TRIO TURNS



BREAKING BARRIERS - INSPIRING HOPE COE ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024 SEPTEMBER 8-11, 2024 - NEW YORK, NY

COE'S 2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE AWARDS LUNCHEON

COUNCIL for OPPORTUNITY in EDUCATION

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WALTER O. MASON, JR.



The Late Walter O. Mason, Jr., a pioneering advocate for educational equity, was born on May 5, 1922, in Oklahoma. After earning a bachelor's degree from Langston University and a master's from Oklahoma State University, he pursued doctoral studies at the University of Oklahoma. He served as a special assistant to the president of the University of Oklahoma. The Tuskegee Airman had a passion for education that led him to a distinguished career in secondary education before he became a pivotal figure in the development of the TRIO programs.

In 1963, while serving as the executive director for the Community Action Programs for Oklahoma City and Oklahoma County, Mason was selected to help draft the Higher Education Act of 1965. This work laid the foundation for TRIO, and Walter played a crucial role in creating TRIO Upward Bound. He contributed to writing the first regulations for the program, served on the committee that named it, and helped design its original logo.

In 1968, as director of Upward Bound at Oklahoma Baptist University, Mason spearheaded the professional organization of Upward Bound Directors in Oklahoma, leading to the chartering of the Oklahoma Division of Student Assistance. His leadership expanded when, in 1971, he became the senior program officer for Region VI of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. In this role, he urged TRIO personnel across Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas to unify, resulting in the founding of the Southwest Association of Student Assistance Programs (SWASAP)—the first region in the nation to become a cohesive, professional TRIO association.

Mason's unwavering dedication to TRIO was evident throughout his life. He remained a vocal advocate, generously sharing his expertise to strengthen the programs he loved. His legacy endures, having shaped the lives of countless students until his passing on August 17, 1986.

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ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 2024 FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE CELEBRATION DAY AWARDS

PRESENTATION OF THE WALTER O. MASON, JR. AWARDS



PRESENTATION OF THE 2024 WALTER O. MASON, JR. AWARDS

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Sam Blanco, III

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WALTER O. MASON, JR. AWARD RECIPIENTS



Randolph Holly, Jr. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF COPE, INC. Southern University and A&M College

Randolph B. Holly, Jr. has dedicated his life to ensuring that students from Central Louisiana have access to the opportunities and resources needed to pursue higher education. As the executive director of COPE Inc., Holly has spearheaded TRIO academic programs that have reached over 10,000 individuals, placing more than 800 seniors in postsecondary institutions. His commitment to guiding young minds toward success has impacted the lives of the students he serves and the broader community.

Holly, an Alexandria, Louisiana native, graduated from Bolton High School and earned a Bachelor of Arts in elementary education and special education, as well as a Master of Education in guidance and counseling, from Southern University A&M College in Baton Rouge. His career in education began at Southern University, where he worked with the TRIO Talent Search program, igniting his passion for helping disadvantaged students navigate the path to higher education.

Recognizing that students often drop out of school as early as the seventh grade, Holly has made it his mission to "catch students as early as possible," particularly those who believe they can't afford or succeed in college. Through COPE Inc., he has introduced various free academic programs, even during the summer, to provide students with early exposure

to postsecondary education. "The idea," Holly explains, "is to get them early exposure to make them aware of how postsecondary education works and the importance of the individual's responsibility."

Holly's leadership extends beyond his direct work with students. He has served as president of both the Louisiana Association of Student Assistance Programs (LASAP) and the Southwest Association of Student Assistance Programs (SWASAP). His nine-year tenure on the Council for Opportunity in Education's board of directors reflects his deep commitment to the TRIO community. In recognition of his contributions, Holly has been honored with numerous awards, including the SWASAP "Legacy Award," the Central Louisiana Business League's "Jimmie Rax, Jr. Businessperson of the Year," and the title of one of the Ten Outstanding Men of Substance in Central Louisiana.

Holly's innovative approach to TRIO programs includes introducing STEM initiatives, such as coding, robotics, and drones, to engage students in new and exciting ways. His vision led to the establishment of the first TRIO Parent University in Rapides Parish, which helps parents navigate the everchanging landscape of higher education as they prepare their children for success.

Holly's contributions are not limited to education. He has played an active role in economic development and community service, serving on the Greater Alexandria Economic Development Authority and the Exploratory Multi-Purpose Arena Committee boards. A dedicated member of St. Matthew Baptist Church, Holly also lends his voice to the male chorus. Behind his professional achievements stands a strong family. Holly is married to his wife of 38 years, Marvinette Kemper, and together they have raised three children and are proud grandparents to three grandchildren.





