



ASPIRATIONS

Official Newsletter of APSIRE, INC.

TRiO

January—April 2014



ASPIRE 2014

Energizing Tomorrow's Future

Grand Forks Oct. 12th-15th

Registration is now open!

click here:

<http://www.cvent.com/d/54qx0d>



Message from the President



Greetings ASPIRE,

As many of you are aware Upward Bound is turning 50! We have been encouraged to promote this significant event within our communities, as well as our institutions because this is a great cause for celebration. This gives us the opportunity to promote the history of TRIO's "First Program" as well as provide a detailed history of the countless students who have succeeded in this program. Upward Bound, as well as the rest of our TRIO programs have made the difference in the lives of low-income, first-generation student and students and students with disabilities. This is the opportunity to engage with your institution, with your state and regional association, and your own alumni to make this year a significant year one that will be remembered.

Please keep in mind that there is an Upward Bound 50th Anniversary video competition. The competition is open to all Upward Bound Projects (UB/Veterans Upward Bound/Upward Bound Math/Science). In the event that you decide to take advantage of this competition it is encouraged that the video occur during the Summer 2014 Program, in addition to your planned curriculum. VUB programs can begin any time after they register for the contest online at COE. The videos will be due by Friday, July 25, 2014. Online applications are available on the COE website www.coenet.us.

Additionally, if you are planning on attending COE's 33rd Annual Conference in September 7-10, 2014, please be aware that the room block is now open, and you will want to make your room reservations as soon as possible. The location will be at the Marriott Wardman Hotel, located at 2660 Woodley Rd, NW, Washington DC.

Last, please be aware that this year's ASPIRE Conference will be held in Grand Forks, North Dakota on October 12th-15th. We are in the process of completing registration at this time, and will notify you via your state presidents. However, please check the ASPIRE website periodically (aspireonline.org) to make sure that you have up to date information. This year's conference theme is "Energizing Tomorrow's Future." Our regional board just completed our May 2014 Board Meeting where we had the opportunity to tour the community, and see the venue planned for the conference. We look forward to having a great conference, and would ask that you initiate your plans on attending. This conference committee has been hard at work to ensure that this conference will be a great opportunity for professional development. We look forward to seeing as many of our TRIO professional attend as possible.

Craig Harter

News from Utah

ASPIRE Utah TRIO Achievers

Three outstanding students were selected to be the ASPIRE Utah TRIO Achievers for 2013-2014. They were honored on March 14th during the Utah State Conference hosted by and held at Salt Lake Community College.

Johna Kay Andreason



My name is Johna Kay Andreason. I am thirty years old. Also, I am a divorced, single-mother with three bright and beautiful little girls. They are, by far, my greatest joy. We live in Kanarrville, Utah. I became divorced when I was twenty-five and was left to be the head of household for our little family. After much struggle and searching in my life, I enrolled full-time at Southern Utah University at the age of twenty-eight. Being a first generation, non-traditional, single-mother student has its challenges, but I know I am setting an example for my daughters. I know we will have a brighter future, and this path is leading me to an indescribable, passionate place within myself that I didn't even know existed.

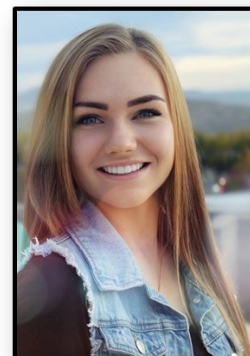
When I was informed about Student Support Services, it was nothing short of the miracle. Upon my enrollment, my father had been diagnosed with cancer and underwent major surgery. My mother was diagnosed with cancer the next year and had a double mastectomy among other health problems. This left my family support system unable to help me financially. I have also found it difficult to find steady employment that fits into our busy schedules and still allows time to be a mother. Student Support Services not only made it financially possible for me to have enough fuel money to make it to my classes and get through times of financial hardship, but they provided the foundation in Mathematics that I would need to go forward and gain confidence in my education. I plan on getting a degree in Engineering with a minor in English. My cumulative GPA is 3.90, and my name has been included on the Dean's List. I receive invitations to honor societies but lack the availability to accept because of responsibilities at home. Student Support Services helps me live my dream, and makes it possible to keep living it.

Alexandra Engel

Alex joined Dixie State's Upward Bound program as a high school sophomore. Her parents were divorced and both were living in St. George, so she went from mom's house to dad's house frequently. She had a 3.0513 GPA when she was admitted to Upward Bound and had a career goal of interior design. Alex graduated high school in December 2013 with a 3.406 GPA. During her 3 years in Upward Bound, not only did her GPA increase, but she took hard classes: AP Literature, MATH 1010, Chemistry, FIN 1750 (Personal



Finance), POLS 1100, CIS 1200, PSYCH 1010, LIB 1010. She found out her mother was moving to SLC for career advancement before the end of the semester, so she graduated early and applied to the University of Utah. She moved with her mother to SLC in December and was accepted to the University of UT. She is currently attending the University of Utah (Spring semester) and is working towards a Degree In Communications. She attributes her success to Upward Bound. "Upward Bound has drastically changed my life in a positive way. It has given me hope for college and has raised my standards for my education."



Micah Toaheedli Daniels



Micah joined San Juan High School's Educational Talent Search program in 2010 at the age of 13. She has been very active in her participation in ETS. She has been on college field trips and actively works with her advisor to make sure she is ready to attend college and succeed. Micah was born in Wyoming and moved to Utah when she was in the second grade. She attended elementary school at Montezuma Creek Elementary and in the beginning, struggled to fit in with the other students. She felt isolated, considering she was from the Arapaho tribe in a predominately Navajo school. But soon her upbeat personality and friendly demeanor won over many friends. She now attends San Juan High School and is a shining example to other students. She is a true leader and a perfect example of what hard work and persistence can accomplish. She also started a club that helps other struggling Native American students academically so they can succeed in school and life. She loves Math and Science and was chosen to attend the (MS)2 program in Andover. While at this program she was chosen to be the cultural sharing leader for all Native American tribes. Most importantly is Micah's ability to spread cheer and happiness wherever she goes. She is constantly smiling and laughing and only talks positively about others. She will go far in life with her caring attitude and her incredible work ethic. Micah will be attending Dartmouth this fall with her older sister Melanie (another San Juan High ETS student), whom is also attending Dartmouth.

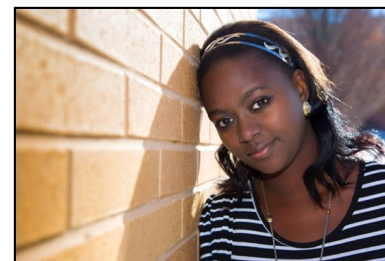


Southern Utah University—SSS

Southern Utah University's Student Support Services program honored four students with TRIO Achiever awards during a special luncheon held on Friday, April 4th.

Adjila Boubacar

I am so thankful for the Student Support Center at SUU. When I first came here, I had many fears and anxieties. I didn't know how to register for classes or what I needed to do to even get started. My academic advisor suggested that I talk to John Shafer about math classes; this was the best thing I have ever done. Learning that they had a tutoring center right outside the classroom put my fears at ease! It took me two years and many, many hours in the math lab to complete all of my math classes, but once I finished I knew I could do anything because I had gotten through the hardest part: MATH.



Math Specialist Lohra Wolden presents Adjila Boubacar with one of the TRIO

One of the happiest days of my college career was finding out I had passed 1050 with a B! I never thought that I could do that, but having the help of Lohra Wolden and the tutors helped me realize that I could do hard things. I have always struggled with math, in 7th grade I was in the lowest math class my school offered, which really lowered my self-esteem about my ability to do math. Ever since then I knew math would be a struggle for me. I was so thankful for Mark Leavitt and Lohra Wolden who helped me realize that just because math didn't come easy to me didn't mean I couldn't do it or that I was stupid. They built up my confidence, which helped me through the rest of my college career and now I am graduating in May with a major in Hotel Resort and Hospitality Management! I never could have done it without the help of the Student Support Center.

Jacyln Edwards

First and foremost, I would like to thank God for the immense privilege He has given me with the greatest education opportunity I could ever dream for. His never-ending grace, provision, protection, and mercy have strengthened me through the wonderful people and institutions in my life. It's a great honor to have been selected for this award. Although I was born in Utah, I was raised in Niger (Africa) and came back to pursue a degree in Political Science and Sociology with a certificate in International Relations.

Coming to Southern Utah University was a life-changing event. It was one thing to dream of a higher education, and another to achieve it. The struggles and challenges were much more than I had imagined. Just before starting college, I lost my beloved father, and my mom was going through hardship to care for her eight children. The language barrier made college a significant struggle at first, and I also had to support myself and family.



Growing up in Africa, education was not given to me on a silver platter. I was taught that without an education you really could not make it in the world. Education was the key to the future. I learned early-on the value of a solid education from my parents. I'm so grateful that I did not complete my journey here alone.



