



*Research Article*

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## Creating College-Going Cultures at Home

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### Abstract

How do parents who have earned college degrees prepare their children for college? What lessons are part of the child-rearing process as it pertains to education in their homes? And how can parents who have never completed a collegiate program of study prepare their children for success in something they have not experienced themselves? If education begins in the home, and parents are a child's first teachers, is it truly possible for parents without a college-education to prepare their first-generation college students to be college-ready?

In a larger critical qualitative research study entitled *Creating College-going Cultures for our Children: Narratives of TRIO Upward Bound Program Alumni* (Author, 2019), the experiences of TRIO Upward Bound Program alumni were explored through narrative inquiry. The study participants were asked to reflect on whether and how their experiences influenced how they raised their children as it pertains to education and educational opportunities. The following research questions were addressed: What were the experiences of the alumni of the TRIO Upward Bound Program while enrolled in the program? How did those experiences influence the creation (or not) of a college-going culture in their households for their children?

### Literature Review

#### What is College-going Culture?

The larger research study centered on the creation of college-going culture in the homes of the study participants. A college-going culture is a culture that promotes, encourages, and continually reinforces college attendance (Corwin & Tierney, 2007). The expectation is set by the adults in a college-going culture that the children will attend college and is espoused by the children who are continually motivated to do so. Information about college access and college preparation is disseminated, while high academic achievement and college-readiness are stressed. College-going cultures can exist in homes and can be created by parents and guardians. They can

also exist in schools and be perpetuated by building leaders, guidance counselors, teachers, and other educators. TRIO Upward Bound Programs cultivate and promote a college-going culture in the lives of their first-generation college student participants. It is often a student's first exposure to a college-going culture.

### TRIO Upward Bound Program

The TRIO Upward Bound Program has been a part of the American education landscape since 1965, emanating from President Lyndon B. Johnson's declaration of the war on poverty, and the passing of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Groutt, 2003). TRIO, originally three programs, is now comprised of eight programs: Upward Bound, Educational Talent Search, Student Support Services, Upward Bound Math/Science, Veterans Upward Bound, Educational Opportunity Centers, McNair Postbaccalaureate Program, and Training Program for Federal TRIO Programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). In 2019, there were 966 TRIO Upward Bound Programs funded nationally, serving 70,744 participants, with an allocation of \$343,356,535, and an average expenditure of \$4,854 per student (U.S. Department of Education, 2020).

TRIO Upward Bound, like all the TRIO programs, is an exercise in social justice that has served to level the educational and socioeconomic playing fields in America. They were created to facilitate upward socioeconomic mobility by encouraging students to pursue postsecondary education and by providing the necessary support to encourage their success once enrolled in college. Upward Bound, a pre-college program that serves high school students ages 13 to 19, provides instruction in literature, mathematics, laboratory science, and foreign language (Upward Bound Program, 1995). Along with the academic instructional component, the program also offers tutoring, academic advising, college entrance exam preparation, financial aid assistance, college application assistance, personal counseling, college campus visits, field trips, campus residential experiences, and ongoing support and motivation (Upward Bound Program, 1995; Author, 2019).

Two-thirds of the participants served by Upward Bound satisfy the criteria of being both first-generation in college, meaning neither parent or guardian earned a four-year baccalaureate degree, and low-income, defined as a household income that falls below 150% of the poverty line (Upward Bound Program, 1995). The other one-third can be solely first-generation, low-income, or at risk for academic failure (Upward Bound Program, 1995).

### African Americans and Access to Higher Education

White Americans in the United States have had some level of access to higher education since the 1600s via early institutions such as Harvard and Yale, and later, the Land Grant institutions created by the Morrill Act of 1862 (Brubacher & Rudy, 2008). Due to federal segregationist legislation, higher education was made widely accessible to African Americans in 1890 with the passage of the second Morrill Act, which created the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)

express purpose was the Americans (Brubacher & Rudy, 2008). The passage of Brown v. Board of Education in 1954 allowed African Americans to lawfully attend predominantly White institutions (PWIs) (Harvey, Harvey & King, 2004). Yet, even today, many African American

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these institutions, as they sometimes experience invisibility and hostility on the campuses (Shabazz, 2015).

