

# Distinguished

# Alumni

A presentation honored TRIO alumni who are now employed as Office of Special Programs directors. Deltha Colvin made the surprise presentation at the National TRIO Day banquet. Vanessa Souriya-Mnirajd, Wilma Holloway, Rhonda Hicks, and Shukura Bakari-Cozart were truly flattered by the words of praise and award Colvin gave to them. A brief bio of each director appears below.

## Rhonda K. Hicks



Hicks was a participant in TRIO Talent Search while a student at South High School. When she came to Wichita State, she joined TRIO Student Support Services and graduated in 1995. She worked in WSU's Admissions for two years and the American Heart Association for one year. She returned to Wichita State in 1991 to become the associate director of TRIO Upward Bound Wichita Prep (UBWP). Hicks completed a master's degree in management information systems at Friends University in 2006. She was promoted to director of UBWP in 2012.

## Wilma Holloway



Holloway was a TRIO Upward Bound student at Forest Park Community College in St. Louis, MO. She later attended Emporia State University before earning her bachelor's degree from Wichita State. She earned a master's degree from Friends University. She worked for eight years with the TRIO Talent Search Program at WSU and 11 years with the Wichita school district. Five of those years were spent with the district's GEAR UP program. She has since returned to WSU serving as director of the Homework Assistance Program for the past five years.

## Vanessa Souriya-Mnirajd



Vanessa Souriya-Mnirajd joined TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) as a student and student assistant in 1991. In 1995 she participated in the McNair Scholars Program which led to her completing a master's degree from Wichita State in 1998. She was hired by SSS as the database manager/academic advisor in 2000 and promoted to associate director in 2002. In 2014, Souriya-Mnirajd became the associate director of Kansas Kids @ GEAR UP, the state-wide grant, and just recently promoted to director of TRIO Disability Support Services. Currently, she is pursuing a doctorate with hopes to complete it by 2019.

## Shukura Bakari-Cozart



Bakari-Cozart obtained a bachelor's degree from Wichita State in 1997. As a student, she participated in TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) and the TRIO McNair Scholars Program. In 2000, she received a master's degree in education and hired as the academic advisor for SSS where she remained for

three years. She began working for the McNair Scholars Program in 2003, first as program counselor, then as the assistant director. In 2013, she became director of Veterans Upward Bound. During her tenure with the TRIO programs, Bakari-Cozart has been involved with the state professional association serving in various capacities.