



MAINE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY ASSOCIATION

# Maine TRIO Yearbook 2003

- **Program Overview**
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*Federal TRIO Associated Programs*

# FEDERAL TRIO PROGRAMS

The Federal TRIO Programs incorporate the following six major programs for disadvantaged students:

Educational Talent Search  
Upward Bound and Upward Bound Math/Science  
Student Support Services  
Educational Opportunity Centers  
Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement  
Training Program for Special Programs Staff and Leadership Personnel

## History

Collectively, these programs are referred to as "TRIO" or "Federal TRIO Programs." In the late 1960's when the first three programs were established, the name "TRIO" was coined. **Upward Bound**, the oldest of the programs, was created by the 1964 Economic Opportunity Act. **Upward Bound Math/Science** was added in 1990. **Educational Talent Search** was established by the Higher Education Act of 1965, and the Higher Education Amendments of 1968 added **Special Services for Disadvantaged Students** (now **Student Support Services**). The Higher Education Amendments of 1972 added a fourth program -- **Educational Opportunity Center** -- but the "TRIO" name continued. The fifth program is the **Training Program for Special Programs Staff and Leadership Personnel**; it was established by the Education Amendments of 1976.

The Higher Education Amendments of 1986 authorized the sixth program, **Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement**, for which funds were first appropriated in FY 1989. The legislative requirements for the TRIO programs can be found in the Higher Educational Act of 1965, as amended, Title IV, Subpart 4.

## Purpose

The primary purpose of the TRIO programs is to prepare disadvantaged persons for successful entry into, retention in, and completion of postsecondary education. In general, these programs identify low-income and potential first-generation college students and provide them with encouragement, support, and assistance to help them achieve their educational goals.

## Service

TRIO services are designed to improve academic performance, increase student motivation, and facilitate transitions from one level of education to the next.

# A Snapshot of Maine TRIO Programs 2002-2003

Program Location	# of Personnel	# Students Served	\$ Award
<b>Educational Talent Search</b>			
University of Maine (2 separate projects)	18	1,550	<b>\$685,679</b>
<b>Educational Opportunity Center</b>			
University of Maine	16	2,500	<b>\$647,828</b>
<b>Student Support Services</b>			
Central Maine Technical College	4	175	\$266,768
Kennebec Valley Technical College	4	180	\$262,589
Northern Maine Technical College	4	160	\$229,338
University of Maine	14	425	\$513,530
University of Maine at Augusta	13	360	\$444,174
University of Maine at Farmington	3	189	\$263,019
University of Maine at Fort Kent	5	140	\$266,121
University of Maine at Presque Isle	7	180	\$273,061
Washington County Technical College	3	115	\$229,338
<b>9 Student Support Services Projects</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>1,924</b>	<b>\$2,747,938</b>
<b>Upward Bound</b>			
Bowdoin College	34	100	\$402,694
University of Maine	53	120	\$633,838
University of Maine at Farmington	17	55	\$336,432
University of Maine at Presque Isle	20	66	\$338,654
University of Southern Maine	15	50	\$274,016
<b>5 Upward Bound Projects</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>\$1,985,634</b>
<b>Upward Bound Math/Science</b>			
University of Maine	50	50	\$282,728
<b>18 TRIO Projects in Maine</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>6,415</b>	<b>\$6,349,807</b>
	<b>Project Staff</b>	<b>Participants Served</b>	<b>Total Federal TRIO Funding</b>

*Maine has experienced a net gain of 1 Talent Search Project, 585 TRIO participants, and an increase of \$525,701 (9%) in total TRIO funding over the prior year.*

# Educational Opportunity Center

## *Program Description:*

The Educational Opportunity Center Program provides assistance and information to adults who seek to enter or continue a program of postsecondary education.

## *Participant Eligibility:*

The program targets persons who express a desire to enroll in a postsecondary program and those who request information and assistance in applying for admission and/or financial aid. At least two-thirds of the students must be low-income, first generation college persons, age 19 or above, and need services in order to pursue a postsecondary education. If the services of an Educational Talent Search Program are not available in the target area, persons under 19 may be served.

## *Sponsoring Institutions:*

Educational Opportunity Center Programs may be sponsored by institutions of higher education, public and private nonprofit agencies, and in exceptional cases, secondary schools.

## *Application/Funding Process:*

Competitions for Educational Opportunity Center funding are held every four years. Second, third, and fourth year funding is based on approval of a non-competing continuation application. The most recent competition was held in the fall of 2001. Applications funded in this competition began a new, four-year funding cycle on September 1, 2002.

## *Services Provided by EOC:*

- Academic, financial, and personal counseling
- Career exploration and aptitude assessments
- Help with the re-entry process to high school or college
- Information on postsecondary educational opportunities
- Information on student financial assistance
- Rehabilitation of defaulted loan counseling
- Assistance in completing college admissions testing, college admissions applications, and financial aid applications
- Coordination with nearby postsecondary institutions
- Activities designed to involve and acquaint the community with higher education opportunities

## *Current Funding for Maine*

# of Awards	1
# of Participants	2,500
Grant Award	\$647,828
Cost per Participant	\$259

## *National Funding*

\$48 Million was awarded in FY 02	
Number of Awards	139
Total # of Students Served	217,836
Average Awards	\$345,405
Average # of Participants	1,567
Cost per Participant	\$220

## *Performance Outcomes of EOC in Maine:*

66% of EOC participants who were academically ready to begin college actually enrolled in 2002.

79% of EOC participants who enrolled in college in the prior year, continued into their second year of college in 2002.

# Educational Talent Search

## *Program Description:*

The Educational Talent Search (ETS) Program identifies "at-risk" young people who have the desire and the potential for success in postsecondary education. ETS encourages participants to continue and graduate from secondary schools or to return to high school if they have dropped out. The goal of ETS is to successfully encourage participants enroll in some form of postsecondary education.

## *Participant Eligibility:*

Students must be between the ages of 11 and 27 and have completed five years of elementary education. In any given project, two-thirds (2/3) of the participants must be low-income persons who are also potential first generation college students.

## *Sponsoring Institutions:*

Educational Talent Search Programs may be sponsored by institutions of higher education, public and private nonprofit agencies, and in exceptional cases, secondary schools.

## *Application/Funding Process:*

Competitions for Educational Talent Search funding are held every four years. Second, third, and fourth year funding is based on approval of a non-competing continuation application. The most recent competition was held in the fall of 2001. Applications funded in this competition began a new, four-year funding cycle on September 1, 2002. Maine gained a new Talent Search project this past fall. The new project serves the Hancock County area and is based at the University of Maine, along with Maine's long-standing Talent Search project. The new project will serve 600 participants; bring the state Talent Search total to 1,550 participants.

## *Services Provided by Talent Search:*

- Student academic, financial, and personal counseling
- Career exploration and aptitude assessments
- Help with the re-entry process to high school or college
- Information about postsecondary education
- Personal development workshops in areas such as test taking and study skills
- Assistance in completing college admissions testing, college admissions applications, and financial aid applications
- Personal growth activities focused on 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> graders
- Tutoring sessions for students with academic need
- Promoting parental involvement

## *Performance Outcomes of Talent Search (TS) in Maine:*

88.3% of the TS participants enrolled in Grades 6-12 achieved achieve a C+ or higher average for the 2001-2002 academic year.

94.9% of the TS participants in Grades 6-12 enrolled in academic courses that will prepare them for college in 2002.

100 % of TS participants were promoted to the next grade level or graduated from high school in 2002.

70.4% of the TS graduating seniors enrolled in college in the Fall of 2002.

80.4% of the TS participants who enrolled in college in the prior year maintained good academic standing and entered their second year of college in 2002.

## *Current Funding for Maine*

# of Awards	2
Average Awards	\$342,839
Average # of Participants	775
Average Cost per Participant	\$442
Range of Awards	\$200,000-\$485,679
Range of Participants	600-950

## *National Funding*

\$143.5 Million was awarded in FY 02	
Number of Awards	475
Total # of Students Served	389,454
Average Awards	\$302,117
Average # of Participants	820
Cost per Participant	\$368

# Student Support Services

## *Program Description:*

The Student Support Services (SSS) Program provides supportive services to disadvantaged college students to enhance their potential for successfully completing the education program in which they are enrolled and to facilitate their transition to the next level of higher education.

## *Participant Eligibility:*

To receive assistance, students must be enrolled, or accepted for enrollment, in a program of postsecondary education at a sponsoring institution of higher education and have an established need for academic assistance. All participants must be low-income, first generation, and/or physically disabled.

## *Sponsoring Institutions:*

SSS Programs may only be sponsored by institutions of higher education. Each applying institution must be prepared to assure that each student participating in the project will be offered sufficient financial assistance to meet that student's full financial need.

## *Application/Funding Process:*

Competitions for SSS funding are held every four years. Second, third, and fourth year funding is based on approval of a non-competing continuation application. The most recent competition was held in the fall of 2000. As a result of this competition, Maine gained two additional projects. Northern Maine Technical College and Washington County Technical College began operations on September 1, 2001.

## *Services Provided by SSS:*

- Instruction in reading, writing, study skills, mathematics, and other subjects necessary for success in education beyond high school
- Tutorial services
- Academic, financial, and personal counseling
- Exposure to cultural events
- Assistance in obtaining student financial aid
- Assistance in securing admission and financial assistance for enrollment in four-year institutions (function of SSS at two-year institutions)
- Assistance in securing admission and financial assistance for enrollment in graduate and professional programs (function of SSS at four-year institutions)

## *Performance Outcomes of SSS Projects in Maine:*

86.5% of the Maine's SSS participants continued their college enrollment from one academic year to the next in 2002.

84.3% of the Maine's SSS participants maintained good academic status at their college in 2002.

56.8% of the Maine's SSS participants graduated with a college degree in 2002.

## *Current Funding for Maine*

\$2,747,938 was awarded in PY 2002-2003

# of Awards	9
Average # of Participants	215
Average Cost per Participant	\$1,414

## *National Funding*

\$262.7 Million was awarded in FY 02

Number of Awards	937
Total # of Students Served	198,551
Average Awards	\$280,375
Average # of Participants	212
Cost per Participant	\$1,323

# Upward Bound

## *Program Description:*

The Upward Bound Program attempts to generate skills and motivation necessary for success in education beyond high school. Participants are students currently enrolled in high school who meet the low income and/or potential first generation college student requirement and who are willing to prepare themselves for entry into postsecondary education.

