

The State of the Region—President Ruth Johnson

Leaders find a way, or make one

- Registration is now open for the 2008 SWASAP Conference

- Fair Share Success!

- 2008 SWASAP Student Leadership coming soon

- 2008 SWASAP scholarship awardees named

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The Southwest Association of Student Assistance Programs is fast approaching the climax of another year. Thus far, we have checked-off a successful conference; HR2669, which restored and initiated funding for 186 Upward Bound Programs; provided scholarships; training and leadership for our colleagues and TRiO participants. We have much to celebrate. But let us not be hasty in festive indulgence. There is yet much to do.

SWASAP is strictly a volunteer association. Those of us who request the privilege of service do so with the full knowledge that duties associated with our elected office must be accomplished on our personal time. We use annual leave, lunch times, evenings and weekends and any other sacrificial time to serve the needs of the Region while still maintaining full time, demanding TRiO careers. The invitation to serve is heralded to all, but a select few respond. With the very best intentions, we all too often solicit, cajole, and beg all members to aspire to leadership in the Region as well as in our states.

However, the costs must be counted; counted before the office is sought and the election won. The Region is done a grave disservice when our elected officials become too busy to fulfill the office to which he/she is elected.

There is sound wisdom in the proviso that requires the written support of our institutions in the candidacy packet. If elected, the institution is expected to support the official. All affected parties should have an opportunity to voice their concerns, support, reservations, and dissent of the candidate's aspiration. The candidate should use this information to inform his/her decision to seek office.

In my personal quest to serve, I spent time in prayer when I perceived the call. My husband was my greatest cheerleader; Vince's enthusiastic encouragement motivated me to seek the support of my family. My children, sister and brother were also given a voice informing my decision. I would need their support and forbearance when my obligations to the Region required my absence or attention. Their support was unanimous. I sought the counsel of my staff.

When faced with a challenge as a youth I thought was beyond me, my Mama would remind me "Can't never did anything; CAN did it all." Most of my pre-Katrina staff was lost after the disaster, and a hiring freeze instituted by the governor left me with only two other staff members doing the work of six. Tish and Regina work diligently at great personal sacrifice, to ensure that program participants are not neglected or short-changed due to bureaucratic dictates or staffing issues.

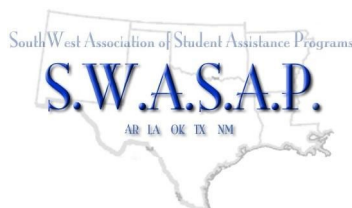
Regina, Administrative Assistant, and Latisha Hebert, Interim Assistant Director/Field Specialist, encouraged me to go for it. Regina stated, "Yeah, like you wouldn't do it if we said no." I assured her that such was exactly the case, because whatever affects one team member ultimately affects the team. Had either of my staff dissented, I would have certainly reconsidered.

I also sought the counsel of my state association, LASAP. My bid for Regional office would hold great ramifications for LASAP. My state leadership was overwhelmingly supportive.

When speaking with all of my important people, I related my expectations of them and asked if he and she were comfortable providing the necessary support. You see, those are the costs associated with leadership.

Leadership is a privilege, not a right. Directly associated with privilege is responsibility. We all have jobs for which we applied (asked). We can no more decline the responsibilities of our employment than the duties associated with our elected (requested) office. Should we become derelict in jobs, we'll likely find ourselves disassociated from TRiO. Dispensation of our voluntarily duties also has consequences and rewards. Competent execution of our office provides gratification, satisfaction, professional and personal growth, an opportunity to convey our professional values, leave our indelible mark in the hearts of our colleagues, and work to bring forth your/my inspired vision for the Region.

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37TH ANNUAL SWASAP CONFERENCE

Please join us for the 37th Annual SWASAP Conference, November 16-19, 2008, at the Arlington Resort Hotel and Spa in Hot Springs, Arkansas. The Arlington Hotel is the most prominent building in the heart of downtown Hot Springs with full spa service and a thermal bath house, three fabulous restaurants, and a national park outside any door. Arrive early to tour the William J. Clinton Library in Little Rock.

