National TRIO Day
BLUEPRINT
FOR A LIFETIME OF SUCCESS

Wichita State University
FEBRUARY 18, 2009

Eugene M. Hughes
Metropolitan Complex
29th and Oliver
9:00 am – 1:30pm
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Congratulations staff and participants. National TRIO Day 2009 was a major success at Wichita State University. Nearly 300 individuals gathered to participate in sessions and enjoy the opportunity to network and celebrate the accomplishments of the TRIO, Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) and the Office of Disability Services (ODS) programs. The middle and high school students along with adults had the opportunity to attend exciting workshops and hear dynamic speakers.

The luncheon speaker Mr. Marcus Engel had attendees on the edge of their seats as he shared the affects of a life threatening accident that left him blind. His message was very powerful. Ms. LaWanda Holt-Fields, acknowledged the students of the year, essay winners from each program and the individuals from the university and community who have significantly impacted the programs. These individuals received the Building Bridges Award. All activities were evaluated and a comprehensive report produced.

The staffs of the Office of Special Programs (OSP) thanks all those who contributed to the success of National TRIO Day 2009. I want to personally thank the OSP staffs for a great and well planned event. Please prepare to join us in 2010.

Deltha Q. Colvin, TRIO Director, Assistant Vice President for Campus Life

Opening Session

The Opening Session of the 2009 National TRIO Day Celebration was honored to have Wichita State University (WSU) President, Dr. Donald Beggs, as the speaker. President Beggs welcomed students to the event and encouraged them to pursue their educational dreams. President Beggs also told students they had an advantage because of the opportunity to participate in the TRIO and GEAR UP Programs.

The Office of Special Programs presented Dr. Beggs with a “Building Bridges” award for his outstanding support of the programs at WSU.

Thank you Dr. Beggs!
The middle school presentations provided students with interesting information, statistics, research, interactive student exercises, and personal stories pertaining to: the different learning styles for boys and girls, the importance of staying in school, making good decisions, turning negatives into positives, and overcoming challenging obstacles in life.

**Track I. – “Learning Styles: How Boys and Girls Learn Differently” Presented by: Dr. Raymond Farag**

Dr. Farag provided students with fascinating facts, research, and illustrated examples regarding the differences in learning styles between boys and girls.

He began his presentation by dividing the room in half with girls on one side and boys on the other. He then asked the entire group what their favorite subject in school was. As expected, girls enjoyed such subjects as reading, English, and grammar, while boys enjoyed mathematics and science. Dr. Farag explained that the language centers of girls’ brains develop earlier, thus the subjects identified above come easier to them. Boy’s brains however, are better at spatial-mechanical tasks.

**Kinesthetic Learners**

Boys tend to be more kinesthetic, more hands-on, more spatial-mechanical learners. They do not tend to sit still to learn as girls do. To illustrate this, Dr. Farag asked how many students enjoy tapping their pencils in class. Boys do not tend to use or produce as many words as girls (girls are wonderful at gossiping or re-telling stories!) because boys have half the verbal center as girls, thus do not rely on words. Instead they rely more on gross motor skills, which means more physical movement (pencil tapping) for focusing. Dr. Farag suggested that if boys needed to tap their pencils during class, to tap their pencils on their thighs rather than the desk to avoid being a distraction to other students. Dr. Farag went onto to say that a boy’s brain goes into “rest states” many times during the day, appearing “checked-out” during class. Girls, on the other hand, have a half-active brain during these “rest states”, so they are taking more notes so they don’t fall asleep.

Students were then given an interactive, spatial game to play to further illustrate spatial learning. Afterwards students were given a worksheet and instructed to locate as many identical numbers as possible in one minute. Not very many students located the number pairs. Dr. Farag gave them a second chance, but this time giving them a spatial perspective to locate the number pairs.

