TRIO Achievers

Two University of North Dakota alumni were honored recently at the regional conference for TRIO Professionals in Cheyenne, WY. Amy Fisher and Robert Hewitt received the ASPIRE TRIO Achievers Award.

“I want all women to know their worth and that they too can walk into TRIO and say ‘I want to go to college, please help me,’ and I want them to know that TRIO will help them,” said Fisher.

Fisher is an advocate and volunteer for the Grand Forks Community Violence Intervention Center. Fisher, a single mother, earned her degree in social work and has gone on to work for the CVIC. She has volunteered hundreds of hours educating others on domestic violence and what they can do to help those trapped in this situation. She has served on statewide committees and groups.

“Amy is a compassionate, intelligent, hardworking, and courageous woman. She has taken a horrific experience and turned it into something that will improve countless lives. I am truly inspired by her journey,” said Kristi Hall-Jiran, Executive Director of the CVIC.

Hewitt is the supervisor of waste management and recycling and coordinator of environmental safety at Altru Health Systems in Grand Forks. Robert received his degree in Occupational Safety and Environmental Health from Industrial Technology at UND. Hewitt was involved in acquiring safety grant funding for Altru and reduced patient lifting injuries by 50% which not only reduced

Continued on page 2
Greetings TRIO Alumni and Friends! It has been another successful year for UND TRIO Programs, with all five programs still going strong. In the fall, Student Support Services received funding for the new five-year grant cycle, so current UND students involved in that program will continue to receive services which assist them in attaining their degrees. Upward Bound, Educational Opportunity Center and Talent Search summer programs were successful, with a lot of activity and learning taking place for students – it is energizing to us all to have them here on campus!

Once again we will be celebrating TRIO student’s success with our TRIO Day Luncheon and Awards program on February 10, 2011. We also plan on asking some former TRIO students to come and speak to current high school students about the importance of education – if any TRIO alumni are interested in doing this please be sure and contact us! Then, in March, the national TRIO professional association, the Council for Opportunity in Education, holds its annual policy seminar. This year, at least three UND TRIO staff will be attending this event to advocate nationally to continue the programs and we would welcome TRIO alumni to be involved in this effort as well.

During this holiday season, we would like to express our appreciation to everyone who has contributed to our success. TRIO Programs rely on support from UND departments as well as many outreach community agencies, colleges, and public schools to partner with us as we provide our student services. Thank you to all who help us in our efforts to assure that students receive educational opportunities! May your holiday season be joyous, and your New Year be filled with happiness.

Elaine Metcalfe, TRIO Director

Notes from Neil

Greetings to TRIO Alumni and Friends! Even though I have been retired for about four years I have appreciated that Elaine and TRIO staff have allowed me to continue to be involved with TRIO. There continues to be wonderful things taking place at TRIO programs and great concern and dedication to students.

We had an alumni committee meeting a couple of months ago and have another one planned in January. There will be some planned alumni activities centered around TRIO Day which is February 10.

I continue to run into former TRIO students which is always enjoyable. I had lunch with some TRIO staff and Shelly Davis from NewTown. She is a former UB and SSS student and is currently attending UND. We had a nice time remembering other former TRIO students and staff.

I once again encourage you to send us articles about what you have been up to.

Neil Reuter, Retired TRIO Director

TRIO achievers continued from page 1

Hewitt is an advocate for TRIO students and programs, he served as a motivational speaker for TRIO students and alum. In addition, he taught computer courses for the Veteran Upward Bound TRIO program at the University of North Dakota.

“Robert fearlessly overcame all of the obstacles inherent in the college experience of an adult student including a physical disability,” said Cheryl Kingsbury, Hewitt’s former advisor at TRIO.

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Talent Search Summer program another great success

TRIO Talent Search hosted its annual Summer Science Adventure Program this past summer; and through this week-long program introduced eight students to a wide variety of educational opportunities, careers, and some amazing sights along the way. Our adventure started at the University of North Dakota where we spent two days learning about the fields of Biology and Chemistry, and conducting several experiments to put lessons learned to the test. Chemistry was a “blast!” What other class provides the opportunity to see hydrogen-filled balloons explode into bursts of flames? It was a great way to get excited about chemistry.

Josh Tharaldson, an alum of the Talent Search program himself and now a Biology instructor at Marshall County Central High School, taught the Biology course. He focused on water quality. In the classroom portion of the lesson, students learned about the current state of water quality and availability in our area, the nation, and the world. Students then attempted to make a water filtration system with products they could easily find in and around their house. Later in the day we drove to Turtle River State Park where they conducted water quality tests. Aside from the swarms of mosquitos, it was great fun to learn at such a beautiful location as the Turtle River.