## *Participant Eligibility:*

Students must have completed the eighth grade and be between the ages of 13 and 19 (except for veterans), enrolled in high school, planning to go to college, and need the services in order to fulfill their goals. Two-thirds of the participants must be low-income and potential first generation college students. The remaining participants must be low income or first generation. Participants are selected based on recommendations from their counselors, teachers, and social service agencies.

## *Sponsoring Institutions:*

Upward Bound Programs may be sponsored by institutions of higher education, public and private nonprofit agencies, and in exceptional cases, secondary schools.

## *Application/Funding Process:*

Competitions for regular Upward Bound funding are held every four years. Second, third, and fourth year funding is based on approval of a non-competing continuation application. The next competition was conducted in the Fall of 2002. Funding decisions will be announced in May 2003.

## *Services Provided by UB:*

- Instruction in math through pre-calculus, laboratory science, foreign language, composition, literature, and other subjects necessary for success in education beyond high school
- Academic, financial, or personal counseling
- Exposure to cultural events and tutorial services
- Information on postsecondary education opportunities
- Information on student financial assistance
- Assistance in completing college admissions testing, college admissions applications, and financial aid applications
- Exposure to the range of career options where the disadvantaged person might be under-represented
- Mentoring programs

## *Performance Outcomes of UB Projects in Maine:*

96.75% of the Maine's UB high school seniors received a high school diploma in 2002.

83.8% of the Maine's UB high school seniors enrolled in college in 2002.

## *Current Funding for Maine*

\$1,985,634 was awarded in PY 2002-2003

# of Awards	5
Average Awards	\$397,127
Average # of Participants	78
Average Cost per Participant	\$5,078

## *National Funding*

\$264.2 Million was awarded in FY 02

Number of Awards	770
Total # of Students Served	56,324
Average Awards	\$343,103
Average # of Participants	73
Cost per Participant	\$4,691

# Upward Bound Math/Science

## *Program Description:*

Upward Bound Math-Science seeks to strengthen the math and science education of participating students and assist them in demonstrating competency in math and science. It also seeks to encourage students to pursue postsecondary degrees in math and science.

## *Participant Eligibility:*

Students must have completed the ninth grade and be between the ages of 13 and 19 (except for veterans), enrolled in high school, planning to go to college, have an interest in and aptitude for careers in math and science, and need the services in order to fulfill their goals. Two-thirds of the participants must be low-income and potential first generation college students. The remaining participants must qualify as low income or first generation. Participants are selected based on recommendations from their counselors, teachers, and social service agencies.

## *Sponsoring Institutions:*

Upward Bound Math-Science Centers may be sponsored by institutions of higher education, public and private agencies and organizations, and in exceptional cases, secondary schools.

## *Application/Funding Process:*

Competitions are held every four years. Second, third, and fourth year funding is based on approval of a non-competing continuation application. The next competition is scheduled for the Fall of 2002.

## *Services Provided by UB Math/Science:*

- Six-week intensive math (including computer science) and science programs during the summer
- Academic, financial, or personal counseling
- Exposure to experts performing research in math and science
- Tutorial services
- Core curriculum instruction including math through pre-calculus, laboratory science, foreign language, composition, and literature
- Intensive instruction in math and science, including hands-on laboratories, in computer facilities, and at field sites

## *Performance Outcomes of Maine's Upward Bound Math/Science (UBMS) Project:*

100% of the UBMS seniors received a high school diploma in 2002.

85.7% of the UBMS high school seniors enrolled in college in 2002.

## *Current Funding for Maine*

# of Awards	1
# of Participants	50
Grant Award	\$274,493
Cost per Participant	\$5,655

## *National Funding*

\$31.8 Million was awarded in FY 02

Number of Awards	123
Total # of Students Served	6,093
Average Awards	\$258,312
Average # of Participants	50
Cost per Participant	\$5,215

# Maine TRIO Achiever Gallery 2003

The following pages consist of a Gallery of TRIO Achievers. These are individuals from many walks of life, many disparate ages, and many different academic backgrounds. They hold one thing in common: each received educational support and assistance from one of Maine's TRIO programs. For these individuals, TRIO programs served as the vital link between the desire to pursue and the ability to actually obtain a postsecondary education.

The people represented on the following pages are a small sampling of the lives TRIO programs impact each year. In 2002-2003, TRIO programs will serve a minimum of 6,415 participants. TRIO programs are funded to assist people who are living within 150% of the federal poverty level and would be the first person in their families to graduate with a Bachelor's degree. They are individuals who are fully capable of achieving academic success in college, and yet are faced with potential economic, social, and/or other barriers. We invite you to celebrate with these individuals as you read of their accomplishments. Thank you for your continued support of TRIO. We hope the following biographies serve as a reminder of the necessity and effectiveness of these programs.



# Lilly Bickford

## **Kennebec Valley Technical College Student Support Services**

The job market was wide open to Lilly Bickford when she first started working. However, a disability abruptly put limitations on the kind of jobs that she could get with just a high school diploma. She knew she needed to further her education in order to expand her choices.

Unlike many students, Lilly knew exactly what she wanted to do for work. She wanted to work in the field of medical transcription. She already had many of the skills needed, but lacked the certificate to get the jobs she really wanted. She decided to pursue her education, and through Kennebec Valley Technical College's admission process she was directed to the TRiO office.

"My TRiO counselor provided me with the emotional support that I needed to get through each day. I could always count on them (the TRiO learning specialists) for extra tutoring."

Since coming to KVTC, Lilly has done well. Her GPA is high and she is on Dean's List. Her proudest accomplishment was getting an A minus in her College Composition class even though she had a very demanding teacher.

Lilly enjoys seeing the impact that her return to school has made on her two sons. Her six-year old is reading at a much higher reading level than his peers, and her seven-year old enjoys helping his mom with her basic algebra.

After finishing her Certificate in Medical Transcription, Lilly plans to continue her education for an Associate's Degree in Medical Office Management. "After that," says the energetic 33-year old, "the possibilities are endless!"



# Johanna Billings

## **University of Southern Maine Upward Bound**

Johanna Billings is a 16-year old junior at Sacopee Valley High School in Hiram, Maine. Trying to help her dad fix things because “there was always something wrong with one of our cars,” she got the clear message from him to do her best in school so she could go to college to “get a better job...the job he didn’t get, but wanted for us just the same.”

Johanna joined Upward Bound at USM during her sophomore year. She writes, “Until Upward Bound came into the picture, I had no idea what I had to do to get into college. Upward Bound opened my eyes to the future that wasn’t as far away as I thought it was. Without Upward Bound, I would still be in the dark about college.”

Johanna is actively involved in the Army Junior ROTC program at her school and has been a volunteer at her local library. She interned as an office assistant at the University of Maine’s Cumberland County Cooperative Extension Office, an experience in which she learned a lot and enjoyed the work. Johanna hopes to learn about automobiles in college and to earn a degree in business administration that she’ll apply to the transportation field.

Johanna Billings is a young woman on the move.



# Matthew Blanchette

## **Maine Educational Talent Search University of Maine**

When he was a little kid, 19-year-old Matthew Blanchette had dreams of growing up to have a fabulous career as a doctor or a superstar. However, when he got older and had to think seriously about his future, Matt wasn't sure what he wanted to be. That's where the University of Maine's Talent Search program came into the picture.

Working with his Talent Search counselor, Matthew began looking at his skills and interests, and forming a realistic plan for his future. "Velma Murphy really helped me to think about college seriously. She brought me to campuses to help me decide where I wanted to go."

At Caribou High School, Matthew was an active member of his school community. He was a member of several teams: soccer, track, civil rights, and Students Against Destructive Decisions. School faculty chose Matthew for National Honor Society and to represent Caribou at Dirigo Boys State in 2000.

Eventually Matthew chose to attend the University of Southern Maine. He is currently majoring in Media Studies, and hopes to minor in either music or chemistry. So far things seem to be going well. Matthew made Dean's List last semester, and was awarded a merit scholarship. When he finishes at USM, Matthew is thinking about working toward a Master's degree.

Matthew has accumulated an impressive amount of awards in his academic career: Student of the Month December 1999 for Caribou HS, Who's Who Among American High School Students 1999 and 2001, and placed on the Dean's List for Spring 2003 at USM.

"College has given me a new perspective of living on my own, and learning things I could learn nowhere else (in and out of the classroom). College will help me to be the best person I can be, and also to be the best at whatever occupation I desire." Matthew is currently working as an Admissions Ambassador at the University of Southern Maine.



# Victoria Blanchette

## **University of Maine Student Support Services – Onward Program**

Before Victoria Blanchette started back to school again to pursue a post-secondary education, she had not ever taken school very seriously. She recalls that, “As a child, I was never supported or encouraged to seek higher education from my parents. Neither of my parents finished college.” Although Victoria did attend a small college for a few semesters after high school, she did not continue. She worked full time as an office manager, but knew that it was not how she wanted the rest of her life to be.

Vicky describes her move from Maryland to Maine as a chance “to simplify her life with a geographic cure.” Soon she was married and raising two sons. An experience at a community radio station widened her horizons and set her “on a path for discovering [her] passion for broadcasting and communications.” She realized that there was a great deal that she wanted to accomplish in life! Victoria also began working part time at a research facility with college students and professional staff, and that further galvanized her resolve to give college another try. The final cosmic push occurred with the death of her mother; it made her realize that life is just a “temporary rest stop, so I’d best get on with it.”

Victoria best describes her experience with the Onward Program: “My Onward counselor helped me to see that college was indeed possible for me, and helped me gain confidence in my academic abilities. The program’s director, Jerry Ellis, was inspirational to me, especially his ability to motivate students through the sharing of his own life experiences.” The program taught her how to “be” a college student: a chance to find her voice, time and stress management, study skills, and leadership.

During her academic career, Victoria gathered an impressive collection of honors: Dean’s List all four years at The University of Maine, the UM Presidential Pin, Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society, and graduated Summa Cum Laude with a 3.76 GPA. She has also been recognized with several distinguished scholarships. Currently, Victoria works as a producer for the nationally syndicated National Public Radio Program, What’s On Your Mind?, and plans to begin a Master’s Degree in an area related to either broadcasting or information systems.

Victoria believes “that without Onward, my steps toward a college degree would not have been as confident or as determined. This has translated to greater financial opportunity, and the ability to support my family.” Her sons have watched their mom go through the process of college, and know what it takes to go to get there.



