



WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY

# Special Programs

M A G A Z I N E

## *Honoring Our Own*

2018







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### Special Programs Ezine Committee Members

Larry Ramos (chair), Ashley Cervantes, Fennie Christensen, Alan Dsouza, PhD, Travis Feeney, and Carla Williams

# ▶ Introduction



The magazine is pleased to focus on the Building Bridges Honorees for National TRIO Day. This year, we continue to honor our own former students for their accomplishments.

Having gone through the programs and pursued their careers, the Building Bridges Award supports the efforts of the participants in the TRIO and GEAR UP programs at Wichita State University. It is the highest award presented by the programs during the National TRIO Day celebration.

The award is given by each of the programs to an individual who has tirelessly worked to achieve academic, personal, and career success. The individuals honored are from all parts of the country. It is important to let these alumni know that the programs are proud of who they are and what they have accomplished. For them, no goal is too small. These individuals can stand tall and let the world know about their successes.

The middle and high school students, persons with disabilities, and adult learners served by the programs have been able to expand their knowledge base and learn from caring and highly qualified personnel. TRIO Day marks an important celebration and collaboration for the programs that highlights the services and activities of the oldest and youngest programs. Each program is a natural complement to the other that provides comprehensive services in addressing the needs of the populations served. A committed and dedicated staff work to ensure opportunities

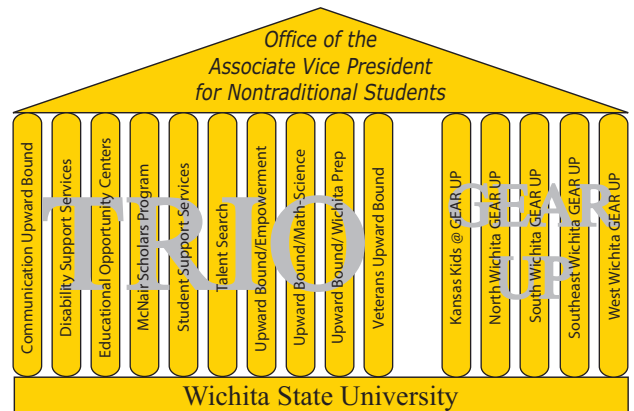
are available to eligible participants from middle school to college.

The directors and their staffs are to be applauded for a quality TRIO Day magazine and program. The Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended and the Higher Educational Opportunity Act of 2008 is the authorizing legislation for the TRIO Programs. Equal educational opportunities for individuals served by the programs is a commitment that each staff member takes very seriously. The programs acknowledge the continued support and commitment of individuals from the community, USD 259 and Wichita State. The participants in the programs have accomplished much and continue to make their mark on the city, state, region, and nation.

Please enjoy the 2018 2nd issue of TRIO Day Magazine.

Regards,

Deltha Q. Colvin  
Associate Vice President for Nontraditional Students





**Outstanding Alum  
Montreal Devine**

**Montreal Devine** attended Southeast High School and spent three years in the Upward Bound Wichita Prep program as a member of the class of 2000. During his tenure in the program, Montreal availed himself of each opportunity offered to him, including after-school tutoring, Saturday sessions, and the summer residential program.

Montreal credits his Upward Bound experience with giving him the tools to gain entrance to Kansas State University and graduate with a degree in mass communication and leadership. During his time in Manhattan, Montreal also shared his love of music with the community by working as a deejay at the college radio station.

He began a management career at QuikTrip® in Wichita, where he served for six years as an assistant manager. A desire to stretch himself and grow professionally took him to Kansas City where he works as an assistant manager for Aldi®. In his free time, he enjoys live music performances and curating his sneaker collection.

Montreal's dedication to self-improvement was evident from his time as an Upward Bound student, and he continues to seek opportunities to better himself. His dream is to take his educational journey to the next level by pursuing a master's degree in project management. The Upward Bound staff know the determination that has taken him this far in life will continue to serve him well in the future as he pursues the next challenge.



**Rising Star  
Aidan Teeter**

Upward Bound Wichita Prep is proud to share that **Aidan Teeter** is its TRIO achiever for 2017-2018. A member of the class of 2018, Aidan has been active in the program since his sophomore year at Wichita East High School. Over the past three years, the staff has watched Aidan become a leader in the program and at school.