Numerous SUU faculty and staff have supported me, especially Student Support Services, where through math support, warm smiles, financial assistance, and genuine care I kept up the courage to be away from my family and keep trying harder and to finally see my dream come true!

Matt VanBlaricom

I would like to take a moment to discuss what the Student Support Center on SUU campus has done for me. When I first came to college I ended up in the Student Support Center offices by mistake. After speaking with John I ended up getting tested to place me in math. I would like to say that Mark Leavitt has helped me enormously by teaching me concepts in mathematics that have not only stuck with me but continue to expand. Thanks to the wonderful help of all my instructors and support staff at the Student Support center I have decided to become an elementary teacher who specializes in mathematics. Every member of the team helped me at one time or another. Mark taught me to enjoy math and still continues to teach me more. Lohra taught me the advanced algebra concepts that took me into calculus. She still teaches me by having me grade assignments. Lynne helps me with navigation of college and the minefield it can be. John taught me about thesis statements and I would have taken an English class from him anytime. To celebrate my success is to celebrate these wonderful people who have given me the vision and ambition to become a very passionate teacher.



Teri Crawford

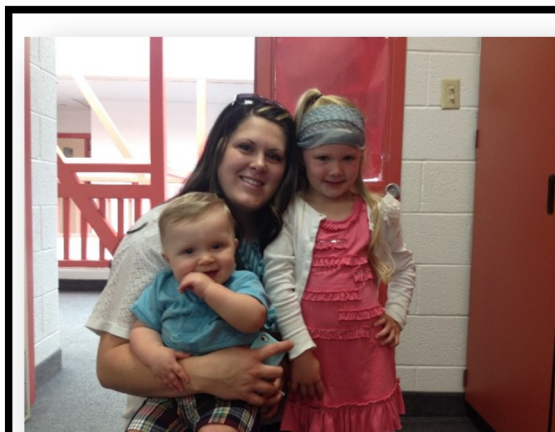
When I divorced at age thirty, I knew I needed major changes in my life. Becoming financially independent required an education. Entering college was the scariest decision I ever made. I had to face my fears of not being smart enough and the possibility of failing. Prior to entering SUU, I was diagnosed with ADHD and a hearing impairment, which helped me understand my struggle with school while growing up and why I wasn't as successful as I could have been. With the help of hearing aids and medication, I knew that I had a chance to attain my goal.



As a non-traditional student and mother of three amazing girls, I knew that school was not going to be easy. I was blessed to have Student Support Services help me. SSS has given me much more than just a place to take my tests; it has provided me with guidance, help scheduling classes, advice on English papers, and awesome math tutors. For the first time in my life, I believed I was smart enough to succeed. My new confidence began with Math 0990. My professor believed in me when I didn't believe in myself. With a lot of hard work, I had my first "A" in a math class and developed a new love for learning. SSS is friendly faces; people who care about you and your future, and who help you succeed.

I have learned much about myself and what I am capable of. I have been challenged more than I ever imagined possible, and not only did I survive, I succeeded! I am graduating in May with a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a secondary education license. I am so grateful for all the help I have been given by the wonderful people at SSS. Thank You!

Southern Utah University TRIO Talent Search News



New Staff Member

We are happy to have Miranda Williams as our new advisor at Beaver High School. Miranda is a Beaver High Alumnus and is passionate about students pursuing their education after high school. She is excited to get to know all of her students and has already pulled off some amazing workshops!

Smarty Pants

Kori Cox Corbridge, an ETS graduate from Valley High School in 2010 was named Southern Utah University's Valedictorian this year! Kori was an excellent, highly sought after Math tutor for the SUU SSS program. She was an outstanding student and will be teaching Math at Canyon View High School in Cedar City, Utah this fall.



Two Utah ASPIRE Board Members Graduate

ETS Director and Utah ASPIRE Past President, Tami Shugart (right) and ETS Advisor and Utah ASPIRE Secretary, Lisa Livingston (left) both graduated Summa Cum Laude from Southern Utah University with a Masters in Public Administration. Congratulations!!



In other News....

High Achieving High School Seniors

85 of our 85 ETS high school seniors will be graduating at the end of May! 24 of those 85 were named Sterling Scholars at their high schools!

USU Blanding Campus Talent Search Students Attend NLSC

Last June, the Council for Opportunity held its 24th Annual National Student Leadership Congress (NSLC). The event brought 150 Upward Bound, Upward Bound Math/Science, and Talent Search students from 25 states, Puerto Rico, and Guam to Washington, DC. Participants in NSLC were rising juniors and seniors who were nominated by their TRIO Directors because of their leadership potential. The

Educational Talent Search (ETS) program at Utah State University – Blanding Campus nominated and sent four students to participate; Riva Thompson & Melanie Daniels from San Juan High School in Blanding, and Donna Snow & Layton Call from Grand County High School in Moab.

“Last summer was the first time ever that our ETS students were able to participate,” stated Jami Bayles, ETS Director. “It is so important that our students have the opportunity to meet with our state representatives and discuss educational issues that the students are currently facing. The four students that attended last summer had such a positive experience, and I’m excited to be able to send four more students to participate this year.”

During their week in Washington, the students stayed at American University and participated in interactive workshops on conflict resolution. They also attended discussions about college, visited the museums of the Smithsonian Institution, went on historical and cultural tours of Washington, DC, and attended a performance at the Kennedy Center. The students then went to Capitol Hill and visited with their Members of Congress and advocated for TRIO programs. One of the

highlights of NSLC was the Mock Congress which was designed to extend the values of democracy and citizen participation by engaging the students in activities that address current issues of concern. In the Mock Congress, the students examined current issues and discussed viewpoints for and against the issue. They were required to research, write, debate, and develop bills of legislation and then present the bill to the full student “Congress”.

Some of the bills introduced last year included violence in video games, whether privacy in social media should be protected, the question of whether school cafeterias contribute to the nation’s obesity problem, and same sex marriage. The students really enjoyed the research involved which enabled them to argue both sides of the issues.

When asked what their favorite part was during the NSLC, Riva stated, “Meeting new people, learning new things about our nation’s capital, and also meeting our state’s representatives. This experience is something I will never forget.”



Pictured top left: Melanie Daniels, Heath Alexander (COE Director of State Outreach Initiatives), Riva Thompson; top right: Donna Snow; middle left: Layton Call; bottom: students in front of Senator Hatch’s office.

Weber State University SSS Participants Honored at Commencement



An excerpt from Abelardo Saucedo, Weber State University Student Association Clubs and Organizations Vice President, SSS participant, and student graduate speaker at WSU's commencement ceremonies held on April 25th.

"A young boy grew up in a home where at times money was scarce. His family could barely afford the necessities of life. Yet his family and especially his mother believed that if he wanted to go to college he could go and accomplish what she never could.

So this young man

would defy the odds by learning English, working from a young age, and getting a multiple scholarships to go to college.

"While in college, he would become a Vice President of the student association, serve in university boards and committees, work in a presidential campaign, intern with the United States Senate, and finally graduate shortly after taking the oath of allegiance to officially become a citizen of the United States of America.

"For him, for me, it wasn't just a dream. It's part of my American Dream fulfilled here at Weber State University. Just one story, out of thousands of stories, waiting to be written by each one of you."



In addition, three SSS graduates were awarded Kente Cloths from the WSU Multicultural Center for their contributions and dedication to the center. The traditional Kente Cloth is a hand-woven ceremonial article of clothing originating from the country of Ghana. It is a visual icon of history, philosophy, ethics, and social code of conduct that an individual strives to represent. Within the academic world, Kente Cloths have been used to recognize individuals who have developed and embodied the ideals of the organization who awards them. Jayrod Garrett (pictured left), Tashina Barber, and Leontra Hill were awarded for their excellence through helping others and having actively participated in making Weber State a better university for all students and their community.



WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY



VUB Student is Committed to Helping Fellow Veterans

By Yulia Goff, Veterans Upward Bound, Weber State University
Randy Wilson – Director



Anthony Baza, originally from the island of Guam, joined the Army in 2007, immediately after high school graduation. In 2009, he was deployed to Iraq in support of Iraqi Freedom. In 2011, Anthony was promoted to the rank of sergeant and was placed in charge of seven soldiers in his squad. He departed active duty three years ago and transferred to the Utah Army National Guard. The transfer from active duty to part time has allowed Anthony to pursue his education and to accomplish this goal in a timely manner.

Leaving a well-paid job in the military to become a poor struggling college student was a hard transition to make. Yet Anthony knew it was the right move for him because returning to active duty as an officer means better opportunities and a higher pay. Anthony emphasizes: “I knew that in order to have more opportunities in the future, I had to invest in my education.”