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“To be successful, you have to have a dream,” was the unanimous message echoed from 9th graders who attended the session, “The Gift of Giving Back,” during the 2009 TRIO Day. That message was shared during a talk and video clip presented by Buddy Shannon, manager of Tree Top Nursery and a community leader. The breakout session addressed the value of effective time management and its connection to academic performance and community service.

As President of Real Men Real Heroes, Shannon works to counter negative images of African American men by introducing boys to male African American role models in the community. Shannon also is the 2009 recipient of the David Wessling Award, named in honor of long-time Kansas schoolteacher, administrator and community volunteer. He was recognized for his commitment to “change the world for the better” through exemplary community service.

Shannon showed a mini-clip, called “Recipients of the Dream,” which featured famous speeches delivered by the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and President Barack Obama. He pointed out that many people like Dr. King organized non-violent protests to end segregated public facilities and social injustices during the civil rights movement.

Shannon encouraged students to stay organized and make right choices because “each of you can make a difference in our community.” After Shannon’s presentation, students were divided into two groups to talk about how they could use what they had learned.

Discussion questions covered included the purpose of an agenda and the relationship between community service and time management. A handout outlining ways to save time and be better organized was provided. The handout offered tips about how to:

- Clean out your backpacks and lockers. Clutter can slow you down by distracting you from what you want to do.
- Keep short “to do” lists. If you often feel discouraged by what’s not crossed off your lists, make them shorter.
- Learn how to say “no” and not feel guilty. It has been said that the two-letter word “no” can be the single, most effective time management tool.
- Take advantage of idle time. If you aren’t involved in traditional after-school activities, community service can be an alternative. Community service projects can help one decide on future career choices, gain job skills and develop leadership roles.
The 10th Grade session was presented by Janice Thacker, an educator, author and counselor who motivates students to learn through the discovery of their “True Colors.”

In “Show Me Your True Colors,” Thacker assisted students in recognizing their skills, talents and natural preferences that will aid them in achieving their academic and personal goals. True Colors is a technique for understanding personality types by grouping common attributes into four colors (orange, blue, gold and green). When students understand their color style, they can better express their needs to parents, teachers and even friends. Educators (teachers, counselors, and administrative staff) can benefit as well, from not only knowing the colors of their students but their personal colors as well. Knowing your “True Colors” makes for resourceful partnerships between student and educator; promotes achievement; prevents behavior problems; and finally, keeps students on track for learning.

The twenty students and several adults worked in “color” groups to present “commercials” that would illustrate their particular color and watched a video that hilariously portrayed “life” situations by individuals and their “colors.” Students left the session with an effective tool for understanding themselves and others. The session was just one of TRIO Day’s powerful blueprints towards student success.

Middle School Sessions

Students located more number pairs the second time.

Track II - Panel Discussion: “The Importance of Staying in School”

Presented by: Jimmy Iniguez, Winnie Nyongesa, Cali Salazar and Adrienne Thompson.

A panel of pre-selected high school students shared personal stories of triumph and success, making positive/negative decisions, and defeating obstacles and barriers in life. Panel topics included: “Why stay in school,” “How to turn negative choices into positive choices,” and “How to ask for help.”

A lively discussion followed. Many students commented on how much they enjoyed the discussion at TRIO Day.
Eyes were opened and preconceived notions were challenged during the TRIO Day sessions held for high school juniors and facilitated by Kaye Monk-Morgan and Angela Johnson. Participants had the opportunity to view the documentary 2 Million Minutes and take the Third World Challenge, an online battery of tests that allows students to compare their learning outcomes to those of students in the developing country of India.

The workshop began with establishing several fundamental beliefs which include:

1. Parents, teachers and community members want students to excel academically,
2. Students want to excel academically,
3. The American high school system is capable of changing,
4. And finally, there is hope to improve the system to insure future global competitiveness.

Students were taken by the documentary’s depiction of the lives of six high school students, all seniors, at the end of their high school careers. Two students hailed from Indiana, USA, two from Mumbai, and two from Shanghai, each one male and one female. Each student explains in detail, educational expectations and their aspirations. The commentary asks viewers to consider the way that each student spends the 2 million minutes they have while attending high school.

