

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024



WICHITA STATE  
UNIVERSITY

*TRIO Programs*

*Talent Search*

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## DIGITAL ANNUAL REPORT CONTENTS

Scan the QR code for the annual report video, detailed reports on program activities, services, statistics, and evaluations.

- Program Highlights Video
- Campus Visits
- College Readiness Activities
- Special Programs
- Professional Development Reports
- Program Statistics
- Program Evaluations





# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It is with pride and great pleasure to publish this annual report that highlights many of the services, activities, and accomplishments made during the 2023-2024 grant year. This marks the end of year three of a five-year grant. I am happy to report that the program exceeded all U.S. Department of Education mandatory program objectives. The staff is to be commended for their hard work in motivating and encouraging students to do their best.



**Larry Ramos**

Program Educational Advisors Suresh Menon, Thip Phichith, and Emily Roets-Estevez worked with the students and staff at North, Southeast, and West High Schools on the ACT, financial aid, and other services including visits to college campuses throughout the year. In addition, Stephanie Haynes led the middle school efforts including the ever-popular Middle School Summer Enrichment Program. Students were selected for program participation from Brooks, Curtis, Gordon Parks Academy, Hamilton, Jardine, and Mayberry middle schools.

Associate Director/Statistician Manivone Souriya and Administrative Specialist Sharon Robertson worked behind the scenes to ensure that the program's operations including the evaluation components were efficient and strong. Finally, university administrators including WSU President Richard Muma, Ph.D., Executive Vice President/Provost Shirley LeFever, Ph.D., and Associate Vice President for Special Programs Deltha Q. Colvin provided unwavering support and technical assistance to ensure the program remained a viable and effective entity at the university. Thanks to all the public school staff who collaborated with the program to ensure that low-income and potential first-generation students were served effectively by the program.

- Larry Ramos, Executive Director

# PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

## TRIO Affiliation and Brief Historical Perspective

Talent Search is housed on the Wichita State main campus. Other TRIO programs at Wichita State University include Communication Upward Bound, Disability Support Services, Educational Opportunity Centers, McNair Scholars Program, Student Support Services, Talent Search-South, Upward Bound Math-Science, Upward Bound Wichita Prep, and Veterans Upward Bound.

On November 8, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the 1965 Higher Education Act (HEA), which included several programs that have changed the landscape of education in this nation. Major pillars of that law included access, equal educational opportunity, increased financial aid for students (work study, low interest student loans, Pell Grants, and strengthening resources to higher education institutions). The Talent Search program was the first TRIO program authorized under the HEA of 1965. The Upward Bound Program preceded Talent Search in 1964 (Upward Bound was established under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964). The amended HEA of 1968 authorized the third educational opportunity program, the Student Support Services Program. Originally named the Special Services for Disadvantaged Students, the term “TRIO” had become the umbrella identifier of these programs.

Nationally, TRIO programs serve approximately 850,000 low-income and first-generation students each year. Millions of students have been nurtured, assisted, and supported through TRIO programs and resources initiated in the 1965 HEA and subsequent amendments. The TRIO programs have had a major effect on millions of eligible students, moving them from poverty to middle class, from limited access to postsecondary education, to graduating from colleges and universities. The students have succeeded in remarkable ways and have become leaders, scientists, entrepreneurs, doctors, educators, and change agents on a global scale. These notable individuals include entertainment icon Oprah Winfrey, award-winning actresses Viola Davis and Angela Bassett, Hall of Fame basketball player and coach Patrick Ewing, NASA astronauts Franklin Chang-Diaz, Jose Hernandez, and Bernard Harris, congresswoman Gwendolynne Moore, former U.S. congressman Henry Bonilla, to name a few, along with millions of other trailblazers and achievers. They are evidence of TRIO’s transformational and global impact. TRIO is the bridge that moves students from where they are to where they want to be. TRIO programs have been a critical tool in actualizing and maximizing the benefits of the 1965 HEA for low-income and first-generation students throughout the United States. “TRIO Works,” and thousands of students achieve and succeed because of TRIO every day.

