

## Newsletter

### TRiO Overview

Despite many obstacles, every now and then greatness manages to break through when one least expects. Such is the case in describing the hard work and achievements of the entire TRiO Program staff in which 160 Opportunity Scholars students' GPAs averaged higher than non-participants at USC Lancaster in race and gender. Furthermore, TRiO's mentoring organizations, Delta Links and Omega Scholars, hosted over twenty one campus and community events at five different locations that totaled over 1, 200 students, faculty, staff and community members. The following newsletter depicts highlights of a very successful year for the TRiO Programs at the University of South Carolina Lancaster.



**Early Start Participants 2010-2011**

*(Early Start students photo taken on graduation day in front of the James A. Bradley Arts & Sciences Building on Friday, August 13, 2010.)*

**Early Start** participants arrived on Monday, July 26, 2010 to began an intensive three-week program designed to provided students with a variety of programs to promote college readiness and success.

Students received instruction from USC Lancaster faculty, TRiO advisors, local business owners and community leaders on a range of topics tailored to help them foster academic success, connect with the University of South Carolina community; prepare for responsible lives in a diverse, interconnected and changing world. To complete the program, students researched and interviewed professionals in their chosen careers, and handed in a written report and provided an oral presentation. Just as important, students developed bonds and friendships that will provide additional support while pursuing their degrees at USCL.

On the final day, students received a Certificate of Completion and began their college careers by receiving four credits in University 101 and Orientation to Physical Education.

Timothy Aubrie, Adrena Anthony, William Colin Bell, Christopher Blackmon, Shabrina Brice, Jessica Burnham, Cody Clanton, Jada Clyburn, Deonca Dewese, Thesia Gill, Khori Hunter, Roderick Ingram, Mishala Izzard, Akeiba Jones, LaWanda Jones, Adam Lacey, Kimberly Lowery, Eldrina McIlwain, Olivia McIlwain, Wanda Mobley, Hannah Moore, Patrick Nguyen, Richmond Pierce, CoCo Riddley, RosaMaria Rivera, Freddie Stroud, Shenna Taylor, Cornelius Tolliver, Shatia Townsend, Mercedes Wade, Donqueshia Waiters, Cala Young, and Lashae Young

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## Opportunity Scholars Program



OSP students enjoy an afternoon Thanksgiving meal in the TRiO Learning Resource Center.

The University of South Carolina Lancaster *Gear Up* and *Upward Bound* Programs are located in the TRiO Learning Resource Center adjacent to Medford Library. The program targets students from three area schools; Andrew Jackson High School, Buford High School and Lancaster High School. A maximum of sixty students from the 9th and 10th grades are accepted and remain in the program until they are accepted into college and graduate from high school. These students attend numerous workshops in career exploration, college and career fairs as well as sessions on money and time management. In addition, students take both the SAT and ACT practice tests and apply to at least three colleges prior to December.

The *Upward Bound* program is divided into two phases, the Academic Year and the Summer Component. During the Academic Year phase students participate in twenty four Empowerment Sessions that focus on English, Math, Science and a foreign language. Additionally, workshops on various topics, such as, academic survival skills, career exploration and personal development are offered to students. The Summer Component, which was conducted on campus, lasts for six weeks and allows the students to participate in the college life experience; receive classroom instructions and tour various four-year institutions. All twenty four seniors, in the program, gained acceptance into either a two-year or four-year college or university. The program concluded with a big end-of-year celebration.

**High expectations** are a must for students in the *Opportunity Scholars Program (OSP)* and the staff takes great pride in this year's achievers in the classroom. The intensive three-week summer program, Early Start; the New Student Orientation; the Strong Interest Inventory; the Lunch-N-Learn workshops; academic advisement and personal counseling have all contributed to the success.

Tasked with increasing college retention and graduation rates, the *OSP* staff, at USC Lancaster, has inspired students to excel in academic performance and their hard work has led to higher GPAs in comparison to the non-participating student population in both gender and race. This year's accomplishments include eight on the President's list; fifty-eight on the Dean's list; nearly fifty percent attended summer school; seventeen received Associate degrees and eight transferred to four-year institutions.