# Jody Buddemeyer

## **Upward Bound University of Southern Maine**

Jody Buddemeyer is a senior at Sacopee Valley High School and is the company commander for the NJROTC and the president of the chorus. He was also the captain of the soccer team. According to Jody, "I had a great childhood, but much like other families we didn't have a lot of money. I have done whatever possible along with the support of my family to ensure my college acceptance."

Upward Bound at USM was an important part of doing "whatever possible" to get ready for college. "Upward Bound showed me what college will be like and what schools to apply to. They helped me with all my forms and even some school work." While at Upward Bound last summer, Jody served as an intern with Southern Maine Technical College's police department, which helped him explore his long-term interest in criminal justice and law enforcement. He also earned an award for his great enthusiasm in learning about Hindi and Indian Culture.

Jody plans to go to North Georgia College and State University, join the Corp of Cadets, major in criminal justice, and then become an officer in the US Army. He would eventually like to join the FBI.

According to Jody, going to college "will ensure that I get a career I am proud of and that my family is proud of. I will have the opportunity to make more money with a skilled job."



# Joleen Brown

## **Kennebec Valley Technical College Student Support Services**

Joleen Brown is a 28-year-old, first generation college student at Kennebec Valley Technical College. She is majoring in Business Administration Management. She says that she has always been dedicated to learning even though she struggled in school. Joleen planned to go to college right after high school, but started a family instead. She says that her children were her inspiration to follow her dreams.

When her children all reached school age, Joleen made the decision to return to school herself. Her husband was injured on the job, and could no longer continue in the same line of work. He and Joleen decided to open a business of their own. At that point, Joleen says she knew she needed to learn how to run a business.

Joleen credits the Student Support Services program at KVTC with helping her in two major ways. “First they gave me the encouragement I needed, and convinced me that I could do whatever I put my mind to. Secondly, they helped me work through any difficulties I had with my course work.”

At the end of her first semester at KVTC, Joleen was shocked to see that she had made Dean’s List. “I had never in my life received all A’s and B’s. I was very proud of my accomplishment.” Her great grades will serve Joleen well, as she plan to continue on in her education by getting a Bachelor’s degree in Business at Thomas College when she graduates.

Says Joleen of her education thus far, “It’s made me more confident in doing tasks that I never would have done before. What’s really great is that my kids are proud to think that I have followed my dreams.”



# Anna Kristobel Chessman

## **University of Maine Upward Bound**

For Anna Chessman, a critical turning point in her life was watching her parents struggle from day to day.

When she thinks back on her high school years and the process of applying to college, Anna remembers that her TRIO counselor helped her achieve goals by providing contacts, moral support, and opening her eyes to possibilities she was not aware of.

Anna's future educational plans are to pursue a JD, a Masters in Business Administration, and eventually own and run her own Title Insurance Company.

"All I do is keep moving up, and my base education allows me to do that," Anna believes. At 26, Anna has the strength and confidence to create the kind of life that she chooses.



# Jessica Connors

## **Upward Bound University of Southern Maine**

Jessica Connors is a sophomore at the University of Southern Maine and a 2001 alumna of Upward Bound and Sacopee Valley High School. A good example to her three younger sisters, Jess knows what it takes to pay for and succeed in college and says, “the choice to attend college will forever affect my life” as it leads to “well-respected, good-paying jobs in a field I’ll enjoy.” She

aspires to be a USM graduate in business administration.

In high school, Jess played basketball, field hockey, and softball, worked on the yearbook, and was a Natural Helper. She also worked as a clerk in a small gift shop. She wanted to attend college, but “I was really unaware about how to make it happen” and “growing up in a family of three younger sisters, I knew my parents could not afford to send me.”

As a 10th grader, Jess enrolled in Upward Bound and “my counselors helped me out a lot by keeping me on track.” She wrote, “After joining Upward Bound, I was a lot more motivated to continue my education.” But, “During my senior year, my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer and due to the medical bills, my parents were going to be able to contribute nothing to my education.” She succeeded in obtaining the financial aid package she needed and “Upward Bound was able to help me find a large amount of scholarship funding available to me.”

Jess is employed under federal work/study funds administered by the University’s Financial Aid office as an office assistant in the Upward Bound office where her hard work, familiarity with the program, and computer skills are much appreciated. She has also recently been hired by Shaw’s grocery chain in an entry-level job, which could provide career advancement opportunities.

The measure of Jess’ success as a role model can be seen in the fact that her sister Becky is a first year student at USM, planning to major in nursing.



# Randy Devost

## **Bowdoin College Upward Bound**

Randy Devost grew up in a very unique and beautiful area of Maine called the St. John Valley. His family grew up in the valley, and many continue to live there. Randy, however, was one of the first from Van Buren to ever pursue a college degree.

Randy graduated from high school in 1998 with a class of thirty-two kids. He was involved in many extra curricular activities: senior class president, band, tennis, tai chi, drama, GT art, and NHS. Instead of hanging around and feeling bored, Randy used what his school and town offered to learn and create his future.

Bowdoin College's Upward Bound and director Bridget Mullen have continually challenged Randy to lead a professional and productive life. Randy describes the Upward Bound staff as "not only there to support me as a program but also as caring individuals. The six-week summer program put me on a rigorous schedule that I continue to use to this day as a model for health, happiness, and success. The program was a way of sampling an array of cultural and societal differences that I had never been exposed to. This introduction to the larger world developed the confidence in me to ultimately move from a town of a few thousand to a city of more than a half a million people. These people helped me accomplish everything I had ever wanted out of life up to that point."

During his college application process, Randy did not limit himself. He ended up receiving six letters of acceptance from six schools and received generous academic and artistic scholarships from many of them.

While Randy has been in college he has shown his artwork in various galleries and events in Baltimore. He has shown his art in Aix-en-Provence, France where he lived and studied for four months at the Center for Art and Culture. In May of 2002 he graduated from the Maryland Institute College of Art with a GPA of 3.5 and a Bachelor of Fine Arts. That same year he was accepted into their Masters of Digital Arts Program, and will finish this May.

"I have always hoped to never stop learning and discovering," Randy tells us. "Someday I would love to further my master's degree at a place like MIT's Media Lab. I have become very interested and involved in the discourse of technology and new media. I am enthralled that I have developed a need and interest for science and engineering though the process of a fine arts background."



# Monique Emerson

## **Maine Educational Talent Search University of Maine**

Monique Emerson is an 18 year-old senior at Jonesport-Beals High School. Currently, she ranks number two in her graduating class with a GPA of 3.98. Monique's accomplishments are too numerous to list, but include the University of Maine Top Scholar Award, the Maine Scholars Achievement Award, the DAR Good Citizen

Award, National Honor Society Member, National Student Athlete Award, Nursing Home Volunteer, and Holiday Food Drive Organizer.

Monique began to realize the value of an education early in life. She was five years old when her father died, and her mother was left to raise three small children on her own. Monique believes that her mother did her best to support the family, but with no education beyond a GED, life was constantly a financial struggle. Having seen what her mother went through, Monique says she is determined to do things differently. Her plans include pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Nursing at the University of Maine this fall. Monique says, "nursing will be a very rewarding career because I will have the opportunity to be there for others and to help make a difference in their lives...and, I'll do it with compassion."

Monique gives much credit to her TRIO Advisor, Brenda Frey, who has assisted her with her educational goals. Monique indicates that "with my advisor's help, I have been given the opportunity to explore many exciting careers and colleges, she has assisted me with scholarship searches, and with completing the FAFSA. Most of all, however, my advisor has helped me fully realize the importance of higher education." As Lucille Ball once said, "I don't know anything about luck. I've never banked on it, and I'm afraid of people who do. Luck to me is something else: hard work and realizing what is opportunity and what isn't." "Adhering to this principle," says Monique, "is pretty much how I've learned to live my life."



# Matthew Gardner

## **Bowdoin College Upward Bound**

Matthew Gardner was always a smart kid, yet he felt that he lacked the motivation necessary to really move on. Upward Bound served as a “kick in the pants” for him – his teachers saw his potential and encouraged him to stretch to another academic level. In fact, Upward Bound was a turning point in his academic career. As Matthew says, “I always knew I wanted to go to college, I just had no idea of what I wanted to pursue or the right way to do it. Being in Upward Bound really changed that. UB also provided me with the building blocks for my career in radio. I volunteered for many shifts at WBOR during my time at UB. Radio is now how I make a living, and that seed was planted during my stay as a UB student.”

Matthew realizes that his Upward Bound English teacher, Tom Morin, taught him to believe in himself. Although he had always thought of himself as a writer and entertainer, Tom really helped him harness that energy and make some really creative things – the kind of things he now uses in the radio business. Matthew believes that creativity is really what makes the commercials he produces worthwhile.

Thinking back on his time at Upward Bound, he credits the people: “everyone involved at UB really made me feel like family, (and) that is most important. These people were dear to me, and that means I trusted them. If Bridget Mullin, Cathy Bell or Michelle Melanson had a suggestion for me, I listened because I believed they would not steer me in the wrong direction.”

He graduated from college with honors and was named student ambassador by the faculty of his college. Matthew speaks of “some unbelievable teachers, people whose passion is evident every time they step into a classroom,” and sees a time when he may join the teaching profession.

Matthew thinks that he has only begun to experience the rewards of his college education. One of his only regrets, however “is that because I am a college graduate, my children might not be able to have the experiences at Upward Bound like I did.”



# Natasha Gilson

**Upward Bound  
University of Southern Maine**

Natasha “Tashi” Gilson is a junior at Massabesic High School in Waterboro, Maine. Of her decision to join Upward Bound, Tashi writes, “Neither of my parents went to college, and my sister enrolled in St. Joe’s in Connecticut and came back a few weeks later. She had a hard time finding another college, but is now at UNE. After seeing my sister drop out, I was worried about that happening to me.” Tashi has found the support and encouragement to improve her grades, explore her career goals, and check out possible colleges with Upward Bound. Her summer experience at Upward Bound and visiting a variety of colleges will help her be comfortable at the college she eventually attends.

Tashi is fascinated by Japanimation, and plans to study animation and Japanese at college. She also hopes to study away in Japan during college. In the meantime, Tashi plans to continue her leadership in designing the layout, writing articles, and creating cartoons for her school newspaper. Tashi shows her school spirit by playing the trumpet for the school pep band.

“My parents are divorced and since neither of them had an education, there is barely any money for me and the four other children from my father. My mom has a total of six kids and is a homemaker.” By learning about financial aid at Upward Bound, and the success of other Upward Bound alumni who share her background, Tashi understands that she will be able to find ways to afford college. And her mom is very supportive of Tashi’s aspirations, encouraging her to achieve success through college.