- Excerpts from Jerry Lewis, Executive Director, Academic Achievement Programs, 2022



Parent Meeting for the North Carolina  
TRIO Access & Success Conference

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

## Daily Operations

The program employs an executive director, associate director/statistician, middle school director, three program educational advisors, an administrative specialist, as well as part-time tutors and student assistants. While most of the grant funds were allocated to services provided to students, funds were included for professional staff development, equipment, supplies and other operating expenditures to enable the program to serve students at a high level.



## Grant Funding

For the 2023-2024 academic year, Talent Search was awarded funding in the amount of \$672,135 from the U.S. Department of Education. This grant supports the Middle School Summer Enrichment Program (SEP), campus visits, workshops on financial literacy and ACT preparation, the After School Tutoring Program (ASTP), and other services and activities offered throughout the academic year.



North High Graduation Ceremony,  
WSU Koch Arena

# PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Since 2016, the program has responded to the mandatory program objectives developed by the U.S. Department of Education.

Secondary  
School  
Persistence:

Ninety-eight percent of non-senior participants served each project year will complete the current academic year and continue in school for the next academic year, at the next grade level.

**The program achieved 100 percent.**



Secondary  
School  
Graduation:

Eighty percent of seniors served during the project year will graduate during the project year with a regular secondary school diploma within the standard number of years.

**The program achieved 100 percent.**



Secondary  
School  
Graduation  
(Rigorous Secondary  
School Program of Study):

Twenty-five percent of seniors served during the project year will complete a rigorous secondary school program of study and will graduate during the project year with a regular secondary school diploma within the standard number of years.

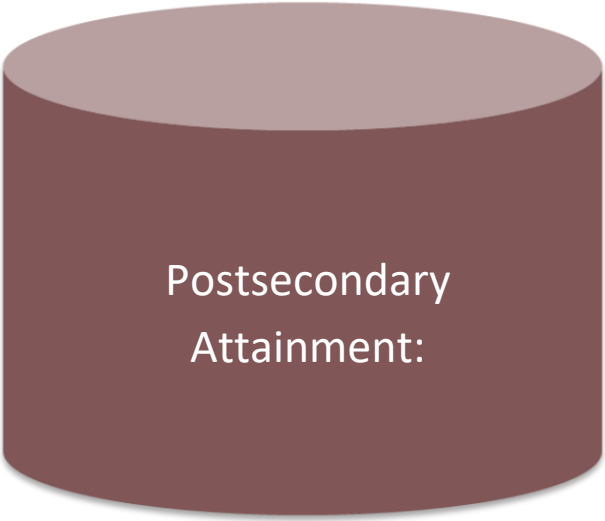
**The program achieved 55 percent.**



### Postsecondary Education Enrollment:

Fifty-five percent of participants, who graduated with a regular secondary school diploma, during the project year will enroll in an institution of higher education by the fall term immediately following high school graduation or will have received notification, by the fall term immediately following high school, from an institution of higher education, of acceptance but deferred enrollment until the next academic term (e.g. spring term).

**The program achieved 61 percent.**

### Postsecondary Attainment:

Forty-five percent of participants served during the project year, which enrolled in an institution of higher education, by the fall term immediately following high school graduation or by the next academic term (e.g. spring term) as a result of acceptance but deferred enrollment will, complete a program of postsecondary education within six years.

**The program achieved 47 percent.**



#### **Please note the following definition:**

Enrolled – a participant who has completed the registration requirements (except for the payment of tuition and fees) at the institution that he or she is attending.



# SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

To ensure that students made progress toward their educational goals, the program offered a wide array of services and activities during the grant year. The following provides a brief overview of the services and activities provided carried out by the program. While most services and activities were in person, the program also utilized the convenience of online programming.

## Academic Advising, Assistance in Pre-College and Rigorous Course Planning and College Course Selection

Program Educational Advisors advised students taking rigorous pre-college curriculum on strategies to improve postsecondary eligibility. Students were given the opportunity to connect with their Talent Search advisors to discuss college plans and receive academic support. Graduating seniors were advised of college course offerings and possible majors. Senior-level students received assistance with applying to postsecondary institutions, completing the FAFSA and scholarship applications, registering for courses and campus orientation, arranging for housing, and identifying their college advisor. Juniors and seniors were advised on the procedures to take advantage of dual enrollment. Middle school students were offered to participate in the summer enrichment program to help them make a successful transition from middle school to high school.