Participants had the opportunity to discuss their personal academic ambitions and compare their preparedness to the students depicted in the film.

Students were shocked to find that the United States ranked 24th out of 25 countries in math testing and even more taken aback to learn that the only area where US students out scored their counterparts was in confidence.

This point was driven home even harder when the students took the Third World Challenge that shined a spotlight on the curriculum that students should master while in high school. Students were asked to take the biology exam. Several were disappointed by their results, which were emailed to their private email accounts for their review, along with an answer key.

Students engaged in a lively discussion relating to the film and on-line assessments. Prior to dismissal, students had the opportunity to talk about changes they could implement in their personal lives to better insure their preparedness for the global economy. Students readily offered that they would:

1. study more,
2. enroll in a more rigorous curriculum, which would include more math and science courses,
3. engage more actively in listening during class, and
4. focus on learning instead of just passing the test!

Students in the junior track were challenged to take their future into their own hands and engage in the global economy in a meaningful way. These students seem ready for the challenge!
The 12th Grade Track “How to Effectively Master College and Life by Sticking to Your Very Own Customized Plan” was a huge success. The students were greeted by Robert Love who served as the moderator for the session. Love greeted the students and discussed TRIO by Definition. Following Love, Alisa Alexander spoke about “How to Be Great Just Being Yourself.” Alexander told her compelling story of how she was able to finish college being single with two young boys to raise on her own. She encouraged the students to find motivational poems and speeches and taught them how to rely on positive tools when they feel they cannot make it.

Next, Brandi Newry presented and discussed stereotypes and how to think outside of the box. Newry is a former McNair Scholars Program participant and presented a very passionate call to action for the students. Newry challenged the students to study even if they think it is not cool, strive to do their best and recognize how great they are just being themselves.

The final speaker was Dr. Marche Fleming-Randle who provided a captivating, interactive, motivational and inspirational presentation for TRIO high school seniors. The students were on the edge of their seats throughout Fleming-Randle’s presentation. She gave each student 10 Best Practices on “How to Effectively Master College and Life by Sticking to Your Very Own Customized Plan.” Dr. Fleming-Randle ended her presentation by saying “Success Awaits You – Go Take Your Place.” There were two special guests that added value to the session as well. Wilma Holloway presented on how TRIO helped her as a high school student and how she worked within the WSU TRIO community for several years. Holloway also shared her experience during the Civil Rights era where she and her classmates were the first students to be bussed to white schools in St. Louis, MO.

Reuben Eckels shared with the students his recently published comic book called “Wichita Man.” Eckels discussed the steps he took to start a comic book series and how his vision helped him to promote an African-American character in a comic book. Eckels, a widely known community member, also discussed the mission of TRIO and how he worked within the WSU TRIO community.
Adult Connection - The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, by Stephen R. Covey

Presenter: Lawrence P. Britton, Director, Veterans Upward Bound

The presentation was attended by 33 adults. The attendees consisted of TRIO program participants, Wichita State University faculty and staff. The audience, while varied, was consistently engaged, interested and involved in discussion throughout the presentation.

Each workshop participant completed a self-scoring Seven Habits Profile. The profiles were collected, scored and the results were graphed. This provided each participant with a baseline score of how they were aligned with The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People principles.

The workshop transitioned to an overview of the topic and the information to be covered. They were: The Seven Habits Profile, Paradigm & Paradigm Shifts and then the seven habits from the book, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.

The first concepts presented were paradigms and paradigm shifts. A paradigm is a perception or model that is used to better understand or more importantly to cope and navigate reality. A paradigm shift is a change in that model or perception.

An illustration, from Mr. Covey’s book, of a paradigm shift: Mr. Covey was traveling in a subway, a man gets in with his two sons, the sons are running all over the place bothering people, this continues, so he finally gets irritated enough to ask the father why he doesn't do something to control his kids. The father replies, "We just got back from the hospital where their mother died. I don't know how to handle it and I guess they don't either."

