



MASSACHUSETTS EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY ASSOCIATION

MEOA News

April 2013 Newsletter

Volume 7, Issue 1

TRIO Day

Celebrate, Act and Reflect

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February 22, 2013

What has 675 high school students, 62 colleges and universities and 1 hotel? TRIO Day 2013, that's what! Though it sounds like a blockbuster movie concept, the 2013 TRIO Day event is actually an equally inspirational and educational conference that will help guide many students from TRIO and GEAR UP programs from across Massachusetts and New England as a whole.



Students and staff from the MIT/Wellesley Upward Bound program arrived in style at the 2013 TRIO Day event in Nashua, NH.

Taking place in the beautiful border city of Nashua, NH, this year's event was coordinated by Randy Schroeder (SSS, UNH) and his team of hardworking educational access and opportunity professionals. During February vacation, Randy and his team put on a regular red carpet occasion that managed to draw nearly 700 students during February vacation! A feat that Randy proudly boasts as "the largest [TRIO Day] in the country!"

Representing Massachusetts were 15 total programs, ranging from Upward Bound (Classic and Math Science,) Educational Talent Search and GEAR-UP.

Attendees were first treated to a campus visit at one of New Hampshire's fine and varied institutions such as Dartmouth College, Keene State University and the New England College, among others. Upon returning to the hotel, students and staff were greeted by the University of New Hampshire Associate Director of Admissions for Diversity, Mr. Richard Haynes. During his passionate speech, Haynes urged students to strive for excellence and breadth in education and extracurricular activities; saying that this was the best way to be noticed by Admissions departments. Upon concluding his speech, one lucky student left with a Richard Haynes original painting.

The following day, students and staff met another beacon of educational access and opportunity; Michael Vidal, a TRIO alumnus and current graduate student originally from Nashua, NH. As the first in his family to attend college, Vidal connected with the many students in the room that are striving to emulate successes.

To conclude the conference, guests visited a college fair with over 60 admissions representatives and attended various workshops aimed to aid their pursuit of higher education. All in all, TRIO Day 2013 in New England will be a useful resource for the students that attended but on a larger scale, it represents the strength and purpose of the many TRIO and GEAR-UP programs nationwide. Next year's TRIO Day will be held in Massachusetts so we hope to see you all there!

(Turn to page 5 for some pictures and quotes!)

TRIO



Program Peek

Northfield Mount Hermon Upward Bound

Through a partnership between the Northfield Mount Hermon Upward Bound Program and Holyoke Surfaces, a photography project rooted in civic pride led by Lyn Horan, the effects of sequestration on educational access and opportunity programs nationwide was in focus recently in the Boston Globe. What started as a humble common interest project for students has become a blueprint for community engagement and grassroots promotion. In this edition of Program Peek, we detail how the program started and the steps that NMH staff took to assure that TRIO and GEAR-UP programs got recognized.



The brainchild of Lyn Horan, an artist and art educator in Holyoke, MA, Holyoke Surfaces began when Horan first moved to the Paper City. In the city's decaying and abandoned buildings, Horan saw beauty and hope and sought a way to showcase it.

Encouraged by members of the community, Horan contacted Anna Rigali of the Northfield Mount Hermon Upward Bound (NMHUB) program and sought the hardworking and community-oriented students that she had heard all about. Sure enough, she amassed a group dubbed the "Talented Ten" and hit the streets with cameras in hand.

Over the next couple weeks, the scholars worked meticulously through their city. Always with an artistic eye and fueled by renewed civic pride, they visited some of Holyoke's most historic buildings and compiled a gallery that represented Holyoke's past and present; A gallery that will be on display at Paper City Studios beginning April 13th.

Meanwhile, in Washington, D.C., talks of sequestration were heating up. Fortunately, in Holyoke Surfaces Horan and Rigali saw an avenue to promote the importance of TRIO and GEAR-UP programs. Horan sent information about the project to Johanna Weiss, a columnist for the Boston Globe. Despite over 100 miles in between the two cities, Weiss was hooked.

When Weiss called, Horan lauded the contributions of the "Talented Ten" and gave her the contact info for Gisele Litalien, the NMHUB Program Director. Litalien helped Weiss understand how sequestration would affect Upward Bound students. Before long, Weiss realized that the story was not the Holyoke Surfaces project itself but rather the students who powered it.

In the March 13th issue of The Boston Globe, Weiss published a column with the headline "*In Holyoke, worry about student program cuts.*" First focusing on the Holyoke Surfaces project, the column later lists multiple effects that sequestration would have, including drastic changes to program activities. Thanks to Litalien, Rigali and Horan, TRIO and GEAR UP was in the spotlight. The full column can be found [here](#).