Lydia Perez DIRECTOR, TRIO SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAMS Mesa Community College

Lydia Perez is a dedicated and accomplished leader in the field of educational equity and TRIO programs. Currently serving as the program director for the TRIO Student Support Services Programs (Classic and STEM) at Mesa Community College in Mesa, Arizona, Perez's impact on student success and empowerment is profound.

An alumna of the TRIO Upward Bound program at Arizona State University, she began her career there and worked in various capacities for 17 years. Her roles ranged from tutor to project director, demonstrating her deep commitment to guiding students through their educational journeys. Since 2016, Perez has overseen the TRIO Student Support Services Program at Mesa Community College, expanding her influence in 2020 to include TRIO Student Support Services - STEM.

Perez holds a Ph.D. in managing organizational systems from Saybrook University, where she was honored with the Excellence in Leadership and Service Award in 2022. Her research focuses on servant leadership, human thriving, and the success of first-generation students and professionals. With a Master of Science degree in community counseling from the University of Phoenix and a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from Arizona State University, Perez combines her academic expertise with a passion for fostering belonging, thriving, and empowerment in all her endeavors.

Her extensive involvement with the Western Association of Educational Opportunity Personnel (WESTOP) includes over 20 years on the board of directors, serving as president, past president, and president-elect. Perez's contributions to WESTOP and TRIO have earned her numerous accolades, including the Steve Holeman Award in 2017 and the WESTOP TRIO Achievers Award in 1997.

In addition to her work with TRIO, Perez coordinated the ACE (Achieving a College Education) program at Paradise Valley Community College, a scholarship initiative that enables low-income, first-generation students to earn college credits while still in high school. Her experience also extends to community counseling, where she served as a family therapist with La Frontera - EMPACT Suicide Prevention Center in Maricopa, Arizona.

Lydia Perez's commitment to the unlimited potential of all people and the power of opportunity is rooted in the foundation set by her family, friends, community, and her experiences with TRIO. Her work continues to inspire and empower countless students, making a lasting impact on their lives and futures.



Randall Schroeder

FORMER DIRECTOR & EDUCATIONAL COUNSELOR, TRIO STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES University of New Hampshire

Randall "Randy" Schroeder has dedicated his career to advancing educational opportunities for low-income and first-generation college students across New England. As a past president of the New England Educational Opportunity Association (NEOA), Schroeder played a pivotal role in supporting 122 TRIO and GEAR UP programs in the region. His leadership was marked by a commitment to advocacy, professional development, and expanding access to educational resources.

Schroeder reflects on the values instilled in him during his upbringing in rural Western New York State and his deep connection to New England, where he has lived since the age of 20. His TRIO journey began in 1997 at the University of New Hampshire, following a varied career as an academic advisor, program coordinator, certified school counselor, and cross-country coach.

At the University of New Hampshire, Schroeder served as an associate director and educational counselor, where he provided comprehensive academic and personal support to undergraduates. His work focused on improving academic skills, time management, and career development, with a particular emphasis on preparing students for graduate school. Schroeder's extensive experience with diverse populations, including students with disabilities, made him a trusted mentor and advocate for those navigating the challenges of higher education.

Schroeder's legacy is one of unwavering dedication to the TRIO mission. His work in integrating academic and emotional support has had a profound impact on countless students, helping them to define and achieve their goals. Even in retirement, Schroeder remains active on the NEOA Board, focusing on TRIO alumni engagement and contributing his expertise and institutional wisdom to the ongoing success of TRIO programs in New England.





2023

DOLORES GOMEZ, Director, Student Support Services-Teacher Prep, College Access and Outreach, Office of Student Success, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

JEFFREY KAHLDEN, Director, Grant Management Services for Student Success, Dallas College

ANTONIO C. STEPHENS, Director, TRIO Center of Excellence, Saint Augustine's University

2022

TRENT BALL, Senior Director, Postsecondary Equity and Attainment, Missouri College and Career Attainment Network

KAREN KEIM, Director, Educational Opportunity Center and Talent Search, The University of Maine System

ANGELICA VIALPANDO, Senior Vice President, Program and Professional Development, Council for Opportunity in Education

2021

EARNESTINE HARRIS BELL, Former Director, General Education Development

Center, Student Support Services and Upward Bound, Paine College **GABRIEL GALLARDO**, Former Associate Vice President for Student Success, Office of

Student Success, Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity, University of Washington (Deceased)

AMY L. VERLANIC, Executive Director, Institute for Educational Opportunities, Montana Tech

2020

BETHSAIDA COLÓN DÍAZ,

Director, Puerto Rico Southeast TRIO Upward Bound Program, Academia Directores Médicos De PR

LUCY JONES, Former Coordinator, TRIO Programs, University of Arkansas, Rich Mountain

EDDIE L. CHAMBERS, Former Director, Upward Bound Wittenberg University

2019

MATEO ARTEAGA, Director, Educational Opportunity Centers, Central Washington University

PAMELA BOISVERT, Former CEO, Massachusetts Education and Career Opportunities Inc.