The seven habits were then listed and covered individually:

1. Personal Effectiveness Habits:
   Habit 1: Be Proactive
   Habit 2: Begin with the End in Mind
   Habit 3: Put First Things First

2. Inter-personal Effectiveness Habits:
   Habit 4: Think Win/Win
   Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood
   Habit 6: Synergize

3. Maximizing personal effectiveness:
   Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw

Practical exercises were used throughout the presentation, which included: defining values, writing a personal mission statement, and asking important questions.

After Mr. Britton completed the presentation, which included defining and discussing the seven habits, he redistributed the Seven Habits Profiles taken earlier. After receiving a basic level of understanding of these habits, the participants reviewed a graph of their responses. This provided participants with a “take-away” to use as a basis for initiating and sustaining individual change.
The theme for National TRIO Day on the campus of Wichita State University was “The Blueprint for a Lifetime of Success.” LaWanda Holt-Fields, Director of the McNair Scholars Program, served as Mistress of Ceremonies during the lunch session. Dr. Ronald Kopita, WSU Vice President for Campus Life and University Relations, welcomed the students. Students in attendance were from middle and high schools from the Wichita area. To familiarize attendees on TRIO, GEAR UP, ODS and university personnel, a continuous slide show presentation played while participants had lunch.

The keynote was Mr. Marcus Engel, professional speaker and author. He challenged the students and guests in attendance to overcome personal adversity, accept and embrace the challenges life presents to them. Marcus shared his story, “On a cold autumn night during his freshman year of college, following a Saturday night hockey game, Marcus and some friends were headed to a local diner for a midnight snack. As the carload of teenagers pulled into a busy intersection, a drunk driver traveling at twice the speed limit slammed broadside into them; only a thin piece of metal separated Marcus from the impact of the oncoming vehicle.” When he awoke to a world he would never again see, Marcus faced seemingly insurmountable obstacles: survive hundreds of hours of reconstructive facial surgery, adapt to blindness and find happiness in a world changed forever. While still restricted to a hospital bed, a feeding tube and respirator, Marcus set his goal: return to college as quickly as possible. This goal would sustain him through two years of medical recovery, 6 months at rehab and 1 month training with a new Seeing Eye dog. Not only did Marcus accept and embrace the challenge, but the life lessons he learned are now the guiding forces that inspire hundreds of thousands every day.

His autobiography, After This... An Inspirational Journey for All the Wrong Reasons has helped tens of thousands realize their potential and reach for new goals. Marcus presented a copy of his book to all student award winners. After sharing his story, students were allowed to ask questions.

The program continued with the TRIO Student of the Year awards from each program, Essay Contest awards, and Building Bridges Awards, which were presented to university or community members who have shown support to the TRIO programs throughout the year.

TRIO Students of the Year
Communications Upward Bound – Nicholas Cox and Mark Steib
Disability Support Services – Kimberly Grimes
Educational Opportunity Center – Daniel March
Talent Search – Nelson Ross
Upward Bound Wichita Prep – Charity Bush
Upward Bound Math Science – Tagen Bryant

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The Impact the TRIO-EOC Program has Made on My Life By Myra McDonald

I am a 43-year-old African American mother of three who is currently working toward a degree in Computer Electrical Engineering. I believe the TRIO-EOC Program has made a difference in my life. In order to understand the true impact TRIO-EOC has had, I will need to take you back a little.

I always had a desire to attend college, but I knew that my parents could not afford to send me or my siblings. Not knowing that there were other ways for me to attend, I gave up that dream. When my husband and I had children, it was important to us that they attend college. I made it my mission to learn about the different options available in order to make this happen. I found out that there were grants and scholarships. I did not know about these things when I was in high school. I thought that a person could only go to college if their parents could pay for them to attend. In my searching, I learned about a program called Upward Bound Math Science, and I enrolled my children in it. After my first daughter had completed the program and my second daughter was involved with it, I spoke with the director about how I always wanted to go to college but my parents could not afford it. She told me about a program called TRIO-EOC that helped adults who did not have the opportunity to attend college. She gave me the information and asked me to give Salyi Vu a call, so I did.