Of her decision to attend college, Tashi writes, “It’ll make me look like I have achieved much and that other people, no matter what background, can achieve a lot if they put their hearts into it.”



# Kim Goding

## University of Maine at Farmington Upward Bound

Kim Goding's father is a Vietnamese immigrant who came to America at the end of the Vietnam War. He spoke very little English and had only a high school education. After coming to America, he met her mother working on a chicken farm in Leeds, ME. Her mother, who dropped out of school in the ninth grade, came from a poor family of eight children. At one point, Kim noticed "history was beginning to repeat itself when [her] cousins were beginning to drop out of school," and realized "I wanted something better for myself than living for minimum wage in a small town."

In ninth grade, Kim asked her mother to help her with a homework assignment. As much as she wanted to and as hard as she tried, her mother was not educated enough to assist. Kim remembers, "I felt sorry for her. I knew she felt embarrassed and ashamed. It was at this moment I realized that I did not want to be put in the same position as my mother when it came to my own children."

Although she had the motivation to continue her education, Kim was at a standstill as to how to actually achieve this goal. "Fortunately," she said, "I was asked to participate in the Upward Bound program." With her UB counselor, Chris Yardley, Kim learned what college life was like during the summer program at the University of Maine at Farmington. Upward Bound, Kim said, made "sure that I kept up my grades, they helped me write my college essays and complete admission forms, and most of all, they gave me the courage and confidence I needed to make that huge step at continuing my education."

Kim remembers the moment that the President of Bates College handed her the diploma that she had earned with her entire family in the crowd. "Just knowing how proud my parents were on that day was enough to last a lifetime," she said. Kim graduated from Bates College with a BA in Sociology and Criminology with a 3.4 GPA.

Currently, Kim works for Governor John E. Baldacci in the Governor's Office. She played a key role in his election campaign and is very proud of her part in that process. "Had it not been for his support of the TRIO program[s]," she said, "I would not be in that position." She is looking to return to school part-time in the fall to begin a graduate program in Public Administration.

"I can hold my head high and be a role model to my children," Kim states. "I am living proof to them that college is not a dream but a reality...I have changed the course of the future for them. Someday, when they are older, I will tell them about the Upward Bound program and the impact it had on my life as well as theirs."



# Amanda Gorey

## **University of Maine Educational Talent Search**

As a child, Amanda Gorey had switched residences many times and been enrolled in several different schools. She lived in a single parent home and no member of her family had ever been to college. She describes herself at this time as “eager to please others and had ambition, but lacked any direction or realistic sense of the future.”

Amanda always felt like a confident student; however, by second grade she was still not able to read. “Later in high school,” Amanda recalls, “my father became disabled and I remember feeling a lot of anxiety over the drastic change in our family income. It was mostly a financial obstacle that blocked my ability to pursue higher education...and at the time it [college] seemed extremely out of reach.”

It was at this time that Amanda met her TRIO counselor. With her Talent Search counselor, Amanda visited a college campus for the first time, met application deadlines and received assistance with application fees that her family could not afford. Especially important, her TRIO counselor explained the financial aid process and encouraged her to apply to a variety of schools – not just the state system schools that she thought were her only option. Amanda was accepted to and attended a small private liberal arts college that suited her needs much better. “I never got to thank the ‘Talent Search Lady’,” Amanda said. “She was a big part of a whirlwind of events and I never once questioned her presence. I feel grateful that I had this special mentor.”

St. Michael’s College awarded Amanda with a scholarship that covered 70% of her tuition costs. While at St. Michael’s, she has worked as an Environmental Intern with the New England Board of Higher Education, was an Americorps Promise Fellow, and graduated with a B.S. in Biology with an 3.4 GPA. Amanda recently completed the Graduate Record Exam and has been researching various degree programs. She is very interested in sustainable agriculture and various methods of bio-intensive and bio-dynamic gardening.

Through education, she has developed opinions and convictions about the world around her. Amanda feels “empowered to be an active participant in life,” and she knows that she has “a unique and special contribution to make.” Her TRIO counselor, Kathy Nadeau, describes Amanda as “a wonderful young woman. She is confident and bright.” In fact, Amanda has been chosen to represent TRIO programs at Policy Seminar in Washington, D.C., and she responded with great enthusiasm. She will certainly represent the efforts put forth by Maine TRIO programs with pride and eloquence.



# Melissa Greenlaw

## **Kennebec Valley Technical College Student Support Services**

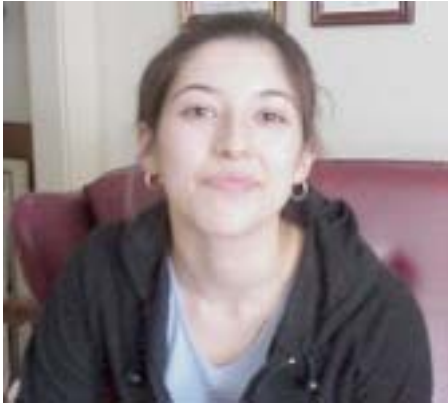
The first thing most people notice about Melissa Greenlaw is her bright smile. At age 26, Melissa is in her first year at Kennebec Valley Technical College, and is finding it quite a change from her home schooling background.

Melissa is enrolled in the Early Childhood Education program at the college and hopes to become a teacher when she is finished at KVTC. She takes her studies very seriously, and is committed to doing her very best.

On any given day, it is not unusual to find Melissa in the TRiO office working with one of our four counselors. Whether it's picking out courses for the next semester, getting assistance with a writing assignment or tackling the difficulties of algebra, Melissa is always striving to be the very best that she can be.

Even though she is attending school and working, Melissa finds time to give back to the TRiO program. Just recently she volunteered to represent our Student Support Services program at Maine State TRiO Day at the Hall of Flags in Augusta.

Melissa's family is very proud of all that she is doing toward earning her college degree.



# Nadia Harris

## **University of Maine at Presque Isle Upward Bound**

Nadia Harris grew up in an economically challenged family with five brothers and sisters. Raised by her Mom in a small house, the family lived seven miles out in the middle of the woods. Nadia's Mom is from Mexico, and the language barrier demanded that Nadia become the family spokesperson at a young age. Her Mom had very little education. However, she was adamant that Nadia do her best in school and go to college. "She [Mom] wanted me to succeed as badly as I do," Nadia remembers. "She realized that I couldn't realize my full potential without higher education."

Nadia always knew that she would go to college. She knew she didn't want to have a life with as little opportunity as she grew up in, and knew the only way to break free of the woods was with a college degree.

For Nadia, the people at Upward Bound were phenomenal. "If it weren't for them and their leadership," she said, "I wouldn't have come as far as I have. They were very motivational and knew exactly how to push me to do my best. They showed me how much I was capable of and made me want to try harder."

Nadia is very proud of her SAT scores; she scored quite high. She also served on a search committee to fill a vacant position with Upward Bound. While living and working on her own, Nadia has persisted in her journey to and through college.

In her educational future, Nadia plans to finish her bachelor's degree and go on to get her Masters and Ph. D. in Psychology.

"I want to have a career that I love and find challenging," Nadia said. "I will have that and a very successful future. I plan to marry my boyfriend who is helping to support me through school. I also plan to provide support for my mom so she can stop working and relax, and to my youngest sister."



# Emily Harvey

## **University of Maine Upward Bound Math/Science**

Emily Harvey grew up learning the value of hard work, enterprise and of caring for the land as a home schooler on a small organic farm. She was one of only a couple of students to attend Hebron Academy on full scholarship, and raked blueberries in the summer in order to pay for the added expense to her family for books and transportation. Throughout her youth, she loved reading novels and learning about the natural world.

At age 12 or 13, Emily read a book about home schoolers in California who attended Harvard and that planted the idea of a college education in her mind. Emily remembers that her grandmother and mother did expect further education for Emily – although they did not have money to pay for it.

Emily learned about the financial aid process with her TRIO counselor, and worked with her mother to fill out the appropriate forms. Emily remembers that her Upward Bound Math/Science counselor also called Wellesley College to encourage them to adjust her financial aid package. Without the adjustment, it may have been difficult or impossible for Emily to attend Wellesley.

Emily earned a BA in Environmental Science and Spanish. She received Mason’s scholarship, worked on MTBE remediation project at UC-Santa Barbara, and was the recipient of a full tuition Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Fellowship. With the Volunteer Fellowship, she finished 2 years Peace Corps service in Paraguay in Environmental Education.

Emily is currently working on a MA in Environmental Science and Policy at Clark University – and on a full tuition scholarship. She plans to finish her Master of Arts degree and then study as a Fulbright Scholar in Brazil.

“Attending college made it possible to learn Spanish, to learn more about the rest of the world, to enter the Peace Corps, and to enter Clark University as a graduate student,” Emily says. “My family is proud of these endeavors.”



# Crystal D. Hatch

## **Bowdoin College Upward Bound**

Crystal Hatch grew up in a small community in Washington County, Maine. Her summers were filled with working in the garden and raking blueberries to help contribute to her family. Her father worked as a logger and spent long days in the Maine woods. His high-risk job often resulted in injuries, sometimes putting a strain on the family. In 1989, her home was destroyed by fire and the family lost everything that they had ever known.

In high school, Crystal started to look around at the community she grew up in. She realized that she had to pursue her education unless she wanted to work on the clam-flats or at the local corner store. She saw how much her parents struggled to provide for the family. At this point, she decided to continue her education to “better myself since they had already invested so much in me.”

Crystal remembers when her counselor, Bridget Mullen, initially met with her at her high school. “Mullen made regular visits to my high school for follow-ups and support,” Crystal said. “She would seek resources for tutoring if it deemed necessary. She helped raise my confidence level to apply to colleges and provided support to my family and myself.”

Crystal graduated high school fourth in her class and received the headmaster’s award for achieving highest honors throughout her four years. During her first year of college, she received the Maine Legislative Scholarship (one person from each county received this award). She was secretary, treasurer and later co-president of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Club (1999-2002) at University of New England. She was a team captain for Multiple Sclerosis Walk 2002, ran a stuffed animal drive for terminally ill children, and raised money for 9/11 Neediest Fund. Crystal graduated Cum Laude (3.56) with a BA from UNE.

Currently gaining experience in her field, Crystal plans on pursuing graduate education in 2004. As she reflects on her college education, she realizes that she is “the only person in my family to have graduated from college. That in itself is a great accomplishment to me. I have remained in contact with my TRIO counselor who, to this day, provides me with support and resources. I will not only be able to provide for myself, but be able to give back those that risked so much for me to attend school – namely, my parents. Education can only help me develop into a better, well-rounded person.”



