Student Profiles

Upward Bound Math Science

Nikki Allums, a three year TRIO Upward Bound Math Science Center (UBMS) participant, is a junior attending Sumner Academy in Kansas City, KS where she participates on the tennis and basketball teams. Always a leader, Nikki works hard to build a reputation of success and achievement, both at school and at UBMS.

A participant in the International Baccalaureate Program at Sumner Academy, Nikki’s academic acumen is without parallel. She is naturally gifted, but it is her hard work that makes the difference. Her study regimen is the stuff of folklore around the study hall. She is keen on developing colorful and kinetic learning tools and sharing them with friends at tutorials or via Facebook.

It’s not enough to say that Nikki is smart or athletic. Those descriptors are true, but not inclusive. Nikki is a woman of faith. Nikki overcame the latest in a string of personal difficulties, the death of her mother. While deeply wounded and suddenly homeless, Nikki rallied to do what she does best—perform in the academic arena. During the entire ordeal Nikki never missed a day of school. When asked why, her response was, “My mama wants me to go to school. It matters even more now.”

Upon completion of high school, she plans to attend one of the universities on her top five. She is leaning towards chemistry and plans for a career in the sciences. Nikki is a shining example of what TRIO programs aim to do—take students from good to great!

Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program

Marcus Crawford started college immediately after high school in 1994. He had goals of becoming the first person in his family to get a college degree. He didn’t exactly know what he wanted to do or how he would get there, but he knew he wanted to finish school.

The desire for a bachelor’s degree didn’t leave him even as he left college without a degree. Marcus continued to go back to school off and on over the next decade. Finally, he decided to get serious and earn a degree. His sister had taken a few classes in college but he was the only one of his siblings who had pursued any serious college work at that point. Neither of his parents had ever attended college.

Recently, Marcus received a Bachelor’s in Social Work degree and started the master’s program at Wichita State. He plans to pursue a doctoral degree in social work in the future. Marcus is working on a new paper and providing research assistance to another professor in the program. He and his mentor are working on taking his McNair manuscript and dividing it into two papers for publication. His hope is to have one to three published papers prior to starting a Ph.D. program.

Marcus states that “the McNair program helped me discover my love for research and gave me the confidence to pursue an educational path that I never thought was open to me.”