Aidan is an active member of Upward Bound Wichita Prep. He logs tutoring hours every week, attends Saturday sessions, and participates in the summer residential program. In the summer of 2017, Aidan won a leadership award for writing, directing, and performing in the original performing arts production Rags to Riches. He has worked hard on his public-speaking skills and excels in this area.

His passion for human rights is evidenced by membership in organizations that seek to make the world a better place. Aidan serves as the president of the Choose Respect Club and volunteers at the Wichita Children's Home.

He plans to major in political science in preparation for a career in politics or as a diplomat. During tutoring sessions, he can often be found working on scholarship applications and contemplating which college to attend.

Aidan exemplifies the college mindset because of his excellent character and spirit of gratitude. The staff know he has the drive it takes to graduate high school, go to college, and obtain his political science degree.

# ▶ Talent Search



**Outstanding Alum  
Solomon Adair**

Founding Pastor of Inspired to Live Church in Texas, former TRIO Talent Search student, **Solomon Adair**, has worked extensively in education, business, and ministry. His passion has been to develop the purpose that he believes exists inside every person.

Solomon received a bachelors in business administration with a minor in Spanish from Wichita State. He started multiple businesses in the financial industry including a tax preparation company and several real estate investments. He earned a masters in the art of teaching that led him to spend five years as an eighth grade science teacher and three years as the founding Dean of Scholars for a charter school in Grand Prairie, Texas. Working as the assistant principal has opened the opportunity to directly affect change in the lives of the scholars, the parents of those scholars, and the staff he coaches.

Solomon's mission has opened the door for him to have several speaking engagements over the years at various conferences, college and career days, business leader panel discussions, seminars, professional development for educators, and after school mentoring.

Solomon's accomplishments would not be as enjoyable if he hadn't spent it with his high school sweetheart and wife of nearly 13 years, Elisabeth. With her support, partnership, and love, he has been able to walk in his purpose and serve others.



**Rising Star  
Sania Saeed**

**Sania Saeed** is a senior at Northeast Magnet High School and has been a participant of TRIO Talent Search since the sixth grade. Her educational and career goals are to major in biomedical engineering, attend medical school, and one day become a successful cardiothoracic surgeon.

In the meantime, Sania takes advanced placement courses, maintains a perfect 4.0 grade point average, serves as senior class president and volunteers for the DAV and Toys for Tots. She is also on the student council and was named a Kansas Honors Scholar. Sania is a Questbridge college match finalist and, if selected, will receive a full scholarship. She has already been admitted to the University of Kansas but is still deciding on her collegiate destination.

Early on, the Talent Search staff noticed that she was a very intelligent and mature student. She began her program participation during the Middle School Summer Enrichment Program which she says was "fun." She also indicated that the program helped her "build connections and made her summers more productive." While in high school, she volunteered to help out with the summer program and perform office tasks. Sania was also chosen by the staff to attend the Girls in STEM conference sponsored by the Educational Opportunity Association where she met other like-minded students which gave her more confidence in her abilities and interest in medicine. TRIO Talent Search is proud of Sania and the bright future that awaits her.



**Outstanding Alum  
Nisha Weems**



**Rising Star  
Syeda Ara**

In 2006, **Nisha Weems** was a single parent of three who had recently moved to Wichita from Texas to find a safer place to live for her family. She was underemployed, living on food stamps, and in Section 8 public housing. Nisha lived next door to Wichita State, and she knew that somehow, some way she'd find an opportunity to enroll at WSU. After many struggles, she enrolled in her first class. Her plan was to better herself by getting an associate's degree, but once she started taking gerontology courses she was hooked. Nisha realized that she was pursuing a profession that she was passionate about.

Nisha got help from Student Support Services. "They provided me with a computer because I didn't have one. They provided me with tutoring, especially with algebra. They were my rock." It was Nisha's SSS adviser, Vanessa Souriya-Mnirajd, who gave her advice that made a big difference in her confidence.

In 2011, Nisha graduated cum laude with a bachelor's degree in general studies. In 2013, she finished a master's in aging studies. Today, Nisha has passed her state and federal exams to become the CEO of a nursing facility. She's also looking at the next step to return to Wichita State to pursue doctoral studies in community psychology. "When I stepped away from my comfort zone, there were people to help," she said. "It was never easy, but it did get easier, and better."

