

Office of Educational Opportunity Programs

The Office of Educational Opportunity Programs was created in January 1992 to organizationally locate the MIT/Wellesley Upward Bound Program, the MIT Educational Talent Search Program (which operated from 1991 to 1998), and all future programming serving low-income Cambridge youth. The federal Upward Bound program was created under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and is one of the US Department of Education's (ED) TRIO Programs. The MIT/Wellesley Upward Bound Program has operated at MIT since 1966. This year, the program was sponsored by the ED, MIT, and Wellesley College.

MIT/Wellesley Upward Bound Program

The MIT/Wellesley Upward Bound Program is a year-round, coeducational, multicultural college preparatory program for high school youth who reside in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and attend Cambridge Rindge and Latin School and Community Charter School of Cambridge. The 2021 academic year marked the program's 54th year; with the financial support of the ED, the Institute, and Wellesley College, the program continued to serve academically promising young men and women from low-income backgrounds and from families where parents have not had the opportunity to attend college and/or graduate with a baccalaureate degree. The goal of Upward Bound is twofold: to motivate client high school youth to continue on to postsecondary education and to provide them with the fundamental skills necessary for success at the collegiate level.

Enrollment Statistics

A total of 56 students were enrolled in the 2021 program year. Student data is presented below.

- Total number of students served in fiscal year 2021: 56
 - Females: 46
 - Males: 10
- Eligibility breakdown in FY2021:
 - Low-income and first-generation: 43
 - Low-income only: 3
 - First-generation only: 10

Summer Session

Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 summer session—traditionally held at Wellesley College—was conducted remotely from June 22 to August 2 and provided participants with a academically rigorous college-like experience. Forty-five of the total

56 students who were served during the 2021 academic year participated in the session. Program services offered during this nontraditional summer included:

Virtual Classes and Academic Support

Students enrolled in courses taught by experienced high school teachers from school districts in the Greater Boston area and from as far as Montgomery, Alabama. Each participant enrolled in two classes from the following offerings: first-year through senior English language arts; algebra II and pre-calculus/calculus; biology and chemistry; United States/world history and the African American experience; Spanish and American Sign Language. Classes were held Monday through Friday from 12:15 to 1:30 p.m. and 2:45 to 4:00 pm. With classes being conducted virtually and the program sufficiently staffed, students were able to take advantage of opportunities for one-on-one and/or smaller group instruction, as necessary, via the use of Zoom breakout rooms.

Virtual Workshops

Students participated in educational, recreational, and cultural workshops Monday through Thursday from 1:35 to 2:40 p.m. Each student enrolled in four workshops that were designed to expose them to new and creative interests or to strengthen their knowledge in more familiar areas. Workshops included: History of Hip-Hop, Effective Note-taking, Protest Through History, Photography, Scholarship Search Techniques, Mindfulness and Journaling, Quarantined Cooking, Arts and Crafts, Resume Building, Yoga/Meditation and Relaxation, and Senior Seminar. The virtual nature of programming allowed for the creativity of the staff and students to shine through and make the workshop experiences successful.

College and Career Advising

The program hosted its annual College Day event on July 8 in our summer academy space on the Zoom platform. Because of restrictions and mandates related to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not like our traditional in-person event, and nine college/university representatives were able to participate. Over 125 students, including those from two visiting TRIO Upward Bound programs from the Greater Boston area, joined us for this special event. The event included three panelists who spoke on the topics of the College Board services and testing requirements, the college admissions process, and the financial aid resources available to fund a postsecondary education.

The program provided a mini virtual career expo event on July 29, where our students were able to meet with professionals to discuss family therapy, nursing, and electrical and computer engineering. This was great opportunity for the students to learn more about these careers and the educational preparation required to enter the respective fields.

School year Session

The school year session, traditionally held at MIT, was conducted virtually via the Zoom platform from September 9, 2020 through June 10, 2021, due to the continuing restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic. Services offered included homework supervision, academic advising, workshops, college and career advising, and presentations by college and university representatives. Because our students were

engaged in remote learning at their schools, the program continued to play an important role in participants' educational development and provided assistance and support to help them remain focused.

Homework Supervision

The Upward Bound virtual platform was open and available for study and homework supervision on a drop-in basis four days a week, Monday through Thursday, beginning on September 21. Part-time employees and volunteer tutors from MIT, Wellesley College, and other local institutions were available to assist participants with homework problems and to meet with individuals or small groups for specific content-area tutoring.

Enrichment Workshops

Saturday enrichment workshops—which helped to address more specialized participant needs such as study-skills development, Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) preparation, SAT preparation, the college application process, computing skills, time management, and job-readiness skills—were held virtually on October 3, November 7, December 5, January 9, February 6, March 6, April 3, and May 1.

Academic Advising

Students received academic advising through monthly virtual class meetings that took place in conjunction with the enrichment workshops on the dates noted above. The meetings provided students in each respective class an opportunity to learn new material and/or strengthen their knowledge in the following areas: understanding current academic status, course selection requirements (high school and college), the college application process and the college experience, career advising and assessment, managing personal finances, academic and personal goal setting, leadership development, current affairs (e.g., local and national elections), and community service and engagement.

College Advising

Weekly virtual individual meetings were held with senior students to monitor them through the college admissions and financial aid processes. Additionally, a representative from Boston College facilitated a College Application Process Workshop for senior students and their parents on October 20. Financial Aid Night was held on November 4 to assist parents of seniors with the financial aid application process, and a financial aid counselor from MIT facilitated the workshop. A representative from the Stephen Phillips Memorial Scholarship Program visited Upward Bound on November 18 to share information about their scholarship opportunity and the application process. Virtual information sessions were provided by representatives from: Boston University (October 8), Pace University (October 22), Tufts University (November 7), Brown University (November 9), University of Massachusetts Amherst (December 3), Clark University (December 10), University of Massachusetts Lowell (January 19), Simmons University (January 26), Yale University (February 10), University of Maine (February 25), Curry College (March 3), Brandeis University (March 11), University of New Haven (March 17), Johnson & Wales University (April 6), Suffolk University (April 4), and Boston University (May 13). Lastly, students who participated in the New England Educational Opportunity Association's (NEOA) Annual TRIO Day Celebration had the

opportunity to meet virtually with representatives from approximately four institutions of postsecondary education at their college fair (February 17).

Career Advising

The career-advising component of the program offered students exposure to career options through the Career Presentations Program as well as through research on the internet and follow-up inventories and assessments. Professionals from the following companies and positions participated on the dates noted: Tactai Inc./Chief Executive Officer (November 10), Whittier Rehabilitation/Registered Nurse (November 24), and Deutsche Bank/Vice President Trade Finance Advisory (December 9).

Activities and Events

The students participated in the virtual NEOA TRIO Day Celebration in Framingham (February 16–18). During the TRIO celebration, in addition to the college fair activities, students were able to benefit from workshops on all aspects of college/career readiness as well as financial literacy.

Class of 2021

Of the program's graduating seniors, nine of 10 students (90%) were accepted into postsecondary education institutions. Students from the program's Class of 2021 will enroll in the following colleges and universities in September 2021: Bunker Hill Community College, Boston University, Lincoln University, The New School, Salem State University, Simmons University, University of Massachusetts Amherst, and University of Massachusetts Boston.

Postgraduate Involvement

The Office of Educational Opportunity Programs strongly encourages its alumni to stay connected to the program and to serve as role models and mentors for current students. Alumni were encouraged to serve as career speakers whenever possible.

Ronald S. Crichlow
Director
Office of Educational Opportunity Programs

Evette M. Layne
Director
MIT/Wellesley Upward Bound Program