

Students Attend TRiO Activities at State Capitol

03.10.2009

These students from several western Oklahoma high schools recently attended TRiO Day activities with the Southwestern Oklahoma State University Upward Bound Program in Weatherford. Attending were (front from left): Peggy McKinsey, Watonga; Logan Sellers, Burns Flat; and Blayne Elam, Carnegie. Back from left-Sharon Tsatoke, Anadarko; Shelia Silverhorn, Ft. Cobb; Amanda Haynes, Anadarko; and Kristen Schaefer, Watonga.

Seven students from several western Oklahoma high schools recently attended TRiO Day activities with the Southwestern Oklahoma State University Upward Bound Program in Weatherford.

The event took place at the State Capitol in Oklahoma City and the theme for this year was "Linking Dreams to Opportunity."

Those who attended were: Sharon Tsatoke and Amanda Haynes, both of Anadarko; Shelia Silverhorn, Ft. Cobb; Kristen Schaefer and Peggy McKinsey, both of Watonga; Logan Sellers, Burns Flat; and Blayne Elam, Carnegie.

SWOSU's UB program serves 76 students from eight area high schools. In an effort to provide educational opportunity for all Americans and eligible non-citizens, the U.S. Congress initiated the federal TRiO programs through the Higher Education Act of 1965. TRiO now offers seven educational outreach programs that are designed to motivate, support and advocate for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

TRiO Day provides an opportunity to spotlight TRiO and educate Oklahoma state officials, media and others regarding the importance TRiO programs have on the state of Oklahoma. There are currently 85 TRiO programs in Oklahoma, serving 26,491 students. Nationally, there are 2,853 TRiO programs serving 841,716 individuals.

Over 1,000 individuals attended this year's annual event. Oklahoma Secretary of State Susan Savage gave the proclamation and the guest speakers were Dr. Kermit McMurry, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs; Lt. Governor Jari Askins; and State Senator Kenneth Corn, who was the 2008 Oklahoma TRiO Achiever.

Former TRiO participants also spoke, sharing their stories of how TRiO programs helped them overcome barriers that may have potentially kept them from obtaining a college education.

Upward Bound is a college preparatory program designed to assist high school students who have the potential for college, but often do not recognize or understand their academic and career options beyond high school. Students who participate in Upward Bound receive academic instruction, tutoring, personal and career counseling, ACT test prep, professional mentoring, exposure to cultural events and community service and assistance in completing college admission, financial aid and scholarship applications.

Additional information about Upward Bound is available by calling the director Jamie Novey at 580.774.7029.