Initially, the goal of Holyoke Surfaces was to highlight the city and to reinvigorate the community with pride and it has. As Rigali says, "our students have always worked hard to get involved in our communities."

Rigali continues and suggests an ulterior motive, stating that as a program, "we're always trying to be seen!" And seen they were, by the Boston Globe's estimated 1.8 million in weekly readers.

Visit the [Holyoke Surfaces](#) Facebook page for more information and pictures.

An UB Alumna's Insight on Policy Seminar

By: Marisola Xhelili

Marisola Xhelili is a proud alumna of the Y.O.U., Inc Bruce Wells Scholars Upward Bound Program at Clark University and a 2007 graduate of the University Park Campus School in Worcester, MA. In 2011, she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Government and Philosophy from Skidmore University and she is currently at Ph.D candidate in Philosophy at Marquette University. Aided by the MEOA Policy Scholarship, she recently attended the 33rd Annual Policy Seminar in Washington, D.C. and offered her thoughts on the experience.

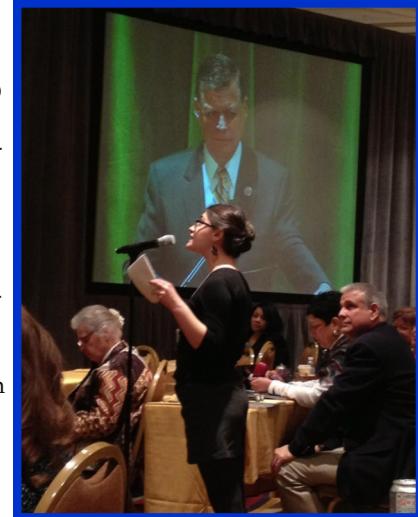
"In my years of studying social justice and the importance of connectedness between representatives and constituents, but in reality feeling under represented and therefore discouraged, I experienced a rare occasion to exercise direct political agency. On March 12th, I was able to join TRIO and GEAR UP professionals from across the nation in Capitol Hill to advocate for educational opportunity programs. Due to a gracious scholarship from MEOA, I flew to Washington, D.C. as a proud alumna of the Bruce Wells Scholars Upward Bound Program to attend COE's 33rd Annual Policy Seminar.

Marisola embarked on the trip frustrated that "in the toughest of economic binds, [the United States]...decides to cut funding of education...which receives less than 3% of the meager non-discretionary pie." She was passionate about making the trip since she believes that "increased education funding, particularly for programs like TRIO, is connected to promoting basic human capabilities."

She "spoke with state representatives about how [she has] personally benefited from the services of TRIO and emphasized how irreplaceably necessary the encouragement they provide to the likes of me is. [She] would likely be crocheting doilies for some unappreciative husband right now", in her country of Albania, "if [her] academic interests and creative prowess had not received the support and encouragement they did from the Y.O.U., Inc. Bruce Wells Scholars Upward Bound program in Worcester, MA

She found that "from Senator Elizabeth Warren to Congressman Jim McGovern, the sentiment that TRIO programs are crucial for the progress and dignity of underrepresented individuals and the nation was echoed without hesitation. To Jim McGovern, for example, [her] story was not a foreign narrative: he could relate and empathize because his experience as a first generation college student had already informed him of the obstacles people like us face, and hence the need for TRIO programs to help us overcome those obstacles."

While she says her struggle continues, she emphasizes that "the important thing is that this struggle has not been in vain. I have been supported so that I can realize my own capabilities, and this is the most fundamental thing that TRIO programs provide."



Marisola seeking answers from Congressman Tom Cole (R-OK) at COE's 33rd Annual Policy Seminar

Connect with your fellow TRIO/GEAR-UP Alumni!

Re-engage with your extended TRIO and GEAR UP family!

- Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/MEOATrio>
- Like the National TRIO Alumni Association at <https://www.facebook.com/TheNTAA?ref=ts>
- Register with MEOA at <http://www.meoaweb.org/alumni/alumni-registration/>
- Register with COE at <https://www.trioalumni.us/pls/apex/f?p=103:1:3463635466442174>
- Follow the National Trio Alumni Association on Twitter [@TheNTAA](#)



If you have questions about how to get more involved as a TRIO or GEAR-UP alumni, contact Alvin Riley, the MEOA Alumni Chair, at alumni@meoaweb.org.