**Syeda Ara** is a senior at Wichita State who is majoring in psychology. She chose to attend WSU because it is a place close to her heart and home. She also had knowledge of the many valuable resources that are available at WSU. In 2015, she enrolled in TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) because she needed additional support to achieve her academic and graduation goals.

Syeda has benefitted most from the program's rental system, both electronics and textbooks. She also enjoys meeting with her advisor even when there is nothing major to report. She is active on the WSU campus and in the surrounding neighborhoods. One of her involvements includes serving on the WSU community service board where her focus is meeting the needs of children across Sedgwick County. She also works with the SSS department as a student assistant. She loves this position as it is a way she feels she can give back to the community.

In her free time, she enjoys watching motivational videos that help her to remain focused and active. Syeda is currently working on learning Hindi, her third language. She is fluent in Bangla and English. After she completes her degree, she wants to travel abroad to work and volunteer while further developing her language skills.

# ▶ Disability Support Services



**Outstanding Alum  
Evan Wainwright**

**Evan Clifford Jerome Wainwright** joined TRIO Disability Support Services in August 2009. Evan has cerebral palsy and has been an advocate for people with disabilities since he was 15 years old. He graduated from Wichita State in July 2012 with a Bachelor of Arts in criminal justice.

After graduating, Evan decided to move to Atlanta, GA to pursue a career in modeling and acting. He had seen an ad on Facebook™ about a company that was looking for models. He submitted a photo and short description of himself and a few weeks later he received a message from the company that they were interested in speaking with him about modeling. Of course, he was very pleased and excited at the prospect of working as a model.

He now works for Sunrise Medical as a brand ambassador for Quickie Wheelchairs®. The ad campaign featuring him was released in 2017. Evan is a strong advocate for people with disabilities and leads by example to empower others to not put limitations on what they can achieve. He indicates that he is very grateful to Sunrise Medical for giving him a chance to live out one of his career goals. In spite of his disability, Evan refused to give up on his dreams. He says “Never give up on your dreams and believe in yourself.”



**Rising Star  
Amber Barker**

**Amber Barker** is currently a senior at Wichita State. She joined TRIO Disability Support Services (DSS) in fall 2013 when she was a freshman. Amber is working toward a degree in social work and expects to graduate in 2018. When asked how TRIO DSS has helped her, Amber said that TRIO DSS is great about arranging tutoring assistance for her in math and writing. She also indicated that her advisors shared ways on how to obtain textbooks for her classes.

Amber’s journey at Wichita State has not been easy. There have been several times where she has struggled through difficulties related to her disability. Fortunately, Amber was assured that she has a strong support system through the Office of Disability Services and DSS.

Recently, Amber lost her job and visited with her TRIO DSS advisor for assistance. The advisor helped Amber with job searches, editing her resume, and helped her with devising a cover letter for a new job in the social work field. Within two weeks Amber was able to start a new job with a company that assists children with behavioral issues to further their independence and ultimately improve the quality of their daily lives.



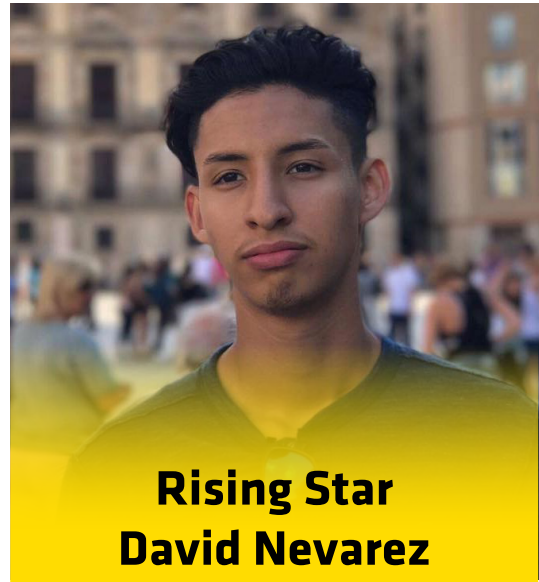


**Outstanding Alum  
Violet Gomes**

**Violet Gomes** is the Upward Bound Math Science (UBMS) alumnus of the year because of her diligence and example. Violet was admitted into UBMS in 1996 as a high school sophomore and participated until her graduation in 1999. Upon her arrival at the summer program she announced that she was “Violet, like the flower, not the color” and she immediately gained credibility with her peers and the staff as a young woman with a voice and plan. This powerhouse of a student from Iowa took the opportunities provided by TRIO and changed her life. Violet matriculated to Wichita State where she completed her bachelor’s degree in nursing. During her time at WSU, she served as a staff assistant for UBMS for nearly 10 years.

