

Upward Bound program proves its importance

BY JESSIE GASCH
Managing Editor

After two years of meeting with Congressional resistance, the Bush administration gave up the idea of doing away with Upward Bound.

Instead of writing it out of the budget a third time, the administration proposed continued funding of the 41-year-old program for fiscal year 2007, and Truman received a \$394,791 piece of the Upward Bound pie, said Lana Brown, the University's Upward Bound project director. According to an Aug. 17 article in the Chronicle of Higher Education, the government infighting about the future of Upward Bound prompted educators to conduct studies on the program's effectiveness, which still is in question in some parts of the country.

Brown said that, at Truman, Upward Bound continually proves its worth. She said diverting funds to No Child Left Behind regulations, as President George W. Bush recommended, would not serve students as well. High school students who participate in Upward Bound through Truman are more than eight times as likely to enter college and more than five times as likely to graduate from college as those from the same demographic who do not, Brown said, citing a 2006 Postsecondary Education Opportunity study.

"Why would we take money from a program that is highly successful and direct it into a testing program?" Brown said. "In my opinion, we need all the money we can get in direct services to students. ... Certainly don't take money away from students to go build a testing program. It makes no sense to me."

Truman's Upward Bound program serves high school students in a nine-county region in northeast Missouri. In order to be eligible, sophomores must either be planning to become first-generation college students or fall under a certain income bracket — most students fit both criteria.

Brown said Truman chooses 80 applicants each year. The participants take part in two six-week residential summer programs, one after sophomore year and one after junior year, with the option to take two courses at the University in the sum-

mer after senior year. They also receive supplemental help from Upward Bound staff throughout the academic year.

"But we're not a recruiting agency for Truman," Brown said. "The program goal is to get them into [any] college where they can be successful."

She said students who are eligible for Upward Bound face grim statistics on college graduation: Students whose families fall in the lowest income quartile in the U.S. are more than six times less likely to enter college than those whose families make it into the highest income quartile.

"Based on income alone, if your family comes from a high-income quartile, you have a high chance of graduating from college," Brown said. "Totally unfair, isn't it?"

And it's not just financial need that prevents some high school students from applying to a university. Adjusting academically and socially proves to be an insurmountable challenge for some.

"It's very difficult to not feel inferior if forever, as you've gone through school, people have seen you in a certain way," Brown said.

Upward Bound provides not just academic training but also social instruction, decision-making skills and time management preparation, she said.

For freshman Chaz Kitchen, learning about Upward Bound was something of an accident.

"Representatives came to our high school," Kitchen said. "... Whenever they first came, I think I was just trying to get out of math class."

Soon, though, he realized the program might be a good fit for him, Kitchen said.

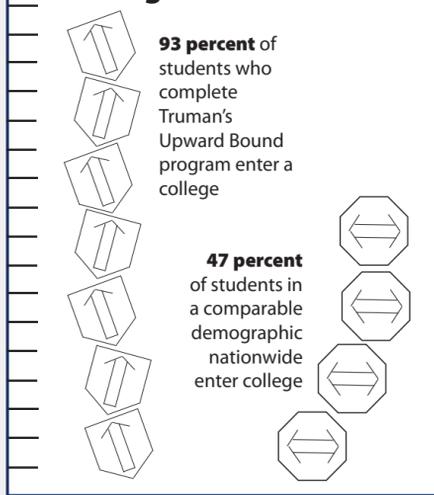
"And it was actually really fun, meeting a lot of people from different areas," he said.

Two of Kitchen's classmates also were accepted but eventually dropped out. He said his friends wondered why he stuck with the program.

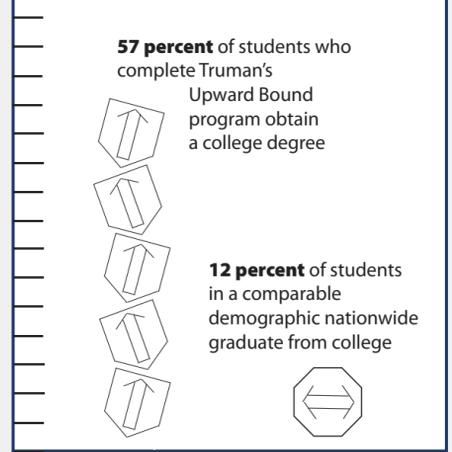
"Usually I would try to get them to join in, but they're kind of hard-headed," he said. "They're like, 'Why would I want to spend a summer away and work?' ... There was one person who tried to get me to drop out, but that's how old girlfriends are. ... Being away during the week and going home just on the weekends, you re-

How does Upward Bound stack up?