Balancing school, work, and military schedule has not been easy. Anthony’s schedule is full and hectic. However, Anthony relies on imagination, faith, and hard work to overcome and break through the hardest obstacles in life. Anthony explains:

“I remember sitting at my security desk in a call center just imagining that one day I will become a therapist in the military. That vision inspired me to keep moving forward, even if success seemed out of reach. That vision uplifted me and I began to have faith that I would graduate even if I was struggling. A year ago I was at SLCC and working as a security guard. Today, I am a counselor working with troubled youth and I will be graduating with my bachelors in Criminal Justice with a minor in Psychology from Weber State in April 2014.”

Anthony adds that vision and faith are not enough. He had to work hard, too: wake up earlier, be the first one in class, stay at school longer, find a math tutor, and continue to keep trying even if he was failing.

Math was the biggest obstacle Anthony faced in college. He failed two math classes, and there were times he felt like giving up. Even though he studied for many hours, he still fell short of a passing grade. Anthony is grateful for Daniel Kiser, VUB math instructor, and feels that without Daniel’s help it would have been extremely difficult for him to pass his required math classes.

Anthony has made great progress, but he has already set even higher goals. He will begin the Masters of Social Work (MSW) program at the University of Utah this fall. The MSW degree will enable Anthony to obtain a professional license and to practice psychotherapy/counseling in the military upon graduation. Anthony has a deeply personal reason for choosing this path:

“When I was in Iraq, three soldiers in my unit committed suicide. It was disturbing to know that my unit was strong enough to survive a deployment, but not strong enough to overcome mental health issues and avoid losing soldiers to suicide. My goal is to return back to the military as a therapist/counselor to help soldiers get through hard times.”

Anthony is one of many students at VUB who remains committed to helping and supporting fellow veterans and active military members, even as they face great challenges in their personal life. As staff members, it is our honor and pleasure to serve you and witness the camaraderie among our program participants. We wish Anthony the best of luck as he begins this new chapter, and we are confident he will succeed.

Westminster College McNair celebrates student achievements



WESTMINSTER
SALT LAKE CITY • UTAH

The McNair Scholars Program at Westminster College has a lot to celebrate this spring. In March, we received word that neuroscience major, Chrono Nu was selected as a 2014 Goldwater Scholar. This scholarship supports high achieving students who will pursue research careers in math, science or engineering. Chrono aspires to build a brain-computer interface using artificial intelligence and EEG technology that will allow paralyzed individuals to use computers with ease. You can learn more about his research from a recent [interview with KSL](#).



Graduate acceptance season has come and gone and our graduating seniors have made decisions on the next step in their academic journey:

Jasmin Alves: University of Southern California, PhD Program in Biomedical and Biological Sciences; Merima Beganovic: Washington University in St. Louis, Energy, Environmental and Chemical Engineering PhD program; Duke Cruz: Ohio University, Philosophy MA program; Katrina England: SUNY Binghamton University, Social, Political, Ethical and Legal Philosophy

PhD program; Courtney Hammond: Ohio State University, Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies MA program; Helen Makhdoumain: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Literature MA/PhD program; Domingo Madrigal: University of Texas at Austin, The New Writers Project MFA program; Paige Martinez: University of Connecticut, Social Psychology PhD program; Wendolens Ruano: University of Utah, Education Leadership & Policy MED program; Carolina Silva: Washington State University, Cultural Studies and Social Thought in Education PhD program; Ethel Tackie-Yarboi: awaiting notice from post baccalaureate research programs; and Dexter Thomas: University of Utah, Social Psychology PhD program.

Lastly, several of our seniors were recognized as Outstanding Students in their department.

Katrina England, Philosophy; Courtney Hammond, Gender Studies and Psychology Research; Domingo Madrigal, English Creative Writing; Helen Makhdoumian, English Literary Studies; and Carolina Silva, Service in Psychology.

Araceli Frias, Program Coordinator for TRIO McNair at Westminster stated, "It has been a pleasure working with these students over the year and it is rewarding to know that their hard work continues to pay off."



DSU

DIXIE STATE UNIVERSITY


TRiO
TALENT SEARCH

MAY 2014

11TH GRADE NORTHERN UTAH TOUR 2014

We had the privilege of taking our Juniors on a northern Utah college tour this February. We had worries of bad weather in the beginning but even mother nature cooperated to make this one of our most memorable college tours yet.

We stopped first at *The Commons at the Cannon Center* located on the campus of Brigham Young University. Our lunch was super and a great opportunity for our Junior students to get a glimpse of what lunch at a major university looks like. Next, we participated in a BYU science

presentation that wowed our students and got them excited about possible STEM majors.

Just down the road we visited UVU. Every year we visit they have more state of the art buildings and educational offerings. They gave us a great tour!

That evening we also had a cultural experience planned for the students. We gave them time in downtown Salt Lake City to tour the City Creek Center as well as the brand new Natural History Museum of Utah. What an experience!

We finished our trip with

a grand tour of the University of Utah. They also have many new buildings & educational opportunities each year but the highlight for our students has to be lunch at *The Pie*, located just off campus. As you can see from the pizza below we all had plenty to eat!



WE LOVE OUR STUDENTS!!!

This year we will serve only 782 compared to a high of 1200 in 2008. Budget cuts and flat level funding have really affected our ETS program. We love each of our ETS students because we know each one personally and their stories. Many of their stories are heartbreaking, yet the students move forward with tremendous strength and hope for the future, not only for themselves, but their

families too.

The Dixie State University ETS program is alive and well because ETS has the support of the University, School District and the individual high schools and middle schools we work with.

We are so fortunate! I hear from other schools that they do not experience the same acceptance that our program receives.

Nothing could be finer (except getting the funding we need from the Department of Education) than being a member of TRiO—which includes everyone involved in making this program work.

**TRiO really does
WORK!**



News from Wyoming

Wyoming Educational Access Day is a day when TRIO, and GEAR UP, students from all across Wyoming have the opportunity to connect with their legislators in Cheyenne. Traditionally, students from Upward Bound, Student Support Services and McNair, along with some Cheyenne GEAR UP students, are represented on this day. This year the tide changed – for the first time ever Wyoming ASPIRE was able to send Educational Opportunity Center students, from outside the Cheyenne area, to participate in Wyoming Educational Access Day! Noticing the importance of *all* students and their individual stories and uniqueness that may set them apart from their peers is crucial to connecting with legislators – acknowledging what our non-traditional students represent (i.e. – tax paying citizens, or potential tax paying citizens, who vote) was a primary reason for this focus on providing these students access to their state legislators.

Conrad Nuanes III, former Cheyenne UB student, attended – traveling, in a snowstorm of course, from Torrington, Wyoming. Conrad is a unique student who attended Bluegrass Community and Technical College in Kentucky prior to enrolling in Eastern Wyoming Community College in Spring 2014. Not only did Conrad show up ‘dressed to impress,’ he also engaged with the other students in attendance and with the state legislators he was able to meet. Conrad has been accepted to the University of Wyoming, and will begin attending classes in Laramie in the Fall of 2014 – Conrad is also a Hathaway Scholarship recipient and was recognized by UB with the TRIO Heart Award in 2012.



Wyoming Educational Access Day – Heather Webb Springer (EOC Coordinator), Conrad Nuanes III (EOC Student) and Kenneth Stacy (EOC Coordinator)

Daniel Uptain traveled from Casper, Wyoming to attend Wyoming Educational Access Day. Daniel is a current Casper College student and has recently submitted his application for the Craig and Susan Thomas Foundation Scholarship. When Daniel was first introduced to the EOC programs he was in a mock interview program and he described himself as someone with “boundless energy” – this self-proclaimed description has served him well! Daniel was engaged and invested in his time spent in Cheyenne for Educational Access Day – as a result of his commitment to capitalizing on this experience, Daniel has been asked to be a keynote speaker at the SOAR Conference at the University of Wyoming in August 2014!



In addition to the two EOC students mentioned above, Devyn Nuanes, former UB student and current Laramie County Community College student, and Adam Guinn, enrolled at Laramie County Community College Spring Semester 2014, were also in attendance.

Wyoming Educational Access Day – Daniel Uptain (EOC Student) and Senator John C. Schiffer (Wyoming State Legislator)



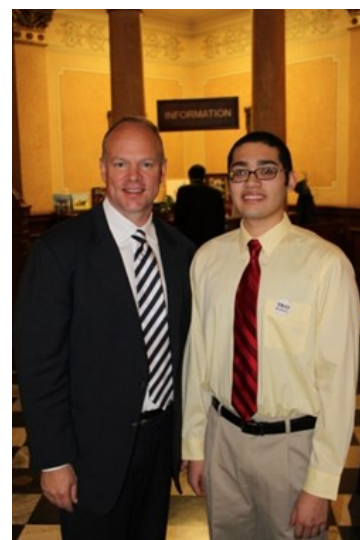
An introduction (from Helen Joyce Brown, SSS mentor):

Diego is one of the most delightful people that I have worked with as a Mentor in the Student Support Services (SSS) program. Diego is extremely responsible and mature. He is always thinking about the future and his career goals, and he takes advantage of all of the opportunities, resources and services that SSS has to offer.