Since leaving UBMS, Violet has worked as a nurse specializing in medical telemetry, a clinical nurse in the pulmonary and cardiac unit, and is currently using her earned master’s degree as clinical nurse manager at the Leavenworth County Health Department where she oversees clinical staff, mediates public health records and communicates with state entities.

Violet will complete a doctorate as a family nurse practitioner in May of 2020, through Fort Hays State University. While Violet readily attributes her academic success to her TRIO participation, she also met her husband of 18 years, Barry Gomes, during her time at Wichita State. Together they live in Kansas City with their three children.



**Rising Star  
David Nevarez**

**David Nevarez** is a four-year Upward Bound Math Science Center participant. He is a junior at Sumner Academy, an International Baccalaureate student, and a member of the University of Kansas Talent Search Program.

David is an avid soccer player and enjoys membership on the varsity team. His love of soccer is not just based on the physicality of the sport, but also the competitiveness and comradery. All three descriptors define David on the field and in the classroom.

The oldest son of immigrant parents, David lives with his grandparents and takes full advantage of their wisdom and culture. He has also worked hard to build a reputation as a leader and team member. Last fall, David chartered a TRIO student organization at his high school that helps students prepare for college admission exams, offers peer tutoring and mobilizes students to fight for TRIO programs.

David aspires to be an engineer. His gifts in science, engineering and math will continue to serve him well. He also dreams of global travel. He recently had the opportunity to travel to Spain with a group from his high school. He has already planned a study abroad component to enhance his college career.

It is for these reasons and so many more that the Upward Bound Math Science staff decided to profile David Nevarez in celebration of TRIO Day 2018.

# ▶ Honoring Our Own



*“I spent eight years as administrative assistant in the McNair Scholars Program and a year as administrative assistant in Student Support Services (SSS) before taking my position in Athletics. I thoroughly enjoyed my time in TRIO working with students from diverse backgrounds and across academic platforms. My TRIO experience well prepared me for working with student athletes, where I have spent the last 13 years. I am grateful for the relationships developed and the training provided during my time in TRIO.”*

**Linda Lindsly**

Administrative Assistant, Department of Intercollegiate Athletics



*“Serving TRIO (Upward Bound Math Science) students for more than 20 years prepared me for my current role as the assistant dean for students. I had experiences that range from teaching students to pump gas, swim, factor polynomials and pipette acid to supporting students through some of their toughest moments: death of a parent, eviction and homelessness, and even abuse.*

*Upon hire, Ms. Colvin told me that I would have the opportunity to do things I couldn't imagine if I took the job. She also said that if I ever left, I would be able to do anything I wanted. She was right!”*

**Kaye Monk-Morgan**

Assistant Dean for Students, Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

## **Other Former Office of Special Programs Personnel on Campus**

- **Maria Lucas** - Student Academic Success Advisor for the Department of Engineering  
*OSP Experience-* McNair Scholars Program and TRIO Disability Support Services
- **Pamela O’Neal** - Assistant Director for the Office of Adult Learning  
*OSP Experience-* TRIO Communication Upward Bound
- **Karen Porter** - Senior Financial Aid Advisor for the Office of Financial Aid  
*OSP Experience-* TRIO Talent Search

# OSP Prepares Shocker Leaders



*“As a college instructor, I work with a lot of first generation students. The skills I learned while being a student in SSS and then working there and also in Talent Search, come into play every day as I help students succeed. Many of them are first generation students and I regularly wish we had a SSS program here at WSU Tech (formerly WATC) for them to take advantage of. Last semester I began working with a mentoring program here at WSU Tech, and I draw on those skills I learned as a counselor and advisor working at TRIO as I work with students.”*

