

Upward Bound Math Science

Rising Star

Christopher Solis



Outstanding Alum

Christina Kitzke



Christopher Solis is a five-year participant of TRIO Upward Bound Math Science Center program (UBMS). He attends Sumner Academy of Arts and Sciences where he is enrolled in the International Baccalaureate program.

A dedicated leader, the UBMS staff expects to see his leadership acumen further develop in college. Christopher's willingness to lead has grown over the years. He has a desire to be a part of the decision-making processes in his school, community and UBMS. He has developed the confidence to know that what he has to say matters, for himself and for others. He is a consensus builder and servant leader who is always interested in what is best for the larger group.

Christopher is very involved in music, community service projects, band, intramural tennis and Engineers without Borders. He is an exemplary UBMS student because he is equal parts leader and capable follower. Christopher is willing to follow directions and he has the academic ability and common sense to solve a problem. These skills make for a powerful combination. Christopher said, "My advice to other students is to get into Upward Bound and take full advantage of every opportunity."

Christopher has had many chances to volunteer through UBMS by working on a community garden, helping clean debris from a tornado in Oklahoma, and working the Heart Walk in Wichita. "This program has helped make me a conscientious, dedicated, discerning, intentional, and purposeful young man," says Christopher.

Christina Kitzke, a five-time summer participant of UBMS and graduate of Wichita State where she earned degrees in biology and psychology. Kitzke is also an alumni of the WSU McNair Scholars Program, where she developed the skills to ascertain a graduate degree. With a Masters of Education, she currently teaches biology, forensics, and chemistry at Wichita North High School.

Kitzke is being honored for multiple reasons, including successful completion of UBMS, high school graduation, college matriculation and graduation, and future investment in others. In addition to her personal success, the staff is proud of the support she provided the program. She has served as student assistant, summer staff, and interim curriculum coordinator. She volunteers to work with current students working to overcome many of the same barriers that she faced. Program students and staff treasure her. Kitzke is the epitome of the program's slogan, "I'm living proof!"

"I had no one at home who had ever gone to college. No one talked about my future or how to get there. TRIO changed that. UBMS gave me the skills I needed to pursue a future." She advises students, "Be a sponge, and be thankful. The impact of the program isn't just educational. It's an encompassing lifelong impact. The people you meet and the people skills you build are invaluable. Take what the program has to give and run with it. Know that you can do great things. TRIO can be the vehicle that helps you get there. Just remember that when you do arrive, be willing to be someone else's vehicle."