Even though Diego works as a supervisor outside of school, he also works as a Resident Assistant on campus and donates his time as a Student Ambassador. He has managed to do all of this and still earn a 3.89 GPA in the meantime. Diego was honored as the Wyoming Association of Community College Trustee's 2013-2014 Student of the Year. He has also accepted an internship in U.S. Senator John Barrasso's office in Sheridan, Wyoming for the Summer of 2014. I am excited for when Diego will progress to a four year university, and I look forward to learning about his future accomplishments!

From Diego Zepeda: My name is Diego Zepeda. I am a sophomore at Gillette College (Northern Wyoming Community College District). I am involved in a lot of activities on campus. I am both a Student Ambassador and a Resident Assistant for Student Housing, and I am a member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and the Student Support Services (SSS/TRIO) program. I also work at the Campbell County Rec Center where I am a Supervisor for Pool activities. I have worked there for four years.

My educational goal is to obtain my Bachelor's degree in both Business Management and Administrative Management. I have decided to attend the University of Wyoming (UW), after touring UW, Chadron and Montana State as part of the SSS program. My career goal is to manage an interesting business related to physical activity or a rec center. I like being in SSS; SSS has helped me advance my education and be more prepared when I move on to a four year school, as well as life in general. It has given me an opportunity to practice being on time, talking to people and holding to a schedule of weekly meetings. SSS has opened doors for me and allowed me to network. I even met Governor Mead last year when I attended Educational Access Day with SSS. Through SSS I have learned to hold conversations with people older than myself, and it has opened doors for me. I know how to utilize resources available to me. SSS has helped me to be more mature and responsible. It has also helped me with time management. I know I have to stay on top of things and that time is key for me. I can't push stuff back, and I have to keep working all the time on things that are due.



Diego Zepeda with Governor Matt Mead at Educational Access Day 2013.

“For me, Educational Access day was one of the greatest experiences I have been a part of in the TRIO program. TRIO has opened many doors for my future and this has been another one.”

-Diego Zepeda

University of Wyoming

Upward Bound

The Project Coordinator, Lori Brown-Wirth (Regional ASPIRE Secretary), for the University of Wyoming Upward Bound and Upward Bound Math Science programs in Casper, Wyoming was excited to host 112 people at the annual Awards Ceremony on May 15, 2014.

This special event honored students for their many accomplishments throughout the school year, including high school graduation, volunteer efforts and making it through another school year!

Presenters included Scholarship Specialist, Lisa Goss from Casper College, Richard Thompson from the Educational Opportunity Centers, Rob Johnston from Project Regain, and Lisa Brown from Gear Up.

Attendees included Upward Bound and Upward Bound Math Science students and family members as well as school counselors from the area.

New students were also welcomed into the program. It was an awesome, educational event celebrating education!



Photo taken at Casper UB Award Ceremony May 15, 2014 –

Sarah Cameron, (left-hand-side, dark hair), senior UB student who plans to attend Casper College in the Fall.

Paige Cameron, (right-hand-side, blonde hair), 2012 UB graduate who just completed her first year of college; Paige attended the National Student Leadership Congress in 2012, her team won first place with their presentation at NSLC.

McNair Scholars Program

UW Student Receives NSF Graduate Research Fellowship

April 23, 2014 — If ever a student exemplifies the goals of the McNair Scholars Program, it is **Josh Heyer**, a University of Wyoming student from Windsor, Colo., who will graduate this spring with a triple major in geography, environment and natural resources, and Spanish.

Along the way, he has earned numerous honors for his academic accomplishments, including selection as an EPSCoR Fellow and as a student speaker at the UW College of Arts and Sciences Honors Convocation, and as one of the college's top graduating seniors.



To top it off, he is the only UW student this year to be awarded a National Science Foundation Research



(NSF) Fellowship, one of the nation's most highly competitive awards for graduate studies. It offers, among other things, a three-year annual \$32,000 stipend; a \$12,000 cost-of-education allowance; and international research and professional development opportunities.

Heyer credits McNair Scholars Program administrators Zackie Salmon and Susan Stoddard for helping build his foundation for success. The McNair program prepares promising undergraduate students from groups traditionally underrepresented in graduate education to enter and complete a doctoral degree program. Services include a research internship, mentoring from UW faculty members, academic support and tutoring, and assistance with the graduate school application process.

Heyer qualified for the McNair program as a first-generation college student, as neither of his parents hold a college degree.

"Zackie and Susan have pointed me in the right direction, which has allowed me to network with various individuals on campus," Heyer says. "During my McNair internship, I learned how to write research proposals, write research manuscripts and prepare for graduate school."

Salmon and Stoddard were not the only ones who helped Heyer achieve his academic goals. UW Department of Geography faculty members J.J. Shinker, associate professor, and Tom Minckley, assistant professor, also provided outstanding mentorship, Heyer says.

"J.J. has guided me during my undergraduate research and has been an amazing mentor during both my McNair and EPSCoR internships," he says. "Dr. Minckley has been very helpful, assisting me in my research as well as employing me during the summer working in his lab."

"Josh has excelled in both the McNair Scholars Program and Wyoming EPSCoR, from the initial proposal design to acquiring data, learning analyses and mapping tools, and completing the research by submitting a manuscript to a peer-review journal," says Shinker, who mentored Heyer in both projects. "Josh has seamlessly integrated skills from his majors to identify and understand the causes and impacts of drought along the U.S. and Mexico border. I feel lucky to have had the opportunity to work with such a great student and look forward to seeing his career grow."

Others cited by Heyer for their support and guidance are Carl Legleiter, geography assistant professor; UW Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources lecturers Maggie Bourque and Courtney Carlson; and UW Department of Modern and Classical Languages faculty members Emily Hind and Kevin Larsen.

About the NSF Fellowship

More than 2,000 students received fellowships from among more than 14,000 applicants for NSF Graduate Research Fellowships this year. Heyer's award is through the Geosciences-Climate and Large-Scale Atmospheric Dynamics unit.

The program ensures the vitality and diversity of America's scientific and engineering workforce by supporting outstanding graduate students who are pursuing research-based master's and doctoral degrees in fields within NSF's mission.

Heyer has accepted a graduate assistantship at the University of Utah, where he will research how climate mechanisms -- in the atmosphere and at the surface -- control drought conditions in arid environments. After completing his master of science degree, he plans to use NSF support to apply at universities in several Spanish-speaking countries to begin work on his Ph.D. degree.



Lander Student Named Top Graduating Woman at UW

April 25, 2014 — **Melanie Vigil**, who will graduate in May with a double major in gender and women's studies and global and area studies, is the recipient of the Rosemarie Martha Spitaleri Award as the University of Wyoming's outstanding graduating woman. The award, established in 1964, recognizes Vigil for exhibiting the finest leadership, academic integrity and citizenship qualities. Patrick Rodgers of Casper received the Tobin Award, honoring the outstanding graduating man.



Vigil is the daughter of Rubel and Chris Vigil of Lander. Her major focuses on issues of human rights, and she frequently does volunteer work on campus, in Laramie and around the state. She has been called a “gifted student and community and campus leader.”

With an endorsement from the UW Honors Program, her achievements as an outstanding student were acknowledged by her nomination for the Wyoming Woman Distinction Award; induction to the International Studies Honor Society; and being named to either the President's Honor Roll (4.0 GPA) or Dean's Honor Roll every semester she attended UW.

As an aide to Albany County Rep. Cathy Connolly during the recent state legislative session, Vigil was a liaison for the representative's social bills, including marriage equality, domestic partnerships and employment nondiscrimination. One of her shining moments at UW, she says, was to organize students on campus to call their representatives and ask them to support Connolly's legislation.

“Working at the Legislature has truly been life changing; it has made me realize that each individual has a voice. I am very passionate about spreading this message to my fellow students and peers,” Vigil says. “I strongly advocate for more people of color and women to get involved in the Wyoming political process, and look forward to recruiting more students into the legislative internship program.”

Those strong qualities are why Connolly, director of the UW Department of Gender and Women's Studies, selected Vigil as a legislative aide.

“She was responsible for the difficult task of organizing the UW student presence for two emotionally charged bills -- the anti-human trafficking bill and the pro-gay rights bills -- both of which required her to train students to testify and lobby rather than to storm the chambers,” Connolly says. “She excelled and made the individuals and groups involved feel not only knowledgeable of the process and how to achieve success, but also to feel that they were valued members of the process.”

