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As part of the First Year Seminar curriculum, Educational Talent Search students enrolled in Gateway to College at Mount Wachusett Community College took advantage of weekend trips to Clark University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology to explore four-year schools and have a little fun at the same time. Through the use of the SPLASH format, which consists of college faculty/student-led activities which allow attendees to explore a wide variety of topics, students were able to experience a little bit of Clark University's campus life while exploring topics in philosophy, Puerto Rican history, imagining atoms, the evolution of Russian novels, constructing balloon animals and even how to survive a zombie attack!

MIT Splash!

MIT Splash occurs every November over the course of an entire, very chilly weekend. For one intrepid group of foundation and continuing students, they made the 90-minute train trip to Cambridge both days to participate in a daylong SPLASH experience exploring topics in origami, lasers, neuropharmacology, physics, video game making and dance, just to name a few of the 400 activities offered. During the second day, the group visited the MIT museum to view the latest in emerging technological innovations. Student feedback from both visits was

overwhelmingly positive, despite giving up a 'free' weekend and was helpful for many with exploring ideas for enrolling at four-year schools after completing their courses at Mount Wachusett Community College.

ETS/ Gateway students stand in front of a statue of Sigmund Freud at Clark University. Submitted photo.



Reaching out to Veterans

On Wednesday, November 14, Education Advisors Omar Reyes and Michael Rogovin from Brockton's College Planning Center represented ASA at the Veterans Career and Resource Fair at the Holiday Inn in Taunton, Mass. They met



with veterans and spouses of veterans who were looking to receive information on careers, guidance on the college process, as well as additional training. You may not realize it, but the unemployment rate among veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan was 10 percent in October, compared to 7.9 percent for the general population. The unemployment rate among all veterans was 6.3 percent in October.

More than 100 veterans and their spouses turned up at the job fair for face-to-face meetings with po-

tential employers. About 18 employers, including ASA; 7 agencies, such as the Taunton Department of Veterans Affairs; and 5 schools offering specialized training set up booths.

While there, Omar and Michael met with leaders of the veterans organizations to establish partnerships in an effort to serve more veterans in Southeastern Massachusetts.

MEOA Professional Development

MEOA hosted a successful professional development event on May 9th at Mount Wachusett Community College, Gardner. Debbie Lynan-gale of the Mediation and Training Collaborative in Greenfield offered a practical overview of effective communication practices in the work place and mediation techniques. Through a series of small group exercises and discussion, participants were able to walk away with helpful tips and resources to improve work environments and program services.

Please join MEOA for an upcoming professional development event at Northfield Mount Hermon School on July 17th and 18th for the annual TRIO Social Justice Conference. The conference includes a variety of workshops and speakers. Free for MEOA Members.

Questions?

Contact Gisele Litalien
Email: glitalien@nmhschool.org
Phone: 413-498-3652

Use link below to register

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1_mfchUqkCyYxOoc7g5Sf4NGmclmctjlrVymhS5tQocw/viewform?usp=send_form

North High goes public

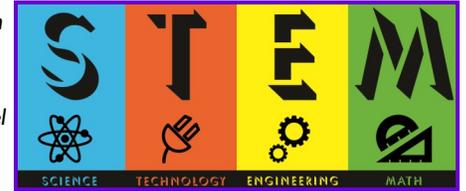
On November 12th the Mass-EdCO GEAR UP program co-sponsored an event with the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education to highlight the many existing opportunities for post-secondary public education.

400 seniors from high schools throughout Worcester convened to hear from college students in STEM related majors talk about their journey to college and why they decided to go public. The event speakers attended UMASS Medical School, UMASS Lowell, Quinsigamond Community College, Mount Wachusett Commu-

nity College, Fitchburg State University, and Worcester State University.

Governor Deval L. Patrick videotaped a personal message to students, urging them to complete four years of high school math and three years of lab sciences in preparation for college-level work. "You might design video games or conduct research in a cancer lab," Patrick says in his message. "Whatever you dream – you can realize it when you 'Go Public.'"

The event ended with a mini college fair where students could meet and ask questions from public colleges and universities around the state.



Submitted by: Taryn Tompkins,
Massachusetts Education &
Career Opportunities, Inc.