# Marrissa Heath

**Upward Bound  
University of Southern Maine**

Marrissa Heath's turning point was when "I learned what Upward Bound had to offer me, and that they were willing to help me academically. It was also when I realized that I actually had the chance to go to college."

When Marrissa started Upward Bound in her sophomore year, she was earning mostly C's and D's. With the help of Upward Bound, she has improved her grades so much that her lowest second quarter grade during her junior year was an 88, placing her solidly on Bonny Eagle High School's honor roll. Upward Bound "stayed after school with me so I could get more help in the subjects I was having a hard time in. The classes I took this summer helped me with my classes I have this school year and I have actually learned how to study and spend more time on my academics." Marrissa is actively working on her writing skills, is especially proud of all the hard work she put in to earn an A on a recent paper.

Marrissa's parents are divorced and she has lived with both of them. She spends a lot of time helping parents care for her older brother who has a disability. She is very energetic, and has a very positive outlook.

Going to college will "affect the rest of my life because it will prepare me for my career and help me to better understand that career." Pediatrics and teaching are her major interests so far. Marrissa will be the first girl in her extended family to go to college directly after high school. She is well on her way.



# Truc Huynh

## **Upward Bound University of Southern Maine**

Truc Huynh is a sophomore at Bowdoin College, and is a graduate of Portland High School and the University of Southern Maine's Upward Bound. Truc cites the Upward Bound summer program for helping him focus on his academic weaknesses. His Upward Bound counselors "weren't only academic advisors to me; they were also role models and friends that I look up to and I hope that more current college students would participate in programs such as Upward Bound to provide some

guidance for younger students."

To follow is an excerpt from Truc's responses to our questionnaire:

My Family and I immigrated to the United States from Vietnam 12 years ago with nothing except two suitcases of clothes and a lot of hope. . Adapting to the new way of life and the new language here in the US was difficult because my parents educational level did not exceed grade school when they were in Vietnam. Although we lacked in the technical support in terms of schoolwork etc my parents were always there for us emotionally and financially. Mom worked two jobs as a housekeeper and an under the table job. My father processed chickens to earn a living. Both of my parents struggled a great deal, but that did not stop them from providing their children with the necessary tools to pursuit a higher education. Sending us to college was a big deal for them; no one in our family had ever been to college as far as we could trace back.

My "turning point" was when I saw my brother, Trung, (also an Upward Bound at USM alumnus) go to Bates College. He was the first one of our family to go to college and graduate. This is an amazing accomplishment for him and for my parents. I think that seeing role models in the family take that first step and leading the way, young people will naturally follow. We need to have more students to be motivated to unleash their potential and pursue a college degree.

I am a Mitchell Scholar. Recently I have been one of the Red Cross's co-chairs for the blood drive here at Bowdoin College. I helped an underprivileged family build their house during Fall Break through Habitats For Humanity. There are numerous activities that I have done, but these are the ones that I have a personal connection with and feel strongly about because of my humble beginnings. I interned with the Maine Democratic Party last summer and was in charge of Minority Outreach.

Of his future after Bowdoin, Truc writes, "I plan on taking a year or two off and joining the job market and then I plan pursue a law degree. Maybe I'll run for Congress someday."



# Karen Jay

## **University of Maine Student Support Services - Onward Program**

Karen Jay had always wanted to further her education. When she graduated from high school, Karen was obligated to help in the family business. Soon after, she married and started a family of her own. At that point college became a “passing dream” because of her responsibility to supplement the family income.

“When one door in life closes, another door is sure to open,” Karen says. In 1997, she lost both parents very quickly to illness. Although a sad time in her life, they left her with a new home to live in and a car for transportation. Around the same time, a great friend was completing his year with the Onward Program and encouraged her to apply. The rest is history: “The counselors and Onward staff gave me the chance to expand my knowledge. They believed in my potential and showed me how to take advantage of the many avenues that were available for me to follow.”

In 1999, Karen was awarded to Dawn Allenwood Scholarship, which is given to a first year Onward student that exhibits the qualities of that program. In 2001, she was initiated as a member of Kappa Delta Pi, the International Honor Society in Education, and the following year Karen became a Presidential Scholar. Karen graduated with a B.A. in Elementary Education from the University of Maine in 2002.

Currently, Karen is seeking employment as an elementary teacher and plans to take advantage of all professional development classes offered in the school system that she will work with. Karen believes that her “education and ability to obtain a teaching position will create a more solid future” for her and her family. In addition, she “hopes that the example I have set will be a legacy for my grandchildren to follow.”

Karen speaks of the personal and professional growth gained as a result of her time with the Onward Program. “I must add that it has been both a privilege and a unique experience to work for the Onward Program. I worked as a Peer Advisor with first year students for three years. This program has given so much to me that I take great pride in the fact that I was able to pass it on to others.”

# Danielle Lagasse

## **University of Maine Student Support Services - Onward Program**

Danielle Lagasse describes herself as a “very lost person until I began to further my education.” For a long time, Danielle was homeless and had a drug problem; she was jumping from state to state, and “hitchhiking to nowhere.” Then, she had her daughter, and the new child in her life became her inspiration to clean up. At this point, she realized that she needed a steady job and a place to live. Waitressing became the job for the next 4 years; the next goal was to get a car. It took quite a while longer to accomplish this, but it did eventually happen.

Danielle’s turning point came when she realized she was sick of not being able to afford the bills and realized that the only job she would ever be able to work would be jobs at minimum wage. She knew she could do better, and with some positive influence from friends, decided to chase her dream – a life working with plants.

For Danielle, her TRIO counselor was and still is one of the positive influences in her life. “Through constant encouragement and just plain being a happy person,” Danielle said, “she has given me confidence and light at times when it seems very dark.”

When asked about an accomplishment that she takes great pride in, Danielle quickly mentions her 3.3 GPA. “To some it may seem mediocre,” she said, “but to me it’s an accomplishment and one that has been hard to keep due to the plethora of science classes and labs. All I want when I graduate this spring is to walk with the honor of Cum Laude.”

In the future, Danielle plans on pursuing a Masters in Botany, work, and then hopefully seek her doctorate in Botany. “I really love school,” she says, “I just wish it was a little bit cheaper!”

“The more I further my education,” Danielle believes, “the more positive of an impact on my daughter Delilah, my boyfriend Matt, and my life. I think that my love for education and knowledge has positively influenced my daughter and her quest for knowledge. Together, I think we make a great Trio!”



# Michaela Landry

**Upward Bound  
University of Southern Maine**

Michaela (Kayla) Landry is an active volunteer for many charitable causes. She is involved with fund-raising walks for cancer, diabetes, and multiple sclerosis charities

and has worked on a Habitat for Humanity house.

A junior at Bonny Eagle High School in Standish, Kayla joined Upward Bound at USM as a sophomore and appreciates the help given in preparing for the SAT and learning “things I need to do to go to college”. She says, “They helped me challenge myself by taking harder classes and classes I hadn’t thought of”. Kayla maintains a GPA over 3.0. During her first summer with Upward Bound, Kayla helped with scientific studies being carried out at the USM labs.

Kayla’s aiming at a four-year college education and is keeping her options open as to a particular major for now. She believes a college education will improve the quality of her life, give her more job opportunities, and more financial security. Kayla’s perspective is influenced by knowing that both of her parents dropped out of high school and she doesn’t want to have the same kind of financial worries her mom has as a textile worker.

Whether walking to raise money for a worthy cause or climbing the academic stairs to college, Kayla Landry is getting closer to her goals.



# Amanda Meikle

## **Upward Bound University of Southern Maine**

Amanda Meikle is a 16-year-old Junior at Bonny Eagle High School in Standish, Maine. She says she has always known that she wanted to go to college but "I wasn't sure how I was going to do it." Neither of Amanda's parents finished high school, but they always made it clear to her that they expected and wanted more from her.

Amanda indicates that she "always liked school," but upon entering high school she struggled just to pass her freshman classes. Without a clear focus on how to obtain her future college goals and without role models to support her in the possibilities, Amanda was becoming discouraged and starting to let go of her dream. Learning about Upward Bound in her sophomore English class, Amanda applied in search of new motivation and guidance.

Since working with her Upward Bound counselors, she has become "refocused on her work, her grades, and the realistic possibilities of fulfilling her dreams." Amanda states with pride that she has begun to move her struggling GPA average up into a more acceptable range and is inspired and confident in her ability to bring it even higher with the support and guidance of her Upward Bound counselors.

Today, Amanda positively shares "being in Upward Bound, I know I will be the first person in my family to go to college, and when I get my nursing degree, not only will my parents be happy because my life will be easier than theirs, but it will also make them proud." Amanda looks forward to being the first in her family to graduate from high school, as well as the first in her family to attend college and graduate from college. She is proud to set the standard for her younger sibling.



## Pauline Moen

### **Kennebec Valley Technical College Student Support Services**

At 49, Pauline Moen is doing things that she never thought she'd be able to do. A health issue forced Pauline to leave her position as a bank teller – a job she really loved. As one might suspect, the experience was very disorienting and very depressing. Like so many students at Kennebec Valley Technical College, Pauline had spent a significant part of her life training for and doing a job, only to have it suddenly be gone.

With the help of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Pauline took a course at KVTC. Once she successfully completed that course, she began to take more and eventually enrolled in a program. Still, despite her early success, college was a scary place for a woman in her 40's. There were times, Pauline admits, that she didn't think she was up to the challenge. This was where her participation in the Student Support Services program really paid off. "The TRiO office was a 'safe' place to go. The counselors gave me encouragement, and directed me toward special programs and tutoring that would help me. They also counseled me concerning personal issues, and have helped me take the right career steps."

Since that scary start at the college, Pauline has maintained a GPA of 3.7 or higher. She has been the recipient of at least one KVTC scholarship. Currently, she is tutoring a student in a computer class, something she never could have imagined herself doing. Even when her degree is complete, Pauline intends to continue taking courses to keep her skills up to date.

Of her experience at KVTC, Pauline has said, "My experience at KVTC has broadened my horizons. I have also been able to share experiences with family members, which in turn has raised their awareness and increased their knowledge. I am encouraging some family members to further their education. KVTC is a good place to start!"



# Quinn Moody

## **University of Maine Upward Bound**

Growing up was a series of extreme circumstances for Quinn Moody – from childhood wonder to being frightened. Her mother was a single parent who battled alcoholism, and at the age of 13 Quinn chose to leave. From there, she moved from California to Maine to live with close friends that became her family. Through them, she received the support that she needed to further her education.