I set up an appointment with Salyi and she gave me a LOT of direction on attending college. The trainings and seminars I received were very informative. I believe that if it was not for the EOC Program I would still be a stay-at-home mom wondering what I was going to do when all my children were gone, or how long I would have to continue working meaningless jobs. I believe that the little college experience I currently have under my belt has helped me land my current job. I hold a position that I have absolutely no knowledge or experience in; but, they are willing to train me to become one of their Quality Assurance Lab Technicians.

Overall, the TRIO-EOC Program has been very inspirational to me. Salyi is a Godsend. I was probably the most clueless person she had ever met. She helps me to make the correct choices in choosing my classes, to understand the implications for future academic achievement as a result of participation in these programs. The official contest essay theme for 2009 was “The Impact TRIO/GEAR-UP/DSO has made on my Life.”

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Numerous options, Endless resources, Unrestrained possibilities. That’s TRIO! By Faith Shellman

There are eight branches of TRIO Programs; TRIO Talent Search being one of them. As a TRIO Talent Search participant, I am beyond pleased to be included in such a great embodiment! Through TRIO I have been privileged with professional assistance in the areas of career exploration, college insight, and financial aid awareness. These areas to some may appear simple, but to me they are not.

The outstanding assistance of TRIO and its wonderful staff has increased my knowledge and prepared me for a smooth college transition.

Like many young individuals, I was unsure of a major, or even a career path to pursue. There are so many career fields and choices one can choose from. I wanted a career I could be proud of, a career that would compel me to wake up each morning. I desired a field that I could interact with individuals of diverse interests and personalities. I wanted a profession that would allow me to use my imagination, while incorporating my own personal style. My TRIO advisor took this, and ran with it! We explored different career fields, narrowed the search, and we came up with something awesome. We discovered an occupation that will not only introduce me to various individuals, but also allow me to be...ME!

When the career search was over, I needed to find colleges with my selected program of study, and TRIO was right there to assist me. Through TRIO, reading about a facility is obsolete, there’s the opportunity of first hand experience. With TRIO, my college choice was a van ride away. Not only did they assist in selecting colleges with my major, but also provided me with transportation to those campuses allowing me to observe and get a feel for them. I got to visit every campus I was taking into consideration, which was great because each one of them has its own uniqueness.

No one thing is greater than the other, when it comes to all the help I have received from TRIO. However, their financial aid services are what stuck out in my mind! I am a first generation student, and I never knew that financial assistance was so readily available to students like me.

The information I have received not only benefits me, but also my family. Gaining information is a breeze when TRIO is the lantern. For example, not only did I learn about FAFSA and its importance, but it became easier for me and my family to use resources such as this. Being connected with TRIO has broken restricting barriers.

Throughout this whole experience I have gained valuable knowledge that would have a positive effect on my present as well as my

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future. When I began my senior year, I was overwhelmed by the thought of college. TRIO has dissolved all of my concerns and has provided me with a lesson plan to go by. I feel empowered to pursue my ambitions. “Numerous options, Endless resources, Unrestrained possibilities. That’s TRIO!”

The Impact TRIO/GEAR UP/ODS Has Made On My Life By Thomas Junkins

The question is how has the Upward Bound program helped me? The answer is the Upward Bound Program has helped me a lot. I heard about the Upward Bound program while attending a meeting at the Veterans Home, in Winfield, KS, of the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs.

After talking to one of the Activity Directors, she informed me that the director would be in Donlon Hall on the following Tuesday to conduct a computer class and I could see him to find out if I was eligible for the program. After giving Larry Britton a copy of my Discharge and my DD 214 file, I was accepted into the program. There were 2 courses that I wanted to take, one was Creative Writing, and the other was Advanced Computing.