MEOA On the Hill: Reports from Policy Seminar



(from left) NEOA State Liason Julie Kimball, Alumna Sonia Higginbottom (UB, Boston University), Senator William "Mo" Cowan (D—MA) and NEOA President Evette Lane

TRIO Alumnae Josefina Garcia (UB, University of New Hampshire) and Natalie Petit (GEAR-UP, Lowell, MA)

MEOA Sends Three to Policy Seminar with Scholarships

Each year, MEOA offers scholarships to help pay for Policy Seminar in Washington, D.C. Thanks to money raised at conferences through membership dues, the following scholarships were awarded:

The MEOA Member Scholarship

- Adam Edgerton, Upward Bound, Salem State University

(2) MEOA Program Alumni Scholarships

- Marisol Xhelili, Alumna of the Y.O.U., Inc Bruce Wells Scholars Upward Bound Program
- Natalie Petit, Alumna of the Massachusetts GEAR-UP Program

Thank you to each recipient for representing and spreading the good work of TRIO and GEAR UP programs in Massachusetts!



NEOA President Evette Lane speaks at a rally on behalf of TRIO at the 33rd Annual COE Policy Seminar



MEOA President Angele Goss speaks with Representative Elijah Cummings (D—MD) during a break at Policy Seminar.

TRIO Day: Sights and Sounds



"Seriously, TRIO Day has made me realize that I still can make it through my difficult times and become successful. Without today, I wouldn't have the motivation to go to college as I do now."

"The guest speaker, Mr. Haynes opened my eyes."

"I enjoyed meeting new people and being able to interact with others from my own school."

"We should extend it to 3 days."



"[Most meaningful was] hearing speeches from people who have gone through hardship and struggle in their life to get where they are now."

"TRIO Day is a moving experience for MANY high school students."



"[I enjoyed] meeting new people, gaining new skills and a general sense of how to approach the future!"

"[I most enjoyed] how such a wide range of groups came together."

Special Thanks to Randy Schroeder (SSS, UNH) for organizing TRIO Day and for providing pictures and quotes for the MEOA Newsletter!

Article Submissions

The MEOA News wants to share different perspectives on educational opportunity, upcoming events, and program stories.

If you have a story idea or photo for the MEOA Newsletter, send it to:
Newsletter@moeaonline.org or ashaughnessy@suffolk.edu



MEOA Scholarship Application Now Available

MEOA Scholarship 2013

General Information The Massachusetts Educational Opportunity Association (MEOA) is pleased to invite you to nominate an applicant for the 29th annual Scholarship Award Program. The MEOA Scholarship Program was created in 1988 to assist undergraduate students in their pursuit of higher education.

Five scholarships of \$750.00 will be awarded to eligible college students who have demonstrated the ability to overcome great obstacles and strive for educational excellence. The selection of recipients will represent the diversity of students, both traditional and non-traditional, that are served by the Educational Opportunity Programs (EOP) represented by the MEOA membership. This is in keeping with MEOA's long time commitment to ensure that all individuals have access to an appropriate higher education.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The nominee must:

- Be a **current** participant of an Educational Opportunity Program in Massachusetts
- Be enrolled in a college or university, or set to enroll following high school graduation
- Meet federal low-income or first generation student guidelines.
- Be pursuing a degree in an undergraduate or graduate program.
- Have demonstrated an ability to overcome educational obstacles.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The following must be entirely completed to be considered for this scholarship:

- A nomination form and letter of recommendation from an EOP professional and MEOA member in good standing with membership dues current. (Contact Taryn Tomkins, MEOA Membership Chair at: ttomkins@cowc.org to verify your membership status.) **Please note: In a change from past years, each member of MEOA will only be allowed to nominate one student per year. Multiple students from the same program can be nominated but each student must have a separate sponsoring nominator.**
- Application Packet completed by applicant must be neat and legible.
- Most recent transcript.
- Two page personal essay detailed on Student Application Form. (Must be typed with page numbers)
- Recommendation from a source outside of TRIO/EOP programs *
- 2013/2014 financial aid award letter.
- Anything typed should include page numbers and no staples.
- Do not submit anything double-sided.
- *All recommendations must typed on official letter head and signed.

In a change from past years, recipients must:

- Attend the Scholarship Luncheon in October if possible. If it is *impossible* for a recipient to attend, a video acceptance speech must be submitted instead.
- Supply a picture (yearbook size)
- Provide an electronic copy of their personal essay

APPLICATION DEADLINE

The completed application (with all requested information) must be postmarked by **Friday, May 24th, 2013**. No applications will be considered if postmarked later than this date. Recipients will be notified at the end of August.