BERNARD CLAY, JR., Executive Director, Introspect Youth Services, Inc. JOY BRITTAIN, Director, Early Outreach and Support Programs, California State University, Monterey Bay

2018

GERALDINE GRAHAM, Director, Upward Bound, Oakland University

VAUGHN ROBERTSON, Retired Director, Educational Talent Search, University of Nebraska-Lincoln 2017

TRACY LYONS, Executive Director of Undergraduate Student Success and Retention, University of Alabama at Birmingham, AL

MICHELE SCOTT, Director, Educational Opportunity Center, California State University-Long Beach, Long Beach, CA

KAREN TEXEIRA, Director, Upward Bound, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, New York, NY CHERRYL F. ARNOLD, Former Director, Office of Educational Opportunity and TRIO Programs, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA

2016

MIKE HENRY, Professor and Director of Student Support Services, Southwest Virginia Community College, Richlands, VA

YOICHI K. RENGIIL, Director, TRIO Programs, University of Guam, Mangilao, Guam

2015

NGONDI KAMATUKA, Director, Center for Educational Opportunity Programs, Achievement & Assessment Institute, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS

EVELYN MARTIN, Former Director, Educational Opportunity Center, East Central University, Ada, OK

ALVIN PHILLIPS, Senior Vice President, Membership and Human Resources, Council for Opportunity in Education, Washington, DC RONNIE GROSS, Executive Director, TRIO Programs, East Tennessee State University,

2014

DAVID MEGUIER, Director of Educational Opportunity Center and Talent Search, University of Maine, Orono, ME

Johnson City, TN

CAMILLE S. ZEIGLER, Retired TRIO Director, Atlanta Metropolitan College, Atlanta, GA 2013

ROBERT BELLE, JR., Associate Director, Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), Atlanta, GA

THE HONORABLE HENRY BONILLA, Partner, The Normandy Group, and Former Member of Congress (1993-2007), Washington, DC

ANDREA G. TAKEMOTO REEVE, Retired Student Support Services Director and Adjunct Faculty Member, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO JACQUELINE O. DANSBY, Director, Upward Bound, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX

2012

JOSÉ MARTINEZ-SALDAÑA, President and Founder, EDvolution, Inc.

VINCENT TINTO, Distinguished University Professor, School of Education, Syracuse University, and Senior Scholar, The Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Education, Syracuse, NY

2011

JACOB FRAIRE, Vice President for Student and Institutional Success, Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation (TG), Round Rock, TX

SUE B. HUIZINGA, Director, Educational Talent Search and Upward Bound, Boise State University, Boise, ID

PAULA MARTIN, Executive Director, Harlem Center for Education, New York, NY

2010

THOMAS G. MORTENSON, Senior Scholar, The Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education, Washington, DC

BOBBY L. OLIVE, SR., Vice President for Student Affairs, Atlanta Metropolitan College, Atlanta, GA

CYNTHIA DARCHÉ PARK, Professor, College of Education, and TRIO Director, Pre-College Programs, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA

2009

RAY CARLISLE, Director, Student Support Services, University of Montana, Missoula, MT

ROBERT L. CARMOUCHE, Director, Department of Special Services, University of Louisiana-Lafayette, Lafayette, LA

DELTHA Q. COLVIN, Assistant Vice President for Campus Life, Wichita State University, Wichita, KS

2008

RONNIE J. BROOKS, Founding Pastor, "To God Be the Glory Ministries," and former Director, Upward Bound and Student Support Services, Texas A&M University-Commerce. Salem. OR

IRVIN L. COIN, Director of TRIO Programs, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ

J. GUADALUPE VALTIERRA, Chancellor of the Northwest Region, Ivy Tech Community College, Griffith, IN

2007

JONATHAN MCKENZIE, Cofounder and CEO, Family Centered Educational Agency, South Holland, IL

ELAINE METCALFE, Director of TRIO Programs, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND

DEBORAH NORTHCROSS, Executive Director, SAEOPP Center, Memphis, TN FUJI ADACHI, TRIO and GEAR UP Director, University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY

2006

MICHAEL L. JEFFRIES, Associate Dean of Students and Director of the President's Leadership Program, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Champaign, IL

AL WHITE, Director, Talent Search, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Durant, OK RENÉ DUBAY, Director, Educational Talent Search and Partnerships for Access, Montana Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, Helena, MT

2005

AVON HONEY, Director, Educational Talent Search, Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA

WILLIAM W. SULLIVAN, Associate Vice President for Retention and Outreach, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and Executive Director, Center for Academic Enrichment and Outreach, Las Vegas, NV

2004

DAN CONNELL, Associate Vice President for Academic Outreach and Support, Morehead State University, Morehead, KY

WILLIAM MORRIS, Former Director, Upward Bound, University of Delaware, Newark, DE

JULIA TOWER, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Council for Opportunity in Education, Washington, DC

2003

PAUL L. BEASLEY, Director, TRIO Programs, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC

MARIO BORELLI, Associate Professor, Mathematics, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN

SALLY J. BURGE, Director, Student Support Services, Eastern Washington University, Cheney, WA

JOAN BECKER, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Support Services, University

2002

of Massachusetts-Boston, Boston, MA VANCE SIMELTON, TRIO

Director, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Little Rock, AR

DOROTHY C. YARBOROUGH, Director of TRIO Programs, Piedmont Community College, Roxboro, NC

2001

ELLEN DOLVEY HOWARD, Director, Educational Opportunity Center, Delta

Sigma Theta, Inc, Baltimore, MD LOTTIE GIBSON, Director, Student Support Services and Upward Bound,

and Upward Bound, Greenville Technical College, Greenville, SC MARSHALL GRIGSBY,

President and CEO, Grigsby and Associates, Inc., Washington, DC

2000

LOUIS BROWNLOWE,

Assistant Vice President for Community Relations, Cleveland State University, Cleveland, OH

BEN MCCUNE, Director of TRIO Programs, Florida A&M University, Tallahassee, FL

BRUCE SCHELSKE, Director, Student Support Services, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

SHARYN SCHELSKE, Director, McNair Program, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN





1999

BRENDA DANN-MESSIER, Executive Director, Dorcas

Place Adult Literacy Agency, Providence, RI

SAMUEL F. HART SR., Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and Director of TRIO Programs, Mercer University, Macon, GA

CELERSTINE BRIGGS JOHNSON, Assistant Provost, St. Louis University, St. Louis, MO

1998

ANN COLES, Senior Vice President of Educational Information Services, The Educational Resources Institute, Boston, MA

DALLAS MARTIN, President, National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, Washington, DC

ROBERT MCFARLAND, Director, New Orleans Educational Talent Search Program, Inc., New Orleans, I A

1997

JOSEPH BELL, Director of TRIO Programs, Howard University, Washington, DC

MONTE PEREZ, President, Perez & Associates, Tucson, AZ

PAUL THAYER, Director of Undergraduate Student Retention, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO

1996

KATHRYN FELKER, Director, Educational Opportunity Programs, University of Utah

ALMA MARTINEZ, Director, Upward Bound, Inter American University in Ponce, Mercedita, PR

HAL D. PAYNE, Vice President, Student Affairs, State University College of Buffalo, Buffalo, NY

1995

EARL VANN FARROW, Director, Academic Achievement and Diversity Programs, Rutgers University, Newark, NJ

RICHARD SONNERGREN, Director, Division of Student Services, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC

PAUL T. SPRAGGINS, Director, Educational Opportunity Programs, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Milwaukee, WI CLARA HEWITT, Director, Upward Bound, Student Support Services, and Educational Talent Search, Lane College, Jackson, TN

1994

KELLY ESPINOZA, Executive Director, Academic Assessment/Support Center at Metropolitan State College, Denver, CO

THOMAS WOLANIN, Assistant Secretary, Legislative and Congressional Affairs, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 1993

HAROLD G. DICKERSON, Executive Director, North Alabama Center for Educational Excellence, Huntsville, AL

WILLIAM A. BLAKEY, Partner, Clohan & Dean, Washington, DC

TOMMY EDWARDS, Director, Upward Bound, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX

1992

IRMA BURKS, Director, Education and Training, Business and Professional Women's Foundation, Washington, DC

CHARLES DESMOND, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, University of Massachusetts, Boston, MA