## **Linda Sessions**

Lead Computer Applications Instructor, WSU Tech (formerly WATC)



*“My experience working in TRIO (Upward Bound Math Science) enhanced my abilities to advocate for students and be a voice for them across the university. Additionally, it fueled my desire to connect students with the financial resources to make college a reality.*

*During my experience in TRIO, I met many amazing students, but the best memories come from seeing them walk across the stage as college graduates.”*

## **Julie Scott**

Business Technology & Data Analyst, Office of Financial Aid

- **Meghan Simpson** - Eligibility Specialist for the Office of Financial Aid  
*OSP Experience-* TRIO Communication Upward Bound
- **Carrie Wyatt** - Senior Administrative Specialist for the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders  
*OSP Experience-* TRIO Talent Search

# ▶ McNair Scholars Program



**Outstanding Alum  
Christa Platt, PhD**

**Christa D. Platt** earned her Bachelor of Science in criminal justice at Wichita State University. She joined the McNair Scholars Program in 2004. McNair was the place where the desire to pursue doctoral study became a confident reality. It was a place of firsts for Christa—first publication, first academic talk, and first graduate school campus visit. The staff served as advocates, teachers, and mentors and expected her to perform at the highest level.

She earned masters and a doctoral degrees in higher education administration from Illinois State University. Over the course of a decade in higher education, she has gained experiences in specialized retention programming, diversity and inclusion affairs, crisis management, first year experience support, assessment and evaluation, academic probation, peer mentor program development, TRIO programs, and STEM advocacy for underrepresented students. Each experience has guided the steps of her professional and academic path.

Christa thrives on cultivating safe spaces and rich learning opportunities for students, staff, and faculty. Her future goals are to marry her passion for research, teaching, and advocacy in a senior level administration position in order to support student retention and academic success.

Already a proud alum of Wichita State, Christa is honored to be in the family of WSU McNair alums.



**Rising Star  
Aja Molinar**

**Aja Molinar** is a psychology major at Wichita State where she has participated in the McNair Scholars Program for the past two years. Aja is committed in pursuing a doctoral degree in clinical psychology. She seeks out opportunities to build academic, research, and practical skills.

Following a rigorous course schedule, she participates in academic research and volunteers as a cultural investigation and analysis intern for the Death Penalty Defense Unit at the Sedgwick County Public Defender's Office.

She completed her first McNair research project under the guidance of Greg Meissen, PhD. She sought several opportunities to present her findings including the local TEDx event and Wichita State's Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Forum. Her current research under the guidance of Robert Zettle, PhD focuses on etiological perspectives of mental illness as a function of religiosity and ethnocultural factors. She hopes to identify obstructions in reaching religious and underrepresented communities and potential strategies to address them.

After earning a doctoral degree, Aja will pursue a career as a professor and clinician. She hopes to contribute to research regarding cross cultural psychology and the need for cultural competency in the field. She is particularly interested in researching manifestations of mental illness in minority populations, minority underutilization of mental health services, and stigmatization of mental health issues.



**Outstanding Alum  
Jackie L. Boyles**

**Jacqueline (Jackie) L. Boyles** serves as administrative specialist for the Student Conduct and Community Standards department at Wichita State in the Division of Student Affairs. She works directly with the assistant vice president for student advocacy, intervention and accountability and deputy title IX coordinator for students.

The department is responsible for overseeing information to manage student issues related to disruptive or inappropriate behavior. Jackie is a perfect match for her current role in that she has also provided support for the vice president's office, the dean of students office and the Center for Student Leadership during various administrative transition periods.

Jackie was a high school graduate, who after working in the business world, decided it was time to go for the gold and obtain a college degree. She applied to the EOC Program to accomplish this. In May of 2016, Jackie earned a Bachelor of Science in health services management and community development from Wichita State.

Jackie is proud to be a Shocker, however, she has never forgotten her EOC Program roots. When designing a special brochure for the Student Services Division, Jackie made sure that the EOC program was represented. She also promotes EOC through social media to help other adults find their way to academic success. Jackie is truly an EOC ambassador.



