



## Executive Director's Retirement Message

By Larry Ramos

All good things must come to an end. Having said that, Larry Ramos is retiring from the university on December 31st. Ramos came to the university in 1985 where he began his professional career as a TRIO program counselor for Operation Success (a.k.a Student Support Services).

Ramos was promoted to the assistant director's position at TRIO Student Support Services before moving on to become the first director of the McNair Scholars Program - another TRIO program at Wichita State University (WSU). In 2001, he became the TRIO Talent Search Program director where he has been ever since. In 2021, he authored the TRIO Talent Search-South grant application and his title changed to executive director for TRIO Talent Search Programs at WSU.

Ramos will miss all the students and staff. He will especially miss the beauty of the WSU campus and the feeling he got when the staff met and exceeded their program objectives. After 40 years at WSU, Ramos says, "Time flies when you're having fun!" He will continue in a consultant role for the university but will get to spend a lot of time watching his grandchildren grow up and doing a lot of adventuring, expanding his DIY hobbies, and spending time with his friends and family.



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Community Service: KS Food Bank
- Overcoming Burnout Techniques
- Winter Break (Revisited)
- Now Hiring Tutors
- Calendar Events



## Community Service: Kansas Food Bank

By Kathy Nguyen, Program Educational Advisor

On October 15, 2025, TRIO Talent Search-South (TSS) students and staff volunteered at the Kansas Food Bank in Wichita, Kansas. This event was created to give students a meaningful opportunity to contribute to humanity while also helping them with progress towards their AVID community service and graduation requirements.

A total of five students attended during school conference day, along with Talent Search-South Program Educational Advisor Kathy Nguyen and Assistant Director/Statistician Vivian Pham-Chanthivong. They were accompanied by Talent Search Program Educational Advisor Aunisti Swan and Talent Search Middle School Director Stephanie Haynes.

During the visit, the volunteers received step by step instructions on the process to assemble bags of food and box them for the Kansas Food Bank's Food 4 Kids program. Students and staff also learned how much work happens behind the scenes from local volunteers and community members to provide the service for students. Many of the volunteers were surprised at how many students rely on supplies from Food 4 Kids.

The experience served as a reminder to students that they can make an impact when they get involved in their community. Several students and staff shared their interest in continuing to volunteer with the Kansas Food Bank and to hopefully make it a quarterly event. The students not only fulfilled part of their AVID requirements but also strengthened their sense of responsibility and connection with the people in their community.

TRIO Talent Search-South is so grateful to the Kansas Food Bank for welcoming the students and to all the volunteers who made this experience possible. TSS is looking forward to organizing more community service events that allow students to learn, lead, and give back.

"Small acts,  
when multiplied  
by millions of  
people, can  
transform the  
world."

HOWARD ZINN





# Overcoming Burnout Techniques

By Vivian Pham-Chanthivong,  
Assistant Director/Statistician

## RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS OF BURNOUT

Early awareness is helpful for taking action before things spiral. Watch for:

- Constant fatigue even after rest.
- Loss of motivation or interest in things once enjoyed.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Irritability or emotional numbness.
- Declining grades despite trying.

If these signs exist, it's time to pause and reset.

## USE SMART TIME MANAGEMENT

- Prioritize, don't overload. Identify the top 3 must-do tasks each day.
- Break tasks into chunks. Study for 25–30 minutes, then take 5–10 minute breaks (Pomodoro technique).
- Plan ahead. Use a planner or app to avoid last-minute cramming.
- Say no to unnecessary commitments that don't align with the goals.



## BUILD REST INTO THE ROUTINE

- Sleep 7–9 hours — lack of sleep is a major burnout trigger.
- Take short breaks between study sessions to stretch, breathe, or go for a walk.
- Schedule downtime — guilt-free time for hobbies, friends, or just relaxing.

## STAY PHYSICALLY ACTIVE

Exercise helps manage stress hormones and boosts mood. Even short daily activities help, like walking, dancing, sports, yoga, or stretching between study blocks.

## EAT AND HYDRATE WELL

- The brain runs on energy (skipping meals or relying on caffeine hurts focus long term).
- Eat balanced meals (protein, fruits, veggies, whole grains).
- Stay hydrated.
- Limit sugar and energy drinks (they cause crashes).

## SEEK SUPPORT

- Talk to teachers, school counselors, or family when overwhelmed.
- Form study groups for mutual motivation.
- Avoid comparisons (everyone's path is different).

## DO THINGS THAT REFUEL ENERGY

- Listen to music, journal, draw, read for fun, or hang out with friends/family.
- Spend time outdoors.
- Practice mindfulness or meditation.
- Celebrate small wins — progress is being made even when it feels slow.





## Winter Recess (Revisited)

By Sharon K. Robertson, Administrative Specialist

The holidays are coming up and for some, this can be a time of stress, depression, and anxiety. But it does not have to be. For every positive, there is a negative. Choose self-care by relaxing and reflecting. Rather than focusing on the negative, choose the positive. Practice mindfulness. Be present in the current moment, owning whatever feelings or thoughts come up, paying attention to how it affects the body. Breathe deeply and release any negative tension. Do something that generates happiness. Play music, paint, or do something else artistic or athletic. Be mindful of what is eaten, exercise, and get plenty of rest. Socialize with people that stimulate the mind and leave a positive effect on the experience. Above all, remember that what is going on around a person cannot necessarily be controlled, but the person can control how they choose to respond to what is happening. Tailor the response to what works for the good. Be safe and be well.



*Happy Holidays!*

## NOW HIRING TUTOR

### REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Currently enrolled as a WSU student with a 3.0 GPA or higher
- Enrolled in at least 3-6 credit hours if a domestic student, 12 credit hours if an international student
- Have a valid driver's license and reliable transportation to travel to and from schools

### PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Preferred to have at least a B in the class to be tutored
- Experience or desire to work with first-generation, limited income students
- Knowledgeable in math, English, science, history, and other subjects

Student wages are competitive (\$10-12 per hour) and the experience is highly rewarding. Recommend someone to a TSS advisor or apply today!



# HOLIDAYS



## CALENDAR EVENTS

### December

- 4 KSU Campus Visit
- 6 SAT Test
- 13 ACT Test
- 22-31 No School | Winter Break
- 25 Christmas
- 31 New Year's Eve

### January

- 1-4 No School | Winter Break
- 5 School Reopens | Students Return
- 9 ACT Registration Deadline
- 19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

### February

- 12 No School (Conferences)
- 13 District Inservice | No School
- 14 ACT Test | Valentine's Day
- 16 President's Day | No School
- 27 SAT Registration Deadline

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The MISSION of the TRIO Talent Search-South program is to identify, encourage, and assist low income and potential first generation college students to complete a secondary education, enroll in postsecondary education, and complete a postsecondary program.

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### STAFF:

Larry Ramos

Executive Director

Vivian Pham,

Assistant Director/Statistician

Kathy Nguyen

Program Educational Advisor

Sharon K. Robertson

Administrative Specialist

TRIO Talent Search-South  
Wichita State University  
1845 Fairmount Street, Campus Box 96  
Wichita, KS 67260-0096  
Phone: (316) 978-3127  
Fax: (316) 978-3527

<https://www.wichita.edu/tss>

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  - a. In response to a formal complaint or charge;
  - b. In furtherance of an investigation, proceeding, hearing or action, including an investigation conducted by the University; or
  - c. Consistent with the University's legal duty to furnish the information.