## Barriers to College Access for African Americans

While African American students now have access to higher education institutions, barriers to college access often limit the number of students who pursue college and complete degree programs. These barriers to college access often begin as early as the elementary school level with poor academic preparation disproportionately affecting Black and Latinx students, who are likely to be first-generation and low-income, and attend failing urban school districts (Postsecondary National Policy Institute, 2020b; Sabey, 2016). College access and success is contingent upon the availability of college-preparatory curriculum and course offerings. On the secondary school level, 71% of White students and 81% of Asian American students nationally have access to the full range of college readiness courses in math and science necessary to prepare them for college, yet only 54% of Black students have access to these courses (Bridges, 2020).

**High Student-to-Guidance Counselor Ratios.** High student-to-guidance counselor ratios are often a barrier to college access for African American and first-generation college students because counselors are often the only source of college access materials for some students (Bright, 2017). Additionally, with the median counselor-to-student ratio of 411:1 in urban and poor districts, the dissemination of college access materials is often minimized (Gagnon & Mattingly, 2016). Only 17.8% of all school districts nationwide meet the American School Counselor Association recommended ratio of 250:1 (The College Board National Office for School Counselor Advocacy, 2010).

**College Entrance Exams.** Historically, heavyweight, in terms of assessing college readiness, has been placed on the ACT and SAT college entrance exams. Just over 10% of African American students' scores reflected college-readiness in math, as compared to 49% of White students (Roderick, Nagaoka & Coca, 2009), and 52% of first-generation students did not meet any of the college-ready benchmarks on the ACT exam (ACT, 2016). Many colleges and universities are beginning to make entrance exams optional for college applications, so the future significance of these exams is to be determined.

**Financial Barriers.** The cost of college often creates a financial barrier to postsecondary education for African American students. According to the Postsecondary National Policy Institute (2020a), during the 2015-2016 academic year, 72 % of African American college students received federal Pell Grant funds compared to 34% of White students. To put this into perspective, consider that a student's family's adjusted gross income must be at or below \$60,000 annually to receive federal Pell funding, and an income under \$26,000 would make them eligible for the full Pell Grant amount of \$6,195 (Pilgrim, 2020). To finance their college education, 71% of African American students took out federal student loans during 2015-2016 (Postsecondary National Policy Institute, 2020a). Federal student aid assistance has not kept pace with the cost of a college education, as the cost of attending a four-year institution has risen 160% since 1980 (Roble, 2017), making the price of college cost-prohibitive for some African American students.

## African American College Enrollment

Despite the barriers to college access for African American students, they still manage to enroll in college to pursue postsecondary degrees. In 2018, 62% of African American students enrolled in college directly following high school (Postsecondary National Policy Institute, 2020a). They made up 13% of the first-year class that entered college in the Fall of 2018, or 1.1 million of the 13.6 million total students (Postsecondary National Policy Institute, 2020a). Historically Black Colleges and Universities make up only 3% of the national colleges but enroll

10% of the nation's African American students (Lomax, n.d.). They also graduate 20% of all African American graduates (Bridges, 2020).

Although African American students are enrolling in college, the rates of persistence through degree attainment are not as promising. Nationally, 41% of all students who began their college matriculation in the Fall of 2010 graduated from their first institution in four years, 56% after five years, and 60 % earned their four-year degree within six years of high school graduation (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). Within four years of high school graduation, 21% of African American students earned baccalaureate degrees from their first institution of enrollment. That number rose to 35 % within five years, and to 40% within six years of high school graduation (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019).