The Creative Writing class has opened up new worlds for me, I am learning how to put things in a story that I have day dreamed about while dozing. The instructor is real good; he has given us assignments that bring out what he is trying to get us to do. My main thing to learn is making better descriptions. He has tried to pull them out of me. I have also bought and am reading a book he said would help me named “Painting with Words” written by Rebecca McClone, this book has helped with writing descriptions.

With writing I have regained my desire to learn, I am writing about fishing trips, places I have been and other things that enthuse me to write. I have a whole new interest in life.

The Advanced Computer class is helping me with the Creative Writing class; it is also helping me with other things in my daily life, such as using Publisher to make signs for events.

There are so many things you can do with Office 2007; we have just scratched the surface of the program. We have been through Word and PowerPoint; I have made several PowerPoint presentations using photos I have taken of events here and with my family. I am hoping we can continue the classes, there are so many things to learn and stories to write.

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Building Bridges Awards
Dr. Donald Beggs, President, Wichita State University
Dr. Ron Kopita, Vice President, Campus Life and University Relations
Robert Jenkins, Director of Educational Talent Search, Higher Education Consortium of the Metro St. Louis area
Joyce Thomas and Kim Gonzales, Counselors, East High School
Phil Ladwig, WSU (LAS) Academic Advisor
Andy McFayden, Wichita Area Technical College
Randy Stout, Kan-ed, Board of Regents
Brian Withrow, Criminal Justice, WSU
Dr. Stephen Brady, Mathematics, WSU
Amy Alvarez, Counselor, Southeast High School
Sandra Prevost, Counselor East High School
Sarah Hunt, Office of Research Administration
Student Profile EOC

Daniel is a Caucasian male in his early 40’s who came to the Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC) Program for assistance with understanding his educational options and the financial aid process. He is a first-generation college student, and as a single parent he wanted to be a positive role model for his daughter.

Daniel had attempted college in the past, but his work schedule and other life changes kept him from finishing his degree. Computer Assisted Labs and Technology Training in Internet Search and Career Exploration gave Daniel additional skills that he needed to confirm his educational path. As a result of the career, academic, time-management, and financial aid counseling received from his assigned EOC Program Specialist, Salyi Vu, Daniel successfully re-entered post-secondary education in the Spring of 2008.

Daniel is currently attending Butler County Community College and is working on his Associates of Applied Science in Nursing. During an update appointment with Ms. Vu, Daniel was excited to inform her that he has maintained As and Bs in his coursework. He was also nominated the President of his class for two consecutive years. According to Ms. Vu, “Accepting a leadership role has greatly increased Daniel’s understanding and appreciation of many issues facing students and campus administrators.”

Daniel is currently working on his clinical training at the Kansas Heart Hospital and Prairie View (Newton). As encouraged by the EOC Program, Daniel began delving into his field and is simultaneously working as a Student Nurse Technician at the Veteran Affairs Hospital. Daniel plans to transfer to Wichita State University or Friends in the Fall of 2010 to complete his Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

Based on Daniel’s educational accomplishments, his acceptance of a leadership position as President of his class and his extraordinary transformation into an accomplished adult learner who is determined to ‘finish his degree’, the EOC Program bestowed upon him the honor of Program Participant of the Year 2009.

Logo Contest Recognition

Erickah Furr is responsible for this year’s TRIO DAY t-shirt logo. Erickah is an excellent student, a writer, illustrator, great communicator and has a marvelous attitude.

The Upward Bound Wichita Prep Program gives students like Erickah a platform and a community to succeed. The Upward Bound Wichita Prep Program staff are honored to showcase Erickah’s award winning logo again as the official 2009 WSU National TRIO Day t-shirt logo.

