

National TRIO Day 2018



Associate Vice President for Nontraditional Students Deltha Q. Colvin provided opening remarks to kick off the CARS Conference.

On February 13, 2018, the Office of Special Programs under the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement at Wichita State coordinated events for National TRIO Day. Over 300 individuals attended the day's activities which included the College Access, Retention, and Success conference (CARS) and the National TRIO Day banquet. All activities were held in the Rhatigan Student Center (RSC). National TRIO Day has been celebrated at WSU since a 1986 congressional resolution declaring the last Saturday in the month of February as National TRIO Day. The day commemorates all of the federal TRIO programs across the United States and the work they do with low come, first generation, and other underserved groups to expand educational opportunities for the most vulnerable citizens of the U.S.

The planning for National TRIO Day is year-round. Twenty committees, comprised of TRIO and GEAR UP staff, are charged with specific tasks to ensure the events are well-designed and honors the purpose of National TRIO Day. This year's planning committees included staff from Communication Upward Bound, Disability Support Services, Educational Opportunity Centers, Kansas Kids @ GEAR UP, McNair Scholars Program, Student Support Services, Talent Search, Upward Bound Empowerment, Upward Bound Math Science, Upward Bound Wichita Prep, and Veterans Upward Bound. This year, the CARS conference consisted of concurrent sessions featuring best practices of the programs. Attendees could choose from

pre-college, college, and community oriented sessions.

According to Associate Vice President for Nontraditional Students Deltha Q. Colvin, the CARS conference made a lasting mark on all who attended. "The CARS conference has been excellent. It's been an opportunity for people to learn about different areas" she remarked. Wichita State is fortunate to have ten TRIO programs and five GEAR UP programs on campus. As a result, there is always a need to inform the campus and community about the various programs and what each does. Several university and public school personnel attended the conference and many reiterated a similar theme—that the conference was very beneficial to their understanding of what the programs offer. According to Stephanie Stovall from Hamilton Middle School, the conference deepened her awareness. "I have a much better understanding of TRIO and how all the programs are connected."

Another theme that transcended the purpose of the conference was that the programs are essential in fostering student success. The CARS conference planning committee considered that educators and service providers need to become better equipped in articulating the benefits of the TRIO and GEAR UP programs so that students and parents understand that help is nearby. Robert Love, a USD 259 staff member, expressed his sentiments about

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Over 300 individuals from the campus and surrounding community attended the day's activities.

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the conference in this way. “It’s essential that students be aware of these programs. Many students would love to go to school (college) but don’t understand how it works and how TRIO/GEAR UP can benefit them. So, I think what we are doing here today is very good and I’m just glad to come up here to learn more about what Wichita State is doing.” Ginger Pollock, Pando Initiative, indicated that the conference provided her with a lot of “exciting opportunities for our students” offered by the TRIO programs.

The conference also reaffirmed established connections as well as fostering new connections between educators and the various programs. “I came today to not only learn more



Each TRIO and GEAR UP program hosted an information table during the CARS event.

about what the programs do but to make connections. It’s great to see familiar faces and hear about the progress that is being made by the people served,” said Pamela O’Neal, assistant director for the Office of Adult Learning at WSU. The evaluations received from attendees revealed overwhelming positive responses. Vice President for Diversity and Community Engagement Marché Fleming-Randle, PhD may have summed it up best when she said, “Today’s conference was extravagant. A two-hour conference where you learn a lot about TRIO and GEAR UP programs is the kind of conference that should take place at the university and in the community.”

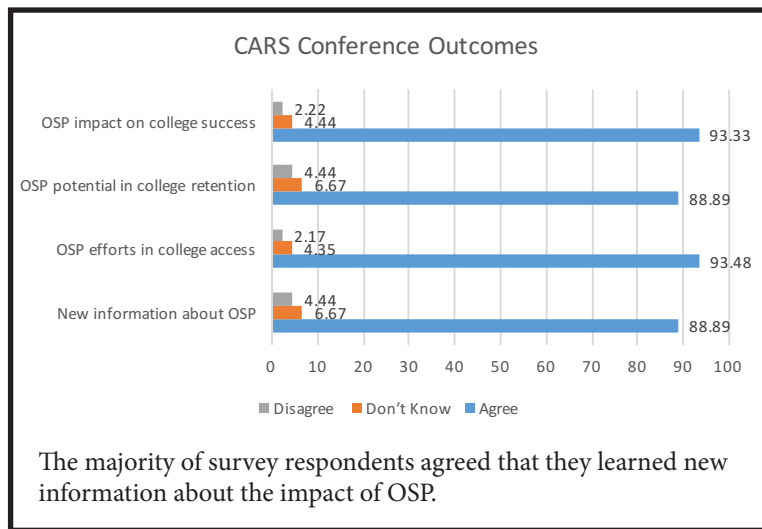
Following the CARS conference, the staff members from the various programs ascended to the third floor of the



Banquet attendees had the opportunity to pose in the photo booth and celebrate their TRIO/GEAR UP pride.