MEOA Policy Seminar Scholarship Recipients

Each year in March the Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) assembles TRIO and GEAR UP Alumni and professionals from across America to go to Washington, DC and advocate for the continued support of TRIO and GEAR UP programs. The annual COE Policy Seminar, being held March 23-25, 2014, is one of the best ways in which we can give strong support to these powerful education programs. This year's

Policy Seminar is particularly important as failing to act to keep TRIO and GEAR UP a priority with lawmakers could spell cuts that continue to shrink these valuable programs.

In support of these efforts, each year MEOA offer scholarships to send two Alumni to take part in the advocacy efforts of the Policy Seminar. The recipients of this year's Alumni scholarships were **Damian Lorenzo Ramsey** (Upward Bound–Clark Univer-

sity) and **Audy Ramirez** (SSS–UMASS Boston).

Additionally, MEOA offers a \$500 scholarship to help cover the unallowable costs for an MEOA member to attend. This allotment is designed to allow a staff member who has not been to policy seminar before to experience this great event. **Breyana Roman** (Upward Bound–Northfield Mount Hermon) was this year's Staff scholarship recipient.

COE Policy Seminar 2014

Council for Opportunity in Education's Annual Policy Seminar in Washington DC was a success for TRIO in Massachusetts. This year TRIO professionals were asking for a \$52 million increase in TRIO funding for FY 2015.

COE provided practical information and resources so that every state was prepared to meet with

their Congressional offices.

Our team headed to Capitol Hill, hoping all of our Congressmen and Congresswomen would be receptive to our efforts and support a funding increase for TRIO programs.

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Policy Seminar 2014

After a long day on Capitol Hill and meeting with all of our Congressional Offices and staff, including **Rep. James McGovern** and **Rep. William Keating** (in-person), the Massachusetts team felt satisfied with our advocacy efforts. Our alumni, **Sade Johnson**, **Audy Ramirez** (Student Support Services Alumni), and **Damian Ramsey** (Upward Bound Alumnus), left lasting impressions of TRIO and its impact. We departed confident that our Representatives and Senators would support an increase in funding.

All nine of the Massachusetts Representatives signed on to the House letter supporting the increase and both Senators signed on to the Senate letter.



From left: Damian Ramsey, (Upward Bound alumnus, head of Special Education at KIPP Academy Lynn), Breyana Roman (Advisor, Northfield Mount Hermon Upward Bound), Evette Lane (Director, MIT/Wellesley Upward Bound), Congressman Bill Keating, Sade Johnson (UMass Boston TRIO staff and Student Support Services Alumnus), Jean-Marie Spinetti (Assistant Vice Provost, UMass Boston), Adam Edgerton (Director, Salem State University Upward Bound)

NEOA Annual Conference

The NEOA Annual Conference, **Paradigm Shifts in Training and Education: Standing Strong Together**, was held on April 9th-11th in Connecticut.

Conference highlights include the NEOA Achievers Luncheon where several outstanding TRIO Alumni were recognized for their significant contributions. NEOA also offered several workshops ranging a wide variety of topics including sessions on building media presence within TRIO programs

and sessions on SAT preparation. In addition to workshops, conference-goers were able to hear from several dynamic speakers including Jonathan Brennan, a national expert in secondary and post-secondary student success.

In addition to the conference offerings, each New England State Association had the opportunity to gather at the conference to discuss important state business. Some highlights from the MEOA meeting include the electing of

Lecia Sligh to the position of State Liaison. The Alumni chair and team

were excited to share plans to build a more unified network of alumni hoping to bridge the gap between young and old alumni. The Scholarship chair was happy to announce the opening of the annual MEOA Scholarship.

http://www.neoaonline.org/a_conference.php



From left: Gisele Litalien (Director, NMH Upward Bound, Sharmese Gunn (Resource Specialist, Mount Wachusett Community College Gateway to College), Adam Edgerton (Director, Salem State University Upward Bound), Darren Blakely, Angele Goss (Director, Mount Wachusett Community College Upward Bound Math Science), Valerie Laporte (Director, Mount Wachusett Community College North Central EOC), Breyana Roman (Advisor, NMH Upward Bound) Lecia Sligh, Kimberly Leblanc, Kerry Pintoba, Ophelia Okah

State Advocacy Day 2014

Inspired by the work in other states, Massachusetts Educational Opportunity Association paid a visit to the state house to advocate for TRIO programs across the state. MEOA's goal is to garner state funding for TRIO programs. While it was too late to make it into the state budget this year, members and alumni were able to plant the seeds of collaboration and the possibility of a new amendment to the state budget during the May 17th visit.

impact of TRIO in Massachusetts, while alumni were able to talk about more personalized experiences in programs like Upward Bound. Many of our Representatives and Senators offices were receptive to the idea of allocating some additional financial support to TRIO programs. MEOA is planning a return visit to the state house next year to continue advocacy efforts.