JERRY LEWIS, Director of the Academic Achievement Program, University of Maryland, College Park, MD

1991

OSCAR HERNANDEZ, Director, Project Stay, Inc., San Antonio, TX

ROBBIE LYLE, Director, Upward Bound and Student Support Services, Arkansas State University, State University, AR

SILAS PURNELL, Director, Talent Search, Ada S. McKinley Community Services, Chicago, IL

1990

JO CONWAY, Director, Talent Search, East Central University, Ada, OK

JAMES HAMILTON, Assistant Provost and Professor of Chemistry, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

RAMOS SANCHEZ, Director, Talent Search, Eight Northern Indian Pueblos, Santa Fe, NM

1989

CLARK E. CHIPMAN, Regional Representative, Higher Education Grants Programs, U.S. Department of Education, Chicago, IL

MATTHEW TAYLOR, Regional Representative, Higher Education Grants Programs, U.S. Department of Education, Dallas, TX

PRINCE O. TEAL, JR., Regional Representative, Higher Education Grants Programs, Department of Education, Atlanta, GA

1988

MAUREEN HOYLER, Deputy Director, National Council of Educational Opportunity Associations, Washington, DC

ARNOLD L. MITCHEM, Executive Director, National Council of Educational Opportunity Associations, Washington, DC

ABOUT COE

MISSION

COE's mission is to achieve college access and success for low-income, first-generation students and students with disabilities.

VISION

We believe every young person and adult should have an equal opportunity to prepare for, attend, and graduate from college. Graduation from any category of a postsecondary institution should be achievable and must not be limited by economic status, family background, or disability.

OUR APPROACH

COE works to improve educational equity for low-income, first-generation students and students with disabilities by advocating and providing resources and services to support colleges and community agencies around the country. We address this mandate by:

- Implementing evidence-based program improvement and student development services for more than 3,100 college access and success programs nationwide
- Advocating for federally-funded programs critical to college access and success, including TRIO, GEAR UP, Pell Grants, and other college access and success programs that assist lowincome and first-generation students
- Providing professional development for college access and success professionals--through COE's annual conference, seminars, video conferences, online courses, webinars, communities of practice, and other web-based idea exchanges
- Conducting research and policy analysis through COE's Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education to inform policymakers, educators, and the public on issues impacting educational opportunities and outcomes for low-income, first-generation students, and students with disabilities



INITIATIVES

- Promote leadership development and global citizenry through student leadership programs such as the National Student Leadership Congress, the Thomas R. Wolanin Congressional Internship, and the Keith Sherin Global Leaders Program;
- Develop partnerships with business and government to introduce low-income and firstgeneration students to 21st-century careers and to prepare them for the workforce better;
- Strengthen the academic preparation of TRIO pre-college students to assure they have the mathematics and writing skills necessary to excel in disciplines of their choice-through curriculum development for STEAM Clubs and Book Clubs available for free to over 4,000 college access and success programs nationwide;
- Through the annual First-Generation College Celebration, uplift and expand the visibility of first-generation students on campuses across the country to increase institutional campuswide engagement in providing comprehensive support to this student population;
- Annually publish the Pell Institute's *Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the United States*, which increases public awareness of disparities in college opportunity for low-income, first-generation students and provides data to help develop educational policies and programs targeting these students, **and ensure that state leaders are familiar with this data to inform policy at the state level**;
- Cultivate college access and success program alumni to serve as mentors and role models for current program participants, act as advocates for the programs, and serve as ambassadors to the broader community;
- Convene leaders of COE-affiliated state associations for executive leadership training to advance college opportunity efforts at the state and national level through partnerships with institutions such as Cornell University, Johns Hopkins University, Princeton University, the University of Kansas, and Yale University;
- Connect college access and success programs and community partners to COE's cloud-based data system—empower[™]—for effective real-time tracking and analysis of student outcomes.

OUR OUTCOMES

College access and retention services are essential to providing true educational opportunities for all Americans, including low-income and first-generation students and students with disabilities. At present, college access and success programs reach only a small fraction of the students and families who could benefit from them. For more than 40 years, COE has worked to make the following outcomes a reality:

- More than 6 million students have graduated from college with the special assistance of TRIO programs.
- Annually, more than 3,000 access and success professionals receive professional development and technical assistance either in-person, virtually, or both.
- **Garnered \$1.2 billion** in federal appropriations to support TRIO programs (up from \$156.6 million in 1981, the year the Council for Opportunity in Education was founded).
- Nearly 875,000 low-income students and students with disabilities receive college access and retention services annually through our member colleges and agencies.

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