



Wichita Mayor Jeff Longwell read the proclamation from the City of Wichita declaring the day National TRIO Day.

A scientist, teacher, psychologist, and IT specialist were among the few who were honored at the 2017 National TRIO Day banquet held in Beggs Ballroom at the Rhatigan Student Center. Directing the spotlight on TRIO, GEAR UP, and Office of Disability Services, alumni stole the show and certainly grabbed the attention of the 225 attendees. Each program selected former participants to receive the coveted Building Bridges Award. In addition, four other outstanding honorees, selected by the Associate Vice President Deltha Q. Colvin, were recognized as well.

Following the VIP reception, Colvin began the evening by welcoming the audience and speaking about notable TRIO alumni who have achieved at the highest level of their professions. She said, “Academy Award winner Viola Davis said that if it had not been for Upward Bound, she would not be where she is today. Davis shared that her interest in acting was fortified by the theatre arts classes she was exposed to while in Upward Bound.” Colvin also mentioned that other prominent TRIO alumni include actress Angela Bassett, writer and producer John Quinones, author and political analyst Donna Brazile, the late singer, songwriter, and record producer Luther Vandross, and journalist and author Wil Haygood. “Tonight, we honor individuals like those,” Colvin exclaimed.

Wichita State President John Bardo, PhD was unable to attend but Senior Assistant Dean and Assistant to the President for Diversity Marche Fleming-Randle, PhD gave the formal greeting from the university and acknowledged the great work of the programs and the leadership that Colvin exemplifies. Terri Hall, PhD vice president for Student Affairs gave a heartfelt welcome and words of inspiration.

Office of Special Programs

TRIO Day

Banquet

She talked about her experience as a first generation college student, how one person can make a difference, and how the kinship she feels with the TRIO directors makes her proud of the work being done at WSU.

Upward Bound Math Science Center Director Kaye Monk-Morgan read Governor Sam Brownback’s proclamation declaring the day National TRIO Day. She was followed by Mayor Jeff Longwell who read the proclamation from the City of Wichita. Several guests in the audience were recognized by Student Support Services Director Kennedy Musamali, EdD including community leaders, WSU faculty and staff, and other dignitaries. North Wichita GEAR UP Executive Director Riccardo Harris gave the invocation prior to dinner. While the audience ate, a video of the programs was played showing the faces of the Office of Special Programs students and staff.

Contemp-Oh! Band provided an eclectic mix of smooth jazz and soulful sounds during dinner. The band’s leader and drummer, Hal Cozart, is a TRIO alumni. His daughter Kamaria, the band’s keyboard player, is a current TRIO Talent Search student. Their participation and the participation of all other TRIO and GEAR UP students and alumni made this event a special and significant celebration.

Delinda Royse, director of development for the Division of Student Affairs at Wichita State was honored with the TRIO Advocacy Award for her work with all the programs. Her tireless efforts to provide resources to the programs demonstrates the passion she has for students. For her support, she was presented with a gift basket on behalf of program directors and the associate vice president for



OSP Directors gather before the banquet.

Student Affairs. Her efforts to provide promotional and other resources are priceless because the programs, due to federal regulations, are restricted in purchasing certain items.

After Roysel's much deserved acknowledgement, the alumni of the programs were individually recognized. Each person was awarded a medallion and a plaque to commemorate the occasion. Vic Chavez, executive director, South Wichita GEAR UP, read a short biography of each recipient.

While on stage, the honorees expressed their gratitude to the programs and talked about how the program impacted their lives. Throughout the entire proceedings, the audience was held captive and awed by each alum.

OSP Alumni Awardees

- **Amanda Griffith**, Communication Upward Bound
- **Rooshad Irani**, Disability Support Services
- **Kari Nilsen, PhD**, Educational Opportunity Centers Program
- **Abraham Rodriguez**, Kansas Kids @ GEAR UP
- **Amanda King**, Kansas Kids @ GEAR UP
- **Dalton Schoonover**, Kansas Kids @ GEAR UP
- **Meladee Garst, PhD**, McNair Scholars Program
- **Nick Taylor**, Office of Disability Services
- **Mikki Phan, PhD**, Student Support Services
- **Billy Dempsey Jr.**, Talent Search
- **Christina Kitzke**, Upward Bound Math Science
- **Robbin Davis**, Upward Bound Wichita Prep
- **Joseph Moore**, Veterans Upward Bound

Associate Vice President Awardees

- **Pamela Bradford Green**
- **Billy Dempsey Sr.**
- **Millicent Dempsey**
- **Phuoc Thai**

To close the evening's festivities, Colvin called each program director to the stage and acknowledged their efforts in supporting all the alumni and the current students. The directors were presented with a special medallion and received a boisterous applause from the audience. It was a fitting end to an absolutely beautiful event.

Banquet Evaluation