**Rising Star  
Rebecca James**

**Rebecca James** is a passionate first generation college student on a mission. At the time she applied for Educational Opportunity Centers Program (EOC) participation, Rebecca was the mother of five children and held a full time job at a local heating and air conditioning company.

Despite her full schedule, Rebecca was determined to achieve her educational goals and to have a career in the social service field. She was referred to the program by a partnering community organization to the EOC Program for advising and assistance to transfer to a four-year university. EOC staff assisted Rebecca with completing an admission's application for transfer students and submitting a 2017-2018 FAFSA application.

In May 2017, Rebecca graduated from Butler Community College with an associate's degree in social work. Beginning in January 2018, she will be attending Wichita State to pursue a bachelor's degree in social work with minor in psychology. Rebecca is excited at the prospect of continuing her studies in the spring 2018 semester and to be a Shocker.

Rebecca is a recipient of the Office of Special Programs admission fee grant scholarship that helped with the cost of her college admission application fee.

# ▶ Veterans Upward Bound



**Outstanding Alum  
Tyson Drummond**

**Petty Officer 2nd Class Tyson Drummond**, served in the U.S. NAVY From 2004-2009 supervising a crew of aviation mechanics at the Naval Air Station in Florida. His happiest moments were launching the S3-B Viking on the flight deck right alongside the F-14 Tomcat, during the final decommissioning deployment of Operation Iraqi Freedom. After his service term expired, he spent time in Florida as a mortgage broker, real estate investor, and credit repair counselor. The market crash of 2008 led him to his hometown (Wichita).

With the help of his G.I. Bill, Tyson received an accounting degree from Wichita State in 2010. He always admires the photograph that was taken with his grandma after the graduation ceremony. That picture is special as it sits next to the degree in his office.

Today, Tyson is co-owner of a movement specialist studio called Zen Fitness, located in the College Hill neighborhood. His spouse was finally able to live out her childhood dream with the help of Tyson's background in business and exposure to many services supporting Wichita State such as the Center for Entrepreneurship in Devlin Hall. They hope to help serve the local community and eventually offer services to veterans as a non-profit.

Tyson wishes to thank Veterans Upward Bound and every single human-being that has lifted a fellow veteran up and helped them succeed.

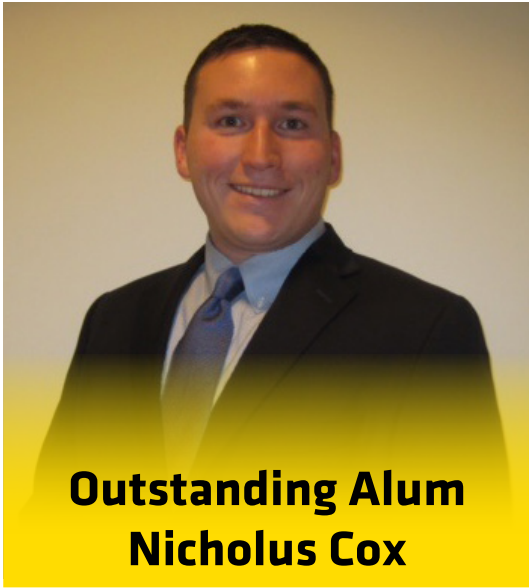


**Rising Star  
Akbar Abdullah**

**Akbar Abdullah** enlisted in the Army National Guard in August of 2000. He trained and served in four military occupational specialties: small arms repair, wheeled vehicle mechanic, metal worker, and Bradley fighting vehicle maintainer. In 2005, he deployed to Bagdad, Iraq with the 2/137th Combined Battalion and again in 2010, to the Horn of Africa. While serving in the National Guard, Akbar obtained his HVAC certificate. He currently works for Wichita State University in the Physical Plant building maintenance department where he puts his HVAC certificate to use.

In 2013, Akbar joined the Veterans Upward Bound program. He wanted to further his education by pursuing an associate's degree to complement his HVAC certification. However, he would have to start over due to when he received his certification. That realization forced Akbar to reconsider his options. He participated in both the summer and winter academic boot camps offered by VUB as he considered his college options. In the fall of 2017, Akbar enrolled at Wichita Area Technical College to earn an associate's degree in welding.

Akbar believes that VUB has assisted and prepared him for his associate's degree. The boot camps, computer lab and speaking with the program specialists have all helped tremendously and enriched him while on his academic journey.