TRIO Day Logo graphic is on page 13.
The Upward Bound Math Science senior class of 2009 is comprised of 16 strong students who are well prepared for college and life beyond high school. Chief amongst them is Lauren, a senior attending Wichita Heights High School and a three-year participant in the Upward Bound Math Science (UBMS) Program. In addition to her participation in UBMS, Lauren is busy devoting her time to her academic studies, the Spanish Honor Society and the Fashion Club, where she is the club photographer. Her most recent honors include being named a WSU Dean’s Scholar, WSU Presidential Scholar, and representing Wichita and Heights High School as a Prairie Schooner Mate in the Wichita River Festival. She is also the 2008 Ms. Galaxy Experience, a designation given to one UBMS student each year who best exemplifies the qualities that UBMS works hard to extol.

Lauren will graduate with the class of 2009 and plans to attend college to study bioengineering with an ultimate goal of becoming an optometrist. Her top three college choices are Vanderbilt University, Wichita State University, and Missouri University of Science and Technology. She has gained admission to all three.

The middle child in a family of three, Lauren is dedicated to service. Lauren is one of the few UBMS students that is involved in service for service sake, not for a resume builder or a National Honor Society project, but just because it’s the right thing to do. Lauren is currently collecting personal hygiene products for a local women’s shelter. She recently approached the UBMS staff to solicit their help by bringing back hotel “giveaway toiletries” collected during travel for her cause. When questioned about the origin of this project, Lauren commented that she read an article relating to domestic violence shelters and their needs and determined she could help. Lauren is a compassionate and focused UBMS graduate with a bright future ahead!
National TRIO Day Celebration 2009: An Evaluation

Introduction: The National TRIO Day Celebration 2009 is an extraordinary event that brings diverse TRIO/Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) and Office of Disability Services (ODS) personnel and clientele together. Students and staff from these programs come together for a day of celebration that includes educational presentations, professional training, inspirational speeches and interactive sessions. Evaluating such a multi-dimensional event required research, planning and cooperation between all the components of the program.

For the 2009 evaluation, the Assistant Vice President for Campus Life compiled an Evaluation Committee of Dr. Alan D'souza (Policy Analyst Director) and two staff members; Mr. Charlie Jenkins (UBWP) and Ms. Vicky Alfred (McNair). The three committee members conducted regular meetings and created a strategy of different layers and dimensions of evaluations. It was planned that each individual session would be evaluated by the attendees. For the final luncheon session where all attendees came together, there would be a separate evaluation. While the individual sessions were focused on the learning/training outcomes of those respective sessions, the general evaluation focused more on the luncheon session and the overall message and outcome of the National TRIO Day Celebration.

Findings: A total number of 131 adults and 122 middle and high school students (N = 253) attended the celebration. With regards to response rates, 40 non-students (40%) and 136 TRIO/GEAR UP students (89%) completed the evaluations. The high response rate of the primary audience, the students, enabled valid and statistically significant inferences about program sessions. Since no differences were found among groups based on demographics of gender (wherever applicable), grade levels, or programs, comprehensive frequencies and percentages were used to measure and infer on the success and satisfaction level among the event attendees. A new element of this year’s evaluation was that each presenter was also given an evaluation to assess his/her impression about the presentation, the audience, and the arrangements for their presentation.

Seventh & Eighth Grade Track: This track consisted of two sessions: one dealing with how gender creates differences in learning styles, and the other consisted of a panel of past TRIO/GEAR UP students who shared their experiences and how TRIO impacted their lives. The students felt that the learning style presentation made them aware of differences in people (85%), helped them identify their own learning style (94%), and that the information would be used for their academic success (84%). The panel discussion made them aware of how “staying in school” can help them to succeed in life (98%), and how making good choices at school is important (97%).

Ninth Grade Track: The ninth grade track consisted of a presentation on “Community Service and Time Management.” The presentation was well received since it exposed students to time management tools and group discussions. The students were not only motivated to consider community volunteer work (80%), but also to effectively use their time in completing school assignments (73%).