The pre-conference will be held Sunday, November 16, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Dr. Kathryn Kailikole, COE Executive Director for STEM Programs, has been invited to serve as presenter for the pre-conference activities. Attendees will learn to better assess, counsel, and structure programs that will encourage and foster more

students to excel in math, and to pursue careers related to math and science.

Hot topics for the conference include: counseling, mentoring, STEM activities, retention and advocacy. Special guests and speakers will include members of the COE staff and the Department of Education staff. Dr. Calvin Mackie, an award-winning mentor and internationally renowned motivational speaker proves to be a phenomenal feature. Mackie was featured on the HBO world premier of Spike Lee's Katrina documentary entitled "When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Parts," as well the PBS News Hour with Jim Lehrer, and the Tom Joyner Morning Show.

The Heifer Project, a nonprofit charitable organization based in Little Rock, Arkansas, dedicated to relieving global hunger and poverty will impart information on how SWASAP can become involved globally to rid hunger in the 21st century. This presentation is sure to give you plenty of ideas on how your program can enhance its community service component. "The Competitive Edge" will prove to be an informative conference. Dynamic speakers, hot topics and innovative workshops will equip TRiO professionals to meet 21st century challenges. For hotel reservation and registration, visit www.swasaptrio.org.

AASAP

The AASAP Spring Leadership Conference was a roaring success and an occasion for learning. Dr. Fitz Hill, president of Arkansas Baptist College at Little Rock, was the first speaker at the Spring Leadership conference held at Pulaski Technical College in Little Rock. Dr. Fitz Hill or "Coach Hill" as he likes to be called said, "Servant leadership is the best thing that we can do for our students." "In 1884, Arkansas Baptist College was started by former slaves – they did not have high ACT scores, but they showed up with a vision and a need," he said. "I just want students to go to school and be involved in an educational process." He reminded the conference attendees the students in the TRIO programs are usually at risk students that no one else wants. "Plant a seed of education so the student will think with the end in mind. Empowerment works," Hill said. In one of his closing remarks, he added that everyone has the potential to do well, but they need motivation, and we are the student's shot of B-12.

The next session of panel discussion allowed four AASAP Board and former board members to offer leadership advice about AASAP Board responsibilities and duties. Afterward, several people volunteered to work on a committee and at least two to three others volunteered to be the chairperson of a committee.

The closing session involved a teamwork activity that forced the participants to depend on a leader to put them in order. Each participant received a number on a slip of paper and was told to close their eyes and not look at it and not to talk. Then the participants had to figure out how to get in order. Enough said. Each group needed a leader in the group to help us. It was amazing how we learned to communicate without talking and without using vision.



Join us! Reserve your room today for the 2008 SWASAP Conference at the historic Arlington Hotel.

LASAP

Louisiana has been busy. We are happy to announce that Louisiana has made its COE Fairshare at 106%. Thanks to all our members and Mr. Robert Carmouche, our Fairshare Chair.

We have also been working with the Louisiana Board of Regents to connect our

Talent Search Programs to the College Access Grant monies to be given to our state. We have been informed that LASAP will be an integral component of the implementation of this program.

Finally, our Upward Bound Math Science Program at Southeastern Louisiana University was

selected by the Pell Institute as a top performing program for review and a site visit was made last summer to this program. The findings of best practices of this program and four others from around the nation will be published and also presented in a session at the COE Conference in September.

NMWTASAP

The NMWTASAP has had a successful and busy year. NMWT has met 113% of Fair Share. NMWT sent 4 representatives (3 staff and 1 Alumni) to the COE Policy Seminar in Washington, D.C. in March 2008. NMWT also developed a state association website: www.nmwtasap.org. Our spring meeting was held in Clovis, NM at Clovis Community College in April 2008. Our fall meeting and officer elections will be held at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, NM in October 2008. The NMWT Association has started the paperwork and process to receive 501 © 3 Status.

