL – In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Dakota Wesleyan University opens its doors for a free presentation to students and the public.

Mixed Blood Theatre Company of Minneapolis will be back on campus next week with the humor-laced biography of Dr. Ronald McNair, the African American scientist aboard the ill-fated space shuttle Challenger. Ronald McNair is the namesake for the TRIO McNair program. The purpose of the Ronald E. McNair Post baccalaureate Achievement (McNair) Program is to provide disadvantaged college students with effective preparation for doctoral study. The event, called “Black Eagle,” will be performed at 7 p.m., Monday, Jan. 16, in the East Main Dining Room within the Rollins Campus Center on DWU’s campus. The event is sponsored by the Multicultural Committee and TRIO Student Support Services and is open and free to the public.

As “Black Eagle” begins, McNair answers taped questions from school children after the Challenger launch has been delayed again. His responses describe a remarkable journey from a small, segregated South Carolina



town to the elite ranks of NASA astronaut.

Mixed Blood Theatre Company is a multi-racial professional company promoting cultural pluralism, individual equality and artistic excellence. Founded in 1976, the company is dedicated to the spirit of Dr. King's dream.

Andre Samples, who portrays McNair, has previously performed in Mixed Blood's productions of "Boy," "Cut Flowers," and "the Boys Next Door," and has toured for the theatre in "Jackie Robinson" and "GunPlay." "Black Eagle" is written and directed by Warren C. Bowles, the veteran Mixed Blood actor best known for his portrayal of King.

DWU TRIO Peer Mentors and Mentees Provide Community Service

Throughout the months of September – December, the DWU TRIO Peer Mentors and 19 mentees volunteered their time to decorate the Abbott House in preparation for the annual Festival of Lights. The Festival of Lights is a large annual fundraiser for the Abbott House. The Abbott House, located in Mitchell, SD, is a private charity that provides residential treatment services to girls between the age of seven and seventeen. The agency provides not only intensive treatment but also foster care in a therapeutic home.



South Dakota State University

SSS Recognizes Student Employees and Volunteers

TRIO SSS is lucky to have such great student employees and volunteers! Each semester we set aside time to recognize these individuals and the impact that they have made on many students. Those being recognized include: Tutors, SI Leaders, Peer Mentors, Monitors, and Advisory Board Members. 26 students were recognized on this day in December.

Our Tutoring and Peer Mentoring programs are CRLA (College Reading and Learning Association) certified. Therefore, many of the tutors, SI leaders, and Peer Mentors also receive their certificate at this time.

This semester we chose to have our recognition event in an open house format. We offered a card for the SSS participants to write a note of "thanks" to the employees and volunteers, as well as snacks and goodies for all to enjoy while celebrating another successful semester!



SDSU TRIO SSS Volunteer Community Service Project – Fall 2011

South Dakota State University, Brookings, South Dakota

Submitted by Laurie K. Johnson, SSS Retention Advisor

On the north wall of the local Brookings Regional Humane Society you will find these words from Gandhi - “The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.” The TRIO Advisory Board members selected the Humane Society for our Volunteer Community Service Project this fall. TRIO participants implemented a three-part project that included donating towels and rags, collectively baking homemade pet treats and donating Saturday time at the shelter. The pictures below show students and staff bakers who made 12 dozen skeptically delicious oatmeal peanut butter and parsley pet treats, and the students helping at the shelter who enjoyed exercising, caring for and playing with the animals. The lesson we learned with this event was that greatness can be measured by the generosity, love and gentleness displayed by our students.





University of South Dakota

A day in the life of...

DHS Seniors Shadow Career Interests By Patty Peacock, HS Counselor

Choosing that first career path, since education is an expensive commitment, is an extremely difficult task for most seniors in high school. To assist with that process, career information/education planning information is shared with students by Mrs. Patty Peacock (School Counselor) and Ms. Marion Blue Arm (Director of the USD TRIO Talent Search Program) through guidance and career classes.