The second portion of the program was on the road. This year we explored the eastern corridor of South Dakota with time spent in Sioux Falls, Mitchell, and Watertown. A few of the highlights from the trip included the Kirby Science Center, US Geological Survey Center, Sertoma Butterfly House, and the Mitchell Prehistoric Indian Village. It was wonderful to explore so many different areas of science careers in a hands-on mode.

Along with our career exploration, we were able to explore colleges as well. The students took tours of University of North Dakota and Augustana College in Sioux Falls, SD, and spoke with admissions representatives at each. Students found it interesting to explore and identify differences between these two colleges. In their size, character, programming, prices, and public/private funding sources, there were many differences. Yet, despite their differences, it was good to learn that the same high school course selections will prepare them for either choice.
EOC summer program a success

TRIO’s Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) held its first ever summer program May 25 and 26, 2010 on UND’s campus.

Participants included students from across EOC’s outreach areas: Williston State College, Northland Community and Technical College, Minnesota State University Moorhead, and Lake Region State College.

Ten students participated in activities designed to enrich and enhance their college experience. Activities ranged from presentations on study skills and student success, personality assessment, and resumes to tours of UND’s campus and the Wellness Center. Students wrapped up the program with an etiquette luncheon led by Mae Marie Blackmore.

Dan Faine, LRSC student, said, “I learned so much from the summer program activities. I had never been to UND before, and it was great to see their campus. I especially liked touring the Wellness Center and the etiquette luncheon. That was definitely a new experience for me.”

EOC advisors are excitedly planning the second annual summer program scheduled to follow a similar format in May 2011.

EOC Alumni update: George Jirout

Educational Opportunity Center alumnus, and current Student Support Services student, George Jirout, was chosen as the North Dakota Association for Lifelong Learning Exemplary Student of the Year. This award is given to the outstanding student of the year from all the Adult Learning Centers across North Dakota.

George came to the Grand Forks Adult Learning Center through his work with Voc Rehab, with determination, but a whole lot more apprehension. On the very first day George’s academic ability became exceedingly apparent. He was smart; he just needed a dose of faith to believe that what he considered an impossible dream was right at his grasp. He began taking his GED tests, scoring a perfect score on his first test, and finishing the year as a Top Five Honor Student among the 62 graduates from the GF ALC. George was referred to TRIO/EOC by Adult Learning Center staff as he neared graduation. EOC staff assisted George with his college admissions and FAFSA paperwork. In addition, George worked with EOC staff exploring his options for careers in fields where he serve others.

It is because of his quiet demeanor, that one would not know George has conquered some of life’s most enduring situations. Not only was George a teenage father and husband, but has been seriously injured not once, but twice. The injuries were so severe that George was not able to return to work. Despite the numerous injuries, George was determined to be a supportive husband and father. He could have given up, but George continued to push forward, excelling beyond expectations!

George may not be able to physically uphold himself at times, but he has enough courage and strength to carry the weight of many. He was the BIGGEST advocate for many of his classmates, urging them to keep going, and yelling out for joy when they reached a pivotal milestone.

George is currently enrolled at the University of North Dakota, with his daughter. He aspires to become a counselor. All of the staff at the TRIO/Educational Opportunity Center would like to congratulate George on this recognition of his achievements.
Spotlight on Upward Bound Alumni: Will Young

Will Young was an Upward Bound participant from 2000-2003, he attended the summer bridge program in 2003. Will worked as a summer residential staff member for the Upward Bound Program. Will graduated from UND in 2008 with a degree in Accountancy and became a CPA in June 2009. Will currently works and lives in EGF, MN with his wife Sarah and they are expecting their first baby the end of January.

McNair student updates

Shamika Hall, PhD
I earned my doctorate in counseling psychology in August 2007 and am a licensed psychologist in the state of Michigan. I work at the University Counseling and Testing Center as an Assistant Professor and Psychologist on Western Michigan University’s campus. I have also worked and trained in private practice and a private outpatient setting conducting psychological assessments and evaluations for Child Protective Services. I have served as a fact witness in a child custody case and worked during my post doctoral training in a geropsychology practice. I completed my pre-doctoral internship at Florida State University’s Counseling Center.