Vigil also volunteered in several student organizations, and is involved in the McNair Scholars Program, which encourages underrepresented students to seek higher education degrees; she plans to enroll in graduate school at UW. Her on-campus, community and state work make her want to succeed, says another nominator.

“Melanie personifies what an outstanding graduate should be. She is a passionate, responsible, intelligent, motivated, caring leader who has made me proud and will continue to make UW proud for years to come,” says Brian Romero, Multicultural Affairs Office project coordinator.



Vigil says she will use her UW education and volunteer work as a stepping stone to the next phase of her career.

“These past four years have allowed me to grow as a professional and as a person, and I can’t wait to continue my education at UW,” she says. “Through being involved in my university, community and state, I’ve learned that engaging oneself in their surroundings is the recipe for success, both personally, academically and professionally.”

News from Montana

Montana ASPIRE Partners with other College Access Programs

On April 28-30th, Montana ASPIRE, Montana College Access Network (MCAN), and Gear up Programs partnered to provide a quality conference in Great Falls themed “Spotlight on College Access.” How fortunate we were to engage in quality, professional development opportunities! Our partners and colleagues were able to participate in learning more about veteran’s issues, financial literacy, student resiliency, data education from the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, Montana Career Information System (MCIS), Graduation Matters, and Montana College Access Network Gap Analysis. We could not have asked for a better line-up of speakers/presenters that included our Montana State Governor, Steve Bullock, Legislator Amanda Curtis, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Denise Juneau, Student Assistance Foundation, Adina Glickman from Stanford’s Resilient Project, Amy Verlanic, Dr. Susan Wolffe, Shane Sangrey, Jim Stipcich and more!

Of course, our conference wouldn’t be as meaningful if we didn’t highlight our students. Many thanks to the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation for funding our student awards banquet by providing a \$5000 grant. Awardees included Kari Roat and Patti Guslander -SAF Achievers; Trudy Carey and Robert Daniels -TRIO Achievers, Isiah Murie, and , Adrien Wagner, Gear UP Achievers. The awards banquet is certainly a testimonial to the purpose and success of our programs and honors our students who strive to become educated citizens. Our students are awesome!

Other important TRIO news is ASPIRE voted to accept two-year terms for our President and Secretary/Treasurer positions. Yes, you’re stuck with Darlene and Peter for one more year! Hat’s off to Kelly Buck, ASPIRE President-Elect from MSU Billings SSS Program and Tonya Gunkel, MSUB Upward Bound. Thanks ladies for stepping up to the plate to serve ASPIRE!

Senator Tester has graciously accepted to write an article for ASPIRATIONS. You’ll find his first contribution in this newsletter!

ASPIRE members, don’t forget to renew your membership by submitting payment on line.

Lastly, as your state President, please contact me if you are not receiving my emails so I can add you to the list serve. (darlene.samson@umontana.edu) As well, I appreciate your input about how our Association is meeting your needs.

Thanks!

Darlene Samson, Montana ASPIRE State President



ASPIRATIONS

18

2014 Montana ASPIRE State Meeting





Senator Jon Tester: We must invest in the American Dream

May 14, 2014

America's greatness comes from the belief that every one of us – no matter how or where we grow up – will have a chance to make something of ourselves. Our belief in a fair shot, in equal opportunity, is what drives and inspires us to attempt great things.

But we cannot rest on our laurels. We must invest in the American Dream in order to make it a reality.

TRIO is a down payment on our dreams. Thanks to TRIO programs, students from Montana and across our nation are better prepared for the next steps in their educations. Financial, cultural and social barriers to higher education are falling. And doors of opportunity are swinging open.

As a former teacher and the founding chairman of the Senate's TRIO Caucus, I know that programs like Upward Bound, Educational Talent Search and Student Support Services help all types of students tap into their potential.

That's why I will continue supporting strong funding for TRIO. I recently joined with many of my colleagues to urge Senate leaders to increase TRIO funding in the 2015 budget so the students of today can emerge as the highly educated, competitive workforce that we will need tomorrow.

TRIO students come from a wide variety of backgrounds and have many stories. Most are young, but some, like Forrest Winkler of Missoula, Montana, use TRIO to help get a degree later in life. It goes to show that, with help from TRIO, the American Dream is never out of reach.

I grew up on a farm in north-central Montana. After I graduated high school my folks pushed me to get a college degree that would diversify myself and open up more opportunity. My mom believed that a good education is one of the building blocks of our democracy.

I couldn't agree with her more. That's why, as a father, a grandfather, and Senator, I will keep pushing to open the doors of higher education to *all* Americans who want the opportunity. And TRIO will continue to be a critical part of my efforts.

Senator Jon Tester is a third-generation farmer from Big Sandy, Montana. Elected in 2006 and re-elected in 2012, he is Montana's senior U.S. Senator.

Dan Malessa

Deputy Communications Director

U.S. Senator Jon Tester

O: (202) 228-0371

C: (202) 355-3784



Letter from U.S. Senator John Walsh in Support of TRIO

May 15, 2014

Born and raised in Montana, I received a top-notch education in Montana's public schools. I was proud to send my two boys, Michael and Taylor, to school in Montana. Over the last 17 years, I have seen firsthand through my wife's work in Helena's public schools just how much care and dedication is put into the education that every Montana student receives.

In recent months, I have met hundreds of bright, motivated Montana students. They have the energy, intellect, and ingenuity to lead the next generation of leaders and innovators in our state. I am working to partner with education leaders in the state to make sure that our students have all the tools they need to succeed in college and careers.

We know that Montana is a wonderful place to live, work, and raise a family. However, far too often, Montanans seeking higher education find they can't afford it, or graduate with staggering student debt. This is why I have introduced legislation to address the high levels of student loan debt our graduates accumulate.

It is essential that we have the systems in place, like TRIO and Upward Bound to work with our talented students, providing them with a world-class education from pre-k through post-secondary education and enable them to stay right here in Montana after they graduate. Due to the escalating costs of education, these graduates are forced to look for employment out of state.

For the first time in our nation's history, college students are graduating with more student loan debt than credit card or auto loan debt. The average student in Montana will leave with \$26,440 in student loans, which is slightly higher than the national average of \$25,000. That's why I'm proud to support legislation that will allow students and graduates to refinance their student loan rate down to four percent.

I remain a steadfast supporter of Pell Grants because I know how important they are for students and their families. We shouldn't reduce or cut this critical source of funding, because doing so would eliminate the opportunity to attend college for many Montana students.

We must make sure that our students receive all of the tools and resources they need to reach their full potential. This is why I called on the Appropriations Subcommittee that handles education resources to support resources for TRIO programs. TRIO programs help students become the first members of their families to graduate college. And, of course, TRIO doesn't stop there – it provides student support services and provides pre-college programs for our youth, a shared goal we can reach together.

Montana State University



Montana State University *Mountains, Minds & McNair Scholars*

The McNair Scholars Program (MSP) at Montana State University-Bozeman is one of the premier and nationally recognized undergraduate programs on campus. The essence of our program is to successfully combine faculty mentoring, undergraduate (UG) research, and academic support services for students whose families have not traditionally participated in post-secondary education. We are very proud of the MSP's success; we are embarking in on our 5th year at MSU in preparing talented students for graduate school. Already it is clear that structured UG research and scholarly experiences provided through programs like MSP are a superb way to engage students academically and encourage them to successfully pursue doctoral endeavors with competence and confidence. Following are some of the highlights the MSU McNair Scholars Program would like to share with all of our TRIO Family in the ASPIRE community and beyond.



MSU McNair Scholars group photo after enjoying an evening lecture by Carl McNair, January 1, 2014.

An evening with Carl McNair: Carl S. McNair, CEO and President of McNair Achievement Programs, and brother of Dr. Ronald E. McNair, was guest speaker at the Montana State University - Bozeman Martin Luther King, Jr. Evening Lecture on January 21, 2014. The event was co-sponsored by the MSU McNair



Scholars Program (www.montana.edu/mcnair), the Diversity Awareness Office, and the Office of the Provost.

With approximately 300 people in attendance, Mr. McNair relayed the challenges he and his brother Ronald endured growing up in South Carolina during segregation. In a fun and interesting connection to Martin Luther King, Jr. and *Star Trek*, Mr. McNair explained how his brother Ronald was inspired to become an astronaut because of the television series *Star Trek* that they would watch weekly as a family, particularly because of Nichelle Nichol's portrayal of Lieutenant Uhura. Mr. McNair explained that at one point, when Ms. Nichols considered leaving the show thinking her role wasn't that important, Dr. King encouraged her to reconsider because her portrayal of an African American woman in a scientific and leadership position of power was inspiring for all African Americans.

In showing the audience photographs of both the Space Shuttle Challenger and Columbia astronauts and pointing out the diversity represented, he expressed that this is what Ronald would have wanted to see and what Dr. King's dream was really about – the country coming together and working together.

