

The University of Montevallo

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Spring Newsletter

January 2009

TRiO

A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAM



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

ASPIRE: To long, aim, or seek ambitiously; be eagerly desirous, especially for something great or of high value.

Welcome back to school! I hope your break was relaxing and fun. For those of you who don't yet know me, my name is Dr. Denise Myers and I have been the Director of Student Support Services since July. I relocated to Alabama from Wisconsin, where I served as the director of another federally funded TRiO program. I am very excited to be a part of such a great school and meeting all of our wonderful students. Along with my fabulous staff, I anticipate many great years full of a variety of useful and fun activities and programs for our participants.

As a newcomer to this campus I made a commitment to ensure that the SSS program staff educate the University community about this program and its mission. I am not new to Student Support Services, having served as director at another institution; but I didn't "know" this program the way current participants do. Consequently, at my request, several SSS participants graciously agreed to meet with me last semester to provide their perspectives about the program and their experiences as SSS participants. The overarching response was that our program would benefit from more visibility that would first, allow potentially eligible students to know that our services are available, and second, educate the University community about what we do. Additionally, from comments made during my meetings with students I learned that, while they knew a few other participants, it would be great to get to know everyone in the program.

I believe that the first thing that we can do is to build a spirit of community *within* our program. That means connecting new with continuing participants, and continuing participants *with each other*. That means attending activities as a group, with opportunities for pre- or post-discussions. That means you, the participants, taking some ownership of the program by planning and advertising workshops that you think would be beneficial to your fellow participants. Lastly, working with the staff to create/reinvigorate the Advisory Board, including participants in creating our newsletter, and perhaps a peer mentoring group.

There is power in numbers; and when we stand together as a community, it will follow that the University community will recognize us as well!

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For your convenience, the office is now open later on Tuesdays!

WHAT IS TRiO?

“TRiO” refers to a series of federally funded programs committed to providing educational opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, ethnic background or economic circumstance.

Legislated under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, these programs were created to assist under-served Americans in overcoming class, social and cultural barriers to higher education. The name TRiO is not an acronym, but was coined to represent the initial three programs, Upward Bound, Educational Talent Search, and Student Support Services.

SSS was created to assist eligible students in developing the academic skills and personal development necessary to successfully pursue a college education. Students who participate in SSS are more than *twice as likely* to remain in college than students from similar backgrounds who do not participate.

Benefits of Participation

Academics

Individual Tutoring Service
Workshops
Grad School Workshops
Individual Academic and Career Advising

Opportunities

Free Printing
Computer Lab
Laptop & Textbook Lending*
Grant Aid for Qualified Participants
Cultural & Educational Events
Leadership Roles And Skills

Meet People

Social Gatherings
A Mentor

* Coming Soon!

A lot of people are waiting for Martin Luther King or Mahatma Gandhi to come back -- but they are gone. We are it. It is up to us. It is up to you.

Marian Wright Edelman

Director, continued from p.1

Lastly, I want to take this opportunity to draw your attention to the word, and its definition, at the top of my article. This is the *new name* of our program: **ASPIRE**. This change represents a philosophy: our program focuses on assisting eligible students who choose to partner with us because they believe that we can assist them in realizing their dream of completing a college education. Through intentional, specific programming and services we expect our participants to become empowered as they take the reins of their academic success into their hands.

We don't make things happen *to* you. Rather, we expect that *through* this partnership—which begins upon your entering the program and continues through to graduation—you will learn to utilize all university resources and opportunities, and build excellent academic skills. Additionally, you will learn to make appropriate choices for your education here at the University of Montevallo, and for your future as responsible citizens.

Dr. R. Denise Myers

ASPIRE/SSS Profile Book



This is an opportunity for ASPIRE participants to band together and combine their resources to help each other succeed!

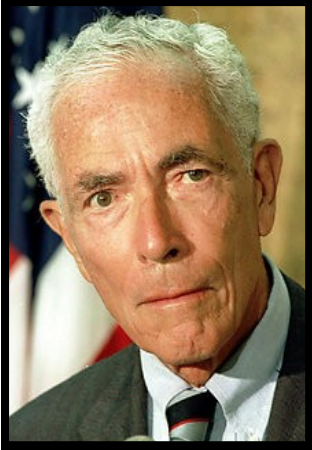
The Profile Book is a way for our students to share their classroom experiences, such as information about classes and instructors. You may want to share information about the instructor's teaching style, helpfulness, approachability, tests and quiz structure, and classroom expectations, or other information that you believe will be helpful to our students.