**Outstanding Alum  
Nicholus Cox**

**Nicholus Cox** was an active member in Communication Upward Bound (CUB) from 2008-2011. Nicholus credits his aggressive drive to the encouragement he received from the CUB staff as the reason he is where he is today. He relays that the CUB summer residential program was the opportunity he needed to prepare for the college experience. Currently, Nicholus is employed with Westar Energy as an electrical power distribution system engineer that serves west Wichita, Hutchinson, KS and Newton, KS.

Nicholus credits former CUB staff Teja Veeramachaneni as the mentor who indirectly influenced his career path. “Teja was so passionate about her major in electrical engineering. She influenced my decision to choose the same major. I graduated with a BSEE from Wichita State and I’m currently enrolled at WSU in the master’s of science degree program in electrical engineering. I plan to graduate in 2018.”

He is a native of Wichita and graduated from South High School. His long-term goals include earning a master’s in electrical engineering, pursuing an MBA at WSU next fall, and eventually acquiring a PhD in electrical engineering. Nicholus shared that his mission in life is to utilize all of his capabilities in leadership, education and to inspire and teach others how to live in such a way that when one leaves this world, it’s a better place because of one’s contributions.



**Rising Star  
Caitlin Riordan**

**Caitlin Riordan**, a senior at North High School, represents the best and brightest in CUB. Caitlin has been an active participant since her freshman year. Despite the rigor of advanced placement and a myriad of extracurricular activities, Caitlin has maintained a 4.0 grade point average.

In Caitlin’s words, “CUB has allowed me to blossom and grow. I was excited to participate in the program and learn more about the process of applying to college. CUB allowed me to see the possibilities of attending college despite my financial restraints. I was enthused to visit colleges and universities in St. Louis, Tulsa, and Oklahoma City. I am actually applying to several of them. The staff at CUB has influenced me to grow as a person and student. The program forced me to break out of my shell and develop social communication skills.”

Caitlin learned a great deal about volunteering through CUB. She indicated that the most influential component was the public speaking course where she grew to enjoy sharing her ideas and developing skills as a public speaker.

This past summer, Caitlin interned at Prochaska, Howell, and Prochaska law firm. “The internship helped me to narrow down my career path to either criminal or immigration law. I really want to advocate for those who have no voice.” Caitlin intends to major in political science and her long-term goal includes pursuing a law degree.

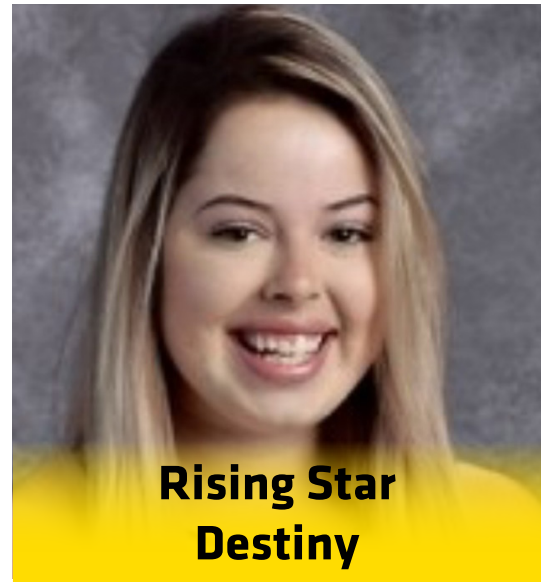


**Jonathan Nehring** participated in Kansas Kids @ GEAR UP from 2005-2007. This experience kept him from being sidetracked by the many distractions within the foster care system and focused on his goal of a secondary education.

Because of KKGU resources, Jonathan was able to attend the University of Kansas as a first generation student and successfully complete his undergraduate degrees in accounting and finance.

Jonathan subsequently obtained his juris doctorate from the University of Kansas School of Law. He currently resides in New York City where he advises on tax law matters for Macquarie Bank.

According to Jonathan, “KKGU provides the foundation and guidance for those underserved populations which have not been given this foundation. This foundation allows young people to focus on schooling and career development with the financial certainty that would have otherwise been their sole focus. I am extremely grateful KKGU was there to provide me with this foundation which I have benefitted from as I work to build upon it every day.”



