Council for Opportunity in Education
Board of Directors
2023-2024

Board Chair: Samuel Blanco III
Director, Pre-College TRIO Programs
University of California - Davis
2828 Cowell Blvd.
Davis, CA. 95618

Past Board Chair: Joseph Givens
Director, Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program
Louisiana State University
232 Hatcher Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803

Board Chair-Elect: Mara Luna
Director, Upward Bound Program
University of Puerto Rico-Rio Piedras Campus
#12 Ave. Universidad, Suite 1201
San Juan, PR 00925-2532
Treasurer: Leo Conway  
Director  
TRIO Upward Bound Programs  
Penn State University  
210 Grange Building  
University Park, PA 16802

Secretary: Theresa Rader  
Director, TRIO Student Support  
Services Institute for Educational Opportunities Montana Tech  
1300 West Park Street  
Butte MT 59701

Parliamentarian: Ronnie Gross  
TRIO Executive Director  
East Tennessee State University  
P.O. Box 70714  
Johnson City, TN 37614

President: Kimberly Jones  
Council for Opportunity in Education  
1025 Vermont Ave. NW, Suite 400  
Washington, DC  20005  
Phone: (202) 347-7430
1st Year Board Member: Angelica A. Benitez  
Director, TRIO Programs  
Rider University  
2083 Lawrenceville Rd  
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

2nd Year Board Member: Anthony J Plonczynski-Figueroa, Current President  
Regional Political Organizer  
New York State United Teachers (NYSUT)

3rd Year Board Member: Jackasha Wiley  
Senior Director, Pre College Initiatives & College Access  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
Lucy Stone Hall, Room A316  
54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue  
Piscataway, NJ 08854
ASPIRE, INC.
Elections: October
Officers change: October

1st Year Board Member:  
Dariana Roybal  
Director, Upward Bound Math & Science  
Colorado School of Mines  
1500 Illinois St.  
Golden, CO 80401

2nd Year Board Member:  
Jami Bayles, Current President  
Director, TRIO Talent Search  
Utah State University - Blanding Campus  
576 West 200 South  
Blanding, UT 84511

3rd Year Board Member:  
W. Barney Nye  
Associate Vice President  
PK-16 Grants, Outreach & Partnerships  
Utah Valley University  
800 W. University Parkway M.S. 318  
Orem, UT  84058
Caribbean Association of Educational Opportunity Programs
CAEOP
Elections: May
Officers change: May

1st Year Board Member: Mariana Franqui
Counselor, Upward Bound
University of Puerto Rico – Rio Piedras
14 Ave. Universidad, Ste. 1401
San Juan, PR 00925

2nd Year Board Member: Jaime Iván López-Rivera, Current President
Assistant Dean of Students
School of Medicine
Universidad Central del Caribe
PO BOX 60327
Bayamón, PR 00960-6032

3rd Year Board Member: Fabiola A. Falto Castro
Director, Student Support Services – ESL
Antillean Adventist University
PO Box 118
Mayaguez, PR 00681-0118
Educational Opportunity Association
EOA
Elections: May
Officers change: November

1st Year Board Member: Karen Smolarek
Director, TRIO Student Support Services
University of Wisconsin – River Falls
410 S. 3rd St.
River Falls, WI 54022

2nd Year Board Member: Adam Cinderich, Current President
Director, TRIO Student Support Services
Kent State University
975 University Esplanade
169-S Center for Undergraduate Excellence
Kent, OH 44243

3rd Year Board Member: Cindy Virta
Director, TRIO Student Support Services
Northeast Iowa Community College
8342 NICC Drive
Peosta, Iowa 52068
Mideastern Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel
MEAEOPP
Elections: April
Officers change: October

1st Year Board Member:  Danny Giles
Associate Director, Student Support Services
Virginia State University
1 Hayden Dr.
Petersburg, VA 23806

2nd Year Board Member:  Jessica Lewis, Current President
Director, TRIO Programs
Mountain Empire Community College
3441 Mountain Empire Road
Big Stone Gap, VA 24219

3rd Year Board Member:  Nicholas Bedway
Director
Heart of Appalachia Educational Opportunity Center
212 Gullickson Hall
One John Marshall Drive
Huntington, WV 25755
Northwest Association Educational Opportunity Programs
NAEOP

Elections: September
Officers change: October

1st Year Board Member: Megan Simila
Educational Specialist, TRIO Upward Bound
Boise State University
Boulder Hall - Room 202
1910 University Dr.
Boise, ID 83725

2nd Year Board Member: Dina J. Ibarra, Current President
Director, TRIO Educational Talent Search
University of Washington
1410 NE Campus Parkway BOX 355845
Seattle, WA 98195-5845

3rd Year Board Member: Geof Garner
Program Director
Multnomah Education Service District
TRIO Talent Search
11611 NE Ainsworth Circle Portland,
OR 97214
New England Educational Opportunity Association
NEOA
Elections: April
Officers change: September

1st Year Board Member: Yara Zoccarato
Student Support Liaison
Western Connecticut State University
181 White St
Danbury, CT 06810-6855

2nd Year Board Member: Lindsay Carpenter, Current President
Director, Upward Bound
Lyndon Institute
168 Institute Circle
PO Box 127
Lyndon Center, VT 05850

3rd Year Board Member: Robert Pote
Director, Pre-Collegiate and Access Programs
Danbury Public Schools Collaborative/Upward Bound/Excel/EA2P/
Minority/Bilingual Teaching Pipeline
Western Connecticut State University
181 White Street
Danbury, CT 06810
Southeastern Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel
SAEOPP
Elections: October
Officers change: March

1st Year Board Member:  
Holly Lawrence  
Director, Talent Search  
Valdosta State University  
1500 N. Patterson Street  
Valdosta, GA 31698

2nd Year Board Member:  
Sherontae Maxwell, Current President  
Assistant Director, Access Programs  
The University of Georgia  
243 Milledge Hall  
Athens, GA 30602

3rd Year Board Member:  
Raymond Cabrera  
Director, Upward Bound  
University of South Florida  
4202 East Fowler Avenue  
SVC 2011  
Tampa, FL 33620
Southwest Association of Student Assistance Programs
SWASAP

Elections: November
Officers change: November

1st Year Board Member: Teriki Barnes
Director, Educational Opportunity Center
Southeastern Oklahoma State University
425 W. University Blvd.
Durant, Oklahoma 74701

2nd Year Board Member: Donta Mills, Current President
Assistant Director, Upward Bound
Baton Rouge Community College
201 Community College Drive
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806

3rd Year Board Member: Darica N. Simon
Director of TRIO Programs
Baton Rouge Community College
3250 N. Acadian Blvd. A-103
Baton Rouge, LA 70805
Western Association of Educational Opportunity Personnel
WESTOP
Elections: March
Officers change: July

1st Year Board Member: Dalia Hernandez
Director, Upward Bound & UBMS
California State University - San Bernadino
5500 University Pkwy
San Bernadino, CA 92407

2nd Year Board Member: Victor Rojas, Current President
Director, TRIO Programs and Minority Male Initiative
Mt. San Antonio College
1100 N. Grand Ave.
Walnut, CA 91789

3rd Year Board Member: Armando Bustos Jr.
Director of TRIO Programs
Azusa Pacific College
901 E Alosta Ave.
Bldg 17D
Azusa, CA 91702