The ASMSU *Exponent* uploaded the following video to YouTube of Mr. McNair's interview and presentation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kwhETZShWLg>

Other press from Carl McNair's visit to Montana in January:

The Bozeman Daily Chronicle: http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/news/montana_state_university/article_d8e4dfc8-82ff-11e3-9777-0019bb2963f4.html

MSU *Exponent* Newspaper: <http://msuexponent.com/2014/01/23/america-enterprise-inspiring-diversity/>



MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

LECTURE

TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2014
6:00 PM SUB BALLROOM A
FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



**FEATURING:
CARL MCNAIR.**

CEO AND PRESIDENT OF MCNAIR
ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAMS.

AUTHOR, EDUCATOR, SPEAKER

The McNair Foundation was created in honor of Carl's brother who died along with his astronaut colleagues aboard the Space Shuttle Challenger in 1986. McNair's presentation will explore what is achievable when we truly embrace diversity, drawing lessons of hope and inspiration from his own life experiences.

Sponsored by the Diversity Awareness Office, McNair Scholars Program, Office of the Provost, EMPOWER program, ASMSU, and the Year of Engaged Leadership.
For more information call the DAO at 994-5801 or visit montana.edu/diversity.

Public Flyer/Poster Announcement of McNair's Lecture.



2014 McNair Research Launch for new scholars.

Welcome to our newest McNair Scholars! Photo of students during the Annual McNair Scholars Research Launch for Conducting Research Workshop conducted on January 7, 2014. Top Left to Right: Maurisa Bell, Isaac Christensen, Cody Goodan, Tanner Lineberry, Katie DesLauriers, Leonna Niblock. Bottom Left to Right: Erica McKay (Dunn), Madison Martin, Kellie Phillips, Mariah Zuniga, Jenna Lipscomb. New McNair Scholars not pictured, Rachel Just, Sarah Miller, Julie Theis, Sally Weinand, and Amanda Williams.

The primary goal of the McNair Scholars Launch for Conducting Research is to prepare all new McNair Scholars for their first Summer Research Internship. The workshop covers topics that familiarizes students on how to efficiently, effectively, and ethically conduct a McNair Summer Research literature review, proposal, research outline and timeline, and budget for their summer research project. Furthermore we discuss research strategies, general analysis of data and information, utilizing referencing software (i.e. Endnotes), the art of scientific writing, poster preparation and presentation. An additional theme that is covered at this workshop is for McNair scholars to understand and appreciate the purpose and importance of institutional review boards (IRB) and Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) certification, and their role in ensuring responsible and ethical conduct in research.

At the end of the Fall semester 2013 McNair Scholars presented their research at the Annual MSU McNair Scholars Research Symposium. All 26 of our McNair Scholars brilliantly and professionally presented their McNair summer research findings in both oral and poster formats. The MSP continues to encourage students who might not otherwise have opportunity, preparation or support. McNair Programs across the country give underrepresented students much needed research exposure, and a plethora of graduate school preparatory material, but also confidence that they can be successful and excel in graduate school.

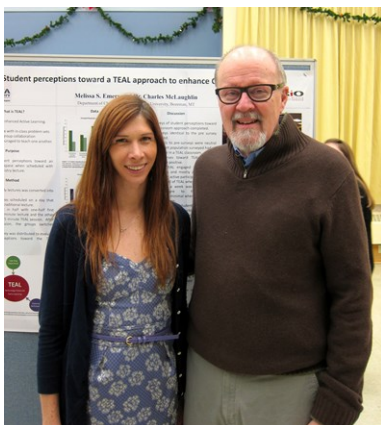
The titles “Kinematics of Slope-Style Skiing,” “Dead Men Do Tell Tales” and “The Effect of Licorice Root on Clinically Important Bacteria” previewed the collection of student research projects presented at the

McNair Scholars Research Symposium. Designed to assist disadvantaged students in pursuance of graduate school, the MSP provides academic support, funding for research projects and the opportunity to gain experience in research, equipping them for success in earning Ph.D.'s.



Annual McNair Scholars Evening of Research Presentation, Partnership and Potential, December 3, 2013.

One important preparatory aspect of the program is to provide opportunities for participants to share their research at forums and national McNair research conferences. “You’re not just doing the research, but presenting it,” said **James Cwick**, “which is a key component.” Cwick, a McNair scholar and microbiology major, presented his study of licorice extract on antibiotic-resistant bacteria. The diversity of projects demonstrates the wide variety of interests, as students in our MSP range from mechanical engineering to art history majors.



McNair Scholars are matched with a faculty mentor throughout the research period and their undergraduate tenure at MSU. **Melissa Emery**, a chemistry education major, has been in the program since last March, paired with Dr. Charles McLaughlin in the Chemistry Department. Emery presented her research project titled, “Student Perceptions Toward a TEAL Approach to Enhance Chemistry Lectures” at the

Melissa Emery with Faculty Mentor Dr. Charles McLaughlin



James Cwick with Faculty Mentor Dr. Jovanka Voyich

symposium. She credited McLaughlin for both his support and friendship. “Working with Dr. Mac is awesome,” she said, “He’s a great mentor and he’s a great friend. I really like having that relationship.” Additionally, Emery noted she appreciates the program for its opportunities. “This (research) and applying to graduate school is something I never would have done if I didn’t join the program,” she said.

Sydney Jaramillo, an English literature major, studied display elements in museums, and their results in attracting visitors. In “The Making of an Effective Visitor-Oriented Museum,” Jaramillo collaborated with David Swingle at the Museum of the Rockies to pursue her research. Jaramillo developed a comprehensive outline that detailed successful museum traits, and how they affect visitors. The fundamental purpose behind MSP, preparing students for graduate school, is an aspect Jaramillo appreciates. “It really helps students who may not feel they can go to graduate school,” she stated, “It provides them with that opportunity so that they can do research, put in on their curriculum vitae, and get into a graduate program.”



Sydney Jaramillo with Faculty Mentor Dr. David Swingle along with fellow McNair Scholars Halley Heintz and Marissa Bell.



Annual McNair Scholars Research Symposium at MSU-Bozeman, December 3, 2013.

We are extremely proud that McNair Scholar, **Michael Fast Buffalo Horse**, has been selected to present his McNair research project, titled: Language Revitalization in Montana's Native American Communities, in WDC for the nationally recognized and very prestigious *Posters on the Hill* event this April. Michael and his mentor Dr. Jioanna Carjuzaa are truly conducting revolutionary research on native language revitalization. In fact Senator Jon Tester has recently introduced a Native Language Bill recently to help strengthen Indian culture and education:

http://www.testersenate.gov/?p=press_release&id=3204 .

At this Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) event which takes place in Washington D. C. on Capitol Hill, students have the opportunity to present their research on a national stage to members of Congress



Michael Fast Buffalo Horse and his McNair Mentor Dr. Jioanna Carjuzaa

and the Senate. This is a wonderful honor for Michael and his mentor (he will be one of 60 presenters selected from over 600 undergraduate student research abstracts).

Selected Poster on the Hill Abstract: Languages are dying at an alarming rate and the languages spoken by Native American tribes in the United States are especially vulnerable. Of the 300+ languages that were spoken on this continent before European contact, only half remain. The tribal languages of Montana's Indigenous nations were harshly suppressed historically, through restrictive governmental policies, cultural prejudices, and forced assimilation. These languages are vital to the continued existence of these peoples, their cultures, and the unique perspectives that they can offer to the rest of the world. Our research takes a snapshot of some of the efforts taking place to revitalize these tribal languages. We examine the historical underpinnings of how these languages came to be endangered and why preserving these languages today is such a daunting task. Our research also focuses on the role education has and continues to play in the health of these languages from suppression in federally backed boarding schools to the rise of new speakers in tribal language immersion schools. Through interviews with tribal educators and visits to Montana's reservations we also wish to present the human side of tribal language revitalization and maintenance by describing the successes and struggles that people have shared with us. It is our hope that our research can offer a more complete look at Montana's tribal people and their experiences with revitalizing and maintaining their languages in the wake of a harsh recent history and in the face of a rapidly changing future.



Michael Fast Buffalo Horse in traditional American Indian ceremonial clothing at MSU's annual spring Pow-Wow in 2013

In July we joined MSU's Director for the Office of International Special Programs who is also a McNair Mentor, Janelle Rasmussen, and the entire Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) group for a day of wonderful conversation and cultural exchange in Butte, MT. The students, about half of which come from 17 different North African and Middle Eastern countries, were visiting MSU/Montana as part of a U.S. State Department program fostering relationships between Middle Eastern and American students. The agenda for the day included the opportunity for an underground mine tour at the World Museum of Mining at the Orphan Girl Mine as well as a visit to the Berkeley Pit and time that evening to listen to music from around the world at the annual Butte Folk Festival.