College entrance rate



College graduation rate



Source: Project director Lana Brown and 2006 Postsecondary Education Opportunity study

Design by Jessie Gasch/Index

ally don't have all that much time."

Kitchen said he would have been stuck in his hometown without Upward Bound. He said his mother, who is employed by the public school district, and his father, who works for the Missouri Department of Transportation, were ecstatic about his acceptance into the program.

"I really didn't want to drop out because, well, my parents would be really angry with me after doing all that work," Kitchen said.

Now the time he spent on Truman's campus during the last three summers (including taking two classes at Truman this past summer through Upward Bound's bridge program) is paying off.

"I know almost every little nook and cranny of every [residence] hall, even Blanton-Nason-Brewer," Kitchen said. "I could try to be a tour guide, even if I [am] a freshman."

Junior Chris Reid said living on campus in high school accelerated his adjustment during college.

"You get used to living in a dorm long before you actually have to live in one," he said. "... It definitely would have been a lot more awkward the first year if I hadn't been in Upward Bound."

Freshman Julie Cotton, another program participant, said she still has to leave campus every weekend to work as a waitress in Memphis, Mo.

"I've had a lot of late-nighters because on the weekend I have a really busy schedule because of work and everything, so I don't have too much time to do my homework," Cotton said. "That's why I decided I really need to quit [my job] — not to mention that I miss out on too much."

She said she isn't missing out on anything, though, with her old crew of friends from the beginning of high school, and she always has been satis-



Senior J.R. Hladky, who has worked with the Upward Bound program for the last two years, plugs away in the Kirk Building office Wednesday.

fied with the program.

"[My friends] all thought [Upward Bound] was kind of a lame thing," Cotton said. "... They all kind of made fun of me about it. ... They were kind of lame friends anyway. Eventually I kind of broke away from them."

Cotton said that ever since her family required legal services several years ago, she has wanted to become a lawyer.

"I was thinking about [attending] the University of Missouri, but my guidance counselor forgot to put my ACT score on my transcript," she said. "So I didn't get my acceptance letter back until after the scholarship deadline was due, so that eliminated that one."

Senior J.R. Hladky, a pre-MAE student, worked with Upward Bound students on campus for the last two summers and during the academic years in

between, accompanying the students on culture trips and at nightly activities and offering tutoring throughout the year.

He said he would recommend the program to any student who wants to be an educator.

"There's a lot of challenges for the students, ranging from just social, fitting in at high school, to getting into college when the odds are against them," Hladky said. "... Now that I've been with the program for a few years, ... you can definitely see changes in them, both emotionally and academically."

Brown said Upward Bound fulfills a double purpose.

"[The participants] are probably just living in the moment a lot of times, but they're very aware that the moment is getting them to where they want to go," she said.

BUCK BROTHERS

SUNNYSLOPE AUTOMOTIVE

"From headlights to taillights and everything in between. The guys at Buck Brothers Auto can fix it all!"

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|------------|
| computer diagnostic | 2 & 4 wheel alignment | inspection |
| fuel injection repair | transmission repair | tune-ups |
| complete brake repairs | air conditioning state | mufflers |



710 West Potter . Monday to Saturday 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. . 665-8486

Good Luck, Bulldogs!

Reflections 2000

Hair • Nails • Tanning

Dora • Charlene • Jacki
Debbie • Lindsey • Melanie • Bill

\$5 off service or \$2 off haircut

Offer expires November 15, 2007.



Reflections 2000

Suite 500
304 S. Franklin Street
Kirksville, MO 63501

Walk-ins welcome!
Call to schedule an appointment at (660) 665-7475

the iINDEX: now in audio



Subscribe to the Index **podcast**, available in iTunes and at www.trumanindex.com every Thursday, for a summary of the week's news.

