
SEMESTER REVIEW

| Wesleyan Upward Bound Math-Science |

In Honor of Willard McRae



Willard McRae

October 11, 1933- February 18, 2016

Willard McRae devoted his life to connecting people to the services and care they need the most. McRae was a proud founder of the Wesleyan University Upward Bound Program and made major contributions to many local organizations. Willard was the first African-American to chair the Board of Directors at Liberty Bank and was a founding director of both the Liberty Bank Foundation and the Community Foundation of Middlesex County. At the time of his retirement in 1996, Willard was the Administrative Director of the Middlesex Hospital Mental Health Clinic. For his distinguished service, Willard has received numerous awards including the Middletown Press 2015 Person of the Year, the Sherry and Herb Clark Beacon of Philanthropy Award from the Community Foundation of Middlesex County and the Middlesex United Way Community Leadership Award. McRae passed away in February 2016 at the age of 82 and left a legacy of helping others who needed it.

“Upward Bound is very important in that its spirit will go on forever in some form... Wherever those kids are, they’re going to have some influence. That’s forever.”

-Willard McRae

Because of him, we can

From the Director's Desk

We have come to the end of another semester and I think that it is important that we pause and reflect on all of our accomplishments. We have done so much this semester and I hope that everyone had an opportunity to participate in one or more of the events that we offered. We hosted and provided students with some amazing opportunities. Wesleyan's Admissions Department, specifically James Huerta and Clifford Thornton, were instrumental in educating our students on the college process and college fair etiquette and I want to thank them for their partnership. I am also excited about the number of ways that we have been able to connect with the Wesleyan community. Through the creation of a mentorship program, My Brother and Sister's Keeper, we have provided a platform for more engagement and interaction between Wesleyan students of similar backgrounds to Upward Bound students. I want to thank our leaders for the creation of this much needed mentoring program: Nebiyu Daniel, Shardonay Pagett, Brianna Thurman and Triston Ortiz. As we return in the fall, I hope that we will build off this relationship and continue the work.

I want to also acknowledge all the hard work of our seniors and congratulate them. You made it, you did it and we wish you luck as you embark on the next chapter in your life. Please stay in touch with us, as we want to continue to be a part of your support team. You will forever be a part of the TRIO family. I want to take this time to also welcome our new recruits to the Upward Bound family. We are excited that you have chosen to be a part of our family and we look forward to working together to help you accomplish your goals.

-Teshia Levy-Grant

TRiO Day 2016

In February, a select group of students (page 2) attended TRiO Day in Burlington, VT, for three days and two nights. The trip included college tours of Amherst College, University of Vermont, Champlain College, and Middlebury College. There was also a powerful keynote speaker, Richard Haynes, an Admissions Officer at the University of New Hampshire and a renowned artist. He talked about applying to college and overcoming adversity. Students also participated in various workshops and activities, including a scholars bowl, and a "Financial Reality Check," in which they had to create a household budget based on randomly assigned jobs/earnings, and college loan debt. There was also a dance and what turned out to be quite a pool party in the hotel. The event was attended by hundreds of students from programs like UBMS from all around New England.

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Upward Bound TRIO Day Crew 2016, visiting Amherst College on the way to Vermont, from left to right: Denia Campbell, Razahnae Watson (behind Kathy), Kathy, Mickayla Joseph, Melanie Tirado, Yamile Beltran, Fatima Boumgourd, Marissa Torres, Te'Rell Knox, Karolina Tarnacki, Daniel Urena, Marek



TRIO Day. At the dance – Kathy, Daniel Urena, Fatima Boumgourd, Marissa Torres, Te'Rell Knox, Marek

Etiquette Luncheon

In April, our students dressed up for a formal luncheon at the Marriott Hotel in Cromwell, where they heard a presentation on table and professional etiquette by Karen Thomas, a certified etiquette coach and “Your Connecticut etiquette expert” as seen on ABC, NBC, FOX, and CBS. Students learned how etiquette and table manners are essential skills to make a good first impression and how to network with others. UBMS partnered with McNair, My Sister’s Keeper (Women of Color Collective), My Brother’s Keeper (Invisible Men), and Wesleyan’s Green Fund to put on this event. This was a continuation of the mentoring program introduced in February. Students got to practice their table and networking etiquette while sitting and interacting with Wesleyan students who will mentor them next semester.

This event was highlighted on the front page of the *Middletown Press* on May 16th! Thank you to all the groups that made it possible!