The U.S.-MEPI exchange program brings college students to the U.S. for six weeks to learn about the human rights and leadership, among other topics. The students, along with MSU McNair Scholars, came to Butte to learn about environmental studies and labor union history. The World Museum of Mining was a great place to start. MSU has hosted MEPI students since the program was initiated in 2002 by President George W. Bush. It's the first year the program has intermixed with MSU's McNair

Scholars Program. We are happy to announce that we have already started to plan the 2nd McNair & MEPI reunion in Butte, MT for this summer ~July 2014!



Left. McNair Scholar Thomas Wurtz and McNair Director Dr. Shelly Hogan with MEPI students at Butte's Berkeley Copper Mine. Right. McNair Mentors and MEPI Program staff at Butte Folk Festival 2013.

Flathead Valley Community College

FVCC SSS Student Profile

I first met Mannie Abram Spring 2009 when he became part of FVCC's TRIO Student Support Services Program by requesting a tutor for Basic Anatomy and Physiology which he was struggling with. Spring was his second semester at FVCC. His first semester he spent taking a developmental writing course, a basic computer course, and starting at the ground floor of math with M 065. Manny's grades his first year were mixed, some good, some not so good.

My impression of Manny was that he was a young, laid-back guy who was unsure what direction he wanted to go in college. I wondered to myself if Manny was motivated and focused enough to tackle higher education. It wouldn't take long for such thoughts to be dispelled. As laid back and uncertain as Manny seemed on the outside it soon became clear he had drive and determination on the inside. He never gave up and when things got tough, advocated for himself and sought support from TRIO Services (tutoring, math and writing labs, advising), and he continued to explore possible majors.



I saw Manny occasionally the next several semesters. Then Spring 2013, Manny approached me about being a Supplemental Instruction Leader for BIOH 201. Supplemental Instruction (SI), similar to group tutoring, was just being tried out with anatomy and physiology classes on campus. Manny told me that A and P was his favorite subject. This was good to hear, but recalling the Manny I knew from his early days at FVCC, I was a bit wary and wondered if he would get an instructor's recommendation as required for SI Leaders. In no time, he returned with a recommendation. At this point, I knew I must be out of the loop. I did some checking with his instructors and looked at his transcript and soon realized that Manny had become a first-rate college student earning good grades in challenging courses and taking the time to repeat courses to



improve his GPA. It was clear that an academic fire had been lit in him. Needless to say, I hired Manny as an SI leader. Manny did a great job helping students with A and P and led the group effectively. More recently, I called upon Manny this spring to be an individual tutor for A and P, which he agreed to despite his busy schedule.

After considering many different majors, Manny settled on nursing and was recently accepted into Montana State University's BSN program with clinical placement at KRMCC. When he told me this, he seemed a bit surprised by his accomplishment. But it didn't surprise me. Manny is a good example of how hard work, perseverance, and seeking help when necessary leads to success.

Manny continues to use academic resources (currently he has tutor a for CHMY 123). He understands that doing well often requires seeking help of others. Knowing this, he has chosen to "pay it forward" by helping his fellow students find success by being an SI leader, a tutor, and a study partner.

FVCC Holds Annual Brat Fry Fundraiser

April 16, 2014 was the 8th annual TRIO/SSS Brat Fry Fundraiser at Flathead Valley Community College

Since *Dan Voermans, Transfer Advisor and Green Bay Packers fan* started the idea we have fired up the grill and cooked Dan's personally created "brat recipe" which is made by the local *Lower Valley Meat Supply* and even sold at our local *Rosauers* store. With buns from *Wheat Montana*, homemade sauerkraut from *Director, Lynn Farris* staff and students helped add to the funds for our TRIO Employee Scholarship. Well supported by FVCC students and faculty everyone enjoyed a great mouthful and opportunity to support our TRIO Employee Scholarship students to the tune of \$496.00.

On the "sweet side" our student disabilities support group (AICE) *Appreciating Individuality, Challenges, and Excellence*; has coordinated a bake sale on the same day as the brat fry to raise monies to support some "fun activities". Some of which have been cross country skiing and snowshoeing at the Isaak Walton Inn in Essex, attending a play at the Bigfork Playhouse, and a Far West boat tour on Flathead Lake. They were only able to raise \$62 dollars this year but hope to do more free and low cost activities.

How did this all come about?

TRIO/SSS at FVCC started honoring TRIO participants in 1985 who exhibited personal and academic growth with congratulation certificates and small gifts. **But, we wanted to do more so**, In 1996 we started a scholarship fund with individual donations from our staff, extra "water cooler funds", and "lefse" fundraisers initiated by former ASPIRE President Bud Sather. After seven years our TRIO Employee scholarship become "**endowed**" so it is ongoing. This year staff chose three students: Emmanuel Abram, a nursing major, Carla Martenson, a business major, and Jonathan McKessick, a Welding Inspection major who will receive \$250 each.



Left to right: Jonathan McKessic, Disability Specialist Anna San Diego, Carla Martenson, Mannie Abram, TRIO Counselor Russ Lamson

Montana ASPIRE Delegation Visits Capitol and Attends COE Policy Seminar



Montana delegation with Representative Daines:

From the left: Amy Verlanic, Allison Grant, Tanya Gunkel, Representative Daines, Jamie Feely, Dugan Coburn, Darlene Samson, Theresa Rader – not pictured Dan Bengé (photographer) and Doug Abbott





News from Colorado

Colorado Mountain College

Student Spotlight

Based on an article by Kristin Carlson, first appearing in the Herald Democrat, Leadville, CO's local newspaper. Revisions by Christine Londos, Coordinator: Success Center/SSS Timberline Campus.

SSS program offers extra support for extraordinary students like Ian Morrison

With a little help from Student Support Services, Ian Morrison is turning his life around. "Before, I didn't understand the idea that people could love learning; now it's helped define who I am." By age 17, Ian had attended four different high schools and spent time in a juvenile detention center. He reflects that "If I had told people then that I would be going to college and earning academic honors, no one would have believed me." During his time at CMC, Ian has made the Dean's List two times and has been inducted into Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year colleges. "My major motivation now comes out of my past struggles," said Morrison. "What are the statistics of a kid like me turning it around? It goes to show that anything is possible."

Rocky start leads to solid future

Despite GED scores revealing strengths in math and science, Ian really wasn't thinking of more school as an option. When he attended a college fair in Westminster he talked with a CMC representative which started him thinking that higher education might offer him a fresh start.

Morrison enrolled in CMC's ski area operations program and soon transitioned into studying for an Associate of Science degree. From the start, the SSS program helped him assimilate and find his way. "I just feel so motivated and incorporated," he said. Ian also engaged fully in CMC by participating in the "Leadville Links", a student ambassador group who took visitors on campus tours, among other responsibilities.

He just graduated with the Associates of Science degree, successfully taking 22 credits this past spring in order to graduate and move along on his path. He has applied to CSU-Fort Collins to pursue a Bachelor's degree in engineering, with a minor in sustainability.

"I'm super ecstatic about CMC and the faculty," Morrison said. "I don't think I could have done what I've done here at any other school."



Noelle Brigden at Brown University

I would like to recognize the achievements of this former student and TRIO alum. She joined our SSS program here at the Steamboat Springs Campus of Colorado Mountain College after being medically discharged from the US Army. Noelle had been a high school drop-out who forged her parent's signature to get into the military at the age of 17.

Noelle went on to graduate as our campus Valedictorian in 2001. She then earned her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in International Studies from University of Denver, then her PhD in Political Science from Cornell. Please click on the link below for more information about her remarkable research. She is a Fullbright Scholar and after completing this year as a Post-Doctoral Fellow at Brown, she will start as an Assistant Professor at Marquette University in the fall. Noelle is a true achiever!!

<http://watson.brown.edu/people/postdocs/brigden>

Carly Grier, Colorado Mountain College 2014 graduate

Carly is a truly remarkable young woman. After growing up off the grid in a solar house built by her father in the mountains of New Mexico, her life was turned upside down with an ugly custody battle. She spent time in foster care and was then bounced around between various relatives. She attended four different high schools during that time, but still earned a 4.0 GPA. She planned to attend University of Colorado in Boulder.

Again Carly's life was derailed by a traumatic brain injury that left her with amnesia and intellectual impairment. During her recovery time she was able to earn an AAS degree in Ski & Snowboard Business here at Colorado Mountain College, which is how she became involved with SSS.

Now, five years later, Carly's brain is healed. She has an A in Calculus, and is graduating with an Associate of Arts degree. She has been accepted into the Leeds School of Business at University of Colorado-Boulder, her original destination.

On her recent 23rd birthday Carly was notified that she has been accepted as a CU Norlin Scholar. This comes with a yearly \$4000 scholarship as well as funding for enrichment activities like study abroad. In addition, Colorado Mountain College has awarded Carly the Swanson Transfer Scholarship, \$5000/year specifically for students at either the Steamboat Springs or Glenwood Springs campuses who are transferring to one of the University of Colorado Campuses.