Central New Mexico College TRiO SSS Students **Karena Washington, Will Thurow** and **Tesa Lane** traveled to Portland, Maine with their **TRiO SSS Achievement Coach Rob Carriaga** to attend the International Listening Association Conference. Students made a formal presentation at the conference discussing collaboration between TRiO and other community college students with professors, administrators and business professionals in the convention development. Travel and expenses were funded by the CNM Student TRiO Association

The 2008 valedictorian from the University of New Mexico-Valencia (UNM-V) Campus is a SSS Student. The 2007-2008 UNM – V, Student Government President is an SSS student. The New Mexico Phi Theta Kappa Century Scholar for 2008 is an SSS student. Two HACU internships were awarded to *UNM-V* SSS students for summer 2008.

The ENMU-Portales UB and ETS program has a total of 6 Daniels Fund Scholars for the 2008-2009 academic years (4 students from UB, and 2 from ETS). In addition, **Barbara Vidal**, an UB Sr. from Clovis High School was accepted into the University of New Mexico BA/MD Program. **Barbara Vidal** and **Yuridia Leyva**, also an UB Sr., were the only two graduating seniors chosen for the Dell's Scholarship and Gates Millennium Scholars.

ODSA

- Oklahoma was proud to host the **2008 National Veterans Upward Bound Conference** held March 17th – 20th at the Sheraton Hotel in Oklahoma City, OK, which was chaired by ODSA President-elect, Mary Huckleberry, and assisted in her efforts by a committee of five. There were a total of 85 registrants.
- The **2008 ODSA Annual Conference** was held March 31 – April 2, 2008, at the Marriott Hotel & Resort in Oklahoma City, OK. Numerous guests were in attendance including SWASAP President, Ruth Johnson. There were approximately 155 registered attendees.
- The University of Central Oklahoma Upward Bound Program, under the leadership of Barry Lofton, hosted the **31st Annual Statewide Upward Bound Student Leadership Conference** held April 11-12 in Oklahoma City, OK. The two-day leadership conference entitled "Building Leaders for Life" emphasized character, civility and community. It was attended by more than 250 Oklahoma high-school students.
- Oklahoma Senator Kenneth Corn was introduced to the ODSA membership as the **2008 ODSA TRIO Achiever** during the Annual ODSA Conference, held March 31 – April 2, 2008.
- There were a total of 12 participants registered for the **ODSA ELI** from across various cities across the state. The institute was chaired by Carlos Rodriguez, and the participants proved to be an invaluable resource by assisting with the annual conference registration and by completely facilitating the Silent Auction.
- Oklahoma is currently supporting Tony Lehrling, from Southeastern Oklahoma State University, and Rosario Riley, from the University of Central Oklahoma, as our **2008- 2009 SWASAP ELI participants**.
- ODSA is very proud to have exceeded our **COE Fair Share** at 101%. Thank you, ODSA!

TASSSP

The Texas Association of Student Special Services Programs (TASSSP) has had a busy winter and spring in 2008.

In February, many programs held and celebrated National TRIO Day throughout the state. One group in particular made an impact on their community with a Dallas-Fort Worth TRIO Alliance National TRIO Day Celebration. Over 250 students came together on February 23, 2008 on the campus of University of North Texas to do community service projects that would benefit the area's various charities. The students put together care packages for the military, nursing homes, Child Study center, and a women's shelter. The students were randomly placed together with other TRIO students to work on these packages and also were able to attend leadership workshops, tour the campus, and also heard the inspiring stories of two former Texas TRIO Achievers. This day was sponsored by a grant of \$10,000 that was provided by the Nissan Neighbors Program.

In March, TASSSP held their annual conference in Galveston, TX. The conference was attended by 210 participants and featured great speakers like Alvin Phillips from COE, Julia Tower from COE, and Dr. Bennie Lambert. A new slate of officers were elected and are as follows: Jeff Kahlden, President, Karen Wilkerson, President-Elect, Darnisha Reed, Past-President,

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Have news you want to include in the next edition?

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Fair Share Update—As of June 30 SWASAP reached our Fair Share and exceed it with our final tally being at 102%. Thank you, SWASAP! You can donate throughout the year online at <http://www.coenet.us>.