Building on these things, the state of South Dakota also incorporates the *Career Cruising* website with students to help them learn more about career options, create personal career/high school education portfolios (now required for some grades), gather information about the careers (such as job outlook, salary, education required, etc.), and compare post-secondary.

Building on the massive information available to students through websites, staff, friends, and family, an actual day of 'shadowing' someone in a career that interests them makes it more 'real' to the students. Therefore, each year, the seniors are taken to Rapid City, chaperoned by Patty Peacock, and Marion Blue Arm, to spend the day in a field they are considering for their future training and hopefully employment. The seniors were encouraged to select a career they were interested in pursuing.



Career interests, like the students, varied immensely and included: x-ray technician, diesel mechanic, nurse, pediatrician, electrician, special education teacher, auto mechanic, game warden, veterinarian, motorcycle mechanic, and telecommunications management. Some interesting aspects of the day were meeting owners of pets and working with their desires/concerns, holding newborns, getting to work on a car while shadowing, eating at nice places for lunch versus being so busy that they almost don't get time for lunch, learning more about reading x-rays, dealing with people when they are sick/stressed, seeing the paperwork

required, knowing that what you're learning in classes like mechanics is already valued in the work force, etc

The interests and shadow experiences varied, however, the positive reactions were universal since their wonderful comments brought smiles to their chaperones and a few mentioned that they would love to be able to do this again; either in the same field or be able to try a different career to see which one they liked better.





News from Utah

Weber State University

TRIO Programs

Congratulations to **Carl Porter**, Executive Director of Academic Support Centers and Programs, and Roxana (Roxy) Luna, Talent Search Academic Advisor, both of whom were honored at the Regional ASPIRE Banquet on October 11th. Carl was recognized as the 2011 "Friend of ASPIRE." This annual award is given to a person in the ASPIRE Region who is not a TRIO employee and who has been particularly supportive of TRIO and TRIO programs.

Carl Porter has been an advocate for underrepresented students at Weber State University (WSU) for 23 years. His department includes many student support programs, such as the writing lab, computer labs, tutoring centers, and TRIO programs. Carl's department has grown over the years to include academic support services at both the Ogden and Davis County campuses.

Carl is compassionate and understanding of the needs of low-income, first-generation, and minority students. He is passionate about increasing student success and has impacted many students' lives at Weber State University. He is involved in various projects designed to meet the needs of students and community members. Carl was instrumental in creating "Dream Weber", a program that ensures full tuition to students whose annual household income is \$25,000 or less. Now in its second year, Dream Weber has opened doors to over 700 students who would not otherwise be able to afford a college education.

Carl supports TRIO in every way – right down to the clothes he



Carl Porter, 2011 "Friend of ASPIRE" with nominators Yvette Rosenberg and Lindsay Beddes

wears. He is often seen wearing shirts with TRIO logos on them. When people ask him what “TRIO” means he takes the opportunity to educate them about the TRIO programs on campus: UB, VUB, SSS, and TS. He makes a point of attending activities and getting to know the students. One year Carl went with the Upward Bound students on their summer trip. He rode ahead of their bus, on his Harley, all the way to Denver. Involvement like that ensures that TRIO students know how important they are. And, they will never forget Carl!

Carl stays up-to-date on what is happening in the TRIO community by regularly attending the national conference. He, of course, pays for this from his own budget, never asking for money that should be going to our students. In fact, he provides financial support to the TRIO programs on campus. This year he required one of his TRIO Directors to coordinate a state-wide TRIO Day celebration. Not only did he ask that the event be open to ASPIRE Utah members, he funded the event almost entirely from his own budget. He paid for “Celebrate TRIO” banners, popcorn bags with the TRIO emblem printed on them, and “TRIO Works” buttons.

TRIO staff and students at Weber State University are very fortunate to have a professional outside of its TRIO programs who places such a high value on our work. Carl Porter truly is an advocate for our programs and students, a friend of ASPIRE, and a friend of TRIO.