## Assistance in Completing College Admission Applications and Financial Aid Forms

Students received technical assistance in completing college admission applications and financial aid forms. A computer lab was available for program students to complete these applications including the FAFSA. Program advisors reviewed applications and students were provided admission application fee waivers and grants offered at many colleges and universities for TRIO participants. Workshops were offered throughout the year providing students information on financial literacy, scholarships, and other related topics. The financial literacy coordinator also published a monthly scholarship newsletter. TRIO Talent Search also posted scholarship information, such as the Educational Opportunity Association Scholarship and the DreamCatcher Scholarship, on its Facebook page.

### TRIO Talent Search May 2024 Scholarship Newsletter

#### Congratulations to the Class of 2024!

Many Talent Search (TS) seniors have received a graduation stole in recognition of their participation in the program and dedication to pursuing a post-secondary education.

All WSU Talent Search graduates are now TRIO alumni and can join [The National TRIO Alumni Association \(NTAA\)](#) and [MO-KAN-NE Alumni Directory](#). Complete your alumni profile to continue receiving TRIO news and resources! Reach out to your TS advisor for more information.

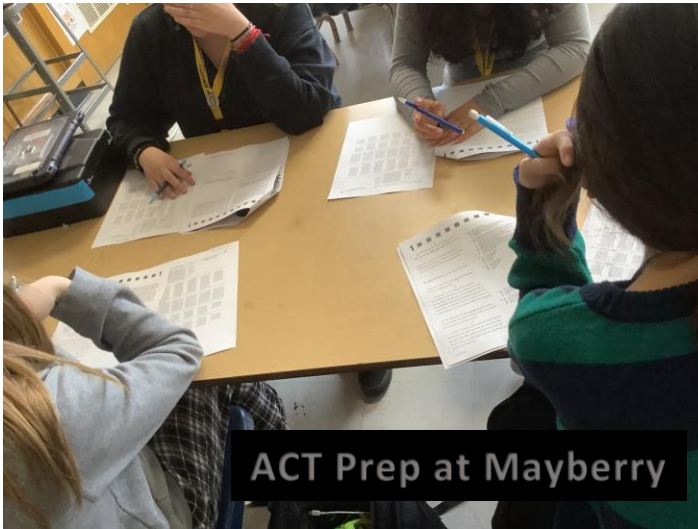


Photo: North High School Class of 2023 graduation ceremony, May 17, 2023.



#### TRIO in College

Talent Search is not the only TRIO program available to help you be successful at school! Many colleges have TRIO programs designed to help you complete certificate programs, associates and bachelor's degrees, and graduate programs. Check out the [TRIO Footprint in 2022-23](#) map to see which colleges



## Assistance in Preparing for College Entrance Examinations

Program advisors advised students on how to prepare for the ACT and SAT exams using online resources, study guides and practice test materials. Academic resource cards and pamphlets were provided to students on money management, financial aid, college admissions, the FAFSA, goal-setting, and college preparation.

Program advisors connected with students using Remind™, emails, text messaging and other social

media on test taking strategies, effective study habits, and other topics related to becoming a better and more prepared student. ACT and SAT registration fee waivers were secured and provided to students who met eligibility guidelines. The program also conducted ACT workshops in the schools.

## Mentoring and Career Counseling

Students met with program staff for mentoring via phone calls, Remind™ messaging, video conferencing, or at the target schools. Students could express any concerns they had regarding school, home life, or their ideas for the future. Presentations on career and educational opportunities were conducted for middle schools, high schools, and community agencies. Talent Search also hosted the annual College Jump Start event at the beginning of the school year on the WSU main campus to introduce high school students to the FAFSA, the college admissions process, campus housing, college orientation programs, the qualified admissions curriculum, and program services and activities.



## Guidance on Secondary School Re-Entry or Entry to Other Programs Leading to a Secondary School Diploma or Its Equivalent

Program advisors provided information to individuals who dropped out of high school on re-entering school or enrolling in alternative education programs. The purpose of this service was to support students in completing their high school diplomas, high school equivalency programs, or GED so that they could become eligible to apply to postsecondary institutions. Individuals were also referred to the Educational Opportunity Centers program for assistance, when appropriate.