SWASAP SLC—Save the date! September 26-28, 2008 at Sky Ranch Camps, Van, Texas. We hope you will make plans to participate!

The 2008 Scholarship Awardees are announced! For a complete list visit the SWASAP website by clicking [here!](#)

Calling all leaders! The call for nominations will be coming soon. Please give thoughtful consideration to serving your regional association in the role of an officer or committee chair.

TASSSP

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Vicki Coley, Secretary, Esmeralda Benitez, Treasurer, and Randy Scott, North Zone Representative. Delicia Ramirez was appointed at South Zone Representative to replace Johnny Martinez, who resigned due to a change in positions at his institution.

Finally, TASSSP is gearing for their 10th Annual Student Leadership Conference. It will be held this year at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, TX. The students will embark on a great experience on July 28 and finish on July 30. It plans to be a great event as TASSSP will be partnering with Sky Ranch to make it a great leadership experience for all students and staff. If you are interested, please go to the website to get more information. <http://www.skyranchschools.com/visionquest.htm>



Check Presentation: Lethia White (UNT), Stefanie McLeese (Nissan), Jeff Kahlden (TASSSP Pres. Elect), and Darnisha Reed (TASSSP President).

The revised SWASAP website will launch soon! We will have a “members only” section, so be sure you have paid your membership dues to enable you to access that part of the website. SWASAP is only as strong as it’s membership, so [join](#) us today!

LEADERS FIND A WAY, OR MAKE ONE

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The leader must struggle to maintain balance. This is the rationale for the earlier groundwork (seeking the counsel of our important people). I am honored by the reward of support engendered by my earlier request. Southern University at New Orleans, The Educational Talent Search Team, my Family, and LASAP are all active participants and share in every success resultant of my service. Without all of these important people, my administration would be rendered ineffective, at best, or fail.

As we move steadily toward our culminating Regional activity (37th Annual Conference in beautiful Hot Springs, AR), let’s **find a way** to honor our commitment to our constituents who vowed to support us by making a herculean effort to assure our Region’s preeminence among the Nation. If you can see no way; well, *BLAZE A NEW PATH.*

Yours for TRiO,

Ruth W. Johnson
President 2008



Advancing Providing Educational
Opportunity Since 1965

SouthWest Association of Student Assistance Programs

Arkansas * Louisiana * New Mexico * Oklahoma * Texas

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Dear Colleagues:

As the educated professionals pondered the quandary of Fair Share for SWASAP, we found ourselves at a dead end. The quest for Fair Share appeared to have been beyond our best efforts. Disheartened and drained, we were close to admitting defeat.

In the final days of the Fair Share Drive, our Chair John Tucker, emailed the Executive Board to report. The report looked bleak. There seemed to be no way SWASAP could make up the shortfall. John told us that his son, Andrew had included Fair Share in his daily prayer. On his own, he petitioned God to help us make Fair Share.

This tiny spark ignited a fire that spread throughout SWASAP. Andrew's faith reminded us that we were not in the fight for academic justice alone. True, the battle was beyond our individual efforts; however, together we all worked and prayed for success.

Kenneth Mackie phoned me on Saturday, to report that Rhonda Robinson, Director of the Southern University Baton Rouge (SUBR) Classic Upward Bound; Earl Lee, SUBR UB/MS; Lois St.Amant, Executive Director; and Kenneth Mackie had all **petitioned their UB parents for contributions on Thursday. They overnighted a check to COE for \$1,000.00 on Friday. They earmarked those monies to assist our sister state, Texas, with their Fair Share Drive.**

On Monday, 30 June 2008, we emailed each other using words like, "unbelievable," "phenomenal," "awesome," "incredible," and "MIRACULOUS." Every time my computer dinged indicating a new email message, I jumped joyously. Monday was the most exciting day of my Presidency. We all did our own interpretations of the Happy Dance. SWASAP's success is nothing short of a miracle.

The simple acts of faith, generosity and unity have made us much stronger and wiser Association. Together, WE CAN! We just did.

Congratulations SWASAP,

Ruth Johnson

SWASAP President