Roxy Luna received the 2011 “Rising Star” award, which is given annually to an individual who has worked in TRIO for no more than two years and who has excelled in providing services to TRIO and ASPIRE. Roxy has been working for TRIO Talent Search at Weber State University for nearly two years. Prior to that, she helped with field trips for the TS program at Salt Lake Community College for one summer, and worked at a juvenile detention facility in Salt Lake City. Roxy has excelled in providing services to our TRIO Talent Search students as well as to the state ASPIRE association. As such, she truly is a “Rising Star of TRIO.”



Roxana Luna, “2011 ASPIRE Rising Star” along with WSU TRIO TS Colleagues

Roxy is a hardworking individual who is constantly seeking new and effective ways to serve her students and improve our program. In April of 2011, Roxy planned and facilitated a “Northern Utah College Tour” for the sophomores and juniors in our program. The event was carefully and thoughtfully planned, and the 41 students in attendance had a wonderful opportunity to visit Utah State, University of Utah, and Westminster College.

Although the tour was intended for our sophomores and juniors, Roxy went out of her way to include a senior student who joined our program at the beginning of the year. This particular student planned on attending the University of Utah in the fall of 2011, but had been unable to find transportation to the U at a time when he could meet with an advisor. In addition to the already overwhelming task of coordinating the tour, Roxy set up

an individual session for this particular student, so that he could be on-track in meeting admissions requirements. This is but one illustration of Roxy’s ability to serve our students on an individual basis while maintaining the flow of the program as a whole.

Roxy has also stepped into a leadership role at the state level. In the fall of 2010, the secretary of ASPIRE Utah had to step down from her position. Roxy enthusiastically accepted the position, and fulfilled the term through fall of 2011. She has been organized and prompt in fulfilling her duties as secretary, and provided a valued service as she served on the ASPIRE Utah Board of Directors.



News from Montana

University of Montana Western

TRIO SSS

Nathan Boll joined the UM Western TRIO Student Support Services in August 2010. He enrolled in one of the University of Montana Western's new Math Major programs, and fills his spare time as an Assistant Residence Hall Director, a Student Senator, working at the campus radio station, and has just received a \$1,500 NASA undergraduate scholarship through the Montana Space Grant Consortium. These awards are made to select students enrolled at MSGC campuses in disciplines related to Science, Math, Engineering, Geology, Technology or other areas of interest to NASA.

This summer, Nathan hopes to receive an Internship through NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab. If he is selected, he will spend 10 weeks working with a scientist at JPL in Pasadena, CA, and receive a stipend of \$6,000 plus room and board.

Nathan also plans to take advantage of the study abroad programs offered through the Montana Western campus; he will be taking a Biology class that includes travel and study in Hawaii this Spring, a Political Science class in Ireland in May, a Geology course in Canada next Fall, and will be going on a geological survey in Nepal Spring semester 2013.

All while maintaining a 4.0 GPA.

Tamie Laverdure is featured in the article, *Plugging People in to the Outdoors* in the November/December issue of Montana Outdoors, the magazine of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. Tamie spent her summer at the new FWP Education and Conservation Center located near Spring Meadow Lake State Park. Tamie is a Biology major with a pre-professional Fish & Wildlife Officer related area. A link to that article is below.

<http://fwp.mt.gov/mtoutdoors/HTML/articles/2011/montanawild.htm>

Both Nathan and Tamie are fine examples of the success so many students enrolled in TRIO achieve. We are proud to include them in our program and know we can all expect great things from them.

New Programming!

The SSS Program at the University of Montana Western successfully launched our First-Year Program (FYP) this fall, 2011. We are focused on empowering and encouraging our first-year students to become individual learners who are able to articulate and pursue their personal and educational goals. Through piloting the FYP last spring we solidified our belief that the first year is a period of critical development where all the pieces can come together. Moving forward, we worked diligently to create interactive and engaging presentations to do just that.

