Help us name the newsletter!

Greetings!

We are pleased to present the first monthly Upward Bound newsletter. Each month we will mail a newsletter to your home, and post it on the webpage so you can share it with your friends and family. Each newsletter will include updates on activities, community events, and participant photos. We will also provide information about succeeding in high school, applying to college, and healthy living. Because college is a family affair there is a special section for our Upward Bound parents and guardians, full of helpful tips and resources.

To kick things off, we are holding a contest to name the newsletter. So put on your thinking caps and decide what Upward Bound means to you. All submissions must be received no later than February 22, 2008. Submissions can be sent to UpwardBound@mail.wvu.edu or WVU Upward Bound, PO Box 6891, G-4 Mountainlair, Morgantown, WV 26506-6891. The individual who submits the winning title will receive a WVU T-shirt.

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WVU Upward Bound participants and staff at the Carnegie Science Center, December 15, 2007. Participants had the opportunity to see the Bodies Exhibit, Omnimax show, and explore the exhibits.

What Can You Do with $40?

Go on a date, save for college, buy a new pair of shoes? The choice is up to you. Remember, to receive your monthly stipend you must attend all monthly in-school meetings, all Saturday Programs, and complete two or more hours of tutoring each month. Please return all of your stipend paperwork to the office as soon as possible. You will not receive your stipend until all of your paperwork is processed.

Sheetz, our Partner in Education. Sheetz has generously donated subs, chips, cookies, and soda for our Saturday programs. Upward Bound would like to thank the staff and management of Sheetz for their dedication to education.

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On December 15, 2007 WVU Upward Bound hosted the first Saturday Program of the school year. Participants from all three host schools traveled to Pittsburgh, PA to visit the Carnegie Science Center (CSC).

The day’s activities included a tour of Bodies the Exhibit, a screening of Sea Monsters, and time to explore the CSC with friends (new and old). Bodies the Exhibit provided an opportunity to learn about anatomy and the effects of diseases and lifestyle choices. Students could see first-hand the effects of smoking on lungs, strokes, and obesity. Paleontologists took us back in time with Sea Monsters, a Omnimax show. The large format screen, HD graphics, and rumbling sound made this film a real adventure. Many stated this was the highlight of the day. Lastly, we explored the CSC independently. Students could manipulate light and sound, explore the salt water aquarium, or investigate many other interactive exhibits.

After a long day, the bus left the CSC early to avoid the bad weather. On the way home we enjoyed a pizza feast. The trip was a great chance for us to get to know each other. Many students came home with new ideas and new friends.
College Corner

Upward Bound Means College Bound!

Freshmen: It is never too early to think about college! Now is the time to learn about the general college admissions requirements. While requirements vary from college to college, you can view WVU’s requirements at http://admissions.wvu.edu/undergraduate/application/requirements.asp. If a college interests you, contact the office of admissions about entrance requirements. Become involved in extracurricular and community service activities. Participation in these activities looks great on your application, and in some cases may help you earn scholarship money.

Sophomores: Meet with your counselor to make sure your classes are on track for college. It is time to prepare for your college entrance exams. Consider taking the PSAT or the PLAN. These exams are similar to the SAT and ACT. It will help you identify weak areas, and improve your test taking confidence. Go to college visitation days or college fairs. 

Juniors: The push is on, time to get serious! Research possible colleges and majors, and figure out your top choices. Meet with your counselor to check if you meet the entrance requirements. You may also want to consider leadership roles in your school and community. Many schools have early acceptance dates as early as November or December of your senior year. That means it is time to start writing your personal statements and entrance essays.

High School Hints

Study Smarter! Not Harder!

- Always work on your most difficult homework first when you are feeling alert and energized.
- Take breaks. Did you know that you learn more if you split up your study time? Try switching subjects every 20-30 minutes. If there is no way around working on the same subject for hours, take 15 minutes off each hour. Exercise, stretch, or reward yourself with some fun.
- Avoid high sugar snacks. They might pick you up at first, but then you have a sugar crash, instead go for natural sugars (fruit) and protein.
- Set good priorities. If you have a paper due in a week and a test in two days, focus on the test.
- Use your preferred learning style. Think back to the activity you did with UB. Are you a visual learner? How about auditory or hands-on learning? How can this strength help you? If you need suggestions about learning styles please check with the UB staff.
- Have a comfortable learning environment. Avoid watching television or listening to the radio while you study. Look for a place with enough room for you to spread out your materials. Plan for distractions.
- Stay organized. Use a calendar or planner to help you track when your assignments are due and the score you received—then your grade is never a surprise.