## Gear Up & Upward Bound



**Above:** Upward Bound students gather for a group photo at the start of the Summer Component. **Below:** Upward Bound students take part in the end-of-year celebration "Winners Circle" Championship Pathfinders Awards ceremony.



## Championship OSPy Awards Winners Circle

The annual OSPy Awards ceremony took place in the James A. Bradley Arts & Sciences Building multipurpose room at noon on Wednesday, April 13, 2011. This year's theme *Winners Circle* allowed the OSP staff to create a tailgate atmosphere that is synonymous to college and professional sports. With tents, grilled meats, fries, soft drinks, and bottled water, the crowd of student, faculty and staff enjoyed sporting their favorite college and professional sports jerseys. Over thirty OSP students received awards for their academic, and group achievements.



TRiO staff, faculty and OSP students enjoy an indoor tailgate in celebration of the Championship OSPy Awards Winners Circle.

## Delta Links

**Numbers do matter** and can make a significant difference when it comes to completing tasks. Over eighty women were enrolled in this year's Delta Links and their presence was felt throughout the USCL campus and the local community. In collaboration with the Omega Scholars, the Delta Links assisted in more than seven campus and community service activities which included several visits, as mentors, to young girls living at the Lancaster Children's Home; recognized USCL sports program during the Lancers Day celebration; and helped fundraise for the Omega Scholars' annual basketball tournament Hoops for HOPE.

## Omega Scholars

**Setting a new standard** was the prime objective of the Omega Scholars this academic year. From the start of fall classes until the last spring exam, the Omega Scholars engaged in numerous campus and community service activities. President, Nico Perry, and his executive board, did a masterful job in organizing and executing each activity and the results confirmed their efforts. The Omega Scholars sponsored 21 events at 5 different locations with over 1,200 participants and 124 hours of service. Even though, these young men engaged in such intense service efforts, they remained committed to the high standards of academic performance with several members making both the President's and Dean's list.



**Left:** Delta Links, Shaketa Robinson and Cala Young pose for a picture with Chris Blackmon during a Pizza Inn fundraiser.

**Right:** Omega Scholars, Undontee Patterson, Greg Lake, Brandon Waltenbaugh, and Jacob Toedtman are hard at work washing cars during a fundraiser event at USC Lancaster in October 2011.



## Inside USC Lancaster TRiO Programs



The **TRiO Program at USC Lancaster** is a federally funded program that provides opportunities for academic development, assists students with basic college requirements, and serves to motivate students towards the successful completion of their post-secondary education.

The TRiO staff consists of eight highly-qualified and dedicated individuals who have greatly impacted the lives of every student in the program. Staff members are from various backgrounds and experiences which adds to the unique relationships they share to enhance the experiences of the participants.

There are three staffers who oversee the participation of pre-college students from eighth to twelfth grade, in the Gear Up and Upward Bound programs. Once in college, students take part in the Opportunity Scholars Program (OSP).

The **Gear Up and Upward Bound** programs help motivate students to stay in and finish high school as well as seek to obtain a four-year degree from a college of their choice. Through academic advisement and developmental support, the staff strives to provide students with a solid foundation to prepare them to complete high school and make the transition to college life.

**OSP** is specifically designed to increase college retention and graduation rates and facilitate the process of learning from one level of education to the next. Between sixty and one-hundred middle and high school students participate in Gear Up and Upward Bound while OSP serves over one-hundred sixty first-generation, low-income and disabled students annually. Both programs offer Lunch-N-Learn workshops and daily access to advisors and the computer lab. OSP students enjoy even more amenities with easy access to the Academic Success Center, Medford Library and Counseling Services.

### TRiO Programs Staff

Thelathia B. Bailey, Director of TRiO Programs

#### Opportunity Scholars Program Staff

Max Bonek, Academic Specialist

Matt Williamson, OSP Career/Cultural Specialist

CoSonja Allen, OSP Administrative Specialist

#### Gear Up Staff

Dia Robinson, Program Specialist

#### Upward Bound Staff

Antonio Mackey, Career/Cultural Specialist

Cathy McGriff, Administrative Specialist

#### Support Staff

Mark Ammons, Business Manager

Call us at 803-313-7125 or visit us at:

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