MEOA met with several representatives and was able to talk about the

Save the date! MEOA Annual Conference

Please join us for the Massachusetts Educational Opportunity Association's 30th Annual Conference, "IMPACT". The conference will be held the **Hotel UMASS in Amherst, MA on October 9-10, 2014**. Representative Richard Holmes will join us this year as a keynote speaker.

Registration details will be available in June.

Hotel UMASS
One Campus Center Way
Amherst, MA 01003



NEOA TRIO Day 2014

NEOA's annual TRIO Day was held in Massachusetts this year in February. TRIO students from across New England gathered to connect with other TRIO students. Events included "ice-breaker" activities and speeches from Karen Keim (NEOA President), Tom Sannicandro (State Representative, 7th Middlesex District), and Mitchell Chester (Commissioner of the MA Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education). Students also heard from outstanding TRIO alumni.

The highlight of the first day were college visits. Students were able to visit schools like Northeastern University and Worcester State University.

Day two was made up of workshops and a bustling college fair.



Throughout the weekend, students networked with each other, staff and alumni and emerged with a new understanding of TRIO and its impact and the importance of continued advocacy for these programs.

http://www.neoaonline.org/a_trioday.php



TRIO Student Ato Howard Accepted for New M.I.T. Research Program

Congratulations to Mr. **Ato Howard** of Worcester, a Biomedical Engineering Major who was recently accepted to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's new i-Trek program (I Turn Research into Empowerment and Knowledge). Mr. Howard, a TRIO Student Support Services participant, was searching for "an opportunity to conduct research. This program will provide additional skills that will give me an edge as a transfer student." (Mr. Howard hopes to transfer to M.I.T. after he graduates this May.)



**Massachusetts
Institute of
Technology**

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The new i-Trek program provides under-served and under-represented students with the skills and resources necessary to succeed in STEM undergraduate and graduate degree programs. The new program was developed to address the lack of diversity among STEM degree recipients and provides research opportunities which may not be readily available to students at smaller institutions. In addition to research, the program requires that participants fund their research projects collaboratively beyond MIT's initial 50% funding; participants will learn about grant and proposal writing as part of the process.

Mr. Howard will spend two weeks in Florida this June with M.I.T. Ph.D. candidates as part of a team researching a coral-reef based chemical. After completing the research, teams (called Trekkers) will be responsible for final presentations of their work, which will also be presented to local high schools with the specific goal to stimulate more interest in STEM fields among under-represented and under-served groups.

Mr. Howard is a Phi Theta Kappa International Honor society member, a Psi Beta Psychology Honor Society member and an on-campus math tutor. He is also the first college student in his family, who is of Ghanaian descent. Of his i-Trek opportunity, Mr. Howard says that he is "very excited to see other parts of the country and do research for the first time." Joseph Adams, Project Director of QCC's TRIO Program is proud of Mr. Howard's recent acceptance into the i-Trek program saying, "Ato is a very goal-oriented, hard-working young man who couldn't be more deserving of this opportunity. We wish him well."

QCC Student Ato Howard with Joseph Adams, SSS Director



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Founded in 1984, the **Massachusetts Educational Opportunity Association (MEOA)** is a 501(c)3 non-profit, tax-exempt organization made up of educators, policy makers, professionals in the private sector and other individuals committed to ensuring that secondary and post-secondary educational opportunities are appropriate and accessible to students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

MEOA currently has over 160 members from across the state and is affiliated regionally with [the New England Educational Opportunity Association \(NEOA\)](#) and nationally with the Washington, DC-based [Council for Opportunity in Education \(COE\)](#).

To become a member, register online at <http://www.meoonline.org/about/membership/>