## Theoretical Framework

### Forms of Capital and Funds of Knowledge

The study utilized Bourdieu's cultural and social capital (Bourdieu, 1983; Bourdieu, 1986; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) as a theoretical framework to examine how TRIO Upward Bound Program alumni gained forms of capital that could be passed down to their children. Because the application of cultural and social capital as a framework to first-generation, low-income student experiences often presents a deficit model, the participants' experiences were further examined through funds of knowledge framework (Kiyama, 2011; Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992) as an anti-deficit model to balance the discussion of the acquisition of forms of capital.

**Cultural Capital.** According to Bourdieu, cultural capital is "the general cultural background, knowledge, disposition, and skills passed from one generation to the next" (MacLeod, 2009, p. 12). The cultural capital parents have accumulated throughout their lifetimes is passed down to their children. In the United States, White American or Eurocentric, affluent culture is the dominant culture that is highly valued (Center for the Study of White American Culture, Inc., 2009). Racial and ethnic minorities may be rich in the cultural capital representative of their own cultures but may not possess prominent levels of the cultural capital valued in a White-dominated society. Therefore, the experiences of a child who visits family in Mexico each summer will be discounted in comparison to the experiences of a child who visits Europe each summer. Both children experienced international travel. However, the European trip is perceived as having provided a richer cultural experience. Cultures outside of the dominant Whiteness are often negated and devalued.

Cultural capital allows students to integrate into their higher education experiences by increasing their degree of psychosocial engagement; this has a direct impact on a student's persistence from the first to the second year of college (Lederman, 2013). While a collegiate experience has the potential to increase a student's cultural capital, much of that cultural capital needs to be built before they ever reach the postsecondary level. MacLeod (2009) says:

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Children who read books, visit museums, attend concerts, and go to the theater and cinema (or simply grow up in families where these practices are prevalent) acquire a

familiarity with the dominant culture that the educational system implicitly requires of its students for academic attainment (p. 12).

These experiences can contribute to the building of cultural capital that is valued in the dominant culture.

**Social Capital.** According to Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992), "Social capital is the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (p. 119). People and their connections make up social networks. Parents can utilize their social networks to benefit their children. For example, students build their social networks in college while they are preparing for their professional careers and can later utilize those networks of college-educated peers to connect their children with opportunities for internships and employment. College-educated professionals have professional-level connections. This social capital can directly benefit their children, and like cultural capital, is a tangible resource that is passed down from parent to child.

**Funds of Knowledge.** Funds of knowledge (Kiyama, 2011; Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992;) are considered to provide an anti-deficit model when applying cultural and social capital (Bourdieu, 1983; Bourdieu, 1986; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) as a theoretical framework in discussions of first-generation, low-income students. First applied in discussions of Mexican American families as transferable skills parents pass down to their children that could be used to run their own households and support their families, funds of knowledge are recognizable across all racial and ethnic cultures. Funds of knowledge, as a theoretical framework, acknowledges that parents who are not degree holders are not empty bank accounts—they are also contributors of valuable capital that can be passed down to their children.

### Study Methods

The researcher utilized a narrative inquiry methodological approach and active interviewing methods (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997), conducting semi-structured interviews with thirteen TRIO Upward Bound Program alumni who participated in Upward Bound Programs across the state of Ohio as high school students at differing times from 1960 to 1990. Purposeful sampling and snowball sampling were utilized to recruit study participants. Of the 13 study participants, 12 identified as African American and were first generation college students; all earned baccalaureate degrees or higher and were parents of college-enrolled children or college graduates; and three left college early but returned as adults to earn their baccalaureate degrees. Narratives and findings are presented using pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality. In-depth reflexive journaling was also utilized to provide triangulation of data, and after transcription of interviews, data were coded first using descriptive coding (Saldaña, 2009) to discover basic themes, then first- and second-cycle coding according to Saldaña (2009) to develop a more detailed analysis. Narrative inquiry was a fitting methodology to illuminate the lived experiences of TRIO Upward Bound Program alumni and make meaning of how those experiences impacted their childrearing and the creation of college-going cultures in their own homes. Through these interviews and narratives, participants make meaning of the cross-generational effects of their participation in TRIO Upward Bound Programs.