She knew that she did not want to continue the life that she grew up in, and that college would give her opportunities away from that life. With Upward Bound, Quinn was challenged to visit colleges and have all her applications in before the college deadlines. Because of this, she had five schools to choose from – all offering a similar financial package.

Two years into her college education, Quinn was diagnosed with epilepsy. When she looks back, she feels that her biggest accomplishment was to go back and complete college after that hiatus. Initially, Quinn felt that she would not be able to go back. Eventually, however, she and her doctors found a medication that worked.

Today, Quinn looks forward to attending graduate school in Ireland. She is researching schools in Northern Ireland and plans to be there by October to study Wildlife Conservation.

When asked how her decision to attend college affected the rest of her life, Quinn said that she learned a very important lesson; “the secret to success is in the constancy of purpose.” “The bottom line is always to have a goal and be willing to change your plans.”



# Marge Morissette

## **Kennebec Valley Technical College Student Support Services**

Losing a job that you have held for 26 years is a devastating thing. For Marge Morissette, it was the event that turned her life in a whole new direction.

Marge is 45 years old, married and the mother of three children. Her husband is disabled, and the family relied on Marge's job for their health insurance and household money. When she lost her job, Marge realized that in order to be more marketable in today's economy she was going to have to go back to school.

She enrolled in the Business Administration program at Kennebec Valley Technical College. As an older student, Marge says she had doubts about her ability to succeed in college. During orientation, she heard about the college's TRiO Student Support Services program. She came to the office the first day of classes and asked about the services available and if she was eligible. Since that time, Marge has worked with her TRiO advisor to outline a degree completion plan and work on financial aid concerns. She has taken advantage of the math learning assistance provided, and regularly attends all of the study skills workshops that she can fit into her schedule.

Marge's hard work has paid off. After her first semester, she holds a perfect 4.0 GPA and is doing equally as well in her second semester. Her success has inspired her in many ways. Marge has begun to think beyond her Associate's degree and is hoping to continue her studies for her Bachelor's degree when she graduates.

When asked how college would affect the rest of her life, Marge said, "It is a positive decision and can only enrich my life. My family is very supportive and my children are seeing that an education is important and valuable."



# Shannon Moynihan

## University of Maine Educational Talent Search

Shannon Moynihan's elementary and high school experiences were not something she looks back at fondly. She was very shy and quiet compared to most of her peers, and wasn't always comfortable when it came to participating in groups or making friends. When she decided to get ready for college, she was nervous as to whether she wanted to put herself through four more years of hiding in the back row and continuing to hope the teacher wouldn't call on her.

Shannon worked every year of high school. At first, she worked summers, but later worked all year long until the beginning of her junior year. "I am glad I learned to work at an early age," Shannon said. "It helped me realize the responsibilities of being an adult. Although my family has always been there for me, we all agreed that I would assume responsibility for my own debts. Students don't often realize that creating debt to afford those little luxuries has an impact on your life and paying for college."

Shannon's educational turning point was when she realized that pursuing further education would be to her benefit in the long run. She wanted to have a career that she would enjoy – instead of just a job.

"My TRIO counselor helped me achieve my goals in many different ways," Shannon remembers. "She was very understanding when problems came up, and helpful in making sure that I was doing what was needed to be done to get to where I wanted to go. By the time I was a senior, she walked me through the process to be sure I was on top of my college applications and the financial aid deadlines. She gave me that extra push I needed."

Shannon is currently a student at The University of Maine and is proud of three scholarship awards from her hometown of Bridgton, Maine – scholarships all awarded under names of her distant relatives. Shannon has been featured in the Who's Who Among American High School Students two years in a row. Her future educational plans are to complete her bachelor's degree in anthropology, and eventually enroll in graduate school. "My TRIO counselor is still giving me that "extra push" in thinking about graduate school!" Shannon adds.

When Shannon reflects on how college will affect the rest of her life, she thinks that her parents will be very proud. "They have worked just as hard as I have to get me to college," she said. "When I graduate, I think it will make them happy to see that their daughter was able to complete a college degree...something they were unable to do when they were younger."



# Judy Murray

## **University of Maine Student Support Services – Onward Program**

Judy Murray married young and had two children by the time she was 22. After some time out of state and two divorces, Judy returned to Maine and worked in the family services profession.

It was her youngest daughter – a former Onward Program student – that encouraged Judy to submit an application. Although reluctant because of her age and a belief that she was not “smart enough” to succeed, she took a leap of faith and applied to the program.

Judy describes the counselors at the Onward Program as “extremely supportive, loving and caring through the whole process of my journey here at UM. They have encouraged me at every turn. The bottom line is they wanted me to succeed and I always felt that I could because they absolutely believed that I could.”

At this time, Judy has a G.P.A. of 3.85 and has been inducted into the Golden Key Honor Society (an honor that is given to students in the top 10% of their class). She was a Holmes Scholar as a sophomore and received a Presidential Pin representing academic excellence. Judy has applied to the University of Cincinnati in the Masters of Education Program for Early Childhood Development.

When Judy reflects on her decision to attend college, she describes it as “life altering.” “My 4.0 semesters are an outward manifestation of what I have come to know internally;” she says, “I am a smart, capable woman. My grandchildren (two boys and two girls) will know that learning is a life long process.”



# Tommy Nguyen

## **University of Southern Maine Upward Bound**

Tommy Nguyen aspires to graduate from a 4-year college and then to “pursue my education even more”. A 17-year old junior at Portland High School, Tommy sees college as “a new life”, the key to success and happiness.

Before participating in Upward Bound, Tommy had this view of college: “I thought you went there to get your degree and that was it. Most of your friends are gone. Homework and studying is all that you did.” Now he’s feeling ready for the challenge and looking forward to college life. He credits Upward Bound for “putting the spark back into school.” Now he says, of college, “Give me all you’ve got.”

A California native, Tommy moved to Maine with his mother, brother, and sister. Tommy’s ethnic background is Khmer Krom, which means that his family were Cambodian-heritage people living in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam, a group oppressed by government policies and officials. They came to the U.S. as refugees.

Tommy is co-president of his school’s Jobs for Maine Graduates student group and has been a Peer Leader in his community. He is interested in studying engineering or computers in college. During his first Upward Bound summer Tommy was an intern at IDEXX Laboratories in Westbrook where used a variety of computer programs and office equipment.

Tommy’s academic work continues to improve as he aims for college success and happiness in his future career.



# Craig Pellerin

## **Kennebec Valley Technical College Student Support Services**

Craig Pellerin says he grew up like most other kids. He went to school, and played with his friends. However, in school he noticed that no matter how hard he tried in his studies, he just couldn't seem to get the higher grades he wanted. It wasn't until he made the decision to return to college, after he lost his job in a seasonal layoff, that Craig was diagnosed with a learning disability. Through his work with the college's TRiO program, Craig was finally able to find the reason that school had been such a challenge for him.

"If I had known about it back in grade school, I would have done better with my life and my studies. I could have gotten the help I needed." Craig says that his work history reflects what he now knows about his learning abilities. "I work better with my hands. Show me how to do it, and I can do it." A student in the college's Electronics program, Craig is putting that hands on approach to life to good use. As part of his work-study job, Craig recently rebuilt part of the Electrical laboratory.

At Kennebec Valley Technical College, Craig works with TRiO's disability counselor to access the accommodations that have helped him to be very successful. Now at age 35, Craig is very happy to acknowledge that his lowest grade is a C+, all of his other courses are A's and B's. His GPA is currently a 3.27. He hopes to go on for another degree when he graduates from his current program.

When asked how college had affected his life, and the lives of his family, Craig answered, "It has had a positive effect. They (his family) are proud of me for going back to school and learning a new career. They've supported me at every step, giving me time alone to study, and even helping me study by asking me questions over the chapters."

# Jason Pirie

## **University of Maine** Educational Talent Search

Jason Pirie always knew that he wanted to go to college. His family was very helpful and supportive – they all knew that a good education was key to future success.

Jason thinks that his educational turning point was the summer that he spent working with his father, who owns a small construction business. Working with his father, he learned the value of hard work and the need for a good education.

With his TRIO counselor, Jason realized his full potential and attained his goals. Together, they looked at several colleges through financial, motivational and realistic discussions. She also “gave insight into college life,” Jason adds.

Currently, Jason’s GPA is 3.9 at Daniel Webster College in New Hampshire. He was recently selected by his school to compete for the National Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship. Currently, he is working on an interactive database system for Meals on Wheels of New Hampshire. Jason is on the President’s List and serves as an alternate RA.

Jason is completing his BS in Computer Science Design at Daniel Webster College and plans on studying for his MBA in the future.

“My college education will help me exponentially in the future,” Jason said. “This college education opens many doors to challenging and rewarding jobs. Also, I think it provides a positive role model for my younger brother.”



# Cyndi Richardson

## **Kennebec Valley Technical College Student Support Services**

At 47, Cyndi Richardson is a TRiO success story. Like many TRiO students at Kennebec Valley Technical College, Cyndi began her education after her job was eliminated. At the urging of a career counselor, Cyndi decided to go to college. She had hoped to go to college after high school, but there wasn't enough money. In later years, as a single mother, she had an obligation to raise her children and her dreams were once again put on hold.

Now with her job gone, and her children grown, Cyndi had the perfect opportunity to continue her education. However, starting back to school after so many years away was a frightening prospect. Cyndi had a hard time with mathematics and sought help from the college's TRIO Student Support Services office. With the academic and personal support she received from TRIO, Cyndi was able to complete her degree and graduate.

Currently, Cyndi is employed in the Information Technology department at KVTC. She is pursuing her Bachelor's degree at the University of Maine at Augusta, and hopes to one day teach at KVTC.

When asked how TRIO and KVTC affected her life, Cyndi answered, "Before college I was a single mother who depended on AFDC and other services to support me. Now I can proudly say I support myself! My children are proud of me and after they saw me graduating, two of my grown children have decided to go to college."



# Matt Rivera

University of Maine  
Student Support Services – Onward Program

Matt Rivera describes his high school experiences as “very negative. I was not interested in the material and could not communicate with the teachers.” After high school, Matt worked for two years at minimum wage with no benefits, and felt that his life was unorganized and very frustrating. Around this time, he realized that he was capable of more than what he was doing. He also understood that without a college education, life was going to be very difficult.