While completing my undergraduate degree at University of North Dakota (UND), I was in the McNair program as a scholar from 2000 to 2001. The McNair program at UND was instrumental in helping me get into graduate school. I was linked up with a mentor, Dr. Jacque Gray, who was wonderful! I presented a presentation with her at a national conference. She also helped me while I was applying to graduate schools. The McNair program gave me an opportunity to look at graduate programs at different universities. They also helped me get prep materials and attend workshops in preparation to study for the graduate school entrance exams. I especially want to thank MPatrice Giese and Jill Teters for the help while I was at UND and in the McNair program.

UN D SSS and McNair Alum, Don Gross, on the Front Lines of Haitian Earthquake

After living in Grand Forks for 14 years and attending UND, where I participated in both the Student Support Services (’92) and McNair programs (’92-95), I decided to move to Fargo, ND. There I worked as a Cytotechnologist for 6 months before moving to Saba, Netherlands – Antilles. At the age of 36, I attended the first 2 years of medical school there. Following that experience, I decided to move to Atlanta, Georgia area for my 3rd and 4th years of medical school.

I did my residency anesthesiology at University of Kentucky Medical Center (UKMC) in Lexington, KY from 2000-2004. I had the opportunity to perform anesthesia research at UKMC in 2005. Following that, I worked Locums Tenens in anesthesiology at the University of West Virginia Morgantown and in Beckley, WV until 2006.

Following that, I began work at Cabell Huntington Hospital in Huntington, WV as an anesthesiologist, where I currently work and live with my wife Sharon (UND, ’95). We have two children Jacob 11 years, and Bojena 9 years. I also have a daughter, Faith, who lives in Crystal, ND.

I am Board Certified with the American Board of Anesthesiologists. I am currently a member of the American Medical Association, American Society of Anesthesiologists, West Virginia Society of Anesthesiologists, and the International Anesthesia Research Society. My interests in anesthesia include regional anesthesia providing pain relief with nerve blocks, and neuroanesthesia for spinal surgeries.

On August 7, 2010 I went to Haiti for a week on a medical mission trip with a local group, Daystar Medical Mission. That same group had gone to Haiti the 2nd week in January when the earthquake hit. I was a member of the team of 17 medical professionals including nurses, doctors, and physical therapists who originally responded to the emergency. When I was there, we did 20 hysterectomies for women suffering from fibroid tumors. The infrastructure in Haiti is still weak. The government charges $1,000 to the Haitians to receive any large containers that are shipped overseas, making it difficult to get medical supplies and relief where it is needed. Unfortunately, at the end of my stay, my mother passed away, requiring my wife and I to return to my hometown of Rugby, ND.

I hope all is well with the TRIO offices at the University of North Dakota!
I started my college career like most young students, not really knowing what direction I wanted to take for my career and therefore not knowing what undergraduate degree to pursue. I enrolled in business courses my first year as a freshmen student at a local junior college in my hometown. While attending my classes I continued to contemplate on which University I was going to finish my education. After discussing my options with family and friends I decided to enroll at the University of North Dakota.

Once there I continued with business courses still unsure of what I was going to do with my life. I had always wanted to be a Pilot, but was sure it would be too expensive and challenging. A friend of mine who was taking flight classes and earning his pilot license through the John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences told me how much fun he was having and suggested that I take a few flight lessons and see if I enjoyed it. I definitely did enjoy it, but from that point on my academic studies became much more complicated and challenging.

First off, I was talking a large loan for the flight training, which made me highly motivated to not waste a single opportunity or class, so I hit the books hard. I enrolled in some advanced math classes, and because math is not my strong suit I was struggling. My roommate was a part of an organization called TRIO Programs and suggested that I could get some much needed help with my math classes and overall counseling for my academic career.

I wasn’t too sure what to expect, but when I met Cheryl Kingsbury I knew right away that this was going to be a great program and it would make my college experience a much richer one. She was so friendly and helpful I felt like she was a second Mom helping me in any way that she could. I can’t say enough wonderful things about Cheryl Kingsbury and all of those that work with the TRIO Programs. She set me up with a tutor that helped me with my advanced math courses which helped me tremendously. She also would meet with me on a regular basis to help me pick the correct courses to keep me on track to graduation.

I cannot recall what my G.P.A. was before I started flight school, but with the help of Trio Programs and my motivation to excel in a field of study that I was very interested in I was able to graduate Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science in Aeronautics from the University of North Dakota. The extra work and sacrifice I made to get good grades I feel has had, and will have a positive impact on my career as an Airline Pilot in Atlanta GA.

Cory Deutsch ’05