Upon acceptance into SSS this fall, students were required to sign a new student contract committing themselves to their success and to the support of our First-Year Program. These new participants were then split

into two groups based on their class time within our Experience one block schedule. FYP students will have met eight times throughout the semester for presentations with various resources on campus to inform and connect individuals to each other, their campus, and their education. Presenters included: Schylar Canfield from the Student Assistance Foundation focusing on financial literacy and scholarship searches; Dr. Mark Krank, an Education and Psychology professor at UMW, focusing on test anxiety; our very own 2011 TRIO achiever, Viliami Haunga, and a fellow TRIO senior and education major, Justin Cossey, created and presented their own lesson plan focusing on learning styles; Sarah Juran, Coordinator of Career Services and the Learning Center used the MCIS to connect career planning to UMW degrees; and finally one of our counselors, Jerry Girard, along with students from our Health and Wellness committee, focused separately on alcohol use and sexual health. Our first-year participants were supported by four peer mentors, all of whom were participants in our pilot last spring. The peer mentors acted as a friendly face on campus, an age related support, and as an early alert for students struggling and in need.

SSS staff believe the FYP has helped students better manage the transition from high school to college. It has proved to be an effective early alert tool allowing SSS staff to promptly serve our students during academic, emotional, and health crisis. While important to retaining our students and graduating them, we believe the FYP has also increased student connection to UMW, TRIO staff, and to each other.



Viliami Haunga 2011 MT TRIO Achiever



TRIO Retention Specialist, Brett Morehouse, with Viliami Haunga at the MT State Meeting Awards Banquet

Alumni News

Roberta Bisbee, UMW and TRIO SSS alumnae, is now a member of the Nez Perce Tribal Government. Roberta graduated from UMW with a degree in business and during her tenure at Western she worked in the TRIO SSS (then EOP) office as a work study student. She is now employed with the Human Resource Department as the Benefits Specialist & HR Generalist for both the Nez Perce Tribe and the Clearwater River Casino and is the administrator for the Board of Trustees for the 401K plan for all four tribal entities.

Roberta is a dedicated wife, mother and tribal member and we are proud to know that we played some part in her success as she continues making a difference in her community.

You can read her bio here: <http://nezperce.org/Official/mainpages/nptec.htm>





TRIO Students Celebrate Recent Successes

Dec 14th, 2011 University of Montana Western website

Sharon Christensen

Two University of Montana Western students involved with TRIO Student Support Services are celebrating recent successes during their undergraduate work at Montana Western.

Nathan Boll — a UMW mathematics senior — received a \$1,500 scholarship through NASA and Tamie Laverdure — a UMW biology, pre-professional fish and wildlife major — was featured in a story in the November/December 2011 issue of Montana Outdoors, the magazine of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

Both Boll and Laverdure are participants in Montana Western's TRIO program, which is part of a federal program aiming to increase the college retention and graduation rates of students. TRIO's name initially came into use for its first three programs originally authorized under the Higher Education Act in 1965, however the program now consists of seven distinct federally funded student programs.

Boll was chosen for his award based on his achievements in disciplines related to science, math, engineering, geology, technology and similar areas of interest to NASA. Boll also applied for a grant to participate in a paid summer 2012 internship through NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab (JPL), working for 10 weeks with a JPL scientist in Pasadena, Calif.

Laverdure spent her 2011 summer at the brand new Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Montana Wild Education and Conservation Center and Montana Outdoors editor Tom Dickson featured Laverdure in his story "Plugging People In To the Outdoors."

Montana Wild is located near Spring Meadow Lake State Park just west of Helena, Mont. During her time at Montana Wild Laverdure developed a program to provide children with bear biology background and hands-on learning stations to help youth become comfortable with experiencing the outdoors safely in bear country. Laverdure encouraged Montana Wild visitors to connect with open spaces through education. Her work aligned with the Center's long-range goal of educating the public about outdoor skills to encourage stewardship of the wildlife, water and land.

Montana Career Information System (MTCIS)

Currently, Career Information Systems (CIS) are in 21 states and originated at the University of Oregon. Montana's Career Information System is funded out of the College Access Challenge Grant through the U.S. Department of Education.

The Montana Career Information System (MCIS) is a comprehensive Internet-based system that delivers accurate and useful local and national information to assist users in making career plans and learning how to achieve their educational and career goals.