## Participants' Narratives: TRIO Upward Bound and Pathways to College

### Racial Bias and Tracking

Undeniably, racial bias sometimes plays a role in African American students' unpreparedness for college. This reality emerged as an important thread in the study. Khalil and Nicole Davis, high school sweethearts who met in Upward Bound at the local University and later married, both resided in the same small Ohio city, yet lived on different sides of town and attended different high schools. Nicole resided on the predominantly Black side of town, whereas Khalil resided on the predominantly White side. Nicole describes a close-knit school community where her high academic ability was quickly recognized, and she was encouraged to pursue educational opportunities by school personnel she describes affectionately as 'Black aunties and moms.' Nicole relayed:

I remember eighth grade year. I was outside during recess and Ms. Smith, who was a counselor said, 'Hey Nicole, you're a smart girl. Here. You take this form home. I think you should be in something called AP—Advanced Placement.

This support encouraged her to get into Upward Bound, to take AP courses, and to take college courses while still enrolled in high school. Wanting similar experiences for himself, Khalil approached leaders in his school about taking advanced science courses but was denied the opportunity. He enlisted the help of his mother who requested the access, on his behalf, to the advanced science courses. Despite her input, his love of and talent in science, and a high GPA, he was denied the opportunity. He, nevertheless, became an engineer.

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African American students, especially Black males, are often marginalized and not encouraged to pursue a challenging curriculum on the K-12 level that would prepare them for postsecondary access and success during college matriculation. This is due to underrepresentation in gifted education and overrepresentation in special education, as well as

higher levels of discipline, suspension, and expulsion (Wright, Counsell & Davis, 2018). The messages Khalil received about preparing for college in comparison to the messages he and Nicole are sending their own kids are vastly different. Khalil shared:

How to get ready for college? I thought I was. But if I had it to do all over again, to actively prepare for Northwestern [University], I would have taken all AP classes. I only took College Prep. College Prep is actually a misnomer. Because when you get to Northwestern, you're competing with kids who had AP prep; kids who have studied abroad; kids who, this isn't their first time reading the Wall Street Journal... These were all my first times and they've already done it many times. So, the messages I got were, 'do this and you can get to college.' The messages we're trying to give our kids are, 'this is how you become successful in college. This is how you get to the next level... not just get to college but make the 3.5 [GPA] when you're at college, and also, start thinking about grad school and what careers look like after college.'

Khalil and Nicole shared that not only do they talk about getting into college with their children, but also about success in college; they have regular discussions about attending graduate school—conversations that they did not have when they were growing up.

### Forms of Capital and Funds of Knowledge

As participants shared their stories with TRIO Upward Bound, the pathways to college and their parenting, they described vivid examples of how cultural and social capital and community funds of knowledge played a role in their experiences.

Antonio Sparks, a hedge fund manager who participated in Upward Bound in the 1990s, shared that the cultural activities he experienced in Upward Bound improved his communicative skills that allowed him to engage with his peers while in college and in his professional life. Of his Upward Bound experiences, he said:

The Sammy Davis, Jr. [performance] is one that sticks out the most, I think... So I can remember when I first moved out here [to New York City] in 1998, I was working on the floor of the [stock] exchange for a little while... I can remember being able to refer to trips or activities that I did with Upward Bound—like pull from my references for nicer things. I felt as if my parents liked to do nice things with me, but if I was going to learn about which silverware to use—the nicer things, the classier things, it was with Upward Bound.

Antonio acknowledges his parents' funds of knowledge but also sees the tension and contradiction in how cultural capital works. He adopted the cultural frame of reference from his Upward Bound experiences that helped him in his interaction with his White, affluent peers in his collegiate and professional life.