**Destiny** became part of Kansas Kids @ GEAR UP in August 2014. Destiny has always been a very outgoing person and has made the best of her situation. She has been fortunate that her placements have all been fairly long-term. She is living with a family who adopted one of her younger siblings. She is currently in the adoption process.

Destiny is in the eleventh grade and has a 3.5 grade point average. She has taken IB, AP and honors classes and is involved in several clubs including Key Club, Christians on Campus and Sign Language Club. Destiny enjoys volunteering in her community as well. She has over 30 community service hours for First Call for Help. She volunteers doing sign language interpreting and is only a few months shy of becoming a legal sign interpreter. This accomplishment will make her tri-lingual.

Destiny believes that GEAR UP has helped her to evaluate her college decisions. She feels that with the help of GEAR UP she will be able to attend the college of her choice and feels that GEAR UP has helped her see that she is not limited by the “foster kid standards” in people’s minds.

Destiny has attended many GEAR UP events, campus visits, summer programming and volunteering activities. She hopes to study forensic science in college and would love to work in the blood splatter analysis field of forensics.





**Jalia Lane** is a sophomore at Wichita West High School. She is one of nine siblings. Jalia relays that while her family is considered large, they are all very close and supportive of one another. She is very grateful for their support in encouraging her to do, and be, the very best.

She admits that middle school in comparison to high school was a lot easier for her. She also confesses that she has to focus on time management and academics more and is challenged as she matriculates in honors courses at her high school. She enjoys cheerleading. However, she prioritizes her cheering responsibilities with her classes. Jalia states, "I have to prepare, organize my time around studying, focusing on each subject, homework and preparing for tests. It has been an adjustment, but I love to work hard and GEAR UP has been a blessing to me and my family as well as my classmates."

Jalia is an active participant in GEAR UP tutoring before, during and after school. She relays that engaging in campus visits has eliminated fears of attending college. Campus visits have given her career exploration opportunities that she will eventually pursue upon graduation from high school. In all, Jalia is excited with all of the incentives GEAR UP provides. In her words, she continues to challenge herself to grow and intends to take advantage of every opportunity.



**David Schlesinger** is a sophomore at Southeast High School. He has been an active participant in the South Wichita GEAR UP program for two years. His career goal is to become a general surgeon.

David is a straight "A" student, soft-spoken, and demonstrates great passion to help people. His hobbies include reading, swimming, hanging out with friends, and writing. He is involved in student government and peer mentoring. In keeping with his career goal, David volunteers for blood drives at school and for Via Christi hospital.

He launched a new club at school called Future Doctors of Southeast (FDSE) to bring students together who have a common interest of pursuing careers in the medical field. As FDSE president, David hopes to connect with local medical professionals and invite them to be guest speakers to inspire students, improve their academic goals, and create a purposeful path to their medical career.

David also came up with a slogan for FDSE - "Passionate About Medicine...Compassionate About People!" He feels that this summarizes his calling in life.

David considers himself a regular student, whose favorite subject is science. One day, he hopes to be a great doctor who will save many lives in the community.

# ▶ National TRIO Day Agenda

Tuesday, February 13, 2018  
Wichita State University

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## **CARS Conference**

*(Open to the public)*

Register at [www.wichita.edu/cars](http://www.wichita.edu/cars)

**10:00 am to 12:30 pm**

Rhatigan Student Center, 2nd Floor

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## **NATIONAL TRIO DAY BANQUET**

*(by invitation only)*

Beggs Ball Room, Rhatigan Student Center

**5:30 pm to 6:00 pm:** VIP Reception

**6:00 pm:** Greetings & Welcome

**Proclamations:** State, City & University

**Acknowledgement of Special Guests**

**Dinner & Video Showcase**

**Awards:** Honoring Our Own

**Felicitations:** Building Bridges & Service Awards

**Recognitions:** Special Programs Staff

*Networking & Social Time*

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To learn more about  
Wichita State University  
Special Programs and  
TRIO Day 2018 go to:  
[wichita.edu/triodayezine](http://wichita.edu/triodayezine)





**TRIO Programs are funded 100% and GEAR UP is funded 50% by the U.S. Department of Education and hosted by Wichita State University under the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement.**

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