It has been a long road, but her perseverance has paid off. Carly is ready to change the world.

Laurie Marano

Director TRIO Success Center

A Student Support Services Program

Colorado Mountain College

Post Independent/Citizen Telegram/FreePress serving Glenwood Springs, Rifle and Grand Junction, CO May 3, 2014

CMC grads celebrate well-earned degrees

GLENWOOD SPRINGS — **Brent Bagen** graduated with an associate degree in nursing, an admirable achievement for any student. But it's especially impressive for Bagen.

"I have dyslexia," he explained, "so I read quite a bit slower than the average student." Rather than letting the hurdle curtail his ambitions, Bagen faced the challenge with determination, ingenuity and tenacity. His hard work, passion for learning, and stellar academic and clinical performance earned the notice of the staff at Colorado Mountain College in Spring Valley, particularly Dr. Anne Moll, disability services coordinator, and Karen Hamick, associate professor of nursing. Both nominated Bagen for the David Allen Outstanding Student Award.

The award is given annually to students who have overcome obstacles, provided outstanding service to CMC or the local community, or achieved outstanding academic success. In addition to Bagen, graduating business student Bob Farmer was also selected for the honor this year.

Graduate lauded as an 'extraordinary student, nurse, leader, human being'

An emergency medical technician class Bagen took at a Wyoming community college about five years ago steered him toward a career in health care. He'd always loved science and math and thought he'd pursue computer engineering. But the EMT class opened his eyes to another path. "It made me realize I had life-saving aspirations," he said.

In addition to earning a 3.8 GPA, Bagen has earned the respect of his colleagues and instructors as a driven learner and a caring health-care provider. "Brent has chosen to be a strong, overcomer," said Moll. "He has climbed beyond the predicted and unexpected to stand out as an extraordinary student, nurse, leader and human being."

Alex McCarty, Success Center participant and Natural Resource Management student, just scored a dream summer job: working as a field technician for Grasslands Consulting out of Golden, CO. He'll be working in Utah, with paid lodging and travel, locating and recording Uinta Basin hookless cactus which grows only in Duchesne, Uintah, and Carbon counties in northeastern Utah and is protected as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act. Data collected informs Environmental Impact Statements which are crucial to the permitting process in the oil and gas industry. Drilling/building must only occur outside an established distance from any hookless cactus. The 'baby' cacti are as small as the tip of a finger so are challenging to find, especially in the rugged terrain. When they mature, they are between 2 and 7 inches above ground and are so similar to other species of cactus that only a couple centimeters difference in spine length differentiates it from others. Alex's eyesight is going to get very, very discerning!

Alex believes that he stood out to Grassland largely due to his coursework in





biology and environmental policies and economics as well as his summer 2013 NRM internship which gave him experience conducting plant research studies. Additionally, he put a lot of attention and effort into creating an outstanding and professional resume, getting feedback from several CMC faculty and staff including Success Center. Alex has been accepted by Western State Colorado University and is deciding his major: Environmental Biology and Ecology or Environment and Sustainability. He believes his work this summer will assist in his decision. Great work, Alex!

Otero Junior College

Cassandra "Cassi" Rapp

2014 Colorado TRiO Achiever
Otero Junior College, TRiO-SSS

Cassandra "Cassi" is a woman of courage and strength. She moved to La Junta when she suddenly found herself as a single mom of three young children. She moved in with her aunt and uncle who encouraged her to get her GED. Cassi was afraid to because math had always been difficult for her. She passed the GED, and then her aunt told her it was time to be on her own. Not having any idea what to do she entered the CNA program so she could have a future for her family. After she earned straight A's, she wanted to pursue more school. It was then that she met the first TRiO director at OJC who encouraged her to work towards the nursing program. Eventually Cassi wants to earn a Master's degree. Cassi set her goals and will graduate this spring with an A.A. and entering the nursing program this fall. She has a 3.63 GPA. Cassi was 1 of 63 students from across the state that was chosen for the CREATE Health Scholars program. She is a student ambassador, member of NTSO and tutors biology and just about any other subject that a student needs help with.



This past year at Otero Junior College TRiO SSS, we decided to start highlighting our students by creating a billboard as a way for them to tell their story. Cassi was the first student to be honored and so it was easy for us to nominate her for the 2014 TRiO Achiever Award. Cassi is a woman of courage and strength. She moved to La Junta when she suddenly found herself as a single mom of three young children. She moved in with her aunt and uncle who encouraged her to get her GED. Cassi was afraid to return to school because math had always been difficult for her. She passed the GED her first try, and her aunt told her it was time to be on her own. Not having any idea what to do, Cassi entered the CNA program so she could have a future for her family. After she earned straight A's, she wanted to pursue more school. It was then that she met the first TRiO director at OJC who encouraged her to work towards the nursing program. Cassi set her goals and will graduate this spring with an A.S. and will be entering the nursing program this fall. Last year Cassi was 1 of 63 students from across the state that was chosen for the CREATE Health Scholars program. She is a student ambassador, member of NTSO and tutors biology and just about any other subject that a student needs help with. This fall, along with 39 other students, Cassi will enter the nursing program here at OJC. Eventually Cassi wants to earn a Master's degree and become a certified midwife. We have no doubt that she will do it. Cassi is truly worthy of this honor!

CASSI RAPP



Metropolitan State College of Denver

TRIO SSS Success Story: Miguel Hernandez

by Rachel Lundstrom and Stephanie Martin Shewfelt

"Awards and accomplishments are like diamonds; they are what everyone will see. No one will ever see the work, struggle, pain and discomfort that forged the beautiful gems. It is therefore our task to inspire people not with the beauty and recognition, but rather with the humility and determination of the individual." – Miguel Hernandez.

Miguel Hernandez was the first person in his family to earn a college degree. Miguel is a non-traditional student; he graduated at age 35 with his B.S. in Civil Engineering Technology last December with a 3.16 GPA. He overcame significant obstacles to graduate. Miguel and his parents left Mexico for the U.S. when he was eight; he remembers living in a low-income neighborhood and completing his homework on his bed because he didn't have a desk. After high school, he attended CU Boulder, but was unprepared for college. After struggling for a few semesters, he left school to join the workforce full time. Miguel was determined, however, and after a few years, enrolled at Metropolitan State University of Denver.

At MSU Denver, Miguel joined TRIO SSS and achieved great things. For the past three summers, Miguel participated in the prestigious Student Career Experience as a Civil Engineering Intern for the U.S. Bureau of



Reclamation in Nebraska, South Dakota, and Montana. He was recently nominated as Intern of the Year for this program. In April of 2013, he won the Outstanding Senior Award from the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). Also in April, Miguel, along with a student team from MSU Denver's ASCE chapter, attended the ASCE Student Conference and entered the Steel Bridge Competition. Miguel's team placed second in the state. Miguel also presented a technical paper, a requirement for the MSU Denver team to remain in good standing. He played an instrumental role in fundraising so that his team could attend; his teammates credit his leadership as being vital in getting them to the competition.

After having participated in the TRIO SSS program at MSU Denver for one year, he became a peer mentor/tutor in the TRIO SSS office and inspired other TRIO students with his success story and positive attitude. Outside of the TRIO program, he was being rewarded for his success, as well. Before he even graduated, he accepted a job with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in Loveland, CO, where he now works in the Infrastructure and Engineering Services Division as a Civil Engineer. He is currently earning his Master of Science in Civil Engineering online through the South Dakota School of Mines, and plans to complete his degree while working full time.

Miguel feels certain that without the obstacles of being a low-income, first-generation student he would not have become the person he is today. He says the judgment of those who didn't believe in him was "like a chisel that knocked away all of my fear and doubt until all that remained was a strong person with focus and determination."

Miguel Hernandez

2014 Colorado TRiO Achiever - Alumni
Metropolitan State University of Denver, TRiO-SSS

As a non-traditional student, Miguel Hernandez graduated this past December with his B.S. in Civil Engineering Technology and a 3.16 GPA. Miguel has overcome significant obstacles to get to where he is today, including moving to the U.S. at age eight and being the first person in his family to earn a college degree.

While at MSU Denver, Miguel achieved great things. After participating in TRiO SSS for one year, he became a Peer Mentor/Tutor in the TRiO office and inspired other participants with his success story and positive attitude. For the past three summers, Miguel took part in the prestigious Student Career Experience as a Civil Engineering Intern for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in Nebraska, South Dakota, and Montana. He was recently nominated as Intern of the Year for this program. In April of 2013, he won the Outstanding Senior Award from the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). Before he even graduated, he accepted a job with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in Loveland, CO, where he now works in the Infrastructure and Engineering Services Division as a Civil Engineer. He is currently earning his MS in Civil Engineering online through the South Dakota School of Mines.