### Creating College-going Cultures

Several themes emerged from the participants' parenting narratives as they described how they created college-going cultures in their homes for their children. The first predominant theme was school selection. Participants described how they intentionally selected the K-12 schools they felt would provide the best education for their children. They also discussed their parental involvement and advocacy, which often differed from the level of involvement their own parents had in their lives. Finally, they described specific forms of capital that they were able to impart into their children's lives.

#### School Selection

Many of the study participants shared that they either attended their neighborhood public schools or were bussed across town in desegregation efforts. However, when the time came to send their own children to school, many of them described the selection processes in which they engaged to determine which schools their own children would attend. Of the process, Lewis Daniels, a school principal who participated in Upward Bound in the 1980s stated:

Because my wife and I are both from the inner city of Cleveland and really had difficult childhoods, we knew that for our children, we had to move into communities where we were going to have to do one of two things—pay tuition for them to go to a private school and live in the city, or find a surrounding suburb to move to that had some type of good academic rating based off state report cards.

The Daniels ended up settling in a suburb where they could send their kids to highly rated public schools.

Xavier Evans, a lawyer, and an Upward Bound alum from the 1990s is the father of a daughter and two nephews he adopted. He reported learning about ‘feeder schools’ from his classmates while in law school. He inquired about the factors that helped them to attend Ivy League schools as undergraduates. They shared that they had attended high schools that were considered ‘feeder schools’ for the Ivy Leagues. He stated:

And the top high school in the State of Ohio is a public school here in Cincinnati—Walnut Hills High School. ‘Okay, how do I get my daughter into that school or one of the Country Day Schools?’ And I found out that most of those kids come from the Montessori schools in Cincinnati. ‘Okay. So, how do I get my kid into a Montessori school?’... And I signed her up. And she had to be tested. She was accepted and I said, ‘okay this Montessori School will get her into one of the good private schools or the great public schools here.’

Xavier rented an apartment in a neighborhood where his nephews could attend high-performing public schools. Because earning a college degree provided upward socioeconomic mobility for many of the study participants, they were able to move into affluent neighborhoods to gain access to higher-achieving neighborhood schools for their children. Deborah "Dee Dee" Dennison reported doing the same thing, choosing a suburb of Toledo in which to settle so her children could attend better schools. Sonia Dixon recounts working two jobs to send her daughter to private school to ensure she was receiving a quality education.

Khalil and Nicole are staunch supporters of public schools. They knew their children would not receive the need-based grants for college that they had received themselves. And while they were nervous about the poor reputation of Detroit Public Schools, through research they found that there were high-performing schools within the district. Therefore, Khalil said: “I'd rather save the K-12 money if I could. So that informed our decision about going to public school. And not just any public school, not a neighborhood school, but a magnet school." The standard for them was that students must test into the magnet school and be accepted to attend. Those were the schools they sought for their three children, two of which were enrolled in college at the time of the study, and one in high school.

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Another commonality amongst the study participants was the fact that many said that they had researched school ratings to determine which one their children would attend. With school ratings readily available to the public in most areas, parents can do their own research on school performances to make informed decisions as to which schools would be the best fit and provide the highest quality education for their children.

**College selection.** Study participants expressed being far more involved in the college selection process for their children than their parents had been for them. Many shared that Upward Bound played a significant role in their college selection processes and transition from high school to college and described providing hands-on guidance and advice to their children during their college selection processes. Khalil and Nicole said they advocated for their children to attend HBCUs after having felt marginalized and invisible during their matriculations at

Northwestern University. Brain Henderson, a retired banking executive who participated in Upward Bound in 1960, shared that as an alum of Florida A&M University's Business School, he knew the power of the resources that were available in the program. When his sons expressed interest in majoring in Business, he persuaded them to attend. Dee Dee encouraged her daughter to attend the University where she was employed to utilize her employee benefit and save money on the cost of college attendance. Of the college selection process for his daughter, Xavier said:

She was very interested in fashion. And so we googled and found out which were the top 20 fashion programs in the world. We were surprised and lucky to find out that of the top 20 fashion programs in the world, three were in the State of Ohio.