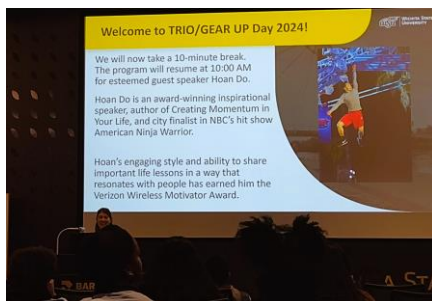


## Campus Visits

The program partnered with TRIO Talent Search-South to offer high school students campus visits throughout the academic year to learn about admissions, financial aid, housing opportunities, majors, and other college-related matters. Campus visits included Butler Community College, Emporia State University, Garden City Community College, Kansas State University, Pittsburg State University, Southwestern College, University of Kansas, Wichita State University, and WSU Tech.



Wichita State University and program participants were also offered the chance to attend Wichita State University's TRIO/GEAR UP Day Celebration in Woolsey Hall. In addition, program participants and staff volunteered at the Kansas Food Bank and donated to local Free Little Libraries in honor of National TRIO Day.



## Tutorial Services and Summer Enrichment Program for Middle School Students

Tutoring and homework assistance was provided to program students. A tutor was assigned to several of the target middle schools and high schools to aid in math and other subjects. In June and July, 25 middle school students were selected to participate in the Summer Enrichment Program (SEP) held on the main campus of WSU. Teaching consultants provided class instruction for English, math, computer science, and life skills/financial literacy. Science included robotics lessons supported by Nucleus Inc. Special projects were presented on July 12<sup>th</sup> to parents and university staff highlighting college and career choices. Campus visits included Pratt Community College, Haskell Indian Nations University, Wichita State University, Rose State University, and University of Central Oklahoma. The Oklahoma tour also included social emotional learning (SEL) activities in Bricktown, Frontier City, and Black Wall Street. Local activities included visits to All Star Adventures and Pro Kansas Recycling Center. Merittrust Credit Union and Paradigm Shift provided speakers who gave interactive and educational workshops.





# YEAR AT A GLANCE

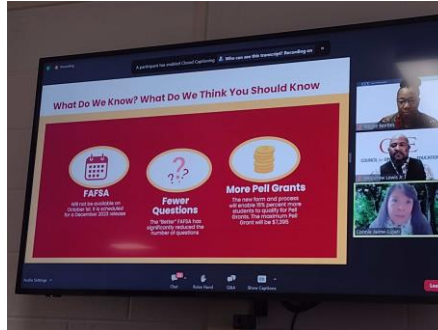
Talent Search offered various educational and professional development activities throughout the academic year. Below are highlights from some of those events.

**SEP**



Music Theater  
Production: Cats

**OCT**



Better FAFSA  
Financial Literacy Webinar

**NOV**



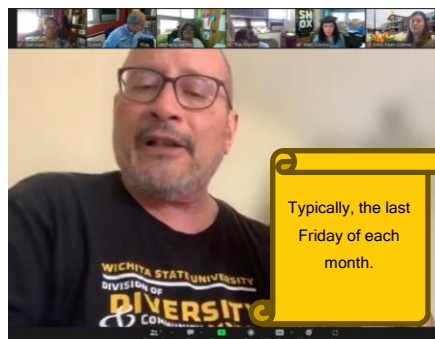
Educational Opportunity Association  
Annual Conference,  
Detroit, MI

**DEC**



Staff Professional  
Development Retreat:  
Team Building & Conflict Management

**JAN**



Staff  
Planning Meetings

**FEB**



National TRIO Day  
Community Service:  
Kansas Food Bank

MAR



Southwestern College  
Campus Visit

APR



TRIO Access & Success  
Conference at North Carolina  
Central University

MAY



Graduation  
Ceremonies

JUN



Middle School  
Summer Enrichment  
Program (SEP)