MCIS provides unbiased information on more than 550 occupations, 640 programs of study, and current



Montana wage, employment and outlook data. This data is provided by the State of Montana Department of Labor. Users can access pertinent data on all accredited Montana schools, and 3,500 other schools as well as over 12,000 financial aid opportunities. MCIS is available in a high school/adult/college version or a junior/middle school version (MCIS Junior). Also, MCIS has several optional components that organizations can add, such as academic and civil service practice tests, and IDEAS assessment tool, Universal Encouragement Program, and Dependable Strengths.

The Montana Career Information System (MCIS) is available **free** to all Montanans and is administered through the Montana Department of Labor's Career Resource Network or MCRN.

But, did you know that MCIS now has strong ties to TRIO programs across the great state of Montana and that there are many different TRIO programs using this system to better their students' educational and career opportunities? Three TRIO programs talk about how their programs have been using MCIS and how it has helped their students make plans for the future.

Michelle Christianson of Montana Tech's Educational Talent Search thinks that "this program is most helpful in the way that it provides tools for students to use to prepare for their postsecondary education and careers after high school. Through the various sorts, inventories and assessments, students get to know themselves and find their strengths both academically and professionally. In the Talent Search program, I encourage my coordinators to use as many of the assessments and inventories as they have time with the students for. The more often students take the assessments, the more accurate a picture they will have of their likes and dislikes in regards to a certain program of study or profession.

The resume builder is another important benefit of the MCIS system. Students can begin a resume and save it to their portfolios. The student can later return to the resume to update educational and work histories. This gives the student a place to keep this important information so that they may return to it whenever they need it. Of course there are many benefits in addition to the ones I have listed here but these are the tools that I use most frequently and have the best results with."

Darlene Samson, University of Montana Missoula Student Success Services (SSS) states, "MCIS is an invaluable tool for any person of any age! At the collegiate level, I have found it useful as a career exploration model—know yourself, find out about the world of work, and make a plan. Choosing a career is a life-long process and finding out how to make more informed career decisions is one way MCIS helps supplement a career decision model.

Self-assessment tools—O'Net, Occupations Sort, and Career Cluster inventory helps a student narrow their choices as they become more aware of who they are and what their interests are in an occupation. Students can narrow their choices as they become more educated about occupational information.

SKILLS is a great section to work with college students as they look at careers. How can they acquire skills for their career choice? Internships, work experiences, and volunteering are all helpful ways to begin developing skills. Once you've gained skills, how can these skills be transferred into other occupations or careers?

Another great section for all students is to look at Financial Aid opportunities through Financial Aid sort. The hardest part is done and that is supplying information as where to seek these scholarships.

Lastly, resume and cover letter construction is a huge help for college students. Samples, video



demonstrations, and easy-to-build resume' construction site is available. It's easy to build a resume' but even better when you can return and continue to add information.

Training students in higher education to navigate through MCIS is like peeling away at the skin of an onion. There are so many levels and so much useful information that you know students will continue to return and use again and again. And without tears!"

Charlene Herron of Flathead Valley College Student Success Services (SSS) praised what MCIS does for her students:

"MCIS AND TRIO - WHAT A GREAT COMBINATION! This past spring the Montana Career Information System and TRIO combined resources to offer even more opportunities and "pay offs" for students.

TRIO projects across the state will offer their staff members as MCIS trainers to support educators and to help students at all levels of education from elementary to college learn about the premier career planning and information resource available for free to Montana schools and social service agencies.

This partnership gives schools and students additional support on how to best use the great MCIS resources for:

- *Career Planning,*
- *Career Assessment,*
- *Occupation Information,*
- *State and national Education and Training,*
- *Financial aid and Scholarship resources,*
- *Employment Readiness.*

The great news for TRIO students is that they also have a scholarship opportunity. MCIS/TRIO scholarships provided \$45,000 dollars in scholarships this last spring and will be offering twice as much in the coming year."

For more information on MCIS and what MCIS can do for your TRIO program, please visit the website at www.mtcis.intocareers.org or call Kehli Kankelborg at 490-0469.