His daughter attended college as a Fashion Design major in Ohio. Social capital built by the study participants proved to be valuable in the college selection process for their children.

**The study participants described providing homework help, attending parent-teacher conferences, attending their children's school and athletic events, and having regular communication with teachers and officials as ways in which they engaged in their children's lives and education process.**

### **Parental Involvement and Advocacy**

Another common theme among the study participants was parental involvement and advocacy for their children's education. Some reported being able to offer homework help to their children more so than their parents had been able to offer them. Khalil shared that he was able to offer homework help in many areas and sought help from his college-educated friends when the work proved difficult.

Dee Dee shared that her daughter was an excellent basketball player in high school. She attended every game but had no interest in being a part of the Booster Club. She shared:

I was very active...But I had no interest in being part of the Boosters Club because everybody wants to be in the Booster Club. I participated in the Parent-Teacher Advisory Council, so I sat in meetings to talk about changes that would affect students academically. I was highly active, and although we were at all her basketball games, I didn't have anything to do with the Booster Club.

She felt that her voice as an African American parent would be more influential in academics for her children than in athletics. She then spoke of a time when she felt the school was engaging in discriminatory practices that directly affected her son. Because she was a part of the Parent-Teacher Advisory Council, she was able to make her voice heard.

Angela Roe, a certified nurse practitioner and Upward Bound alum of 1970, received a report on her son's disruptive behavior in his elementary classroom and requested a meeting with his teacher. Her son stated that he was bored and needed more to do. Angela inquired about his academic performance and his teacher relayed that his work was excellent. She suggested to the teacher to give her son more challenging work and pair him with a student who might be having difficulty, as a peer tutor. This proved to be an excellent solution as her son's behavior improved. He continued tutoring his peers into his college years. Regularly attending parent-teacher conferences and building positive relationships with their children's school personnel were recurring themes within the participants' responses.

The study participants described providing homework help, attending parent-teacher conferences, attending their children's school and athletic events, and having regular communication with teachers and officials as ways in which they engaged in their children's lives and education process. And although many of the study participants expressed having parents who were involved in their lives and advocated on their behalf, they described being intentional about their involvement in their children's lives and the levels and types of support they provided. Many credited the Upward Bound Program as being influential because of the exposure and support they received from the program through their experiences and how those experiences exposed them to what was necessary in their preparation for college.

### **Forms of Capital and Funds of Knowledge in Parenting**

Several themes emerged from the larger study as valuable capital the study participants were able to pass down to their children. Of those, reading, the exposure of their children to learning and cultural opportunities, and providing career advice and guidance were most salient. All these forms of capital were used to create a college-going culture in their homes.

**Reading.** A recurring theme that surfaced in the larger study was that of reading. Some of the study participants expressed that their parents passed down a love of reading to them, causing them to become lifelong, avid readers. An appreciation for reading can be a fund of knowledge that the study participants received from their parents. Xavier, a single father, described himself as an avid reader who felt it was important that his children should also be readers. Of his nightly routine with his children, he stated:

We had an hour every evening that we turned off the television from 8:00 to about 9:00...And we're going to read. My daughter's bedtime is 8:30. So I would go into her room with her and read from 8:00 to 8:30 or just listen to her read to me. My boys had their own books at the dining room table, and they would read. You can pick any book you want, but you have to read. That only works if my kids see me reading too.

He stressed the importance of modeling behavior for children to emulate, in this case, reading.

Bethany Martin, a professional counselor who participated in Upward Bound in 1970 to 1980 also describes herself as an avid reader who, as a child, would rather read than play outdoors. She set the expectation that her children would also become readers. However, not all her children thought of reading as pleasurable. She said:

My oldest one did not. My other ones loved to read. And so, I had to get my oldest one to want to read. She liked magazines. So, I started ordering magazines and I would put them all over because I started noticing, if it was a magazine, a short story, she would read it. And that was how I got her to read and increase her grades in 8th grade and high school. I figured out that was the way to get her to read.