MAIL COMPLETED APPLICATIONS TO:
Sharmese Gunn
Mount Wachusett Community College
Division of Access and Transition
444 Green St.
Gardner, MA 01440
Email: s_gunn@mwcc.mass.edu

HEP Project Director's Meeting

By: Ramon Gonzalez

The Department of Education held the Higher Education Program Project Director's Meeting (HEP) on March 26-28, 2013 at the Washington Hilton in beautiful Washington, D.C. Over 3,100 fellow program directors from across the country attended this meeting.

As TRIO and GEAR UP officials, we focused on the Student Services portion of Higher Ed because that houses the TRIO & GEAR UP programs along with the Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program, the Thurgood Marshal Legal Educational Opportunities program and many others.

There were several dynamic speakers, including Robert Dais, Director for GEAR UP Massachusetts and Boston University Upward Bound Director Michael Dennehy, who presented on partnering with citywide and district school improvement efforts in Boston. Three days of speeches and networking with program personnel from across the spectrum gave new life to new and returning program directors. Here are a couple of bullet points to look out for in the near future:

- Congress would like to make a Common Financial Aid package. Some colleges are starting to use this voluntary form.
- SSS program automatically received their PE points when they submitted this year, your program could be next.
- New APR format for McNair and UB/UBMS. Comments are due back by May 21 and 28, 2013 respectively.
- ED is planning on doing site visits this year to some lucky programs.
- Everyone will receive a 5% reduction in their budgets for the 2013-2014 school year, this will be reflected on your GAN. Even new programs that were funded at the lowest level possible will receive a reduction. Written communication from ED will be forthcoming.
- There is nothing currently that suggests further cuts past the 2013-2014 school year.
- Number of students served and services will not be reduced. This will be a case by case basis, contact your program officer for further details.

This is just a brief overview of what the HEP meeting was all about. For further information on the HEP meeting, please see the ED website.

Massport Announces 2013 Diversity Stem Scholarship

Eligibility Requirements:

- Must be a minority student graduating from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- Intent to study a degree utilized in the Transportation Industry (ie.Accounting, Architecture, Aviation, Business Administration, Engineering, Finance, Human Resources, etc..)
- Must be admitted to accredited school or university by Fall 2013 as a full-time undergraduate student in a degree seeking program
- Must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0
- Must be involved in community and/or extracurricular activities
- Must show demonstrated financial need.

Amount: \$2,000 One-Time Award

Deadline: Monday May 6, 2013

For more information and for a copy of the application packet, contact Magda Plumb at (617)568-3125 or via email at mkitlas@massport.com

MEOA Professional Development

By: Anna Rigali, MEOA Professional Development Co-Chair

MEOA hosted its second professional development event of the year on Friday, March 22, 2013 at Holyoke Community College (HCC). The training focused on brain-based strategies for student engagement.

Presenters Penny Cuninggim and Steve Bengis, co-founders of the New England Adolescent Research Institute, presented attendees with innovative ways to engage and teach students of all ages. Their methods are based on neuroscientific research as well as their own numerous years of brain-based research and experience in their center in downtown Holyoke.

Attendees were given the opportunity to engage in roundtable sessions following the training and shared ideas and resources about best practices in student engagement, youth work, and counseling strategies.

Twenty professionals attended the event, which generated 13 new MEOA members! We would like to thank Joan Giovannini and the STRIVE, TRIO Student Support Services, staff at HCC for hosting us at such a great venue.

For information about the presentation, visit www.neari.com.

MEOA Emerging Leaders—Registration Now Open!

The MEOA Board is proud to announce that we are now accepting applications for the 2013 Emerging Leaders Program. The Emerging Leaders Program will provide opportunities for MEOA members who are willing to take on more responsibilities in their respective TRIO or GEAR UP program as well as in their state, regional and national associations.

Participants will be paired with a proven MEOA leader in the field to help them develop and work towards a final project; a self-designed project that will benefit TRIO and GEAR UP in the Commonwealth that will be presented to the MEOA membership at the MEOA Conference in the fall.

Program Eligibility:

- Must be a MEOA Member as of April 26, 2013
(registration is available for \$20 at <http://www.meoaoonline.org/about/membership/member-registration/>)
- Completed Application including signature of nominator
- Willing to commit to a short-term, self-designed project.

Deadline: Monday April 15, 2013

For more information about the 2013 Emerging Leaders Program, please contact MEOA Professional Development Co-Chairs Ralph Hogan (rhogan2@mccc.mass.edu) and/or Anna Rigali (arigali-ub@nmhschool.org)

A Very Special Thanks to our Tireless Sponsor!

To another successful year!