RSC and the Shirley Beggs Ballroom to set up for the evening banquet. Each program placed a banner near the stage and the decorations committee headed by Vanessa Souriya-Mnirajd, director of Disability Support Services, adorned each table with beautiful over-sized papier-mâché sunflowers. Hercilia Thompson, administrative specialist, and her team made sure all the logistics for the evening program were in order including the VIP reception. The Ezine committee including Ashley Cervantes, McNair Scholars Program, and Fennie Christensen, T3, prepared rooms on the third floor to hold interviews and set up a photo booth.

The banquet attendees, nearly 200 of them, included students and their parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts,





ContempOh! was recognized with the TRIO Advocacy Award for their ongoing support of National TRIO Day.

uncles, and the guests of honor (TRIO and GEAR UP alumni). University and public school personnel as well as community and university officials were also in attendance. All of the programs under the Office of Special Programs had several staff members in attendance. Many of these staff members were responsible for chaperoning students, registering people, supervising the dinner, taking photographs, placing programs at each table, handing out evaluations, and filming the event. To top off the logistics, ContempOh! played contemporary jazz tunes which filled the ballroom with lively music.

Colvin began the banquet congratulating the students and

the alumni on their hard work in and out of the classroom. She also commended the staff for their passion and resolve in working with students through the years. Following her words of praise, Wichita Mayor Jeff Longwell read a proclamation from the City of Wichita declaring February 13, 2018 as National TRIO Day. Then, Colvin directed the audience to the serving lines. A delicious meal featuring chicken, beef, and vegetarian choices was offered to the attendees. Side dishes included salad, vegetables, and rolls. Many people complimented the food—especially the desserts. Afterwards, Souriya-Mnirajd read WSU President John Bardo's proclamation. She also presented Colvin with a proclamation from the governor's office.

Fleming-Randle also offered her congratulatory remarks to Colvin and the programs for their work with low income and first generation students. She praised the students and the alumni for following their dreams and reaching their goals. Later in the program, Fleming-Randle was requested to place medallions around each director in recognition of their efforts. This was the first year that National TRIO Day at WSU was carried out under the newly formed Division of Diversity and Community Engagement.

Kennedy Musamali, PhD read the names of special guests in the audience. Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Dean Ron Matson, PhD, Professor Robert Weems, PhD, and Peter Najera, Rudd Foundation were mentioned



A message from the vice president of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Marché Fleming-Randle, PhD

As we celebrate National TRIO Day 2018 at Wichita State, I would like to thank Deltha Q. Colvin, associate vice president for nontraditional students in the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, as well as the directors for their hard work. According

to the 1986 Congressional resolution, National TRIO Day is meant to focus the nation's attention on the needs of disadvantaged young people and adults aspiring to improve their lives, to the necessary investment if they are to become contributing citizens of the country, and to the talent which will be wasted if that investment is not made." A job well done TRIO and GEAR UP staff!



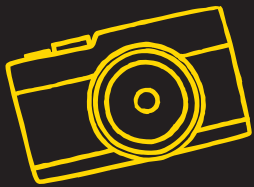
OSP administrators were recognized with medallions following banquet activities.

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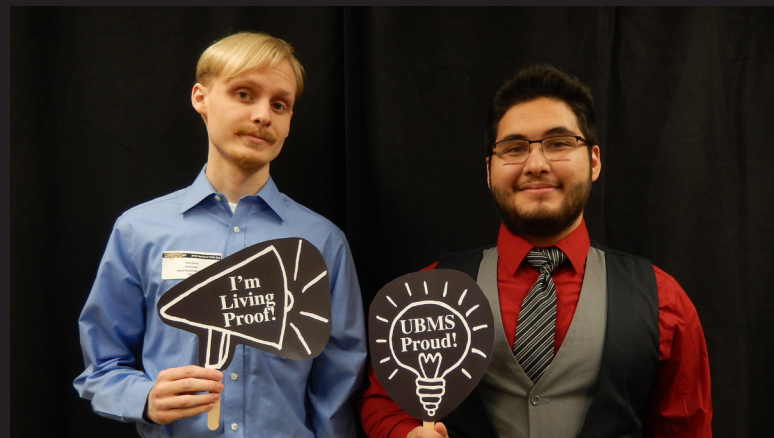
to name just a few of the many dignitaries who spent the evening at WSU. Carla Williams of Communication Upward Bound provided an insightful and inspiring speech. Her words embodied the spirit of National TRIO Day and tugged on the hearts of nearly every person in attendance who has had to struggle with poverty, strife, and oppression. Her message of hope was relevant in today's caustic society. Williams also assisted Colvin with presenting ContempOh! with the TRIO Advocacy Award for their ongoing support of National TRIO Day. Charity Lowe, Student Support Services, Manivone Souriya, Talent Search, and Hercilia Thompson, Office of Special Programs, were also presented TRIO Advocacy Awards. These

individuals are TRIO alumni who now work for one of the educational opportunity programs.