When asked how TRIO helped him achieve his educational goals, Matt remembers, “the TRIO counselors gave me the tools necessary to be successful in college. They told me where to sit how to study and most of all they taught me how to interact with my professor.”

In addition to commissioning as a second Lieutenant in the Army and receiving an engineering degree in May, Matt has received several awards and achieved many accomplishments. The University of Maine Army ROTC program sent him to many schools including the United States Airborne School, Cadet leadership in Bamberg (Germany), and Ft. Lewis Washington ROTC Advance Camp. Matt has received the Army National Guard Cadet Military Excellence Award, and been recognized as Junior Year Cadet of the semester. He held the highest physical fitness average for two years in the ROTC Battalion and exceeded every Physical Training test issued by the Army during the two year period he was in ROTC. Matt graduated in the top 10% of his class in Fort Sill Oklahoma during OSUT (a four month on site unit training).

Matt plans to attend TOBC (Transportation Officer Basic Course) in Ft. Eustis Virginia, and graduate school in the future.

“School has changed my life more than you can imagine,” Matt said. “College has given me a chance to create a good life for myself . . . and has allowed me to see that almost any goal you want is achievable. College pulled me out of a situation that was bringing me down. The program I was accepted into was the first time I really achieved a piece of success. I can remember the acceptance letter the day I opened it, and reading that first word in bold letters with an exclamation point reading CONGRATULATIONS!!!”

# Terri Shaw

## **University of Maine Student Support Services – Onward Program**

Terri Shaw was a high school dropout at age 16. In the years that followed, she worked a series of dead-end jobs in shoe factories and the timber industry. By the time she was 20, Terri was a mother of two. No family members that she had known had ever attended college.

Her motivation was the realization that her job would not be around much longer; she worked for a timber harvesting company. Terri knew the timber industry was struggling, and since she had no formal education, it would be difficult to find a similar position elsewhere.

For Terri, TRIO helped her achieve educational goals by providing refresher courses in Math, Biology, and English. They also provided support services like counselors, advisors, and tutoring.

Terri is especially proud of her cumulative GPA – a 3.3. She has received the Donald Tavener Scholarship, Zonta Club of Bangor scholarship, and NSF scholarship. She is also a member of PiMu Epsilon and the Golden Key Club.

In the future, Terri plans are to graduate with a BS in Secondary Education and a BA in Math in May 2003. In addition, she would like to pursue a Masters of Sciences in teaching.

“A degree in education opens up a whole new world of possibilities for me,” Terri said. “I’ve also been able prove to my children that you can achieve what you can dream.”



# John Simko

## **University of Maine Upward Bound**

John Simko is a first generation college student. He was raised by his mom, and was an only child. His mom worked for fifteen years as a caseworker for Penquis Community Action Program. She would often take him with her when he was a young child, visiting the homes of seniors, single-moms, and others in need of assistance programs.

He always wanted to attend college, but was more and more concerned about how to pay for a college education. The turning point was John's work in the Upward Bound program, which showed him that he could not only get the grades necessary to be admitted to college, but that he could also find creative ways to finance his education. Most importantly, the Upward Bound program enveloped him in the college environment, proving to him that he could thrive and succeed in such an environment.

John's counselor from the UMaine Orono Upward Bound program was Izzy Cross. She tirelessly worked with him and a handful of others from my high school to make sure they were in the right academic classes, to encourage our performance in these classes, and to organize everything from SAT testing and preparation to college application preparation and financial aid submission. John remembers, "Izzy was great: she made sure I was doing everything I needed to do to get into college."

During high school, John achieved the following awards: Earth Science Highest Achievement Award-1985, State Science Fair Second Place-Biology-1986, Public Speaking Award Second Place-1987, PSAT National Merit Scholar Honorable Mention-1987, Eagle Scout Award-1987, National Honor Society-1988, Rose Award (top 15% of graduating class)-1988, and GPA of 96.7 (#6 in class.)

At Bowdoin College, John was on the Bowdoin College Dean's List 1988-1989, won the Nathaniel Hawthorne English Department Prize for Best Short Story in 1990, and was awarded the DeAlva Stanwood Second Prize (Commencement Speech) at his graduation in 1992.

John is currently considering application to either the UMaine Master's Program in Public administration, or the Maine school of Law at USM. His wife and children are very supportive of his educational goals.

# Tracey Small

## University of Maine Student Support Services – Onward Program

Tracey Small was a high school graduate, twice divorced with two young daughters. She had a moderate-income job but the corporation she worked for was selling off departments. She knew it would only be a matter of time before she would be unemployed, and this made her wonder how she would be able to support her family.

Talk about more layoffs at work started surfacing again, and slowly Tracey's job duties were being taken away and sent to a call center out of state. In Tracey's words, "I knew I had to do something because I knew my job was coming to an end. It was at that point that I realized that I could go back to school and have nothing for 5-6 years and then be able to support my girls and myself, or struggle to make ends meet working 2-3 jobs at minimal wage for the rest of my life. It wasn't a hard decision. It just took courage to follow through with it."

The Onward program gave Tracey the opportunity to attend college. Through the Peer Advisors, she learned how to cope with life and college at the same time. The counselors helped her to understand that asking for help when she needed it was acceptable, not shameful. "When I became sick because of cancer treatments and couldn't speak up to ask for what I needed," Tracey said, "they became my voice. When I needed to cry out my frustrations, they assured me it was OK and that I had what it takes to reach my goal. They also...gave me the tools I needed to be able to finance my education. Without the Onward staff I don't think I would have made it through college."

Tracey was honored to receive the Jerry Herlihy Senior Perseverance Award; it reminds her of a time when she had a perfectly acceptable reason to leave school, but instead chose to stay and continue to work towards reaching her goal of a college education. Her future educational goal is to pursue higher education specializing in Mental Health Nursing.

"Going back to college is the best thing I could have ever done for my daughters and myself," Tracey says. "My girls have seen my struggles and triumphs. They have seen me work hard and have seen me succeed. They have seen the possibilities and now understand that anything is possible if you want it, work hard, and don't give up. Because of my education I will be able to support my family and not worry about where the rent money or food money is coming from. I will be able to support them both emotionally and financially."



# Annie Stubbs

## **University of Maine at Presque Isle Upward Bound**

Before Upward Bound, Annie Stubbs was a very shy kid with little to no self-esteem. She had few friends and no plans for the future. She describes her life at school as “miserable,” and tells that life at home was even worse. “In other words,” she said, “I was lost and searching for a light to guide me.”

Her turning point was a high school English teacher that was the first person to ever believe in her. This teacher was one of the people that encouraged Annie to get into Upward Bound and go on to college.

Annie said that her Upward Bound counselor “encouraged me to seek out my strengths and use them. Any question that I had she was always willing to answer.”

Several years ago, Annie would never have considered getting up in front of 500 people and doing a speech by herself. Since her Upward Bound experience, Annie has done just that. She also takes great pride in her skill at restoring old photographs.

As she looks to the future, Annie plans on getting two degrees: one in communication, and the other in art. Eventually, she would like to get into films using computer art.

When Annie was asked how her decision to attend college would affect the rest of her life, Annie said, “it will open more doors and give me the skills needed to pursue my dreams.”



# Jamie Sylvain

## **Kennebec Valley Technical College Student Support Services**

If there were a TRiO Dictionary, under the word motivation you would find a two-word definition - Jamie Sylvain. Jamie dropped out of high school during her freshman year. When she discovered that she was pregnant a short time later, she decided that she needed to take some steps to make sure that her child would have a

better life than she did.

Jamie studied and earned her GED. She babysat to get enough money to take Driver's Education. She participated in job training, and went to work – first in an office, and then in the mills. Along the way, she had two more children and earned enough money to buy a home for her family. She eventually ended up working in a shoe factory, and worked consistently at 175% of expected production. While her incredible effort allowed her to buy an even better home for her children, it did take its toll. Jamie developed severe tendonitis in her right hand. “That’s when I knew I need to go back to school and get more education. I wanted to work with my mind, instead of my body.”

However, despite her incredible success in the working world, Jamie doubted that she had what it would take to be a successful college student. No one in her family had ever been to college. “I thought college was for other people, not for me.” Despite her doubts, Jamie enrolled at Kennebec Valley Technical College. Due to a low score on the algebra section of her placement test, Jamie was referred to the college’s Student Support Services program. Within two semesters, she went from needing assistance in math to tutoring other students in the subject.

Jamie currently has a GPA of 3.85. She is a member of Phi Theta Kappa, and the Dean’s List. In her typical style, Jamie has surmounted every obstacle that gets in her way. She has been accepted at the University of Maine in Farmington, and will begin her studies in Secondary Education with a concentration in Mathematics next fall.

“TRiO helped me with every educational goal. I couldn’t have done it without their help.”



# Valerie Tranbarger

## **University of Maine at Presque Isle Upward Bound**

Throughout her childhood, Valerie Tranbarger's family supported her educational decisions. Although she was (and continues to be) a very independent person, and knew she wanted to pursue college, she really wasn't aware of what resources were available to her or how to use them. Before Upward Bound, she was not as motivated to do what needed to be done in order to pursue her life dreams.

Valerie believes that the real turning point was when she volunteered in the elementary classrooms in her district as a high school student. She enjoyed seeing each student succeed, and was exhilarated by the thought that she had played a part in their success.

During her time in high school, Valerie thought that the TRIO counselor was very informative and was always willing to help locate resources in order to achieve her goals. "They always encouraged me to pursue the things that I wanted to do," she remembers.

Valerie graduated 3<sup>rd</sup> in her high school class, and went on to college to pursue a degree in Recreation. Her future educational plans are to finish college with a degree in Recreation and to pursue a job with the opportunity to work with children or the elderly.

When she thinks about the impact that her education will have on her life and the lives of her loved ones, Valerie says, "my decision to attend college helped to prove to myself and others that I was able to achieve anything that I set my mind to, and that when hard times circle around, that I will still be okay and can take care of myself and get things done."



# Amanda Turcotte

## University of Maine Talent Search

Before college, Amanda Turcotte lived at home with her parents, sister, and a nephew. During the first half of her senior year in high school, she traveled to the Netherlands as a foreign exchange student, and this experience cemented her decision to further her education. She hopes to become a research biologist, and made that decision after taking biology her sophomore year in high school. She says that right away, she “knew that it was

what I wanted to do with my life.”

For as long as she can remember, a college education has been an important part of her plans. It was TRIO, however, that helped her decide what aspects of a college were important when deciding which colleges to apply to. As she says, “my counselor helped me with my applications, even though I was in Europe when I was filling them out. He was always an email away. The tours were also beneficial because I was able to compare different campuses before choosing the right one for me. I’m very happy with my decision to attend the University of Maine.”