Health and Wellness

It is a new year. For many of us that means New Year’s resolutions. Below are some helpful hints to make your resolutions more manageable.

- Write it down! Research shows you are more likely to reach your goal if you write it down. Many people find it helpful to break goals down into smaller steps or mini-goals.
- Be reasonable. “Drinking no more than one soda per day” is more manageable than “I will never eat sugar again.”
- Be practical. Don’t set yourself up for failure by making things difficult. Who keeps a resolution that is always frustrating and unpleasant? Nobody. To eat healthier, make a list of healthy foods you enjoy. If you need more exercise do something fun. Think about what you liked to do when you were little. Ride a bike, skate, or hike. We are all different.
- Build a support network. Tell positive friends and family members about your goal. Ask them to help you when things seem difficult.
- Forgive yourself. So you broke down and ate the jumbo chili-dog with extra cheese. It is not the end of the world. Don’t spend a lot of time beating yourself up, just try again.
- Love yourself. Even if you don’t reach your goal today, next week, or next year, you are not a failure. Make a list of all of your good qualities, and keep it somewhere safe. Pull it out anytime you need a little encouragement. Give yourself a reward for a job well done.

Remember, you don’t have to wait for New Years to make a positive change in your life. START NOW!

Parent’s Corner

Welcome to Upward Bound. As you know, we are here to support your student as they pursue their academic goals. Soon, we will begin our weekly tutoring sessions to supplement our monthly meetings at your student’s school. Throughout the year we provide opportunities for college visitations, field-trips and cultural experiences to keep your student active and involved. We understand it affects a whole family when a student goes to college. Please feel free to contact us with your questions or concerns regarding UB or your student. We can be reached from 8:30 am to 5 pm at 304-293-6199 or UpwardBound@mail.wvu.edu.

Below are some reasons why you may want to contact us:

- You are concerned about how an event is impacting your student’s life and academic success (e.g. death in the family, illness, divorce).
- Your student is struggling in one or more subjects, and you would like to know how we can help.
- To find out about class selection, college searches, or the application process.
- You would like to meet with an Upward Bound staff member for assistance completing college and financial aid application forms.
- You would like to share a special achievement/honor your student received.

We look forward to working with you.
Upward Bound is a federally-funded grant program. Funded by the Title IV TRIO grant from the US Department of Education, the project services are free to eligible students. Upward Bound is an Equal Opportunity in Education project, and therefore, does not discriminate of the basis of age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race or disability.

Meet the Staff of West Virginia University Upward Bound

Frances Bennett—Director

I’m really excited to be working with you– our new UB family members. My parents instilled in me a great love for education. After graduating from college, my first job was working in university admissions. For the past six years, I have helped students, who were the first in their families to go to college, stay in school and graduate. I’m thrilled to be able to combine my passion for life-long learning with my experiences to be able to help our UB students tap into their potential, and reach their dream of being a college graduate.

Vanessa Harrison—Administrative Assistant

My name is Vanessa Harrison. I am the Administrative Assistant in the Student Support Services and Upward Bound offices. I have worked full-time for WVU for 10 years, with experience in the WVU Learning Centers, Residential Education, and SSS for the past 5 years. I am originally from St. Albans, WV and I am a first-generation college student pursuing a Regents Bachelor of Arts degree with an emphasis in Communication Studies. I plan to graduate in December of 2008.

Laurel Spigler—Intern

Hi! Many of you have already met me. I began working for WVU Upward Bound in September. I am originally from Slippery Rock, PA. I have been involved in mentoring, tutoring, and counseling for the past eight years. I am a first generation college student. As an undergraduate, I studied Photography and Graphic Design. I am currently finishing my masters degree in Counseling at WVU. I will graduate in May of 2008. When I am not studying, I enjoy hiking, kayaking, camping. I am an avid nature photographer.