The information you provide may guide other SSS students as they plan their courses. *Please keep the information you provide on a professional, respectful level.* For more information contact the ASPIRE/SSS Office at Station 6250.



IN MEMORIAM

Claiborne de Borda Pell



Sen. Claiborne Pell in 1995

If you haven't already guessed, Claiborne Pell was the primary sponsor of the Pell Grant, (no doubt very familiar to many of you and to millions of other college students). He also was the principal sponsor of a 1965 law establishing the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Pell passed away on New Year's Day, at his home in Newport, RI, after a long and tough battle with Parkinson's Disease. He was 90.

Born November 22, 1918 in New York City, Pell earned his A.B. degree, *summa cum laude*, in history from Princeton University and his M.A. degree from Columbia University. He also earned a bachelor's degree from Princeton University in 1940. Pell's life was defined by service: He was a U.S. Senator (Rhode Island) from 1961 to 1997. He served in the U.S. Coast Guard during World War II. Later, he participated at the international conference that created the United Nations, followed by a stint as a U.S. State Department official and Foreign Service officer.

During his political career Pell was a longtime supporter of federal aid for higher education. Although he himself attended some of the nation's finest private schools, and was one of a long line of U.S. senators and congressmen in his family (including his father, several uncles, great uncles, and a great-great-grandfather), Pell took a particular interest the problems that many low- and middle-income students were having in affording college. He took a leading role in eliminating financial barriers to higher education, and his concerns were addressed by amendments in 1972 to the Higher Education Act. This legislation created the Basic Educational Opportunity Grants in 1973, which Congress later renamed "Pell Grants" in 1980. These grants provided funding directly to low-income students instead of channeling it through other institutions, which marked a profound change from earlier federal aid programs. By the time he retired in 1997, Pell grants had aided more than 54 million low- and middle-income Americans.

Claiborne Pell also distinguished himself as a supporter of gay rights. In 1993 during a bitter confirmation battle over Roberta Achtenberg as an assistant secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), a bloc of senators objected to her appointment solely because she was openly lesbian. Pell, whose daughter Julia was a lesbian, denounced the attacks. On the Senate floor he stated, "I believe we should strive to let simple standards of fairness and equal treatment be our guide in examining all nominees that come before us...I know I would want to see my daughter treated fairly, if she were the nominee before us today." Achtenberg's nomination was secured by a margin of 58 to 31, making her the first openly gay person to be confirmed by the United States Senate.

Pell was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in December 1994 and disclosed the condition the following spring. He left office in January 1997 after his sixth term—36 years—as Senator. Describing his job as a senator, Pell said his work was to "translate ideas into actions and help people."

Pell has been decorated by no fewer than twelve foreign countries, as well as received honorary degrees from 46 colleges and universities. Vice President-elect Joe Biden, who served with Pell in the Senate and who chaired the Foreign Relations Committee from 2001 to 2003 and for the past two years, said, "Claiborne Pell was a man of extraordinary integrity, grace and decency." Claiborne Pell truly was a champion for those who needed their voices heard.

From http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/topics/Claiborne_Pell

STUDENT OF THE MONTH



We are launching the *Student of the Month* program. In order to qualify for the Student of the Month program, you must be an active participant in ASPIRE/SSS.

A student must be nominated by a staff member for showing improvement or achievement in the areas of mentoring, ASPIRE/SSS participation, tutoring, academics, etc. The chosen student or students for each month will be voted

on by staff members and the winner(s) will have his or her photograph posted in the display case located in the main hallway next to the ASPIRE/SSS office.

The winner will have his or her photo and name in this newsletter, and *receive a voucher for a free drink at Jazzman's!*



BIRTHDAYS!

We have lots of birthdays this month!
Help us wish a "Happy Birthday" to the following January birthday babies!

Dora Dodson	Olivia Lucy
Melody Briscoe	Patrick Cobb
Kristen Lipscomb	John Screven
Chiara Smith	Jessica Davis
Brandy McGough	LaChandra Cook
Seth Hampton	Ricky Walker
Leigh Williams	



JOIN THE STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD!

Want to show off your leadership skills? We invite you to join the ASPIRE/SSS Advisory Board. For more information please contact the ASPIRE/SSS Office.

"The strength of the United States is not the gold at Fort Knox or the weapons of mass destruction that we have, but the sum total of the education and the character of our people."

Claiborne de Borda Pell

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OFFICE/COMPUTER LAB HOURS:

Monday—Friday: 7:00 am to 5:00 pm

Tuesday Only: 7:00 am to 6:30 pm



ASPIRE/SSS Staff:

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