Gabriela Montanez, freshman at Middletown High School, sits with Wesleyan students at the Etiquette Luncheon

Biomedical Science Careers Student Conference

In April, six of our students attended the Biomedical Science Careers Student Conference in Boston. The conference is designed to address the need for student mentoring, guidance, support, and career development. It provides underrepresented and first generation high school students with an opportunity to network with advisors and role models from the basic and clinical sciences, medicine, public health, academic administration and the private sector. The advisors at this conference encouraged the students to complete advanced studies and gave them concrete advice and information on available resources, professional opportunities and career paths. This conference also enabled the student participants to meet, inspire and network with one another. Our students were also able to enjoy “a little of the Boston life” since we arrived the day before the conference. We’re sure our participants will go on to have successful careers in the medical field!



About to head off to Boston, left to right: Asma Akter, Mickayla Joseph, Charlene Ngige, Erica Arhin, Jordan Legendre, Farhana Mariya

Body Worlds Exhibit



This semester our students took a trip to New York City to visit the Body Worlds Exhibit. This exhibit enters its third year in New York in an inspiring exhibit experience about challenges our bodies face navigating the 21st century. The exhibit uses real bodies that were donated to science to help amplify the experience. After the exhibit, students had a chance to explore Times Square and enjoy lunch in the city.

Body Worlds Exhibit trip. In Times Square, left to right: Love Quaye, Nelson Robles, Daniel Urena, Nasim Aouji, Ledjin Gebo, Patrick Mularzuk, Melanie Tirado, Devaughn Tucker, Edwin Laboy, Fatima Boumgourd.

Common Application/ Financial Aid 101/ College Panel

For our February Saturday Session, we held a couple of events on the same day. Freshmen, sophomores and juniors had a common application workshop where students were given details about the process of applying to college and the application itself from Wesleyan admission counselors. They also received a Financial Aid workshop where they learned the basics about applying for financial aid from Wesleyan financial aid officers. We also had a college panel and a financial aid analysis workshop for the seniors. Here the students learned how to pick the best school for them academically, financially, etc, hearing from first generation/low income Wesleyan students. After these events, parents and students joined us for brunch



Students enjoying brunch at the February Saturday Session.



UBMS Student Shoutout: Mickayla Joseph

Mickayala Joseph, a junior at Middletown High School, pictured above, is in front of Wesleyan Potters, where UBMS helped her apply for a scholarship to take a pottery class. Her application was a success and she recently received a scholarship to take another class! We couldn't be more proud! Congratulations Mickayla!

College Fair and Cyber Safety Workshops

In March, our students attended a college fair workshop where they learned the basics about attending a college fair. They learned that first impressions are key and were informed of proper etiquette when it comes to meeting a college admissions counselor. They received this information from Wesleyan admission counselors themselves. There was also a presentation for students and parents on cyber safety by Lieutenant West from the Public Safety Department at Wesleyan. In addition, there was another financial aid workshop for seniors, which included a visit from one of our former students - Daniella Dennis. She graduated last year and just finished up her first year at Central Connecticut State University. She spoke to students about how she paid all of her tuition through scholarships she got on her own, as well as her experiences in college.

NACAC National College Fair

The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) hosted its annual National College Fair in Hartford in March. A group of our students took advantage of the opportunity to meet admissions representatives from over 300 colleges and universities from the US and abroad. Students were able to put to use the college fair etiquette skills they practiced at the Saturday Session earlier that month.

Science Day

In May, students participated in hands-on science experiments, including an egg-drop, catapult, chair spin (angular momentum), air pressure vortex, and opposable thumb. We also said goodbye to the seniors at their last Saturday Session, with each senior telling the group where they are heading off to college. There was also a surprise appearance from Matthew Padilla, a Wesleyan student who helped organize a career fair for our students a few years ago. He was very involved on campus and in the community, including My Brother's Keeper (Invisible Men). He graduated this year and spoke to students about his experiences in college, his advice, and his plans after graduation.

Tutoring

Tutoring sessions are an integral facet of the UBMS program. We selectively hire tutors of various backgrounds and academic fields of study who are currently attending Wesleyan University. We highly encourage all of our students to take advantage of such a great and **free** resource at their disposal. This past semester we had tutoring on Tuesdays and Thursdays, after school 2:30-5pm at the UBMS office.



Tutors helping UBMS students during a study session.

Meet the Tutors



Hannah Bolotin

English, Biology, Chemistry, Math

Wesleyan, Class of 2019

Major: Neuroscience, Psychology and Philosophy

Hometown: Seattle, WA



Tutoring in session

When Hannah is not working for Wesleyan UBMS, she likes to go on bikes, listen to music and spend time with her friends, family and her cat and dog. Fun Fact: Hannah is vegan!



