Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs

Teresa Coons is a sophomore at Wichita North High School and has been in Kansas Kids @ GEAR UP since 2010. She has been a very active member of the program and has been able to participate in a variety of activities.

Some of her favorites include going to see the Sea Life Aquarium in Kansas City, visiting the Oklahoma City Memorial, touring KMUW radio studio, and attending the Tallgrass Film Festival this past fall. She also jumps on any college campus visit she can go to. During the summer of 2013, Teresa was able to go on the joint Upward Bound Math/Science and GEAR UP trip to St. Louis. This opened her eyes to life outside of Wichita and she is ready to see more!

After high school, Teresa hopes to find a college somewhere within driving distance of Wichita, but also far enough away that she can see new places. Right now, she wants to study science, but she has a whole list of other options too.

In her free time, she enjoys hanging out with friends, knitting, and taking pictures. She is always up for a new adventure and has a goal of someday being a member of the Jeopardy Clue Crew.

Veterans Upward Bound

As an energetic, enthusiastic, and ambitious youth, Master at Arms Navy veteran Brandon Anthony Warren has all the trappings that make him a successful Veterans Upward Bound (VUB) participant.

After graduating from Heights High School in 2001, Brandon joined the Navy and has been stationed in San Diego and Japan. While in Japan, he earned the Medal of Distinguished Service for helping those who were involved in the Iraq war.

After four challenging and productive years of service, Brandon left the Navy and was not adapting to a new civilian life. He did not waste time, and immediately signed up with the VUB program to seek postsecondary education opportunities. “The Navy taught me to focus and be disciplined,” Brandon says, “to go after that which matters most.”

Brandon’s successful transition is proven by the fact that he is now in the process of taking the mandatory assessments before he enrolls in school in fall of 2014. He wants to major in counseling and help others by ultimately, making a career as a motivational speaker and writer. In a way, he has already started on his career because he is a great motivator for other VUB participants. His encouraging message for other VUB participants is “Don’t give up. School is challenging for a reason. It is the only way in having the career you want, and achieve what you want in life.”