JUL



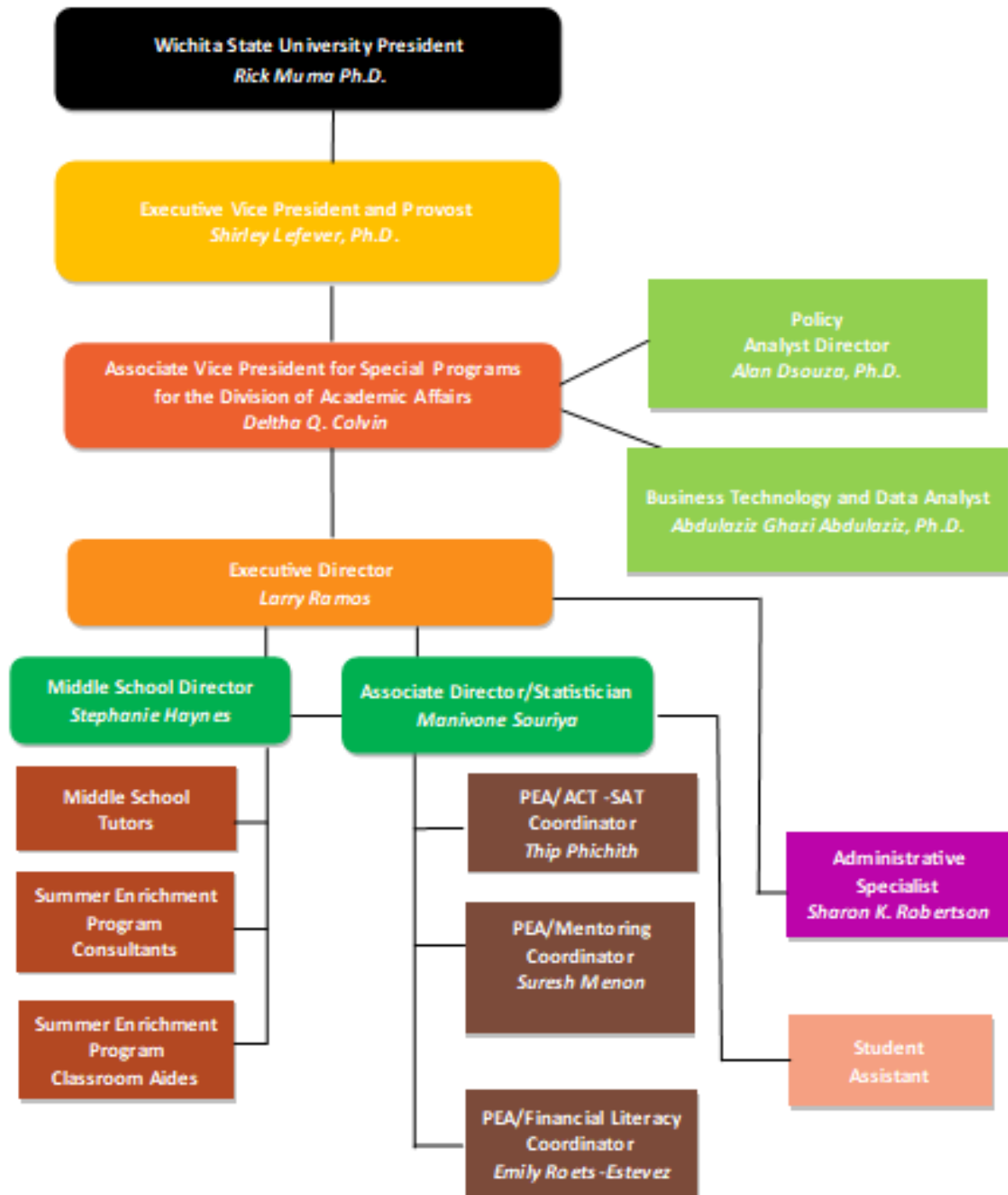
Music Theater  
Production: Frozen

AUG



College  
Career Fair

# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



# PROGRAM STAFF



*Larry Ramos,*  
Executive Director

*Manivone Souriya,*  
Associate  
Director/Statistician

*Emily Roets-Estevez,*  
Program Educational  
Advisor-Financial Literacy  
Coordinator

*Stephanie Haynes,*  
Middle School Director

*Sharon Robertson,*  
Administrative Specialist

*Suresh Menon,*  
Program Educational  
Advisor-Mentoring  
Coordinator

*Thip Phichith,*  
Program Educational  
Advisor-ACT & SAT  
Coordinator

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