By making short texts available to her oldest daughter, Bethany encouraged her to become an avid reader.

Parents do not need a higher education to read to or with their children, or to encourage their children to become avid readers. Encouraging an appreciation for reading is something that can be implemented during a child's early years to contribute to creating a college-going culture at home. It is easier to encourage children to read if parents model the behavior.

**Children's Exposure to Learning and Cultural Opportunities.** One of the tenets of the Upward Bound Program is the exposure to cultural and educational activities, which increased their cultural capital. As noted in Antonio's example in a previous section, many of the study participants reported having a fine dining experience, experiencing the opera, going canoeing, visiting our nation's Capital, or seeing a concert for the first time with Upward Bound. They expressed intentionality of exposing their own children to similar cultural activities and learning experiences. Bethany shared that she used her family vacations and outings as learning opportunities for her daughter, a hands-on learner who struggled in school:

Because my oldest daughter had a very hard time catching up in her earlier years of school, on many of our family vacations the focus was on what she was learning or was about to learn [in school]. I would always get an idea of what they were learning, what their focus was going to be, and we would do our monthly trip going somewhere. We would . . . visit so she could see what it was. She was a hands-on learner, so I always tried to make things fun and in a learning environment.

Bethany stated that these regular outings allowed her to supplement her daughter's learning and played a key role in her daughter's academic development and ultimate success.

Sonia Dixon, a school district Superintendent who participated in Upward Bound in 1980, spoke of the experiences she provided her daughter because of the experiences she was exposed to in Upward Bound. She said she told her daughter:

I want you to go to a restaurant. I want you to go to a play. I want you to experience some of the things I was able to experience for free by being in Upward Bound because now, I've made a way in a career. We're not low income, so you're not eligible for a lot of the programs that are out there. And that's okay because that's what you're supposed to do—when you know better you do better.

She relayed that she tried to give her daughter her own summer Upward Bound-like experiences by sending her to different camps each summer at different institutions of higher education, such as Purdue, Brown, and Hampton Universities, where her daughter was exposed to programs to help her determine her interests, just like Upward Bound had done for her.

**Utilizing Social Networks.** The social capital possessed by parents can directly benefit their children. Antonio shared that his mother heard about Upward Bound from friends in her social network. He said she pushed him to get into the program when she learned of how it could benefit him. Xavier learned about 'feeder schools' from his Ivy League-educated peers in law school. He used that information to learn how to enroll his daughter in schools that would feed into the best public schools in the Cincinnati area. Khalil and Nicole said when they could not provide the necessary homework help for their children, they called their friends to help who had the knowledge. And both Xavier and Bethany spoke of meeting guest speakers during their Upward Bound events and building relationships. Bethany relayed:

What was most important and what I really gathered from that was the networking—meeting professionals as a youth and getting information from them. That was what made me want to get serious with college—talking with them and hearing their stories, getting encouragement.

Bethany was able to later use those connections as references for professional opportunities.

Information sharing is an important function of any social network. Upward Bound increased the social capital of the study participants, and in turn, the participants' children benefited. College access information can be shared and disseminated within social networks, regardless of the education level of those sharing, such as the case with Antonio's mother learning of Upward Bound from her friends.

### Conclusion

The creation of college-going cultures in the homes of students is an important part of preparing students for academic success on the K-12 level and in college. Parents do not have to be college graduates to create college-going cultures in their homes for their children. Lessons on creating those environments can be learned from the study participants in the larger study, both from the experiences they had within the TRIO Upward Bound Program, as well as through their experiences parenting their children. Earning a college degree is one way to attain upward socioeconomic mobility in the United States that many Americans pursue. As their children's first teachers with education beginning in the home, parents creating college-going cultures have the potential to be the greatest influence on their children's future.

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