Thafir Elzofri

Math (all subjects) & Spanish

Wesleyan, Class of 2019

Major: Math

Hometown: Oakland, California — but attended school in Berkeley, California

When he's not doing schoolwork or working at UBMS, Thafir enjoys writing comedy and sitcoms, as well as performing stand-up comedy. He is involved in various extracurricular clubs at Wesleyan such as Middle Eastern Perspectives and the Muslim Student Association, and volunteers for the Wesleyan Refugee Project, a organization that works with Syrian refugees, living both in and outside of Syria.

My name is Thafir Elzofri and I am the new intern for Wesleyan UBMS. When I first started, I was told that communication with the students was an issue. We noticed that emails and phone calls were not enough so I started our social media presence. In the beginning of the spring semester, I created a Snapchat and Facebook page for UBMS (see page 2). This helped a little bit more, but it can definitely be improved. As parents and students who commit to the program, we try to inform you about the events and updates we work hard to create. Everyone's participation is key for a successful four years with the program. If you have any ideas that we should consider about reaching you or your student, please email me at telzofri@wesleyan.edu. Thank you and I look forward to working with you and getting to know you more next academic year!

Other tutors who make it possible include: Jeffery Bigman (Class of 2017) and Eric Gooden (Class of 2019)

Class of 2016 Profile

We are so proud of the Class of 2016 and the hard work they put into applying to college and getting in!
So, where are the Class of 2016 going?

Imade Adnane – University of Connecticut
 Esmeralda Alvarez – Middlesex Community College
 William Anti – Western CT State University
 Mariano Cardet – Central CT State University
 Terri Carson – University of Hartford
 Alexia Deleo – Manhattanville College
 Dontrell Douglas – Southern CT State University
 Zamyra Douglas – Middlesex Community College
 Jacob Johnson – Tunxis Community College
 Edwin Laboy – Central CT State University
 Jessica Marcatoma – Central CT State University
 Patrick Mularzuk – University of Connecticut
 Sierra Pettway – University of Connecticut
 Devaughn Tucker – Central CT State University
 Shanya Wyatt – Spelman College
 Asma Akter – Middlesex Community College
 Corey Freer – University of Connecticut
 Emily Gombotz – University of Connecticut
 Dhruv Kekare – University of Connecticut
 Frhana Mariya – University of Connecticut
 Zahria McDaniel – Quinnipiac University
 Gifty Mensah – University of Connecticut
 Lizzie Smith – Trinity College
 Jevon Smith – University of Connecticut
 Aisha Spears – Springfield College
 Ijah Teape – Mitchell College
 Chris Tewksbury – Rochester Institute of Technology
 Chelsea Winborne – Dean College
 Lydia Wolfe – Franklin & Marshall College
 Yan Zhao – Boston University



Congratulations to the Class of 2016! Your UBMS family is very proud of you!

Points System

Last semester we introduced a POINTS incentives program! As part of their participation in the UBMS program, students had the opportunity to earn points for taking advantage of all the services and resources we have available to prepare them to enroll and persist in college. The students with the highest point totals at the end of the 2015-16 school year were awarded with a Kindle Fire tablet. The top 5 points earners and winners of this Semester's Points Incentives Program are:

Farhana Mariya (senior, Middletown High)
Melanie Tirado (sophomore, Platt High)
Trevor Stevens (junior, Middletown High)
Te'Rell Knox (junior, Maloney High)
Sarah Nguyen (sophomore, Middletown High)

These students earned points through academic achievement and improvement, as well as attendance and participation in school and at UBMS. A special shout-out also goes to Melanie Tirado, who already received a Kindle Fire for the best peer biography from December. She will receive an additional gift for her outstanding performance.



Farhana Mariya, top points earner!

Congratulations to the winners!!

Ascend

The Ascend Program is an exciting program designed to help students prepare for future educational goals through tutoring, hands-on enrichment projects, cultural field trips, and special events. The Ascend students are required to meet after school twice each week with a Wesleyan student who will assist with homework assignments, schoolwork, hands-on enrichment sessions in math, science, music, art, social studies, language arts, music, and technology. The Ascend students went on a trip to National Museum of Mathematics (MoMath) and the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in New York.





During their trip to MoMath and the Intrepid museum in New York, students visited Madison Square Park - where they had lunch.

Let's Get Ready SAT Prep

The Spring edition of the Let's Get Ready (LGR) SAT Prep course for juniors got underway in February at Wesleyan and ran until the beginning of May. The course included an Intro Session for students and parents, a pre and post diagnostic test (to measure improvement), and 16 classes, which met Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:30-8:30pm. The course prepared students for the May SAT, and included registration for the test and fee waivers (so registration fee of about \$55 dollars waived). The course also contained a college prep element, including college essay draft writing and a college visit to Eastern Connecticut State University. Students were coached by trained Wesleyan students. A final ceremony with gifts, awards, and a financial aid presentation wrapped up the course.