The featured part of the evening was the Building Bridges honorees. Rhonda Hicks, Upward Bound Empowerment and Upward Bound Wichita Prep director, read each honoree's bio and the Building Bridges award was presented by Colvin. Each program and the Office of Special Programs selected at least one of their prominent alumni to receive this year's award. The honorees included Solomon Adair (Talent Search), Duane Bosley (Office of Special Programs), Jacqueline Boyles (Educational Opportunity Centers Program), Nicholas Cox (Communication Upward



TRIO Day Photo Booth



A Huge Success!



Bound), Montreal Devine (Upward Bound Wichita Prep), Tyson Drummond (Veterans Upward Bound), Violet Gomes (Upward Bound Math Science), Christy James (Office of Special Programs), Conni Earl-Mansaw (Office of Special Programs), Johnathan Nehring (Kansas Kids @ GEAR UP), Christa Platt, PhD (McNair Scholars Programs), Evan Wainwright (Disability Support Services), Nisha Weems (Student Support Services), and Andrea West (Office of Special Programs).

Each honoree spoke about their appreciation to the programs that served them while a student. While the alumni were selected by individual programs, many of

them participated in more than one program. As a result, several of the honorees acknowledged several staff from various programs and thanked them for the support they received. Their heartfelt words left a positive impression on the audience as many of the evaluations returned included comments about the speeches given by the honorees and how meaningful their words seemed.

After acknowledgements and final words from Colvin, the evening was called to a close. Overall, the audience left feeling good and energized by the vibe that was in the air. "It was an outstanding program. Very well put together. We are so grateful and glad that we were able to come and be a



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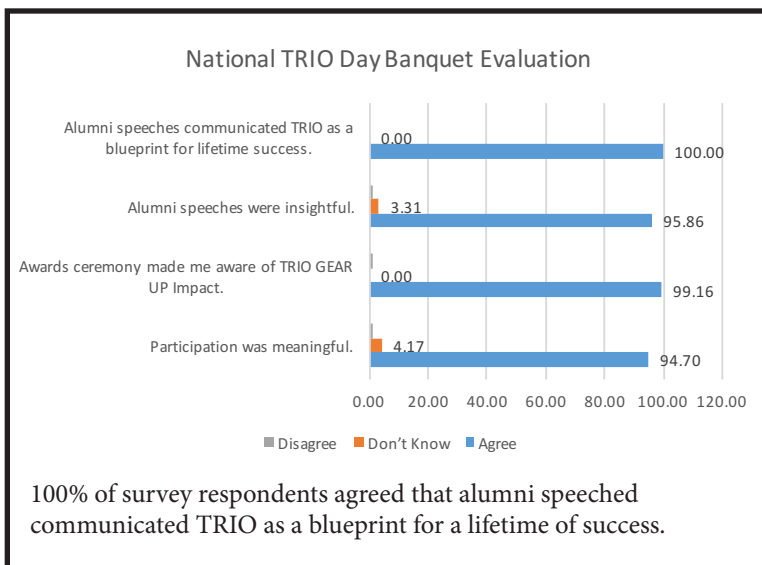
Banquet attendees included TRIO Staff, students and their families and the guests of honor (TRIO and GEAR UP alumni).

part of this program” said Jonathan Platt, father to honoree Christa Platt, PhD. Grady Landrum, Office of Disability Services, thought the banquet exceeded his expectations and had glowing comments about the honorees. “I thought tonight’s program was really good. I enjoyed hearing from a lot of different people about, not only how they were motivated by the TRIO programs, but also how they are now turning that over and giving it to other people by helping them grow, get to college, and do positive things with their lives.” Landrum volunteered to create a slide show for the banquet and the programs are grateful for his efforts.

It is important to note that a significant percentage of the audience consisted of TRIO and GEAR UP personnel. In addition to creating a banquet program experience that is motivating and positive for students, alumni, parents, and other dignitaries, the staff cannot be overlooked. Several staff thought the banquet speakers, in particular, made the biggest impression of the evening. “My favorite part of the evening was listening to the honorees speeches. They were really inspiring. It was nice to hear how much we supported them and they are going out and supporting other people. That was wonderful,” expressed Tracy Sheppard, Kansas Kids @ GEAR UP.



Building Bridges Honorees were recognized during the banquet and spoke about the impact of OSP programs on their lives.



Hercilia Thompson, Office of Special Programs, Manivone Souriya, Talent Search, and Charity Lowe, Student Support Services, were presented with TRIO Advocacy Awards.