Amanda graduated third in her class in high school. At The University of Maine, she finished her first semester of college with a GPA of 3.18. She has received many scholarships and grants through the college as well as two merit scholarships: \$1,000 from Pike Industries and \$750 from the Litchfield Lion’s Club (the highest award given each year).

She plans to continue her college career and receive a B.S. in Biology. After that degree, she plans to either start her profession in research, or continue on to graduate school to pursue her Ph.D.

Amanda thinks that the decision to attend college has already affected the rest of her life. “I’ve created many wonderful relationships with other students and professors,” she says. “I’m also learning many things that will ... help others in my future research. I hope to be an inspiration for my younger cousins and nephew to continue with their education – no matter how many obstacles may be in the way.”



# Melissa Turner

## **University of Maine Upward Bound**

Melissa Turner grew up in a small town where many people went into the fishing industry. Her parents, however, pushed Melissa from an early age to go to college. There was very little question in her mind whether she would go to college; it was just a matter of where.

It wasn't until high school – and with the help of her Upward Bound counselor – that Melissa really embraced that dream of college and considered all her options. UB counselor Debbie Davis was an inspiration to Melissa. She made Melissa's dreams her own and helped her find the right college. Melissa says, “(Debbie) did everything from opening her home to writing an eloquent recommendation.” When she arrived at college, Melissa found that she had the tools to succeed.

Melissa received a 2001 Landmark Award for copyediting and headline writing; an award that she takes great pride in. Melissa is in hopes to return to college to obtain her masters degree and possibly a PhD in English Composition. She sees a day in the future when she would like to teach.

College transformed Melissa's life. She now thinks of college as “simply a part of reality, like elementary and high school.” It made her a “fuller person,” and she hopes to encourage her children to embrace education in the same way that her parents and Upward Bound did.

# Sara Vanidestine

## **University of Maine Student Support Services – Onward Program**

Sara Vanidestine was a single mom at 16. A few months after the birth of her daughter, she was asked to leave her home. So, she quit school, worked in shoe shops and fast food chains, and survived on AFDC. Throughout the years that followed, Sara worked as a waitress and a factory worker, but found those careers frustrating and unsatisfying. She was also a practicing alcoholic; it took two years to achieve sobriety, but she has now been sober for almost 11 years. At this point, she began to question what she was going to do with the rest of her life, and made the decision to go back to college.

Sara recalls that when her two children made her a grandmother it “added to...sobriety.” “I began to question if this was the legacy I wanted to leave them,” she said. “I decided it was not and decided to give them something invaluable. I wanted to prove to them that you can obtain the goals you set for yourself as well as achieve your dreams if you want it badly enough and are willing to work for them.”

The TRIO counselors gave Sara all the support and encouragement a person could need. She believes that this support is the main reason for her success. “They believed in me when I did not believe in myself,” Sara said.

Sara has been awarded several scholarships throughout her college career, and acts as the co-chair of the Student Social Work Organization. Her accumulative GPA is 3.54 and was 3.87 for last semester. She has been awarded the Presidential Achievement Pin for making the Dean’s List for one semester and for achieving a 3.5 GPA or better.

She plans to work for the next 2 or 3 years, and then to come back (to the University of Maine) to earn her Masters Degree in Social Work. Sara’s senior internship has been with the Department of Human Services and she has signed a contract to work for them for a year after her graduation.

With a college education, Sara says, “I will be able to work in the profession I have always wanted to work in. I will no longer have to waitress because I now have the skills to do a different type of work. Both of my children are now thinking of going back to school and I hope my grandchildren will as well. I am also the first person in my family to attend college and graduate with a degree. I am also a much happier person, pleased with who I have become, and confident that my future looks very bright.”



# Grace Waugh

## **Kennebec Valley Technical College Student Support Services**

College can be a daunting task for anyone. However, imagine being in your early 50's and getting laid off from your job. That's just what happened to Grace Waugh. To complicate matters even more, Grace has arthritis.

Suddenly all of the jobs that she had years of experience doing were no longer options for her. Grace knew she needed to find a new career, but she wasn't sure what to do.

Some previous experience with bookkeeping made her think that she might do well in business, but it wouldn't be easy. As Grace wrote, "I was basically computer illiterate." After being accepted into Kennebec Valley Technical College's Business Administration – Marketing/Management program, Grace found her way to the Student Support Services office. And is she ever glad that she did. "TRiO has helped me with composition assignments, college algebra, and higher level mathematics. When I had problems related to my arthritis, the disability counselor helped me through them successfully. I am so thankful for our TRiO counselors at KVTC – they have had a huge part in my success."

Grace's success reaches beyond the classroom. She has a 3.92 GPA, and is a member of Phi Theta Kappa, - the International Honor Society of America's Two-Year College. Grace serves as Treasurer for that campus organization, and is an active member of Student Senate. When not busy with her school activities, Grace stays busy helping to form a business plan for a new business that is hoping to start up in our area.

Even though Grace will graduate in May of 2003, she plans to continue to take courses while she works. When asked about college Grace replied, "College has been such a positive experience for me. I am able to do things I never dreamed I could do. So many doors are now open to me that never would have been."



# Kendon T. Warren

## **University of Maine Upward Bound**

Kendon Warren's parents successfully completed college, and became successful teachers. He had a brother and sister who paved the way, and showed him that applying to college was the right choice to make. From an early age, Kendon knew that if he wanted to be somebody in this world, and make a difference, it would be important for him to further his education. "If I didn't further my education," Kendon said, "I feel as though I would be letting many people down, including myself."

Kendon feels that the turning point that motivated him to pursue his education was the knowledge that he could make a difference in someone else's life. In addition, he found that he could do that on his way to becoming a better person.

He believes that his TRIO counselors drove him to be the best person that he could possibly be. "They all saw the potential I held within myself and wanted me to expose it," he tells. "Without the extra push, I wouldn't be where I am now!"

His accomplishments at the University of Southern Maine include: creating a USM tour video of the Portland campus, co-founding USM's co-ed a cappella group 'Perfect Octave,' and he maintains his G.P.A. at 2.92. In May of 2003, Kendon will graduate with a B.A. in communication from USM.

After graduation, Kendon will be off to the work force and the real world. He believes that he will feel accomplished and complete after completing college. He describes it as if one chapter of life has concluded, while another has just begun. In his own words, Kendon tells us that he "will actually be the person I have been destined to be."



# Jaimi Kilby Weston

## **Bowdoin College Upward Bound**

Most of Jaimi Kilby Weston's childhood was spent in the small town of Pembroke, Maine. With a population of approximately 700, and an economy primarily based upon the fishing industry, further education is not considered a major priority or goal. She had lived solely with her Dad for most of her life, and money was always a limiting factor. Jaimi feels that "TRIO Programs like Upward Bound are the reason I made it through high school and college. If it had not been for the Advanced Placement Courses, the aid in figuring out complicated financial forms, and the general support, I often wonder if I would have made it as far as I have."

The turning point in Jaimi's life was not the significant earth shattering moment that is like a light bulb switching on, but more of a general realization that the only thing that would ever complete her was earning a full education. She always wanted to attain something greater that would make her father proud. In time, she realized that she was doing it not only for her father, but for herself as well!

Jaimi remembers Bridget, her Upward Bound/TRIO Counselor, as possibly the person most instrumental in the fulfillment of her educational aspirations. Bridget was an open source of information regarding college options, financial aid tips, and personal advice. "Whenever I felt that I had hit my barrier and that it was useless to continue," Jaimi says, "Bridget was always there to remind me exactly what all the hard work was for. I remember the shock on my father's face when she traveled from Brunswick to Pembroke simply to help fill out Financial Aid forms. It is this kind of devotion that makes the TRIO programs invaluable to people like me."

Now that she has completed her Baccalaureate, Jaimi currently works as a Merchandiser and is receiving training that she hopes to put into a degree in Business and Supply Chain Management. She considers ongoing education to be a major part of her life and hopes to one day be able to contribute to the system that has helped her so much along the way.

As Jaimi reflects on her college career, she feels "that my attending University had a positive affect on my family. I feel that ... I have every reason to have pride in myself, and that I have been able to accomplish something my father always wished for me. I know that when I look back on my life it has been greatly changed by going to University. I live in London, met my present husband while studying abroad, and feel I have accomplished something that was always hoped of me, but never fully expected."

# Susan White

## **Bowdoin College Upward Bound**

Susan White believes that Upward Bound provided her with the encouragement and the knowledge she needed to not be discouraged by the college application process. Because both of her parents had not attended college and were not aware of the process, she wasn't sure how to prepare for college.

“UB provided me with information on college; preparatory courses, choosing an appropriate college which best suited my individual needs, financial aid, and what to expect once attending college. Without the support of UB, the entire college process would have been daunting and perhaps discouraging,” she said.

Because Susan was able to attend college, she feels that she has many opportunities in her future. In addition, she has realized education is vital to success. “I feel that there are many educational opportunities here in America,” she said, and “unfortunately not all students are able to take advantage of these opportunities because of the lack of information. I believe programs such as UB are resources for educational opportunity.”

When Susan thinks about how the decision to attend college has affected her, she talks about the tremendous impact that Upward Bound has had on her life. For Susan, UB illuminated “the numerous opportunities available to me. More importantly, it provided me with the self-confidence to make me believe I can do anything I desire regardless of my background!”



# April Pearce Wohlfeil

## **University of Maine Upward Bound Math/Science**

April Pearce Wohlfeil came from a financially disadvantaged family. She recalls putting effort into school, but not to her potential; she suspects now that it was because she didn't think she could go to college. Her parents said that it would be nice if she could go, but that they certainly couldn't afford to send her.

She remembers her educational turning point was a trip to the University of Maine at Fort Kent with Linda Ives (April's Upward Bound Math/Science counselor) when she was in high school. Later, as an adult, April chose her field of study to help others help themselves; she has a keen understanding of disadvantage since she shares this experience.

"Linda and I had several conversations about my goals and difficulties," April said. "She encouraged me to follow my heart and spirit, reminding me I was capable of so many things. I am very proud to have received the Upward Bound Math/Science Bridge Award."

April's future educational goal is to continue her pursuit of a master's degree, and to continually learn and become familiar with research. She enjoys this kind of learning, and loves to share what she learns with her students. April adds: "I hope to encourage my daughter to go to college and teach her that she can overcome any barriers."