

Kevin Richards



*Kevin Richards participated in TRiO through Upward Bound Math Science (UBMS) at the University of Maine in 2000 – 2003. The UBMS director then was Linda Ives. Kevin was nominated by current UBMS director Rebecca Colannino.*

Limiting myself to only 500 words while trying to describe the important impact TRiO has had on my life is a significant challenge. Not only did the Math and Science Upward Bound program help me find what I am passionate about, but it also gave me the friends, confidence and resources I needed to get where I am today. I can think of no better way to help students discover what would best make them happy and successful in life than to bring them into a program where you are surrounded by those who are doing what they love.

I could write a paragraph here about my home life and the disadvantages I faced coming from a poor household in small-town rural Maine. I choose not to for truthfully I only have admiration, love and thankfulness for the life that my parents were able to give me. We did not have a lot of money and yes pulling my 1984, Chevy Celebrity that was purchased for fifty dollars into the school parking lot next to another student's BMW did present frustration and challenges. However, with the encouragement of my family and the support of the Upward Bound program, I never lost my focus on what I wanted to do with my life. With this love and support, I knew that I was going to go to college.

The Upward Bound program I attended helped me realize two important things: First, how to navigate getting into college, Second and most important find what you are passionate about and through that passion the best direction to make a positive impact in your community, family and life. I have said since my first summer at Upward Bound that I am so lucky to have the support of two families. The family I was born with and now the TRiO family that to this day I am happy to still be involved with. I will support TRiO programs until the day I die not only because of what I have been able to see TRiO do for its students.

After discovering my love for providing education at Upward Bound, I went on to get my baccalaureate in psychology at The University of Maine. With the connections I was able to make through my friends and colleagues in TRiO, it was not long until I found myself working in a TRiO program at Kennebec Valley Community College. Since then I have taken the Director of Student Development position at the college. I have kept the TRiO mentality of community, opportunity and support in everything I do in my job. We are soon to hand out 65 complete thanksgiving meals to students of KVCC and will be setting up our Holiday tree program to provide KVCC families support at Christmas time. These are the things that make me happy, which is why I love my job and will forever be grateful to TRiO for helping me along the way.