Tenth Grade Track: The tenth graders attended a session on “True Colors,” where they found out about individual differences in behavior and approaches. All attendees (100%) found the information useful and 90% stated that they would like to learn more about different personalities. The participants also enjoyed an understanding of self-esteem issues (90%) and
National TRIO Day Celebration 2009: An Evaluation

sought more knowledge in interacting with people of different personalities (86%). The answers to the open-ended questions extended these findings as participants specifically mentioned their colors, and the fun activities they experienced.

Eleventh Grade Track: The Eleventh graders experienced a challenging and interesting session in which they watched a documentary “Two Million Minutes,” followed by a challenging math test to assess their performance against similar grade students in a different country. The session impacted the students as they found taking the exam was a valuable learning experience (95%), and they were able to compare their educational level (95%), and their assessment of American students’ readiness to compete in a global economy (50%). The answers to the open-ended questions showed how the session impacted them positively.

Twelfth Grade Track: The Twelfth graders were exposed to a series of speakers who spoke about several aspects of college such as TRIO programs, career options in the field of psychology and sociology and career choices. All the attendees realized the importance of a customized college plan (100%), using self-identification and interests in planning college majors (100%), and found the track beneficial (100%).

Adult Track: The adult track consisted of a special presentation for participants, on the “Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.” Several adults including those from McNair Scholars Program (McNair), Veterans Upward Bound (VUB), Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC), Talent Search (TS), Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP), Student Support Services (SSS), and Disability Support Services (DSS) attended the session. The attendees found the presentation effective (88%), made them realize the importance of becoming proactive (84%), setting goals (84%), the effectiveness of synergy (96%), and using the Time Management Matrix (76%). All the attendees (100%) found the session beneficial to them.

The Luncheon Session: The luncheon session was a motivational speech by Marcus Engel. The presentation was a unique mixture of biographical episodes, anecdotes, and pedagogy which kept the audiences’ attention throughout the presentation.

Student Responses: One hundred and thirty-six (136) students responded to the assessment survey regarding the luncheon speech. Ninety-seven percent (97%) found it exciting and interesting, and 95% agreed that the speech succeeded in communicating to them the importance of education for long-term success. In the answers to the open-ended questions, the students indicated how the speaker made them realize the importance of perseverance and making the best of what you have. It was interesting to note that several students were extremely interested in knowing about the life-experiences of the speaker.

Non-Student Responses: Forty (40) non-students (including TRIO staff and WSU administrators) responded to the evaluation survey. Ninety-seven percent of those found the motivational speaker appealing and 97.4% indicated that the speaker successfully communicated the importance of education in making life-decisions. Some of the non-student attendees recorded their learning experiences ranging from “WSU has the largest number of TRIO programs on a single campus” to “TRIO programs help students in so many ways.” A few suggested that the program could include some presentations from the TRIO participants as they wanted to hear from the students on how they felt about the programs.
Overall Assessment: Both the students and non-students gave high points to the National TRIO Day organizers for the program. Among non-students, a majority suggested that TRIO Day succeeded in making participants realize the importance of education (92%), and that the event was helpful to them (97%). Ninety-five percent (95%) expressed their desire to attend TRIO day again.

Among the students there was a similar exciting response. Ninety-three percent (93%) of the students agreed as to how the celebration succeeded in making them understand the importance of education and ninety-one percent (91%) found the event beneficial. Eighty-four percent (84%) of them indicated that they would like to attend the event again next year.

Conclusion: The positive responses and assessments of National TRIO Day bears witness to the underlying principle to provide high quality educational and training services to all clientele. The multi-layered approach to evaluating the day-long event help in assessing critical components of the event, and strived to enhance the effectiveness of the sessions.

The 2009 National TRIO Day celebrations at WSU succeeded in bringing 253 people together, who shared educational presentations, professional training, inspirational speeches and interactive sessions. The organizers of the event are positive that the long-term effect of the event matches the short-term enthusiasm it has generated. Further, the message of TRIO/GEAR UP/ODS of equal access to education continues unabated.

(The detailed report of the TRIO National Day Celebration 2009 is available at the Office of the Assistant Vice President for Campus Life, Wichita State University.)

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